

The next chapter, “Ideologies of the Anaesthetic,” links up well with the earlier chapter on representations and images of judicial punishments and punitive practices. In this chapter, Hayot draws upon the example of Georges Bataille’s interest in a photograph of the death of a Chinaman by a thousand cuts as evidence of the representation of physical violence on a Chinese body (p. 224). In particular, Hayot focuses on how violence is perpetrated on the body of the Chinese, forcing that body to mediate its own pain (p. 226). Bataille’s reading of this image is further analysed in the context of how the body of the tortured is deployed as a representation for political use. Through his analysis of this photograph, Hayot shows how the representation of a tortured body, which has been subjected to pain, can be thus understood as an expansion of the notion of pain in relation to the body rather than a diminishing of the actual experience of pain itself.

Finally, by way of offering a conclusion, the final chapter attempts to place his collection of examples from the earlier chapters into three additional references in order to demonstrate and restore the representational complexities in the relationship between reality and representation vis-à-vis the process of sympathetic exchange (p. 269).

Drawing upon a range of materials, *The Hypothetical Mandarin* is an inspiring work for scholars and students in comparative literary studies. Whilst Hayot’s work does not privilege the literary, visual, or philosophical aspects and will thus no doubt also be of interest to those working in cogent fields such as the history of emotions, comparative philosophy, visual studies, and socio-cultural studies, it is unfortunately still heavily embedded in a language and discourse that would perhaps alienate a wider readership of those without some knowledge of literary studies or those with a limited knowledge of China and Chinese literature. Despite this, his proposal of the concept of the “ecliptic,” which emphasizes the relationship of perspectives as an analytical lens, speaks to the underlying strength of his work because it offers a nuanced approach to understanding how ideas of pain, sympathy, and modernity were refracted through the lens of “China” in different mediums and across time. In attempting to demonstrate how the “ecliptic” functions, Hayot has shown the importance of examples to the formation of ideas, in which such ideas are then refracted vis-à-vis such examples. In short, it is precisely through this ecliptical relationship between ideas and examples that has informed us as to how “China” and the “Chinese” have entered into the imagination (whether authentic or metaphorical) of a Western consciousness as a form of condition that cannot be neatly bounded but is comprised of intersecting relationships.

Although the brevity of this review cannot possibly do justice to the nuanced analysis and depth of Hayot’s work, it is worth emphasizing here that amongst the many strengths of this ambitious book is one that encourages scholars in Chinese and comparative literature to engage in a wider discussion about what and who is “Chinese” both from within and without; so as to arrive at a deeper understanding that is not only capable of crossing disciplinary and temporal boundaries but also encourages scholars to draw similarities that move beyond existing paradigms of understanding how concepts of modernity (and modernisms) are framed in reference to China and the Chinese.

The Other Women’s Lib: Gender and Body in Japanese Women’s Fiction.

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Reviewed by Noriko J. Horiguchi, University of Tennessee

E-mail njh@utk.edu

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In *The Other Women’s Lib*, Julia C. Bullock provides a fascinating analysis of postwar Japanese feminist writing by focusing on the implicit yet powerful subversive language in feminist fiction of the 1960s.

She highlights three captivating and provocative writers, Kōno Taeko (1926–), Kurahashi Yumiko (1935–2005), and Takahashi Takako (1932–), and focuses on four tropes: masculine gaze, feminist misogyny, odd body, and the Other Woman. In doing so, she shifts attention from the well-studied, overtly political activism of the 1970s to previously overlooked authors and themes of the 1960s that provided the theoretical underpinnings for subsequent developments. Bullock demonstrates the power and performativity of the language of these three women writers who parodied and critiqued “the violence inherent in the process of engendering.” In exposing the artificiality of the dominant “disciplinary mechanisms of engendering” then widely accepted as natural, these writers suggested possibilities for recreating less restrictive gender relations, and emerge as having been more imaginative and radical than later political activists. *The Other Woman's Lib* should appeal to students of modern literature, modern Japanese cultural history, feminist history, and gender and sexuality studies.

