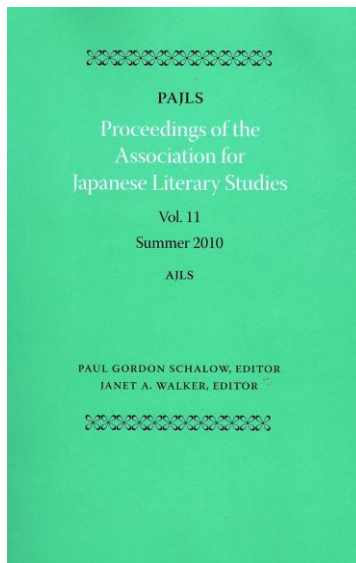


“Good Mother, Bad Mother: Reading the *Jōjin azari no haha no shū* through the Lens of Gender”

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Proceedings of the Association for Japanese Literary Studies 11 (2010): 259–271.



PAJLS 11:
Rethinking Gender in the Postgender Era.
Ed. Paul Gordon Schalow and Janet A. Walker.

Good Mother, Bad Mother

Reading the *Jōjin azari no haha no shū* through the Lens of Gender

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The *Jōjin azari no haha no shū* 成尋阿闍梨母集 (Collection of the Poems of the Mother of the High Priest Jōjin) was compiled between 1071 and 1073 by an aristocratic woman known to us only as Jōjin's Mother 成尋母 (Jōjin no haha).¹ Like all Heian women's diaries that preceded it, this work chronicles a woman's loneliness and disappointment, which results from the nature of the relationship between a mother and her son. In search of selfhood—in this case her identity and role as mother—the author explores all the ramifications of that relationship from birth to death, as well as the feelings of bitterness that resulted from her emotional attachment. In the course of the narrative we witness the author's transformation from a good mother, who thinks only of her son's welfare and career, into a bad mother, a selfish woman with a sinful excess of maternal attachment over her son's religious obligations.

In his book *Eros in Mourning: Homer to Lacan*, Henry Staten discusses the Western philosophical response to the pain of erotic loss, which he claims is universally applicable. His main theme is the "hidden and continual grief" at the core of human experience as a consequence of the transitoriness of temporal things."² Heian literature echoes this 'hidden and continual grief' in terms of the Buddhist teachings of impermanence and loss of fleeting beauty, which are essential elements underlying the aesthetic concept of "the pathos of things" (*mono no aware* 物の哀れ) in poetry (*waka* 和歌), fictional narratives (*monogatari* 物語), and women's diaries (*nikki* 日記).

Based on Staten's argument that a tradition can only be critiqued through the texts proper to it,³ I propose that the *Jōjin azari no haha no shū* is precisely

The author wishes to thank Janet Walker for valuable advice related to this paper. Any errors that remain are naturally the author's.

¹The most comprehensive studies of the *Jōjin azari no haha no shū* within the context of Heian literature are Ii 1996, Ishihara et al. 1990, Hirabayashi 1977, and Shimazu 1959. In English, see Borgen 1996 and Mintzer 1978.

²Staten 1995, p. 2.

³Staten 1995, p. xiii.

such a tradition-producing text. The diary becomes a dream-space in which the author re-lives her relationship with her son and her pain of being separated from him. I will show that Jōjin's Mother's act of self-writing and the resulting construction of her self-images of the good mother/ bad mother serve as a unique defense mechanism to recover the illusion of eternal presence of the desirable object—her son Jōjin 成尋—and in the end accept the pain of his loss. My thesis is that Jōjin's Mother posits her love for her son as forever returning through transformations and variations, and that her emotional bond makes mourning itself a highly developed amorous practice of worldly attachments.

