NOTES

In the notes, works frequently cited have been identified by the following abbreviations.

ARS	Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, *Akutagawa Ryūnosuke shinjiten*, ed. Sekiguchi Yasuyoshi (Tokyo: Kanrin Shobō, 2003)
ARZ	Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, *Akutagawa Ryūnosuke zenshū*, 9 vols. (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1971)
KMYZ	Mishima Yukio, *Ketteiban: Mishima Yukio zenshū*, 44 vols. (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 2000–6)
MHLW	Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare
MYE	Mishima Yukio, *Mishima Yukio eigaron shūsei*, ed. Yamauchi Yukihito (Tokyo: Waizu Shuppan, 1999)
MYZ	Mishima Yukio, *Mishima Yukio zenshū*, 36 vols. (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1973–76)
WHO	World Health Organization

INTRODUCTION

Epigraph: Améry (1999, 1).

1. Améry (1999, 10, 21).
2. Améry (1999, 4).
3. Current guidelines recommend replacing the phrase "committed suicide" with the more neutral "died by suicide" and avoiding any language of "successful or unsuccessful attempts." If the former aims to avoid associations with criminality, the latter seeks to defuse any sense of the act as a worthy goal. See Suicide Prevention Alliance (2023) and Singer and Erreger (2016). Throughout this book, I have tried to follow these recommendations as much as possible but compromise at times in the interest of smoother prose or more accurate translations.

4. In 2017, public health agencies in Japan began exploring information and communication technology (ICT) as one means of combatting the relatively new phenomenon of "internet group suicides," anonymous web denizens who make and plan suicide pacts (Itō Jirō and Sueki Hajime 2018). For a review of ICT's efficacy, see Rassy et al. (2021).

5. On biomarkers of suicidality, see Kaplan (2018), Guintivano et al. (2014), and Le-Niculescu et al. (2013). On linguistic markers, see Nook et al. (2022) and Tingley (2013). I am grateful to the many mental health professional researchers who patiently walked me through their research at the 2019 International Summit on Suicide Research.

6. In her diary entry for November 23, 1926, Woolf recorded making this remark to her lover and friend Vita Sackville as she was writing her novel *To the Lighthouse*, long before her own suicide in March 1941 (Woolf 1926).

7. Améry (1999, 29).

8. Marcel Proust, *Remembrance of Things Past* (1913–27), cited in Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas, "Editors' Introduction," in Derrida (2001, 3).

9. Wordsworth's poem *The Excursion: Being a Portion of The Recluse, a Poem* (ca. 1806), cited in de Man (1984, 77).

10. Didion (2005, 196).

11. The historian Golo Mann (1909–94), brother of Klaus (1906–49) and son of author Thomas Mann, cited in Améry (1999, 28).

12. All citations of "Wanting to Die" are from Sexton (1966, 58).

13. Yamana (1949, 199).

14. Burke (1952, 369).

15. Terayama (1979, 63–64). See also Ōe Kenzaburō's imagined posthumous dialogues with his brother-in-law and filmmaker Itami Jūzō, who died by suicide in 1997, in his 2000 *Torikaego* (*The Changeling*). The protagonist uses a clunky old tape recorder called Tagame that is likened to an "interdimensional mobile phone" that enables his dead friend to continue communicating from "the Other Side" (Ōe 2010, 12).

16. Extended entries for each of these authors appear in both Ueda Yasuo (1976) and Kokubungaku (1971). The former also includes Ikuta Shungetsu and Hino Ashihei, while the latter includes playwrights Katō Michio and Kubo Sakae (while leaving out Kawabata, since his suicide postdates its publication).

17. Miyoshi (1974, xvi). For other works that conclude with Mishima as their final chapter, see also "Mishima Yukio (1925–1970): The Man who Loved Death" (Lifton 1979, 231–74); "Mishima Yukio: Engeki-teki jisatsu [a theatrical suicide]" (Kokubungaku 1971, 190–93); Ueda M. (1976); and Pinguet (1993), whose two final chapters on modern authors cover a slightly expanded roster with Kitamura Tōkoku, Arishima Takeo, Akutagawa, Dazai, Haraguchi Tōzō, and finally Mishima (243–85).

18. Harold Strauss, personal correspondence to Michael Gallagher, December 2, 1970, Alfred A. Knopf Archives, the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.

19. Lifton (1979, xi–xii). *Six Lives, Six Deaths* focuses on six men—General Nogi Maresuke, Mori Ōgai, Nakae Chōmin, Kawakami Hajime, Masamune Hakuchō, and Mishima Yukio—three of whom are professional writers and two of whom, Nogi and Mishima, died by suicide. For a more recent example, see Bargen (2006).

20. Orbaugh (1996, 13, 17). For a critique of the gendered, heterosexist, and classist biases of most accounts of suicide in modern Japan, see also Robertson (1999) and Pflugfelder (2005).

21. On Internet group suicide, see Ozawa-de Silva's (2012) exceptional ethnographic study *The Anatomy of Loneliness*. On the letters and poems left behind by kamikaze pilots, I would point readers to the excellent study by Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms and Nationalisms: The Militarization of Aesthetics in Japanese History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002). On public politically motivated self-immolations, see Norimatsu (2012); and "Yuigon・saigo no isho: Yui Chūnoshin" in Matsuta (1972, 33–34). See also the bestselling last writings of Zainichi youth Yamamura Masa'aki in *Inochi moetsukiru to mo* (1971). For works in English on the Japanese practice of *seppuku*, see Seward (1968) and Rankin (2011).

22. Bourdaghs (2003, 115). See his chapter "Suicide and Childbirth in the I-Novel" (especially pages 126–31) on the underlying gender politics of representations of death in Japanese literature that depict passive female deaths from childbirth in contrast with active male suicides.

23. Ōhara (1971, 18).

24. For a fascinating work that tackles the pedagogy of teaching literary suicide, see Berman (1999).

25. Miyoshi (1974, xv).

26. Alvarez (1990, 245).

27. Miyoshi (1974, x, xi, xv).

28. De Vos and Wagatsuma's analysis can be found in *Socialization for Achievement: Essays on the Cultural Psychology of the Japanese* (De Vos 1973, 486, 486–549). De Vos adds a fifth category dubbed "role narcissism" in an attempt to inject Durkheim's sociological framework with a Freudian psychoanalytical component that he believes can adequately address the cultural particularities of the Japanese case (see 438–85). For a highly mechanistic application of these frameworks onto Japanese authors and cultural productions, see Iga (1986, 69–113 and 149–56).

29. Iga (1986, 70); De Vos (1973, 488).

30. Iga (1986, 113).

31. A similarly diagnostic impulse can be seen in *Sakka to jisatsu* (Writers and suicide), a special edition of *Kokubungaku: Kaishaku to kanshō* published in December 1971 that pairs essays by literary scholars on suicidal writers with ones by the psychiatrist Ōhara Kenshirō. See also Ueda Yasuo (1976). For critiques of such diagnostic approaches, see Améry (1999, 10, 4), Alvarez (1990, 12–13, 113–39), and Pinguet (1993, 21–29).

32. Ōhara (1965); Kōsaka Masa'aki and Usui Jishō, *Nihonjin no jisatsu* [Japanese people's suicide] (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1966); Stuart D. B. Picken and Taoko Hori, *Nihonjin no jisatsu: Seiō to no hikaku* [Japanese people's suicide: A comparison with the west] (Tokyo: Saimaru Shuppankai, 1979); and Fuse (1985).

33. Wolfe (1990, xv, xiv).

34. Wolfe (1990, 14).

35. Wolfe's study targets so very many other scholars that reviewers critique it for succumbing to the pitfall of "the (inevitably?) tail-chasing nature of a deconstructionist … academic discourse" and for failing to offer a sustained or alternative approach of its own (Orbaugh 1990, 193). See also David Pollack's review that notes that Dazai's writings themselves are not examined "until the fifth chapter" and that "their 'deconstruction' (especially when achieved pretty much in the absence of the texts themselves) has the feel of trying to crack nutshells with a bomb, and leaves us in the end without very much but the big deconstructive bang itself" (*Monumenta Nipponica* 46, no. 1 [Spring 1991]: 114–15).

36. Émile Durkheim's classic 1897 work, *Le Suicide: Étude de sociologie*, was translated into Japanese in 1932, relatively early compared to other nations, but Di Marco finds little evidence of the now-famous "Durkheimian paradigms [of] individualistic [egoistic], altruistic, anomic, and fatalistic suicide in the literature published before the end of World War II," although his "sociological explanation of suicide showed a certain ascendency … from the late 1920s onward" (2016, 40–41). In Japan, early enthusiasts for Durkheim's sociological method include journalist Yamana Shōtarō, who serialized a column titled "Sociological explanations of suicide" in a new journal, *Shakaigaku* [Sociology] in 1933 and claimed that the contemporaneous Mihara incident (the subject of chapter 2) offered "nothing less than a means of understanding the sociology of suicide" (Yamana 1933, 2, 336). For examples of the use of Durkheim in Japanese-language research on suicide, see Ōhara (1965, 37–39) and Fuse (1985, 159–66). On Freudian theories of life and death instincts, see Fuse (1985, 151–59).

37. Like Pinguet's expansive study, Di Marco's work incorporates a much wider range of examples than most English-language studies, ranging from regular citizens to kamikaze pilots, authors to idols. See especially the chapter 2 subsection in Di Marco (2016) "Desisting from Culturalizing Women's 'Blameful Suicides'" and the chapter 4 subsection "Outcasts from the 'Suicide Nation'—Women and Youths" (70–76, 158–64). See also the chapter "Female Suicides" in Iga (1986, 48–68).

38. Di Marco (2016, 182, 6, 35).

39. Di Marco (2016, 29, 28, 117). For more on "the consolidation of the cultural narrative" in the early twentieth century, see 28–35; on the postwar, see the chapter 3 subsection "A Cultural By-Product: Historicizing Suicide," 117–23.

40. In May 2013, I traveled to Kegon Falls and visited Fujimura's grave in Aoyama Cemetery in Tokyo. I also toured the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) headquarters in Ichigaya, the site of Mishima's seppuku, which, as the tour guide pointed out to everyone's astonishment, preserves the scarred doorframe where SDF forces and Mishima's slashed at one another through the barricaded door. In June 2017, I toured the Mitaka sites where Dazai Osamu lived, died, and is buried, attended his annual memorial service at Zenrinji Temple, and conducted research and interviews at the Dazai Osamu Bungaku Salon. I also visited nearby Inokashira Park, where ethnographer Kon Wajirō lived in the early 1920s and created a "suicide distribution map" to capture the many suicides there. My planned trip to Mount Mihara in spring 2020 fell through because of the COVID-19 pandemic and related travel restrictions, but even earlier, although I had the opportunity, I shied away from more contemporary sites, especially the death tourism at Aokigahara Forest. My one visit to the location of a relatively recent suicide, Itami Jūzō's 1997 leap from the roof of his Tokyo office building, felt ghoulish in the extreme.

41. Pinguet (1984, 263–85).

42. Améry (1999, 152).

43. The phrase "in the middest" comes from Edmund Spenser's 1589 letter to Sir Walter Raleigh regarding *The Faerie Queene*, in which he compares the work of historians, who analyze the past in retrospect and "discourseth of affayres orderly as they were donne," with "a poet [who] thrusteth into the middest, even where it most concerneth him, and there recoursing to the things forepaste, and divining of thinges to come, maketh a pleasing analysis of all." In *Prefaces and Prologues to Famous Books*, Harvard Classics vol. 39 (New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1910), 63.

1. THOUGHTS AT THE PRECIPICE: FUJIMURA MISAO AT KEGON FALLS

1. Hiraiwa (2003, 25–26).

2. Watsuji (1963, 298).

3. Naka Michiyo, "Naka-hakase no oi Kegon no taki ni shisu," *Yorozu chōhō*, May 26, 1903, reprinted in Yamana (1949, 157–60) and in Hiraiwa (2003, 5–7).

4. By the time of the ban, the photo by Yamanaka Shashinkan had already appeared in *Tōyō gahō* (edited by Kunikida Doppo) in July 1903 (Hiraiwa 2003, 23–24; Yamana 1933, 300).

5. The former Nikkō Kankō Kyōkai website, which was available as of March 4, 2014, had been revamped with all mentions of Fujimura Misao scrubbed by May 13, 2021 (Nikkō-shi kōshiki kankō WEB, n.d.).

6. Yamana (1949, 160); Hiraiwa (2003, 7).

7. For examples of ghosts captured at Kegon and other suicide sites, see Namiki Shin'ichirō, *Nihon reikai chizu: Norowareta kyōfu no tabū chitai* (Tokyo: Take Shobō, 2013).

8. Kuroiwa Shūroku [Ruikō], "Fujimura Misao no shi ni tsuite," originally published June 13, 1903, reprinted in full in Yamana (1949, 166–85).

9. I use the transcription of Fujimura's poem provided in Hiraiwa (2003, 61).

10. In Fujimura's poem, "Horatio," which was written in katakana, refers to Hamlet's loyal friend in Shakespeare's play, which Fujimura was reading in the months leading up to his death. The reference confounded many contemporary commentators who assumed that Fujimura was insufficiently familiar with the ancient philosopher Horace or with Shakespeare (for example, see Kuroiwa [1949, 171–72]).

11. For example, see *Yorozu chōhō* (n.d., 1903?) and *Kokkei shinbun*, July 20, 1903, reproduced in Hiraiwa (2003, 25, 70).

12. Fujimura's note to his cousins is reproduced in Hiraiwa (2003, 19). This was Fujimura's second trip to the falls, having first visited during a middle school class trip in 1900 (Domon 2002, 120–21). This was the same year that an enterprising local, Hoshino Gorobei, completed constructing a teahouse at the fall's base after seven long years of labor (Nikkō Kankō Kyōkai former website, s.v. "Kegon no taki," accessed March 4, 2014).

13. Abe, "Waga tomo o omou," originally published May 1904, cited in Hiraiwa (2003, 55). Here and below, I have modernized all kana usages, here, for example, using *omou* rather than *omofu*.

14. Hiraiwa (2003, 24–26).

15. Domon (2002, 131).

16. Information on the number of copycat suicides at Kegon Falls after Fujimura drawn from the following sources: "Fūzoku tokei," *Nippon shinbun*, cited in *Japan Weekly Mail*, September 26, 1903, 335; Hiraiwa (2003, 100); Yamana (1949, 162); Domon (2002, 115). Later scholars note that there were rumors that Fujimura's father, from a prominent samurai family and director of a major bank in Hokkaido, died by suicide years earlier, although this was rarely brought up by commentators at the time.

17. On the "cult of anguish," see Takahashi S. (1986, 16) and Hiraishi (2002, 20–29).

18. Uozumi, "Nijūnen no omoide,"originally published December 1914, in Uozumi (1974b, 334–35); Abe, "'Gantō no kan' o megutte," originally published September 1949, in Abe (1949, 54).

19. Hiraiwa (2003, 26).

20. Iwanami and Uozomi cited in Hiraiwa (2003, 41; 45; on Uozumi's response, see also 192). Some speculated that Iwanami's later publishing enterprise was deeply influenced by Fujimura's suicide.

21. *Japan Weekly Mail*, September 26, 1903, 335.

22. On Kōda Minoru's copycat suicide, see *Yorozu chōhō*, July 6, 1903, Hiraiwa (2003, 38–40).

23. Domon (2002, 115); Takahashi S. (1986, 16).

24. Hiraiwa (2003, 40).

25. Domon (2002, 118). See also the satirical op-ed "Bakamono no shinibasho," *Kokkei Shinbun* no. 117 (August 5, 1906): 390.

26. Kuroiwa (1949, 166). See also Shimazaki Tōson, who complained in 1906 that "the literati only forgive the anguish of youths when it is intellectual, not when it is sentimental. … That explains why they lack sympathy for the drowning of a young couple on Haneda shore but sympathize with Fujimura Misao." *Ryokuin zatsuwa*, April 1906, cited in Hiraishi (2002, 109–10).

27. Yamana (1949, 155). This record was discovered in an old storehouse in summer 1921 when the local Nikkō authorities were still struggling to manage suicides at Kegon Falls, which totaled over seventy by that point.

28. "Bakamono no shinibasho," *Kokkei shinbun* no. 117 (August 5, 1905): 390.

29. Sōseki was likely the anonymous eulogist who compared Fujimura to Empedocles based on similar remarks in his 1907 *Bungakuron*. For an extended comparison with Sappho, see Ōtsuka Yasuji, "Shi to bi-ishiki: Seishiron no issetsu," *Taiyō*, September 1903, cited in Hiraiwa (2002, 52–53).

30. Kuroiwa (1949, 166). Kuroiwa ranked Fujimura above Empedocles (172).

31. Hiraiwa (2003, 46–47, 51). For unnamed critics' reactions at the time, see also Yamana (1949, 162–63).

32. Di Marco (2016, 37). Also see Di Marco (2016, especially 35–46), for a compelling analysis of the ways that Fujimura's suicide sparked competing discourses in the medical community. Wasaki identifies a similar tendency among educators to pathologize youths by associating adolescence with anguish and suicidality after Fujimura's death (Wasaki 2010, 40–41n37, 45).

33. "Jisatsu no ryūkō," *Kokkei Shinbun* no. 122 (September 5, 1906): n.p.

34. Anezaki Chōfū, "Genji seinen no kutō ni tsuite," originally published July 1903, cited in Hiraiwa (2003, 50); Uozumi (1974a, 291). Uozumi, "Kojin-shugi no kenchi ni tachite," originally published in *Dai-ichi Kōtō Gakkō Kōyūkai zasshi*, October 1905, cited in Hiraiwa (2003, 208).

35. Nakamura Hajime et al. (1982, s.v. "Fujimura Misao," 505).

36. Hiraiwa (2003, 37).

37. Kinoshita (1955, 127).

38. *Meiji Taishō Shōwa dai-emaki* 1931, n.p.

39. Like most of these commentators, Anezaki found it lamentable that Fujimura had "decided upon the 'not to be' [in English]" option but blamed the "crimes of society and education" (cited in Hiraiwa [2003, 50]).

40. Keigetsu reassured those who feared copycat suicides that they could "relax, for the average masses lack the courage to learn from this marvelous singular death of Fujimura's" (Ōmachi Keigetsu, "Uchū no kaishaku," *Taiyō*, July 1903, cited in Hiraiwa [2003, 46–47]).

41. Yamana (1949, 163); Miyatake Gaikotsu, cited in Terayama (1979, 59).

42. Kuroiwa (1949, 170, 184, 182).

43. "Ganzen kōtō," originally published in June 1908 (Futabatei 1964, 263).

44. Tsubouchi (1903, 70, 56). Here, Tsubouchi distinguishes between "purposeful, active suicides (committed for others or for one's principles)" versus "passive, egoistic ones (committed out of physical or spiritual suffering)." See his fascinating chart on pages 58–59. For a survey of the nine articles published in *Taiyō* from July to September 1903, see Hiraiwa (2003, 46–54), which characterizes four in support of voluntary death and five against, including Tsubouchi.

45. Di Marco (2016, 35).

46. Hiraiwa (2003, 40). Mount Asama was such a hotspot for suicides that one critic joked it stopped erupting because it was filled with so many jumpers; see "Jisatsu denpō," *Tokyo Puck* vol. 4, no. 20 (July 9, 1908): 6. In July 1933, the Hokushin Nichiren sect sponsored a memorial ritual at the mountaintop that was attended by thousands (Yamana 1933, 290).

47. Futabatei (1964, 263).

48. Itō Sei (1964, 139; see also 132–36 passim). On Sōseki's encounters with Fujimura, see also Etō (1970, 252–55) and Domon (2002, 84–95). Although space limitations preclude going into any depth here, Sōseki's subsequent 1914 novel *Kokoro* includes the most famous example of a suicide note in Japanese literary history, or rather two suicide notes, one as loquacious as the other is taciturn.

49. McKinney (2008, 128). Translation adapted here to more closely reflect the original text, which is available at Aozora Bunko, www.aozora.gr.jp, a digital, open-access library of e-books.

50. English-language translations that aim at more elegant, literary renderings tend to underemphasize any condemnation evident here. McKinney's 2008 translation elides the censure evident in the first clause: "To me, it seems that this young man sacrificed his life, that precious gift, for the sake of beauty pure and simple" (128). Alan J. Turney's translation in *The Three-Cornered World* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1965) takes greater liberties by implying that the rationale for his suicide was nothing less than Art itself: "As I see it, that youth gave his life—the life which should not be surrendered—for all that is implicit in the one word 'poetry'" (162–63). Notably, both translations flip the word order and thereby stress artistic gain rather than bodily loss.

