

Kōda Rohan's Literary Debut (1889) and the Temporal Topology of Meiji Japan

KYOKO KURITA

Pomona College

WITH his debut novel, *Tsuyu dandan* 露団々 (Dewdrops; 1889), Kōda Rohan 幸田露伴 (1867–1947) did something no other Meiji author had been able to do: he wrote the future fully into narrative.¹ To explore this territory, a mid-Meiji literary novice might have been expected to try his hand at a political novel or a “chronicle of the future” (*mirai-ki* 未来記), two popular overlapping genres whose potential to address the future had not yet been fully realized. Instead, the twenty-two-year-old Rohan proceeded, with astounding self-confidence, to transform the conventions and tropes of both genres, internalizing them much as the English Romantics had internalized the quest-romance.²

In *Tsuyu dandan*, Rohan unmistakably references William Wordsworth's

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¹ In a comparative analysis of Japanese concepts of time and space, Katō Shūichi describes a cultural gravitation to the “here-and-now” that persists throughout Japanese history. See his *Nihon bunka ni okeru jikan to kikan* (Iwanami shoten, 2007). For a discussion of the specific conceptual and linguistic obstacles facing Japanese authors in the 1870s and 1880s, see Kyoko Kurita, “Meiji Japan's Y23 Crisis and the Discovery of the Future: Suehiro Tetchō's *Nijūsan-nen mirai-ki*,” *HJAS* 60.1 (2000): 5–43.

² On the quest-romance in English literature, see Harold Bloom, “The Internalization of Quest Romance,” in his *Poetics of Influence: New and Selected Criticism*, ed. John Hollander (New Haven: Henry R. Schwab, 1988), p. 21; also see Harold Bloom, *A Map of Misreading* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 129, 152.

own invocation of Miguel de Cervantes in *The Prelude*, using an identical trope in which he substitutes Wordsworth for Cervantes, thus signaling his own internalization of Wordsworth. Rohan's deep engagement with *The Prelude* created a major route by which English Romanticism entered Japanese literature. However, the unexpected subtlety of Rohan's strategies³ has hindered many later readers (including myself) from readily appreciating that this debut novel was a metanovel, and that one of its greatest achievements was to provide a new, future-oriented topology of time.

How did Rohan manage to reconfigure time, introducing temporal complexity and incorporating true futurity into narrative, when his predecessors had fallen short? To answer that question, one must address the following interrelated issues: Rohan's Romantic use of love and dream in *Tsuyu dandan* (with reference to some of his other early works); his "translation" of Wordsworth (and other strategies of internalization); and his long-misunderstood theme of Enlightened Liberty (*fūryū* 風流). Reevaluating Rohan's early accomplishments in this manner carries far-reaching implications for Japanese literary history, opening up new lines of inquiry.

GENERIC CONTEXT:

THE POLITICAL NOVEL AND THE *MIRAI-KI*

In a Meiji political novel, especially the type that features a romantic relationship between a "talented man" (*saishi* 才子) and a "beautiful woman" (*kajin* 佳人),⁴ the reader hopes that the freedom fighter from the commoner class will overcome adversity to marry the virtuous woman who shares his goals. This plot line is conventionally understood to symbolize the triumph of liberty, or "Freedom and Popular Rights" (*jiyū minken* 自由民権). Kōda Rohan was influenced by two political novels, written by the most sophisticated practitioners of this genre. The reduplicative title of *Tsuyu dandan* (especially in its alterna-

³ Saitō Mokichi, one of Rohan's last literary disciples, observed that Western influences on the master were considerable but thoroughly assimilated. This may also be applied to domestic influences. See his *Kōda Rohan* (Senshin Shorin, 1949), pp. 99–100.

⁴ The most famous exemplar of this genre is Suehiro Tetchō's *Setchūbai* (1886). Kamei Hideo states that all "successful" political novels of this period are of this type. See his *Kansei no henkaku* (Kōdansha, 1983), pp. 53–54.

tive reading, *Ro dandan*) pays homage to *Ki shūshū* 鬼啾々 (Lamentations of lost souls; 1884–1885), by Miyazaki Muryū 宮崎夢柳 (1855–1899), and *Mu renren* 夢恋々 (Dreaming the dream of love; 1884), by Komuro Angaidō 小室案外堂 (1852–1885).⁵

Ki shūshū, an adaptation of S. Stepniak's *Underground Russia* (1882), taught Rohan certain technical devices,⁶ the interplay between fact and fiction, and the connection between romance and Romanticism, especially in the context of idealistic young individuals struggling against injustice. The story's leading characters, the Nihilists Sophia, Vera, and Brantner, are uncompromisingly opposed to the Russian Imperial regime; the narrative recounts their valiant struggle and tragic fate.

