Japanese Women's Science Fiction: Posthuman Bodies and the Representation of Gender

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Japanese Women’s Science Fiction: Posthuman Bodies and the Representation of Gender
by
Kazue Harada

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of Washington University in
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Kazue Harada

Washington University in St. Louis

April 2015
Dedicated to my parents, Harada Ryōzen and Ayako.
ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Japanese Women’s Science Fiction: Posthuman Bodies and the Representation of Gender

by

Kazue Harada

Doctor of Philosophy in Japanese Language and Literature

Washington University in St. Louis, 2015

Professor Rebecca Copeland, Chair

My dissertation explores the way Japanese women science fiction writers and manga (illustrated stories, often translated as comics) artists have used posthumans, cyborgs, and other hybrid creatures to question contemporary gender roles and identities. Traditionally, science fiction has been seen as a male domain. But by incorporating science fiction themes into manga and fiction intended for a female readership, these writers have carved out space for women in the genre and have stretched the boundaries of science fiction in the process. I focus primarily on the representation of posthuman bodies in the literary works of Ōhara Mariko (b.1959) and Ueda Sayuri (b.1964), and the manga of Hagio Moto (b.1949). It is my contention that these women writers’ use of posthuman or other liminal figures that breach the boundaries of humanity create a so-called “queer” effect that undoes normative sex/gender and sexualities. Queer effect is, in short, a moment or a space deviated from straight or normative worlds in order to serve feminist interests and to critique, both overtly and covertly, contemporary social customs.

Introduction offers the confinement and devaluation of women’s writing and criticism in the science fiction community as well as more generally in Japanese literary history. All subsequent chapters in my dissertation offer close readings of texts that highlight particular
aspects typical of women’s science fiction in Japan, such as queering sex/gender, the evolution of cyborgs, the importance of performance, and alternative reproduction and familial relationships. Chapter One and Two further explore Hagio’s manga experiments with the combined use of ambiguously sexed/gendered identities, especially androgynous and dual-sexed characters that challenge the dichotomy of sex/gender and the conventional notion of motherhood and female reproduction. Additionally, I consider the way she incorporates the male-male romance scenarios popular to girl’s manga of the 1970s. Chapter Three investigates the cyborg characters in Ōhara’s works and shows how cyborg bodies highlight merging multiple genders and/or reconstruct gender through simulation. The cyborg in the text is constructed as either having a fixed or a free-floating gender. In contrast, the “feminine” space (consisting of mother-daughter dyads, images of both nurturing and destructive maternity, reproduction, monstrosity, and emotionality) is prominently simulated through parodic performance to challenge the masculinist portrayals of femininity. Chapter Four examines the ways genetically engineered dual-sexed beings are perceived by men and women in Ueda’s work and illustrates how normative sexualities and binaristic gender discourse are challenged. Chapter Five continues the exploration of Ueda’s works by focusing on the interdependent relationships between humans and non-humans. These relationships disrupt a coherent subjectivity and create alternative forms of queer families that undo received notions of what constitutes humanity and gender. In conclusion, these three authors contribute to the act of expressing posthuman feminist critiques through creating a new paradigm of gender. Their works paradoxically also take us back to unresolved binaristic gender concerns and open up ongoing questions of gender issues.
Denial of Agency: What to do when a woman has written something? The first line of defense is to deny that she wrote it. Since women cannot write, someone else (a man) must have written it.

Joanna Russ, *How to Suppress Women’s Writing*, 1983

On Christmas Day, 2001, the science fiction critic and writer Kotani Mari (b. 1958) received word that she had won her “textual harassment” lawsuit and was able to restore her “lost” pen name. Her long-fought battle to assert her own authorial agency began in 1997 when she was shocked to discover that she did not exist. At least that was the claim made by critic Yamagata Hiroo. He made his assertion in reference to Kotani’s book *Seibo Evangelion* [Evangelion as the Immaculate Virgin, 1996], which he declared was written by Tatsumi Takayuki, a Professor of English at Keio University, who is also Kotani’s husband. “Kotani Mari,” Yamagata insisted, was Tatsumi’s penname. Yamagata’s claim was based on his sexist assumption that a woman was unable to write “intellectual” literary criticism. He, thus, reached his own conclusion: “she didn’t write it.” Based on this premise, Yamagata continues his
criticism as if he were critiquing her husband’s work. As Kobayashi Fukuko, Professor of English, suggests, “The literary attacks on female authors—spreading false rumors that a woman’s writing was actually the work of her husband’s or lover’s, or that the author must be a man—have been common practice among misogynistic male literary critics. However, this vicious practice cannot be laughed off as a mere cliché since this is an effective and violent apparatus for silencing women writers.” Yamagata’s denial of Kotani’s identity reveals the deep-seated chauvinist practice embedded in male-oriented literary cultures including SF communities (writers, critics, editors, publishers, translators, fans) to silence women’s voices. His comment also exposes the persistence of a binaristic gendered discourse, especially an asymmetrical power relationship between men and women. Whereas we might have expected this kind of bias in the early twentieth century, how was it possible at the end of the millennium?

The genre of SF has traditionally been viewed as a male domain both in Japan and elsewhere. It was precisely because women writers/critics like Kotani felt confined by this attitude that they needed to write their own style of criticism and create a space for themselves in what had heretofore been conceived as a man’s genre. In addition to Kotani, others who have carved out space for women in the genre and have stretched the boundaries of SF in the process include Ōhara Mariko (b.1959), Ueda Sayuri (b.1964), and manga artist Hagio Moto (b.1949). In

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5 Yamagata’s argument is that feminist “criticism” is not grounded in the real world although feminism itself has power. His supporting argument is that Kotani’s book is bombarded with citations and thus is a “false” academic writing. He claims that her emphasis on exposing hidden Western concepts of binary oppositions in Evangelion has no meaning because binarism is everywhere. However, his argument is illogical and self-evidential without any citations of Kotani’s book. It is also unclear what his ideas of feminism and feminist criticism are and what academic writing is supposed to be. It is not grounded in any specific evidence.


7 SF is “esu-efu” in Japanese.
their efforts to find their own pathway into the genre, they have experimented with cyborgs and other posthuman bodies, alternative sexualities and relationships, and alternative reproduction. Cyborgs—with their flexible sexualities—offer these writers a way to circumvent—if only in imagination—the limits of “being female” in late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries Japan. It is my contention that these three authors’ works are exemplary of the SF genre in different times in postwar Japan and shed a new light on gender issues. Hagio’s shōjo manga, especially beautiful boys’ comics (shōnen ai, male-male romance), incorporated SF themes and pushed the boundaries of the shōjo manga and SF genre in the early 1970s. Hagio has maintained a consistently prolific presence in the SF and manga communities since the 1970s when shōjo manga criticism was also developed via her fandom. Ōhara’s works brought attention to a new subgenre in 1980s and 1990s SF that incorporated a cyberpunk-like style and focused on gender play and performance, while her fandom was established in the SF community in the 1980s. Ueda’s award-winning works produce a new form of ecocriticism and ecofeminism with the use of nonhumans from a non-anthropocentric worldview in SF in the 2000s and 2010s. Although none of these writers claim to be feminists, their works serve as feminist interests through the use of posthuman and queer figures and had significant impact on the SF and other communities.

This dissertation will explore the ways in which women’s writing was historically contained in male hegemonic literary discourse and girl’s comics contained and manga production based on a binaristic gendered discourse in Japan and the ways women have asserted their rights to challenge this containment. Granted SF has long been accepted as a male-oriented genre, I will investigate why these Japanese women writers and artists were drawn to SF and what measures they took to break into the field. Furthermore, I will explore the ways in which their use of cyborg and posthuman figures that breach the boundaries of humanity create a so-
called “queer” effect that undoes normative sex/gender and sexualities. In this introductory chapter I will briefly chart the history of women’s writing in modern Japan. I will also discuss the ways in which SF has been situated as a male-dominated genre despite the ambiguity. And finally, I will argue that SF has room to serve as a tool for these women writers to subvert contemporary gender roles.

The Containment of Women’s Writing and the Genre of Shōjo Manga

The Meiji era (1868-1912) in Japan saw a reinforcement of binaristic gender divisions and gendered criteria in the literary establishment (or bundan). In conventional modern literary histories, women writers were presented as the counterpart of male writers (who are mainstream) and categorized as writing of “female” concerns in a “feminine” mode. As such, they were separated from the mainstream with terms such as keishū sakka (lady writer), or joryū sakka (female-style writer), or josei sakka (woman writer) through gender-biased assumptions, regardless of the fact that they represent diverse voices and have been writing in various styles. Rebecca Copeland observes that male mentors (male relations—fathers, brothers, uncles—and sometimes male teachers) particularly played an important role for Meiji women writers, encouraging their writing but simultaneously directing their careers and the ways they should write. For example, keishū sakka or lady writers, who were affluent daughters and highly educated, were “to avert their eyes from anything untoward and focus on the gentle, lyrical

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8 The term bundan is currently used loosely as a literary establishment, community, or world. According to Marvin Marcus, bundan, a Tokyo-based literary establishment, emerged from major literary groups of “the nation’s elite universities—Tokyo Imperial University, Waseda, and Keiō,” which published their own journals, in the Meiji era (52). The bundan became an essential site for “networking and socialization” and eventually for literary production among writers and critics. Marvin Marcus, “The Social organization of Modern Japanese Literature,” Columbia Companion to Modern East Asia Literature, ed. Joshua S. Mostow (Columbia University Press, 2003), 52-58.
9 According to Copeland, the term keishū sakka (lady writers) was used in the early part of the Meiji era. In contrast, the term joryū sakka (female-style writers) was used after the later part of the Meiji era. Josei sakka (a woman writer) began to be used in the 1970s. “Introduction” in The Modern Murasaki: Writing by Women of Meiji Japan (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 20-22.
10 Ibid., 20-21.
moments of their own pristine lives. Their lives, like their writing, were to be as pure and chaste as those that their Heian precursors [Murasaki Shikubu, Sei Shōnagon] were assumed to have lived.”11 From the 1900s on, joryū sakka or woman-style writers were also to follow a similar gendered convention — “woman-style” literature was expected to be “sentimental lyricism, and impressionistic, nonintellectual, detailed observations of daily life.”12 In contradiction to the keishū sakka criteria, women’s writing was artistically “not” considered “pure” or “superior” literature but rather “popular” or “stylistically inferior” literature.13 A clear binaristic gendered division constructed the ways in which women must write or create “like women”— based on gender-assigned criteria. If women writers did not fit into the criteria, they would find themselves subjected to the kinds of criticism Joanna Russ outlines in *How to Suppress Women’s Writing*, criticism that either diminished or completely erased a woman’s literary output.14

Kotani’s confrontation with this kind of professional erasure was not unique. There was a similar case during the Meiji era, for example.15 The female haiku poet Sawada Hagijo (沢田はぎ女, 1890-1982), who had flourished for a time, completely disappeared until another modern female haiku poet, Ikegami Fujiko (1909-1999), rediscovered and reinstated her in 1957. For four or five years in the early twentieth century, Hagijo composed more than six hundred sophisticated haiku poems—under the tutelage of her mentor in the haiku community, Etsuyū-kai, as well as her husband Gakurō. Hagijo’s talents were undeniable. And yet, once she began to

11 Ibid., 20.
14 She didn’t write it. // She wrote it, but she shouldn’t have. // She wrote it, but look what she wrote about. // She wrote it, but “she” isn’t really an artist and “it” isn’t really serious, of the right genre—i.e. really art. // She wrote it, but she wrote only one of it. // She wrote it, but it’s only interesting/ included in the cannon for one, limited reason. // She wrote it, but there are very few of her. Russ, *How to Suppress*, 76.
15 See details on Sawada Hagijo in Kotani’s “Kono tekusuto ni,” 312-335.
win fame, the rumor spread that her haiku were composed by her husband. Without clarification, Hagijo’s name dropped off the list of haiku poets in 1909. Subsequently, her husband’s name disappeared as well.\textsuperscript{16} For five decades, it was simply assumed that Hagijo was just another one of Gakurō’s literary guises, and her existence was completely ignored. Apparently, the rumors were begun by the well-established male haiku poet, Yamaguchi Karitsu (1878-1944). In an interview with Ikegami, Hagijo speculated that she hurt his pride when she revealed he made his living as a variety store owner, which was considered an unrespectable occupation. Ikegami also notes that Gakurō and Karitsu had a long-standing feud which may have affected Hagijo’s career.\textsuperscript{17} Either way, Karitsu was jealous of Hagijo’s talents. He had the power to remove her from the haiku community by discrediting her agency; and he effectively silenced her until Ikegami “rediscovered” her five decades later.\textsuperscript{18}

“Woman-style” literature continued into the postwar era, resulting in the containment of female literary expression to gendered criteria. According to Julia C. Bullock, women writers who made literary debuts in the 1960s encountered “a network of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ disciplinary mechanisms that operated in emphatically gendered ways and were frequently mutually imbricated.”\textsuperscript{19} By “hard” mechanisms, Bullock refers to the more formal or external ways of control that prevent women writers from reaching the gateway to publication and public recognition, whereas “soft” mechanisms are more private and internal ways of control through daily communications.\textsuperscript{20} Kurahashi Yumiko (1935-2005) serves as an important illustration of these mechanisms while simultaneously providing an example of yet another way gender bias

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., 316-7.
\textsuperscript{17} From Ikegami’s interview to Hagijo, ibid., 329-34.
\textsuperscript{18} Lesbian writer Yoshiya Nobuko (1896-1973) also researched Hagijo and wrote “Hagijo jiken” (The Incident of Hagijo) in the literary magazine Ōru yomimono (All Reading) in 1965.
\textsuperscript{19} Bullock, Other Women’s Lib, 32.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 32-32.
has tried to curtail female literary activity. Known for her avant-garde style writing or antinovels, Kurahashi’s early literary efforts were met with impressive reviews. Despite her early success (or because of it), literary critic Etō Jun accused her of plagiarizing her novel Kurai tabi (Blue Journey, 1961), claiming it was too indebted to its foreign origin. Kurahashi actively refuted Etō and other male critics’ criticism of her work and stated in newspapers, journals, and the postscripts to her own collection that she strategically used pastiche for the narrative style.\(^2\)

Atsuko Sasaki, scholar of Kurahashi, remarks that these male critics attacked Kurahashi’s work as lacking authenticity in an effort to maintain their own literary territory.\(^2\) Sakaki argues, “What appears to males, including Etō as authentic, natural, and real may well not appear to females, including Kurahashi, as such. Neither will the things that seem to males literary or artificial necessarily be taken as such by females. What males call reality is in fact a male construction of what is real and is thus gender specific.”\(^3\) When women writers like Kurahashi stylistically or thematically challenge the convention of women-style literature (by being too talented or too intellectual, for example), male literary critics have been prone to launch attacks that damage the writers’ reputations or even silence their voices. The difference between Hagijo and Kurahashi is that the latter did not stop writing and had access to print channels that allowed her to refute her critics. In the 1960s, the emergence of other experimental women writers, student activism, and the subsequent women’s liberation movement helped at least to provide greater access to a literary space.


\(^3\) Ibid., 305.
Unlike the containment of women’s writing, manga in the immediate postwar did not initially have distinctive characteristics in styles and content based on binaristic gender difference.\(^\text{24}\) However, the re-publication of prewar youth’s magazines such as *Shōnen kurabu* (Boy’s Club, 1914-1962) and *Shōjo kurabu* (Girl’s Club, 1923-1962) and the publication of entertainment magazines influenced the gender division in the manga genre and subsequently produced weekly and monthly manga magazines divided along gender lines.\(^\text{25}\) The genre of manga becomes eventually divided into the gendered assigned subgenres: *shōnen* (boy), *seinen* (adult men) and *shōjo* (girl). *Shōjo manga* or girl’s comic artists have primarily been expected to create certain themes such as love romance, family issues, tear-jerking (emotional) stories, or any other “feminine” subjects based on gendered-coded assumptions,\(^\text{26}\) while boy’s manga magazines include action adventures, science fiction, sports, comedy and so on.

In the 1950s, many pioneer male artists such as such as Tezuka Osamu (1928-1989), Ishinomori Shōtarō (1938-1998), Matsumoto Reiji (b.1938), and Yokoyama Mitsuteru (1934-2004) created manga works for girls, as it is an arguable claim that the girl’s comics began with androgynous figures in Tezuka’s *Ribon no kishi* (Princess Knight, 1953-56).\(^\text{27}\) They employed

\(^\text{24}\) Manga was called “jidō manga” [Children’s Manga]. Yonezawa Yoshihiro, *Sengo shōjo manga shi* [Postwar History of Girl’s Comics] (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2007), 50.

\(^\text{25}\) Gender categorized magazines had been available since the Meiji era. Boy’s magazines such as *Shōnen sekai* (The Youth’s World, 1895-1933), *Shōnen* (Boy), and *Nihon shōnen* (Japanese Boys) included adventure stories, future novels, political novels, stories on sports, and science. In contrast, the girl’s magazines appeared about a decade later. For example, *Shōjo kai* (The Girl’s World, 1902-1912), *Shōjo no tomo* (Friends of Girls, 1908-1942), and *Shōjo gahō* (Illustrated Girls, 1912-1942) established *shōjo shōsetsu* or girl’s fiction. Illustrative of this girl’s fiction is Yoshiya Nobuko who wrote of *esu-kankei* or a transient “platonic” and “pure” girl-girl relationship that girls outgrow and enter the womanhood for marriage. Another example is Kawabata Yasunari’s stories with illustrations of the big-eyed girls drawn by Nakahara Jun’ichi, and photos of actors/actresses in the Takarazuka Revue. Yonezawa, *Sengo shōjo*, 24-26.

\(^\text{26}\) Girl’s comics developed into various themes over the years. Refer to Fujimoto Yukari, *Watashi no ibasho wa doko ni aruno?: Shōjo manga ga utsuwa kokoro no katachi* [Where is A Room of One’s Own?: The Girl’s Comics Reflect on the Interiority] (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbun Shuppan, 2008).

\(^\text{27}\) Fujimoto Yukari and many Japanese other critics agree that the shōjo manga was invented by Tezuka Osamu. However, Takahashi Mizuki, Deborah Shamoon and others disagree this claim since the visual style of girl’s comics was very different from Tezuka’s style. The visual style (i.e. exaggerated big eyes) rather developed by the
the stories of *shōjo shōsetsu* or girl’s fiction from the prewar time—“innocent” and “non-sexual”
girl homosocial romance and thus “pure” and “platonic” love—reserving boy’s manga for
experiments with new styles and seeking new possibilities. Nonetheless, according to
Yonezawa, except for popular artists such as Tezuka, Ishinomori, and a few others, most male
manga artists who were drawing for girls were considered second-rate. Girl’s comics were also
considered to be a gateway for new artists to enter the manga market. Thus, girl’s comics were
regarded as secondary to boy’s comics. As Yonezawa observes, “The boy’s comics are kitsch,
but the girl’s comics are vulgar.” In other words, the boy’s comics are pleasingly distasteful but
still art, whereas girl’s comics are not quite art. The biased attitude toward the girl’s comic
existed from the beginning. Eventually, when more female manga artists, such as Mizuno Eiko
(b.1939) and Maki Miyako (b.1935), began to take over the genre; male artists were pulled away
from the girl’s comics.

In addition, the establishment of the girl’s comic aesthetics in the late 1960s, in fact,
signifies the construction of a girl’s culture bubble or a secluded world of girls. Yonezawa calls
this development “the construction of a closed chamber.” Deborah Shamoon elaborates on
Yonezawa’s point,

> The dominant aesthetic in shōjo manga, marked by the use of large, starry eyes,
emotive backgrounds, and rule-breaking panel arrangements, was a translation
into manga format of the prewar *jojōga*, or lyrical picture, intended to emphasize
emotion over action or realism. At the same time, the distinctive look of shōjo
manga also kept uninformed readers away, bringing back the sense of a private

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convention of *jojōga* by Nakahara Jun’ichi in the prewar magazines. In particular, male artist Takahashi Makoto was
influenced by Nakahara’s style in the 1950s and established a particular style of girl’s comics.
28 Deborah Shamoon, *Passionate Friendship: The Aesthetics of Girls’ Culture in Japan* (Honolulu: University of
29 The original: 「少年マンガはキッチュで、少女マンガは俗物だった。」 Yonezawa, *Sengo shōjo*, 60.
30 Yonezawa’s title for Chapter Three, “Misshitsu no kōchiku,” in *Sengo shōjo*, 76-120.
world of girls that had allowed for a sense of freedom and creativity in prewar girl’s magazines.\textsuperscript{31}

Despite some freedom of creation, the girl’s comics are still expected to conform to the conventions of style and themes deemed appropriate to girl’s comics. Both women’s writing and girl’s comics have been contained in a part of male hegemonic literary discourse and manga industry in Japan. Nevertheless, there have been resistant women writers and manga artists who challenge the convention of the so-called “feminine” writing or girl’s genre and push the boundaries of the genre with “unfeminine” science fiction themes.

\textbf{SF as a Male Domain: Negative Gender Stereotypes vis-à-vis Ambivalence to Gender}

As mentioned above, the genre of SF has conventionally been seen as a male domain both in and outside Japan.\textsuperscript{32} This is because the genre has been associated primarily with science and technology and thus has stereotypically supported a male-oriented discourse. In addition, the male-oriented SF communities have long struggled with the contestation between gendered stereotypes of women and ambivalent attitudes toward gender \textit{per se}.

First of all, the gendered stereotypical assumptions about women have been prevalent in SF despite ongoing social changes. In particular, it was a common premise that women did not or could not write about something related to science and technology, and therefore were incapable of the basic ingredients of SF. Once critics recognized that more and more women were in fact writing SF, the discussions of their contributions shifted to style. It was argued that women tended to write or create “soft” SF rather than “hard” SF, which arguably referred to the works that constructed or cautiously extrapolated science and its backgrounds. In other words, to cite Russ again, “She wrote it, but ‘she’ isn’t really an artist and ‘it’ isn’t really serious, of the right

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., 100.
\textsuperscript{32} In this case, outside Japan primarily refers to Europe and the U.S. due to their influence on Japan.
genre—i.e., really art.”

Minimizing women’s contributions was another way to undermine or dismiss women’s SF as “not real” SF. To illustrate, Pamela Sargent, author and anthologist of *Women of Wonder*, quotes male writer Charles Platt’s 1989 critique of the SF from the 1970s:

[From the New Wave, via the *Dangerous Visions* series, thence Damon Knight’s *Orbit* anthologies and Milford writing workshops, evolved a generation who used the props of science fiction (aliens, time travel, starships) without any real interest in plausibility as their predecessors had known it. A new “soft” science fiction emerged, largely written by women: Joan Vinge, Vonda McIntyre, Ursula Le Guin, Joanna Russ, Kate Wilhelm, Carol Emshwiller. Their concern for human values was admirable, but they eroded science fiction’s one great strength that had distinguished it from all other fantastic literature: its implicit claim that events described could actually come true.]

As Sargent points out, although Platt’s criticism is applicable to male writers as well, the only authors he singled out by name were female. The question then is why Platt felt compelled to target women SF writers exclusively for “eroding” the genre. Sargent suggests that his criticism is an indication of the impact women writers were having on SF, as they could no longer be completely excluded from the SF community. In the 1960s SF was influenced by philosophical radicalism (Marxism, socialism, structuralism) and the civil rights movement, giving way to what is known as The New Wave. The New Wave ushered in the notion of “soft” SF and opened up a period of experimentation with focus on stylistics and a turn away from the earlier reverence for scientific accuracy and predictability. In the 1970s women’s liberation further contributed to the loosening of generic expectations. These factors pushed the conventions of SF as a countercultural movement. Nonetheless, gendered assumptions of women’s writing like Platt’s criticism remained at the end of the 1980s.

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Russ, *How to Suppress Women’s Writing*, 76.

As revealed in the Kotani case, gender bias against women’s authors has also been persistent in literary or SF communities in Japan. At the time of the establishment of the SF genre in the immediate postwar, the groups of Japanese writers were primarily men. They gathered to write SF in new magazines such as *Uchūjin* (Cosmic Dust, the amateur writer’s magazine, founded in 1957 by Shibano Takumi) and *S-F magajin* (SF Magazine, founded in 1959 by Fukushima Masami). These magazines eventually produced well-established male SF writers such as Hoshi Shin’ichi (1926–97), Komatsu Sakyō (1931–2011), and Tsutsui Yasutaka (b.1934). In 1963, eleven members of male writers, critics, editors, and translators (Komatsu, Hoshi, Mitsuse Ryū, Hanmura Ryō, Ishikawa Takashi, Fukushima Masami, Yano Tetsu etc.) formed an organization called *Nihon SF Sakka Kurabu* (Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of Japan or SFWJ) to promote SF in Japan and to have regular gatherings. The organization was open to both male and female writers, to manga artists, to critics, and to all who contributed to SF in Japan. Nevertheless, there were very few woman members at the beginning, as fewer women writers and artists wrote SF or the genres associated with SF at that time. The photo of the New Year’s party taken in 1968 is an example of the formerly male-oriented organization, which shows only one woman attendee—the translator, Fukamachi Mariko (b.1931) (see Figure 1). However, SF communities in Japan gradually began to acknowledge women authors. In November 1975, after Pamela Sargent’s “Introduction” to the anthology *Women and Wonder* was translated into Japanese, *SF magajin* published *Joryū sakka tokushū* (Women Writers’ Special), a special issue featuring women writers such as Suzuki Izumi (1949–1987) and Yamao

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35 Sato states that *S-F magajin* in the earlier issues (in the 1960s) incorporated American SF into “approximately 80% of each issue, which led to the situation that science fiction and fantasy became the emissary of ‘white’ popular culture, serving Japanese readers as ‘high-class entertainment for intellectual elites.’” She refers to Morishita Kazuhito’s website: “Nihon SF no ayumi” [The Record of Japanese SF]. http://www2.ocn.ne.jp/~nukunuku/MyPage/AYUMI.HTM [accessed March 6, 2015]. Kumiko Sato, “Culture of Desire and Technology: Postwar Literatures of Science Fiction in the US and Japan” (PhD diss., The Pennsylvania State University, 2005), 59.
Although the idea of “woman author” is still categorized as a subgenre, more women authors gradually joined the SFWJ.

In addition, SF in other forms of popular media—such as manga, films, anime, and computer games—grew significantly after WWII, reaching a “golden age” in the 1970s. Male SF writers, artists, readers, and fans initially dominated the genre; however, the ambiguity of the themes the authors select, such as the search for national identity (hybridity), technological ambition and anxiety, represents the feminization and infantilization that Japan underwent after the defeat of World War II. The transformation of the image of Japan as the feminine and infantilized has begun to be used in the postwar era, promoting the image of submissive and non-threatening Japanese women and mothers and innocent Japanese children (without Japanese male soldiers in the wartime) and indicating symbolically the subjugation of Japan by the U.S.

Furthermore, gender representation of SF anime works exhibits ambivalence. Some SF works perpetually produce and reproduce cute and/or sexualized representations of feminine figures, either human or non-human, whereas some works offer stronger female figures and ambiguously gendered figures in SF anime films. For example, prominent anime creators and producers emerged from the annual SF conventions in the early 1980s. The group of twelve male university students, such as Anno Hideaki, Yamaga Hiroyuki, Okada Toshio, created two short

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36 This issue was dedicated to “Joryū sakka tokushū!” [Women Writers’ Special], and Pamela Sargent’s essay in translation was included. Pamela Sargent, “Josei to SF” in S-F magajin 16, no. 11, trans. Sawa Yuriko (November 1975): 39-67.

37 The image of Japan was wittingly feminized and infantilized by SCAP (Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers) in the immediate postwar era. In particular, the symbolic image of General MacArthur and the Showa emperor Hirohito side by side typified the comparative image between Americans and the Japanese and shows the smallness of the Japanese as a child. MacArthur even said that Japan would need to mature its modernity and democracy. Naoko Shibusawa, America’s Geisha Ally: Reimaging the Japanese Enemy (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Press, 2010), 4-5.
anime films in the opening ceremonies of the SF conventions in Osaka (DAICON 3 and 4). In 1984, they established the anime studio Gainax, which has produced influential SF anime films such as *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (1995-96).

Regarding anime, contemporary scholarship on male *otaku* sexuality in relation to anime, manga, and computer games provides a rereading of female figures (especially *shōjo* or preadolescent characters) with the potentiality of multiple layers of fictionality and ambivalence to gender. For example, Keith Vincent summarizes Saitō Tamaki’s notion of *sentō bishōjo* (the beautiful fighting girl) as “not a reflection of the status or desires of women but an autonomous object of desire, an imaginary ‘phallic girl’ whose unbridled *jouissance* lends reality to the fictional spaces she inhabits.” In other words, the beautiful fighting girl is a sexual fantasy that paradoxically encompasses objectification of girls and more ambiguous representation of gender. Patrick W. Galbraith also argues that “*moe* is often misunderstood to mean sexualized images of young female characters, but it is “a response to a potentially wide range of characters” or “a neologism to describe feelings for fictional characters.” Therefore, many of male-authored SF works paradoxically present gendered biases and simultaneously ambivalence toward gender.

Nevertheless, substantial studies on the *shōjo* representations in relations to male *otaku* sexuality

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38 The DAICON Films, especially *Aikoku sentai Dai-Nihon* [The Patriotic Squadron Great Japan, 1982], instigated controversies. It is a parody of the Super Sentai (tokusatsu) TV series such as *Himitsu Sentai Gorenjā* [Five Rangers, 1975-77]. In the film, the Patriotic Squadron fights against the enemy of the Red from the North, which suggests communists in the Soviet Union. The controversy was about racist representations and glorification of war. In addition, some fans did not like the idea that the group made profits out of the name of the SF conventions since the conventions have been non-profit and run by volunteers. See Nagayama Yasuo, *Sengo SF jikenshi: Nihon teki sōzōryoku no 70-nen* [Postwar History of SF Incidents: 70 Years of Japanese-esque Imagination] (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō, 2012), 184-94.

39 Ibid., 260-65.


have been presented except yaoi (male-male romance) studies for female otaku sexuality (fujoshi, rotten girls), but the works of female-authored SF have rarely been studied.

Why SF Matters for Women?

Although the SF genre is a contested site of persistent gendered biases toward female authors and ambivalence toward gender, why has it attracted women writers and manga artists like Hagio, Ôhara, and Ueda? One obvious answer is simply that they like SF. It is my contention, however, that SF has also given these writers and artists a creative space and the methods they need to challenge the patriarchally-mandated, binaristically-gendered heteronormative discourse in which we live. Then, why and how did these creative spaces become possible for these women? First, as imaginative fiction, SF has long fallen under the rubric of popular or entertainment literature (taishū bungaku). As such, it has been regarded as second-rate, or “counter” to serious or pure literature (jun bungaku), which includes the more “realistic” writing styles associated with the I-novel and autobiographical writing. Therefore, the literary conventions of style and methods to follow were less strict although these two categories of popular and serious literature were historically contingent. Second, SF is a discursive genre of imaginative fiction, which pushes the boundaries of the genres and concepts including fantasy, detective fiction, avant-garde, speculative fiction,42 fabulation,43 metafiction,44 postmodern fiction, avant-pop,45 slipstream fiction (henryū bungaku),46 weird fiction,47 and so on. This

42 It is redefined by Judith Merrill. See the definition later.
43 See Robert Schole’s definition of “structural fabulation” and Marleen S. Barr’s “feminist fabulation” later.
45 Larry McCaffery anthologized a new form of fiction as avant-pop—“pop-culture demolition artists” (1). Avant-Pop: Fiction for a Dream Nation (Black Ice Books, 1993).
46 Cyberpunk writer Bruce Sterling (b.1954) coined the term of slipstream fiction in 1989, describing it as feeling “strange,” “an attitude of peculiar aggression against reality,” or “Novels of Postmodern Sensibility,” which is
discursiveness of the genre, inclusive and constantly changing multifold definitions and various forms of media, allowed women writers and artists to question the boundaries of the concepts and expand the genre to suit their own creative styles and agenda. In particular, active debates on SF were initially male-dominated, but women participated in the debates on gender issues. Japanese women did not immediately participate in the debates; nonetheless, the discursiveness of the genre allowed individual writers and artists to experiment with SF methods and to open up their own creative space. Third, SF rhetoric of departure from the human—seeking the possibilities and alternatives of the contemporary worlds that the authors live in—offered a useful vehicle for the expression of social concerns, especially sex/gender and sexualities. I will elaborate on these three points below.

The Counter-Hegemonic Genre

The construction of hegemonic literature and the counter-literary genre historically traces back to the Meiji era in Japan. Although the term science fiction or SF was conceptualized in the postwar era, the perception of imaginative fiction was influenced by the construction of shōsetsu (which became the equivalent to the prose fiction in modern Japan) and the production of literature. In particular, Tsubouchi Shōyō’s Shōsetsu shinzu (The Essence of The Novel, 1885-86) was constructed as the “origin” of modern literary history of Japan when the production of literature was institutionalized in the university educational system and was directed by “national”
According to Atsuko Ueda, *Shōsetsu shinzui* criticizes the lineage of *gesaku* (playful things) and its brand of imaginative fiction, which is the negative precursor of the *shōsetsu*, as “criticiz[ing] and lament[ing] the state of Meiji writings that focus on ‘encouraging virtue and castigating vice’ (*kanzen chōaku*).” To illustrate, *Shōsetsu shinzui* also condemns Takizawa Bakin’s *gesaku* fiction, *Nansō satomi hakkenden* (The Chronicles of the Eight Dogs and The Satomi Clan in Nansō, 1814-42), which lacks the representations of human emotions and overtly stresses Confucian-inspired didactic tales. Nonetheless, Bakin’s *Hakkenden* was popular among young students associated with the Freedom and Human Rights Movement, as these students (formerly of the samurai class) were dissatisfied with the new Meiji government. As Ueda argues, *Shōsetsu shinzui* disapproves of political movements, such as the Freedom and Human Rights Movement, in the 1870s and the 1880s and centers on the “depoliticized” self, which later emerged as the writing of realism (*shajitsu*, writing as it is), naturalism, and the I-novel. *Shōsetsu shinzui* was ultimately used to “conceal” the politics in literature in order “not” to encourage anti-governmental politics.

In contrast to writing of the self in the *shōsetsu*, SF historically tends to trace back to a counter-literary discourse—imaginative fiction such as *seiji shōsetsu* (political novels), *mirai shōsetsu* (future novels), *bōken shōsetsu* (adventure novels), and science novels (*kagaku shōsetsu*) in the Meiji and detective fiction in the Taishō era. In particular, future novels or political novels (for example, *Nijūsan-nen miraki* by Suehiro Tetchō) were clearly used for political purposes and employed a narrative technique of an alternative world to write about the

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49 Ibid., 29.
50 Ibid., 58-68, 86-89.
new parliamentary system and constitution from near future perspectives.\textsuperscript{51} Shōyō, in fact, wrote about the impossibility of writing about the future and politics in the \textit{shōsetsu}.\textsuperscript{52} In addition, adventure stories (those by Oshikawa Shunrō, 1876-1914, for example) and other imaginative fiction were developed as new features in boy’s magazines from the Meiji era to 1945 as a way to introduce science and technology and thus to inspire adolescent boys and young men to learn new concepts. These stories in the boy’s magazines encouraged such political and cultural ideals as militarism, imperialism, and nationalism, bolstering Japan’s engagement in and eventual invasion of Asia. However, \textit{henkaku tantei shōsetsu} (irregular detective fiction), which includes supernatural and pseudo-scientific aspects, could offer a critical viewpoint of modern science and society. As Rebecca Suter argues, “The science-fiction twist given to the mystery format thus performs two simultaneous operations: it foregrounds the dark side of science to critique modernization, and it uses the subversive potential of science-as-hypothesis to reflect on the politics and society of the time.”\textsuperscript{53} Popular writers like Naoki Sanjūgo (1891-1934) and Unno Jūza (1897-1949) wrote detective fiction, \textit{kagaku shōsetsu} (science novels), and/or \textit{kūso kagaku shōsetsu},\textsuperscript{54} often under the threat of censorship, to criticize the capitalist and hierarchal system implicitly with the use of the “new” concept of (quasi-)science during the 1920s and 1930s. Sari Kawana also speculates that Unno was cloaked in \textit{tenkō sakka} (convert writers) to promote the idea of “the danger of science without conscience,” as he “wished to make science fiction the last

\textsuperscript{52} Nagayama Yasuo, "Nihon SF wa hyakugojū-nen ni naru" [Japanese SF is One Hundred and Fifty Years Old], \textit{Bungaku} [Literature] 8, no. 4 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007), 62n3.  
\textsuperscript{53} Rebecca Suter, “Science Fiction as Subversive Hypothesis: \textit{Henkaku tantei shōsetsu} between Entertainment and Enlightenment” \textit{Japanese Studies} 31 (2) (September 2011), 276.  
\textsuperscript{54} Unno Jūza was included among detective fiction writers, as there was not an appropriate category for his fiction. But detective fiction writer Edogawa Ranpo called Unno’s works as \textit{kūso kagaku shōsetsu} [fantasy and science fiction] in the preface of \textit{Nihon tantei shōsetsu kessaku shū} [The Collection of Japanese Detective Fiction Masterpieces] in 1935. Nagayama, “Nihon SF,” 56.
resort against totalitarian thought control in times of extreme censorship." Although bōken shōsetsu and some kagaku shōsetsu were primarily used for mass political ideals of the nation, henkaku tantei shōsetsu, kagaku shōsetsu, and kūso kagaku shōsetsu were simultaneously used to push the boundaries of the convention of the genres and to critique national politics implicitly. Like the New Wave SF in the 1960s in Europe and the U.S., the development as a counter genre gave space for experimentation and room for discussions of the genre. The discursiveness of the SF derived from a counter-hegemonic genre is a key to the development of SF in the postwar and creative forces of SF, as Abe Kōbō describes below.

**The Flexibility of the SF Genre**

SF is a discursive genre with multiple definitions initiated by the debates, focusing primarily on concepts of narrative functions and themes, the historical origin of the genre, and commercialization of the genre. In the introduction to *The Routledge Companion to Science Fiction*, Sherryl Vint, Mark Bould, and others summarize the contingencies and discursiveness of the SF genre:

[Genres] are ongoing, and by definition irresolvable, fields of contention between myriad discursive agents (between writers, readers, editors, directors, producers, viewers, players, fans, critics, detractors; between institutions of production, distribution, and consumption), many of whom may well be more interested in establishing, maintaining, and expanding markets for commodities and in promulgating ideologies than in the particular genre itself. And in an appropriately science-fictional manner, these discursive agents are not even necessarily human.  

The definitions of SF become multiple depending on the specific historical moment and the particular cultural context between particular agents particularly in relations to markets although

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this idea can apply to any genre. Japanese surrealist/avant-garde/SF writer Abe Kōbō (1924-93) wrote in his essay “SF kono nazuke gataki mono” (SF the Unnamable, 1967) about his anxiety over SF becoming mainstream and formulaic and wishing to preserve the impossibility of defining SF as its “monstrosity.” For Kōbō, the monstrosity of SF (an indefinable and counter mainstream SF) is necessary for creative forces in literature. As mentioned above, cultural and historical contingencies and conceptual debates on the SF genre are significant aspects of SF.

The continuous debates on the SF genre open up the possibilities and push the borders of the genre. The debates over the SF genre have been active in the U.S. and Europe since the 1940s. For example, in the academic sense, Robert Scholes’s concept of “structural fabulation” (1975) and Darko Suvin’s definition of “cognitive estrangement” (1979) influentially extended the concept of SF from the New Wave SF movement. Scholes’s “structural fabulation” (sf) is defined as “any ‘fiction that offers us a world clearly and radically discontinuous from the one we know, yet returns to confront that known world in some cognitive way.’” Scholes expands the definition to include the fantastic and imaginative fiction writers such as Jorge Luis Borges, Thomas Pynchon, and Herman Hesse. Suvin also described SF as “cognitive estrangement”: “a literary genre or verbal construct whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition [something new or novum], and whose main device is an imaginative framework alternative to the author's empirical environment.” His definition has influenced SF writers, scholars, critics, and fans in the U.S., Europe, and Japan to discuss and reconsider the meaning of SF. In particular, not only feminist SF writers and critics but also

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59 Ibid.
non-feminist authors use the (debatable) concept of “estrangement” to support a challenge to the “normative ideas of gender roles.”

The debates on the SF genre have also been active in postwar Japan. In contrast to academic-oriented debates in the U.S. and Europe, these debates have largely been mediated through magazines among Japanese writers, critics, and fans. For example, in 1969, critic Yamano Kōichi (b.1939) expressed his critical concerns about the popular trend in Japanese SF as lacking originality and being overly influenced by Anglo-American SF traditions. In response, writer Aramaki Yoshio (b.1933) refuted Yamano’s lament by supporting the accomplishments of Japanese SF writers and focusing on narrative technique of SF—“The Fiction of Kunst (術).” To support modern humanism, Aramaki again had another dispute with writer/critic/translator Shibano Takumi (1926-2010), who attempted to redefine SF as “shūdan risei” (collective reason). Their disputes were primarily about what SF means to Japanese writers and exhibited the struggle of finding their own positions in relation to SF regardless of the initial Western influence. The debates on SF continue (such as the Influence of the New Wave, pre and post cyberpunk, SF as trash literature, posthumanities, and so on). These active discussions and the

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62 Ibid., 10, 190-204.
63 Ibid. In addition, a group of young male critics called Genkai-ken (Studies of the Limit) published a variety of discussions of the “Japanese-style” posthumanity in Japanese SF called Posuto hyūmanities: Itō Keikaku igo no SF [Posthumanities: SF after Author Itoh Project] by Namundō in 2013. In “The Introduction,” critic Fujita Naoya summarizes the concept of “Japanese-style posthuman” from the articles and their group studies in contrast to posthumanity in Europe and the U.S. Four characteristics of the Japanese-style posthumanity are: 1. There are “very few” euphoric depictions of humanity (humanity eternally develops toward the singularity, or humanity has achieved immortality by eternal soul-copies or resurrection); 2. The Japanese-style posthuman tends to be subjects who are infused with or plugged into the Social Network System (SNS), the communication system, or the air; 3. The relationship between the self and the character has been merged based on the character platform culture in Japan (perhaps, due to influence of Buddhism and animism); 4. Komatsu Sakyō’s works Hateshinaki nagare no ha (End of the World after Endless Streams, 1966), “Kami heno nagai michi” (A Long Path to the God, 1967) and Kyomu kairō (Empty Corridors 1987, 2000) influenced the concept (5-6). Although posthumanity is supposedly irrelevant to gender, the representations of the posthumanity in the works that they analyzed are mostly gendered. However, there is not much discussion on gender identities. Their studies include the representations of the girl
fluidity of SF eventually allowed women the space they needed to express their voices within the community.

**Women Authors Strike Back: Claiming Voices in the Male-Oriented SF**

Women writers, critics, editors, and scholars began to express their opinions on the definitions and studies of SF as well. Anglo-American women initiated discussion by questioning why SF was a male-dominated genre. In particular from 1950 on, author/critic/editor, Judith Merril (1923-1997), who was extremely influential to Japanese SF, began to explore the critical meaning of SF and to challenge the limitation of Hard SF. In the anthology *SF: The Year’s Best* of 1959, Merril playfully pokes at the definition of SF:

*SF is an abbreviation for Science Fiction (or Science Fantasy). Science Fantasy (or Science Fiction) is really an abbreviation too. Here are some of the things it stands for... S is for Science, Space, Satellites, Starships, and Solar exploring; also for Semantics and Sociology, Satire, Spoofing, Suspense, and good old Serendipity. (But not Spelling, without which I could have added Psychology, Civilizations, and Psi without parentheses.)

F is for Fantasy, Fiction and Fable, Folklore, Fairy-tale and Farce; also for Fission and Fusion; for Firmament, Fireball, Future and Forecast; for Fate and Free-will; Figuring; Fact-seeking, and Fancy-free. Mix well. The result is SF, or Speculative Fun... Happy reading.*

Merril punned the acronym SF to try to expand the definition of SF. Merril explored more on SF and wrote an essay with the concept of “speculative fiction,” “What Do You Mean: Science?”

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persona voiced by musical software (vocaloid), Hatsune Miku, and magical girls in the TV series, *Mahō shōjo Madoka, Magika* (Puella Magi, Madoka Magic 2011) as well as many male writers such as Tobi Hirotaka (b.1960), Miyauchi Yūsuke (b.1979), and Itō Keikaku (1974-2008), who raise the issues of contemporary gender roles in Japan. Nonetheless, gendered aspects in posthumanity are not focused. Women writers such as Ueda Sayuri who work on posthumanity are also not included. Their posthuman discourse tends to be reduced to a male-centered discourse.

Fiction?” in the first SF studies journal *Extrapolation* in 1966.\(^{65}\) She attempted to question that SF is not about science itself, but rather that it sought the meaning of science. As Diane Newell indicates, Merril challenged and diverged SF from “the traditional male model of ‘hard’ science fiction, with its concern with getting the science right.”\(^{66}\) This was when the new wave SF and the second wave of the women’s movement emerged in the 1960s and gained the recognition of a small number of feminist SF writers such as Ursula Le Guin, Joanna Russ, and Marge Piercy. Newell argued that Merril’s passionate and active participation in the arguments of the SF genre affected subsequent women authors and scholars like Donna Haraway,\(^{67}\) and the Japanese SF community.

Moreover, feminist scholar Marleen S. Barr, who was also influential to Japanese SF feminists, invented the new term or genre “feminist fabulation” in order to “reclaim canonical space” and to “redefine gendered space” in the 1992 book *Feminist Fabulation: Space/Postmodern Fiction*. Motivated by her dissatisfaction with marginalized women’s and/or feminist fiction in literary studies of postmodern fiction, Barr defines “feminist fabulation” as “a new supergenre of women’s writing” or “a new literary space,” “which includes works now thought of as mainstream, SF, fantasy, supernatural, and utopian as well as feminist text men author,” referring to Scholes’s flexible use of “structural fabulation.”\(^{68}\) Barr’s purpose with feminist fabulation was ultimately to create alternative forms of patriarchal myths, which

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\(^{65}\) “What Do You Mean: Science? Fiction?” was published in *Extrapolation: Journal of Science Fiction and Fantasy Studies* 7 (May 1966) and 8 (Dec. 1966). This essay was also translated into Japanese “SF ni nani ga dekiru ka?” in 1972 and influenced Japanese SF critics and fans. Regarding “speculative fiction,” Robert A. Heinlein used the term “speculative fiction” referring to science fiction (not fantasy) in his 1947 essay. Canadian feminist writer Margaret Atwood (b.1939) also prefers to use her work as “speculative fiction” rather than science fiction.

\(^{66}\) Newell, ibid., 34.

\(^{67}\) Donna Haraway is Professor of the Studies of Science at University of California, Santa Cruz and writer of “A Manifesto for Cyborgs” (1984).

\(^{68}\) Barr refers to three studies of postmodern fiction: Linda Hutcheon’s *A Poetics of Postmodernism*, Larry McCaffery’s *Postmodern Fiction*, and Brian McHale’s *Postmodernist Fiction*. Marleen S. Barr, *Feminist Fabulation: Space/Postmodern Fiction* (Iowa, IA: Iowa University Press, 1992), xiii.
“expose, subvert, and rewrite,” and show “the possibility of real world change.”\(^6^9\) The discursiveness of SF (science fiction, speculative fiction, science fantasy, or feminist fabulation) allowed women’s writers and critics to create their own space in the genre and to challenge the male-centered discourse in the genre and in studies of SF.

Japanese women writers and critics did not directly participate in the debates on SF immediately, yet experimental works by women SF writers and manga artists emerged in Japan in the 1970s. In prose fiction, Suzuki Izumi, Yamao Yūko, and Arai Motoko (b.1960) appeared around the same time as American feminist SF writers such as Ursula Le Guin (b.1929), Marion Zimmer Bradley (1930-1999), Joanna Russ, and others.\(^7^0\) In “Onna to onna no yo no naka” [The World of Women and Women, 1977], Suzuki created a “women’s utopia,” which subverted the patriarchal society, placing women in power and sequestering men to a restricted area. Yamao wrote satirical surrealistic fiction. In her novel Yume no sumu machi [The City where Dream Lives, 1976], red-colored women’s legs are artificially manufactured, but their upper bodies are shriveled. Kotani points out that this work criticizes male violence against women’s bodies and their body commodification in prostitution.\(^7^1\) Arai made a sensational debut as a high school student in 1977 in the magazine Kisō tengai and has been a prolific shōjo fiction writer ever since. In Atashi no naka no… [Inside Myself…, 1978], she experimented with new styles and with the use of colloquial language such as the first-person pronoun “atashi” and the second-person pronoun “otaku” to challenge the conventional style of writing. Writer Takahashi Gen’ichirō (b.1951) validates her work by terming her use of language “the second movement of

\(^6^9\) Ibid., xxviii.
\(^7^1\) Kotani, “Alien Spaces,” 59-60.
the unification of written and spoken language.”

The rise of women writers in the 1960s, such as Kurahashi, Ōba Minako (1930-2007), Kōno Taeko (b.1926), Takahashi Takako (b.1932), Kanai Mieko (b.1947), Tomioka Taeko (b.1935), and Setouchi Harumi/Jakuchō (b.1922), among others, opened the door to greater experimentation in women’s writing which in turn encouraged women to push their way into SF. In addition, during the 1970s, Japanese female intellectuals, grassroots feminist activists, and housewives became more and more active in the women’s liberation movement, claiming women’s rights, reproductive rights, and autonomous sexuality, and advocating for gender equality which helped women writers and artists to express their concerns about gender roles and customs in SF.

Manga artists Hagio Moto and Takemiya Keiko (b.1950) began experimenting with beautiful boys’ love in the girl’s comics with SF scenarios. SF author Kurimoto Kaoru (1953-2009) was inspired by Hagio and Takemiya and theorized the aesthetics of beautiful boys’ love (shōnen ai)—yaoi. She extended the yaoi concept as a phenomenon, encompassing prose fiction and girl’s comics, in her books Introduction to Beautiful Boys’ Studies (Bishōnen gaku nyūmon, 1984) and Children of Thanatos: Ecology of Excessive Adaptation (Tanatosu no kodomo-tachi: kajō tekiō no seitai gaku, 1998). Kurimoto’s discussion of the yaoi aesthetics is not clearly connected to SF per se, but yaoi poetics is an important part of the development of Japanese

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Űman ribü (The Women’s Liberation) movement was forged in the reactions against the attempt to the amendment of the abortion law and the Eugenic Protection Law as well as the secondary treatment of women’s rights in the New Left activism (anti-Anpo or against the renewal of the US-Japan Security Treaty, radical student movements, anti-Vietnam War protests) in the 1960s. Tatakau onna (Fighting Women), Chūpiren (Alliance for Abortion and the Pill), and many other feminist groups emerged in the 1970s. The housewife Saitō Chiyo established the organization Agora (childcare facilities, consciousness-raising, assertive training) and the Bank of creativity (a labor exchange) in 1960. Vera Mickie, Feminism in Modern Japan: Citizenship, Embodiment and Sexuality (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 144-173.

Kurimoto (her actual name was Imaoka Sumiyo) used two different pseudonyms: fictional writing under Kurimoto and essay writing under Nakajima Azusa.
women’s SF. In particular, female fandom and dōjin (amateur writers) circles on manga were largely associated with Comiket (comic market), which had the connection to SF communities, in the mid-1970s and the 1980s. The convergence of yaoi narratives and SF will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two.

Gender politics becomes more apparent in Japanese SF in the 1980s and the 1990s. Whereas Ōhara Mariko does not overtly claim to be a feminist, she uses cyborg figures and cyberpunk to push the borders between human and machine, between artificial and real, and between human and animal, similar to Haraway’s claim in A Cyborg Manifesto. With the use of cyborg figures, Ōhara creates alternative post-gender worlds and/or alternative versions of femininity. While the cyberpunk movement in the U.S. in the 1980s was often criticized as a male-oriented subgenre or movement, Ōhara distinguishes herself, according to Tatsumi, as a pioneer of cyberpunk in Japan, at a time synchronous with the U.S. As clearly feminist concerns in SF stated in her 1994 book, Kotani theorizes the concept called “Techno-gynesis,” in which women authors and artists create a feminine textual space in the male-oriented SF genre through the development of technology. Her concept is strongly influenced by Haraway’s cyborg feminism and Alice Jardine’s “gynesis,” which also inspired Barr’s concept of “feminist fabulation.” Kotani finds the synchronicity between the yaoi narrative in Japan and K/S fiction in the U.S. through the concept of techno-gynesis.

75 Yonezawa Yoshihiro, the co-founder of the Comiket, participated in the eighth SF Convention as a staff (KYUCON) in 1969 and later joined SF kenkyūkai (SF Studies Club) at Meiji University. A majority of the attendees were schoolgirls at the beginning (90% in the first Comiket in 1975). This connection helped to link these two events. http://www.comiket.co.jp/archives/Chronology.html#year_1975; http://www.toshonoe.net/shojo/05_list/yonezawa_yoshihiro_list.html [accessed April 15, 2015].
Ueda Sayuri, who similarly does not overtly claim to be a feminist, decided to turn to writing after she lost family in the Great Hanshin Earthquake of 1995. Many of her SF works question humanity by seeing humans as one species in a contiguous environmental system, where human bodies are modified to adapt to drastic environmental changes and are placed in new relations with non-human beings. In an interview in the *SF Prologue Wave*, Ueda states that SF can express the world of non-humans, which occupy a large part of the Earth and live out of the human’s value and morals. From a larger perspective of humanity, Ueda sees sex/gender and sexualities that are not bound to a binaristic and heteronormative system but rather challenge our human gender system. In a way, she offers a new form of ecocriticism and ecofeminism in SF.

Furthermore, women writers, artists, scholars as well as fans began to form their own comfortable and safe space and to establish awards for the recognition of those who contribute to gender politics in SF. The initial establishment of an international feminist SF convention made an impact on feminists in the Japanese SF community. In 1977, *The World’s Leading Feminist Science Fiction Convention* (WisCon) was established in Madison, Wisconsin, focusing on a discussion of “feminism, gender, race, and class” after many women writers felt the lack of recognition of women writers and gender issues. In 1991, the James Tiptree, Jr. Award, “an annual literary prize for science fiction and fantasy that expands or explores our understanding of

78 In addition, Ueda’s works often employ scientific theories and thus contest assumptions that women writers cannot write so-called Hard SF.
79 Despite the efforts of participants and organizers to create a safe space, two participants were sexually harassed by the editor Jim Frenkel in WisCon 37 in 2013. He reappeared in WisCon 39 in 2014, but he is permanently banned to participate in future conventions. In addition, cyber harassments have been more and more common. http://wisconnews.blogspot.com/2014/05/the-concom-is-aware-of-concerns-about.html [accessed June 1, 2014]. Feminist popular SF critic and game developer Anita Sarkeesian has been constantly harassed online by male game players, since she tries to raise funds for analyzing the representations of games in her blog *Feminist Frequency*. She called these harassments “cyber mobs,” as she has been receiving death threats, rape threats, misogynist and racist comments, and rape games created by other players. http://feministfrequency.com/ [accessed November 20, 2014].
gender,” was founded by two award-winning feminist SF writers, Pat Murphy and Karen Fowler. The award was named after James Tiptree, Jr., which was the pseudonym used by Alice B. Sheldon (1915-1987), who broke the obstacles between men’s writing and women’s writing. The name James Tiptree, Jr. constantly reminds us of the irony that a woman writer had to use a male name to break through.

The establishment of the WisCon and the James Tiptree, Jr. Award eventually influenced the foundation of the Japanese Association for Gender Fantasy and Science Fiction (called G-ken) and the Sense of Gender Award in 2001, which was established by Kotani, Kashiwazaki Reona, and Kubo Lena, who participate regularly in the WisCon. G-ken and the Sense of Gender Award were, in fact, motivated by the necessity for forming a support group for women SF authors, artists, critics, and fans in Japan, while Kotani was going through the textual harassment case. Meanwhile, outside of the SF communities, Kotani was supported by Saegusa Kazuko of the Japanese Pen Club, literary critic Saitō Minako, and Lacanian psychoanalyst Saitō Tamaki, each of whom refuted Yamagata’s “textual harassment” of Kotani. Her distressing textual case ironically brought together a group of feminists and women in SF and created a comfortable and safe space and supporting network in order to resist perpetual gender biases. This is a significant act of resistance on the part of Japanese women authors and fans deriving from within the SF community in Japan.

**Undoing Human/ Undoing Gender through SF and Creating Queer Effects**

*I can’t imagine a two-sexed egalitarian society and I don’t believe anyone else can, either…. Well, here you have the whole thing about s.f. Where else could one even try out such visions? Yet in the end we will have to have models for the real thing and I can find none yet.*

80 See the website, http://tiptree.org/ [accessed October 15, 2014].
Joanna Russ\textsuperscript{82}

I repeatedly experimented with “how to unbind” the confinement [as a woman] in my works.

Hagio Moto\textsuperscript{83}

Reading SF, you transform yourself into robots, see the Earth as an alien, or establish relationships with aliens. We can be the opposite sex.

Ōhara Mariko\textsuperscript{84}

I like the world of pan sexualities, and I thought I could express it freely in SF... [...] If societies reached the point where they peacefully accepted all the sexual differences, gender identities, and sexual orientations, it would bring us an unimaginably happy place.

Ueda Sayuri\textsuperscript{85}

Women writers and artists employ SF rhetoric to undo human and to undo gender expectations in the world around them. In other words, SF offers freedom from the constraints in actual societies. Feminist SF critic Veronica Hollinger cites Judith Butler’s statement: “a certain departure from the human…takes place in order to start the process of remaking the human.”\textsuperscript{86}

Departing from the human and remaking the human, these women seek alternative worlds with alternative entities such as cyborgs and non-humans, alternative sex/gender and sexualities, and alternative relationships, which problematize or deflect a hierarchal patriarchy, binaristic gender, and heteronormative system. In particular, as will be discussed further in Chapter Four, their use of cyborg and posthuman models as metaphors in their works—in keeping with Haraway’s

\textsuperscript{82} Barr, Feminist Fabulation, 133. Cited from Joanna Russ’s “Reflections on Science Fiction.”

\textsuperscript{83} Hagio’s comment for receiving the Life Achievement Award in 2012. “Jushō no kotoba” [Award-Winning Comment for Life Achievement Award], The Japanese Association for Gender Fantasy & Science Fiction (July 2013), http://gender-sf.org/sog/2012/4091791352.html [accessed March 10, 2014].

\textsuperscript{84} Ōhara Mariko, “The Twister of Imagination: an Interview with Mariko Ōhara,” Interview by Larry McCaffery et al. The Review of Contemporary Fiction XXII, no. 2 (June 22, 2002), 130.


\textsuperscript{86} Butler’s citation (Undoing Gender, 3-4) is quoted in Hollinger’s “(Re)reading Queerly: Science Fiction, Feminism, and the Defamiliarization of Gender in Future Females, The Next Generation: New Voices and Velocities in Feminist Science Fiction Criticism, ed. Marleen S. Barr (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2000), 157.
concept—is a tool for reconfiguring new human forms through science and advanced technology, including sexed bodies, gender identities, and sexualities.

