

The Questioning of the Concept of Masculinity in Joyce Lebra's *The Scent of Sake*

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Abstract

*Gender is the social construction of elaborating sex, which is supposed to be distinguished from the biological categories of being male or female. Gender is said to be a very complex phenomenon and one has to acquire it through the process of socialization. Sex itself determines gender, while gender determines gender roles, whether it is masculinity or femininity. This study discusses Joyce Lebra's *The Scent of Sake* as a novel which portrays a violation to the concept of masculinity recognized in Japanese male gender roles, or also known as daikokubashira, through the analysis of its male character, Jihei. The discussion consists of the analysis of how Jihei is depicted as an unmasculine man in the novel. Then, followed by the discussion on the reason why Jihei's unmasculine characteristics are considered as a form of violation to the concept of masculinity recognized in daikokubashira.*

*The results of this study shows that Jihei is depicted as a man whose characteristics reject the masculine qualities expected by society. Thus, they are also said as questioning the concept of masculinity recognized in daikokubashira. Hence, it can be said that Joyce Lebra's *The Scent of Sake* portrays and encourages masculinity as a mandatory characteristic which is supposed to be possessed by men, especially in patriarchal culture, but it also counts as a double-edged sword for them.*

Keywords: questioning, masculinity, 'daikokubashira'

Introduction

Elaine Showalter in *Feminism and Literature* states that the term gender is used to mean the social cultural and psychological constructs imposed upon biological sexual difference (1990: 197). It is the social construction of elaborating sex, the innate state of being female or male, and is said to be a very complex phenomenon. To acquire gender, one must identify it through a process of socialization and also a reflection on the existing power relations between women and men.

In line with Showalter, Devor (1998: 10; 23-29) adds that sex determines gender, and gender determines gender roles, whether it is masculinity or femininity. Masculinity, according to Stets and Burke in

Femininity/Masculinity, is "the degree which a man sees himself based on what it means to be a man in society", while femininity is found in women who are "investing the domestic role and being passive, cooperative and expressive." Hence, masculinity and femininity are rooted in the social, or one's gender, rather than the biological, or one's sex (1998: 3).

When talking about gender roles, whether it is masculine or feminine, it is inevitable to separate the notion of gender stereotypes. A gender stereotype consists of beliefs about the psychological traits and characteristics of men and women, as well as the activities appropriate to men or women. Gender roles are defined by behavior and influenced by beliefs and attitudes about masculinity and femininity accepted in the society. Therefore, gender roles furnish the material for gender

stereotypes. Women are supposed to be feminine and men are supposed to be masculine. While one cannot maintain his/her gender roles, it is considered as a violation towards the values.

This violation from the masculine paradigm, is a result from the devaluation of men gender role, or masculinity. Such Violation occurs when men harm themselves, harm others, or are harmed by others because of destructive norms related to the idea of masculinity. Since masculinity itself also represents the primary values and standards that define, restrict, and negatively affect men's lives. Masculinity also refers to the beliefs about the importance of men adhering to the culturally defined standards for male behavior. As the result, such devaluations are followed by negative critiques of oneself or others when conforming to, deviating from, or rejecting stereotypical gender role norms of the idea of masculinity (O'Neil, 2016: 13).

Joyce Lebra's *The Scent of Sake* is a good example of how the concept of masculinity becomes a double-edged sword towards its male character, Jihei. Taking the setting of Tokugawa period in Japanese, *The Scent of Sake* tells a story of a young woman named Rie Omura who marries a *mukoyoshi* named Jihei who is chosen by her parents to secure and expand their family business relation. Though Jihei is outwardly in charge of the House of Omura and The White Tiger, Rie is the brain behind the operations and often makes important and risky business decisions. Thus, leaving Jihei no roles for himself as the head of the Omura House and White Tiger.

Jihei's Characteristics as Forms of Rejection towards Masculine Qualities

According to Eckert and McConell-Ginet, gender is the social construction of elaborating sex, the innate state of being female or male (2003: 10). It is influenced by "the social categories of male and female. These [social] categories are distinguished from one another by a set of psychological features and role attributes that society has assigned to the biological category of sex" (Helgeson, 2012: 3).