Autobiography criticism originated as a hegemonic practice which focused exclusively on the Western Enlightenment ideology of 'individual uniqueness.' This traditional viewpoint is summarized as follows by Georges Gusdorf, who emphasized the origin of autobiographical writing, privileging a Eurocentric conception:

It would seem that autobiography is not found outside of our cultural area; one would say that it expresses a concern peculiar to Western man, a concern that has been of good use in this systematic conquest of the universe and that he has communicated to men of other cultures; but those men will thereby have been annexed by a sort of intellectual colonizing to a mentality that was not their own.⁴

Over the past two decades the study of autobiography has undergone a significant shift that moved away from a homogeneous to a more heterogeneous practice which places greater emphasis on race, gender, class and nationality as the foundation for our reading and understanding of texts. This aspect is significant because it allows us to see outdated and misleading aspects underlying Gusdorf's traditional view on autobiography as limited to the West, especially when compared to non-Western autobiographical writing, as in the case of Japan.

The main shortcoming of this traditional view is a lack of what Vytautas Kavolis calls "individual self-understanding,"⁵ meaning that autobiographical writing can take different forms in different cultures. For example, in contrast to Western autobiography, which is always factual, Japanese self-writing can also be fictional, or can contain a combination of fact and fiction.⁶ Therefore, we need to ask: "What does autobiography mean to the Japanese? Are there any aspects of autobiographical writing that are unique to Japan in terms of cultural background?" Janet Walker has shown that Japanese autobiographical works, specifically women's diaries, are of three types. The first type comprises a first-or third person account of the author's life, the second a brief account of a specific and limited time period

⁴Gusdorf 1980, pp. 28–29.

⁵Kavolis 1984, p. 59.

⁶The characteristic features of Japanese diaries include 1) public and private diaries, 2) men's diaries which were written in Chinese (*kanji* 漢字) and women's diaries which were mainly written in the indigenous Japanese syllabic script (*hiragana* 平仮名), 3) time as a process, and 4) art diaries which are largely fictional. See Miner 1969, pp. 4–6.

of the author's life, and the third a combination of a historical and biographical account in order to reveal the author's personality.⁷ In this case, only the first type resembles the concept of Western autobiography as outlined by Gusdorf.

This new focus on the dynamics of a text—dynamics referring to modes of production and consumption, reading, and interpretation—emphasizes self-writing as an interpretative strategy for exploring the relationship between reader and text, as well as a 'double-bind' which "reflects the narrator stepping outside him/herself in a moment of recollection and then captures that moment in writing."⁸ Regarding women's self-writing, studies by feminist critics such as Estelle Jelinek and Domna Stanton challenge the idea that a single, essentialist conception of the 'self' is sufficient to interpret narrative practices of authors who struggle to find their own voices from a position other than the privileged center.⁹ They argue that women engage in a much deeper, more complex 'double-bind' in their autobiographies than men because they must transgress into a male domain, adopting a language and narrative structure unfamiliar to their own literary, social, and cultural environment. Therefore, the stigmatization of women's self-writing as an ideology of sexual difference and binary opposition is primarily based on language, as stated by Sidonie Smith:

Since traditional autobiography has functioned as one of those forms and languages that sustain sexual difference, the woman who writes autobiography is doubly estranged when she enters the autobiographical contract. Precisely because she approaches her story telling as one who speaks from the margins of autobiographical discourse, thus as one who is both of the prevailing culture and on the outskirts of it, she brings to her project a particularly troubled relationship to her reader.¹⁰

In accordance with this "troubled relationship" which women face in their self-writing, I will examine the self-images of the good mother/bad mother in the *Jōjin azari no haha no shū*.

The diary begins in Enkyū 延久 3 (1071) when the author moves from Daiun-ji 大雲寺 in Iwakura 岩倉, where she lives together with her son, Jōjin, to Ninna-ji 仁和寺 in Ōmuro 奥付.¹¹ As will be revealed in the pages to come, Jōjin has arranged

⁷See Walker 1994, p. 209–10.

⁸Loftus 1996, p. 155.

⁹See Jelinek 1986 and Stanton 1987.

¹⁰Sidonie Smith 1987, p. 49.