By the process of reconfiguring the human bodies, these women writers and manga artists, Hagio, Ōhara, and Ueda, experiment with queering the human and sex/gender and sexualities. In *Queer Phenomenology*, Sara Ahmed argues that phenomenology allows us to reconsider orientation, especially the relation to space and bodies, or bodies and objects. Bodies attempt to orient themselves in space “in line”—such as left and right, front and back, up and down—depending on how bodies live in space. If bodies fail to orient, they will create “queer” moments or “queer” effects that are “off-line,” “oblique,” or deviate from straight and normative worlds.\(^8^7\) Ahmed employs queer as non-straight and non-normative sexualities as well as bodies that are offline and oblique ways or out of place, particularly, in racial orientation (e.g. “the presence of bodies of color in white spaces as disorientating”).\(^8^8\) To loosely adopt Ahmed’s use of queer effect as reading new odd bodies, Hagio, Ōhara, and Ueda create “queer effects,” which contest binaristic sex/gender, heteronormative sexualities, normative femininity, normative family and relationships, in their works. Their works also offer a “queer” or “oblique” angle of perceiving the human through marginalized humans or non-human entities—such as vampires, aliens, machines, animals—and through a (re)configuration of the human—such as genetic engineering, cyborg, and advanced plastic surgeries—in order to undo the human and undo the gender that we currently inhabit.

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88 Ibid, 161.
Review of Literature on Science Fiction (SF) in Japan

Although they rarely focus on gender, there are quite few studies on science fiction in Japan, especially focusing on robotics, cyborgs, and posthumans, in both English and Japanese such as those by literary critics Tatsumi Takayuki, Kotani Mari, Christopher Bolton, Sharalyn Orbaugh, Susan J. Napier, Steve T. Brown, Miri Nakamura, Rebecca Suter, Kumiko Sato, to name a few. Regarding Japanese scholarship on history of SF in Japan, SF critic Yokota Junya brings attention to Meiji adventure stories as SF classics such as Oshikawa Shunrō’s the *Kaitei gunkan* series [Submarine Warship, 1900-07], whereas Nagayama Yasuo attempts to historicize the origin of Japanese SF at the end of the Edo period. Nagayama also traces the history from the end of the Meiji era to the present, including various media and SF conventions and communities. Yonezawa Yoshihiro painstakingly traces the postwar history of SF manga, while Tatsumi argues that the history of SF is also a discursive history of SF and compiles SF debates in postwar Japan. As for Japanese SF studies in English, in a theoretical framework of her dissertation, Kumiko Sato comprehensively proposes that the concept of “Japanese” “science fiction” is a genre of popular fantasy or popular fantastic fiction: “the creative failures to imitate authentic Western models of detective fiction and science fiction.” She delineates this idea from the comparison between Western literary theories of fantasy and science fiction genres and development and classification problems of Japanese fantasy or fantastic (*gensō bungaku*),

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89 Yokota anthologizes SF classics including Yano Ryūkei’s *Ukichiro monogatari* [Tale of Ukichiro, 1890], Oshikawa, and others.
90 Nagayama claims that Iwagaki Gesshū’s “Seisei kaishin hen” [Good Feeling about Western Expedition, 1857] is the origin of SF in Japan, as its narrative utilizes an alternative world in the imaginary and futurist setting. This story sets in the near future and features an imaginary island nation that beats England in war. Nagayama, *Nihon SF seishin shi: Bakumatsu, Meiji kara sengo made* [Intellectual History of Japanese Science Fiction: From the End of the Edo and the Meiji Era to the Post-war Era] (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 2009).
93 As she bases on the premise that science fiction is a subgenre of fantasy, Sato uses four representative theoretical approaches of literary genres: 1) setting the subjects and structuring the genre by Northrop Frye’s *Autonomy of Criticism*; 2) Structuralist approaches referring to Tzvetan Todorov’s the Fantastic (the concept of “hesitation”); 3) feminism and psychoanalysis through Rosemary Jackson’s notion of fantasy; 4) Marxist approaches and Dark Suvin’s concept of “cognitive estrangement.” See details in Sato’s PhD diss., 14-36.
detective fiction (tantei shōsetsu), and (fantastic) scientific fiction (kūso kagaku shōsetsu).94

Christopher Bolton’s studies on SF writer Abe Kōbō foregrounds the studies of postwar Japan’s SF in the U.S.95

Most scholarship on cyborgs and posthuman subjectivities focuses on the realm of visual culture within SF, especially post-World War II anime films and manga. Within these studies, cyborg and posthuman subjectivities are shown to reflect the (re)constructions of Japanese identity or the (re)configuration of humanity itself after the loss of the humanity during the war. These subjectivities, due to their hybrid nature, disrupt the notions of the Western modernist dualistic ideologies and anthropocentric notions of humanity, including race, ethnicity, and gender. In prewar time, Nakamura argues the machine becomes “the new metaphor of the human body” in both scientific and literary writings.96 In postwar Japan, scholars and critics of Japanese SF have identified three major characteristics in cyborg and posthuman subjectivities that they describe as distinctly “Japanese” when discussing these issues in a West (especially, the U.S.)-Japan relationship. These characteristics are the tendency for the Japanese authors/artists to “self-orientalize.” The second is a reassertion of a colonialist mentality. The third is materialist practice and animistic beliefs impacting on the relations between humans and nonhumans.

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94 As Sato points out, there are more categories of popular fantasy or fantastic such as kaidan (uncanny tales), kaiki shōsetsu (bizarre novels), denki (tales of uncanny things), and fantajī (fantasy) (39). Considering Japanese popular fantasy, Sato hypothesizes to make its four changes and to redefine the genre: 1) “Science fiction and detective fiction were considered as a literary tool to prove Japan’s modernity by realizing the logic of scientific reason”; 2) “the popularity of genre-mix” and later “media-mix”; 3) “This generically confused fantasy world is an expression of present reality”; 4) The above conditions combine to create a sense of uniquely Japanese identity (63-65). Sato, ibid.

95 Christopher Bolton, Sublime Voices: The Fictional Science and Scientific Fiction of Abe Kōbō (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University of Asia Center, 2009). In addition, Bolton’s edited book Robot Ghosts and Wired Dreams also covers a wide range of critical essays on SF prose fiction to manga, anime, and video games.

As for the first, Japanese SF writers and artists adopted and cultivated the West’s Orientalist view of Japan’s technophilia. In other words, the Japanese “self-orientalize” through a reappropriation of cyborg and posthuman subjectivities. Tatsumi argues this phenomenon as “creative masochism” or “metallocentric imagination” in postwar Japan in “The Japanoid Manifesto” and Full Metal Apache. Similarly, Orbaugh proposes the “Frankenstein syndrome,” “in which the developing non-West nations [in this case Japan] come to recognize their own ‘monstrosity’ vis-à-vis/within the discursive hegemony of the already developed nations of the West.” In particular, the Frankenstein syndrome differs from popular North American cyborg subjectivities that are undesirable and potentially a threat, but rather highlights a more sympathetic, intimate, and physically incorporated experience as cyborgs.

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97 In “The Japanoid Manifesto” (1991), the Japanese themselves unconsciously embrace the Orientalist view of Japan’s willing (self-orientalizing) technophilia such as bodily transformation into cyborgs and posthumans modified by advanced technology. He calls this cultural consciousness “Japanoid,” the invisible identity that is “floating between Japanophobic Japanese and Japanophilic Westerners.” This technophilia is also connected to Japan’s “masochistic” relation to the U.S. For example, the posthumans survive by eating metal in Komatsu Sakyō’s Nippon appachi zoku [The Japanese Apache, 1964], and a man who intentionally infects himself with implanting a metal bar into his thigh, eventually infects others, and become a hybrid creature of machine and human in Tsukamoto Shinya’s Tetsuo [Tetsuo: The Iron Man, 1989]. These posthuman subjectivities have undergone painful transformations, but their pain simultaneously gives these characters pleasure. Tatsumi, “The Japanoid Manifesto: Toward a New Poetics of Invisible Culture,” The Review of Contemporary Fiction. XXII, no. 2 (2002): 16; Full Metal Apache: Transactions between Cyberpunk Japan and Avant-Pop America (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2006) 3, 25, 155-170.


99 Orbaugh gives two examples of the Frankenstein syndrome with gender being portrayed in Anno’s Neon Genesis Evangelion and Oshii’s Ghost in the Shell. With this analysis, she brings attention to gendered aspects of cyborg subjectivities, which challenge the conventional notions of gender and the “heterosexual matrix” (“Sex”188). For example, in Evangelion, the male EVA (a metal suit robot) pilot Shinji is forced to incorporate his own body into the EVA, into which his mother’s element has also been blended. Shinji-EVA cyborg illustrates the contention between Shinji’s fear of being feminized by the machine EVA penetrated into his body and his desire for the superhuman strength. “Permeability/penetrability” of sex/ gender difference breaks down the “heterosexual matrix” (“Sex” 188). In contrast, Ghost in the Shell provides the cyborg character Major Kusanagi Motoko whose femininity/masculinity is juxtaposed: a female-sexed mechanical body and an organic component of brain (called “ghost”). While the body
characteristic, that of reappropriated colonialism, Sato and Shigeru Suzuki demonstrate the limits and danger of the posthumanity, which instigates another form of (neo)colonialism toward non-Japanese Asian subjectivities and (re)instigates the legacy of Japanese colonial imperialism and nationalism (Nihonjinron, Japanism). As for the third, Anne Allison discusses new forms of hybridity (machine or organic/human) in “material practices of commodity consumerism” in postwar Japan, as reconfiguring the intimate attachment to devices such as techno-toys. She calls this the aesthetic of “techno-animism.” Similarly, Japanese critic Fujita Naoya points out one of characteristics of Japanese posthumanity as the merged relationship between the self and the character based on the character platform culture due to the influence of Buddhism and animism.

Tremendous strides have already been made in considering the female experience in horror, supernatural stories, and detective fiction by scholars such as Hiromi Tsuchiya Dollase, Amanda C. Seaman, and Sari Kawana. Nevertheless studies that consider women’s works are still underrepresented. Therefore, the purpose of my dissertation is to bring women further into the domain of Japan studies. Here I am not a forerunner, by any means. A few scholars, such as Kotani, Orbaugh, Sato, and Jennifer Robertson, have worked on gendered attitudes of SF and/or

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100 Suzuki argues that Oshii’s anime film Innocence undermines the potential of the posthuman with xenophobic attitudes and the portrayals of negative non-Western others although posthuman bodies and hybrid city space attempt to deconstruct a fixed notion of ethnicity, gender, and national identities. Further, he contends, “the Japanoid claim Japanese superiority and technological advancement over the other part of Asia, which eventually fails to critique the narrow-minded cultural nationalism in contemporary Japan.” Similarly, despite the strong female cyborg and android characters, Sato argues that the rhetoric of the Japanese uniqueness is fostered through “the struggle between its duality, between subject and Other, West and Japan, science and occult, as well as machine and human organism” in two cyberpunk works, Kanbayashi Chôhei’s Sentô yôsei Yukikaze (Battle Fairy Yukikaze, 1984) and Noa Azusa’s Baberu no kaori (The Flower of Babel, 1991). Shigeru Suzuki, “Posthuman Visions in Postwar U.S. and Japanese Speculative Fiction: Re(con)figuring Western (Post)humanism” (PhD diss., University of California, Santa Cruz. 2008), 196; Sato, ibid., 227.


robotics. Kotani is a pioneer in the studies of Japanese women SF in Japan and has written on the bodily transformation of characters such as half-animal/half-human and monstrous women. Kotani discusses three major characteristics of Japanese women’s SF development: women’s utopias, the transformation of women into monsters, and alteration of masculinity. Orbaugh’s studies on cyborg subjectivity in anime gives the complexity of the representation of gendered cyborgs. Sato explores the portrayals of androgynous bodies in shōjo manga of Hagio and Takemiya Keiko, and abject mother and shōjo identity in Ōhara’s novel. By focusing on the cyborg and other posthuman figures in SF by women, I will be able to interrogate—not just the specific features of SF, but the way these features are made to serve feminist interests and to critique, both overtly and covertly, contemporary social customs. I do not support an essentialist claim that only these women writers incorporate cyborg and posthuman figures to critique gender issues radically and do not wish to reinforce the dichotomy between men and women. However, as mentioned above, since the social dichotomy between men and women is asymmetrical, bringing attention to these women’s works attempts to balance out the representation of gender in Japanese SF. In particular, women use SF in a particular way in order to create alternative sex/gender and sexualities.

Overview of Chapters

As mentioned above, Hagio, Ōhara, and Ueda employ the queer effects through cyborg and posthuman subjects. In Chapter One and Two, I will examine the ways in which Hagio’s works create a queer effect—male-male homosexual romance (shōnen ai or yaoi in a larger sense of the phenomenon)—in girl’s comics with SF scenarios. In particular, the confluence of

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beautiful boys’ comics and SF was new for the readers at that time. In an attempt to deviate from Japanese female bodies and normative femininity, she created male homosocial worlds—such as that of the European adolescent vampire boys in *Pō no ichizoku* (*The Poe Clan, 1972-76*), the alien boys in “Jūchi-nin iru!” (*1975, There Were Eleven!, trans. 1996*), and the male-only-secluded Earth *Mājinaru* (*Marginal, 1985-87*). By doing so, Hagio’s works attempt to undo the sex/gender system in Japan. In this chapter I will also investigate how her use of transformative dual-sexed figures disrupt these male homosocial worlds and heteronormative worlds. Finally, I will explore the way in which *Marginal* produces a queer effect of reproduction and motherhood in the male-only world with advanced reproductive technologies, including genetic engineering. However, these technologies simultaneously become a means to control dual-sexed figures who have female parts, similar to the patriarchal control of reproductive activities in Japan.

In Chapter Three, Ōhara’s cyberpunk works also offer queer effects that deviate from normative femininity (cyber-mother), binaristic genders, and coherent subjectivities through cyborgs and posthumans. In particular, similar to Haraway’s concept, cyborgs in her works play with the hybridity between human and machine, between real and artificial, between the original and simulacra, and between the embodied and the disembodied, and therefore challenge what is a coherent subjectivity and gender identity. I will, thus, examine how these cyborg figures function to challenge conventional gender roles for women and notions of femininity as well as to create new forms of gender(s)—contingent and fluid gender(s) in “Mentaru ōmēru” (*1984, The Mental Female, trans. 2002*) and *Haiburiddo chairudo* (*Hybrid Child, 1990*). In addition, in her work

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104 There are three types of male-male homosexual romances in *shōjo* manga. In the early 1970s, *shōnen ai* (beautiful boy’s comics) emerged and primarily focused on Platonic love and male homosocial relationships between two boys. In the 1980s, *yaoi* emerged in the comic market, referring to *dojinshi* (fanzines or amateur writing) to parody the original anime films and manga and to create male homosexual love. Nakajima Azusa contributed to the expansion of *yaoi* as a larger phenomenon. In the 1990s, *bōizu rabu* (Boy’s Love, *Bīeru or BL*) emerged with a focus on male-male love and erotica. These three categories are no longer new at this point since they became more mainstream; hence, the readers may no longer have a queer effect.
“Shōjo” (1985, Girl, trans. 1991), I will explore the way in which the transsexual character, who modifies his/her body for the sake of performance, creates a queer effect through the performativity and the parodic effect of gender. Simultaneously, these three works, however, revolve around two kinds of feminized cyborg characters—shōjo (girl) and mother—to resist normative feminine roles in the patriarchal society in Japan through the contingencies and constructedness of gender.

In Chapter Four, Ueda’s work Zeusu no ori (2004, The Cage of Zeus, trans. 2011) generates queer moments when the characters and the readers are introduced to new hermaphroditic people called “the roundtrip gender” (shortened to the Rounds), created by scientific experiments. I will explore how the single-sexed people called Monaurals perceive the Rounds, especially when they fail to recognize the dual-sexed aspect present in the Rounds. The Monaurals’ failures reveal queer moments that deviate from the normative sexualities, sexual dimorphism, and binaristic genderism that the readers are also bounded by. In addition, I will investigate how the dual-sexed-normativity raises another issue of the marginalized Rounds within the normative Rounds to question the construction of normativity and non-normativity.

In Chapter Five, Ueda’s series of novels known as the Ocean Chronicles: Karyū no miya (The Palace of Flower Dragons, 2010) and Shinku no hibun (Deep Crimson Epitaphs, 2013) offers a queer angle in perceiving the human through various posthuman subjects: the marginalized genetically engineered sea people, fish-boat-like creatures, and the artificial intelligence (AI) called autosapients. In particular, with her use of the recent scientific discoveries (non-coding RNAs) and inventions (parasite human robots), interdependent relationships between humans and non-humans challenge preconceived notions of an individual subjectivity, which is embedded into male-centered and Western-centered notions of humanism.
and dualistic ways of thinking. I will explore how interdependent relationships between humans and non-humans disrupt a coherent subjectivity and create alternative forms of queer family to undo the human as well as gender.

A variety of queer effects are produced by these three women’s SF works to problematize normative sex/gender and sexualities that the authors and the readers are facing at that moment. My contention is that the SF works of Hagio, Ōhara, and Ueda *per se* are the act of theorizing multiple expressions of post/human feminism\(^{105}\) regardless of whether or not they recognize themselves as feminists. The use of queer effects in their works reflects on what these women were dealing with, desiring for an equal relationship between men and women, a non-binaristic gendered and non-heteronormative system, valorization of femininity, and a non-coherent subject that is assumed in a male-oriented and Western humanism. Thanks to the efforts of Kotani Mari and to the dynamic creativity of the writers presented in this dissertation, we can imagine a world today—and not one in a far-off galaxy—where women can claim their own name, and can live beyond the confines of gendered assumptions.

\(^{105}\) Post/Human is inspired by “Introduction” by Noreen Giffney and Myra J. Hird in *Queering the Non/Human*, (Ashgate, 2008), 1-16. The slash in between the words “raises the issue of ‘limits, margins, borders, and, and boundaries’ (Fuss 1991), but also that of instability, fluidity, reliance and vulnerability.” For them, Non/Human positions between the human/humanism and the posthuman and posthumanism. I am not stressing the binarism between human/humanism, but rather Post/Human still raises attention to liminality and in-betweenness.
Figure 1

The photo of SFWJ was taken in 1968. The center is the translator Fukamachi Mariko, the only woman attendee in the photo.

Chapter One: Liminality of Queer Vampire in Hagio Moto’s Manga

Earlier in my career as a manga artist, I soon realized that I was no good at writing a love romance and that it was much easier drawing boy protagonists. I also realized that if I proceeded as a woman it was much too confining and I began to question how this confinement had been developed. Therefore, I became interested in the social environment of gender and the history of gender. I repeatedly experimented with how to unbind this confinement in my works.

Hagio Moto1

Hagio Moto (1949-) is one of the pioneering female manga artists working in the genre of shōjo manga or girls’ comics in Japan today. She is especially significant for having broken into the male-oriented genre of science fiction (SF) in Japan.2 Her activity in this genre allows her to use imaginary worlds and characters as a means to confront issues of sex, gender, and sexuality in the patriarchal and heteronormative society. Hagio’s SF works frequently “depart” from the human in order to “remake the human,”3 especially in terms of sex/gender and sexualities. Many of her SF works portray ambiguously sexed/gendered characters who are non-humans (aliens, vampires), cyborgs and posthumans: genetically modified humans (clones, unicorn-humans), humans who have extrasensory power (ESP), and so on. The characterization of ambiguously sexed/gendered identities through non-humans or cyborgs and posthumans challenges the dichotomy of sex (female/male), gender (feminine/masculine), and sexual orientation

1 This is Hagio Moto’s award-winning comment for Life Achievement Award in 2013 from the Japanese Association for Gender Fantasy & Science Fiction. Ibid. 『マンガを描き始めてからすぐ「私は恋愛ものがうまく描けない」のに気づき、「男の子を主人公にした方が、描いてて、すごく楽」と、気づき、そうして、描きながら、「女であるということで、自分で自分に、縛りを掛けてきた」のに気づき、「この縛りはどこかから生まれたのか」と、ジェンダーの社会環境とジェンダーの歴史に興味を持ち、「この縛りは解けるのか」と、作品の中で「解く実験」をくりかえしてきました。』

2 Hagio is given one of the most prestigious awards called Shijuhōshō (紫綬褒章 Medals of Honor with Purple Ribbon) in 2012 and is the first female manga artist in the girl’s comics to win the medal. [Medal with Purple Ribbon is bestowed for those who contribute to inventions, improvement, and creations in the academic and fine arts under the Emperor’s name.]

(heterosexuality/homosexuality), and the conventional patriarchal family system. In addition, the utilization of these characters in the imaginary world can appropriate the hegemonic concepts of motherhood and reproduction to question “biological” reproduction by women and present alternative forms of reproduction.

Hagio’s works roughly comprise four major sex/gender themes: male-male love, love between the ambiguously gendered; alternative reproduction; and conflicts within the family dynamic. First, since the 1970s her works have centered on male-male homosexual romantic narratives, bishōnen comics (beautiful boys), or shōnen ai (boys’ love) primarily set in Europe or the U.S., all of which have delved into the characters’ psychological struggles with their sexualities. Later, these narratives also came to be called Bōizu rabu (boys love, BL, bī-eru), or yaoi (amateur fanzines of male-male homoerotic parodies). For example, Hagio’s Pō no ichizoku [The Poe Clan, 1972-76] and Tōma no shinzō [The Heart of Thomas, 1974-1975] are representative of her attention to male homosocial relationships and beautiful boys’ love. These beautiful boys’ characters are often depicted as androgynous. Although not all of these works are based on SF themes, Hagio’s works, especially beautiful boys’ comics, have contributed to border crossing from the SF between shōjo manga genre and boy’s one. Since these comics are primarily written by women for an audience of women, male-male romantic narratives (in this case, referring to a larger sense of yaoi phenomenon) are often compared with slash fiction or K/S fiction in the U.S.

4The yaoi genre specifically refers to amateur fanzines (dōjinshi) that parody popular anime (ani-paro) by rewriting as a male-male homoerotic romance. See more explanation later in this chapter.
5Hagio and Takemiya Keiko were considered big two manga artists of shōnen ai at that time. Takemiya’s work Kaze to ki no uta [The Songs of the Wind and the Trees, 1976-84] is also considered an example of shōnen ai. Takemiya is currently professor of Comic and Cartoon Art at Kyoto Seika University and became chancellor of the university in April 2014, in a term that will last four years.
Second, the sex-specific theme prevalent in Hagio’s works presents the relationship between a man and an entity or a genetically-engineered person with an ambiguously sexed/gendered identity. For example, in “Jūichi-nin iru!” [There Were Eleven!, 1975] and Mājinaru [Marginal, 1985-87], the character appears male but is, in fact, a hermaphroditic figure. Third, we find representations of alternate (re)production by advanced technology, thus rejecting “biological” reproduction and motherhood along with a convention of male-male romance. Alternatively, in this category we also find depictions of ambiguously sexed/gendered identities through posthuman figures or supernatural forces. Fourth, many of her works also focus on family relationships: incest, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, and struggles between mother-daughter or father-son. Many works include elements of all four of these themes. In the following two chapters, I will focus primarily on the representation of ambiguous sex/gender modified or altered by high technology in conjunction with the use of SF rhetoric, coinciding with Category Two and Three above. I will begin with Category One.

Hagio’s works are discussed in Chapter One and Chapter Two. This chapter will explore the way in which Hagio’s works form a bridge between SF manga and shōjo manga, especially male-male homosexual romance (shōnen ai, or yaoi). I will also discuss various debates on this yaoi phenomenon and its comparison to K/S fiction in the United States in order to position Hagio’s works in the SF and shōjo manga genres. By examining vampiric figures in The Poe Clan, a beautiful boys’ comics, I will demonstrate how radical and pioneering Hagio’s beautiful boys’ love was in terms of gender. Chapter Two will briefly trace the concepts of hermaphroditism and/or intersexuality in Japan and will examine the ways in which ambiguously sexed/gendered characters created by advanced science and technology are represented in
Hagio’s works: “There Were Eleven!” and *Marginal.* In the second section of Chapter Two I will explore, primarily in Hagio’s *Marginal,* how the reproductive system is influenced by these cyborg/posthuman entities and how technological enhancements expose the patriarchal control of reproductive activities in Japan.

**Beautiful Boys’ Love Narratives and SF: The Convergence of Male-Male Homosexual Romance in Shōjo Manga and SF Manga**

Before the 1970s it was uncommon for women manga artists to work in the SF genre. According to manga critic Yonezawa Yoshihiro, “SF was a rarity among rarity in the shōjo manga genre.” However, the 1970s emergence of male-male homosexual romance in the shōjo manga brought a dynamic change in girl’s culture and the SF genre. The Year Twenty-Four group (Nijū-yo-nen gumi) or the Forty-Niner group including Hagio (1949-), Takemiya (1950-), Ōshima Yumiko (1947-), Yamagishi Ryōko (1947-), Kihara Toshie (1948-) and others began to use male-male homosexual romance—in which two beautiful boy protagonists are sexually or emotionally involved— in the shōjo manga in the 1970s. These comics are often referred to as *shōnen ai* (love between beautiful boys). As Hagio herself mentions in an interview with Matt Thorn, “I found that the boy characters could say what I want to say easily.” The beautiful boys’ love comics created a world distanced from patriarchal power structures and the dichotomy of sex/gender. Prominent feminist scholar Ueno Chizuko postulates that ambiguously gendered beautiful boys’ love comics were necessary to create “the third sex/gender” or “the third world

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6 Hagio’s works also became theatrical performance. *Studio Life,* an all-male theater troupe, performed shows on Hagio’s *The Heart of Thomas* (2002), *Marginal* (2008), and *There Were Eleven!* (2013).
7 Yonezawa is also known as a co-founder of *Comike* or *Comiketto* (Comic Market), which is the largest self-published amateur fanzine or *dōjinshi* fair in the world and held twice a year in Tokyo.
that is not contaminated by a binaristic gender world.” SF was also a useful medium for these women artists to experience and express the “third world” that leads to the potential for a genderless or gender neutral world.

SF manga covered a substantial portion of *shōnen* manga (boys’ comics). This genre gained popularity following the immediate post-war era. According to Yonezawa who traced the intricate histories of both SF manga and *shōjo* manga from the immediate postwar era to the 1980s, a number of low-priced *akahon* manga (juvenile boys’ comics) were circulated and were sold in street shops. SF was a useful way to avoid Japan’s brutal militaristic past allowing focus instead on a futuristic world. Because SF promoted the idea of “world peace and democracy” through its adventure stories, it escaped the censorship and then dispensed by the Allied Occupation. Samurai sword-fight films, on the other hand, were banned by General Headquarters (GHQ), along with judo and kendo. Pioneer manga artist Tezuka Osamu (1928-1989) was particularly successful during this era, initiating the story manga with SF themes and expanding the realm of manga. In the mid-1950s, *akahon* manga were taken over by *kashihon* manga (rental libraries for manga). A variety of new themes and methods grew prevalent: parallel universe scenarios, erotic-grotesque-nonsense rhetoric (*ero guro nansensu*), horror, stories

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12 Ibid., 141-2.
14 Ibid., 38-9; 54-55.
16 The erotic-grotesque-nonsense phenomenon was expressed in the popular culture from the 1920s into the1940s. It is often described as “decadent—a culture ostensibly eager to celebrate the degradation wrought by sensual pleasures while ignoring the pleas of party politics and the unharnessed militancy in the streets” (xv).” However, Miriam Silverberg reinterprets the expression of *ero guro nansensu* as a montage—political expression—that in fact defies the militarism and the state ideology. Miriam Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense: The Mass Culture of Japanese Modern Times* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California, 2006), xv-xvi, 28-35.
without heroes, stories with new types of heroes (robots, mecha-suits, cyborgs, extrasensory power), group action, etc. More SF manga by Tezuka, Ishinomori Shōtarō (1938-98), Fujiko Fujio (who were two artists who worked collectively under a single pseudonym, 1933-96; 1934-), and others were soon regular staples in the boys’ magazines; the weekly or monthly publication of boys’ comic magazines were launched with a high-economic growth. During the 1960s, more SF manga was televised as animation series, while live-action films or TV drama with the use of special effects (tokusatsu) became popular. Although SF reached the height of its popularity in Japan and became prevalent in the general public during the 1970s, SF manga magazines needed to shift gears to target a readership of older teenage boys, as the appearance of blockbuster SF commercial films in the United States, such as 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968), Star Wars (1977), Close Encounters of the Third Kind (1977), expanded the audience for SF. Ultimately, SF manga in Japan had been primarily targeted for male audience over the years.

During the craze of SF in the 1970s, the appearance of Hagio’s work in shōjo manga brought a dramatic change in the use of SF rhetoric and beautiful boys’ love comics. Hagio did not have an easy opportunity to write SF in the shōjo manga industry as a professional. Since shōjo manga industry was constructed by the ideas of “what girls like” such as “friendship (yūjō), love, and romance (ren’ai),” many shōjo manga artists followed this convention. Nevertheless,
many manga critics and Tezuka himself argue that Tezuka’s *Ribon no kishi* (Princess Knight 1953-56; 1963-66) was arguably the first shōjo manga that created an androgynous protagonist Sapphire, who is a girl born with a boy’s heart and cross-dresses as a prince. In particular, Fujimoto Yukari suggests that Tezuka arguably initiated the tradition of the androgynous protagonist who transgresses gender identity in the girls’ comics with the influence of the Takarazuka Revue (all-female theater troupe). Ikeda Riyoko (1947-)’s *Berusaiyu no bara* [*The Rose of Versailles*, 1972-73] also depicts the androgynous protagonist Oscar, a girl raised as a boy, who becomes the leader of the Palace Guards in the French Revolution. Consequently, *The Rose of Versailles* has been adopted and performed by the Takarazuka Revue a number of times over the last four decades. However, with the recent popularity of scholarship on *yaoi* and Boys’ Love, many scholars and critics also argue that beautiful boys’ love comics (*shōnen ai*) by the Forty-Niner artists, the *yaoi* phenomenon, and BL (*bī-eru*) tradition deserve more critical attention in terms of transgressive and subversive gender identities and readership in shōjo manga.

There are various debates on male-male romance in girls’ comics by artists, critics, scholars, and fans in Japan and outside of Japan. *Yaoi* scholar Akiko Mizoguchi describes three current co-existing subgenres of BL, and her explanation will help us catch a glimpse of the complexity of BL convention in a tangible way.

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21 Yonezawa, Fujimoto Yukari, and many others agree with this argument.
(1) Male homoerotic/homosexual comics within the “girls’ comics” genre, direct successors to the “beautiful boy” comics of the 1970s.

(2) The amateur yaoi fanzine world, which may currently be smaller in its sales than at its peak in the late 1980s, but is still significantly large.

(3) The mainstream “boys’ love” magazines (comic and literary) and paperback publications that emerged in 1988 and proliferated in the 1990s.²⁴

As mentioned above, beautiful boys’ love comics (shōnen ai) in the 1970s primarily drawn by the Forty-Niner Group are considered the precursor to the recent yaoi and BL tradition. The designation of yaoi originally referred to self-published amateur fanzines (dōjinshi) that parody popular manga and anime shows (often referred to as ani-paro) such as Captain Tsubasa (1981-88) and Saint Seiya: The Knights of the Zodiac (1986-90) as male-male homoerotic fiction/manga with sexually explicit depictions. These yaoi fanzines are usually written by women writers/artists for an audience of women. The term yaoi is commonly understood as an acronym for yama-nashi, ochi-nashi, imi-nashi (no climax, no ending, no meaning) because these fanzines are considered collections of random scenes and lacking any plot or structure.²⁵

The yaoi fanzines became popular during the 1980s after the yaoi magazine Comic Jun (later changed to June) was launched in 1978, while the prosperity of the biannual Comic Market (since 1975) contributed to production, circulation, and preservation of the yaoi genre. Since the 1990s, the genre has more commonly been referred to as Boy’s Love (BL, bōizu rabu, or bī-eru) after the success of commercialized BL (June, in its peak, was selling 150,000 copies a month).²⁶

The yaoi/BL genre has developed the girls’ communities through reading and sharing certain

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²⁴ Akiko Mizoguchi, “Reading and Living Yaoi: Male-Male Fantasy Narratives as Women’s Subculture in Japan” (PhD diss., University of Rochester, 2008), 74.


The devoted readers and active participants of the BL communities are currently called *fujoshi* (rotten girls), which is meant as self-mockery and playful rhetoric.²⁷

Hagio’s and Takemiya’s beautiful boys’ love comics had a significant impact on many writers/artists to create a space for women creators and fans, to extend their communities, and to create a discursive space, and to open up to the SF genre. For example, Kurimoto Kaoru/Nakajima Azusa (1953-2009)²⁸ played a crucial role for the development of the *yaoi* phenomenon after she was fascinated by beautiful boys’ comics. First, she held a contest for the *yaoi* fiction and taught the “Novel School” for amateur writers in the publication of the *yaoi* magazine *June*, while Takemiya became an editor for the “Manga School” to assist in amateur manga artists. Kurimoto/Nakajima herself wrote the beautiful boys’ novel called *Midnight Angel* (Mayonaka no tenshi, 1979). Moreover, her discussion of *yaoi* extended to the concept of the aesthetics of male-male romance as a phenomenon, encompassing beautiful boy’s love (*shōnen ai*), *yaoi* (fanzines), and BL.²⁹ Nakajima wrote a number of essays on boys’ love narratives such as *Bishōnen gaku nyūmon* [Introduction to Beautiful Boys’ Studies, 1984], *Komyunikēshon fuzen shōkōgun* [Communicative Deficiency Syndrome, 1991], and *Tanatosu no kodomo tachi: kajō tekiō no seitai gaku* [Children of Thanatos: Ecology of Excessive Adaptation, 1998]. She also suggested boy’s love began with Mori Mari (1903-87)’s *tanbi shōsetsu* (aesthetics novel) of male homosexual love in the 1960s.³⁰ Kurimoto/Nakajima, in short, claims that *yaoi* was necessary for

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²⁹ Mizoguchi, “Reading and Living *Yaoi*,” 55-56.
girls who lost their own place to create a new place for them in Japanese society. Furthermore, following the *yaoi* tradition, SF writer Ōhara Mariko, the subject of Chapter Three, wrote a series of boys’ love narratives (Ill and Clumsy series) in the 1980s and 1990s. Thus, Hagio and Takemiya’s beautiful boys’ comics contributed to the *yaoi* phenomenon with Nakajima/Kurimoto’s active participation and creation.

In addition, Hagio’s beautiful boys’ comics encouraged some male readers, especially SF authors to read *shōjo* manga. For example, SF author Noa Azusa (1954-) is a well-known fan and an avid reader of Hagio’s beautiful boys’ comics and wrote critiques of her works. He also theorizes the *yaoi* phenomenon of mystery and detective fiction (*misu-paro*) with the concept of simulacra and employs *yaoi* rhetoric or aestheticism (*tanbi*) in his own works such as *Kyō tenshi [Seraphim Hero*, 1986]. Multiple-award-winning and prolific SF and fantasy writer Yumemakura Baku (1951-), who has written a series of the novel *Onmyōji [A Master of Magic and Divination*, 1988-], was also a devoted reader of Hagio’s works, especially *Heart of Thomas* and *The Poe Clan*. Yumemakura states that he and other male SF fans started to read Hagio’s manga and other *shōjo* manga after learning of these works from another male SF fan. In other words, Hagio’s works brought more male fans into the *shōjo* manga through the SF community. In particular, he mentions that his novel *Onmyōji* is also influenced by another manga artist Yamagishi Ryōko (1947-)’s *Hi izuru tokoro no Tenshi* [*Emperor of the Land of the Rising Sun*,

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31 Ibid., *Tanatosu*, 244.  
1980-84], which utilizes a male-male romance and psychic powers.\textsuperscript{34} *Onmyōji* also echoes beautiful boys’ rhetoric by hinting at a romance between the master of divination Abe no Seimei and his friend Minamoto no Hiromasa. As Laura Miller points out, Yumemakura reconstructs the images of Seimei and Hiromasa as a *bishōnen*, a beautiful young man, for the girl’s market.\textsuperscript{35} With his collaboration, Okano Reiko (1960-’)s manga version of *Onmyōji* (1993-2005) and films gained more *yaoi* fans and brought a boom in the late 1990s and the early 2000s.\textsuperscript{36} (See details on the phenomenon in Miller’s article.)

Male-male homoerotic narratives are not limited to Japan but have also grown popular in the U.S. and other countries. SF feminist critic Kotani Mari argues for the synchronicity between the *yaoi* phenomenon in Japan in the 1970s and K/S or slash fiction in the U.S. in 1976-77.\textsuperscript{37} K/S or slash fiction refers to fan fiction of male-male homoerotic narratives between the two main characters in The Original Series (TOS) of *Star Trek* (1966-69), namely, James T. Kirk and Spock. Henry Jenkins III argues that the audience actively participates in and consumes the media and changes the primary text into their own to fit their desires and needs. He calls this “textual poaching,” borrowing from Michel de Certeau’s concept of “poaching.”\textsuperscript{38} Women readers/fans created homoerotic narratives between Kirk and Spock to rewrite the male-privileged society. Slash fiction has also been expanded to other SF and fantasy narratives such as *Starsky and Hutch, Blake’s 7, X-Files,* and *Harry Potter*. Kotani claims both *yaoi* text in Japan

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid.
and slash fiction in the U.S. grew out of the technological development, as word processors and copiers enabled ordinary fans to create and mass-produce the text, thus, women readers/fans/writers were able to produce male-male homoerotic narrative by themselves. Both yaoi and K/S fiction seemingly demonstrate the absence of men in male-male romance; however, a majority of creators are women. Therefore, by using the new technological means available to them, these women create a feminine literary/visual textual space within the male-oriented genre of SF. Kotani calls this phenomenon “techno-gynesis.” The development of male-male romantic narratives and SF are closely intertwined for women authors/readers/fans to reproduce their own texts.

There are a number of debates and studies on BL and the yaoi phenomenon in Japan and outside of Japan. The common studies on yaoi/BL are grounded by feminist approaches focusing on the yaoi narrative as a critique of a sexist and patriarchal society of Japan. These studies also stress women reader’s projections of their own femininity and female sexuality onto male characters to challenge sexism. For example, Midori Matsui argues the boys’ characters in the boys’ love are the girl readers’ replacement. She describes, “It was apparent that the boys were the displaced girls’ selves; despite the effeminate looks that belied their identity, however, the fictitious boys were endowed with reason, eloquence, and aggressive desire for the other, compensating for the absence of logos and sexuality in the conventional portraits of girls. Another scholar Kimura Midori suggests that the androgynous bodies of these boys’ characters

39 Kotani mentions that Constance Penley also suggests K/S fiction authors (teachers, nurses, office clerks) were able to use copiers in convenience stores, and this factor contributed to expand fan fiction. Kotani, Joseiā muishiki, 253.
40 Ibid., 231-56.
41 There are many other feminist scholars argument on yaoi such as Tomoko Aoyama, 1988; Sandra Buckley, 1993. Midori Matsui, “Little Girls were Little Boys: Displaced Femininity in the Representation of Homosexuality in Japanese Girl’s Comics” in Feminism and the Politics of Difference, eds. Sneja Gunew and Anne Yeatman (Boulder CO: Westview, 1993), 178.
symbolize “the girls’ longing for the psychologically complex-subjectivities that exceed conventional gender roles. […] These boys’ physical bodies must retain an androgynous beauty in order to internalize a vanishing girlhood.”42 As mentioned earlier, Ueno and Fujimoto also claim that these women artists attempt to create a “genderless” world or the “third” gender world where artists/ readers can distance themselves from the unequal power relationship between men and women to seek an egalitarian relationship.43 Mark McLelland similarly posits that the absence of women and the all-male world do not have to deal with pregnancy and childbirth and thus create a non-reproductive world with no restraints of female sexuality.44

However, the popularity of yaoi instigated yaoi ronsō (yaoi disputes) in the early 1990s. Gay activist Satō Masaki severely attacked the yaoi readers in a feminist journal Choisir (minikomi, a small and non-commercial magazine), as he claimed that the yaoi comics did not portray the realities of gay culture and life styles and as a result damaged gay culture. Some yaoi readers responded to his attack to explain how the form expressed the internalization of their own misogyny or their fascination and affiliation with gay men from their position as okoge (fag-hag). (See more details in Vincent and Lunsing).45 Hagio herself mentions in the 1981 interview

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that a female-female romance in girl’s school is too realistic to draw and can be too racy or offensive (iyarashii). McLelland remarks that Hagio tries to “avoid [female-female] homophobic reactions from her female readers who might have found the idea of girls kissing disgusting but would have found boys kissing somehow safer (just as some heterosexual men appreciate lesbian eroticism).” It might also be lack of lesbian representations rather than gay representations in media. Nonetheless, this yaoi ronsō created a discursive space between gay men and female yaoi readers. In the end, Satō felt it would be useful to promote greater understanding of feminism and gay issues and so he initiated his own small journal. Despite the disputes, some gay men enjoy reading yaoi, and some BL stories exhibit changes in their depictions of male-male romance.

Recent studies emphasize a discursive, multiple, and fluid readings among women. James Welker suggests that BL/yaoi offers queer reading, especially reading the beautiful boy as lesbian by analyzing the readers’ comments. Kazumi Nagaike suggests “metafictional narrativity” in the women readers’ fantasies of male homosexual romance, due to a structure that highlights “women’s cognitive ambivalence regarding such psychological processes as

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46 Iyarashii has two basic meaning either disagreeable or lecherous (obscene). Hagio’s comment can read it in either way. Hagio’s interview with Yoshimoto Takaaki, “Jiko hyōgen to shite no shōjo manga” [Shōjo Manga as a Tool For Self-Expression], Yuriika [Eureka] 13, no. 9 (July 1981): 90.
48 Vincent, Ibid., 78.
50 Mizoguchi, “Reading and Living Yaoi,” 41.
identification and dissociation.” In particular, she posits that women readers/fans’ imaginative identification on male homosexual romantic manga is “multiple, shifting and divergent” and thus trouble the binarism between heterosexuality and homosexuality and can read as bisexual/androgynous identities. Mizoguchi argues that the yaoi has become a discursive space for “straight, lesbian, and other women’s desires and political stakes clash.” For example, Mizoguchi claims that as a fan and researcher she became a lesbian via reading male-male romance and argues a discursive space within the BL readership. Mizoguchi also adds virtuality of sex practices among some heterosexual women readers; some women readers imagine having sex with her male partners thinking themselves as a man, simulating an experience of BL in their daily lives. The reading of the genders in the texts can be fluid depending on the reader’s perceptions of sex/genders and sexualities. When we keep in mind the discursive and complicated reading of boys’ love genre, Hagio’s beautiful boys’ comics also offer multiple readings such as the pursuit of egalitarian relationships, non-reproductive bodies, and androgynous reading. I will now turn to her pioneer work The Poe Clan that demonstrates the possibility of multifold perspectives in reading age, ethnicity, and gender.

52 Nagaike, Fantasies of Cross-dressing: Japanese Women Write Male-Male Erotica (Leiden, The Netherlands; Boston, MA: Brill, 2012), 31. Nagaike explains metafictional narrativity as “a two-leveled diegesis, in which the subject is ideologically doubled in terms of its diegetic transformation. Even when the subject of the present narrative domain is not reflected by the active agents of the metafictional narrative, the extradiegetic self participates decisively in the intradiegetic narrative as the one who creates the metafictional domain and who is the origin of its narrative procedures” (31). See details in her section of “Female Psychological Orientations and Metafiction,” 30-34. 53 Ibid., 25-30, Chapter Seven: 103-134. Nagaike uses two concepts for female fantasies of yaoi manga by Freud’s concept of “A Child is Being Beaten” and Hélène Cixous’s notion of bisexuality. 54 Mizoguchi, “Reading and Living Yaoi,” vii. 55 Ibid., 44, 53. 56 Ibid., 43-44. See details in the sections “Virtual Sex” and “Her Penis” of Chapter Six, 336-384.
The Poe Clan

The Shōgakkan award-winning manga *The Poe Clan*[^57] was originally serialized in the monthly girls’ comic magazine *Betsukomi* (officially known as *Bessatu shōjo comikkusu, Girl’s Comics Supplementary Volume*) from 1972 to 1976. The series was printed in nine volumes in *Flower Comics*; 30,000 copies of the first volume were sold out in the first three days in 1974. This work is an omnibus of stories and covers a vast time from around 1740 to 1976; the story does not progress chronologically, but goes back and forth across the centuries. Primarily set in England and Germany, the stories center on two adolescent boy vampires (who are referred to as “vampanella”) Edgar and Allan, as well as stories of the Poe Clan: Edgar, his sister Marybelle,[^58] and his foster family. (See the Appendix for the detailed plot.)

**Vampires as Liminal Subjects in Age, Gender, and Race**

In *The Poe Clan*, Hagio depicts a male-male homosocial bond and homosexual relationship with the use of vampires in order to create alternative entities departing from humans and alternative genders and sexualities other than heteronormative romance for women readers. According to SF feminist scholars Joan Gordon and Veronica Hollinger, vampire figures in narratives can be treated as “a metaphor for various aspects of contemporary life.”[^59] Similar to Haraway’s cyborg as a metaphor, vampire figures transgress the boundaries between humans and monsters. For example, they posit that vampires indicate “desires and anxieties of particular cultural and political moments.”[^60] As Kotani points out, vampire figures in Japan, nevertheless, contain slightly different metaphors since vampire figures were adapted to a Japanese context.

[^57]: Main boy characters “Edgar” and “Allan” and the “Poe” Clan of the vampires are a pun of Edgar Allan Poe.
[^58]: Marybelle is メリーベル in Japanese. There are a number of possible translations such as Merrybell, Marybell, or Merrybelle. However, I choose to use Marybelle suggesting a beautiful/good virgin or maiden who ironically become a vampire.
[^60]: Ibid., 5.
roughly in 1930. She postulates that vampire figures in Japan connotes the “doubled” Other: “the Western Other” and “the Japanese Other” as well as the Others in terms of gender and class. Vampire figures in Japanese texts demonstrate desires for emulating Western culture or anxieties about losing national identity in the postwar Japan. Although I concur with the use of vampires by women writers/artists like Hagio, which tend to focus on gender issues rather than national and racial identities, vampires in The Poe Clan implicitly and explicitly portray multilayers of gender, age, and racial identities through its liminal characteristics.

The physical bodies of vampire characters in Hagio’s work are visually fixed due to their immortality. In other words, their exterior bodies (sex, race, and age) do not change, but their identities can be multiple due to their complex interiorities and hidden monstrosity as a vampire. As mentioned above, although Edgar and Allan look like ordinary human boys, they are imprisoned in the bodies of vampires who appear to be fourteen-year-old boys. It is possible to read their monstrosity as a metaphor for the reader’s suppressed desires and anxieties. Kotani also notices that Hagio’s vampire figures internalize the counterparts of their physical characteristics: “not only the binary opposition between physical childhood and internal adulthood, but also that between physical manhood and internal womanhood.” In particular, the aspects of “internal womanhood” and “the Japanese Other” are not immediately visible but refer to the primary readers as Japanese women for Hagio’s works. Borrowing Nagaike’s

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62 Ibid., 189.
63 Ibid., 191.
64 Ibid., 190-92. These three elements of vampire figures: gender, age, and racial identities in The Poe Clan are discussed in Kotani’s article. As mentioned above, she argues that the vampire figures in this work depict “the Western Other and Japanese Other,” “physical childhood and internal adulthood,” as well as “physical manhood and internal womanhood.”
65 Ibid., 191-192.
metafictionality mentioned earlier and Kotani’s observation, women readers’ identification processes are hidden behind at least three elements of vampires crossing boundaries between physical youth and internal maturity, between physical boyhood and internal girlhood, and between physical West and internal Japan. These three liminal elements are demonstrated by the characters’ emotions not only through the text (dialogues and interior monologue) but also through visual images of the characters’ facial expression, especially eyes, and emotive backgrounds in shōjo manga style.

First, male characters Edgar and Allan’s actual ages are much older than their physical appearance. In particular, Edgar’s psychological maturity among boys stands out since he has lived for more than two hundred years. Edgar harbors sorrow, loneliness, and pain because he must accept himself as an outcast being a vampire. He also regrets that he was unable to make his beloved sister Marybelle happy since he feels that he deprived her of humanity. Toward the end, when Allan wants a young girl Edith to join their clan, Edgar tells him, “The more you like one, or the more you love one, the more you regret what you did. You can never make your loved one happy.” His sorrow can also be for Allan since Edgar had him converted into a vampire. Edgar’s agony as a vampire and sensibility are not that of a fourteen-year-old boy, but rather he carries his long-lived burden despite his adolescent body. Edgar’s subjectivity constantly oscillates between his visual adolescent image and his psychological maturity and struggle.

In addition, the setting of male-male romance by vampire figures in Europe is Hagio’s strategy to create a possible alternative world from Japan. As mentioned earlier, Ueno suggests that Hagio’s male-male romance set in Europe is distanced from Japanese patriarchal society. In

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66 *Poe no ichizoku*, vol. 3, 257.
this case, the West (especially, aristocratic class) is situated as a site of liberation from being a
Japanese woman since beautiful boys’ love comics in shōjo manga were primarily for the
consumption of girls and women readers. The female readers are able to superimpose themselves
onto these eternal boy vampire characters in order to dissociate from their femininity, but
simultaneously to identify with internal monstrosity and maturity and to access white male
privilege. In particular, aristocratic Western boy figures from the Georgian era and the Victorian
era to the postwar era enable girl readers to experience privilege, power, and mobility. In
exchange for eternal youth, beauty, and power, the readers can also experience sadness, burden,
and loneliness as a vampire. Nevertheless, these boys’ characters’ gender identities are more
complex.

The Potential to Neutral Gender: Scramble of Gendered Markers

The most prominent gender characterization of Edgar and Allan is their exterior
androgynous bodies and their feminized interiorities (women reader’s psychological processes).
Both of them have fourteen-year-old boys’ bodies that have not fully developed yet (see Figure
1.1). Hagio wants the boy character to be seen as “non-sexual” (see interviews with Thorn and
others), while Ueno and Fujimoto argue that women artists employ these beautiful boys’
characters as “genderless” or “neuter.” Thus, the image of Edgar and Allan are intended to be
non-sexual or neuter (chūsei); they are neither man nor woman or neither male nor female.
Anthropologist Jennifer Robertson states that “androgyny” in Japan often refers to two terms:

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67 Hagio, “The Moto Hagio Interview,” conducted by Matt Thorn, xxvi. Hagio mentioned this in different interviews
and talks. During the talk with Tezuka in 1977, Hagio mentions that she considers Edgar and Allan “neuter” or
“non-sexual” since they are children. This talk was originally published in Bessatu shinpyō [Supplementary Volume
“ryōsei (両性, both sexes/genders)” and “chūsei (中性, neutral, in-between).” Here I will focus on androgyny as chūsei in terms of gender (I will discuss ryōsei later). Robertson continues that chūsei stresses “the erasure or nullification of differences,” and the chūsei’s body is a person “whose surface appearance (costume, hairstyle, intonations, speech patterns, gestures, movements, deportment, and so on) confounds the conventional alignment of sex with gender and scrambles received gender markers.”

The “surface” appearance of both Edgar and Allan is androgynous since their gendered signs between masculine/feminine are mingled in order to nullify binaristic gender differences. They are generally male-embodied androgynous figures; however, their adolescent boys’ bodies are small and thin and have not fully developed as muscular. Their body type is ambiguous and can erase a clear dualistic gender difference between masculine and feminine. In addition, their school uniforms with round collars and ribbon tied around the neck or regular shirts with ribbon can be marked as feminine although the late Victorian hyper-feminine clothes of women and girls are distinguished from these boys’ characters. Both Allan and Edgar cross-dress as girls on certain occasions in the story. In the German boy’s boarding school, Allan plays the role of Celia/Aliena in William Shakespeare’s As You Like It; Edgar later dresses as a girl in order to trick two mafia men to misidentify him as Edith. Both of them are able to pass as girls. (See Figure 1.2.) Moreover, both Edgar’s wavy short hair and Allan’s blonde shoulder-length hair are indicative of their femininity, but Allan’s longer hair and his shorter height mark him as even more feminine than Edgar. However, their behaviors such as fistfights are portrayed as that of adolescent boys. Thus, Edgar’s and Allan’s gendered markers: their ambiguously gendered and

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69 Ibid., 50.
neutral bodies, feminine clothes and hairstyle, and masculine behaviors are intermingled. Hagio’s boys’ characters obscure masculinity “by creating the illusion of an asexual—in effect, a disembodied-identity.”

In addition, the drawing of the boy characters’ eyes in Hagio’s works features as androgynous since their eyes are simplified compared to girls’ characters’ eyes in earlier shōjo manga yet keep some feminine features. In the shōjo manga convention, there is a stark contrast between a girl character and a boy character. A girl character usually has big starry eyes, long eyelashes, and thin eyebrows, whereas a boy character has smaller eyes with less light reflection, shorter eyelashes, and thicker eyebrows. Shōjo manga critic Oshiyama Michiko argues that the boy characters in Hagio’s works do not have big starry eyes and long eyelashes in comparison to the girl characters in other earlier shōjo manga; however, her boy characters are not clearly distinguished from the girl characters in her manga. In particular, the black parts of Edgar’s eyes are bigger and more highlighted; his eyelashes are longer than other male characters. By creating these androgynous features, Hagio scrambles the gender markers of boy-embodied androgynous figures to attempt to achieve neutrally gendered characters.

In contrast, these androgynous boy characters’ interiorities are frequently superimposed onto the women reader’s psychological process and identification. Although this can be applied to all readers, as mentioned earlier, Kimura posits that adolescent boy characters are employed to fulfill “the girls’ longing for the psychologically complex-subjectivities that exceed conventional gender roles.” In particular, the androgynous Edgar’s monologues demonstrate the complexity of his inner feelings toward Marybelle and Allan, as I will discuss below. Mizuki Takahashi

70 Ibid., 49. Robertson argues this logic of androgyny in the context of all-female Takarazuka Revue; however, Hagio’s beautiful boys’ love comics can conversely apply to male-embodied androgyny.

71 Oshiyama, Shōjo manga jendā hyōshō ron, 146-7.
suggests that big starry eyes in shōjo manga convention are “the windows of the soul,” in which the readers can pick up “unexpressed feelings in dialogue.”\(^{72}\) Whereas not as big and starry as girl characters’ in other girls’ comic, the intensity of Edgar’s eyes is emphasized, as is the depth of his inner feelings (sadness, remorse, and love) and his sensitivity to others.\(^{73}\) The boy characters’ sensitivity and psychological depth possibly signifies emotional sensitivity unexpressed by the women readers in the shōjo manga. Thus, the ambiguously gendered boys’ external bodies, including eyes, enable the girl readers to identify with these characters’ interiorities.

**Queer Romance and Male-Male Homosocial Love**

Along with the scrambled gendered markers, the triangle relationship between Edgar, Marybelle, and Allan— male/female/male— is crucial in order to challenge the heteronormative romance in *The Poe Clan*. In particular, Edgar’s internalization of Marybelle later complicates either heteronormative or male-male romance. In *Two-Timing Modernity*, J. Keith Vincent argues that René Girard’s concept of “triangular desire” is similarly employed as a common narrative strategy in Japanese canonical literature such as Natsume Sōseki’s *Kokoro* (1914), Mori Ōgai’s *Gan* [The Wild Goose, 1911-1913], and many other naturalist works.\(^{74}\) A woman character connects two male characters’ bonds over the relationship with the woman. In other words, a woman is a conduit to the serious business of male homosociality in a heteronormative

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73 In contrast, either his sparkling eyes or his blank eyes exhibit his monstrosity as a vampire, craving for others’ blood/energy.

74 Vincent mentions Gerard’s model of “triangle desire” as externally mediation, which the mediator is “openly avowed and in some way distanced from the subject,” from modern Japanese canonical literature as triangle of internal mediation, which the mediator is involved in a homosocial relationship. In *Kokoro*, K is, in fact, a mediator between the homosocial relationship between K and Sensei is described by Sensei’s disciple *watashi* (I) as a homodiegetic narrator who is reading Sensei’s letter (Homodiegetic narrator is the same fictional world). *Watashi* desires to participate in the mediation of the homosocial narrative. Vincent, *Two-Timing Modernity: Homosocial Narrative in Modern Japanese Fiction* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Asia Center, 2012), 15-17.
society. In *Kokoro*, the male friend K is, in fact, a mediator between Sensei and Ojōsan (a young woman character), who is the object of a heterosexual romantic love and simultaneously who functions as a conduit between the two men: K and Sensei. Nonetheless, Vincent observes that the “foreclosed” male homosocial desire between K and Sensei is only retrospectively recognized by Sensei after K’s suicide. K haunts Sensei, whereas Sensei’s relationship to his wife Ojōsan is withdrawn. In contrast, triangle desire in *The Poe Clan* is slightly different. Marybelle similarly functions to connect the two boys, but she eventually dies and is unable to fulfill the ideal of heterosexual love. The male-male homosocial romance is not foreclosed yet is ultimately achieved.

The triangular desire between Edgar, Marybelle, and Alan is sexually ambiguous and oscillates between siblings, friends, and lovers. Edgar and Marybelle are either siblings or lovers, whereas Edgar and Allan are either best friends or lovers. Edgar loves Marybelle, as loving her is his purpose for living as a vampire as well as his guilt for having her become a vampire. On the other hand, Allan first falls in love with Marybelle, who resembled his dead fiancée, and later develops his love for Edgar. In contrast, it is unclear whether Marybelle (whose body is imprisoned in a thirteen-year-old girl) loves Edgar as a brother or a lover; nevertheless, she chooses to live with Edgar as a vampire despite the fact that he killed the young boy who was infatuated with her. Marybelle also cares for Allan as her brother’s friend.

The relationship between Edgar and Marybelle is depicted as a suggestively incestuous desire through the images and Edgar’s interior monologues. Vampirism metaphorically

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75 Ibid., 130-34.
76 The concept of incest is seen as a form of coerced sexual abuse and violence between familial or relative members. However, the discourse of incest has socially and culturally been constructed as a problem (taboo and prohibition) in relation to power and knowledge based on asymmetrical relationships between age and gender. In particular, the
indicates incestuous desire. Margaret L. Carter mentions that the prototype of vampire studies on Bram Stoker’s Dracula (1897) focuses on “symbolic incest,” which sucking blood symbolically suggests sexual intercourse or a victim of incest. In this sense, Marybelle’s transformation to a vampire can be read as a metaphor for deprivation of both her sexual innocence and humanity. For example, the image of Edgar giving Marybelle blood by kissing her neck is depicted as literally blood-tied and sexual, as she is frail due to her lack of blood. (See Figure 1.3.) After her death, Edgar’s memory of Marybelle hints at this intimate moment: “We often exchanged with each other. We put our hands together and ran warm blood/life energy into each other through our fingertips. Old blood/life energy was cleansed and renewed. In old days, I lay down with Marybelle together and occasionally slept with her quietly for two weeks.” The depiction of their exchange of blood/life energy is erotic, but lying down quietly together stresses the nonsexual. Thus, Edgar’s incestuous desire is ambiguous, as it conflates familial love with sexual desire. Nonetheless, Edgar’s deep repentance toward Marybelle’s vampirism is derived from his guilt, as it might imply the sin of incestuous desire and forbidden love.

Edgar’s atonement for Marybelle’s vampiric transformation ends with her death. His monologues describe his loss of living purpose and existential question as a vampire.