From *Mu renren*, a more fanciful work, Rohan absorbed a general political and moral philosophy, and a theory of love. The hero, Raishun, is born when his shipwrecked Japanese mother, pregnant with him, is washed up on the Chinese shore, and lightning splits open her womb, killing her. Raishun trains himself as a warrior in order to redeem an Asia that has fallen in the world's esteem. In the unpublished conclusion, given in synopsis at the end of the last published installment, Raishun encounters a Chinese woman who has arrived by passenger balloon from France, and joins her on a world tour to spread the ideals of liberalism. Rohan was deeply influenced by Angaidō's global perspective and all-encompassing vision: his freedom from the simple antitheses or dichotomies of the didactic narratives still popular in the early Meiji. Angaidō's elevation of the concept of *koi* 恋 (romantic love, longing, yearning) showed Rohan a way to go beyond the relatively primitive emotional wellsprings for political action found in Muryū's Romanticism.

The Meiji *mirai-ki*, conventionally categorized as a subset of the political novel, actually has an equal or better claim to the status of a genre.⁷

⁵ For a close textual analysis of these novels, as well as reflections on *Tsuyu dandan*'s debt to the pervasive Romanticism of the political novel, see Kurita Kyōko, "Rohan no shuppatsu to seiji shōsetsu," *Nihon no Bungaku* 2 (January 1988): 156–77.

⁶ By "technical devices" I mean, for example, the use of a surprising encounter in an unlikely place. For a discussion, see Kurita, "Rohan no shuppatsu to seiji shōsetsu."

⁷ I have identified well over one hundred *mirai-ki* from the Meiji period, most of them published between 1885 and 1890. See Kurita Kyōko 栗田香子, "Mirai-ki no jidai," *Bungaku* 9.4 (Autumn 1998): 28–38; also see Kurita, "Meiji Japan's Y23 Crisis," *passim*. Yanagida Izumi introduces a few *mirai-ki* as a sub-genre of the political novel in *Seiji shōsetsu kenkyū* (1935–1939; rpt.,

Its most characteristic feature is the narrator's tour of the future while in a dream. This framing and enabling device was popularized in the 1870s by two Japanese translations of the novel *Anno 2065* by "Dr. Dioscorides" (pseudonym of the Dutch scientist Pieter Harting).⁸ In *Anno 2065*, the narrator falls into a reverie, in which he encounters the thirteenth-century English scientist Roger Bacon, the muse Fantasia, and her friend Realia. Bacon and Fantasia take the lead, guiding the narrator as he explores the future. The story ends when he suddenly awakens to find himself back in his nineteenth-century armchair. Kamijō Shinji's 上条信次 1874 translation was titled *Kōsei yume monogatari* 後世夢物語 (Tale of a dream of a later world), highlighting the delivery of future content via the medium of daydream. Both as a word and as a narrative device, "dream" subsequently enjoyed a considerable vogue in Japan, not only in *mirai-ki* but in other genres. "Dream" became a popular word in book titles; and as a framing device, dream or daydream became a standard feature of Meiji *mirai-ki* in their efforts to apprehend the future. An early, primitive example is Toda Kindō's 戸田欽堂 political novel-like fictional sketch, *Jōkai haran* 情海波瀾 (A storm in the sea of emotions; 1880), in which the geisha Sakigakeya Oken (Pioneer of People's Rights) daydreams about her happy union with Wakokuya Minji (Citizen of the Country of Japan). It is notably in its use of dream that *Tsuyu dandan* both absorbs and transcends the genres of the *mirai-ki* and the political novel.⁹

COMMON THREADS: ROMANTICISM AND THE FUTURE

Romanticism, as I use the term, represents an elevated consciousness of the gap between ideal and reality, or between desire and fulfillment, and it either mourns this gap or attempts to overcome it, or both. In the nation-building ferment of Meiji Japan, there was much

Shunjūsha, 1967). Komine Kazuaki traces the Japanese literary forebears of the Meiji *mirai-ki* in his *Yamatai-shi no nazo: rekishi jojutsu to shite no mirai-ki* (Iwanami shoten, 2003) and *Chūsei Nihon no yogen-sho* (Iwanami shoten, 2007).