¹¹Although the author's personal name is unknown, Jōjin's biography in the *Daiun-ji engi* 大雲寺縁起 (Origin Legend of Daiun-ji), records his mother as "the daughter of Tsutsumi Dainagon" (Tsutsumi dainagon no musume 堤大納言娘). Tamai Kōsuke has shown that the character "tsutsumi" 堤 was actually a transcription error, and that the character has to be "gon" 権, which is a standard prefix indicating a limited office rank in the Heian period. Based on one of the early entries in the *Jōjin azari no haha no shū*, we know that she author was fourteen in Chōhō 長保 4 (1002) which suggests that she was born in 988. Tamai has traced the lineage of ten individuals who fathered a daughter around that time, and based on the fact that the family tree of one of them reflects a large number of individuals' names in the *Jōjin azari no haha no shū*, he concluded that the author was very likely the daughter of Gon-dainagon Minamoto no Toshikata 権大納言源俊賢 (960–1027). See Tamai 1943.

this relocation of his mother's residence on purpose because he has decided to travel to China and to leave his mother in the care of his younger brother, Risshi 律師, who is a priest at Ninna-ji. Shortly after the move, Jōjin's Mother falls ill and her condition takes a turn for the worse when she hears that Jōjin is going to China to study Buddhism. Her poems express her fear of dying and her sincere wish to see Jōjin one last time. Miraculously, Jōjin, who at this time has already tried to leave for China, returns to his mother and she quickly recovers from her illness. However, in the Third Month of Enkyū 4 (1072) Jōjin finally departs for China, and the occasional letters he sends to his mother are her only mementoes of him. In the Fifth Month of Enkyū 5 (1073) the author's health deteriorates and, though distracted by both physical and psychological pain, she prays that she will attain birth in Amida Buddha's Pure Land Western Paradise (*saihō gokuraku jōdo* 西方極樂淨土) and will eventually be reunited with her beloved son Jōjin in the next life.¹²

In Heian Japan, a mother's worldly fate depended upon the success of her offspring, and it was incumbent upon aristocratic women to produce highly educated children. By the eleventh century, the Japanese had transformed the longing of a mother for her child into a religious idea, and the excessive love for a child was seen as a sin. Heian-period hagiographies of Buddhist monks (*kōsōden* 高僧伝) and didactic Buddhist tales (*bukkyō setsuwa* 仏教説話) propagate that the salvation of mothers is firmly linked to the idea of 'the fall of the mother' due to her strong emotional attachment to her child. Among these hagiographies and didactic tales, the most well-known is the story of the monk Mokuren 目連 traveling to the underworld in order to save his mother, who due to her greedy nature and worldly attachment had fallen into hell. By rescuing and praying for a more favorable rebirth, Mokuren facilitates his mother's salvation. Therefore, the child, who is the cause of the mother's perdition, must exert himself/herself to the utmost in order to rescue the mother from damnation in the afterworld. In a similar sense, Jōjin is expected to facilitate his mother's salvation, but him traveling to China leaves his mother doomed.

I will show that the act of self-writing and the resulting construction of self-images of the good mother/bad mother are closely linked to the Buddhist view of motherhood in Heian Japan.¹³ The author's transformation from a good mother, who is only concerned for her son's career, into a bad mother, a selfish woman exhibiting a sinful excess of maternal attachment, results from Jōjin's Mother positing her love for her son as forever returning through transformations and variations. In the end, her emotional bond makes mourning itself a highly developed amorous practice of worldly attachments.

¹² See Miyazaki 1979. Although her younger son, Risshi, promises to be at his mother's deathbed, the author only wants her son Jōjin at her side. Throughout the diary, there seems to be no indication why the author has such strong feelings of longing for Jōjin but not for Risshi, and why she prefers the company of the former over the latter.

¹³ For a detailed study of the interrelationship between motherhood and Buddhism in pre-modern Japan see Glassman 2002.