51. McKinney (2008, 23, 51). I have slightly altered McKinney's translation of Nami's dialogue to reflect the depth of her skepticism here. Robert Tuck (2017, 86) points out how the beautiful Nami confronts the protagonist-painter with "the aesthetic fantasy of female suicide by drowning within which he has already imagined her" through the templates of "two other drowned beauties, the Maid of Nagara from the *Man'yōshū* poetry collection and both the Shakespearean and Pre-Raphaelite Ophelia." She succeeds in laying bare his basest artistic impulses by pointing to the ways his (male) artistic composition depends on the sight of her (female) self-death. See also Atsuko Sakaki, "Unmaking the Tableau: Natsume

Sōseki's *Kusamakura* and Gender/Genre Politics," *Recontextualizing Texts* (Harvard East Asian Monographs, 1999), 99–135.

52. McKinney (2008, 129), with slight alterations.

53. Natsume (1966, 175). Literary scholar Kin'ya Tsuruta notes that Sōseki subsequently rejected the novel and its artist-protagonist's detached aestheticism in a 1906 letter where "he wrote that while a detached, aesthetic life like that of the novel's painter-protagonist could be one way of living, 'real' living should involve life" ("Sōseki's Kusamakura: A Journey to 'The Other Side,'" *Journal of Association of Teachers of Japanese* 22, no. 2 [1988]: 169).

54. A more complete edition of eleven letters and notes from Fujimura to his friends and family were published for the centennial anniversary of his death in a collection claiming to "correct rumors and hoaxes" (Domon 2002, 3). For reproductions, see Domon (2002, 29–40) and Hiraiwa (2003, 213–22).

55. "Fujimura Misao no 'koibito e no isho' hakken," *Shūkan Asahi* (July 11, 1986), reproduced in Hiraiwa (2003, 89; see also 82–91). Despite the publicity, scholars were aware that this volume existed even before Tamiki's death (Itō Sei 1964, 137). I am indebted to the painstaking work of an anonymous blogger who has collated and reproduced many of the relevant original documents at the website Chiisa na shiryō-shitsu, "Shiryō 2 Fujimura Misao no 'Gantō no kan." Last modified November 12, 2023. https://sybrma.sakura.ne.jp/02hujimura.htm.

56. "Jisatsu annai," *Kokkei shinbun* no. 58 (October 5, 1093): 350–52. See also "Bakamono no shinibasho," *Kokkei shinbun* no. 117 (August 5, 1906): 390; and "Shitsuren yatsu Fujimura Misao" [The broken-hearted bastard Fujimura Misao], *Kokkei shinbun*, July 20, 1903, n.p., reproduced in Hiraiwa (2003, 70).

57. Domon (2002, 155).

58. See Yamana (1933, 300) for a reproduction of this note to his cousins inscribed on the inside cover of his Chikamatsu volume. See also Yamana (1949, 160–61). The other plays included in the Chikamatsu volume were *Keisei hangonkō*, *Nagamachi onna hara-kiri* (*Hara-kiri of a Woman at Nagamachi*, trans. Paul S. Atkins), and *Semimaru* (*The Legends of Semimaru: Blind Musician of Japan*, trans. Susan Matisoff).

59. Yamana 1933, 298–301.

60. Translations adapted from *I am a Cat*, trans. Aiko Ito and Graeme Wilson (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1972), 538, 541. Original text available at Aozora Bunko, www.aozora.gr.jp.

61. Takahashi S. (1986, 16).

62. Hiraiwa (2003, 24).

63. "'Gakusei' no shinpo jyūkanen" [The ten-year progress of a "student"], reproduced in Hiraishi (2002, 50).

64. "Shi-teki jisatsu," *Osaka Puck* no. 7 (1912): 14.

65. Henshall (1987, 151–52); Tayama Katai (1901, 383–84). I have made a slight adjustment to Henshall's translation here to reflect Katai's direct citation of Fujimura's poem's "*fukakai*" (incomprehensible).

66. In *The Similitude of Blossoms: A Critical Biography of Izumi Kyōka (1873–1939), Japanese Novelist and Playwright* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 1998), Charles Inouye notes Kyōka's "early-modern penchant for topicality" and offers an intriguing discussion of the autobiographical ties that led him to incorporate suicide as a key theme in his writing (179–85).

67. For synopses of these many adaptations, see Hiraiwa (2003, 97–116, 139–74) and Tanizawa (2015a and 2015b).

68. All translations of Shimazaki's story "Tsugaru Strait" are drawn from the 1918 translation by Torao Taketomo in Shimazaki 1904. For the original, see Shimazaki (1956). For a stinging critique of this story as an obvious "attempt to cash in in on the reading public's appetite for topical sensationalism," see William E. Naff, *The Kiso Road: The Life and Times of Shimazaki Toson* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2011), 233–34.

69. Harrison (2003, 39–40).

70. Harrison (2003, 1, 2, 20, 12).

71. Shimazaki (1956, 215; emphasis mine).

72. Uozumi's eulogy, cited in Hiraiwa (2003, 193, 194).

73. Hiraiwa (2003, 71).

74. Tuck (2017).

75. Hiraiwa (2003, 192, 193).

76. Cited in Hiraiwa (2003, 130). According to a newspaper at the time, authorities deleted the poem not just "out of fear of a second jumper appearing," as one of his friends speculated, but also "out of fear of many tourists" (*Hōchi shinbun*, July 21, 1903, cited in Hiraiwa [2003, 26]). The sense that Fujimura's poem and suicide would also attract tourists was a double-edged sword for authorities, both a source of revenue (with over fifteen thousand yen spent by families traveling to retrieve their loved ones' bodies in 1932 alone) and costly to the city since it enlisted and paid locals to patrol and report on would-be suicides (at twenty yen each and over six hundred informants) (Yamana 1933, 289).

77. Another Fujimura family grave that is fashioned into the shape of a tree trunk on the Aoyama Cemetery plot evokes this severed connection as well.

78. Tezuka (1987, 55–57).

PART ONE. MAPPING SUICIDE: *JISATSU MEISHO*, THE POETIC PLACES OF SUICIDE

1. Tokyo Hāpii (1907, n.p.). The Niagara incident appears to refer to the suicide on March 31, 1907, of "a Japanese, T. Tamai, [who] leaped into the river from the outermost of the Three Sisters islands and was carried over Horseshoe Falls. He left behind a note containing his address, No. 17 Concord street, Brooklyn" (Marshall Michigan, *Daily News*, Monday, April 1, 1907, 1). His body was discovered by a fisherman (see fig. 1, inset image on left). Mount Vesuvius was the site in 1897 where "a young foreigner, believed to be German … ascended Mt. Vesuvius while it was in eruption, lay down near the edge of the crater, and then shot himself, apparently with the idea that the lava would flow and cover his body" (*New York Times*, September 18, 1897)

2. Yamana (1949, 153).

3. Beautrais (2007, 59). There is no agreed-on minimum number of suicides or timeframe that leads to designating a place as a *jisatsu meisho* or suicide hotspot, but instead a more subjective sense of its cache as a suicide destination.

4. Edward Kamens, *Utamakura, Allusion, and Intertextuality in Traditional Japanese Poetry* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 1.

5. Fujiwara no Tameaki cited in Haruo Shirane, *Nature and the Culture of the Four Seasons: Nature, Literature, and the Arts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 67.

6. WHO (2017, 6–7). Numerical representations are also recommended to be self-censored. For example, the California Highway Patrol stopped their official count for Golden Gate Bridge at 997 on June 5, 1995, and Yamanashi Prefectural officials stopped publicizing counts of bodies retrieved from Aokigahara forest in 2001.

7. Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) website, 2007–23. "Jisatsu taisaku hakusho." For "jisatsu no meisho" in the 2007 version, see 16; for its replacement with "jisatsu no tahatsu basho," see 2012, 23; and 2017, 24.

8. Yamana (1933, 133–38). Each incident is listed by date, time, location (and its height), gender, age, occupation, and cause/motive (*gen'in*). In addition, each suicide is marked as completed or attempted (with any injuries sustained), and whether a suicide note was left behind.

9. For example, see Satō (2016) for a comprehensive list of 521 stations' suicide rankings over a ten-year period, published on Tōyō Keizai Online (website), n.d.

10. My approach here takes a cue from historian Mary Elizabeth Berry (1997, 578), who explains what the profusion of *meisho* and representations of these famous places in guides and maps can (and cannot) reveal about Tokugawa society:

> We might speculate usefully, though inconclusively, about the transforming power of the famous place. Perhaps a dispersed geo-piety, attached both to local and national monuments, came to unite a people and a landscape. Perhaps a historical consciousness … came to unite a people and a shared past. The … guidebooks focus, however, not on feeling but on access and choice. The many *meisho* and their thick histories are available, and available in the same terms to anyone who wants them for any reason. … Myriad places with multiple associations were opened to all claimants.

2. MOUNT MIHARA'S SAME-SEX SUICIDES AND FLIPPANT FLIPS

1. Chimura Chiaki quoted in *Miyako shinbun* (April 1933), cited in Yamana (1949, 215).

2. Yamana (1949, 202). Details about this incident and its contemporary reportage are drawn from Fujin Kurabu (1933); Bunshin online (https://bunshun.jp/articles/-/15686 and https://bunshun.jp/articles/-/15687, posted 2019); Yamana (1949, 187–218); Kinoshita (1955); Katō (1965); and Koike (2019).

3. Saitō (2017, 93, 95).

4. Sakaguchi (1950, n.p.). Originally published in *Bungei shunjū* 28, no. 6 (May 1950).

5. Yamana (1949, 188); Saitō (2017, 102).

6. President of Tōkai Kisen steamship company, cited in Kon (1994, 14).

7. See timeline on the Oshima Town official website, www.town.oshima.tokyo.jp/soshiki/seisaku/s2.html, last modified 2014; Kon (1994, 15–22 passim). Song lyrics for "Habu no minato" and "Shima no musume" are available at http://J-Lyric.net. Both songs were tie-in hits for the 1933 Shochiku short film *Shima no musume* (dir. Nomura Hōtei). For a short film clip set to "Habu no minato," see www.youtube.com/watch?v=lZDjiCdoXBI.

8. Saitō (2017, 85–86). See *Fortune* 11, no. 5 (May): 112–23, for fantastic contemporary photos of Mihara's key attraction: steamship travel, camels, "beer, tea, postcards," and a

toboggan chute to descend from the summit. One picture shows Shinto priest Shako Tanaka and police chief Iwasa stationed to thwart prospective suicides while another depicts crowds of sightseers gathered around the crater's edge in a photo captioned "Waiting for Someone to Jump In" (115). I thank filmmaker Jacqueline Castel, who has plans to make a feature film set in Mount Mihara (www.jacquelinecastel.com/mihara), for sharing this article with me.

9. Yamana (1933, 290).

10. Lyrics for "Moyuru goshinbi" available at http://j-lyric.net/artist/a000979/l02061d.html.

11. Numbers dipped again in the immediate postwar down to 73,211 in 1950 but in 1973 reached a historic record number of 830,000 visitors (Oshima Town official website, www.town.oshima.tokyo.jp).

12. Kinoshita (1955, 122, 124); Kon (1994, 8). Kinoshita's original reportage in the February 14, 1933, *Tokyo Asahi* is reproduced in full in Kon (1994, 1). In his 1955 article written over two decades after Matsumoto's suicide, Kinoshita reconstructs the incident and its reportage based on his notes from working at Asahi at the time.

13. Pflugfelder (2005, 154, 160).

14. "Miharayama funkakō de jyogakusei dōsei shinjū," *Tokyo Asahi shinbun* (February 14, 1933), 7; reproduced and available at Bunshun online, https://bunshun.jp/articles/photos/15686. See also "Miharayama no kemuri to kieta: Jyogakusei jisatsu no shinsō o tazuneru," *Fujin Kurabu* 14, no. 4 (1933): 328–34, at page 331, which notes that her love of the classics included *Man'yōshū*, *Kinkashū*, and *Tsurezuregusa*. In this and other articles about Mount Mihara in the mid-1930s, the words *shinjū* (double love suicide) and *jisatsu* (suicide) are used interchangeably with no seeming distinction or value associated with either.

15. "Gakuyū no funkakō tōshin o kikai! Ni-domo michi-annai. 'Shi o sasou onna,'" *Yomiuri shinbun* (February 15, 1933), available at Bunshin online, https://bunshun.jp/articles/-s/15686?page=3. Tomita died suddenly on April 29, reportedly of cerebral meningitis. After her death, the media became immensely more sympathetic and claimed she died "seeking the ghosts of her friends" (Kon 1994, 10).

16. Poet Fukao Sumako in "Dōseiai o sabaku," *Fujin sekai* (April 1933), cited in Kon (1994, 44–45n4). Pflugfelder notes that there was often inconsistent and unclear reportage about the "exact relationship of 'same-sex love' and 'same-sex suicide'" but that sexological and journalistic discourses converged in a way that "helped to suffuse this particular 'love' with a sense of distinct, and possibly mortal, danger" (2005, 157–58). For accounts of how sexological work on same-sex love suicides evolved over the early twentieth century, see Pflugfelder (2005, 140–50) and Robertson (1999, 19–24).

17. Article in *Yomiuri shinbun*, February 17, 1933, cited in Kon (1994, 5).

18. Robertson (1999, 1–7). Notwithstanding the overwhelmingly disparaging critiques in the media, same sex suicides offered lesbian couples a "culturally intelligible act that turned a private condition into a public matter" (Robertson 1999, 30) or "a form of self-representation toward others" (Pflugfelder 2005, 154). Similarly biased coverage is evident in *Fortune* magazine's May 1935 coverage of an earlier June 1934 suicide attempt at Mihara involving three women in a love triangle. The article opens with a list of the Tokyo Bay Steamship Co. assets that include "One volcano (active.) 313 suicides. 1,208 attempted suicides. Three Lesbians (one a transvestite* ([defined as] *a person who wears the clothing of the opposite sex.))." "Profits in Suicide." *Fortune* 11, no. 5 (May, 1935): 112–23, at 112.

19. Yamana 1949, 201.

20. Kikuchi Kan, *Tokyo Asahi shinbun* (February 1933), cited in Yamana (1949, 213). See also a 1910 cartoon in *Osaka Puck* that suggests that women, and beautiful women in particular, were looking for attention with a suicide attempt. The manga shows a beautiful woman praying in a kimono beside a river being hailed by a male passerby; the caption (in English) reads, "Beautiful suicides always look for a passer-by while ugly onees [*sic*] dash straightforward." "Jisatsu misui to kisui," *Osaka Puck* no. 5, 12.

21. "Goshinbi wa maneku: Miharayama jyogakusei jisatsu jiken no zensō," *Fujin sekai* (April 1933), cited in Kon (1994, 9).

22. Di Marco (2016, 72). See "Culturalizing the Meaning of Suicide (1930s–1945)," 57–93, for Di Marco's arguments about psychiatry's failure as a discipline to maintain a coherent position on suicide in an era of increasing nationalism.

23. "Miharayama ni jinji sōdan," *Fujo shinbun* no. 1721, June 4, 1933, 482.

24. Yoshiya Nobuko comments in an article in *Tokyo Asahi*, February 16, 1933, cited in Yamana (1949, 214–15). For more on the incident's reception in the contemporary media, see Di Marco (2016, 71–73) and Pflugfelder (2005, 159–60).

25. Kinoshita (1955, 124). According to other sources, this letter opened with an apology: "I can only apologize to everyone" (Katō 1965, 83).

26. Menninger's research developed in line with earlier Freudian theories of suicide as an expression of a repressed or redirected homicidal impulse. In the late 1950s, American psychiatrists tended to categorize suicidal motives using this scheme, distinguishing, for example, between "animosity toward others versus toward self." In Japan, a 1979 study by a Tokyo medical examiner, which surveyed 586 suicide notes over a thirty-one-year period from 1948 to 1978, ascertained motive by explicitly using Menninger's Freudian hypothesis distinguishing between "the wish to die" (47 percent males, 41 percent females), "the wish to be killed" (27 percent males, 14 percent females), and "the wish to kill" (31 percent males, 35 percent females) (Inamura 1977, 257–68; and Tuckman et al. 1959, cited in Izawa 2002, 617). Dr. Ōhara Kenshirō, one of Japan's early leading suicidologists, created a modified taxonomy that categorized notes as primarily filled with pessimism (38 percent), self-blame (29 percent), or externally directed blame (17 percent) (Koshinaga 1979).

For an overview of medical and sociological approaches to suicide in the west and their adoption to the Japanese context, see Di Marco (2016, 20–28). Her work suggests that Freud had only a minor influence on the dominant psychiatric approaches to suicide in Japan despite appearing translated in prominent journals between 1912 and 1918 (41–42) and somewhat superficially incorporated by some in the field like Komine Shigeyuki writing between 1919 and 1942 (66).

27. Kinoshita (1955, 124). Masako also had a nineteen-year-old younger sister who was a Tokyo Jissen Girls' School student.

28. "'Shi no annai' zenbō hanzen su" [Clearing up the whole story of the "death guide"], *Yomiuri shinbun* (February 16, 1933), cited in Kon (1994, 4). Matsumoto's mention of going "to Heaven" was likely an oblique reference to the Sakata love suicide incident of February 1932 between a twenty-two-year-old woman from a rich Christian family and a twenty-four-year-old Keiō University student. Within a month, their deaths were dramatized in a Shōchiku film directed by Gosho Heinosuke, *Tengoku ni musubu koi* (A love consummated in heaven, 1932) starring Takamine Hideko. In a 1967 radio interview, Gosho reflected on this film with chagrin

noting that it was a rush job designed to capitalize on the sensational incident (*kiwamono*). He claims not to have wanted to direct it, although he omits any mention his equally sensational adaptation of the Mount Mihara suicide that same year in *Shojo yo, sayonara*. The interview, originally broadcast on June 5, 1967, is reprinted in Mikuni (1989, 202–9).

29. Matsumoto's last letters are reproduced in Kinoshita 1955, 124. Original Narihira poem and translation taken from Paul Schalow, *A Poetics of Courtly Friendship* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), 67.

30. "Miharayama funkakō de jyogakusei dōsei shinjū" *Tokyo Asahi shinbun* (February 14, 1933), available at Bunshun online, https://bunshun.jp/articles/photos/15686.

31. "Hi o fuku Mihara-sanchō shinyū・shi no tachiai: 'Sayōnara' to hito-koto: isho o nokoshi kakō e" [The smoke-billowing peak of Mount Mihara, close friend as death witness: Saying only 'sayōnara' and leaving behind a last letter, to the crater mouth], *Tokyo Asahi shinbun* (February 15, 1933), available at Bunshun online, https://bunshun.jp/articles/-s/15687?page=2. This poem is also transcribed in "Miharayama no kemuri to kieta: Jyogakusei jisatsu no shinsō o tazuneru," *Fujin kurabu* 14, no. 4 (1933): 328–34, at 328.

32. Kon (1994, 8). Kinoshita (1956, 124) claims this was a poem she composed at the peak during her October 1932 visit with friends.

33. Katō (1965, 83); "Hi o fuku Mihara-sanchō shinyū・shi no tachiai," *Tokyo Asahi shinbun* (February 15, 1933), available at Bunshun online, https://bunshun.jp/articles/-s/15687?page=2; Kinoshita 1955, 124.

34. "Poem 9, Ono no Komachi," *Ogura hyakunin isshu*, Japanese Text Initiative, University of Virginia Library. Translation slightly modified here to standardize capitalization of waka poems. Last modified November 7, 1998. https://jti.lib.virginia.edu/japanese/hyakunin/frames/hyakuframes.html.

35. Kinoshita (1955, 124).

36. Kinoshita (1955, 122).

37. Harrison (2003, 145).

38. Kinoshita (1955, 123).

39. Yamane (1949, 216). See also the comments of Buddhist scholar and educator Asano Kenshin (214).

40. All information on the Yomiuri crater exploration taken from Kon (1994, 24–28, 32–40).

41. "Sekai-teki daikensaku seikō・Miharayama kakō soko o kiwamu." *Yomiuri shinbun*, May 30, 1933, article available at Bunshin online (https://bunshun.jp/articles/photo/15686?pn=10) and in Kon (1994, 34–35).

42. Tsurumi (1993, 125).

43. Pinguet (1993, 180).

44. "Goshinbi, mata seinen o nomu," *Yomiuri shinbun*, June 21, 1933, cited in Kon (1994, 38).

45. Kon (1994, 42). By the late 1930s, the locale faded as a suicide destination with the escalation of war and the concomitant decline of the suicide rate.

46. Katō (1978, 197).

47. Reports of Mihara suicides and their last words taken from the following sources: Kon (1994, 31); Tsurumi (1993, 125); Yamana (1949, 147); Katō (1965, 83); Kinoshita (1955, 126); and Yamana (1949, 195).