⁸ The full title of the original work is *Anno 2065; Een Blik in de Toekomst* (Utrecht: J. Greven, 1865). The two Japanese translations are *Kōsei yume monogatari*, trans. Kamijō Shinji (Keishōkaku, 1874), and *Shin mirai-ki*, trans. Kondō Makoto (Aoyama Seikichi, 1878).

⁹ I suggest that *Tsuyu dandan* may be considered as a kind of *mirai-ki* in my "Kōda Rohan to mirai: *Tsuyu dandan* no jikan-teki kōsatsu," *Bungaku* 16.1 (January-February 2005): 120-33.

to hope for and much to mourn. M. H. Abrams has written of the "apocalypse of consciousness"¹⁰ or "apocalypse by imagination"¹¹ that characterized the development of Romanticism in England and continental Europe in the wake of the French Revolution, as hope yielded to disappointment, and literary expressions were "translated" into different dimensions.¹² The political and intellectual environment in which Rohan's psyche as a writer took shape—the local apocalypse of the Meiji Restoration and its aftermath—produced a comparable set of expectations and reactions. The political novel and the *mirai-ki* constituted virtual laboratories for experiments in creating the future. It was entirely consonant with the Western Romantic precedent that the precocious Rohan (followed by others) then adopted so many strategies of internalization.

Romanticism is the common thread that runs through most of Meiji literature. It is intimately related to changes in temporal psychology. As the Tokugawa *bakufu* collapsed and the Meiji state emerged, and as this "new Japan" tried to engage in international relations, domestic history was revised.¹³ The pace of change was bewildering.¹⁴ Time itself

¹⁰ *The Correspondent Breeze: Essays on English Romanticism* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1984), p. 250.

¹¹ *Natural Supernaturalism* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1971), p. 335.

¹² As Abrams puts it, "The great Romantic works were not written at the height of revolutionary hope but out of the experience of partial or total disenchantment with the revolutionary promise. The striking fact is that a number of these works nonetheless retain, but translate into a different dimension of experience, the design, the ideas, and the imagery of the callower works their authors had composed in a mood of millennial excitement" (*Natural Supernaturalism*, p. 335).

¹³ The Meiji-era boom in historical tales and biographies initially featured a value-reversal that turned villains into heroes and nameless commoners into important historical actors. The biographical essays collected by Komuro Angaidō as *Tōyō minken hyakka den* (1883–1884; rpt., Iwanami shoten, 1975) represent the peak of one early wave of historical revisionism. The *jiyū minken* approach of such works suggests that their new views of the past were motivated by expectations and desires about the future, as past and future became integrated in a futurological dialectic. For an interpretation of changing Meiji concepts of time and history that foregrounds the concept of modernization, see Stefan Tanaka, *New Times in Modern Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), esp. pp. 2–4, 29–30. For the relationship between historical narrative and literature in the Meiji era, see Yamazaki Kazuhide, "Rekisho jojutsu to bungaku," in *Iwanami kōza, Nihon bungaku shi* (Iwanami shoten, 1996), 12:219–46.

¹⁴ Literary expressions sometimes displaced such sentiments into the future. For example, in a *mirai-ki* piece titled *Mirai no miyako* (The capital of the future; 1890), Hankei Rōgyo 半溪老漁 delineates the utter bafflement of two old men during their tour of Tokyo, which they used to know as Edo.

took on new characteristics.¹⁵ Above all, Meiji Japanese were obsessed with the future. However, fashioning the narrative tools with which to express their concerns proved to be a difficult enterprise.

In the *saishi-kajin* type of political novel, it is crucial that the hero and heroine share certain ideals, and that the heroine supports the hero's political goal: the building of a democratic nation of "Freedom and Popular Rights." This vision of the desired future is symbolized by their hope for a happy marriage. We must not take this future-orientation for granted: it was a Meiji phenomenon and by no means typical of Edo literature. However, the narrative structure of a Meiji-period *saishi-kajin* tale differs very little from an old-fashioned romance that recounts the progress and setbacks of a romantic relationship. Furthermore, the future remains that which has not yet happened, a mere extrapolation from experience. Bound by the past, this future is not something that can be freely formulated or realized.