The diary consists of two parts. In Book One, the author is portrayed as a stellar mother, encouraging her son in the pursuit of his Buddhist studies. She proudly writes how Jōjin had succeeded in attaining the honorary Buddhist title of “high priest” (*azari* 阿闍梨), and describes her joyous years at Iwakura where they lived together:

I have two sons, Risshi and Jōjin, who are remembered for their pure hearts. To my happiness, day and night I have been under their care for a long time. The high priest (Jōjin) was laboriously engaged in prayers and continued to do so with great devotion. . . . On the first of the seventh month I went to Iwakura. Jōjin had sent a letter asking me to join him and to devote myself to prayers. I was overjoyed to obey his wishes. To my satisfaction, by being so near to each other we were able to spend much time together.¹⁴

However, in Book Two we find that the author’s enthusiasm for Jōjin’s religious success has disappeared. Following her move to Ninna-ji, the author’s shock upon hearing about the sudden news of Jōjin’s departure for China, the move to the capital with her younger son Risshi shortly after, and the mere thought of dying without Jōjin by her side all trigger her transformation from an ideal loving mother into a woman of maternal obsessive attachment over her son’s religious devotion:

I suffer from old age and illness. Upon this pitiful sight of me, one might think that Jōjin would have changed his mind about his journey to China, and it hurts me deeply that he did not. People say that it would be wrong for me to hold a grudge against him, so I am trying to overcome my loneliness and suffering by praying for my imminent death. My misery by far surpasses that of King Jōbon, whose son turned his back on the wish of his father to pass on his rank and to live in comfort. But in my case, it is *a mother being deserted by her son*, the only person *she longs to be with* day and night, and the only person *she can rely on*. There are no words that can express my sorrow.¹⁵

This transformation of the author presents us with an image of motherhood that is deeply rooted in the social context of Heian aristocratic society. In the late Heian period, the negative Buddhist view of women and sexuality led to the definition of women’s sexuality in terms of motherhood, as summarized by Nishiguchi Junko: “Buddhism negated women, approving them only as mothers.”¹⁶ In this way, the dominant culture has relegated female sexuality to sex for procreation, and women came to be seen as the ‘weak sex,’ and a ‘feminine’ and ‘passive’ woman became the ideal. Therefore, a woman’s role was only to serve as a ‘borrowed womb’; women were valued in their capacity for producing male heirs,

¹⁴Miyazaki 1979, p. 17. At this point, the author’s husband has died and that is why she seeks refuge at her son’s residence. Unless otherwise noted, the English translation is my own.

¹⁵Miyazaki 1979, p. 90.

¹⁶See Nishiguchi 1987, p. 63.

and they accepted this ideology and identity of childbearing “within a tradition that has made maternal love an absolute demand of patriarchy.”¹⁷ Ever since, Japanese women have lived under the myth of the “Respect for Motherhood” (*bosei sonchō* 母性尊重). What relation does the author’s self-writing have with her changing physical and psychological condition? I argue that through this recasting, the sin of Jōjin’s Mother becomes the driving force behind her transformation from a good mother to a bad mother.

The author skillfully intertwines both poetry and prose in order to effectively express her suffering. It should be mentioned that up to the point of hearing about Jōjin’s decision to travel to China, *waka* poetry predominates over prose, as suggested by the title of this diary. It contains a total of 174 *waka* poems—all but four composed by the author herself.¹⁸

What distinguishes the *Jōjin azari no haha no shū* from other Heian women’s diaries and serves as a point of departure for exploring the links between psychoanalysis and self-writing is the fact that this work centers unusually closely on its author and her emotional turmoil about her son’s abandonment. Jōjin’s Mother is unable to draw a clear line between herself, the speaker of the diary, and its narrator. Hibarayashi Fumio has shown that this unique fusion of speaker and narrator into one single persona results from the author’s particular usage of honorific verbs, such as “haberi” 侍り, which appears ninety-one times in this diary. Interestingly, of the ninety-one occurrences, sixteen are within the context of conversation, whereas the remaining seventy-five occur in narrative passages.¹⁹ How does the author’s usage of “haberi” in this context support the application of a psychoanalytical approach to her search for her identity as a good mother/bad mother in her self-writing?

