

Tokugawa Women and Spacing the Self

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For too long literary expressions of the person—self-testimonies—have been categorized as a modern Western genre, one which conceives the classical autobiography as a testimony of individuality in the modern world. As feminist critics have pointed out, this genre does not work well even in Western discourses of self-narratives, in particular when considering gender and class, so it works even less well in a non-Western, non-modern context.¹ The Western notion that individuality and autobiographical writing are closely connected is especially prob-

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¹ The literature on this subject is large. Some of the leading literature on this topic includes: Linda Anderson, *Women and Autobiography in the 20th Century* (London/ New York: Prentice Hall/Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1997); Sidonie A. Smith/Julia Watson, *Women, Autobiography, Theory: A Reader* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998); Leigh Gilmore, *Autobiographics: A Feminist Theory of Women's Self-Representation* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994); Carolyn Heilbrun, *Writing a Woman's Life* (New York: Norton, 1988).

lematic in the case of Japan, where the diary literature of the Heian period (794-1185) is well known as a genre of women's self-writing.² According to secondary literature, the classical autobiographical genre seems not to have been represented in the vast quantity of literary production by women of the Tokugawa period (1600-1868). Modern scholars' lack of attention to these self-narratives may stem from the narrow definition of autobiography itself, and hence the assumption that such texts simply do not exist.³ By relating to a greater range of autobiographical texts, the focus of this article is to introduce the production of self-testimonies by women writers of the Tokugawa period, which remains so little explored.⁴

² For a discussion of these diaries, see Paul Gordon Schalow/ Janet A. Walker, *The Woman's Hand: Gender and Theory in Japanese Women's Writing* (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 1996); John R. Wallace, *Objects of Discourse: Memoirs by Women of Heian Japan* (Ann Arbor, MI : Center for Japanese Studies, the University of Michigan, 2005).

³ For a good reader of autobiography by women and different autobiographical genres, which includes the genre of the diary, see Martine Watson Brownley and Allison B. Kimmich, *Women and Autobiography* (Wilmington, Del.: SR Books, 1999). In the past decades, many more diaries written by women in the Tokugawa period have come to light, which promises the rewriting of the standard history of Tokugawa literature. Shiba Keiko and Yabuta Yutaka are among the leading scholars in this area in Japan. Although scholars in Japan have been introducing women writers of the Tokugawa period, the topic is still mostly neglected in English literature.

⁴ In English, see Saeki Shōichi, "Autobiographical Literature in Japan," in *Japan Echo* 10:3 (1983): 69-75, for an overview of autobiographical writings in Japan, which includes both men and women. For a mid-nineteenth century woman, see Anne Walthall's biography of the poet and political activist Matsuo Taseko. Anne Walthall, *The Weak Body of a Useless Woman: Matsuo Taseko and the*

In fact, we do come across texts that resemble what is commonly considered autobiography in the Tokugawa period, although these texts are written by men only.⁵ This raises the question why the style of personal expression by women should be different from that of men. One answer can be found in the link between the autobiographical genre, which can be construed as masculine, and Tokugawa male-centered society. Feminist theoretical discussions of female self-narrative have posited that the female subject is not able to write in the masculine genre of autobiography, an argument that can be extended to the Japanese case as well.⁶ Men and women in the Tokugawa period produced self-testimonies in a variety of forms, even though the forms as such are not consistent. In fact, there is a large variety of different genres of self-testimony that do not have much in common formally. Moreover, one work hardly resembles another. This has led critics to argue that we may simply not call them autobiographies proper. While in particular female self-narratives of the Tokugawa period are susceptible to this critique, I do not intend to describe an autobiographical tradition for women's life-writing different from men.

Meiji Restoration (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1998). Also, see the recent monograph by the author on the early nineteenth century woman Tadano Makuzu. Bettina Gramlich-Oka, *Thinking Like a Man: Tadano Makuzu (1763-1825)*, (Leiden/ Boston: Brill, 2006). A thorough investigation of autobiographical texts of the Tokugawa period is desirable. For a short introduction for a method to categorize these texts, see Wolfgang Schamoni, "Kōkai to Hikōkai no aida," in *Misuzu* 503 (March 2003): 36-53.

⁵ We have a few works written by men of that period, which are comparable to the Western auto-biography. For instance, the self-justification of the politician and scholar Arai Hakuseki in *Told around the Brushwood Fire*, or the autobiography of the low-ranking samurai Katsu Kōkichi in *Musui's Story*. Saeki, "Autobiographical," pp.74-75 (see note 4).

⁶ I draw here on Watson Brownley/ Kimmich, *Women and Autobiography* (see note 3).

Instead, I agree with Linda Peterson that gender alone cannot be the sole "hermeneutic key to authorial intention and textual production." There are other important factors, such as social, regional, and religious practices, which need to be accounted for when investigating self-testimonies.⁷

For this reason, I will investigate here three women whose literary productions, I demonstrate how their social space has a bearing on their chosen form of self-narrative. Because the texts under discussion do not offer themselves as classical autobiographies, they point more distinctly to the social space the woman writer occupied and from which these works were generated. A reading of the different forms of self-testimony gives us the opportunity to witness how women participated in the struggle to position themselves within their respective social spaces. Each author examined here participated in a network or "field" (in the Bourdieusian sense),⁸ and it is their forms of expression that demonstrate the women's sense of belonging, as well as their position within the social hierarchy of the field.⁹ Each woman was part of a socio-political environment dominated by husbands, fathers, sons, and male teachers.¹⁰ We find in the self-testimonies of these women how historic-

⁷ Linda H. Peterson, *Traditions of Victorian Women's Autobiography: The Poetics and Politics of Life Writing* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999), p. 2.

⁸ For an outline of Bourdieu's definition of the field, see Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, translated by Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991).

⁹ I thank Herman Ooms for guiding me back to Bourdieu and that his notion of "field" may not describe a completely different notion of what the European historians at the Berlin conference meant by the term "space."

¹⁰ There were certainly also mothers, female teachers and sisters, etc. in the social environment of these women who played important roles. Yet, I argue that the society was male-dominated and so were the structures of social space.

cultural concepts of the person in her particular social position have been navigated, addressed, and contested in a male-dominated society. In other words, the investigation of how these women performed their positioning within their respective social space (or field) will give us an indication of why they chose their particular form and style for doing so.

The three women I analyze here are Rai Shizuko (or Baishi) (1760-1842), Tadano Makuzu (1763-1825), and Iseki Takako (1785-1844).¹¹ They used their ink brushes in ways that portray in each case a persona that was part of a social space.¹² All three women meant to renegotiate their location within this space and its internal hierarchy. There is no direct connection between these women—they came from different backgrounds, and the forms of their texts differ not only from each other but also, as far as I know, from any other examples of self-testimony. The social spaces of these women conditioned the persona that each uses to write, and the differences in their social spaces produced different forms of self-representation.

