

JAPAN STUDIES REVIEW

Volume XXIII
2019

Interdisciplinary Studies of Modern Japan

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**JAPAN STUDIES REVIEW
VOLUME TWENTY-THREE
2019**

A publication of Florida International University
and the Southern Japan Seminar

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EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the twenty-third volume of the *Japan Studies Review* (JSR), an annual peer-reviewed journal sponsored by the Asian Studies Program at Florida International University. JSR remains an outlet for publications related to Southern Japan Seminar events that encourages submissions from a wide range of scholars in the field.

The 2019 issue features five articles branching into different aspects of Japanese studies. Janusz Mytko provides a thorough study in the “Analysis of the Military Plot against Saionji Kinmochi’s Second Cabinet” regarding a conspiracy during the *Taishō Seihen* crisis in order to provide insight into the political process in pre-World War I Japan. In “Literary Ligations: The *Ubume* in Early Monstrous Maternity Narratives,” Michaela Leah Prostack presents a literary analysis of various religious and secular aspects of the *ubume*, a figure in Japanese folklore of a woman who died during either pregnancy or childbirth. The next article by Peter Mauch, “‘Our Islands Are Being Violated One After the Other’: Hirohito’s Prayerful Reports to His Imperial Ancestors, October 1937 – August 1945,” enables readers to see for themselves the texts and translations of the World War II-era prayers that Japan’s Showa Emperor delivered to his imperial ancestors.

The last two articles are written or translated by Lorenzo Marinucci, beginning with an informative introductory essay, “Following the Footsteps of Wind: Some Remarks on Kuki Shūzō’s Philosophy of Aesthetics.” Then, in “A Translation of Kuki Shūzō’s ‘Reflections on Poetic Spirit’ (*Fūryū ni kansuru ikkōsatsu*),” Marinucci offers a work by Kuki from 1937 that gives us a deeper understanding of the renowned Japanese philosopher’s uniquely creative modern approach to the meaning of key aspects of traditional Japanese culture.

This year’s issue also includes three essays. In “Wakamatsu Farm and the Birth of Japanese America,” Daniel A. Métraux explores the emblematic history of Japanese American immigration represented in the Wakamatsu Tea & Silk Farm Colony of 1869 located in California. Next, “Japanese Studies in Israel: A Response to Meron Medzini’s ‘From Alienation to Partnership: Israel-Japan Relation’ in the *Contemporary Review of the Middle East*” by Christopher L. Schilling clarifies Medzini’s shortcomings and criticizes certain anti-Semitic tendencies. The last essay by Kinko Ito, “*Golden Kamuy*: Can the Popular Manga Contribute to the Ainu Studies?” uses a content analysis based on the popular Japanese manga produced by Shueisha that has created interest within the Ainu community.

There are three book reviews. Jakobina K. Arch’s *Bringing Whales Ashore: Oceans and the Environment of Early Modern Japan* is reviewed by W. Puck Brecher; Emily T. Metzgar’s *The JET Program and the U.S.–Japan Relationship: Goodwill Goldmine* is reviewed by Gabriela Izaguirre; and Yoneyuki Sugita’s *Japan’s Shifting Status in the World and the Development of Japan’s Medical Insurance Systems* is reviewed by Carmen E. Schmidt.

Re: Submissions, Subscriptions, and Comments

Submissions for publication, whether articles, essays, translations or book reviews, should be made in electronic formats, preferably Word for Windows via email attachment (please inquire about other formats). The editor and members of the editorial board will referee all submissions.

Annual subscriptions are \$45.00 (US). Please send a check or money order payable to *Florida International University* to:

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Visit our website at <http://asian.fiu.edu/jsr>. PDF versions of past volumes are available online.

All comments and feedback on the publications appearing in *Japan Studies Review* are welcome.

ISSN: 1550-0713

Articles

ANALYSIS OF THE MILITARY PLOT AGAINST SAIONJI KINMOCHI'S SECOND CABINET

Janusz Mytko
Kyoto University

Overview

Saionji Kinmochi tendered resignation of his government to Emperor Taishō on December 5, 1912, amidst the most severe constitutional crisis up to that date. The peculiar feature about this particular cabinet collapse was that it occurred as a consequence of an intrigue, orchestrated by a group of high-ranked officers convinced that under Saionji's leadership the army's interests were not adequately served. The primary reason behind this plot was to secure the prime ministerial post for General Terauchi Masatake. Admittedly, the conspirators managed to force Saionji and his ministers to resign *en masse*, but the main goal of the plot remained unfulfilled. The fall of the government sparked a political upheaval, nowadays remembered for two cabinet changes within merely two months, and mass protests against Saionji's successor, Katsura Tarō, that quickly spread nationwide and prompted Katsura's resignation during the events referred to as the "Taisho Political Crisis," or *Taishō Seihen* in Japanese.¹

¹ A number of previous studies covered the problem of the Taisho Political Crisis during the span of the last five decades. These include: Yamamoto Shirō, *Taishō Seihen no kisoteki kenkyū* (Tokyo: Ochanomizu Shobō, 1970), Banno Junji, *Taishō seihen–1900 nen Taisei no hōkai* (Kyoto: Minerva Shobō, 1994), Sakurai Ryōju, *Taishō seiji shi no shuppatsu–Rikken Dōshikai no seiritsu to sono shūhen* (Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppansha, 1997), Stewart Lone, *Army, Empire and Politics in Meiji Japan: The Three Careers of General Katsura Tarō* (London: Macmillan, 2000), and Kobayashi Michihiko, *Katsura Tarō–yo ga seimei ha seiji de aru* (Kyoto: Minerva Shobō, 2006). The frequent practice in describing the origins of the crisis was to concentrate on the military's power to influence the composition of the government, set up by the requirement that only an active military officer in the top two ranks could serve as army or navy minister. This limitation was formally introduced by the Yamagata Aritomo's administration in May 1900, but rather than establishing a

Focused specifically on the plot against Saionji and his cabinet, this article reexamines numerous sources pertaining to the event to give a possibly detailed description of the conspiracy, and the political mechanisms its participants tried to employ to achieve their goal. It particularly highlights discrepancies between information given in different sources, which show how the strategy to bring down the government evolved, and how misinformation was used in the conspirators' favor. Increased attention is given to factors behind the failure of the plan to replace Saionji with Terauchi as prime minister, providing an insight on the political process in pre-World War I Japan. This helped to demonstrate that in the early twentieth century, the oligarchs, who wielded power in the country throughout the Meiji period, still constituted the center of Japanese politics, despite pressure from the political parties on one side, and the military on the other.

Japan at the Turn of Taishō

When the Taishō period started in July 1912, the ruling class of bureaucrats – as a dominant political force in Japan with strong ties to the military – had divided according to their place of origin into domain cliques.² Out of the four leading domains of Chōshū, Satsuma, Tosa, and

completely new procedure, it simply formalized the existing custom, rooted deeply in the politics of Meiji Japan, that had been in use since the formation of the first Japanese cabinet led by Itō Hirobumi. This requirement allegedly gave the army and the navy a serious advantage in their clashes with the civil government, as it equipped them with power to topple cabinets by withdrawing their ministers and hinder the formation of any new government by refusing to supply their candidate.

² This new ruling class consisting mostly of former *samurai*, that emerged during the early Meiji period and led Japan through the process of modernization and westernization throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, is known as “Meiji oligarchy,” though in Japan the more direct term “domain cliques” is preferred and commonly used. The divisions into the domain cliques existed among the top-rank bureaucrats, as well as military officers. Many of them, including important dignitaries like Yamagata Aritomo, Katsura Tarō, and Ōyama Iwao, had military background, but their careers in the army or the navy were followed by years of civil service as elite bureaucrats. Thus, it can be said that the “Meiji

Hizen that had become a driving force in the country forty years earlier at the dawn of the Meiji period, the first two in particular had succeeded in establishing themselves at the forefront of Japanese politics. They also secured their leading positions in the army and the navy respectively, although this correlation often exceeded the domain boundaries with some prominent army officers hailing from Satsuma, and vice versa.

At the moment of transition between the Meiji and Taisho eras, it was the Chōshū clique that seemed at the height of their powers. Their leader was Field Marshal Prince Yamagata Aritomo, one of the pivotal figures in Japan's military and political modernization, who served as prime minister twice. In 1912, Yamagata was president of the Privy Council, an advisory body to the Throne. He was also the most powerful among the informal, yet very influential group of elder statesmen known as *genrō*, constituting the *de facto* highest echelon of Japanese politics.

When Emperor Taishō succeeded the Throne, the number of *genrō* consisted of five, three of which were from Chōshū.³ Apart from Yamagata,

oligarchy” constituted a complicated network of intra-faction rivalries and reciprocal interdependencies between the bureaucrats, the army, and the navy.

³ The *genrō* were a small group of powerful statesmen within the oligarchy who served as advisers to the Throne on the most paramount matters of state, particularly responsible for recommending to the emperor prime minister candidates, which in effect gave them power to select them. Since the title is unofficial and not mentioned in the constitution or any other law, scholars may give different number of *genrō*, the moot point being whether Katsura Tarō should be viewed as one. Out of the first seven *genrō*, namely Itō Hirobumi, Kuroda Kiyotaka, Ōyama Iwao, Inoue Kaoru, Saigō Tsugumichi, Matsukata Masayoshi, and Yamagata Aritomo, only four (Ōyama, Inoue, Matsukata, and Yamagata) were still alive in 1912. The above seven, together with Saionji Kinmochi who joined in at the end of 1912, after his resignation as prime minister, raise no doubts among historians whether they should be counted as *genrō*. Fukumoto Gentarō and Murai Ryōta note there are views that Katsura, or even Ōkuma Shigenobu, should be added to that list. See Fukumoto Gentarō and Murai Ryōta, “Senzen Nihon no naikaku ha sonzoku suru tame ni dare no shiji ga hitsuyō to shita ka—Gikai, gunbu, kakuryō, shushō ninteisha,” *Gakushūin Daigaku Hōgakukai zasshi*, 47/1 (2011), 78. Opinions of other historians on that

there was Marquis Inoue Kaoru and General Prince Katsura Tarō. Marquis Inoue Kaoru is the former minister of agriculture and commerce, home minister, and finance minister, also remembered as Japan's first minister of foreign affairs; General Prince Katsura Tarō, widely considered the “number two” of both the Chōshū domain and the army, whose political career, like in the case of Yamagata, included two terms as prime minister. Satsuma was represented by Marquis Matsukata Masayoshi, who also had been named prime minister twice, but was known, first of all, as a long-time finance minister, and Field Marshal Prince Ōyama Iwao, leader of the Satsuma faction in the army, former army minister in several cabinets, and former Chief of the Army General Staff.

Among the front-page politicians was also Marquis Saionji Kinmochi, a member of the court nobility, prime minister and president of the *Rikken Seiyūkai* (*Constitutional Association of Political Friendship*, often abbreviated to *Seiyūkai*), the most successful political party in Japan through the first four decades of the twentieth century. Since its inception in 1900, the *Seiyūkai* quickly came into prominence as one of the main political powers, and Saionji held office from 1906 until 1908, and again from 1911, in both cases succeeding Katsura Tarō. The party also cooperated with the government during Katsura's second administration, which allowed them to influence Japanese politics of three consecutive cabinets. The *Seiyūkai* contributed to the political scene with some notable figures, including Matsuda Masahisa, minister of justice, and Hara Takashi, home minister, famous as the first commoner to be named prime minister six years later, in 1918. The party had the largest representation in the Lower House of the Diet, and even bolstered its position in the election of May 1912, winning the majority of seats. Thus, Saionji's government may be described as “partisan” or “semi-partisan,” in contrast to previous bureaucratic, or transcendental, cabinets.

Saionji's predecessor, Katsura Tarō, had a well-established position in political circles. His prime minister ship was notable due to the signing of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1902, the victory over Russia in

matter are divided. While Chiba Isao makes a clear statement Katsura was a *genrō*; see Chiba Isao, *Katsura Tarō—soto ni teikokushugi, uchi ni rikken shugi* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Shinsha, 2012), 178. Itō Yukio claims he was not; see Itō Yukio, *Genrō—kindai Nihon no shidōsha tachi* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Shinsha, 2016), 113.

the war of 1904–05, and the annexation of Korea in 1910, with the events that elevated Japan to the position of East Asian superpower. Katsura was perceived as Yamagata's successor and a future Chōshū leader. However, at that time he seemed to have fallen from Yamagata's favor.⁴

Disunity between the two statesmen originated in Katsura's desire to create a completely new political platform centered around his own party, in opposition to both the *Seiyūkai* and Yamagata. These plans were publicly unknown when Katsura left for Europe in July 1912. The journey, planned as an opportunity to meet and exchange views with European statesmen and old acquaintances, was ended abruptly by reports about the grave illness of Emperor Meiji. A few days after reaching Saint Petersburg, Katsura and his entourage decided to head back to Japan but arrived in Tokyo already after the emperor's demise. The new monarch was of poor health, inexperienced and, unlike his predecessor, completely unfamiliar with military matters. Yamagata used the fact that the emperor needed a tutor, a politician experienced and influential but younger than Yamagata himself, and recommended Katsura, the most suitable choice, at the Imperial Court as Grand Chamberlain and Lord Privy Seal, leaving him virtually no margin to protest.

The vacuum caused by Katsura's absence was soon filled in by General Viscount Terauchi Masatake, the first Governor-General of Korea and the "number three" in Chōshū, with an ambition to assume the mantle of leadership in the faction at a future time. Soon, he had an opportunity to make his first step. Before his appointment to the Court, Katsura was a patron of the *Jukkinkai* (literally: *Society of Ten Gold Coins*), an informal secret group of most important Chōshū bureaucrats within the House of Peers, including Yamagata's protégé Hirata Tōsuke, and a former minister in the Katsura administrations Ōura Kanetake. When the *Jukkinkai* convened to deliberate on Katsura's retirement from politics on August 19, 1912, they made Terauchi their new patron instead.⁵

This promotion within the Chōshū faction was believed to spur Terauchi's political advancement as well. The fact is, in political circles he became commonly considered the most probable candidate to replace

⁴ See, for example, Lone, *Army, Empire and Politics*, 176–177, Sakurai, *Taishō seiji shi*, 168–70; and Kobayashi, *Katsura Tarō*, 263–64.

⁵ Shōyū Kurabu, Hirose Yoshihiro, ed., *Den Kenjirō nikki* (hereafter *Den nikki*), vol. 2 (Tokyo: Fuyō Shobō Shuppan, 2008), 197.

Saionji in case the *Seiyūkai* administration collapsed. Ozaki Yukio, a *Seiyūkai* politician and a member of the House of Representatives,⁶ who played a pivotal role in the resignation of Katsura Tarō in 1913, described this outcry of opinions around Terauchi's candidature in his article published in *Taiyō* in September 1912:

These days, if you ask about the name of the successor in case developments regarding the political situation topple the current government, the vast majority of responses would certainly be "Count Terauchi." However, the reason behind these opinions is not Terauchi's career, nor his abilities, nor even his brilliance, but the mere fact he hails from the Chōshū faction. More than that, as the result of the victories in two great wars with China and Russia, soldiers are subliminally perceived by the public as men of great authority. It is this intangible powerful group that soldiers form, that made Count Terauchi what he is today. He owes his fame only to protection provided by the clique bureaucrats and support offered by the army.⁷

Critical of the *Seiyūkai's* rule, Terauchi was infuriated by an informal alliance between the *Seiyūkai* and the Satsuma faction within the navy and its new emerging leader, Admiral Count Yamamoto Gonbee, a former navy minister. Accordingly, the cabinet gave the navy favorable treatment in budget negotiations, which led to the rise of anti-*Seiyūkai* sentiments among a number of army officers. In order to ease the country's huge indebtedness, the government introduced a strict retrenchment policy and ordered each ministry to reduce their budgets. The only exception was made for the Navy Ministry, and large sums were allocated to purchase new vessels.

The battle over military budget escalated after completion of the imperial defense plan, developed in 1905–07. The plan, sketched over two years following the Russo-Japanese War, came up as a response to the

⁶ One of the central figures in the Movement to Protect Constitutional Government (*Kensei Yōgō Undō*) during the Taishō Political Crisis.

⁷ Ozaki Yukio, "Risō jitsugen ha izure no hi," *Taiyō* 18/14 (1912), 231.

heavy losses the Japanese had suffered during the conflict, and was intended to rationalize and unify the country's overall defense strategy.⁸

The plan not only failed to resolve the differences between the army and the navy, but also deepened the division between them. The services reached no agreement concerning even the hypothetical enemy, with the army focused on Russia, and the navy on the United States. Consequently, they had their own separate strategies and financial plans and, with the central budget strained to its limit, were compelled to compete about their share of military funds.

The defense policy approved in April 1907 by Emperor Meiji set requirements for 25 standing army divisions on active duty, an increase by three. The plan also called upon the expansion of naval force to eight battleships and eight heavy cruisers in service by 1928. Due to Prime Minister Saionji's fierce resistance, caused by the lack of funds and a serious possibility of bankrupting the state, the promised number of new divisions was soon curtailed to two with the increase postponed by three years, and the commission of new vessels postponed by six years.

The formal annexation of Korea incited another strife between the cabinet and the army, with the army leaders pushing for the new divisions to augment their positions in the newly acquired territory, and the civilian government trying to limit their expenditures to keep the budget in check.⁹ The decision of the second administration of Saionji to purchase the new vessels may have been necessary to maintain Japan's defensive ability.

After the commission of HMS Dreadnought in 1906 sparked a global arms race in battleship building, the Japanese fleet found itself

⁸ As Stuart Lone suggests, many army officers, including Yamagata Aritomo, aware that although victorious, the wars with China (1894–95) and Russia (1904–05) exposed a number of weaknesses and limitations of the Japanese army, causing them to be gripped by fear of possible revenge wars with either of the continental powers. These fears were exacerbated after the annexation of Korea that imposed on the army the obligation to defend the new colony. Realizing that the army expansion would drown Japan in a mountain of debt, Yamagata nonetheless lobbied for more troops year after year, completely ignoring the fiscal condition of the state. Lone, *Army, Empire and Politics*, 185–186.

⁹ Edward J. Drea, *Japan's Imperial Army: Its Rise and Fall, 1853–1945* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2009), 125–130.

obsolete and in dire need of modernization. Nonetheless, the army felt compelled to react, and brought back their plan of two additional infantry divisions, which Saionji once again rejected. This gave rise to a conflict that tormented the Japanese political scene over the next few months.

Beginnings of the Anti-Cabinet Plot

Being the Governor-General of Korea, Terauchi Masatake resided in Keijō (Japan's colonial name for Seoul), but the death of Emperor Meiji granted him an opportunity to keep up with Tokyo's mainstream politics. He had arrived at the Japanese capital on official matters at the end of June,¹⁰ however, the situation in the country allowed him to prolong his stay. He was in Japan when new army minister, Lieutenant General Baron Uehara Yūsaku, in office since April, addressed the cabinet on the issue of the new divisions in August 1912.¹¹ Uehara hailed from Satsuma, but enjoyed Terauchi's support and soon proved to be his trusted follower.

The collection of Terauchi papers deposited in the National Diet Library contains a set of documents on the problem of two new divisions, but one among them attracts particular attention: a carbon copy titled "Memorandum on Issue of Two Additional Infantry Divisions," drawn up circa September 1912 on four sheets of standard ruled paper used by the army.¹² The memorandum is virtually a full manual explaining how to replace the Saionji's government with a new administration led by Terauchi.

Historian Yui Masaomi, who first brought this document to light, suggested it had been drafted by a group of top-level army officials, the most important among them being Army Minister Uehara and the director of the Military Affairs Bureau at the Army Ministry, Major General Tanaka Giichi.¹³ Yui's claims were based on the contents of the correspondence

¹⁰ Entry for June 27, 1912. Yamamoto Shirō, ed., *Terauchi Masatake nikki-1900-1918* (hereafter *Terauchi nikki*), (Kyoto: Kyōto Joshi Daigaku, 1984), 559.

¹¹ Entry for August 9, 1912. Hara Keiichirō, ed., *Hara Kei nikki* (hereafter *Hara nikki*), vol. 3 (Tokyo: Fukumura Shuppan, 1981), 244.

¹² "Niko shidan zōsetu mondai oboegaki" in Yamamoto Shirō, ed., *Terauchi Masatake kankei monjo—shushō izen* (hereafter *Terauchi monjo*), (Kyoto: Kyōto Joshi Daigaku, 1984), 583–86. An English translation of the document can be found at the end of this article.

¹³ Yui Masaomi, "Niko shidan zōsetu mondai to gunbu," *Komazawa shigaku*, 17 (1970), 12.

between Tanaka, Uehara, and Terauchi. The quoted letters¹⁴ demonstrate clearly that Tanaka and Uehara were aware of the plan to overthrow the cabinet, approved of it, and most likely were involved in its development. While the document's authorship has not been identified beyond doubt, it is safe to assume Tanaka Giichi and Uehara Yūsaku as the most probable candidates.

At its beginning, the document refers to the temporary alliance of the *Seiyūkai* cabinet and the navy, formed under the banner of fiscal and administrative reforms. It suggests the main purpose of this alliance is to suppress the army's demands of the new divisions or, in case they remain unwithdrawn, to pin the responsibility for the reform failure and a probable cabinet collapse onto the army, in order to create resentment towards the army among the public.

The document predicts Saionji to finalize negotiations on the budget cuts with any other minister before opening talks with Uehara. If the cabinet sees no possibility of the Army Ministry's demands being renounced, or at least postponed, they are likely to intensify attacks on Uehara, requesting his dismissal. Saionji may also ask for Yamagata and Katsura's help in the clash with his army minister.

The authors of the memorandum recommend that at this point the army should avoid making direct requests to the cabinet and wait for an invitation to negotiations instead. After the talks commence, the public should be informed that the disturbing situation in the East Asia, particularly in Russia and China, provides enough reason for the new divisions to be formed. Uehara should fend off any attacks and requests from the fellow ministers on the pretext "the national defense is in direct responsibility of the emperor, and not a matter of army minister's arbitrary decisions."¹⁵ Saionji might attempt to resort to Yamagata's help, yet in these circumstances Yamagata has no capacity to act either as *genrō* or as field marshal, unless ordered by the emperor himself. Analogically Katsura, now serving at the Court, also should be disinclined to engage in the conflict.

The document suggests that Uehara inform the emperor about the threat to national security and make arrangements to convene the Supreme War Council. When Saionji requests for the imperial judgment, the emperor,

¹⁴ The letters quoted by Yui are described further in this article.