48. Yamana (1949, 197).

49. Katō (1965, 83); Kinoshita (1955, 122); and Kon (1994, 4).

50. Kon (1994, 30).

51. These included a lecture series, talkies, and radio shows produced by *Yomiuri shinbun*; a humorous documentary by Nikkatsu based on footage from the *Yomiuri shinbun* descent into the volcano mouth titled *Miharayama wa waratte iru*; and a Moulin Rouge review show called *Miharayama kensaku ki* (Kon 1994, 38–42). For a discussion of popular song adaptations that fed into the Mihara suicide boom, see Saitō (2017, 84–85, 99–103).

3. SUICIDE MAPS AND MANUALS

1. Shively (1953, 345).

2. Kon (1994, 30); Henshall (1987, 151–52, emphasis mine).

3. Katō (1978, 193–94). Morita subsequently wrote about their affair and suicide attempt in the hit serialized semi-autobiographical novel *Baien* (Smoke, 1909). On this incident, see Rubin (1984, 135–37).

4. Kon (1987b, 253). All subsequent citations of this text appear parenthetically. My thanks to Jordan Sand for drawing my attention to this fascinating map.

5. Kon (1987a, 248). Kon romanizes the title of this map as "Inogasira-kōen no picnic no mure." Both maps were published in Kon Wajirō and Yoshida Kenkichi (1930).

6. See Silverberg (1992, 35–44) for an analysis of Kon's modernology projects including "Tokyo Ginzagai fūzoku kiroku" (Record of mores on Tokyo Ginza Boulevard).

7. Kon cited in Harootunian (2000, 128).

8. Naikaku Tōkei Kyoku, ed., *Nihon Teikoku tōkei tekiyō* [Summary of Japanese Empire statistics], published by the Imperial Cabinet Statistics Bureau annually from 1887 through 1912, contains statistics for suicide that date back to 1882. These records are available on the National Diet Library Digital Collections, the 1888 version at https://dl.ndl.go.jp/pid/805991/1/58. Motive appears to have temporarily stopped being recorded between 1888 and 1890, but then returned in 1891 with a more streamlined list of eight motives; see https://dl.ndl.go.jp/pid/805997/1/56.

9. MHLW (2007–23). Prewar and postwar studies invariably include motive/cause in even their shortest lists, including Yamana (1933, 133–39) and Ōhara (1965, 32–38), which breaks down motive (*dōki*) into thirteen categories, including mental disturbance, sickness, poverty, regret for past crime, family disharmony, anxiety over future, failure at work, illicit pregnancy, broken heart, debauchery and dissipation, and pessimism, and a miscellaneous "Other" category (33).

10. Yamana (1949, 155).

11. Hirayama (1971, 196–245).

12. Silverberg (1992, 44).

13. Kon 2016, (71, 68).

14. On Kon's ability to occupy the inviolable position of all-seeing observer while retaining a self-reflexive stance on his role as a spectator, see Harootunian (2000, especially 130).

15. "Kon Wajirō 'Inokashira kōen jisatsu basho bunpuzu," Google map, www.google.co.jp/maps/d/viewer?mid=1z9vnFXRgFVE7JEnYC_ANuQFaQ88&hl=ja&ll=35.6983650371478%2C139.57571150000004&z=17.

16. Dazai moved to Mitaka in September 1939, evacuated in April 1945, and returned in November 1946. See timeline at "Dazai Osamu to Mitaka," www.city.mitaka.lg.jp/dazai/dazaitomitaka/index.html#header.

17. Unless otherwise noted, all of Dazai's and Tanaka's works mentioned in this chapter are available at Aozora Bunko (www.aozora.gr.jp/), and all translations of their works are mine. Several of Tanaka's other published 1948–49 fictional and nonfictional works appear collected in a work titled *Shi Dazai Osamu* (Master Dazai Osamu) (Tanaka 1994). For an account of the two men's relationship, see the chapter on "'Tanaka Hidemitsu: Shi no shi ni junjita burai no shi" that follows the one on "Dazai Osamu: Jigai ni ikite 'Guddo・bai'" in Ueda Yasuo (1976, 180–99); see also Kokubungaku (1971, 135–56).

18. Depictions of suicide attempts alone do not make this list, thus significantly reducing the tally for an author like Dazai; for example, neither "Ubasute," a semi-autobiographical story about one of his failed attempts, or more metaphorical suicides, such as the girl-fish Suwa in "Gyofuku-ki" (Metamorphosis) make the list (Hirayama 1971, 196–245).

19. Dazai's contemporary Sakaguchi Ango, for example, criticized his suicide and his final writings for lacking self-reflexivity, or what he called the "M・C, or my comedian" tone of Dazai's best works ("Furyōshōnen to kirisuto," Aozora Bunko, www.aozora.gr.jp/). In *Suicidal Narrative in Modern Japan: The Case of Dazai Osamu* (1990), Alan Wolfe writes against what he sees as the critical establishment's tendency to monumentalize Dazai as a failed, alienated writer whose many suicide attempts and many suicidal writings were characterized by failure and incompletion. Instead, Wolfe seeks to recuperate the unfinished qualities of Dazai's writing and his life as resistance to closure and to seamless autobiographical fiction, the dominant literary trend of his time.

20. See "Mitaka bungaku sanpo," Mitaka City website (last modified on November 24, 2022), www.city.mitaka.lg.jp/c_service/011/011644.html. In 1990, the Mitaka City Library published *Mitaka bungaku sanpō* (Ōkōchi 1990) featuring local Mitaka authors. Recent city plans to amplify this literary presence use the new tagline: "Bungaku no kaoridakai machi Mitaka" (Mitaka, a town steeped in literature); see "Inokashira onshi kōen nai ni kensetsu suru 'Inokashira bungaku shisetsu (kashō)' ni kansuru seiri kihon puran (shūsei-an)," at the Mitaka City website, www.city.mitaka.lg.jp/c_pubcome/068/attached/attach_68283_5.pdf, December 2017, 1–9.

21. A total of 70 of Dazai's fictional works and essays feature Mitaka (Mitaka City 2008), while 80 out of approximately 150 total works were penned while he was living in Mitaka.

22. Mitaka Dazai no Kai (2008).

23. "Dazai yukari no basho," Mitaka City 2008, www.city.mitaka.lg.jp/dazai/dazaitomitaka/yukari.html.

24. My sincere thanks to Koyano Yoshifumi, head volunteer of the Mitaka Tour Guide Association, for taking me on a tour on June 19, 2017 and to Yoshinaga Mami, curator at the Dazai Osamu Bungaku Saron (literary salon), whom I interviewed at the salon on June 20, 2017. Tour guide information available at https://mitakaguide.p-kit.com.

25. A photo of Dazai in his signature pose—one he imitated from his literary idol Akutagawa Ryūnosuke—was also displayed at his wake (Mainichi 2009). In 2013, Dazai's infatuation with Akutagawa made headlines when his old school notebooks were discovered with this author's name repeatedly inscribed into its pages ("Dazai nōto ni rakugaki: 'Akutagawa' to nandomo," *Nikkei shinbun*, May 11, 2013; and "Dazai no jugyō nōto: rakugaki

darake," *Asahi shinbun*, May 11, 2013). All Japanese-language newspapers cited in this section are drawn from the Nikkei Telecom database.

26. Tanaka claimed to be wildly pleased with his "ability to imitate Dazai to the letter so precisely in this photo" (Nohira 1992, 131–32) and even to be "happy to now die" ("Dazai Osamu to Tanaka Hidemitsu Ten [November 26 2011—January 15, 2012], Kōchi Literary Museum, http://home.u06.itscom.net/lupin/111126_2/111126_2.html). See the photographer's account of his unwitting role in Tanaka's copycat photo and suicide in Hayashi Tadahiko, *Bunshi no jidai* (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1986), 26–32. I thank Paul Roquet for sharing with me a photo of the uncannily realistic depiction of Dazai in latte art by an entrepreneurial café in Mitaka.

27. "Dazai yukari no basho," Mitaka City 2008, www.city.mitaka.lg.jp/dazai/dazaitomitaka/yukari.html. See also Mitaka Dazai no Kai, ed. 2008, "Dazai Map" (fig. 10).

28. In his short Inokashira Park essay, Kon Wajirō (1987, 254) also traced the derivation of the "man-eating river" to this schoolteacher's death. Today, the canal is placid and shallow, confounding tourists who anticipate a swift deep current at this former site of suicides and accidental drownings.

29. See, for example, Sakaguchi Ango's scathing remarks in "Dazai Osamu jyōshi-kō" [Thoughts on Dazai Osamu's love suicide], originally published August 1, 1948, Aozora Bunko, www.aozora.gr.jp/.

30. Claiming Dazai is not the exclusive purview of Mitaka. Another memorial just a bit further from the spot where Dazai and Yamazaki entered the canal is a placard beside a large local rock from his hometown of Aomori called "Jeweled Deer Rock" (Stop #12). Alternatively, in the town of Kanagi, visitors can tour his birth home, which has been renamed the "Shayōkan," after his most famous novel *The Setting Sun*. Here, for a small fee, you can "walk through the town where Dazai left his scent," as the promotional materials put it. We are assured that "'Dazai' is standing just around the corner" (http://dazai.or.jp/en/museum/index.html).

31. Yamazaki's note has been reproduced by an anonymous blogger and Dazai fan at www.age.ne.jp/x/matchy/yamazaki.html#note, accessed December 1, 2023.

32. Tanaka's story "Rikon," cited in Ueda Yasuo (1976, 194).

33. Ueda Y. (1976, 192); Kokubungaku (1971, 152). On the day of his death, Tanaka called on several friends and writers who had also been key players in the aftermath of Dazai's suicide. This included their shared editor Nohira, who later complained of being labeled a "gravedigger" (*haka-hori ninpu*) after his role as the caretaker of both Dazai's and Tanaka's ashes (Nohira 1992, 132).

34. See, for example, criticism of Tanaka lodged by his friend and fellow author Hanada Kiyoteru: "Committing suicide in front of Dazai Osamu's grave is an end unbefitting to someone belonging to the materialist school [*yuibutsuron-sha*], but Tanaka Hidemitsu always did have a feudalistic side to him. He had old-fashioned tastes. And yet, I can only conclude that he was an unworthy pupil. Somehow Dazai-sensei's method of committing suicide was a bit smarter than the pupil's. Although it is true that *shinjū* itself is old-fashioned …" ("Chiriyuki inochi ni," *Tanaka Hidemitsu zenshū* 11 (1965): 374–75.

35. See several pictures of Dazai's cherry-laden grave in an article exploring their meaning posted online by Sasaki Moe, "Dazai no haka ni sakuranbo oshikomu 'nazo no fūshū,'" June 24, 2019, https://j-town.net/2019/06/24290573.html?p=all.

36. In June 2009, for the fiftieth anniversary of Dazai's death, a retrospective series of thirty-one photos and articles was published by *Mainichi shinbun*. Dating from his death in June 1948 to the 2009 Ōtōki memorial service, the series offers a kaleidoscopic view of how Dazai has been mourned over time (Mainichi 2009).

37. Opponents worry that a Dazai museum would "destroy the nature and environs of Inokashira Park," a place "where children play and events are held," this "forest for little birds, a crucial place that houses a diversity of living creatures." See public comments as well as original and revised plans at Mitaka City website, February 2, 2018, at www.city.mitaka.lg.jp/c_pubcome/068/068283.html. See also "'Dazai Osamu Kinen Bungakukan' minaoshi: Tokyo, Mitaka-shi ga Inokashira kōen-nai o dannen," *Sankei shinbun*, February 5, 2018), www.sankei.com.

38. "Atashi ya, jishi shita mono-kaki wa mitomen yo: Dazai Bungakukan 'konryū' hantai," (October 8, 2017), accessed April 4, 2019, formerly available at https://ameblo.jp/mushumi54/entry-12317770103.html. On Dazai's popularity with youths, see Saitō et al. (2009) for a roundtable discussion between psychologist Saitō Tamaki, Dazai scholar Andō Hiroshi, and novelist Kawakami Mieko. For a strident critique, see Ishihara Shintarō (2009). Ishihara worries especially about Dazai's influence on the disaffected "NEETS and freeters analyzed in psychologist Saitō Tamaki's work." Calling it symptomatic of nothing less than "the decline of the nation of Japan," Ishihara critiques both the author's and his readers' masochistic tendencies where "narcissism masquerades as self-hate" and cites Mishima Yukio's own infamous diagnosis and prescribed cure of "a daily morning regimen of cold water rubdown and radio exercises."

39. Tsurumi (1993), book jacket band. Subsequent page numbers are cited parenthetically. According to Yomidasu bestseller data, *The Manual* was the number one nonfiction bestseller in November 1993 and remained in the top ten through March 1994. In 2002, *Jisatsu no kosuto* (The costs of suicide, published by Ōta Shuppan), a rival publication by Amamiya Karin, the punk rock singer and writer, offered a "balance sheet of suicide's profits and losses that were not included in *The Manual*."

40. This comment was made by a member on the Tokyo Youth Protection Ordinance committee who wanted to revise regulations to include "tempting suicide and thereby harming the healthy development of youths" ("'Kanzen jisatsu manyuaru' Seishōnen e no eikyō dai," *Mainichi shinbun*, September 20, 1999). In Aichi, which was the fourteenth prefecture to label *The Manual* a harmful book, the penalty for selling it to minors is up to six months imprisonment and/or fines of up to five hundred thousand yen ("Yūgai tosho: 'Jisatsu manyuaru' o shitei—ken, seishōnen hogo ikusei jyōrei kaisei de," *Mainichi shinbun*, July 8, 2005). All newspaper articles for this section on *The Manual* are drawn from the Yomidasu, Maisaku, and Asahi online databases.

41. Tsurumi defended his book as a paradoxical intervention of sorts, countering that "the men did not decide upon suicide from reading the book. What I wanted to say with this book is that one can live easier knowing that there exist many choices for 'suicide.'" ("'Jisatsu annaisho' shomochi shita 2 itai: 'Hon de mite kita,'" *Tokyo Yomiuri shinbun*, October 20, 1993, 31. Alternatively, Tsurumi claimed that the book is designed to counteract Japanese society's condemnation of suicide (Tsurumi 1993, 195) or "a book meant to challenge this nation of Japan where there is a tendency not to face suicide head on" ("Fueru 'Jukai jisatsu': Manyuaru-bon ga jimoto shigeki," *Asahi shinbun*, November 25, 1993, 3.

42. Kumamoto (2011, 12–13). In March 1977, one high school student leaped from the Takashimadaira complex after failing her entrance exam, and in April, there was a "parent-child double suicide" (*oyako shinjū*) by a spiteful father who took along his young children ages six and nine and left behind a scathing note to his wife (Kamijō Masashi, "'Okāsan wa, jigoku e ike' Haha-oya jyōhatsu de chichi to kodomo-tachi no sōzetsu isho," *Shinchō 45* vol. 27 (June 2008): 52–54.

43. Nomura (2004); Kumamoto (2011, 12–13).

44. Tsurumi (1993, 95). Writing in 1965, psychiatrist Ōhara Kenshirō noted a disproportionate number of suicides in scenic locales like Nikkō, Kamakura, and Atami and speculated that dissatisfaction with cities and "the desire to die in a place with a mood" is what drives these "business trip suicides" (*shutchō jisatsusha*) (42). Katō Hidetoshi coined the term *scenic suicide* (*fūkō jisatsu*, 風光自殺) to describe the trend started by Fujimura at the turn of the century (1978, 194–95).

45. Kumamoto (2011, 13). For English-language coverage of the Takashimadaira suicide boom, see John Needham, "Apartment Complex Fights Image as 'Mecca for Suicides,'" United Press International, October 29, 1980, www.upi.com; and "Coveted Homes in Tokyo Draw Many Suicides," *New York Times*, February 23, 1979, 9, www.nytimes.com.

46. See Beautrais (2007, 60, 61) for a Swiss example demonstrating the inefficacy of physical barriers and also on the need for updated policies that warn against advertising any implementation of physical barriers out of fears that they will instead promote suicide and the site. *The Manual* details just such prevention strategies at Takashimadaira and even notes that this architecture is what now draws sightseers to the complex (Tsurumi 1993, 94).

47. Nomura (2004). These interim reports and MHLW funding applications were formerly available at Japan Support Center for Suicide Countermeasures (JSSC)/National Center of Neurology and Psychiatry (NCNP) online archives at https://jssc.ncnp.go.jp/archive. Accessed February 19, 2019. Nomura Tōta, head of Architecture at Monoritsuku University, headed the research on "suicide prevention and space/place" (*jisatsu yobō to basho・kūkan ni kansuru kenkyū*) for this multiyear MHLW-funded grant that ran from 2001–4. For the team's final reports, see https://mhlw-grants.niph.go.jp/project/5386. Nomura Tōta, "Jisatsu yobō to basho・kūkan ni kansuru kenkyū hōkoku (zoku)," Heisei 14-nendo Kōseirōdō kenkyū-hi hojokin [2002 application for MHLW research funds], 2002, n.p.

48. Tsurumi (1993, 71–72).

4. AOKIGAHARA JUKAI, SEA OF TREES

1. *The Sea of Trees*, directed by Gus Van Sant, written by Chris Sparling, featuring Matthew McConaughey, Ken Watanabe, and Naomi Watts, A24 Distributors, May 16, 2015 (Cannes).

2. "Aokigahara, monogatari no kanpeki na butai," *Asahi shinbun* (May 6, 2016). All Japanese-language news articles in this chapter were retrieved from Nikkei Telecom, unless otherwise noted.

3. Emily Yoshida, "The Forest Turns Japan's Suicide Forest into an Obstacle Course for Americans," *The Verge*, January 8, 2016, www.theverge.com; "Matthew McConaughey's Sea of Trees Booed at Cannes," *Entertainment Weekly*, May 15, 2015, https://ew.com; Nico

Lang, "Film Review: The Sea of Trees, Gus Van Sant's Embattled Film Mangles Its Profound Subject Matter," *Consequence of Sound*, August 27, 2016, https://consequenceofsound.net.

4. According to a Yamanashi Prefecture official who questions detainees, "The majority come to Jukai having seen or heard about it from the media in television, newspapers, or books" (Satō 2001, n.p.).

5. The January 2018 YouTube posting prompted public outcry over the lack of standards on social media platforms; on this incident and its aftermath, see Cather (2018). Until Aokigahara vlogs were censored by YouTube, they were standard fare featuring similarly clueless guides who posed as intrepid explorers braving the haunted forest in a *Blair Witch Project* docudrama style that invariably featured the scattered possessions and remains of the dead. One example strung together "5 YouTubers Who Explored the Suicide Forest in Japan," culminating with Logan Paul's infamous clip.

For an exceptional production centered on the forest, see the avant-garde feminist production by playwright Kristine Haruna Lee (*Suicide Forest*, 2019), www.harunalee.com.

6. Tsurumi (1993, 70).

7. Takahashi Y. (1986, 23, 24, 26). In contrast, Hayano Azusa, a self-appointed guardian who patrols the forest to dissuade suicides, stresses that individuals who choose to die there do not necessarily desire to vanish and are often found not far from the main path ("Aokigahara Jukai o haikai, sono taiken o misuterii ni," *Shūkan Tōyō keizai*, September 12, 1998). Hayano is the subject of the refreshingly compassionate documentary by VICE media 2010. Hayano is also a prolific mystery writer going by the penname of Satō Toshio whose *Saifuku no idenshi* (1998) was implicated for leading a man to try to die there. The man survived and claimed that unlike its depiction in the book, "Jukai was not of this world, it was hell" (*Aokigahara Jukai wa kono yo de naku jigoku*), *Yomiuri shinbun*, November 1, 1998.

8. "'Jisatsu annaisho' shomochi shita 2 itai: 'Hon de mite kita,'" *Tokyo Yomiuri shinbun*, October 20, 1993. After *The Manual*'s publication in July 1993, suicides in the forest were said to have increased from twenty-one in both 1991 and 199, to thirty-three in 1993. It is difficult to prove or refute this assertion because these statistics are not broken down month by month, and most bodies are discovered during the annual October sweeps. What makes it suspect, however, is the fact that thirty suicides were discovered in 1990, and there was a peak of fifty-three back in 1989 ("Rensai: Shakaibu hatsu Aokigahara Jukai de jisatsu bōshi borantea," *Nikkan sports*, March 11, 1998.

