

Shino's Gender Variance in *Hakkenden*: Derision and Interiorisation as Coming-of-Age Trial

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Paper Topic

Case study of Inuzuka Shino, fictional character from *Nansō Satomi Hakkenden* (*Chronicle of the Eight Dog-Heroes*, 1814-1842) by Kyokutei Bakin (1767-1848)

Explore how laughter and seriousness work in Shino's story in relation to his upbringing: during childhood and adolescence, Shino, while biologically male, is raised by parents Tatsuka and Bansaku as girl following childrearing called the *torikae kosodate* practice

Since he has girl's name and appearance, Shino:

- becomes the laughingstock of malicious relatives and residents from his country village
- develops keen self-consciousness pushing him to become man once he reaches adulthood

Ridicule functions as coming-of-age trial and self-consciousness, serious consequence of being laughed at, motivates him to overcome trial

Contributions to the State of the Art

Takawa Kuniko has explained Shino's upbringing as girl by focusing on Bakin's words from *Ken'i hyōbanki* (*Appraisal of the Dog-Heroes*, 1818)

Shino's upbringing as girl serves as gradual transition from previous part of the epic, which follows female character Fusehime, to the central focus of the story, which moves to the male dog-heroes

Studied role Shino's upbringing plays in overarching story of *Hakkenden*, but not within Shino's own story

Mitsuhashi Junko has analysed *Hakkenden* to extract information on *torikae kosodate* practice
Hakkenden as only source and not triangulated findings with other cases

Paper compares Shino's story with other cases to produce more robust understanding on *torikae kosodate* practice

Paper pursues double objective:

- to understand what role Shino's upbringing fulfills within character's own story
- to compare Shino's story with more cases of individuals raised as opposite gender to better comprehend childrearing technique

The *Torikae Kosodate* Practice I

To define this practice, I will compare different stories of individuals, both fictional characters and real life figures, raised as opposite gender:

- Dian Miangu, fictional character from Chinese anthology *Zibuyu* (*What the Master Would Not Discuss*, 1788) by Yuan Mei (1716-1798)
- Ooto (born c. 1854), Japanese real life individual who, while being anatomically male, was raised as girl/woman; life story recounted in *Tokyo nichichi shinbun* 813/1874

- Nakajirō (c. 1863-1884) and Okame (born c. 1866), two Japanese real life individuals, former biological female raised as boy/man, latter biological male raised as girl/woman; life stories reported in *Yomiuri shinbun* 13-15/06/1884
- Sarukawa Kanzaburō, character from novel *Kagama no adauchi* (*The Apprentice Actor's Vengeance*, 1899) by Jōno Saigiku (1832-1902)
- general observations made by sexologist Sawada Junjirō (1863-1944) in *Shinpi naru dōseiai* (*The Mystery of Homosexuality*, 1920)

- anonymous male whose case discussed by sexologist Morita Yūshū (1882-1945) in *Dōseiai no kenkyū* (*Research on Homosexuality*, 1931)

Notes on Important Terms

Primary sources do not use specific name to indicate practice

Phrase *torikae kosodate*, which means:

- “childrearing” (*kosodate*)
- “exchange” (*torikae*), allusion to *Torikaebaya* (*The Changelings*, late eleventh century)

proposed by Mitsuhashi and used for simplicity’s sake

In the title I have used gender variance, modern English expression chosen to make topic clear to contemporary audience

However, it did not exist in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Japanese, thus its use is anachronistic

As possible alternative, *Yomiuri shinbun* articles refer to Nakajirō and Okame by compound word *otoko-onna*, "man-woman," term from Edo/Tokyo dialect from early eighteenth to mid-twentieth century to indicate anatomical males who took on lifeways of females and vice versa

Bakin employs rare variant *onna-otoko* in *Tōen shōsetsu* (*Proceedings of the Bunny Garden Association*, 1825) to indicate biological male who dressed and behaved like woman
Otoko-onna might be more culturally adequate alternative for gender variance and gender-variant

About the use of pronouns:

- “he/his” for Shino since he consistently identifies as “man” (*otoko*)
- “they/them” for Dian following Matthew H. Sommer (2024)
- for remaining Japanese subjects, primary sources do not reveal what pronouns they used nor writers use any