Masculinity or instrumental behavior is the accepted gender role for male, while femininity is the accepted one for female (Devor, 1998: 28). Masculinity itself means "the set of social practices and cultural representation associated with being a man" (Pilcher & Whelehan 2004: 82). While femininity is "investing the domestic role and being passive, cooperative and expressive behavior" (Stets & Burke, 1998: 1). Moreover, Parsons and Bales, quoted in Helgeson's *Psychology and Gender*, state that there is a relation between superior power and instrumentality and a relation between inferiority and expressivity. They believe that the distinction between the men and women role was both instrumental/expressive as well as a superior/inferior power (2012: 60).

Below is a table of selected instrumental and expressive behaviour based on Broverman and colleagues' research taken from Helgeson's *Gender and Psychology* on people's perception about masculine and feminine traits. The list prescribes the ideal traits of man and woman that lead to typical stereotypes of man and woman.

Feminine	Masculine
Not at all aggressive	Very aggressive
Not at all independent	Very independent
Very easily influenced	Not at all easily influenced
Not at all competitive	Very competitive
Not at all skilled in business	Very skilled in business
Feelings easily hurt	Feelings not easily hurt
Has difficulty making decisions	Can make decisions easily
Almost never acts as a leader	Almost always acts as a leader
Not at all self-confident	Very self-confident
Not at all ambitious	Very ambitious
Unable to separate feeling from ideas	Easily able to separate feelings from ideas

Thinks women are always superior to men	Thinks men are always superior than women
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Since masculine and feminine qualities shown in the table are the expected traits based on people's perceptions, it means that those qualities are constructed and not always essential in one's characteristics. Hence, it can be said that those masculine and feminine qualities are in line with Butler's statement that "there would be no true or false, real or distorted acts of gender" (in Storey, 2008: 162). In this study, the desirable masculine qualities suggested by Broverman's research is compared the concept of *daikokubashira* as known in Japanese society during the Tokugawa's era. The two concepts of masculinity suggested by both resources share common ground in the sense that men are required to be strong, powerful, reliable leaders, protectors, and providers of the family.

Such an issue is also found in Lebra's *The Scent of Sake*, especially in the character of Jihei. Since the concern of this study is a male person, the masculine qualities will be used as a guide to categorize Jihei's characteristics whether they are considered as in line with or rejecting the masculine qualities.

The character of Jihei is a device employed by the author to throw doubts at the perceived masculine qualities prescribed in the table above. The first masculine quality challenged is the quality of being "very skilled in business". Jihei is not very skilled in managing *sake* business. He never offers solution to overcome The White Tiger's business issues despite its apparent looming bankruptcy. It contradicts with the quality of being very skilled in business because as seen from the table, society tends to expect that men are skilled in business. Jihei who originally comes from a brewery house is selected by the Omura House to be the *mukoyoshi* because he presumably has it learned from his family. Further they also hear that "he has been apprenticed to the Ohara house, so [they] know that he has had excellent training, and the report we hear are good" (Lebra, 2009: 6; 23).

Another masculine quality challenged is the quality being able to "make decisions easily" as closely related to the quality of being "very self-confident". Jihei is a businessman who is pretty hesitant in most of The White Tiger's business decisions. Instead of saying what his opinion is, he only "pulls his eyebrows" (Lebra, 2009: 184). This characteristic contradicts with the 'manly' quality of being decisive since Jihei is depicted as a man who is way too cautious and timid when it comes to business deals. It is seen from the way he refuses to increase the *sake* shipment to Edo because he thinks it is too risky. Jihei always "refuses any forward move by White Tiger" (Lebra, 2009: 26). He doesn't want to take any risks because he is too afraid of facing financial loss and thinks that a brewery house should only focus its business on *sake*. Through his way of doing business Jihei shows himself as not very competitive, not very aggressive, and not very ambitious, thus throws further doubts towards the listed manly qualities in Helgeson's table. Jihei's reluctance to make The White Tiger as the number one *sake* brewery house in Japan is seen in his negative responses to his wife's suggestions to start buying ships for The White Tiger, buying *sake* from smaller brewery house and selling *kura* as ways to expand and vary their business. Jihei would rather do his business conventionally maintaining the good quality of the *sake* to keep the customers satisfied while also managing the lending money business to balance their finance, instead of making transactions some *kuras* or any other kind of business (Lebra, 2009: 161).

