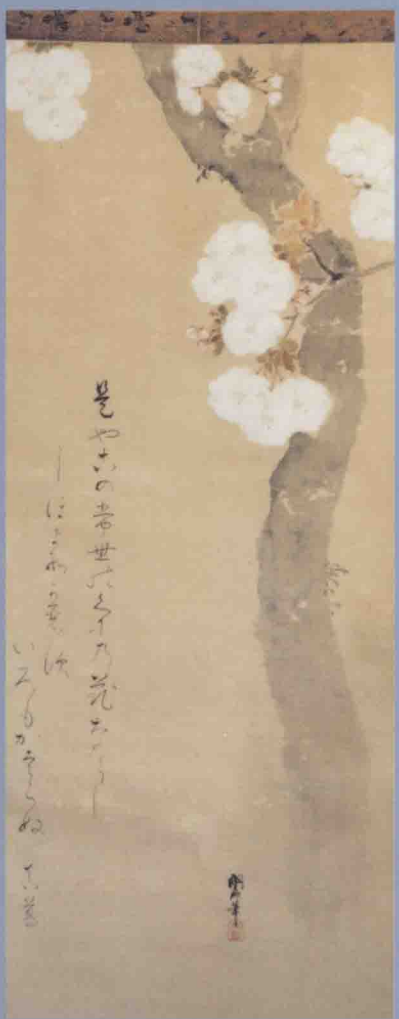
Thinking Like a Man

Tadano Makuzu (1763-1825)

by

Bettina Gramlich-Oka



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BRILL
LEIDEN · BOSTON
2006

Cover illustration: Hanging Scroll *Sakurabana*. Poem by Mazuku. Courtesy of Tadano Hama.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A C.I.P. record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

The book was printed with the financial support of the
Förderverein japanisch-deutscher Kulturbeziehungen e.V., Köln (JaDe).

ISSN 0925-6512
ISBN-13: 978-90-04-15208-3
ISBN-10: 90-04-15208-3

PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

CONVENTIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Conventions

Names are given in the Japanese order, surname first followed by personal or sobriquets. After the first appearance, I refer to their personal or artistic name, with the exception of Tanuma Okitsugu, who is better known as Tanuma. Ages are given by traditional Japanese reckoning, one or two years older than by Western count. Years have been converted from the lunar to the Gregorian calendar, while days and months are left in the original numbering, e.g. 1755/2/20 or twentieth day of the second month of 1755. I ignore thereby the complexity of the conversion, since some days of the twelfth month in the lunar calendar fall into the next year of the Gregorian calendar. All translations from the Japanese are the author's unless otherwise indicated.

Measures

1 *koku*	about 180 liters (47.5 gallons)
1 *ryō* (*koban* gold piece)	about 4,000 *mon* (copper coins)
1 *shaku*	about 30 cm (1 foot)
1 *ri*	about 3.9 km (2.5 miles)

Abbreviations

DK	*Dokkōron*
HJAS	*Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*
HK	*Hitori kangae*
JJS	*Journal of Japanese Studies*
KMZ	*Kamo Mabuchi zenshū*
MB	*Mukashibanashi*
MN	*Monumenta Nipponica*
MNZ	*Motoori Norinaga zenshū*
NKBT	*Nihon koten bungaku taikei*
NKT	*Nihon keizai taiten*
NST	*Nihon shisō taikei*
SHS	*Shin Hokkaidōshi*
TMS	*Tadano Makuzu shū*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Ichigaya, Tokyo, 1996. My encounter with Tadano Makuzu began in a coffee shop. Kate Nakai and Umezawa Fumiko, my advisers for my Masters thesis at Sophia University, mentioned to me that Tadano Makuzu's collected works had been published only recently, and knowing of my interest in the lives of women during the Tokugawa period, they thought it would be worthwhile for me to look into her work. With the book in my suitcase, soon after I left for California. In September 2003 I submitted my dissertation on Makuzu to the Institute of Japanese Studies at Tübingen University, Germany. Two and a half years later, this book is completed.