9. On the Papageno effect, see Niederkrotenthaler et al. (2010) and Niederkrotenthaler and Till (2019).

10. DeWyze (2005, n.p.). On the Werther effect, see Phillips (1974). It should be noted that there was no proof that those who did commit suicide actually read these news reports, although later studies conducted using a similar methodology in the United States, Britain, and Asia replicated these findings and affirmed the validity of this general claim (Fu and Yip 1996; Stack 1996). A 2001 comparative study of media reporting of suicides in Hungary, Japan, the United States, Germany, Austria, and Finland from 1981 and 1991 offers a more nuanced analysis and conclusions. Researchers found that newspapers in Japan and Hungary tended to over-publicize celebrity suicides, particularly ones who died using a spectacular method. But they also found that the "positive, sometimes heroizing evaluations" in Japan were counterbalanced by displays of the negative consequences of suicide, which "decreases the possibility of imitation-identification" (Fekete et al. 2001, 171).

11. The 2002 WHO Suicide Prevention Guidelines for Media in Japanese acknowledges in a footnote that "imitation" (*mohōsei*) and "contagion" (*densensei*) depend on media reporting of an actual suicide and that research lacks consensus regarding fictional depictions. In the main text, they point to one US-based study that identified copycat suicides after the publication of the cofounder of the Hemlock Society in 1980, Derek Humphry's manual on voluntary death, *Final Exit* (1991). (WHO 2002, n.p).

12. Phillips (1974, 340).

13. DeWyze (2005, n.p.).

14. Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe et al., *Conversations with Eckermann: Being Appreciations and Criticism on Many Subjects* (New York: M. Walter Dunne, 1901), 48. My thanks to Michiko Suzuki for pointing me to the religious significance of the wounded pelican allusion.

15. Jan Thorsen and Thomas J. Oberg, "Was There a Suicide Epidemic after Goethe's Werther?," *Archives of Suicide* 7, no. 1 (2003): 69–72.

16. Saio (2012, 216).

17. Fujii Yasue, "Kaidai (Nami no tō)," in Matsumoto (2009, 2:399–400). Her pillow book is not identified in the press but was likely either the volume from Bungei Shunjū's *Matsumoto Seichō zenshū*, which had recently published the story as a single volume (on January 17, 1972), or perhaps the Kappa Noberusu edition from June 1960.

18. WHO (2008b, n.p.). For his part, Matsumoto Seichō defended himself by claiming no such authorial intent, likening himself to Meiji literary giant Ozaki Kōyō, who, he asserted, "surely did not write *Golden Demon* in order to make Atami Nishikigaura famous for suicide, even if suicides there increased afterwards" ("'Meisaku no butai' 'Nami no tō,'" *Sankei shinbun*, December 24, 1994) The suicide of a woman in the early 1960s on Noto peninsula was blamed on another Seichō novel ("Jukai, Inochi no mori [ue]: Seimei no atsumori jikkan," *Tokyo Yomiuri shinbun*, September 16, 2010).

19. The first theatrical film adaptations of *Nami no tō* was in 1960 by Shōchiku "women's film" director Nakamura Noboru. Eight TV film adaptations have followed to date, including the most recent 2012 TV Asahi drama.

20. DiMarco (2016, 119).

21. Matsumoto (2009, 2:395). Subsequent page numbers are cited parenthetically in the text, preceded by the volume number. All translations are mine.

22. Nishiki Masa'aki, "Kaisetsu," Matsumoto (2009, 2:407).

23. "Seichō no 'Shōwa': 3 Ōse no Jindaiji, būmu ni," *Asahi shinbun*, August 7, 2009.

24. Despite a general trend for women to attempt suicide more often than men, Takahashi found that between 1982 and 1984, the male-female ratio for attempted suicide in Aokigahara was 9:1. Between 1975 and 1984, men died there three times as often as women, accounting for 206 of the 281 total (Takahashi Y. 1986, 24).

25. Lisa Zunshine, *Getting Inside Your Head: What Cognitive Science Can Tell Us about Popular Culture* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012); *Why We Read Fiction: Theory of Mind and the Novel* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2006); and Clover 1993).

26. Fukuoka (1968, 55). Like Dazai before him, Seichō spurred tourism booms in the various locales where he set and wrote his works. See the recent book series that maps his fiction (including *Nami no tō*) onto their settings in *Chizu de yomu Matsumoto Seichō*

(Tokyo: Teikoku Shoin, 2020–21); or virtual tours online at www.yamaimo.net. See also Nishiki, "Kaisetsu," Matsumoto (2009, 2:405–6).

27. Fujii, "Kaidai (Nami no tō)," in Matsumoto (2009, 2:399).

28. A local sixty-four-year-old man who worked at this youth hostel at the time Seichō was writing the novel (and who was the model for one of its characters) recalls the author's visit to scout locations, speculating that "something about Sensei's mystical depiction lent itself to the aesthetics of people intent upon dying" ("Shōsetsu 'Nami no tō': Jukai … Inochi ga hajimaru mori," *Tokyo Yomiuri shinbun*, June 23, 2007). A huge fan, he admitted that the copycat suicides were a problem, but he was loath "to criticize Seichō-sensei. It's complicated" (Jukai-Inochi no mori [ue]: Seimei no atsumori jikkan," *Tokyo Yomiuri shinbun*, September 16, 2010).

29. There is a red herring at this point in the novel where readers are led to believe that Yoriko might choose drowning in the lake, a prototypically female mode of dying (2:392). Matsumoto's secretary/stenographer for nine years recalls debating with Matsumoto whether to kill off Yoriko or save her in the end of *Nami no tō* (Fukuoka 1968, 54–56).

30. Ishihara Shintarō's story "Aokigahara" was initially solicited and published by *Shinchō* in December 1999. The film originally screened at the 2012 Tokyo International Film Festival. I thank Ark Entertainment for sharing with me a copy of the otherwise difficult to obtain film.

31. "Ishihara-tochiji ga jisaku eiga 'Aokigahara' no seisaku happyō: 47-nen buri ni shutsuen," *Sports hochi*, April 12, 2012. Ishihara's "retirement" from politics was short lived. At the film premiere on October 26, 2012, he announced the establishment of his new Sun Party, explaining that "I had planned to quit as governor and direct films, but I erred in my way. … And I just can't stand to see this country as it is" ("'Michi, machigaeta' chiji gensaku no jyōeikai," *Tokyo shinbun*, October 27, 2012).

32. "'Jukai eiga satsuei wa hairyō o' Yokouchi-chiji, Ishihara-shi ni motomeru," *Yamanashi nichi-nichi shinbun*, May 31, 2012.

33. "Aokigahara Jukai aoki sennen no mori," *Yamanashi nichi-nichi shinbun*, November 6, 2013.

34. "Shōsetsu 'Nami no tō' Jukai … Inochi ga hajimaru mori," *Tokyo Yomiuri shinbun*, June 23, 2007.

35. "Eiga 'Ki no umi' ga 7-gatsu 30-nichi kara kōkai: Takimoto Tomoyuki kantoku 'Shuyaku wa Jukai.'" Other Japanese productions set in the forest include *Ki no umi* (dir. Takimoto Tomoyuki, 2004), *The Forest* (dir. Jason Zada, 2016), and *Jukai no futari* (dir. Yamaguchi Hideya, 2013).

36. "Aokigahara Jukai aoki sennen no mori," *Yamanashi nichi-nichi shinbun*, November 6, 2013.

37. Ishihara (2014, 70).

38. Ishihara 2014, 38. The economic burden of caring for unidentifiable corpses, which often tally two-thirds of all bodies found in the forest, falls to the local villages and are estimated to cost anywhere from approximately 1.5 to 3 million yen annually. In 1993, twenty-two of thirty-three recovered bodies were unidentified, and in 1998, forty-four of sixty-three were unidentified ("Fueru 'Jukai jisatsu': Manyuaru-bon ga jimoto shigeki," *Asahi shinbun*, November 25, 1993; "Yamanashi jisatsu kyūzō, jimoto komatta," *Mainichi*

shinbun, November 5, 1998). The cost to families is estimated to be four million yen total (Amamiya 2002, 74–75; see also Tsurumi 1993, 73–74).

39. Ishihara (2014, 28–29).

40. Takahashi (1988, 165).

41. Ishihara (2014, 4–5).

42. Takahashi (1988, 166).

43. Satō (2001, n.p.).

44. Kishida (2008, 94). This modern Japanese-language translation of the shogunal response to the grave caretaker's request is provided by Kishida alongside the original: 「見苦敷被成御肆「晒」被成候が御仕置」.

45. Nomura (2004).

46. "JR Chūō-sen no tobikomi jiko bōshi puran," *E-Mansion*, May 17, 2005; revised May 20, 2005, available at www.ll.em-net.ne.jp.

47. Just how these flyers spell out the pathetic state of corpses—in verbal and/or visual terms—is not specified. Satō 2001, n.p. "Inochi tsunagu tame ni jisatsu taikoku Nippon no ima (3): 'Meisho' henjō e 'mizugiwa' sakusen," *Yamanashi nichi-nichi shinbun*, June 22, 2008.

48. "Suicide Deterrent Net," Golden Gate Bridge Official Website, n.d., www.goldengate.org; "Golden Gate Bridge's Suicide Net Comes after Decades of Tragedy," *New York Times*, November 8, 2023, A1. See also one spokesperson's comments in 2017 noting that "if a person jumped onto the net, it would be unforgiving, perhaps leading to broken bones"(Katy Steinmetz, "The Golden Gate Bridge Is a 'Suicide Magnet.' So Officials Are Adding a Net," *Time*, April 12, 2017, http://time.com). During an October 2022 visit, I discovered that the net had been temporarily taken down after they discovered a technical glitch that was causing terrible noise pollution from wind interference.

49. "'Meisaku no butai' 'Nami no tō,'" *Sankei shinbun*, December 24, 1994.

50. Russell (2006, n.p.).

51. "Jisatsusha: 8-hitoberashi no 131-nin: Jukai imēji-mukiage hakaru 17-nen ken matome," *Mainichi shinbun*, June 8, 2018; "Jukai, inochi no mori (Ge): Kawaru fu no imēji," *Yomiuri shinbun*, September 18, 2018. "Jukai no utsukushisa posutā de 'Seimeiryoku yutakana basho,'" *Yomiuri shinbun*, August 15, 2018. The 2018 Jukai promotional poster available at: https://twitter.com/livedoornews/status/1019881085755305984.

See also the recommendations of a local Yamanashi doctor who advocates patrolling, arranging image-enhancing events that stress nature and eco-tourism, and disallowing any media productions that "spread the image of Aokigahara as a *jisatsu meisho*" (Hosaka Michio, "Aokigahara Jukai de shinryōnaika o kaigyō shite," *Kokoro to shakai* 45, no. 4 (2014): 90). Just days before the Logan Paul scandal broke, the prefecture had sponsored a family friendly event to promote the site as "a place famed for tourism" (*kankō no meisho*) ("Aokigahara jukai: Ninki jiwari—'Jisatsu' no imēji kara kankōchi," *Mainichi shinbun*, December 26, 2017)

52. Sontag (2003, 91, 64). For a similar strategy that outs online spectators of suicide in order to question the ethics of such representations, see the performance art of Eva and Franco Mattes, *No Fun* (2010), in which they simulated a hanging body on the website *Chatroulette* to record spectators' reactions, which range from shocked horror and titillation to boredom. After being banned on YouTube, the only currently available video is an eight-and-a-half-minute extract available at https://vimeo.com/11467722. See also the 2004

documentary *The Bridge* (dir. Eric Steel), which was heavily criticized for presenting the filmmakers as inviolable spectators who watched and filmed people plunge to their deaths from the Golden Gate Bridge.

53. Sontag (2003, 89).

PART TWO. NOTING SUICIDE: *ISHO*, THE WRITINGS LEFT BEHIND

1. Kastenbaum (1993, 273). In Japanese, the term *yuigonsho* (or *igonsho*, 遺言書) is used to refer to a legally binding will, but *isho* (遺書) is used colloquially to refer to these as well, or alternatively to an unofficial suicide note.

2. Okamoto (1927, n.p.).

3. Mark Twain in "The Curious Republic of Gondour" (1919), cited in Guthke (1992, 27). Guthke notes the "disconcerting fact" that "George Washington, Immanuel Kant, and André Gide not only died saying insignificant words, they died saying exactly the *same* insignificant words" (68).

4. Whether professional writers write something qualitatively (or quantitatively) different from the average population in their final moments is debatable. One 1901 French study, *Le Requiem des gens de lettres*, found that little separates professionals from amateurs in the end, as did a 1921 study that sought to characterize last writings by the professional affiliations of their writers, dividing them into religious, royalty, military, philosophers, litterateurs, physicians and scientists, artists, poets, and statesmen (Guthke 1992, 127, 215–16n21).

5. Nakamura (1948, 91).

6. Nosaka (1988, 146, 147). See also Terayama Shūji's satirical essays "Jyōzu na isho no kakikata" [How to write a good suicide note] and "Jisatsu shinshi-ron," where he debates the merits and demerits of various "gentleman's suicides" including Fujimura Misao, Haraguchi Tōzō, and Tsuburaya Kōkichi (Terayama 1979, 41–46, 58–99).

7. Kawabata (1968). On the importance of the "rhetoric of sincerity" to early twentieth-century Japanese literary criticism, see Fowler (1988).

8. Dickinson's poem "I've Seen a Dying Eye" playfully if somewhat ambivalently invokes this privileged final vision. In *Poems by Emily Dickinson*, edited by Mabel Loomis Todd and T. W. Higginson (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1890), 124.

9. Fuss 2009, 879; on Dickinson's death poems, see 884–85. Literary theorist Kenneth Burke points out how death makes especially great fodder for poetry because of its unknowability and "ideality" (Burke 1952, 369).

10. Guthke 1992, 28; *The Law.com Dictionary*, s.v. "nemo moriturus praesumitur mentire," https://dictionary.thelaw. In his 1922 story "Yabu no naka" ("In a Grove"), Akutagawa Ryūnosuke relentlessly satirizes any such presumptions of deathbed truths by staging the competing testimonies of a man headed to the gallows, a woman confessing at a Buddhist temple, and finally a dead man speaking through a shaman.

11. "Jisatsu taisaku ni kansuru sankō tōkei shiryō," MHLW, n.d. Statistical data on suicide in Japan from 1899–2022 is collated in this report. The report tallies motive from 1978 until 2005, clarifying that just one motive per individual was assigned but that as of 2006, up to three motives could be included "provided they were clearly specified in suicide notes or other documents" (248–49).

12. For a critique of the police, see Izawa (2002, 608, 612); on the media's tendency to oversimplify motive, see Sakamoto et al. (2006, 44, 50).

13. Hori (2002, 142–43). For an example of one psychiatrist who used what he claims may be the world's "first suicide note" to diagnose an ancient Egyptian, circa 1800 BCE, with "severe depressive psychosis" that was "not dissimilar to the views expressed by suicidal patients today," circa 1980, see Thomas (1980, 285, 284).

14. Shimizu (2007, 49–50). See also Inamura (1981, 1630–35) and Myōki (2007). For prohibitions against publicizing suicide notes, see WHO (2017, 7, 11).

15. Koseki Tomohiro, "29-moji no isho: Jyosei daigakuinsei wa naze jisatsu shita no ka," *Chūō kōron* 116, no. 5 (May 2001): 176–87; "Nagaoka Yōji Gi'in: Isho-naki jisatsu de sasayakareru 'konna dōki'" *Shūkan Asahi* 110: 39 (August 2005), 31–32.

16. A study of suicides in Kobe from 1981 to 2001 found that the note-leaving rate remained fairly constant (between 23–36 percent) notwithstanding suicide rates almost doubling (from twelve to twenty-four per hundred thousand population) over the twenty-one-year period (Shioiri et al. 2005, 227–28).

17. National police data for 1999 found that 28 percent left behind a note (males, 29 percent, and females, 25 percent). Izawa's 1999 study in Niigata Prefecture found that 34 percent left behind notes, with just slightly more men than women (at 35 percent versus 33 percent), but found much larger deviation between the genders depending on their age. The older the man, the more common it was to leave behind a note, while the opposite was true for women: 57 percent of men in their nineties wrote versus 27 percent of women compared to 32 percent for men in their sixties and 36 percent for women; younger females wrote more consistently than younger males overall, and the younger they were, the more likely to leave behind a note (55 percent of females in their twenties versus 35 percent for males) (Izawa 2002).

Earlier studies appear to show more variation. A study of suicides in Tokyo from 1955 to 1957 found 35 percent total left behind suicide notes with more youths than elderly and a tendency to write less the older one got. A regional study in Kanagawa Prefecture from 1977 to 1978 found 27 percent total with more women than men (31 percent versus 26 percent) while another from Saga in 1981–90 also had 27 percent total with more elderly than youths writing (32 percent in their sixties versus 21 percent in their thirties) (Izawa 2002, 608).

18. Shneidman (1996, 4); Shneidman (2004, 7).

19. Shneidman (2004, 7–8). See also a 2006 study by psychiatrists in India who use suicide notes as "an important component of psychological autopsy" (Bhatia et al. 2006, 163).

20. Ōhara (1978, 88–90). Ōhara's previous two monographs were *Isho no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Nihon Bungeisha, 1963) and *Isho no naka no jinsei* (Tokyo: Yomiuri Shinbunsho, 1970).

21. Ōhara (1978a, 89). Ōhara wrote, "I had thought that all suicides leave behind suicide notes. But in fact, only one-third of youths leave them, and the older one gets, the lower that figure becomes with just 15% of those in their seventies." Writing in the late 1940s, Yamana (1949, 147) worked under a similar assumption, commenting that out of 761 cases he surveyed, "only" 288 had notes at all, although at 38%, this was actually quite a high ratio.

Little cross-cultural comparative work has been done on suicide notes, but many scholars have tended to assume that the Japanese were uniquely reticent to leave behind notes. For example, the eminent sociologist Fuse Toyomasa claims that the low percentage of suicides who leave a suicide note ("a mere 24%") points to a failure of Japanese to communicate in words and a preference for gestural or non-verbal/textual "communication," a word he says is entirely lacking in the Japanese vocabulary (1985, 203–4). The literary scholar Masao Miyoshi (1974) similarly points to the uniquely reticent qualities underpinning modern Japanese literary aesthetics in his *Accomplices of Silence* featuring three suicidal authors: Dazai, Mishima, and Kawabata.

22. Shneidman (2004, 8; emphasis in original).

23. This psychiatrist, Inamura Hiroshi, proposed an alternative taxonomy that rejects his colleagues' tendency to use suicide notes to diagnose a patient along reigning Freudian interpretations of suicide as displaced homicidal aggression. Whereas their categories included "animosity toward others" versus "animosity toward self," for example, his considers what kind of communication each offered to those left behind—whether they could be categorized as words of thanks, goodbyes, apologies, or self-justifications, for example, or what they said about the individual's views about life and death (Inamura 1977, 257–68).

24. On *jisei*, see Hoffmann (1998) and Nakanishi (1984).

25. One study of 371 suicide notes (out of 868 total suicides) in Niigata in 1999 conducted by a university medical school researcher in the Division of Legal Medicine found that *isho* most often take the form of a letter (80 percent), tend to be addressed to a designated recipient(s) (66 percent), sometimes with date and signature included (19 percent and 30 percent, respectively), and most leave behind one (63 percent) or two (19 percent) letters. Their length ranged from one to twelve pages with an average of 1.2 pages, the shortest example comprising only two characters, while most (65 percent) were about a paragraph long. Notes have been written on anything from memo paper to sumo broadsheets and business cards (Izawa 2002, 606–8),

26. For the original study, see Shneidman and Farberow 1957. For a critique of this study and an overview of subsequent ones, see Lester (2014, 78–89).

27. Yamana (1949, 145–47). In his 1933 study, Yamana devotes twice the amount of space to "notes of nameless suicides" as he does to more famous ones (304–31).

28. Yamana (1949, 149–51).

29. Nakanishi (1987, 3). This collected volume of famed last writings stretches from the death poems (*jisei*) of sixteenth-century figures, such as Sen no Rikyū and Toyotomi Hideyoshi, to suicide notes, wills and testaments, and last poems by twentieth-century luminaries who died of natural causes as well as by suicide, including Fujimura Misao, Mori Ōgai, Masaoka Shiki, Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, Hagiwara Sakutarō, and Hino Ashihei.

30. WHO (2000, 8).

31. For the most recent statistics on suicide in Japan, see MHLW 2023. Youths who are sexual minorities are at a particularly high risk for suicide, although as researchers note, reliable data is hard to come by. One study found that the risk was six times higher for urban non-heterosexual males in their teens and twenties (Hidaka Y. et al. 2008). Another report notes that these individuals are rendered doubly invisible after their suicides because their sexuality is often obscured by families out of fear of prejudice (Tokyo Jinken Keihatsu Sentā 2013).

