



In the Company of Men: Representations of Male-Male Sexuality in Meiji Literature

Jim Reichert

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In the Company of Men examines representations of male-male sexuality in literature from the Meiji period (1868-1912), the era when Japan embarked on an unprecedented modernization campaign. Because male-male sexuality occupied a prominent place in the literary culture of the preceding Edo period (1600-1868), the issue was of importance to Meiji writers and intellectuals, especially given the stigma attached to male-male sexuality in Europe and America, the "civilized" societies that Japan strove to emulate as it modernized. The heterosexualization of literature thus emerged as a key component of the production of Japanese literary and cultural modernity. At the same time, male-male sexuality also surfaced as an important cultural symbol for segments of society opposed to the push to modernize. *In the Company of Men* considers how these conflicting attitudes toward male-male sexuality manifested themselves in Meiji literary history.

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