Literacy, in particular among daughters of scholars, physicians, and samurai, was high during the late Tokugawa period (late eighteenth century through the 1840s) when these women lived. Literary production by women of all ranks included short and long forms of poetry, travel diaries, and diaries written mostly in classical language.¹³ In general, education for women

took place at first at home, later with a poetry teacher, and would often continue throughout their lives within a network of poetry students and teachers. Shizuko, Makuzu, and Takako were all accomplished poets and life-long participants in poetry circles. In spite of their commonalities—their gender, and their training in the same classical canon of poetry and prose collections—we find individual forms of presentation in their literary activity due to how they aimed to position themselves within their respective social fields.

Rai Shizuko (1760-1843) and the Records of the Confucian Wife

Today Rai Shizuko is best known in Japan as the mother of Rai San'yō (1780-1832), famous painter, poet, calligrapher, scholar, and author of *Nihon Gaishi* (History of Japan, 1827). Some may know of Shizuko's husband, the Confucian scholar Rai Shunsui (1746-1816), who mainly shaped the structure of teachings at the newly-founded domain school in Hiroshima and whose scholarship made him well-respected in the capital of Edo (today Tokyo). Still fewer historians know Shizuko for her diary, simply called Baishi's Diary (*Baishi nikki*) after her *nom de plume*, Baishi. Next to travelogues and hundreds of poems, Shizuko wrote this diary, which spans fifty-eight years. Most of the diary was printed along with her son's Collected Works in 1931. Its last ten years, however, are only available in manuscript form.¹⁴ Quite a few biographies have been

¹¹ I chose these three women, since they lived around the same time, came from different backgrounds and moved in different spaces. Also, they are rather well-known in Japan even if not well-studied. For more about each woman, see below.

¹² Names are given in the Japanese order, surnames first followed by personal names or surnames.

¹³ Classical language denotes here a contemporary version of the Heian language, written in the syllabary with only sparse use of Chinese characters. In contrast, Classical Chinese was considered the official language, including scholarship, in which boys were trained. While men used Classical Japanese as well in their

letters, diaries, and essays, women only rarely used Chinese. About the gendered usage of language, see Schalow/ Walker, *The Woman's Hand*.

¹⁴ The diary's manuscript is kept today in the Rai San'yō Museum in Hiroshima. The Rai family kept Shizuko's diary and we can assume that until its publication in the early twentieth century, probably only family members had read it. There is no evidence that further copies of the manuscript were made. Early on the diary was edited, but we do not know by whom, nor when. At that time, when the compiler put two years

written about Shizuko, mostly to explain the familial circumstances of her son. In 1997, Minagawa Mieko introduced Shizuko and the diary to the academic world in a monograph.¹⁵ Outside of Japan, Shizuko has yet to be discovered.

Shizuko was born 1760 in the merchant town of Osaka to the Confucian scholar and town physician Inooka Gisai (1717-1789) and his second wife Kijima Sawa. Shizuko was the elder of two daughters that Gisai was able to see live to adulthood. Since four other of Gisai's children had died, he showed his devotion to these two daughters with much care and attentiveness, in particular to their education. After having probed various Confucian schools of thought, Gisai determined to study in depth the teachings of Zhu Xi (1130-1200), in which he also instructed his daughters. Through his network of fellow scholars he met Rai Shunsui (1746-1816), a promising young scholar who had opened his private school in Osaka at the youthful age of twenty-eight. Gisai was so impressed with his scholarship that he encouraged Shunsui to marry his daughter Shizuko. The marriage took place in 1779, when Shunsui was thirty-four and Shizuko twenty years old.¹⁶

Gisai also made sure that Shizuko was well trained in poetry. On the occasion of meeting her

together into one volume, some of the booklets—each covers more or less one year—were arranged in the wrong order. Out of the fifty-eight years, only two years are absent completely (the years of 1813-14), while in the first fifteen years some shorter periods are missing. Minagawa Mieko surmises that these pages, rather than having been lost, probably never existed at all. Minagawa Mieko, *Rai Shizuko no shufu seikatsu* (Tokyo: Kirara Shobō, 1997), p. 98.

¹⁵ Minagawa, *Rai Shizuko*. See also Ōguchi Yūjirō, *Rai Baishi nikki no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Ochanomizu Joshi Daigaku. Jendā Kenkyū Sentā, 2001), in which students of the vast material of the Rai family published a compilation of articles related to Shizuko's diary.

¹⁶ Ages are given by traditional Japanese reckoning, one or two years older than by Western count.

father-in-law Rai Kōō (1707-83), who came from his native Takehara (Aki province) to Osaka, the newly-wed couple, Shunsui's father, and his youngest brother Rai Kyōhei (1756-1834) went on a sightseeing tour to the old capital of Kyoto. Shizuko drafted an essay, *Yūrakuki* (Leisure Trip to Kyoto, 1779), which reflects her thorough training in classical literature and a style that was common among many poets of her time.¹⁷ Shizuko mentions that her father and later her son introduced her to poets such as Ozawa Roan (1723-1801) and Kagawa Kageki (1768-1843), both central figures in Kyoto poetry circles who would continue to instruct Shizuko in the newest poetic trends.¹⁸

Soon after their marriage in 1781, Lord Asano Shigeakira (1743-1813) of the Hiroshima domain offered Shunsui a position as teacher for the new domain school, which was to be opened in the following year. This was a great opportunity for Shunsui since it provided semi-samurai status with a regular income. Shizuko followed her husband a few months later to Hiroshima, on which occasion her father Gisai sent her a long memorandum of instruction. The lessons, consisting of 111 points, most of them in the form of a poem, were simple: Shizuko needed to learn to rise to her new status. Now that she was part of the ruling class and not a commoner anymore, she had to preserve and practice the Confucian Way even more rigorously, and her father's list of advice should be of assistance.¹⁹ As the wife of a scholar in Hiroshima, she was supposed to leave behind her taste for the high culture of Osaka and the old capital, Kyoto, and instead to follow the Way seriously.²⁰ Most important for Shizuko would be to adjust to her new social world, hence Gisai suggested:

¹⁷ For a print version of the essay, see Kizaki Aikichi/Rai Seiichi, ed., *Rai San'yō Zenshō*, vol. 6 (Tokyo, 1931; repr. Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1983). Shizuko wrote six travel diaries all together.

¹⁸ See Azuma Shōko, "Baishi no bunji," in Ōguchi, *Rai*, p. 54.

¹⁹ Document published in Ōguchi, *Rai*, pp. 121-26.

²⁰ Ōguchi, *Rai*, p. 122.

Yo no naka ni Whatever in the world
michi yori soto wa lies outside
nanigoto mo the Way,
supporapon no throw
pon ni shite oke away!²¹

Gisai knew that Shizuko would encounter difficulties in her new home and so he encouraged her not to keep the worries and anger in her heart but to take it easy and concentrate only on what lay ahead of her, namely the running of a model Confucian household.

Before the family could settle in their new life in Hiroshima, however, Shunsui was ordered to instruct the young lord-apparent in Edo.²² Shunsui, who had to leave wife and son behind in Hiroshima, worried how they would manage in the unfamiliar town, and asked his lord for permission to let them go to Osaka with Gisai. The wish was granted and Shizuko stayed with their young son San'yō in her natal house while Shunsui moved on to Edo.