Why do I live? … If I understood this, [it would be easier for me to live.] Why do I live like this for such a long time with no creation, no reproduction, and no properties to pass onto the next generation? At least I… at least I have… my wife,
my love, and my clan who share my fate. Farewell, farewell. Farewell my old
days… It’s the end. It’s all over! I am free. I am alone in the world. I don’t have
to live in order to protect Marybelle. I don’t have to live…  

In particular, his monologue corresponds to the image that Edgar’s translucent face and his right hand are drawn upside down and that his blank eyes are superimposed onto the cityscape in the right side of the panel. (See Figure. 1.4.) The image and his monologues demonstrate Edgar’s existential question of an immortal being and no meaning of his existence without his beloved Marybelle. Simultaneously, Edgar’s vampiric existential question raises an issue of a patriarchal and heteronormative familial system, which emphasizes procreation. Although vampires do not reproduce from mothers but rather (re)produce offspring by sucking blood, Edgar’s commitment to heterosexual love (“my wife” perhaps refers to Marybelle despite incestuous desire) and family (The Poe Clan) is lifted after other vampire die. Edgar is no longer confined by family obligation and will take Allan as a companion, as the upside down image of Edgar’s hand runs off the next panel (in a technique called “bleed”) of Allan to reach out (See Figure 1.4).

Edgar and Allan develop their homo-social and suggestive homoerotic relationship. Non-physical and Platonic aspect of love between two boys is also highlighted after the death of Marybelle. As Deborah Shamoon observes, Hagio’s The Heart of Thomas is about the story of “the triumph of spiritual love” between two boys in a Christian boys’ boarding school in Germany, as Juli accepts spiritual love and recuperates his spirituality at the end.  

Thomas commits suicide in order to salvage Juli’s suffering by spiritual love, as the story reveals later that Juli has a posttraumatic stress syndrome from rape by the upperclassman. Thomas’s pure

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79 Ibid., vol. 1, 110-3. 「なぜ生きているのかって・・・それがわかって！創るものもなく 生みだすものもなく うつるつぎの世代にたくす遺産もなく 長いときをなぜこうして生きているのか・・・すぐなくともぼくは ああ すくなくともぼくは・・・わが妻 わが愛 わが運命をわけし者ども さらばさらば ・・・さらば遠き日び・・・ 幕だ すべては終わった！ ぼくは自由 ぼくはこの世でただひとり もうメリーベルのために あの子をまもるために 生きる必要もない 生きる必要もない・・・」

80 Shamoon, Passionate Friendship, 110.
love for Juli and his sacrifice (his death) would give Juli salvation. As mentioned above, non-physical homosocial love between the boys in The Poe Clan is complicated due to their triangle relationship. At the beginning, Edgar is interested in Allan because he wants Allan to join vampires and to give his blood to Marybelle. Allan first dislikes him, but he gradually develops his feelings for Edgar. After Marybelle’s death, Edgar comes to pick Allan up to tag along, as Allan decides to leave home after accidentally pushing his uncle, who is interested in his beloved mother, from stairs.

Love between Allan and Edgar is mediated by Marybelle. Allan develops more affection for Allan and thus becomes jealous of dead Marybelle, as Edgar still loves her. In the German boys’ boarding school of 1959, Allan’s monologue demonstrates, “You’re thinking about Marybelle, aren’t you, Edgar? That’s your deceased sister who always occupies the half of your heart. She’s long gone.” In addition, Allan tries to get attention from Edgar by stealing the teacher’s pocketwatch with Marybelle’s picture inside, throwing it out into the marsh, and telling Edgar, “You deeply love Marybelle. Love her. Love her. Love her. I knew that from the beginning. […] You’re always thinking about something else. So I didn’t like to come to school from the beginning! Marybelle […] is not a big deal. I hate you. You have to only think of me! I hate you. You have to only think of me!” Edgar responds to Allan only in his mind, “How can I leave Marybelle alone? Now Marybelle and I have become one, and we both love you. Why isn’t this good enough for you? Why isn’t this your answer that we are here together? Why can’t you

81 Ibid., vol. 3, 20. 「メリーベルのことを考えているね エドガー 彼のいつもむこう半分の心をしめているもういない彼の妹 もううちにいないー。」
82 Ibid., vol. 2, 62. 「そうとも手続きはメリーベルを愛してる 愛してる 愛してる 愛してる それぐらいうちからちゃんと知ってると ほかのことばかり考えてる！学校に行くの最初っから気にくわなかったんだ！メリーベルだって… どうでもいいじゃないか ぼくのことだけ考えてくれなければイヤやだ！ ぼくのことだけ考えてくれなければイヤやだ・・・！」
accept that I am with you peacefully?"83 (See Figure 1.5.) For Allan, he wants Edgar’s sole attention, whereas for Edgar, Allan is present and Marybelle is absent. In other words, male-male romance in The Poe Clan is, in fact, male/female (Edgar’s internalization of Marybelle) and male romance. Carolyn Heilbrun’s definition of androgyny can explain an intricate dichotomy of sex/gender: “the realization of man in woman and woman in man—as an ideal, nonpolarizing way of being that is necessary for survival of human society.”84 Edgar, in this sense, offers an androgynous or queer romance.

However, platonic love between Edgar and Allan can be achieved through a suggestive ending: death in fire. Allan wants the young girl Edith to join the Poe clan and attempts to suck her blood/energy out since he realizes that he is unable to have Edgar’s sole attention. He forgets to turn off the stove and leaves her house, and it catches fire. Meanwhile, Allan discusses his wish with Edgar to let Edith join the vampire clan, but Edgar strongly objects. As mentioned earlier, Edgar loves Marybelle so deeply that he regrets that he was unable to make her happy, and therefore he cannot allow Allan to take Edith as a vampire. For Edgar, if Allan truly loves Edith, he will not sacrifice her life as a vampire. What Edgar says demonstrates his life-long psychological torment: “The more you like one, or the more you love one, the more you regret what you did. You can never make your loved one happy.”85 Allan realizes what Edgar said was about Marybelle and also that Allan was trying to create a substitute—Edith—of the loved one, as Edgar had made Allan into a substitute. (For Edgar, he might also regret making Allan a vampire as well.) Allan’s monologue describes: “For Edgar, I was a substitute of Marybelle. For

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83 Ibid., vol. 2, 63. 「どうしてメリーベルをほうっておける？もうひとつにけこんでいるんだよ ぼくとメリーベルは二人してきみを愛してるよ それでなぜいけない？なぜこうしてここにいるってことが答えにならない？なぜだまってきみのそばにいるだけでは。」
84 Robertson, Takarazuka, 49. Cited Robertson’s summary of Carolyn Heibrun.
85 Ibid., vol.3 257.
me, Edith is...” Allan understands that he was trying to use Edith as a loved one. Thereafter, Edgar and Allan return to Edith’s house and try to save Edith from the fire. Allan falls into the fire when a big clock falls and explodes, while Edgar is holding Edith in order to save her. The overlay of Edgar’s monologue in his mind and his flashback of people suggest their final peaceful end in the fire since they are unable to achieve redemption if living as vampires.

We’ll return. We’ll return to our far old days. We don’t have to wait for tomorrow. Allan! Allan! Is it Marybelle? Marybelle… Sheila… Happiness in my old days… We’ll go back. We’ll go back. We’ll jump back to the past. Oswald… Old Hannah… Mother… Everyone… everyone… ha ha… ha ha… everyone… everyone… Allan! ha ha…” (See Figure 1.6)

Burning in fire can be interpreted in multiple ways: first, punishment for an “evil” vampire to terminate their lives; second, consummation for spiritual love between Edgar and Allan; third, the possibility for purifying their sins (after death). However, Allan’s realization of Edgar’s feeling and his attempt to save Edith might salvage Allan, whereas Edgar’s rescue of Edith might also redeem himself from his guilt. Edgar’s flashback and his happiness in the old days can suggest that he is willing to die with Allan in the fire. Their spiritual connection can be achieved at the end.

As discussed above, Hagio’s The Poe Clan illustrates the multi-layered representations of characters in age, ethnicity, and gender. The exterior of the two boys’ characters’ bodies are fixed as adolescent European boys; however, gendered markers scramble their gendered bodies as androgynous, and their interiorities can also shift their genders and ages in the story. In

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86 Ibid., vol.3 258.
87 Ibid., vol. 3, 263. 「・・・帰ろう帰ろう遠い過去へ・・・もう明日へは行かない・・・アラン！アラン・・・メリーベル・・・？メリーベル・・・シーラ昔の幸せ帰ろう帰ろう時を飛んでオズワルド老ハンナ・・・お母さんみんなみんな・・・アハハ・・・アハハみんなみんなアラン・・・！・・・アハハ」
88 Nonetheless, some critics argue that Edith’s mysterious rescue from the fire leaves the readers the possibility that Edgar is still alive.
particular, their monstrosity, maturity, and femininity, and Japanese-ness are hidden inside. Vampire figures are useful to express the complicated inner selves. The adolescent European boys’ characters’ enable the Japanese girl readers to create a distance from the patriarchal society in Japan, but at the same time their male-embodied androgynous bodies can confound masculinity and recreate the illusion of non-sexual or neutral gender so that the girl readers are able to engage with the characters. In addition, as Kimura mentions that the girl’s longing for psychologically complex-subjectivities are demonstrated in Edgar’s character, his inner maturity and emotional sensitivity (sorrow as an immortal being, devoted love) can be seen as ideal for the readers. In particular, a triangle relationship among Edgar, Marybelle, and Allan complicates heteronormative romantic love and rather recreates queer spiritual romance (especially, Edgar’s internalization of Marybelle). As mentioned above, Heilbrun’s definition of androgyny can describe Edgar’s internalization of Marybelle—“the realization of man in woman and woman in man.” Nevertheless, at the end male-male spiritual love will be achieved through death in order to seek a spiritually consummate and egalitarian relationship between two people regardless of gender for women readers. In the following next chapter I will discuss transformative hermaphroditic characters in other Hagio’s works.

89 Roberson, Takarazuka, 49.
Figure 1.1 Two adolescent boys: Edgar (Left) and Allan (Right) in both images. *Pō no ichizoku* [The Poe Clan, 1972-76] (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1995), vol. 1, 22 (left), vol. 2, 102 (right).

Allan cross-dresses as a girl with long hair (in the middle). Edgar also cross-dresses as Edith. *Pō no ichizoku*, vol. 2, 119 (left), vol. 3, 241 (right).
Figure 1.3 Incestuous moments between Edgar and Marybelle in two panels. Edgar gives his blood to Marybelle by kissing her neck. Marybelle hugs Edgar. *Pō no ichizoku* vol. 1, 43.
Figure 1.4 In Edgar’s monologue, he feels that he has no meaning of his existence after Marybelle’s death. (Edgar’s upside down image on the right side of the panel.) *Pō no ichizoku* vol. 1, 113.
**Figure 1.5** Allan is jealous of dead Marybelle and wants to have Edgar’s sole attention on him. Edgar feels that he and Marybelle are merged together, and both love Allan. *Pō no ichizoku* vol. 2, 62-63.
Figure 1.6 Edgar’s daydream in fire at the end. *Pō no ichizoku* vol. 3, 263.
Chapter Two: Contesting Dual-Sexed (Re)production in Hagio Moto’s Manga

I. Queering Aliens and Post/Humans: Hidden Femininity and Dual-Sexuality

As discussed in Chapter One, The Poe Clan demonstrates androgynous vampiric figures, whose gender markers shift and whose interiorities reveal the complexity of gender(s) in order to create the illusion of non-sexual or neutral genders. Many of Hagio’s works also deal with these ambiguously sexed/gendered or androgynous figures, who are aliens or humans created/modified by genetic engineering. For example, Frol in “There Were Eleven!” and Kira in Marginal are seen as gender-neutral (chūsei) in a male-only world, yet these characters are, in fact, dual-sexed with hidden female elements. Their reproductive organs are undeveloped or hidden within their bodies and are not clearly drawn in the images, and thus their physically sexed markers are unclear. However, their gendered markers, including psyches, are simultaneously scrambled to confuse their sexes/genders. Depending on the characters’ perceptions or the readers’ perspectives, Frol and Kira look either male or female, or neither male nor female (chūsei), or both (ryōsei). It is my contention that Hagio’s dual-sexed characters become a contested site: creating an illusion of non-sexual genders or neuter (chūsei), or exposing the confinement to binaristic sex through transformative sex, or pursuing the possibility of ambiguous sex/gender identities. It is because these dual-sexed characters problematize hegemonic notions of sex/gender identities in heteronormative and familial relationships.

In this section, I will primarily explore the ways in which the sexes/genders of Frol, Kira, and other dual-sexed characters are represented in “There Were Eleven!” and Marginal to challenge naturalized binaristic sexes/genders through alien and genetically-engineered bodies. First, I will trace the historical use of the concepts of hermaphroditism—ryōsei(guyū), han’in’yō,


In Japan. I will also examine the ways in which these dual-sexed figures affect heteronormative or male-male relationships and why femininity within dual-sex is invisible in Hagio’s texts.

The Problematics of the Concepts of Hermaphroditism, Intersexuality, and (Androgyny).

The term hermaphrodite,¹ intersexual, and disorders of sexual development (DSD) are controversial and problematic, as intersex activists disagree about these terms. The term hermaphrodite is now considered derogatory and obsolete, while intersexual and DSD are also considered controversial both in Japan and outside of Japan due to the pathologized usage. Nonetheless, hermaphroditism historically refers to anatomical conditions of dual sex characteristics, whereas intersexuality refers to dual, multiple, and/or a wide range of various sex characteristics. Androgyny denotes both anatomical conditions and two or more gender signs. Since the distinction between sex and gender has been ambiguous in Japan, the differences between hermaphroditism, intersexuality, and androgyny are also ambiguous. However, for the sake of clarification, I will here distinguish hermaphroditism as a historically pathologized term as an amalgam of bodily markers from androgyny as jumbled gendered markers. Intersexuality is currently a preferred term for multiple sex or variety of sex characteristics. I will historically trace the terms in Japanese to understand the implications of hermaphroditism and intersexuality in Japan.

In Japan, the concepts of dual or multiple sexual characteristics have presumably existed since the Heian period (794-1185). For example, the term “hanwari” or “haniwari” (半月, 波邇和利) appeared in Wamyōshō (和名抄) around 934 and describes either a person who has both male

¹ The etymology of “hermaphrodite” is hermaphroditos, the son of Hermes and Aphrodite in Greek mythology, as “the person is both fully male and fully female.” Q&A in the Intersex Society of North America (ISNA), http://www.isna.org/faq/hermaphrodite [accessed February 26, 2014]
and female sexual organs or a person who is a male for a half month and changes into a female for the rest of the month. Similarly, the word “futanari” (二形・二成) means “having two components in one” and refers to a hermaphrodite or an intersexed person, who has both male and female reproductive organs. The term was pathologized appearing in *Yamai no sōshi* (病草子, Collections of Strange Disease and Symptoms). “Futanari” was described in the text, as “the person’s appearance is male, but eir mannerism and behaviors are similar to those of women. The others felt suspicious. While this person is sleeping, the other flips eir clothes secretly and finds out that ey has both male and female organs. This body is futanari.” Thus, “futanari” indicates anatomically double bodies, yet male sexuality is a prototype with an additional female organ and feminine behaviors.

In contrast, “futanarihira” (二業平) is derived from the use of “futanari” and is named after the ninth century poet Ariwara no Narihira, known for his beauty and bisexuality. According to Maki Isaka, the term was, however, specifically used for “an androgynous stunner,” describing a male actor who impersonates a woman (oyama, onnagata) in the kabuki theater in post-1629. In particular, “futanarihira” was used to describe the wakashu (beautiful boys)

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2 NKD. Transformation of bodies (*henshin*), particularly from male to female, in one of the Buddhist sects’ beliefs might influence the concept the transformation between male and female.

3 “Futa” means two or double; “nari” connotes either a form or a component.

4 *Nihon kokugo dai jiten*, abbr. NKD. *Yamai no sōshi* was also created for one of the series—Humans—in the Six Realms of Existence in Buddhism (Nipponica).

5 I refer to Michael Spivak’s pronouns (ey, eir, em— removing “th” from they, their, and them). This usage empties the pronoun of specific sex/gender coding, thus appropriate marking the fluidity of the gender in the body in question.

6 The original in Japanese: 「かたちおとこなれども、おんなのすがたににたることもありけり。人これをおぼつかなくして、よるなおいりたるに、ひそかにきぬをあげてみれば、男女の根ともにありけり。これ二形のものなり。」

7 Robertson, *Takarazuka*, 51-52.

8 Since 1629, the female kabuki theater (*onna kabuki*) was banned, and then the young beautiful boy kabuki theater (*wakashu kabuki*) appeared. Nevertheless, it was also banned in 1652 since it was believed to have negative influence by male-male sex (*nanshoku*). Since then, all-male kabuki theater (*yarō kabuki*) appeared. Maki Isaka, “Images of *Onnagata*: Complicating Binarisms, Unraveling the Labyrinth” in *Postgender: Gender, Sexuality, and*
aesthetic, as these boys were performing a role of woman. As Robertson also argues, the female impersonator was “a male invention: an amalgam of signifiers of ideal femininity,” while a woman who impersonated a man was criminalized during the Edo period. In addition, in a Buddhist concept (especially the Lotus Sutra doctrine), *henjō nanshi* (変成男子) or *tennyō jōbutsu* (転女成仏) was used to describe transformation of a female body into a male body for enlightenment from a misogynistic doctrine; however, during the Edo period, the *henjō nanshi* syndrome was used to describe intersexed people. Therefore, futanari refers to a male prototype of doubly sexed bodies, while futanarihira describes gender signs of a female-embodied male androgyne. *Hanwari* or *haniwari* alludes to doubly sexed bodies as well as the temporary transformation of sexes or gender. *Henjō nanshi* describes a hermaphroditic body, especially the transformation of a female body into a male body. For these ambivalent sex/gender terms, although the distinction between sex and gender signs is unclear, these terms seemingly center on male sexuality as a prototype.

After the Meiji Restoration (1868), medical discourse and jurisprudence for sexuality regulated the ambivalence of sex and gender and reinforced binaristic “biological” sexes (male/female) as a norm, in which each sex must correspond to “proper” gender characteristics (masculinity/femininity). Japan adapted the Western scientific and medical discourses and practices in order to catch up to the West in becoming a “civilized” society. Alice D. Dreger argues that “hermaphroditism” was medically invented in the late nineteenth century in Europe by examining genitals (and later gonadal tissue) to find “true” or “false” hermaphroditism.

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9 Robertson, Takarazuka, 54.
10 Ibid., 54.
Hermaphrodites became scientific and medical specimens as well as spectacles to fit into “true” sex: either male or female. Similarly, Japan incorporated Western sexology and pathology into its own system in order to regulate individual bodies and sexualities and to re-conceptualize the sex/gender system. For example, the discourse underlined the dichotomy of sex, gender, and sexuality such as conceptualizing the “sameness” and the “otherness” or discoveries of hermaphroditic bodies.

According to Teresa A. Algoso, in the early Meiji period, the term “han’in’yō” (半陰陽, literally half yin, half yang—half female, half male) was coined to refer to “those individuals who could not be unproblematically assigned either female or male status.” While han’in’yō commonly refers to intersexuality and DSD at present in Japan, this term was divided into two categories: true hermaphroditism (真半陰陽, shin-han’in’yō) and pseudo-hermaphroditism (仮半陰陽, ka-han’in’yō) in the Meiji and Taishō era. True hermaphroditism referred to a single individual who had both “ovaries and testicles,” whereas pseudo-hermaphroditism was categorized as two kinds: “feminine and masculine” although true hermaphroditism was believed to be rare. Hermaphroditic bodies mattered for conscription exams to evaluate masculinity after the establishment of conscription law in 1873; detailed physical examination including genitals contributed to the “discovery” of hermaphrodites whose condition was seen as a disability or

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13 Winston states, “The older division of male-male sex (nanshoku) and male-female sex (joshoku) was replaced by same sex love (dōseiai) and cross sex love (isei”) (74).
14 Richard von Krafft-Ebing’s *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886) greatly influenced sexology in Japan (Winston 74).
16 Ibid., 243-5.
17 Ibid., 243-4. The concept of hermaphroditism changed quickly. True hermaphroditism was acceptable in the early Meiji era but became intolerable in the Taishō era (Winston 73-4).
In a conscription exam, the concern was to determine whether or not a person was “properly” male and therefore available for conscription.

To complicate matters, another term, “ryōseiguyū” (両性具有), is frequently used to describe dual-sexuality. In the early twentieth century, as the word “sei” (性) began to be used to mean sex and/or gender, the terms “ryōsei (両性 both sexes/genders) and chūsei (中性 between sexes/ genders)” were coined referring to androgyny. Since there is no clear distinction between sex and gender regarding sei in Japanese, neither ryōsei nor chūsei distinguishes between sex and gender. That is, ryōseiguyū is used to describe either dual-sexed bodies (with both complete male and female reproductive organs) or androgynous bodies with both masculine and feminine gendered signs. Because of the use of ryō (two, double, pair), ryōseiguyū corresponds to binarism of sex and gender.

During the Taishō and Shōwa eras, more complex notions of hermaphroditism (including biological, psychological, and social or cultural hermaphroditism) were discussed among doctors, critics, and scholars. Satirical journalist and cultural historian Miyatake Gaikotsu (1867-1955)’s book Thoughts on Hermaphroditism (Hannannyokō, 半男女考, 1922), a collection of exemplar records of hermaphrodites, demonstrates both fear and optimism toward ambivalent sexed/gendered bodies, as both terms hannannyo (半男女, half-male and half woman) and han’in’yō were used to describe hermaphroditism. Miyatake primarily focused on five categories of physiological hermaphroditism although on a larger scale he divided hermaphroditism into

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18 Ibid., 249-50. “Condition number forty-eight was “serious urethral deformity, hermaphroditism, or urinary fistula.” (Original text qtd 249).
19 Guyū (具有) means “having (innate) characteristics, talents, and skills. (NKDJ)
20 The Chinese character 性 has many readings (sei, shō, saga etc.) as well as multiple meanings (characteristic, essence, inheritance, fate, mentality, habits, morality etc.). The word 性 specifically began to refer to sex gender in the early 20th century (NKDJ).
21 Robertson, Takarazuka, 49.
two types: "psychic (seishinteki [精神的] or shinriteki [心理的]) and physiological (seiriteki [生理的])." In contrast, psychiatrist Sakaki Yasusaburō (1870-1929) described "psychic" hermaphroditism (seishin no han’in’yō or seishinue (sic.) [seishinjō] no han’in’yō) as its relation to same-sex desires. To illustrate, Sakaki explained that an example of psychic hermaphroditism is a man who feels like a woman and is attracted to another man. Algoso suggests the use of psychic hermaphroditism might have been able to scapegoat male homosexuality, which particularly became a taboo after the Meiji era. In addition, Miyatake argued a part of psychic hermaphroditism in an optimistic light: women’s social progress gradually eliminated the differences between men and women, and thus men and women were psychologically and behaviorally converging together. Miyatake considered this social change as “cultural” hermaphroditism, which could eventually change people’s physiology and could cause "physiological” hermaphroditism. In other words, he observed that hermaphroditic physiological conditions were the result of social change, as psychically and socially men and women became similar. Therefore, the terms han’in’yō (and hannannya) were used for biological and psychological characteristics as well as social and cultural changes of sex and gender at that time.

Like Miyatake, hermaphroditism offered a site for debates on sex, gender, and sexuality during the Taishō and the early Shōwa eras. As Leslie Winston suggests, novelists Shimizu

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22 See Algoso’s elaborate discussions of Miyatake’s five kinds of hermaphroditism. “Han’in’yō” also appeared in Miyatake’s writing “Otoko ni chibusa ga aru riyū” (The reason why men have nipples) in Hadaka ni shirami nashi (No flea on my naked body, 1920). Miyatake discusses an obscure theory: “all fetuses are hermaphroditic for the first three months and for the fourth month their sex is determined as either male or female. Nevertheless, nipples might develop earlier than genitals. Thus, men still have nipples. If hermaphrodites (or neutral sex) change from male to female, they should have nipples to feed babies” (Kindai digital library). Algoso, “Not Suitable,” 249, and “‘Thoughts on Hermaphroditism’: Miyatake Gaikotsu and the Convergence of the Sexes in Taishō Japan,” The Journal of Asian Studies 65, no. 3 (August 2006): 558-60.

23 Algoso, “‘Thoughts on Hermaphroditism,’” 562-63.

24 Ibid., 564.

25 Ibid., 569-70.
Shikin (1868-1933) and Tokuda Shūsei (1872-1943) provided the counter-arguments of dichotomous sex. In her essay “Expectations of Girl’s Education” (“Joshi kyōiku ni taisuru kibō,” 1896), Shikin argues that people’s reproductive organs should not determine their personal characteristics. Similarly, Shūsei’s novel Rough Living (Arakure, 1915) suggests that a body should not define sex, employing the portrayals of the female protagonist Oshima’s unfeminine personality, behaviors, and dual-sexed body. Winston posits that Oshima’s dual is characterized for both physical conditions and behaviors; thus, Shūsei “breaks the naturalised connection between body, sex, and gender.” Thus, the concepts of dual sex or intersexuality in Japan in the Meiji, Taishō, and early Shōwa eras do not clearly distinguish between physiological conditions and gendered markers. The terms han’in’yō and ryōseiguyū can be used for physiological, psychological, and cultural hermaphroditism and androgyne. Nonetheless, despite Shikin, Shūsei, and Miyatake’s critical views of hermaphroditism, the concepts of hermaphroditism rotated around male-centered medical and sociopolitical discourses.

Today “intersex” is used to encompass a variety of conditions that do not fit into male or female in birth in a sexual and reproductive system. Nevertheless, for decades an intersex child has been made into a boy or a girl in most medical institutions by normalizing surgeries or hormone treatments because of an assumption that anatomical conditions (especially

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26 Winston, 75-76.
27 Ibid., 81.
28 According to biologist Anne Fausto-Sterling in her 1993’s article, sex can be considered a spectrum from female to male, and there are at least five sexes or even more depending on the measures (157). Her categorization of five sexes comprises female, three intersexes, and male. Three intersexes are herms, mermes, and ferrmes herms (previously called true hermaphrodite) “possess one testis and one ovary (the sperm- and egg-producing vessels, or gonads).” Mermes (male pseudo-hermaphrodites) “have testes and some aspects of the female genitalia but no ovaries.” Ferrmes (female pseudo-hermaphrodites) “have ovaries and some aspects of the male genitalia but lack testes” (157). However, this theory does not assist intersex people, as Fausto-Sterling’s categorization was “artificial and did not mean anything for intersex people’s well-being” with “exoticizing and sensationalizing intersex people.” Fausto-Sterling also decided not to use this categorization in the 2000 Sexing the Body. Intersex Society of North America (ISNA), Introduction to Intersex Activism: A Guide for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Trans Allies, compiled by Emi Koyama. (October 2001), 3.
reproduction) determine gender identities.\textsuperscript{29} The English loanword “intāsekkusu” has frequently been used for \textit{han’in’yō} since the 1990s in Japan, but \textit{han’in’yō} is still used for intersexuality, especially describing medical conditions. Intersex people have been treated unfairly under the Eugenic Protection Law of 1948 (優生保護法) and now in post-1996 the Maternal Health Protection Law (母性保護法) similarly discriminates, according to Hashimoto Hideo (Hasshī), who is the founder of \textit{Peer Support for Intersexuals} (PESFIS, 1995) and who came out of the closet as an intersexual.\textsuperscript{30} The intersex rights movement began during the 1990s; Cheryl Chase founded the Intersex Society of North America (ISNA) to have support groups and to protest against the medical practice to “make intersex disappear.”\textsuperscript{31} ISNA changed its name to Accord Alliance in 2008, accepting the term “disorders of sexual development” (DSD) to improve medical treatments for intersex people and also to remove negative connotations of intersex. Nevertheless, the use of “disorders” provokes controversies. Organizational Intersex International rejects the term “disorders,” and Intersex Initiative remains neutral to use the DSD. Japanese organizations have also been influenced by ISNA and Accord Alliance, accepting the term “sei bunka shikkan” (性分化疾患, DSD) to improve medical treatments for intersex people in general. The concepts of intersexuality are complicated in medical, legal, and political discourses in Japan. Intersex people refer to \textit{han’in’yōsha}, and their identities are seemingly based on physiological conditions today. However, intersex activist Hashimoto discusses at least nine types of intersexuality referring to medical, societal, and cultural contexts in Japan: “chromosomal make-ups, gonadal formations, internal genitalia, external genitalia, sex determination in birth by doctors, sexes in family registry, the second sexual growth, gender

\textsuperscript{31} ISNA, “What's the history behind the intersex rights movement?”, http://www.isna.org/faq/history [accessed February 26, 2014].
identities, and sexual orientations.” Thus, intersex people are free to choose their own sex/gender identities.

The usage of both *han’in’yō* and *ryōseiguyū* ultimately encourages a focus on binarism but does not help us understand the difference between sex and gender. These terms are, rather, a combination of two or more qualities of sex/gender depending on contexts and/or the author’s or reader’s perspectives. In addition, we have to be aware that the use of the term hermaphroditism is discouraged since the term sets up the notion of physical pathology, moral transgression, or even alternative sex and using the term leads to “exoticizing” or “sensationalizing.” Nonetheless, I will use dual-sex rather than intersexuality in the following, as it points to Hagio’s agenda—a male homosocial world or an exclusively male-only world, and it still revolves around binarism between male/female and masculine/feminine.

**Invisible Dual-Sexed Figures in “There Were Eleven!”**

Bearing in mind that the concepts of intersexuality are complex, Hagio’s texts employ (male-embodied) dual-sexed figures especially in the 1970s and the 1980s. As I mentioned earlier, in the Shōgakkan award-winning manga “There Were Eleven!” Frol is a hidden dual-sexed figure whose two sex characteristics stay dormant until the second phase of growth (*sei mibunka*); ey will eventually fix to one sex. Frol is visually portrayed as having a slender boy-like body with no breasts, (presumably) no penis, and long blonde wavy hair as feminine gender markers. Eir physical markers are ambiguous, while eir gendered markers simultaneously confuse eir sexed/gendered identities. Depending on the characters’ perceptions, Frol looks

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33 ISNA, *Introduction to Intersex Activism*, 3-4.
34 Both *The Poe Clan* and “There Were Eleven!” received the Shōgakkan Manga Award in 1976.
either male or female (one sex—*tansei*, 単性), or neither male nor female (*chūsei*), or both (*ryōsei*).

Frol’s invisible dual-sexed body confuses other characters with eir unfamiliar sex/gender identity, as Frol’s bodily markers between male/female and gender markers (hair, speech, behavior) between masculinity/femininity are scrambled. Only another student Nuum, is unfazed by this confusion. The story is primarily set in the male homosocial world of the space academy. Ten men take the final exam for the academy; their mission is for all crews to remain safely on board the spaceship for fifty-three days. However, there are eleven men on board, and they are trying to find out who is the eleventh student, but some accidents happen during the mission. For example, when Frol first removes eir helmet and eir long hair tumbles out, the other students are surprised to see em since they see em as a woman in a male-only ship.36 (See Figure 2.1.) Eir beautiful appearance, especially long wavy hair and slender body, is identified as feminine, whereas eir flat chest is marked as masculine or undeveloped. However, Frol insists ey is not a woman and strongly objects when the others see em as such. Ey also becomes conscious about eir own body size and compares eir own body structure (chest and waist circumference, shoulder and arm length etc.) with that of Tadatos (Tada). They both have almost the same height, but Frol’s body structure is smaller than Tada’s.37 In contrast, Frol’s aggressive behavior such as being easily provoked to fight38 and derogatory use of language39 are portrayed as masculine. Nonetheless, eir squeamishness when seeing weird metallic plants is marked as a feminine

36 Ibid., trans. 63; original 15.
37 Ibid., trans. 70, 77, 84; original 22, 29, 36.
38 Ibid., trans. 63, 81, 105, 115; original 15, 33, 57, 67
39 Ibid., trans. 73; original 25.
behavior since Tada identifies Frol as a woman from this behavior.\textsuperscript{40} Frol’s physical and gender markers are mingled and thus complicate both eir sex and gender.

Although Frol insists ey is “not” a woman and strongly objects when others see em as such, when one of the crew members sees eir naked body in a shower room he identifies em as a woman.\textsuperscript{41} (See Figure 2.2.) Frol’s genitals are not drawn, but this character implies that Frol does not have a penis and thus ey is a woman. In this scene, most characters’ perceptions of Frol reveal that genitals are used for binary sex markers, and the normative sex is binary for these characters. Thus, Frol’s dual-sexed body confounds them until Tada suddenly realizes that Frol is dual-sexed; the others in turn express their surprise: “You mean you have both male and female organs! You’re both a man and a woman!?” Frol responds, “I’m not either yet. If I pass this test, I’ll get permission to become a man.”\textsuperscript{42} The others struggle to understand dual-sex through their knowledge of the biology of animals, gastropods, fish, or snails.\textsuperscript{43} Once they know that Frol is dual-sexed and has a feminine element within eir body, they still treat em as a woman. For example, the crew member known as the Fourth, pulls a chair out for Frol—as in an act of male chivalry, while Tada tries to get a box from a higher place instead of em.\textsuperscript{44}

Nonetheless, Nuum is able to recognize Frol as a dualistic sex from the beginning since Nuum and all the inhabitants in eir planet are also dual-sexed. Nuum calls Frol a “meneer,” who is a sexually undeveloped and undifferentiated hermaphrodite. The meaning of “meneer” emphasizes neutrality, innocence, and immature bodies with dormant dualistic sex. In Nuum’s

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., trans. 79-81; original 31-3.
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., trans. 110, 114-5; original 62-66-7.
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., trans. 117; original 68.「両性?完全雌雄同体のことか!?ってことは男性であり女性である・・・」…「まだ男女どっちでもねいよ！このテストにうかったら許可がおりるんだから！男になってもいいって！！」
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., trans. 118; original 70.
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid., trans. 120; original 72.
star system, “meneer” denotes an “angel,” whereas in Frol’s planet, an undeveloped and undifferentiated sexual status is referred to as “gaki” (ガキ, kids). Nuum’s scaly species consists of three sexual developments or statuses: first, meneer, who are sexually undeveloped with strong scaly skin; second, vida (connoting inhabitants of paradise), who cast off scaly skins, transforming into either male or female, and eventually dying after the birth of three or four children in cold winter; and third, vidmeneer, who has no transformation and remains sexually undifferentiated for the rest of eir life. Nuum is, in fact, vidmeneer, and therefore not transforming, as ey describes: “I am neither meneer nor vida. When summer came, I did not transform. Such cases are uncommon, but not unheard of. Accordingly I remain sexually undifferentiated. Marriage is of course out of the question. And so, automatically, I become a vidmeneer. That is, a monk.”

Since Nuum is familiar with dualistic sex, unlike the others, ey is able to recognize Frol’s sexual status. Nevertheless, Nuum refers to Frol as “ey,” and thus Frol is still a feminized dual sex. In contrast, because Nuum is eternally sexually undifferentiated, ey is non-sexual. Therefore, dual-sexed figures, especially Frol, complicate sex/gender identities with both scrambled bodily and gendered markers, but dualistic sexed characters are also bound by binaristic sex between male and female.

From Their Own Misogyny to Their Agency

Despite ambiguity of eir sex/gender, Frol’s familial system in the planet reflects on the inequality between men and women in a rigid patriarchal society. Becoming a man is a privilege in this planet’s custom since the society is described as “Men govern and women work. Every man has an average of 4.5 wives, and every woman bears an average of 5.5 children.”

According to the laws of the planet, the eldest child in a family becomes a man; the younger

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45 Ibid., trans. 122; original 74.
46 Ibid., trans. 117; original 69.
47 Ibid., trans. 118; original 70.
siblings must become women to procreate in a polygamous system. Frol, as the youngest child, is destined to become a woman and enter into an arranged marriage to a feudal lord eighteen years eir senior, a fate Frol is determined to avoid. Thus, ey plans to take the space academy exam which will result in eir becoming a man. We can see Frol’s misogynistic attitude toward women due to the disadvantage of being a woman, as ey says, “I hate women! Women are nothing but a waste of space!.” Frol also describes eir feeling about the way in which men and women are treated differently, as ey says, “Women are pretty on the outside, anyway… But that’s it. I’ve seen my older sisters’ weddings… … but they were nothing compared to my brother’s coming-of-age ceremony. If you only get to live once, I’d rather become a man and have that kind of fuss made over me.” In Frol’s planet, men are fewer than women, but they are paid more attention and have more authority. Despite Frol’s ambiguous sex in the earlier stage, ey cannot choose eir own sex, and the familial system is still bounded by a binaristic sex system.

Frol’s misogynistic attitude reflects on Hagio’s attitude toward women’s conditions in Japan during the 1970s and probably her own self-hatred, although the women’s liberation movement occurred around the same time, and love marriages and the number of women in higher education drastically increased. However, Japanese literary scholar Julia Bullock states that gendered division of labor was endorsed during the high economic growth period (1955-1973): men worked in the paid labor force in the public sphere, while women supported their husbands in the domestic sphere even though many women worked outside the home. This strict dichotomy between men and women reinforces gender division of expected roles such as the rhetoric of “good wife and wise mother” for women once again and of “corporate warriors”

48 Ibid., trans. 118-9; original 70-1.
49 Ibid., trans. 82; original 34.
50 Ibid., trans. 119; original 71.
51 Bullock, Other Women’s Lib, 2, 27-30.
for men.\textsuperscript{52} In other words, the expected roles for women were marriage and motherhood, just as women are expected to get married and have children in Frol’s planet as soon as they become women. Bullock argues that some women’s writing in the 1960s and 1970s (Kurahashi Yumiko, Kōno Taeko, and Takahashi Takako) employs the misogynistic logic (women’s “internalization of ‘superiority’ of men”) to demonstrate how this logic “trap[s] women in an emphatically illogical and unjust double bind.”\textsuperscript{53} Frol’s misogynistic attitude, similarly, illustrates an example of a strictly binaristic sex system and unequal relationship between men and women even though Frol emself has not been a woman yet.

Nonetheless, Frol’s misogynistic attitude ultimately changes, and ey accepts eir feminine side in the end. All of the crew in the spaceship are infected by Dell’s red-spot disease, but they are able to create a vaccine from a crew member who recovers from the viral infection. The vaccine, however, does not work on Frol; all the crew members decide to return to the space academy even though it means that they will all fail the exam. But Frol, whose failure to take the exam will foreclose eir ability to become a man, resists, saying, “I’d rather die than become a woman. No way, Tada! No way!”\textsuperscript{54} Tada consoles Frol and tells em that Frol can abandon eir arranged partner and instead get married to Tada as a woman on his monogamous planet.\textsuperscript{55} (See Figure 2.3.) After they return to the academy, they find out that they actually passed the final exam since they prioritized the crew’s lives and survived in the ship for forty-five days despite accidents. Even though Frol is able to become a man after passing the exam, ey accepts the possibility to become a woman for Tada in the future. Frol tells Tada, “… I don’t mind becoming

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., 18, 27-30.
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., 78.
\textsuperscript{54} Hagio, “There Were Eleven!,” trans. 162; original 114.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., trans. 164; original 116.
Frol is accepting the female side of em undeveloped dual-sex when Tada as an ideal partner treats eir equally. Despite the limitation of the binary sex system, Frol’s misogynistic attitude stems from the coercion of becoming a woman and being forced into a polygamous marriage. When Frol has freedom of choice to determine eir sex and thus has agency, Frol accepts eir feminine side and chooses to become a woman.

The relationship between Frol and Tada seemingly suggests a happy-ending for heterosexual love romance when Frol decides to become a woman. Although it is possible that the women readers can interpret Frol as a future woman who can identify with “women’s issues” in a patriarchal society or in a heterosexual relationship, we can only see that Frol is sexually undeveloped but dual-sexed and thus a liminal figure straddling male and female. Therefore, Frol’s sexually undifferentiated and invisible dual-sexed state as well as eir scrambled gendered markers can give the possibility of interpreting either a quasi-male-female or a quasi-male-male love romance, depending on the reader. Frol’s ambiguous sex/gender appropriates heterosexual romance and even a male homosocial world.

The Collapse of Sexual Dimorphism: Invisible Dual- or Multiple-Sexed Figures in Marginal

Unlike Frol and Nuum who are born as dualistic sex, dual-sexed characters created or altered by genetic engineering in Hagio’s 1985-87 work Marginal challenge the notions of dualism: sexual dimorphism and binaristic gender roles in heteronormativity. According to psychologist Gillian Einstein,

The notion of sexual dimorphisms requires that one believe that mammals develop into only two recognizable phenotypes: female or male. To do this, however, genetics, hormone action, and rearing all must align. If any of the switches on the pathway are inoperative or turn on at an earlier or later stage, or to

56 Frol’s speech in the original text in Japanese is more masculine with the use of masculine subject pronoun I—ore. 「オレさ おまえがそういうなら女になってもいいいや」 Eir speech demonstrates the mixing between masculinity and femininity (trans. 170; original 122).
Biomedical and societal discourses have reinforced the concept of sexual dimorphism, corresponding to the sexed bodies, and complementary gender characteristics; however, the sex/gender/sexuality system has become more complex due to an ongoing expansion of the knowledge of molecular biology. Therefore, two sexes do not encompass all the sexual differences, multiplicity of sexes, genders, and sexualities.

Hagio’s *Marginal* illustrates at least three kinds of ambiguously sexed figures altered by genetic engineering or medical technology. First, Kira is one survivor of dual-sexed quadruplets who were genetically created from his wife’s egg by the Martian scientist Ivan (Iwan) in order to give birth to a child on the infertile male-only Earth. Second, the Holy Mother Hallelujah, a religious icon on planet Earth, originally appears to be male but is genetically dual or multiple sexed (XXY), and is surgically transformed into a female so that other Earthlings believe that she has procreated all the children on Earth. In fact, all the fetuses have been fertilized in tubes and raised in artificial wombs. Third, Meyard, the chief scientist of the company on the Moon, becomes dual-sexed by having medical treatments for his rare genetic disease (carrying Factor Ezekiel) with the injections of female hormones. I will examine the ways in which these three ambiguously sexed characters function to complicate many forms of dualism and also demonstrate how their feminine elements within dual- or multiple-sex are treated and why their feminine elements are invisible.

*Marginal* uses complex narrative plots and background, and thus it is hard to describe the whole of the novel in detail, but this is the simple backdrop to the story. The year is 2999,

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and Earth is a male-only-infertile planet. In the Arabian medieval-like Monodor city, the inhabitants believe that the Holy Mother procreated all the sons on Earth in what resembles a beehive societal system. In fact, the oceans were contaminated by an infertile virus—Factor D—in 2300, and the people on Earth became infertile. Women disappeared from Earth because Antibody D—which only Y chromosome can host—prevents Earthlings from the infection. The scientist Meyard in the Company on the Moon is sent to Earth in order to conduct the Marginal Project, which creates all the children by lunar women’s eggs and semen registered by the Earthmen in artificial wombs. During a public appearance, the old Holy Mother is assassinated by Grinja, a cult member, who eventually rescues the hermaphrodite figure Kira in the desert. Then, Grinja sells Kira to a mysterious loner Ashijin. Grinja, Ashijin, and Kira eventually become involved in the Monodor city’s Marginal Project.

Kira’s dual-sex complicates sexual dimorphism (female/male or XX/XY) and challenges the notion that an individual subject has a separate consciousness. Ey is one of the dual-sexed quadruplets created from Ivan’s wife Arlene’s egg (Arlene was born and raised on Mars and thus has no Factor D infection) and Meyard’s Factor Ezekiel (I will call Factor E),59 which causes a high risk of genetic mutation in sequence-specific DNA-binding factors. Even though it is illegal for Factor E carriers to reproduce due to their rare genetic disorder, Ivan uses Meyard’s Factor E secretly to induce genetic mutation to create ideal dual-sexed quadruplets called “lost dream children.” Nonetheless, Kira’s genetically-engineered dual-sex is actually invisible. Physically Kira presents as an adolescent boy—eir penis is unclearly drawn with eir small and slender

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58 Marginal was serialized in the monthly shōjo comic magazine called Puchi furawā (Petit Flower) from August 1985 to October 1987.
59 エゼキエル因子
(See Figure 2.4.) However, ey is also medically described as a male embodiment with a female brain. Kira’s genitals transform from a penis into a vagina when ey accepts Grinja as a compatible and emphatic partner. Kira becomes pregnant by Grinja. Despite eir male sexual appearance as a prototype, eir sexual organs are transformative; eir sexual marker is able to shift between male and female depending on situations. Kira’s surface physicality cannot completely demonstrate eir sex marker and gender identity.

On a molecular level, Kira has genetically XXY sex chromosomes, which are not fitted into the binarism of biological sexes: an XX or an XY. Sexual chromosomes are not sole indicators of sex and do not always align with exterior genitalia and gonads. Although XXY chromosomes are medically categorized as at least two types or more: XXY males (frequently associated with Klinefelter syndrome), XXY females (with testicular feminization and positive sex-determining region Y (SRY)), and possibly more, XXY persons still fit into a spectrum of dualistic sexes and are pathologized. However, many XXY males appear to be male and do not realize they have an extra X chromosome. In Hagio’s fictional world, Kira’s XXY

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60 Hagio, Mājinaru, vol. 2, 153.
61 Ibid., vol. 2, 137.
62 Ibid., vol. 1, 332-3.
63 Klinefelter Syndrome, named after Harry Klinefelter in 1942, is considered a genetic disorder, which one extra sex chromosome X is found (47 chromosomes instead of 46).
65 Regarding more elaborate stories on molecular sexes, Hagio’s story “X+Y” (published in the shōjo manga magazine Puchi furawā (Petit Flower) in July and August in 1984, translated by Matt Thorn, 1997) experiments with transformative sexual genes and demonstrates the character Tacto, whose sexual genes shift between XX and XY. Tacto’s transformative sexual makers are similar to those of Kira, but the story tends to explain Tacto’s fluid sex more scientifically. Tacto appears to be a small-built boy who has a penis, but medical doctors tell him that he is, in fact, XX, and thus they suggest that he must begin to inject female hormones to become a woman. One of the doctors explains to Tacto how reproductive organs develop: “The human reproductive organs in a pair of ducts [are] known as the ‘Wolffian duct’ and the ‘Mullerian duct.’ Sex is determined genetically. In the case of an XY, the Wolffian duct develops. In the case of an XX, the Mullerian duct develops. The undeveloped duct degenerates” (trans. 116). Tacto rejects any changes in his body at this point since he thinks that he wants to stay male for his girlfriend. He responds that his XX is an error but in fact should be XY since he remembers a test result XY at the age of seven. He says (Tacto refers himself to the third person “he”), “He won’t be injected with female hormones he won’t make a baby. He doesn’t need ovaries or a uterus” (trans. 117). Since his genetic make-up is XX, the
chromosomes can reflect on an androgynous appearance (eir body structure that is smaller and thinner than the average man’s) and transformative sexual genitalia: a penis and a vagina. Kira’s XXY is genetically engineered, but there are some XXY people in the Monodor city. For example, the new Holy Mother Hallelujah (previously Emerada) also has XXY sex chromosomes. Although ey has feminine features (smaller bone structure and fairer skin than the average man), ey is much taller and has bigger shoulders than Kira. Eir female marker, breasts, is surgically created. Hence, XXY persons are portrayed with more feminine features than other male characters; nevertheless, their male physical appearance is more visible on the surface, and feminine elements are either invisible on a molecular level or are visibly altered. In other words, like Frol, Kira and Hallelujah are externally male in appearance but molecularly close-to-be female. In particular, Kira’s hidden femininity can first demonstrate a distance from a woman’s body to unbind the confinement of women, and eir ambiguously gendered body can also deflect negative attitudes toward women. However, the revelation of eir femininity shows eir gradual adaptation to being a woman.

In Marginal, Kira has another aspect that does not fit with dualism, as ey has collective consciousness with eir other quadruplets. Their genes—Factor E cause them to communicate

dr. Moonsault reveals Tacto’s transformative sexual genes make-up—shifting sexes between XX and XY. Dr. Moonsault talks about Tacto’s sex, “For the first two years of his life, Tacto changed back and forth from male to female every two or three months, as the description of eir sex is similar to the Heian concept of “hanwari” or “haniwari.” From about the age of three, he remained male, so I thought his body had settled down. But if he has become XX again…” (trans. 194-5). He continues to explain why Tacto has transitory and transformative sexual genes. Dr. Moonsault had been interested in sex chromosomes such as Turner syndrome (a missing X) and Klinefelter syndrome (an extra X) and accidentally created a sex-change medicine, Tacto was born between Dr. Moonsault and his partner Marble who was originally XY but became XX—thus was a mother for only a short while. Marble turned into a male one month after Tacto was born and never changed back to a woman even though he had wanted to. Marble committed suicide after he could not cope with his permanent sex change as a man (trans. 196). Therefore, Tacto’s transitory and transformative sex is created by the consequence of medical experiments. His transformative sex is bound by the dichotomy between male and female, yet the process of his transformative sex shows ambiguity and fluidity in a binary sex spectrum. “X+Y” in A-A’, trans. Matt Thorn (San Francisco: Viz Media LLC, 1997).
with each other psychically. The quadruplets are also called “dream children” because they are extremely empathetic and understand each other using their telepathic abilities. They are not separate subjects but rather a unified subject of four. According to their mother Arlene, one of the quadruplets remains in the form of a ten-month-old baby and thus preserves the core brain and heart for the others, while the other three physically grow to function as the manifestation of the baby.\textsuperscript{66} If one of them learns math or history, the others also gain the same knowledge. In the story, however, it is believed that all of them die by fire except Kira. Ey remembers the other quadruplets’ warning them to escape from the fire and their screaming as they burn to death.\textsuperscript{67} Later, another quadruplet is found to be alive because ey was kept frozen. After eir revival, ey shares eir consciousness with Kira and is able to recognize Grinja and Ashijin even though ey has met them for the first time. Kira and the other quadruplets’ collective consciousness(es) are unified as one, but one subject is an assemblage of four, which is symbolically connected to a womb and Kira, who is also Ivan’s mother. I will discuss this point in the section on reproduction.

The Holy Mother becomes dual-sexed to serve as a religious icon of all the Earthmen. Eir dual-sexed body shows an irony of the “reproductive” mother, as most Earthmen are ignorant of the Holy Mother’s unreproductivity and eir surgically transformed female status. There are in fact two Holy Mothers: the old Mother who is assassinated by Grinja and the new Mother who falls from the balcony. In particular, the new Mother Hallelujah originally appears to be an effeminate male named Emerada, and ey is genetically XXY, as mentioned above. Meyard decides to kidnap Emerada in order to create the new Holy Mother without eir consent due to eir

\textsuperscript{66} Hagio, Mājinaru, vol. 2, 221.
\textsuperscript{67} Ibid., vol. 2, 157-8.
feminine features (long wavy hair, a smaller bone structure, fairer skin than average men).\(^{68}\) Ey is surgically transformed into a female by transplanting breasts and injecting female hormones.\(^{69}\) (See Figure 2.5.) Ey is mostly kept asleep to maintain eir youth. Thus, the Holy Mother Hallelujah becomes feminized yet non-reproductive and a puppet who has lost eir memory, consciousness, and autonomy. In the Holy Mother inauguration ceremony, Hallelujah is made to wear a white dress with a veil like a bride, symbolizing marriage with all the men on Earth to procreate their children although all the children are, in fact, grown in artificial wombs.\(^{70}\) Ironically, the more feminized Hallelujah becomes, the less autonomy ey has. Nonetheless, during the ceremony, when a bird perches on eir hand and flies away, Hallelujah follows the bird and falls to the ground from the balcony. Ey dies from the fall. However, through eir death, ey flees from a living confinement as an iconic reproductive “mother” without eir autonomy, memory, and consciousness, and becomes a symbolic mother.

Meyard is a dual-or-multiple-sexed cyborg figure; however, his feminized and cyborgian side of the body is invisible until the end.\(^{71}\) (See Figure 2.6.) As Ueno Chizuko argues, “Beautiful boys’ love rhetoric can be a safety device to distance an unsafe notion of ‘sex/gender’ from a girl’s body.”\(^{72}\) Similar to discussion of Frol earlier, the dual-sexed condition of Meyard, who is primarily portrayed as male on the surface with his feminized body hidden, can function as a device to express women’s internalized misogynistic logic freely and critically. For example, Meyard believes that the feminization of his body and that of the infertile world are artificial and useless because his rare genetic disorder and a virally contaminated Earth are incurable. After

\(^{68}\) Ibid., vol.1, 205, 275-8.
\(^{69}\) Ibid., vol. 2, 172.
\(^{70}\) Ibid., vol. 3, 193.
\(^{71}\) Ibid., vol. 3, 276.
\(^{72}\) Ueno, “Jendāress,” 139.
Ashijin saves Meyard from the flood, his feminized and mechanical body is revealed, and Ashijin suspects that Meyard is a woman. Meyard speaks to Ashijin,

This is the only place where there is no woman. Everything is fabricated! That’s right; it’s like my body. Argh, this is annoying! I’m sick of this fairy tale! I will end this futile world! I’m done with the Mother, children, and all of it!” … “I am receiving female hormone injections because female hormones slow the progression of my diseases. My useless breast grows. I am strangely becoming a woman step by step on this womanless Earth. This is ridiculous.” [Ashijin responds,] “You said this is such a wretched world and a marginal place—the male-only infertile world. This isn’t about yourself, is it?”

As described above, Meyard’s regular female hormone injections cause the growth of his right breast. Meyard is, hence, ashamed of his own feminized body. He also parallels himself with the infertile male-only Earth since he believes that his diseases and infertility of the planet are irreversible and that the feminization (Meyard’s female hormone injections, the Holy Mother, and artificial insemination) is a temporary solution. His attitude reflects on his self-hatred toward the diseased and un(re)productive body, and he wishes to die with the diseased planet although he has artificially been creating babies. Meyard’s attitude is reflected in some Japanese women’s ambivalent attitudes toward femininity and procreation. In particular, some women’s liberation activists stressed how to cope with maternity, whereas some considered gaining their own reproductive rights such as contraceptives (birth control pills) in the 1970s and the 1980s.

Hermaphroditic characters Kira, the Holy Mother, and Meyard are both male characters and female characters by default. They externally or originally appear male but internally or invisibly female. The invisibility of femininity—Kira’s transformative and molecular sex, the
feminized quadruplets’ collective consciousness, the Holy Mother’s surgically transformed body, and Meyard’s diseased body—can challenge binary-opposed sex and gender roles as a norm. However, once the feminine elements became more visible within their bodies, the women’s confinements (lack of autonomy and reproductive duties) are exposed. Kira, the Holy Mother, and Meyard all have pressure to procreate: Kira from Ivan, the Holy Mother from the citizenry and Meyard from both the citizens and company (an actual creator of medically engineered babies). The Holy Mother dies and breaks free from loss of autonomy and duties as mother. Meyard also dies without reconciliation to his femininity at the end, yet he is released from his genetic diseases, physical part of femininity, and creating babies technologically. Kira dies at the very end while eir pregnant body deactivates an infertile Factor D and purifies the tainted red ocean into a blue and fertile one. Kira, thus, frees emself from bearing a baby and regenerates the world. As Hagio comments, dual-or-multiple sexed figures are experimental devices “to unbind the confinement of women,” especially reproduction. I will discuss this point specifically in the reproduction section below.

**Multiple Triangulations: An Alternative to the Electra or Oedipus Complexes and Male-Dual-Sexed-Male Relationship**

As noted in the discussion of *The Poe Clan* in Chapter One, triangular desires are common melodramatic devices in canonical Japanese literature. In *Marginal* as well, triangle relationships complicate the heteronormative relationship or dyad. Ayelet Zohar agrees with Homi Bhabha’s concept of the “Third Space,” which breaks down “dialectic tensions between contrary agents in cultural, governmental or religious binary systems” and is seen as “the temporal and spatial aspects of hybridity, as the moment/location of collapse of the previously
presumed contradictory entities (cultures, discourses, histories, etc.).” Zohar suggests rereading the Oedipus triangle (based on the dyad: father and child) and argues that Bhabha’s concept of “the ‘third element’ of hybridity may, in psychoanalytical terms, correspond to the presence of the child (specifically, Oedipus himself), as a hybrid of his two parents, yet detached and different from the story that links (him) with them, constituting himself as an independent phenomenon.” Therefore, Zohar’s rereading of the triangulation by the Third Space, especially hybridity, defies the Freudian suppositions of family romance and can offer alternative models to the Oedipus triangulation and to heteronormative relationships.

There are at least five overlapping triangular relationships in *Marginal*. First, Ivan, Arlene, and Goh as a group of three scientist friends; second, Ivan (father), Arlene (mother), and the quadruplets Kira(s) (children) as a family; third, Meyard (biological father), Arlene (mother), and the quadruplets Kira(s) (children) as a biological family; fourth, Grinja, Kira, and Ashijin as a triangle romance; fifth, Meyard, Ashijin, and Nastas as a triangle romance. Nevertheless, I will focus on the triangulations involving the “third element” as a hybrid character Kira in order to offer alternative models that challenge the heteronormative family structure.

For the second triangulation, Ivan, Arlene, and Kira(s) are portrayals of a typical heterosexual nuclear familial structure, yet the family dynamic changes after Kira’s second sexual developments. (See Figure 2.7.) Ivan and Arlene get married and create the Kira(s) quadruplets by genetic engineering. Ivan is not technically Kira(s) biological father but rather a

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75 Ibid., xxxiv-xxxv.

76 This familial scheme also seems to fit into Freudian family romance, in which the child imagines him/herself as adopted because of the child’s same sex parent’s infidelity (mother if the child is daughter, or father if the child is son). In this manga, the children do not fantasize about this, but they are created by the mother and another man’s genetics by the father’s experiment. Since Kira(s) are hermaphroditic, it is hard to say ey feel which of eir same sex parents is antagonized.
foster father. They are a happy family until Ivan becomes obsessed with creating babies with the Kira(s). This creates tension between the mother Arlene and the Kira(s). This tension drives the mother insane. After she runs away, the family breaks down. Kira(s) try to die with Ivan since he grows unhappy. Ivan, however, tries to save them, but only one Kira survives.

This triangular family drama fits a Jungian Electra complex scheme; however, the Kira(s) can function as either sons or daughters, as the Kira(s) are the third element as a hybrid of the mother and father (foster father) and a hybrid of male and female. As mentioned above, the Kira(s) drive eir mother insane and let eir father die. When Kira’s wombs become available, ey become quasi-daughters. After eir mother escapes, the father and the Kira(s) live together, and the situation is just like Carl Jung’s Electra complex, in which the daughter removes the mother in order to gain the father for her own desire.77 The mother-quasi-daughter relationship is not derived from penis envy since the Kira(s) have penis(es). Nevertheless, the Kira(s) do not intend to remove eir mother. The father is, however, unhappy without the mother, and the quasi-daughters or quasi-sons let the father die in order to end his unhappiness. At the same time, the Kira(s) are able to free emselves from the father’s experiment—fertility. If the Kira(s) as son(s) kill the father in order to gain the mother, it would be Oedipal, but the Kira(s) as either son or daughter ultimately lose both parents. Kira’s transformative sexual markers collapse not only this typical heterosexual family structure but also myths of the Oedipus or Electra triangles. The survivor Kira becomes an independent subject.