On the other hand, everything in the house "gets decided by [Rie], his father and Kin" (Lebra, 2009:33). He does not show good leadership or strong dominance in the family which brings into question of the said manly quality of "men are always superior than women" in Helgeson's table. During the Tokugawa era, the Japanese *ie*, or family system, which was influenced by Confucianism, required a father, or the head of the house to control and support the economy for the well being of their entire family members as well as to be responsible for finding the marriage partners for the heirs to preserve family property and maintain the

family line (Kawamura, 2011: 7-8). As the one who is supposed to decide for the family's matters, Jihei has certainly failed because his wife is the one who makes the decisions and decide who their children will be married to. For instance, when their heir, Yoshitaro, is in the right age to get married, Rie is the one who arranged the *o-miai* with the most perfect and suitable daughter of The Tamiyas named Tama while Jihei just agrees to it.

"The Sawada family are not brewers, the Tamiyas are. Your bride must come from a brewing house." She looked at Jihei, who pulled at his eyebrows and looked at Rie, then back at Yoshitaro. Jihei cleared his throat. "Yes, Yoshi. As I've told you, individual preferences are a private matter. They aren't concerned with marriage. I believe The Tamiya daughter would be a good match for us. A good house." He glanced at Rie again (Lebra, 2009: 189).

Also need to be considered, Jihei is also easily influenced by his wife. It is seen from the way he doesn't object all of the business decisions made by Rie. When, Rie suggests that they should try to get access to a well in Nishinomiya, Jihei refuses her idea. Eventually, he gives in to Rie's ideas. It is shown in the excerpt below.

Rie tapped her fan against her shoulder. ".....Maybe we should focus on getting the access to the well so we can use it for the next year's brewing. Then maybe we could sell some to other brewers." "This would be a bold move, wouldn't it?" Jihei protested. Rie sighed and looked at her father, then at Kin. "Aren't we moving too fast?" jihei protested again. Rie sighed again, louder this time "Not to move tomorrow would be too slow. We'd lose our advantage." Kin nodded. Jihei glared at her (Lebra, 2009: 145-146).

The qualities discussed are closely related to Jihei's status as the *mukoyoshi*. Being a *mukoyoshi* is actually rejecting the men's masculinity since the status of a *mukoyoshi* in

feudal Japan was low and lightly regarded. In addition, there also seems to be a paradigm against *mukoyoshi* by both genders in the feudal Japan society. In the case of male gender, the idea of *mukoyoshi* tends to downgrade the image of men in feudal Japan as well as acts as a shortcut to success or fame, though it depends on the household, while for the female gender as it is their only chance at equality or validation or recognition (Onogwu, 2015: 146).

Jihei, the second son of The Okamotos who originally comes from a smaller brewery house, is in no place to inherit an *ie*. By becoming a *mukoyoshi*, he will inherit a household and other benefits. Jihei then rises to be the head of The White Tiger when the marriage took place. However, after being a *mukoyoshi* in Omura's house, Jihei becomes a victim of discrimination. He is the last person in the household to receive courtesies while being hassled about his obligations as a *mukoyoshi* of The Omura House. Jihei feels as if he is

.....eternally on inspection, judged. He had to be cautious at home, always on guard. The house was growing more and more oppressive.He felt overshadowed by Kinzaemon and Kin, with Rie ready to catch him in an error of some kind (Lebra, 2009: 36).

The patriarchal structure in the Japanese society expects that men should be the one who works and connects to the worlds. Feudal Japan forbids women's full participation in work outside the house is fully deployed to the advantage of Rie. As women are expected to be fit only as housewives with little or no connection to the social world, Jihei is being exploited by Rie. By "[demonstrating] so little ability", Jihei becomes the excuse of every decisions made by Rie (Lebra, 2009:73). In this case, Jihei is, in fact, but a ceremonial head of the family as Rie is the *de facto* authority of the house. Thus, it is considered that Jihei rejects the quality of almost always acts as a leader and not at all easily influenced as well as think men are always superior than women.

In addition to that, Jihei is characterized as an irresponsible man. Jihei's irresponsibility is

seen from the way he mentions that in his own family's sake brewery house, he "was trained as a child too..... there wasn't pressure on [him]" because his older brother would succeed his father (Lebra, 2009: 23). In addition to that, he also neglects his obligation as the head of The White Tiger by outspending time in *geisha* houses and by absence from the Sake Brewers Association's meetings since he feels that everything is controlled by Rie despite Rie's parents expectation that he will be able to make The White Tiger's rank rise since he comes from a brewery house too. It is clearly stated in the beginning of the novel when Rie's parents selected him as the *mukoyoshi* for Rie.