Being reunited with her natal family gave Shizuko time to consider her new life in Hiroshima. While the reasons are unclear, Shizuko started a diary during her stay in Osaka.²³ The diary, today called *Baishi's Old Diary* (*Baishi ko nikki*), has many missing entries. It is significant that the transmitted manuscript begins with the day of her mother's death.²⁴ Perhaps the shock over the loss of her mother, who had died sud-

denly while still in her forties, made Shizuko decide that it was now her turn to become a female role model.²⁵

Writing a diary was certainly nothing extraordinary for men or women at the time. Shunsui and Gisai, too, were keeping daily records. The extant manuscript of Gisai's diary, *Hibi sōkō* (Daily Notes), covers the same period as Shizuko's old diary but we can assume that he had already been writing his for some time.²⁶ Shunsui began to record his daily events on the day of his appointment as a domain scholar and the last entry dates two months before his death.²⁷ Back in Hiroshima, Shizuko began writing the new diary right after her arrival. She would continue for fifty-eight years, ending two months before her death.²⁸ It is one of the few instances where we have diaries of a couple, often written side by side, overlapping for about thirty years.²⁹

Each diarist, Gisai, Shunsui, and Shizuko, wrote with a different focus according to his or her function and duty. They documented their roles within the social field they occupied. This is most apparent in Shunsui's diary, in which he records his activities, meetings, and plans in his new position as domain scholar. He meant to advance Zhu Xi Confucianism, which was not in vogue at the time, nor were scholars as such highly respected, and so his diary is one testimony of this task. Shizuko's role was to document the daily chores and duties of the wife in the new Confucian household.

Shizuko's new diary does not read as a voy-

²¹ Ōguchi, *Rai*, p. 126.

²² During the Tokugawa period the shogunate ordered the lords to have their wives and heirs residing in Edo under the shogun's watch.

²³ Minagawa surmises that it was Gisai who encouraged Shizuko to keep a diary. In Gisai's admonition we find a line in which he encourages Shizuko to write a diary because it was one's duty to look back on the day and see if one had acted rightfully. Minagawa, *Rai*, p. 73.

²⁴ It is difficult to establish when Shizuko began writing the diary; the extant version today dates from 1784/7/21 until 1785/5/12, after which Shizuko left the following year to return to Hiroshima with her husband on duty in Edo. Days and months follow the lunar calendar.

²⁵ Her younger sister Naoko still lived at home.

²⁶ All of Gisai's diary is extant from New Year's Day of 1785 until 1785/11/24. Manuscript kept by the Rai family. There was even a short time when Shizuko's sister wrote into both diaries as a substitute for Gisai and Shizuko. The entries overlap in content. Minagawa, *Rai*, p. 56.

²⁷ The diary covers the thirty-four years between 1781/12/16 and 1815/12/2.

²⁸ The main diary begins the following day, 1785/5/13.

²⁹ Out of the thirty years, the couple recorded their diaries in separation for more than ten years when his duty kept Shunsui in Edo.

age to the innermost thoughts of the writer; in fact, it is a plain record written in abbreviated language. The diary simply begins with the day the Rai family returned to Hiroshima after an absence of almost two years:

1785/5/13: Clear skies, rain at night. Husband finishes correspondence. Visitors.

5/14: Rain in the morning, later sunny. Many visitors come to welcome us. Among them [family doctor] Hayashi's wife and daughter.

5/15: Clear skies. Completing the ceremony at the ancestral altar. I clean up the storage.³⁰

The diary was not meant to gain Shizuko literary acclaim, but rather to be a record for family members. When we compare Shizuko's diary to Shunsui's they are quite similar in form. For instance, Shunsui's diary for the same days records:

1785/5/14: Off to work. Baien is in mourning over his mother-in-law . . . Kagawa came to work as usual. In the evening, I went to see Kawasaki Shikanosuke

5/15: Off-duty. Many visitors come to welcome us.

5/16: Off to work.

5/17: Off to work. Strong wind and rain, later clear.

Even though Shizuko was trained in classical women's literature and knew many literary diaries of women, her style is as plain as her husband's.³¹

The entries differ according to the diarist's function in the household, which is more evident

³⁰ The quotations herein refer to the print version in Kizaki/Rai, *Rai*.

³¹ Shizuko, for instance, copied in 1793/1/10 *Matsukage nikki* (1685-1709) by Ōgimachi Machiko (d.1724) who was the mistress of Yanagisawa Yoshiyasu (1658-1714), advisor to the shogun Tsunayoshi.

from Shunsui's diary when he resides in Edo.³² Shunsui, in addition to recording his daily affairs, copied shogunal edicts and letters he received. Shizuko wrote short daily entries describing such things as the coming and going of visitors, gifts received and given, letters sent or received, food served, and the illness of family members and its treatment.³³ For instance,

1804/5/1: Clear skies. Preparations are completed. In the evening, Shunsui off to work.

5/2: Clear skies. Cleaning fish [for celebrating the departure of Shunsui's students to Edo].

5/3: Clear skies. Preparing wrapped rice. Hirata and Fujimura, both students, going on board [to Edo].

Since Shunsui's duties would often call him to Edo, he would rely on Shizuko's records after his return to inform him what had occurred in the household during his absence.

Shizuko took care of the household while her husband was in Edo for more than ten years over all.³⁴ Her first twenty years of recordkeeping is predominantly occupied with her four children's health and upbringing. One year after their marriage, their son San'yō was born (1780-1832), nine years later their daughter Tō (1789-1826), and then two boys, in 1794 and 1798 respectively. Only San'yō and his sister Tō would survive past childhood. In the end, however, Shizuko survived them all.³⁵ In minute detail she described

³² There is one month, from 1798/1/29 until 2/24, when Shunsui was sick and Shizuko continued to write in his stead. Shunsui's Diary, p. 351, and Baishi Diary, pp. 124-25, in Kizaki/Rai, *Rai*. The entries of 1/29 are identical.

³³ List of gifts given is by Otake Sachiko, "Rai San'yō no haha Shizuko ga nokoshita 'Baishi nikki' ni okeru tabemono kanrenkijutsu," in Ōguchi, *Rai*.

³⁴ This may explain the missing entries as well.

³⁵ San'yō died at age 53, when Shizuko was 73, Tō at age 37 when Shizuko was 67. The youngest son Shirō died after only six days, and

when the children were sick and what she and the doctors administered. For instance, when her son was nine years old he was infected with smallpox.

1788/3/13: Clear skies. [San'yō] has fever. I asked Hayashi for medicine. After the eighth hour, he slept. In the evening Hayashi came for a sick visit. He prescribed some medicine. At dawn, temper outbreak, repeated two more times until the morning . . . [San'yō] had some vegetables for dinner.

3/14: Clear skies. [San'yō's] fever was the same. For breakfast, he ate two small grilled rice balls. From two o'clock in the afternoon, he was again moody, later a bit better. He threw up some water. For lunch he had rice soup. In the morning he was more at peace. Had a bowel movement.

Shizuko's description goes on for one more month until San'yō recovered from his illness and the family celebrated this event with steamed rice with red beans. Over the years, many similar entries about the care of sick children fill the pages.