For the fourth triangulation, Grinja, Ashijin, and Kira (another Kira) have a triangle romance (see Figure 2.8.), as Kira functions as a young hermaphrodite fatale. A sexual

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relationship between Kira and Grinja externally happens as a male-male romance but momentarily as a female (hermaphrodite)-male romance, whereas the relationship between Kira and Ashijin happens as a male-male relationship. Nonetheless, Kira’s physical transformation breaks the harmony of the triangulation. First, Kira physically and emotionally reacts to Grinja. He saves Kira and takes good care of em when ey is lying unconscious in the desert. Although as a fugitive he has to sell Kira to Ashijin, Grinja helps em when ey is in danger. Kira becomes more emotionally attached to Grinja, and then Kira’s male genitals transforms into female ones. Kira tells Grinja,

“Kira… is awake…” [Grinja responds to em,] “You’re Kira, aren’t you?” “Yes, I am Kira. I will accept you.” […] [Grinja asks in his mind,] “Is it because of the light? Wasn’t ey such a beautiful boy, was ey?” […] [Grinja says,] “Eh? Your body has changed? Your body is different from the last one when you had a fever.” “Is it? Because of Kira.” […] “Like you… your male part suddenly disappears…” “Is it strange?” “This is my first time to see…” “My body will return to a boy’s one soon. It’s just only right now. It’s because Kira reacted after you touched me. I won’t react to anyone else except you.” (See Figure 2.9.)

As we can see, Kira only reacts to the man whom ey loves, as in eir term “Kira” refers to the awakening of the feminine side, especially eir womb of eir body. Grinja is also surprised to see Kira’s body change. Through eir transformation, eir lips are drawn with more shading and tones and thus have more depth, while eir eyes have more lights inside. Therefore, in this panel, Kira’s features are more feminine and more sexualized. The relationship between Kira and Grinja changes from a male-male relationship to a heteronormative (female-male) relationship;

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78 Hagio, Mājinaru, vol. 1, 330-33. (キラ)「・・・キラが・・・目を・・・覚ました・・・」（グリンジャ）「おまえがキラだ ちがうのか」「そう ぼくがキラだ・・・あんたと対応する・・・」（中略）「灯 の・・・せいか・・・?こんなに・・・きれいな子だったか・・・?」（中略）（グリンジャ）「?・・・体が・・・変化してる・・・?まえに熱を出したとき見た体とちがう」（キラ）「そう？キ ラのせいか」（中略）「おまえみたいに・・・?・・・いつのまに—男の部分が消えてしまうのは—」「へん？」「・・・はじめて見る」「すぐもとにもどるいまだけだ あんたがふれてキラが対応したせ いだ あんた以外とは対応しない」
nevertheless, Kira is able to choose eir partner to become a woman and get pregnant when ey is emotionally attracted to that person.

In contrast, the relationship between Ashijin and Kira is strictly a male-male relationship. Ashijin becomes jealous of Grinja after he sees Kira’s transformation. After Ashijin punishes Grinja by blinding him, he has sex with Kira, but ey neither transforms into a woman nor presents a seductive face. As mentioned earlier, Kira states that “Kira”—the feminine side—will not awaken for Ashijin. Eventually, Kira escapes from Ashijin, but once captured by the medical center, ey begins to appreciate Ashijin. Later, Kira finds Ashijin more honest, kinder, and more caring than ey thought. Although Kira’s feminine side does not awaken for Ashijin, eir pregnancy (fertility) is able to save Ashijin from the flood at the end. Therefore, Kira has agency and is able to choose to transform into either male or female (particularly, the transformation of eir femininity is selective) depending on eir own emotion.

Toward the end, Grinja, Kira, and Ashijn enter into a harmonious triangular relationship. For example, Kira’s extrasensory power aligns with Ashijn and Grinja, who are the only ones able to keep Kira’s power in check. Kira mentions that ey hopes the three of them will live together peacefully in Ashijin’s cave.\textsuperscript{79} All three of them are outsiders who do not fit into the society. Kira is the father killer who is sheltered in Ivan’s world without knowledge of the outside, while Grinja is the Holy-Mother killer and follows a millenarian cult. Ashijin is called “a person who failed to die,” as he falls from the cliff and cracks his forehead open, but he survives after six months of medical treatment by the center. As others fear the crescent-moon scar on his forehead, he is considered an outsider, yet Ashijin is always optimistic about his life and the world. Kira is first attracted to Grinja’s pessimistic worldview, but Ashijin’s optimistic

\textsuperscript{79} Ibid., vol. 2, 314.
worldview gives them hope. The three of them begin to balance out; nevertheless, Kira dies at the end to save the Earth, and, another quadruplet, who was frozen after the fire, is revived. The ending suggests that Ashijin, Grinja, and the other quadruplet (who is going to be named another name and not “Kira”) might form a triangle relationship. This other quadruplet can be the “third element,” who is a hermaphrodite—a hybrid between Arlene and Meyard’s Factor E. Although the triangle relationship between Ashijin, Grinja, and Kira ends, the triangulation between Ashijin, Grinja, and the second quadruplet suggestively has the potential to deconstruct the dyad between either a man-woman or a man-man.

Therefore, the multiple intersections of five triangulations attempt to collapse binarism and to complicate a heteronormative love romance or even a male-male romance with the interception of the “third element”—Kira’s transformative sex/gender. In particular, Kira’s transformative sex between male and female is never able to fit into the theory of the triangles of the Oedipus or the Electra complexes; hence, the third element exposes the dualistic-centered discourse of the Oedipus and the Electra myths. Nevertheless, hermaphroditic bodies float across the spectrum between man and woman. As discussed above, hermaphrodites can affect the ways in which heteronormative romance and binarism are played out. In the next section, I will show how hermaphroditism can affect the idea of women’s reproduction.

II. Dual-Sexed (Re)production—A Contested Site Between Biological and Technological Reproduction

As we have seen, Hagio’s Marginal and other works explicitly and implicitly bring attention to reproductive issues in Japan. In 1978, the first successful in-vitro fertilization (IVF) birth was carried out in England; five years later Japan saw the first successful IVF birth. Since then, IVF has been used in Japan for fertility treatments along with a variety of other assistive reproductive technologies (ARTs). Kotani posits that “reproduction is a contested field between
‘biological reproduction’ and ‘technological reproduction’” and “the dichotomous sex/gender matrix—woman/nature/biological reproduction versus man/culture/technological reproduction—is embedded in societies.”

Based on this dichotomous system, even though giving birth has a major impact on women’s bodies and despite the fact that it is women who are the primary users of ARTs, the reproductive system has been controlled by male-centered biomedical technology and sociopolitical and legal system. Reflecting on the reproductive system in Japan at that time, many of Hagio’s works satirically depict these male-controlled practices and demonstrate an effort on the part of female characters to escape or reject biological reproduction and/or to pursue alternative means of reproduction.

This section will specifically explore the way in which the reproductive system in *Marginal* is portrayed to reflect on reproductive activities regulated by male-centered biomedical technology and the sociopolitical system in Japan. I will also examine the ways in which the creation of ambiguously sexed/gendered figures by the use of genetic engineering serve as alternate ways of reproduction in order to reject women’s biological reproduction and to create a debatable site of scientific reproductive experiments.

**A Historical Overview of the State and Women’s Reproductive Bodies**

Reproduction has been controlled by the Japanese state since the Meiji era. During World War II, the slogan “Be Fruitful and Multiply” (*Umeyo fuyaseyo*) was used to encourage the creation of future soldiers, whereas the postwar reproductive strategy was believed to be democratic, as women had gained reproductive rights. However, feminist historian Ogino Miho argues that postwar reproduction has been controlled by the national population policy; the inconsistency of its policy: the continuation and discontinuation of certain reproductive policies

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80 Kotani, *Joseijō muishiki*, 44.
illustriates the problems of national intervention to individual reproductive activities. In the immediate post-war period, the dramatic increase in the population caused the government to control the birth rate by implementing a “Family Planning” policy, improving contraceptives, and legalizing abortion under the Eugenic Protection Law in 1948. Nevertheless, the Eugenic Protection Law (EPL) was a continuation of the National Eugenic Protection Law of the inter-war period with some additional policies, such as the forced sterilization of those who were considered to have hereditary diseases or genetic disorders. This policy remained in effect until the movements to abolish it began in the 1970s. As mentioned earlier, intersexed people were treated unfairly under the EPL. The EPL was finally abolished and re-formulated as the Maternal Body Protection Law in 1996.

Since the late 1960s, the issue of the low birth rate has been receiving attention, and the government attempted to ban abortions under the EPL during the 1970s and the early 1980s. However, feminists and activists fought against the change in women’s reproductive rights. Thus, many women began to be able to choose their career and to marry and have children at their desired age, but reproductive policies and medical practice such as obstetrics and gynecology remain in a patriarchal discourse. The extreme decline of the birth rate has become an issue since the 1990s, as lack of labor makes it difficult to support the large population of the elderly. The countermeasure policy for the falling birth rate (少子化対策) and the Specified

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82 Ibid., 153-3.
83 Ibid., 156. Many feminists groups protested against the coerced sterilization for those who have hereditary diseases or genetic disorders in the EPL.
84 From 1972 to 1974, the political conservative attempted to amend prohibition of abortions for those who wish to terminate pregnancies for economic reason under the EPL. Mackie, Feminism in Modern Japan, 164-68.
85 Ogino, ibid., 157. Radical feminist groups such as Tatəkau onna (Fighting Women) led by Tanaka Mitsu, Chūpiren (Alliance for Abortion and the Pill) led by Enomoto Misako, and others protested against the amendment of the abortion law in the 1970s. Mackie, ibid., 155-57, 164-68.
Service System: Financial Aids for Fertility Treatment (特定不妊治療費助成事業制度) have been implemented together since 2004 although the local service does not ask the people who receive financial aid about successful rates. The implementation of these two policies together would limit women in society to the role of childbearing. Senba Yukari points out, “due to fertility treatment aids, if the society begins to highly expect those infertile women to bear a child, the society will give a cold stare to either those women who do not choose to have treatments or women who choose not to have a child. If the society only accepts that childbearing is a good thing, it will cause women to be trapped in a role of a ‘child-bearing machine.’” Almost in support of Senba’s fears, as late as 2007 the health minister Yanagisawa Hakuo scandalously referred to women as “‘child-bearing machines,’” and shockingly in 2014 some male politicians in the Tokyo Metropolitan assembly publically bullied a young single female politician Shiomura Ayaka for not producing a child. In the 1980s when Marginal was published, women were blamed more for not having babies early enough when the birth rate began to drop, as the improvement of reproductive technology did not necessarily give women the pressure to have babies.

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87 Ibid., 170.「不妊治療費を支援することで、より多くの不妊の人たちに子どもを産むことを期待する雰囲気が社会に広まれば、治療を受けない選択をした女性や、そもそも不妊でなくても子どもを産まないと決めた女性たちに大使、人は冷ややかな目を向けるようになるかもしれない。産むことのみを善とする社会は、女性たちを「子どもを産むための存在」へと貶めていく。」
89 Asahi shinbun digital, June 18, 2014.
(Re)production Beyond Women in *Marginal*

As discussed above, the world of *Marginal* illustrates the male-only infertile world because the environmental contamination of the Earth affected the Earthlings’ genetics (Factor D) so that they became infertile. This world reconstructs the reproductive system on Earth after the extinction of women. Hagio creates the reproductive system that distances itself from women’s biological reproduction in order to avoid the use of the woman’s body, to unbind the confinement as a woman, and to circumvent a binary-opposed system between “men/culture/technological reproduction” and “women/nature/biological reproduction.” In this “marginal” world, two men: Ivan and Meyard (the latter being in fact dual-or-multiple sexed) are in charge of procreation. These two characters expose reproductive technologies as a male-centered medical discourse. Simultaneously, Ivan, Meyard, and their products (Kira and the Holy Mother) become a contested site between men and women.

Ivan, for example, reflects on an extreme version of male-centered bio-technological reproduction, as technology enables men to control reproduction more actively. Ivan is obsessed with the healing of the mother’s trauma from the rape, the connection between a woman’s womb and brain, and uterine reproduction. Regarding these points, Akiko Ebihara argues that Ivan’s obsession with reproduction as a medical experimental site is similar to the obsession of male gynecologists. Ivan prioritizes scientific experiments over anything else. He illegally experiments (cloning etc.) until the university and medical institution expel him. In addition, Ivan uses Meyard’s Factor E, which is contrary to genetic law in this imaginary world, in order to create the dual-sexed quadruplets Kira(s). He wants to continue fertility experiments on Earth through his children Kira(s) to create a baby between Kira and him without any concerns for

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Arlene’s feelings and Kira(s)’ desires.\textsuperscript{91} Ivan is too obsessed with biological reproduction, especially giving birth by wombs although he apparently does not have to use his own body to give birth. His obsessive dream compels Kira(s) to have the same dream—having a baby but it is not Kira’s desire, reflecting the situation in Japan, where society pressures women to have children.

In contrast, Ivan’s idea of the connection between wombs and women’s (un)conscious suggests the possibility of a collective and transcendent feminized space, although his concept essentializes women and equates them with their reproductive organs (wombs). The quadruplets’ collective consciousness(es) symbolically suggest “wombs” called Kira, as Fujimoto suggests that Kira emself is “a metaphor of a womb.”\textsuperscript{92} Ivan believes that uteruses function in a woman’s body like another brain and use another kind of language like dreams. Kira also points to Ivan’s mother since her name was also Kira. From Ivan’s flashbacks of childhood, his mother Kira commits suicide due to posttraumatic stress disorder after his father strangled her while raping her.\textsuperscript{93} Since then, Ivan becomes obsessed with procreation by “wombs.” Because he theorizes that women’s uteruses are able to function like brains (remembering, feeling, dreaming, etc.), he believes his mother remembered her traumatic event and went insane even though she was knocked unconscious while his father was raping her.\textsuperscript{94} Ivan continues to hypothesize, “The basis of organisms is a mother. The basis of mother is a womb. The adrenal medulla [the internal part of adrenal gland]\textsuperscript{95} functions like the brain of the womb.”\textsuperscript{96} His belief is that a womb is an

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\item\textsuperscript{91} Hagio, Mōjinaru, vol.2, 244.
\item\textsuperscript{92} Ibid., vol. 2, 46-77.
\item\textsuperscript{93} Ibid., vol. 2, 51-2.Ivan’s story is a flashback of the flashback. Ivan’s scientist friend Dr. Goh tells Ivan’s story to Meyard.
\item\textsuperscript{94} Ibid., vol. 2, 53-5
\item\textsuperscript{95} The cells of the adrenal medulla are connected to automatic nervous system, secrete hormones, and primarily influence the energy, heart rate, and metabolism. http://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=9702 [accessed March 2, 2014].
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unconscious “marginal” (bordering) place of the woman’s body that feels and dreams. Ivan’s belief recalls French feminist Julia Kristeva’s concept of the semiotic *chora*, which is a mélange of perceptions, feelings, and desires in the pre-linguistic stage and the unutterable and repressed state of the mother. The womb as the collective (un)conscious is the possibility of the pre-linguistic space rather than the symbolic (the social world of linguistic communication).

Ivan’s idea of the link between women’s (un)conscious and wombs goes further to include fetuses. Wombs are able to dream; these dreams are words in the womb, and thus fetuses are an assemblage of the womb’s dreams. Ivan explains,

> A fetus is the crystallization (or fruit) of the womb’s dream. [...] Words lie dormant. The womb’s words are buried somewhere deep in the brain. Words in dreams are words in wombs. These words go through the cerebral cortex, the limbic system, and the hypothalamus, and return to the womb and the fetus. The fetus is a mysterious new alien existence. The womb is a foreign frontier in the body. Even time flow is different here. The division of follicles travels to eons ago. The primitive brain bordering on the limbic system was speaking to the fetus eons ago.

Although Ivan’s idea essentializes women’s reproductive organs—wombs—as a core function of women’s brain (emotion, dream etc.), wombs can constitute an alternative feminized language like dreams, and thus fetuses are the product of dreams since wombs are the beginning of life and

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96 Ibid., vol. 2, 56.
97 Ibid., vol.2, 58, 61.
100 Hagio, *Mājinaru*, vol. 2, 58-61. 「胎児は子宮の夢見る結晶体だ」（中略）「ことばは眠ってる・・・子宮のことばだ 腦のどこかに奥深く 眠りいる夢のことばは子宮のものだ 大脳皮質から辺縁系をす きて 視床下部へおちてゆく そして子宮へー 胎児へかえっていく 胎児 この不思議な新しい異物 子宮は体の中の異邦部分だ 辺境だ ここから先は時の流れすらちがう・・・ 何億年の時を旅して分裂する卵胞 辺縁系を境にしてある原始的な脳が 胎児に語りかける何億年もの過去」
share a long history of cell divisions of organisms, and both wombs and fetuses transcend time and space.

Based on Ivan’s belief, Kira’s womb reacts to eir feelings. For example, Kira’s monologue illustrates that Kira’s womb reacts to only eir selected partner, and eir womb and eir brain react separately. As mentioned earlier, when Kira transforms into a woman’s body with Grinja for sex, Ashijin becomes jealous of Grinja and throws him out. Thereafter, Ashijin has sex with the male form of Kira. He tells Kira, “You’re thinking of the beloved Grinja while making love to me. Do you know what a person like you is called? Two-headed.” Kira responds to him in eir mind, “[Two-headed person] means both of us—Kira and me. Kira won’t wake up for you. You can embrace my purposeless body. I will kill you sometime soon.”101 Kira indicates that “Kira” is a “womb,” which shares the (un)conscious space of women. Kira’s womb only reacts to eir selected partner and responds emotionally, while eir brain (in the head) reflects on the exterior male body of Kira. Dichotomizing the womb as a female brain and the brain as a male brain exposes a common association between women and reproductive organs. Thus, Ivan’s character demonstrates a contradictory and polemical site between a male-centered technological reproduction and a hopeful unconscious and emotional feminine space of wombs, although Ivan’s idea is ultimately essentializing women/womb as nature/unconscious/emotion/intuition.

Meyard is a complex character, who is first portrayed as a domineering chief scientist and later as a victim of the societal system in his world. As discussed earlier, his dual-sexed condition shows these two contesting positions. Meyard is in charge of creating all the babies on Earth and is also called Margrave, which refers to a hereditary title of the military governor who

101 Ibid., vol. 1, 362-63. Ashijin’s dialogue: 「おまえのように 男に抱かれながら想い人に心をはせる者をなんというか知ってるか」「双つ頭というんだ」Kira’s monologue: 「それはキラとぼくの二人のことだ おまえのためにキラは目を覚まさない せいけい目的のない体でも抱くがいい いずれ殺してやる」
eventually becomes the prince of the Holy Roman Empire. He is an authoritarian figure from the Company and the father figure of all the Earthmen because he creates children by technological reproduction. In this way, men can participate in (re)producing babies, who are created from lunar women eggs and earthmen’s sperm by artificial wombs.

However, he is paradoxically not allowed to procreate his own children or descendants under the law of genetics since he is a carrier of the genetic disorder Factor E. The carriers of Factor E have higher risk not only of genetic mutation (especially, mutation of heart and/or brain, difficulty in sight and hearing) but also of dictating group suicides through their strong psychic powers.102 This law calls to mind the Eugenic Protection Law in Japan that was still effective in the 1980s, as the law was constituted for “‘those who have the latency to carry malicious hereditary disorders’ physically and mentally are not allowed to have descendants and […] must be sterilized.”103 Like those who were coerced to be sterilized, Meyard, as a carrier of a genetic disorder, has also been oppressed under the legal system in this imaginary world despite being a chief scientist, as Ebihara points out.104 Thus, Meyard can associate his own body with the infertile Earth. Instead of his own procreation, he creates all the babies in artificial wombs, and his creation indicates the irony of becoming an artificial reproducer without realizing that he is oppressed. Nonetheless, his partially feminized body by injections of female hormones demonstrates that he is doubly oppressed due to having a disability and being partially feminized. His dual-sexed condition can offer two possible readings by Ebihara. First, as discussed earlier, the doubly oppressed can be interpreted as women’s internalization of reproductive burdens with the fear of infertility and coercion of reproduction. Second, dual-sexed can be interpreted as “a

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102 Ibid., vol.2, 192-3.
103 This is from National Eugenic Law, but it continued in the postwar era. Ogino, “Jinkō seisaku,” 156.
reflection of confused men in Japan who are at a loss at a time when the relationship between men and women is going through a transition.” Meyard’s body becomes a contested site between men and women, and between the oppressor/an artificial reproducer and the oppressed/the sterilized.

Moreover, both Kira and the Holy Mother are products of these scientific experiments. As discussed above, the new Holy Mother Hallelujah is a symbol of biological reproduction created by Meyard, but ey is a mere puppet and is not a reproducer, as ey was an XXY male and is surgically transformed into a female. Eir existence is full of irony, as most citizens are ignorant of the mother’s reproductive abilities but expect her to be reproductive for her whole life. In contrast, Kira is a reproductive dual-sex genetically engineered by the creator Ivan from Meyard, as ey has transformative sexual organs in order to have a baby. Nevertheless, as discussed earlier, since Kira’s transformative sex reacts to eir selected partner Grinja and hidden femininity give em an agency, Kira is able to decide when and with whom ey gets pregnant although Ivan’s obsessive dream of creating a baby in a womb has been haunting Kira. For example, when Ashijin told Kira that the new Holy Mother would give birth for everyone, Kira begins to weep out of relief. Kira says, “I don’t have to do anything. I don’t have to bear a baby for Ivan. […] The Mother… the New Mother will give birth! […] I can fly! I am free.” (See Figure 2.10.) Despite eir being dual-sexed, Kira’s words demonstrate that eir pressure to bear a child for eir father rather than for eir own sake is similar to these Japanese women who have pressure to have babies for the sake of their families.

105 Ibid.
107 Ibid., vol. 2, 293, 295. «ぼくはもういいんだ 何もしなくても イワンのために子供を産まなくてもいいんだ（中略）マザが—新たなマザが産んでくれる—！」（中略）「飛べるよ！自由なんだ」
Kira begins to realize that ey is able to establish eir own identity other than Ivan’s dream—reproduction after Ivan’s death and living outside of the world. As Kira questions the meaning of eir existence to Grinja and Dr. Goh,

“Who am I here? What is this world that I see in front of me? […] I didn’t know other worlds existed before, other than Ivan’s world. The world was dead once, but I live here and feel many things. […] Do I live now because I must make Ivan’s failed dream a success? Or, is it okay for me to have another dream because this is another world and Ivan’s no longer here? ” [Grinja responds,]

“Right. Your previous world ended. You can have your own dream, not anybody else’s dream.”

This dialogue demonstrates Kira’s struggle of establishing eir identity. Kira did not know that eir purpose of living was other than procreation, but ey comes to realize that ey can find eir own purpose of living.

Nevertheless, the optimistic ending suggests that Kira’s pregnant body is merged into the ocean and saves the infertile Earth. Eir fertilized egg (embryo) deactivates the infertile genes—Factor D and thus purifies the ocean. The Earth becomes fertile. The Company, in fact, wants to terminate Kira, as ey is an illegal existence created from illegal genes, Factor E. However, Kira has supernatural powers to allow em to envision the polluted red-colored ocean and to regenerate the entire ocean on Earth. In the symbolic images, Kira has a vision that the ocean dreams about the clean and blue ocean, while ey is also able to hear and feel the pulse of the ocean. Both Kira’s and the ocean’s dreams and pulses are merged together; both Kira and the ocean are symbolically wombs of the Earth. These images of water and pulses also symbolize a fetus inside of the womb. This is Kira’s monologue:

108 Ibid., vol. 3, 96-9. 「ここにいるぼくはなんだろう？この目の前にある世界はなんだろう？（中略）ぼくはイワンのいた世界のほかに世界があるなんて知らなかった 世界は一度死んだのにぼくは生きていて ここででもぼくはいろんなことを感じられて（中略）ぼくがこうしているのはあのとき失敗したイワンの夢をかなえるため？それともここは別の世界だから イワンはいないのだから 別の夢を・・・見てもいいんだろうか・・・？」 [グリンジャ]「そうだ・・・もう終わったのだ 誰の夢でもなく 自分の夢を語ればいい」
“I can hear very clearly—the blue ocean’s pulse. The pulse strikes through my body. . . . Oh, this is it. I have been hearing this pulse. . . . So bright! Have you been waiting for me? . . . It’s an illusion—the dream that the Earth continues to have. . . . My pulse ripples and resonates with the Earth’s pulse. The dream that has been waiting for me. . . . (See Figure 2.11.)

This symbolic ending of Kira illustrates the escape of woman’s biological reproduction—giving uterine birth. In other words, Kira’s genetically engineered hermaphroditic body merges into the oceans—nature—rather than giving birth or becoming a mother of the individual subject. Kira is primarily a male embodiment in order to keep a distance from the woman’s body, and then she reveals the feminine reproductive bodily part and becomes pregnant. Nonetheless, Kira ultimately fertilizes the planet. The regeneration of the planet at the end of the story might suggest the possibility of “remaking” human society, as Hollinger suggests. The revival of another hermaphroditic quadruplet also suggests a hopeful ending with the possibility of fertility (children) on the Earth.

*Marginal* attempts to avoid portraying women’s biological reproduction and motherhood, while advanced reproductive technologies such as genetic engineering seem to offer an alternative way to procreate. Nevertheless, these technologies also provide a means of

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109 Ibid., vol. 3, 295-8. 「ぼくにはこんなにはっきり聞こえる 青い海の律動——が——（略）ああこれだ 聞こえていたのは 青い海が・・・（略）まぶしい ——ぼくを——待っていたの——？（中略）（そう）幻影 病んだ地球の見続ける夢—— ぼくの波動がひろがっていく 地球の律動と重なって ぼくを待っていた夢——・・・」

110 As cultural studies critic Ōtsuka Eiji suggests that Hagio’s *Sutā reddo* (Star Red, 1977-78) also depicts boys who bear a child, the character Yodaka who appears to be an adolescent boy transforms into a woman to give birth. At the very end of *Star Red*, the last generation of the Martian girl Sei’s body is destroyed, but her soul goes into the boy Yodaka, who becomes pregnant by supernatural powers and will give birth to Sei as a newborn baby. Ōtsuka continues to argue, “a ‘male mother’ is necessary for women to be reborn” (133). *Star Red* demonstrates a sudden reversal maternal role for reproduction; however, my contention is that the reproduction by the boy is a fictional device to avoid women’s reproduction completely rather than rebirth of women by male reproduction in this work. Ōtsuka Eiji, “‘Umu sei’ to shite no shōnen: seisa no shōjo manga shi, yokoku hen” [The Boys Who Has ‘a Sex of Bearing a Child.’ Preview: Sexual Difference on Shōjo Manga History] in *Kikan toshi 2 Tokushū: Seiteki toshi* [Quarterly Issue Metropolitan 2 Special: Sexual City] (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō, 1989), 128-133.

111 Both “A-A’” (Ei and Ei-dash, 1981) and *Gin no sankaku* (Silver Triangle, 1980-82) deal with cloning as a means of reproduction. In “A-A’” the protagonist Adi’s clone is kept to resurrect Adi. As Adachi Yumi points out that clone bodies in Hagio’s works are seen as memory receivers of the original person rather than a clone who has an entirely different personality. For example, *Silver Triangle* portrays three versions of the male protagonist Mallee (a
controlling dual-or multiple-sexed figures even further in this world. As mentioned earlier, these dual-sexed figures are externally male and internally female; however, once their femininity is revealed, only death becomes a solution to escape from biological reproduction. Nonetheless, the regeneration of the nature by Kira’s pregnancy (eir fertilized egg) offers a hopeful future—the rebirth of the fertile world. In other words, Kira’s fertility shows the potential of “remaking” the human world.

**Conclusion**

Hagio’s innovative works begin with the convergence between shōjo manga and SF genres. Her ease of drawing male protagonists frees her from being a woman; these androgynous male characters express her desire for a genderless or gender-neutral world. The beautiful boys’ comics with the use of the Other (hybrids, non-humans, posthumans) have been useful devices to detach women from women’s bodies and sexualities, especially avoiding pregnancy and motherhood. Hagio’s works gradually evolve from androgynous characters in a male-male romance of the beautiful boys’ comics to the third-element dual-sexed figure in a male homosocial world. As mentioned earlier, in Hagio’s texts, both androgynous and dual-sexed characters can function as externally male and internally (hidden) female to remove women themselves from their own bodies and unbind the confinement of women. The disclosure of these figures’ feminine parts demonstrates the gradual adaptation of a woman. Dual-sexed

time reaper and species called Silver Triangle): the original Mallee, who is killed; Mallee 2, whose original memory and the female singer Lulugo Moore’s memory are accidentally installed; Mallee 3, whose original memory, is installed. Similar to Meyard in *Marginal*, Mallee is a carrier of multiple genetic disorders (fatal factors) and is legally sterilized under the genetic security law. Mallee is a forced sterilized man. Mallee 2’s gender identity is also confused, as a male body contains both memories of male and female. His identity becomes unstable and a contesting between the masculinized brain and the feminized one. Toward the end, Mallee 2 is killed by Mallee 3, but the readers see Mallee 2’s body survived at the very end. Mallee 2 ultimately becomes the original person Eroquisu in another realm of time and space; as a result, the Silver Triangle species no longer exist by the tempo-spatial distortions. Thus, these works avoid biological reproduction by women and present male sterilization, as cloning is a common practice to maintain humanoid species in these worlds. Adachi Yumi, “Kurō ningen: Hagio Moto no sekai ga anjisuru mono” [Clone Humans: What the World of Hagio Moto Suggests], *Manga kenkyū* [Manga Studies] 4 (November 2003): 111.
figures can also become a contested site between a man and a woman to challenge heteronormativity, sexual dimorphism, binaristic gender roles, and male-centered discourse of reproduction in the patriarchal society despite being still bound by binarism.

*The Poe’s Clan* primarily portrays a male homosocial world by the use of vampire figures. In particular, two boy vampires, Edgar and Allan, complicate the borders of gender, age, and ethnicity. Both of them are trapped in British adolescent boys’ bodies; however, their gendered markers (hair, eyes, clothes) are feminine, and thus they are marked as androgynous. The androgynous characters give readers the illusion of neutral gender or a genderless world and particularly enable Japanese girl readers to redirect negative connotations of women’s bodies and to engage with these characters. Simultaneously, the European boys’ characters allow these readers to create a distance from the patriarchal society in Japan. In addition, while Edgar’s interiority shifts between adult and child, his maturity and emotional sensitivity, particularly, demonstrate the female readers’ desire for the psychologically complex subjectivities. Moreover, the triangulation between Edgar, Marybelle, and Allan complicates heteronormative love and hence creates male(-female)-male or queer spiritual romance, after Edgar internalizes Marybelle as his unified subjectivity. However, at the end, male-male spiritual love between Edgar and Allan is suggestively consummated through death in fire in order to pursue spirituality and an egalitarian relationship between two people regardless of gender for the girl readers.

In “There Were Eleven!” a dual-sexed character, Frol, who has not been sexually differentiated, complicates sex/gender identities by both scrambled sexed and gendered markers in order to create an illusion of neutral gender in a male homosocial world. Frol’s sexually undifferentiated and invisible dual-sexed state and eir scrambled gendered markers with another male partner Tada offer us the possibility of interpreting the relationship as either a quasi-male-
female or a quasi-male-male love romance in order to appropriate the conventional heterosexual love romantic story. Nevertheless, other crew members’ perceptions of sex problematize and expose our limited perceptions of binaristic sex, as Frol is seen as either a woman or a man. Frol’s dual-sex also becomes a contested site between a man and a woman. For example, Frol’s misogynistic attitude corresponds to women’s internalized misogynistic logic of male superiority that imprisons women in an unequal double bind in a male-privileged world. Frol, however, accepts becoming a woman at the end when ey finds a good future partner, as eir freedom to choose eir sex gives em an agency. The ending also suggests a hope for overcoming internalized misogynistic logic and acceptance of being a woman.

In Marginal, similarly, Kira’s genetically engineered transformative sex (from male to female) and XXY sex chromosomes can play with the ambiguity and fluidity of sex to challenge sexual dimorphism. In particular, Kira, as externally male in appearance but molecularly female, creates distance from a woman’s body on the surface. Similar to Frol, Kira’s selective sex transformation offers em an agency so that ey can choose the time when ey wants to be pregnant. Kira’s development of eir own subjectivity as an individual also demonstrates a gradual acceptance of emself rather than becoming the experimental reproductive subject of Ivan. In addition, Kira’s transformative sex/gender and Meyard’s dual-sexed body as the third element complicate a heteronormative love romance or even a male-male romance and attempt to collapse binarism through multiple intersections of triangle relationships.

However, artificially transformed dual-sexed figures, the Holy Mother Hallelujah and Meyard, do not have any positive solutions when the female elements are imposed on them. Both of them are released from the entrapment of the mother/the creator by death. The Holy Mother Hallelujah jumps off the balcony to free em from living as an icon of the mother, who is, in fact,
unreproductive. Meyard dies from exhaustion and is freed from creating babies artificially and from his own rare genetic disorders, which prohibit him from his own procreation. Despite a possibly hopeful ending, the Holy Mother, Meyard, and even Kira are free from their reproductive duties through death. Their ambiguous sex/gender is an attempt to collapse sexual dimorphism and simultaneously exposes the limit of escaping from the inequality between men and women despite the male-only-world.

While advanced reproductive technologies such as genetic engineering seem to provide women with an alternative way to procreate, these technologies become a means of controlling dual-sexed figures who have female parts even further in this world. The scientist characters Ivan and Meyard reflect a male-centered biomedical discourse, the use of reproductive technologies, and fertility experiments in Japanese society. However, Ivan’s idea of the womb and Meyard’s hermaphroditic body contest the male-centered discourse and rather bring attention to women’s struggles (Meyard’s internalized misogyny and forced sterilization) and an alternative feminized space (Ivan’s concept of the womb and the fetus). Although Kira is a reproductive experimental product at the beginning, Kira’s pregnancy offers an optimistic ending. Since Kira’s pregnancy (the fertilized egg) deactivates the infertile factor D and saves the entire planet, the regeneration of the Earth through eir femininity suggests a hopeful future—the remaking of the human world.
Figure 2.1 Frol takes off eir helmet, and eir long and shiny hair comes out. “There Were Eleven!,” trans. Matt Thorn in *Four Shōjo Stories* (San Francisco, CA: Viz Communications, Inc., 1996), 63.
Figure 2.2 Amazon sees Frol’s naked body and identifies em as a woman. “There Were Eleven!,” Ibid., 110.
Figure 2.3  Tada consoles Frol for a failure of the exam and proposes em that Frol can marry Tada as a woman. To mark femininity, Frol leans on Tada. “There Were Eleven!,” Ibid., 164.
Figure 2.4 Kira, who is dual-sexed, appears to be male. This image shows that Kira has a penis. *Mājinaru* [Marginal, 1985-87] (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1999, 2009), vol. 2, 153.
Figure 2.5  The Holy Mother Hallelujah (Emerada) is surgically transformed into female. *Mājinaru* vol. 2, 72.

![Figure 2.5](image1)

Figure 2.6  Meyard, a rare genetic disease carrier, is gradually transformed into a woman. Meyard’s right breast is ambiguously drawn with the shade, while his left chest has an artificial heart is implanted. *Mājinaru* vol. 3, 276.

![Figure 2.6](image2)
**Figure 2.7:** The Second Triangulation

![Diagram of the Second Triangulation]

**Figure 2.8:** The Fourth Triangulation

![Diagram of the Fourth Triangulation]
Figure 2.9 The panel suggests transformation of Kira’s genitals from a penis into a vagina after Grinja touched Kira. *Mājinaru* vol.1, 333.
Figure 2.10  Kira jumps up to the roof with a joy after Ashijin told Kira that the Holy mother gives birth to all the children. *Mājinaru* vol. 2, 293.
Figure 2.11  Kira is in the ocean and has a vision of the untainted blue ocean. Kira eventually merges into the water. The image of Kira with a fin can illustrate the process of becoming a fish and melting into the ocean. *Mājinaru* vol. 3, 296.
Chapter Three: Gender Panic through Cyborgs: Simulated Sex/Gender and Excessive Maternal Performance in Ōhara Mariko’s Texts

Once Hagio Moto carved out space for women in the genre through the convergence of SF and shōjo manga, other women writers were quick to join her in making use of the cyborg, posthuman, and other liminal figures to critique contemporary social customs. One writer who has experimented with hybridity and gender-play through cyborgs and cyberpunk is Ōhara Mariko (b.1959). Whereas most of Ōhara’s works feature cyborgs or alternative gender identities, her 1985 short stories “Mentaru fimēru” (The Mental Female) and “Shōjo” (Girl), and her 1990 novel Haibriddo chairudo (Hybrid Child) in particular draw our attention to the way cyborgs question notions of fixed gender and inherent social roles. It is my contention that the cyborg bodies in these works highlight fluid and multiple genders in simulation or in the process of physical transformation and thus (re)construct new forms of gender.

This chapter consists of three sections, each dedicated to a primary text: Ōhara’s cyberpunk story “The Mental Female,” her novel Hybrid Child, and her short work, “Girl.” The first section will analyze the ways cyborg/posthuman entities—four kinds of multi-layered simulacra of cyber-femininity and signs of cyber-motherhood—are presented in “The Mental Female.” It will also illustrate the ways in which these models of femininity and the mother can challenge hegemonic forms of femininity. In the second section I focus on three major themes in Ōhara’s Hybrid Child and the way these themes call into question the natural binaries of gender, the modification of male bodies, and the performance of femininity, especially the role of the
mother. The third section will explore the ways a fantastic hermaphroditic posthuman figure creates the parodic effect of performativity and exposes the satirical representation of a heteronormative couple in the text “Girl.” I will begin with a brief introduction to Ōhara Mariko, simulation, and cyberpunk before turning to a discussion of the works.

**Era of Simulacra, Cyberpunk, Cyborg, and Ōhara Mariko**

Since the 1980s, rampant technology has altered the concept of the body as sexed and gendered through a hyper-consumer culture. French philosopher Jean Baudrillard in *Simulacra and Simulation* (1981) discusses that the models of the real—simulacra (“the copy without an original”)—precede reality in a postmodern consumer culture. In other words, reality is now replaced and determined by simulacra; it is already hyperreal.¹ Baudrillard claims, “It is no longer a question of a false representation of reality (or ideology) but of concealing the fact that the real is no longer real, and thus of saving the reality principle.”² As he notes, simulacra connote falseness or counterfeit. Although simulacra need to have referents to have some sense of the real, Baudrillard stresses that we are no longer able to distinguish between the real and the artificial. The imaginary such as science fiction is “an alibi of the real.” Thus, our world is already hyperreal and, in a sense, science-fictionalized.³

The postmodern culture and technological developments in the hyper-consumer culture also witnessed the development of a cyberpunk movement or phenomenon in the U.S. during the

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¹ Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 1-3.
² Ibid., 12-13.
³ There were a number of criticisms of Baudrillard’s book. For example, George P. Landow points out that the weakness of Baudrillard’s approach focuses on that digitality engages in binary oppositions such as question/answer or stimulus/response; however, digitality does not limit to “either a linear world or one of binary oppositions” (20-22). George P. Landow, *Hypertext: The Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1992).
1980s, initiated by William Gibson’s publication of the novel *Neuromancer* (1984).⁴ Cyberpunk is considered a radically new form of hybridity, synthesis, and integration “between high art and trash, beauty and ugliness, avant-garde and pop, delicacy and violence, the utterly programmed and the spontaneous, and, perhaps their most original synthesis, technology and humanism,” like punk and cyberpunk.⁵ In particular, the notions of Donna Haraway’s cyborg and Baudrillard’s simulacra and simulation coincide with the emergence of the cyberpunk movement and/or phenomenon. Although the cyberpunk movement was criticized as an upper-middle-class white heterosexual male movement, Tatsumi Takayuki draws attention to the synchronicity between the works of the third generation of Japanese SF writers, including Ōhara, and the cyberpunk movement in the U.S.⁶

**Ōhara Mariko and Female-Centered Science Fiction**

Ōhara was keenly aware that high technology and hyper-consumer culture dramatically affected Japanese society in the 1980s. In the 2002 interview, she mentions that the plethora of high-tech information systems, especially an excess of images on TV, leads people to be childish and shields them from their own sensitivity.⁷ Kotani Mari suggests that Ōhara’s works explore Japan’s postmodern culture, particularly “Japanese femininity through ‘simulationism’ […]—the sampling, simulating, remixing—that came after the high-tech era.”⁸ Her works amply employ cyborgs, hybridity, simulacra, and simulation of gender identity, and hyperbolic feminine

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performance as tools to put the reality of sex/gender into crisis, similar to Judith Butler’s notion of gender performativity. 9

Ōhara Mariko has won several important awards, most notably the award for the Best Science Fiction in 1994, bestowed by the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of Japan (SFWJ). The novel Hybrid Child also won the Seiun Award in 1991, voted on by the fans and the attendees of the Japan Science Fiction Convention. Although she may not be well known by the general public, Ōhara established a position among science fiction writers and readers especially during the 1980s and 1990s. She is considered one of the forerunners of cyberpunk fiction in Japan. As she attended Sacred Heart Women’s University in Tokyo and studied psychology there, her works bear the traces of psychoanalysis and Catholicism to challenge established studies and an organized religious institution. 10 Her works go beyond prose fiction and embrace a variety of media. She has written text for manga, video games, and radio shows, and during the late 1990s and the early 2000s she edited SF anthologies with her husband Misaki Keigo (b.1954). Additionally, Ōhara served as the president of the SFWJ from 1999 to 2000. Although Ōhara has not written fiction in recent years, she has remained busy writing essays in Tōshiba’s promotional magazine Erekitaru [Electricity]. She has also begun to write essays and blogs

9 Although Baudrillard’s notion of simulacra and hyperreality focuses on a pessimistic view of hyper-consumer culture, Judith Butler emphasizes the playful and parodic reconfiguration of gender performance in Gender Trouble. Butler claims that sex and gender have no original identity but rather the perception of the repetitive acts has become the reality of sex and gender and “through the gendered stylization of the body” (Gender, xiv-xv, 33). In particular, “drag” performance is a parodic identity of the original gender and exposes heterosexuality is not an origin. Butler states, “the reality of gender is also put into crisis: it becomes unclear how to distinguish the real from the unreal” (Gender, xiii). The reality is that sex and gender are simulacra in a way and produced through the repetition of acts and performance. Judith Butler, Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity (New York: Routledge, 1999).

10 Ōhara was partially influenced by the works (such as Norstilla (1975) of American SF writer Cordwainer Smith (Paul Myron Anthony Linebarger, 1913-66), who employed the concepts of psychology and religious beliefs (especially, Anglicanism). In addition, Smith’s narrative style was also set in a universe (so-called instrumentality of mankind, which the ultimate guardian watches over the mankind) for a long period of time (e.g. thousands of years), but the cycle of the universe was not necessarily resolved. Ōhara’s works such as Hybrid Child similarly utilize the long-period time of universe that the mysterious guardian watches over the planet and the endings of the universe are primarily unresolved. Smith was born in Milwaukee and grew up in Japan, China, France, and Germany and was influenced by classical literature tradition such as The Journey to the West in China and Tale of Genji in Japan.
opposed to nuclear energy after the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster, caused by the Great East
Japan earthquake and tsunami on March 11, 2011, which is counter to her earlier positive
comments on nuclear energy.\textsuperscript{11} Despite her prolific career in SF during the 1980s and 1990s,
there are very few studies of her works in English or Japanese.

\textbf{Experiencing Cyber-Femininity and Cyber-Maternity in “The Mental Female”}

The title “Mentaru fimeuru” (女性型精神構造保持者, The Mental Female, 1985) emphasizes
the “mentality” of the feminine to challenge Cartesian dualism associated with sex/gender
difference: mind/male and body/female in Western philosophy. However, in the text different
kinds of femininity including the mental female take complex forms of simulation and oscillate
between mentality and physicality, disembodiment and embodiment, human and machine,
animal and machine, subject and object, and the self and other. Various models of femininity
seem to occupy a liminal space in this text. Simultaneously, femininity is associated with
“mentality or “madness” in a sarcastic sense, as the concept of motherhood, for example, is a
sign and becomes destructive through excess of love.

This section will explore four kinds of femininity as represented in this text. Three of
them are directly connected to the cybernetic system known as “Her.” This system has multiple
materializations: (1) Kipple (“Her”—a self-image), (2) the Sacred Bird Mother (“Her”—a
manifestation of the physical body), and (3) the Story Maker (“Her”—a creator of reality).
Notably, Kipple and the Sacred Mother are mothers. The fourth and the final kind of femininity
in the text is the “Mental Female” (who appears as the Cat-Girl Sheila and others), a professional
lover. Here I will refer to Baudrillard’s concept of simulacra and simulation to illustrate the ways

\textsuperscript{11} Ōhara’s profile is provided in her homepage on the website. http://park6.wakwak.com/~ohara.mariko/profb.htm
[accessed April 10, 2009].
in which these models of femininity can challenge the hegemonic forms of femininity through destructive behavior. First, I will discuss the cyberpunk genre or movement in the U.S. and Japan in relation to Ōhara’s narrative style. Then, I will briefly explore how cybernetics and the city of Tokyo are a rendered as a feminized space in this text, before turning to an examination of four kinds of femininity through layers of simulation and parodic maternal signs.

**Cyberpunk and Ōhara’s “The Mental Female”**

Cyberpunk is a controversial concept. It is considered a subgenre, a movement, or a phenomenon of science fiction that emerged during the 1980s. Gibson’s 1984 novel *Neuromancer* initiated heated discussions of its genre and its relation to postmodern culture and technological development in a hyperconsumer culture. The term “cyberpunk” was originally coined in Bruce Bethke’s short story “Cyberpunk” and was employed to describe a literary movement by the writer and the editor of the *Washington Post* Gardner Dozois. Dozois refers to a group of writers such as Gibson, Bruce Sterling, Rudy Rucker, Lewis Shiner, and John Shirley. The “cyber” refers to “cybernetics—“a future where industrial and political blocs may be global […] and controlled through information networks.” The “punk” coming from “the rock’n roll terminology of the 1970s” denotes that which is “young, streetwise, aggressive, alienated and offensive to the Establishment.”

Cyberpunk writer Bruce Sterling describes cyberpunk as the integration or mixture of two things opposed to one another, in his preface to *Mirrorshades: The Cyberpunk Anthology* (1988). “The integration has become our decade’s crucial source of cultural energy. The work of the cyberpunks is paralleled throughout 1980s pop culture: in rock video; in the hacker underground;

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14 Ibid., 288.
15 Ibid.
in the jarring street tech of hip-hop and scratch music; in the synthesizer rock of London and Tokyo. This phenomenon, this dynamic, has a global range; cyberpunk is its literary incarnation.”

SF scholar Larry McCaffery describes the cyberpunk phenomenon as “a synthesis of SF with postmodern aesthetic tendencies and thematic impulses” in Storming the Reality Studio. As mentioned above, it is a radically new form that creates new connections “between high art and trash, beauty and ugliness, avant-garde and pop, delicacy and violence, the utterly programmed and the spontaneous, and, perhaps their most original synthesis, technology and humanism,” like punk and cyberpunk. These characteristics of cyberpunk (synthesis, hybridity, integration, counterculture) by Sterling and McCaffery comport with Ōhara’s “The Mental Female” and a collection of other stories.

In addition, as noted above the cyberpunk movement has been criticized as a white middle-class heterosexual male movement. For example, in Science Fiction Eye in 1990, feminist SF writers Karen Joy Fowler, Lisa Goldstein, and Pat Murphy remark that the cyberpunk is “a made-up genre and mostly just like a boy’s club except Pat Cardigan.” Nonetheless, these cyberpunk authors claim that many cyberpunk works such as Neuromancer employ feminist rhetoric, including portraying strong women warriors. Jessica A. Salmonson, however, strongly opposes the claim that cyberpunk is “the new bastion of feminist extrapolation” and that the use of strong women warriors in cyberpunk is essentially feminist. Rather she argues that this statement “coöpt[s] and putref[ies] the rhetoric of feminism into yet another all-men’s

18 Ibid., “Cutting UP,” 306. Scholars such as Darko Suvin and Istvan Cscicsery-Ronay, Jr. are critical of so-called “cyberpunk” movement. The cyberpunk movement is a more ambivalent development. In particular, Cscicsery-Ronay has called it “neuromanticism.”
club” in *The New York Review of Science Fiction* #20 of 1990.\(^{20}\) Salmonson’s concern is that cyberpunk feminism claimed by these male writers will become a simple reduction of feminism and women’s history.\(^ {21}\)

In contrast, women’s cyberpunk appeared with feminist concerns during the 1990s in the U.S. Feminist scholar Carlen Lavigne suggests that a wide range of women’s works such as those by Marge Piercy, Lisa Mason, Melissa Scott, and Lyda Morehouse “show evidence of cyberpunk influence while simultaneously changing the paradigm—works that added a feminist slant to cyberpunk’s themes of globalization, capitalism, embodiment and identity, while at the same time dealing with newly voiced concerns such as ecology, feminism, religion and queer rights.”\(^ {22}\) In particular, in the response to Neil Easterbrook’s 1992 statement of “the death of cyberpunk,” Lavigne supports Karen Cadora’s idea of the death of “masculine” cyberpunk and claims that a new mode of feminist cyberpunk has emerged.\(^ {23}\)

However, as mentioned earlier, Tatsumi draws attention to the synchronicity between the works of the third generation of Japanese SF writers such as Ōhara and the cyberpunk movement in the U.S. during the 1980s.\(^ {24}\) After Japan went through massive importation of SF works from the U.S. (and Great Britain) in the post WWII era, its drastic economic growth and technological

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\(^{21}\) Ibid., 2, 9. Salmonson continues, “By their reasoning of Bill Gibson and his coat-tail riders are the rightful heirs to Joanna Russ and James Tiptree Jr., and of the important feminist writers of the ‘70s, only John Varley and Samuel R. Delany still count” (2). As Delany argues that there wouldn’t be any cyberpunk. [Feminism] lights the whole cyberpunk movement” (citation 1), she agrees with his point, but she thinks that it is also a reductive view or misunderstanding of the representation of futuristic strong women (Amazons) in a male tradition.


\(^{23}\) Ibid., 39.

\(^{24}\) Tatsumi, “The Expository” 298-9; *Japanoido sengen*, 83-4.
development during the 1950s and 1960s led to a similar phenomenon of cyberpunk. 25 Ōhara’s “The Mental Female” (published in December 1985 in S-F magajin) and a collection of her short stories published along with this work in 1986 are considered [proto-]cyberpunk stories.

Moreover, Tatsumi also argues that SF rhetoric, especially cyberpunk rhetoric, disallows metaphorization since cyberpunk dissolves the border “between the literal and the metaphorical” and “between the biological and the high-tech territories” and thus is called “post-metafiction.” 26 “While metafiction breaks down and exhausts the fundamental narrative structure by fragmentation and compilation and then metaphorizes fiction, cyberpunk breaks down [not only narrative structure but also] human subjectivity; the subject always becomes intertextual and an assemblage of fragments since metaphorical language constituted by the subjectivity is usurped.” 27 I will examine the ways in which Ōhara’s text breaks down two kinds of borders: narrative borders and the borders of the human body (cyborg). First, I will briefly demonstrate two significant points that underscore the way Ōhara’s narrative style in “The Mental Female” can be seen as incorporating cyberpunk and postmodern aesthetics.

The Outline of “The Mental Female”

The story begins with Ms. Kipple and Mr. Techie demonstrating various sex positions on 100 million TV screens. Kipple is the self-image of the cybernetic system, “Her,” that protects the security of Tokyo, whereas Techie is a simulated image of a gendered male in Northern Siberia and is directly wired to national security. These computer systems run for the world of living beings “on screens mounted in every wall, every room, every shop and office in the

25 Although Sato argues that the rhetoric of the Japanese uniqueness (Nihonjin-ron) is fostered through the cyberpunk works of Kanbayashi Chôhei and Noa Azusa, Ōhara’s many stories are often set in non-cultural specific states and a post-apocalyptic world. Sato, “Culture of Desire and Technology,” 227.
27 Ibid., “Cyberpunk Fashion,” 95.
The images are so pervasive that the citizens of this city cannot escape and are thus fixated upon Kipple and Techie. Because the program was originally designed to invade foreign territories, this “Love Simulation” program now invades the citizen’s minds to force them to have sexual/love relationships. The Kipple and Techie soap opera portrays their love, marriage, sex, and the eventual birth of their child—thus offering a completely simulated portrayal of a heterosexual family. The image of their child is taken from Wolf Boy’s datum in the database of the Tokyoites and looks exactly like the individual referred to as the Real Wolf Boy who lives in Tokyo. He grows up on screen.

The actual Wolf Boy and his girlfriend Cat-Girl Sheila try not to be affected by these images on the TV. However, when the TV Wolf Boy in the drama commits suicide, the Bird Mother (a manifestation of the physical body of the computer system “Her”) chases the real Wolf Boy in Tokyo apart from the millions of TV viewers since the Bird Mother misses her son. The Bird Mother is not only the manifestation of the physical body of Her but additionally the sacred icon for the cult known as the Japanese Association (the Friendship Club). In the original story the cult group is referred to as the Japanese Association (日本人協会) (the original “Mentaru femēru” 109), while the English version is translated as the Friendship Club (trans. 136). It is assumed that the story is meant to be non-culturally specific. Ōhara, “Mentaru femēru” [The Mental Female, 1985] in Mentaru ōfāmu (Tokyo: Hayakawa Shobō, 1995).

29 In the original Japanese states “Afurika gasshūkoku” (United Africa), but the English translation states the “American” computer system. It is possible that the word was mistranslated.
demands a divorce and settles for a huge sum of money. The Love Simulation program ends.

Wolf Boy and Sheila marry happily. Tokyo will be wealthy for a while due to “Her.”

**Ōhara’s Cyberpunk Narrative**

First, Tatsumi also points out some aspects of “multicultural coincidence” in Kuroma Hisashi’s Japanese translation approach to Gibson’s *Neuromancer* (trans. 1985). In particular, Kuroma’s translation uses the typographical convention “rubi” or “ruby” (annotative glosses) for two simultaneous readings of the term: Chinese characters and Japanese letters (katakana), such as cyberspace (電脳空間). The Chinese characters 電脳空間 are read “den’ō-kūkan,” but instead the ruby reads “saibā-supēsu” (its meaning, cyberspace) in Japanese. The ruby convention has been used since the Meiji era for the adaptation of new foreign words in Chinese characters and for loan words (for example, the word asphalt 土瀝 in Mori Ōgai’s (1862-1922) work *Maihime* (Dancing Girl, 1890)). In the postwar era, zainichi writer Kim Sŏk-pŏm (b.1925) uses katakana ruby in Korean pronunciation to read Chinese characters. Kuroma’s technique became a popular convention in translation, allowing a reading of the word in two ways at the same time. Similarly, Kuroma’s technique is used in Ōhara’s title “The Mental Female” 女性型精神構造保持者. The reader will simultaneously read the Chinese characters “Josei-gata seishin kōzō hojisha” (literally, a holder of a feminine mental structure) and the ruby “mentaru fimēru” (a mental female) of English reading. Since it is not an exact translation, the reader is momentarily disrupted by two different readings of the title. Thus, the title at least gives two simultaneous readings of the term and does not clearly separate the cultural borders.

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32 I learned of Kim Sŏk-pŏm’s ruby usage in the presentation by graduate student Cindi Textor (University of Washington) at Association of Japanese Literary Studies (AJLS) Conference in October 2013, at the University of Chicago.
Second, the use of simple and playful dialogues and puns in the narrative highlights fragmentation and the “simulated” aspects of Ms. Kipple and Mr. Techie, who are both virtual images. The story opens onto a soap opera starring Ms. Kipple and Mr. Techie, who are engaged in a sexually charged scene; their dialogue unfolds like a typical heterosexual love romance. However, their dialogue does not offer a certain point or climax, but rather illustrates word play. Particularly, the original Japanese version is marked by puns and playful reverse of syntax:

(花をかざるわ)
(君のからだに)

(島へ泳ぎに行きましょう)
(愛する君といっしょに凧に乗って)

(あなたにプレゼントするわ)
(タコでかざられた君の肉体を)
[…]
(パスクリーンのような海ね)
(キモノを脱ぎたまえ)

(まだ暑くないわ)
(ぼくのために熱くなりたまえ)

(まるでゲイシャアソビみたいね)
(それではキャッチボールをしてタマを落としたほうが先に脱ぐことにしよう)

“I want to wear flowers…”
“Your body, dressed in flowers…”

“Let’s boat over to the island for a swim.”
“Floating on the waves with my lover…”

“I have a present for you.”
“You will dress in octopus…”
[…]
“The ocean is like a bubble bath, don’t you think?”
“Open your kimono and let me in.”

“I’m not ready yet.”

34 Ōhara, “Mentaru femēru,” 105-6.
“Then get your motor running for me.”

“. . . it sounds like a geisha game!”
“We’ll play catch, and whoever drops the ball has to strip.”35

The dialogue includes puns: “tako”: kite (凧) sounds like octopus (タコ); the same sound and similar meaning of “atsuku”: “暑く” means “hot” when used in terms of the weather, but “熱く” means “hot” or “passionate” in the context of a romance. The first pun literally means “Let’s go to the island for a swim, riding upon the kite with my lover” and “I will give you a present—you are dressed in octopus.” The second pun offers a contextual connection, yet it stresses playfulness: “Take off your kimono.” “I am not hot yet.” “You have to get hot for me.” The puns do not produce useful or meaningful connections but merely stress playfulness per se.

In addition, the dialogues from the first pair to third pair resemble a reverse poem and are like a renga-style linked verse variant to complete one poem: reciting the last line (下の句) first and then the first line (上の句). The syntax of the first (花をかざるわ), the second, and the third pair (あなたにプレゼントするわ) of the dialogues is reversed; these three pairs also make sense as one sentence if two lines are put together. For example, the second line and the first line are put together like this: “kimi no karada ni hana o kazaru wa” (君のからだに 花をかざるわ; “I will dress you in flowers”), and it becomes a full sentence or poem. Thus, their dialogues in the drama do not serve to advance the plot, but rather focus on playfulness or create a comedic effect. Similar to Tatsumi’s concept of cyberpunk above, several insertions of these dialogues are the compilation of fragments of exchange of words just like a collection of randomly retrieved information from the database. These two examples demonstrate some aspects of cyberpunk rhetoric.

The Feminized Embodiment of Cybernetics and City

In “The Mental Female,” both cybernetics and city are embodied by female bodies. These three female entities: Kipple, the Bird Mother, and suggestively the Story Maker are alternative representations of Tokyo, which is the cybernetic system. That is, they are ultimately the same entity. Kotani argues that the permeation of femininity intersecting with technology can expose the “repressed” side of patriarchal domination and resistance toward the male-dominated conception of technology. She calls this concept “techno-gynesis” or “the political unconsciousness of the feminine,” utilizing Alice Jardine’s feminist theoretical method “gynesis,” which valorizes the feminine. Interestingly, many women’s cyberpunk works in the U.S. also stress embodiment and identity rather than disembodiment. Lavigne points out that cyberpunk explores the desire for “escaping the vulnerability of the flesh” and is exempt from gender and cultural differences; however, the neutral default is white male, and thus disembodiment might fall into the trap of erasing gender, race, and ethnic differences. In addition, as Lavigne cites Anne Balsamo, body always exists “through the use of virtual avatars or a gendered interface.”