¹⁵ "Niko shidan" in *Terauchi monjo*, 584.

likely to consult his decision with Grand Chamberlain Katsura, should be advised that “the government’s job is not to bother the new emperor with problems of this sort, but to competently settle a unified defense strategy, and report it to the Throne.”¹⁶

This would certainly lead to the government’s resignation, followed by Terauchi’s nomination as the successor to Saionji. The memorandum speculates that Katsura is likely to name him as a candidate, and Yamagata, Ōyama, and Inoue will certainly support it. Subsequently, as the *genrō* of no military affiliation, Inoue should propose a debate regarding the “unity of national defense”¹⁷ (*kokubō no tōitsu*, a term coined to assert the necessity of equal treatment of the army and the navy), which would help the new cabinet ease the political tensions and curtail pressure from the navy.

There also was an alternative scenario to the above plan, drawn up in a form of a short paragraph at the end of the memorandum: should the prime minister abandon his policy of the army’s discrimination and show some amicability in the negotiations, the army was ready to agree on an extension of time for establishing the new divisions from six years to eight, and look for an opportunity to move the completion schedule up to the original date in the following years. This scenario, however, was suggested in the document as unlikely.

What stands out in the memorandum is the prominence it gives to the role of the *genrō*, particularly Yamagata Aritomo, in the upcoming skirmish with the cabinet, a clear signal that, despite having at their disposal the requirement for army and navy ministers to be on active duty, the conspirators realized the nomination of prime minister was fully dependent on a sovereign decision of the Conference of Elders. They also assumed Yamagata had the final word regarding whether or not the army should name a successor in case of Minister Uehara’s resignation.

Escalating Political War over Army’s Budget

In October 1912, the preparations for administrative and fiscal reforms entered the decisive phase. In his letter from October 1, Saionji ordered the cabinet ministers to summarize their opinions concerning the

¹⁶ Ibid., 585.

¹⁷ Ibid., 586.

reform project and submit them by October 15th.¹⁸ At this point, Terauchi had already left Tokyo. He departed Japan on September 30th after a three-month long stay, and arrived in Korea on October 2nd.¹⁹ Two days after the cabinet meeting, he sent a letter to Katsura to share his view that, with Russia's increasing activity in Mongolia and Manchuria, only establishing the new divisions would guarantee Japan protection of its interests on the continent. He consequently called for priority to military issues over budget reform policy, claiming that the nation's future was at stake.²⁰

Tanaka, Uehara, and Terauchi achieved their first success when they managed to win the support of the most senior of the *genrō*, Inoue Kaoru. As Home Minister, Hara recounted in his diary on October 20th:

Inoue expressed his support to the organization of the new divisions, adding it would provide a perfect opportunity for a wide-ranging reform of the army. On my remark there was little hope for such reform, he replied the odds would be higher if both [the government and the army] developed better understanding of each other.²¹

Inoue continued his agitation for the new divisions, citing the complicated Russo-Japanese relations as the main argument. Hara suspected he had been instigated by the army, and noted in his diary that Inoue's point of view on the matter was the same as Yamagata's.²² These words indicate that, according to Hara's knowledge, Yamagata Aritomo looked kindly on the proposed two additional infantry divisions. Thus, the only *genrō* openly opposing the army's plan was Matsukata Masayoshi, an advocate of tight fiscal restraint, who called for the budget cuts that exceeded even those proposed by the cabinet.²³

¹⁸ Saionji letter to Hara, October 1, 1912. Refer to *Hara nikki*, vol. 6, 208.

¹⁹ *Terauchi nikki*, 559, entries for October 1 and 2, 1912.

²⁰ Terauchi letter to Katsura, October 11, 1912, in Chiba Isao, ed., *Katsura Tarō kankei monjo* (hereafter *Katsura monjo*), (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 2010), 282–83.

²¹ *Hara nikki*, vol. 3, 257, entry for October 20, 1912.

²² *Ibid.*, 259, entry for November 1, 1912.

²³ *Ibid.*, 257, entry for October 10, 1912.

The government's stance on the matter of the new divisions remained unchanged. When on October 18th, Hara visited Saionji to hand him the Ministry of Home Affairs budget cuts project, he heard the prime minister's pledge that there would be no changes in the government's retrenchment policy, with any eventual budget surplus incorporated into the navy expansion costs, financing reduction of taxes, and stimulating industrial production. As for the army's demands, Saionji suggested the cabinet should make it clear to Yamagata and Uehara that creating the new divisions was difficult, if not impossible, to proceed with, at least in the following fiscal year.²⁴ This was an apparent signal that the government definitively put a halt on the armaments expansion.

On October 22, 1912, the problem of the new divisions was dropped from the agenda during the next cabinet meeting.²⁵ Uehara immediately reported this to Yamagata, explaining it as a result of delays in work on the spending cuts projects in some ministries.²⁶ The fact Uehara misinformed Yamagata on this issue proves two important points. First, Yamagata was most likely unaware of any hidden meaning behind Tanaka and Uehara's actions. Second, Uehara found it more beneficial to keep Yamagata in his unawareness, which, on the other hand, implies the conspirators suspected that Yamagata, although supportive of the new divisions, would not approve of the plot.

Saionji eventually received most of the spending readjustment proposals from his ministers by October 27th, with the projects of Ministries of Agriculture and Trade, Communications and Transportation, and Education returned for amendments due to insufficient budget reductions. The only minister with no readjustment plan submitted yet, was Uehara.²⁷

This delay in the submission of the draft was in line with guidelines contained in the memorandum. The document assumed Saionji

²⁴ Ibid., entry for October 18, 1912.

²⁵ Banno Junji et al., eds., *Takarabe Takeshi nikki—kaigun jikan jidai*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppansha, 1983) (hereafter *Takarabe nikki*), 94.

²⁶ Uehara letter to Yamagata, October 23, 1912 in Shōyū Kurabu Yamagata Aritomo Kankei Monjo Hensan Iinkai, ed., *Yamagata Aritomo kankei monjo*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Shōyū Kurabu, 2005) (hereafter *Yamagata monjo*), 221–22.

²⁷ *Hara nikki*, vol. 3, 258, entry for October 28, 1912.

would start negotiations with the Ministry of Army after reaching agreements with all the other cabinet members. Uehara, by delaying the submission of his ministry's draft, guaranteed that this order would be maintained even in case of unexpected delays from other ministers.

The content of two letters quoted by Yui Masaomi, mentioned earlier in this article, confirms the above supposition, and clearly indicates Terauchi's involvement in Uehara and Tanaka's plot. In the first, sent to Terauchi on October 29th, Uehara informed him about delay in commencing negotiations between prime minister and the Ministry of Army, which was consistent with the "plan," and asked about his "decision." The "plan" was most likely the plan described in the memorandum on the two new divisions, and the "decision" presumably referred to Terauchi's expected acceptance of the post of prime minister had the current cabinet fallen.

The other letter was written by Terauchi on November 1st and addressed to Tanaka Giichi. Terauchi informed Tanaka he intended to return to Japan around November 12th or 13th, to participate in the annual army maneuvers and visit Tokyo afterwards. Due to high probability of the cabinet's collapse, he was ready to become an eventual replacement for Prime Minister Saionji. Providing he received the emperor's order to form a government, he "would assume it not earlier than after a meeting with prime minister and the *genrō* to discuss the current political situation, hear their opinions, and gain their approval for [the new government's] policy."²⁸ The letter concluded with instructions for Tanaka to provide assistance with all necessary preparations in case Terauchi obtained the nomination.

As the plan to replace Saionji with Terauchi was set in motion, Uehara's attitude toward other cabinet members became more uncompromising. He took a hard line in a row with Finance Minister Yamamoto Tatsuo, categorically demanding funds for the new divisions. Yamamoto invariably believed that only efforts in finding a compromising settlement would eventually allow the army to organize new units in the near future and, in the face of public opposition towards any increase in number of divisions, had no intentions to make concessions to Uehara.²⁹ Instead, he came up with a compromise proposition postponing the

²⁸ Yui, "Niko shidan," 15–16; and Yamamoto, *Taishō seihen*, 163–165.

²⁹ *Hara nikki*, vol. 3, 258–59, entry for October 30, 1912.

armaments expansion by one year, which was promptly rejected by the army minister.³⁰

Discouraged by Uehara's attitude, Saionji attempted to resolve the problem by dealing directly with Yamagata Aritomo and visited him at his residence a day later.³¹ Yamagata received him coldly. He firmly rejected Saionji's arguments about fiscal difficulties, bringing up the substantial sums to be spent on the navy rearmament against the army's moderate demands. He came up with a counterargument that the new divisions would require no additional financial support from the state budget, and what the army demanded was merely funds saved by the army itself through its budget cuts, i.e., the army's own assets. He also warned Saionji: "To favor the navy's rearmaments and deprive the army of its assets at the same time is not only unjust...It may bring about some serious trouble with unpredictable, grave consequences."³² At this point, the situation was developing exactly the way it was predicted in the memorandum.

Meeting with Yamagata's firm refusal, Prime Minister Saionji found himself in dire straits. He realized that further conflict with the army would expose the government to an inevitable risk of collapse but was unable and unwilling to act against his own party, the *Seiyūkai*, whose members were almost unanimously against any increase in the strength of the army.³³

Having little room for maneuver, Saionji sought help from Katsura Tarō, not without Home Minister Hara's scepticism. As Grand Chamberlain and Lord Privy Seal, Katsura was *de facto* in charge of the imperial institution, and the memorandum's authors assumed he would avoid any action that would threaten involving the monarch in the conflict. Contrary to that prediction, Katsura made certain attempts to broker some form of agreement. He met with Hara on November 16th, and presented his own compromise proposal, as well as offered his support in persuading Terauchi

³⁰ Utsunomiya Tarō Kankei Shiryō Kenkyūkai, ed., *Nihon rikugun to Ajia seisaku—rikugun taishō Utsunomiya Tarō nikki*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007) (hereafter *Utsunomiya nikki*), 160. See entries for November 1 and 2, 1912.

³¹ *Hara nikki*, vol. 3, 260–61, entry for November 9, 1912.

³² Tanaka Giichi Denki Kankōkai, ed., *Tanaka Giichi Denki*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Hara Shobō, 1981), 497.

³³ *Hara nikki*, vol. 3, 261, entry for November 10, 1912.

whom he was planning to encounter at the army maneuvers, had the cabinet adopted his ideas. The idea Katsura suggested was to postpone financing the establishment of the new divisions by one year in the hope that the budget situation would improve, with only some small initial quota spent as soon as the following fiscal year.³⁴ Hara's response, however, was tepid, and Terauchi, seemingly surprised when confronted by Katsura during the maneuvers, avoided any topic related to the army expansion plans in their conversation.³⁵ The confidential talks between the *Seiyūkai* and Katsura continued until November 25th, but turned out fruitless, as Katsura's compromise proposal was met with cold reception from both sides of the conflict.³⁶

On November 22nd, Home Minister Hara received a letter from Saionji, informing him that a day earlier he had met with Army Minister Uehara, and asked to explain the reasons of his demands to the fellow cabinet members.³⁷ As Hara wrote in his diary, when the army minister appeared at the cabinet meeting the next morning, he was rude and uncooperative, and refused to accede to the prime minister's request unless he was assured that the government would approve the formation of the new divisions. Only an intervention by the minister of agriculture and commerce, Baron Makino Nobuaki, prevented further escalation of the quarrel, but the explanation of the issue Uehara eventually offered to the cabinet was nonchalant, chaotic, and insufficient.³⁸

Another description of the same events but based on Uehara's account, thus considerably different from what Hara wrote, can be found in the diary of Major General Utsunomiya Tarō. In 1912, Utsunomiya served as director of the Second Bureau of the Imperial Japanese Army General Staff Office. A native of Hizen, he kept good relations with the Satsuma faction within the army, including Minister Uehara. Abe Umaso, a secretary in the Ministry of Finance and a nephew of Finance Minister Yamamoto Tatsuo, was his old acquaintance from London, where Utsunomiya had served as military attaché in 1901–05. Their friendly relations were

³⁴ Ibid., 262–63, entry for November 16, 1912.

³⁵ Ibid., 263, entry for November 18, 1912.

³⁶ Ibid., 264–66, entries for November 23, 24, and 25, 1912.

³⁷ Saionji letter to Hara, November 22, 1912; *ibid.*, vol. 6, 209.

³⁸ Ibid., vol. 3, 264, entry for November 22, 1912.

henceforth used as a means of contact between the two ministries on several occasions since September 1912.³⁹

A supporter of the new divisions, Utsunomiya had been continuing his efforts to muster support for the armaments expansion plan through behind-the-scenes talks independently of army minister, and believed that winning concessions from the government was only a matter of time. Unaware of the severity of the conflict between Uehara and his colleague ministers, Utsunomiya called on him on November 21st,⁴⁰ and once again the next morning, to give him some advice on how to deal with negotiations during the cabinet meeting, and visited him again later that day to hear about its results. Uehara not only made him believe the negotiations proceeded smoothly, but also implied that the government was willing to make concessions to resolve the standoff.⁴¹

Utsunomiya's description gives a good hint on how Uehara acted on the case of the new divisions. He took a hard line in talks with the cabinet, attempting to corner Saionji and force him to resign. At the same time, he misled his subordinates by ensuring he was on the right track to reach an agreement with the cabinet. The reasons for such actions are easy to guess. Uehara, determined to have Saionji replaced with Terauchi, wanted to avoid any movement within the army independent of him and aimed at finding a compromise over the new divisions, so he needed to demonstrate that he had the situation fully under control. However, a compromise-oriented movement eventually occurred, and Utsunomiya became its central figure.

Emergence of Pro-Compromise Group in the Army

The movement started on November 24th, when General Viscount Takashima Tomonosuke, a former army minister, used his connections with vice minister of home affairs and a Satsuma compatriot, Tokonami Takejirō, to establish a dialogue between Uehara and Saionji. Utsunomiya wrote in his diary how surprised he was when he first heard about the government's possible rejection of the army's demands. It happened during his meeting with Takashima and Kabayama Sukehide, a former government official and

³⁹ *Utsunomiya nikki*, vol. 2, 147–150. See entries for September 7, 8, and 18, 1912.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 166, entry for November 21, 1912.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 166–67, entry for November 22, 1912.

Takashima's son-in-law, also from Satsuma. Disillusioned Utsunomiya, who had been certain the agreement was imminent, realized the opposite was true.⁴²

On the same day, on Takashima and Kabayama's request, Tokonami met with his superior minister Hara Takashi to sound out possibilities of a meeting between Saionji and Uehara. Hara had no objections and passed a proper request to prime minister.⁴³

Despite giving a green light to the meeting, Saionji had no intention to carry on any further negotiations with Uehara. Hara made it clear while talking to Katsura on November 26th, when he refused to hear out any of the army minister's demands, reminding that Uehara had "confronted the prime minister in a defiant manner...and his refusal to speak in front of other cabinet members was nothing but scandalous."⁴⁴

Regardless of the inauspicious conditions, Takashima and Utsunomiya continued their efforts to mediate some form of accord between the cabinet and the army. On November 26th, Utsunomiya met with Vice Minister Tokonami, who conveyed Saionji's new proposal. According to it, the expansion was to be postponed by a year, but Saionji declared to make a public promise to provide funding for the two new divisions in the next budget. Utsunomiya's reaction was generally positive.⁴⁵ Paradoxically, what he and the rest of the pro-compromise group in the army had to do was to convince Uehara to change his attitude towards the issue. Instead of the cabinet, they had to negotiate the compromise with their own superior minister.

Right after the conversation with Tokonami, Utsunomiya hurried to visit Uehara, and recommended him to accept Saionji's proposal. Uehara, adamant in his decision, rebuffed the plan and instead requested a certain sum spent on the army's expansion already in the following year. Utsunomiya remarked bitterly in his diary that his minister "had gradually become estranged from the other government officials, and closer in his views to the so-called 'Chōshū bureaucrats.'"⁴⁶ With Uehara deaf to all arguments, Utsunomiya attempted to talk the issue over with Terauchi

⁴² Ibid., 167, entry for November 24, 1912.

⁴³ *Hara nikki*, vol. 3, 265–66, entry for November 25, 1912.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ *Utsunomiya nikki*, vol. 2, 167–68, entry for November 26, 1912.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

Masatake, who was on his way to Korea. On November 27th, he boarded the train carrying Terauchi to the port of Moji, and explained to him his standpoint, but to no effect. The Governor-General of Korea replied he saw no possibility for any form of compromise.⁴⁷

The next day's cabinet meeting brought another strife between army minister and the rest of the government. In the face of heavy criticism from the other cabinet members, the infuriated Uehara threatened that he would put a halt to the fiscal reform in his ministry. After the meeting was postponed, he spoke with Saionji in private declaring his will to resign, but eventually agreed to rethink his decision until the following day.⁴⁸

Having little time left to act, the pro-compromise group hastily decided to send Viscount Takashima, who had an established position within both the army and the Satsuma faction, to talk to Uehara and dissuade him from taking any further unreasonable steps.⁴⁹ Early in the morning on November 29th, Takashima paid Uehara a visit that brought a surprising overturn. According to Home Minister Hara's diary, army minister agreed to accept the compromise proposal in front of Takashima. Hara claimed he had confirmed the authenticity of this information from two independent reliable sources, i.e., Vice Minister Tokonami and Prime Minister Saionji, whom Takashima visited after meeting Uehara. The government officials were so assured they were on the right track to reach the final agreement with the army, they failed to notice anything suspicious when Uehara appeared on a cabinet meeting that day, and asked for putting the discussion on the new divisions off, but mentioned nothing regarding the withdrawal of his demands.⁵⁰

It soon became apparent Uehara's promise was merely a tactic, designed to avoid further pressure from the other cabinet members and Satsuma leaders. Utsunomiya's record of the events diverges greatly from Hara's version. Utsunomiya, who was a guest at Tanaka Giichi's residence late that night, and rushed to meet Uehara right afterwards, revealed in the diary that army minister had reached no compromise in talks with Viscount Takashima, and thus made a decision to confront the government.⁵¹ These

⁴⁷ Ibid., 168–69, entry for November 27, 1912.

⁴⁸ *Hara nikki*, vol. 3, 267–68, entry for November 28, 1912.

⁴⁹ *Utsunomiya nikki*, vol. 2, 169, entry for November 28, 1912.

⁵⁰ *Hara nikki*, vol. 3, 268–69, entry for November 29, 1912.

⁵¹ *Utsunomiya nikki*, vol. 2, 169, entry for November 29, 1912.

discrepancies suggest that Uehara deliberately deceived Takashima and Saionji, yet kept this information to himself, while in front of other army officers he claimed no agreement had been achieved.

On November 29th, the conflict reached the point that even some prominent figures from Satsuma deemed it appropriate to intervene. The Satsuma faction, embedded in the navy, was actually the main beneficiary of the Saionji administration, providing that the government emerged victorious from the clash against the army. With Saionji's support for their plans of commissioning new warships, they remained relatively passive throughout the conflict, hoping prime minister would successfully suppress the army's demands on the one hand, and secure sufficient funds to fulfill his promise given to the navy on the other.

Some naval officers and bureaucrats from Satsuma, including Vice Minister of the navy and Admiral Yamamoto Gonbee's son-in-law, Rear Admiral Takarabe Takeshi, Executive Director of the Railway Bureau Yamanouchi Kazuji, Vice Minister of Agriculture and Commerce Oshikawa Norikichi, and Director of the Bureau of Commerce of the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce Ōkubo Toshitake, reacted nervously when the news came to light about a possible compromise plan presented by their compatriots from the army, fearing it would weaken the government's financial abilities, and consequently undermine the plans to purchase the new vessels.⁵² Takarabe even went as far as to pay visits to Saionji and Matsukata on November 26th, and strongly advise them to renounce any ideas proposed by Utsunomiya and Takashima.⁵³

Merely three days later, in the evening of November 29th, the same party, accompanied by a shipbuilding engineer Suda Toshinobu, gathered in Takarabe's residence to deliberate on the current state of affairs. Having considered the matter in all its bearings, they all agreed that in this instance to accept the compromise proposal was the only way left to save the cabinet from collapse. After the meeting, Suda headed to Uehara's house to meet with the minister and persuade him against doing anything unwise that would result in toppling the government.⁵⁴ This change in stance reflects how strained the situation at that moment was.

⁵² *Takarabe nikki*, vol. 2, 105–106, entry for November 25, 1912.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 106–107, entry for November 26, 1912.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 108, entry for November 29, 1912.

On the morning of November 30th, Utsunomiya paid a call to Uehara and made one more attempt to influence his decision, but to no avail. Soon after his guest left, Uehara made visits to Takashima and Saionji to inform them he had no intention of assuming the compromise.⁵⁵ Startled, the Prime Minister immediately called in his closest subordinates, Home Minister Hara and Minister of Justice Matsuda, to give them the bad news.⁵⁶ As the cabinet was most likely beyond salvation, the only sensible decision was to ask the army for Uehara's successor or resign *en masse*, if their request was declined.⁵⁷

Cabinet Resignation and Prime Ministerial Selection Process

The conflict over the new divisions came to a head on December 2, 1912, when Uehara Yūsaku resigned in front of Emperor Taisho.⁵⁸ Soon after that, Grand Chamberlain Katsura was sent to Saionji with the emperor's question concerning the resignation. He also informed Saionji that the army minister had named no successor.⁵⁹ The Prime Minister visited the Imperial Palace the next day to report the circumstances surrounding Uehara's resignation, and afterwards he headed to Odawara to meet Yamagata in his villa. He was met with cold indifference, and advised to "attempt to settle the current state of affairs, rather than come and ask for successors, etc."⁶⁰ Irritated Saionji returned to Tokyo to open an urgent cabinet meeting, during which he ordered his ministers to write their

⁵⁵ *Utsunomiya nikki*, vol. 2, 169–70, entry for November 30, 1912.

⁵⁶ According to Hara's account, Uehara initially requested Saionji to have him dismissed, and only after the Prime Minister's firm refusal did he agree to resign himself on the pretext of health problems. This can be seen as an attempt to demonstrate to the public that any blame for the incoming collapse of the government should be put on Saionji's shoulders. A similar measure was suggested in the memorandum on the two new divisions. See *Hara nikki*, vol. 3, 269–70, entry for December 1, 1912.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 269, entry for November 30, 1912.