Shunsui made it his task to practice Zhu Xi's teachings, among which were family rituals. In particular, ancestor worship, which was at that time in Japan more commonly fashioned after Buddhist rites, became central to the Rai household. From Gisai's diary we learn that the Inooka family already observed Confucian funeral rites, but it would be Shunsui's legacy to perfect them.³⁶ Shunsui recorded in his diary that when he was first on duty in Edo (1783-85) he performed the ancestor rituals, including the wearing of the proper garments. Once back home, Shunsui began to observe the ceremonies with more detail. Shizuko's role was the preparation of the meals and the daily rituals prescribed for

Daijirō at age three, which caused Shizuko in particular much pain as we can read in her diary.

³⁶ For a list of Shunsui's writings on family rituals, see Minagawa, *Rai*, p. 257.

the wife of the household.³⁷ In her diary, we find detailed descriptions of the rites. Just as Shizuko usually began her daily entry with the weather, she would continue by mentioning the morning rite in front of the ancestral altar before she recorded other events of the day.

1788/1/1 [New Year]: Clear skies. Reverence to the ancestors. Prepared as offerings: soup and rice wine.

2/1: Clear skies. *Ozōni* (rice cakes boiled with vegetables for New Year) offered to the ancestors.

3/3 [Girls Day]: Clear skies. A little windy. Reverence to the ancestors. Rice cakes, rice wine, and soup offered. Sister-in-law and Hisatarō [son San'yō] went to visit the Katō family. In the evening, I followed them.

4/17 [Shunsui's mother's memorial]: Performance of the ritual. Offerings: Tray: radish, *aralia cordata* [mountain plant], *perilla*, knotweed, fish eggs; Soup: mushroom [*gyrophora escutenta*], arrowhead [*sagittaria trifolia*], shrimp... Plate: bamboo shoots, egg, citron... Grilled dish: sea bream; Rice; Rice wine[...] tea and sweets.³⁸

The diary was intended to demonstrate how seriously the rites were taken, and also as a guide for future practice.

In the early years, apparently at least once she made the mistake of observing the ceremonies late by one month, so that the next time Shunsui left for Edo he gave Shizuko instructions not to forget the important dates.³⁹ By 1793, Shizuko recorded that she honored ancestors up to the fourth generation. There were ten ancestors to worship: the former four generations, including

³⁷ Shunsui would perform them with Shizuko when in Hiroshima; otherwise, his brother would do the man's part.

³⁸ On 1816/12/30, for instance, Shizuko documents in the diary even more details of the food she prepared, where she got the material from, in which order, etc.

³⁹ Cited in Minagawa, *Rai*, p. 115.

one of Shunsui's great uncles and his wife, since they did not have children who could perform their services. In order to complete the rites, Shunsui constructed a Confucian-style house that had an offering hall (*mitamaya*). It would take fourteen years before the family could move in. In 1804 the house, including the ancestral hall, was finally finished.⁴⁰ By 1809, due to various deaths, the family held rituals for fifteen ancestors. By building the ideal scholar's house in which Confucian rites could take place, Shunsui demonstrated that Confucianism was not only to be followed in the domain school but also at home. Inner and outer, public and private were not to be set apart.

The diary conveys the maturing of a woman. Shizuko went through a process of learning how to write the diary. The middle years are filled with anxiety over who the successor to Shunsui should be. In her later years, in particular after Shizuko turned sixty (four years after Shunsui's death), after her husband's successor, her grandson, was old enough to marry and his wife took over the household chores, Shizuko described how she would accompany her son San'yō on journeys and pursue the way of the poet.⁴¹ The poetry begins then to take up more pages, and so do her travel accounts, written in the classical language.⁴² Altogether, there are more than one hundred poems in the diary, while for the first thirty years we have only a handful of poems.⁴³ Shizuko learned to balance in her diary her ob-

servance as a Confucian housewife including the daily rituals and ceremonies, while age gave her the freedom to indulge in leisure.⁴⁴

It would be a mistake to regard Shizuko's diary as a linear narrative. There are many gaps, inconsistencies, and entries that do not fit, particularly in regard to language. Shizuko generally employed a short, abbreviated style that describes only the essentials. Over the years Shizuko included more poetry or the use of the classical style, but we can also find such occasions early on, usually in connection to separation from family members (going off to Edo, getting married, death) or her own departure.⁴⁵ The most drastic change occurred when Shizuko retired to the language of the poet, namely, when her son San'yō, who was newly married, ran away. This act meant a great crisis to the entire family. A couple of days after she learned of San'yō's absconding and visitors came constantly to give support and advice, Shizuko wrote in her diary:

<i>Omou koto</i>	Without a thought,
<i>nakute mimashiya</i>	for a while, I only
<i>to bakari ni</i>	observe,
<i>nochi no koyohi zo</i>	but later this evening
<i>tsuki ni nakinuru</i>	I will shed tears under
	the moon. (1800/9/13)

⁴⁰ For a map of the house, see Minagawa, *Rai*, p. 129.

⁴¹ The grandson's first marriage lasted only one year, thus the second wife took over the household in 1822, when Shizuko was already 63.

⁴² Shizuko took four trips with her son: in 1819, 1824, 1827, and 1829.

⁴³ Shizuko always was active as a poet, as her compiled poetry collection indicates. Azuma Shōko has a detailed analysis of Shizuko's various stages as a poet from an apprentice, through to having a small salon in her house that would grow over the years until she was free to travel again to meet with many other poets. Azuma, *Baishi*.

⁴⁴ In 1829/12/29 Shizuko mentions that she could not sleep and decided to think about poems. At the end of the booklet for that year, she attached one of her travelogues, including how much she spent on gifts during her journey to Kyoto.

⁴⁵ In general, Shizuko reached for her poetic conventions when away from home, reminiscent of classic travel accounts. See for instance, when San'yō left for Edo to go to school (Shizuko was 38); when Tō got married (Shizuko was 49); when the new heir went to Edo to study (Shizuko was 83). For her own departure, see for instance, when Shizuko, together with her son, left for Osaka to visit her father who was sick. The two stayed away for one month and the entries during that period are mostly in classical language (1788/7/26-8/27).

Apparently Shizuko practiced her father's advice, who once said, "When you feel sorrow, compose poetry." Shunsui who was again on duty in Edo decided to disinherit San'yō in order to give him the freedom he desired.

There are also places in the diary that attest to Shizuko's decision not to record her feelings at all. In 1796/5/27 her second son died of smallpox at the early age of three. Shizuko stopped writing for the rest of the year.⁴⁶ Again, when her husband died in 1816/2/19, Shizuko noted his passing in the diary, but left the entry for the following day blank. She noted for the twenty-first only that it was raining. When Shizuko learned of the death of her sister who lived in Edo, and of San'yō's death while he was in Kyoto, she only documented the bad news; there is no poem or further comment.⁴⁷ In addition, while the diary is not supposed to be a space for Shizuko to demonstrate her talent as a poet, it is nonetheless the space where she mentions the poetry meetings she held at her house, the trips she took, and the correspondence she had with teachers, offering therefore another of Shizuko's personae, even if only indirectly.

