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**Tokuda/Rough Living**

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## Translator's Introduction

BY THE TIME of his death, Tokuda Shūsei (1872–1943) was respected as Japan's most accomplished novelistic chronicler of the urban working class and common life.<sup>1</sup> Kawabata Yasunari (1899–1972), the 1968 Nobel laureate for literature, wrote that Shūsei was a master of the novel, a master who maintained no school and who was the most Japanese of all modern novelists in the sense of being the most closely in touch with his own society. Kawabata also argued that there are three pinnacles in the history of the Japanese novel: Murasaki Shikibu (fl. ca. 1000), Ihara Saikaku (1642–1693), and Tokuda Shūsei.<sup>2</sup> Nakamura Murao stated that, after Saikaku, only Shūsei portrayed the true characteristics of the Japanese people.<sup>3</sup> Takeda Rintarō also saw Shūsei as Ihara Saikaku's modern successor.<sup>4</sup> Murō Saisei, Uno Kōji, Chikamatsu Shūkō, Hirotsu Kazuo, Aono Suekichi, Takami Jun, Kojima Masajirō, Shinoda Hajime, and Etō Jun are among the writers and critics who have expressed admiration of, and even wonder at, Shūsei's mature literature.<sup>5</sup>

By the 1930s, young writers defending freedom of speech and resisting authoritarian political movements had begun to rally around Shūsei. He accepted the chairmanship of the League of Academic and Artistic Freedom, one of the few organizations opposing greater government restriction of the arts and literature at that time. A literary coterie formed around Shūsei and published a journal, *Arakure* (Rough living), devoted to a kind of liberal cosmopolitanism. Writers associated with Japan's version of the popular front, the *jinmin bunko* (People's library; a literary magazine) group of writers, praised Shūsei as the embodiment of the "Spirit of Prose Literature," a slogan used in the fight against the "poetic neoromanticism" of Japanese

fascism. Young writers associated with the Left were arrested for subversive activities when they met under the auspices of the Tokuda Shūsei Study Group.<sup>6</sup> Why Shūsei's mature fiction inspired such respect and controversy is a question that can probably best be approached historically.

Throughout his career as a professional novelist, a career that lasted from about 1895 to 1942, Shūsei remained committed to the egalitarian ideals of the Meiji period. He participated in the people's rights movement in the 1880s and worked at provincial newspapers associated with the Liberal Party, the inheritor of the mantle of the people's rights movement. His earliest published works of fiction, appearing in the mid-1890s and sponsored by the utopian socialist Taoka Reiun (1870–1912), were polemics denouncing the rich and powerful in Japanese society. As will be discussed below, after the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), he explored the egalitarian implications of Japanese naturalism. In 1923, Shūsei wrote that he had lived most of his life as a member of the propertyless classes and that he thought that all writers should imbue their works with what he called “the revolutionary spirit.” In 1927, Shūsei maintained that, as an individual, he identified more with the proletariat than with any other class.<sup>7</sup> In a 1936 preface to one of his books, he wrote, “This volume reflects my deep interest in the lower classes and my growing conviction that I have lived my life together with the masses.”<sup>8</sup> Addressing the war effort in 1942, he wrote, “What we must never forget or ignore is the individual human being. All of us must live first and foremost as human beings.”<sup>9</sup>

For Shūsei the novelist, identification with the “masses” was translated into various concepts of realism. At the start of his career, he read and imitated the works of Western realists—Émile Zola, Guy de Maupassant, Charles Dickens, Victor Hugo, and Alphonse Daudet, among others—but, in 1905, he realized that his novels written under their direct influence were “entirely inadequate for the serious representation and analysis of human affairs.”<sup>10</sup> Shūsei turned away from Western literary models and explored ways in which to incorporate extraliterary language in his work and circumvent the literary stereotypes inherent in the Japanese literary tradition. The transformation in Shūsei's writing corresponds with the rise of Japanese naturalism in the first decade of the twentieth century and involves experimentation with narrative perspective: how the novelist could

allow working-class characters to speak, see, and feel in languages that were true to the character and yet not demeaning or patronizing.<sup>11</sup> Little or no foreign influence can be discerned in his solutions to this problem. As Masamune Hakuchō (1879–1962), one of Japan’s most distinguished critics and authors, observed in 1920, “One will almost certainly not find a novelistic style like Shūsei’s in a foreign work.” In the critic Nakamura Seiko’s words, “Shūsei is unique to Japan.”<sup>12</sup>

One reason that Shūsei is compared so often to Saikaku, the archetypal figure and originator of Japanese realism, has to do with the distinctive ways that Shūsei discovered to write about lower-class characters. When writing for a popular audience, he adhered to generic conventions in literally hundreds of novels and short stories. In these works, he punished the rich and powerful and sympathetically portrayed the weak and oppressed. On the other hand, he attempted to circumvent generic convention in a series of novels and short stories in which he experimented with ways to narrate the world from the perspectives of common characters. Writers and critics marveled at the seemingly innumerable “tricks” that Shūsei developed to make language of great complexity and beauty “belong to” his characters, who were generally not very articulate. It was this latter Shūsei who came to be recognized as one of Japan’s most original and talented novelists. In truth, however, one Shūsei was the mirror image of the other.