⁵⁸ According to Hara's diary, Uehara tendered his resignation in a way different to the previous day's agreement. He presented it directly to the emperor, and not via the Cabinet Office. He also failed to mention health problems as a reason. This infuriated Saionji, who perceived it as a breach of promise. See *Hara nikki*, vol. 3, 270, entry for December 2, 1912.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 270, entry for December 3, 1912.

resignation letters by the following day. He was to hand them to the emperor in person, together with his own resignation, on December 5th.⁶¹

At this moment, Terauchi had already left Japan for Korea and Tanaka Giichi acted as his eyes and ears in Tokyo.⁶² On December 4th, he wired Terauchi to inform him that Katsura had recommended him as the succeeding prime minister. Supposedly, Yamagata was still hesitant, nonetheless Tanaka believed that Katsura's mediation would effectively dispel his doubts.⁶³

The *genrō* were requested to return to Tokyo, and on December 6th, the Conference of Elders (*Genrō Kaigi*) was inaugurated to advise the emperor on the nomination of the next prime minister. On the evening preceding the conference, Tanaka telegraphed Terauchi again, to affirm that the events were developing as planned. The *Seiyūkai* purportedly wanted Katsura as Saionji's successor but, according to Tanaka's knowledge, since Katsura refused this offer and expressed his full support for Terauchi's candidacy, his nomination was simply a matter of time.⁶⁴

The next telegram reached Terauchi on December 7th, right after midnight. Tanaka reported no decision had been made so far, mostly as a result of the absence of Matsukata Masayoshi, who remained in his residence in Kamakura due to ill health. The *genrō* agreed they ought to ask for Matsukata's opinion before making any decision, so the meeting was adjourned until the next morning. Inoue and Ōyama were requested to head to Kamakura and pay Matsukata a visit, before the talks were resumed.⁶⁵

At this point, Terauchi may have still believed only a few hours separated him from the prime ministerial nomination. Unfortunately for him, the course of events had diverged completely from his expectations. The main purpose of Inoue and Ōyama's trip was to persuade Matsukata to form the next cabinet.

Tanaka failed to notice that Terauchi's candidature from the outset had no support from any significant political force outside the army. Katsura, believed by the conspirators to be an avid proponent of Terauchi's

⁶¹ Ibid., 270–71.

⁶² *Terauchi nikki*, 568, entry for November 30, 1912.

⁶³ Tanaka telegrams to Terauchi, December 4, 1912, in *Terauchi monjo*, 587.

⁶⁴ Ibid., Tanaka telegram to Terauchi, December 5, 1912.

⁶⁵ Ibid., Tanaka telegram to Terauchi, December 7, 1912.

cabinet, not only opposed it,⁶⁶ but even advised Yamagata against such an idea. When Yamagata visited him immediately after Saionji's resignation, he was advised that, in the current political situation, no candidate related in any manner to the conflict between Uehara and the cabinet should be considered as the next head of government, also to avoid possible public resentment against the army.⁶⁷

Many bureaucrats, including those hailing from the Chōshū domain, shared views similar to those of Katsura. Even the *Jukkinkai* members, who had made Terauchi their patron only four months prior, now decided to back Matsukata Masayoshi's candidature. Around December 1st, both Ōura Kanetake and Hirata Tōsuke reportedly expressed their support for Matsukata.⁶⁸ This support was endorsed at the *Jukkinkai* meeting of December 8, 1912.⁶⁹ A day earlier, Ōura and Hirata paid a visit to Matsukata in his residence in Kamakura, and tried to persuade him to accept the nomination.⁷⁰

Before the name of Matsukata appeared in the debate, keeping Saionji in office was perceived among the elder statesmen as the best option. This would mark a complete failure of the plot and literally humiliate Uehara as, with Saionji reinstated as prime minister, the commotion he had caused would prove utterly futile, but some *genrō* seemed willing to sacrifice the army minister's reputation. The *Seiyūkai* president rejected the idea of his reinstatement definitely, though there were voices within his party, including Home Minister Hara, calling for the Prime Minister to accept an offer from the *genrō* had it been made.⁷¹

On December 6th, Yamagata was sent to negotiate but, notwithstanding the situation, he attempted to run his own game on Saionji. He offered him his post back, but refused any help with the new divisions problem. This only aggravated the strain between the *Seiyūkai* and the *genrō*, and Yamagata was forced to return to the Conference of Elders

⁶⁶ *Hara nikki*, vol. 3, 270, entry for December 2, 1912.

⁶⁷ See Saionji letter to Yamagata dated January 12, 1913 in *Yamagata monjo*, vol. 3, 413–14.

⁶⁸ *Takarabe nikki*, vol. 2, p. 109, entry for December 1, 1912.

⁶⁹ *Den nikki*, vol. 2, 235.

⁷⁰ Hirata letter to Katsura, December 7, 1912 in *Katsura monjo*, 323–24.

⁷¹ *Hara nikki*, vol. 3, 271–72, entry for December 6, 1912.

empty-handed.⁷² In the fallout, the elder statesmen concentrated their efforts on persuading Matsukata to take the office. Seemingly, none of them considered Terauchi as a possible prime minister, neither was his name ever mentioned in this context.⁷³

At the time Inoue and Ōyama were heading to Kamakura to meet Matsukata, the origin of the crisis was discovered by Utsunomiya who, to his astonishment, learned the truth about the plot. In his diary, he spared no harsh words against Terauchi and Tanaka:

Today, a certain Chōshū officer allowed me to peruse the secret correspondence wired to Terauchi. To my shock and anger, it stated clearly, they had schemed to take over the cabinet. Those perfidious bastards may put on their masks of allegiance, but are nothing more than hypocrites and rebels.⁷⁴

Naturally, the Satsuma faction followed all the speculations regarding Matsukata's candidature with due attention, but far from enthusiasm. When Matsukata returned to Tokyo on December 8, Admiral Yamamoto Gonbee rushed to see him and persuade him against assuming the office. Takarabe Takeshi described this situation below:

In the present situation, when the Yamagata clique grew in influence at the Imperial Court, there is little doubt that even if Marquis Matsukata succeeded in forming a cabinet, it would quickly reach a deadlock. Hence, forcing his old body into the strenuous position of prime minister nowadays would be nothing but futile.⁷⁵

On December 9th, Terauchi received another telegram from Tanaka Giichi, communicating that the odds of Matsukata taking the office had significantly increased, with Yamagata, Inoue, and Katsura unequivocally supporting his candidature. Tanaka speculated that the upcoming cabinet

⁷² Saionji letter to Hara, November 6, 1912, in *ibid.*, vol. 6, 209.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 272, entry for December 7, 1912.

⁷⁴ *Utsunomiya nikki*, vol. 2, 172, entry for December 7, 1912.

⁷⁵ *Takarabe nikki*, vol. 2, 114, entry for December 9, 1912.

would strengthen its ties with the navy and become a guarantor of “unity of national defense,” using exactly the same words that had been reserved in the memorandum on the new divisions for the would-be Terauchi administration.⁷⁶

These speculations proved incorrect as well. On December 10th, Tanaka cabled Terauchi again, informing him that Matsukata had eventually rejected the nomination, which made Katsura the most probable candidate.⁷⁷ It can be safely assumed that the formation of Matsukata’s cabinet was suppressed by Admiral Yamamoto’s intervention. Yamamoto was afraid that the so-called “unity of national defense” would put a break on military expenses of both the army and the navy, which would menace the acquisition of new battleships, thus he wished no Satsuma politician involved in such decision. Given Matsukata’s poor health and advanced age, Yamamoto also feared that the new cabinet would be merely a puppet government, restrained by the influence of Yamagata, and the recent overtures of support from Ōura and Hirata, only magnified this fear.

Two other names, Yamamoto Gonbee and Hirata Tōsuke, were listed as possible candidates instead. Admiral Yamamoto refused immediately, citing more or less the same reasons he had given Matsukata to discourage him from assuming the office.⁷⁸ Hirata was more hesitant, but he finally realized that, as a Chōshū bureaucrat, he would have to face a severe bout of public backlash, and admitted he had no sufficient abilities to navigate the country through the crisis.⁷⁹

On December 15th, Hara was informed that the Conference of Elders had stalled the night before, as the *genrō* were left without any suitable candidates. The possibilities they were taking into account were limited to only two. The first, and preferable, option was to persuade Saionji to remain in office. Due to his categorical refusal of the other option, which was bringing Katsura back to politics, had to be considered. Katsura, who was the most experienced statesman in terms of prime ministership, could finally see the end of his seclusion out of politics.⁸⁰ Terauchi’s hopes

⁷⁶ Tanaka telegram to Terauchi, December 9, 1912, in *Terauchi monjo*, 589.

⁷⁷ Ibid. See Tanaka telegram to Terauchi, December 10, 1912.

⁷⁸ *Takarabe nikki*, vol. 2, 115–116, entry for December 12, 1912.

⁷⁹ Matsukata letter to Yamagata, December 14, 1912 in *Yamagata monjo*, vol. 3, 126–27.

⁸⁰ *Hara nikki*, vol. 3, 273, entry for December 15, 1912.

to become the next prime minister were dashed, when on December 15th Tanaka informed him, that Katsura left the Court after receiving an imperial command to form the new cabinet.⁸¹ This information was more accurate than the content of Tanaka's previous telegrams, and disappointed Terauchi was forced to put his political ambitions aside for an unspecified period of time. He wired Tanaka a reply and requested him to convey to Yamagata that from the beginning he had no intention to make any use of the current circumstances.⁸² In a letter sent directly to Yamagata Aritomo on December 24th, he expressed his belief there was no organized plot behind the recent events, and thus denied any knowledge regarding the existence of the plan to remove Saionji from office.⁸³

Conclusion

While the "Memorandum on Issue of Two Additional Infantry Divisions" alone cannot be cited as a solid proof of a plot against Prime Minister Saionji Kinmochi, there exists other evidence: (1) Uehara Yūsaku's letter to Terauchi Masatake from October 29, 1912 informing about the negotiations with the prime minister proceeding according to the "plan," (2) Terauchi's letter to Tanaka Giichi sent three days later, expressing his readiness to become prime minister, (3) the exchange of telegrams wired between Tanaka and Terauchi during the *Genrō Kaigi* regarding the latter's chances to take office, and finally, (4) the entry for December 7, 1912 in Utsunomiya's diary, reviling the conspirators. All of these combined with the fact Army Minister Uehara's actions regarding the negotiations on two additional divisions matched the contents of the memorandum, with only a few slight divergences, leave little room for doubt that Uehara's actions were the result of the conspiracy orchestrated against Saionji to replace him with Terauchi.

The memorandum emphasizes the importance of the *genrō*'s support for Terauchi's prime ministership. In order to win it, the conspirators planned to persuade them that the country's military capability was deteriorating, and only the nomination of Terauchi could reverse this

⁸¹ Tanaka telegram to Terauchi, December 13, 1912, in *Terauchi monjo*, 590–91.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 592. See Terauchi telegram to Tanaka, December 16, 1912.

⁸³ Terauchi letter to Yamagata, December 12, 1912 in *Yamagata monjo*, vol. 2, 400–401.

process. They also used misinformation to keep the plot in secret, not only from the government or the *genrō*, but even from the fellow army officers.

Intended by its authors as an elaborate, meticulous analysis of the political situation that would pave the way for the upcoming Terauchi's administration, the memorandum eventually proved to be a rather unrealistic plan. It was based on the assumption that the new government would have the full backing of the most influential statesmen, with Yamagata and Katsura Tarō univocally approving of Terauchi's nomination.

Contrary to popular belief, the *genrō* in their decision attached considerable importance to the voice of the people, and a possibility of public resentment was a compelling reason to reject any candidate involved in the resignation of the *Seiyūkai* cabinet. Thusly, their options of preference virtually limited themselves to either reinstating Saionji to his post, which was firmly rejected by Saionji himself, or nominating Matsukata Masayoshi, who also dismissed the idea. This brought about a severe impasse that ended eventually with Katsura returning to politics and taking the office. Terauchi's nomination was never discussed.

Although a proponent of the new divisions, Yamagata was not a supporter of Terauchi's prime ministership. This became very clear after the cabinet's collapse. Realizing he was facing a potential outburst of public wrath, Yamagata opted for either leaving Saionji on the prime ministerial post or nominating Katsura rather than letting Terauchi take the office.

The plotters' conviction regarding Katsura's support for Terauchi was equally unaccountable. Katsura, engaged at the Imperial Court, briefly attempted to broker an agreement between Uehara and Saionji, but otherwise there were no signs indicating that he would want to risk involvement in any political contrivance, not to mention supporting Terauchi. On the contrary, in his conversation with Yamagata, Katsura openly opposed the idea of Terauchi's nomination.

The question remains open as to why the memorandum's authors made such a critical mistake. One of the explanations may be that they overestimated Terauchi's reputation among the *genrō*. Katsura and Terauchi, both influential army officers from Chōshū, both key figures in the faction, maintained a long-standing professional relation. Terauchi served as army minister in Katsura's first and second administration. Katsura was considered a friend and drinking companion of Terauchi.⁸⁴ Combined with

⁸⁴ Drea, *Japan's Imperial Army*, 104.

the prevailing belief that Terauchi was to be Saionji's successor, also quoted earlier in this article, this may have been the main reason why the plotters took Katsura's support for granted and simply neglected a proper consideration of his actual intentions.

The events of 1912 had another importance, as they demonstrated that the army command was not a united entity, and while the support for the new divisions was common among the officers, not all of them would sacrifice a civilian government to achieve it, and calls for a compromise were heard even from high-rank army officials. Apart from the conspirators, there existed the pro-compromise group concentrated around Utsunomiya Tarō. They acted to alleviate the conflict between Army Minister Uehara and Prime Minister Saionji and mediate an accord between the cabinet and the army, that would postpone the armaments expansion, but allow the army to form the additional divisions without straining the state budget.

While there was no support for giving office to Terauchi among the *genrō*, the public was infuriated, and even some circles within the army voiced disapproval. General Terauchi's chances to succeed to the prime ministerial portfolio at that moment turned out virtually nil. The situation developed into the progressing political crisis that hit the army the most, weakening their position against both the civilian government and the navy.

At the end it should be noted that, in contrast to their expectations, the *genrō*'s decision further escalated the political crisis. Katsura, though not directly implicated in the preceding cabinet's collapse, was highly unpopular among the public. His ill-fated, short-lived third administration was forced to resign only two months later, in February 1913, amidst nationwide protests. Katsura's successor, Yamamoto Gonbee, the first Satsuma politician since 1898 to become prime minister, and the first ever to hail from the navy, waived the requirement for army and navy ministers to be on active duty, mostly as a consequence of the events presented in this article (it was restored in 1936). The plans for the new army divisions were put aside for the time being, and revived by Yamamoto's successor, Ōkuma Shigenobu, only after Japan's entry into World War I.

Memorandum on Issue of Two Additional Infantry Divisions⁸⁵

As the demand for two additional infantry divisions is a vital issue regarding the government's policy, before giving his final opinion, the prime minister is expected to deal with the matter in the following manner.

1. The government intends to follow through on their campaign promises of [fiscal and administrative] reforms to enhance the reputation of the *Seiyūkai* government and strengthen the groundwork for party cabinets. For this reason, they temporarily joined hands with the navy in their plan to increase pressure on the army, suppress the army's demands, and demonstrate the prominence of the *Seiyūkai*.
2. If, due to the army's firm stance, the prime minister is unable to carry out his policies, he is likely to request the emperor's judgment. However, if the verdict differs from his expectations, he is believed to ask the monarch to accept the cabinet's resignation *en masse*, and consequently blame the army for the failure of his administrative reforms, naval armaments expansion, and tax reduction policy, thus complicating the situation of the succeeding government.
3. The prime minister will delay the realization of points 1 and 2 until right before the opening of Imperial Parliament. In case of the cabinet resignation, he will attempt to hinder the formation of the next administration.

The following measures are likely to be taken by prime minister in order to employ the above plan:

1. The prime minister will secretly conduct and finalize negotiations [regarding budget cuts] with any other

⁸⁵ The Japanese text of the memorandum can be found, e.g., in *Terauchi monjo*, 583–86.

ministry, before entering talks with the army ministry and other army-governed institutions: the offices of Governor-General of Taiwan and Korea, and the Kwantung Army.

2. The prime minister will finally attempt to conduct formal negotiations with the army minister but, seeing no possibility of the demands being renounced or postponed, he will increase pressure on army minister during cabinet meetings. Circumstances may force him to call for the cabinet's unity, a veiled suggestion of the army minister's resignation.

3. The prime minister will make a complaint to Field Marshal Yamagata about the army minister's requests that jeopardize the cabinet's policy and bring the administrative reforms, naval armaments expansion, and tax reduction to a halt. He will demand that Yamagata exercise his power as the elder statesman and the top-rank army commander to suppress the issue. He may also appeal to General Katsura's friendship, in an attempt to obtain his advice and help.

As a countermeasure to the above tactics, the army should take the following steps:

1. The army minister should avoid rushing the prime minister into settling the issue of the army's demands. Instead, he should calm the commotion down and wait until prime minister invites him to negotiations.

2. After the negotiations commence, the minister should firmly stand by his demands, claiming the deficiencies in national defense threaten the sheer existence of the state.

3. The army minister should use criticism from other cabinet members as an opportunity to explain to his fellow ministers the disturbing situation in Russia and China, and how it affects the national defense. He should

particularly demonstrate how the defense strategy evolved since Meiji 39 [1906], and how the naval expansion at the expense of the standing army's combat value and its budget would undermine defensive abilities of the state. Even if the prime minister warns about the inevitable collapse of the cabinet, the minister should show no retreat from his stance, claiming the national defense is in direct responsibility of the emperor, and not a matter of army minister's arbitrary decisions.

4. The prime minister may approach Field Marshal Yamagata with a demand to suppress the disobedience of the army. [Yamagata] is bound to refuse, claiming that as an elder statesman he has no capacity to express his private opinions on matters of national defense, and neither can he take any responsibility for relaxing the army's demands as a field marshal, unless asked for an advice by the emperor himself. He may also express his personal displeasure regarding the army's budget cuts and countless flaws in national security they caused, and add that with the army minister being the proper person to discuss the matter, he [Yamagata] is not in a position to openly declare his private views [on this issue]. Even though in friendly relations [with Saionji], General Katsura will also refuse to engage in the debate due to his current position and duties.

5. As soon as he ascertains that the government is going to reject the army's demands, the army minister, accompanied by Chief of the General Staff, should report to the emperor a threat to national security and inform his majesty that the prime minister's claims are unacceptable for him as a person in charge of national defense. They should also request that the emperor consult this matter with the Supreme War Council, due to the potentially grave consequences it may have.

6. Once the idea is brought to the Throne, the preparations to convene the Supreme War Council should be started as early as possible.

The above steps should be discussed in advance with Chief of the General Staff. For the sake of mutual understanding, the councillors should previously arrange a secret meeting with the army minister and Chief of the General Staff to exchange and discuss opinions regarding convening of the Supreme War Council, hear how the affairs have progressed so far and how they are expected to develop from now onward, and understand the gravity of the deficiencies in national defense.

A text of the final resolution summarizing the conference of the Supreme War Council should be drafted in advance, and all the other necessary steps should be taken for the conference to proceed smoothly.

The current situation is not merely an issue of forming new divisions. What the government really attempts is to use it as an opportunity to lay ground for a partisan cabinet, and the plan of the new divisions is just a victim of this circumstance. This is indeed a critical time for our country, and during this decisive moment that will determine whether the Japanese Empire becomes a republic or remains a monarchy, an enormous effort, supported by [our] strong will and close cooperation, will be required.

1. Having met with refusal from Field Marshal Yamagata and General Katsura, the prime minister will have no choice but to inform the monarch that the army's demands obstruct the government's policy and request the emperor's judgment. However, when the emperor consults his decision with Grand Chamberlain Katsura, he should be advised to dismiss [Saionji's claims,] as the government's job is not to bother the new emperor with problems of this sort, but to competently settle a unified defense strategy, and report it to the Throne.

2. Once the prime minister submits the resignation of his cabinet for imperial approval, the emperor should summon the *genrō* to the court to hear their opinions. At this point, General Katsura should speak in favor of sanctioning the resignation and giving General Terauchi an imperial order to organize the next cabinet. With Field Marshals Yamagata and Ōyama's voices of support, and Marquis Inoue's approval, the final decision should be made [in Terauchi's favor], to provide realization of national policy imperatives.

3. After the Conference of Elders, held at the Imperial Court, ends with the conclusion that the imperial order to form the new government should be given to General Terauchi, the *genrō* of no military affiliation (i.e. Marquis Inoue) needs to propose a debate regarding the unity of national defense. This would be a good start for the General Terauchi's term, as it would facilitate the realization of his policy, curb ambitions of the navy, and ensure stability of national defense.

There are signs the prime minister intends to keep the cabinet in power as long as possible. Some might optimistically believe that, even in such situation, whether the army's demands are rejected is not yet determined, but they need to be prepared that the chances [for the new divisions] would be slight. If, nonetheless, the prime minister honestly shows some amicability in the negotiations, [the army] should recognize his good intentions and agree on an extension of time for establishing the new divisions (from six years to eight) in order to ease the expenses burden. Once the goal is achieved, seeking an opportunity to move the completion schedule up to the original date would be a wise strategy for the following years.

**LITERARY LIGATIONS:
THE *UBUME* IN EARLY MONSTROUS
MATERNITY NARRATIVES**

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Introduction

The *ubume* (産女) is a figure of Japanese folklore, once a living woman, who died during either pregnancy or childbirth. After situating this gendered apparition within the broader context of Japanese folklore, I show the literary foundations that paved the way for the first textual reference to an *ubume* that appeared in the *Konjaku monogatari*, a work compiled around 1120. This early example of the *ubume* in literature is explored within its historical context in order to best understand what meanings this maternal figure held for people at that time and if they have changed. These cultural values, and the actions taken to avoid becoming an *ubume* or interacting with one, contributed to a metanarrative that aids in our understanding of the historical experience of women.

Beginning with the mytho-historical *Kojiki* (712) and *Nihon shoki* (720), I contextualize this literature within the historical developments of attitudes towards women, which were heavily influenced by the indigenous traditions associated with Shintō and the spread of Buddhism in Japan. By examining these works, I show that the religious and secular developments of the *ubume* and related figures created a dichotomy of ideologies that continue to both condemn and liberate women in their roles as mothers.

As recently as the 1950s, there were steps taken to avoid a woman becoming an *ubume*, and the practice of separating an unborn fetus from the deceased mother was still being performed.¹ Considering that “before the advent of modern diagnostic techniques and the development of emergency medicine...women of all classes were suffering violent deaths in childbirth and failed pregnancies,”² it is not surprising that certain practices, both

¹ Manami Yasui, “Research Notes: On Burial Customs, Maternal Spirits, and the Fetus in Japan.” *U.S.-Japan Women's Journal* 24 (2003), 110.

² Hank Glassman, “At the Crossroads of Birth and Death: The Blood Pool Hell and Postmortem Fetal Extraction,” in *Death and the Afterlife in*

religious and medical, developed to help individuals and communities cope with this reality. Figures of folklore solidified these anxieties and ideas in narrative form, spreading them from rural to urban spaces, from the elite class to the commoners, beginning with the didactic literature examined in this article.