Different sources about other *otoko-onna* contain material on pronouns authors and gender-normative population employed to refer to *otoko-onna*:

In *Tōen shōsetsu* by Bakin

In *Kasshi yawa* (*Night Stories of the Kasshi Year*, circa 1821) by Matsura Seizan (1760-1841)

In *Kumo no itomaki* (*The Spider's Reel*, 1846, 1850) by Santō Kyōzan (1769-1858)

authors utilise:

- male third person pronoun *kare* (shortened *ka*) to refer to individuals anatomically male or believed to be anatomically male by their communities
- female third person pronoun *kanofu* to refer to anatomically female individual
- Bakin refers to *otoko-onna* by neutral noun and pronoun *mono*, which does not specify sex

Witnesses indicated *otoko-onna* by gender pronouns that related to person's (real or purported) biological sex

Witnesses enforced gender-normative bias

To avoid perpetrating gender-normative bias, imitation of Bakin's neutral pronoun *mono* by using English singular pronouns "they/them"

The *Torikae Kosodate* Practice II

The origins of *torikae kosodate* practice are not clear. Based on *Zibuyu*, custom possibly emerged in China, adopted in eighteenth century, then imported to Japan. According to Bakin, custom was part of “folklore” (*yo*). Ooto, Nakajirō, and Okame belonged to the “farmer” (*hyakushō*) class, suggesting custom based on beliefs held by lower population strata.

Hakkenden and newspaper articles emphasise that knowledge about custom was shared orally
Practice is not discussed in written childrearing manuals, textual genre which records customs based on Neo-Confucianism practised among noble and warrior classes

Torikae kosodate practice was based on folklore beliefs whose knowledge belonged to lower segments of Japanese society and was transmitted orally

Parents could adopt this practice when they feared their children could die in infancy:

- In *Kagama no adauchi*, Saruwaka's father raises Saruwaka as girl because of eye disease
- In Dian, Shino, and Okame's cases parents had lost other male children, who died of illness in infancy; Ooto's name means "last one," plausible their parents had lost other children

Parents could raise their children as opposite gender to protect them and have them live a long life:

- In *Zibuyu*, fortuneteller tells Dian's father that his sons died because star gods are female

- As Sawada and Morita argue, Japanese parents raised children as opposite gender to invoke upon them protection of *kami*

Primary sources do not explain why children would receive blessings of *kami*

Earlier and contemporary texts and practices indicate belief that person who fused male and female in one body was divine:

- In *Ariake no wakare* (*Partings at Dawn*, late twelfth century) main character, biological woman who lives part of life as man, is said to be manifestation of "heavenly maiden" (*amatsu otome*)

- In "Consecration of Acolytes" (*Chigo kanjō*), ritual performed in Tendai Buddhism in fifteenth and sixteenth century, acolyte, who wore both male and female clothes and accessories, was declared avatar of bodhisattva Kannon
- *Kōshoku henjō nanshi* (*The Amorous Adventures of a Hermaphrodite*, mid-eighteenth century) argues that Kannon is depicted as female in Chinese and Japanese devotional scrolls and statues and manifests as boy is proof of otherworldly nature

Torikae kosodate practice possibly originated from belief that fusion of male and female was trait of divine

Fusion of male and female was part of folklore breastfeeding technique *hiawase*: weak newborn, if anatomically female, should be fed for first time by mother of male child and vice versa

Being trait of the divine, perhaps fusion of male and female was understood as way to strengthen and protect baby from harm

Children's Gendered Socialisation

Children were socialised as opposite gender through:

- attribution of names
- performance of age-related rites of passage
- transmission of skills

usually reserved to persons of opposite gender

Children and adults raised as opposite gender received names bestowed on member of opposite gender:

- in childhood Dian is called "Little Miss Seven," *xiao qiqi niang*, where use of character *niang*, *musume* in Japanese, clarifies it is a girl's sobriquet
- Ooto and Okame's names can be considered feminine because of O- prefix
- Nakajirō's name can be read as masculine because of -jirō suffix

Names could be auspicious in wishing a long life:

- Okame contains *kame*, "turtle," symbol of longevity
- Ooto "last one," parents hoped they would live

Shino's name is both feminine and auspicious: characters who hear name think he is girl and Shino comes from ancient word meaning "long"