Shūsei the popular writer was the product of an apprenticeship starting in 1895 to Ozaki Kōyō (1897–1903), the most easily marketed writer of the day and the founder of several guilds that promoted and protected novelists in the midst of one of the most remarkable publishing booms in the history of the world. Through the intermediation of Izumi Kyōka (1873–1939), a fellow Kanazawa native, Shūsei became a live-in student of the craft of the novel in a “school”/dormitory in the back of Ozaki Kōyō’s house. He remained associated with Kōyō’s stable of writers until Kōyō’s death in 1903—and, in the public’s mind, until after the Russo-Japanese War.

His association with Kōyō’s school taught Shūsei a great deal about the fictional techniques and the vocabulary of the classical tradition as it was being updated and adapted to modern melodrama. Under Kōyō, Shūsei also learned how to write quickly and how to write for different audiences. From 1895 to 1915, he produced

approximately 285 short stories and novellas, 16 children's stories, 22 translations, 110 haiku, 44 long serialized novels for a popular audience, and 5 major novels that have since been acclaimed as masterpieces of Japanese naturalism. He tended to publish his writing in periodicals with readerships appropriate to the literary work in question. He serialized his major novels in newspapers with a substantial urban circulation, newspapers such as *Yomiuri*, *Asahi*, and *Kokumin shinbun*. More popular works were sent to provincial papers distant from the central literary world in Tokyo, some as far away as Korea and Manchuria. Short stories were often commissioned by magazines with connections to Ozaki's guild, including in 1898 and 1899, for example, *Shōnen bunshū* (Collected young people's writings), *Shinshōsetsu* (The new novel), Shun'yōdō's journal for a popular readership, *Jogaku kōgi* (Lectures for young ladies), *Joshi no tomo* (The young lady's friend), and *Bungei kurabu* (Literary club), Hakubunkan's literary journal for a popular readership. Other short stories were written specifically for journals with an intellectual readership: *Shinchō* (The new tide), *Chūō kōron* (Central review), and, later, *Kaizō* (Reconstruction) and *Bungei shunjū* (Spring and autumn literary arts).<sup>13</sup>

Among the members of Kōyō's guild, Shūsei was a different presence. He took political issues more seriously. His fiction concerned class conflict, women's rights and the emergence of the new independent woman, and discrimination against *eta* (a class of outcasts within Japanese society), themes that were dealt with much later in Japan by such writers as Shimazaki Tōson (1872–1943) and Arishima Takeo (1878–1923).<sup>14</sup> Better educated than other members of the guild, and also able to read English, Shūsei introduced the group to works of Western literature. From the first, he was the realist of the guild, and, after Ozaki's death in 1903, while other members of the guild polished and transformed formulas inherited from the past, reworking them for a popular audience (sometimes brilliantly), Shūsei incorporated stylistic innovations from the sketch-from-life movement (the "haikuesque" prose movement advocated by Takahama Kyoshi) in his work and met head-on the challenge of naturalism. He was the only one of Kōyō's disciples to survive as a professional realist novelist into the second decade of the twentieth century. However, in the end, the reason that "the respected Shūsei," the literary innovator, could break so many of the rules of linear narrative development is because he had mastered the conventions of popular fiction.

## Tokuda Shūsei and Japanese Naturalism

In Japanese literary histories, Tokuda Shūsei is most often held to personify Japanese naturalism. Whether this association is justified depends on how one defines *naturalism*. If one traces the ideological genealogy of Japanese naturalism from a Western-inspired Christian Romanticism that influenced Kitamura Tōkoku (1868–1894), Shimazaki Tōson, Kunikida Doppo (1871–1908), and Masamune Hakuchō with its emphasis, derived from such varied sources as the Bible and William Wordsworth, on platonic love, confession, and the discovery of the self, then Shūsei was definitely not a part of the movement. Or, if one considers naturalism to be a new set of materialistic beliefs more amenable than an earlier conception of realism (*shajitsu*) to the idea that instinctual motives—bestial sexual desires, racial or hereditary proclivities, or innate aggression—determine human behavior, then Shūsei was only superficially a “naturalist” in a few of his more conceptually realistic works for a popular audience. The association of Shūsei with naturalism is probably justified, however, if one understands naturalism as Shūsei himself characterized it in 1942:

At about the time of the Russo-Japanese War, the nation's citizens entered a whole new stage of self-awareness, and the new literary trends dominated as a surging tide. It was not limited to naturalism, for which Tayama Katai and others propagandized so passionately; by reacting critically to naturalism, other writers as well helped create the new literature. I do not know whether the naturalism of Tayama Katai and the others was truly grounded in French naturalism, but, whether it was or not, as realism it represented enormous progress in the way in which people were perceived and portrayed when compared to the so-called *shajitsu* form of realism that preceded it. . . . It was during this period that the Japanese people, who for generations had been kept subservient, cast off their fetters and awakened to their humanity.<sup>15</sup>

As Japan's first mass literary movement, naturalism encouraged more people (including large numbers of students) to write in a realist style than ever before, revolutionized the subject matter of literature, and transformed Japanese literary stylistics. It provided novelists with the theoretical justification that allowed them to portray ordinary individuals participating in the creation of history. Through literary characterization, the life of an ordinary person could serve as

a microcosm of the past and future of the nation. This is true in the case of Tayama Katai's *Inaka kyōshi* (1909), Shimazaki Tōson's *Yoakemae* (1929–1935), and much of Shūsei's work.<sup>16</sup>