What is an ubume?

An *ubume* is a phenomenon of Japanese folklore most often categorized as a *yōkai* (妖怪), an ambiguous term which can be translated as ghost or monster. The ideographs used to write “*ubume*” allude to her appearance and the way in which she died: birth-giving (産) and woman (女). Many *yōkai* have been labeled in such a way that denotes their physical characteristics. For example, the *kuchi sake onna*, or “slit-mouthed woman,” (口 *kuchi* meaning mouth, 裂け *sake* meaning slit, and 女 *onna* meaning woman), is the name of another female *yōkai* that literally has a mouth that is disfiguringly torn.

There are two basic narratives of an encounter with this maternal apparition. If the woman’s unborn baby perished with her, the *ubume* will attempt to pass it off to someone (consistently a man) who will care for it. Once taken, the ghostly infant typically either becomes as heavy as a stone or turns into a stone, and the *ubume* disappears. In some cases, the person who agrees to take the child is rewarded with great strength if they are able to continue holding the increasingly heavy baby.

If the woman perished while her baby survived, she is usually referred to as a *kosodate yūrei* (子育て幽霊, child-rearing spirit). The term *yūrei* (幽霊) is most comparable to the ghosts in Western literature and cinema. This apparition will search for food to provide for her living offspring, either by stealing temple offerings or visiting a candy shop night after night. When she is followed by a curious monk or shopkeeper, she will disappear near her grave. The observer will discover that the apparition has been providing sustenance for a living baby, which is then taken in and raised by the living, generally growing up to be a remarkable person, such as a man of great strength or prosperous monk. In one *kosodate yūrei* narrative, villagers find a skeleton of a woman clutching a living baby. The skeleton only releases its

Japanese Buddhism, ed. Jacqueline I. Stone and Mariko Namba Walter (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 180.

grip when a living woman proves that she can properly care for her baby by showing she is lactating.³

Another set of ideographs that are often used interchangeably with 産女 refer to another layer of this figure, the *kokakuchō*, 姑獲鳥, which literally means 姑 mother-in-law, 獲 seize or find, and 鳥 bird. *Kokakuchō* is the Japanese pronunciation of a monster of Chinese legend, the *guhuoniao*. This figure also originates from the ghost of a woman who died during childbirth, but unlike the Japanese *ubume*, which is fairly innocuous, this spirit is malevolent and attempts to steal the children of living women. This figure is not explored in this paper but is important to note as it explains why some depictions of the *ubume* by Japanese authors and artists depict her with birdlike features and may use the 姑獲鳥 set of characters. It also shows that figures like *yōkai* often have multiple layers and inspirations, making them rife with cultural significance. As we will see, the first literary reference to an *ubume* was the inspiration for the first basic narrative.



Figure 1. Tokugawa period (1603–1868) artist Sawaki Sūshi's (1707–1772) rendering of an ubume⁴

³ Michiko Iwasaka and Barre Toelken, *Ghosts and the Japanese: Cultural Experience in Japanese Death Legends* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1994), 64.

⁴ Money L. Hickman, "Views of the Floating World," MFA Bulletin 76 (1978), 33 (accessed May 19, 2019, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4171617>, one time fair usage).

Forming the Metanarrative

Why did these narratives develop, and in what context? Folktales do not just appear out of nowhere, for no reason. As Iwasaka and Toelken point out, "...if the same themes, anxieties, concerns, and values found in a group of legends are also prominently displayed in the daily lives of the people who tell them... these legends offer one of the best possibilities for insight into an ongoing culture."⁵ Indeed, the *ubume* and *kosodate yūrei* still figure into contemporary literature, media, and religious spaces such as the Ubume Kannon Temple in Shizuoka.

Within the context of the ideology of motherhood, the quote from Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, "one is not born a woman, but rather becomes one,"⁶ takes on a particularly potent meaning in Japan; to be a woman is to be a mother. The ideology of motherhood creates pressures for women to have children and stigmatizes non-reproduction. The social norm is for women to have children, with pressures coming from various spheres.⁷ Despite shifts in attitudes towards women's bodies over the course of Japanese history, which can be exemplified by attitudes and actions taken towards figures like the *ubume*, women were still expected to produce children and have consistently been situated within society based on their relationship with men. Figure 2 shows a graph detailing the overlying ideology of motherhood, the underlying factor of the stigmatization of non-reproduction, and the *mélange* of indivisible cultural attitudes and religious beliefs in which the narratives of figures such as the *ubume* are situated. These, in turn, form and inform the metanarrative, or everything that happens surrounding the narratives. In other words, the realm of folklore can offer

⁵ Ibid., 45.

⁶ Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), 301.

⁷ For an in-depth look on this specifically, see Kumiko Nemoto, "Postponed Marriage: Exploring Women's Views of Matrimony and Work in Japan," *Gender and Society* 22/2 (2008): 219–237 (accessed April 4, 2019, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27821634>) and Rebecca L. Richko, "Social and Economic Factors Influencing Japanese Women's Decision about Childbearing in Post-Bubble Japan," Master's thesis, Florida International University, 2016. FIU Electronic Theses and Dissertations (accessed May 19, 2019, <http://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/etd/2451>).

insight into the current reality of gender equality from angles differing from, but not unrelated to, politics or economics.

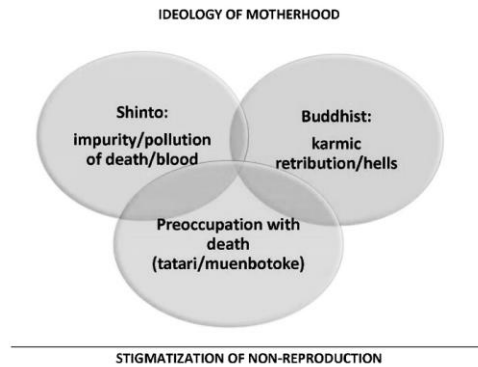


Figure 2. Ideology of motherhood, the stigmatization of non-reproduction, and cultural influences

It is helpful to address briefly the “vivid manifestations of belief, psyche, and imagination”⁸ that contribute to the themes in the chart above. Nature and the belief in the transformation of animals, as well as objects, contributes to an animistic worldview, emphasizing that anything and everything can be “potential abodes for spirits and deities and that they must be treated with care and respect.”⁹ Although there are separate spaces for deities, the living, and the dead, these are incredibly liminal and interconnected. Because of this, interaction with deities and spirits was not seen as completely out of the ordinary. *Tatari*, which originally referred to repercussions from kami, came to be seen as misfortune caused by spirits, who were most often *muenbotoke*, or “restless spirits with ‘no relations’ (*muen*) to ritualize them properly.”¹⁰

⁸ Akira Y. Yamamoto, introduction to *Japanese Ghosts & Demon: Art of the Supernatural*, ed. Stephen Addiss (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1985), 9–12.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Helen Hardacre, *Marketing the Menacing Fetus in Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 2–3.

Another important aspect of the spiritual landscape in Japan is the syncretism of Shintō, Buddhism, and the state. While the power dynamics of these three institutions have continuously shifted throughout different periods in Japanese history, their interconnectedness contributes to a religious atmosphere that categorizes the three domains by an indivisibility. Buddhism was used as an ideological tool of those in power as early as the Asuka period (552–645), as various competing families came to adopt it. In opposition, there were also powerful families that asserted adherence to kami.¹¹ In this respect, the religious atmosphere in Japan can be considered to be made up of various religious *ingredients* and not so much a cookie-cutter religion.

How did these ingredients contribute to the development of the *ubume* narrative? The notions of the impurity of blood hindered living women. The fear of *tatari* and *muenbotoke* put women who died particularly violent or tragic deaths at a disadvantage. Since death as a result of pregnancy, before the advent of modern medicine, occurred regardless of class, the figures of the *ubume* and *kosodate yūrei* developed, in addition to measures taken to avoid becoming one and to avoid interaction with one.

Literary Ligations

What led to the first textual reference to an *ubume*, found in the *Konjaku monogatari*, compiled around 1120? This article explores the literary foundations that paved the way not only for later Japanese literature but the flourishing of the performing arts during the Tokugawa period in which the *ubume* and other folkloric figures proliferated. Throughout this early literature, the feminine was consistently and overtly used to represent chaos while the masculine to represent order. However, the feminine was not always treated with disdain, and many works make it clear that from the fecundity of the feminine comes life-giving benefits. It was from these irresolute attitudes towards the female body that the figure of the *ubume* developed.

The aesthetics of Heian period (794–1185) court literature stressed that “emotions had to be carefully packaged in poetic expression” and the emotions of women were often “expressed metaphorically” with demons. The “didactic lesson” of such a metaphor warned women not to show “rage

¹¹ William E. Deal and Brian Ruppert, *A Cultural History of Japanese Buddhism* (West Sussex, UK: Wiley, 2015), 28–29.

and jealousy (lest they turn into demons) and men against pursuing affairs with an unknown woman (lest she turn out to be a cannibalistic demon).¹² This trend echoes the stories found in the preceding Nara period (710–794) *Kojiki*¹³ and *Nihon shoki*¹⁴ in that it shows the man to be more innocent and the woman to be demonic, sometimes literally, and again emphasizes the themes of order (male) and chaos (female). While in some cases, as in the story of a pregnant mother facing an oni in the *Konjaku monogatari* discussed below, “...it is undeniable that the tales simultaneously were influenced by and contributed to the growing demonization of women and their bodies from the Heian period...” onward.¹⁵ The overlying anxiety related to the Buddhist concept of *mappō*, or the notion that the further in time from the death of the Gautama Buddha the more difficult it is for a person to be able to achieve salvation, made the lessons held in such literature all the more important.

Early Inklings of Defining the Ideal Female Gender Model

Before discussing the first textual reference to the *ubume*, found in the *Konjaku monogatari*, the largest compilation of *setsuwa*, or doctrinal tales, it is necessary to examine briefly the literary foundation in which this text appeared, beginning with the *Nihon shoki*, or *Chronicles of Japan*, compiled in 720.

Because the transmission of Buddhism to Japan was “intimately connected with struggles over the consolidation of political power,” it is not surprising that the “imperial command” had the *Nihon shoki* compiled in a time when various clans were all vying to legitimize their claims to power.¹⁶ While Deal and Ruppert point out that the *Nihon shoki*, as the “official” account of the transmission of Buddhism into Japan, is “retrodictive,” it is still important because it stressed the materiality of Buddhism (such as sutras)

¹² Barbara R. Ambros, *Women in Japanese Religions* (New York: NYU Press, 2015), 60–61.

¹³ Donald L. Philippi, *Kojiki* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968) (accessed May 6, 2019, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt183pkqk>).

¹⁴ W.G. Aston, *Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest of Times to A.D. 697* (Rutland, VT: Tuttle Publishing, 1972).

¹⁵ Ambros, *Women in Japanese Religions*, 60–61.

¹⁶ Deal and Ruppert, *A Cultural History of Japanese Buddhism*, 13–31.

and treated Buddhism itself as an object that was to be used by those in power.¹⁷

In other words, this was the beginning of the control of the state over religious practices and ideologies that were eventually emulated by the majority. The *Nihon shoki* was written to be an ideological collar and leash. If Buddhism was indeed such a tool, we can see how easily the non-elites would adopt the practices that the elites adopted, such as reading and copying sutras for deceased family members. Beginning in the Nara period (710–794), the state began setting forth rules and regulations for monastics. While these did not initially single out females, they were influenced by “Confucian values of loyalty, fidelity, and filiality,” which place women in an inferior position to men. Ambros stresses that during this time, the more severe notions of female defilement and pollution were not present, and did not take firm root until the Heian period (794–1185).¹⁸ Still, the *Nihon shoki* contains the notion of karmic retribution, as opposed to *tatari* (punishment from kami) and although it does not yet necessarily single out women and their various transgressions, there are stories that foreshadow the themes of the literature in which the *ubume* was included. Before turning to the first compilation of *setsuwa* tales, it is helpful to note one such story from the *Kojiki*, compiled shortly before the *Nihon shoki*; the creation myth of the Japanese island and its people. The tale involves a pair of deities, Izanami (female) and Izanagi (male). Izanami discovers that her body is insufficient, while Izanagi discovers that his “is formed to excess,” and inserts this part of himself into her to procreate. However, because Izanami speaks before Izanagi, their child is “malformed.”¹⁹ The version found in the *Nihon shoki*, while not as damning for Izanami, still depicts femininity as “dark, yielding, and destructive.”²⁰

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ambros, *Women in Japanese Religions*, 45–47.

¹⁹ Ibid., 27. Interestingly, they send the child off into the ocean, not unlike some of the practices of *mabiki*, or infanticide, practiced by individuals who for various reasons did not feel that they had the means to raise a child. In some cases, this was seen “less as a desperate act in the face of poverty than as a form of family planning.” Thomas C Smith, Robert Y. Eng, and Robert T. Lundy, *Nakahara: Family Farming and Population in a Japanese Village, 1717–1830* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1977), 61.

²⁰ Ibid., 28.

Particularly pertinent to the formation of the *ubume* trope is the ending to the tale found in both the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki* versions. Izanami dies after giving birth, and although she is not referred to as an *ubume*, in death she vows to wreak havoc by taking “1,000 lives daily,” while “Izanagi counters that he will ensure the birth of 1,500 daily.” As Ambros points out, Izanagi, the male, represents order, while Izanami, the female, represents chaos. While it would be overly simplistic to impose this story on gender relations of actual living people, it still embodies the ambivalent attitudes of purity and the duality of the female body as both polluted and fecund.²¹ Hardacre also points out the following:

...within this relation of *gender complementarity*, the male should take the initiative, and the female should yield and assent. When those conditions are met, their union is successful, but when the female usurps the male prerogatives, deformities or incomplete creations are the result. This construction assumes that the female is incomplete without the male, and that female initiative lacking male guidance is doomed to failure.²²

In other words, this story lays out the ideal male/female relationship dynamic. Again, it should be stressed that the mythologies contained in these works do not necessarily reflect the beliefs and actions of the people living at the time of their compilation. However, in them we can see the seeds of the patriarchy in which eventually the *ubume* would become such a threat to as the inverse of what an ideal woman should be: a mother.

Setsuwa

Setsuwa, written as 説話 (the ideographs for explanation and tale), is a literary genre distinct from the earlier works of “mythological nature”²³ like the *Nihon shoki* mentioned above. They can be considered anecdotes,

²¹ Ibid., 29–30.

²² Helen Hardacre, *Shinto: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 52.

²³ Kōzō Kurosawa, “Myths and Tale Literature,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 9:2/3 (1982): 115–125 (accessed April 4, 2019, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30233943>).

“defined as the narration of an individual event, or a series of events.”²⁴ In other words, the potency of *setsuwa* derives from their connection to our world, not the world of gods, although many do include trips to hell, such as chapter nine of the *Konjaku monogatari*, or miraculous tales, such as those found in chapters sixteen and seventeen of *Konjaku monogatari*. Because the “life of any *setsuwa* is derived from its interest,” the stories combine elements that are “out of the ordinary” with real individuals, real people, and real places.²⁵ As Davidsen points out in regards to the efficacy of the supernatural to afford religious belief, “a text must present those supernatural beings as real within the story-world; to afford ritual interaction with said beings, a text must include model rituals and inscribe the reader into the narrative; to afford belief in the historicity of the narrated events, a text must anchor the story-world in the actual world.”²⁶

Setsuwa, which developed as “the earliest attempt in Japanese Buddhism to find a popular literary genre capable of expressing complex aspects of abstract doctrine in concrete, sensually verifiable, and compelling narrative terms,” were “also linked intimately to performance, to the public and popular venue of the sermon.” This was extremely important in that it allowed them to “transcend class boundaries”²⁷ in a time when only the elites could read and write. Due to this performative nature, this genre also helped pave the way for the development of “pictorial preaching, known as *etoki*,” popularized in medieval Japan and still performed today.²⁸

²⁴ Ury describes *Konjaku* as “an anecdote depicting a world,” and indeed it covers “all three countries of the known world, all provinces of Japan, and the activities of persons of every class of society.” Marian Ury, *Tales of Times Now Past* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies, 1979): 3–10.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Markus Altena Davidsen, “Fiction and Religion: How Narratives About the Supernatural Inspire Religious Belief – Introducing the Thematic Issue,” *Religion* 46/4 (2016): 489–499.

²⁷ Charlotte Eubanks, “Illustrating the Mind: ‘Faulty Memory’ *Setsuwa* and the Decorative Sutras of Late Classical and Early Medieval Japan,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 36/2 (2009): 210–211 (accessed April 4, 2019, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40660966>).

²⁸ Ikumi Kaminishi, *Explaining Pictures: Buddhist Propaganda and Etoki Storytelling in Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 3.

Nihon ryōiki, the first *setsuwa* collection and predecessor of the *Konjaku*, is short for “*Nihonkoku genpo zen’aku ryōiki* (日本国現報善惡靈異記)” or “Miraculous Stories of the Reward of Good and Evil from the Country of Japan.”²⁹ Its pages are full of karmic retribution, not just in the afterlife but in this life as well. One of the recurring themes is “immediate” penalty or reward, stressing the “different ways in which the law of karmic causality is manifested.” Like many of the stories in the *Konjaku* (which may have derived inspiration from this earlier work) the *Nihon ryōiki* is an attempt to spread Buddhist doctrine to the “lower level of society.”³⁰ Although many of the stories are set prior to the Heian period, the idea of mappō still underlined the urgency of the events. Stylistic of *setsuwa*, the stories in the *Nihon ryōiki* are short, “plot and action driven,” and arranged in a decisive manner, in this case chronological.³¹

How are women treated in the *Nihon ryōiki*? Raechel Dumas addresses the contradictory unease with which the female body is, “figured as an object of simultaneous desire and disgust.”³² The *ubume* does not appear in this text but many of the narratives and their themes mirror those found in the *Konjaku* and profoundly affected the perception of not only the female form but *giri* (duty), karmic retribution, and attitudes towards family and the dead. Because the stories found in this text are “thought to have been transmitted outside of religious sites and among listeners residing within both trade cities and peripheral communities,”³³ it offers invaluable insight into the cultural atmosphere at that time beyond what the state demanded be included in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*.

Tale thirteen of volume one offers a story about how a mother should act. It features an incredibly pious woman who bore seven children and, despite being poor, cleans herself every day and provides clothing and food for her offspring. One day, she flies up to Heaven. The ending remark

²⁹ Haruo Shirane, introduction to *Record of Miraculous Events in Japan*, trans. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 4.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 1–3.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 5.

³² Raechel Dumas, “Historicizing Japan’s Abject Femininity: Reading Women’s Bodies in “*Nihon Ryōiki*,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 40/2 (2013): 247–248 (accessed April 4, 2019, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23595655>).

³³ *Ibid.*, 250.

of the story is, “Even though you live the life of a layperson, if you sweep the garden with a pure heart, you will gain five kinds of merit.”³⁴ This story not only demonstrates immediate karmic reward for her actions, but also ties in the notion of purity by stressing cleanliness.

Other tales, about one-fifth of them, address “female transgression.”³⁵ Story nine in volume three details the account of a man who travels to hell where his wife was suffering after dying in childbirth. He learns from King Yama (the king of hell) that “she has been condemned to suffer for six years. She has already spent three years here and has three years to go.”³⁶ His wife requested that he suffer with her for the remainder of her sentence, but when the man agrees to copy the *Lotus Sutra*, his wife and King Yama agree to let him go back to the world of the living. This is an early example portraying the idea of a family member atoning for a loved one who is suffering in hell. Like the tale of Izanami and Izanagi, however, the female in this story suffers while the male does not.

Konjaku – The First Textual Reference Explained

The first textual reference to an *ubume* is found in the *Konjaku monogatari shū* (今昔物語集) “*Tales of Times Now Past*,” compiled during the Heian period, most likely around 1120.³⁷ “*Monogatari*, literally ‘a telling,’ is a word for tales or narratives of any kind; *shū* means collection or anthology; *konjaku* is the Sino-Japanese pronunciation for the two Chinese characters in the formulaic phrase with which each tale opens.”³⁸ This is often translated as “at a time now past” (as in Marian Ury’s translation) or “in olden times.”³⁹ Although the compiler, or compilers, are unknown, Ury points out that “...the motive was religious and behind the compilation was a very practical intention: to provide a handbook of stories which preachers might use to enliven their sermons,”⁴⁰ and indeed the *Konjaku* is the largest collection of *setsuwa* tales.

³⁴ Watson, *Record of Miraculous Events in Japan*, 33–34.

³⁵ Dumas, “Historicizing Japan’s Abject Femininity,” 261.

³⁶ Watson, *Record of Miraculous Events in Japan*, 146–148.

³⁷ From here on referred to as *Konjaku*. Marian Ury, *Tales of Times Now Past* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies, 1993), 1.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Naoshi Koriyama and Bruce Allen, *Japanese Tales from Times Past* (Rutland, VT: Tuttle Publishing, 2015), 26.

⁴⁰ Ury, *Tales of Times Now Past*, 2.

Despite the lacunae within the text itself—some sections are missing or lost while some information has been intentionally left out—much can be derived from the tales with which we are left.⁴¹ Because the *Konjaku* pulls inspiration from Indian, Chinese, and Japanese sources, it is not an easy task to identify which tales were from the oral tradition; this must be done through process of elimination. If a story resembles a Jataka tale (narratives of the Buddha's past lives) or a story from a sutra, we can deduce that it was not told orally amongst Japanese villagers. On the other hand, if a story does not have a precedent in literature from India or China, it is safe to assume that it was most likely collected from, or inspired by, an oral tradition. In other words, “motifs, incidents, or tales that do not derive from Buddhist literature can be taken as Japanese, and as part of their ancient conceptual framework.”⁴²

Another clue is in the language used in the tales. Robert Smith points out that in the tales from India, the phrases “‘in a previous rebirth,’ ‘the way of merit,’ ‘the acts of devout monks,’ ‘the power of the Lotus,’” or “‘the true teaching,’” are prevalent while in the Japanese tales there is a focus on this world and ordinary people: “‘grandsons are now living,’ ‘the province was well content,’ ‘all blamed the wife,’ ‘the fortunate man.’” In other words, “the Indian religious tales continually look before and after this life, while the Japanese tales speak of supernatural occurrences of everyday life.”⁴³ Instead of focusing on the *next* life, they focus on *this* life.

Though not untypical of this time, Ury stresses another aspect of the *Konjaku*: the “magpie tendency”⁴⁴ with which the stories were collected. However, this does not mean that the compilation lacks order. On the contrary, “[w]ithin each chapter the stories are meticulously arranged. As a rule, they appear in pairs joined by a common theme; in addition, each

⁴¹ William Ritchie Wilson, “The Way of the Bow and Arrow. The Japanese Warrior in Konjaku Monogatari,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 28/2 (1973): 177–233.