32. Hagiwara (1972, 306–7).
33. Burt (2009).

5. A NOTE TO AN OLD FRIEND, OR TWO: AKUTAGAWA RYŪNOSUKE

1. *ARS*, s.v. "Isho," 33–34. In this chapter, all primary works by Akutagawa are drawn from Aozora Bunko (www.aozora.gr.jp/), and all translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

2. Matsumura (1927). Beongcheon Yu's translation offers no indication that it elides almost half of the original and takes great liberties throughout (in Lippit 1999, 205–6). See also Akio Inoue, trans., "A Note Forwarded to a Certain Old Friend," in *Posthumous Works of Ryunosuke Akutagawa: His Life, Suicide, and Christ* (Tenri: Tenri Jihō, 1961), 11–14. Mamoru Iga (1986, 82–84) offers a fairly complete, accurate translation but elides the postscript and instead inexplicably appends a passage from another suicide note that Akutagawa wrote to his friend Oana Ryūichi.

3. Hibbett and Itasaka (1971, 188–93). In an essay on literary translation, Robert Lyons Danly recounts the story of a certain unnamed prominent social scientist in Japan Studies, whose translation of the note from the Hibbett and Itasaka textbook as a second-year Japanese student in the early 1970s was discovered by his wife after an epic fight, leading her to mistakenly believe it to be a genuine suicide note (Danly 1991, 63–67).

4. *ARS*, s.v. "Isho" and "Bonyari shita fuan," 34, 254; Iga 1986, 84–85. The phrase yields over three million hits on Google search. See also "Baku to shita fuan," *Mainichi shinbun*, November 11, 2003 (Osaka morning edition), Maisaku database.

5. The Agon Sutra would become the basis for a Japanese "new religion" (*shin shūkyō*) that emerged in 1954 after its founder, whose attempted suicide was averted when he came across a copy of the Buddhist text *Juntei Kannon-kyō* and attributed his salvation to Kannon's mercy ("Agonshū," in Peter B. Clarke, ed., *Bibliography of Japanese New Religious Movements* [Richmond: Japan Library, 1999], 135–39).

6. The word *inhuman* appears capitalized and romanized ("Inhuman") in Akutagawa's original.

7. *ARS*, s.v. "Isho," 34.

8. Samuel Richardson, cited in David Lodge, "The Epistolary Novel," *The Art of Fiction* (London: Penguin, 1992), 23.

9. Kōjien dictionary defines memo (*shuki*) as "something one writes oneself, or a record that one takes down for oneself" while a letter (*tegami*) is defined as "prose sent to another person."

10. Tsurumi (1993, 77, 56). For more contemporary examples of tongue-in-cheek "guides to suicide" that were more contemporary to Akutagawa's time, see "Jisatsu annai" (Introduction to suicide [methods]), *Kokkei shinbun*, no. 58 (October 5, 1903): 50–352; and "Shinan jisatsu ryōhō" [New proposals for the treatment of suicides], *Tokyo Puck* 11, no. 12, 1929.

11. Akutagawa's comment about fearing a deflation in property value if he commits suicide at home is filled with his characteristic irony, but also may have reflected a reality. In contemporary Japan, property owners are legally required to report any suicide at that locale in the past five years, or at least until two other sets of occupants have resided there (Amamiya 2002, 51).

12. Fowler (1988, 27).

13. Kawabata's Nobel lecture is available (in Japanese and English translation) in Kawabata 1968. For his essay "Matsugo no me," see Kawabata (1964, 482–83). For citations of this passage in secondary works, see Keene (1988, 587) and Pinguet (1993, 258).

14. Nakamura S. (1960, 480).

15. Scholars have identified Henri Régnier's story as chapter one of "Les bonheurs perdus" (Lost happiness) which was translated into Japanese as "Ushinawareru kōfuku" ("Isho—Aru kyūyū e okuru shuki," in *ARZ* 8:114n1).

16. *ARS*, s.v. "Empedocles," 34.

17. Matthew Arnold, *Empedocles on Etna: A Dramatic Poem*, originally published 1852, available at www.telelib.com.

18. In the footnotes to "A Note to a Certain Old Friend," Japanese editions do note that both Philipp Mainländer and Heinrich von Kleist committed suicide ("Isho—Aru," in *ARZ* 8:114n2, 115n11). On Racine's focus on death and suicide in his works ("la mort et le suicide en particulier sont omniprésents dans ses tragedies"), see Tom Bruyer, *Le Sang et les larmes: Le suicide dans les tragedies profanes de Jean Racine* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2012).

19. Theodor Lessing, *Schopenhauer, Wagner, Nietzsche: Eine Einführung in moderne Deutsche philosophie* (Munich: CH Beck, 1906).

20. Miyamoto (1957, 137–65).

21. Nakamura M. (1969, 11–12, 10).

22. Yoshida Sei'ichi, "Kaisetsu," *ARZ* 4:425; Satō Haruo quoted on page 424.

23. Rubin (2006, 205). I have just slightly adapted Rubin's translation here and borrowed from Will Petersen's earlier translation to draw attention to the original's emphasis on the act of writing as "the hand taking up the pen (*pen o toru te*)" (Petersen 1999, 175). Yamazaki Mitsuo claims that in the aftermath of Akutagawa's death there was a deliberate rewriting of his method from cyanide to trendy sleeping medications like the Veronal mentioned in this passage in order to fashion it as a more literary suicide. (Yamazaki 1997, 195–98, 240–45).

24. Petersen (1999, 203). The story has also been translated by Jay Rubin (2006) as "Spinning Gears," 206–36.

25. Roland Barthes's *The Pleasure of the Text* (1973) cited in Gallop (2011, 50).

26. Here I've adapted published translations slightly to emphasize Akutagawa's use of the metaphor of autopsy (Rubin 2006, 186; Petersen 1999, 177).

27. English translators have chosen to title it "A Fool's Life" (Petersen) or "The Life of a Stupid Man" (Rubin), but a more accurate if less literary translation would be "The life of a certain fool."

28. *ARS*, s.v. "Aru ahō no isshō," 20.

29. Rubin (2006, 204), with a slight alteration to reflect the original, which has the title listed in full this time.

30. The chapter title "Illness" similarly repeats itself twice in sections 6 and 41. Some critics interpret these repetitions as evidence of Akutagawa's disordered and drug addled mental and physical state, although they seem quite deliberate (*ARS*, s.v. "Aru ahō no isshō," 20).

31. Améry (1999, 1–30).

32. Lippit (2002, 48–49). See also Yu (1972, x, 4). On Akutagawa's last essays on Christ, "Saihō no hito" ("The Man from the West"), see Doak (2011) and Megumi (2014, 50–82).

33. Yu (1972, 96); Keene (1988, 584).

34. Hiramatsu Matsuko has been identified as the potential "springboard" partner Akutagawa mentions in "A Note to a Certain Old Friend" and as his unnamed promised partner in what is labeled a "double platonic suicide" (*daburu puratonniku sūisaido*) in two excerpts (47 and 48) of "A Fool's Life." (The choice of this particular phrase in katakana seems to point to yet another intertextual allusion, an oblique reference to Kleist's platonic suicide with a similarly infirm, young unmarried woman.) Most of their contemporaries, including his wife, seem to have believed that it was a wholly platonic relationship and that Matsuko helped forestall his suicide. *ARS*, s.v. "Akutagawa Fumi," 10; and "Hiramatsu Masuko," 510–11. See also Akutagawa's wife's memoir: Akutagawa Fumi and Nakano Taeko, *Tsuisō Akutagawa Ryūnosuke* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1975).

35. See, for example, the claim that "Akutagawa's last words were, 'In those days I wanted to make myself into a god'" (Keene 1988, 587).

36. *ARZ* 4:14, 51, 45. "Mitsu no mado" (Three windows) was dated June 10 and published in *Kaizō*; a shorter earlier version of "Yume" (Dream) was published in *Fujin kōron* in November 1926. "Anchū mondō" (Dialogue in darkness), found by his deathbed, was posthumously published in the September 1927 issue of *Bungei shunjū*.

37. Yoshida Sei'ichi, for example, first credits all three posthumously published stories, including "Dialogue in Darkness," for offering "records of the desperate defeat of his life," but quickly then asserts that "especially 'Cogwheels' and 'A Fool's Life'" are worthy of critical attention ("Kaisetsu," *ARZ* 4:424–25).

38. Nowhere have I been able to locate a complete and definitive list of the number of notes Akutagawa left behind. Some accounts include notes addressed to "his aunt Fuki, his uncle Takeuchi [Senjirō], and his nephew Kuzumaki Yoshitoshi and other relatives" (*ARZ* 8:292). Information on notes is based on accounts in *ARS*, s.v. "Isho," 33; *ARZ* 8:118; and *ARS*, s.v. "Dr. Shimojima Isaoshi," 272.

39. On Akutagawa's Bibles, see Doak (2011, 250).

40. The three designated recipients are thought to be Dr. Shimojima, Kikuchi, and Oana, though some speculate that it instead refers to his relatives.

41. Nihon Kindai Bungakukan (2009, 172–73, 208–9).

42. This was a curious request given the number of times Akutagawa had explicitly declared his intent to kill himself to Oana; for example, in a May 17 letter, he wrote, "Night after night, I sleep resolved to die without delay" (Yoshida, "Kaisetsu," *ARZ* 4:423).

43. *ARZ* 8:114–19; also available on Aozora Bunko, s.v. "Isho," www.aozora.gr.jp/.

44. See, for example, "Akutagawa Ryūnosuke: Maboroshi no isho, Izoku-taku de yontsū hakken, zuisho ni suikō," *Mainichi shinbun*, July 19, 2008 (Tokyo morning edition). For a copy of the extant handwritten notes with visible edits, see Nihon Kindai Bungakukan (2009, 171–86). This volume reproduces a note to Kikuchi with a list of five largely practical provisions (180–81), but *ARZ* notes the existence of another note to Kikuchi that seems to have been destroyed ("Akutagawa sakuhin sakuin," 8:7).

45. Oana 1956. In this work, Oana also records the following provisions from other unpublished notes: "(1) If a collected volume is published, it should be based on the manuscripts in my possession and (2) "Yōba" [The hag] (in *God of Agni*, if this is to be reprinted) and "Shigo" [After death] should be excluded (for my wife's sake)." Provision 4 in the note to his wife designated Iwanami as his publisher of choice, following in the footsteps of his "beloved Natsume [Sōseki] sensei," as he put it in the P.P.S.

46. His sons were only aged seven, five, and two at the time of his death. His eldest son Hiroshi (1920–81) became an actor and the youngest Yasushi (1925–89) a composer, while Takashi (1922–45) was drafted and died in Burma.

47. Only the final bullet point of the note to Kikuchi departs from the more mundane practical matters with its plaintive cry: "(5) I ask for forgiveness from everyone. Do not forget that deep in my heart I ask for everyone's forgiveness" (*ARZ* 8:118).

48. All translations from Akutagawa's note to Oana are mine based on the original version in *ARZ* 8:117–18. On his affair with the poet/singer Hide Shigeko (1890–1973), see Rubin (2006, 260n17); and *ARS*, s.v. "Hide Shigeko," 505–6.

49. Oana published two versions of *Futatsu no e*, one in installments in December 1932 and January 1933 in *Chūō kōron* with the subtitle *Akutagawa Ryūnosuke jisatsu no shinsō* [真相], and an expanded version in the same journal in January 1956 with the revised subtitle *Akutagawa Ryūnosuke no kaisō* [回想]. All citations are my own translations of the latter version, which is available at Aozora Bunko (www.aozora.gr.jp/) (Oana 1956).

50. *ARZ* 6:342–43.

51. Yoshida Sei'ichi, "Kaisetsu," *ARZ* 4:421.

52. De Man (1984, 67, 68, 77).

6. A NOTE FOR ONESELF: KISHIGAMI DAISAKU

1. Kishigami 1960, 239–55. Hereafter, all page numbers of quoted or referenced passages from Kishigami (1960) are cited parenthetically in the text.

2. On one page alone, there are four such emphatic direct addresses: "K-san yo! … Yoshimoto-san! … Yoshimoto-san! … Okui-san!" (245); "Takase yo! … Takase! … Takase yo!" (250–51). Takase Takakazu (1939–2008) was a fellow student-poet at Kokugakuin University who roomed next door and was Kishigami's best friend from the same hometown in Hyogo Prefecture. In the note, Kishigami expresses both his deep sense and friendship and jealousy toward this friend whom he believed to be his rival in love. He expresses equally ambivalent sentiments toward the poet and critic Yoshimoto Taka'aki (1924–2012) for managing to balance both an esteemed career as a writer and a rich family life (245). Late in the note, he writes, "As long as Yoshimoto Taka'aki is alive, this world still has some use. Yoshimoto-san, I will die clutching your poems. And just as rigor mortis sets into my hands, your poetry collection will fall to the earth, drenched by the rain. Serves you right! I don't want to lose to you of all people" (252).

3. Kishigami singles out poets who died of tuberculosis, a disease he himself had suffered from, including Kajii Motojirō (1901–32), Nakahara Chūya (1907–37), Tominaga Tarō (1901–25), and Sagara Hiroshi (1925–55). Although he admits a desire to be canonized among them, he also acknowledges the folly of this, writing, "What does it matter if I'm registered as a poet who died young in literary history or not? Any literary critic who calls me one is an idiot" (252).

4. Ogawa (1999, 258). Dazai's opens his story "Ha" ("Leaves," 1933) with these lines: "I planned to die. In January I received a New Year's gift of a gray striped robe. It was clearly a summer kimono. I thought I might as well go on living until summer" (Wolfe 1990, 132).

5. Tanaka Hidemitsu, "Sayōnara."

6. At one point, Kishigami links the unfavorable reception of his *buzama* writings and his corpse more explicitly. He imagines that "Yoshiko," the object of his unrequited love to whom he leaves all his books, diaries, letters, and personal effects, will never in fact receive or accept any of these items. Instead, they will all just be sold off thereby "completing this pathetic suicide." He writes that he dies with a photo of his beloved in his pocket and another on his desk (240–41). His unrequited love has been identified as the eighteen-year-old Sawaguchi Fumi (b. 1941), who was also an aspiring poet in his same poetry circle. Sawaguchi foreswore poetry after his suicide, although she turned to poetic criticism in the early 1970s and later released a volume of her own poetry in the early 1990s. Seven years after he died, she also published a novel titled *Kaze no naru hi wa* …, in which her main character resents the ways that the tabloids demonized and silenced her after his death, while Kishigami's "books got published and widely read," including his poems, which also appeared in school textbooks (Ogawa 1999, 28–29; see also 16–19).

7. Ogawa (1999, 13).

8. Ogawa (1999, 28–29; see also chapter 6, "Anpo tōsō no numa no naka de," 165–19). In 1960, suicides among those twenty to twenty-four years old were peaking at 4,269 total (13–15). See also Yoshimoto Taka'aki's chapter on Kishigami in *Jidaibyō* (Tokyo: Ueitsu, 2005) titled "60-nen Anpo no jidai-shi to shite no Kishigami Daisaku."

9. For Kishigami's closing lines and postscript, see Kishigami (1960, 254–55).

10. Paul de Man, cited in Macksey (1984, 979).

7. A NOTE TO THE NATION: TSUBURAYA KŌKICHI

1. For the most recent 2020 Olympics coverage, see the July 19, 2021, front page of the *New York Times* sports section: "A National Hero with a Broken Heart: Kokichi Tsuburaya Won a Bronze Medal in 1964. He Died at 27, Believing He Had Let Japan Down" (www.nytimes.com).

2. Both notes are reproduced in their entirety in Matsunaga 1968, 101. All translations are mine, unless otherwise noted.

3. De Vos 1973, "Role Narcissism and the Etiology of Japanese Suicide," 438–86. For examples of the typical English-language media coverage of Tsuburaya's suicide, see Tim Larimer, "The Agony of Defeat," *Time Asia*, October 2, 2000, at http://edition.cnn.com; or Robert Whiting's 1964 Olympics retrospective, "Schollander, Hayes Were Spectacular at Tokyo Games," *Japan Times*, October 17, 2014, https://www.japantimes.co.jp. In Japanese, see "Tsuburaya Kōkichi 64-nen Tokyo Gorin akagane kara hajimatta higeki," *Nikkan Sports*, December 21, 2015, at https://www.nikkansports.com; and the *Asahi shinbun* editorial on January 10, 1968, cited in Matsunaga (1968, 100).

4. Kobayashi (2009, 158); Sawaki (1976, 120, 119). For praise of his "SDF spirit" on NHK broadcast, see also Matsunaga (1968, 100). For this chapter, details on the incident and its contemporary reception are drawn from several pieces of excellent scholarship in Japanese, especially Kobayashi (2009, 153–73) and Sawaki (1976, 95–140).

5. Okabe et al. (2010, 17) suggest that Kōkichi's case illustrates "our nation's unique … 'Japanese sports outlook,'" one constructed in the postwar to tighten individual affiliations to school, hometown, company, and nation. See also Ezura Koya, "Tsuburaya Kōkichi:

Jisatsu no kage ni 'kon'yaku haki,'" ["The 'broken engagement' hiding in the shadows of Tsuburaya Kōkichi's suicide], *Shūkan bunshun* 42, no. 35 (2000): 28–29.

6. Tsuburaya's family members cited in Kobayashi (2009, 159–60, 163–64, 170). The estimated total number of visitors at the Tsuburaya Kōkichi Kinenkan quickly grew, doubling from five thousand in 1980 to ten thousand by 1988. The later relocated and renamed Memorial Hall (Memoriaru Hōru) gets about seven hundred visits per year, with spikes during the Olympics and annual memorial marathons.

7. Some scholars have criticized the nationalist and regionalist impetus behind such projects. Komatsu Kazuhiko interprets the 1980s boom in such postwar "people's memorials" (*jinbutsu kinenkan*) as a not-so-subtle continuation of the deification of patriots as *kami* in "people's shrines" (*jinbutsu jinja*) that were abolished alongside state Shinto in the immediate postwar. While we may be rightly cynical about the ideological (and commercial) impetus for such state-sponsored projects, Kobayashi Teruki points out that even when institutions originate from such cynical aims, what must sustain them is an ability for visitors "to touch the hearts and humanity of the dead" (Kobayashi 2009, 153–55).

8. The play *Egg* by Noda Hideki ran at the Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre in November and December 2015 (www.geigeki.jp).

9. "Hitori no michi" lyrics available at https://j-lyric.net. In live performances, the band would sometimes read Tsuburaya's suicide note to his family in full after performing the song. Initially, they opened with a live recording of Yoyogi Olympic Stadium at the moment when Tsuburaya lost his second-place lead, although it was subsequently removed due to copyright infringement (a recording of one of their performances is available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=9WxdgK70B4U).

10. The manga series *Eikō-naki tensai-tachi* (No glory for the greats), serialized from 1986 to 1992 in *Shūkan yangu jumpu* (Weekly young jump), includes this harangue by Tsuburaya's father: "No man would be such a pathetic fool as to look behind them during the midst of a race!" (Morita Shingo and Itō Tomoyoshi, *Eikō-naki tensai-tachi*, vol. 3, *Abebe soshite Tsuburaya*. [Tokyo: Shūeisha Bunko, Komikku-ban, 1997]).

11. Kimihara, cited in Sawaki 1976, 135. A documentary about Kimihara from 1964 titled *Seinen: Aru marason rannā no kiroku* (dir. Kuroki Kazuo) depicts the grueling training regimen and disappointments of such runners charged with representing their nation in the Olympics.

12. I am deeply grateful to Sukagawa City for sharing with me a copy of Tsuburaya's note to his family. On their website, there are no longer any explicit mentions of his suicide or notes, beyond one brief mention that "on January 8, 1968, Kōkichi left behind a suicide note for his family saying '[I] am far too tired to keep on running' and took his own life. He was twenty-seven. It was a far too short-lived life" ("Sukagawa jinbutsu-den Tsuburaya Kōkichi," last modified March 24, 2023, https://www.city.sukagawa).

13. Nornes makes this insight in the context of Mishima Yukio's English-language handwritten intertitles to his film *Yūkoku*, the subject of chapter 10. Noting "the shimmering smudge" on one intertitle, Nornes writes that "*the smudge may have no semantics but it does possess somatics*" (Nornes 2021, 125, 129–30).

14. Maruya (1987, 67–73). Tsuburaya's note to his family is published here along with Kawabata's essay in praise of the note, which is discussed in greater detail below.