Book One describes the events prior to the author’s knowledge of her son Jōjin’s journey, closely resembling a poetry anthology. Therefore, the usage of “haberi” does not strike readers as unusual:

I read [mihaberu] in a letter to the High Priest:²⁰

Listening to the sound of the river
The stream of tears I float upon
Drowns my sorrows
So profound I cannot keep
My body from being washed away.

Kawa to kiku
Namida ni ukabu

¹⁷ Vernon 1989, p. 168.

¹⁸ These four exceptions are poem #22 (Intendant of Tennō-ji), poem #23 (Jōjin), poem #29 (anonymous), and poem #40 (anonymous).

¹⁹ See Hirabayashi 1977.

²⁰ The original Japanese text reads “Dentō daihōshii” 伝灯大法師位, which refers to a high-ranking Buddhist rank that was bestowed by imperial edict. It refers to Jōjin.

Kanashisa ni
 Oritatsu mi o ba
 Seki zo kanetsuru.²¹

Although Jōjin is physically absent, the image of his persona is present in the poetry and prose passages throughout his mother's diary. In this poem, the usage of "haberi" indicates the author's respect for her son because he has attained the rank of high priest and, therefore, she uses the humble form to place herself on a level lower than that of the addressee.²²

But then the author changes the usage of "haberi" in Book Two of her diary. Jōjin's Mother uses the humble expression "haberi" to directly address her son—who is physically absent in the diary—as if they were engaged in a real dialogue. The following excerpt describes the author's feelings after a brief visit from her son while she was suffering from an illness. Jōjin, the main character in her diary, becomes one with Jōjin, the actual person and addressee of this work:

You said [notamau] to me, "If we do not meet again while you live, we shall surely be reunited atop the same lotus." How I regret my speechlessness then, my surrendering to tears and grief as I bade you farewell [idashiyarikikoyu]! There can be no greater joy in store for me than a speedy death. Surely, anyone would agree who knows something of my feelings. I too believe [omoihaberu] that we shall be together in Paradise: How then can I doubt your words?²³

Here, the honorific verb "to say" (*notamau* 宣ふ) refers to Jōjin's own words, whereas "to bid farewell" (*idashiyarikikoyu* 出だし遣り聞ゆ) is a humble expression describing the author's action, as is "to believe" (*omoihaberu* 思ひ待る).²⁴ It is precisely because the diary focuses exclusively on the author and her feelings for her son that she is unable to distance herself from the events she writes about, which allows for a composite character-recipient and narrator-author, as shown above.

Psychoanalysis and self-writing are dialogical processes which probe a person's past, past selves, and memories and psychological conditions, as does Jōjin's Mother's diary. The work successfully illustrates how psychoanalysis and self-representational texts allow the author to return to her past, analyze her past experiences, and re-evaluate them by experiencing them again, while writing in the present.²⁵

Brief though it might be,
 To a life too fragile
 To bear the waiting

²¹Miyazaki 1979, p. 78.

²²Or it might simply indicate a literary convention common to *waka* prefaces.

²³This is Mintzer's translation. See Mintzer 1978, p. 182.

²⁴Hirabayashi 1977, p. 24.

²⁵The other two themes of her poems are Buddhist faith and nature.

How sad
This earthly parting.

Shibashi zo to
Matsu hodo mo naki
Inochi ni wa
Kono yo no kari no
Wakareji zo uki²⁶

Jōjin's Mother's use of what Aileen Gatten calls "the beauty of the moribund" addresses the anxiety that she articulates in the poem.²⁷ Gatten's examination of death and salvation in *Genji monogatari* 源氏物語 (The Tale of Genji) shows that:

Death in *Genji* is a symbolic event that can be interpreted on various levels: as a natural process aestheticized, a literary metaphor, or an indication of a character's spirituality and likelihood of rebirth in Paradise.²⁸

Depending on the level being used, beauty does not die with the separation of people; rather it withdraws from view, to return again at another occasion. In *Genji monogatari* the manner in which a character dies—including physical and mental conditions—reveals his/ her life within the novel. In a similar sense, I would argue, do Jōjin's Mother's memory and obsession with her son reveal her struggle between staying alive until Jōjin's return and dying due to the pain of her loss.