⁴² Robert Smith, “On Certain Tales of the ‘Konjaku Monogatari’ as Reflections of Japanese Folk Religion,” *Asian Folklore Studies* 25 (1966): 221–233.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ury, *Tales of Times Now Past*, 2.

member of the pair will have associations with the other story adjacent to it through some common motif.”⁴⁵ The chapters are arranged as follows:

CHAPTERS ONE TO FIVE: Tales of India, beginning
with the founding of Buddhism
CHAPTERS SIX TO TEN: Tales of China, beginning to
the establishment of Buddhism
CHAPTERS ELEVEN TO TWENTY: Tales of Buddhism
in Japan
CHAPTERS TWENTY-ONE TO THIRTY: Secular tales
of Japan.

The “secular” designation is a bit of a misnomer, as even within the stories in these chapters it is clear that the “compiler’s stance... is determinedly didactic.”⁴⁶

The story in which the *ubume* makes her first textual appearance is found in chapter twenty-seven, “tales of malevolent supernatural creatures.” According to Kunisaki Fumimaro, “the chapters of secular tales of Japan in turn reiterate the Buddhist ones in overall arrangement,” and therefore the story of the *ubume*, tale 43 in chapter twenty-seven, falls within “instruction... paralleling chapters 19–20.” Chapters nineteen and twenty consist of “tales of religious conversion; strange tales illustrating the principle of karma” and “a few tales of a kind of goblin called *tengu*; tales of visits to hell; tales of karmic retribution in this present life,”⁴⁷ respectively.

In terms of chapter twenty-seven, it would be helpful to consider the perspectives on supernatural creatures in *setsuwa* collections laid out by Mori Masato that the compiler utilized.⁴⁸ Editorial refers to the actual collecting of the tales and the previously discussed order they were placed in, while selection refers to meaning assigned to the tales “in order to fulfill the editorial plan of the collection.” Narrative, Mori explains, is “the concrete choice of words to clarify the function and meaning of each individual tale.” Mori uses this structure “to clarify the meaning assigned to supernatural

⁴⁵ Ibid., 6.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 2–4.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 4–5.

⁴⁸ Masato Mori, “‘Konjaku Monogatari-shū’: Supernatural Creatures and Order,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 9:2/3 (1982), 147 (accessed April 4, 2019, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30233945>).

creatures during the Heian period,”⁴⁹ which will be discussed now before turning to the story of an *ubume*. Or, rather, the story of the man who meets an *ubume*.

When examining the supernatural world of *yōkai*, *yūrei*, and *kami*, some consistency does emerge, just as with the natural world. As Mori points out, there are three types of “rules” that supernatural creatures in the *Konjaku* tend to adhere to: time, location, and the more thematic “as opponents of order.”⁵⁰ This “order” refers to the world of humans.

Time and location are incredibly important when navigating the world of *yōkai*. During the Heian period, supernatural creatures were perceived as tangible threats. For example, the court employed Onmyōji, or “practitioners of Onmyōdō, a complex system of divination and geomancy based on principles of yin and yang,”⁵¹ to determine when the *hyakkiyagyō* would be appearing in the capital. *Hyakkiyagyō*, written in Japanese as 百鬼夜行, refers to a night procession of one hundred demons, the character for demon being 鬼, or *oni*. *Oni* are another category of supernatural entities in Japan, and during this period (pre-1185), the word was used as an umbrella term for “any sort of nasty and threatening creature.”⁵² The key here is “night,” and as Mori points out, “the reader of Volume XXVII [of *Konjaku*] will soon be struck by the fact that supernatural creatures are active primarily during particular set time periods... Nighttime seems indeed to have been the time period made especially for these creatures. Nighttime was clearly a special time, one exempt from order the controlled by humans during the daylight hours.”⁵³

Furthermore, these creatures “lived, or appeared, at certain fixed locations.” Hence, the compiler of the *Konjaku* “added a detailed geographical explanation of places considered haunted” since “spirits controlled such locations, and it was necessary for humans to learn that they should not invade them.” Interestingly, these places “frequently were bridges

⁴⁹ Ibid., 147–148.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 156.

⁵¹ Foster, *The Book of Yōkai*, 15.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Mori, “*Konjaku Monogatari-shū*,” 148.

or riverbanks,”⁵⁴ and, as we will see, the *ubume* appears in a river.⁵⁵ They also often appear near gates, which, when considering that a gate, a bridge, or a river marks a boundary or separates one place from another, they have the same function. This also explains why these creatures can be seen as opposing order, as they occupy liminal spaces close to, but not always under, the control of humans.⁵⁶ In a way, the meticulous order in which the stories are compiled is a means of control, or “bringing light into the darkness of confusion and providing order.”⁵⁷



Figure 3. Toriyama Sekien's *ubume*.⁵⁸

Where does the *ubume* fit within this chaos and order? First, let us look at the story itself, which appears in the 2015 English translations by Naoshi Koriyama and Bruce Allen as “Taira no Suetake, a Retainer of

⁵⁴ Ibid., 149–151.

⁵⁵ When the *ubume* was later depicted in Edo Kabuki plays, the playwright that most frequently invoked her image consistently placed her in or near water: Shimazaki, “Figures of the *Ubume* and the Breakdown of Theater Tradition,” 218.

⁵⁶ Mori, “Konjaku Monogatari-shū,” 155.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 163.

⁵⁸ Shimazaki, “Figures of the *Ubume* and the Breakdown of Theater Tradition,” 203.

Yorimitsu, Comes across a Woman with a Baby.”⁵⁹ The tale begins as follows:

In olden times, Minamoto no Yorimitsu was the governor of Mino Province. One time, he went off to a certain county in the province. One night, a number of samurai were gathered in their quarters, engaging in idle talk. Someone said, “I hear a certain woman has been showing up with a newborn baby at a place called Watari in this province. When someone goes across the river, the woman appears with a crying baby and requests of him, ‘Hold this baby. Won’t you hold this baby, please?’” Hearing this, one of the men said, “Is there anyone here brave enough to go across that river to Watari right now?” A man named Taira no Suetake replied, “I could go there even at this very moment.” Some other men said, “No, you might be able to fight a thousand enemies, but you won’t be able to cross that river now.” But the man insisted, “It’ll be nothing for me to cross that river.” The others chided, “No matter how brave you may be, you’ll never be able to get across that river.”

The men place wagers. Suetake is to prove he has crossed the river by placing an arrow on the other side of it but three of the men follow him in secret:

It was a moonless night, near the end of September. They could hear Suetake wading through the river with loud splashing. Presently, he reached the other side. The three men listened.... Then Suetake must have quickly pulled out an arrow and struck it into the ground, for soon he seemed to be wading his way back. Straining their ears,

⁵⁹ Interestingly, in their translation, they do not call this woman an *ubume*. However, the title of the story in Japanese is 頼光郎等、平季武、値産女語、which Reider translates as “Yorimitsu no rōtō Taira no Suetake *ubume* ni au koto” (Yorimitsu’s retainer, Taira no Suetake, meets an *ubume*), Reider, *Seven Demon Stories from Medieval Japan* (Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 2016), 34.

they could hear a woman's voice calling out to him from the middle of the river. "Hold this baby," she said, "Won't you hold this baby, please?" And then they also heard the squealing voice of a baby. At that time, an awful, fishy smell drifted over the river to their side. Although the three men were together, they were terribly frightened. Just imagining the fear of the man wading across the river gave them the chills.

Suetake then takes the baby, but the woman demands it back and tries to follow him. He refuses and goes back to meet up with the other men. He attempts to show them the baby but finds in its place just tree leaves. Still, the men that had followed him confirm that he did indeed cross the river. When they try to give him the wagers he has rightfully won, he refuses to take them for completing such a simple task. The story ends, "Those who heard the story were deeply impressed and praised him. Some said that the woman with the newborn baby was a fox trying to bewitch humans, while others said that she was the ghost of a woman who had died in childbirth. Such then is the story as it has been handed down to us."⁶⁰

First, we should discuss the characters that are specifically named. Minamoto no Yorimitsu⁶¹ was governor of Mino, which at the time was "the highest official of the provincial bureaucracy... appointed from the capital."⁶² Yorimitsu actually appears in multiple stories within and beyond *Konjaku* and is associated with another yōkai, the *tsuchigumo*, or earth spider.⁶³ Taira no Suetake, his retainer, was also a living person, and accompanied Yorimitsu on perhaps what is his most famous adventure: the defeat of Shuten dōji, an oni that had been causing harm in the capital.⁶⁴

What would life have been like for these men? Wilson points out that the *Konjaku* "was compiled at a time of social change. In the capital, the system of aristocratic rule, which had been in its glory a hundred years earlier,

⁶⁰ Koriyama and Allen, *Japanese Tales from Times Past*, 206–208.

⁶¹ Also known as Minamoto no Raikō.

⁶² Wilson, "The Way of the Bow and Arrow," 184.

⁶³ Noriko T. Reider, "Tsuchigumo Sōshi: The Emergence of a Shape-Shifting Killer Female Spider," *Asian Ethnology* 72/1 (2013): 55–83 (accessed April 4, 2019, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41958916>).

⁶⁴ Foster, *The Book of Yōkai*, 41.

was under strain, while in the provinces the military families which by the end of the century would provide the de facto rulers of Japan were gathering strength.” Within this climate, “the warriors of the *Konjaku* tales were armed men living on the land on the fringes of an expanding agricultural economy,” and throughout the collection, “the general attitude toward warriors is one of admiration.”⁶⁵ As mentioned, the *ubume* falls within chapter twenty-seven. Chapter twenty-five deals exclusively with warriors, but the theme of honor is “central” to most of the tales that deal with warriors. Suetake exemplifies this honorable ideal by his bravery and selflessness in refusing to take the wagers he had rightfully won.

Next, we should consider the other tales in chapter twenty-seven that deal with similar themes, characters, and locations. As mentioned, the layout of the *Konjaku* was painstakingly meticulous. Stories feed into one another, characters reappear, and plots overlap. From them, we can discern attitudes that help explain the significance of the *ubume*. Story 15 of chapter twenty-seven, titled “How a Woman Who Was Bearing a Child Went to South Yamashina, Encountered an Oni, and Escaped,” deals with an “intelligent woman” who “found herself pregnant without a proper husband.” With no one to help her, she decides to find a secluded place to give birth and abandon the child. This suggests that to have no relatives, and to become pregnant without first being married was a source of anxiety. She was “ashamed to confess her condition,”⁶⁶ and hence felt the need to hide it.

After venturing off into the woods, she comes across a secluded estate occupied by an old woman who offers to help her. Believing that the Buddha “had come to her aid,” she “had an easy delivery,” and decides not to abandon the baby once she sees it is a “beautiful little boy.” The old woman says to her, “Old people like me who live in countrified places like this don’t need to worry about taboos. Why don’t you stay here for seven days, until your defilement is over,”⁶⁷ suggesting that customs were already in place to separate pregnant women due to their impurities.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Wilson, “The Way of the Bow and Arrow,” 184–189.

⁶⁶ Ury, *Tales of Times Now Past*, 161.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 162.

⁶⁸ This theme is discussed at length in the next chapter. Interestingly, the last parturition hut used for childbirth “was in use until the 1950s.” Hardacre, *Marketing the Menacing*, 24.

The woman's happiness is short lived, however, as she overhears the old woman exclaim, while looking at the baby, "only a mouthful, but my how delicious!"⁶⁹ The woman and the baby escape and the story concludes with, "Now think: ancient places of that sort always have supernatural beings living in them... only an oni could have looked at an infant and said that. This shows that you should never go into such places alone."⁷⁰

Unlike the *ubume*, barring the fact that she may well have been a fox simply playing a trick, the mother in this story ultimately is able to fulfil her duties to her child. It also seems that the compiler was suggesting that to think violent thoughts towards an infant would be demonic, although the main point is to stay clear of old places. This message is explicit, while in the *ubume* story the actions of a character (Suetake) are the main point.

Story thirteen of chapter twenty-seven follows the construction and plot of the *ubume* tale, with a much more violent ending. A group of men also make a wager to test their bravery and, as with the *ubume* narrative, it opens with them discussing a location, in this instance a bridge, that people have been avoiding.⁷¹ The emotions of the warrior who agrees to cross the bridge are stated more explicitly than Suetake's. Perhaps the storyteller wished to create a sense of unease to foreshadow the grim ending. He sees a woman on the bridge but reasons it must be a demon and rides his horse right past her, which greatly angers the demon.

He is able to escape, but his troubles are not over. "Sinister things began to occur at his house," and the man consults an Onmyōji who tells him to seclude himself on a specific time and day.⁷² He shuts himself in but when his younger brother comes knocking with news of their mother's death, the man lets him in. The wife of the man later hears the two brothers fighting and her husband demands she get his sword. However, she hesitates, not knowing the younger brother is actually the demon, and in that instant he bites off the head of the older brother. A cautionary summation after this grisly scene states, "and so we can see what happens when a woman interferes and tries to act too clever."⁷³

⁶⁹ Ury, *Tales of Times Now Past*, 162.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 163.

⁷¹ Koriyama and Allen, *Japanese Tales from Times Past*, 192.

⁷² Ibid., 193.

⁷³ Ibid., 194.

These three examples of female abjection and ineptitude were originally told and retold by men. Men promulgated even the first two, which deal with the immensely personal female experience of birth, with the *ubume* narrative taking it a step further by including the tragedy of death as a result of maternity.

At this time, historically, women were still “engaged in devotional practices as nuns, pilgrims, and patrons,” but “marriage and inheritance patterns shaped women’s religious choices and opportunities.”⁷⁴ In short, husbands and sons held more power than wives and daughters, and attitudes towards the female body, exemplified by the Heian period literature, suggest that the laws in place to protect women from offenses such as rape were geared more towards assuring “patrilineal authority” and not so much to protect women.

While individuals were becoming increasingly concerned with their afterlife, living women were being excluded from certain religious spaces, such as the Shingon sect’s Kōyasan, the monastic center of Shingon, and the Tendai sect’s Hieizan, the monastic center for the Tendai sect. At the same time, “belief in blood pollution (through menstruation and childbirth) slowly began to gain currency among nobility and in monastic circles alongside the Confucian concept of women’s Three Obediences and the Buddhist notion of women’s Five Obstructions. Given the proliferation of such beliefs, the notion that women were innately flawed and sinful spread.”⁷⁵ *Setsuwa* were one way in which the laity came to be familiar with such ideologies.

Summary

In the *Konjaku monogatari* the *ubume* is used as a terrifying female figure in opposition to warrior (male) order. She is associated with a specific location, typical of the supernatural in *setsuwa*. However, there is a stronger focus on the men who encounter her. In this instance, a warrior bravely seeks out the spot she is known to haunt and comes away unscathed. Despite the fact that the emphasis is on Suetake’s bravery and honorable act of refusing to take the wagers he won, this text indicates that it was already known that should a woman die while pregnant, she could potentially become an *ubume*, although perhaps not viewed as quite a grave a sin as it would later come to be.

⁷⁴ Ambros, *Women in Japanese Religions*, 56–59.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 66–69.

If this story was used to enliven sermons, then we can infer that monks were promulgating the notion that to die during childbirth would lead to the horrible fate of becoming an *ubume* into a society that had already absorbed the idea of karmic retribution and the defilement of blood and fear of the dangers the improper care for a dead mother and infant posed, whether the baby survived or perished with the mother. If the story was also meant to be an attempt to bring order to the supernatural world so prominent in the Heian period, it would seem to both warn of the Watari area, but also imply that if one is brave and honorable, one can escape an encounter with an *ubume*.

Conclusion

Retracing the Ubume

The *ubume* began her journey into the fixed pantheon of *yōkai* around 1120 when she was confined to the pages of the *Konjaku monogatari*. However, this would not have been enough to warrant the repetition in which she was invoked during the arts of the Tokugawa period, nor would it have been enough to spur the development of rituals performed for a natural occurrence that should have resulted in life that instead results in death. Entire areas developed out of these practices, such as the Shōsenji temple and town surrounding it, or more obviously, the town of Ubume in Shizuoka, home to the Ubume Kannon Temple.

By tracing the chronology of such a figure, it becomes clear that the *ubume* narrative informed, and was formed by, the metanarrative. In other words, the general attitudes towards the dead, mainly notions of *tatari* (spirit attacks) and the anxieties of *muenbotoke* (spirits with no relations), merged with the attitudes towards women and the female body, creating a specific afterlife for women who died either during pregnancy or childbirth. These were further enforced by the notions of impurity (specifically of blood), karmic retribution (immediate and after death), and specific hells for certain transgressions.

It becomes a bit of a “chicken or the egg” dilemma when trying to determine exactly what came first. Based on the language of the *Konjaku*, we know that the chapter in which the *ubume* appears consisted of stories most likely derived from Japanese vernacular culture. Put another way, by process of elimination we can make an educated guess that that chapter did not derive inspiration from previous histories or sutras. We also know that in order for *setsuwa* to function (mainly, to make more easily accessible the teachings of Buddhism), they had to be relatable to the audience. From this, we can assume that whoever compiled the *Konjaku* did not make up the figure of the

ubume, regardless of whether or not people believed it was actually a fox playing tricks or a woman who died during pregnancy.

Whatever the case, by the time Banryō included the illustration of the *ubume* passing her baby off to Suetake in his edited Tokugawa version of the *Konjaku*, and removed the part that she may have been a fox, her figure was already recognizable. I argue that the religious ramifications surrounding maternity contributed to the popularity of the *ubume* trope, which became so popular that by the 1800s one author lamented that she was invoked too often. In an illustration meant to be comedic, she was drawn with a ghostly husband who proclaims, “You! You’re just a female ghost, but you’re an incredibly immodest one! You’ve been popping up totally randomly... and as a result no one takes us ghosts seriously anymore.”

But ghosts do not pop up randomly. In the past, they were real figures that inspired fear and action to be taken in this life to prevent others from becoming one and from interacting with one.

Further Research

During the Nanbokuchō period (1336–1392), a wooden statue of a seated Jizō Bodhisattva was carved. In 1678, to memorialize his dead son, “a merchant by the name of Obiya,” put two of his sons’ books inside the statue, to ensure “the boy’s connection to Jizō in the afterworld.”⁷⁶ Even though the books inside were discovered in 1915, they were “largely disregarded until 1980,” when a scholar insisted they be reexamined.⁷⁷ Dated between the years 1667–1677, the books give scholars valuable insight into the “reading material that would have been deemed appropriate for merchant-class boys” of that time. In their case, they included “monsters, anthropomorphic animals, silly jokes, and violence,” and in one tale “two men who, in parallel dreams, ran away from the same blood-stained *ubume* 産女 (the ghost of a woman who died in childbirth).”⁷⁸

What this example shows is that new discoveries always await. We may one day find yet an older extent copy of the *Ketsubonkyō* or a textual reference to an *ubume* that predates the *Konjaku monogatari* compilation.

⁷⁶ R. Keller Kimbrough, “Bloody Hell!: Reading Boys’ Books in Seventeenth-Century Japan,” *Asian Ethnology* 74/1 (2015), 112 (accessed April 4, 2019, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43610654>).

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 112.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 118.

The crisis Japan is facing in terms of its aging population and low-birth rate is not going to be alleviated any time soon, which means gender, and more specifically, maternity, will continue to be a contentious issue in contemporary Japan. Certainly, within this climate, the ideology of motherhood and the stigmatization of non-reproduction persist. As Foster points out, “we humans have created monsters over which we have no control.”⁷⁹ Yōkai, and to an extent more overtly religious figures such as Kannon, cannot easily answer or stand in for the problems of the twenty-first century. However, when examined empirically, they offer insight into how those problems arose.

⁷⁹ Foster, *The Book of Yōkai*, 243–245.

**‘OUR ISLANDS ARE BEING VIOLATED
ONE AFTER THE OTHER’:
EMPEROR HIROHITO’S PRAYERFUL REPORTS TO HIS
IMPERIAL ANCESTORS, OCTOBER 1937 – AUGUST 1945**

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Editor’s Note: Because of the intricate linguistic material included in this article, some of the font sizes are unusually large to preserve the integrity of the original material.

On September 9, 2014, Japan’s Imperial Household Agency released *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku* (True Documents of the Shōwa Emperor, 昭和天皇実録). The official day-by-day account of the Shōwa Emperor’s life and times, *Jitsuroku* totals roughly 12,000 pages and sixty-one (unpublished) volumes. Twenty-four years in the compiling, it draws upon some 3,000 separate documentary source materials.¹ Many of those source materials,

¹ This article cites the unpublished volumes of *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku*, which were available to researchers in the Imperial Household Agency’s Archives and Mausolea Department between September and November 2014. Readers who do not have access to them should consult the published volumes. Publication by Tokyo Shoseki is an ongoing process that began in 2015; it takes place each March and September and is scheduled for completion in 2019. (One published volume incorporates numerous unpublished volumes). Published volumes at time of writing include Kunaichō [Imperial Household Agency], ed., *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku, dai-1: ji Meiji 34-nen itaru Taishō 2-nen* (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 2015); idem., ed., *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku, dai-2: ji Taishō 3-nen itaru Taishō 9-nen* (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 2015); idem., ed., *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku, dai-3: ji Taishō 10-nen itaru Taishō 12-nen* (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 2015); idem., ed., *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku, dai-4: ji Taishō 13-nen itaru Shōwa 2-nen* (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 2015); idem., ed., *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku, dai-5: ji Shōwa 3-nen itaru Shōwa 6-nen* (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 2016); idem., ed., *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku, dai-6: ji Shōwa 7-nen itaru Shōwa 10-nen* (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 2016); idem., ed., *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku, dai-7: ji Shōwa 11-nen itaru Shōwa 14-nen* (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 2016); idem., ed., *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku, dai-8: ji Shōwa 15-nen itaru Shōwa 17-nen* (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 2016); idem., ed., *Shōwa Tennō*

such as the diary of wartime Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal Kido Kōichi, have been available to researchers for decades.² Yet, at least a few dozens of the cited materials, including for example the diary and papers of wartime Grand Chamberlain Hyakutake Saburō, remain otherwise inaccessible to researchers.³ Herein lies *Jitsuroku*'s principal point of scholarly value, for its in-depth use of source materials means it is a goldmine of hitherto-unknown historical facts centering on the Shōwa Emperor.⁴

jitsuroku, dai-9: ji Shōwa 18-nen itaru Shōwa 20-nen (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 2016); idem., ed., *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku, dai-10: ji Shōwa 21-nen itaru Shōwa 24-nen* (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 2017); idem., ed., *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku, dai-11: ji Shōwa 25-nen itaru Shōwa 29-nen* (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 2017); idem., ed., *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku, dai-12: ji Shōwa 30-nen itaru Shōwa 34-nen* (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 2017).