36 In “Bodies-Cities,” Elizabeth Grosz also argues that the relationship between city and body is described by simulation of each other. “The body and its environment rather produce each other as forms of the hyperreal, as modes of simulation which have overtaken and transformed whatever reality each may have had into the image of the other: the city is made and made over into the simulacrum of the body, and the body, in its turn, is transformed, ‘citified,’ urbanized as a distinctively metropolitan body” (507). Grosz continues that the interrelation between the body and city is “a fundamentally disunified series of systems and interconnection, a series of disparate flows, energies, events or entities, and spaces, brought together or dawn apart in more or less temporary alignments” (510-11). “The Mental Female” describes the city of Tokyo as the female body. Tokyo is the hyperreal and a mode of simulation of the female body; the female body is “citified” as Tokyo. As mentioned earlier, both the cybernetics system and the city emphasize simulacra of female embodiment. Grosz, “Bodies-Cities” in The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader, ed. Amelia Jones (New York and London: Routledge, 2003), 507, 510-511.

37 Kotani, Josejō muishiki, 255-256.

38 In Josejō muishiki: tekuno gaineshisu, Kotani refers to the term “gynesis” coined by Alice A. Jardine, who has extended the concept of Kristeva’s abjection. Jardine connects “gynesis” with “the valorization of the feminine” and women’s implications, “somehow intrinsic to new and necessary modes of thinking, writing, speaking” (25). For both Jardine and Kotani, gynesis is, thus, a theoretical method of feminist reading that interrupts the master narratives in Western culture. Kotani, ibid; Alice A. Jardine, Gynesis: Configurations of Woman and Modernity (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 1985), 25.

39 Lavigne, Cyberpunk Women, 62-3.

40 Ibid., 67.
The gender and racial identities are culturally reconstructed through technological images.\(^{41}\)

Therefore, in the context of Japan, Ōhara’s text attempts to valorize the feminization of technology and city of Tokyo through embodiment. This story also challenges gendered binary oppositions between masculinity (mind, disembodiment, technology, order, structure etc.) and femininity (body, embodiment, nature, disorder, unstructured etc.) through hyperbolic feminine signs.\(^{42}\)

I will now discuss the relationship between cybernetics and embodiment. When we think of cybernetics, we often associate it with a virtuality that is disembodied. In *How We Became Posthuman*, Katherine N. Hayles argues that the concept of cybernetics emphasizes the notion of disembodiment but that it is still embodied while she historically traces the discourse of cybernetics employed from the range of homeostasis\(^{43}\) and reflexivity\(^{44}\) to virtuality. Hayles describes how disembodiment is stressed during the course of developing the concept of cybernetics: “[t]he reading of cyberspace as a disembodied realm is a skeuomorph [“a design feature that is no longer functional but it was before”] that harks back to the first wave of cybernetics, which in turn is a reading of information that reinscribes into cybernetics a very old

\(^{41}\) Ibid.

\(^{42}\) Another aspect of the feminized image of Tokyo was begun in the postwar era. In particular, the image of Japan was wittingly feminized and infantilized by SCAP (Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers) in the immediate postwar era. The image of Japan (especially Tokyo) has been reconstructed as a mechanized metropolis by high technology and economic power during the bubble economy, just as the cyberpunk appeared. “The Mental Female” employs the image of a feminized Tokyo, but the hierarchal relation between the U.S. and Japan is reversed. When Kipple previously had an affair with the Memphis Computer, she dumped him and he killed himself. That area of North America was thus destroyed and is still dead or unpopulated, as the computer system maintains the system of living beings. The U.S. has no existence in this text, whereas Japan is occupied by the cult group called the Japanese Association, which was founded on the concept of love and friendship. This Association is a spoof of postwar Japan, which represented itself as a pacifist nation. The ending explains that Tokyo, as the wealthiest nation, survives because the city is female: “As for the City, that was Tokyo—the richest City in the world. There the Kipple system lived, telling stories to sustain Her Children, as women do” (trans. 155). The feminized image of Tokyo is used with connotations of not only women (mothers) in Japan but also the Japanese in relation to the U.S. Naoko Shibusawa, *America’s Geisha Ally: Reimagining the Japanese Enemy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 4-5. Transforming the image of Japan as a woman is a symbolic subjugation of Japan in comparison to the U.S., whereas Japan’s image as a child reinforces the notion that Japan needs to mature its modernity and democracy.

\(^{43}\) Homeostasis refers to “the living organism maintenance system in the environment.”

\(^{44}\) Reflexivity here refers to “a circular movement: self-organizing and self-making system.”
and traditional distinction between form and matter.” In particular, she continues to argue that virtual reality is, in fact, an embodied activity since the person has to perceive simulated worlds “through the techno-bioapparatus of our body spliced into the cybernetic circuit.” Therefore, Hayles brings back attention to an “embodied” aspect of cybernetics, including virtuality. “The Mental Female” more distinctively demonstrates the feminized embodiment of cybernetics, and it is within this context that I will discuss four kinds of mental female(s).

Cyber-Femininity: Simulacra of the Feminine

This story portrays four different kinds of cyber-femininity. The first three models are connected to the cybernetic system of Tokyo embodied by Kipple (“Her” virtual image on the TV screens), the Bird Mother (the manifestation of “Her” physical body”), and the Story Maker (the creator of reality). The fourth and final model is the mental female—a love engineer, who professionally designs and performs a romantic relationship with the client. In particular, the three models have female-embodied forms and complex layers of simulation. I will examine the way in which femininity is represented in these models through simulation and how these feminine signs are used to challenge hegemonic forms of the metaphysics of beings.

The first model is Kipple—the virtual image of the Tokyo computer system “Her,” which is occasionally also referred to as the Mother. In Baudrillard’s concept of simulacra and simulation, reality is replaced and determined by simulacra; it is already hyperreal. Kipple is a

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46 Hayles, “Boundary,” 34.

47 Baudrillard, Simulacra and Simulation, 1-3. In Simulacra and Simulation published in 1981, he suggests three orders of simulacra in science fiction, and the third order that has not happened yet is “simulacra of simulation, founded on information, the model, the cybernetic game—total operationality, hyperreality, aim of total control. To the first category belongs the imaginary of the utopia. To the second corresponds science fiction, strictly speaking. To the third corresponds—is there an imaginary that might correspond to this order? The most likely answer is that the good old imaginary of science fiction is dead and that something else is in the process of emerging (not only in
simulacrum of the gendered female, who is a 7.5 inch tall beauty with white ceramic skin, and who appears on the televised soap opera. Because this gendered female is the virtual image of the computer system “Her,” which was originally programmed, Kipple is a simulacrum (Kipple) of simulacra (the computer system)—a copy of copies. Then, the ending reveals that an actress wearing prosthetic skin suits is, in fact, physically performing Kipple on TVs. The prosthetic-skin-suited Kipple was chosen for the TV performance by the computer system “Her.” The actress Kipple is also a simulacrum of “Her” self-image; therefore, the actress Kipple is a simulacrum of simulacra (Kipple on TV screens) of simulacra (the computer system). Kipple is at least a three-layered copy. It is confusing for the reader to distinguish which one is the original form of Kipple since the computer system “Her” is not immediately a tangible image and obscures the original image. Multiple layers of simulacra of Kipple question the metaphysics of being and/or femininity itself. However, Kipple’s performance by the “physical” actress stresses the materiality of the woman’s body through the media, despite the artificiality of her skin.

Christine Cornea summarizes Donna Haraway’s point in Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium. “[T]he actual and figural are both ‘constitutive of lived material-semiotic worlds.’ Unlike a purely ‘constructionist’ perspective of the body as existing only within discursive formations, Haraway highlights the importance and interplay between the discursive and the material.”

Similar to Haraway’s concept, multiple simulacra of Kipple, in fact, demonstrate the “interplay between the discursive and the material,” as the female embodiment (both the TV image and the actress) constitutes the meaning to the computer system.

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The second model of cyber-femininity is the Bird Mother—the manifestation of the physical body of the computer system of Tokyo “Her.” The Bird Mother appears as a grotesque, gigantic chicken. In Baudrillard’s terms, the Bird Mother is a simulacrum of the gendered female bird, which also serves as a religious icon for the Japanese Association of Tokyo. The Sacred Bird Mother is also described as the computer system’s sense receptor that has an independent intelligence.49 The Bird Mother is a simulacrum of the computer system “Her;” therefore, she is also Kipple.

The third mental female is the Story Maker—the creator of the world in Tokyo. She is left ambiguous: either the computer system Herself or the creator of Her. When the Story Maker is at the Dragon Café where Cat-Girl Sheila is working as a mental female, she is described from Sheila’s perspective:

[A] different world radiated from Her, the world which She created, the story She told Herself that She could shape reality, involve others in it, and fill them with joy. Or perhaps Her creation was this world. Verdant pastures hovered around Her under clear skies. Pure white sheep grazed upon fields swept by gentle breeze, which Sheila felt on her cheek—they were real, or more than real. Story Maker’s age was indeterminate—She was neither woman nor child. She had short black hair and a round face [and looked Asian].50 The sunlight around Her was like a golden…51

The Story Maker is depicted as a mysterious and ageless female image, yet She has a special aura around her with a peaceful pastoral image. Borrowing Baudrillard’s words, the Story Maker is a simulacrum of simulacra (the computer system “Her”) although she looks different from Kipple. In contrast, if the computer system “Her” is a part of the Story Maker’s creation, “She” is a simulacrum of the Story Maker.

49 Ōhara, “The Mental Female,” trans. 139.
50 The Story Maker is described as having an Asian appearance in the original sentences: 「ストーリーメーカーは、短い黒い髪をした丸顔の女の子だった。女の子というには少し年をとりすぎているような感じだが、年齢不詳の東洋系の顔立ちだ。」 Ōhara, “Mentaru ōmēru,” 140.
Nonetheless, the Story Maker can change the visual images of Tokyo. The background scene rapidly changes from the Dragon Café to the Square with an O-Bon dance circle, as illustrated: “To keep the story interesting, Story Maker sent Bird, Wolf Boy, and now Cat-Girl Sheila, in quick pursuit, right through the stage set of the Dragon Café, scattering bit players and props in the simulated drama that shaped the world.”\(^\text{52}\) This scene discloses that the world of Tokyo, where Wolf Boy and Sheila live, is also a simulated image of the drama. This makes Kipple (a simulacrum of simulacra of simulacra of simulacra) and the Bird Mother (a simulacrum of simulacra of simulacra) more complex forms of the feminized copies.

The fourth cyber-femininity is the mental female described as a “love” engineer who is sensitive to other’s thoughts and feelings, gleaning their insights from bodily and speech expressions. There are eight mental females, including Sheila, Platina, and Brando, at the Dragon Café.\(^\text{53}\) For example, Platina falls in love with a poodle for three hours right after crying over the soap opera of Kipple and Techie. Platina is depicted as follows: “For exactly three hours, professional Love Engineers fell in love with anyone or anything—human, cyborg, robot, animal, dolls.”\(^\text{54}\) In contrast, Cat-Girl Sheila feels that she is not suited for the role of a mental female, as she neither can read the other’s mind nor empathize with Kipple’s drama. Brando is gendered male but fulfills the role of a mental female since his level of empathy is high. Therefore, the mental female does not necessarily have a “biologically-categorized” body of woman, but s/he has qualities of sensitivity to any entities’ love and is able to give “love.” Here the femininity is coded as emotionally sensitive and empathetic, as Japanese women are often expected to have

\(^{52}\) Ibid., 152.
\(^{53}\) Ibid., 150.
\(^{54}\) Ibid., 151.
this quality; nevertheless, this feminine quality can be shared by a male figure. Thus, this makes the mental figure queer.

Nonetheless, all the models of cyber-femininity are in a part of the Love Simulation program, which the Story Maker or the computer system creates. Since the world of the mental females’ reality is also a simulation, they are all “simulated” love engineers (or professional lovers) within the program. Therefore, these four kinds of cyber-femininity are ultimately all copies and obscure the original or authentic form, as Baudrillard suggests. The imitative aspects of cyber-femininity and a queer mental female figure highlight the constructedness of femininity per se. However, all of them are assigned to the female embodiment and the materiality of the feminine except the mental female Brando. Therefore, the multiple simulacra of cyber-femininity suggest the interplay between the discursive and the material.

The Cyber-Mother Has Gone “Mental”

I will now return to focus on discussing two kinds of cyber-femininity: Kipple and the Sacred Bird Mother as the “mother” of citizens in Tokyo. As Ōhara mentions in the 2002 interview with McCaffery, Gregory, Tatsumi, and Kotani, all women have a destructive side of maternity: “[t]he mother figure in myself, however, is really nightmarish, a kind of destroyer silently invading others with a weapon called love, rather than kindness and generosity. All women, including you and me, have destructive motherhood, which plunders and kills someone’s heart with ‘generosity.’”

55 Interview with Ōhara, “Twister of Imagination,” 130. Barbara Creed also argues that a woman is frequently represented as monstrous, associated with her “mothering” and “reproductive functions” in the horror films in relation to Julia Kristeva’s theory of abject. According to Kristeva, “abjection” is the concept of the human reaction (horror, repulsion, vomit) that breaks down the distinction between the object and the subject, the self and the other. In particular, the images of the woman’s body, due to the maternal functions, indicate “the abject” since they threaten the border between the self and (m)other. The monstrous is also the abject, as it transgresses the border of the humans. Since both the notions of the monstrous and the maternal transgress the border of the human subject,
Viewing her idea of destructive maternity through love in a sarcastic sense, Kumiko Sato suggests that Ōhara’s texts are often divided into two maternal fragmented signs: “the bodily use (womb; reproduction) and the mental use (language, love).” The images of Kipple and the Bird Mother are also employed with these maternal signs: “love” with the use of language or the woman’s body parts (womb—reproduction; breast—lactation). This section will explore the ways in which these signs of maternity stress the artificiality of motherhood: simulated “reproduction” through the visual images and simulated “love” through language. I will then show the way in which the repetition of the linguistic usage of “love” and maternal qualities will lead to madness and become monstrous, thus parodying the concept of motherhood.

Kipple’s maternal nature is indicated emotionally and physically—both of which are simulated in the soap opera. First, Kipple influences Tokyoites’ attitudes towards love, as “every citizen of the city—human, android, cat, dog, bird, reptile, mole, whale, friend and foe, self-styled gods and prophets of gods—anyone with eyes had them riveted to the screens,” where they are saturated with her daily “love” simulation programs broadcast over 100 million TV screens. In *Terminal Identity*, Scott Bukatman describes this kind of phenomenon as “terminal image” or “image addict,” which is “the subject that is so overtaken by the forces of the spectacle […] and that simulation becomes a new reality.” Similarly, the “terminal image” of Kipple on
the 100 million TVs “penetrat[es] and invad[es] the physical body of the viewer like a virus.”59

The images of maternal Kipple invade the bodies and the minds of the viewers in Tokyo. In a way, Kipple raises the Tokyoites with these terminal images.

In contrast, Kipple Mother also has a destructive side despite her cyber-ness, as Ōhara mentions in the interview above. Kipple destroys a part of Tokyo since she could not protect it by missiles while Techie and she are playing a toss-and-catch game on TV. Her artificial intelligence has glitches because she was damaged in a past war and has gone mad. “Already a half-century had passed, but still the scars of The War affected Her, like the shadow bodies burned into glassified walls. Sometimes still, dying cells from those scars lashed Her brain into uncontrollable frenzies of destruction.”60 Once again, despite her cyber-ness, Kipple Mother suffers from a psychological disorder—the posttraumatic syndrome disorder (PTSD) because of the past society. Her repressed mentality—madness—uncontrollably permeates the cybernetic system, which Kotani suggests is the notion of “techno-gynesis.”

In addition, Kipple plays a simulated role of the mother to Wolf Boy on the TV screen: a physical sign—giving birth, and a linguistic sign—love. Kipple gives violent birth to a simulated image of Wolf Boy. The viewers describe her pregnancy: “Some thought that her midriff was being inflated with air, like a balloon. Others thought that both Kipple and Techie were just manipulated images, existing only in the electronic reality of TV.”61 Although the viewers are aware of the artificiality of her pregnancy, they are absorbed by her maternal image. Now Kipple raises Wolf Boy on TV and repeatedly tells him of her “love.” Wolf Boy on screen refuses her love as a delinquent boy:

59 Ibid.
60 Ōhara, “The Mental Female,” trans. 135.
61 Ibid., trans. 134.
He attacked his father. He bit off his mother’s nipple.  
“We love you so much.”  
“I don’t love you at all.”

“Don’t you feel our love?”
“Can’t feel what I don’t see.”
[…]
“I love you.”
“I’m not getting that.”

“I love you.”
“I don’t feel a thing.”

Her words of love do not foster the intimate mother-child relationship. Rather, her son wishes to break away from the mother to establish himself as an individual subject. With the superficial repetition of the word “love,” Kipple fails as the mother on TV, as Wolf boy commits suicide to free himself from his TV mother. Kipple’s simulated motherhood ends in failure despite the use of love.

Due to Kipple’s failure on screen, the Bird Mother as the physical body of “Her” (the computer system) takes over the role of the mother to the Real Wolf Boy. The Bird Mother suddenly pursues Wolf Boy throughout the city of Tokyo and tries to make up with her child. In pursuit, she tells him about her love repeatedly: “DO YOU KNOW DO YOU KNOW DO YOU KNOW… SOMEBODY SOMEBODY SOMEBODY LOVES YOU LOVES YOU LOVES YOU…”

Despite the cyber-ness of the mother and the child, the loss of her child causes the Bird Mother’s malfunction: stuttering and the repetition of her words. The Bird Mother has gone mad. While the Real Wolf Boy is running away from her, the Bird Mother tells him: “YOU MUST BE OBEDIENT.” Since he does not listen to her, she punishes him by firing flames at him, parodying the popular SF monstrous icon Godzilla. The Real Wolf Boy shouts at Sheila for

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63 Ibid., trans. 143.
64 Ibid., trans. 149.
help, “She’ll kill me with Her love.” As Ōhara mentioned in the interview, the abundance of love will lead to the death of the child. To avoid this outcome, the Real Wolf Boy’s lover Sheila kills the Bird Mother and frees the son. All the while observers of the drama know that the Bird Mother is Kipple—a simulacrum of the computer system—and yet they presumably enjoy the spectacle of the drama.

The Bird Mother also serves as the religious icon of Love and Peace, the Mother of all Citizens. The maternal bodily functions: womb—laying eggs, breast—milk, and flesh—blood are keys to the rituals that her followers perform. In a moment of ceremonial worship, the Bird Mother goes through an act of reproduction and providing milk to the devotees: “At morning prayers, the Experience Body laid eggs. During the afternoon prayers it ate freshly slaughtered hens. And for evening prayers it gave milk to the Chosen as a symbol of the Eternal Mother’s Love.” As the leader of this cult conducts the ceremonial performance, he beheads a hen with a glass knife, showers the devotees with blood, and chants:

Let us offer
Let us offer
The Lord’s blood
And our blood.

The Bird Mother—Her becomes a symbolic icon of the mother of Tokyo through these key maternal bodily signs and love; however, She has gone mad after the failure of her motherhood on TV, as mentioned above. Although both Kipple and the Bird Mother can be freed from women’s physical reproduction and parenthood in a cybernetic world, why are they multi-layers of the “feminized” simulacra or the performing “mother”?

65 Ibid., trans. 153.
66 Ibid., trans. 139.
67 Ibid., trans. 141.
The setting of cyberpunk possibly excludes the embodiment, biological reproduction, and motherhood all together. Lavigne summarizes Mark Fisher’s point that there is no need of mothers in cyberpunk, referring to concepts of Baudrillard and Deleuze-Guattari: “machinic reproduction offers a crossing point for both Baudrillard’s re-engineering of sex (a “post-sexual necrotic culture”) and Deleuze-Guattari’s theory of replication as contagion—both positions which ultimately remove sexuality from the reproductive equation.”\(^68\) Lavigne continues Fisher’s argument about asexual figures that incline toward maleness as a prototype; thus, there is no room for women.\(^69\) Therefore, the exclusion of maternal functions and femininity runs the risk of reinforcing the male-privileged world. Ōhara’s “The Mental Female,” rather, emphasizes femininity and motherhood in a dystopic technological world.

As mentioned above, multiple layers of simulacra of femininity—Kipple, the Bird Mother, and the Story Maker as well as the mental female—are pervasive in the city of Tokyo, so that the inhabitants are required to experience femininity all the time. The soap opera is based on heterosexual love and family and simulates TV-based biological reproduction and motherhood. The cult of Love and Peace is also based on fragments of maternal-encoded rituals with both bodily (reproduction, breastfeeding, bleeding) and mental signs (love) of the Bird Mother. Simulacra and the simulation of femininity have the potential to free actual physical reproduction and parenthood from women and reveal the artificiality of femaleness and motherhood. Multiple simulacra of cyber-femininity also challenge the binarism between disembodiment and embodiment, between the self and other, between natural and artificial. Nevertheless, as Lavigne points out, most works of U.S. feminist cyberpunk are skeptical of new reproductive technology alienating women’s bodies completely. It is because women physically

\(^{68}\) Lavigne, *Cyberpunk Women*, 139.

\(^{69}\) Ibid., 139.
give birth to their children and that the technology would control women’s bodies. Ōhara’s story suggests a similar issue with concerns for reproductive technology. It is an attempt to feminize the cybernetic space and city space by rejecting the possibility for reproduction appropriated by men. In addition, the cyber-mother occupies cyberspace and fails to behave as a “proper” mother due to her madness. However, at the end the cyber-mother is terminated and rebooted: the Bird Mother is killed; Kipple’s Love Simulation program is rebooted. Despite her madness, monstrosity, and artificiality, Tokyoites accept this cyber-mother since She will bring wealth to the city. *Hybrid Child*, to which I will turn next, also addresses a similar tension between the liminality of gender through simulation and cyborg subjectivities and some issues related to gender difference in the male-privileged world.

**Gender Simulation though the Cyborg Subjectivities in *Hybrid Child***

In this section I focus on three major themes in Ōhara’s *Hybrid Child* and the way these themes call into question the natural binaries of gender, modification of male bodies, and the performance of femininity, especially the role of the mother. It is my contention that the cyborg bodies in *Hybrid Child* highlight fluid and multiple genders in the process of physical transformation and/or reconstruct new forms of gender through simulation to challenge binaristic sex/gender and naturalized bodies. Subsequently, the male characters’ bodies and male identities are modified, particularly the way in which these two male characters’ bodily developments are reversed to reconstruct male bodies and masculinity and create an alternative configuration for a heterosexual love romance. Through the cyborg bodies, the mother-daughter dyad is repeatedly performed, and its repetition of excessive femininity teases the notion of a mother-daughter symbiotic relationship to defy conventional notions of maternity and the roles of mother and

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70 Ibid., 142-44.
daughter in the phallocentric logic. I will begin with a brief discussion of cyborg feminism\(^71\) before turning to a discussion of the novel.

**Definitions of Cyborg**

In “A Manifesto for Cyborgs,” Haraway defines the cyborg as “a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction.”\(^72\) The cyborg’s hybrid nature enables the disintegration of three major boundaries: the first between human and animal, the second between human and machine, and the third between natural and artificial. Haraway claims that the self is a social construction that does not depend on a natural body, but on social interaction and discourse, and thus the cyborg metaphor provides a means to construct a new body and a new identity. Haraway’s cyborg is a metaphor for a post-gender world that challenges the binary oppositions of sex/gender in order to eliminate unequal social hierarchies. Utopian cyborg feminism, deriving its impetus from Haraway, commonly views cyborgs as having the potential to disrupt naturalized gender categories since cyborgs point to a utopian space in which “bodies, desires, sex/gender behaviors are free floating and in constant play.”\(^73\)

However, many scholars and feminists find Haraway’s utopian (and universal) views of cyborgs problematic. Anne Balsamo points out that technologies can “serve to reinforce traditional gendered patterns of power and authority”\(^74\) because cyborgs (including fragmented bodily parts) claim a gendered origin. In the process of technological transformation, Balsamo...

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\(^71\) I will distinguish cyborg feminism from cyber feminism, which focuses on the idea of a positive notion of cyberspace and effect on sex/gender and sexualities.
emphasizes the gendered embodiment of the cyborg: “new forms of gendered embodiment emerge which on the one hand may display inherited signs of traditional dichotomous gendered identity, but which also reinvent gender identity in totally new ways.” Therefore, the cyborg may suggest new form(s) of gendered embodiment, but is never totally free from gendering.

Furthermore, Japanese scholars such as, Takayuki Tatsumi, Sharalyn Orbaugh, and Kumiko Sato voice concern about the way the rhetoric of cyborgs and posthumanity is discussed only through a Western lens. Thus, Japanese cyborgs are viewed as derivatives of the West or viewed monolithically without a historical context. Japan’s cyborg discourse might share many aspects with that of the West, given Japan’s avid consumption of Western literature. However, as Tatsumi argues, “the logic of the imitation has been replaced by one of synchronicity—synchronicity between American and Japanese works” during the 1980s because the discursive interplay between foreign and native sources has been more common.

Today science fiction novels, manga, TV, and film animation have become mainstream in Japan. Sato suggests that Japan’s economic and technological success and innovation following WWII increased the popularity of SF and the prominent representation of robots, androids, and cyborgs. Three major types are most popular: humanoid robots with emotion and/or human intelligence such as Tetsuwan Atamu (Astro Boy, 1952-68), metallicized humans including human bodies fusing with metals such as Komatsu Sakyō’s Nihon Apacchi zoku.

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75 Ibid. 39.
77 Sato, “Culture of Desire and Technology,” 200-201.
[Japanese Apache, 1964] and the film *Tetsuo* (*Tetsuo: The Iron Man*, 1989), or the mecha-suits with a human pilot such as TV series *Kidō senshi Gandamu* [Mobile Suit Gundam, 1979-current].78 These male-gendered cyborgs are often assigned bodies with superhuman strength, while female cyborgs have continuously been represented with explicitly huge breasts, tiny waists, and curvy hips—as though intended solely for heterosexual male enjoyment. Cyborgs are also represented within fixed, naturalized, and heteronormative binary oppositions of sex/gender. However, some cyberpunk manga and animation offer powerful and strong female cyborgs (for example, Shirō Masamune’s manga and Oshii Mamoru’s animation film *Kōkaku kidōtai* [Ghost in the Shell, 1989-2001] and correspondingly effeminate male cyborgs (for example, Anno Hideaki’s animation film *Shinseiki Evangelion* [Neon Genesis Evangelion, 1995-6]. Ōhara’s novel presents a different kind of cyborg.

**The Outline of *Hybrid Child***

The award-winning novel *Hybrid Child* consists of three parts and was published over six years in *S-F magajin*, the most prominent monthly science fiction magazine, produced by Hayakawa Publisher. First, the short story “Hybrid Child” was published in December 1984; the second story “Kokubetsu no aisatsu” [Farewell] appeared in February 1985; third, the longest story “Akua puranetto” [Aquaplanet] was serialized from 1989 to 1990. All three stories were compiled and published as a book in 1990. The story is complicated and multifaceted—unfolding on a variety of levels, involving characters who transform into a multiplicity of versions of themselves, and with narrative that rejects linearity. Any attempt to render the “plot” in a seamless description reduces it to the ridiculous. But, for the purpose of this study, we can say that the novel is about a secret animated military weapon that escapes from its military base,

78 Orbaugh, “The Genealogy,” 60.
assumes the form of whatever it ingests, and interacts with a mother-daughter dyad who continue
to morph into various versions of themselves.

**Ôhara’s Cyborgs: Gender Panic through Cyborg**

*Hybrid Child* depicts four cyborgs. The first is Sample B III, a top-secret national
security cyborg designed as a bio-mechanical weapon. The other three are separate versions of
the girl Jonah: 1) Clone Jonah, 2) her consciousness as manifested in her house, which I refer to
as “Consciousness Jonah,” 3) Hybrid Jonah, which is a hybrid of Jonah and Sample B III after he
ingests the corpse of Clone Jonah and Consciousness Jonah, 4) Sample B XIII, called Daniel, the
same kind of cyborg as Sample B III.

Whereas Sample B III is gendered “male,” as noted below, the other characters in the
novel present as “female,” or more specifically as either a shōjo (girl) or a mother. The shōjo is
richly nuanced; her gender is ambiguous or nearly androgynous, since she is considered neither
female nor male, or “a ‘not-quite-female’ female.”79 Whereas the “mother” character manifests
as either nurturing or phallic.

One of the exciting (and at times challenging) aspects of Hybrid Child, is that none of
the characters have stable identities but rather mutate into different forms. The cyborg Sample B
III, for example, has the ability to transform or morph into other shapes—animal or human—and
thus to assume different genders. Nevertheless, throughout the narrative Sample B III is referred
to with the male-pronoun “kare” or “he.” At one point Sample B III transforms into a military
officer in order to escape from the military base. Once off the base, he transforms into a

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79 Robertson, *Takarazuka*, 63-65. The concept of shōjo has been constructed and has kept changing. In the Meiji era,
the meaning of shōjo was invented as “future housewives (wise mothers, good wives)” and simultaneously was
considered sexually innocent. In the Taishō and the early Shōwa eras, shōjo referred to elegant and urban bourgeois
girls, who did neither labor nor productive jobs. In the post-war era, shōjo means primary school or middle school
girls; shōjo becomes commercialized and sexualized during the 1990s.
mysterious pet (a chimera of a flower, an animal, and a fish) known as Dadajimu. While in this guise he encounters a mother and her cyborg daughter Jonah. The mother has an accident and dies, so Sample B III eats her corpse and—having absorbed her consciousness—transforms into a younger version of the mother, who looks like an exact replica of Clone Jonah. As for Jonah, Consciousness Jonah used to be a human girl who, it appears, had been the clone of the mother. This Clone Jonah was starved to death at the age of seven but then her consciousness was revived and attached to her house by a mysterious savior figure. Before Consciousness Jonah emerged, the body of Clone Jonah was preserved in a specially shielded EMP (electromagnetic pulse) capsule by her mother. After a number of adventures, Sample B III escapes in the EMP capsule that houses Clone Jonah’s dead body, directed by Consciousness Jonah. In order to complete his escape, Jonah encourages Sample B III to consume the body of the dead Jonah and, suggestively, her consciousness (Consciousness Jonah). This then becomes Hybrid Jonah.

Able to simulate any living entity he encounters, Sample B III gender and life forms are contingent and free-floating. In this respect, he conforms to Haraway’s notion of the way the cyborg body transgresses boundaries of human, machine, animal, and gender. In Katherine Hayles’s term, Sample B III is also posthuman as “an amalgam, a collection of heterogeneous components, a material-informational entity whose boundaries undergo continuous construction and reconstruction.”

That Sample B III is assigned the pronoun “kare” (he) in the narrative does little to make his gender less confusing, especially after his transformation into the girl-mother Jonah. While Sample B III’s consciousness proceeds as an amalgamation of his past existences, his

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80 Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman*, 3.
body morphs into the girl’s. After consuming the mother, his transformation into the girl is described from Consciousness Jonah’s perspective:

_Dadajimu_’s four legs begin to transform into the familiar shape of arms and legs. The two back legs elongate, and the two in front shorten; the tail is retracted into his spine and disappears. His neck becomes slimmer, and then the parts of the face take on an orderly arrangement as if remembered from the past. A nose sticks out, a mouth splits open, and lips turn red. His eyeballs shrink, and the irises turn blue. Flesh swallows his body hair and scales. And, blonde curly hair grows vigorously as if being pushed up from inside of his head. His transformation gives me the creeps. He looks just like a cheap doll lying there. No! It can’t be… The thing wears no clothes and is completely naked. Oh… it’s a girl… it’s myself at the age of seven! 

The process of transformation, as depicted here, makes clear that Sample B III’s transformed body is not an original but that which simulates the body of the seven-year-old girl. Sample B III resembles the Clone Jonah, the seven-year-old girl starved to death by an abusive mother. But the abused body of this seven-year-old girl was itself a copy of the mother, a clone. Therefore, Clone Jonah (now deceased), Consciousness Jonah, and Sample B III’s Jonah are all copies of the mother. That is, Sample B III’s girl looks exactly the same as Clone Jonah. No original exists, but two separate copies of Jonah remain. This lack of original coincides with Baudrillard’s notion of simulacrum: “the copy that has no original; the model has replaced the actual” and “the copy is becoming more desirable” in the consumer society.

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81 Ōhara, *Haiburiddo chairudo* [Hybrid Child] (Tokyo: Hayakawa Shobō), 51. The translations of all the passages from _Hybrid Child_ are mine. 「ダダジムの四肢がひらき、見慣れた形の手足に変わっていく。後ろ足二本は長くすらりと伸び、前足はやや短く、尻尾は脊骨の中でズルズルと引きずり込まれてゆく。首は細くなり、顔も正しい配列を深く刻みはじめた。あらかじめ決定していたのだというように鼻が出て口が裂け唇は赤く染められ、眼球は少し縮んで虹彩が青に変わった。体毛もウロコも肉の中に呑みこまれていった。かわりに、頭部の内側から押し出すように金色の巻き毛がニュルニュルと大量に生えてきた。 その様子は実に気味が悪かった。それはまるで安物のお人形のように横たわっていた。いや、（中略）その子はまったく裸でいるのだった。そして——その女のは、七歳のあたしなのだ！」

82 Andrew M. Butler summarizes Baudrillard’s notion of simulacra and simulation. Andrew M. Butler, “Postmodernism and Science Fiction” in _The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction_, ed. Edward James and Farah Mendelsohn (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 141-4, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CCOL0521816262.010](http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CCOL0521816262.010) [accessed May 27, 2010].
Sample B’s III gender is also a simulation. And here we can call to mind Judith Butler’s notion of gender identity. Butler emphasizes that there is no original gender but the imitation of repetitive acts reproduces the reality of gender. Sample B III’s identity appears to be that of a girl, yet it is a simulation of multiple humans and beings, including an ungendered creature and animals. His multiple gender identities are all copies because there is no description of Sample B III’s original form in the narrative. In other words, Sample B III’s gender has no original. So then, what determines Sample B III’s gender? Is it his consciousness, his simulated embodiment, his social identification (the pronoun “he”), or other outside factors? Sample B III’s external girl’s body, the pronoun assigned to “him,” and the accumulation of his consciousness(es) demonstrate that his gender is not fixed but is transitory.

At the end of the first section, Sample B III’s transformation completes a form of Jonah when he attempts to consume both Jonah’s consciousness and her dead human body in the capsule. Sample B III and Jonah fall into the deep underground interior of a specially shielded capsule. For survival, Sample B III must eat, and hence Jonah offers up her dead body and her consciousness. “‘We are saved,’ [Jonah said.] ‘Yeah,’ Sample B III replied. ‘You can eat me…’ [Jonah says,] ‘If you remember me forever…’ ‘Yeah,’ he replied. ‘Just like my mom remembered me forever,’ Jonah giggled.”

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84 Here the image of Jonah is also associated with Jonah from the Bible. The preface of *Hybrid Child* quotes Book of Jonah 2.10: “The LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited out Jonah on the dry land” (3). Jonah is swallowed by the whale, but he survives after three days and three nights in its belly. In Ōhara’s work, despite the consumption of two bodies of the girl Jonah, her spirit will remain. This reference suggests that the miracle will resurrect Jonah through the merging with Sample B III.
85 Ōhara, Haiburiddo chairudo, 82. 「たすかったみたいね——。 ああ——とかかれは答えた。 あたしを食べていわ・・・あたしのことをずっと覚えてくれるのなら・・・ ああ——とかかれは答えた。 ・・・・・・・ママも、そうしたものの。少女はそう言ってクスクス笑った。」
will no longer exist, but her consciousness and genetic information will survive within Sample B III, as a disembodied being. Jonah, gendered female, and Sample B III assigned the male pronoun “he” will merge. Sample B III is able to simulate Jonah’s embodied image exactly, since he carries both her genetic information and that of her mother’s. At this point, the ending of the first section makes their beings and genders even more ambiguous and further complicates the distinction between the original and the copy, and between Jonah/her mother and Sample B III. Sample B III demonstrates a liminal space. In Haraway’s and Balsamo’s term, the process of Sample B III’s transformation demonstrates the constant reconstruction(s) of gender identity and the potential for a multiple gender world.

(Re)construction of Masculinity: The Reversion of Male Development

Although there is tension between the gender flexibility of cyborg subjectivities and binary gendered bodies, male-gendered bodies or male-assigned identities of some characters are reconstructed in this novel. Despite his flexible genders and life forms, Sample B III was originally “he” and transformed into the girl Jonah fixed as a core identity—the feminized cyborg. Sample B XIII is also fixed as the masculinized cyborg Daniel but nullified at the end. Maryellen T. Mori argues that “liminal male” characters in Japanese women’s fiction play a significant role in affecting male-female relationships as a resistance to a traditional heterosexual love romance and “a search for alternative symbolic configurations.”

86 Similarly, Kotani claims that “the alteration of masculinity” is one strategy to invert the hierarchy in the actual world through Japanese women SF and fantasy. 87 Hybrid Child also uses male bodies and modifies

male identities, especially the reversion of the bodily development of two male characters: Shiverer Mouse and the savior figure “he.”

Shiverer Mouse (Shiva)—named after an animal used in medical experiments—is a young man suffering from myelin deficiency (leukodystrophy), a genetic disorder in which nerve cells are degenerating with age. His body is plugged into a white coffin spaceship in order to sustain his life. Nevertheless, his muscles shrink, hastening his eventual death. Shiva is a kind of cyborg who needs to have mechanical interventions to support his life functions. When he encounters Hybrid Jonah (Jonah/Sample B III), he is described as follows:

Shiva… the young man who hasn’t lived even for thirty years is much smaller than the seven-year-old-girl-Jonah… His shrunken and emaciated body is placed in the center of the white coffin. The complex mechanism is functioning in all possible ways to rescue his frail and sterile cells. Shiva himself lies there quietly, just like a marionette whose strings have been cut. Due to his illness, his body becomes smaller and smaller, and he looks like a baby in an incubator. His body regresses or degenerates. The baby-like male figure Shiverer Mouse and Hybrid Jonah, with the body of a seven-year old girl, are, as Mori notes of liminal male pairings, an “odd couple.” Hybrid Jonah also becomes interested in another cyborg, Sample B XIII’s Daniel, and chases after him, yet Hybrid Jonah as a monstrous butterfly returns to Shiva to save him from destruction. “Jonah suddenly remembers a young tender man who is dying in a white coffin. That is why he is so alive and radiant. ‘I like him… I like him! I never forget the lives I

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88 Shiva reminds us of two American SF feminist writers’ works: James Tipree Jr. (1915-87)’s novelette “The Girl Who Plugged In” (1973) and Anne McCaffery (b.1926)’s The Ship Who Sang (1969). Shiva’s degenerating disorder resembles the female protagonist P. Burke/Delphi’s pituitary dystrophy in Tipree Jr.’s work. Shiva recalls the female character Helva had physical disabilities and was forced to become a cyborg called “brainship,” as her body is into a spaceship in McCaffery’s novel.
89 Ōhara, Haiburiddo chairudo, 126.
90 Ibid., 148-9. 「シバ・・・・まだ三十年も生きていない青年は、七歳のからだをもつ少女よりさら に小さいのだ・・・・。 瘦せさらばえ、縮みきった身体は、白い棺の中心部にすえられていた。 ありとあらゆる手をつくして、痩せて弱りきった細胞を救うため、複雑なメカニズム群が稼働しつづけ ていた。 シバ自身は、糸を切られたピノッキオみたいに静かに横たわっているだけだった。」
sampled. I never forget!,’ she thought.” In contrast, Shiva thought of Jonah: “When Shiva recalls Jonah, his heart aches unexpectedly. When they met for the first time, the girl shed tears for Shiva. She shed tears for the sick and dying marionette plugged into the white coffin. ‘You’re going to die soon. You will die...’ she said and kept crying. The girl understood him right after she bit him. That is why she cried, her tiny body trembling with her sobs.” Love romance between Shiva and Jonah seems to reify a conventional heterosexual relationship, yet Shiverer Mouse’s baby-like body and Hybrid Jonah’s “he” identity interfere with the typical heterosexual romance.

“He” or “kare,” a mysterious savior figure, who is the highest military marshal and the founder of the church, is another example of reverse human development, although he has no physical presence, appearing only as white noise and light. His reverse development does not interfere in the heterosexual love romance but rather goes against the real world. He was created to be the highest military authority and the founder of the church in order to manage the universe for eight hundred years. He was born an “old man” who has the knowledge of eight hundred years and was the son of Major Dana Hess (D. H.) and First Lieutenant Shinohara. As soon as he was born, his body disintegrated like spores, and thus he survived as a disembodied being. He occasionally appears to be white noise on the cathode ray tube (CRT) or the Braun tube, but his image is that of an old man who is fiery and merciless. As an old man he focuses on winning the war against the machine Adiaptron and creates bio-chemical weapons in the Sample B
groups. At this point, he grows younger and younger; his image begins to appear as that of a toddler and finally as a baby. When he becomes an infant, he also appears as the light: “ERGO SUM LUX” [Therefore, I am the Light] as the church founder. The younger he becomes, the kinder and the more merciful he becomes. His development into the youth seems to correspond to his spiritual development; he becomes closer to being a savior, a God-like figure. He also begins to believe the God(dess)’s existence as the creator of the universe since he can be a savior, but he is “not” a creator. At the very end, he sees the creator of the universe, “she,” before he dies. It is suggested that the savior figure “he” is created by the God(dess) “she”—the feminization of the spiritual figure. The reversion of these two male characters’ development demonstrates the appropriation of masculinity in the text to counter the asymmetry between men and women.

**Symbiotic Cycles and the Parodic Performance of Mother-Daughter**

Judith Butler argues that the repetition of the gendered signs through performance “can reveal the hyperbolic status of the norm itself, [and] indeed, can become the cultural sign by which that cultural imperative might become legible.” Whereas Butler claims that the most obvious example of this performativity is found in drag, I propose that SF, particularly by women writers, provides a similar stage upon which to highlight the constructiveness and performativity of gender through cyborg or posthuman subjectivities.

In this section I will focus on the mother-daughter dyad in *Hybrid Child*, paying particular attention to the way this dyad is performed repeatedly through the recreation of

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94 Ibid., 135, 486. 「ERGO SUM LUX」
95 Ibid., 488.
96 Ibid., 497-8.
cyborg/posthuman subjectivities. I will consider how these models of mother-daughter relationships thus alter and tease the notion of a symbiotic mother-daughter relationship (understood in psychoanalytic theory). Since each version of the mother-daughter relationship is slightly different, the process of the repetition itself can challenge conventional notions of maternity and the roles of mother and daughter.

Mother-daughter relationships are emotionally ambivalent, Luce Irigaray suggests. They teeter simultaneously between love and hate. This ambivalence stems from “the absence of symbolization,” “a state of déréliction,” or “the state of being abandoned by God or, in mythology . . . , left without hope.” In other words, ambivalent emotions in a mother-daughter relationship are due to their lack of subjectivity and their marginalized positions in society and culture. Irigaray thus argues that women are outside of the symbolic order or unsymbolized since Sigmund Freud’s theory of a child’s psychic development is the son (male) as a prototype based on the heterosexual matrix. Unlike a boy, whose penis already marks the loss of the original symbiotic relationship with mother, a girl, according to Freud, has specific difficulty in recognizing the loss of the original symbiotic relationship with mother or continuing the pre-oedipal phase, as both mother and daughter are castrated. Thus, women, usually daughters, remain in a melancholic stage but are not able to achieve mourning since they cannot realize the loss of origin. Jacques Lacan radically revises Freud’s psychic development of the child in

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99 Whitford clarifies Irigaray’s definition of the unsymbolized in a mother-daughter relationship; it refers to “an absence of linguistic, social, semiotic, structural, cultural, iconic, theoretical, mythical, religious or any other representations of that relationship” (76).
101 Freud, “On the Sexual Theories of Children”(1908c.) 1972; “Female Sexuality.” (1931b.) in *Freud: Complete Works*, ibid, 4590-4607. Lacan, Anna Freud, Melanie Klein, and many psychoanalysts revised Freud’s phallocentric analysis. For Lacan, there are three dimensions of a child’s psychic development: the Real, the Imaginary order, and the Symbolic order. The Real is a chaotic mixture of materiality, images of the world, and needs, and the child has
relation to language, but not biological difference. In the Symbolic order, which corresponds to the Oedipus complex, the child accepts the Name-of-the-Father (law, knowledge, control) to control his/her sexual desires through language in *The Mirror Stage*. The child recognizes the lack of the mother’s attention to him/her, as it is caused by the outside world. Lacan calls this the symbolic castration of the mother in *The Signification of the Phallus*. Despite Lacan’s critical stance on Freud’s biological difference, the very term he uses is still phallocentric.

Based on these psychoanalytic theories, Irigaray considers that the only subjectivity is male, and thus one sex exists in Western philosophy, and it excludes women/ the feminine from a subject position. Therefore, she suggests a strategy called “mimesis” to recover female subjectivity and “the female imaginary” and problematize the phallogocentric logic of femininity. Irigaray remarks,

> One must assume the feminine role deliberately. Which means already to covert a form of subordination into an affirmation, and thus begin to thwart it…To play with mimesis is thus, for a woman, to try to locate the place of her exploitation by discourse, without allowing herself be simply reduced to it. It means to resubmit herself—inasmuch as she is on the side of the ‘perceptible’ of ‘matter’—to ‘ideas’, in particular to ideas about herself that are elaborated in/ by a masculine logic, but so as to make ‘visible’ by an effect of playful repetition, what was supposed to remain invisible: recovering a possible operation of the feminine in language.\(^\text{102}\)

In short, mimesis is not simply miming, but rather miming unfaithfully, and it thus reveals the exclusion of the feminine in the phallogocentric economy.

In *Bodies That Matter*, Butler elaborates on Irigaray’s concept of mimesis by suggesting a critical strategy of mime—a reverse-mime or performativity. In particular, she employs Irigaray’s concept of “to play with mimesis” and “an effect of playful repetition” (of citation),

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\(^{102}\) Whitford, *Luce Irigaray*, 71. Whitford quoted from Irigaray’s *The Sex is Not The One*. (76); translation is adapted.
questioning originality as a ploy of the power discourse such as masculinism, binaristic gender, and heterosexual matrix. In Ōhara’s *Hybrid Child*, the hyperbolic or artificial versions of maternity through mimesis or repetitive performance question the legibility of symbiotic illusion of the mother-daughter relationship in the masculinist and heterosexual matrix. Thus, these performance recreate an alternate version of the symbiotic relationship.

Of course, Ōhara is not the only writer to represent complicated mother-daughter relationships through playfulness, parodies, and performativity. Many modern Japanese women writers of SF (or speculative fiction) such as Kurahashi Yumiko (1937-2007), Shōno Yoriko (b.1956), and manga artist Hagio Moto challenge the hegemonic form of gender roles in Japan’s patriarchal society. Kurahashi’s “Uchūjin” [An Extraterrestrial, 1964, trans. 1997], for example, illustrates not only a playful bi-gender alien but also a satirical performance of expected gender roles that questions the phallocentric notions of gender in the patriarchal family. Shōno’s *Haha no hattatsu* [The development of the mother, 1995] deconstructs the conventional perceptions of the mother through linguistic play and multiple physical metamorphoses viewed from the daughter’s perspective. And Hagio’s “Iguana no musume” [Iguana Girl, 1992, trans. 2010] portrays the emotional ambivalence in the mother-daughter relationship through parodying the mother’s perception, as she can only see her daughter Rika as an iguana in order to reject her resemblance to Rika. After the mother’s death, Rika also sees her mother as an iguana, realizing her mother’s struggle to raise her daughter and reconciling with her mother in the end. The text illustrates the mother’s rejection of the mother-daughter enmeshment at the beginning, but affirms the daughter’s acceptance of this symbiosis in the end. These authors attempt to bring

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103 Reverse-mime does not have to privilege masculinism as an origin or binaristic opposition of masculinity and femininity, but shows the subversive possibility— for example, miming without a heterosexual matrix. Thus, a reverse mime contains a wider sense of miming to destabilize a master’s discourse: “for every oppositional discourse [women, children, slaves, animals in Plato] will produce its outside, an outside that risks becoming installed as its non-signifying inscripational space” (Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 52).
attention to or to rewrite the mother-daughter relationship to challenge the hegemonic form of
gender roles in the patriarchal society in Japan, by incorporating an alien, an animal, and a
cyborg through satirical performance, playful perceptions, or linguistic play.

In Ōhara’s *Hybrid Child*, several different versions of mother-daughter conflicts are
played out repetitively. Some seem to conform to the psychoanalytic theory of a symbiotic
mother-daughter identity, whereas in others the excessive performance of maternity or
cyborg/posthuman subjectivities tease or create parodic effects of the mother-daughter
relationship. Importantly, none of the mother-daughter pairings are created by reproduction in
the heterosexual family. Rather, they are copies or imitations of the family enhanced by
advanced technology such as genetic engineering. Kotani Mari notices that since the father figure
is absent in most of these mother-daughter dyads, the family becomes a feminized space and the
mother role takes on attributes of a phallic [i.e., controlling] figure. In this feminized family
space, there is no castration and no loss of origin, but the mother-daughter symbiosis continues
since there is, as Luce Irigaray suggests, no clear identification of the female subject in the
phallocentric logic in Freudian terms. Nevertheless, the mother-daughter symbiosis is an
imitation of the heterosexual matrix; in a sense, the imitation of the repetitive acts creates the
reality of this dyad, yet it is not quite faithful to the heteronormative matrix in the process. In this
respect, the mother-daughter symbiosis in this text is by default.

Keeping these points in mind, I will focus on three major cycles in the mother-daughter
relationship in this story. First, there is Clone Jonah. In this cycle the daughter exists as a clone
of the mother. Second, there is Consciousness Jonah, which manifest as the voice of a first-

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As Kotani points out, Ōhara’s *Hybrid Child* rather focuses on “the phallic mother, who replaces the absent
patriarchal authority figure by becoming one with the home and by becoming the ruler of the feminized family space”
and “the postmodern daughter, who survives by adapting to different situations and transforming herself” (“Alien
Spaces,” 61).
person narrator who is associated with the house and who assumes the historical memory of the mother from the first cycle. This voice dialogues with Sample B III. We recall that the daughter Jonah was already a clone of the mother in this first cycle. So, in fact, the Mother is in dialogue with herself. Third, we have Hybrid Jonah. In this cycle we have a hybrid of Sample B III and Jonah after he ingested the corpse of Clone Jonah and Consciousness Jonah in the second cycle. This Hybrid Jonah creates a giant dragonfly mother, into which Jonah’s brain cells and memory are implanted.105 (See Figure 3.1.)

In the first cycle, the seven-year old girl Clone Jonah and her mother simulate their roles as a daughter and a mother. In an interview Ōhara noted that we see in this performance two hyperbolic aspects of maternity: either extreme nurturing or extreme authority that manifests in destructiveness.106 Through Jonah’s flashback, Jonah’s mother attempts to “play” the maternal role, going through the motions of “feeding” her daughter Jonah. The act of “feeding” is normally a nurturing aspect of the maternal role, while “being fed” (or eating) is part of the daughter’s role. But in Hybrid Child the mother is so fixated on the act of “feeding” or “eating” that she harms her daughter, and she herself has an extreme eating disorder that fluctuates between bulimic and anorexic periods.

During the bulimic period, the mother forces Clone Jonah to eat a great deal of food. When Jonah does not eat, the mother punishes her by asking her to stand in front of the mirror, where the mother pulls savagely at the girl’s face. She sees in Jonah her own mirror image and is

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105 The story calls this dragonfly mother Dragon Cosmos.
jealous of a youth and beauty that she no longer has.\textsuperscript{107} Her punishment of Jonah illustrates her ambivalence: she is jealous of what Jonah has that she lacks, while at the same time admiring what she sees of her younger self reflected in her daughter. The mother, hence, has difficulty in completely separating herself from Jonah. In contrast, during her anorexic period, the mother completely rejects the role of nurturer. She does not feed Clone Jonah, and eventually the girl starves to death.\textsuperscript{108} Once Jonah dies, the mother preserves Jonah’s girl body safely in an electric magnetic pulse (EMP) capsule, thus demonstrating both her excessive love for her daughter as well as her own narcissistic desire for her own self-image.\textsuperscript{109} This is enmeshment where the mother-daughter boundaries are diffuse.

The mother-daughter symbiosis or enmeshment seems to fit Freudian (or Lacanian) theory; however, because Jonah is already a clone of the mother, the mother’s ambivalence and confusion between her self-image and her daughter’s is coming from their identical images by cloning, and not because there is no castration or the loss of origin. According to Jean Baudrillard, “the mirror stage is abolished in cloning, or rather it is parodied therein in a monstrous fashion.”\textsuperscript{110} The mirror stage—the moment of self-identification for Jonah—is thus unclear; Jonah is identical with the mother in adulthood. Therefore, the image of the mother becomes a prison for the daughter, as the mother-daughter symbiosis is an imperative concept in the male imaginary. Nonetheless, in this cycle, the mother-daughter symbiosis is modified by cloning, and the use of the mother’s contradictory performance: excessive nurturing and simultaneous destructiveness mock their enmeshment.

\textsuperscript{107} Ōhara, Haiburiddo chairudo, 53-4.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., 60-2.
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid., 81-2.
\textsuperscript{110} Baudrillard, Simulacra, 97.
For the next mother-daughter cycle, Consciousness Jonah assumes the role of the malicious mother in her interaction with the Sample B III. Jonah’s consciousness is attached to the house as a kind of cyborg and manifests in a first-person narrative voice,\(^{111}\) whereas Sample B III claims the male pronoun, regardless of its physical manifestation. Sample B III’s gender is contingent because of his ability to simulate. In this respect, Sample B III’s girl (after he ingests the corpse of the mother and transforms into a seven-year-old Jonah) is a copy of Jonah and ultimately a copy of the mother. His gender is always a simulation and thus no original exists. There is also no description of his original form in the narrative; as with Butler’s notion of gender identity, the imitation of repetitive acts reproduces the reality of gender.\(^ {112}\) Keeping in mind with both cyborg subjectivities, Consciousness Jonah—who is disembodied and lacks a corporeal presence—is jealous of Sample B III’s Jonah, who appears in bodily form. This jealousy echoes that of the mother in the earlier cycle, insofar as she was envious of the young and beautiful Jonah. Consciousness Jonah mimics the mother’s insolent voice and interrogates Sample B III’s transformed Jonah:

“What are you?” I asked. The girl looked puzzled as if she was sorry for becoming Jonah. “I … want to get out of here,” the girl answered. I asked again, “What the hell are you?” I mimicked my mother’s tone of voice and interrogated her. The girl looked terrified, yet she peered straight into my eyes (the camera). My anger surged up from deep within like a cauldron of wrath. I’m jealous of her beautiful flesh that I no longer have. “What are you?” I screamed. Suddenly, a divine revelation came to me. “Oh, it’s you! Mom!” The girl stepped back. I was agitated by her frightened look, like that of a scared cat. “I’m right, aren’t I? You’re not me. You’re my mom! How on earth do you think you can get away from me?”\(^ {113}\)

\(^{111}\) The first-person narrative voice “atashi” (a casual form of I, primarily used by women) is employed for Consciousness Jonah and Hybrid Jonah (a hybrid of Sample B III and Jonas), while the first-person narrative voice “watashi” (I, a general form) is used for the Mother at the very beginning.

\(^{112}\) Butler, “Imitation,” 22.

\(^{113}\) Ōhara, Haiburiddo chairudo, 57. 『＜あんた、なんなの?> 少女は表情を変えた——それはどうやら成功して、困ったような顔に見えた。 「あたし・・・・外に、出たいわ」＜何者なのかって、きいてるのよ?> あたしはママの口調をそっくりまねて詰問する。 少女は恐怖と驚きをあらわにし
Consciousness Jonah perfectly performs the phallic mother—an authoritative and abusive mother acting just as her mother had, while Sample B III plays the role of an obedient and frightened daughter as had the previous Jonah. Jonah’s mother becomes the text for Consciousness Jonah to perform. However, as this quotation shows, Consciousness Jonah wants to interpret Sample B III’s version of Jonah as that of the mother, not the daughter in order to take revenge on her mother. Consciousness Jonah confuses the image of herself with that of her mother. She attempts to destroy the girl’s body with fire, but ultimately saves her by dousing her with water. Her ambivalent feelings toward Sample B III’s Jonah come from the mother-daughter symbiosis that Consciousness Jonah inherited.

Jonah—both a clone body and a consciousness—and Sample B III’s girl are all Jonah’s mother. That is their point of origin. The relationship of the mother and the clone daughter Jonah is replaced by the simulation of the mother (Consciousness Jonah) and the daughter (Sample B III’s Jonah). The mother-daughter enmeshment does not end here; however, these extreme mother-daughter simulations through clone or cyborg subjectivities expose the performativity of the mother-daughter roles per se and the artificiality of their symbiotic relationship.

In the third cycle, the relationship of Jonah and her mother is revived with role reversal performances. At this point, Jonah is a hybrid of Jonah and the cyborg Sample B III after he ingested the corpse of Clone Jonah and Consciousness Jonah in the second cycle. I will call this cyborg Hybrid Jonah. Hybrid Jonah gives birth to a giant dragonfly containing the mother’s
memory—in other words, Hybrid Jonah’s dragonfly offspring is an imitation of the mother. Hybrid Jonah performs the role of nurturing mother and feeds the giant dragonfly. The dragonfly assumes the role of daughter and grows into a grotesque form with a voracious appetite. Hybrid Jonah eventually tires of feeding the dragonfly, kills her, and slowly consumes pieces of her flesh. Hybrid Jonah ultimately fails in her performance of nurturing mother. But as the destructive phallic mother, Hybrid Jonah is able to kill the daughter/dragonfly and thus re-enact the role of her mother who killed Clone Jonah to end their symbiotic relationship.

As mentioned above, Hybrid Jonah is already a hybrid of Jonah’s body and consciousness and Sample B III, while the dragonfly mother is a chimera of a dragonfly with the mother’s memory. But the four of them: Clone Jonah, Conscious Jonah, the Dragonfly Mother, and a part of Hybrid Jonah— are derived from the mother as origin, which recalls Butler’s assertion that “the prior presumption of the maternal as ground” is the male imaginary in psychoanalysis. The role reversal initially confuses the identities of the mother and the daughter. However, as both cyborg mother and cyborg daughter perform the roles of “feeding” and “being fed” repeatedly, the repetition of their performance can expose the artificiality of their gender roles and of the symbiotic identity, insofar as they all return to the mother.

Moreover, since the sign “feeding” or “eating” is repeatedly used for playing the mother-daughter roles here, the action of “eating the dragonfly mother (reconstituted in the role of the daughter)” creates an alternative form of the mother-daughter symbiosis in the feminized

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114 Ōhara describes the mother as a mysterious creature called Doragon kosumosu (Dragon Cosmos), which resembles a giant dragonfly in space. The mother no longer has a human form and becomes an insect.
115 Ibid., 250-51.
family space (without the father figure). “Eating the mother’s flesh” (cannibalism) in the text connotes two paradoxical meanings. First, it displaces an authoritative figure—the phallic mother. Tomoko Aoyama posits that “texts that have cannibalism as a theme involve . . . a notion of ‘displacement.’” The daughter (Hybrid Jonah) gains power and becomes independent as an autonomous subject. Second, cannibalism can emphasize the daughter’s affection for the mother and the mother-daughter affinity. The slow process of eating her flesh is an act of homage; the complete absorption of the mother is also the act of her acceptance of the mother.