By definition, the Meiji *mirai-ki* attempts to deal with temporality, specifically the future, more directly than does the typical political novel. In Dioscorides' archetypal *Anno 2065*, Roger Bacon guides the narrator in the future, somewhat as Virgil guided Dante Pilgrim. In the future in which the narrator finds himself (the year 2065), Bacon refers in the past tense to pre-2065 events that still lie in the narrator's actual future. I call this a futurological narrative, rather than a simple narrative of the future. A futurological narrative historicizes the future in such a way that it serves as a mirror to the present, a vantage point that enables the author both to understand the present and to envision the desired future with greater critical objectivity. The dialectic constructed in this way is not the same as projecting the future from past practices or current trends, nor does it accept the future as something imposed by fate or political authority. The historicization of the future objectifies the goal, making it possible to construct a path backwardly, from the future to the present. In order to achieve the goal, one then freely chooses to follow an original path. One can even have a futur-

¹⁵ Calendrical and horological reforms began in the early 1870s, and were accompanied by the spatial reconfiguration symbolized by the Land Reform of 1873. See, for example, Nishimoto Ikuko, *Jikan ishiki no kindai* (Hōsei Daigaku shuppan kyoku, 2006), esp. Chapters 3 and 4; also see the thematic overviews by Narita Ryūichi in "Jikan no kindai," in *Kindai chi no seiritsu, 1870-1910 nendai*, ed. Komori Yōichi et al., vol. 3 of *Iwanami Kōza Kindai Nihon no bunka shi* (Iwanami shoten, 2002), pp. 1-51.

ologically informed view of the past, if the narrative of the past is similarly based on a dream of the future. For literary practitioners in the 1870s and 1880s, the Dioscoridean dream was the primary medium through which they explored the tripartite distinction between past, present, and future.

Such approaches to the narration of the future, and of time in general, were new to Japan. Although Meiji writers adopted certain aspects of Dioscorides' dream with alacrity, they did not immediately realize its full futurological potential. Early *mirai-ki* defined the future as the near future of constitutional government, conceived almost entirely in terms of the planned inauguration of the National Diet in Meiji 23 (1890). Their efforts to engage this future were characterized by conceptual and linguistic struggle, as seen in the essentially linear structure of Ryūso Gaishi's 柳窓外史 *Kokkai yume monogatari* 国会夢物語 (Dream tale of the National Diet; 1881), the somewhat confused narrative format of his *Nijūsan-nen mirai-ki* 二十三年未来記 (The year 23: a chronicle of the future; 1883), and the negative tone and temporal myopia of Suehiro Tetchō's own dystopian *Nijūsan-nen mirai-ki* (1885–1886).¹⁶

The Meiji effort to narrate the future straddled genres. *Jōkai haran* is sometimes referred to as the first political novel; despite its extreme brevity, Kindō's use of political allegory makes his work at least a precursor of that genre. What is less well known is that it also represents an early attempt to introduce the Dioscoridean dream that was to become a hallmark of the Meiji *mirai-ki*. The most famous Japanese political novel, Suehiro Tetchō's *Setchūbai*, is also a *mirai-ki*, and it too experiments with narrative tense.

Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859–1935), the foremost literary authority of his day, was the first to work a version of the dream device into a romantic narrative, as a plot within (and related to) a larger plot, rather than letting it simply frame the entire story or serve solely to introduce scenes of the future. In Shōyō's unfinished *Mirai no yume* 未来の夢 (Dream of the future; 1886),¹⁷ the protagonist meets his ideal woman in a dream that clearly foreshadows a union to take place later in the story. Shōyō's abrupt abandonment of this novel in 1886 (before the romance could

¹⁶ For a detailed discussion, see Kurita, "Meiji Japan's Y23 Crisis."

¹⁷ The full title includes the supra-title (*tsunogaki*, that is, the secondary title preceding the main title), *Naichi zakkyo* 内地雜居. It was published by Banseidō in installments from April to October 1886, and then (in its unfinished state) in book form in 1887.

develop), and his dramatic renunciation of the *mirai-ki* genre on theoretical grounds the next year, meant that, as of 1887, the *mirai-ki* still had not fully incorporated the future into narrative.

SYNOPSIS OF *TSUYU DANDAN*

Though not a very long novel (about 140 pages, organized into twenty-one chapters), *Tsuyu dandan* is amazingly complex for a debut work by so young an author.¹⁸ Superficially, it is a story about finding the perfect match, and it ends happily with the heroine marrying the man she loves. However, her success is achieved only by overcoming her father's efforts to subject her to a worldwide competition for her hand in marriage. This competition is a market-oriented process that is democratic for the suitors but oppressive for the prospective bride.