² Kido Kōichi Kenkyūkai, eds., *Kido kōichi nikki* [Diary], 2 vols. (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1966).

³ Regarding the significance of the Hyakutake papers and diaries, see Chadani Seiichi, 'Sensō no jidai to tennō' [The war and the emperor], in Furukawa Tadahisa, Chadani Seiichi, Mori Yōhei, eds., *'Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku' kōgi: shōgai to jidai o yomihodoku* [Lectures about 'Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku': deciphering his life and times] (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2015), 52–77.

⁴ The outpouring of scholarly analysis of *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku* is testament to its scholarly value. See Handō Kazutoshi, Hosaka Masayasu, Mikuriya Takashi, and Isoda Michifumi, *'Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku' no nazo o hodoku* [Solving the Mysteries of 'Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku'] (Tokyo: Bunshun Shinsho, 2015); Hosaka Masayasu, *'Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku' sono omote to ura* ['Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku' on and beneath the surface], 2 vols. (Tokyo: Mainichi Shimbunsha, 2015); Toyoshita Narahiko, *Shōwa Tennō no sengo nihon – kenpō anpo taisei ni itaru michi* [The Shōwa Emperor's postwar Japan: the road leading to the constitution and the security system] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2015); Kurihara Toshio, *'Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku' to sensō* ['Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku' and the war] (Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppansha, 2015); Katsuoka Kanji, *Shōwa Tennō no inori to daitōa sensō: 'Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku' o yomihodoku* [The Shōwa Emperor's prayers and the Greater East Asian War: deciphering 'Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku'] (Tokyo: Meiseisha, 2015); Handō Kazutoshi, *'Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku' ni miru kaisen to shūsen* [The Opening and Ending of the War as Seen in 'Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku'] (Tokyo:

This study draws from *Jitsuroku* a select few of these hitherto-unknown facts. It examines, in their entirety, those prayerful reports reproduced in *Jitsuroku*, which the emperor delivered to his Imperial ancestors between the outbreak of Japan's war in China on July 7, 1937 and the end of World War II on August 15, 1945. *Jitsuroku* reveals that the emperor delivered at least forty-six prayerful reports during the war. Of the forty-six wartime prayers which it mentions, *Jitsuroku* reproduces the texts of five.

Month	1937 (post-Jul. 7)	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945 (until Aug. 15)
Jan.	--	Jan. 2	Jan. 3	Jan. 3	Jan. 3	Jan. 3	Jan. 3	Jan. 3	
Feb.	--		Feb. 11	Feb. 9	Feb. 11	Feb. 11	Feb. 11	Feb. 11	Feb. 11
Mar.	--				Mar. 21	Mar. 21		Mar. 21	
Apr.	--	Apr. 3	Apr. 3		Apr. 3	Apr. 3	Apr. 3	Apr. 3	
May	--								
Jun.	--								
Jul.						Jul. 30			Jul. 30*
Aug.									Aug. 2*
Sept.	Sept. 23	Sept. 24	Sept. 24		Sept. 23		Sept. 24	Sept. 23	--
Oct.	Oct. 17*	Oct. 17	Oct. 17	Oct. 17	Oct. 17	Oct. 17	Oct. 17	Oct. 17	--
Nov.					Nov. 23				--
Dec.	Dec. 25		Dec. 25	Dec. 25	Dec. 9* & Dec. 25	Dec. 12*		Dec. 25	--

Table 1.1 Prayers mentioned in *Jitsuroku*

Iwanami Panfuretto, 2015); Hara Takeshi, '*Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku*' o yomu [Reading 'Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku'] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2015); Otabe Yūji, *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku* hyōkai: hirohito wa ika ni shite Shōwa Tennō ni natta ka [Evaluating 'Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku': How Did Hirohito Become the Shōwa Emperor] (Tokyo: Keibunsha, 2015); Furukawa Tadahisa, Chadani Seiichi, Mori Yōhei, eds., '*Shōwa tennō jitsuroku*' kōgi: shōgai to jidai o yomihodoku [Lectures about 'Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku': Deciphering His Life and Rimes] (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2015).

It is precisely these five prayerful reports, which this article discusses: one from October 17, 1937; another from December 9, 1941; two separate prayers from December 12, 1942; and a fifth prayer which was delivered on July 30, 1945 and repeated three days later. Table 1.1 provides a comprehensive list of all forty-six prayers mentioned in *Jitsuroku*; starred items are the five prayers recorded in *Jitsuroku* and reproduced and translated in this essay. By delving into the emperor's prayerful sincerity, this essay purports to provide insights into the emperor's innermost thoughts at key moments in Japan's wartime history.

It is perhaps necessary to add a few words about the prayers themselves. There are three kinds of prayers reproduced. The first, known as 'otsugebumi' (御告文), involved the emperor praying in either the Imperial palace's ancestral shrine or Mie Prefecture's Ise Grand Shrine. The second, known as 'kotowakete' (辞別), were delivered by the emperor during the course of a longer 'otsugebumi' prayer. In the third, known as 'gosaimon' (御祭文), the emperor dispatched an imperial messenger to a shrine to pray on his behalf. Whichever form his prayers took, the Shōwa Emperor self-consciously patterned his prayers after a set of ancient Shinto ritual prayers known as *norito*. His prayers, like the original *norito*, employ an archaic, hybrid Sino-Japanese written form, called *semmyōtai*, which includes particles and inflections written small, in phonogram orthography.⁵ This study reproduces the prayers in four forms, including (i) the *semmyōtai* form in which they appear in *Jitsuroku*, (ii) in modern-day Japanese, (iii) in Roman lettering, or *romaji*, and (iv) in English-language translation. It also provides a brief headnote for each prayer. The headnotes are designed to enable readers to contextualize the prayers.

⁵ For translations of the *norito*, the oldest of which date back to the seventh and eighth centuries CE, see Donald L. Philippi, *Norito: A Translation of the Ancient Japanese Ritual Prayers* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990); and Felicia Gressitt Bock, *Engi-Shiki: Procedures of the Engi Era*, (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1972), 65–105. For a brief discussion of *semmyōtai*, see Edwin A. Cranston, 'Asuka and Nara Culture: Literacy, Literature, and Music,' in Delmer Brown, ed., *The Cambridge History of Japan: Volume 1, Ancient Japan* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 485–486.

Prayer 1: *Kotowakete*, October 17, 1937⁶

The emperor delivered this prayer approximately three months after the opening of Sino-Japanese hostilities on July 7, 1937. Days after the outbreak of fighting, on July 11th, Army Minister Sugiyama Hajime and Army Chief of Staff Prince Kan'in Kotohito informed the emperor that peace should be obtainable within weeks. The emperor nonetheless expressed his misgivings. He was concerned lest the army had taken up the fight against the wrong enemy. He fretted about the army's preparedness "if the worst should happen and if the Soviet Union used military force [even as the fighting continued in China]."⁷ On July 31, an attentive Emperor Hirohito listened as the Army General Staff's Operations Bureau Chief Major General Ishiwara Kanji spoke of the "urgent need to ... withdraw troops, as soon as possible, by means of diplomatic negotiation."⁸ Yet, when the fighting spread to Shanghai in early August, the emperor concluded that "the situation could not be helped," and that it was "difficult to bring the situation under control by means of diplomacy."⁹ Even so, the emperor by mid-August was voicing his concern with "the army's strategy" and spoke of the "dangers of expanding the incident to China in its entirety."¹⁰ It was against this backdrop that the emperor delivered the following *kotowakete* prayer in the Imperial palace's ancestral shrine (*kashidokoro*).

Document 1.1: *Semmyōtai*

辭別^{氣氏}白^{左久}朕中華民國止心^平協^{世氏}東亞乃安^久穩^爾
 共^爾榮^{伎事}曾^{平古}夜^爾日^爾思奉^{礼然}此^平彼得悟良^泥
 加^爾加久^爾事^平橫^{布留賀}隨^爾今次乃事變^曾起^{利氣}慨^伎
 事^{爾奈母}故此乃由^平告奉^{利氏}祈請奉^{良波久}海^爾陸^爾空^爾身^母

⁶ *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku*, vol. 24, 146. Daily entry, October 17, 1937.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 90. Daily entry, July 11, 1937. See also Terasaki Hidenari and Mariko Terasaki Miller, *Shōwa Tennō dokuhakuroku: Terasaki Hidenari goyōgakari nikki* [The Shōwa Emperor's Monologue: Imperial Consultant Terasaki Hidenari's Diary] (Tokyo: Bungei Shunjū, 1991), 35–36.

⁸ *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku*, vol. 24, 103. Daily entry, July 31, 1937.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 108. Daily entry, August 12, 1937.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 24, 114. Daily entry, August 18, 1937.

棚^良知^受勤^美勞^久我^賀軍人^平守^給比^幸給^比彼^乃国^{平志氏}
 深^久省^美疾^久悟^{良志}給^比一^速東^平亜^無窮^爾平和^{米志}
 給^倍止^美恐^母恐^母白^須

Document 1.2: Modern Japanese

辞^{こと}別^わけて白^{あわ}さく朕^{わが}中^{ちゅう}華^か民^{みん}国^{こく}と心^{こころ}を協^{あわ}せて東
 亜^あの安^{やす}く^{おだい}穩^{えん}に共^{とも}に^{さかえ}榮^{さか}む事^{こと}をこそ夜^よに日^ひに
 思^{おも}奉^{もつ}れ然^{しか}に此^こを彼^か得^え悟^ごらで加^かに加^か久^{きう}に
 事^{こと}を横^{よこ}ふるが随^{したが}に今^{いま}次^じの事^{こと}変^{へん}ぞ起^{おこ}りける
 慨^うき事^{こと}になも故^ゆ此^この由^{よし}を告^つ奉^{ほう}りて祈^{いの}請^{ねが}奉^{ほう}
 らはく海^{うみ}に陸^{りく}に空^{そら}に身^みも棚^{たか}知^しらず勤^{いそ}み勞^{らう}ぐ
 我^{わが}が軍^{いくさ}人^{ひと}を守^{まも}り給^{たま}ひ幸^{さい}給^{たま}ひて彼^かの国^{くに}をして深^{ふか}
 く省^{しやう}み疾^{いそ}く悟^ごらしめ給^{たま}ひて一^{いち}速^{そく}く東^{とう}亜^あを無^む
 窮^{きゆう}に平^{へい}和^わめしめ給^{たま}へと恐^{おそ}み恐^{おそ}みも白^{はく}す

Document 1.3: Roman Lettering

kotowakete mōsaku chin chūkaminokoku to kokoro o awasete tōa no yasuku
 odai ni tomo ni sakaemu koto o koso yoru ni hi ni omoitatematsure sa ni kore
 o kare tokusatora de ka ni kaku ni koto o kama furu ga mama ni konji no jihen
 zo okorikeru uretaki koto ni na mo yue kono yoshi o tsugematsurite kisei
 matsurahaku umi ni kuga ni sora ni karada mo tanashirazu isoshimi negu
 waga ikusabito o mamoritamahi sakaetamahite kare no kuni o shite fukaku
 kaerimi toku satorashimetamaheto ichihayaku tōa o tokoshie ni
 tairakekunago meshime tamahite to kashikomi kashikomi mo mōsu

Document 1.4: English Translation

We take up a new theme and humbly say: We offer our thoughts, night and day, about cooperating with the Republic of China for East Asia's tranquility and prosperity. We are unable to have them understand this, and although We are prepared to do much, this incident has occurred. It is deplorable. Accordingly, We offer this prayerful report. Our toiling servicemen on the sea, on the land, and in the air are oblivious of life and limb. Bestow protection and blessings on them. As for the other nation, grant that it may, on deep reflection, soon understand. Also, grant without delay eternal peace and tranquility to East Asia. We humbly speak these words.

Document 2: *Otsugebumi*, December 9, 1941¹¹

Japan opened war against the United States and Britain with dramatic suddenness on December 7, 1941. *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku* provides ample evidence of the emperor's concerns and frustrations in the weeks, months, and years between the opening of the undeclared war in China and the war against the Anglo-American powers. The emperor was particularly exercised when the cabinet of Konoe Fumimaro in September 1940 concluded a military alliance with Nazi Germany. He opposed the alliance precisely because it raised the possibility of war against the Anglo-American powers. To cite but one example of the emperor's disdain for the alliance with Germany: the emperor in July 1939 lashed out at Army Minister Itagaki Seishirō for his advocacy of a military alliance with Nazi Germany. The emperor said unequivocally that such an alliance was "against his will," and he criticized the army for its "maneuvering" to that end. He ended the audience with a stinging assessment of Itagaki's "competence."¹²

Despite his concerns, the emperor fulfilled his responsibilities as commander-in-chief once war began. For example, on December 7, 1941, the emperor awoke at 2:50 a.m. – some forty minutes before his navy launched the Pearl Harbor attack – and dressed in full naval uniform.¹³ *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku* sheds no light on why the emperor should have woken so early and why he should have dressed in naval uniform, but it seems eminently plausible to suggest that his actions were connected to his navy's Pearl Harbor attack. In this regard, historian Yamada Akira offers a threefold

¹¹ Ibid., vol. 29, 143. Daily entry, December 9, 1941.

¹² Ibid., vol. 26, 85. Daily entry, July 5, 1939.

¹³ Ibid., vol. 29, 137. Daily entry, December 8, 1941.

suggestion: the emperor may have been involved in some ritual or ceremony relating to the attack, the emperor may have had an audience with a naval officer and received an eleventh-hour report on the attack, or the emperor may well have prayed for victory.¹⁴

Its silence on the matter of Hirohito's early-morning December 7 activities notwithstanding, *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku* includes the full text of the prayerful report which Hirohito delivered on December 9, 1941. Scholars have long known that the emperor prayed to his ancestors on this date. According to Kido's diary (which was published in 1966) a "special festival" was held on December 9, 1941 in the Imperial palace's ancestral shrine (*kashidokoro*), so that the emperor could "report on war against the United States and Britain."¹⁵ Until now, however, the contents of that message remained unknown.

Document 2.1: *Semmyōtai*

掛卷^母恐^伎賢所^乃大前^爾恐^美恐^母白^左朕天津日嗣
知食^{志々}以来皇祖^平始^米御世御世^乃聖謨^乃隨^爾四
海皆同胞^止弥睦^毘睦^爾弥親^{志美}親^{麻志米}夙夜心^平竭
志身^平致^{志々}由久利奈^久去^志十二年支那^乃事變起
利奴故一速^久大東亞^平和^{米牟}關係淺^{加良}国々^爾事謀
志其^乃甲斐無^{伎乃美}阿多奈^布影年^爾月^爾深^{利奴}猶
母有^利有^止手段^平尽^{志々}日^爾異^爾風荒^美浪高^久遂^爾
我国^左危殆^{久古}成^{爾氣}斯^久有^礼甚遺憾^{志久}有^礼已^{牟倍}有
良事^{止奈}思^保食^志今度米国^止英国^止對^比戰^平開^久事^止

¹⁴ Yamada Akira, 'Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku no gunjishiteki bunseki' [Military History Analysis of Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku], *Sundai Shigaku* 156 (February 2016): 114–115.

¹⁵ *Kido nikki*, vol. 2, 933. Diary entry, December 9, 1941.

成^{利爾}是^平以^氏大前^平齋^伎祭^利此由^平告奉^留事^平平
^{良氣}安^久^{良氣}聞^志食^爾海^爾陸^爾空^爾射向^布敵等^平速^爾伐^平
^{良氣}皇御国乃大御稜威^平四表八方^爾伊照^利徹^{良志}給^米
^比無窮^爾天下^平調^{波志}恐^美恐^美母白^須

Document 2.2: Modern Japanese

かけまく^{かしこ} 掛巻も 恐^{もう}き賢所の大前に恐み恐みも白さ
^{すみみおや}
く朕天津日嗣知食ししより以来皇祖を始
^{おおみはかりごと} ^{はらから}
め御世御世の 聖 謨 の随に四海皆同胞と
^{むつ} ^{あけくれ}
弥睦びに睦び弥親しみに親ましめむと夙夜
^{ゆくりな}
心を竭し身を致ししに由久利奈くも去し十
二年支那の事変起りぬ故一速く大東亜を和
めむと関係浅からぬ国々に事謀りしに其の
^{ほとほと}
甲斐無きのみかは阿多奈ふ影年に月に深り
ぬれども猶もと有りと有る手段を尽ししも
^{ほとほと}
日に異に風荒み浪高く遂に我国さへ危 殆^{ほとほと}
くこそは成にけれ斯くし有れば甚遺憾しく
は有れど已むべくも有らぬ事となも思ぼし
食し今度米国と英国とに對ひて戦を開く事

と成りにき是を以て大前を斎き祭りて故此
 由を告奉る事を平らげく安らげく聞食して
 海に陸に空に射向ふ敵等を速に伐平らげ皇
 やか御国の大御稜威を四表八方に伊照り徹
 らしめ給ひて無窮に天下を調はしめ給へと
 恐み恐みも白す

Document 2.3: Roman Lettering

*kakemakumo kashikoki kashikodokoro no ō mae ni kashikomi kashikomi mo
 mōsaku are amatsu hitsugi shiroshime shishi yori irai sumemioya o hajime
 miyomiyo no ōmihakarigoto no manima nishikai harakara to iya mutsubi ni
 mutsubi iya oyashimi ni oyashimashimemu to akekure kokoro o tsukushi mi
 o itashishi ni yukurinaku mo inishi tōamarifutatose shina no jihen okorinu
 kare ichihayaku daitōa o nagomemu to kakawari asakaranu kuniguni ni koto
 hakari shi ni sono kai nakinomi ka wa hotohofu kage toshi ni tsuki ni
 fukamarinuredomo naomo to ari to aru sube o ozukushi shite mo hi ni ke ni
 susami name takaku tsui ni wagakunisa e hotohotoku koso ha nari ni kere
 kakushi areba hanahada urewashiku ha aredo yamu beku mo aranu koto to
 na mo omoboshimeshi kotabi beikoku to eikoku to ni mukahite ikusa o hiraku
 koto to nariniki koko o mote ō mae o itsuki matsuri te kono yoshi o
 tsugematsurukoto o tairageku yasurageku kikoshimeshite umi ni kuga ni sora
 ni imukafu adadomo o sumiyaka ni uchitairage sumeramikuni no ōmitsu o
 yomoyamo ni iteri tōrashime tamahite tokoshie ni amenoshita o
 totonohashimetamaheto kashikomi kashikomi mo mōsu*

Document 2.4: English Translation

Humbly, We approach the palace sanctuary in prayer. With awe and reverence, We humbly speak these words: Ever since We ascended the Imperial throne, we have night and day devoted my body and soul to the Imperial reign's founding ideals of universal brotherhood, harmony, and friendship. Yet, in 1937, the incident in China occurred unexpectedly. To pacify Greater East Asia quickly, Japan has consulted with closely connected nations. Their untrustworthiness has grown with the passage of time. Although we've taken all possible steps, the winds get rougher and the waves

have become taller with each passing day and now endanger Our nation. This is awfully lamentable, yet it is not something I think we can avoid. Now, it has come to pass that we have opened hostilities against the United States and Britain. We dedicate this to You and we worship You. We report this to You. Govern this world so as to bring it peace and tranquility. On the sea, on the land, and in the air, rain blows on the enemy. Bring peace promptly. Grant that the Imperial nation's august virtues shine out in all directions and grant the world eternal harmony. We humbly speak these words.

Document 3: *Otsugebumi*, December 12, 1942 (Delivered at the Outer Shrine at Ise Grand Shrine)¹⁶

Japanese forces enjoyed stunning successes in the early stages of the war against the Anglo-American powers. Southeast Asia, in its virtual entirety, quickly fell within Japan's so-called Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku* offers little on the emperor's reaction to these battlefield successes. It is nonetheless well known that he was considerably exercised by Japan's initial victories. For example, Kido's diary records a gleeful emperor commenting on March 9, 1942, on Japan's forces having recorded victories almost "too quickly."¹⁷ *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku* does not shed much light on the question as to when the emperor recognized Japan's war fortunes as having turned; it nonetheless records an interesting conversation between the emperor and Kido on December 1, 1942. The emperor spoke of Japan having "unavoidably taken up arms" against the United States and Britain. He spoke also of his desire to thank the gods for Japan's subsequent battlefield victories. There remained, moreover, much for which he wanted to pray, including his own wartime leadership, East Asian "stability," and "world peace." Perhaps most importantly, he wanted to pray for "final victory."¹⁸ He delivered just such a prayer (reproduced below) on December 12, at Ise Grand Shrine (in Mie Prefecture).

Document 3.1: *Semmyōtai*

掛卷^母恐^伎 豐受大御神^乃 大前^爾 恐^美 恐^美 白^左 去年^久
 乃 此月^乃 八日已^{牟倍} 無^久 米^母 国^久 及 英^久 国^母 爾^比 對^氏 戰^平 開^{牟志}
 与利

¹⁶ *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku*, vol. 30, 216–217. Daily entry, December 12, 1942.

¹⁷ *Kido Nikki*, vol. 2, 949. Diary entry, March 9, 1942.

¹⁸ *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku*, vol. 30, 209. Daily entry, December 1, 1942.