The work of Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, Laura Malvy, and Julia Kristeva underpins Bullock's arguments about disciplinary mechanisms, performativity of language and gender, visual and sexualized violence, and abject bodies. Among Bullock's intriguing insights is the idea of a paradoxical feminist misogyny in 1960s Japan that embraced female intellectuals' negation of, identity with, and desire for the Other Woman who embodies femininity. This paradox reenacts the dominance of the disciplinary mechanisms of binary models of gender within which women both resist and conform.

Bullock's theoretical approach makes incisive use of postwar Japanese history. Central to her argument are the “disciplinary mechanisms of engendering” that characterized the period of explosive economic expansion from 1960 to 1973. Rebuilding postwar Japan depended on these disciplinary mechanisms, which (a) restored the binary gender norms of man vs. woman, specifically the division of labor between “salary men” outside the home and the “good wife, wise mother” inside; (b) conflated gender and the body, both of which were codified as feminine or not-male; (c) committed visual and sexualized violence against women; and (d) erased differences among women by creating the category WOMAN. Echoing Michael Molasky, Douglas Slaymaker, and Susan Napier, Bullock sees the reinforcement of dualistic gender distinctions in postwar Japan as springing from the emasculation of Japanese men in the defeat and the presence of the dominant and superior American occupation. By disavowing such qualities as “physical fragility, sexual vulnerability, submission to authority – and then projecting them onto women,” “Japanese men were able to posit themselves as superior to women by virtue of their own theoretical invulnerability” (pp. 77–78). In the stories Bullock analyzes, the powerful institutions that control and strengthen the disciplinary mechanisms of engendering include the legal system, the representatives of the national Diet, the school curricula, the corporate world, the medical establishment, religious institutions, the factions of student movements, and the literary establishment (*bundan*) (p. 155). Countering these mechanisms, the three authors narrate the female body, combining sexuality and violence with different intent and effects than the male authors who abuse the female body (p. 37).

Challenging the prescribed patterns of masculinity and femininity proved dicier in the 1960s than in the 1970s, because doing so in the 1960s simultaneously challenged the national goal of economic growth; the recession and environmental and social problems in the following decade made it easier to protest the status quo. Consequently, feminist writings of the 1960s employed a more implicit and imaginative style, exposing and parodying the artificiality of the disciplinary mechanisms while critiquing the sexualized violence integral to the gendering processes.

Rather than focusing exclusively on women's resistance, Bullock also points out that many women, including fiction writers, acquiesced because disciplinary mechanisms encourage and reward women for their submission. And “[c]omplicity and submission is crucial in the success of the process of self-abjection” (p. 83). Thus both external societal forces and women's internalization of these expectations helped reestablish and reinforce binary gender norms, misogyny, and abjection of the female

body. Bullock argues, however, that neither resistance nor conformity ultimately resolves the problems of disciplinary mechanisms or helps create a space for feminine subjectivity (pp. 95–96). Fiction that parodies and exposes the artificiality of gender norms exemplifies the performativity of the subject, thereby establishing the power of fiction. Kōno, Kurahashi, and Takahashi's texts exemplify this power and envision a less restrictive disciplinary space for postwar Japanese women.

Bullock cogently, provocatively, and persuasively structures her analysis of these feminist writings by theme and trope, subjecting the three authors' texts to thematic analysis in separate chapters that transition smoothly while carefully suspending premature conclusions about each topic.

The Introduction, "Bad Wives and Worse Mothers? Rewriting Femininity in Postwar Japan," and Chapter 1, "Party Crashers and Poison Pens: Women Writers in the Age of High Economic Growth," introduce Kōno, Takahashi, and Kurahashi and their texts and contextualize them in their theoretical, historical, economic, political, and literary frameworks. Bullock's overview covers the postwar economic cycles, corporate culture, bureaucratic structures, legal system, educational curricula, media, and the literary establishment (*bundan*), emphasizing the formal and informal networks of power that govern "domestic femininity," "legible" expressions of femininity, and women's literary careers. Biographical and bibliographical sketches serve principally to interweave the authors' lives, works, and contexts.