Shūsei brought ideas imported from the West by members of the educated elite down to the level of ordinary Japanese men and women, where they took on new significance. While *individualism* (*kojin-shugi*) was generally used in the Meiji era to denote a liberal intellectual discourse advocating rationality and independence from family and tradition, in his *Arajotai* (The new household, 1908) Shūsei applied the concept to the life of a sake merchant who is struggling to establish a shop in an impoverished neighborhood. This “individualism” is a loneliness caused by the economic necessities of capitalism, an alienation far more common than the angst of intellectuals. The “independent household” (*katei*) of the newly emerging nuclear family became in *Tadare* (Festering, 1913) the sensual, decadent realm of an ex-prostitute and her prosperous but slightly crooked husband. “The new woman” became in *Ashiato* (Footprints, 1910) and *Arakure* (Rough living, 1915) the next-door maid or the independent businesswoman, a woman who would not endure the indignities of a traditional marriage, the sex trades, or the apprenticeship system. Perhaps most crucially, if the reader were to be transported across class and gender lines and thrust into complex new sociolinguistic realms being explored by novelists with an interest in common life as a source of beauty and the determinant of Japan's future, then the prevailing generic codes marking characters as members of the lower classes or as disreputable women had to be radically disrupted.

This, I think, is one reason for the unique temporal structures of Shūsei's best work. The “plot,” if it can be called that, progresses according to declarative sentences. The reader is then taken back into the past through a series of associations both within and beyond the character's memory—that peculiarity of language in the novel that consists of the layering of consciousnesses, what Bakhtin has called “novelistic hybridization”<sup>17</sup>—that eventually return to the narrative present, at which point the process starts over. This technique foregrounds everyday conscious time at the expense of dramatic time. The author is free to incorporate literary and extraliterary language in the consciousness of common characters. The resulting memories within memories, at times crystallizing in present moments

of naturalistic impressionism, portray the literary nature of consciousness in the ways in which human beings perceive the world: it does not matter whether the character is barely literate or not very articulate; in the end, he or she interprets experience according to complex literary paradigms.

The major naturalistic novels that Shūsei completed between 1908 and 1915 were all based on stories that he “picked up” at home or within a twenty-minute walk of his house in the Morikawa district of Tokyo’s Hongō ward. The daily experience of the wine merchant across the street from where he once lived became the basis of the novel *Arajotai*; the life of the next-door maid, later his wife, and his first years of marriage to her provided the material for *Ashiato* and *Kabi* (Mold, 1911); the career of a former prostitute, his wife’s friend, became the subject of *Tadare*. His treatment of these materials was in absolute contrast to his former writing as “the Western-influenced realist” under Ozaki Kōyō. He probably stopped reading foreign literature altogether, and, in his best writing, there is no discernible Western influence. When he had a documentary source, a living model, for his fiction, it was as if he felt the need to reinvent the novel to account for this randomly found human situation; otherwise, he tended to work within established genres. He understood only too well the temptation to surrender to the conventions of popular entertainment and the difficulties of creating innovative fiction, of “making it new,” for, as he instructed young writers in 1913, “You must work, as a human being and as an author, to avoid being caught by form. It is so easy to get caught.”<sup>18</sup> He spoke from experience.

For much of his forty-five-year literary career, Shūsei managed to earn a living as a professional novelist—raise a large family of, at times, eight dependents, educate his children, buy a house, and so on—by observing a dichotomy in his writing. He maintained his reputation as a serious writer by working in an experimental mode of realism, producing work that was often critically well received, and then using that reputation to sell popular works of what might be called *conceptual realism*—for example, melodrama, mystery fiction, novels of the demimonde—for serialized publication in periodicals considered to have a less than discriminating readership. *Arakure* (1915), translated here as *Rough Living*, represents the tendency in his work toward an experimental mode of realism.

### *Rough Living*

Shūsei's *Arakure* concerns a seamstress named Oshima, a character based on Suzuki Chiyo, Shūsei's sister-in-law. The novel was serialized daily in the newspaper *Yomiuri shinbun* from January to July 1915 and was published as a book in September 1915. It was almost universally praised as the most substantial work of fiction of the year.<sup>19</sup> Nonetheless, in an October 1915 interview, Shūsei stated that, while he could write two or three more novels like *Arakure* were he so inclined, he was tired of "that kind of thing" and did not intend to write other works like it. He was true to his word. *Arakure* is the last of his major novels of common life set in the Meiji period.

Donald Keene has translated the title of this novel as "The Wild One." This may be closer to Shūsei's original intention. In 1915, Shūsei wrote:

I first intended to title *Arakure Yajū no gotoku* [Like a wild beast], but, when I was about to start writing, I changed it. I had come up with some very imaginative fictionalizations for that material. I was trying to portray a modern type with extremely rough nerves . . . a person who paid absolutely no heed to the social conventions of duty and civility [*giri-ninjō*] and who was ceaselessly compelled to action. One does not often encounter such people in real life. But, owing to all the petty irritations that I was experiencing at the time, I felt a great attraction to just such a person, and the woman who was the model for the protagonist of the work was a person with some of those same tendencies. To put it bluntly, I intended to re-create that woman as my ideal. When I actually started writing, however, I succeeded in only a few respects. I drew away from the novel that I had started to write and found myself adhering too closely to reality.<sup>20</sup>