During these years my research has been nurtured in several academic communities. From my *alma mater*, Tübingen University, I received the greatest support that a student could wish for. I was an unconventional student: I left Germany for Japan after my undergraduate studies, never to return permanently. Klaus Antoni, Viktoria Eschbach-Szabo, and Klaus Kracht helped me overcome bureaucratic obstacles arising from my absence from Germany and were approachable at all times, offering their intellectual advice and academic support. Auditing Herman Ooms's seminars at UCLA and Anne Walthall's at UCI was mind-opening. I was truly fortunate to have met some of the finest scholars in our field. Without Anne's guidance in particular in writing my dissertation, which must have been trying at times, I doubt that I would have come this far. Our translation group—Janet Goodwin, Elizabeth Leicester, Yuki Terazawa, and Anne Walthall—confirmed and reinforced my decision to work on Makuzu despite the initial difficulties I had with her thought and with how to conceptualize it in a larger framework. After the translation of Makuzu's *Solitary Thoughts* had been published in *Monumenta Nipponica*, we continued our regular meetings (now also joined by Kristine Dennehy), where we read and discussed my manuscript chapter by chapter. I learned to keep tight deadlines, but more important, I profited from their excellent and stimulating critique, which I miss dearly. I am in particular thankful for having met Elizabeth, who shares not only my interest in Tokugawa history but also similar life choices.

During my research in Japan many scholars mentored, inspired, and supported me. I would like to thank many of them for their valuable assistance and guidance, including my former advisor at the Rikkyō University, Arano Yasunori, and my advisor at Ochanomizu Women's University, Ōguchi Yūjirō. I am especially grateful to Kado Reiko, Seki Tamiko, Shiba Keiko, and Suzuki Yoneko who shared with me their knowledge, expertise, and their sources on Makuzu. My mentors, Kate and Fumiko, who continue to share their vast knowledge with me, have my deep respect and gratitude.

While I transformed the dissertation into a book, Wesleyan University in Middletown, CT, became my new haven. William Johnston and Steven Angle introduced me to academic life from the other side of the classroom; but they also gave me needed advice about the publishing process. Others who have read my entire manuscript are Gregory Smits and the reader for Brill. I appreciate all their suggestions and hope to have responded to most of them. Their input adds to the invaluable comments on the presentations that I gave at various conferences over the past five years. I also would like to acknowledge the encouragement I received at various stages of this project, even though I cannot properly thank everyone to whom I am indebted. Any errors that remain, of course, are mine alone. Some short segments have been published in "Tadano Makuzu and Her *Hitori Kangae*," MN 56:1 (Spring 2001). Portions of chapter 5 have been published in "A Woman's Critique of Male Academics in Early Nineteenth Century Japan," in *Kulturwissenschaften und Frauenstudien*, ed. Viktoria Eschbach-Szabo et al., vol. 1 (Tübingen: Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, 2005).

Financial support was provided in the summer of 2004 by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science; the ideal working conditions of that summer and the following one, when I was close to Kate, Lynne Riggs, and Takei Masako, who offered me concrete advice, enabled me to be most efficient in the short period of time available. My time in Tokyo was also enriched by the Saturdays I spent with the members of the *Katsura no kai*, who introduced me to the wealth of Tokugawa women's writings and their meaning for women today. Gaye Rowley deserves special thanks for helping me to gain access to the Waseda University Library. Laura Mercs, Yui Suzuki, and Andrea Vogt know best how much I relied on them in recent years, and I appreciate their friendship. My mother, Charlotte Gramlich, and my sisters and brothers have my deepest affection for always being there for me.

Special gratitude goes to Tadano Hama and her family, who invited me to their home and spent hours in the heat of the summer showing the relentless historian materials that were kept in heavy boxes. I am honored to be able to present here for the first time some images of what she showed me.

In addition to Laurence Marceau who introduced me to Brill, there are two individuals who helped with getting the manuscript ready for Brill's printer: my editor Julia Perkins at Wesleyan University, who did an excellent job in responding to all my particular requests, and my husband Oka Kiyoshi, who created the graphics and images.