In Chapter 2, "The Masculine Gaze as Disciplinary Mechanism," the stories discussed illustrate "scopic dynamics" – male visual surveillance of women's lives and activities. The oppressive, invasive masculine gaze enforces feminization on the protagonists in a sexual way (p. 69). Men's "penetrative gaze" (p. 69) is "encoded as a kind of rape" (p. 71), forcibly engendering and traumatizing the protagonists. Despite attempting to remain gender-neutral, the masculine gaze becomes so overwhelming that the protagonists internalize and replicate it. Thus "feminine complicity" reproduces repressive gender norms. "The 'solution' to this victimization by womanhood," Bullock writes, "is to embrace and anesthetize the infliction through a parodic performance of femininity" (p. 73). By controlling the process of performance itself and distancing herself from the assault on her ego, the protagonist is able to maintain "some degree of subjectivity" (p. 73).

Chapter 3, "Feminist Misogyny? or How I Learned to Hate My Body," features female protagonists who offer "a feminized visual position that makes the dominant power structure visible" (p. 93). Here the misogynist logic assigns a negative value to femininity and enforces abjection of the female body within a society ruled by power networks that structure human relationships along gender lines, employing such dualisms as superiority/inferiority, dominance/submission, and intellect/body. What Bullock terms "feminist misogyny" entails the female characters' desire to (a) replicate men's misogynist philosophy because of their need for acceptance by their male mentors and lovers, (b) transcend the body associated with femininity by becoming androgynous, and (c) entertain contempt for other women who embody feminine qualities. By parodying misogynist attitudes toward femininity, these texts highlight the artificial construction of feminine inferiority, and of the rules that render women abject (p. 95).

Chapter 4, "Odd Bodies," analyzes androgynous, deformed, and non-reproductive bodies – bodies neither male nor female, neither masculine nor feminine – in short, a trope that defies binary gender differences. By feminizing male bodies, the stories problematize "natural" linkages between sex and gender (p. 125). In Bullock's assessment, the three authors' "queering" of male bodies offers a supreme subversive challenge to the existing structure of gender roles because it destabilizes both (a) the male body as the theoretical foundation of masculinity, and (b) the male subjectivity upon which conventional dualistic gender differences are based.

Chapter 5, "The Body of Other Woman," challenges the ontological existence of Woman as a singular and unified category, by showing differences among women the authors portray (p. 128). The Other Woman in the stories is "a surrogate or replacement, as a complement to oneself, or as a

more perfect vision of the self that one might have been” (p. 129). Analyzing dialectic and sometimes homoerotic relationships among women, Bullock directs the reader’s attention to woman writers who renounce “feminine qualities” – materialism, corporeality, and commodification – and become disembodied and provisionally “masculine” or androgynous intellectuals. The tensions among intellectual women’s aggression against, identification with, and desire for the body of the Other Woman unmask the ever-present oppression of binary gender norms and “feminine misogyny” (p. 151).

The concluding segment, “Power, Violence, Language in the Age of High Economic Growth,” revisits the power dynamics of disciplinary mechanisms, the sexualized violence of the gendering process, and the power of language in fiction. Bullock masterfully underscores the feminist theoretical foundations in postwar Japanese fiction while exposing dominant and violent, yet subvertible, societal mechanisms. Beyond defining the ways fiction parodies and critiques contemporary society, *The Other Women’s Lib* offers a vision of alternatives to the status quo. Bullock also leaves the reader with food for thought in further examining the connections between fiction writing, the women’s movement, and academic theorization. With an adroit analysis in a gripping narrative, *The Other Women’s Lib* sheds light on how fiction as a literary theory can offer a powerful political critique of the gender relations in postwar Japan.