In Chapter 1, Gurando ("Grand") Bunseimu ぐらんど文世武, a self-made millionaire living in Zenerasu ("Generous") Village, New York, advertises in the newspaper that he is looking for a husband for his daughter, Rubina るびな. An eight-item list describes the bride-to-be as an ideal woman and her dowry as substantial. As for the prospective groom, eight out of the nine criteria allow the groom to be, in effect, any man between the ages of twenty and thirty-five. Qualification No. 9, however, is crucial: he must never entertain feelings of "displeasure" (*fuyukai* 不愉快) and must be able always to lead "a pleasurable life" (*yukai naru seikatsu* 愉快なる生活). This advertisement causes a huge sensation in Chapters 2 and 3.

Next we learn about Bunseimu's background. A man in the Samuel Smiles "self-help" mold, he was born poor in a New England port town, started life as a sailor, bought a whaling business, and gradually accumulated a fortune in every field of industry, building railroads and ships and founding ironworks and textile mills. An intrepid, domineering, and shrewd businessman, he is at the same time known for his generous donations to schools, hospitals, and orphanages. He refuses, however, to donate to religious organizations.

Morun Shinjia もるん信日亜 is now introduced. A handsome young evangelical ("a second Moody"),¹⁹ he studied theology at Boston Uni-

¹⁸ Kinkōdō first serialized *Tsuyu dandan* in its literary journal, *Miyako no hana*, from February to August 1889, before publishing it in book form the following year. I shall refer in this article to the version in *Rohan zenshū*, ed. Kagyūkai (Iwanami shoten, 1978-1980) [hereafter *RZ*]: 7.1-144.

¹⁹ *RZ* 7.23. Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899), the lay Christian evangelist, mounted revival tours

versity, and tries in his speeches to awaken people to the necessity of improving their moral and spiritual condition rather than looking to their material comfort. The goal is not mere prosperity, but enlightenment. From these desiderata it is clear that his creed is nondenominational, though he may conceivably be Unitarian (Rubina's faith as advertised).²⁰ Shinjia himself indicates in a speech that his spirituality derives not from his commitment to religion as such, let alone to any one church, but rather from his belief in an absolute Power that governs the laws of Nature (*RZ* 7.24–26). A deeply committed and passionate evangelist who preaches virtue in the name of "God" but never refers to Christ, rarely refers to any particular religion, and endorses no established Church, Shinjia conforms remarkably to Harold Bloom's description of that lapsed Unitarian minister, Ralph Waldo Emerson: "the true American charismatic, who founded the actual American religion, which is Protestant without being Christian."²¹

Knowing him to be in love with Rubina, Shinjia's friend Jakuson ("Jackson") tries to persuade him to enter the competition for her hand in marriage. Shinjia refuses, as he considers "leading a life without any unpleasant thoughts" to be a rich man's "delusion, enabled only by the fulfillment of all worldly desires" (*RZ* 7.41). Jakuson's wife, Cherii ("Cherry"), who is close to Rubina, informs her of Shinjia's decision not to take part in the competition despite his high regard for her. To isolate Rubina from the influence of her friends, Bunseimu takes her on a trip to Lake Ontario.

The scene suddenly shifts to China. Den Kōryō 田亢龍, scion of a corrupt Chinese official, learns of Bunseimu's advertisement but is too crafty to enter the competition under his own name. He consults an aged Daoist priest called Mumei 無名 (No Name), who first displays two Magic Squares: a *tenban* (Heaven Board) and a *chiban* (Earth Board) and then gives Kōryō a *shichigon zekku* (a Chinese-style quatrain with seven characters in each line), in which he exhorts Kōryō to hire "an oarsman of leisure, a free spirit" (*fūryū no kankōjin*) (*RZ* 7.52). Kōryō

attended by millions of people in the United States and Great Britain; he was still active when Rohan was writing *Tsuyu dandan*.

²⁰ Boston, where Shinjia studied theology, was a center of Unitarian activities and ideas in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. See Anne C. Rose, "Boston Unitarianism, 1790–1840," in her *Transcendentalism as a Social Movement, 1830–1850* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), pp. 1–37.

²¹ "Emerson: Power at the Crossing," in Bloom, *Poetics of Influence*, p. 314.

has a secret advisor named Ginchō 吟蝸, a Japanese traveling minstrel whom he once freed from imprisonment on a false charge of arson and has retained in semi-captivity ever since. He forces Ginchō to impersonate him in the contest.