After consuming the mother’s flesh, Hybrid Jonah can no longer maintain the body of a seven-year-old girl, she begins to grow. No matter how many times she destroys her body out of revulsion, it continues to grow into that of an adult woman. The daughter will become the mother no matter what, and hence the mother-daughter symbiosis will never end. Nonetheless, by ingesting the mother, Hybrid Jonah can finally end the conflict with her, and their reconciliation establishes her subjectivity while embracing the mother’s qualities. This recalls the ending of Hagio’s “Iguana Girl.” Once again Hybrid Jonah might return to the mother; the mother-daughter symbiosis is like the food chain cycle, which never ends.

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118 Aoyama, Tomoko. Reading Food in Modern Japanese Literature (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 95.
119 The image of the mother’s flesh pierced through a lighting rod and the church covered with blood is iconoclastic and can be associated with the distorted images of Christianity (perhaps, flesh and blood of Christ). Ōhara frequently plays upon Christian symbolism challenging organized religious institutions.
120 The excerpt from Ōhara’s Hybrid Child: “Jonah begins to lose the shape of the girl. Layers of body fat lie thick on every part of her body as if snow piled up after she killed her mother three months ago. She couldn’t believe this. For the past two hundred years, her body had no sign of growth. The body begins to swell out as if the balloon were inflated. The evolution of Sample B III’s artificial intelligence (AI) was necessary for Jonah to grow older because the real Jonah as the DNA donor lived until the age of seven. Murder the mother. Jonah thought with a shiver… Murder the mother… my mother… my mom… my mom…” (255). 「ヨナは少女のかたちを失いはじめていたのである。三ヵ月前、母親を殺してから、からだのあらゆるところに雪がふり積もるように厚い脂肪の層がたまり出した。信じられなかった。二百年ものあいだ、いっさい成長のきざしすら見られなかった肉体が、突然風船みたいにふくらみ出したのだから。そう DNA 提供者である本物のヨナは七歳までしか生きなかったから、それ以上に成長するにはサンプル BIII 号の人工知能上での発達が必要だったのだ。親殺し・・・・ヨナはふるえながら思った、親殺し、親を、ママを、ママを・・・・・・。」
As discussed here, three different cycles of the mother-daughter relationships are simulated through excessive maternal performance and cyborg/posthuman subjectivities. In the first cycle, Clone Jonah and the mother seem to comply with the symbiotic relationship according to phallocentric theory, as the mother cannot completely distinguish herself from the daughter. However, Jonah as the clone of the mother reveals the mother-daughter symbiosis in the male imaginary itself as an imperative concept. As for the excessive performance of the mother, nurturing and destruction can also reinforce the artificiality of the concept of mother-daughter symbiosis, as Butler suggests. In the second cycle, Consciousness Jonah and Sample B III’s transformed Jonah repeat the roles of the mother-daughter in the first cycle; however, their cyborg subjectivities suggest the performativity of the gendered roles per se. In the third cycle, Hybrid Jonah and the dragonfly mother-daughter role reversal changes the dynamic of the mother-daughter relationship. The daughter-cum-mother murders the mother-as-daughter by cannibalizing her. Eating the mother’s flesh creates an alternative for the mother-daughter symbiosis, as their symbiosis is inescapable: the daughter will eventually become the mother. However, as mentioned earlier, all these versions are performed by imitation mothers and daughters; hence, they are products of the male imaginary and the heterosexual family by default. The mother-daughter symbiosis is rewritten within a feminized family space confined to the mother and the daughter. Although the cycle of the mother-daughter relationship do not substantially differ, the repeated imitations of the mother-daughter symbiosis in the process expose the constructedness of the phallocentric logic of the mother-daughter symbiosis.

Feminization of the Planet—The Monstrous Mother and The Neutralization of Sex/Gender

Although the mother-daughter symbiosis between Jonah and her mother ends here, in the larger universe the mother-child conflict continues on Planet Caritas where Hybrid Jonah
escapes. Milagros—the mother computer system of the planet Caritas—is a core artificial intelligence tasked with sustaining a good environment on the planet for all the residents (children). She is originally programmed to be motherly, affectionate, and gentle in her protection of the inhabitants. The maternal functions of Milagros are associated with the images of breasts (feeding) and womb (birth/death). Milagros, however, suffers from posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) due to wars between the humanoids and the machines that have lasted several hundred years. As a result, she has flaws that cause her to kill some residents, not unlike what we saw earlier in “The Mental Female” and the mad mother computer system Kipple. The inhabitants have no power to stop this monstrous mother since they rely on her completely for the sustainability of the planet. Once Hybrid Jonah murders the mother, as discussed earlier, Milagros becomes even more unhinged and kills half a million of the residents. She stops “feeding” the inhabitants just as Jonah’s mother did to Clone Jonah, and many inhabitants become malnourished and die. Milagros ceases functioning as a good mother and becomes extremely destructive and monstrous.

In addition, Milagros’s image of a womb is linked to death. She collects a variety of personalities (information) from dead people and saves their data for simulation, just as the cyborg Sample B III does with his accumulated identities. Milagros’s aim is to create a spiritual world for the machine—the immense and sensitive AI.

Millions of the dead spirits—that Milagros stored in the AI—are calling their parents, partners, children, lovers, and friends. Milagros will engulf them all. She is the horrendous Mother God—the voluptuous, insatiable, and powerful, yet affectionate mother of all the inhabitants of Caritas. This mother will slaughter them all. When this

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121 Ōhara, Haiburiddo chairudo, 306.
122 Ibid., 163
123 Ibid., 187-90.
planet reaches a plateau, or when all the living organisms cease to exist, or when all the children are engulfed by her womb, she will finally be satisfied.\textsuperscript{124}

Milagros’s maternal affection for the inhabitants of Caritas is simultaneously excessive and destructive, as she wants to contain them all in her womb. The computer mother Milagros’s aim accords with Julia Kristeva’s notion of the semiotic “chora,” indicating a prelinguistic stage associated with maternity where language has not yet been established and thus object and subject are not separated. In other words, the semiotic chora is a space where a chaotic mixture of perceptions and drives co-mingle. Milagros attempts to create a perfect symbiotic space in the mother-child dyad for herself. The planet is completely controlled by Milagros.

However, the children (inhabitants) resist their mother. Some children gather in the church and attempt to save her with collections of “love” models, while others who were neglected attempt to destroy her. Toward the end, the children attempt to attack Milagros’s core system. This conflict ends when the merging of Hybrid Jonah and Daniel triggers the transformation of all organisms and metals into plants. What is more, there is an end to the conflict between mothers and daughters (Jonah and her mother), Milagros and her children, Sample B III and the military, as well as between humanoids and the machines. Milagros says with a smile, “It’s peace. Everlasting peace and comfort will come to me...at last.”\textsuperscript{125} Everything on the planet Caritas is swallowed by plants. The vegetation, namely, the de-metalized/de-technologized entities of the entire planet, suggest the end of the conflicts and the neutralization of binaristic sex/ gender and/or any other identities. In other words, the feminized planet—the

\textsuperscript{124} Ibid., 420-21. 「ミラグロスが人口知能に刻み込んだおおぜいの死者たち、霊魂たちが、みなそれぞれに親を、連れ合いを、子どもを、恋人を、親しい者を、呼んでいるのではないだろうか、そう思ったのだ。そしてミラグロスはすべてを呑み込む。恐ろしい母神、豊満で貪欲でたくましい、すべてこのカリタスに生まれた者たちの、愛情あふれる母親なのだ。この母親はすべてを殺戮する。この星が美しい永遠のプラトーにつつまれ、あらゆる生命も生活も人生も存在をやめ、自分の胎内にすべての子どもたちが包含されるとき、初めて彼女は満足するのだ。」

\textsuperscript{125} Ibid., 483. 『平安よ。永遠の安らぎが・・・・・・やっとあたりにもおとずれてくれるんだわ』
monstrous mother Milagros dies, but the plants regenerate the entire planet. The nullification of humanity including binaristic sex/gender is achieved by the regeneration of the planet, as the destruction is only able to renew sex/gender and possibly (re)construct another form of sex/gender(s). However, this does not guarantee a post-gender or gender-free world. Once again, the ending ambiguously suggests that the regeneration of the planet—(re)production—is associated with the female creator (Goddess). Therefore, a post-gender world and a dualistic sexed/gendered world constantly create tension in *Hybrid Child*.

**Conclusion: Hybrid Child**

*Hybrid Child* offers multiple layers, and even contradictory readings, of gender. The cyborg Sample B III is a good example of a denaturalized embodied body with his contingent and free-floating gender. In particular, the merging of Sample B III (and his accumulated multiple genders and life forms), the two Jonahs, and the mother challenge the naturalized notion of gender. Conceptually, Ōhara’s text seems possible to achieve Haraway’s cyborg in the post-gender world despite being utopian. The process of Sample B III’s transformation shows us constant reconstruction(s) of gender identity and the potential for a multiple gender world, and the cyborg/posthuman subjectivities are a means to express new form(s) of gender identities.

However, we have not solved the issues in a dualistic sexed and gendered world. In particular, the concerns of femininity and masculinity in the patriarchal society are presented in this text. Appropriation of male characters’ physical development goes against a biological understanding of humanity. It is impossible, as is the seemingly impossible task to change the unbalanced relationship between men and women. In addition, femininity—the roles of mother-daughter—imprisons women in patriarchal societies and reflects on the male imaginary of psychoanalytic theory. Nevertheless, the use of cyborg/posthuman subjectivities provides the
mother-daughter symbiotic identity with a means to modify the conceptual sex/gender in the male imaginary based on the heterosexual matrix. In addition to the cyborg bodies, the parodic performance of three cycles of the mother and daughter relationship exposes the hyperbolic status of the mother-daughter symbiotic relationship. Particularly, cannibalizing the mother is an alternative for the mother-daughter symbiosis. Thus, *Hybrid Child* rewrites the phallocentric logic into a feminized family space. In the end, once again we see the tension between the feminized planet and the nullification of sex/gender. The nullification of sex/gender possibly removes the issues that we have now, but the inequality between men and women and between heterosexuality and homosexuality are still present. The text points to a desire for a world beyond dualistic gender constructions: possibly a post-gendered world or else the reconstruction of another version of a multiple sexed/gendered world; nevertheless, the text returns in the end to a binaristic sexed/gendered world—the ending suggests the feminized world in this work.

**Queering Cyborg and Performativity of Gender—“Girl”**

Keeping in mind Ōhara’s creation of complex and multiple readings of sex/gender through cyborg/posthuman subjectivities in her texts, this final section will explore her story, “Shōjo” (*Girl*, 1985). In particular, I will examine the way she represents the queer posthuman character Gil (Jill) whose “drag” quality of performativity and satirical representations of heteronormativity constitute a critique of gender. In her discussion of the performative nature of gender, Butler notes that “drag,” in particular, is an example of a parodic imitation of the original gender, and gender performativity constantly and repeatedly destabilizes naturalized notions of gender. According to Butler, gender is culturally constructed depending on different

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127 Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 33
128 Ibid., xxii-xxiii.
historical contexts and “the discursive/cultural means by which ‘sexed nature’ or ‘natural sex’ is produced and established as ‘prediscursive,’ prior to culture.” In other words, the perception of repetitive acts becomes the reality of gender and “through the gendered stylization of the body.” In particular, “drag” performance is a parodic identity of the original gender and has the potential to interfere with naturalized gender categories. Butler believes that “drag” performance not only discloses that heteronormativity itself and heterosexual identities are not an origin, but that “the reality of gender is also put into crisis: it becomes unclear how to distinguish the real from the unreal.” For example, this uncertainty arises when one moves from seeing drag and assuming: “one sees a man dressed as a man or a woman dressed as a man” to the perception where “one is no longer sure whether the body encountered is that of a man or a woman.” In the 1999 preface to Gender Trouble, Butler revises the notion of “drag,” which she originally used in referring to cross-dressed persons, such as drag queens and or butch/femme women, to include transsexualism and intersexuality and extends the meaning of “drag” metaphorically. Recalling Butler’s notion of “drag,” Ōhara creates a hermaphroditic character having both masculine and feminine physical qualities or multiple sexualities, which interfere with and destabilize sex/gender.

In Ōhara’s “Girl,” the protagonist Gil demonstrates the “drag” quality of performativity. Gil is a young male stage dancer in a dystopian city, with the stage name Jill Abel; Ōhara assigns the pronoun “he” to Gil, who has an extraordinary queer body: both “platinum-mink-

129 Ibid., 11. In the story, Gil’s breast implants are treated as dressing or bodily stylization for the performance.
130 Ibid., xiv-xv, 33.
131 Ibid., xiii.
132 Ibid., xii-xiii.
133 Ibid, xxvi.
134 The translation creates two spellings of his name Gil (his regular name) and Jill Abel (his stage name); however, in the original Japanese text this is not apparent since he is always referred to as Jiru (ジル). Nonetheless, the stage name Jill Abel plays the meaning of the child of the god (Jill (Gillian) means “Child of the gods” or “Jove’s child” in English, while Abel is the son of Adam (Cain and Abel) in the Old Testament.).
encased genitals” and implanted breasts. Since Gil is also a performer, he is constantly objectified even off stage where he performs different aspects of conventionally constructed femininity in a heteronormative system. For example, the beginning of the story shows Gil’s feminine quality, his self-consciousness about being watched, and his awareness of strategically using his attractiveness:

Sitting with his platinum-mink-encased genitals exposed, he could sense the attention he was drawing. Every nerve ending in his body tingled, almost painfully, from the repeated caresses of staring eyes. Gil knew his own charms better than anyone. The smooth, honey-colored curve of his back from his shoulders on down, his wisp-clinched queen bee waist, his wind-teased shock of straight blond hair, and only darker, his amber-hued eyes. Even more, he knew, he was a beauty in motion, a fluid grace to his movements that had been there from birth—the same as his mother’s.  

Although this passage suggests that Gil inherently moves beautifully, he seems to learn from his mother and chooses to be a dancer to use his talent. Even though he does not enjoy being a dancer and feels pain in being objectified, he chooses to wear revealing clothes and is conscious of his charms and physical attractiveness. As seen from the perspective of a heteronormative society in which metaphysics of being are fixed, Gil’s maleness is inverted, yet the masculine part of his body is displayed in a way that is not associated with masculinity but rather with femininity. Thus, there seems nothing inherently associated with Gil’s gender; rather it is flexible and performative.

In addition, when Gil encounters the alien girl Kisa, the reader learns more about Gil’s sexuality from the short, fragmented dialogues between them, and also learns of Kisa’s confusion with Gil’s sex/gender. Kisa asks Gil, “You…human?” . . . “Well, then…you’re male?” “Gil’s chest boasted two voluptuous mammalian protuberances. Much bigger than the girl’s own

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budding breasts. And at the same time, he displayed a male organ swaddled root-to-tip in fur.

‘Yes, I am a man’ [Gil] answered honestly.” Kisa responds [in reference to his male organ],

“Looks more like a tail.”136 This comical dialogue emphasizes a parody of our fetish for hypertrophic sexual equipment and the playfulness of Gil’s ambiguous sexuality. The gender ambiguity of Gil’s body interferes with the notion of binary sexes and exposes the constructedness of heterosexual identities and gender itself.

The constructed and performative nature of Gil’s body underscores the impossibility of origin. In order to play the Sphinx on the stage, Gil modifies his body, imitates the imagery of the Sphinx, and plays with the gender stylization of the body.137 “His implanted breasts maintained their picture-perfect form. . . . The attributes proved so fabulously popular, it seemed a shame to lop them off. The Sphinx’s mother was half-maiden, half-serpent, known as the Echidna. The Echidna gave birth to all manner of horrible monsters. The Chimera, the Gorgon, the Cerberus [sic], then later the Dragon, and lastly the Sphynx.”138 Greek mythology describes the Sphinx as a winged monster with a woman’s head and breasts and a [male] lion’s body.139 Although the Sphinx connotes the negative meaning of a mysterious, destructive, and unfortunate female figure in male hegemonic ideologies from certain Western cultural and historical contexts, Gil is a man who alters his body to become the Sphinx for the sake of a stage performance. Gil’s Sphinx is not explicitly discussed in the story, though Gil’s Sphinx body—

136 Ibid., 157.
137 Butler, Gender Trouble, xv.
138 Ōhara, “Girl,” 158. The translation used the spelling of “Sphynx” rather than the Sphinx. I assume that the translator intends to distinguish between the mythological Sphinx and Kira’s robot called Sphynx, but the intension is unclear since it seems that two usages are conflated.
139 According to Willis Goth Regier, the Sphinx is a sculpted figure with a human head and a lion’s body called “the Great Sphinx of Giza” (an old name, Horemkhet) in Egypt, but Greek mythology adapted the tradition to a specifically female monster, Sphinx (Phix) (3-4). The Sphinx in Greek mythology gives the person a riddle. If the person fails to solve the riddle, she will destroy him/her. Oedipus succeeds in solving her riddle and destroying her. Ōhara’s story indicates that the mother of the Sphinx is Echidna. Hence, Gil’s Sphinx refers to that of Greek mythology. Therefore, Gil’s hermaphroditic appearance even confuses Oedipus’s victory over a female monster.
which has a woman’s breasts, lion’s body, and male genitals—is more confusing and disruptive to binary oppositions of sex/gender.

To add to this confusion, neither Gil nor Kisa maintains a strict heterosexuality, but both are involved in bi-/multiple- sexual activities. For example, Gil has a male sexual companion Remora (his roommate) who turned the fingers of his left hand—all six of them—into penises, and his sole connection with Gil is through sexual activity.\(^\text{140}\) Remora and Gil have a homosexual relationship; Gil suggestively performs a feminine role. However, Gil’s being a hermaphrodite blurs and disrupts the distinction between homosexual and heterosexual activities. On the other hand, Kisa, who looks like an angelic boy and glows phosphorescently, has an ambiguous gender quality and lives with a girl roommate who appears to be her partner.\(^\text{141}\) As the story suggests, Kisa also works as a hooker and performs sexual acts for her customers, who might be either male or female. Thus, in a post-apocalyptic city, there is no clear normativity for Gil, Kisa, or any others, and therefore their performance of sex/gender depends on necessity.

Moreover, similar to Ōhara’s other works, the multiple familial relationships, especially mother-child dyads, are also encoded and performed in “Girl” in order to expose the constructedness of familial roles. Gil is the center of the mother-child relationship and performs either a mother or child role. There are a number of dyads: between Gil (as the mother/child) and Kisa (as the mother/child), between Gil as the mother of the Sphinx on stage and the Sphynx—Kisa’s robot as the child, and between Gil as the child and the mother insect. In particular, Gil performs the role of a newborn baby given birth by the genetically-engineered insect mother on stage. Gil’s birth and the insect mother’s death are performed for the audience of the dystopian

\(^{140}\) Ōhara, “Girl,” 161.

\(^{141}\) Kira is described in the text: “The girl looked angelic in profile. But weren’t angels boys? A girl, the image of a boy” (trans. 156); 「少女の横顔は天使のように美しい。天使は少年だ。少女は少年のようでもある。」 (original 35).
city and for the story’s readers. This double-layered performance reinforces the performativity of both the child and the mother roles and provides a satirical, grotesque imitation of the mother’s labor and the simulated relationship between the mother and the child. This satirical performance of the mother’s giving birth suggests a critique of the societal expectation of women in Japan, as women are expected to bear children, and hence their commitment to this role becomes performative.

The grotesque process of the mother’s labor and delivery of the child is a spectacle of a contested site between mother and child on stage. The giant insect mother is created only for the performance of giving birth, while Gil is an adult human dressed in golden feathers, looking like a bird. The moment of the child’s delivery is also taken out of the context of the motherhood as a performance on stage. During the delivery, both the mother’s and Gil’s rage and hate for each other are stressed because the mother is in pain from the childbirth, and because Gil is nearly killed as the mother knocks him unconscious. Neither the mother’s nurturing aspect nor the child’s love for the mother is presented here. The grotesquely violent process of labor is depicted as follows:

Costumed in golden feathers, [Gil] crawls out of his mother’s womb. His mother is an insect, an enormous spheroid eggcase covered in honey-colored fuzz. The genetically engineered freak wiggles its giant abdomen, and Gil half-emerges. Smeared with emulsion, Gil’s golden plumage glistens. The insect suffers. It rages, beating Gil, the cause of its suffering, against the ground with primitive spite. Gil is knocked nearly unconscious. Gil and the insect explode with equal fury, bolts of pure hatred arc and collide. Writhing and squirming, his torso freed at last, hands flat upon the slime-plastered stage . . .

Gil extracts his legs from the insect womb. Too quickly, in fact, for huge quantities of blood spill out over the stage. The insect writhes and spreads its paraffin wings. The wires that hold them in place begin to cut into the thorax. . . .
The mutual anger and hate between the mother insect and the child Gil suggest a negative future relationship between them. Nevertheless, Gil finally passes through and emerges from her womb. The mother-child dyad is transitory and performative here and ends with the death of the mother, who is sacrificed in the process of her own labor. Instead, Gil’s birth suggests the rebirth and renewal of the relationship between Kisa and Gil.

Gil and Kisa temporarily become a couple, indicating a heterosexual relationship. Nonetheless, Gil’s hermaphrodite body has a parodic effect that unsettles the heteronormativity; Gil and Kisa rather suggestively have a lesbian or mother-daughter relationship. Butler’s remarks in this regard are worth noting: “The parodic or imitative effect of gay identities works neither to copy nor to emulate heterosexuality, but rather to expose heterosexuality as an incessant and panicked imitation of its own naturalized idealization.”

As noted earlier, Gil’s hermaphroditic character exposes the conscious performativity of gender, much as drag or gay identities. In particular, the scene below stresses the (heterosexual) parentage when the Mothers and Fathers church appears to give love to and to heal souls and wounded hearts of the city’s citizens, including Kisa and Gil. The M/F church, which emphasizes parentage, suggests an organized religion. “Gil left Kisa, made his way over to the unfinished statue of Mary, and bared his chest. A face—the girl’s face—burrowed into the fullness of Gil’s breasts. He heard Kisa’s voice asking, could he really give milk? He didn’t know. Why didn’t she just suck?”

This scene is more comical than romantic and suggests either a tender moment between a surrogate mother and a daughter or a lesbian relationship. Kisa’s act of burying her face in Gil’s huge but artificial breasts.

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143 Butler, “Imitation,” 22-23.
144 Ōhara, “Girl,” 168.
breasts interrupts their heterosexual relationship. Gil’s hermaphroditism and his revealing his breasts in front of the statue of Mary also emphasize the playful nature of gender performance and further trouble the heteronormative institution, the M/F church, in order to interrupt the sacrosanct position of heteronormativity. Nonetheless, this city dies despite the M/F church’s efforts. By the time the destruction of the city occurs thirteen years later, the relationship between Kisa and Gil has ended. Kisa will never become a biological mother to anyone. The hermaphroditic performance also disappears—but leaves in its wake a faint glow to illuminate the darkness. Similar to the ending of Hybrid Child, the ending here implies a renewal of the sex/gendered system that defies the inequality between men and women in the heteronormative societies.

As we have seen, gender performativity is an important aspect of Ōhara’s work. The hermaphrodite character Gil functions as “queer,” which encompasses drag, transsexualism, intersexuality, and multiple sexualities that challenge the notion of naturalized heterosexuality and fixed gender. Because the constructed hermaphroditic character not only exposes gender performativity but also creates the parodic effect of gender itself, Kisa and Gil as a couple disrupt the hegemonic heteronormative relationship. The birth-giving performance by Gil and the insect mother reinforces the artificiality and grotesquity of mother and child roles. Ōhara plays with ambiguous gendered bodies and gender performance. Through alternative gender, queerness, and conscious gender performance, she can be seen as exploring the possibility and the potential for changing “reality” for women in Japan.

Conclusion

Ōhara’s “The Mental Female,” Hybrid Child, and “Girl” provide multiple layers of (paradoxical) reading of sex/gender. “The Mental Female” demonstrates the artificiality of
gender, especially femininity, through four kinds of cyber-femininity while blurring the boundaries between the original and copied forms and between discursiveness and materiality. The copied elements of cyber-femininity and a queer mental female subject expose the constructedness of femininity per se. Hybrid Child offers contingent and fluid gender through the cyborg subject Sample B III. In particular, Sample B III’s amalgamation and transformation of various entities, including the Jonahs and the mother, show continuous (re)construction(s) of gender and point to a Haraway-esque post-gender world. The cyborg subject is a tool for expressing new type(s) of gender. “Girl” portrays the hermaphrodite (transsexual)—queer—character Gil to show the performativity of gender and creates a parodic effect of gender that reveals the instability of heteronormativity. Alternative gender and conscious gender performance suggest the potential for alternate realities for women.

However, all three works also demonstrate a concern for a binaristic sexed and gendered world and unequal relationships within gendered identities and roles in a patriarchal society. As the titles of “Girl” and “The Mental Female” indicate, Ōhara’s three works primarily focus on two kinds of feminized characters—shōjo (girl) and mother—to challenge the conventional roles in Japan’s patriarchal society. Gender here is ambiguous since shōjo is considered neither female nor male, and a not-quite female. Ōhara’s portrayals of shōjo are ambiguously sexed and gendered. In “Girl,” Kisa is the shōjo, who is a not quite developed as a girl but rather looks like an angelic boy. The shōjo figure is androgynous, while Hagio’s shōnen (boy) figure is also androgynous (see Chapter One and Two). In contrast, Gil is queer gendered but is contrasted with the mother, the statue of Virgin Mary, when revealing his breasts. “The Mental Female” focuses on the female gender of the character, especially the manifestation of the mother.

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145 Robertson, Takarazuka, 64-65.
Although the cybernetic world—Tokyo—is supposedly disembodied, it is nevertheless always embodied as the female form. The mentality of the female, especially the mother’s repressed madness, permeates through the cybernetic system, as Kotani suggests in the notion of “techo-gynesis.” “The Mental Female”—the ubiquity of maternal and feminine signs—resists the pervasive notion of cybernetics as a disembodied world and rebels the binaristic masculine logic—mind/cybernetics/disembodiment.

_Hybrid Child_ keeps readers in the realm of the shōjo Jonah(s) yet highlights the shōjo’s hybridity, her gender ambiguity, and her transformative characters in order to defy the masculine logic in the heteronormative society. As mentioned above, the cyborg Sample B III, though assigned the male pronoun “he,” is occupied by the shōjo Jonah’s body and consciousness. Moreover, the conflicts between the mother and daughter manifest through the shōjo’s cyborg body. The roles of mother-daughter confine women in the patriarchal society, which reflects on the male imaginary of psychoanalytic theory. However, the use of the shōjo’s cyborg attempts to alter the mother-daughter symbiotic identity in the male imaginary based on the heterosexual matrix. The parodic performance of three cycles of the mother-daughter dyad also exhibits the exaggerated version of the mother-daughter symbiotic relationship. The shōjo daughter’s cannibalization of the mother is an alternative for the mother-daughter symbiosis and rewrites the phallocentric logic into a feminized family space. As Sato suggests, Ōhara’s works refuse “a continuum between a shōjo and mother.”146 We see the contested site between mother and shōjo; however, the mother is ultimately destroyed, and/or the shōjo is also destroyed in order not to become the mother.

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146 Sato, “Culture of Desire,” 182.
Therefore, all three texts demonstrate a longing for a world beyond binaristic sex/gender constructions: possibly a post-gendered world or the reconstruction of another version of a multiple sexed/gendered world. Nonetheless, these works simultaneously express concerns regarding a binaristic sexed/gendered world and the asymmetrical relationship between women and men. The endings of these works suggest the nullification or renewal of the sex/gendered system that we currently have and again hint at the feminization of the cybernetics world and feminized planets to challenge the inequality between men and women in heteronormative societies.
Figure 3.1

Mother

The Mother

Consciousness Jonah (associated with the house)

Hybrid Jonah: Hybrid of Jonah & Sample B III

Daughter

Clone Jonah (a clone of the mother, now deceased)

Cyborg Sample B III in disguise of Jonah

Dragonfly Mother (her memory attached)
Chapter Four: Gender Politics in The Posthuman and Post-Fluid Worlds of Ueda Sayuri’s The Cage of Zeus

There is one thing I want you to be aware of when you exercise your imagination. If you see your imagination through to fruition, will it end up bringing about happiness—in the true sense of the word—for humanity and society? Isn’t it possible that in order to benefit the few you will end up trampling the happiness and rights of others? You must always ask these questions over and over.¹

Ueda Sayuri

Scientific experiments do not benefit everyone in the world. Ueda Sayuri’s texts probe the ethics of science, asking these questions, while she explores the possibilities of a posthumanity in which humans must either adapt to a new environment or modify themselves to live in an otherwise uninhabitable environment. Timothy Morton argues that we have already lived through “the end of the world” in the sense that our conception of world, horizon, nature, and environment ended when we began living with numerous “hyperobjects”—objects that exist in enormous temporal and spatial dimensions that are indiscernible to humans. Global warming is one of the most affected examples for the notion of hyperobjects.² Morton further notes that the end of world is linked with anthropocentric concepts, and that the concept of hyperobjects is a critical device to rethink world, horizon, nature, and environment and living with other life

¹ “Yume to akumu no hazama de” [Caught between Dreams and Nightmares] in Mirairyoku yōsei kyōshitsu [Futuristic Thinking Training], ed. Nihon SF Sakka Kurabu [Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of Japan, SFWJ] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2013), 47.

² There are more examples of hyperobjects: “a black hole, the Lago Agrio oil field in Ecuador, the Solar System, the sum total of all the nuclear materials on Earth, the plutonium, or the uranium, the very long-lasting product of direct human manufacture such as Styrofoam or plastic bags etc.” Morton, Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World (Minneapolis, MN and London: University of Minnesota Press), 2013, 1.
forms. Ueda’s novels similarly demonstrate the ways in which these so-called hyperobjects dramatically affect the living conditions on Earth (the end of the world), alter human bodies and genomes for survival, and eventually cause a new evolutionary change. Thus, we can see through her texts how the boundaries of humans, animals, and non-humans have become or already were unclear. These texts also show that human beings are but one species of many on Earth and the interdependence between humans and non-humans offers us alternative ways of non-anthropocentrism and non-essentialism. Interdependent relationships can challenge preconceived notions of an individual subjectivity and anthropocentrism, which is embedded in Western-centered notions of humanity and dualistic ways of thinking—particularly but not exclusively manifested in Western perspectives. Humanity and dualism are also closely intertwined to the patriarchal and heteronormative ideological discourses. Therefore, non-anthropocentrism and interdependence can challenge the hegemonic discourse of patriarchy and heteronormativity in Japan.

In this chapter and the one that follows, I will examine two of Ueda’s major works, Zeusu no ori [ゼウスの檻 2004, The Cage of Zeus, trans. 2011] and the series of novels known as The Ocean Chronicles: Karyū no miya [華竜の宮 The Palace of Flower Dragons, 2010, or The OC I] and Shinku no hibun [深紅の碑文 Deep Crimson Epitaphs, 2013, or The OC II]. This chapter will explore The Cage of Zeus, focusing on a new scientific creation of sexed beings and the issues of gender and sexuality. The following chapter will investigate the posthuman, humans as a new species, and will explore the meaning of coexistence and interdependence between humans and non-humans. Or what Morton terms “mesh,” which coalesces after dramatic environmental changes is represented in the series The Ocean Chronicles. These works point to the fluidity and

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queerness of sex/gender and of humanity in order to challenge anthropocentrism and the dualism of sex/gender and humanism. However, this fluidity and queerness cannot be achieved without consequences. As such, these consequences in Ueda’s texts problematize the issues and the struggles inherent in sex/gender identity and reproduction in contemporary Japanese society and possibly outside of Japan.

*The Cage of Zeus* introduces readers to new dual-sexed people called “the roundtrip gender” (shortened to the Rounds), who were intentionally created by scientific experiments. In this seemingly utopian post-gender or bi-gender fictional world, the fluidity of sex/gender is accepted, and sex change becomes commonplace. This fluid transgenderism goes beyond a binaristic sexual and gender difference between male/masculine and female/feminine. Nevertheless, the Rounds are kept in isolation and are vigilantly controlled by single-sexed people, thus establishing a stark distinction between the single-sexed people or Monaurals (men or women) and the Rounds (hermaphrodites or bi-genders). The separation between these two groups also complicates the system of sex/gender and sexuality and demonstrates that the creation of new sexual categories does not necessarily solve current problems, but rather creates new conflicts and marginalizations.

Hence, in this chapter I will primarily examine the Monaurals’ multiple perceptions of the Rounds and briefly the Rounds’ perceptions of Monaurals and of themselves in order to see the complexity of the potential sex/gender system and problems of sex/gender binarism. In addition, I will explore the ways in which scientist views of the Rounds problematize scientific surveillance of the bodies and the ways in which normativity creates marginalized groups in the context of the public recognition of gender identity disorder (GID), including Sex Reassignment Surgeries (SRSs) in contemporary Japan.
Recognition of Gender Identity Disorder (GID) and the Controversies on Transgenderism in the Early 2000s in Japan

Around the time of the publication of The Cage of Zeus in 2004, sei dōitsu sei shōgai (性同一性障害, gender identity disorder, GID)⁴ had gained widespread recognition in Japan. From October of 2001 to March of 2002, the sixth series of the popular TV drama Kinpachi-sensei (San-nen bī-gumi Kinpachi-sensei, 1979-2011) shed light on those recognized as having GID.⁵ The drama showed a GID student’s gender struggle based on the actual experiences of Torai Masae, FtM transgender, who was assigned the female gender at birth but has always identified as male, and eventually physically transformed into a man. In 2002, motorboat racer Andō Hiromasa was allowed to enter races as a male after he changed his female sex assigned at birth to male and came out as an FtM transgender. And in 2003, Kamikaya Aya, who openly came out as an MtF transgender, was elected to the Setagaya ward assembly in Tokyo.

Although MtF (male to female) transgenders appeared in the media in the 1980s and 1990s as curiosities known as “New Half” or “Mr. Lady,” Kamikaya allowed transgenders

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⁴ GID is used for a long time, but it leads to a controversy. Similar to the conditions of GID, the term gender dysphoria was used for American Psychological Association (APA)’s DSM-III (the third edition of Diagnostic and Statistical Manual) in 1980. It is currently used for DSM-V-TR and ICD-10 (the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, the 10th edition). In 1997, Nihon seishin shinkei gakkai (The Japanese Society of Psychiatry and Neurology) recommended the guidelines for sei dōitsu sei shōgai (GID). However, transsexual and transgender issues were already there. In 1969, the doctor, who performed Sexual Reassignment Surgeries for three men, was prosecuted for violation of the Eugenic Protection Law; three men were arrested for prostitution. It was called Burū bōi jiken (Blue Boy Trial). Blue boy referred to male prostitutes (but primarily transsexual women and a derogatory term she-male). According to Mark McLelland, the division between gay men and transwomen was unclear until the appearance of gay men in the media, and the term “toransusekushual” (transsexual) appeared in the 1970s. Mark McLelland, Queer Japan: From the Pacific War to the Internet Age (Lanham, MD and Oxford, UK: Rowman & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2005), 11-12, 101-126.

⁵ GID was defined as “those who have felt to have a different sex from their biologically determined sex and wish to match their gender identity psychologically with biological sex and social gender” referring to the second article of the Act on Special Provisions for the Determination of Sexual Difference For Those Who Have Gender Identity Disorder, implemented in 2003. However, the definition of GID in this article is arguable because it is based on categories of psychiatric disorders. 第三条「この法律において「性同一性障害者」とは、生物学的には性別が明らかであるにもかかわらず、心理的にはそれとは別の性別（以下「他の性別」という。）であるとの持続的な確信を持ち、かつ、自己を身体的に及び社会的に他の性別に適合させようとする意思を有する者」
slightly more respectable attention. Even so, not all transgenders have seen their requests for inclusion met with acceptance. In 2006 an FtM person lost his lawsuit in the Supreme Court to officially change his status (female-to-male) in the *koseki*, or family registry. All these events served to highlight the GID situation for the general public. Furthermore, *Act on Special Provisions for the Determination of Sexual Difference For Those Who Have Gender Identity Disorder* [*性同一性障害者性別の取扱いの特例に関する法律*] was approved in July 2003 and implemented in July 2004, spearheaded by a member of the House of Councilors, No’ono Chieko. Those who sought to change their sex, such as Torai and Kamikawa, were finally able to do so, officially, in their respective family registries in 2004.

However, the drama *Kinpachi-sensei* and the implementation of laws for the GID instigated some controversy among the transgender communities. The term GID becomes problematic since it is primarily used in medical and legal contexts. According to gender studies scholar Mitsuhashi Junko, the term originated in the context of psychiatric medicine and thus prioritized treatments such as SRSs, which reinforce sexual binarism. Thus, the term GID does not encompass the social aspects of gender identities. Due to the focus on GID, the TV drama

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6 The New-Half phenomenon occurred in the early 1980s after the female cross-dresser and hostess Matsubara Rumiko appeared in the film *Kura no naka* [In the Storehouse, 1981]. The term Mr. Lady became popular in the late 1980s and the early 1990s when TV variety show *Tamori no waratte itomo!* [Tamori’s It’s Okay to Laugh!] began to broadcast the community of Mr. Lady called *Misutā Redi no wa* [Circle of Mr. Lady] in 1988. Mitsuhashi Junko, “Nihon toransu jendā ryakushi” [An Abridged History of Transgender in Japan] in *Toransujendarizumu sengen: Seibetsu no jikoketteiken to tayō na sei no kōtei* [Manifesto for Transgenderism: Rights to Determine Sex/Gender Identity and Affirmation to Multiple Genders], ed. Yonezawa Izumi (Tokyo: Shakai Hihyōsha, 2003), 110-14.


8 Mitsuhashi, “Tōku batoru: Transujendarizumu sengen” [Talk Battle: Manifesto for Transgenderism] in *Toransujendarizumu sengen*, 227-28. Yonezawa also mentions this idea as well as the fact that those who can receive medical treatments are given a higher status among the community in “Toransujendarizumu gairon” [The Overview of Transgender] in *Toransujendarizumu sengen*, 29-32. Mitsuhashi also has a number of publications on gender identities, transgenderism, cross-dressing, and her own experience as a MtF transgender cross-dresser.

9 For example, *The Gender Book* describes a varied range of transgender as “some elements of crossing over or challenging gender roles, expressions, and expectations.” Mel Reiff Hill, Jay Mays, and A Whole Big Beautiful Community, *The Gender Book* (Houston, TX: Marshall House Press, 2013), 18. Mitsuhashi traces the history of
did not address the diversity of transgender experience, as Torai remarks. For example, there are some exclusions: “those who like to have hormone treatments but no surgery, those who wish to be identified as neither a man nor a woman (agender or intergender),” and those who are not diagnosed as GID by doctors, and so forth.¹⁰

Furthermore, the 2003 law was constituted exclusively on the basis of GID and on no other transgender people who did not wish to identify or cannot be identified as GID. FtM transgender feminist Tanaka Rei argues that the law remains problematic because it revolves around the family registry system and excludes many people.¹¹ For example, those who wish to have their sexual identity changed in the family registry must meet five preconditions. They must: “1) be over twenty years old, 2) be unmarried, 3) NOT have a child under twenty years old; 4) have neither gonads nor have permanent reproductive functions 5) have proximate exterior genitals of the changed (other) sex.”¹² Namely, only those who completed sex change through sex reassignment surgery (SRSs) can change their sex. Therefore, GID people must maintain the physical appearance of binary sex (either male or female) and prove that they are non-reproductive, for the purposes of the family registry.¹³ The GID law is also controlled by the reproductive law. The GID law contradicts the twenty-eighth article of the Maternal Body

transgender from ancient times to the present day and also describes the adaptation and use of terms such as transsexual, transvestite, transgender, GID, and so forth in Japan. For details, see her “Nihon transujendā ryakushi” [An Abridged History of Transgender in Japan] in Toransujendarizumu sengen, 96-127.

¹⁰ Torai Masae, Kataritsugu toransu jendā shi: sei dōitsu shōgai no genzai kako mirai [Oral Transmission History of Transgender: Present, Past, and Future of Gender Identity Disorder] (Tokyo: Jūgatsusha, 2003), 161-62. There are more controversies regarding the drama. Yonezawa Izumi mentions that the drama promoted the image of GID people as “pitiable individuals” (kawaisō na hito) who suffer from identity crisis. Yonezawa, “Media to toransujendā” [Media and Transgender], Ibid., 79-83.

¹¹ Tanaka, ibid., 91-95. For example, insofar as same-sex marriage has not yet been legalized in Japan, some people retain their sex assigned at birth since in this way they can marry legally (MtF and a woman; FtM and a man; or FtM and MtF etc.).

¹² The purpose for the fifth category of the third article is to avoid public confusion, yet it is extremely ambiguous. 「その身体について他の性別に係る身体の係る部分に近似する外観を備えていること」 (2003)

¹³ Binaristic sexual appearance contradicts the fact that intersexed people are currently allowed to register as kansei (intersex). In the legal cases, it was argued to be acceptable whether one’s sex is “natural” (by virtue of birth) or “unnaturally” altered.
Protection Law, which prohibits the removal of reproductive organs without medical reasons.\textsuperscript{14} In this sense, it is difficult for people to change their sex in the family registry as well as to remove their reproductive functions, as the Maternal Body Protection Law mandates, and the promotion of the countermeasure policy for falling birthrate prevents the Maternal Body Protection Law from changing. It is also difficult to change one’s sex in the family registry for those who cannot afford SRSs, those who are not diagnosed as GID, and those who choose not to undergo surgery.

Although the public recognition of GID does to some extent enhance the understanding of transgender people, the GID law still hinges upon family registry and medical discourse—both of which are bounded by patriarchal, reproductive-oriented, binaristic, and heteronormative systems. Therefore, the law fails to recognize the diversity of transgender identities: and the possibility of the modification or abolition of sex categories and of the family registry system \textit{per se} is left out.

The Rounds (hermaphroditic) characters in \textit{The Cage of Zeus}, are obviously different from the category of transgender, and are more similar to intersexed people. Nevertheless, the issues surrounding GID are reflected in the persistence of sex/gender binarism, the medical control of sex/gender identities and sexualities, the diversity among the Rounds, their marginalization within the community, and the way in which some characters struggle with gender identities not consistent with the sex assigned to them at birth.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{14} Article 28 of the Maternal Body Protection Law: 「何人も、この法律の規定による場合の外、故なく、生殖を不能にすることを目的として手術又はレントゲン照射を行ってはならない」 Yonezawa mentions that people cannot change sex if it amounts to cosmetic surgery. There are very few support systems for medical and psychological treatment of GID and transgender. “\textit{Toransujendā gairon},” 30.
\textsuperscript{15} Cis-gender means the person whose gender identity matches the sex assigned at birth. \textit{The Gender Book}, 18.
Synopsis of The Cage of Zeus

In order to diversify sex/gender and resolve the issues of sexual and gender minorities on Jupiter, scientists on Earth create a new kind of hermaphrodite called “roundtrip gender” (the Rounds) by genetic engineering, for new scientific experiments. The Rounds are kept in isolation on the planet called Jupiter-I. This is because the bioengineering of human beings with two reproductive organs is prohibited on Earth and Mars, which are inhabited by the Monaurals (typically, one sexed person, women or men). However, some protest against these scientific experiments on bioethical grounds and are opposed to the existence of the Rounds. The Central Intelligence Bureau (CIB) and the Mars Police Department receive information that a terrorist group, the Vessel of Life, has attempted to terminate the Rounds on Jupiter-I. Security chief Shirosaki and his group are sent to protect the Rounds. The Rounds have developed their own community and have a different view of gender and sexuality. On one hand, both the Rounds and Monaurals perceive one another as a threat; on the other hand, they are curious about one another. They try to maintain peace despite living in separate locations. In the end, the terrorist Karina, who is forced to become a member of The Vessel of Life, uses a bioweapon created from the parasites of Europa (a moon of Jupiter) in order to fix the Rounds’ sex as either female or male. Despite Karina’s demise, the security force fails to protect the Rounds from the infection. At the conclusion of the novel, we know that the Rounds will all become one fixed gender.

The Systematic Use of Gendered Speech

Gendered speech—a common feature of Japanese language usage—is carefully deployed in The Cage of Zeus. Harding (American male security commander) and Arino (Japanese male sub-commander), who are heterosexual married men, consistently use the masculinized subject pronoun I, ore (俺). When addressing others, they also use the masculine omae (you). However, Arino uses a gender-neutral polite speech pattern to address the higher-ranked Shirosaki and out-
group people. In contrast, Karina (the female terrorist) and Shiohara and Ogata (two heterosexual female Japanese officers) use feminine speech patterns, notably with speech ending such as -wāyo, -wane, and -kashira. The Rounds—Tei, Veritas, and others—use gender-neutral pronouns, watashi (I) and anata (you) and gender-neutral polite diction. Shirosaki (Japanese male commander) and Kline (female doctor) employ a mixture of gendered speech. Shirosaki uses the gender-neutral subject pronoun watashi (I) and addresses others as omae (you), whereas Kline mostly uses gender-neutral polite speech patterns with an occasional use of the feminine speech ending -wa. In bears noting that this division of characters’ usage of gendered pronouns and speech patterns corresponds to the characters’ attitudes toward sex/gender.

**In The Cage— Marginality: New Hermaphroditic Sex/Gender Identity**

The word cage (ori) has two key meanings in this novel. First, a cage refers to a biological body, which restricts one’s ways of thinking. Second, the place—Jupiter-I—where the Rounds reside is a cage. In order to challenge the first meaning of cage, the Rounds are created by genetic engineering so as to defeat the binaristic sex/gender and heteronormative system and thereby to improve humanity. Ironically, this attempt creates another cage for the Rounds, who are confined to a special district of Jupiter. In particular, the cage (isolation) of the Rounds in the special district corresponds to Michel Foucault’s concepts of panopticism and disciplinary space. Although the Rounds are aware of separation but not necessarily conscious

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16 The usage of third-person pronouns for the Rounds is avoided in Japanese, insofar as proper nouns are often used. For the English translation, I will follow the translator’s use of mathematician Michael Spivak’s gender-neutral pronouns to refer to the Round characters. “Spivak pronouns [ey, em, eir] are formed by dropping the th from the plural pronouns ‘they,’ ‘them,’ ‘their’ etc.” (Translator’s Note)


18 The word “Jupiter” is a playful association of two words of the Gods in Greek and Roman mythologies: Zeus and Jupiter.

of being watched, the Round’s bodies are constantly under surveillance despite the new possibility of sex/gendered species.

This paradox invites several questions: Who benefits from the creation of the Rounds? How is humanity meant to be thus improved, and for what purpose? Who gains freedom from the creation or who controls the Rounds? What are the consequences? These questions go to the substance of Ueda’s observation at the beginning of this chapter: the possibility for excluding some people for the benefit of others—in other words, a systematic marginalization. The Rounds are the invented sexed/gendered people who are set apart and locked in a cage. Will eir cage ever be removed?

In seeking an answer to these questions, I will briefly discuss how sex/gender is seen in this fictional world and how the Rounds are created. I will then explore the representations of the Rounds as perceived by the single-sexed Monaurals, and their queer effect of (dis)orientation. In addition, I will consider the relationship between the Rounds and the Monaurals, the scientific ideal of sex/gender and its consequences, the Rounds’ perceptions of sex/gender and sexuality, and marginality within the Rounds, my aim being to underscore the complex issues of sex/gender and sexuality and the persistence of binarism.

In Ueda’s fictional world, the creation of these new dual-sexed people, the Rounds, challenges the borders between sexual minorities (fluid transgenders, or “fluids”) and the sexual majority (heterosexuals). Fluidity of sex, gender reassignment, and homosexuality are commonplace in this society. This fluidity of the sex/gender system is described by the Martian police chief administrator, Hasukawa, in his conversation with another officer about his niece’s wedding. His niece is having a lesbian wedding; her partner is a transwoman or a male-to-female
transgender (MtF). Some individuals in the novel—the “fluid transgenders”—alternate their sex/gender.

Although the law protects the right of one’s sex and gender identity, the discrimination against them is still severe because they are a minority. In fact, the bioengineering of human hermaphrodites on Earth and Mars and registering them as ryo sei (two sexes) is banned by law. Because of this, the creation of the Rounds pushes the boundaries of human sexual diversity and gendered identities. It is intended to eliminate the notion of sex/gender minorities and to improve human (Earthling) thinking. The conversation between Hasukawa and the other officer spells this out: “We’re still ‘Earthians’ living on Mars and Jupiter. We’re imprisoned in this body. This body hinders our psychological growth, like a cage.” For Hasukawa, the imagination of most Monaurals, including himself, is still imprisoned by the idea of the binaristic sexed body. One of the major reasons for the creation of the Rounds in the first place was to get free from the “cage” of binaristic sex/gender.

The Rounds are genetically engineered to have a synthetic pair of “I” sex chromosomes, which are different from two “standard” chromosomes (X or Y) or XX/XY. Scientifically, ey are “perfect hermaphrodites and produced peptides that sent commands to the subcerebral lobe, an organ unique to Rounds, and located next to the pituitary gland.” The complete dual-sexed people constantly shift along the masculine-feminine gender spectrum and are thus called the “round-trip gender.”

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20 The translator chooses to translate “people of earth” (chikyūjin, 地球人) as “Earthians” and not the more typical, “Earthlings.” Ueda, The Cage of Zeus, trans. 22.
21 Ibid., 43.
Orientation and Disorientation through Dual-Sexed Bodies

Ueda’s narrative illustrates how differently Monaurals (women and men) perceive the sex/gender and sexuality of the Rounds. In particular, multiple perceptions of Monaurals toward the Rounds are depicted in a spectrum ranging from curiosity and tolerance to hostility and hatred. According to Sara Ahmed, “Perception hence involves orientation; what is perceived depends on where we are located, which gives us a certain take on things.” She also mentions, “If orientation is a matter of how we reside in space, then sexual orientation might also be a matter of residence; of how we inhabit spaces as well as ‘who’ or ‘what’ we inhabit spaces with.” The readers can see that the single-sexed Monaurals’ perception of the Rounds is based on their own orientation—their familiarity and unfamiliarity—vis a vis sex/ gender. In particular, Monaurals fail to recognize (disorient) the dual-sexed-ness in the Rounds since eir appearance resembles that of either Monaural women or men. As Ahmed suggests, this moment can be called a “queer” moment that reveals an “oblique,” “twisted,” or deviated direction in the relation to a normative world—a Monaural or sexual dimorphism world—in this work. Monaurals’ perceptions reflect on how we as readers are also bound by sexual dimorphism (male and female), gender binarism (masculinity and femininity), and sexuality that corresponds to these binarisms.

To illustrate, most security officers see the Rounds as either male or female at the beginning, as they are unfamiliar with eir hermaphroditic bodies and sexuality. For example, when Arino, a Japanese heterosexual male officer, meets the Round doctor Tei for the first time, he describes em as a “female” doctor:

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22 Ahmed discusses the orientation in the relation between bodies and objects, but I utilize the orientation in the relation between bodies and other bodies. Ahmed, Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others, 27.
23 Ibid., 1.
24 Ibid., 170.
“A female doctor,” Arino said, cracking a smile. “Nice to see I’ll be in good hands if I’m wounded.”

A faint smile came across Tei’s pink lips. Shirosaki moved to caution Arino, sensing that the smile on the doctor’s face was one of cynicism rather than delight, but Tei spoke first. “I’m not a woman, Sub-commander Arino.”

Arino’s cheek twitched. “My apologies.”

“And incidentally, I’m not a man either,” Tei added. “I’m a human from the special district that you’ve come to guard. I’ve come as a representative of the special district.”

This exchange illustrates the awkwardness between Arino and Tei. Arino has no clue that his assumption about Tei’s sex would be incorrect, while Tei seems to be used to this kind of response and the need to explain emself to the Monaurals. Arino is embarrassed by his own comment, yet he does not realize that he relies on his own preconceived notion of sex/gender, especially when he whispers to Shirosaki, “I had no idea hermaphrodites looked so feminine. Do you think everyone in the special district looks like that?” Simultaneously, Arino’s response exposes the normalization of single sex in one body (either male or female), sexual dimorphism, and heterosexuality in his world, which affects his perceptions of the Round. His comment also reveals his projection of what he desires onto the other. For Arino, Tei’s features are automatically associated with a female body and feminine characteristics, even though Tei is described as ambiguously gendered: “The figure that stood before him was in eir early thirties with spindly arms and legs and slight features. Eir silken hair, cut evenly at the chin, shone as it moved. Although difficult to guess eir ethnic origin and not exactly beautiful, ey had strangely magnetic eyes.” Arino uses familiar gendered markers to assess sex as either male or female. His perception reveals that Monaurals’ perceptions of sex/gender are subjective and have been oriented by binary sexual bodies.

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26 Ibid., trans. 36.
27 Ibid., trans. 35.
In contrast, the two female officers, Ogata and Shiohara, are described as more receptive to the hermaphroditic bodies than the male officers, and they fantasize a love romance with the Rounds. For example, Ogata thinks her relationship with the Round is both heterosexual and homosexual—hence bisexual: “Even if they thought they were entering from the standpoint of a woman, the relationship would be a lesbian one. Ogata remarked that she wouldn’t quite know what to feel, but that was part of the allure.” Both of them are more curious and willing to have an intimate relationship with the Rounds. Nonetheless, the efforts that Shiohara and Ogata (as well as male officers Arino and Shirosaki) make to understand the Round’s sexuality demonstrate the limitation of the three categories of sexual orientation: heterosexuality, homosexuality, and bisexuality. As the doctor Kline character points out, the three sexual orientations are “extremely fluid.”

Thus, it is possible to posit that the relationship between the Rounds can be perceived as either homosexual (one kind of sexual orientation) or bisexual (always bi-gender sexual orientation), or other sexual orientation. In contrast, the relationship between the Rounds and the Monaurals can be seen as heterosexual or homosexual, and/or bisexual. However, the Round’s sexuality fits these three categories only from a monosexual perspective and not from a hermaphroditic or bi-gender one. Their sexual orientations cannot be described by these three categories and rather require new other categories such as pansexuality.

In addition, Shiohara and Ogata are fascinated by the male-looking Round’s dual pregnancy, as they cannot imagine Monaural men talking about the physical aspects of pregnancy. “The figure of this attractive masculine-looking Round [or individual] talking about ovulation and pregnancy as if it were his own experience was enough to give them goose

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28 Ibid., trans. 79.
bumps.”29 Shiohara’s and Ogata’s disconcerted reaction (goose bumps)30 to a male-looking Round talking about experiences they can identify only with women suggests their sense of both oddness and excitement. This passage also points to their desire to share their actual experience of pregnancy and childbirth, including bodily change and labor pains, and their feelings in this regard with their partners. The different reactions between the male and female officers clearly relate to physiological and emotional experiences.

Nonetheless, the Round’s physiology still defies Ogata and Shiohara’s imagination, since they cannot understand physiological sensations of the opposite sex and having both characteristics. “One Round was capable of knowing what it was like to both impregnate and [be] impregnated. Not just for a limited period but for a lifetime. That alone was enough to transform the worldview of the Round.”31 The third-person narrator (it is unclear whether the narrative viewpoint resides in Shiohara and Ogata) continues to explain how Monaurals are trapped in their anthropocentric assumption of sexual dimorphism.32 In particular, our living world has a variety of creatures with a variety of sexes from non-anthropocentric views. For example, the passage makes the point that the dual-sexuality of the Rounds and other species, including snails and sea slugs, is a more efficient system of reproduction. Some species of fish alter their sex according to environmental conditions.33 In this respect, the Monaural (and other species) sexual dimorphic system is only one variation in the reproductive system of life forms, while the Rounds’ is another variation. Hence, Shinohara, Ogata, and Arino are struggling to

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29 Ibid., trans. 85.
30 In the original version, their reactions are described as “ぞくぞくするほど刺激的で嬉しいものだった” (original 87).
31 Ibid., trans. 85-86.
32 「ひとりの間が、妊娠させる感覚と妊娠する感覚の双方を知っている。しかも、それが期間限定ではなく一生続くのだ。それだけでも、相当に、世の中見る目が変わってしまったようだ。」 Ueda, Zeusu no ori (original), 87.
33 For example, ciliated protozoa have thirty-eight kinds of sexual differences. Ibid., trans. 86.
understand the Rounds and arrive at a non-anthropocentric way of seeing life forms and reproductive system.

Moreover, American male commander Harding’s perception and experience of the Rounds is more complicated than that of the other Japanese officers, as it is later revealed that he had a relationship with a Round. At first, Harding reveals his discriminatory attitude toward the Rounds when a new security team of Japanese officers arrives. For example, his conversation with Shirosaki betrays a distinct anthropocentric bias, insofar as he sees the Rounds not as human but rather as creatures:

Harding stared at Shirosaki with a look of contempt. “Have you ever seen sea hares mating?”

“No.”

“They’re simultaneous hermaphrodites whose male sex organs are exterior, while the posterior holds the female. When the sea hares mate, they form this long link. One puts its male organ in the female organ of the sea hare in front of it, while its own female organ is entered by the male organ of the sea hare from behind. Scientists call that a ‘mating chain.’ Snails mate in a similar way, only they have to face each other to insert the male organ in the other’s female organ. Same goes for the Rounds. With a single act of intercourse, they can love as a man and be loved as a woman at the same time. I’m telling you, that’s not right. A group that doesn’t have any scruples about doing shit like that don't deserve to call themselves human.”

Harding mentions that the Rounds’ manner of sexual intercourse, especially the simultaneous excitement of both male and female sexual organs, disgusts him although for the Rounds it is perfectly “natural.” His disdain clearly derives from an anthropocentric view of sexual dimorphism which posits heterosexuality as the norm even though human beings have a variety of sexes/genders and sexuality. Nonetheless, as Shirosaki mentions, Harding provides a “vivid

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35 Ibid., trans. 41.
picture” of the Round’s sexual intercourse, and his response exhibits his knowledge about eir sexual activity and his strong negative reaction to em.

The very end of story exposes Harding’s relationship with the Round Veritas. The earlier descriptions of Harding’s knowledge of the Round’s sexuality, his strong negative response, and his discriminatory attitude toward the Rounds are, in fact, an outcome of his unsuccessful relationship with Veritas. When Harding is badly injured and floating in space with Shirosaki, he confesses to Shirosaki about his previous intimate relationship with Veritas. Since there was no segregation of the Round’s district and the Monaural’s area when Harding first came to Jupiter-I, Veritas and he became good friends and shared common sensibilities. Their relationship gradually went beyond the stage of friendship. Harding’s confession illustrates his difficulty in coping with his attraction to the hermaphroditic figure and in understanding his own sexuality. Harding says,

“I realized that I was feeling something more than male camaraderie. Not in a homosexual way. I was attracted to the female part of Veritas. Humans are nothing more than animals. Once I became aware of the female half of em, I got a little skittish. And to make matters worse, half of Veritas is biologically female. Maybe it’s because I could recognize the male half of em, too that eir female half seemed all the more radiant.”36

Harding sees Veritas as a woman, as if theirs were a heterosexual relationship. Avoiding any encounter with Veritas’s male sexual organ, Harding is satisfied with their partnership. But, as only eir female part is satisfied but not eir male part, Veritas is not completely fulfilled sexually. Veritas wants to have sex with Harding as a man. This desire disorients Harding. Unable to overcome his homophobia, he refuses to acknowledge Veritas’s maleness even though he knows

36 Ibid., trans. 261.
that it is unfair to eir. Despite his experience with a Round, Harding’s perspective does not transcend sexual dimorphism, gender binarism, and heteronormativity.