"[Rie's] father and [Rie's mother] are especially interested in the Okamoto son, Jihei. He has been apprenticed to the Ohara house, so [they] know he has had excellent training, and the reports [they] hear are good" (Lebra, 2009: 6).

Rie's parents want Jihei for their daughter because Jihei is considered as a well-trained businessman in the hope that he can succeed them in the future.

Moreover, Jihei's irresponsibility is also due to his frustration about his big responsibility and obligation at The White Tiger and his disappointment as a *mukoyoshi* in his wife's family of the absence of a male heir. However, after being a *mukoyoshi* for The Omuras, Jihei thinks that he has done his best as the next successor who will represent Omura House and The White Tiger. Unfortunately, Rie thinks that all he has ever done is causing financial loss to The Omura House because Jihei's behavior is seen as "the most obvious of his weaknesses" that "embarrass or dishonor the house" (Lebra, 2009: 198).

Throughout the story, Jihei is depicted as very dependent on Rie and his son Yoshitaro when it comes to their business. One of Jihei's irresponsible behaviours is caused by his drinking problem. Due to his addiction to heavy drinking, he is not able to work properly as the head of White Tiger (Lebra, 2009: 184). Jihei's dependence also can't be separated from the fact that Jihei is a *mukoyoshi*, which

affects the relationship between Jihei and Rie since the status of a *mukoyoshi* is perceived to be lower than his wife who originally inherits the family business. Rie is "intimidating Jihei. . . because a *mukoyoshi* often feels a stranger in his new home because his position is not so different from a bride's" (Lebra, 2009: 44). Jihei also thinks that being a *mukoyoshi* of The Omura House " [is] something no one could envy, no matter how wealthy and important his adoptive house" (Lebra, 2009: 138). Jihei's relationship with Rie justifies Parsons and Bales's statement that there is a relation between superior power and instrumentality and a relation between inferiority and expressivity. Also, the distinction between the men and women role was both instrumental/expressive as well as a superior/inferior power (2012: 60).

Jihei is also an unfaithful husband. Not only that he is unfaithful to his wife, Jihei is also disloyal to The White Tiger. As a husband who is supposed to be loyal to his wife, Jihei does not share this characteristic. He spends most of the night at Kitaya or Sawaraya philandering with geishas named O-Toki and O-Yumi. To make things worse, Jihei also attempts to ruin The White Tiger's *sake* by getting the *sake* to turn sour. Jihei does this because he feels unappreciated as the head of house. It is clearly stated from what he thinks about his position in the house.

The house was growing more and more oppressive. It was like a cage, a trap that brooked no escape. They had no appreciation for his talents.....the Sawaraya was his refuge. Here they treated him with the respect befitting the heir to the Omura House, one of the largest and most prestigious in the city (Lebra, 2009: 36).

In addition to that, Jihei also thinks that his obligations as the head of the head are too suffocating. It can be seen from the excerpt mentioned below.

Jihei put his hands to his face, resting his elbows on the table. Huh! Obligation, obligation! This was all he'd heard ever since he had married into this family. . . It was suffocating, this network of

relationships and obligations that entwined around him, an intricate spider's web. There was no escape, no relief, other than the Sawaraya or Kitaya, to a geisha's understanding ways (Lebra, 2009: 138).

To vent out his frustration that he has no authority in the house, Jihei then sets a plan to ruin The White Tiger's *sake*. He plans to cut back the *sake* production by making the *sake* sour. His revenge is revealed when he talks with O-Toki, a geisha at The Sawaraya.

"Ah, what happened about your plan to cut back on your wife's production increase?" She glanced at Jihei.

"Oh, it worked better than I thought. Actually, I thought only one kura would go sour, but all three did. The whole cellar was spoiled. Couldn't be helped." He closed his eyes and smiled at the thought of his successful revenge against Rie (Lebra, 2009: 177).

Since Rie is always meddling with the house matters, Jihei feels intimidated. Rie's mother sees Jihei's behavior as "the result of [Rie's] constant involvement in the affairs of the house. Maybe [Rie] is intimidating Jihei . . . it may be difficult for Jihei to accept suggestions from a woman" (Lebra, 2009: 44).