Shizuko's diary is the self-testimony of a woman who is part of this social space; she is a vital member of the Confucian household. What was for Shizuko a new form of expression at first became routine over time, and perhaps her early lack of familiarity explains the missing entries and irregularities. She had found her voice in the persona of a Confucian housewife whose duty it was to record daily events. The positioning the couple took should have granted them a higher place in the hierarchy of the social field, and when we consider Shunsui's reception in Edo and Hiroshima it appears that he, and in extension Shizuko as an essential part of the household structure, was successful.

⁴⁶ Shunsui, too, who was at home, wrote only scattered entries in the following weeks, then his diary was resumed on a daily basis on 1796/7/1.

⁴⁷ See the entries of 1832/8/12 and 1832/10/4, respectively. While not in the diary, we have in her poetry collection many poems that account for each loss.

Tadano Makuzu (1763-1825): The Woman Scholar

With the publication of Tadano Makuzu's collected works in 1994 in Japan, a wave of interest in this thinker and poet was initiated. In English, there is the translation of Makuzu's most debated work, the political treatise *Hitori kangae* (Solitary Thoughts, 1818-19), and recently the monograph by the author.⁴⁸

Makuzu offers the rare example of how a woman positions herself within a social space explicitly, fitting well into the Bourdieusian complex of an academic field in which players attempt to gain a higher stance. Makuzu, since she attempted to participate in intellectual debate—to be accepted as a scholar—did exactly that. Having observed her father and brother, who were both scholars and physicians of some renown, she decided to take their position after their deaths, if not in real life at least on paper.

Makuzu's main text is *Hitori kangae*, which she meant to be published in order to gain her recognition in the scholarly world. Makuzu criticized rulers and scholars alike for their remoteness from reality and delivered reform plans that deal with the current socio-economic misery in the country. Makuzu's self-testimony is much more straightforward than Shizuko's diary. Moreover, Makuzu's text is more easily recognized as an autobiographical work. Makuzu supplied us with a personal history, while Shizuko did not do so in her diary. Makuzu was born as Kudō Ayako in 1763, the oldest daughter—out of seven—of the physician Kudō Heisuke (1734-1800), who served the lord of the Date family of the Sendai domain in Edo.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Suzuki Yoneko, ed., *Tadano Makuzu shū* (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1994). Janet R. Goodwin et al., trans. "Solitary Thoughts: A Translation of Tadano Makuzu's *Hitori Kangae*," parts 1 and 2, in *Monumenta Nipponica* 56:1 and 56:2 (2001). Gramlich-Oka, *Thinking*.

⁴⁹ Makuzu's mother was the daughter of Kuwabara Takatomo Yukiakira (d. 1775), a fellow physician serving the same domain. The mother only plays an important role in the narrative when Makuzu means to emphasize the

We learn further how Makuzu's life course was circumscribed and predestined by the existing family structure that centered on the patriarchal household. Her education was part of the preparation for Makuzu's task of bringing social capital to the household. She therefore received the education appropriate to the girls of her time and status in the shogun's capital of Edo.⁵⁰ Makuzu's first outside teacher was celebrated as one of the great female poetry teachers of her time. Kada no Tamiko (1722-1786) taught her to read and write in the style of Heian classics, such as the *Kokinshū* (Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems) or *Ise monogatari* (Tales of Ise).⁵¹ Makuzu's principal teacher, though, was her father, who lifted her spirit and made her into an educated woman who could claim to be a connoisseur of the theater, the tea ceremony and Western Studies. Makuzu's service at the Sendai upper mansion and later Hikone mansion nurtured her perceptions further, which should have equipped her to marry up to men of samurai ranking.

After a brief failed marriage, Makuzu was remarried in 1797 at the age of thirty-five to Tadano Iga Tsurayoshi (d. 1812). Makuzu's marriage, to which she dutifully agreed, was meant to promote her brother's career within the domain's bureaucracy by building stronger ties with a Sendai domain retainer.

My father Heisuke had five daughters. He wished to marry one of them to a retainer [of the Date house], but none of my sisters said she would go. While they feigned ignorance of our father's hope, one by one their life courses were decided. I realized that if I did not act, my father's wish

would go unfulfilled, so I set aside my own desires and moved to this place.⁵²

While her husband stayed in Edo most of their married life, Makuzu was welcomed in Sendai by his mother, a widow since 1790, Iga's younger brothers, and Iga's three sons.⁵³ The move had far-reaching consequences for Makuzu. In her new role as the wife of a samurai, Makuzu started to develop a literary persona, expressing her impressions of her new environment and of the people she met. Makuzu stated that she started writing in Sendai.⁵⁴ I surmise that within her new social place Makuzu meant to position herself within its hierarchy and her brush was her means to do so. Her recognition as a poet was acknowledged and we know that she participated in the poetry circles of her new domicile.

Yet, over time, Makuzu developed another persona that would claim a place as the rightful heiress of her father's intellectual legacy. Heisuke was not merely a physician, as Makuzu repeatedly pointed out, but was also involved in shogunal politics concerning both the northern border to Russia and the Nagasaki trade.⁵⁵ Both issues found a place in Makuzu's own views, which provided her with authority in turn. Some twenty years after arriving in Sendai, and having lost first her father, then her brother and her husband, Makuzu meant to take her family's place in her father's and brother's network of scholars.

Having made up my mind, I resolved to return to my father the body he had given me and, resigning myself to my life being over at the age of thirty-five, set out on a

roots of her literary talent, which go back to her maternal side.

⁵⁰ *Mukashibanashi* in Suzuki, *Tadano*, p. 14. *Mukashibanashi* (Stories from the Past, 1811-12), a six-chapter narrative, provides much autobiographical information. For the purpose of this article, however, I will concentrate on *Hitori kangae*, since it displays Makuzu's positioning in the scholarly space more concretely. For more on *Mukashibanashi*, see Gramlich-Oka, *Thinking*.

⁵¹ *Mukashibanashi* in Suzuki, *Tadano*, p. 110.

⁵² *Hitori kangae*, in Suzuki, *Tadano*, p. 283. Translation from Goodwin, "Solitary," part 2, p. 174.

⁵³ Letter by Makuzu to Iga, in Kado Reiko, "Tadano Makuzu no otto Iga ate shokan," in *Edo ki onna kō* 11 (2000), pp. 73-74.

⁵⁴ *Hitori kangae*, in Suzuki, *Tadano*, p. 291.

⁵⁵ Hokkaido, the border between Russia and Japan, was a frontier at the time, and Heisuke suggested its colonization. Nagasaki was the only port through which the shogunate conducted direct foreign trade.

journey of no return. There was little to it, I thought, since it was better than the road to death. Whatever hardships I encountered after arriving here, I endured, thinking them better than the tortures of hell. But ever since [my brother] Motosuke left this world, my mind has not been at ease. I wrote this book [*Hitori kangae*] thinking that unless I pursued my father's goals, he would have developed his ideas in vain.⁵⁶

Makuzu wistfully created the image of herself as the dutiful daughter, willing to do anything that would help her family.⁵⁷ Only after her father's designs were shattered due to the premature death of his heir, Makuzu's brother, who did not leave behind a son, Makuzu had to step up from her passive position and take over the lost rudder of the family's intellectual legacy.

