

Tokyo, August 20, 2001

Dear Maurice,

It is hot here.

Ordinarily, the exterior of the body is cooler than within, and especially, less humid. But in this period of the Japanese summer it is not the case. This hot and humid air, like urine, envelops the body solarly. Licking the skin, in absence of sensation: impossible to say where are the limits of the body. The summer is at the same time on, in, and under my skin, that from this fact loses part of its signification to "be skin". That is all I can say about that.

Japanese women are perched on stiletto talons, high and thin. A certain complex of smallness might be the reason for it, meanwhile there is perhaps something else. Most of them have feet, calves, from the extremity of the legs to the beginning of the thighs, just above the knees, damaged or bruised by incessant shocks, as these thin shoes don't protect them at all. Their legs are strong and hard from daily walking "on tip-toes" and corns appear in places of constant friction. Their feet take the shape of the Occidental aesthetic's constraint, twisted, swollen: it is a woman's foot. Little by little, the throbbing idea comes to me that these stiletto talons, most of the time fine and narrow, hung under the Achilles heel, represent well "the actual state" of Japanese women. Judged on these points, long as these legs they don't have but feel they must invent for themselves, they have as a base these fragile batons that permanently give them the demeanor of collapsing. The appearance of falling is, after all, maybe part of the excitement these shoes produce, or are supposed to produce, among men: something about torture, forced unbalance, forced pity, almost commensurate as these shoes make the women, or men sometimes, who wear them, limping and forcibly fragile, prey: upon the opening of a hunt, under the hegemony of perversion.

We know that what is beautiful, fragile and crippled, is perceived as an appeal to whither, to deny, to break, and we also know the crudity of sex finds its reason or its echo in these definitions. Less and less in contact with the ground, searching to flee, or maybe to refrain from it, the Japanese women perched on these one centimeter square bases in this country where earthquakes are frequent, tragic, give a metaphorical vision adapted to this post-war Japan that remains post.

In friendship,

Morice