Children and adolescents underwent rites of passage marking progression from childhood to adulthood through sartorial and tonsorial practices

Rites differed according to status and gender

For male and female children: *kamioki* "hair placing,"
2/3 *sai*: child's hair let grow and received gender-specific clothes

Rite performed 3 times with gender-specific clothes and hairstyles at 3, 5, and 7 *sai* (*shichigosan*)

For boys:

10/12 *sai*: "wearing of pleated trousers" (*hakamagi*), boy received first pair of *hakama*; rite exclusive to nobles and warriors

11/12 *sai*: crown of boy's head shaved, hairstyle drew attention to "forelocks" (*maegami*); boy combed back hair in "topknot" (*chonmage*)

14/15 *sai*: hair on temples shaved into right angles, "putting in corners" (*kado wo ireru*)

16/17 *sai*: coming of age ritual: "wearing of [adult] clothes" (*genpuku*): man received hat/helmet, gifts, pate of hair shaved (*sakayaki*), new name

For girls:

Coming of age ritual: "stopping sleeves" (*sodetome*), coincided with first marriage: woman had sleeves shortened, blackened teeth, removed eyebrows then repainted with makeup; woman did not receive new name, kept hers since childhood

From 7 to 13 *sai*, boys and girls began schooling and were taught by parents and instructors different gendered skills:

- Dian was taught how to sew, feminine occupation
- Ooto was taught how to sew, dress according to seasons and weather, apply make-up, take care of long hair
- Shino was taught to read and punctuate Confucian texts and martial treatises in *kanbun* and to fight, masculine pursuits

Reversing the *Torikae Kosodate* Practice

Persons raised following this childrearing technique could align their gender performance to anatomical sex in adulthood:

- Dian lives half life as woman, implying they take masculine appearance for other half
- Okame was expected to adopt masculine gender performance once they reached adulthood, but continued to live as woman; however, Okame and Nakajirō aligned gender performances to marry

- Saruwaka assumes masculine appearance at 16 *sai*
- On the contrary, Ooto and Morita's patient continued to live as women once they became adult

Social expectations gave time window during which individuals could alter their gender performances, coinciding with adulthood

However, it was up to the person to decide for themselves
Shino assumes masculine appearance when he celebrates *genpuku*

Disappearance of the *Torikae Kosodate* Practice

Morita records latest case custom adopted in Japan

Patient was raised as girl/woman from 1910s

After this time, practice seemingly disappeared

As Kojima Hideo suggests, in 1910s and 1920s in Japan seismic change in the ways parents brought up children because of importation of Western childrearing

Possibly *torikae kosodate* practice disappeared because of introduction of Western childrearing techniques

Shino's Upbringing as a Girl

Before conceiving Shino, Tatsuka and Bansaku have 3 other sons. However, they all die in infancy

When Shino is born, Tatsuka is worried that Shino might die as well

Tatsuka talks to Bansaku about the *torikae kosodate* practice: they can give child a girl's name if it is male and vice versa

Children brought up like this are said to live long life safe from harm

Tatsuka would like to raise Shino as girl until he turns 15 *sai*

Bansaku does not think it is a wise decision:

- Life and death ordained by Heaven, not names
- Thinks *torikae kosodate* practice is superstition of "people" (*yo*)