Makuzu's strategy is straightforward: She complained, as many other autobiographers do, that there was nobody to whom she could reveal her thoughts, and therefore she used her brush to write those thoughts down, in solitude.⁵⁸ Yet, in *Hitori kangae* Makuzu is self-conscious and persuasive, and her decision to send the manuscript to Takizawa Bakin (1767-1848), one of the most popular authors of the time, is certainly a sign of her true confidence.

As for half-baked scholars, their thinking is full of errors; the more they gather together, the more they argue without producing wisdom. This is the general situation among scholars. In what way do they differ from frogs?⁵⁹

She wanted *Hitori kangae* to position her in

⁵⁶ *Hitori kangae*, in Suzuki, *Tadano*, p. 283. Translation from Goodwin, "Solitary," part 2, p. 174.

⁵⁷ Nevertheless, Makuzu does not speak ill of her marriage to Iga, which apparently worked well.

⁵⁸ See for instance *Hitori kangae*, in Suzuki, *Tadano*, p. 260.

⁵⁹ *Hitori kangae*, in Suzuki, *Tadano*, p. 295. Goodwin, "Solitary," part 2, p. 183.

the intellectual field, where her father had once been an influential player.

What distinguished Makuzu from a male scholar who meant to establish himself, such as Rai Shunsui, for example, is foremost her gender. Makuzu was well aware of this, and also of the fact that it would not allow her to participate in the world of scholars. For that reason Makuzu ends her treatise with a request to Takizawa Bakin:

Since I am a woman lacking in knowledge, I have stated whatever I wanted to without a second thought. Please correct my writings according to your judgment.⁶⁰

While she ended her treatise on this note, using her gender as an excuse for possible mistakes, she utilized a different strategy in the beginning, when she wrote:

I have written this entire text without any sense of modesty or concern about being unduly outspoken...With this in mind, I feel neither pain nor irritation at being criticized by others.⁶¹

In the end, Makuzu failed in her self-repositioning. *Hitori kangae* was neither published, nor widely circulated. Nevertheless, it is a strong testimony by a person who sought to claim her father's position of her father in an academic field and her membership in a certain group.

Iseki Takako (1785-1844), the Commentator

In comparison to the other two women, Iseki Takako has not yet received much attention, inside or outside of Japan. Her diary was discovered in 1972 and with its publication in the late

⁶⁰ *Hitori kangae*, in Suzuki, *Tadano*, p. 307. Goodwin, "Solitary," part 2, p. 193.

⁶¹ *Hitori kangae*, in Suzuki, *Tadano*, p. 260. Goodwin, "Solitary," part 1, p. 21.

1970s some scholarly interest was stirred.⁶² However, the annotator of the diary, Fukasawa Akio, remains the only specialist. One hopes that Fukasawa's recently published research on Takako will lead to a wider reception of this intriguing writer, whose known works are now all available in Japanese editions.⁶³ In English, Donald Keene introduced Takako with a few pages in *Travelers of a Hundred Ages*.⁶⁴

In contrast to Makuzu but similar to Shizuko, Takako offered in her diary very little autobiographical material. Takako, unlike the other two women, was born into a samurai household. We find in her diary only brief comments that refer to her childhood, but they are too sketchy to present much of a biographical account. According to the family register, she was born in 1785/6/21 as Shōda Kichi to the shogunal retainer Shōda Yasutomo (1736-1792). When Takako was eight years old, her father passed away and her oldest brother Yasukuni, who was at the time twenty-four, became the household head. The family register also reveals that apparently Takako was once married when she was about twenty but divorced when about twenty-three.⁶⁵ Yet, quite the opposite from Makuzu, Takako does not even mention her husband at all. Nor does she mention that she had served in the shogun's castle. She probably lived at home until she was in her early thirties—sometime between 1815 and 1820—when she became the second wife of Iseki Chikaoki (d. 1826, 61 years old). Her husband, also a shogunal retainer, was a widower nineteen years her senior. His office was Unit Commander of the Inner Quarters to the future Shogun Ieyoshi (1793-1853; r. 1837-53). Both

Chikaoki's son and grandson served Ieyoshi during their careers. Takako, like Makuzu, had no children of her own, but raised her husband's son. Indeed, the similarity to Makuzu's life course is striking, but it may have been a relatively common experience, given the high mortality of women due to childbirth and its subsequent complications, and given that Makuzu and Takako had brothers who continued their natal families.

Concerning her education, we learn that Takako's brother instructed her in the Chinese classics. Yasukuni gathered people in his house to hold *kanshi* (Chinese poetry) parties with much drink, and Takako herself was able to convert *kanshi* into Japanese.⁶⁶ Japanese poetry (*waka*), however, was her true passion. Takako learned directly from the poet Hayashi Kunio (1758-1819). In addition to composing *waka*, Takako used her free time to paint, read, play I-go and *shōgi* with her stepson Chikatsune (d. 1858), and to entertain friends with sake, of which she was extremely fond.⁶⁷ During her widowhood—and her retirement as the woman in charge of the household—Takako began to study more thoroughly the writings of Kamo Mabuchi (1697-1769), Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801), and Katō Chikage (1735-1808), whom she respected for their profound scholarship.⁶⁸

Just as Makuzu flaunted her erudition in *Hitori kangae* when she commented on works by Kamo Mabuchi and Motoori Norinaga, evaluating the political ideas of the political advisors Arai Hakuseki (1675-1725) and Kumazawa Banzan (1619-91), and criticizing Confucianism and specific sections of the Chinese Classics,⁶⁹ Takako, too, referred to books she had read, which covered the same vast range. She also criticized

⁶² *Iseki Takako nikki*, 3 volumes, Fukasawa Akio (Tokyo: Benseisha, 1978-81). For an article see Seki Tamiko, "Tempō-kaikaku-ki no ichi hatamoto josei no shōzō," in Hayashi Reiko, *Josei no kinsei (Nihon no kinsei)*, vol. 15 (Tokyo: Chūōkōronsha, 1993).

⁶³ Fukasawa Akio, *Iseki Takako no kenkyū* (Osaka: Izumi Shoin, 2004).

⁶⁴ Donald Keene, *Travelers of a Hundred Ages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

⁶⁵ Cited in Fukasawa, *Iseki*, p. 8.

⁶⁶ Takako read *kanshi*, such as those by Gensō and his princess Yōkihi. In regard to her brother, see Fukasawa, *Iseki*, pp. 324-25.

⁶⁷ Takako apparently also studied *waka* in the *Reisenryū*. Mentioned by Fukasawa, *Iseki*, p. 327.

⁶⁸ In ten days Takako composed 1000 poems, which she dedicated to the shrine where Mabuchi was venerated (1840/3/3).

⁶⁹ See for instance, *Hitori kangae*, in Suzuki, *Tadano*, p. 266, p. 268, p. 273, and p. 291.

without constraint those with deficiencies as scholars, such as Hirata Atsutane (1776-1843) and Ichikawa Tazumaro (1740-1795), including even her former teacher Hayashi Kunio (1840/1/6).⁷⁰ Evidently, Takako was highly educated and participated in a scholarly intellectual space in which she meant to position herself by means of her diary and her distinct opinions.

