

Postwar Women's Magazines and Yukio Mishima's Critique of Dazai Osamu: Representing the Downfall of the Aristocratic Family

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This paper argues that the critique Yukio Mishima launches on Dazai Osamu in the pages of postwar women's magazines should be understood as a self-defining act to mediate Mishima's social image vis-à-vis aristocratic families. I investigate Post-WWII Japanese women's magazines—both magazines intended for the educated classes for which Mishima was writing, as well as magazines in mass circulation—and the economic and social problems involved in their reception. Here, I focus particularly on Mishima's relation to Dazai and representations of the downfall of the aristocratic family in *The Setting Sun*. Mishima's critique of Dazai was a kind of strategic posturing, a performance as both a male intellectual enlightening female readers and as a true aristocrat. This posturing helped create an image of Mishima as “writer,” a strategy that proved beneficial to the reception of the women's magazine *Fujin Kōron*.