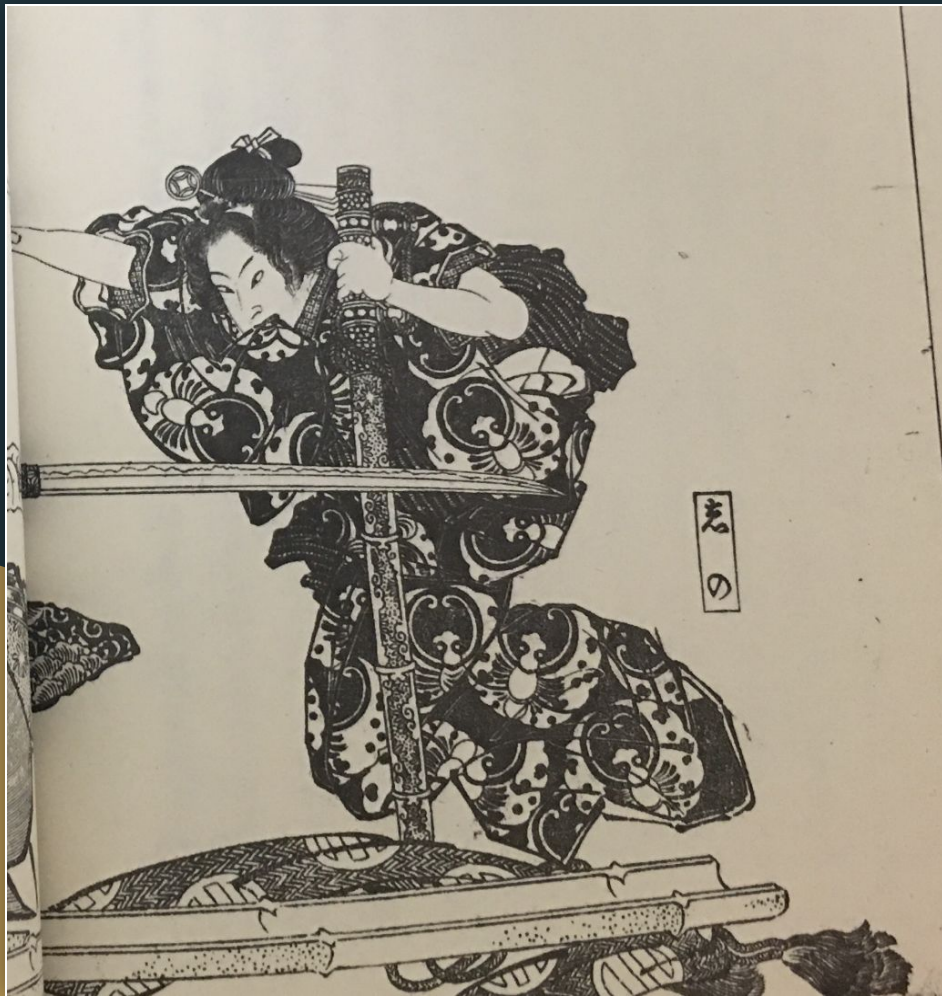
Bansaku agrees to bring Tatsuka peace of mind

Proposes name Shino, "long," as an auspicious name to wish son a long life

Tatsuka dresses Shino in "feminine clothes" (*onnafuku*)
When Shino is 3 or 4 *sai*, Tatsuka performs *kamioki* rite
of passage by letting his hair grow and combing it with
"hairpins" (*kanzashi*)

As Tatsuka calls him Shino, those who do not know him
think he is a girl

Illustrations by Yanagawa Shigenobu (1787-1832)
show Shino wearing feminine hairstyles and clothes
from his 11 or 12 to 14 or 15 *sai*



Source: Hamada, 2003b



Source: Hamada, 2003a
Shino is not wearing *hakama*,
crown of hair is not shaven, he
does not have topknot,
suggesting he has feminine
appearance

Shino's appearance and name make him the laughingstock of malicious relatives Kamezasa and Hikiroku, usurpers of the Inuzuka's family

Kamezasa and Hikiroku badmouth Bansaku: as he is a masterless warrior who was badly injured during a battle, he wishes to have a daughter so to protect her from harm

While slandering Bansaku, Kamezasa and Hikiroku "laugh in scorn" (*azawarai*), compound word formed by *warai*, "to laugh," and *aza*, "cold," to express the tone of their mockery

At 9 *sai*, Shino develops a passion for games suitable for a boy from a warrior family

Given Shino's interest in the martial arts, Bansaku teaches him to read and punctuate Confucian texts and war chronicles and how to fight with a sword and hand to hand

Shino presents a mismatch between his appearance and name on the one hand, which are coded as feminine, and his behaviour on the other hand, which is gendered as masculine

This mismatch is the cause behind two other scenes in which Shino is laughed at by villagers
He mounts a dog as if it were a horse
Some villagers “clutch their sides in laughter” (*hara wo kakaete warau*), astonished at the fact that his appearance does not match his ability



Source:
Hamada,
2003b

Youth from the same community “laugh at him in scorn” (*azamite*) when they see him training in girl’s clothes and mock him by saying that he has no genitals

This kind of harassment was common for people like Shino: Okame was ridiculed by the community of Susukimura village, in Saitama prefecture, near Tokyo. Villagers knew they were biologically male based on their body. Drunk villagers harassed them by surrounding and pushing them



Source: Tsuchiya, 1995
Women laugh at
cross-dressing man stopped
by police officer

Shino interiorises mockery: why, asks he, “differently from other boys” (*yo no warabera to wa kotonishite*), is he the “only one” (*wagami hitori*) who wears “girl’s clothes” (*me no ko mekitaru kinu*)?