Of the few works recovered, the diary is Takako's major work. When, on 1840/1/1, Takako began writing her diary at the age of fifty-six, she was about the same age as Makuzu when the latter put *Hitori kangae* to paper.⁷¹ Takako had been in the Iseki household for twenty-seven years, and had been a widow for half that time. Her diary, twelve volumes all together and stretching over a period of almost five years, has 966 handwritten pages (1200 in print) and 18 illustrations. The diary ends on 1844/10/11, three weeks before Takako died at age sixty (1844/11/1).

Sometimes Takako recorded day by day; at other times there are gaps between the entries. There is no consistency to the length of each entry, either. Sometimes they are as short as one or two lines, while on other days the entries run over several pages. In general, an entry starts with the weather, the seasonal changes (where Takako exhibited her erudition in poetic conventions), followed by what happened that day in the house, some memories from her childhood, or her thoughts on people, politics, society and scholarship. In other words, Takako touched upon a wide variety of topics often in lengthy accounts in classical language interspersed with poetry.

Takako's diary differs markedly from that of Shizuko. She did not aim to portray the duties of a Confucian housewife, but to be a commentator on her time. Takako did not record housework, as

Shizuko did, which can be explained by the fact that she wrote the diary after she had given over the housework to her daughter-in-law, but also because she intended to comment on current events inside and outside of the house. As validation, she constantly mentioned the family's close connection to the shogun's castle. There is no evidence that someone had asked her to write the diary, as in Shizuko's case, nor is there any example left behind by her family that could have inspired her to do so. Her style and form, even if in classical language, are independent since Takako used language not only to evoke poetic conventions but also to criticize political affairs, similar to how Makuzu did in *Hitori kangae*.

Takako mainly recorded events and incidents she learned about from her family and friends. Her stepson Chikatsune (d. 1858) and her grandson Chikakata (d. 1865) served as particularly valuable informants. Chikatsune had moved in 1839 to the Great Interior of the shogun's castle (the women's quarter) to attend the former shogun Ienari's (1773-1841, r. 1786-1837) wife Kōdaiin (1733-1844) and Chikakata continued Chikatsune's former service for current shogun Ieyoshi. Both worked therefore directly for the shogun's family. Their neighbor, former Osaka magistrate and councilor, Shinmi Masamichi (1791-1848), supplied her as well with information from inside the castle.⁷² The older brother of Chikatsune's wife, Toda Ujjiyoshi (1799-1858), who served in various prominent positions, also came to compose poems with Takako. Therefore, not only her immediate family, but also acquaintances who had access to the Inner Quarters where policies were made, kept Takako updated with valuable information, which she discussed in her diary.

Takako's descriptions and commentaries on current policies and laws are an important source for historians. As already mentioned, Takako

⁷⁰ She defends her critique by saying that mistakes by teachers need to be corrected, and one should not hesitate to do so; however, it is important that one's critique is backed up by one's own argument. Fukasawa, *Iseki*, pp. 74-76.

⁷¹ The diary did not have a title, so today it is called after its author: *Iseki Takako's diary* (*Iseki Takako nikki*).

⁷² Shinmi Masamichi's extensive library *Shirobunko* was available to Takako. Further, Masamichi introduced her to the scholar Yashiro Hirokata, who read some of Makuzu's work. For a list of books Takako mentions in her diary, including Makuzu's grandmother's essay, see Fukasawa, *Iseki*, pp. 327-28.

included in her diary discussions of scholarship and politics. When compared to other sources such as the official Tokugawa records (*Tokugawa jikki*), we find much correspondence and in some cases, inconsistencies. For instance, Takako gave information about events that were not publicly known, such as the death of the shogun Ienari, which Takako recorded on 1841/2nd intercalary month/10 that he had died on the 7th, while official records mention the 30th. The government meant to gain more than twenty days to avoid possible unrest and to decide upon his succession.⁷³

Takako, as with many diarists, did not explain why she wrote the diary. It has no foreword, which is common, but she also began her entries with an allusion to the *Tsurezuregusa* (Leaves of Idleness, early fourteenth century), that in the future this meaningless writing will have some meaning (1840/1/1). Then Takako went on to acclaim the New Year, which started with society being at peace. The Tokugawa house was strong—current, previous, and future shoguns were well—and so was her family who served them (1840/1/1).⁷⁴

On a different occasion, however, we find Takako's reason embedded in an eight-page-long excursus about currency, pottery, clothing, superstition, the rebellion of Ōshio Heihachirō (1793-1837),⁷⁵ and the debate over the usage of words

in poetry:

What I am now writing, with my inadequate intelligence and clumsy brush, is not intended to be broadcasted to the world. I am writing this in order to let the young people of my family and their children in future generations know a little of how our family lives today and what our world is like. No doubt these scraps of paper will become the haunt of bookworms or be dragged off by mice for their nests, but even if that happens, it will make a wonderful diversion. (1840/2/12)⁷⁶

This disclaimer serves Takako as a shield to hide her literary and intellectual ambition. Furthermore, she observed that as time passes, “even extremely dirty-looking and ugly things are prized as treasures, providing they are over five hundred years old” (1840/2/12).⁷⁷ Clearly, Takako was not writing for her own diversion, but to ensure that others would respect her in the future for what she had written down.

Takako's diary is her self-testimony. The appearance of the diary alone exposes the author's aim: she meticulously edited the diary. There are hardly any writing mistakes, and she must have spent a lot of time drawing the pictures.⁷⁸ Some of the illustrations point directly to Takako's positioning in the social space. For instance, on 1841/10/04 Takako described a gift the family had received from the Great Interior: bonsai, planted in Chinese vases. While Takako usually depicted cultural capital with words, as Makuzu did, she also used her talent as a painter to underline symbolic capital as well. The reader would understand the gift of a bonsai as of particular value, because it was widely known that the shogun Ienari was fond of these miniature trees.

⁷³ *Iseki Takako nikki*, vol. 2, p. 24.

⁷⁴ It would be worthwhile investigating if this kind of beginning of her diary reflects Takako's appropriation of an available diary writing discourse, as one of the readers suggested.

⁷⁵ At the revolt of the scholar Ōshio Heihachirō against the government during the Tempō famine, Takako responds with a comic verse:

<i>Misago iru</i>	The people of Naniwa [Osaka]
<i>iso uchikoeshi</i>	have had a most bitter time
<i>ōshio ni</i>	because of the big tide [Ōshio]
<i>karaki me mitsuru</i>	that has swept over the beach
<i>naniwabito kana</i>	where the ospreys dwell.

Takako blames further hardship the famine-ridden city of Osaka had experienced on Heihachirō, who had set the city on fire. *Iseki Takako nikki*, vol. 1, p. 47. Translation by Keene, *Travelers*, p. 381.

⁷⁶ Translation by Keene, *Travelers*, p. 377.

⁷⁷ Translation by Keene, *Travelers*, p. 378.

⁷⁸ Fukasawa, *Iseki*, pp. 49-50.