Finally, the book is dedicated to Kiyoshi, Dai, and Shin for sharing the journey, and to my in-laws, Oka Masahiko and Tomiko, without whom I could not have accomplished half of the research I did while I was in Japan.

New York, Winter 2006

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INTRODUCTION

One morning in the early fall of 1797, a thirty-five-year-old woman left the shogun's capital, Edo, on her journey to the northern domain of Sendai. The woman, Tadano Makuzu 只野真葛 (1763–1825), left her birthplace for the home of her newly wedded husband.[1] It is with this departure that the story of the poet and thinker begins. The starting point is the woman's choice, as Makuzu began actively collecting and preserving her literary productivity from this moment in time.[2] Even though the same lord employed both her new husband and her family, Makuzu had never before left Edo. Makuzu was born in 1763 as Kudō Ayako 工藤あや子, the oldest daughter of the physician scholar Kudō Heisuke 工藤平助 (1734–1800), who served the Date 伊達 family of the Sendai domain in Edo. Makuzu's mother was the daughter of a fellow physician serving the same domain. Makuzu's childhood, her ten-year service as a maid-in-waiting, and her care of her father's household all took place within the city limits of Edo. Makuzu's marriage, to which she dutifully agreed according to her father's wishes, was meant to promote her brother's career within the domain's bureaucracy by building stronger ties with a Sendai domain retainer. In her new role as a second wife, Makuzu started to develop a literary voice, expressing her impressions of her new environment and of the people she met. What has brought her fame in recent years, however, is the political voice with which she freely criticized the scholars and lords of her time.

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[1] Makuzu was her artistic name and Tadano her married name. For consistency I refer to her throughout as Makuzu, not least because her collective works are called *Tadano Makuzu shū* 只野真葛集 (Collected Works of Tadano Makuzu), ed. Suzuki Yoneko, Sōsho Edo bunko, vol. 30 [Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1994]; abbreviated hereafter as TMS). In doing so I disregard that she signed her works and letters with different names, an indication of her multiple personae depending on age, stage in life, and addressees. See Figure 0-2.

[2] Makuzu herself states that she started writing in Sendai (*Hitori kangae* 独考 [Solitary Thoughts], in TMS, p. 291; abbreviated hereafter as HK, indicating the publication in TMS). We know that Makuzu had been skilled from an early age in composing poems, but no traces of her work remain from her earlier life in Edo. The sudden change in the volume of her literary output, which is effectively displayed in her collected works published in 1994, can be partly explained by the possibility that much of her early writing was lost, but the large amount of poetry and prose that she produced from the moment she left Edo testifies to her aptitude and her strong motivation to write.

Figure 0-1. Hanging Scroll *Sakura-bana*. Poem by Makuzu. Courtesy of Tadano Hama.

Women of the Tokugawa period (1600–1868) have long been neglected in modern scholarship, in particular with regard to their own agency. Although publications increasingly unearth the lives and works of Tokugawa women, the assumption persists that the early-modern period was the dark ages for women.[3] Recently, however, among the few women writers whose works are known in and outside of Japan, Makuzu has attained a distinguished position.[4] Even though her life course is quite

[3] For concrete examples, see footnotes 15 and 16. The number of Japanese publications continues to grow. See, in particular, the works by Maeda Yoshi, Shiba Keiko, and Yabuta Yutaka, who introduce numerous Tokugawa women. For more diversified perspectives in English, see the recent volumes *Women and Class in Japanese History*, ed. Hitomi Tonomura, Anne Walthall, and Wakita Haruko (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1999); *Women and Confucian Cultures*, ed. Dorothy Ko et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); and *Gender and Japanese History*, ed. Wakita Haruko, Anne Bouchy, and Ueno Chizuko, 2 vols. (Osaka: Osaka University Press, 1999).