Towards the end of her diary, the author is drowning in her tears. Blinded by her maternal pride and attachment to Jōjin, she does not show the slightest understanding as to why Jōjin's journey to China is essential for his career, and considers his behavior as a sign of indifference to her. Several times she is torn between the desire to live until Jōjin's return and the desire to die as soon as possible. Quite a few of her poems indicate that, instead of continuing to live in her misery and being plagued by her attachment to Jōjin, she would prefer death:

If only my life
Would heed my heart
Would I continue to pass
These days on end,
His distance ever greater.

Inochi dani
Kokoro ni kanau

²⁶Mintzer 1978, p. 22.

²⁷See Gatten 1993, p. 7.

²⁸Gatten 1993, p. 5.

Mi nariseba
 Touzakariyuku
 Hikazu hemashi ya²⁹

Jōjin's Mother is first held up as a paradigm because she insists that her son become a monk and her severity appears as a sacrifice, but she is then later villainized because she blames her son for her suffering. This reversal implies that she is guilty of an extreme instance of the most human and grave sin: a parent's blind love for his/her child. This feeling of blind parental love, called "darkness of the heart" (*kokoro no yami* 心の闇), is a literary theme essential to any understanding of the construction of motherhood in Heian Japan. This self-deprecating expression appears in poetry and prose, and refers to a parent's love for a child that blinds him or her to the child's faults, clouds his or her judgment, and, most importantly, signifies an emotional attachment that becomes an obstacle to Buddhist salvation.³⁰ In this context, on the one hand, a parent's attachment to a child is given a Buddhist interpretation as sinful, but, on the other hand, a parent's attachment to a child is understood to be an inevitable aspect of human life. This is expressed in the phrase "a child is the neck fetter that keeps one bound to the three worlds" (*ko wa sangai no kubikase* 子は三界の首枷).³¹ The theme of "darkness of the heart" refers to both fathers and mothers, but from the late-Heian period onward it became exclusively associated with mothers.

In her diary, Jōjin's Mother tries in vain to understand the disaster that has befallen her, and constantly asks herself why she did not beg her son to stay. She believes that her son's decision to leave her and travel to China is the result of some bad karma, and the diary speaks of her "secret hope" that Jōjin will read it upon his return and know the depths of suffering he has caused his mother. The diary, indeed, seems to be designed to play upon Jōjin's feeling of guilt, going on as it does about her anger over his failure to write her from China, and reminiscing about his infancy, when he would cry if anyone but his mother picked him up and how her embrace always comforted him immediately. Jōjin's Mother envies Queen Maya, the mother of the historical Buddha Sakyamuni, who because of her death following her son's birth was spared the pain of parting:

I have heard that shortly after giving birth, the Buddha's mother, Queen Maya, passed away, leaving King Jōbon, the father, to raise the child and to carry on the family lineage. No matter what, a mother's feelings toward her child differ from those of a father. All the while that the child is in the womb, a mother experiences physical discomfort, but she does not think about bringing comfort to herself. Rather, she turns her mind only to thoughts of her child; of the suffering which comes in giving birth she also

²⁹ Miyazaki 1979, p. 62.

³⁰ The majority of references to "the darkness of the heart" appear in poetry, however.

³¹ See Glassman 2002, p. 14.

seems unaware. From the very moment a child is born, one must pour out one's love upon it; perhaps because of this, I particularly doted upon this Jōjin of mine, paying no heed to my own suffering of the heart.³²

Despite her invective, she makes it clear that all of her anger grows out of a love that is too deep. She blames her own indulgence of Jōjin for his callous treatment of her. The text becomes a dream-space in which Jōjin's Mother can re-live her life and relationship with her son in the way she wished she had. Self-writing is thus a result of *pre-text*. It arises from the author's own life before the text, a life which the writer and reader read as the text. Self-writing also becomes the *pre-text* for the construction of the self-image of the good mother/bad mother by the author and the reader. The self-conscious and careful selection of events, people, and memories within the diary, either "fictive" or "deliberate," re-orders the past and can generate more memories, becoming a form of dreaming and wish-fulfillment. Instead of seeing fiction as a reflection of reality, we might consider self-writing as equally an ordering of the "tentative unfinished" raw material of the real in a metaphoric and symbolic creation of self. The living hell that she is caught in and prays repeatedly to be freed from through death is a hell of her own making; it is the hell of "the darkness of the heart."