In the meantime, Rubina is feeling lonely and neglected. All her visitors and correspondence have been secretly screened or disrupted by her father. Father and daughter eventually return to Zenerasu Village. In Chapter 11, in the depths of her longing, Rubina reflects on Wordsworth, whom she has just read, and falls into a reverie in which she dreams of meeting with Shinjia and confirming their love. Subsequently she decides to stand up to her father and insists on her right to choose her own husband. Bunseimu rejects this, proclaiming that in this world freedom derives from might, not right.

Finally, the examination of the suitors begins, with surrealistic tests of character. Just before the final interview, a promising candidate, Tairakku, a man of letters, disappears. He sends a statement of withdrawal to Bunseimu, asking: "What poet of *fūryū* wishes to pluck a rose from a garden and put it into a vase?" (RZ 7.104). The remaining finalists are vetted, and Ginchō emerges as the surprise winner. But this honest proxy draws the line at an actual wedding, and also disappears.

Shinjia continues to think of Rubina with admiration, but still chooses to follow his own path. He believes that, as long as he does the right thing, the right outcome will follow. Rubina wishes to confer with Shinjia, but there is no way of doing so. Bunseimu's steward and his wife, Mr. & Mrs. Shinpuru ("Simple"), who have supported Rubina all along, now protest strongly to Bunseimu and are sent away to Hong Kong. In despair, Rubina writes a letter in "sympathetic" (heat-sensitive) ink and ties it to the leg of her pet dove. It reaches the Jakuson household. Mr. Jakuson promptly visits Shinjia, explains the situation, and Shinjia makes up his mind to act on his desire. The two of them rush to Bunseimu's house. Just as Shinjia is happily reunited with Rubina, Bunseimu steps into the room and bestows his blessing, as if this had been his plan all along.

Ginchō, meanwhile, has also fled to Hong Kong. Kōryō catches up with him and tries to choke him. The provincial governor, Hou Reirin, chancing upon them, intervenes. Mr. Shinpuru testifies in court; Ginchō is vindicated, while Kōryō is found guilty of wrongdoing. Kōryō reads

a book that Ginchō gives him, *Hōjin hisetsu* 方陣秘説 (The hidden logic of the magic square),²² and reforms.

Bunseimu invites Ginchō and Mr. and Mrs. Shinpuru back to New York. Rubina and Shinjia are married with the blessing of the whole community, from local notables to Bunseimu's factory employees. Bunseimu leaves most of his vast fortune to the newly wedded couple, and—a happy man at last—departs on a humanitarian world tour with Ginchō. Their goal: to bring spiritual happiness to those still in need.

TSUYU DANDAN AS A MIRAI-KI

In myriad ways, *Tsuyu dandan* invokes the conventions of the *mirai-ki*, only to refine them both formally and substantively. Instead of framing the novel as a dream (as in a typical *mirai-ki*), or otherwise specifying a temporal location in the future, Rohan allows intimations of futurity and ideality to permeate the novel: the odd East-West blendings that make up the key characters' names;²³ the simultaneous worldwide publication of the marriage advertisement; transportation often so unspecified, effortless, and instantaneous that it tends to the metaphysical (characters popping up in China or New York at a moment's notice, for example); emblematic references to science or logic (the "sympathetic" ink, the Magic Square); and visions of social mobility and international harmony.

Just as the characters' names and traits defy cultural or ethnic pigeonholing, the "America" in *Tsuyu dandan*, which furnishes the nominal location of most of the action, proves to be a metaphysical and ethical space rather than simply the country of that name. A convenient imaginary topos, with no language barriers, and where individuals and even cultures can be invented freely, this is not so much America itself as the American Dream. Like Angaidō's *Mu renren*, *Tsuyu*

²² Rohan wrote an identically titled work, "Hōjin hisetsu," available in *RZ* 40.3–16. The date is unknown, but it may be placed, on the basis on similarities of content, at approximately the same time as *Tsuyu dandan*. See Nihei Aizō, *Wakaki hi no Rohan* (Meizendō shoten, 1978), pp. 333–34.

²³ The peculiar names cannot be ascribed to ignorance or lack of sophistication on Rohan's part. His family background and professional milieu were highly cosmopolitan. He was educated in the Chinese and Japanese classics, and, for about a year, starting in July 1881, he also studied English formally and intensively at Tōkyō Eigo Gakkō, the future Aoyama Gakuin University.

dandan advocates freedom and people's rights on a global scale; and the endings of both works lack the nationalistic message one expects in a typical political novel. Rohan echoes and extends the logic, not only of *Mu renren*, but also Shōyō's *Mirai no yume*. As a *mirai-ki*, Shōyō's novel is distinguished from a conventional political novel in part by its glimpses into a future world in which races and nationalities achieve symbiosis. Just one month after Oscar Wilde cheerfully observed, through one of his characters, that Japan and the Japanese did not exist,²⁴ Rohan was conferring upon America the dubious status of a noble fiction.