[4] For introductions to other Tokugawa women writers, for instance Ema Saikō 江馬

ordinary for a woman of her status during the Tokugawa period, her writings document an idiosyncratic thinker, which calls for our reconsideration of the early-modern period and its society's tensions and undercurrents. In the scholarly world, Makuzu's political treatise, *Hitori kangae* 独考 (Solitary Thoughts, written from 1817 to 1818),[5] which challenges and criticizes shogunal and domain politics, is credited as a text that significantly expands and alters our perspective of the Tokugawa period on various issues, in particular with regard to gender ideology. In this essay Makuzu provides the reader, in addition to the opportunity to re-envision women's history, with a window into the thoughts of a woman who explicitly addressed the reasons why the early-modern period in Japan is considered to be male-centered and male-dominated.

Another, but closely related, reason why *Hitori kangae* does not correspond well with our understanding of Tokugawa history is Makuzu's refusal to be limited by the gender boundaries that precluded women from participating in intellectual discussion. With *Hitori kangae* Makuzu entered the public realm, a taboo for women, as she herself observed.[6] *Hitori kangae* testifies to a woman's knowledge of the sociopolitical problems of the capital and of life in a financially troubled domain. Moreover, Makuzu does not hold back in arguing for drastic reforms, which she explains by comparing current conditions in Japan with those of foreign countries. In writing a political treatise, she reached the zenith of her literary role, not as a female poet, but as a serious author, operating in the exclusive preserve of male academia, which sets her apart as a woman and a thinker.[7] When one of the first

細香 (1787–1861), see Patricia Fister, "Female *Bunjin*: The Life of Poet-Painter Ema Saikō," in *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600–1945*, ed. Gail Lee Bernstein (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 108-130, and *Breeze through Bamboo: Kanshi of Ema Saikō*, transl. Hiroaki Sato (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998). For Matsuo Taseko see Anne Walthall, *The Weak Body of a Useless Woman: Matsuo Taseko and the Meiji Restoration* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

[5] *Hitori kangae* has been translated into English. See "*Solitary Thoughts*. A Translation of Tadano Makuzu's *Hitori Kangae*," transl. Janet K. Goodwin et al., part 1, MN 56:1 (Spring 2001), part 2, MN 56:2 (Summer 2001). Abbreviated hereafter as MN 56:1 and MN 56:2.

[6] In the letter called *Towazugatari* とはずがたり (A Tale No One Asked For), in TMS, p. 374; and in the Letter called *Mukashibanashi* 昔ばなし (Tales from the Past), in TMS, p. 374.

[7] The bibliography of works by women lists only three critical commentaries by women, of which Makuzu wrote two. The list excludes court women and wives and daughters of daimyo. See Kuwabara Megumi, "Kinseiteki kyōeibunka to josei," in *Nihon josei seikatsu shi*, ed. Joseishi sōgō kenkyūkai, vol. 3 (Tokyo: Tokyo University Press, 1990), p. 181 and p. 188. The source is *Joryū chosaku kaidai*, compiled by Joshi

readers of her treatise, the famous author Takizawa Bakin 滝沢馬琴 (1767–1848), was so impressed by this woman that he claimed she was "thinking like a man," he illustrates well the deep-seated correlation between gender and intellectual discourse.[8] In analyzing a woman thinker, therefore, I unveil a gender discourse that is deeply embedded in academic discourse. This is all the more important since Makuzu's attack on the male-dominated discourse of Tokugawa intellectuals that ignored women is a sensitive issue that persists even to this day. Modern scholars in the field of intellectual history of Tokugawa Japan have ignored the category of gender, and if there is a concern with women it is only in passing. I hope my discussion will open a new forum for debate.

Makuzu's Place in Japanese Literature

The shifts of scholarly and ideological trends in Japan illustrate and explain the attention paid to Makuzu and her work. Makuzu first won a degree of fame during the Meiji period (1868–1912), when writers based in Sendai acclaimed her as a poet of remarkable skill.[9] The first of her works to be published were essays and poems, written in the Japanese style (*wabun* 和文), dealing with the Sendai region.[10] Early biographers

Gakushūin [1935] (Tokyo: Higashi Shuppan, 1997).