15. Matsunaga (1968, 102); Sawaki (1976, 99); Kawabata (1973, 293–94).

16. Matsunaga (1968, 101, 102, 104). Matsunaga compares Tsuburaya as a "peacetime national hero" to author Shimao Toshio, a wartime national hero facing certain death as a *kaiten* pilot during WWII. If Shimao was an author who recognized the importance of his *furusato* while alive, writing longingly about a desire to return to an authentic self in his hometown (also located in Tōhoku), Tsuburaya only realizes it belatedly (103). Although space prohibits going into this in any depth, Shimao offers an illustrating counterpoint to other examples I discuss since he too scripted his state-imposed "suicide" into his fiction, writing in retrospect about his near-death experience in his fascinating story "Shuppatsu wa tsui ni otozurezu ("The Departure That Never Came," 1962).

17. Matsunaga (1968, 100).

18. Mishima (1968, 6). All subsequent citations are taken from this one-page article from the "Self-Cultivation" (*kyōgi*) column of *Sankei shinbun* on January 13, 1968, all translations are mine. The only time Mishima uses the word *suicide* (*jisatsu*) to refer to Tsuburaya's act, he modifies it extensively as if to redefine it: "It is a suicide [*jisatsu*] committed out of a preciously fragile, manly, and beautiful sense of self-respect" (6). Otherwise he calls it a *jiketsu* (twice) or alternatively in the title, a *jijin* (suicide by sword).

19. What complicates any too-neat mapping of Mishima's manly and soldierly *jiketsu* onto Tsuburaya's is the fact that Mishima also introduces another "splendid *jiketsu*" in this 1968 essay: the drowning suicide of the elderly kabuki actor Ichikawa Danzō in June 1966. See also his earlier, longer article titled "Danzō・Geidō・Saigunbi" (Danzō, the arts, rearmament) (Mishima 1966a).

20. This poem was composed by Mishima in July 1970, although some scholars claim that it was also designed to serve as his *jisei* (Keene 2003, 46–47). For Mishima's second *jisei* composed days before his suicide, see my discussion in chapter 10.

21. On Mishima's solo training with the SDF, see Inose and Sato (2012, 485–93); see 546–47, 551, for his subsequent trainings in March 1968 along with members of what would become the Shield Society and its "fateful" training exercise in terrain surveillance of the SDF headquarters in Ichigaya. Years later, their shared SDF air officer commander recalled that Mishima was a weak runner and Tsuburaya hated swimming, but that both were stoic (Sugiyama 2007, 176–80).

22. Mishima (1966b, 371). Reflecting on his choice to publish this testament years later, Mishima worries some will accuse him of "indulging in exhibitionism that knows no bounds," but he defends his choice by noting that the point of a will and testament, after all, is to be read by others (372). All subsequent citations of this text are my own translations based on the version in Mishima (1966b, 371–74). See also Inose and Sato (2012, 16–17), for an alternative translation and discussion of this earlier testament.

23. Mishima notes with some pride that he successfully resisted army censorship and "the model wartime examples for wills and testaments" that were pressed on young soldiers (1966b, 372–73). It is not clear what models circulated among soldiers at the time, but presumably they are along the lines of ones in later published collections like *Kike wadatsumi koe* (*Listen to the Voices From the Sea*, 1949).

24. In his 1968 Nobel speech, Kawabata claimed to "neither admire nor [be] in sympathy with suicide" but nonetheless carves out space for a Zen Buddhist "concept of death … very different from that in the West" by citing the example of the fourteenth-century Zen Buddhist priest Ikkyū and also the example of one of his contemporaries, an avant-garde

painter friend who died young having "said over and over that there is no art superior to death, that to die is to live" (Kawabata 1968).

25. Ueda M. (1976, 210).

26. Kawabata (1973, 293). All subsequent citations of this text appear parenthetically in the text. All translations are mine.

27. Kawabata's essay, "Issō ikka—'Izu no odoriko' no sakusha," originally appeared serialized in the literary journal *Fūkei* from May 1967 through January 1969; the two entries related to Tsuburaya were written in January and February 1968 shortly after Tsuburaya's suicide and were published in March and April.

28. See also Kawabata's despair that "the poet Itō Sachio surely never dreamed that 'Wild daisy' would be the one work that continues to be known among today's young readers. Maybe in fifty or a hundred years' time, Natsume Sōseki will only be known as the author of *Botchan*" (315).

29. See also the previous installment where Kawabata writes that he finds himself "at a loss at the prospect of turning seventy years old in the New Year" and regrets that "I have not yet been able to write the kinds of things I want to write" (290–92).

30. In Kawabata's case, the refusal to narrate his own last final moments gave rise to several competing narratives about his motives and even speculation as to whether it was a suicide. It also led to a tendency to read into his life for scandalous biographical details that might explain his suicide in retrospect (see Usui Yoshimi's 1977 novella *Jiko no tenmatsu* that claimed an illicit affair with a young maid was the root cause, which prompted Kawabata's estate to sue for libel and eventually led Chikuma Shobō to discontinue publishing). See also the chapter on Kawabata in Mamoru Iga's *The Thorn in the Chrysanthemum* (1986), which concludes by labeling it an "egoistic suicide in Durkheimian terms" (113) after citing a host of biographical details—including being orphaned as a young child, poor physical health, increased professional demands and pressure in the wake of receiving the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1968—and after diagnosing his personality as a combination of iconoclastic individualism, traditionalism, fatalism, and pessimism, as well as citing Japanese animistic views on death (106–13). Among commentators, Pinguet is exceptional in that he follows Kawabata's lead, devoting just one line to Kawabata in his lengthy study of *Voluntary Death in Japan* (1993) to acknowledge the act as "a reminder that silence has its own grandeur: in our increasingly noisy society, we need it" (283). Makoto Ueda similarly avoids any mention of Kawabata's suicide at all, unlike his chapters on Dazai Osamu or Mishima Yukio (Ueda M. 1976, 173–218).

31. Ueda M. 1976, 196–97. My thanks to Sharalyn Orbaugh, who pointed me to this insightful essay and to the case of Tsuburaya Kōkichi. For Kawabata's essay "Matsugo no me," see Kawabata (1964).

32. Ueda M. (1976, 194).

33. Kawabata (1982a, 615). For Mishima's funeral, Kawabata delivered the opening address and served as chief mourner (*moshu*), a role that reflected his tightknit connection with the younger author whose literary career he had helped launch.

34. Okamoto (1927).

35. Kawabata (1982b, 178).

36. Kawabata (1982a, 76–77). At the funeral, Kawabata asked the public to show mercy to Mishima's family, citing one of Mishima's letters to him (dated August 4, 1969) in which

Mishima requested this, fully anticipating that "the public will leap at the chance to dig up all my flaws and ignominiously rip me to shreds" (77). In calling for a "quiet ceremony in the beautiful and heartfelt traditions of Japan" (76), Kawabata was also clearly warning off any potential disrupters who might interrupt this peaceful send-off and threatened to immediately cut short the proceedings should any occur.

37. Nosaka (1988, 146). Hereafter cited parenthetically in the text in this section; all translations mine. Nosaka's essay originally appeared in the magazine *Taiyō* in October 1978. See also Nosaka (1983), his edited collection of *zuihitsu* on the topic of death, which included Akutagawa's "A Note to a Certain Old Friend," as well as Kawabata's essay on Akutagawa "Matsugo no me."

38. Futabatei's perfunctory last testament (*Yuigonjyō*) is available on Aozora Bunko (www.aozora.gr.jp). Nosaka also cites approvingly François Villon's (d. 1463) *Le Grand Testament* (1461), a lengthy autobiographical recounting of the author's fears and regrets late in life that intermixes a variety of fixed poetic forms and genres (146).

39. Two days before his death on December 9, 2015, Nosaka offered his own leftist manifesto, a "letter lamenting the contemporary state of Japan ("gendai Nihon ureu [憂う] tegami") on a TBS radio program featuring Ei Rokusuke, the author of the best-selling *Daiōjō* (Peaceful death, 1994). Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_qap3RLeeJg.

40. This *jisei* was composed by Mishima on November 23, 1970. I am grateful to the poet Yuki Tanaka for his help in attempting to capture Mishima's poetics in my translation here. The line "chireba koso" alludes to the famous *Tales of Ise* poem: "Chireba koso / itodo sakura wa / medetakere / ukiyo ni nani ka / hisashikarubeki; It is precisely because / cherry blossoms scatter / that we find them appealing. / Does anything endure long / in this world of sorrows?" (McCullough 1968. 125). At Mishima's behest, final poems were also penned by his fellow Tate no kai soldiers, who all thought they would die along with Mishima in the coup attempt two days later.

41. Writing in 1968 in *Sun and Steel*, Mishima similarly endorsed the mundane language found in last letters by kamikaze pilots, praising "their very impersonality and monumentality [that] demanded the strict elimination of individuality" (Mishima 1970, 81).

42. In Japanese, these characters 虚実 invoke the dichotomous terms of *shinjitsu* (真実)/*kyokō* (虚構), *jitai* (実体)/*hyōgen* (表現), *shajitsu* (写実)/*kyogi* (虚偽) (https://kotobank.jp/word/虚実53357).

43. Shirane (2012, 399).

8. AUTOTHANATOGRAPHY, OR THE EXORBITANT CALL TO WRITE ONE'S OWN DEATH: ETŌ JUN AND YAMADA HANAKO

1. Burt (2009). On the ties between autobiography and autothanatography, see also de Man (1984). On Sylvia Plath's autothanatography, see Boileau (2017).

2. Bazin (2003), 31.

3. De Man (1984, 70).

4. The use of pronouns in these last writings merits more thorough consideration although space precludes going into depth here. James Pennebaker (2011) has argued that our use of pronouns (and other of our "most forgettable words") reveals things about us

that we might otherwise strive to conceal from listeners. His earlier coauthored study (Stirman and Pennebaker 2001) "Word Use in the Poetry of Suicidal and Non-Suicidal Poets" found a preponderance of I-language in suicidal writers. The researchers theorize that inward-looking, ruminative thoughts are reflected by these self-referencing pronouns. In my Japanese examples, as often as there was an erasure of "I" language entirely, there are also other texts filled with first-person language. See, for example, Akutagawa's repeated use of the masculine I-pronoun "*boku*" in two of his famed "last" works: 79 times in his short "A Note to a Certain Old Friend," 493 times in "Cogwheels," and, most intriguingly, just 3 times in his "Life of a Certain Fool," which instead uses the third-person masculine *kare* 358 times. These represent a striking proportion of pronouns for any language text, but an especially conspicuously high one for a language like Japanese that does not require subjects to be explicitly stated. I am grateful to Jamie Pennebaker for sharing his insights on this topic in our meeting on February 18, 2022.

5. Kishigami (1999, 255).

6. Terayama (1979, 63–64).

7. A transcription and a photo of Etō Jun's original note appears in Bungakukai (1999, 222–23). All Japanese-language newspaper articles in this chapter are drawn from the online newspaper databases of Asahi, Yomidasu, and Maisaku (accessed in May 2012).

8. Ishihara, "Tsuioku taidan: Zoku to sūkō o tsunagu hito (Ishihara Shintarō and Fukuda Kazuya)," *Bungakukai* 1999, 51. In his memorial essay for this September 1999 *Bungakukai* special issue, Karatani Kōjin parroted Etō's own favored form of title, calling his piece "Etō Jun to watashi" (44–46). See also comments by the writer Kurumatani Chōkitsu, who quoted Shiga Naoya's own terse comment after Arishima Takeo's love suicide—"Weak"—adding that "although as a husband, Etō's suicide attests to an extreme love rarely seen today, as a writer, it was a dog's death" (64).

9. The *Japan Times* claimed, "A suicide note was left in his home, in which he mentioned the recent loss of his wife, Keiko, as well as his own failing health, police said. He had recently spent time in the hospital after suffering a stroke. Police suspect Eto killed himself due to anguish over these matters" ("Literary critic Eto, 66, commits suicide," July 22, 1999). In *Asahi shinbun*, July 22, 1999 p.m. edition, two articles made similar claims: novelist and psychiatrist Kaga Otohiko commented "He loved his wife, wrote 'Tsuma to watashi,' and ended his own life" ("Etō Jun-shi jisatsu: Bundan sekibetsu no koe") and Obuchi Keizō, the prime minister at the time, speculated that "his feelings for his wife were one cause" in an article that claimed the "main gist of the note's content was 'I lost my wife and am sick and therefore have lost the will to live'" (*Mitotta tsuma, ou yō ni jisatsu no Etō-shi "hitori torinokosareta"*).

10. Etō's chosen method—slashing his wrists in the bath—evoked premodern Japanese samurai traditions for some, and western classical ones for others. Literary scholar-critic Komori Yōichi noted that he "felt distant from Etō's political stances, but … wondered if Etō was perhaps the last 'literary warrior' [*fumi no mononofu*]" ("Etō Jun-shi jisatsu," *Asahi shinbun*, July 22, 1999 p.m. edition); Edwin McClellan described it like this: "Sat in the bath he did. Very Roman." And Donald Richie replied, "Like Seneca" (Donald Richie and Leza Lowitz, *The Japan Journals: 1947–2004* (Berkeley: Stone Bridge Press, 2005), 440.) Articles about Etō's suicide were so very numerous that they ranked number fourteen in the top-twenty list of "the most important domestic news items" for 1999, even though it occurred fairly late in the year ("Kokunai 10-dai nyūsu," *Yomiuri shinbun*, December 21, 1999).

11. Glosses were provided for five of the more difficult words. See "Jisatsu shita Etō Jun-shi no isho kōhyō," *Asahi shinbun*, July 23, 1999; "'Byōku taegatashi … Onozura shoketsu' Etō-shi no isho kōkai," *Yomiuri shinbun*, July 23, 1999; "Etō Jun-san isho, bungo-tai de jisei" and "Jisatsu no Etō Jun-san, jitaku ni isho—Byōku taegatashi onozura shoketsu shi …," *Mainichi shinbun*, July 22, 1999. One essay in the *Bungakukai* special feature memorial edition even conducts a detailed handwriting analysis of the note (Kusamori Shin'ichi, "Kunpū wattate iku: Etō Jun no 'isho' no ato-ashi," *Bungakukai* 1999, 138–47; see also Kojima Nobuo's comments at page 62).

12. Ebersole 1989, 8. Ebersole's framework has been very useful for my own project especially his insistence that just because ritual tears may be "scripted" this does not render them meaningless, but all the more meaningful as signs about what society invests in this symbol and in this script. See also his article "The Function of Ritual Weeping Revisited: Affective Expression and Moral Discourse," *History of Religions* 39, no. 3 (February 2000): 211–46.

13. Bungakukai (1999, 70).

14. Etō and Kurumatani (1998, 169).

15. De Man (1984, 68).

16. Bowring (1975, 145–46); Ōgai's original testament is available on the Mori Ōgai Memorial Museum website, n.d. at https://moriogai-kinenkan.jp, accessed December 1, 2023.

17. *Bungakukai* (1999, 41–42). In Etō's note, Yoshimoto detects a "self-delimiting willful suicide of one who is already dead" (*jiko gentei ni yoru ishi-teki na shigo no jisatsu*) (42). For Yoshimoto, the key point is less about any public/private self than a divide between Etō before and after his stroke, between his former writing self and the now-sick self who needs to be disposed/deposed.

18. Etō and Kurumatani (1998, 168–69). From 1994 until the time of his death, Etō was chairman of the board for this communal literary grave (*bungakusha no haka*) in Shizuoka Prefecture that was created under the aegis of the Japanese Writers' Association in 1969. I was unable to confirm what work does represent Etō Jun or other writers here at this public site, having been informed by the institution that this information was private as per the wishes of the surviving families.

19. Etō and Kurumatani (1998, 162). Etō also points out that the translation of "shishōsetsu" by foreign literary scholars as "I-novels" is a misnomer given that the Japanese language originally had no first-person pronouns at all (164).

20. "Takaichi Yumi (Yamada Hanako) no saigo no hinichi" (dated late February 1994) in Yamada 1998a, 12–13. *Jisatsu chokuzen nikki* had eight initial print runs through Ōta Shuppan and a revised "complete edition" (*kanzen-ban*) in 1998. It was subsequently published by Tetsujinsha in both 2014 and 2018 ("Shūkan besutoserā," *Yomiuri shinbun*, June 22, 1996, 3). On her father's transition from car salesman to aspiring writer, see "Yamada Hanako nenpyō," in *Kinkyū tokushū: Tsuitō Yamada Hanako* n.p. (*Garo* 1992). For reproductions of her hand-scrawled diaries, manga production notes and sketches, see Yamada 2009.

21. Fujiguchi Tōgo, "Eien ni ikashite yaritai: Jo ni kaete," in Saeki (1949, 7–9). I thank the librarians at the Gordon W. Prange archives of Occupation-era publications reviewed by the censors for pointing me to this little known text, which to my knowledge is not held by any other library worldwide. This volume was passed by the Occupation censor without any notations beyond the facts of its publication details.

22. Kojō Hisako, "Saeki-san no baka," in Saeki (1949, 241–47).

23. One of the most famous examples of the struggle to control a posthumous literary legacy in the case of a suicide is the disputes over the literary estate of Sylvia Plath (1932–63) due to her contentious relationship with her estranged husband, the poet Ted Hughes. For an excellent book on this subject, see Janet Malcom, *The Silent Woman: Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes* (New York: Vintage, 1993).

24. "Ninki mangaka no Nekojiru-san jisatsu—*Garo* nado de katsuyaku," *Yomiuri shinbun*, May 13, 1998, 11.

25. In 1999, there was a reported 44 percent increase among elementary, middle, and high school students in public schools since the previous year ("Kyonendo no kodomo no jisatsu 192-nin: Kōritsu shō-chū-kō de 44% zō, saikin 10-nen de saita," *Yomiuri shinbun*, December 16, 1999, 1). The media also noted that the parasuicidal behaviors of X Japan hide's many fans attending his funeral service, which were said to number over fifty thousand (Neil Strauss, "The Pop Life: End of a Life, End of an Era," *New York Times*, June 18, 1998, www.nytimes.com. For an excellent documentary film about hide and X Japan, see *We Are X: The Death and Life of X Japan*, dir. Stephen Kijak (Passion Pictures, 2016).

26. "Shonen no jisatsu, saiaku no 74-nin," *Yomiuri shinbun*, May 5, 1999, 27.

27. Hayami Yukiko, "Shinjinrui heisoku: Sabukaruchā no karisuma-tachi no jisatsu," *Aera*, November 19, 2001, https://dougasetumei.hatenablog.com. See also Yoshinaga (2004, 56–57).

28. Yoshinaga (2004, 7).

29. Yoshinaga (2004, 83).

30. On Nekojiru, see Thom Bailey, "Where Has All the Cat Soup Gone: An Investigation of Manga Artist Suicides," *HZ Net Journal* 5 (December 2004), https://www.hz-journal.org. See also Yoshinaga (2004, 71–72).

31. "Bakuzen to shita shōsō: Saeki Masako no baai," *Shinjoen*, February 6, 1948, reproduced in Saeki (1949, 219–24).

32. In all commentary I have seen, there was little to no discussion of mental health issues. This likely reflects reigning taboos against the subject in the early 1990s and the tendency to interpret suicidality as a sign of artistic genius. See Jamison 1993 on "the surprising links between manic-depression and creativity" among "the world's greatest artists."

33. Yoshinaga (2004, 202).

34. Yamada (1998b, 30, 8). I would like to express my sincere thanks to Takaichi Maki at Seirin Kōgeisha for generously allowing me to reprint her sister Yamada Hanako's manga in the pages of this book.

In Yamada's manga, mothers are also depicted using this iconography, portrayed at best as only ineffectual annoyances in their children's lives. The fact that Yamada's own mother was a schoolteacher and is the target of much of her anger in the diaries suggested to many that there was a heavily autobiographical home life component to her works. On the topic of bullying in her manga, see Ohizumi 1996, 106–18; Migiwa Pan, "Panko to Hanako no teihen no warai"; and Iguchi Shingo, "Daibingu • purinsesu Yamada Hanako" in *Garo* 1992, n.p.; and Sugawa Akiko, "Yamada Hanako to Shinsan Nameko," *Sabukaru • poppu magajin maguma* 17 (2009): 46–64.

35. Yamada (1998a, 14–15).

36. Yamada (2009, 49–52).

37. Yamada (1998a, 24).

38. Yamada (1998a, 137–38).

39. Yamada (1998a, 21). She had announced the debut of this new poet's identity in an earlier diary excerpt two weeks earlier, on March 15, announcing her "plans for the June edition of *Garo*: 1) Suzuki Haruyo and 2) Haru no kogawa" (Yamada (1998a, 19), a work that was later retitled "Aamen, sōmen, hiyashi sōmen."