However, "The Wild Woman," "The Tempest," "The Outlaw," "The Ruffian," or similar translations of the title invoke the Western theatrical and cinematic tradition, leaving the reader with inappropriate expectations. On the other hand, if Shūsei had intended the nominal form of the verb *arakureru* (rough, wild) as only a concrete noun referring to a specific person, he might have indicated this by adding a suffix: *arakure-mono* (ruffian) or *arakure-onna* (rough woman). The title that Shūsei ultimately chose allows the semantic space to translate the noun in a more abstract sense, as a "life" and a "way of living." "Rough living" is a fairly accurate description of the contents

of the novel, tones down Shūsei's originally conceived title, and remains within the semantic scope of the nominalized form of the Japanese verb *arakureru* in the sense of *arakureta seikatsu* (a rough life).

*Rough Living* is, in some respects, Shūsei's least technically accomplished and innovative serious novel of the period from 1907 to 1915. It lacks the severe and insightful sociological summings-up of *Arajotai*. Narrative perspective tends to drift away from the protagonist, as it does not in *Ashiato*. In all Shūsei's serious work, time is that of everyday consciousness—digression, memory, and association—but the temporal structure of *Rough Living* is not nearly as complex as that of *Kabi*, in which past and present can barely be distinguished. Finally, while *Rough Living* deals quite frankly with sexuality and sexual dysfunction and was quite shocking to many readers at the time it first appeared, it does not provide the sort of erotic charge to be found in *Tadare*.

Nonetheless, *Rough Living* remains Shūsei's representative work. It is his most accessible and popular novel because of the humor, exuberance, and spirit of rebellion personified by its protagonist, Oshima. Through Oshima's eyes, we see the formation of the structures underlying everyday life in a modern capitalist society as they were evolving in Japan from the time of Oshima's birth in 1884 until the end of the novel in about 1910. Portrayed as it is coming into existence in Japan, modern capitalism seems invigorated, enormously liberating, enriching people more than it impoverishes, and creating the tragic denouements of a lifetime every week and a half or so.

As a product of this new social order, Oshima herself is independent and indomitable. Her response to adversity is to fight her way past whatever obstacles fate has thrown in her path, taking great delight in the various strategies that she develops. Readers probably derive vicarious pleasure from the sheer joy that Oshima takes in her physicality. Relatively petty disappointments often bring about depression and pain, but, in moments of real crisis, she rises to the occasion with assurance and physical vitality. The humor in the novel also derives in part from self-recognition on the part of Oshima and the reader rather than from comic stereotyping. Oshima is often laughing, chuckling, or smiling, and such a response represents an awareness of the incongruity inherent in her position or a given social situation. This incongruity arises in part from the disparity between

the ideological certainty with which those in authority speak and the irrelevance of their words in the light of reality. If an older person in authority makes a pronouncement, it is almost certainly self-serving or wrong. There are frequent reversals of gender roles. Men often do the cooking and flower arranging, and women issue commands and work outside the home.

Of all Shūsei's remarkable heroines, Oshima invites the broadest sense of familiarity and identification on the part of a mass readership. While Oshima may have been a new type of woman in her day, she is not a new type any longer. The typical Japanese reader today sees Oshimas all around, and the character comes alive as a touchstone or standard by which present-day Japanese society can be judged or measured. This is because certain aspects of Japanese culture and society have remained constant over the years. In what follows, certain of those aspects will be briefly examined: the diminished authority of folklore; the improving status of women; the currency of the success ethic; the longing for romance; the importance of festivals; and the Westernization of popular manners, fashion, and customs.

From the child Oshima's perspective, we are introduced to a series of folkloric associations, associations that give rise to certain expectations that are then frustrated. For example, one expects the ill treatment of children at the hands of an "evil stepmother," but it is Oshima's real mother who has formed an obsessive hatred of her. Oshima's foster mother at first appears kind and compassionate, but even she turns out to be as deceptive and greedy as any other authority figure in the novel. The ferry crossing at Ogu on the banks of the Sumida river, traditionally associated with the kidnapping, enslavement, murder, and abandonment of children, should be the site of a similar tragedy for Oshima; instead, expectations are undercut, and, through the intermediation of Nishida, Oshima is adopted by a prosperous family.<sup>21</sup> The wealth of Oshima's foster parents in turn brings to mind other folktales, particularly the story—common during the Meiji period—of the wandering monk (*rokubu*) bearing a Buddhist altar on his back who begs for a night's lodging and is robbed and murdered by his hosts. Thus, the story of the monk's death that Oshima's friends tell at school is as much a "fairy tale" as her foster father's version. While the belief that the soul of the vengeful monk returns to strike blind the offspring of his murderers is

occasionally of some concern to Oshima, her negligence in not receiving the “holy waters” at the temple Nishi-Arai Daishi—instead she drinks a bottle of soda—indicates that she is able to ignore superstition with few ill effects.<sup>22</sup>

By 1900, Ōji Paper Manufacturing, which would become one of the largest producers of paper in Japan, has expanded and built a huge new factory in Ōji, effectively marginalizing smaller craftsmen, such as Oshima’s foster parents. The indirect result is the kind of capitalization of the countryside that the foster parents profit from and that breeds local resentment in the form of tales of murdered Buddhist monks who curse the ill-gotten gains of the newly prosperous. The authority of myth, Confucian morality, and feudal custom is undercut by the greater opportunities available to Oshima’s generation. Oshima emerges from feudalism to define herself rationally, independent of family and community and tales of their origin. She refuses to act like a character in a play or a popular novel. She is, in short, a modern individual.