That fondness apparently started a bonsai boom first in the shogunal quarters and then among the lower ranks.

Not only does the preparation of the diary illustrate Takako's self-positioning in social space, but here and there she dropped a line as to why she wrote the diary. For instance, when Takako argued why it was her responsibility to record her world (1840/3/3):

When we look at the romances of long ago, they seem to have been inspired by a desire to portray, exactly as they were, in an interesting and amusing manner, the customs of the past and the circumstances in which people lived. However, the world has greatly changed, and even though human emotions are not all that altered, innumerable things differ from what they were in the past, from the laws of the land to the daily life of the people, and in most respects the differences are surely more numerous. If someone today planning to write an essay or a story merely imitates the elegance of the past, and does not describe the splendid world we live in now, this will surely be both unsatisfying and regrettable.⁷⁹

Here we find Takako's explanation for being the chronicler and commentator; as a contemporary, she is obliged to record her present for future generations. Even though at first she referred to and imitated *Tsurezuregusa*, which does not describe events particular to time or place, Takako chronologically described one particular day in a particular month of a particular year. Moreover, what she described are her own reflections. We get to know the persona Takako over a span of four years.

Takako occupied the space shared by the educated literati among shogunal retainers. With her wit and her talent as a writer she meant to make a mark in this field; an active player in the world of men who worked in the shogunal quarters. Takako was not directly part of it, but she en-

⁷⁹ Translation by Keene, *Travelers*, pp. 377-78.

tered that world through her diary. By doing so, she manifested her participation for future generations while the other members of the family would be forgotten. Takako was apparently successful in her positioning, since she was asked by an acquaintance to write a short piece for a literati meeting of celebrities.⁸⁰

Conclusion

Individuals who engage and compete in cultural production occupy a social space or field. Each field has its own autonomous arena with certain rules that differ from other spaces.⁸¹ The person positions him or herself within the space, which in turn is built upon socio-political hierarchy. The hierarchical order of the field is constantly contested through the players' position-taking. In the case of the three women, their literary works are the strategies for their position-taking in each respective space of cultural production.⁸²

The reason why these women nevertheless could not make use of the more obvious or explicit autobiographical form employed by their male peers is explained by their gender.⁸³ Each woman had a position within her field. They share gender, but why do they present themselves in different forms? The differences in presentation in their writings are related to the different fields of cultural production in which

⁸⁰ The poet Sugishima Katsuichi (n.d.) requested this of Takako on 1843/11/5. Takako wrote *Sakuraoga monogatari*, a parody of government affairs concerning the construction of the Inbanuma dam as part of Mizuno Tadakuni's unpopular policies that failed in the end.

⁸¹ Bourdieu, *Language*, p. 215.

⁸² Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc J.D. Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 105.

⁸³ While male autobiographical forms are certainly diverse as well, they appear to be more straightforward and thus identifiable as autobiographies. A comparative investigation is desirable.

they engaged, as well as their status. Certainly, Shizuko, Takako and Makuzu had many things in common. They all enjoyed a thorough education including poetry and poetic theory. Makuzu and Takako were married twice. Both remarried in their thirties, each to a widower whose children they raised, and neither had children of their own.⁸⁴ Both became widows while still fairly young (Takako was in her forties and Makuzu in her fifties), and both started writing prose, as far as we know, only in married life.⁸⁵ Makuzu and Shizuko came from similar, non-samurai background. However, while in comparison to Shizuko, Makuzu and Takako shared gender and age when they articulated their literary ambitions, their choices of self-testimonial form still differed. The difference in position of a woman from a family of shogunal retainers versus that of a physician's daughter required a different set of strategies. Makuzu meant to be accepted as a scholar and advisor, which was the official function of the male members in her family. Takako, on the other hand, aimed to participate in a social field of poets where the gender boundaries were more fluid.

⁸⁴ Not having given birth may have been the reason why both their first marriages were terminated.

⁸⁵ In comparison, women in premodern Europe tended to perform autobiographical writings rather before entering or after leaving married life. See for instance, Gianna Pomata, "Partikulargeschichte und Universalgeschichte: Bemerkungen zu einigen Handbüchern der Frauengeschichte," in *L'Homme Z.F.G.* 2 no. 1 (1991), pp. 22-23; Gabriele Jancke, *Autobiographie als soziale Praxis: Beziehungskonzepte in Selbstzeugnissen des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts im deutschsprachigen Raum* (Selbstzeugnisse der Neuzeit 10) (Köln: Böhlau, 2002), pp. 198-199; Heilbrun, *Writing*, pp. 76-95, on male biographers' patterns for writing 20th c. female writers' lives: In their narratives, marriage marks the end of literary activity whereas the writers themselves often had their most productive times later. A closer investigation which includes the household structure would be fruitful.

Shizuko's form of self-testimony, too, is different due to her status. She started her diary at a young age, probably not so much on her own account but on the advice of either her father or husband. She was married only once, had her own children, but, not unlike Makuzu, was new to the world of the samurai. Since she married a commoner who himself had risen to a higher status, however, her situation differed. Her husband had to prove his own position and Shizuko was his collaborator.

Nevertheless, women are not only objects who are produced socially in a masculine world. As Terry Lovell insists, women, too, are subjects with capital-accumulating strategies of their own.⁸⁶ Moreover, the individual's self-testimony is also a text that has a space of its own, which does not reflect the person, but only the persona the author intends to portray. It is important to recognize that what is represented in their work is not Shizuko, Makuzu, or Takako, but the self-crafted personae, the narrative voices of these women. We need to consider the performance of the author. All three women have written other texts, such as poetry, where their performances express different personae. There, their poetry is meant to position them in their poetry networks, fields on their own.

Thus as historians we can learn much from these sources about the relationship between the person and social space in the Bourdieusian meaning, while at the same time the author's space cannot be clearly defined, since it is fluid, temporal, and changing. The text reflects only one self of the woman's flexible selves, which have permeable or semi-permeable boundaries. The Bourdieusian approach does not deal so much with inner and outer space of the individual and its permeability, as many feminists have argued. Performance, too, plays an important role in how the author creates his/her narrative persona.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Terry Lovell, "Thinking Feminism with and against Bourdieu," in *Feminist Theory* 1 (2000): 11-32.

⁸⁷ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990); Judith Butler, *Bodies that*

In the end, we observe that these women certainly could not claim to achieve dominant positions within their social space, which suggests that this again falls back to their gender. Thus, gender appears to be outside the social fields of practice or social space of the time. The prevailing gender discourse of the Tokugawa period, as I argue elsewhere, is deeply imbedded in the social structure.⁸⁸ Even if women were able to apply and employ various strategies to make a mark, which indicates an awareness of their position, it does not mean that they reached with their texts any position that men occupied. It can be argued that these women did not mean to attain a man's position, but Makuzu's case clearly shows that she, certainly, had this intention. In our case, gender, I surmise, is more important than age or status, while social space dictates the women's practice, i.e. literary forms of expression.

Matter (New York: Routledge, 1993). Discussed by Lovell, *Thinking*, p. 15.

⁸⁸ See Gramlich-Oka, *Thinking*, in particular Chapter Five (see note 4).