朕^賀軍人^波海^爾陸^爾空^爾身^母棚知^良猛^毘進^美敵^乃抛^波
 島々^礼国々^留平次々^爾戡定^{氣志乃美加波}日^爾月^爾和^志惠^{麻氏}或^波
 大海原^爾寇^布艦船^平擊破^利追攘^{比氏}偉^{自倍}戰果^平擧^{氣志波}
 專^良広^伎厚^伎恩頼^{止奈母}思^{保志}食^須故此由^平告^氣奉^利辱^美
 奉^留為^氏今日^乃此日^礼代^乃御幣帛奉^利齋祭^利拝^美
 奉^留状^平宇豆奈比給^比殊^爾心中深^久祈請奉^{良久波}
 今^志此類^母有^{良奴}大戰^乃最中由々^志時運^爾有^礼国^波
 内愈^利擧^一心^爾撓^{麻氏}勵^美直道^爾聖謨^平張弘^米成遂^給
 給^比愈^{古留}皇軍^乃行手^平弥益々^爾守幸^波給^比速^美
 敵等^平事向^{氣志}給^比天壤^乃共隆^{由留}皇国^乃大御稜^威
 威^平八紘^爾伊照^利輝^{加志}給^比無窮^爾天下^平調^波給^止
 白^須事^平聞食^世恐^美恐^母白^須

Document 3.2: Modern Japanese

掛けまく^{かしこ} 掛巻も 恐^{もう}きも 恐き 豊受大御神の大前に恐
 み 恐みも 白さく 去年の此月の八日已むべく
 も 無く 米国及英国に対ひて戦を開きしより
 朕が軍人は海に陸に空に身も棚知らず猛び
 進みて敵の抛れる島々国々を次々に戡定^{うちさだむ}
 けしのみかは日に月に和し恵まひ或は大海

原に^{あだ}寇ふ艦船を撃破り追攘^{いみ}ひて偉じき戦果
 を挙げしは専ら広き厚き恩頼となも思ぼし
 食す故此由を告げ奉り^{はずかし}辱み奉ると為て今
 日の此日礼代の御幣帛奉りて斎祭り拝み奉
 る状を宇豆奈比給ひ殊に心中深く祈請奉ら
 くは今し此類も有らぬ大戦の最中由々志き
 時運にし有れば国内愈^{こぞ}挙り一心に^{たお}撓まず励
 みて直道に聖謨を張弘め成遂げしめ給ひ愈
 広ぐる皇軍の行手を弥益々に守幸はへ給ひ
 て速けく敵等を事向けしめ給ひ天壤の共隆
 ゆる皇国の大御稜威を八紘に伊照り輝かし
 給ひて無窮に天下を調はしめ給へと白す事
 を聞食せと恐み恐みも白す

Document 3.3: Roman Lettering

Kakemakumo kashikokimo kashikoki toyouke daijingū no ō mae ni kashikomi
 kashikomi mo mōsaku kozo no kono tsuki no yōka yamubekumonaku beikoku
 mata eikoku ni mukahite ikusa o hiraki shiyori are ga ikusabito wa umi ni
 kuga ni sora ni karada mo tanashirazu takebi susumite ada no yoreru
 shimashima kuniguni o tsugitusgi ni uchisadamuke shinomi ka wa hi ni tuski
 ni nagoshimegumahi aru ha ō unabara ni adafu ikusabune o uchiyaburi
 oiharahite imijiki isao o agheshi wa mohara hiroki atsuki mitamanofuyu
 tonamo omoboshimesu kare kono yoshi o tsugematsuri hazukashimi matsuru
 to shite konjitsu no kono hi iyashiro no miteguratate matsurite iwai matsuri
 ogami matsuru sama o uzunahi tamahi koto ni kokoro no uchi fukaku kisei
 matsurakuha imashi kono tagui mo aranu taisen no sanaka yuyushiki jiun

*nishi areba kokunai iyoioyo kozori hitotsukokoro ni taomazu hagemite
naokimichi ni ōmihakarigoto o harihirome nashitogeshime tamahi iyoioyo
hirogoru sumeramiikusa no yukute o iya masumasu ni mamorisaki hae
tamahite sumiyakeku adadomo o kotomukeshime tamahi ametsuchi no
tomoni sakayuru sumekuni no ōmitsu o amenoshita ni iteri kagayakashime
tamahite tokoshie ni amenoshita o totonohashime tatahe to mōsu koto o
kikoshimese to kashikomi kashikomi mo mōsu*

Document 3.4: English Translation

Humbly, I approach the Outer Shrine in prayer. With awe and reverence, I humbly speak these words: Last year, on the eighth day of this month, We unavoidably opened hostilities against the United States and Britain. Oblivious of life and limb, Our servicemen on the sea, on the land, and in the air drive onward. Not only do they suppress disorder in enemy islands and lands, they pacify them. They defeat and drive away enemy ships on the open seas. They deliver excellent battlefield results. This is all entirely due to the Gods' divine grace. With thanks, We report this to You, and We make this offering today. Acquiesce in Our prayers of worship. In particular, We pray from deep in Our heart, at this critical juncture in the midst of this incomparable great war, that You might grant ever greater domestic unity. We also pray for the realization of Your plans. Bestow protection and blessings along the way of Our ever-spreading Imperial forces. Grant that they may quickly confront their enemies. Grant also that the Imperial nation's august virtues, which grace heaven and earth, shine across the world's eight corners. Grant the world eternal harmony. We humbly speak these words.

Document 4: *Otsugebumi*, December 12, 1942 (Delivered at the Inner Shrine at Ise Grand Shrine)¹⁹

This is the second of two prayerful reports which the emperor delivered on December 12, 1942. The two prayerful reports are for the most part identical: the emperor delivered the first at Ise Grand Shrine's Outer Shrine, and the second only moments later at the Inner Shrine. The emperor addressed this second prayerful report directly to the Sun Goddess Amaterasu (who is believed to dwell in Ise Grand Shrine's Inner Shrine). It is interesting to note that he specifically attributed all Japan's battlefield victories to her support.

¹⁹ Ibid., vol. 30, 217–218. Daily entry, December 12, 1942.

Document 4.1: Semmyōtai

掛卷^母恐^伎天照坐皇大御神^乃大前^爾恐^美恐^美白^左
 去年^乃此月^乃八日^已^{牟倍}無^久米^母国^久及^久英国^爾對^比戰^平
 開^{牟志}朕^{与利}賀^良軍人^波海^爾陸^爾空^爾身^母棚知^良猛^受毘^美進^氏
 敵^乃拋^礼島々^留国々^平次々^爾戡^{氣志}定^乃日^美月^{加波}爾^和志
 惠^麻或^氏波^波大海^爾原^寇布^艦船^平擊^利破^追攘^比偉^自戰^倍
 果^平拳^{氣志}專^良皇大御神^乃阿奈々^比給^比扶^氣給^布
 恩^止賴^奈思^保食^須故^此由^平告^氣奉^利辱^美奉^留為^氏今
 日^乃此日^礼代^乃御幣^帛奉^利齋^祭利^美奉^留狀^平宇
 豆^奈比^給比^殊爾^{心中}深^久祈^請奉^良今^志此^類母^有
 良^奴大^戰乃^最中^由々^志伎^時運^志有^波国内^愈舉^利一
 心^爾撓^麻勵^美直^道爾^聖謨^平張^弘米^成遂^{氣志}給^比愈^広
 古^留皇^軍乃^行手^平弥^益々^爾守^幸波^給比^速氣^久敵^等平^事
 向^{氣志}米^給比^天壤^乃共^隆由^留皇^国乃^大御^稜威^平八^紘爾
 伊^照利^輝加^志給^比無^窮爾^天下^平調^波米^給倍^白須^事平^聞
 食^世止^恐美^恐美^白須

Document 4.2: Modern Japanese

かけまく かしこ
 掛卷も 恐 き天照坐皇大御神の大前に恐み
 恐みも白さく去年の此月の八日已むべくも
 無く米国及英国に對ひて戰を開きしより朕

が軍人は海に陸に空に身も棚知らず猛び進
 みて敵の扱れる島々国々を次々に戡定けし^{うちさだ}
 のみかは日に月に和し恵まひ或は大海原に
 寇ふ艦船を撃破り追攘ひて偉じき戦果を挙げ^{あだ}
 げしは専ら皇大御神の阿奈々比給ひ扶け給^{いみ}
 ふ恩頼となも思ぼし食す故此由を告げ奉り
 はずかし
 辱み奉ると為て今日の此日礼代の御幣帛
 奉りて斎祭り拝み奉る状を宇豆奈比給ひ殊
 に心中深く祈請奉らくは今し此類も有らぬ
 大戦の最中由々志き時運にし有れば国内愈
 挙り一心に撓まず^{こぞ}励みて直道に聖謨を張弘^{たお}
 め成遂げしめ給ひ愈広ぐる皇軍の行手を弥
 益々に守幸はへ給ひて速けく敵等を事向け
 しめ給ひ天壤の共隆ゆる皇国の大御稜威を
 八紘に伊照り輝かし給ひて無窮に天下を調
 はしめ給へと白す事を聞食せと恐み恐みも
 白す

Document 4.3: Roman Lettering

Kakemakumo kashikoki amaterashimasusume ō mikami no ō mae ni
 kashikomi kashikomi mo mōsaku kozo no kono tsuki no yōka
 yamubekumonaku beikoku mata eikoku ni mukahite ikusa o hiraki shiyori are
 ga ikusabito wa umi ni kusa ni sora ni karada mo tanashirazu takebi susumite

ada no yoreru shimashima kuniguni o tsugitusgi ni uchisadake shinomi ka wa hi ni tuski ni nagoshimegumahi aru wa ō unabara ni adanafu ikusabune o uchiyaburi oi-harahite imijiki isao o ageshi wa mohara sume ōmikami no ananahi tamahi tasuke tamafu mitamanofuyu to namo omoboshimesu kare kono yoshi o tsugematsuri hazukashimi matsuru to shite konjitsu no kono hi iyashiro no miteguratate matsuete iwai matsuri ogami matsuru sama o uzunahi tamahi koto ni kokoro no uchi fukaku kisei matsuakaha imashi kono tagui mo aranu taisen no sanaka yuyushiki jiun nishi areba kokunai iyoio yokozori hitotsukokoro ni taomazu hagemite naokimichi ni ōmihakarigoto o harihirome nashitogeshime tamahi iyoio hirogoru sumeramiikusa no yukute o iya masumasu ni mamorisaki hae tamahite sumiyakeku adadomo o kotomukeshime tamahi ametsuchi no tomoni sakayuru sumekuni no ōmiitsu o amenoshita ni iteri kagayakashime tamahite tokoshie ni amenoshita o totonohashime tatahe to mōsu koto o kikoshimese to kashikomi kashikomi mo mōsu

Document 4.4: English Translation

Humbly, I approach the Sun Goddess in prayer. With awe and reverence, I humbly speak these words: Last year, on the eighth day of this month, We unavoidably opened hostilities against the United States and Britain. Oblivious of life and limb, Our servicemen on the sea, on the land, and in the air drive onward. Not only do they suppress disorder in enemy islands and lands, they pacify them. They defeat and drive away enemy ships on the open seas. They deliver excellent battlefield results. This is due entirely to the Great Imperial Goddess Amaterasu's support. With thanks, We report this to You and We make this offering today. Acquiesce in Our prayers of worship. In particular, We pray from deep in Our heart, at this critical juncture in the midst of this incomparable great war, that You might grant ever greater domestic unity. We also pray for the realization of Your plans. Bestow protection and blessings along the way of Our ever-spreading Imperial forces. Grant that they may quickly confront their enemies. Grant also that the Imperial nation's august virtues, which grace heaven and earth, shine across the world's eight corners. Grant the world eternal harmony. We humbly speak these words.

Document 5: Gosaimon, July 30, 1945 and August 2, 1945²⁰

The final wartime prayer recorded in *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku* is of particular interest. Its plea for the crushing of Japan's enemies comprises much stronger language than the emperor's earlier wartime prayers (reproduced above). This is more noteworthy because this prayer was delivered only days before Japan's surrender in World War II. This being the case, a critical historian Herbert Bix has cited this prayer and asked rhetorically: "What was [Hirohito] thinking?"²¹

Historian Hara Takeshi has sought to address precisely that question. He suggests that the dispatch of an Imperial messenger to pray for victory at this late hour reflected the desires not of the emperor but of his mother, the Empress Dowager Teimei. Hara argues that the emperor had already concluded the war was lost and therefore saw little point in praying for military victory; conversely, the empress dowager was (like many in the army) adamantly opposed to surrender. Hara also notes that the imperial messenger visited not Ise Grand Shrine (where the Sun Goddess Amaterasu and progenitor of the Imperial line is supposed to reside), but instead Usa Jingū Shrine and Kashiigū Shrine. Hara assigns significance to the latter shrine, which enshrines Queen Jingū (r. ca. 201–269 CE). For one thing, Queen Jingū had, according to Japan's oldest surviving written records, led successful military expeditions against an overseas enemy (the Korean kingdom of Silla). This was a compelling precedent for the Empress Dowager who, in July-August 1945, continued to hope for victory over the United States and its allies. Hara also notes that the Empress Dowager Teimei (when still empress) had traveled to Kashiigū Shrine and composed a poem professing her fidelity to Queen Jingū. To restate Hara's basic argument: this wartime prayer reflects the desires of the Empress Dowager Teimei more closely than it does those of the Shōwa Emperor.²²

²⁰ *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku*, vol. 34, 23. Daily entry, July 30, 1945.

²¹ "Selective History: Hirohito's Chronicles," *Japan Times*, October 11, 2014 (accessed May 15, 2019, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2014/10/11/national/history/selective-history-hirohitos-chronicles/#.WTnq3OuGOUk>).

²² Hara, '*Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku*' o yomu, 150–153.

5.1 *Semmyōtai*

辞別^{氣氏}白^左今^志例^母有^{良奴}大戦^乃最中^{勁敵}倍々^荒
 熾烈^志猖獗^{比氏}帝都^乎始^米国内^乃所々^乎日毎夜毎^爾
 襲^{倍留乃}我^賀島嶼^乎次々^爾侵^志遂^波本土^{平母}寇^{波牟止}勢^{阿利}
 当^爾皇国^乃興廢^爾繫^留甚由々^志戦局^爾有^{礼婆}国内^尽
 一心^爾奮起^知有^{良牟}限^利傾竭^志敵国^乎撃破^利事向^志
 思^{氣志米牟}食^保嚴^志神靈^{弥高}降鑑^志神奈我良明^志
 駿^乎発頭^志給^比速^氣神州^乃禍患^乎禳除^伎聖業^乎成^志
 遂^{氣志}給^倍祈請^世奉^良給^布大御旨^乎聞食^世恐^美恐^母白^須

5.2 *Modern Japanese*

辞別^{ことわ}けて白^{たぐい}さく今^さし例^なも有^{かつよき}らぬ大戦^{ますます}の
 最中^{さかんにはげ}勁敵^{たけりくる}倍々^さ荒^さび熾^さ烈^さしく猖獗^さひて帝
 都^さを始^さめ国内^さの処々^さを日ごと夜ごとに襲^さへ
 るのみかは我が島嶼^さを次々に侵^さし遂^さには本
 土^{まさ}をも寇^さはむとする勢^さあり当^さに皇国^さの興廢^さ
 に繫^さる甚^さ由々^さしき戦局^さにし有^されば国内^さ
 尽^{ことごとく}一心^さに奮起^さち有^さらむ限^{かたむけつく}りを傾^さ竭^さし
 て敵国^{うちやぶ}を撃破^さり事向^さけしめむとなも思^さぼし
 食^{いつく}す嚴^さしき神靈^{ふりてら}弥高^{かんな}に降鑑^がして神奈我良^ら

明駿を発顕し給ひ^{すむや}速^{はらいのぞ}けく神州の禍患を
 禍除き聖業を成遂げしめ給へと祈請奉ら
 せ給ふ大御旨を聞食せと恐み恐みも白す

5.3 Roman Lettering

*Kotowakete mōsaku imashi tagui mo aranu ōmiikusa no sanaka tsuyoki
 masumasu arabi sakannihageshiku takerikuruhite teito o hajime kunuchi no
 shosho o higoto yogoto ni osoheru nomi ka wa waga shimajima o tsugitsugi
 ni okashi tsui ni wa hondo o mo adanahamu to suru ikioi ari masa ni
 sumekuni no kōhai ni kakaru hanahada yuyushiki senkyoku ni shi areba
 kunuchi kotogotoku hitotsukokoro ni furuitachi aramu kagiri o
 katamuketsuku shite adanokuni o uchiyaburi kotomukeshimemu tonamo
 omoboshimesu itsukushiki shinrei iya taka ni furitera shite kannagara meiken
 o hatsugen shi tamahi sumuyakeku shinshū no kakan o harainozoki seigyō o
 nashitogeshimetamahe to kisei tatematsurase tamafu daigyoshi o
 kikoshimese to kashikomi kashikomi mo mōsu*

5.4 English Translation

We take up a new theme and humbly say: In the midst of this unprecedented great war, the fierce rage of Japan's formidable foes increases exponentially. Not only are there attacks day and night on the imperial capital as well as places all across the nation; our islands are being violated one after the other. At last, the momentum is such that the home islands will be invaded. It is an exceedingly grave war situation and Japan's destiny is truly connected. May the nation wholeheartedly rouse itself, and may it move to crush the enemy. Magnificent divine spirit, descend from Your seat on high and manifest Your godly virtues. Grant also accomplishment of the sacred task of the timely elimination of the Land of the Gods' calamities. We offer this prayer, and We ask that You govern in accord with Your purport. We humbly speak these words.

Conclusion

Researchers should find much interest in the prayers reproduced in this article. The language in which these prayers are written provides one point of real interest. The *semmyōtai* in which the emperor's wartime prayers

are written provide tangible evidence of the existence of a sacred or liturgical language used in Japan's Imperial court. In this regard, it might be noted that the emperor's wartime use of this archaic written language is not unlike (to cite but one example) the Catholic Church's reliance on Ecclesiastical Latin. This, then, points to another subject of interest that emerges: the emperor's duties combined the positions of head of the Japanese government and the commander-in-chief of the armed services. He was also responsible, as emperor, for significant religious duties, including frequent prayers to his imperial ancestors. The prayers under examination in this study reveal that he discharged at least this aspect of his religious duties in earnest.

Finally, researchers will also find value in analyzing these prayers in order to shed light on the Shōwa Emperor's innermost thoughts at key moments during World War II. His lament in October 1937 concerning the Chinese Nationalists' refusal to countenance Japan's supposedly peaceful intentions suggests an unwillingness to admit to the belligerence of Japan's Imperial army. Some eight years later, in July-August 1945, the fear he expressed at the forthcoming invasion of the home islands is very nearly palpable. The "sacred decision" for surrender which he delivered two times on August 9 and again on August 14 should come to mind.

The emperor's "sacred decision" came on the heels of both the atomic attacks against Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and Soviet entry into the war against Japan. These twin shocks convinced the emperor that Japan had irretrievably lost the war. They also shook Japan's policymaking processes, making possible the emperor's direct intervention in that process. Over and above the arguments of his military advisers, including War Minister Anami Korechika, Army Chief of Staff Umezu Yoshijirō, and Navy Chief of Staff Toyoda Soemu, Emperor Hirohito chose surrender. His actions in the endgame of war remain the subject of ongoing scholarly debate. Rather than wade into that debate, it might simply be noted on the basis of the emperor's own wartime prayers, that Hirohito himself believed his sacred decision was based firmly on the will of his ancestral gods.

**FOLLOWING THE FOOTSTEPS OF WIND:
SOME REMARKS ON KUKI SHŪZŌ'S
PHILOSOPHY OF AESTHETICS**

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A Traveling Philosopher

Kuki Shūzō 九鬼周造 (1888–1941) is one of the best-known modern Japanese philosophers both in and outside of Japan. In the translation of his essay, “A Reflection on Poetic Spirit,”¹ that follows this article, I contribute to the understanding of his thought by presenting for the first time in English one of his shorter but important later works. Here is a brief introduction to his life and thought.

Kuki's fame is largely based on several factors from his biography. Kuki was born right after a scandal in the highest echelons of the Meiji cultural elite. The affair between his mother Hatsu (a former geisha who had married the baron and diplomat Kuki Ryūichi) and Okakura Tenshin (one of the early protagonists of modern Japanese aesthetics) occurred when Okakura was charged to accompany a pregnant Hatsu from the United States to Japan. This episode casts a particular light on Kuki's intellectual biography. He received the level of education expected from his aristocratic background, but also internalized the ideal of poetic freedom and anti-conformism represented by his second father figure, Okakura. His own life was marked by a long stay in Europe in his thirties (1920–1928), where he went on a quest for intellectual discovery that oscillated from the dry academic world of Neo-Kantianism and early phenomenology to a Paris still full of Baudelairean and Proustian suggestions. During this time, he met some of the protagonists of the German and French philosophical milieu (a remarkable list including Rickert, Husserl, Heidegger, Becker, Bergson and Sartre). Kuki's thought can be summarized through this split between the sensual and the contingent on one side, and the world of theory on the other: a tension that unavoidably brought him towards aesthetics.

Another contribution to Kuki's fame outside of Japan is Heidegger's fond mention of “Count Kuki,” when in reality he was a baron, at the beginning of his conversation with a Japanese in *A Dialogue on Language*: an enviable showcase for the work of a non-European philosopher, despite

¹ *Fūryū ni kansuru ikkōsatsu* 風流に関する一考察 (1937), from KSZ 4:60–82.

the fact that Heidegger ostensibly understood very little of Kuki's philosophy and of his interest in *iki* (いき)². It is true, however, that Kuki's best-known work is his short and fascinating analysis of this "uniquely Japanese" style of erotic play in *The Structure of Iki*, which he began drafting during his stay in Paris and published in 1930, right after his return to Japan.³ In his analysis of *iki*, Kuki goes back to the pleasure quarters of the Edo period (1603–1868) and tries to draw *more geometrico* a figure for the living atmosphere of sensuality, pluck and disillusion permeating the exchanges between libertines and courtesans of the Floating World. It is not hard, however, to notice the preoccupations of a modern, cosmopolitan man in this analysis: it is after diving into difference that Kuki turns back to Japanese culture, describing it with the unavoidably hybrid language of an intellectual and physical traveler.

The Structure of Iki is a work both charming and perplexing: even before its two translations into English, most of the scholarly attention on Kuki focuses on this work.⁴ Michael Marra's engagement with Kuki's poetic activity and his later philosophy of poetics is unique in this effort to broaden the scope.⁵ Kuki's other major theoretical work, his 1936 *The Problem of Contingency* has only been translated into French.⁶ Kuki's own early death in 1941 effectively leaves us to guess the common concerns and the progressively converging direction of the three main strands of his work:

- a) the aesthetic analysis of "ethnic being" begun with *The Structure of Iki*, right after his European stay;
- b) the theoretical work on contingency and existence, occupying him in the mid-1930s;
- c) the works on poetics of the late '30s, collected in the volume *About Literature* a few months after his death.⁷

² Martin Heidegger, *On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter D. Hertz (New York: HarperCollins, 2006). 1–56.

³ *Iki no kōzō* いきの構造, KSZ 1:86.

⁴ H. Nara, trans., Kuki 2004; and Clark, trans., Kuki 1997.

⁵ Micheal Marra, *Kuki Shūzō a Philosopher's Poetry and Poetics* (Honolulu, University of Hawai'i, 2004).

⁶ *Gūzensei no Mondai* 偶然性の問題, KSZ 2; H. Omodaka, trans., Kuki 1966; see however Maraldo 2008 and Botz-Bornstein 2000 on this topic.

⁷ *Bungeiron*, KSZ 4.

By all evidence, these apparently separated lines of research all belong to a unitary philosophical puzzle: Kuki's philosophy needs to be addressed as a whole. More of a few hints in this sense can also be found in the essay on *fūryū*. While much less studied than his other works, even in Japan, Kuki's 1937 essay on "poetic spirit" (*fūryū* 風流) is a necessary tile to understand the evolution of his thought after the masterpiece on contingency and the increasing synthesis of the literary and philosophical in his later work. It also shows his great ability in blending premodern Japanese sources and his cosmopolitan philosophical formation into a powerful and deceptively simple synthesis.