The denouement of *Tsuyu dandan* directs the reader's attention toward the future more effectively than any previous political novel or *mirai-ki*. Rohan does this in two ways. First, in contrast to the *saishi-kajin* political novel, *Tsuyu dandan* uses endings to introduce beginnings. With regard to the successful "conclusion" of the Rubina-Shinjia romance, Bunseimu wishes the young couple "eternal *koi*,"²⁵ by which he means not just permanent wedded bliss, but a continued commitment to their shared goals. In the same vein, the narrator quotes the Abbé de Rochebrune: "When two lovers marry, their love story ends and their history begins" (*RZ* 7.143). Another result of the marriage contest is the pairing of Ginchō with Bunseimu, followed by their departure on a humanitarian world tour. This tour converts into an integrated plot element both the form and the content of the projected ending to Angaidō's unfinished novel *Mu renren*.

Second, whereas in a typical Meiji *mirai-ki* the narrator wakes up from his dream of the future at the end of the story, Rohan has dispensed with the limiting frame of the Dioscoridean dream in *Tsuyu dandan*. Instead, he fully integrates the dream into the plot: Rubina is awakened from her dream by the sound of a clock. This reveille-by-clock, reminiscent of the function of clocks in some *mirai-ki* dreams, is the novel's most concrete indicator of a different temporality, one belonging to the creative, future-oriented imagination. After Rubina wakes, her actions are guided by her experience in the dream: her awakening is by no means the end of the story.

²⁴ "In fact, the whole of Japan is a pure invention. There is no such country, there are no such people." Thus spoke Vivian, in Wilde's *The Decay of Lying*, first published in January 1889. See *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde* (London: Hamlyn, 1983), p. 840.

²⁵ More literally, "Let the couple's love [*koi*] be eternal." 二人の恋は永遠なるべし (*RZ* 7.133).

THE POWER OF LOVE (*KOI*)

In *Tsuyu dandan*, the brightest light guiding the way to the future comes neither from science and technology, nor from politics, but from *koi*, which may conveniently be translated as "love" but is more precisely described as a Romantic, yearning love. Angaidō's *Mu renren* was a major influence. The centrality of the theme of *koi* in that novel is underscored by the title: *ren* is the *on*-reading of *koi*. In *Mu renren*, the hero Raishun's every romantic involvement creates a new development in the plot, to culminate in the glorious fruition of *koi* in the novel's projected final portion. In his preface, Angaidō offers, in lyrical and passionate prose, a comprehensive statement of his concept of love.

Upon reflection, there are many kinds of love (*koi*). It is love that makes one long for the moon that hid behind the clouds over an eagle's mountain peak three thousand years ago. It is also love that makes one wish to see the stamen and pistil inside the bud of a dragon flower when it blooms at dawn five billion six hundred million years into the future. . . . The great man and the beautiful woman in the novel I am about to present may appear to have merely the love of a husband and wife, if one takes but a cursory look at this work. However, if one opened a pair of curious eyes and looked very clearly, one would find figured herein the grand theme of an ardent love that desires to reestablish the strength of an Asia currently in decline; and, interwoven with that, other kinds of love, manifested as the courage and righteousness that prompt human society to secure freedom and equality for all people.²⁶

The term *koi* comes from the classical Japanese concept of yearning for an absent lover. In a famous ninth-century *tanka*, Ono-no-Komachi even celebrates the yearning power of "dream."²⁷ Angaidō's idealistic preface, however, evinces a concern, not with mere romance, but with Romanticism. He broadens the implications of "love" beyond a simple yearning for a lover, and also beyond Muryū's comparatively inchoate emotional reaction to oppression. Angaidō's more sophisticated blend of politics and literature takes a giant step toward a broader conception of Romantic yearning and spiritual freedom. He left *Mu renren* unfinished simply because he had grown too busy with

²⁶ *Mu renren*, first installment, *Jiyū shinbun*, April 6, 1884. Yanagida Izumi states incorrectly that this introduction was added later when *Mu renren* came out in book form. See his *Seiji shōsetsu kenkyū*, 1:349.