The relationship between Harding and Veritas eventually becomes a target of mockery from both his security team and the other Rounds. Buckling under the pressure, Harding strikes Veritas, who subsequently attempts suicide. The disruption that ensues leads to the imposition of restrictions on access to the special district. In the aftermath, Harding realizes that much of the trouble arose from his difficulty in admitting his own bisexuality (especially, male homosexuality) when confronted with the Round’s sexuality. As he tells Shirosaki, “Did I really hate the Rounds or love them? Was I angry at Veritas or at myself? Or maybe I was just spooked that my relationship with Veritas made me realize that I might have been bisexual all along and was desperately trying to deny it.”

Before his death, Harding tries to reconcile with Vertias, who has decided to become fully a woman after being maimed by a parasitic machine. Nevertheless, Veritas insists that eir sexuality is not the same as that of a woman but rather ey will always be both a woman and a man. Harding acknowledges Veritas’s bi-gender identity, as he accepts his own possible bisexuality and asks Veritas not to visit him again. Out of perversity, Veritas refuses Harding’s request—wanting eir visits to punish Harding. Nevertheless, Veritas’s actions toward Harding reveal a lingering tenderness.

Harding felt something cool and soft touch his face. A familiar touch he’d felt many times before. That supple sensation that had aroused in him unspeakable feelings of intoxication and guilt and had awakened his passion. He did not have to open his eyes. This was Veritas’s hand. Eir cold, slender fingers. Palm. Cheek. Eir lips.

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37 Ibid., trans. 264-65.
Harding swallowed the feeling of calm that began to rise up inside him. But he did not open his eyes. Pulling his lips taut, Harding said nothing and gave himself over to Veritas’s gentle caress.38

The final silent communication between Harding and Veritas is deeply affecting. Their anger subsides, and they accept each other.39

Both Japanese male and female officers have different queer moments when they see the Rounds because their perceptions of binaristic sex are different. While these male officers use their own gender markers to see em as a woman and try to see themselves from the Round’s perspectives, female officers use their own gender markers to see em as a man and imagine themselves involved with em. Harding gradually comes to understand and acknowledge his own sexuality, yet he is the first Monaural to have a relationship with the Round and try to understand em. Monaurals at least benefit from learning of different sex/gender and sexualities through the Rounds. Some Rounds might see some benefit from an encounter with Monaurals, but ey are not free from the surveillance under Monaurals. I will discuss this point in the following section, regarding the views of two female scientists.

**Contested Feminist Views: The Idealist(ic) Scientist vs. The Skeptical Terrorist**

The two women scientists, Kline and Karina (who is also a terrorist), have contrary views concerning the Rounds. Kline holds an idealistic view since she believes the existence of the Rounds offers hope for humanity and new possibilities in a gendered world. Karina (known as Von in her role as a scientist) suspects that the existence of the Rounds will, in fact, solve the unequal relationships in the binaristic system, as she believes the binaristic system perpetuates the inequality between majority and minority categories.

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38 Ibid., trans. 277.
39 It is hinted that Veritas’s baby is Harding’s, as ey does not have a partner, but the baby is not clearly mentioned as Harding’s child.
As a scientist, Kline is protective of the Rounds, given that they are a new scientific creation. As mentioned above, the Rounds are primarily created for two purposes: 1) testing the limits of the human body (remodeling the human body), and 2) creating sexual diversity (solving the issues caused by binaristic sexual differences). Kline describes the Rounds to Shirosaki as “a branch of the human evolutionary tree—one possibility of humanity’s progression.”\textsuperscript{40} Kline believes the existence of the genetically-engineered Rounds is a progressive stage of human evolution. For her, the Rounds become a cathartic way to improve single-sexed people’s attitudes toward sexuality; thus, Monaurals must develop companionship with the Rounds. Kline continues, “We should regard them as partners and must not pressure them with any undue expectations. We must think of them neither as an ideal form of humanity nor a new breed of human reigning over us, but as a new subspecies coexisting with us.”\textsuperscript{41} Kline’s statement is paradoxical in a way. Her best solution is co-existence between the Rounds and Monaurals, even though she and other staff hushed up the problem between Veritas and Harding, which increased the gap between the Rounds and Monaurals. In addition, Kline’s reaction toward the ex-Round and currently single-sexed male Wolfren later reveals her belief that the Rounds are a supreme gendered subspecies even though she mentions here that the Rounds are neither ideal beings nor higher-ranking than Monaurals.

Kline’s ideal of co-existence is tarnished by the Vessel of Life terrorist attack, yet her main concern is to protect the Rounds. Kline finds the terrorist beliefs extremely backward. The Vessel of Life claims that the existence of hermaphroditic beings corrupts the natural order of humans, reduces human diversity, and will eventually dominate the single-sexed people. In response to this, Kline thinks to herself, “\textit{Eliminating gender differences would homogenize the...}”

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., trans. 49.  
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., trans. 49.
culture? … What narrow-minded drivel! All we did was increase the number of humanity’s possibilities by one. Not once have we demanded that everyone become like the Rounds.” Kline believes that the creation of the Rounds provides humanity with more possibility and diversity and thus does not threaten to homogenize human culture. She is also annoyed by the fact that those who have dual-sex-phobia assume that the Rounds would sleep with anyone.

Kline’s belief in the Round’s existence as human progression has a pitfall. Although she mentions above that the Rounds are not the ideal models of humanity, Kline reveals that the Rounds still serve as her ideal when she finds out that Wolfren, a previous Round and currently a Monaural man, assists the terrorists in their escape to other planets. Kline is unable to understand Wolfren’s misery; Wolfren feels that he does not belong to the Rounds and is trapped in Jupiter-I. After hearing Wolfren’s confession from Arino, Kline comments on his action:

“The Rounds are our good partners and the hope of humanity. There’s nothing about that statement anyone needs to be suspicious about. Tenebrae couldn’t understand that. That’s why he forsook his given name to become Barry Wolfren,” Kline said. “A shame, really. We gave him a perfect body and home, yet he fled this paradise all on his own. Suck the Rounds dry of all their acquired data and toss them away? How can he be delusional? He has no idea just how blessed his life has been.”

Kline expects all the Rounds to appreciate eir hermaphroditic bodies and eir home since she believes that the Rounds are perfect beings, and thus Wolfren does not fit into her ideal of a Round. For whom are the Rounds’ bodies perfect? Her actual belief of the Rounds as perfect beings contradicts her previous statement “the Rounds are not ideal forms reigning over single sexed people.” Kline does not realize that she is judging Wolfren’s action and behavior based on her Monaural ideal, which blinds her to Wolfren’s perspective. Kline’s blindness is similar to

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42 Ibid., trans. 158.
43 Ibid., trans. 182.
44 Ibid., trans. 49.
that of cisgender-normativity, wherein people cannot imagine that the sex assigned at birth
would not match gender. Her shortsightedness also corresponds to Ueda’s remark at the
beginning of this chapter, which insists that we ponder our own imagination, to the extent that it
limits our ability to see certain contrary perspectives and allows us to infringe upon the
happiness of others. Kline’s character illustrates that one’s ideal is not always the other’s ideal.

In contrast, Karina sees the Rounds with the twofold skepticism of a Monaural: from both
a scientist’s and terrorist’s perspective. As a scientist, Karina sees Fortia, the superintendent of
the Rounds, as a medical subject. And as a terrorist, she sees em as a hostage. When Karina
attacks the station, she rips off Fortia’s clothes with a knife and reveals eir naked body. She
examines eir body and slips her fingers between eir legs out of curiosity. The description of
Fortia’s body demonstrates Karina’s fascination with the Round’s body and the scientific and
efficient design of eir reproductive functions:

So the penis and vagina aren’t arranged front to back but side by side [internally].
The penis on the right and vagina on the left.

An effective formation. With the reproductive organs arranged in this way, the
Rounds can engage in the act facing each other with one’s penis inside the other’s
vagina and the other’s penis inside one’s vagina. Very convenient! . . .

The urethral orifice was located toward the anterior and the anus located toward
the posterior in relation to the reproductive organs. They’re arranged in a cross.
Karina mused, a smile escaping her lips. No doubt, whoever was responsible for
the Rounds’ genetic design was precision-oriented.45

From a biologist’s point of view, Karina intriguingly sees the functionality of the Round’s body
design for the increased prosperity of the species, since two Rounds are able to have
simultaneous sexual gratifications and often have synchronous pregnancy. In addition, Karina

thinks that the cross formation\textsuperscript{46} of the Round’s genitals, the urethral orifice, and the anus is
designed for functionality and hygiene. Karina’s fascination with Fortia’s body derives from the
scientist’s genetic design but not the Round’s perspective.

With physical assault and aggression, Karina insults Fortia with her assumptions about
eir feelings but simultaneously has sympathetic views toward em as a scientific subject. Karina is
on top of Fortia, forces her lips and tongue into Fortia’s, and puts her hand between eir legs. She,
then, tells em that eir body, sexual behaviors, and baby have been under constant surveillance by
scientists. Karina says,

“I can imagine the humiliating treatment you must have endured in the name of
science. Being subjected to experiments like a lab animal. It must have wounded
“To have your newborns taken from you for experiments before you’d had a
chance to hold them?”\textsuperscript{47}

Despite Fortia’s rejection of her comment, Karina points out the issues of the constant
institutionalized control of the Rounds’ bodies in scientific studies, which corresponds to
Foucault’s idea of the docile body or disciplinary body, which is “subjected, used, transformed
and improved.”\textsuperscript{48} Karina also asks why Fortia did not refuse to be examined, although Fortia
says that ey did not have a choice for the first generation Rounds. Fortia’s thought reflects on the
disciplinary body; nevertheless, Karina imposes her idea upon Fortia’s situation, as Fortia
understands that Monaurals use the Rounds as a “lab animal or a tool of space exploration,” but
Fortia hopefully thinks that the Rounds represent the space frontier. The conversation between
Karina and Fortia illustrates scientific objectification and control of the Round’s bodies through

\textsuperscript{46} The cross-formation (十字配列) of Rounds’ genitals possibly implies the creation of God. The Japanese title of
\textit{Zeusu no ori} (The Cage of Zeus) plays with the word of Jupiter rather than Greek mythology, as the Rounds reside
in the planet Jupiter. The Japanese subtitle has an English title, which is \textit{The Cage of God}. Ibid., original, 181.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., trans. 170-71.
\textsuperscript{48} Foucault, “Docile Bodies,” ibid., 136.
examinations. Yet the reader does not know that all the Rounds feel the same about scientific
observation.

Moreover, Karina insults the Round doctor Tei with eir sexual/genital differences as
deformed. Karina sees Tei’s body that non-normativity needs to be fixed. While Tei is treating
her injuries from the security guard’s torture, Karina mischievously tells Tei about the secret of
eir body:

Your penis and vagina are configured on the wrong side—the penis on the left
and the vagina on the right. You’re not able to engage in the act facing your
partner because your configuration doesn’t allow you to insert your penis and
have your partner’s penis be inserted into you at the same time. You have never
felt the sensation of simultaneous ejaculation and insemination. You, Doctor, are
a special case who can only do one or the other. At present, there are no other
Rounds in the special district with your abnormality. You’re a misfit of Round
society.” Then Karina said, in a contemptuously gentle tone, “You’re deformed,
isn’t that right?”

Tei strongly resists Karina’s characterization of eir sex as abnormal or deformed and insists that
eir sex should be considered rather as “genetic aberration.” Nonetheless, Karina continues to ask
why Tei did not have reconstructive surgery to fix it. Tei feels that such surgery is unnecessary.
Karina’s comment corresponds to contemporary discussions in Japan about sexual reassignment
surgeries (SRSs) in the case of an intersex person. Karina advocates the modification of Tei’s
physical condition to the “proper” dual-sexed body.

Karina suspects that sex/gender differences create unequal relationships in any society.
She is intrigued by Tei’s response that eir physical difference is necessary for not homogenizing
the Round’s culture. Karina tells Tei,

“So what you’re telling me is that Round society will eventually develop a binary
system like the gender distinctions separating Monaurals, Karina said. “If a

49 Ibid., trans. 193.
Round majority and minority were born of physiological differences, you’re going to have the same disagreements that exist among Monaurals, regardless of your elimination of gender distinctions. In time, these differences will be the standard by which you discriminate against others.”

Karina points out that the relationship between the Rounds and Monaurals will eventually create an asymmetrical relationship between majority and minority when differences exist regardless of sexual/gender differences or any other differences. Tei disagrees with her comment and believes that differences have no significance. In response, Karina considers Tei’s belief naïve, as she mentions that the people’s ways of thinking do not drastically change toward any kinds of differences. Since the Rounds will have binaristic differences, Karina’s character is, thus, skeptical that the existence of the dual-sexed people changes the unequal relationships between Monaural women and Monaural men and between sexual minorities (LGBTQIA) and majorities (heterosexuality). However, Karina assumes that majorities are against minorities and does not recognize the multiplicity or differences within minorities.

Therefore, both Kline’s and Karina’s perception of the Rounds have pitfalls. Kline sees the Rounds as the alternative sexed humans for all the humanity and does not recognize gender diversity among the Rounds such as demonstrated by Wolfren. On the other hand, Karina doubts that the hermaphroditic existence can change the inequality among various gender identities, and believes to the contrary that there are also unequal binaristic relationships even within that category. Her belief exposes the assumption that majorities and minorities always contest one another. Kline’s and Karina’s questions are never resolved. Kline’s hope for a post-gender or alternative-gendered world and Karina’s doubts regarding the elimination of inequality in a binaristic system reflect issues that have long been shared by Japanese SF women writers.

50 Ibid., 194.
51 An acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual/Ally.
The Counter Gender Political Discourse: Dual-Sexed Normativity

I will briefly discuss dual-sexed normativity and the ways in which the Rounds perceive their own existence as an ideal in comparison to Monaurals. From the Rounds’ perspectives, bi-gender and dual-sexed bodies are normative, while binaristic sexual/gender differences are functionally ineffective and restrictive and cause more disagreements. Thus, the Rounds believe that ey are the more balanced sexed/gendered humans and that the bi-gendered world is able to maintain stability with less discrimination. In a way, the Rounds have a superiority complex regarding the Monaurals. In particular, two ideal ideas of the Rounds—the frontier of humanity and separatism—reinforce this sense of superiority.

The superintendent Fortia holds an ideal for the Rounds serving as the frontier of humanity through space exploration since this validates eir existence. Ey says,

“I’m proud to be a Round. I will be venturing into uncharted space before any Monaural, testing the limits of my skills to gather valuable data. That data will serve as the foundation for when the Monaurals are ready to journey farther into space. I have been entrusted with a wonderful and rewarding job. We’re capable of doing the work no unmanned probe will be able to handle in your stead. We’ll die satisfied, even if it means cutting short our lives. . . . For all of humanity.”

As described above, Fortia considers the Rounds to represent the future of all humanity, although the Rounds sacrifice eir life for Monaurals. Fortia’s ideal thus empowers the Rounds and allows ey to see emselves as more than a victim or scientific object. However, in order to maintain eir utopian space, Fortia advocates separatism from Monaurals. Ey tells Shirosaki, “There’s absolutely no need for any sort of human interaction between the Rounds and Monaurals.” In particular, Fortia thinks that their communication is not necessary after the “incident” (the failed relationship) between Harding and Veritas, but the Monaurals are only required to protect eir

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52 Ibid., trans. 71-72.
53 Ibid., trans. 74.
existence. Despite Fortia’s contradiction, “separatism by choice” gives the Rounds eir own sense of agency. Fortia’s ideals—the potential for humanity and separatism—serve as a temporary and practical solution for the Rounds; nevertheless, security dependence on Monaurals does not give complete freedom.

Fortia tries to maintain the dual-sexed normativity even after the terrorist attack that will turn all the Rounds into single-sexed people. After breaking the rules, ey punishes another Round Calendula with a monosexual surgical treatment. Calendula is not allowed to have a reverse sex change and change back to Round. Fortia believes that the Rounds are bi-gender beings although eir bodies will be single-sexed. As Fortia tells Calendula’s partner Tigris about eir children, “You’re free to go with Calendula, but leave the children here. Album and I will raise them. While you may be their parents, you have no right to rob them of their futures.” Fortia and others believe in the possibility of returning to the Rounds’ bodies without eir mind-set adopting Monaural ways of thinking. In a way, all the Rounds have to face similar identity issues of non-cisgender or GID, as the Rounds eventually have bi-gender identities with single-sexed bodies. However, the Rounds do not all share the same gender identities, and those who are marginalized tend to problematize hermaphroditic normativity or normativity per se.

The Complexity of the Rounds: A Minority Within A Minority

Three marginalized characters within the Rounds—Tei, Veritas, and Wolfren—illustrate the complexity of sex/gender and sexuality. These three do not fit into the Round ideal and are thus alienated from other Rounds. In short, they are a minority within a minority. Nor do these

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54 Not all Rounds agree with Fortia’s ideal. For example, Calendula believes that ey requires mutual understanding with Monaurals; however, after the terrorist attack, Calendula insists on the Round’s independence and self-defense in order to have eir autonomy. The contrast between Fortia’s harmonious separatism and Calendula’s independence possibly reflects the varied Japanese political stance regarding the U.S-Japan security treaty and the fraught postwar relations of the two nations.

55 Ibid., trans. 274-75.
three fit into the Monaural community, either. Each has a different issue. Tei is slightly physically different from the other Rounds, akin to the situation with SRSs faced by intersex people. Veritas is ostracized when ey is having a relationship with the Monaural man Harding, tackling different sexual orientations. The Round, Wolfren, became a Monaural man in order to be freed from the restricted district, as demonstrating non-cisgender, GID, or transgender issues in the following.

Tei’s marginality functions as a resistance to the normativity of both the Rounds and the Monaurals. Tei’s three ‘othernesses’ are characterized in the text. First, eir physiological difference from other Rounds; second, the use of eir nickname “Tei” (灯, light) in Japanese, rather than eir given Latin name, “Lanterna,” marks em as Other within the Rounds because other Rounds use Latin names; third, Tei is an intermediary between the Round and Monaural communities. As mentioned above, Tei’s sexual physiology is different from the Round’s normative forms; Tei feels alienated from both communities. Tei is hermaphroditic and able to perform sexual or reproductive activities; however, due to the placement of eir male and female reproductive organs, Tei cannot have “standard” sexual intercourse with eir partner like other Rounds. As a result, Tei undergoes eir identity crisis in adolescence: “Why am I different from the others? I am not a Monaural. But I’m also not a Round. Then what am I?”

Tei’s identity is liminal. As discussed in Chapter Two, intersex identity is positioned in a binaristic spectrum between male and female despite diversity of intersexuality. Nonetheless, Tei refuses surgery to fix the location of eir genitals, as ey accepts eir physical difference and resists conforming to the normative model of the Round’s body or even the Monaural body. The relocation surgery similarly reflects on compulsory or irreversible sexual reassignment surgeries (SRSs) for intersex

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56 Ibid., trans. 44.
people. As discussed earlier in Karina’s perspective, Tei thinks that Tei’s physical difference marks the individuality and does not homogenize the Round’s culture. Tei’s physiological difference, thus, gives space for eir own.

In addition, Tei as an intermediary creates eir own space as a minority within a minority. As mentioned above, Tei refuses to use eir Latin name, Lanterna, as marking eir as the other. Tei supports the idea of increased communication between Monaurals and Rounds even though the station staff decide to segregate the Rounds’ residential space from the Monaurals’. When Tei takes three Monaural officers to meet with the Round couple, Tei insists to Fortia:

“Living apart will only serve to deepen the rift. Monaurals will grow to hate the Rounds, and the Rounds will scorn the Monaurals even more. The only difference between us is our physiology. Whatever technology was used to create us, we are essentially intelligent human beings. In that sense, we’re no different from the Monaurals. It’s absurd not to be able to communicate with them.”

Tei—a minority within the minority and an intermediary—is seen by Shirosaki at the novel’s conclusion as offering humanity a new potential. After the terrorist attack, Tei becomes single-sexed—male, but ey contends that eir physiological change does not change the fact that ey is bi-gender in eir mind. Despite no clear solution, Shirosaki thinks that Tei’s existence, following the meaning of eir name “light,” might illuminate new spaces and possibilities for humanity. “Perhaps Lanterna was too small to light humanity’s way into space. But any amount of illumination was better than nothing. Much better.” Tei is an optimistic relief while maintaining the resistance spirits against any sexual or gender normativity.

Veritas is also a liminal figure between the Rounds and Monaurals. As discussed earlier, Veritas (Latin word for truth or honesty) is the only person who has a relationship with a

57 Ibid., trans. 90.
58 Ibid., trans. 273.
59 Ibid., trans. 279.
Monaural man, Harding. Veritas is predominantly portrayed as being terrified by Monaurals since ey has been psychologically and physically hurt by the romantic relationship with Harding. In addition, ey faces discrimination from both sides. Monaural officers laugh at Veritas when ey seeks to satisfy eir male identity with Harding. Ey is simultaneously isolated from other Rounds. Doctors and station staff hush up their relationship after Veritas’s suicide attempt. Ey is completely isolated from both sides. Ultimately, however, Veritas becomes a hopeful figure who overcomes her fear and reconciles with Harding. Eir silent, gentle caress of Harding shows eir acceptance of him before his death. Veritas’s liminality and marginality, in fact, raise awareness of dealing with different orientations such as Harding’s homophobia and the discrimination from non-normative sexuality from both sides.

Wolfren is depicted as a traitor of the Rounds and a liminal figure, as he shows another aspect of sexuality within the Rounds. He became a single-sexed man surgically and eventually assists the terrorist group in exchange for his escape. He is attracted to the Monaural way of life and wants to become a man in order to liberate himself from Jupiter-I, since he cannot leave the district as long as he is a Round. His name, Barry Wolfren, is also marked as Other, as he changes his Round’s Latin name Tenebrae, which ominously means “shadows” or “darkness,” and which serves as a counter to Tei (Lanterna, light). Wolfren’s conversation with Arino describes his feelings of being unfit both for Rounds’ normativity and Monaurals in Jupiter:

“I was born a Round but hated Round society.” . . . [“] But I always felt, however, imperceptibly, that everyone reacted differently toward me. They all knew that…I used to be a bi-gender. In that sense, I would always be a bi-gender as long as I stayed here. I can never be solely male. And that’s because your gender is determined by the perceptions of others. Whenever the Monaural staff went back
to their homes on Earth and Mars, I was reminded that I’m not an average human. That I’m not a Round even after the surgery. That I’m not a Monaural.

Wolfren cannot be seen as a Monaural man in Jupiter-I, even though he desires to fit into a Monaural world. Similarly, his situation corresponds to those who have non-cisgender, GID, or transgender identities and desire to fit into a heteronormative society after having SRSs. Thus, Wolfren feels that he belongs to neither the Rounds nor the Monaurals. As he observes, gender identities are established by “the perceptions of others” since people see one another with preconceived notions. We can see Wolfren’s desperation to become a Monaural man in order to be free from the cage of Jupiter and the cage of the Rounds, even though in the process he might sacrifice others through terrorism.

Ironically, at the end Wolfren is confined to a solitary cell for the rest of his life with no contact with either the Rounds or the Monaurals. In a way, he is free from both. Through Arino’s report to Shirosaki, Wolfren believes that there will be more like him in the future, who are neither Rounds nor Monaurals. Wolfren tells Arino: “A new race is bound to emerge from the Rounds,” and Wolfren is “merely a progenitor of that race.” Thus, neither homogenizing nor erasing differences will serve to create an egalitarian society. Similar to Wolfren’s and Karina’s ideas, there will always be another minority group or difference to emerge.

As mentioned above, at the very end all Rounds will become one fixed gender (either man or woman); however, they have no experience of living in single-sexed bodies with unigender identity. After both the Rounds and the Monaurals have a single sexed body, the question remains open—how to coexist. Will they face the similar power imbalance between

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60 Ibid., trans. 179-80; my emphasis added.
61 Ibid., trans. 277.
62 Ibid., trans. 278.
men and women or face different problems? Simultaneously, Ueda’s representation of the Rounds’ coerced sexual transformation problematizes the binaristic sex/gender system and particularly criticizes sex reassignment surgeries (SRSs), which are imposed upon intersex people at birth. In addition, the ending implies that the Rounds have to face similar challenges of non-cisgender, GID, and transgender so as to cope with their bi-gender identities and single-sexed bodies in order to question hetero-cis-normativity. The ending also questions how we come term with multiple issues of gender imbalance in the future (between men and women, majority and minorities).

As Ueda commented upon receiving the 10th annual Best Sense of Gender award in 2010: “I like the world of pan-sexualities, and I thought I could express it freely in SF,” *The Cage of Zeus* emphasizes post-fluid gender identities not only as a way to reject binaristic sex/gender and specific gender orientations, but also to problematize coerced medical interventions such as SRSs and non-cisgender identities struggles. First, Monaurals’ different perceptions of the Rounds and the process of understanding eir gender offer a queer effect to question binarism and heteronormativity. In particular, American officer Harding’s struggle with his relationship with the Round Veritas demonstrates a critique of homophobia. But his reconciliation with Veritas is a positive outcome that points to his having come to grips with his own sexuality. Two contested ideas of female scientists Kline and Karina ultimately criticize scientific control of sex/gender identities, especially so-called sexual minorities. Kline’s ideal of non-binary sex seems plausible, yet her ideal clouds her judgment of other gender identity issues. In particular, she cannot recognize Wolfren’s gender identity crisis as similar to non-cisgender, GID, and transgender. Karina seems sympathetic to the Rounds’ situation under constant surveillance as scientific subjects; however, she cannot recognize Tei’s wish for no sexual reassignment surgeries to
become “proper” dual-sexed people. In addition, once the “normativity” of dual-sex is constructed, there remain ways to justify their segregation and maintaining the prevailing social hierarchy; nevertheless, the marginalized people continually emerge with the power imbalance. Three minority Rounds—Tei, Veritas, and Wolfren—deal with similar issues with SRSs, sexual orientation, and non-cisgender or GID, reflecting on public awareness of the GID identities in the early 2000s. These examples illustrate the multiplicity and diversity of sex/gender and sexualities no matter what sex/gender system becomes the norm.

In conclusion, The Cage of Zeus serves to express a desire for pansexuality and underscores Ueda’s expressed concern over “trampling the happiness and rights of others.” Gender diversity does matter.
Chapter Five: Queer Families in Posthuman Worlds: Entanglement and Companionship in Ueda Sayuri’s *The Ocean Chronicles*

Noting the interdependence of life forms, Timothy Morton suggests that any living system can be described as a “mesh;” that is, life forms are so interconnected that it is difficult to distinguish one from another, but simultaneously each life form is distinctive. As the science fiction works that we have examined thus far have demonstrated, living beings—whether real or imagined—are inextricably entangled. By using Morton’s concept of “mesh,” as well as Donna Haraway’s “companion species” and Karen Barad’s “intra-action,” this chapter will explore the ways in which such “ecological” entanglements blur the borders among life forms and challenge anthropocentric ways of seeing humans and non-humans. My discussion will focus on the coexistent relationships between humans and non-humans in Ueda Sayuri’s *The Ocean Chronicles* series. More precisely, I will examine the interactions between the sea-folk (海上民) and fish-boat-like creatures called icthynavis (魚舟), between the human and autosapient (an entity with artificial intelligence, 人工知性体), and between humans and an artificial child called the Savior Child (救世の子).¹

Ueda’s *The Ocean Chronicles* series proposes two major aspects of queer effects: first of all, the interdependent relationships between humans and non-humans disrupt the idea of a singular, individual subjectivity; and second, these relationships create alternative forms of queer family to challenge or undo heteronormative relationships. Ueda challenges a coherent subjectivity, which is embedded in anthropocentric views of Western humanity and dualistic thinking—particularly but no exclusively manifested in Western perspectives. The “mesh” of life

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¹ The Savior Child refers to a baby or child who is given birth for another sibling’s life. The analogy in the novels is that these artificial children are created for the salvation of humanity. Due to their sacrifice, the Savior Child can be a reference to Jesus in an apocalyptic world and promise for redemption from suffering and strife.
forms and the subsequent interdependent relationships present subjectivity as contingent and queer. These non-anthropocentric ways of thinking about life forms can be read as a critique of contemporary Japanese society, including the existence of classes and genders that are marginalized. These interdependent relationships also create an alternative queer family to resist heteronormative reproductive relationships, as many women science fiction writers attempt to avoid representing sexual dimorphism, heteronormativity, and women’s biological reproduction.

This chapter will briefly discuss *The Ocean Chronicles*, exploring the ways in which life forms function as a “mesh” and destabilize a coherent subjectivity in the companionships between sea-folk and fish-boat creatures and between the human and the autosapient. I will also examine how these companionships create an alternative for non-heteronormative and non-reproductive companionship—in other words, a queer family. These non-reproductive companionships, and even the interactions between the sea-folk and fish-boat creatures, challenge the pro-reproduction countermeasure for low birthrate in contemporary Japan.

*The Ocean Chronicles*

*The Ocean Chronicles* (OC) series comprises two main novels: *Karyū no miya* [The Palace of Flower Dragons or *The OC* I, 2010] and *Shinku no hibun* [Deep Crimson Epitaphs or *The OC* II, 2013] and two short stories: “Uobune, kemonobune” [Fin and Claw, 2009, trans. 2011] and “Ririentāru no matsuei” (The Descendants of Lilienthal, 2011) (See Table 5.1). I will

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2 Since *The OC* II was written in post 3.11 after the Great East Japan earthquakes (*Higashi Nihon daishinsai*, on March 11, 2011) and Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster, this novel reflects on the issues of nuclear technology and power such as discussions of the use of two nuclear reactions: nuclear fission and nuclear fusion.

3 For a chronology of the series, see *S-F magajin*, vol. 55 (Feb. 2014), 5. The prologue begins with the Re-Cretaceous in 2017. The story subsequently jumps to the twenty-fifth century and progresses chronologically from Chapter One to Chapter Eight in *The OC* I, the entirety of *The OC* II (for four decades), and the Epilogue of *The OC* I. “Fin and Claw” centers on the land-folk’s defense against feranavi, the partnership between the sea-folk and icthynavi, and the discovery of feranavi’s mutation for survival on land. “The Descendants of Lilienthal” focuses on a destitute boy, Cham, with a pair of wing-like hooks on his back caused by genetic mutations, and his dreams about flying in the sky using his wings. In *The OC* II, Cham appears as an old man who works as a space engineer.
primarily focus on the two novels: *The OC* I and *The OC* II. The first of these received the Japan SF Grand Prize (Nihon SF Taishō), awarded by the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of Japan (SFWJ) and the Sense of Gender Award by the Japanese Association for Gender Fantasy and Science Fiction (G-ken) in 2011. Both novels share the premise that a hot plume eruption has caused the majority of earth’s landmass to be submerged under the sea. This disaster is called the Re-Cretaceous. Eventually, most nations allow biotechnological modification of any life forms for the preservation of humanity. Humans wage wars over possession of land and natural resources, with the use of human-slaughtering autosapients.

**A Queer Post/Human Position: Interdependence and Companionship**

In presenting his concept of “mesh,” Morton provides a contingent and queer ethical position with a “dark ecology” (non-essentialist ecological views and melancholic views of nature) that expresses the extension and permeation of human bodies and stresses the interdependent relationships between humans and non-humans. Morton also suggests that the notion of mesh is paradoxical, insofar as life forms are so interconnected that it is hard to distinguish one from another, although each life form remains unique. For example, the human body is uniquely composed of a set of body parts and organs, yet simultaneously various life forms are floating and moving around inside the human body, and in a sense the human body is “permeable and boundaryless.”\(^5\) Similarly, in *Companion Species Manifesto*, Donna Haraway proposes an anthropocentric way of looking at the companionship between humans and non-humans. All entities are companion species and develop through “co-evolution.” In Haraway’s

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4 Ueda’s use of Plume Tectonics theory was inspired by the work of Japanese geophysicists Maruyama Shigenori and Isozaki Yukio in the 1990s. The theory figures in the story’s account of massive hot-mantle plume eruptions that cause the submersion of the Earth’s landmass. In a way, she rewrites Komatsu Sakyō’s best-selling *Nihon chinbotsu* [Japan Sinks, 1973], which was inspired by Plate Tectonics theory.

term, co-evolution is not only “the mutual adaptation of visible morphologies like flower sexual structures and the organs of their pollinating insects” but also the compatibility of human genomes and the pathogens of companion species. Haraway’s concept of “co-evolution” also encompasses not only the relationship between animals and humans but also extends to cyborgs and OncoMouse™ (a genetically modified lab mouse used for cancer research). Haraway describes cyborgs as “junior siblings in the much bigger, queer family of companion species.”

Interdependence, companionship, and co-evolution between humans and non-humans are keys to reconsidering human subjectivity as contingent and queer. However, Ueda’s novels demonstrate not only affinity between humans and non-humans but also bleak views of coexistence among humans, and between humans and non-humans.

**Interdependence between Humans—Sea-folk and Non/Humans—Icthynavis/Feranavis**

In *The Ocean Chronicles*, the four kinds of life forms—the two kinds of humans and the two types of fish-boat creatures—are all interconnected and ultimately create a cyclic relationship (see Figure 5.1). For survival in the oceans, the human sea-folk (海上民) are genetically engineered by the land-folk (陸上民) so that women always bear twins: a hominid (sea-folk) and a fish called icthynavis (魚舟). The sea-folk and icthynavis are genetically identical (genotypes), but their morphologies (phenotypes) are different. Hominid children are raised by other hominids, while the icthynavi are release into the oceans and return to their siblings or other halves if they survive. If a particular icthynavis returns, the sea-folk and the icthynavis try to bond and to establish a partnership known as “hō” (朋). In this partnership, the icthynavis serves as a boat which is piloted by the hominid, who directs his/her icthynavis by a

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7 Ibid., 11.
specific sound, or “pilot’s song,” unique to each pairing. However, if an icthynavis returns but cannot find his/her other half, s/he will become a rogue ship, a feranavis (獣舟), which goes inland and attacks the land-folk for food. The land-folk kill these feranavi by way of defending themselves. But, unable to kill all the feranavis, mutations begin to occur inland. When this happens, the feranavis transform into spider-like creatures, earthworms, or hominids.

This interconnected cyclic relationship recalls Morton’s Interdependence Theorem, which formulaically describes the life form system as arbitrary, “without center or edge.” Here Morton applies two axioms to the living system. Axiom 1 posits that “Life-forms are made up of other life-forms (the theory of symbiosis);” Axiom 2 proposes that “life-forms derive from other life-forms (evolution).” Although the relationships between the land-folk and sea-folk and between the sea-folk and icthynavi are not arbitrary but instead systematically engineered, we can still investigate the interdependence between these life forms and discern unexpected consequences. The sea-folk are derived from the land-folk by biotechnology, as in Axiom 2, whereas the sea-folk and icthynavi have a symbiotic relationship, as in Axiom 1. In Haraway’s terms, the sea-folk and icthynavi are forms of co-evolution, revealing “the mutual adaptation of visible morphologies.” A feranavis, mutating from an icthynavis, suggests Axiom 2 when they adapt to the land environment. Because they attack the land-folk—essentially their creators—the

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8 Two formulas: Axiom (1): \( \forall a: \exists b = \neg(b) \) Axiom (2) \( \forall a: \exists b \supset \neg a \)
Morton first describes the following two formulas, “Axiom 1 states that for every \( a \), the existence of \( a \) is such that \( a \) consists of things that are not \( \neg a \). In other words, \( a \) is made of \( \neg a \)’s, and thus must be defined negatively and differentially. In other words, \( a \) is \( a \) because it isn’t \( \neg a \), while \( \neg a \) is only \( \neg a \) because it is \( a \). In this sense, \( a \) and \( \neg a \) are mutually determining” (23). He continues, “In every case, things like \( a \) only exists such that a \( \neg a \) exists. Nothing exists by itself and nothing comes from nothing” (23). In addition, “Axiom 1 states that things are only what they are in relation to other things. Axiom 2 states that things derive from other things. While Axiom 1 makes statements about how things are (synchronically), Axiom 2 talks about origins (diachrony).” Morton, “The Mesh,” 22-23.
9 Ibid., 24.
10 Morton argues that one species should be differentiable from another in order to validate Axiom 2. Ibid., 26-7.
11 Haraway, Companion Species, 31.
feranavi in a sense correspond to Morton’s seventh implication of Interdependence Theorem: “Since we cannot know in advance what the effects of the system will be, all life-forms are theorizable as strange strangers.” Ueda’s novels demonstrate that these four beings are eventually interconnected in the environmental food chain.

**Sea-Folk and Icthynavis**

The sea-folk and icthynavis are identical at the gene level, but their morphologies differ. According to a published interview in the December 2010 issue of *S-F magajin*, Ueda was inspired by two separate ideas in her “inventing” the sea-folk and icthynavis. Her first inspiration came from the discovery in 2005 of a unicellular marine microorganism (a flagellate) called Hatena (meaning “enigma” in Japanese). Scientists noted that Hatena divided into two different types of cells during the process of cell division, an exceptional occurrence. One type of cell was plant form, the other animal. In her fictional world, Ueda represents them as twins.

Ueda’s second influence was a new discovery of noncoding RNA (Ribonucleic acid), which affected her way of looking at life forms. Her short story “Fin and Claw” elaborates on the point that the visibility of morphological difference among life forms and the complexity of life forms are not correlated to the numbers of genes. In the story, one of the sea-folk, Mio, describes the role of ncRNAs to her old friend:

> In 2003—when they finished decoding the human genome—they learned that the protein-coding areas and the expression-suppression areas took up no more than a

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12 Morton, “Mesh,” 24; 27.
14 RNA is a single-strand biological molecule. In particular, ninety-eight percent of the human genome is composed of ncRNAs, which have multiple functions. For example, RNA silencing (also referring to RNA interference) is that small noncoding RNAs “maintain genome stability, defend against invading nucleic acids (such as viruses), and regulate gene expression in a multitude of biological processes (such as cell proliferation and differentiation).” The research on RNA silencing has been ongoing. Marin J. Simard and Gregory Hutzvagner, “RNA Silencing,” *Science New Series* 309, no. 5740 (September 2005): cover, 1.
couple percent of the whole gene. They really weren’t sure what the other ninety-eight percent of the whole gene was for. They used to think those areas were nothing but cellular junk, but just two years later, they showed that the non-coding RNA that gets copied from those regions might in fact be what determines the complexity of creature’s form and function. Up until that time, they’d thought that RNA only had an extremely limited use, but in reality, it was related to the expression and even the evolution of physical traits. And even different species, with entirely different shapes and forms, were using . . . the same genes. We can use this mechanism to create life-forms with completely non-human morphologies now, using the same genome as a human. Icthyanavi are creatures made by the application of that technology. They’re quite literally our other halves. 

The world of ncRNAs obliges us to rethink the borders between humans and other life forms.

The ambiguity of the borders of the living system raises questions about the very nature of “the human” Judith Butler puts it as follows: “What qualifies as a human, as a human subject, as human speech, as human desire?” vis-à-vis non-humans. In Ueda’s story, bodily manifestations cannot precisely determine what it means to be “human.” In a sense, the creation of icthynavis and humans stresses microscopic interconnectedness in a vast living system.

Keeping in mind their interconnectedness at the molecular level, the symbiotic relationship between the sea-folk and icthynavis is not only genetically engineered but is also mutually developed through communication and co-development. In this kind of “mutualism,” both species benefit each other. While the hominid sea-folk have binaristic sex—male and female—the icthynavi have no sex and no reproductive function. Thus, the latter depend on the former for the perpetuation of the species. In turn, the sea-folk receive housing and mobility from icthynavi. As part of this equation, the icthynavi benefit from the guidance and support of

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the sea-folk, which keeps them from becoming feranavi. Importantly, both hominids and icthynavi bond emotionally in the harsh oceanic environment as described in the following.

This bonding is made possible through acoustic communication, the pilot’s song, and echolocation. The pilot’s song is sung by the sea-folk in a mixture of seven musical scales (audible to land-folk) and five ultrasonic scales (audible only to sea-folk and icthynavi). The sea-folk have two ways of singing to icthynavi in order to pilot: either singing on deck while above the water or singing inside the fish boat while underwater. Although the range of normal human hearing frequency is from 20 hertz to 20 kilohertz, both the sea-folk and icthynavi can clearly hear the pilot’s song, which is monophonic and at a high frequency of 20 kilohertz, or occasionally 30 kilohertz. Their mutual communication is based on a unique acoustics rather than the human linguistic system. Thus, the pilot’s song is a key to their mutual trust and emotional bonding.

Second, both the sea-folk and icthynavi share the ability to echolocate, like whales or dolphins. Icthynavi emit high frequency calls of 130 kilohertz underwater and capture the size, shape, and surface texture of the objects through the reflected sound waves. The sea-folk are similarly able to locate and visualize the images of objects through reflected waves, while inside the icthynavi. The following describes the sea-folk’s echolocating experience shared with the icthynavis:

The sea-folk’s brain can hear the sound just like the icthynavis. The sea-folk can construct the same image that “the other half” just captures, as they can feel vibrations through the icthynavi’s tympanic membrane in its phonic pathway. They can see it by sound, rather than by their eyes. Just as a medical ultrasonic device can transfer the sound into the image of the inner body, the sea-folk can

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19 A higher frequency, especially 30 kilohertz, of the communication between the sea-folk and icthynavi signifies their exclusive communication.
form a three-dimensional object in their brains. This aspect of their brain function is different from the land-folk’s.

In this sense, icthynavi are “the other halves” who are born from the very same wombs. We both are “marine organisms” that share the same hearing function and the same biological function for information processing.\textsuperscript{20}

This shared echolocation ability is essential for underwater survival. Their genetically engineered complementarity emphasizes the bonding process and their shared status as “marine species.” The co-development of their aural communication and echolocation suggests a queer angle of seeing humans in a non-anthropocentric way.

The emotional bonding between the female sea-folk leader Tsukisome and her icthynavis Yuzuriha is depicted by her singing the pilot’s song. Tsukisome cares about Yuzuriha’s old age and sings a song of gratitude to Yuzuriha:

\begin{quote}
Thank you for everything you have done.
Don’t push yourself any longer.
We’ll get some fish from someone else, so we don’t have to go fishing anymore.
Take a rest...
Yuzuriha makes a sad squeal like the squeaking of a rusty hinge. Don’t walk away from me, s/he seems to say.
[Tsukisome responds] “I’ll never abandon you nor walk away from you.” She pushes her body against Yuzuriha with care. “You’re the best hardworking partner. We, Asagi and I, are very proud of you. It’s time to take a rest.”\textsuperscript{21}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{20} Ueda, \textit{The OC I} (Tokyo: Hayakawa Shobō, 2010), 111. 『海上民の脳は魚舟と同様にこの音を聴く。音響孔内を満たす振動膜の震えによって、<朋>が捉えたのと同じ光景を脳内で構築できる。目でみるのでなくはなく、音で見るのである。医療用の超音波診断装置が体内の様子を目で見える画像に変えるのと同じ理屈で、海上民の脳内には立体図が生成される。陸上民とは違う脳機能のひとつだ。この意味でも海上民にとって魚舟は、まさしく同じ腹から生まれてくる<朋>だった。同じ耳、同じ情報処理器官を持つ<海洋生物>。』

\textsuperscript{21} Ueda, \textit{The OC I}, 347-8. In addition, Yuzuriha is supposed to have no sex/gender, but the masculinized subject pronoun, \textit{ore} (I) is used from Tsukisome’s perspective. \textit{Ore} is probably used in contrast to Tsukisome’s feminine speech. This seems to take a pseudo-heterosexual form, yet theirs is a non-reproductive relationship; nevertheless, their relationship calls to mind Haraway’s idea of the relationship between a dog owner and the canine companion species.

-これまでありがとうございました。
-もう無理をしないほうがいいわ。
-明日からは漁もしなくていい。他人から魚を分けてもらうから、ゆっくり休んで・・・・・・・。
Tsukisome’s song exhibits her affection for Yuzuriha, while Yuzuriha responds to her song with a squeal. Tsukisome interprets Yuzuriha’s squeal as lamenting, as she can understand the icthynavis’ emotion from its cry. Their mutual understanding through songs and cries is possible only insofar as these two are lifelong partners.

Tsukisome and Yuzuriha’s mutual echolocation ability is used to defeat the enemy. Near the end of *The OC I*, Tsukisome is asked to guide Yuzuriha to produce a high frequency sound for echolocation in order to locate the enemy’s submarine and torpedo it. However, this strategy puts Yuzuriha at risk of injury. Tsukisome’s emotional struggle is described from the perspective of the autosapient Maki (who belongs to the outer sea legation officer Aozumi): “Tsukisome bites her lip. No sea-folk can bear the other half’s injury. We [Aozumi and I] know well enough that all sea-folk are emotionally wounded by terminating their other halves when fatal marine viruses occurred.”

Tsukisome finally allows Aozumi to carry out this maneuver for the sake of survival. After they all felt the blast from the explosion, Maki imagines Tsukisome’s torment and anger: “I clearly heard a piercing scream. Did Tsukisome hear Yuzuriha’s cry even though she was covering her ears? If she heard, she must’ve been deeply hurt at the moment when Yuzuriha—her other half whom she shares her life with—was critically injured. She’d never forget this event nor forgive herself.”

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22 *The OC I*, 526. ‘ツキソメは唇を噛みしめた。<朋>を傷つけて平気な海上民などいない。病潮遭遇時にどうしても魚舟を殺さねばならないとき、海上民がどれほどの傷を心に刻まれるか、僕たちはよく知っている。’

23 Ibid., 531. ‘甲高い悲鳴のような鳴き声を僕は確かに聴いた。耳を押さえていたツキソメにもそれは届いただろうか。もし届いていたなら、その瞬間、彼女はひどく傷ついただろう。生死を共にしてきた<朋>が、僕たちの作戦によって大けがを負った瞬間——。彼女は決して忘れないだろうし、許しはしないだろう。’
shock through the vibrations. Therefore, she can share Yuzuriha’s physical and emotional pain and increase her bond with Yuzuriha.

However, the end of The OC I reveals that Tsukisome is, in fact, a feranavis mutant, thus stressing the interconnectedness—and complexity—of their companionship. As discussed earlier, humans and fish-boat creatures share the same genetic codes, but Tsukisome has a hominid morphological expression. In other words, she is originally the same life form as her icthynavis Yuzuriha. The companionship between Tsukisome and Yuzuriha is actually that of a feranavis and an icthynavis.24

As a mutant feranavis, Tsukisome initially had no language ability, but unlike other mutant feranavi, she acquired language proficiency surgically. Language ability gives her the agency to communicate with other humans. “Tsukisome mutters quietly. Language has created me... Language has changed me and has created my world... As I’m able to express the same form as Ed and other humans do. As I’m able to enjoy beautiful things and emotionally moving things together.”25 Tsukisome’s language ability and hominid morphology function as her bridge between the human and non-human realms, as she has access to human-like qualities of life and is recognized as a valuable life form. The proximity to humans such as morphology and language also gives her a voice as non-human life forms.

At the same time, these two characteristics question the boundary between humans (hominid) and non-humans (feranavis/icthynavis) and thus challenge the anthropocentric

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24 An earlier section of the novel reveals that in some respects Tsukisome does not embody all of the sea-folk’s characteristics. For example, She ages much more slowly than regular humans and is immune to fatal marine viruses. She is non-reproductive since both icthynavi and feranavi are asexual creatures. Tsukisome’s status as a mutant feranavis also explains her exceptional compatibility with Yuzuriha.

25 The OC I, 496-7.「言葉が私を作ったー。ツキソメは静かにつぶやいた。言葉が私を変え、言葉が私の世界を作り出した・・・。エドや他の人間が見ているものを、私も同じ形で見られるように。美しいもの、心を動かすものを、共に味わえるように。」
assumption of coherent subjectivity. The humans/icthynavi/feranavi “triad” thus emphasizes the “meshing” of life forms. Subsequently, Tsukisome asks what it is that determines the form that one’s life will take. Is it morphology, genetics, intelligence (language), behaviors, emotions, other factors, and/or the combination of multiple factors? Tsukisome’s genes are identical to Yuzuriha’s; however, her human subjectivity has been shaped by years of experience as an individual sea-folk. Therefore, social interactions and repeated experiences ultimately give form to Tsukisome and her companionship with Yuzuriha. This companionship exposes the contingency of relationships and subjectivity and challenges our understanding of the human/non-human relationship.

The Interconnectedness between Human and AI through Intra-Action

Another interconnected relationship between the human and the autosapient (AI) undermines the concept of individual subjectivities as a stable form, as we tend to assume the stability of the subjectivity and thus forget interconnectedness with non-humans.26 For example, Aozumi, Japanese outer-sea legation minister, and his variously-gendered autosapient Maki(s) are entangled. An autosapient (jinkō chiseitai) is an entity with artificial intelligence (AI) whose main function is to monitor the human partner’s physical and psychological conditions and enhance his/her thought process. These autosapients appear in two guises: first, as wireless electronic equipment; and second, as a humanoid with an AI. Maki appears both as equipment and as a humanoid. In her 2011 interview, Ueda noted that the autosapient character was inspired by the “Parasitic Humanoid (PH),”27 which is “a wearable robot for modeling nonverbal human behavior.” The PH records and analyzes the wearer’s behavior, and it “has the internal models to

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26 As mentioned above, Morton states that there is always a paradox: interconnectedness of life forms and individual as a unique being.

learn the process of human sensory motor integration continuously, [and] thereafter […] begins to predict the next behavior of the wearer using the learned models.”

As described above, the PH assists and enhances human physical capacities. As Watanabe also notes, an autosapient in Ueda’s novels has a coherent subjectivity and communicates to the partner’s brain through language. Therefore, the autosapient Maki(s) is much more involved in the human’s emotions and thought process.

As mentioned above, the companionship between human Aozumi and autosapient Maki(s) exposes an individual subjectivity as a stable form. Feminist and quantum physicist Karen Barad argues that the idea of interaction presumes an individual as a separate entity acting upon another entity and vice versa. In contrast, she defines the notion of “intra-action” as upsetting Aristotelian “the metaphysics of individualism.”

“[I]ndividuals” do not exist as such but rather materialize in intra-action. That is, intra-action goes to the question of the making differences, of “individuals,” rather than assuming their independent or prior existence. “Individuals” do not exist, but are not individually determinate. Rather, “individuals” only exist within phenomena (particular materialize/materializing relations) in their ongoing iteratively intra-active reconfiguring.

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28 The “Parasitic Humanoid” has been created and researched by Dr. Maeda Tarō and his lab researchers at the University of Osaka. The symbiotic interaction between a human wearer and the PH is necessary. Further, the PH is described as follows: “[W]e are designing the nervous system in PH. It uses sensory information to produce a model of body structure by performing self-organized learning. This model performs information integration between motor systems and sensory systems. PH requires human action according to the model.” Maeda Tarō, “Parasitic Humanoid,” JST/NTT Communication Science Laboratories, http://www-hiel.ist.osaka-u.ac.jp/~t_maeda/parasite/ [accessed June 20, 2014].

29 Ueda, “SF seminā 2011, 50. Ueda mentions in the same interview that she wants to add a psychological assistant system to the PH.


31 Barad explains, “The notion of “intra-action” queers familiar sense of causality (where one or more causal agents precede and produce an effect), and more generally unsettles the metaphysics of individualism (the belief that there are individually constituted agents or entities, as well as times and places) (77).

32 Ibid.
The notion of intra-action, which we can also see in the relationship between Tsukisome and Yuzuriha, makes us question the border of an individual subject, similar to Morton’s concept of the “mesh.” In particular, as an autosapient Maki(s) exists or becomes materialized in relation to Aozumi and through their intra-action. When Aozumi dies, Maki will be terminated (with an exception of the Maki copy). Without Aozumi, Maki(s) cannot exist. Thus, the inseparability of Aozumi and Maki(s) emphasizes their companionship.

The subjectivities between Aozumi and Maki(s) are interconnected through intra-action. Aozumi’s thoughts and emotions developed through Maki(s)’ constant intra-action at the neural level, while Maki(s) accumulates and stores knowledge about Aozumi’s behaviors, thought processes, and emotions in his/her database. Simultaneously, Maki(s) is able to simulate reactions to Aozumi and subsequent emotions through his/her speech and artificial body. In other words, Maki(s) becomes an embodied form of Aozumi. For example, at the end of The OC I, when male Maki is chosen to travel to outer space, Aozumi’s superior, addressing Maki, explains the co-development between these two:

A human and an autosapient reach maturity by influencing each other equally. Two become one system. The human deepens his/her thoughts through the autosapient, whereas the autosapient attains a human-like thinking process by being asked questions. The human body and a computer program, of course, grow differently. . . . But without a doubt you have inherited half of Aozumi, as you managed various situations for him over all these years. In other words, you’re an alternate Officer Aozumi, whose humanity has been shaved off in a positive sense.33

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33 Ueda, The OC I, 572-3. 「人間とアシスタント知性体は、お互いに影響し合って成長する。ふたつはひとつのシステムだ。アシスタントによって人間は思考を深め、アシスタントは人間からの問いかけによって、より人間に近い思考を獲得する。もちろん、肉体を持つ存在と電脳上のプログラムでは成長の方向性が違うよ。蓄積できるデータの量も違う。けれども、長年様々な状況下で使い込まれた君は、公使との交流から、確実に彼の半分を受け継いでいるはずだ。青澄公使から、いい意味で人間性をそぎ落とした存在が君である。」
Aozumi’s superior believes that a human and an autosapient co-evolve over time and are one entangled system although they are affected differently by each other and still maintain themselves as separate beings.\(^{34}\) Maki A responds to Aozumi’s superior in his own mind and describes the entanglement of their subjectivities:

> It is logical to think that I am virtually half of Aozumi, but not because I have a coherent subjectivity. In fact, I have been behaving like the other half of Aozumi. I am more like his shadow, rather than truly the Other. I am ultimately created to assist his internal struggle. I can no longer distinguish where the characteristics of my original program begin, and where the shadow of Aozumi ends. As Ambassador Katsura [Aozumi’s superior] . . . said, I truly became “the half of Aozumi,” perhaps.\(^{35}\)

As Maki A notes, he is the shadow or the invisible side of Aozumi, and he is unable to distinguish his characteristics from Aozumi’s. In other words, Aozumi’s characteristics have become a part of Maki A. The intra-action of these two at a molecular level and the accumulation of their experiences are intertwined—they are a “mesh” \(^{I}\).\(^{36}\)

As discussed above, such companionship destabilizes an anthropocentric view of a coherent subjectivity. As Morton’s concept of the “mesh”—the entanglement of life forms—and Haraway’s concept of co-evolution with companion species, humans: the land-folk/the sea-folk

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\(^{34}\) Ibid., 573. Watanabe points out that “the growth” of the characters is not obvious since Ueda mentions “the change” of the characters, rather than “the growth.” Growth in Ueda’s work seems to indicate “progression,” but perhaps she does not want to emphasize a goal-oriented or progressive (achievement or success) way of thinking about humans. However, in The OC II, Aozumi’s aging can be interpreted as either growth (progression) or change.

\(^{35}\) 「—僕が、ぼくという確かな主体を持つ者であるよりは、仮想的とはいえ青澄の半分である—という理由は、確かに筋が通っているように思えた。実際、僕は青澄に対してそう振る舞ってきた。僕は青澄にとって真の<他者>というよりも、彼の影に近い—。内部的藤を促進するために作られた存在なの—。僕という存在のどこまでが出荷時のアシスタントが持つ性質で、どこからが青澄の影なのか—僕自身には、もはや区別がつかない。桂大使が—いや、彼に教えられた研究者が言うように、僕は本当に<青澄の半分>になっているのかもしれない。」

\(^{36}\) Despite the emphasis on their entanglement, Aozumi and Maki A are simultaneously seen as separate beings. In particular, Maki A is unable to feel, sense, and process human emotions and thoughts differently. For example, Maki A is unable to feel physical pain the same way Aozumi does. Maki A is able to quantify the degree of physical pain but cannot feel it nor understand its psychological impact. In addition, Maki A finds the human thinking process, emotions, and behaviors to be paradoxical and illogical. He considers this paradox to be humanity. As with Morton’s “mesh,” the contradiction between autonomy and mutual “meshing” remains unresolved.
and fish boat creatures: icthynavi/feranavi are all interconnected as life forms, especially sharing the same genetic codes. As discussed in this section, morphological differences between the sea-folk and icthynavi are unable to show that they share the same genes. The evolution of Tsukisome as a hominid form of feranavis blurs the boundary between humans and non-humans. The relationship between Aozumi and his autosapient Maki(s) is “enmeshed” through intra-action and companionship. The anthropocentricism—the entanglements of life forms—is vital to destabilize the concept of humanity, which encompasses an anthropocentric way of understanding heteronormative and binaristic sexual reproduction.

**Non-Reproductive and Non-Heteronormative Companionships**

The development of entangled relationships between humans and non-humans in *The Ocean Chronicles* series creates an alternative for non-heteronormative and non-reproductive companionships—in other words, the queer family. Many of the human characters in the series do not have children, but they have non-reproductive companionships with non-humans, insofar as humanity itself might end on account of a looming disaster—the Winter of Plume.\(^{37}\) For example, the companionship between Aozumi and his autosapient Maki is non-reproductive. As SF critic Watanabe Toshimichi suggests, a key aspect of *The OC* I is that “most main characters are singles (and non-reproductive).”\(^{38}\) He also refers to Elliott Sober’s argument on evolution theory: these single beings function to make society a better place.\(^{39}\) Aozumi’s full name is Seiji N. Aozumi, and “N” stands for “null,” which indicates those who willingly decide to go through

\(^{37}\) Humans are faced with the choice of either to reproduce or not to reproduce. Or, they must find some other ways, such as non-reproductive companionship, creating another species (hermaphroditic dolphin-like creatures called Luci from the sea-folk), or sending the record of human civilization to the outer space, to cope with the end of humanity. Some think that procreation becomes irrelevant without a future. Others decide not to have children so that their children do not suffer from facing the disaster. Others decide to have children hoping for the human future. Still others have less choice to have children without birth control. Some could not have children due to suffering from infertility. Some others decide not to have reproductive relationships due to their sexualities.

\(^{38}\) Watanabe, “Dokushinsha tachi no utage,” 260.

\(^{39}\) Ibid., 261.
life with no partner and no children. Single, Aozumi is determined to dedicate himself to society. He thinks of himself as a tool for society and thus remains non-reproductive. As such, he is a counter-example of pro-reproduction policies meant to increase Japan’s perilously low birthrate. Clearly non-reproductive, Maki will be terminated with Aozumi’s death.

In the following section, I will briefly discuss Japan’s demographic countermeasures and then explore the entangled relationship between Aozumi and the variously gendered Maki(s) and a mature female-female companionship between Yui and Mari, challenging the hegemonic human reproductive discourse.

**Japan’s War on Low Birthrates**

As discussed in Chapter Two, childbirth is prioritized in Japan in order to ensure a sufficient labor force in the future and to help support the aging population. Beginning with the “Angel Plan” in the 1990s, the Japanese government has instituted countermeasure policies to combat the low birthrate in conjunction with the promotion of childbirth. The Basic Act for Measures to Cope with a Society of Declining Birthrates (少子化社会対策基本法, 2003) promotes the programs such as Supporting Plans for Children and Childrearing (子ども・子育て支援プラン, 2004) and the Specified Service System: Financial Aids for Fertility Treatment (特定不妊治療費助成事業制度, 2004). For example, the goal of these outlines is “to transform into a society in which children grow in good health and individuals are able to have safe childbirth and to take great pleasure in childrearing.”

