

Passages From the Hagakure (Yamamoto, Tsunetomo. 1979. Hagakure: the book of the samurai. Tokyo: Kodansha International.)

- When one is young, he can often bring on shame for a lifetime by homosexual acts. To have no understanding of this is dangerous. As there is no one to inform young men of this matter, I can give its general outline. One should understand that a woman is faithful to only one husband. Our feelings go to one person for one lifetime. If this is not so, it is the same as sodomy or prostitution. This is shame for a warrior. Ihara Saikaku has written a famous line that goes, "An adolescent without an older lover is the same as a woman with no husband." But this sort of person is ridiculous. A young man should test an older man for at least five years, and if he is assured of that person's intentions, then he too should request the relationship. A fickle person will not enter deeply into a relationship and later will abandon his lover. If they can assist and devote their lives to each other, then their nature can be ascertained. But if one partner is crooked, the other should say that there are hindrances to the relationship and sever it with firmness. If the first should ask what those hindrances are, then one should respond that he will never in his life say. If he should continue to push the matter, one should get angry ; if he continues to push even further, cut him down. Furthermore, the older man should ascertain the younger's real motives in the aforementioned way. If the younger man can devote himself and get into the situation for five or six years, then it will not be unsuitable. Above all, one should not divide one's way into two. One should strive in the Way of the Samurai. Hoshino Ryotetsu was the progenitor of homosexuality in our province, and although it can be said that his disciples were many, he instructed each one individually. Edayoshi Saburozaemon was a man who understood the foundation of homosexuality. Once, when accompanying his master to ado, Ryotetsu asked Saburozaemon, "What have you understood of homosexuality?" Saburozaemon replied, "It is something both pleasant and unpleasant." Ryotetsu was pleased and said, "You have taken great pains for some time to be able to say such a thing." Some years later there was a person who asked Saburozaemon the meaning of the above. He replied, "To lay down one's life for another is the basic principle of homosexuality. If it is not so, it becomes a matter of shame. However, then you have nothing left to lay down for your master. It is therefore understood to be something both pleasant and unpleasant."
- It is good to carry some powdered rouge in one's sleeve. It may happen that when one is sobering up or waking from sleep, his complexion may be poor. At such a time it is good to take out and apply some powdered rouge.