The ridicule Shino receives and its interiorisation reach climax when Tatsuka dies

On the day of the funeral, Shino wears feminine clothes as usual and everyone in attendance “does not hide their laughter” (*warai wo shinobiaezu*)

Troubled at being ridiculed during the funeral, Shino confronts Bansaku

Bansaku explains:

- Tatsuka and he wanted to prevent Shino from dying
- until 15 *sai* boys and girls look the same with forelocks, wide-sleeved vests, and hairpins; only after 16 *sai* a man becomes different from a woman

Shino celebrates *genpuku* in two correlated scenes:

- shortens topknot and receives adult man's name of Moritaka and sword "Rainmaker" (*Murasame*)
- at 14 or 15 *sai*, Shino is gifted "men's clothes" (*otokokinu*) and cuts hair on his temples



Source: Hamada, 2003a
Shino has crown of his hair
shaved and topknot



Source: Hamada, 2003a
Shino has top of his head
completely shaved in
sakayaki style

The Narrative Function of Shino's Upbringing as a Girl

In *Kojiki kenkyū* (*Research on Records of Ancient Matters*, 1973), Saigō Nobutsuna has discussed the scene where the hero Yamato Takeru kills his enemies, the Kumaso brothers

Yamato Takeru wears feminine clothes to enter the Kumaso's base, slays them by surprise with the sword "Grasscutter" (*Kusanagi*), and is bestowed sobriquet Yamato Takeru

The killing of the Kumaso serves as coming-of-age trial, since Yamato Takeru leaves behind him his boyish/feminine appearance and gains sword and new name, which were bestowed on men in the *genpuku*. Like Yamato Takeru, Shino wears feminine clothes and faces numerous obstacles before he can undergo the *genpuku* and become a man of the same mythical stature as Yamato Takeru, which Ivan Morris has famously called the archetype of the tragic hero in Japanese history.

Shino's upbringing as a girl functions as a coming-of-age trial that Shino has to overcome.

Laughter functions as the main obstacle Shino encounters in his childhood and adolescence

If his relatives and villagers had not laughed at him, Shino would have become a man without meeting any obstacles on his way

Possibly, he could have decided not to assume a masculine appearance: reverting the *torikae kosodate* practice was a personal choice

Laughter functions as the obstacle in Shino's coming-of-age trial

Interiorisation, the serious consequence Shino learns from being laughed at, pushes him to become a man and a mythical hero

In *Hakkenden*, laughter plays a role in setting Shino's coming-of-age trial, while seriousness works in motivating Shino to overcome said trial

Conclusion

We have examined how Bakin incorporates the *torikae kosodate* practice in the fictional world of *Hakkenden*

We have seen how this custom worked:

- Folklore childrearing technique adopted in Japan in nineteenth and early twentieth century
- Parents could choose this method to protect their children from dying in infancy
- Parents socialised children as opposite gender through attribution of names, performance of age-related rites of passage, and teaching of skills

Persons from outside immediate families did not take kindly to individuals reared through this method, as they did not align their gender performances to their anatomical sexes

Contemporaries often subjected these persons to mockery and harassment

We have noticed how Bakin portrays the *torikae kosodate* practice and reactions communities had to it. Tatsuka and Bansaku bring up Shino as a girl to prevent him from dying an untimely death as happened to his brothers.

Relatives and some villagers deride Shino because his masculine sex and male-gendered behaviour do not match his feminine name, clothes, and hairstyles.

Those characters “laugh” at Shino, concept expressed through the verbs and noun *warau/warai*, *azawarau*, and *azamiru*.

As a serious counterpoint to the laughter, Shino interiorises slander and decides to assume a masculine name and appearance when he becomes an adult

We have investigated what functions laughter and seriousness play within Shino's story:

- laughter serves as obstacle Shino has to overcome as a coming-of-age trial
- interiorisation pushes him to overcome the trial and become a full-fledged man and hero

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Thank you for listening

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