This brings us to the subject of the status of women in Meiji society. According to the Meiji civil code, women had almost no rights under the law. Based on Confucian concepts of the proper role of women, the law held that, in all social situations, women were to be subservient to men: first to their fathers, then to their husbands, and, finally, to their sons. The ideal woman, championed by government officials, especially those associated with the Ministry of Education, was the “good wife, wise mother” (*ryōsai kenbo*), whose proper field of activity was to be limited to her nurturing, supportive, and subservient role within the household (*ie*). One cannot help but note that these legal and semilegal abstractions have little currency in or relevance to Oshima’s world. Women’s rights and status are protected by common custom, which directly contradicts official legal provisions.

Women had no legal right to inherit property, for example, but common custom in *Rough Living* seems to indicate that Oshima’s sister (and her husband) has a substantial inheritance coming. True, Oshima is disinherited, but this is her mother’s doing, one woman’s misguided whim, not the heavy hand of tradition. Oshima would appear to be the exception that proves the rule of the daughter’s right to inherit. The law also gave women no rights in divorce proceedings, but, in the world that Shūsei portrays, men must pay substantial amounts to separate, not only from wives, but also from mis-

tresses, and even from lovers.<sup>23</sup> Although the notion of women functioning as heads of households was anathema to a state ideology that defined the nation as one great family with a male emperor at its head, in the novel women take over as effective heads of households as a matter of course—for example, the old woman at Uegen, who is firmly in control of her household, and the woman owner of the hot-spring resort to which Oshima is sent after she begins an affair with the innkeeper in Shiobara. The possibility is even advanced that Oshima will take over her father's business, a possibility that is foreclosed when she leaves for the mountains with her brother. Oshima's independence is, in part, made possible by traditional common custom as it evolves to deal with modern times.<sup>24</sup> The nation's legal system—patterned on Western models—is largely absent or irrelevant in Oshima's world.

Almost all historical treatments of the “ethic of success” (*nisshin shusse*) in the Meiji period ignore women. However, even a cursory reading of Shūsei's novels reveals how important various conceptions of success were to both sexes in Meiji common life. In *Rough Living*, Oshima is intent on taking advantage of the transformations that Japan is undergoing at about the turn of the century—industrialization, the decline of an older landowning class, imperialistic expansion abroad, and the Westernization of native customs and manners. These transformations are disassembled and reconstituted in Oshima's field of vision and are generally felt as different perceptions of time. In chapters 1–61, time passes according to the natural progression of the seasons. Although, in the first decade of the twentieth century, Ōji and Ogu are in the process of losing their agricultural character as they gradually become suburbs of Tokyo, the local economy is still dependent on cyclic, seasonal fluctuations in supply and demand. Scenes of natural beauty in changing seasonal aspect, a leisurely pace of life, and a feeling of being confined or trapped often dominate Oshima's perceptions. Similarly, the urban district of Kanda remains the realm of an older Edo bourgeoisie, a class that has almost disappeared today and is shown in precipitous decline in the novel. During her sojourn deep in the mountains, Oshima is immersed in dead time, a function of a primary economy dependent on mining, sericulture (silk being at that time Japan's primary export), and tourism.

With Oshima's return to the city in 1904, the nature of temporal

change has been transfigured. From chapter 62 on, time is no longer anchored in agriculture and the cycles of nature and is now determined by external institutional and political agendas: the Russo-Japanese War, the 1907 Exhibition of Industry and Commerce, and the academic year of the public school system. Oshima's motives seem clear enough in making the transition to a nonseasonal, fully capitalistic economy. Economic success is, after all, her only means of maintaining common respectability, which she comes perilously close to losing. Her contempt for prostitutes, other workers in the sex trades of the demimonde, landless peasants with "the despicable character of a slave" (p. 46), and workmen is an expression of her resolve not to fall out of the realm of common respectability. Further, her desire for success is motivated by a desire for revenge. She is born into a situation in which the deck is stacked against her, and, in creating her own fortune against all odds, she defies the strictures of the past. Oshima is the hero of an age that is still with us. In sensing in cityscapes the direction of consumer desire and wagering everything again and again on her hunches, she personifies that hungry, entrepreneurial spirit of "the free individual" who has no place in the traditional order, a spirit that represents an extraordinary challenge to novelistic articulation because it in turn defies most rules of genre.

But what does Oshima really want? At one point, she thinks that all her striving for success represents merely the sublimation of other, more shadowy desires, and, as soon as she gains some measure of success and security, she plans to give it all up. Perhaps readers identify with Oshima's ambivalence. The objects of her yearning are by their nature ephemeral. But there is also a universality in her longing for love and affection. Achieving success is a highly addictive game that coarsens Oshima's personality and her capacity for sympathy, yet it does not seem to diminish her sexual generosity or her willingness to sacrifice for romance with little expectation of material gain. Desire moves Oshima to transcend economics.

