

Abstract

The PhD thesis deals with the topic of male homosexuality in the works of Japanese modernist authors; its aim is to discern in what ways homosexuality is portrayed in these works.

In the theoretical part, the thesis first provides a wider definition of modernist literature, which encompasses not just the so-called pure literature but also popular literature works from the same period. It then offers an overview of male homosexuality in Japanese history from the Heian period to the 1930s with an emphasis on artistic representation of male homosexuality. Starting from the Tokugawa period, the focus is on individual discourses on male homosexuality – legal, medical and popular.

The theoretical part also contains the methodology used for achieving the aim of this thesis, which is based mostly on post-structuralism and queer theory. This methodology is used in form of concrete tools – discourse analysis and deconstruction of binary oppositions underlying the social constructs of gender and sexuality. These approaches are complemented by strategies created by Martin C. Putna and Gregory M. Pflugelder, who use a combination of topic and textual strategy analysis together with biographical and autobiographical information about the author to find different types of homosexuality representation in literary works.

In the practical part, I use these tools to analyze a novel *Shōnen* by Kawabata Yasunari, a short story *Moyuru hoho* by Hori Tatsuo, a novel *Kotō no oni* by Edogawa Ranpo and a short story *Akuma no deshi* by Hamao Shirō. The analyses find two distinctive tendencies in these works, which I reflect by dividing the analyses into two separate chapters.

The works of Kawabata and Hori are connected by school environment, and their topic is the love of the male narrator for a fellow male schoolmate. In both works, male homosexuality disappears when the characters enter adulthood – we are thus talking about marginalization of homosexuality into adolescence. It is not, however, presented as something too pathological in these works.

This happens in the works of Ranpo and Hamao, where in case of Ranpo everything related to homosexuality is presented using expressions like strange, perverted etc., and in case of Hamao we can talk even about the demonization of the main character. However, as we know from their other

texts, both authors were generally sympathetic towards homosexuality, and we can see the pathologization of homosexuals in the analyzed works as a concession towards censorships and audience tastes rather than an expression of their personal opinion.

Keywords:

Japanese literature, modernism, homosexuality, queer theory