Further, when Jihei is unable to show his role in the house, he feels frustrated. As Rie always "[pushes] him so hard" regarding his responsibility and his obligations as house head, while he doesn't have any authority and "any role for himself" because Rie is the brain of the house. He also feels that he is not appreciated as a man because Rie hardly understands and always so unresponsive to what a man needs (Lebra, 2009: 197).

Renunciation of the "Daikokubashira"

The idea of masculinity in feudal Japan is well introduced through the concept of *daikokubashira*. *Daikokubashira* is an expression used to refer to the figure of an ideal male as a breadwinner who supports the house as the head of the family. *Daikokubashira* symbolizes reliability, strength, and stasis, wealth and authority (Gill, 2009: 144).

During the Tokugawa era, or also known as the Edo period, the feudal Japanese were influenced by Confucian ideals. They expected men to be aggressive, independent, dominant, competitive, confident, and analytical. All of these traits were needed to lead a household and manage the family's estate. Men were expected to be leaders, risk-takers, decision makers, and profoundly loyal to his lord and emperor.

The characteristics mentioned are based on the well-known expression of Japanese masculinity, *daikokubashira*. According to Gill, *daikokubashira* literally means a big black central pillar which holds up a house. This term is also used as a metaphorical expression of an ideal male as a breadwinner in the same manner as the central pillar which supports the house. *Daikokubashira* itself symbolizes reliability, strength, and stasis, wealth and authority (2009: 144).

Tracing back to its historical background, the image of *daikokubashira*, or male breadwinner, was originally projected into the family into the figure of a father as the head of the house who controlled and protected the rest of the family members after the government's policy that the emperor of Japan as the *daikokubashira* who had brought up and educated the nation as his sons and daughters. This policy was necessary for the establishment of *ie*. In other words, the concept of *daikokubashira* was exploited to reinforce the ideology of the nation state under the emperor. Hence, the term began to be used only to refer to the figure of a father up to this day (Yamada, 1993: 56, 59).

In Japan, a father is usually described as *setai nushi* or *shujin* which means head of the home, *koshu* which means head of the *ie*, and *taisho* which means chief or leader. All of these addresses reveal the status of a father as the leader of the family who mediates his family to the outside world. His symbolic role as a *daikokubashira* is based on the image of *Daikoku-sama*, the Shinto god who brings good fortune, guardian of the well-being and success of the *ie*. By adapting the image of *Daikoku-sama*, a father is expected to bring the good fortune within his family as well as to be the

guardian of the house (Jeremy and Robinson, 1989: 39).

During the Tokugawa Era, a father as the breadwinner or *daikokubashira* of the family was expected to support the family through his economy activity by having connections outside the house. Without his support, the household would collapse. This idea very vividly conveys the importance of the presence of a father or the *daikokubashira* as the head of the house to be the one who is responsible for his dependent wife and children. In return, he is free to devote his physical and emotional labour to his work. Thus, it becomes the standard for men of entering the mature manhood (Matsunaga, 2000: 150).

In addition to Matsunaga's opinion, Dasgupta adds that "the *daikokubashira* archetype is not the empirical reality but a standard to which all Japanese men aspire to be." It is because when a man becomes the head of the house, he will have certain privileges, like being allowed to take the first bath, being served first at meals, being waited upon. All of these are seen as the strategies which are used to retain and uphold the structures that legitimize, enforce and perpetuate their authority over women (2005: 168).

In Lebra's *The Scent of Sake*, although Jihei succeeds Kinzaemon as the *daikokubashira* of The Omura House, Jihei does not have the qualities of what a *daikokubashira* should be. While *daikokubashira* itself symbolizes reliability, strength, stasis, wealth, and authority, Jihei does not show these qualities. It can be seen from the previous discussion how Jihei's characteristics lack the desirable masculine qualities.

Before looking at the metaphorical meaning of *daikokubashira*, it is better to look at the literal meaning of *daikokubashira* first. As mentioned before, it means the big black central pillar supporting the house. In general, *daikokubashira* or the central pillar is bigger than any other pillars in the house. The pillar generally has the most important function of supporting the load of a roof in a traditional Japanese house. On the other hand, the metaphorical meaning of *daikokubashira* is the

male breadwinner of a family, usually the figure of a father. *Daikokubashira*, which is placed at the center of the house, at one time will be blackened with age and smoke from the hearth. It means that the male breadwinner is expected to become wiser through life experiences in the same manner as the pillar which is blackened over the years.