Previous studies have suggested that the deep psychological dependence on the mother-son relationship resulted from the fact that men's respect for women was limited to the respect for women as mothers.³³ This reliance of women upon their children—particularly sons—came to be extended from life to the world beyond death, and women felt that the presence of their priestly sons at their deathbed was necessary for their salvation. Jōjin's Mother's separation from her son caused her such great suffering that at moments in the diary she realized that the bitterness engendered in her by Jōjin's decision to go to China could be harmful to him, but she was powerless to control her emotions. At one point, after describing Sakyamuni's awakening to the suffering of human beings upon his encounter with an old, sick, and dead person, Jōjin's Mother applied this parable to herself and her son:

I suffer from old age and illness. Upon this pitiful sight of me, one might think that Jōjin would have changed his mind about his journey to China, and it hurts me deeply that he did not. People say that it would be wrong for me to hold a grudge against him, so I am trying to overcome my loneliness and suffering by praying for my imminent death.³⁴

Jōjin's Mother's feelings of bitterness escalate even more, and she uses words such as "to bear a grudge" (*uramu* 恨む) when describing her feelings towards her son

³²Miyazaki 1979, p. 74.

³³See Glassman 2002.

³⁴Miyazaki 1979, p. 114.

who abandoned her. After recovering from an illness, she expresses her anger toward Sakyamuni Buddha:

I bear a grudge against the Buddha and the Buddha alone. I prayed day and night with a single steady mind that he would let me die quickly, but I recovered!³⁵

Finally, having realized that there is no cure for her suffering, the author begins to concentrate her thoughts on rebirth in the next world and sighs: "Death now seems to be the only thing that would bring me happiness."³⁶ Seeking to turn her mind away from tormenting thoughts of her departed son, she composes a series of twelve poems based on doctrines from Buddhist sutras, drawing comfort from her holy sentiments, as shown in the following passage from her diary:

Words cannot express the pain I feel knowing that I shall not live to see Jōjin again. As I wait for the time to come when we shall repose together on the same lotus, my eyes bleary with crimson tears, flowing without cease, soaking my sleeves like a pond that has overflowed its banks. I am drawn toward Amida's paradise; how sad it is to wander as I do in this dreamlike state on earth.³⁷

Minamoto Junko states that "women led a life of constant self-effacement," and as a result women's procreative sex and the birth of children alone can strengthen their identity as women.³⁸ Thus, a mother who bore a son who became a high priest was certainly saved and respected. According to Ōgoshi Aiko, it was believed that "in order to bear a son to be a high priest, a woman had to be strong emotionally and psychologically, and the life of self-sacrifice was forced."³⁹ To gain respect, a woman had to bear and raise a child, and a mother's self-sacrifice for her child became an ideal. Thus, Ōgoshi argues that a woman's salvation existed only by denying her own sexuality and becoming a mother. Her own sexuality was limited to sex for procreation and the life of a mother.

It is rare for a woman in her eighties to keep a diary devoted exclusively to her son, who occupies her thoughts not only in reality but also in dreams. In the *Jōin azari no haha no shū*, the damning sin of the mother is transformed from one of action to one of mind. With this psychologization of her sin, this diary recasts Jōjin's Mother as a deeply sympathetic character. Originally a concerned woman looking out for her son's career advancement, she becomes one who is guilty only of that most human of crimes—"the darkness of the heart"—an excessive love for her child that blinds her judgment.

³⁵Ibid., p. 149.

³⁶Ibid., p. 149.

³⁷Ibid., p. 150.

³⁸See Minamoto 1993, p. 96.

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