Oshima loves novelty and fun, and life in the city seems to consist of endless festivals and the exoticism of the new. The two most important celebrations of the year are the Festival of Souls (*obon*) in mid-July and the New Year's festivities (*shōgatsu*). These are also the critical deadlines in the business year. It is the custom in common life that, if one can pay off one's debts by these holidays, credit is

extended through the coming year. If one cannot pay off one's debts, credit is not extended further, and, especially for a business like that of the tailor, bankruptcy almost inevitably results. The Festival of Souls, when households welcome home the souls of ancestors, is traditionally the holiday when servants are allowed to visit their families, and it provides Oshima the opportunity to stay in touch with her natural family. In addition, there are the countless local festivals and activities in entertainment districts like Asakusa and neighborhoods around temples and shrines that offered diversions for men and women on a daily basis. And, of course, Oshima's world is shot through with reference to prostitutes and semiprostitutes, whose fashions and manners influence the world of the commonly respectable.

The opportunities for success afforded Oshima generally have to do with the growth of a utilitarian mass culture heavily influenced by Western fashions and entertainments. Such fashions and amusements are generally portrayed in the novel as superficial: Onoda's phonograph or Oshima's declaration that her Western-style dress is for work and that she does not care how she looks. However, these manifestations of the West (the West as it influenced the majority of the population in Japan) reveal significant changes. The demand for Western-style clothing undoubtedly came about because of the literal "uniforming" of Japanese society at around the time of the Russo-Japanese War: military uniforms for officers and soldiers; uniforms for postmen, railroad conductors, and policemen; court dress; tuxedos and morning coats worn at upper-class social events; the frock coats worn by politicians, educators, and doctors; and uniforms for the small percentage of students who made it to middle school and beyond. At least in Tokyo, the distinction between public and private clothing for men—Western-style clothing for official occasions and government employment, Japanese-style clothing for use at home and for personal ceremonies—appears to have been well established in the years after the Russo-Japanese War.<sup>25</sup>

The Westernization of popular customs and manners in everyday life can be attributed to the utility of Western fashion, and the value placed on utility owed a great deal in turn to the militarization of the Japanese economy as a whole, or at least civilian spinoffs from the military. Of course, Oshima benefits enormously from these trends. Indeed, one begins to see "internationalization" in terms of the sex-

ual attraction of this utility: from Oshima's perspective, Western men's clothing symbolizes vigor and strength, while traditional clothing is held to represent the effeminate.

### Problems of Translation

As was suggested above, in Shūsei's serious novels, the voice of the author is refracted through an enormous diversity of languages: highly original sound symbolism (conventionally held to be not literary), the representation of regional and urban dialects, nonstandard pseudoclassical narrative forms, beautiful seasonal imagery, and dialogue in mixed dialects. These features make his works difficult to translate.

At times, the voice of the narrator seems an invisible mediator, simply presenting Oshima's/Suzuki Chiyo's words. At other times, it seems an objective, documentary presence narrating the events of Oshima's life and the entertaining backgrounds of the host of eccentric characters who appear and disappear in the course of the novel. Frequently, there is the pure stylist in the tradition of Japanese nature description, yet we also glimpse the radical modernist, constructing flashbacks and digressions within digressions, all within Oshima's consciousness. The varying tones and narrative techniques again make for difficult translation.

All Shūsei's serious novels were written for daily serialization in newspapers. Because Shūsei used the features of serialization as an integral part of the structure of *Rough Living*, I have retained in translation the chapter numbers, which reflect the divisions imposed by daily serialization. In his serious fiction, Shūsei showed little concern for maintaining tension or suspense in the plot, believing that page-turning plots (and Western ideas) were more appropriate for a popular audience. There is no evidence that he was influenced, as were some authors at the time, by letters to the editor voicing complaints or suggesting revisions or future plot developments.<sup>26</sup> As was previously indicated, he would often "give away" the conclusion of his story at the start of a day's serialization and then depend on the strength of his literary technique to keep the reader interested until he had "caught up" with his conclusion.

An example of this sort of "inverted narration" is found at the

start of chapter 18, which opens: “The second time that Oshima ran away from her foster family was just after her wedding to Saku, toward the end of autumn of the same year” (p. 48). The narrative does not catch up with the narrative present—toward the end of autumn 1901, when Oshima runs away—until chapter 23. Yet a close reading and “unraveling” of the complicated temporal structure of the work reveals that it is all perfectly consistent, and every major incident in the book can be fairly consistently dated. A chronology of events in the novel appears in the appendix.

The effect of the work as a whole in Japanese is profoundly humanistic, especially in the treatment of Oshima’s childhood. Aesthetic, ideological, or poetic unity cannot be found in Shūsei’s best work. On the other hand, what can be found in the original is some intimation, perhaps more than in other literary texts, of the enormous language diversity and complexity that washes over and penetrates most human beings at any given moment. Suffice it to say in conclusion that Oshima’s story is one that I want to present in English, however inadequate the translation may be to the original, because her Japan is one that I recognize and identify with and because her life probably remains, even today, not so far distant from the lives of a great many people struggling to find some measure of happiness in the city.