Although having children is ultimately a personal choice, the implementation of these conjoint policies and ubiquitous promotions of pro-reproduction compel Japanese people, especially women, to reproduce for the future of Japan, as these policies and

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promotions are grounded in the reproductive and heteronormative system. Even though raising the birthrate is one major solution to gain the population growth in Japan, there are other possible ways to create labor forces. The government’s monolithic way of enforcing the reproduction of children does not encourage Japanese people to have children.

*The Ocean Chronicles*—with its apocalyptic “end-of-the-world” scenario—provides an alternative to this pro-reproduction trend in Japan. Childbirth is an unthinkable choice for a population facing extinction, because adding more people at this critical time taxes the scarce resources and give life to young people only to force them to face the impending disaster. Non-reproductive and non-heteronormative relationships like Aozumi’s become common and eventually obligatory choices in this imaginary world.

**Gendered Autosapients and Intimacy with Humans**

In this section I will explore the ways in which the companionship between the variously-gendered autosapient Maki(s) and Aozumi problematizes binaristic gender and the reproductive

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41 Not only these policies but also a wide range of mass media (the SNS, website, blogs, TV shows, magazines, books, manga etc.), industries (*konkatsu*, spouse hunting companies), and communities (spouse hunting events, childcare lectures) promote “spouse hunting” and “family planning” (including *Ikumen* phenomenon—men actively involve in childcare around 2010). For example, several mother manga artists such as Takano Yū (b.19??) appeared in the 2000s depicting their vivid (positive and negative) experiences of child labor and childcare and having nationwide lectures. In addition, through the twitter and blogs, a number of young people have recently criticized the depictions of the online manga for promoting the public pension plan by Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare. In particular, all the characters are women. In the final episode, while the female social insurance consultant explains a gap in pension benefits between generations due to low birthrate and aging population, the older sister tells the younger one: “you should get married and give birth to lots of children.” And then, the social insurance consultant is about to take the older sister to a spouse hunting party. The rhetoric of marriage and childbearing is targeted for women in the manga. “Konketsu de kaiketsu? Kōrōshō no nenkin PR ni wakamono hanpatsu” [Spouse Hunting as a Solution?: The Youth’s Protest against the Promotion for Public Pensions by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare] *Asahi shinbun* (January 20, 2015), http://digital.asahi.com/articles/DA3S11559650.html?requesturl=articles%2FDA3S11559650.html&iref=comkiji_text_end_s_kjid_DA3S11559650 [accessed January 21, 2015]; Kōsei Rōdō Shō [The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare], “Manga de yomu, Issho ni kenshō! Kōteki nenkin: zaisei kenshō kekka kara yomitoku nenkin no shōrai” [Reading Manga: Verification of Public Pension: The Future of Pension Benefits Understanding from the Results of Financial Verification], http://www.mhlw.go.jp/eninkenshou/ [accessed January 22, 2015].

42 For example, the improvements of working conditions and financial instability for young part-time workers (contract workers, *arubaito*, *nīto*) contribute to these people to have family with children. In addition, if child support is improved, more women are able to work. The change of immigration policies enables immigrant workers to work comfortably in Japan.
and heteronormative system. The male-male bond between Aozumi and the male version of Maki(s) is an intimate relationship. Autosapients supposedly do not have gender, yet they assume their human’s gendered appearance. In Maki(s)’s case there are three distinct representations. The first is a male model (Maki A); the second is a copy of this male model (Maki A’); the third is a female model (Maki B) (see Figure 5.2). Each model develops a different relationship with Aozumi. In The OC I, Maki A has been Aozumi’s partner since his childhood, and they have spent critical life time together while Aozumi worked as an outer-sea legation officer. Maki A’ is a copy of this male Maki, who will be dispatched to outer space for the preservation of humanity. Maki A’ technically contains the same memory as Maki A. In The OC II, Maki B is technically the same as Maki A, but the male body becomes female when Aozumi becomes the director of his own organization. Maki B stays until Aozumi’s death.

First, the narrative voices of the male and female Maki(s) are starkly contrasted. Maki A and Maki A’ use the first-person narrative voice (Boku, I) to tell Aozumi’s story and to describe Maki’s point of view. Maki A also uses casual speech patterns to communicate via brain waves with Aozumi, as they are colleagues and friends in the homosocial working setting. Maki’s descriptions of Aozumi’s interiority as the first-person narrator and his use of casual speech emphasize their intimacy. In contrast, both Maki B and Aozumi are referred to in a third-person narrative voice. What is more, Maki B uses polite speech patterns when addressing Aozumi and rarely participates in brain-wave communication since their relationship is formal. The contrast between Maki A and Maki B in terms of gender, narrative voice, and speech patterns demonstrates the different kinds of the intimacy with Aozumi to the reader. However, Maki A (including Maki A’) and Maki B develop different kinds of intimacy with Aozumi, reflecting Aozumi’s perception of genders.
Owing to factors such as narrative voice and casual speech as well as the intertwined subjectivities mentioned above, the male model Maki A is depicted as a more intimate partner of Aozumi, and their male-male relationship is represented with a *yaoi*-like flavor. The relationship between Aozumi and Maki A is marked by an intimate but platonic friendship. Theirs is a business partnership, a brotherhood. Their companionship recalls the convention of male-male bonding found in *bishōnen ai*, or beautiful boys’ comics (see Chapter One), except for the fact that theirs is a relationship between an adult male and an adult-looking autosapient and focuses on their emotional entanglement. For example, throughout most of the series, but especially in *The OC I*, Aozumi denies having a human companion (with the exception of the priestess in *The OC II*), depending instead on Maki A to be his closest partner. Aozumi tells Maki A, “I don’t need a family, anyway. I’m fine with staying single [N or null]. As long as you’re with me, I’m fine. If I really need more support, I’ll buy another general-purpose model of your artificial body.”

The readers will find out later that Aozumi chooses to stay single because he sees himself as a tool for society. Maki A is enough for him. Maki A, on the other hand, reacts mentally to Aozumi’s claim: “A new body… I wonder if Aozumi wants to keep my current appearance or if he wants me to age matching with his age? I imagine myself that I would age little by little as if I were a real human partner.”

Maki A’s imagination of his aging reflects on his desire to become a human-like life partner. Hence, both Aozumi and Maki A hope to maintain their companionship in the future.

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43 *The OC I*, 345. 「とにかく家族はなし。私はひとりでいる。おまえさえいてくれれば、それでいいんだ。どうしても人手が必要になったら、汎用タイプのボディを買うから」

44 As mentioned above, Aozumi does not wish to have family, and singles can contribute to make a better society. 

45 Ibid. 「新しいボディーかーと僕は思った。その外見は、これまでと同じく、ずっと若いままだろうか。それとも青澄は、自分の年齢に合わせて、僕も老けさせていくつもりなんだろうか。少しずつ。少しずつ。本物の人間のパートナーみたいに。」
Toward the end of *The OC I*, we can see that their strong bond allows them to overcome difficult situations together. When Aozumi tries to outmaneuver the enemy, he is seriously injured, at which point Maki A appears. Aozumi says, “Thank goodness! Maki, you’re here. I thought I was gonna die.” Relieved to see Maki A, Aozumi has no qualms about whining, but he subsequently asks Maki A to protect Tsukisome. Maki A hesitates and says, “…I can’t! Seiji N. Aozumi is the only person for me; just as Tsukisome is the only person in this world.” Despite the programming, Maki A claims that Aozumi is the most important person. Aozumi responds, “‘Maki, I don’t intend to die soon. I want to see a bigger world with you. . . . I can take care of myself. Please save Tsukisome!’ . . . I touched Aozumi’s cheek gently with my hand that he was grabbing.” Aozumi trusts Maki A to save Tsukisome and expresses his desire to live with Maki A in the future. Maki A’s gentle touch on Aozumi’s cheek wordlessly exhibits his affection.

The last chapter of *The OC I* ends with intimate communication between Aozumi and Maki A. Aozumi is amused that Maki A’ will survive even after his death (in the form of the copy, Maki A’). Aozumi is so happy that he allows Maki A to grind the coffee beans for the first time. The last conversation between Aozumi and Maki is described from Maki A’s perspective:

[Quotation from Aozumi]

：“The banquet of humanity will end soon. Nobody knows whether humans have the right to die with peaceful smiles…” I couldn’t respond when Aozumi gave his sad smile. But he didn’t seem to care about my silence. Aozumi placed his hand on mine in order to help me grind the purple coffee beans and said gently, “Hey! Don’t look away. You’ve got to be careful when you grind the...”
beans, just as you’d caress someone dear to you…” I began to grind the beans slowly under Aozumi’s supervision. I clearly detected in my iProbe that his emotions were filled with gentleness and warmth.  

Maki A’s silence in response to Aozumi’s thought about humanity demonstrates his human-like sensitivity to Aozumi, as Maki A cannot answer him casually. Grinding coffee beans together implies Aozumi’s affection for Maki A, as coffee beans are analogous to the significant other. For Aozumi, coffee beans are precious in this world and grinding coffee beans is a delicate and important process for making a good coffee. Aozumi’s gentle words and touch clearly show caring for Maki A, whereas Maki A calmly receives Aozumi’s warmth. This is the yaoi moment. Their intimacy in this scene is subtle; however, the gentleness and heart-warming ending suggest the long history of their intimate male-male companionship, and Maki A is a special partner for Aozumi.

Aozumi’s last meeting with Maki A’ (the copy) shows closure in their relationship, as Maki A has been very special to him. Aozumi, now seventy, meets Maki A’ in both The OC I and the last chapter of The OC II, both of which share the same temporal space. The OC II, however, describes the scene in more detail. When Maki A’ asks what Aozumi’s life was like over the past thirty years (without Maki A), Aozumi describes his meeting with an unforgettable woman. Maki A’ responds, “That’s great! You made such progress, didn’t you!” Then, he continues, “It’s great to always have someone in your heart no matter what form the relationship

49 The OC I, 576. 「人類の宴はもうすぐ終わる。最後の瞬間が訪れるとき、私たち人類に、穏やかに微笑みながら死ぬ資格があるかどうか—それは誰にも分からないだろうな」寂しそうに微笑を浮かべた青澄に、僕は何も言えなかった。けれども彼は、僕が答えないことを、まったく気にしていないようだった。紫豆を挽く僕の手に自分の手を添えながら、青澄は穏やかに言った。「こらこら、よそ見するんじゃない。豆はな、こうやって大切に挽くんだ。大事な人を、優しく撫でるようにしな・・・」僕は青澄の指導の下、紫豆をゆっくりと挽き始めた。彼の内面がこのうえなく優しく温かい想いに満たされているのを、僕はiプローブは明瞭に把握していた。
takes. I wish that you’ll have a real human partner.” Maki A’ is pleased to hear that Aozumi loves someone other than the autosapient Maki(s) and respects the positive change in Aozumi’s life. At the very end of the meeting, Aozumi expresses gratitude to Maki A’:

“Thank you, Maki. I was very happy being with you. You were the best partner in my life.” [Maki A’ responds,] “It makes me sad that you used the past tense.”

Sad—the word made Aozumi smile involuntarily. The autosapient Maki does not have human emotions. The word “sad” is logically selected as the best word choice from the human assistant program. But these trivial things make humans happy. Words are an invaluable support for emotionally vulnerable people such as Aozumi.

Aozumi’s use of the past tense suggests their last meeting. His words “the best partner in his life” expresses his validation of good partnership with Maki A/A.’ In particular, the last meeting means for Aozumi a closure in their relationship. Maki A’s emotional response, “sad,” is comical, as Aozumi knows that Maki A’s “sadness” is programmed. Aozumi is content with Maki A’s human-like response. Thus, their last meeting connotes a happy ending to the male-male partnership.

In contrast, the relationship between the female model Maki B and Aozumi is depicted as more formal and hierarchal than Maki A/A’ and reflects Aozumi’s perception of women. Maki B is technically the same as Maki A, but Aozumi modifies male Maki A to the female model in order to achieve a complete differentiation. Maki B’s body and features are an amalgamation of Aozumi’s ideal adult women. Maki B is described in the third person narrative voice:

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50 The OC II Vol. 2, 341. 「それはすごい。大変な進歩じゃないか」「どんな形でも、心に誰かが住んでいるのはいいものだ。その相手が本物人間であることを、僕はずっと望んでいたから」
51 The OC II Vol. 2 342-3. 「ありがとう、マキ。君がいれてくれて私はとても幸せだった。君は私にとって、人生で最高のパートナーだったよ」「過去形で言わないでくれよ。悲しくなるじゃないか」悲しい----か。青澄は思わず微笑を洩らした。人工知性体であるマキには、人間の心を支援するプログラムが、パートナーに対する最も相応しい言葉として、論理的に選択された言葉を出してくれるのだ。（中略）だが、たったそれだけのことが人間にはうれしい。心の弱い人間にって、その言葉は大きな支えとなる。
Her black hair is evenly cut at her chin line. She has big dark brown eyes. The skin of the slim body glows like a real human’s despite its slightly blue tint. Her lips shine like a rose bud. Despite the artificial body, her demeanor is smooth and elegant with a hint of glamour. She has great taste in fashion, wearing business suits depending on the occasion. The New Maki’s smile, just like the old Maki’s, is almost identical to that of a human. . . . The New Maki refers to herself not as “boku” but “watashi.” She calls Aozumi the “Chief Director” and talks to him using the honorifics that a human secretary would accord the executive.52

As described above, the physical features of the female model Maki B are described in more detail than those of Maki A. The appearance of Maki A primarily focuses on his human-like friendliness and warmth. The descriptions of Maki B’s face, hair, skin, demeanor, and clothing suggest the qualities of human femininity. As Aozumi also refers to himself with the pronoun watashi (I), the use of subject pronoun “watashi” by Maki B makes her speech more gender neutral than Maki A’s use of “boku” (I), which signifies young male speech. In addition, Maki A’s use of casual speech with Aozumi and addressing him in the second person demonstrates their relative intimacy. They correspond with each other as friends, colleagues, and equals in a male-male pairing.53 On the other hand, the relationship between Maki B and Aozumi is more formal and hierarchal, as would exist between a boss and his secretary. Maki B addresses Aozumi with the title of his occupation and not with his given name.

The relationship between Aozumi and Maki B simulates not only the relationship of superior/ inferior, but also that of patient/counselor, or even husband/wife. For example, Aozumi

52 The OC II Vol. 1, 77. 「顎のラインで切り揃えられた黒髪。焦げ茶色の大きな瞳。すらりとしたボディの肌は、若干青みを帯びているものの本物の人間のように艶やかで、唇は薔薇の蕾を思わせる色に輝いていた。人工身体でありながら、その立ち居振る舞いには、微かな色気を含んだ清楚な雰囲気が漂っていた。数種類の秘書用スーツを、時と場所によって、自ら使い分ける美的センスも備えていた。新し

53 Ueda mentions a male paring in comparison to the first generational SF writer Mayumura Taku’s (b.1934) detective series.

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begins to tell Maki B his life stories daily because most of her earlier memory has been deleted. While Maki B listens to him patiently and asks questions carefully, Aozumi realizes that his story-telling has a calming effect.\(^5^4\) Maki B is programmed to listen to her partner attentively and to encourage him to talk about himself in order to collect the partner’s data. This resembles the counselor-patient relationship. Maki B continues as follows:

“Mr. Chairperson, you seem to be a person worth supporting.”

[Aozumi responded,] “Are you saying that I’m a high-maintenance guy?”

“Yes, the general public will probably agree with your expression. However, I find this aspect of you very likable, Sir. You have been devoted to taking care of others, and therefore you need your own psychological maintenance. Regardless of living up to one’s high ideals, if people can’t vent, they are unable to function normally.”

“It’s very reassuring when you put it like that.”\(^5^5\)

Nonetheless, Maki’s word usage, “sasae gai no aru kata” (the person worth supporting) and Aozumi’s response of “sewa ga yakeru otoko” (a high-maintenance guy) suggest a quasi-marital relationship. In the patriarchal model, the wife provides emotional support, which the husband needs in order to be successful in his work. However, their formal conversation style—especially Maki B’s polite speech mode—suggests that their relationship could not be that of an actual husband and wife. Thus, it shifts back to the patient-counselor or the superior-secretary relationship.

Despite the formality, their relationship shows the slight suggestion of a more intimate development. When Maki B asks Aozumi about Maki A, Aozumi responds emotionally,
“My ‘former Maki’ [Maki A] is my significant other. I don’t want to make a comparison without careful consideration ...because my former Maki only existed in those days.”

[Maki B replied,] “I understand, Sir. If you say so, I will comply. The ‘former Maki’ is a lucky autosapient. I am a little ‘jealous’ of him and feel a little ‘embarrassed.’”

“Do you have an understanding of jealousy or embarrassment, as an autosapient?”

“I’m entering the data in my system just now. I don’t feel actual emotions, of course, but your story enables me to tag these emotions. Thank you.”

Their conversation reveals that Maki A is Aozumi’s significant other, as Aozumi wishes to embrace his memory of their relationship. For Aozumi, Maki B is not equivalent to Maki A. Although Maki B does not feel emotions as do humans, she still expresses her jealousy and embarrassment in comparison to Aozumi’s relationship with Maki A. For Aozumi, the difference between Maki A and Maki B exists in the way the former lingers in his memory and also in the way their genders affects their relationship.

When Maki B temporarily changes her female features into male features in order to be Aozumi’s bodyguard, Maki B’s gender becomes more ambiguous. Maki B at that point has short hair, a masculine voice, and muscular facial and body features with a flattened chest. Maki B’s male features remind Aozumi of Maki A and make his heart beat faster. Aozumi tells Maki B,

“Even though you’ve changed into a male model, your vibe is a little different from a copy Maki [Maki A’]. I wonder if you changed under the influence of being a female model.” [Maki responded,] “Our characters are greatly influenced by the partner’s interiority. This is evidence that your interiority has changed over

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56 The OC II Vol. 1, 82. 「私にとって<前のマキ>は、とても大切な存在だ。安易に、いまのおまえと比べたくない。あの頃のマキは、あの時代にしかない存在だから・・・」「わかりました。理事長がそう仰るなら私はそれに従います。<前のマキ>は、とても幸せ者ですね。私は少しだけ<嫉妬>します。そして、少しだけ<恥ずかしい>気がします」「嫉妬とか恥ずかしいとか、人工知性体のおまえにわかるのか」「いま覚えました。感情としての実感はありませんが、理事長のお話は、このデータとにようなタグ付けを可能にしてくれました。ありがとうございました。」
the course of four decades. This is the reason why *boku* (I) don’t resemble the copy Maki. Isn’t that a blessing?" 57

As Maki B explains, the male model of Maki B is different from Maki A (male model) because Aozumi’s inner feelings respond to the appearance of the autosapient Maki B. Therefore, Maki B’s male-gendered body modification does not correspond to Maki B’s gender expression, as Maki B has been culturally developed as a woman, while Maki A has been treated as a man. The gendered body modification does not change Maki B’s personality. This recalls Kurahashi Yumiko’s “An Exterritorial,” in which the ET character responds to the male protagonist and his sister with different gender performances. As discussed earlier, Maki A is one half of the younger Aozumi, and hence Maki B has become the half of the later Aozumi. Either Maki A/A’ or Maki B is ultimately the reflection and embodiment of Aozumi. In a sense, both Maki A/A’ and Maki B are masculinized. The two Maki(s)’s intra-action with Aozumi and co-evolution over the course of decades are the outcome of Aozumi’s level of maturity. Yet, Aozumi still misses Maki A/A’—the younger half of Aozumi.

The final meeting between Aozumi and Maki B implies a certain level of intimacy. Maki B changes back to the female model, and her behavior toward Aozumi resembles that of a life-long partner or family member.

Maki raised Aozumi’s left hand gently and wrapped her hands around it. She said, “Please allow me to carry out only this once that which you desire from the bottom of your heart. No one is here. No one is looking. Please…” Maki laid her cheek against the back of Aozumi’s hand. Aozumi felt Maki’s moist, soft artificial skin as if he were touching a real human. Maki pulled her cheek

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57 *The OC II* Vol. 2, 377-8. 「それにしても、男性型に戻しても、おまえの雰囲気はコピー・マキとは少し違うな。女性型として使っていた間に、独自の形に成長したのかな？」「アシスタントの性質は、パートナーの内面に影響されますから。僕がコピー・マキと似ていないのは、とりあえずおまえこそ、この40年間に団長の内面が変化なさった証拠でしょう。それは喜ぶべきことではないでしょうか」
away and kissed the back of his hand. . . . Maki’s white shape became blurred, but Aozumi felt as if she would be there forever.  

Similar to the final coffee grinding scene between Aozumi and Maki A, Maki B’s action of rubbing her cheek against and kissing the back of Aozumi’s hand demonstrates Aozumi’s desire for Maki B and perhaps more desire for Maki A/A’. Maki B reassures Aozumi, who is on his deathbed. She seemingly wishes to touch and kiss him for the last time as a family member. Aozumi has left instructions not to reveal his death to Maki A’: “This is Aozumi’s final act of consideration to the copy Maki [Maki A’]—needless to say, the person who understands him most is the original Maki [Maki B].” Aozumi cares about Maki A’ until the end. Both Maki B and Maki A/A’ are the closest family member(s) for him, yet the female model Maki B is, in a way, used to highlight the intimacy with the male model Maki A/A.’

The autosapients Maki A/A’ and Maki B are Aozumi’s companion species in his queer family, as Haraway remarks on “cyborgs as junior siblings in the much bigger, queer family of companion species, in which reproductive biotechnopolitics are generally a surprise, sometimes even a nice surprise.” In any case, the gender differences of Maki A/A’ and Maki B reflect on Aozumi’s perceptions of gender: Maki A/A’ reflects a male homosocial bonding; Maki B reflects Aozumi’s professional status in a hierarchal relationship. However, both Maki A/A’ and Maki B are ultimately Aozumi’s embodiments and manifestations. In a way, the triangular—or quadrangular—relationship of Aozumi, Maki A/A’, and Maki B together form a complete

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58 The OC II Vol. 2, 394. 『マキは青澄の左手をそっと持ちあげ、両手で包み込んだ。「・・・でも一度だけ、あなたが、ずっと心の底で望んでいたことを実行させて頂けませんか。ここには他に誰もおりません。誰もこの場をみておりません。ですから、どうか・・・」 マキは青澄の手の甲に優しく頬を寄せた。しっとり柔らかいマキの人工皮膚は、本物の人肌と接しているように感じられた。頬を話すと、マキは青澄の手の甲に口づけをした。（中略）マキの姿が白く滲んで見えた。その姿は、永遠に、そこでにあるかのように思われた。』

59 The OC II Vol. 2, 395. 『それが、コピー・マキに対する、青澄の最後の配慮であったことを一誰よりもよく理解していたのは、言うまでもなくオリジナルのマキ自身だった。』

60 Haraway, The Companion Manifesto, 11.
companionship. Such companionship resists the heteronormative and reproductive norms, insofar as Aozumi the “Null” and two or three autosapients are non-reproductive.

In the above, we have seen how the author creates queer bonds that challenge the anthropocentric concept of a coherent subjectivity as well as heteronormative and reproductive relationships. The relationship between Aozumi and his autosapient Maki(s) is entangled through the intra-action and companionship. However, Aozumi’s special bond with male Maki A/A’ strongly suggests the yaoi flavor of their companionship as non-heteronormative and non-reproductive, as the relationship with the female model Maki B is contrasted to draw attention to male-male companionship. This yaoi-tinged relationship can be seen as an homage to Hagio’s and the 1970s “beautiful boys” comics to stress Platonic male-male romance, yet Ueda adds a yuri-tinged female-female companionship. In the following section I will briefly discuss another non-heteronormative and non-reproductive mode of the female-female relationship as a counter example of male-male companionship.

The Enduring Female-Female Companionship

The female-female companionship suggests another non-reproductive and non-heteronormative relationship, and the production of another queer family. The companionship between the female astro-engineer Hoshikawa Yui and the artificially engineered child Kōno Marie develops over the years. Their ambiguous relationship can suggest female-female friendship, companionship, bonding, and/or a lesbian relationship. According to Yaoi scholar Akiko Mizoguchi, there are three subgenres of the so-called yuri (lily, a euphemism for lesbians) genre—first, narratives about “the decidedly asexual, platonic relationships between school girls”

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61 In the early twenty-first century, their ancestors or relatives substantiated a hot plume theory, called the Theory of Kōno-Hoshikawa in The Ocean Chronicles series. Their last names hint at their connection in the past.
(e.g., the novel series *The Virgin Mary is Watching Over*); second, superheroine narratives (e.g., *Sailor Moon, Revolutionary Girl Utena*); and third, accounts of “sexual relationships and lesbian relationships,” from the terms used in *Yuricon ’05 in Tokyo*.

Although Ueda’s novels are not generally categorized as *yuri*, the relationship between Yui and Marie in this novel points to a *yuri* reading. Borrowing Mizoguchi’s subgenre category, the representation of the female-female relationship here is similar to the first category of an asexual and platonic relationship, but it is “not” a fleeting relationship. As Mizoguchi and others observe, the first category of *yuri* narratives typified in *shōjo* fiction focuses on intense female friendship and sisterhood during high school, with the girls moving on to heterosexual relationships in adulthood. The relationship between Marie and Yui seems to fit this narrative; nonetheless, theirs is neither a fleeting female bond nor a transitory S-relationship (*esu kankei*). Their friendship/companionship rather suggests a long-lasting relationship. Their intellectual exchanges slowly develop from the school years to the end of the world.

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62 The *shōjo* novel series *Maria-sama ga miteru* (abbr. the *Marimite*) by Konno Oyuki (b.1965), with Hibiki Reine’s illustrations, has been published in Cobalt since 1998. Various media forms (manga, anime, web radio, film) have contributed to the popularity. According to sociologist Kumada Kazuo, the representations of alternative masculinity in this series appeal to non-traditionally masculine male readers (*sōshoku kei danshi* or sensitive feminine men). Kumada Kazuo, *Ototorashisa to tu yamai?: poppu karucha no shin dansei-gaku* [“Masculine” Illness?: New Men’s Studies on Popular Culture] (Tokyo: Fūbaisha, 2005).

63 Manga *Bishōjo senshi Sērā Mūn* by Takeuchi Naoko (b.1967) was originally published in a monthly *shōjo* manga magazine *Nakayoshi* from 1992 to 1995. Various media forms (media-mix) such as TV anime, website anime, musical, games, and feature TV series played an important role in its popularity. TV anime series *Shōjo kakumei Utena* was produced and aired in 1997 by Ikuhara Kunihiko (b.1964), who created the production team Bepapas in collaboration with manga artist Saitō Chiho (b.1967).

64 As Mizoguchi points out, the term *yuri* was initially used for a counter-example of *bara* (rose, gay men) in the gay magazine called *Barazoku* (The Tribe of Roses) in the 1970s. The genre of *yuri* is “not” related to the emergence of *yaoi*. She also maintains that *yuri* has been used for the heterosexual male desire for lesbian pornographic representations (223). However, Mizoguchi notes that the concept of *yuri* began to be used as a female-female romantic expression after 2000. Mizoguchi, “Reading and Living Yaoi,” 2006, 287-9. The founder of Yuricon and American *yuri* fan Erica Friedman defines *yuri* as a broader spectrum of “intense emotional connection, romantic love or physical desire between women.” The term *shōjoai* or Girl’s Love (GL) is used as a counter example of *yaoi*, initially by American fans and eventually by Japanese fans. http://www.yuricon.com/what-is-yuricon/ [accessed December 20, 2014]
As mentioned above, the end-of-the-world scenario does not exactly encourage reproductive and heteronormative relationships, in strong contrast to current governmental programs to counter low birthrate by promoting reproduction. The inclusion of both a yaoi-flavored narrative between Aozumi and Maki(s) and a yuri-flavored narrative between Yui and Marie can be said to challenge the hegemonic heteronormative and reproductive-oriented discourse. In particular, the yuri-flavored narrative makes women more visible than the yaoi-flavored narrative. It is also my speculation that their non-sexual and platonic female companionship is able to avoid pornographic images of lesbian relationships, as most Ueda’s readers are presumably both men and women who are either SF fans or entertainment readers.65

Similar to the first category of yuri narrative, the friendship between Yui and Marie begins at school but gradually develops into a respectable companionship. Their relationship, however, is not represented as a normative human companionship. Marie, the “Savior Child” (a genetically engineered child to save humanity from the forthcoming disaster) has not had social interaction with other “regular” children like Yui and thus does not know how to form a friendship. Marie is also portrayed as a highly intelligent person with little emotional affect, similar to an autosapient. Yui, however, is attracted to Marie because of her unhuman-like coldness. Yui’s first impression of Marie is as follows: “The girl’s long black hair and light complexion catch Yui’s eyes. Her skin looks smooth and bewitching, like a pearl … Yui feels as if she were looking at a well-structured industrial design. Beauty of the Ultimate Functionality.

65 There are various kinds of yuri readers as well as male readers and fans. However, some male readers consume yuri narratives as lesbian pornographic images. Mizoguchi mentions that some male attendees for the YuriCon ’05 in Tokyo masturbated during the film screening on lesbian images. Mizoguchi, “Reading and Living Yaoi,” 231-32. In contrast, James Welker points out, another type of male yuri fan who does not use yuri as food (okazu) is represented in Kurata Uso’s manga Yuri Danshi [Yuri Male Fans, 2011-2014]. James Welker, “Kurata Uso Yuri danshi ni arawasareta yuri fandamu no sugata ni tsuite no ichikōsatsu” [Yuri Fandom represented in Kurata Uso’s Yuri danshi] Yuriika 46, no. 15 (December 2014): 148-154. He mentions that this article is based on his presentation “Whose Queer Media? An Examination of the Diverse Fandom of the Cross-Media Yuri Genre,” at Manga Future, held at the University of Wollongong in Australia in November 2014.
Beauty of Efficiency. Yui can’t think of this girl as being the same creature as herself. But she senses her sublime aura." Despite her aloofness, Marie indeed begins to develop an emotional sensibility and gradually show fondness for Yui, in part because she prefers talking to Yui rather than the other Savior Children, who only relate to one another. Both Yui and Marie are, in a way, outsiders who accept their differences and hence become a bridge between the Savior Children and “regular” humans.

Both Marie and Yui eventually become necessary to each other’s existence long after their graduation from school. Marie spends a good deal of time away from home on business trips, while Yui awaits for her return. In a marked “yuri moment,” Marie (who does not show emotions easily) expresses her emotional need for Yui:

“I’ll travel all over the world on business trips, but I’ll always come back. If I imagine you’re waiting for me here, danger will never come.”

[Yui asked,] “So then, am I your lucky charm?”

“So it seems.”

“That’s intriguing…”

“For those such as myself who have occupations, it’s important to have a home to come back to. My boss told me about it a long time ago—My boss was spot on.”

Because her job with the international governmental organization is demanding, Marie turns to Yui for comfort and psychological support. In return, Marie gives Yui the reassuring freedom to pursue her dream—dispatching the spaceship to outer space. Marie’s words—someone waiting

66 The OC II Vol. 1, 108. 「長い黒髪と色白の容姿がひどく目を惹く女子で、肌は真珠のように滑らかで艶やかだ。…よくできたインダストリアル・デザインを見ているようだった。機能性を極めた結果としての美。一切の無駄を含まぬ美。自分と同じ生物とは思えなかった。何か崇高な気配すら覚えるほどだった」The sublime aura of Marie hints at the (Christian) religious icon as the Savior Child although she was created by artificial wombs.

67 The OC II Vol. 2, 197.「私はこれからも出張が増えめるけれど、いつも、ここへ帰ってくるわ。ここでユイが待っている姿をイメージすると、危険が向こうから退いてくれるの」「私はあなたの守り？」「そうですかい」「不思議ね・・・」「こういう仕事をする人間は、掃除の場所があることが大切なんだって。昔、上司から教えてもらったんだけど正解だってみたいね」
at home—strongly suggest the stereotypical breadwinner husband and stay-at-home housewife. Yet this is a female-female companionship, in which both are independent and have their own occupations. Although the relationship between Yui and Marie is represented as having no sexual component, their relationship hinges upon mutual intellectual exchange, psychological support, and enjoyment and develops as an independent as well as a long-term companionship.

Toward the end of The OC II, the emotional bond between Marie and Yui is highlighted as being strong despite the fact that they are physically separated. Due to an impending disaster, Marie has not returned for five years, while Yui is busy working on the space project and dealing with a recent accident on the spaceship. Marie suddenly calls Yui and apologizes for not contacting her. Yui is about to burst into tears and says,

“Where the hell are you? I’ve been waiting for five years... Please come home soon. Your condo is too big for me to live in alone.”
[Marie replied.] “I’ll be back as soon as my work is done. Keep waiting for me as usual.”
“I dream about you every single day.”
“Me too. Let’s continue to see each other in our dreams for a little while longer. I want to come back to see the launching of spaceship Akili.”
“Promise me... to come back here at any cost.”
“I promise to come back to you. So please wait for me...”
When she hung up, Yui looked up and gazed at the Mexican Bay.

Can I believe you? Marie...

The above exchange points to their emotional connection even while separated. Dreaming of one other indicates their spiritual or psychic connection. Suggestively, the ancestors of Yui

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68 In the novel, Akili—meaning intelligence or wisdom—is mentioned as having Latin roots, but in fact it is a Swahili term.
69 The OC II Vol. 2, 370-1. 『「いったいどこにいるのよ。もう、5年も待ってるのよ・・・」（中略）「あなたも早く帰ってきたね。あのマンションは、ひとりで住むには広過ぎるんだもの」「仕事が終わったらすぐに帰るわ。いつものように待っていて」「私、毎日あなたを夢に見るよ」「私もよ。だから、もうしばらくの間、夢の中で会い続けましょう。私だって、アキーリ号の出発を見たいんだから」「約束して。必ず帰ってくる」「約束するわ。必ずあなたの元へ帰る。だから、もう少し待っていて—」通信が切られると、ゆいは視線をあげ、メキシコ湾の彼方を見つめた。——信じているの？マリエ・・・。』
(Hoshikawa) and Marie (Kōno) might have advanced the *Kōno-Hoshikawa* plume tectonics theory, thus indicating their past connection. In addition, Yui’s dream about space/spaceship becomes equivalent to her dream about Marie. On the other hand, Marie can show much more emotion than before, as demonstrated by her commitment to return to Yui. Their relationship is non-sexual, but it is emotionally and spiritually bonded and long-lasting.

The ending of the series ambiguously suggests the continuation of the companionship between Yui and Marie, although the reader will not be witness to their reunion. When the spaceship is finally launched into space, Yui watches the launch with her colleagues, but not with Marie. Marie has not come back, yet Yui believes that she is still alive and will eventually return: “Marie promised to come back to me at any cost. I just need to wait for her. As I believed in the success of the spaceship Akili Plan, I’ll continue to believe in Marie’s return, even for years to come.”70 Yui’s optimism sounds a note of relief throughout *The OC II* and she continues to dream about the future despite difficult circumstances. Yui’s dreams and beliefs hint that her relationship with Marie will continue. At the very end, Yui smiles and begins to contemplate the next dream. In a sense, as long as Yui’s dream continues, their spiritual connection will not end. Importantly, the female-female companionship will endure in this novel. Hence, non-reproductive and non-heteronormative relationships continue.

The end of the novel highlights queer family, especially family groupings other than humans. The series *The OC II* ends with the above female-female relationship, the end of the Aozumi and Maki(s) relationship, and the departure of the spaceship, which carries non-humans including autosapient and Tsukisome’s genetic information (a hominid shaped feranavis) as

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70 *The OC II* Vol. 2, 384. 「マリエは必ず帰ると約束してくれた。ならば、私はそれを待つしかない。アキーリ計画の成功を信じ続けたように、マリエの帰りも信じ続けよう。これからもずっと。」
representatives of humanity into outer space or to another planet. As deconstructing the anthropocentric view of humanity, non-humans ultimately become the future of humanity and thus the ending is presented as optimistic and hopeful. Humans may not be the center of the world but rather are one among other intelligent species.

In conclusion, the entire series challenges our anthropocentric worldview. As discussed above, the entanglement of life forms questions our perception of humanity as hinging upon individual subjectivity and complicates our understanding of human/non-human relationships. Morphological differences in life forms (such as that between the sea-folk and icthynavi) do not mean different species, but rather that all the life forms are connected. In addition, the “mesh” of Tsukisome as a hominid form of feranavis not only obscures the boundary between humans and non-humans but also becomes the future hope for humanity. Moreover, a variety of entangled companionships—especially the male-male bond between Aozumi and Maki(s) and the female-female bond between Yui and Marie—question heteronormative and binaristic gender and reproductive discourse. The apocalyptic scenario can be said to critique official pro-reproductive policies and at the same time warns us of the future of humanity if people do not seek the “true” happiness of all people as Ueda’s novels promote. Morton’s idea of “the end of world” as a critical device (mentioned at the beginning of Chapter Four) gives us the potential to depart from our anthropocentrism and our human reproductive discourse and to deconstruct the worldview that we currently inhabit.
Table 5.1: Chronology of *The Ocean Chronicles*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Events</th>
<th>The Novel/ Short Stories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>The Re-Cretaceous</td>
<td><em>The Palace of Flower Dragons (The OC I)</em>, Prologue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 25th Century</td>
<td></td>
<td>“Fin and Claws”</td>
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<td>“The Descendants of Litiental”</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>The Palace of Flower Dragons (The OC I)</em>, Ch.1-8</td>
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<tr>
<td>For 40 years</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Deep Crimson Epitaphs (The OC II)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter of Plume</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>The Palace of Flower Dragons (The OC I)</em>, Epilogue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Figure 5.1: Four Life Forms Chain:**

![Four Life Forms Chain Diagram](image_url)
Figure 5.2: Three Kinds of the Autosapient Maki

- **Maki A - Male**
  (Aozumi 5-42yrs old)

- **Maki A' - Male**
  (Copy of Maki A - To Outer Space)

- **Maki B - Female**
  (Aozumi 43-70yrs)
Conclusion: Post/Human Queer Feminism in Japanese Women’s SF

Science fiction happens to have an advanced capacity for interrogating the status quo! It’s really good at! It really almost just tricks you into doing it, even if you think you’re just reading it for fun! So yes, maybe it is a dangerous property that is fundamentally revolutionary, and it should be suppressed by the powers that be. [...] I’m on the side of the kinds of interrogations of reality that science fiction taught me to consider before I even had words for such things. It made me look at our present social situation as a construction, first and foremost.

Jonathan Lethem

“I can’t imagine a two-sexed egalitarian society and I don’t believe anyone else can, either…” Joanna Russ states, adding: “Well, here you have the whole thing about s.f. Where else could one even try out such visions?” Science fiction interrogates the reality of gender. In Japan as well, SF is a device for women artists and writers, such as Hagio Moto, Ōhara Mariko, and Ueda Sayuri to reset and reconstruct the worlds through the imaginative future or the alternative past. These writers engage in writing post/human bodies to serve their feminist interests and critiques of contemporary social customs. First, their primary concern is to create a new paradigm of sex/gender and sexualities because they desire to remove themselves from the limits of human female bodies. In this process, this new paradigm creates queer effects to free from a binaristic and heteronormative world. Second, most of their works paradoxically take the readers back to binaristic gendered worlds to address the concerns for imbalance between men and women since the issue has been unresolved in the reality in which we live. This criticism serves either to invert its hierarchal relationship and to valorize femininity, or to demonstrate continuous struggle with the asymmetry between men and women.

1 Cited in Marleen Barr’s Feminist Fabulation, 133.
In this conclusion, I will highlight some implications that these three authors wittingly or unwittingly contribute to the act of expressing post/human feminist critiques through creating a new paradigm of gender. I will outline this new gender paradigm concerning three categories: body, intimacy, and reproduction, reflecting on the social conditions of gender from the period following high economic growth and the so-called bubble economy to the recession. The former correlated with the emergence of the women’s liberation movement in the 1970s and the enactment of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law for Men and Women, EEOL in 1986; the latter fed the resurgence of political conservatism. These three categories also take us back to unresolved binaristic gender concerns and to open up ongoing questions of gender issues.

Body: 1) A New Paradigm of Sex/Gender

Concerning reconfiguration of bodies, these three authors produce various queer effects to construct a new form of sexed and gendered bodies and thereby explore an alternative form of sexuality in their SF works. To evade women’s bodies and sexual binarism, they make use of androgynous and hermaphrodite bodies, post-gender bodies, and post-anthropocentric notions of bodies. Initially, Hagio’s *The Poe Clan* (1972-76) utilizes vampiric male bodies to allow women readers to access male privilege. At the same time these male bodies are marked as androgynous through scrambled gender expressions (hair, eyes, clothes, bodies, speech, behavior). These androgynous characters create the illusion of a neutral gender or of a genderless world.

All three writers construct dual-sexed or multiple-sexed bodies as liminal sexed figures in order to attempt to collapse sexual dimorphism. Each dual- or multiple-sexed figure approaches gender issues differently at different historical moments. Through these bodies, Hagio’s works pursue sexual autonomy and circumvent those roles that were then expected of women, namely pregnancy and motherhood. In the 1970s, Japanese feminists in the women’s liberation sought
freedom from women’s suppressed sexuality and reproductive control. Hagio’s “There Were Eleven!” (1975) and *Marginal* (1985-87) portray transformative dual-sexed characters, who are externally male but who are invisibly or genetically close-to-female (XXY). Male-embodied transformative dual-sex have access to male privilege but are simultaneously able to choose—even if only temporarily—life as a woman. Their dual-sex allows these characters an agency for the woman’s side, especially sexual autonomy, pregnancy, and motherhood. Nonetheless, their dual-sexed exposes the limit of escaping from asymmetrical sex/gender binarism. In particular, in *Marginal* three dual-sexed characters are freed from the roles of mother/creator/reproducer only after their death. The survival of one of the dual-sexed quadruplets suggests the potential to remake the new world—through a revival of the fertile, feminine side.

In Ōhara’s “Girl” (1985), dual- or multiple-sex focuses on modification of the male body and the parodic aspects of the performativity of gender. Although Gil is male-embodied except for his implanted voluptuous breasts, his gender shifts depending on his circumstances such as his stage performance or his romantic/sexual relationships. In Ueda’s *The Cage of Zeus* (2004), the representation of multiple-sex changes to more complex gender issues when GID issues brought attention to the public in Japan. Genetically-engineered dual-sex, the Rounds, not only complicate sex/gender binarism but also critique any forms of normativity. Once dual-sex-normativity conforms, the dichotomy between majority and minorities emerges, and thus a continuous asymmetrical power relationship does as well. Ueda’s dual-sexuality raises similar issues of the gender identity struggles of non-cisgender, GID, or transgender and intersex. For example, the character Wolfren struggles with his gender identity not matching up with the Round sex assigned at birth. Additionally, it problematizes medical intervention such as sex reassignment surgeries (SRSs). To illustrate, the Round Tei struggles with bodily difference
when compared to other Rounds, just as in our contemporary society intersex people similarly struggle with their bodily differences from binaristic sex and with coerced SRSs at birth. This novel raises awareness of various aspects of gender issues in relation to sexed body and gender identities.

Beyond dual-sexed bodies, Ōhara constructs a possible post-gender world through simulated and cyborg bodies. Post-gender does not necessarily mean that gender has been eliminated but rather suggests fluidity or multiplicity of gender. Ōhara’s the cyborg Sample B III in *Hybrid Child* (1990)—an amalgam of various entities—continuously (re)constructs gender(s) and shows new form(s) of gender in the process. While Hagio’s transformative dual-sexed bodies shift between male and female, Ōhara’s cyborg’s ambiguity of the original gender stresses the performativity and imitation of gender *per se*.

Ueda’s *The Ocean Chronicles* (2010, 2013) offers a non-anthropocentric notion of bodies through the entangled subjectivities between humans and non-humans. Since all life forms are interconnected synchronically or diachronically, these companionships *per se* question our perception of humanity as an individual subjectivity and destabilize our understanding of human/non-human relationships. For example, morphological differences in life forms (such as that between the sea-folk and icthynavi) do not indicate different species, as they are still the same species. The “mesh” of Tsukisome as a hominid form of feranavis not only breaks down the boundary between humans and non-humans but also becomes the hope for the future of humanity. Therefore, this non-anthropocentric worldview demonstrates bodies are permeable and boundary-less regardless of sex/gender.
**Body: 2) Binarism of Sex/Gender**

Despite the construction of new paradigm of sex/gender, Hagio, Ōhara, and Ueda simultaneously bring attention back to binaristic gendered worlds in order to invert asymmetrical gender relations and to valorize femininity. In particular, the 1980s works attempt to embrace femininity, reflecting on the increase of working women and the implementation of the EEOL in 1986. While Hagio’s hermaphroditic characters still struggle to accept the feminine side, Ōhara’s “The Mental Female” (1984) and *Hybrid Child* valorize the feminized space focusing on two kinds of feminized characters—shōjo (girl) and mother—through multiple simulation and performative repetition. “The Mental Female” centers on the female gender, especially the manifestation of the mother. The cybernetic city Tokyo is always embodied as the female form despite the cybernetic world signified as disembodied. The mentality of the female, especially the mother’s repressed madness, satirically invades the cybernetic system. The ubiquity of femininity challenges the pervasive notion of cybernetics as a disembodied world and of the binaristic masculine logic—mind/cybernetics/disembodiment. *Hybrid Child* also rewrites the phallocentric logic into a feminized family space in psychoanalytical terms through the shōjo’s cyborg Jonah(s), as if an illustration of Luce Irigaray critiques the male imaginary in response to Freudian psychoanalytic theory. Both the use of the shōjo’s cyborg multiplicity and the parodic performance of three mother-daughter cycles alter the mother-daughter symbiosis in the male imaginary. Thus, the shōjo daughter’s cannibalization of the mother creates an alternative to the mother-daughter symbiosis. These cycles also show a response to a conventional idea of a nurturing and good mother.

However, Ueda’s *The Cage of Zeus* ends with struggle of binaristic gender between men and women, as all the Rounds will have single-sexed bodies. The failure to preserve the
hermaphroditism shows anxiety toward the unresolved power imbalance between men and women. The erasure of the difference between the Rounds and Monaurals reflected the resurgence of conservatism after the economy recession in Japan and the global impact of terrorism 9.11. At the same time, this ending brings up another issue challenging hetero-cis-normativity—how to cope with the Round’s bi-gender identities matching up with single-sexed bodies.

Therefore, the works of Hagio, Ōhara, and Ueda open up a site in which gender is constantly contested between non-binary and binary. Hagio’s androgynous male bodies and transformative hermaphroditic bodies are free from the burdens of women’s bodies and the attempts to mollify gender. Ōhara’s works create the feminized space with an attempt to subverting a male-privileged world in order to challenge the inequality between men and women in the heteronormative societies. Ueda’s work troubles the hetero-cis-normativity. In the following section, I will return to discuss intimacy in a new paradigm of sex/gender.

**Intimacy**

Fluidity of gender and alteration of sexed and gendered bodies affect heteronormative romance and familial relationships and hence create a queer romance or a queer family. In the 1970s, Hagio’s creation of beautiful boys’ comics (male-male or *yaoi* romance) with SF scenarios opened an imaginative space that was void of women’s bodies. In *The Poe’s Clan*, two adolescent boys Edgar and Allan complicate the borders of gender, age, and race through vampiric bodies. Their androgynous bodies unsettle male-male romance and produce the illusion of a sexless or genderless relationship. In addition, Hagio’s use of triangle relationships obscures heterosexual pairings. For example, Edgar’s mental internalization of his dead sister Marybelle forms male(-female)-male or a queer Platonic romance. In *Marginal*, Hagio’s dual-sexed figures
are used as the “third” element in a narrative strategy troubling heteronormative romance. The dual-sexed Kira does not match up with the triangulations of the Oedipus or the Electra complexes and exposes the dualistic-centered discourse of these myths.

In dyads, queer moments of romance are also created by the gender fluidity of dual-sexed bodies that float across the spectrum between man and woman. In Ōhara’s “Girl,” the relationship between the dual-sexed Gil and the androgynous shōjo, Kisa, shifts between heterosexual and lesbian romance or, when he reveals his breasts, a surrogate mother-daughter relationship. In Ueda’s The Cage of Zeus, the male officer Harding’s relationship with the Round Veritas exposes both his homophobia and bisexuality. Simultaneously, their relationship cannot be fully described by three sexual orientations: heterosexuality, homosexuality, or bisexuality. It requires another term because it is not binary and does not depend on gender identities. At best it could be defined as pansexual—a more fluid, diverse, and all-inclusive sexuality.

In Ueda’s The Ocean Chronicles, various companionships between humans and non-humans produce a non-reproductive and non-heteronormative relationship that interrogates the pro-reproductive policies in contemporary Japan. Non-humans have different kinds of sex and sexuality or have no sex/gender system. Despite that, a variety of these entangled companionships are still based on the proximity to the human sex/gendered system. In particular, the male-male (yaoi-flavored) bond between Aozumi and the autosapient Maki(s) and the female-female (yuri-flavored) relationship between Yui and the genetically-engineered human Marie construct a “queer” family as an alternative to the reproductive and heteronormative family to serve as a life-time partner. The emphasis on yaoi-flavored romance between human and non-human is an homage to Hagio’s beautiful boys comics, while this yuri-flavored romance also rewrites the fleeting romance typical of shōjo fiction, presenting it as a more enduring
relationship. By avoiding the descriptions of women’s bodies, and developing queer romance and unconventional family structures, they invite alternatives to the usual means of reproduction as discussed in the next section.

**Reproduction**

Hagio, Ōhara, and Ueda all circumvent or modify women’s reproduction by making use of fantastical settings or futuristic reproductive science and technology. They imaginatively create an infertile world, a non-reproductive end of world, alternative (re)productive aliens/humans such as dual- or multiple-sex, or alternative (re)productive means in order to resist the hegemonic reproductive discourse. For example, vampire’s blood-sucking, genetic engineering, cloning, virtual (baby) images from database, simulation, performance, eating, planet regeneration, and evolution are all represented as alternative means for (re)production.

Genetic engineering is primarily used to allow an alternative way to procreate and simultaneously demonstrates an ambivalence between positive and negative effects on bodies in their works. In both Hagio’s *Marginal* and Ueda’s *The Cage of Zeus*, genetic engineering is represented as a means of controlling dual-sexed subjects, reflecting on male-oriented and compulsory heterosexual biomedical discourses in postwar Japan. Hagio’s transformative dual-sexed characters resist the medical surveillance and are able to make a choice when they want to get pregnant, as gaining reproductive rights. Kira’s pregnancy (the fertilized egg) leads us to an optimistic ending—with the assumption that the Earth will be regenerated. Kira’s feminine side recovers the fertility of the Earth. Hagio’s novel is based on a post-apocalyptic and dystopian world and ends with a utopian impulse, as feminist critic Raffaella Baccolini calls it “critical
dystopias” to resist tragic ending of dystopia narrative conventions.\(^2\) This ending seems to suggest a heteronormative reproductive discourse; however, the valorization of femininity was a significant issue during the 1980s while the Eugenic Protection Law was in effect until the implementation of the Maternal Body Protection Law in 1996. Therefore, despite constant reproductive surveillance, genetic engineering in Hagio’s works has a positive outcome.

In contrast, dual-sex people in *The Cage of Zeus* are treated as utopian beings with effective reproductive functions, but their bodies are constantly under medical surveillance. This is an opposite tradition called “critical utopia,” as Tom Moylan states that it is “the awareness of the limitations of the utopian tradition, so that these texts reject utopia as blueprint while preserving it as dream.”\(^3\) The special district of the Rounds is a utopian space within the limitation and under surveillance, and scientist character Kline maintains hope for these ideal beings. However, at the end, every Round becomes ineffective as either a woman or a man and is unable to reproduce as a dual-sex. This novel demonstrates “the continuing presence of difference and imperfection within the utopian society itself.”\(^4\) Hence, genetic engineering in this novel questions the ethical issues of medical surveillance which does not necessarily bring about a positive impact on the society. As discussed in Chapter Four, despite the public recognition of the GID and enactment of the law, the society still marginalizes the diversity of transgender, as well as other sexes and other genders.

Ueda’s other series *The Ocean Chronicles* utilizes elaborate genetic engineering for the human survival in the drastic environment. This series can be read as a critique of the

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\(^3\) Cited in Baccolini’s “Gender and Genre,” 16.

\(^4\) Ibid.
reinforcement of the pro-reproductive policies that were meant as countermeasures to the low birthrate in contemporary Japan. The resurgence of the prioritization of childbirth raises anxiety over promotion the idea of women as a baby machine and reproduction in general. The Ocean Chronicles world—the near end of the world—provides a counter view of this pro-reproduction trend. Childbirth is an inappropriate choice for a population facing the extinction of the world, because adding more people at this critical time taxes the scarce resources and gives life to young people only to force them to face the impending disaster. A variety of entangled companionships between humans and non-humans including non-reproductive and non-heteronormative relationships (male-male, female-female, or even male-female) become common choices and eventually obligatory choices in this imaginary world. Timothy Morton’s idea of “the end of world” as a critical device of deconstructing “Nature” itself, Ueda’s series gives us the potential to depart from our human reproductive discourse and to reset our normative worldview. Nonetheless, this bleak view of humanity and non-humanity warns us the irreversible demographic and environmental changes in the future.

Future Alert
As I have discussed, the SF works of Hagio, Ōhara, and Ueda provide this new gender paradigm concerning body, romance and family, and reproduction in reaction to the situations that the authors and the readers faced at that moment. As mentioned above, the new paradigm of sex/gender and queer effects are the product of these three authors’ expressions of post/human feminism regardless of whether or not they identify themselves as feminists. Responding to their immediate social environment, they show themselves to be wildly inventive in their creative imaginative worlds. They have created new gender forms in order to soar beyond gender—

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defying the limits of the human body. Thus, they have carved out new space for women writers and readers. Hagio’s works evaded the woman’s body in the wake of the women’s liberation movement struggles. Reflecting on the woman’s era, Ōhara’s works shifted to the inversion of the binaristic system and valorizing femininity in the 1980s. Ueda’s works represent more complex gender issues and diversity of sex/gender and sexualities intersecting the public understanding of some gender identities.

Nonetheless, their works show ambivalence toward a binaristic system, as an asymmetrical relationship between men and women remains unresolved, especially in the reproductive discourse in contemporary Japan. These authors experiment with critical utopia or critical dystopia and attempt to create alternatives but not necessarily give solutions for the issues. The recent SF works respond to the uncertainty of the future of Japan after the economic recession, the resurgence of the conservative governmental policies, and the aftermath of post 3.11. In particular, Ueda’s *The Ocean Chronicles* series projects our possible future that humans must be genetically engineered in order to survive a harsh environment and otherwise will bring the demise of humanity. Gender identities no longer matter, but reproductive bodies are constantly under surveillance. These SF authors alert the readers that these imaginative worlds may come true in the future. However, thanks to these writers, Japanese readers now have more options of ways to critique the contemporary gender system. Kotani Mari’s long-fought battle to assert her own authorial agency in the textual harassment case was also a key to raise more awareness to gender issues in the SF and literary communities. These three authors asserted their agency in creating new genders, new sexes, and new geometrics. Their authorship of these new worlds and new world orders is an extension of Kotani’s assertion of her authorship. These
women authors demonstrate the innovative ways of expressing feminist concerns, and others may follow in their footsteps.
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Appendix: Plot Summaries

Chapter One: Hagio Moto’s The Poe Clan

The stories center on two adolescent boy vampires (who are referred to as “vampanella”) Edgar and Allan, as well as stories of the Poe Clan: Edgar, his sister Marybelle, and his foster family primarily set in England and Germany. In the mid-18th century, Edgar and his beloved sister Marybelle are raised in Poe village after their mother dies. Edgar accidentally sees a ritual of vampires and promises to become a vampire in adulthood in order to protect Marybelle. Edgar sends her away. The Portsnell couple and Edgar become a quasi-family. All the villagers are found out to be vampires and are about to be attacked; Edgar is forced to become a vampire by the Old Poe (King Vampire) at the age of fourteen. After several years, Edgar and Marybelle come across each other in the same town, but he accidentally kills Jusis with whom Marybelle was infatuated. Marybelle is shocked, yet she decides to join her brother. In the late 19th century, while the doctor notices that Edgar’s family members are vampires, he attacks Mrs. Portsnell with a pitch fork and shoots Marybelle with a gun after she is weaken by crucifixes. Mr. Portsnell is run over by a carriage after a crash. All of them are dead; Edgar is left alone. Edgar shoots the doctor for revenge and takes his classmate Allan Twilight as his companion. Edgar and Allan travel together for about one hundred years and frequently attend a Gymnasium or boys’ boarding school. Allan feels affection for Edgar, but Edgar loves his dead sister Marybelle. Allan has emotionally been torn by his unrequited love for Edgar, while Edgar has been continuously consumed by his regret and his love for his sister. At the end (1976), both Allan and Edgar catch fire and suggestively die.

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Chapter Five: Ueda Sayuri: *The Ocean Chronicles*
In *The OC I*, Aozumi, Japanese outer sea legation minister, tries to negotiate with Tsukisome, the female sea-folk leader because the NODE (alliance of North and South America and other areas, including Japan) wants to all the sea-folk to have citizen registry for taxation in exchange for vaccination for fatal marine viruses. Each tries to understand the other’s situation; Tsukisome offers another suggestion for a solution. But its bureaucrats do not agree with their negotiations. In the meantime, the Pan Asian Alliance (China and other Asia) secretly begins to attack non-registered sea-folk (including Tsukisome’s community) in order to annihilate the entire sea-folk in Asia. The end reveals that Tsukisome is, in fact, a mutation of a feranavis (a feral ship creature) taking a form of humanoid. Because of this, the NODE wants to capture Tsukisome; nonetheless, Aozumi succeeds to prevent Tsukisome from becoming a mere medical subject. At present, the International Environment Research Association (IERA) predicts a serious natural disaster (massive hot plume eruptions) in five decades. This disaster will cause the ice age (called Winter of Plume) and subsequently extinction of human beings. For preservation of humanity, the IERA is creating dolphin-like humans called Lucis. A new space project also begins, dispatching two spaceships to outer space with twenty autosapients (including a copy of Aozumi’s autosapient, Maki) for mementos—historical records of human civilization.

In *The OC II*, the battles between the land-folk and the sea-folk become more intense. New sea-folk pirate groups, Rabuka (which means frilled sharks), appear to fight against the land-folk in order to plunder food, medical supplies, and other daily products for survival and to maintain their pride as the sea-folk. The land-folk have ransacked the pelagic resources for their
own for the forthcoming disaster. The leader of Rabuka, Zaphir, keeps fighting the land-folk with his companions, as he and others have been fed up with never-ending suffering from marine plagues and the land-folk’s discriminatory attitudes toward them. Aozumi, currently the director of the relief supplies cooperation Pandion, attempts to negotiate with Zaphir for a cease-fire. But the negotiation fails. In the meantime, Aozumi successfully built a sea-floating city, Margarita Collare, for the sea-folk for survival of the forthcoming disaster. Aozumi eventually decides to join a dark powerful group called *Invisible Ten* to stop the battles between the sea-folk and the land-folk. Zaphir continues to fight against the land-folk who created modified feranavis (controlled navis, CN) to attack Rabuka; however, most Rabuka groups (Zaphir is believed to be killed) are destroyed by the CNs and human slaughter autosapients. Finally, other Rabuka groups and the land-folk achieve the cease-fire and focus on preparing for Winter of Plume. Meanwhile, Yui Hoshikawa works for the space project at the Deep Space Research Development (DSRD) despite many difficulties. DSRD, at last, launches the spaceships with the autosapients (including a copy of Maki) to the outer space for preservation of humanity.