Jihei as the head of The Omura House is expected to have the characteristics that symbolize this big black central pillar which blackens over the year. However, none of the *daikokubashira* characteristics mentioned earlier is found in Jihei.

First, since Jihei's characteristics of being dependent is said to be not in line with the quality of very independent, Jihei fails to become a symbol of reliability and authority. As *daikokubashira* itself literally means a pillar, he is actually expected to be able to support the house and the family (Onugwu, 2015:148). Jihei does not share this quality. It is because Jihei relies on his wife and his son to manage The Omura House and The White Tiger's business as he can't work properly due to his heavy drinking habit.

As mentioned earlier, a *daikokubashira* is usually the figure of a father or the head of the house. By being the head of the house, a father "wields so much power that he takes unilateral decisions most times. Moreover, his opinions on any matter are strictly adhered to. An expression of a contradiction or otherwise is viewed as a threat to the group harmony and well-being of the *ie*" (Onugwu, 2015: 141). However, because of Jihei's status as a *mukoyoshi*, he is put in the lower position than his wife. Because of that, he is being looked down by his wife. In addition to that, his inability in business makes him unable to make any decision for The White Tiger as well as The Omura House.

Second, Jihei's characteristic of being hesitant and uncompetitive, his figure betrays the masculine qualities of being very self-confident, very competitive, very aggressive and very ambitious. By not showing these stereotypical characteristics, Jihei also undermines the *daikokubashira* as the symbol of strength. *Daikokubashira* as the pillar

supporting the house is expected to be strong enough to hold up the house. As mentioned earlier, the house is interpreted as a family. By being the breadwinner of the house, a father is expected to have the strength of holding up his responsibility, mainly financial responsibility, as the pillar for his family (Kawamura, 2011: 7).

In *The Scent of Sake*, Jihei is seen as businessman with so little acumen which causes him to resist any suggestion which could bring benefits to The White Tiger. Hence, because of his inability to hold up his responsibility as the *daikokubashira* of his family he is said to have no strength.

Third, by having the characteristics of being disloyal Jihei as a character haggles for the expected masculine quality of having sturdy feelings, or toughness. His failure to accept his wife's despise which owes to his status as a *mukoyoshi* of the house shows that he fails to stand as a symbol of stasis as the concept of *daikokubashira* requires. His frustration drives him to devise a destructive way of life, such as excessive alcohol drinking and frequenting geisha houses, partly as form of revenge to his wife and family, which in the end proves that he is not a tough man.

Fourth, Jihei's low business skill is a disruption to the concept of *daikokubashira* which also stands as a symbol of wealth. Being the *daikokubashira* means that a father should be able to provide the family's financial needs. By being able to do so, a father is said to be able to bring his family wealth. Jihei's inability to overcome the financial issues of The White Tiger makes his family face the threat of bankruptcy.

By having Jihei as a character who lacks expected masculine behaviors as listed by Helgeson, the novel rejects the concept of masculinity valued in *daikokubashira*. In Joyce Lebra's *The Scent of Sake*, masculinity is perceived as indeed a mandatory characteristic of a man in a patriarchal culture. It also conveys the idea that masculinity in patriarchal culture can encourage men to be able to strive for validation and approval which may result either in enhancing or devaluing themselves. Thus, presenting a

weak male character in the novel can be seen as a renunciation of the idea of desirable masculine characteristics in a Japanese society. Jihei shows that keeping up with the standardized qualities of manhood in a Japanese society or family can be overwhelming and frustrating. Not only the women are unappreciated, but the men are also oppressed by the idealization of masculinity.

Conclusion

Broverman's list of expected masculine and feminine characteristics agrees with the Japanese *daikokubashira* which demands a man to behave accordingly if he is to gain respect from his family and society. Jihei's unmasculine characteristics as presented in the novel are considered as a renunciation of the concept of masculinity suggested by *daikokubashira* because his character fails to stand as a symbol of reliability, strength, stasis, wealth and authority. The fact that Jihei does not live up to the concept of masculinity recognized in *daikokubashira* betrays the general expectation of an expected masculinity suggested by Broverman's research. Thus, Joyce Lebra's *The Scent of Sake* portrays that masculinity is indeed a mandatory characteristic of men in a patriarchal culture such as Japanese culture, but more importantly, it also counts as a double-edged sword for men, which deems men as victims of a patriarchal culture.

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