²⁷ "I dozed, and dozing, saw my darling lover; since when, if I turn pale with fond desire, I do rely on dreams to give me color." うたたねに 恋しき人を見てしより 夢てふ物は たのみそめてき, in *Kokin wakashū*, ed. Kojima Noriyuki and Arai Eizō, vol. 12 of *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* (Iwanami shoten, 1989), p. 174.

political and journalistic activities, as he explains in the last published installment.

Picking up where *Mu renren* left off, *Tsuyu dandan* presents an even more complex interplay between politics and literature. The conventions of the political novel and prevailing assumptions in theories of progress presuppose that the ambition to better oneself or one's country is noble. In Rohan's universe too, the power of *koi* is born from a Romantic sense of dissatisfaction with one's existing situation or state. Thus Bunseimu later shows an appreciation of the deep displeasure expressed in the tragic epic that Tairakku presented as his answer to Bunseimu's examination question, "What is displeasure?" In the epilogue to his poem, Tairakku writes, "Truly, if a man feels displeasure, it is because he possesses the most beautiful virtues. . . . All discontent originates [there]" (*RZ* 7.101). Tairakku's response, judged acceptable by Bunseimu, represents Rohan's own Romantic conception of the moral basis of *koi*, and of the basic function of literature. Ethically, mourning the gap between the real and the ideal becomes a stimulus to action, as with Shinjia's spiritual politics. Aesthetically, it is the source of literary production, as it was for Tairakku's epic poem.²⁸ The utility and limits of this negatively created energy are underscored by the ideal groom's Qualification No. 9, whose complex, apophatic first half (requiring that he never entertain feelings of displeasure) is complemented by a simple, cataphatic second half (requiring that he be able always to lead a pleasurable life).

In overall form, content, and tone, the two sets of credentials for bride and groom (*RZ* 7.7-8) parody and subvert the standards of the *saishi-kajin* political novel. They mock Enlightenment ideology, capitalism, the public media, and the simplest forms of *koi*. The ideal bride is blatantly commodified by her own father. As for the ideal groom, eight out of the nine qualifications are defined in the advertisement in essentially negative terms: he need have neither money nor good looks; be of no particular race, religion, or family background, and so forth. This is democracy taken to an extreme.²⁹ But the profoundly odd

²⁸ The excerpt from Tairakku's epic "quoted" in *Tsuyu dandan* is an accomplished piece of poetry, praised as such by Doi Bansui, a well-regarded poet, thus further validating Tairakku's position. See Nihei, *Wakaki hi no Rohan*, p. 235.

²⁹ Compare the narrator's doubly negative praise of Shuun, the hero of *Fūryūbutsu* (1889), in *RZ* 1.25-26; trans. Kyoko Kurita and James Lipson as *The Icon of Liberty*, in *The Columbia Anthology of*

Qualification No. 9 for the groom, which relativizes even the generative power of "displeasure," is unmatched by any corresponding item in the bride's eight-item list of credentials. This creates an imbalance and incompatibility between the two lists.

Qualification No. 9 is phrased initially as a double negation: the groom must absolutely *not* entertain feelings of *displeasure*. The two negatives do not equal a mere positive. They encompass a sphere more profound than that of simple, affirmative expressions, since the first negative ("never entertain") suggests that what follows—a sense of *displeasure* and *discontent*—is a common phenomenon. But, astonishingly, the positive value that Romanticism implicitly accords this common "displeasure" is here negated. Further, Qualification No. 9 goes on to assert the positive value of knowing "pleasure" as well. The groom cannot satisfy Qualification No. 9 if he is either blindly content with life or resigned to disappointment. Rather, he must understand the limitations of this world sufficiently to be able to live without anger or resentment.

This imbalance in the two sets of credentials for bride and groom is the mechanism that generates both plot and thought in *Tsuyu dandan*, starting with the question whether any man can meet Qualification No. 9. An apparent contradiction arises as to which is to be privileged, "pleasure" or "displeasure." Can one really lead a "pleasurable" life without experiencing the "displeasure" that engenders yearning and striving? Can the marriage contest produce a groom satisfactory to both father and daughter?

ROHAN'S NEW HIERARCHY OF *KOI*

The main characters of *Tsuyu dandan* are each initially paired with different objects of desire and yearning—*koi* in various manifestations. The young Bunseimu seeks wealth and power. He stands the closest to the Enlightenment ideal of salutary ambition, characterized variously as aspiration (*kokorozashi* 志), resolution (*risshi* 立志), and social advancement (*risshin shusse* 立身出世). Shinjia's *koi*, on the other hand, is notable for its spiritual and moral yearnings. It represents a development