[8] Takizawa Bakin frequently refers to Makuzu in this way; see Takizawa Bakin, *Dokkōron* 独考論 (Discourse on Solitary Thoughts), in TMS, p. 310 (abbreviated hereafter as DK, indicating the publication in TMS); *Untitled Letter from Takizawa Bakin to Tadano Makuzu* (twenty-fourth day of the third month of 1819), in Nakayama Eiko, *Tadano Makuzu* (Sendai: Maruzen Sendai Shiten, 1936), p. 103; and Takizawa Bakin, *Makuzu no ouna* 真葛のおうな (The Woman Makuzu) included in *Toen shōsetsu* 兎園小説 (Stories of the Rabbit Grove), vol. 1 of 2nd series of *Nihon zuihitsu taisei* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1973), p. 253.

[9] Makuzu's renown during her lifetime is not easy to trace. According to Nakayama Eiko, Makuzu had poetry students in Sendai (Nakayama Eiko, *Zoku—Miyagi no Josei* [Sendai: Konkōdō, 1988], p. 24). Nakayama also mentions some of Makuzu's students by name: Takeda Umeko 武田梅子 and Tadaki Naoko 但木直子 (Nakayama 1936, p. 15). Makuzu's sister Taeko mentions that a nun from Ise, called Kaion-ni 海音尼, has learned about Makuzu's talent and meant to visit her in Sendai (see the letter by the sister to Makuzu, cited in Kado Reiko, "Tadano Makuzu ate no imōto Hagi-ni kara no shokan," *Edo-ki onnakō* 12 [2001], pp. 84-87). Takizawa Bakin promoted Makuzu's talent when he sent out copies of some of her manuscripts to his friends, but this occurred around the time of her death and afterward. It is probably due to his copies that so many of Makuzu's writings have been preserved.

[10] *Isozutai* いそづたひ (From the Seashore) and *Ōshūbanashi* 奥州ばなし (Stories from Ōshū) were both first published in 1891 (*Edo jidai joryū bungaku zenshū*, vol. 3, ed. Furuya Tomoyoshi [1918] [Tokyo: Nihon Tosho Sentā, 1979]). Makuzu presumably

went on to fashion her into an exemplar of local culture. The portrayal depicts her as a filial daughter who followed her father's wish that she marry a well-off samurai, even though it meant leaving her beloved Edo for Sendai, to her an unknown region in the far north. Despite her isolation there, she devoted herself to looking after her husband's house during the extended periods when his duties kept him in Edo. Without any children of her own, she dedicated herself to raising her husband's children from his first marriage and became a model educator who paid particular attention to the instruction of girls.[11] The main source for this portrait of Makuzu's filial piety, which was exploited within the new terminology of good wife/wise mother (*ryōsai kenbo* 良妻賢母), was *Mukashibanashi* むかしばなし (Stories from the Past, 1811–12), a six-chapter narrative relating Makuzu's personal history and describing life in the northern domain of Sendai, published in a series on women writers during the Taisho period (1912–26). With this new nationwide recognition, Makuzu gained a place among women writers. *Mukashibanashi* has been published four times within the past eighty years.[12] Her status incorporated a contradiction, however: Makuzu was the exception to the long silence of women of the Tokugawa period, but she also represented virtuous womanhood, true to Confucian ideals.

The interpretation of Makuzu's works illustrates in particular many of the issues of category and canon that affect the reputations of Tokugawa-period women writers. Since the Meiji period, women's writings have commonly been categorized as *joryū bungaku* 女流文学 (literature by women writers).[13] This creation of a canon of women's texts in the modern period established an artificial dichotomy of gen-

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completed both in 1818. *Isozutai*, a travelogue about a trip in the Sendai area, has been published seven times; *Ōshūbanashi*, which relates twenty-nine stories Makuzu had heard, most of which take place in the Sendai domain, has been published at least three times. Both are also included in TMS.