40. Maruo Suehiro, afterword in Yamada (2009, 190).

41. Yamada (2009, 41–43).

42. Yamada (1998a, 19).

43. Yamada (2009, 95–98). "Ikite itemo daijyōbu" appeared originally in July 1987 in a self-published zine called *Gladiolus*, which was also her band name with friends and her sister, the manga editor Takaichi Maki.

44. In her diary, she refers to herself alternately as "Tamami, a girl who has always been a patient child" versus Neko, "a pain in the ass, selfish, swaddled baby, a hysteric (Yamada 1998a, 18, 16).

45. Yamada (1999, 83). Just beneath the lower left corner outside the manga panel border, another note reassures the reader, "A tranquilly sleeping Tamami. But just so you know, she'll appear again reborn." This panel appeared in "Maria no kōmon," originally serialized in Reed Comics from May 1990 through November 1991 and first published in book form under the title *Nageki no tenshi (Der Bleu Engel)*, taken from Josef von Sternberg's 1930 film, one of her favorites.

46. Takaichi Toshihiro, untitled, *Garo* (June 1986), Underground Magazine Archives, https://kougasetumei.hatenablog.com/entry/takaichitoshihiro.

47. Takaichi Toshihiro, "Takaichi Yumi・Tokkō mangaka Yamada Hanako o shinonde," Underground Magazine Archives, https://kougasetumei.hatenablog.com. This entire passage is censored out of the reprinted version in the "Complete Edition (*kanzen-ban*)" published by Ōta Shuppan in Yamada (1998a, 192).

48. Yamada (1998a, 152).

49. Nemoto Takashi, "Maria no kōmon o mita onna," in *Garo* (1992, 12–14).

PART THREE. MOURNING IN MULTIMEDIA

Epigraph: Carson (1999, 84–85). I am grateful to Alan Tansman for pointing me to Carson's beautiful and insightful essay.

1. Bungakukai (1999, 42). After Yamada Hanako's suicide, a similar series of memorial essays and tributes were published by her colleagues and friends, who in this case, represented the limelights of the underground comics and music scene. See the *Garo* special memorial issue (Garo 1992, 15–26) and Yamada (2009, 212, 162). For her fans' responses, see the letters sent to her family reproduced in Yamada (1998a, 204–29).

2. Bungakukai (1999, 40, 42).

3. Bungakukai (1999, 112–13). See Anne Allison's recent book *Being Dead Otherwise* (2023) for a compassionate consideration of the innovative ways that old traditional burial and mourning practices (including incense stick offerings and *kotsuage* or "picking up the bones") are evolving in contemporary Japanese society with an aging population without

descendants to tend to them when they are dying and dead. See also Mark Rowe's *Bonds of the Dead* (2011) for an intimate, incisive portrayal of Buddhist funerary practices in contemporary Japan and Andrew Bernstein's *Modern Passings* (2006) for a fascinating historical account of the evolution of premodern Japan's death rites.

9. COPYCAT POETS AND SUICIDES: NAGASAWA NOBUKO AND HARAGUCHI TŌZŌ

Epigraph: Fukushima (2009, 90). See also (Kuyama 1974, 267).

1. *Études à Vingt Ans* was first published by Maeda Shuppan in June 1945, just eight months after Haraguchi's suicide. After immediately selling out five thousand copies, another five thousand were printed and sold in the fall. In February 1958, a former editor at Maeda, Date Tokuo, published a new version through his newly established publishing company Shoshi Eureka (later Eureka) that became their number-one bestseller. Kadokawa's subsequent editions (seven total from 1952 to 1974) were also best long-sellers (Fukushima 2009, 41; Nakane 2015, 49). Chikuma Shobō's 2005 text is the most recent print version. All citations are based on my translations of the online version at Aozora Bunko, www.aozora.gr.jp.

2. Haraguchi was born in 1927 in Keijō (now Seoul) and schooled in Manchuria until Japan's defeat in 1945. His experience as the youngest fifth son of a family of colonialist settlers colors several of his excerpts in *Études*. For the importance of the colonial experience in shaping Haraguchi, see Nakane (2015, 55–56).

3. Selections of Nagasawa's poetry were initially published in 1965 by a small publishing firm in her hometown in Gunma under a title taken from one of her poems, *Umi: Nagasawa Nobuko no ikōshū* (The sea: The posthumous writings of Nagasawa Nobuko). The volume was later republished in 1968 by Tensei Shuppan, a newly established publishing company that, like Shoshi Eureka, staked its initial success on the publication of a suicidal poet's last works. For this later volume, Nagasawa's work appeared under the more sensational title of *Tomo yo watashi ga shinda kara tote*, a line taken from what soon became her most famous poem. Another volume with this title was published by Shin Shuppan in 1983. A complete edition of her poems and her high school notebooks and diaries was recently published by Kōseisha in an 850-page volume in 2021 but is thus far available in a handful of libraries across the world.

4. *Shinin oboegaki*, alternatively called *Memoires d'un mort*, includes essays by literary critic Nakamura Mitsuo, two philosophy professors at Doshisha and Tokyo University (Mashita Shin'ichi and Mori Arimasa), Haraguchi's friends Hashimoto Ichimei, who became a noted Rimbaud scholar at Kokugakuin, and the later literary critic Kiyo'oka Takayuki, and Haraguchi's brother and another friend. It had ten printings in 1948 alone (Haraguchi 1948b).

5. *Asahi shinbun* (October 30, 1946) article cited in Nakane (2015, 51).

6. Haraguchi (1948b, 156). Haraguchi's suicide threats became such a common refrain that they gained the status of a legendary joke among his friends, with one classmate asking him frequently at what time they might expect him to die and Haraguchi responding with his apologies for keeping them waiting for so long (158). Afterward, there were two reported suicides at First Higher School, one that year and another the following (Nakane 2015, 50).

7. Fukushima (2009, 41). In another echo of Fujimura, Haraguchi's friend Hashimoto called his death wish "incomprehensible" (*fukakai*) in the opening to his afterword to *Études* (Hashimoto 1948, 204).

8. Haraguchi (1948b, 96, 92).

9. Karaki's essay "Jisatsu ni tsuite," originally published by Kobundō in July 1950, opens with a lengthy section on kamikaze pilot letters in *Kike wadatsumi no koe* before turning to these literary men's suicides. An expanded edited volume with the same title *Jisatsu ni tsuite*, republished in 1974, also includes Karaki's short essays on a couple other individuals and on the topics of suicide notes and the suicide hotspot of Tōjinbō Cliffs, as well as an afterword that briefly touches upon Mishima.

10. Kimura (1970, 44).

11. Kuyama 1974 is the reprint of this 1968 volume *Seishun no kiroku*. Elsewhere, Haraguchi has been interpreted as symptomatic of a generation of "martyrs" (*junkyō*) who also include Fujimura Misao, kamikaze pilots, and Mishima Yukio (Hasegawa Izumi, *Junkyō* [Tokyo: Shibundō, 1973]) or alternatively, like the 1960s youth Kishigami Daisaku, emblematic of the "illness of the times" in Yoshimoto Taka'aki's *Jidaibyō* (Tokyo: Ueitsu, 2005). See Fukushima (2009, 82) for an account of the writer and Gunma native Kuboki Sōichi reading Nagasawa's volume as a Tokyo University student protestor in the 1960s.

12. Kuyama (1974, 19–20).

13. "Nagasawa Nobuko miryoku o saihyōka," *Asahi shinbun* Gunma edition, April 9, 2009, 23.

14. Kimura (1970, 44). Kimura claims that Nagasawa may have written lots of poems and prose but likely "had no intention of becoming a poet" (43), an especially odd assertion in a tribute to Nagasawa that includes a selection of her finest poems.

15. As noted in chapter 6, Kishigami's love interest, the eighteen-year-old Sawaguchi Fumi, foreswore poetry immediately after his suicide and seven years after he died published a novel in which her character resents the ways that the tabloids demonized and silenced her after his death while Kishigami's poems and "books got published and widely read" (Ogawa 1999, 28–29; see also 16–19).

16. Carson (1999, 94).

17. Kuyama (1974, 273). This statement appeared in a section of aphorisms that she subtitled "Nikutai to Tamashii" (Flesh and spirit)."

18. Fukushima (2009, 90).

19. Nosaka (1988, 148).

20. Carson (1999, 87).

21. As discussed in detail below, Nagasawa elides one line of Haraguchi's note here—"On this night, I too have buried one of my own" (*Boku mo mata, kono yo, hitori no nakama o hōmutta*)—indicating the elision with six dots ("……").

22. Kimura (1970, 49); Kuyama (1974, 275–76).

23. Nagasawa's friend Takakura Eiko bristled at the crass marketing strategy used by Tensei Shuppan in the 1968 edition for their title choice of *Tomo yo watashi ga shinda kara tote* and for irresponsibly intermixing and excerpting her poems, notes, and essays to appeal to young readers in the politicized context of the late 1960s (Fukushima 2009, 76–77). This title also appears on the cover of the earlier volume released by the local Kiryū publishing firm, as well as the subtitle to Fukushima 2009.

24. Kurihara (2006, 42). In this thought-provoking article, Kurihara suggests there are three "I's" (*watashi*) in Nagasawa's poem: the first "I" is constrained by family and society in life, the second one is the "image" that would be fixed in people's minds in death, while the third "I" represents "freedom" (45). Kurihara follows the genealogy sketched by Nakamura Fumiaki in his multivolume *Gendai-shi kenkyū* (Tokyo, Nōsaido Kikakushitsu, 2000–4) where Yosano Akiko is identified as the founding mother of three poetic strains later taken up by female poets, including Nagasawa Nobuko whom he identifies as representing the "haiku-esque conceptual ideological camp" (*haiku-teki hassō-kei no shisō*) (43).

25. Derrida (2001, 45).

26. Nagasawa's notebooks cited in Kuyama (1974, 273, 268).

27. Four volumes of Nagasawa's notebooks were nearly lost except for the fortuitous coincidence that the scholar Fukushima Yasuki salvaged them from copies saved by Kubota Sai'ichi, the writer who had cherished Nagasawa's poems as a student protestor in the late 1960s and who worked at the Hagiwara Sakutarō Bungaku Kinenkan in Gunma (Fukushima 2009, 74, 80–81).

28. In Notebook A, Fukushima (2021).

29. See Hashimoto's afterword to *Études* for his account of their decision to use this as Haraguchi's grave marker (Hashimoto 1948, 204).

30. Fukushima (2009, 42).

31. Nakane (2015, 53).

32. Haraguchi (1948b, 217–18).

33. Haraguchi (1948b, 3–4). His first memorandum, "Shisha oboegaki," was addressed to the Gunma police chief.

34. When reading through *Études* and recalling that it was composed in a mere eight days, at times readers can sense the author's increasing exhaustion and the diminishing returns of writing in the face of death. The majority of the work was composed in the first three days with 278 out of 406 numbered excerpts (20 were written on the first day, 105 on the second, and a whopping 153 on the third) while the remaining 128 were written over the next four days with just 9 on the sixth day, 16 on the following, and 34 on October 1, which was to be the last day of his life. The proportions dedicated to each of the three movements similarly suggest this declining arc in production, with each tallying just half the amount of the previous one (238–112–56).

35. Iiyoshi (1969, 28); Kiyoʾoka (1975, 40–41).

36. In another excerpt, Haraguchi compares himself to Mozart: "It was unnecessary but after destroying all my past works out of a sense of indignation—or was it when I cut off my creativity out of a sense of distrusting expression?—at that time, I'd whisper to myself sadly these words of a poem in consolation: In the shadow of a single Mozart, never forget that there are hundreds of dead Mozarts."

37. See the May 1947 Maeda Shuppan edition of *Études*, which includes a Rimbaud quote on the cover beneath the title.

38. October 30, *Yomiuri shinbun* editorial, cited in Nakane 2005, 51.

39. Haraguchi (1948b, 101–2). See also Miyauchi (1969).

40. In a suicide note to friends, Nagasawa employed another act of creative citation and adaptation. In an echo of her most famous poem and Haraguchi's final lines from his suicide note, she writes, "If you are truly my friends, you will accept my death with cool

criticism, laugh it off as a bad joke, and soon thereafter forget, without even my name remaining in your memories." But in a pointed reversal of Haraguchi's own final lines, she follows by asserting the need for sincerity in this final communication in which she speaks, and they listen: "In the end, at least this one time, I do want to say this sincere goodbye (*makoto na sayōnara*)" (Kuyama 1974, 268).

41. Carson (1999, 82–83, 75). In Carson's reading, the pathos of this epitaph that reads in alternating lines of red and black—"Tomb Spinther Set" and "This Upon Spinther Dead"—stems as much from the poet's powerful rhetorical strategies that endow the dead with "double subjectivity" as from the reader's own complicity in pronouncing him dead when reading aloud these very words on the so-called talking stone (83–84).

10. DEATH IN MIXED MEDIA: MISHIMA YUKIO

Epigraphs: "It's good to be an actor, isn't it?": Mishima, cited in Iwasaki (1971, 92).

"We cannot, indeed, imagine our own death": Sigmund Freud, *Reflections on War and Death*, 1918. (Freud 1918, 41)

"What is music, to me?": "Yūwaku: Ongaku no tobira" (March 1967) (Mishima 1967, 379)

1. Hirayama 1971, 231–44. In this fascinating chart, Hirayama tallies the "top ten" modern writers who feature suicide in their texts with Mishima at the top of the list and Kawabata in second. It is important to note that only three of the authors in his list died by suicide because it serves as a useful caution against presuming simple causality between acts of writing and acts of suicide. Most lived to ripe old(er) ages: Toyoshima Yoshio (died at age sixty-four), Tamiya Torahiko (died at age seventy-six by suicide), Fukunaga Takehiko (sixty-one), Mizukami Tsutomu (eighty-five), Izumi Kyōka (sixty-five), Mori Ōgai (sixty), Kawatake Mokuami (seventy-five), Tayama Katai (fifty-eight), Akutagawa Ryūnosuke (died by suicide at age thirty-five), Kikuchi Kan (fifty-nine), Kume Masao (sixty), Nagai Kafū (seventy-nine), Inoue Yasushi (eighty-three), and Dazai Osamu (died by suicide at age thirty-eight). A digest version of Hirayama's list is available in English in Iga (1986, 69–70).

2. Shinoyama (2020, n.p.). See also Yokoo Tadanori's prefatory essay, "*The Deaths of a Man* Chronicles," (n.p.) where he recalls being strong-armed by Mishima "in a predictably domineering move" to sign a publisher's contract in order to costar as a photography model in this collection when Yokoo was bedridden in the hospital. He recounts: "After Mishima's all-too-real death, it was no longer possible for me, his surviving alter ego and co-star to perform my role in *The Death of a Man* so late to the party" (n.p.). On the belated publication of this photo collection, see Cather (2021).

3. Alvarez (1971, "The Closed World of Suicide," 95–162).

4. Nathan (1974, 92), citing "Watashi no henreki jidai," originally published January–May 1963, *MYZ* 30, 445–46.

5. June 30, 1955 entry, *Shōsetsuka no kyūka*, originally published June 24–August 4, 1955, Mishima (1982, 17–19).

6. "Fushigi na otoko," originally published August 1, 1966, *KMYZ* 34:181; "Jieitai o taiken suru—46-nichikan no hisoka na 'nyūtai,'" originally published, June 11, 1967, *MYK* 34:406–7.

7. "Akutagawa Ryūnosuke ni tsuite," originally published February 1954, in Etō, Sono, and Nada (1972, 133).

8. "Nentō no mayoi," originally published January 1, 1967, *MYK* 34:286. In June 1961, Hemingway had returned home after being forcibly institutionalized and subjected to a second round of electroshock treatments. Although his suicide on July 2, 1961, was initially reported as an accidental death, Hemingway's wife publicly acknowledged it as a suicide in an August 1966 press interview.

9. Mishima (1968, 6). Recently, the kabuki actor Ichikawa Ennosuke IV, a descendant of Danzō's, appeared in the news after he was the sole survivor of a family suicide pact with his elderly parents on May 18, 2023 that was made after a breaking news scandal. He is currently on trial for assisted suicide with the prosecutors seeking a three-year prison sentence.

10. Etō, Sono, and Nada (1972, 135).

11. La Rochelle's first attempt was in July 1944 just before the liberation of Paris, and he died by suicide in March 1945 after months in hiding. Hasuda Zenmei, a soldier in the Japanese Army, murdered his commanding officer and then killed himself in outrage over the August 1945 order to surrender and the suggestion that the emperor had become just another citizen (Inose and Sato 2012, 88, 676–77). Saigō Takemori, leader of the 1877 Satsuma Rebellion in the name of restoring imperial authority, suffered a gunfire injury in battle and subsequently died, either by ritual seppuku followed by his beheading at the hands of a comrade or only the latter if, as is rumored, he was too weak to die by his own hand. Kaya Harukata died during the failed Shinpūren (Divine winds) rebellion of 1876 in protest of the government order for samurai to relinquish their swords. He was age forty-two, which as Mishima notes was precisely his own age when writing this piece "Nentō no mayoi" (*MYK* 34:86).

12. "Utsukushii shi" (Beautiful death), originally published August 1967, *MYK* 34: 440–41.

13. Inose and Sato 2012, 503, citing "Hinuma-shi to shi," originally published September 1968, *MYZ* 35:184–85.

14. Etō, Sono, and Nada (1972, 133–34).

15. "Furansu no terebi ni hatsu-shutsuen," originally published March 1966, *MYZ* 34:32. In his essay "Akutagawa Ryūnosuke ni tsuite," Mishima explains, "I cannot forgive weakness perhaps because of my own self-perception. I don't want to think of myself like that. … When I look at a weak spirited person, I fear that I too will turn out like that, and my fears turn to hatred" (Etō, Sono, and Nada 1972, 133); about Hemingway, he claims "to understand [his] feeling all too well" ("Nentō no mayoi," *MYK* 34:286); and as for Dazai, he notes that "I felt a physiological repugnance … perhaps because, according to the laws of love and hate, he was the type of writer who deliberately exposed the parts of me I most wanted to hide" (Flanagan 2014, 91, citing Mishima, "Watashi no henreki jidai," originally published 1964, *MYZ* 30:443).

16. Ultimately, his parents chose as his posthumous Buddhist name 彰武院文鑑公威居士, or Martial Illuminator and Literary Mirror Layman Kimitake (Inose and Sato 2012, 731). The date February 26, 1968, the day Mishima signed his blood oath was the thirty-second anniversary of the February 26 incident, a failed coup d'état designed to revive direct imperial rule in 1936, after which Mishima would pattern his own political coup attempt on November 25, 1970. On that day twenty-two years earlier, Mishima had announced starting his career-making novel *Confessions of a Mask*, writing his publisher Kawade Shobō to say he planned to start writing his first "I-novel" twenty-three days later, on November 25,

1948. On timelines for establishing the Japan National Guard (JNG), later renamed Shield Society, see Inose and Sato (2012, 540, 582).

17. See, for example, Kinya Tsuruta, who writes, "That gory Kabuki drama Mishima perpetrated at the Ichigaya headquarters must have been his most satisfactory work of art" ("Review of Mishima Yukio's *Bungaku zenshu*," *Books Abroad* 46, no. 2 (Spring 1972): 345; or Marguerite Yourcenar who "sees Mishima's death as his final opus—a grand masterpiece towards which his whole career had led" (Shira Nayman review of Yourcenar's *Mishima: A Vision of the Void*, *Georgia Review* 41, no 2. [Summer 1987]: 439). For a stereotypical reading of Mishima's turn from words to action, see Stokes (1974, 188–92). See Seidensticker (1971) for a relatively sympathetic take on Mishima's "overt rehearsal[s]" in "Yūkoku" and in the *Sea of Fertility* tetralogy as well as on his "curious proclivities" (including his acting and nude photography modelling stints) as a quest for immortality (275, 280); on "symbolic immortality," see Lifton (1979).

18. See, for example, Flanagan (2014), who identifies this false either/or proposition between art and action only to conclude that art, not action, is what mattered (239). See also Peter Abelsen, "Irony and Purity: Mishima," *Modern Asian Studies* 30, no. 3 (June 1966): 651–79, who argues that Mishima successfully fused art and action (*bunbu ryōdō*) by interweaving it with western notions of Romantic Irony (678).

19. "Mishima 'kikyō-hei' ni 26 no shitsumon," originally published June 11, 1967, *MYK* 34:420.

20. For a detailed account of Mishima's last day, see Stokes (1974, 29–51, 234); and Ueda Yasuo (1976, "Mishima Yukio: Yūkoku no shi, seizetsu ni yuku," 32–84). See also Andō Takeshi, ed., *Mishima Yukio "nichiroku"* (Tokyo: Michitani, 1996), 423–24.