The text translated was taken from volume 4 of *Shūsei zenshū* ([Complete works of Shūsei], 18 vols. [Kyoto: Rinsen Shoten, 1974–1975; reprint, Kyoto: Rinsen Shoten, 1989–1991]), with reference to the recent edition in volume 10 of *Tokuda Shūsei zenshū* ([Complete works of Tokuda Shūsei], 12 vols. to date [Tokyo: Yagi Shoten, 1997–]) and editions in *Tokuda Shūsei shū* ([Tokuda Shūsei anthology], vol. 68 of *Meiji bungaku zenshū* [Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1971]), *Tokuda Shūsei* (vol. 8 of *Nihon bungaku zenshū* [Tokyo: Shūeisha, 1974]), and *Tokuda Shūsei* (vol. 9 of *Nihon bungaku* [Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1973]).<sup>27</sup>

## Notes

1. Tokuda Shūsei was born Tokuda Sueo to a respectable *bushi* or samurai family who were retainers of the Yokoyama house in the Kaga domain, present-day Ishikawa prefecture. The *bushi* or gentry population of the domainal capital, Kanazawa, was particularly hard hit by the changes brought about by the Meiji

Restoration of 1868, when the hereditary *bushi* class was deprived of its social status, and Shūsei's memories of his youth are colored by poverty and the social chaos caused by such large-scale loss of status. He entered what would become the Fourth Higher School but dropped out of this elite educational track in 1891 owing to poor grades and a lack of money. After stints at provincial newspapers, Shūsei found a niche in the central literary world in Tokyo and supported himself as a professional novelist from about 1895 until his death in 1943.

2. Kawabata Yasunari, "Kaisetsu," in *Tokuda Shūsei shū I*, vol. 9 of *Nihon no bungaku* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron, 1973), 519–520; and as quoted in Kōno Toshirō, "Hibonkaku-han *Shūsei zenshū* no 'Naiyō mihon' to 'Geppō,'" in *Ronkō Tokuda Shūsei*, ed. Kōno Toshirō (Tokyo: Ōfūsha, 1982), 248–249.

3. Nakamura Murao quoted in Kōno, "Hibonkaku-han *Shūsei zenshū* no 'Naiyō mihon' to 'Geppō,'" 247.

4. Takami Jun, Takeda Rintarō, Hirotsu Kazuo, and Tokuda Shūsei, "Sanbun-seishin o kiku" (a roundtable discussion), *Jinmin bunko* 1, no. 9 (November 1936): 80–91; and Ōtani Kōichi, *Hyōden Takeda Rintarō* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1982), 200, 380–385, 390.

5. See Murō Saisei, quoted in Kōno, "Hibonkaku-han *Shūsei zenshū* no 'Naiyō mihon' to 'Geppō,'" 248; Uno Kōji and Hirotsu Kazuo, "Shūsei o kataru" (a roundtable discussion), in "Tokuda Shūsei: Hito to bungaku," a special issue of *Geirin kanpo*, November 1947, 48–58; Uno Kōji, "Bungei jihyō: Shōsetsu no shomondai," *Shinchō* 23, no. 5 (May 1926): 22–32; Chikamatsu Shūkō, "Hito oyobi geijutsuka to shite no Tokuda Shūsei-shi," in *Tokuda Shūsei shū*, vol. 68 of *Meiji bungaku zenshū*, (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1971), 365–370; Hirotsu Kazuo, *Hirotsu Kazuo zenshū*, 12 vols. (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1974), 9:186–188; Aono Suekichi, quoted in Kōno, "Hibonkaku-han *Shūsei zenshū* no 'Naiyō mihon' to 'Geppō,'" 248; Takami Jun, "Shūsei bungaku ni kanren shite," *Geirin kanpo*, November 1947, 27–30; Kojima Masajirō, "Shōsetsu no kamisama," *Nihon bungaku zenshū geppō* (Shūeisha) 67 (August 1974): 1–12; Shinoda Hajime, *Nihon no gendai shōsetsu* (Tokyo: Shūeisha, 1980), 236; and Etō Jun, "Tokuda Shūsei to 'jūjitsu shita kanji,'" *Gunzō* 45, no. 3 (March 1990): 172–182.

6. Muramatsu Takeshi et al., eds., *Shōwa hihyō taikai*, 5 vols. (Tokyo: Banchō Shobō, 1968), 2:414–423, 546. Takami Jun, *Shōwa bungaku seisuishū*, 2 vols. (Tokyo: Bungei Shunjūsha, 1958), 2:65–77. On the Tokuda Shūsei Study Group, see Ōtani Kōichi, *Hyōden Takeda Rintarō* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō, 1982), 241–242.

7. Tokuda Shūsei, "Sakka wa kakumei kibun o motsu," *Shinchō* 30, no. 2 (February 1923): 25–27, and "Gappyō: Shūsei-shi no ren'ai," *Shinchō* 24, no. 10 (October 1927): 127–128. See also Tokuda Shūsei, "Gappyō," *Shinchō* 23, no. 7 (July 1926): 23.

8. Tokuda Shūsei, "Jo ni kaete," in *Kunshō* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1936), 2–3.

9. Tokuda Shūsei, "Sōwa shuppan ni nozomite no sakusha no kotoba," in *Sōwa* (Tokyo: Sakurai Shoten, 1942), 2 (located at the end of the volume).