[11] Nakayama Eiko gives an overview of literature on Makuzu, written primarily by scholars based in the Sendai area prior to 1936 (Nakayama 1936, pp. 13-24).

[12] *Mukashibanashi* was first published in 1925 in *Sendai sōsho* 仙台叢書 (Sendai series), ed. Sendai Sōsho Kankōkai, vol. 9 [1925] (Sendai: Hōbundō, 1972). Other editions appeared in 1969, 1984, and 1994. Abbreviated hereafter as MB, indicating the publication in TMS.

[13] Tokugawa women's travelogues, collections of poems, novels, and essays—among them Makuzu's work—became available in published form and were embraced in the same way as the work of their Heian period (794–1185) sisters, namely as part of *joryū bungaku*. See Tomi Suzuki, "Gender and Genre: Modern Literary Histories and Women's Diary Literature," in *Inventing the Classics*, ed. Haruo Shirane and Tomi Suzuki (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), pp. 71-95, for an analysis of *joryū bungaku*.

dered literature that served to marginalize women and their writings.[14] The emergence of a Japanese national literature (*kokubungaku* 国文学) that intertwined gender and genre is one of the reasons why women writers of the Tokugawa period, such as Makuzu, when compared to their male peers, until recently have been little known outside of Japan. Widespread belief in women's apparent suppression in the Tokugawa period only contributed to this "vanishing" of the Japanese female voice.[15] The view that there is not much in the way of literary works by Tokugawa women has been prominent and is articulated to this day in Western scholarship.[16]

Even as there has been a noticeable rise in publications dealing with women writers, the complex relationship among gender, genre, and politics persists. Makuzu's political treatise, *Hitori kangae*, highlights the inherent problem of consigning women's literary production to *joryū bungaku*. Just as Tokugawa poets with expertise in Chinese

[14] This dichotomy is most evident in the well-known gendered binary of the distinction into female (*kana* syllabary) versus male (Chinese) language. Heian women's literature written in *kana* was embraced as indigenously Japanese, while the use of Chinese (*kanbun* 漢文) was deemed masculine and foreign. There is a growing literature that concentrates on the subject of canonization and gender politics. See the essays by Tomi Suzuki 2000; Joshua S. Mostow, "Modern Constructions of *Tales of Ise*: Gender and Courtliness," in *Inventing the Classics*, ed. Shirane and Suzuki, pp. 96-119; Atsuko Sakaki, "Sliding Doors: Women in the Heterosocial Literary Field of Early Modern Japan," *U.S.–Japan Women's Journal: English Supplement* 17 (1999), pp. 3-38; Joan Ericson, "The Origins of the Concept of 'Women's Literature'," in *The Woman's Hand: Gender and Theory in Japanese Women's Writing*, ed. Paul Gordon Schalow and Janet A. Walker (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), pp. 74-115.

[15] For instance, the statements that express the notion that Tokugawa women did not write, or if they did, they did so with less quality: *Japanese Women Writers*, ed. Noriko Mizuta Lippit and Kyoko Iriye Selden (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1991), xii: "When feudalism was established, women ceased to write, and there ensued a long period of silence in which women lost a major voice in literature... classical female-style literature and expression virtually vanished...." Or see Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature of the Modern Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), p. 165: "The Heian tradition of writing by women was broken when the court society itself lost its importance and when the position of women came to be threatened by the hostile attitudes of the feudal government."

[16] In *Travelers of a Hundred Ages*, Donald Keene cites only three Tokugawa women poets, depicting them as exceptions to the rule (Donald Keene, *Travelers of a Hundred Ages* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1999], pp. 376-40). Haruo Shirane mentions literary women only in passing (Haruo Shirane, *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology, 1600–1900* [New York: Columbia University Press, 2002]). Rebecca L. Copeland regrets in the preface to *The Father–Daughter Plot* that no female Tokugawa poet is represented (*The Father–Daughter Plot: Japanese Literary Women and the Law of the Father*, ed. Rebecca L. Copeland and Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen [Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001], ix). For a critical discussion of the "invention of women's liberation," see Sakaki 1999.