21. Iwasaki (1971, 84).

22. *Shōsetsuka no kyūka* (June 29, 1955, entry) in Mishima (1982, 17), ellipsis in original. All citations of this text in this section are subsequently noted parenthetically; all translations are mine.

23. The associative logic of Mishima's daily entries in *Shōsetsuka no kyūka* conspicuously links the masochistic deathlike effects of music and film to aurality. In his next day's excerpt, he turns to describe the passing of a seventy-eight-year-old man whose death he knew of only upon suddenly hearing hymns come from the shadowy stands of trees over in the neighboring garden (21). Mishima frequently uses visual metaphors to explain his fear of music, as if only the language of visuality offers him a means of tackling this deficit. His usual metaphor of choice is the terrifying sea at nighttime contrasted with the clear beauty of the sea at daytime. See also his novel *Ongaku* (Music, 1965) where it is a woman's sexual frigidity that is linked to her inability to hear music.

24. Mishima (1999, "Bōga," *MYE*, 612–15). "Bōga" was originally published in *Eiga geijutsu* in August 1970. In November 1970, Mishima published his final installment of *Shōsetsu to wa nani ka* as well as an essay titled "Bungaku wa kūkyo ka" (Is literature vacant?).

25. Barthes (1984, 346).

26. Mishima blames both advertising and the liberation of sex for making "sex" the naked "protagonist" of the film, no longer "wrapped in the giant shadows of sex." Paradoxically, he speculates that explicit blue films distributed on video cassette may be the salvation of film since these make possible "the sexual monopoly of the image" (Mishima 1999, "Bōga," *MYE*, 613–15; see also "Eiga-teki nikutai-ron: Sono bubun oyobi zentai,"

originally published May 1966, *MYZ* 32:337–44). Mishima's own choices with *Yūkoku* seemingly offer an antidote to these problems; it was a low budget softcore production with "beautiful people" played incognito by himself alongside an unknown former pink film actress.

27. Barthes (1984, 348).

28. Barthes (1984, 349).

29. Yokoo (1986, 150); Rayns (2008, n.p.).

30. "Eiga no genkai bungaku no genkai," originally published March 1951, *MYE*, 121–22.

31. Goossen (2008).

32. "Boku ga tsukutta '*Yūkoku*' eiga no uchimaku," originally published May 1966 interview with Oya Sōichi, *MYE*, 560.

33. Baudelaire's original French phrase—"Et la victim et le bourreau"—is from his poem "The Man Who Tortures Himself" in *Fleurs du mal* (1857). Mishima quoted Baudelaire also when embarking on writing his first autobiographical "I-novel" *Confessions of a Mask* in 1948, which suggests that it is not just the medium of film that enabled him to enact these doubled roles of executioner and executed (Mishima's letter to Sakamoto Kazuki, *MYZ* 35:507 cited in Flanagan [2014, 97]).

34. The short story "Yūkoku" was marked with the completion date of October 16, 1960, and was initially slated to appear as a companion piece to Fukazawa Shichirō's controversial "Furyū mutan" in December 1960 of *Chūō kōron*, which went on sale on November 10.

35. "Yūkoku' no nazo," originally published April 1966, *MYZ* 32:302. Most English-language commentary on this story and film adopts a psychoanalytic/sexological approach that is mapped onto the relevant biographical details of Mishima's life. See Irmela Hijiya-Kirschnereit's "Review of *Deadly Dialectics: Sex, Violence and Nihilism in the World of Yukio Mishima* by Roy Starr" for a scathing critique of the "biographical reductionism and psychoanalytic orientation" of much Mishima research, especially the facile diagnoses of narcissism and nihilism in Starr's 1994 monograph (*Journal of Japanese Studies* 22, no. 1 (Winter 1996): 177–82, at 179). See also Hiroaki Sato's critiques of both Starr's work and psychology professor Jerry Piven's 2004 *The Madness and Perversion of Yukio Mishima* for their retrograde assumptions and analysis ("An Ominously Familiar Japanese Contemporary," *Japan Times*, September 24, 2012, www.japantimes.co.jp).

Japanese-language scholarship has tended to interpret "Yūkoku'" through Bataille's theories of eros and death, which Mishima wrote about extensively. See Kamada Hiroki, "'Yūkoku' oyobi sono jihyō ni tsuite: Eroteishizumu no yukue," originally published 1988, *Mishima Yukio: Bi to erosu no ronri*, ed. Satō Hideaki (Yūseitō Shuppan, 1991), 192–204; and Hirano Yukihito, *Mishima Yukio to G・Bataiyu: Kindai sakka to Seiō* (Kaibunsha Shuppan, 1991). In English, see Rankin (2018, 102–14). For analyses that map the story onto Mishima's politics (or lack thereof), see Isoda (1974, 87–99); and Isoda Kōichi, "Seiji・Eros・Bi," *Junkyō no bigaku* (Tokyo: Tōjusha, 1964), 55–69; Shiba Ryōtarō, "Kannen-teki na bungakushi: Hito-bito no kenkō ni hannō shita," originally published November 26, 1970, in Matsuta (1972, 285–88). In English, see Susan Napier, "Death and the Emperor: The Politics of Betrayal," in *Escape from the Wasteland: Romanticism and Realism in the Fiction of Mishima Yukio* (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1991), 143–59.

36. "Yūkoku' no nazo," *MYZ* 32:302–3.

37. Mishima's first film appearances were cameos playing himself, the literary author Mishima Yukio, in both *Junpaku no yoru* (Snow-white night, 1951) and *Fudōtoku kyōiku kōza*, (Lectures on immoral education, 1959). In his later film roles, Mishima sought to play characters distant from his literary persona, or as he put it, "Enough of being a so-called intellectual already!" (*iwayuru interi wa mappira da*). ("Boku wa obujé ni naritai," originally published December 1959, *MYE*, 290). He plays a cowardly yakuza in *Afraid to Die* (1960), a resolute military soldier-husband in *Yūkoku* (1966), a dead taxidermied statue kept in the basement of a beautiful jewel thief (played by actor Miwa Akihiro in drag, who kisses him in what is often regarded as Japan's "first" on-screen gay kiss) in *Black Lizard* (1968), and finally a samurai who decisively disembowels himself when wrongfully accused of an assassination in the historical drama *Hitokiri* (1969).

38. Scholars have painstakingly mapped the story's connections to the February 26 incident and to the young couple on whom it is ostensibly based: Ōnishi Takeshi, "Mishima Yukio 'Yūkoku'-ron," *Sapporo kokugo kenkyū* 15 (2010): n.p.; and Hong Yun-Pyo, "Mishima Yukio 'Yūkoku' ni okeru 'zure'—1936-nen to 1960-nen no danzetsu to renzoku" [A study on Mishima Yukio "Yūkoku": Continuity and discontinuity between 1936 and 1960], *Bungaku kenkyū ronshū* 24:89–112. Yumiko Furuhata persuasively argues that Mishima's suicide as a staged media event was, in part, a response to the anxiety revealed in *Yūkoku* over "the untimely nature of insurrections that failed to make history" (*Cinema of Actuality: Japanese Avant-Garde Filmmaking in the Season of Image Politics* [Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013], 113).

For Mishima's contemporaries' critiques of using the February 26 incident in this work, see Etō (1971, 258) and Abe (1990, 154). For Mishima's own essays on the February 26 incident, see "2.26 jiken to watashi," originally published June 1966; and "2.26 jiken ni tsuite," originally published February 1968, *KMYZ* 34:107–19; 658–60. See also Mishima's own comments, where he sometimes discounts using "the mere anecdotal biographies of the 2.26 incident [*tannaru 2.26 gaiden*]" as source material for "the tale itself" (*monogatari jitai*) while at other times stressing the incident as a formative boyhood influence that became core to his later literary identity ("'Hanazakari no mori・Yūkoku' kaisetsu," originally published September 1968, 439; Mishima 1971, 234).

39. Sargent (1966, 100), hereafter cited parenthetically in the text. I largely rely on this excellent translation except, where noted, with slight alterations or my own more literal translations alongside the original when necessary to make my point.

40. Mishima (1980, 337). Sargent's translation in this latter passage refers to Reiko as a "witness" (113), but the original more literally reads, "She must watch. She must watch unto the end" (*Tonikaku mitodokeneba naranu. Mitodokeneba naranu*) (Mishima 1980, 351).

41. In an April 1966 *taidan* with Funabashi Kazuo, Mishima explained that the story hints that Takeyama merely needed to believe his newlywed status was what led to him being left out of the coup by his friends in order to maintain his memories of friendship untarnished ("Yūkoku o kataru," originally published April 1966, *MYE*, 534–35) Both the film's intertitles and the screenplay do, however, unambiguously point to this as the reason ("Yūkoku [Satsuei daihon]," *MYZ* 23:345).

42. Mishima (1980, 343). See Hasegawa Izumi (1971, 147–48) for an in-depth reading of the sexual politics of this reciprocated female gaze on the male body in "Yūkoku."

43. Goossen (2008, n.p.).

44. Mishima (1980, 353).

45. Mishima (1980, 350).

46. In his glowing review of Kobayashi Masaki's 1962 film *Seppuku* (released outside Japan as *Harakiri*) and its bloody visceral depiction of a samurai's disembowelment, Mishima expresses ambivalence over the Japanese tendency to rely on poetic metaphors that aestheticize and euphemize bloody death: "In our classical literature, autumn leaves and cherry blossoms were metaphors for blood and death. These metaphors buried deep in the subconscious of the people have endured for hundreds of years of training to transform biological fears into aesthetic form" ("Zankokubi ni tsuite: 'Harakiri' 'Nani ga Jean ni okotta ka,'" originally published August 1963, *MYE*, 459). See also Mishima, "What makes a good metaphor?" in his 1959 primer on literary style (Mishima 1959, 205–6).

47. Mishima (1980, 353).

48. "Yūkoku (Satsuei daihon)," *MYZ* 23:372. On the "money shot" in pornographic films, see Williams (1999, 93–120). Rankin (2018) likens the seppuku scene with all the bodily fluids on display and the final "finish[ing] himself off" to a "mega-ejaculation" (111). Kawasaka (2018) reads the lovers' twinned death scenes as a means of gendering and differentiating the two characters (5–6).

49. Mishima (1980, 340, 342). Garcin (2015) notes that even during these preparations for death, the "characters are already deceased, mummified within the solemn dirge that is Mishima's text" (233).

50. Sargent (1966, 93); Mishima (1980, 330). It is worth noting that the lieutenant's phrasing here points to his conflicted loyalty toward his army friends as much as to the emperor and is not identical with Mishima's cry—"Long live the Emperor!" (*Tennō heika banzai!*)—that he repeated twice on the SDF balcony.

51. Sargent (1966, 116–17); Mishima (1980, 354–55).

52. Bazin (2005, 9); Bazin (2003, 30–31).

53. "Yūkoku (Satsuei daihon)," *MYZ* 23:353, 360, 358, 373. See Isoda 1974 for a reading of Mishima's own body as torn between two poles, the "sculptural" (*zōkeisha*) and that of the "practitioner" (*jissensha*) (95–96). For a critique of Mishima for too hastily "killing off his characters" to fulfill his "poetic image" of a white, unsullied landscape, see Rizawa (1971, 139).

54. Garcin (2015, 230). Garcin convincingly argues that the story contains many intertextual allusions to premodern texts, including medieval epics of samurai valor, the eighteenth-century double suicide puppet plays of Chikamatsu, and an "aesthetic of cruelty" present in both kabuki and Georges Bataille's writings. In Garcin's reading, the monumental epic style of these first two genres entails an empty, abstract body that is in tension with the organic, visceral dying body depicted in the story's latter half.

55. Bazin (2005, 14).

56. In his lengthy account of making the film, Mishima makes just one brief reference to his memory of "how cold I felt soaked to the skin in that pool of blood" (Goossen 2008, n.p.).

57. Goossen (2008, n.p.). See also the video interview with filmmakers' forty years later for their memories of this scene and the use of pig's intestines for blood. As one crew member recalls, "We only had one chance to get it right" (Fujii, Watanabe, et al., 2008).

58. "Otazune itashimasu," originally published May 1961, *MYE*, 311–12.

59. Cather (forthcoming).

60. In "Seisaku izu oyobi keika (Yūkoku eigaban)," Mishima calls for the man's role to be played as a "robot" and the woman's as a "statue" (*zōkei*) (*MYZ* 32:315–16). Tsuruoka Yoshiko was the stage name Mishima gave to new Daiei actress Yamamoto Noriko (山本典子).

61. "Yūkoku o kataru," April 1966, *MYE*, 528–29, 537.

62. Clover (1993, see especially "Her Body, Himself," 21–64).

63. Kawasaka (2018, 6n7). In Izumo Marō's formulation, Reiko becomes a stand-in both for the queer *bishōnen* youths desired by Mishima (and by his protagonists) and for Mishima himself. Izumo offers highly creative interpretations of the closeted gay symbolism in *Yūkoku* in a series of what are called "associative games" (*rensō no gēmu*). For example, the figurines that Reiko prepares as keepsakes are linked to Tennessee Williams's 1944 play *The Glass Menagerie* that evoke an era of homosexual persecution in the United States and Williams's own sexuality (Izumo 2010, 116–20).

64. Dōmoto (2005, 61–62), cited in Izumo (2010, 115).

65. The Adonis Society (Adonisu-kai; also called the Greek Research Club) was established in 1952 and had a membership of three hundred by 1960, including Mishima and his filmmaking collaborator (and sometimes lover) Dōmoto Masaki. The original publication of "Ai no shokei" included four illustrations by Mishima Takeshi (no relation). All citations from the story are hereafter noted parenthetically and come from the reprinted version available in *KMYZ hokan*, 40–54. All translations are mine. For a recent complete translation of the story, see Bett (2022).

66. Mishima's choice of title here—"Ai no shokei"—represents an odd departure for this author who claimed to hate this imported Christian-tinged word for *love* (*ai*) and to prefer the native Japanese term *koi* (恋) or carnal love. See Mishima's January 1969 essay "Aikokushin." (*MYZ* 34:648–51). Translating "Yūkoku," which literally means "grieving, or mourning, the nation," as "patriotism" is somewhat misleading, as Mishima himself notes in his introduction to Geoffrey Bownas's edited volume of his translations; he writes that "the Japanese of my original title, *Yūkoku*, which is usually translated as *Patriotism*, conveys more than a hint of melancholy: the word *yū* is related to the verb 'to feel grief' and grief is the emotion sustaining this story" (Mishima 1972, 22). Curiously, when deciding on an English-language title for the film and retranslating it back into Japanese, Mishima chose not *Yūkoku* but instead *Ai to shi no saigi*, or *The Rite of Love and Death*.

67. See the December 1983 "Ai no shokei special issue" of *Barazoku*, which includes a reprint of the story and a series of critical essays that draw clear parallels between the two works (especially Arashi [1983, 102–12]). In part, the special issue's overemphasis on these similarities stemmed from a perceived need to convince readers that "Ai no shokei" was in fact by Mishima, a claim that was disputed at that time. When *Barazoku* was republishing it, his father is rumored to have called the publisher to request that it not appear under his son's official penname; see "'Ai no shokei' wa yahari Mishima Yukio no sakuhin datta!" (Itō Bungaku 2005). The 1983 *Barazoku* volume also includes photographic stills from a 1983 gay *poruno* film adaptation directed by Nogami Masayoshi that included a coy reference to the open secret of Mishima's authorship and his semi-closeted homosexuality with a title card "dedicated to M."

68. Arashi (1983, 106).

69. See Vincent (2003) for an incisive critique of scholarship that presumes that Mishima possesses "an identity which is founded on lack and which can only be realized through a performative expression of identity as 'identification' with the other." Vincent is especially critical of "the oft-asserted idea of Mishima's 'virtually erotic obsession with performance … that, for Mishima, took the form of 'identification as a daily practice'" (n.p.).

70. "Boku wa obujé ni naritai," *MYE*, 290, 291, emphasis mine.

71. "Barei 'Yūkoku' ni tsuite," originally published July 1968, *MYZ* 33:407. In his review of Kobayashi Masaki's 1962 *Harakiri*, Mishima praised the director's attempt to emphasize the cruelty of the seppuku scene with the bamboo sword that strives not for kabuki with its "fake effects" (*gomakashi* kabuki) but rather the shock value of "truth" delivered through film images. He worries, however, that contemporary audiences might not be receptive to this message ("Zankokubi ni tsuite," *MYE*, August 1963, 458).

72. "Yūkoku o kataru," *MYE*, 535–36. Mishima considered the nude bed scene in *Yūkoku* "appropriately abstract" for noh. See Yokoo Tadanori's print advertisement for the ballet at the M+ Collections Archive in Hong Kong, available online at https://collections.mplus.org.hk.

73. "'Hanazakari no mori • Yūkoku' kaisetsu," originally published September 1968, *MYZ* 33:439.

74. "Yūwaku: Ongaku no tobira," *KMYZ* 34:380.

75. Goossen (2008, n.p.); "Seisaku izu oyobi keika," *MYZ* 32:325; "Yūkoku (Satsuei daihon)," *MYZ* 23:345.

76. Goossen (2008, n.p.); "Seisaku izu oyobi keika," *MYZ* 32:324. The filmmakers used Mishima's own record, a scratchy 78 rpm recording made by Leopold Stokowski with the Philadelphia Orchestra in the mid-1930s. Donald Richie recalled being consulted on the musical choice, becoming "what Mishima jokingly called 'the music director,'" and noted the powerful experience of watching the final cut overlaid with Wagner's "Liebestod" at Aoi Studio (Richie 2006, n.p.).

77. "Yūkoku o kataru," *MYE*, 538–39. Wagner's opera scores have often been credited with anticipating the filmmaking technique of Mickey-Mousing where a film score perfectly matches a character's onscreen actions and movements. See Joe and Gilman (2010) for an in-depth consideration of Wagner "as a paradigm for filmmaking, film scoring, and silent film accompaniment," especially 1–9, and articles by Marcia J. Citron and Lawrence Kramer, 167–85, 381–407.

78. Hugo Shirley, "The Opera That Changed Music: Wagner's Tristan und Isolde," *Gramophone*, June 9, 2016, www.gramophone.co.uk.

79. Notably, Mishima puts both his penname and his character's name in scare quotes here. "'Yūkoku' no nazo," originally published April 1966, *MYZ* 32:304; see also "Jinsei no kyūkyoku no yume o … . . .—Sakusha ken enshutsuka ken haiyū no kotoba," originally published June 1966, *KMYZ* 34:122.

80. "Yūkoku o kataru," *MYE*, 526–27; Mishima calls big studio filmmaking a "sadomasochistic" enterprise. Iwasaki and others have argued that his choices to produce *Yūkoku* were a way to avenge his previous failures as an actor at the hands of director Masumura and Daiei studio (Iwasaki 1971, 89–90; see also Inoue 2006, 44–48).

81. Goossen (2008, n.p.); "Seisaku izu oyobi keika," *KMYZ* 32:324–25. See also "Yūkoku o kataru," *MYE*, 538.

82. *Shōsetsuka no kyūka*, July 1, 1955 entry, Mishima 1982, 20.

83. Mishima (1959, 171, 176).

84. "Yūkoku o kataru," *MYE*, 532–33.

85. Goossen (2008, n.p.); "Seisaku izu oyobi keika," *MYZ* 32: 316–17, 307. For a critique of Mishima's assumptions about the antimodern prelinguistic medium of film, see Hasegawa (1971, 157–60).

86. "Yūkoku o kataru," *MYE*, 540–41.

87. Adorno (2005, 74). Originally written during the war, *In Search of Wagner* was not published until 1952. My thanks to my colleague in UT Austin's Music Department, Eric Drott, for pointing me to this fascinating essay.

88. Adorno (2005, 75–78 passim, 80).

EPILOGUE: DIALOGUING WITH THE DEAD

Epigraphs: Marcel Proust, *In Search of Lost Time* (originally published in 1927; 2023, 232); Licinius in *Cloud Cuckoo Land* (Doerr 2021, 47).

1. Enchi (1998, 246; originally published November 1971). For this densely intertextual rumination on her relationship to Mishima and to books, Enchi takes her title from Schubert's 1827 *Winterreise* (Winter's journey), one of his last compositions (as he was dying of syphilis at the young age of thirty-one) in which he set to melancholic music twenty-four poems whose speaker wanders through barren cold winter landscapes, tormented by unrequited love and existential angst.

2. Enchi (1998, 239, 243, 254).

3. I thank literary scholar Tsuboi Hideto for sharing the information that Mishima's translation of D'Annunzio's play bears a red cover.

4. Enchi (1998, 264).

5. Carson (1999, 99).