10. Tokuda Shūsei, "Jijo," in *Shōkazoku* (Tokyo: Shun'yōdō, 1905), n.p. (two pages, unpaginated).

11. A fuller and more technical treatment of the development of Shūsei's

stylistics is provided in Richard Torrance, “Tokuda Shūsei and the Representation of *Shomin* Life” (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1989), 68–132. See also Richard Torrance, “Bungaku kyōzai toshite no Tokuda Shūsei,” *Kokugo kyōiku ronsō* (Shimane Daigaku Kyōiku Gakubu Kokubun Gakkai) 4 (1994): 127–134.

12. Masamune Hakuchō and Nakamura Seiko, “Katai Shūsei ryōshi ni,” *Bunshō sekai* 15, no. 11 (November 1920): 126 and 135, respectively.

13. Matsumoto Tōru, “Tokuda Shūsei no chosaku shoshutsu nenpū kō,” *Kinki daigaku kyōyōbu kenkyū kiyō* 13, no. 3 (1982): 1–35.

14. See, e.g., “Yabukōji” (Spearflower, 1896), *Kumo no yukue* (Where the clouds go, 1900), and *Shunkō* (Spring light, 1902), in vol. 1 of Tokuda Shūsei, *Shūsei zenshū* (Complete works of Shūsei), 18 vols. (Kyoto: Rinsen Shoten, 1974–1975).

15. Tokuda Shūsei, preface to *Meiji bungaku sakka ron* (Discourse on the novelists of the Meiji period, 1942), reprinted in Tokuda Shūsei, *Kan no bara* (Tokyo: Shuppan Kubashiki Kaisha, 1948), 19–20.

16. For translations, see Tayama Katai, *Country Teacher: A Novel*, trans. Kenneth Henshall (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1984); and Shimazaki Tōson, *Before the Dawn*, trans. William E. Naff (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1987).

17. Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 302–311, 358–362.

18. Shūsei as quoted in Enomoto Takashi, “Shūsei bungaku ron II,” in “Tokuda Shūsei kenkyū go,” a special issue of *Bunshō kurabu*, September 1952, 15. Shūsei made several similar declarations (see, e.g., Tokuda Shūsei, *Shōsetsu no tsukurikata* [Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1918], 82).

19. See, e.g., Nakamura Seiko, Nogami Shirakawa, and Sōma Gyōfū, “*Arakure* no hihyō,” *Shinchō* 23, no. 4 (October 1915): 102–105; Kisha (literary reporter), “*Arakure*,” *Waseda bungaku*, October 1915, 8–9; and Kisha (literary reporter), “*Arakure*,” *Bunshō sekai* 10, no. 12 (November 1915): 222–231; Okada Hachiyo, “*Arakure* no Oshima,” *Shinchō* 23, no. 5 (November 1915): 82; A.B.C., “Shūsei no geijutsu,” *Shinchō* 23, no. 5 (November 1915): 36–39; and Chikamatsu Shūkō, “Shūsei-shi no sakufū,” *Bunshō sekai* 11, no. 6 (June 1916): 58–63.

20. Shūsei as quoted in Noguchi Fujio, *Tokuda Shūsei den* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1965), 404.

21. The first association that springs to mind is the Umewakamaru legend in the No play *Sumidagawa*, but there must be any number of variations on similar legends, including the *jiuta* (ballad) version of *Sumidagawa*, the version contained in the *Sumidagawa Umewaka engi*, the version in the *Sumidagawa kagami ikeden*, the Tokiwazu variation *Sumidagawa tsuki no koto no ha*, or Kyokutei Bakin’s *Sumidagawa bairyū shinsho*. For a perceptive discussion of the mythical elements in *Arakure*, see Ōsugi Shigeo, “*Arakure* ron,” *Gunzō* 40, no. 6 (June 1993): 94–130.

22. Ōsugi, “*Arakure* ron,” 100–107.

23. Even Okana, the mistress of a mining engineer, receives a separation payment, despite the fact that she has continued to carry on an affair with Oshima’s brother, Sōtarō, after Sōtarō has been paid by the engineer to give her up.

24. Shūsei's treatment of women's rights in common custom in *Arakure* is consistent with his treatment of women in his other works (see Richard Torrance, *The Fiction of Tokuda Shūsei and the Emergence of Japan's New Middle Class* [Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994], 93–95, 166).

25. Shōwa Joshi Daigaku Hifukugaku Kenkyushitsu, ed., *Kindai Nihon fuku-sōshi* (Tokyo: Kindai Bunka Kenkyūjo, 1971), 115–116. Of course, the spread of Western-style clothing was generally limited to men's clothing (see pp. 314–315).

26. Naitō Hisako, "Arakure ron: Yomiuri fujin furoku o hojosen ni," *Bungei to hihyō* 8, no. 9 (May 1999): 27. Naitō notes that, although there is no direct evidence of readers' reactions influencing the novel, there may be indirect influence in the form of the "tenor of the times" crystallized in reports on the "new independent woman" in the newly created "women's supplement to the newspaper *Yomiuri*."

27. Readers with a further interest in Tokuda Shūsei, his position in Ozaki Kōyō's guild, or the historical issues raised by the novel should see my *Fiction of Tokuda Shūsei*; Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature in the Modern Era, Fiction* (New York: Henry Holt, 1984), 271–281; Charles Inouye, *The Similitude of Blossoms: A Critical Biography of Izumi Kyōka (1873–1939), Japanese Novelist and Playwright* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 1998); James Fujii, *Complicit Fictions: The Subject in the Modern Japanese Prose Narrative* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993); and Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985).