The Aesthetic Category of *Fūryū*

That of *fūryū* 風流 (Ch. *fengliu*) is one of the most ancient aesthetic categories in East Asia. Originally Chinese, it is composed of two characters literally referring to "wind" (風) and "flow" (流). However, the sense of this "poetic spirit," perhaps fittingly and just as wind would, seems to refer to something ungraspable and constantly shifting. Richard J. Lynn offered a list of no less than 12 different meanings of the word *fengliu* in Chinese sources:

- (1) literal meaning, "wind flowing (blowing)";
- (2) a metaphor on the unpredictability of human existence;
- (3) a term for popular customs and mores;
- (4) a term for popular literary/aesthetic traditions;
- (5) an individual literary style;
- (6) a term for "noble," high culture behaviour;
- (7) a term for libertine behaviour associated with *xuanxue* (mysterious learning) and *qingtang* (pure talk) movements;
- (8) combining (6) and (7), referring to elegant, asocial behaviour inspired by the Laozi, Zhuangzi, and Buddhist thought;
- (9) a term for unconventional, "elegant" lifestyles;
- (10) an amalgam of (5), (6), and (9), term for the lifestyle and literary expression of eccentric and elegant aesthetes;
- (11) an amalgamation of (10) with (7) (without *xuanxue* and *qingtang* associations), a term for the heightened appreciation and expression of sensual-aesthetic experience and sensibilities (as in Bai Juyi's poems that celebrate wine, women, and song).

The first five categories of meaning seem to have dropped out by the fifth century, but (7), shed of philosophical connotations, was transformed during the Song dynasty into a term for (12) dissolute, libertine behaviour in general, and it, along with (8), (9), (10), and (11), remain in common use up to the present.⁸

As the two characters 風流 reached Japan, they already brought along with them more than one thousand years of disparate aesthetic connotations. Moreover, while in China these differences were mostly results of a chronological drift, the Japanese *fūryū* seemed to immediately embrace opposite meanings. Two early alternative readings for the characters 風流 are in fact *misao* and *miyabi*, with the first referring to simplicity and moral purity, and the second to the formal elegance and sensuality of the court.⁹ Later senses of *fūryū*, too, ostensibly keep playing this dialectic tension between opposite ideals. Already in the Heian age, *fūryū* was used to refer to the refinement of Chinese-style poetry and to the spiritual charm permeating an actual landscape: in other words, it expressed both natural and artificial beauty, connecting to classical terms of Chinese aesthetics like *yūgen* (幽玄), or to Japanese notions like *okashimi* (可笑しみ) and *omoshiroshi* (面白し). Later cases of *fūryū* are the extravagant luxurious aesthetics of *basara* (馬佐良) and *kasa* (過差) and the threadbare simplicity of *wabi* (侘び) and *sabi* (寂) emerging from tea culture, which repurposed in an aesthetic context the spiritual aloofness of Daoist and Buddhist eccentrics.

This sense of tension between contradictory aesthetic stances is perfectly incarnated in the biography of the two paradigmatic examples of *fūryū* in Japanese history: the Zen monk and poet Ikkyū Sōjun 一休宗純 (1394–1481) and the *haikai* master Matsuo Bashō 松尾芭蕉 (1644–1694). Ikkyū's *fūryū* is the irresistible flow of sexual desire and “mad poetry” that lets him break free from monastic rules and realize his original form of

⁸ John R. Lynn, “The Range of Meanings of Fengliu in Early Chinese Texts” abstract for the Association for Asian Studies conference, panel *Defining Refinement: The Aesthetic of Fūryū in Japanese Intellectual and Popular Culture*, 2000 (accessed March 2, 2019, <http://aas2.asian-studies.org/absts/2000abst/Japan/J-91.htm>).

⁹ Okazaki Yoshie, *Fūryū no shisō* 風流の思想, 2 vol. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1947), 48–65.

transcendence in the world: as Qiu observes, Ikkyū's *fūryū* is an "aesthetic of unconventionality...which to the orthodox point of view, is crazy and eccentric."¹⁰ Bashō's case is different. While the sexual sense of *fūryū* becomes gradually preeminent in the erotically charged world of *ukiyo*, often with parodic references to the refined sensuality of ancient courts, it would be hard to find this sense of *fūryū* in Bashō's work.¹¹ *Fūryū* in the case of Bashō is rather a more-than-personal spirit that, like literal wind, is what pushes him onwards on the lonely path of poetry. While Ikkyū was a monk who still inhabited the world of desire, opposing to society his *fūryū* in its aspect of "wind-madness" (風狂 *fūkyō*), to Bashō, *fūryū* is lived as an all-encompassing "wind-grace" (風雅 *fūga*), permeating nature, culture, and personhood. The lonely refinement of Chinese poetry and medieval authors, such as Saigyō and the popular world of peasants and bourgeois that he met during his travels; the weathered simplicity praised by *sabi* aesthetics and the endlessly creative face of nature (造化 *zōka*); a total immersion into a path of poetry and the sudden distance of irony and self-deprecation: all these contradictory elements are rediscovered by Bashō as elements of *fūryū*.

Despite the lack of a univocal and clear definition, what *fūkyō*, *fūryū* and *fūga* share is their being something "spiritual" in the original sense of wind. "Wind" 風 is, in other words, a signifier for aesthetics. In Imamichi Tomonobu's words:

The way in which through its action consciousness (心 *kokoro*), all while keeping itself invisible, tries to reach a far ideal through the mediation of visible figures (姿 *sugata*) is exactly like the way in which with its action a gust of wind blowing on the leaves keeps revealing its moving image all while keeping itself invisible, breathing from tree to tree in the distant light. Consciousness, due to its depth, has a sort of "aesthetic overtone" that is similar to the essence (本情 *honjō*) of wind, which can only be glimpsed by the trembling of trees.¹²

¹⁰ Qiu Peipei, "Aesthetic of Unconventionality: *Fūryū* in Ikkyū's Poetry," *Japanese Language and Literature* 35/2 (2001), 135.

¹¹ Alfred Haft, *Aesthetic Strategies of the Floating World: Mitate, Yatsushi and Fūryū in early Modern Japanese popular Culture* (Leiden: Brill 2013).

¹² Imamichi Tomonobu, *Tōyō no bigaku* 東洋の美学 (Tokyo: Tōbōshoin, 1980): 277–278.

Imamichi was not alone in this realization: the affinity between the field of aesthetics and the dynamic, invisible, formless animation of air is a theme discussed by several Japanese authors.¹³ Kuki's reflection on *fūryū* is uniquely relevant in this perspective because it is one of the earliest attempts to discuss and draw a shape for this formless flow in a deeply transformative moment for the tradition of Japanese aesthetics.

Bashō and Japanese Philosophy in the Early 20th Century

Published in 1937, Kuki's study of *fūryū* was far from an isolated attempt: it must be read within the sudden increase of interest for Bashō and *haikai* (俳諧) poetics that began in the 1920s and lasted until after the war. This "Bashō boom," to borrow Suzuki Sadami's expression, is even more relevant if we observe how intense this spike of interest towards Bashō was perceived among philosophers.¹⁴ Beginning in 1920, a group of Kyoto-based intellectuals including Ōta Mizuho, Kōda Rohan, Abe Jirō, Abe Yoshishige and Watsuji Tetsurō gathered regularly to discuss Bashō's poetry. This long series of meetings was later collected into the three volumes of *Research on Bashō's Haiku*.¹⁵ Ōta published his own book about Bashō a few years later, *The Fundamental Problems of Bashō's Haiku*, while Watsuji, who left shortly after for Europe, returned to the atmospheric attunement of *haikai* (気合 *kiai*), both in *Fūdo* and in his *Studies in the History of Japanese Spirit - Continuation*.¹⁶ Watsuji also tried to directly address the hermeneutics of

¹³ Karaki Junzō, *Shi to dekadansu* 詩とデカダンス (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1951); Ōhashi Ryōsuke, "Der 'Wind' als Kulturbegriff in Japan," in Wolfgang Bauer and Sigrud Paul, eds., "*Kultur*": *Begriff und Wort in China und Japan: Symposion des Forschungskreises für Symbolik, Salzburg vom 25-27. Juni 1982* (Berlin: D. Reimer, 1984); Ōhashi Ryōsuke, "Inwieweit ist der 'Wind' ein Morphom?" in Blamberger, Günter, et al., *Morphomata. Kulturelle Figuren: Genese, Dynamik und Medialität* (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2011); Ogawa Tadashi, *Kaze no genshōgaku to fun'iki* 風の現象学と雰囲気 (Kyoto: Kōyō Shobō, 2000).

¹⁴ Sadami Suzuki, *The Concept of "Literature" in Japan* (Kyoto: International Research Center for Japanese Studies, 2006).

¹⁵ Abe et al., *Bashō haiku kenkyū* 芭蕉俳句研究, 1924–1926.

¹⁶ Ōta Mizuh, *Bashō haikai no konpon mondai* 芭蕉俳諧の根本問題 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1926); and Watsuji Tetsurō, *Zoku Nihon seishinshi kenkyū* 続日本精神史研究, from WTZ, vols. 4 and 8.

haikai in the incomplete essay *Explaining the Poetry of Bashō*.¹⁷ Another influential interpretation of Bashō in the 1920s was offered by Akutagawa in his *Bashō Zakki*, a series of prose fragments mixing literary interpretation and autobiographical projections to which Akutagawa returned in the last weeks of his life.¹⁸

Fūryū too became an increasingly discussed topic in the 1920s: it was a recurring theme in the work and literary stance of Kōda Rohan and Satō Haruo's 1924 discussion of *fūryū* in the magazine *Chūōkōron*, sparking a further debate with Kume Masao and Akutagawa.¹⁹ In the 1930s and during the war this trend did not stop: a few years after Kuki's essay Ōnishi Yoshinori, chair of aesthetics at Tōkyō University, added to his earlier study of *yūgen* and *aware* the massive study *On Fūga: A Study of "Sabi,"* a philological and phenomenological observation of *sabi* and *fūryū* aesthetics in Bashō.²⁰ In the same years Okazaki Yoshie, another major aesthetician of the period, began working at a massive history of *fūryū* throughout Japanese literary history: a first draft of the book was destroyed in a fire during the war years, but Okazaki still managed to publish two massive volumes after the war. To this day, his *The Thought of Fūryū* is still the most comprehensive study of *fūryū*.²¹

Two more notable works on Bashō, of considerably different tone, also appear during the war. In 1943 the controversial literary critic Yasuda Yojūrō (1910–1981) published a short volume simply titled *Bashō* in which he harshly criticized how the “new interpretations” of Bashō kept projecting on this Asian giant concerns and problems slavishly imported from the West.²² A distinct tone is exemplified in a second cycle of meetings in Kyoto published in 1945 by the magazine *Gakkai*. The participants included *haikai*

¹⁷ WTZ 2:322–325.

¹⁸ ARZ 11:1240–1250 and ARZ 15:237–240.

¹⁹ Nicolas Mollard, “Construction d’une identité littéraire moderne à travers la relecture d’une esthétique traditionnelle – *fūryū* dans les écrits de Kōda Rohan autour de 1890” (PhD diss., University of Geneva, 2007); and SHZ-19:213–238, from collected work *Satō Haruo zenshū* 佐藤春夫全集 (SHZ), 12 vols. (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1966–1970).

²⁰ Ōnishi Yoshinori, *Fūgaron: Sabi no kenkyū* 風雅論・「さび」の研究 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1939).

²¹ Okazaki Yoshie, *Fūryū no shisō* 風流の思想, 2 vols. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1947).

²² Yasuda Yojūrō, *Bashō* 芭蕉 (Tōkyō: Kōdansha, 1989).

specialists such as Endō Yoshimoto and Ebara Taizō and philosophers like Doi Torakazu and Nishitani Keiji.²³ The influence of Bashō was long-lasting especially in the case of Nishitani, who wrote about his “philosophy” several times during the 1940s and kept unfolding the insights gained from *haikai* until the 1980s.

As evident from this cursory list, the relation between 20th century Japanese philosophy and Bashō is a complex one, still largely to be written. Kuki’s work ought to be understood in this general context, from which it stands out as one of the boldest attempts to formalize these materials in a philosophical sense.

Kuki and the Structure of *Fūryū*

At first glance, the 1937 essay about *fūryū* would seem a return to the method of *The Structure of Iki*. In both essays, an ambiguous, hard-to-grasp Japanese aesthetic concept is transformed into a geometric shape organized by pairs of opposite terms. Both *fūryū* and *iki*, moreover, are directly connected by their sensual connotation. Also, the sense of creative contradiction, a “Goethian” feature of Kuki’s thought, is evident in both essays.²⁴ These analogies, however, should not overshadow some distinct differences and the evolution of Kuki’s thought between the two essays. While *Iki* was a uniquely Japanese notion, greatly limited in its temporal and spatial frame, Kuki immediately introduces *fūryū* through an anecdote from Confucius’ *Analects*, acknowledging its trans-national character and stratified history.

Three moments:	Opposite terms:	
離俗 rizoku:	華やか hanayaka,	vs. 寂 sabi, “solitary,”
detachment	“colourful,” “flourishing”	“desolate”
耽美 tanbi:	細み hosomi, “subtle,”	vs. 太い futoi, “bold,”
aestheticism	“fine”	“broad”
自然 shizen:	可笑しみ okashimi,	vs. 厳か ogosoka,
nature	“funny,” “laughter”	“stern,” “sublime”

²³ Nishitani Keiji, et. al., 芭蕉研究 *Bashō kenkyū* in *Gakkai–Daitōa gakujutsu kyōkai*, vols. 3–1 to 3–4 (1945).

²⁴ Tanaka Kyūbun, *Gūzen to shizen* 偶然と自然 (Tokyo: Perikansha, 1992): 181–198.

While the phenomenological distinction between “intensional” and “extensional” structure explicitly drawn in *The Structure of Iki* is not repeated, we see how Kuki follows the same method, establishing *fūryū*'s sense through three different “moments” (契機 *keiki*), and its field through six different aesthetic modes, organized in oppositional pairs as above. It would be hard, however, to pattern the dialectic between detachment, aestheticism and nature on the categories of sensuality (媚態 *bitai*), will (意気地 *ikiji*) and resignation (諦め *akirame*) described in *The Structure of Iki*.²⁵

The difference in the geometrical organization is even greater: the oppositional couples of *iki* included anti-aesthetic terms like boorish (野暮 *yabo*) and vulgar (下品 *gehin*), effectively limiting *iki* to a subsection of that formalized space. In the case of *fūryū*, the contradictions between these couples of different aesthetic modes are presented as something essential: the space of *fūryū* is the totality of aesthetic possibilities shaped by these contradictions, with none of the six aesthetic values superior or inferior to its opposite. Moreover, if the terms around which *iki* was organized were selected arbitrarily, in the case of *fūryū*, Kuki offers poetic examples and theoretical discussions showing how each of these aesthetic values was effectively central to *haikai* aesthetics. The quantitative-spatial contradiction between subtlety (*hosomi*) and boldness (*futoi*), the qualitative-temporal progression that goes from the fresh and colorful (*hanayaka*) to the withered and subdued (*sabi*), the sudden switch between quasi-aesthetic laughter (*okashimi*) and sublimity (*ogosoka*) offer a hermeneutic grid that applies surprisingly well not just to the different styles of *haikai*, but to what is effectively a totality of artistic expression. Kuki begins his analysis of *fūryū*

²⁵ Kuki had already highlighted the opposition between will (most evident in Bushidō) and resignation (exemplified by Buddhism) in the two 1928 French essays on art and time later published as *Propos sur le temps* (KSZ 1:53-86), while in his longer essay *The Japanese Character* (*Nihontekina seikaku*, KSZ 3) will and detachment are considered on a common spiritual love of nature rooted in Shintō. In the case of *fūryū*, however, it would be hard to define the “opposition to the world” (離俗 *rizoku*) of Bashō or Ikkyū uniquely as an example of “detachment” or “will.” The 1937 description of an alternation between disruptive (*rizoku*) and creative (耽美 *tanbi*) following a spontaneous flow (自然 *shizen*) is probably a better description of actual creative patterns that does not rely on a crystallized “essence” of religious tradition or on an unchanging Japanese character.

from the paradigmatic example of Bashō, but, as the quote of *Analects*, other extraliterary examples and the inclusion of other key categories like *mono no aware* and *yūgen* within the octahedron of *fūryū* show he is effectively proposing *fūryū* as an all-encompassing notion to understand Japanese (as well as non-Japanese) aesthetic production. The same paradoxical status that forbade a positive determination of *fūryū* in other authors is turned by Kuki into a key to explain how throughout the Japanese aesthetic history, diametrically opposite genres kept flourishing:

Historically the most relevant forms assumed by *fūryū* have shown a tendency to be inclined towards *sabi* on the line between *sabi* and *hosomi*, to be closer to *hosomi* than *futoi* in the segment between the two, and to choose *okashimi* over *ogosoka* [...] But if we think that this interpretation would forbid us to consider as examples of *fūryū* Hōtaikō (Hideyoshi) celebrating his huge cherry-viewing banquet at the Daigo temple or Ogata Kōrin throwing his painted scrolls in the river Ōi, such objections lose all their credibility.²⁶

Kuki's analysis of *fūryū* might be lacking an actual history of the term, collapsing Chinese sources, Edo period *haikai*, and older examples from *waka* (和歌) in the same pattern of oppositions. On the other hand, this quasi-structuralist approach does account for the constant dialectic of personal innovation and established styles that is warp and weft of art. As Kuki observes, the philological puzzle of *fūryū*, a term so all-encompassing to suggest ever so often something and its contrary, actually touches an essential paradox of aesthetics:

The experiential value that we call “beauty” is unavoidably thought as something absolute: and yet in it there is also a necessary movement towards the relative, towards single individuals and ages. It is here that has its roots the duality of “constancy” (不易 *fueki*) and “change” (流行 *ryūkō*).²⁷

²⁶ KSZ 4: 80.

²⁷ KSZ 4: 61.

The constant change of wind, manifesting itself through and with other things as a contingent, unique movement, rather than as an unchanging substance, is the living image of *fūryū*: Kuki is the first modern thinker to recognize how this premodern “wind aesthetic” is not a mere metaphor, but rather touches something essential to artistic manifestations in general. Bashō discussed this duality of art, representing within the structure of its expression the same coexistence of momentary and eternal of nature through the twin concepts of “unchanging” (不易) and “flowing” (流行 *ryūkō*), both emerging from the “truth of windgrace” (風雅の誠 *fūga no makoto*). This is a very likely reason for Kuki's choice of Bashō as the starting point for a phenomenological reading of *fūryū*; in his 1928 essay on the expression of the infinite in Japanese art, he quoted a *hokku* by Bashō revealing this meta-temporal quality of poetic language:

橘や	<i>Tachibana ya</i>	Oh, wild tangerines
いつの野中の	<i>Itsu no no naka no</i>	In some past field
ほととぎす	<i>Hototogisu</i>	A singing cuckoo

Returning in his essay *Metaphysics of Literature* (trans. in Marra 2004) and in the essay on *fūryū*, this Proustian description of a sudden olfactive memory shows how, through a poetic shift, the fleeting instant of an atmospheric moment can turn into something eternal, transcending time and space. If contingency and temporality are the two great themes of Kuki's philosophy, it is worth noting how already in this 1928 essay, that is, during his European years, he considered Bashō's work a worthy philosophical contribution to a reflection on these themes.

Such a paradoxical coincidence of opposites is one of the general figures of modern Japanese philosophy, with Nishida's “absolutely contradictory self-identity” (絶対矛盾的自己同一 *zettai mujunteki jikodōitsu*) and Watsuji's irreducibly singular-plural “human existence” (人間存在 *ningen sonzai*) being other prime examples of this structure. Nor could this pattern be found only in Bashō or *haikai*: an acceptance, even a certain gusto for unescapable contradictions, is a recurring feature of Buddhism and Daoism, in general. The tension between theoretical necessity and the radical contingency of existence and cultural belonging is, however, something that insistently led Kuki towards poetry (a poetry that, as in Nishitani's case, is part of philosophy, not other from it). The essay on *fūryū* is probably the part of his production in which he faced Japanese poetic tradition at his best, using his philosophical formation to reveal its deeper problem, rather than force on

it a logical structure from the outside. Kuki was well aware of this temptation in himself, ironically confessing:

I do not know if in my observations I am being too impertinent, turning my back on the purport of Bashō's teachings: maybe my own attempt rests on the misguided assumption that such *esprit de finesse* (*hosomi*) can be translated as *esprit de geometrie*. And yet to me also this latter one is holding the “one thin thread” that connects all life, so that it is hard not to do so.²⁸

“A Reflection on Poetic Spirit” does walk on this thread, trying to reconcile these two opposite necessities. As it does so by approaching an aesthetic ideal that names these contradictions themselves, however, it might succeed where a one-sided attempt (philosophical or philological) would be bound to fail.

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A TRANSLATION OF KUKI SHŪZŌ'S
“A REFLECTION ON POETIC SPIRIT”
(*Fūryū ni kansuru ikkōsatsu* 風流に関する一考察)
(1937/1941)¹

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Part I.

It is told that Bashō once said, “People in my school are studying *fūryū* (風流).”² But what is *fūryū*? *Fūryū* is an opposition to the worldly. It must begin with a refusal of the commonplace world as it is found in social everydayness. *Fūryū* is first of all detachment (離俗 *rizoku*). When Confucius asked Shiro, Sōseki, Zen’yū and Kōseika about their desires, Shiro (Zi Lu) answered that his ambition was becoming a politician and serving the state in a moment of emergency; Zen’yū (Ran You) said that he would rather strive for the wellbeing of the people by administrating their economy; Kōseika (Gong Xi Hua) described his intention to become a government official. Only Sōseki (Zeng Xi) remained silent, and when the Master asked him once again he answered: “To bathe in the waters of river Yi, to feel the wind blowing over the rain altars, to go back home singing.”³ Confucius heaved a sigh and said, “It is Sōseki who has my approval.” *Fūryū* is the free spirit (心意気 *kokoroiki*) with which Sōseki breaks away from the world.

It has been said that “the rule of detachment is the hardest one,”⁴ and yet it is also stressed that becoming a man of *fūryū* “is nothing more than

¹ *Fūryū ni kansuru ikkōsatsu* 風流に関する一考察 (1937), from the collected work *Kuki Shūzo zenshū* 九鬼周造全集 (KSZ), 12 vols (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1980–1982), 4:60–82.

² *Igoshū* 遺語集, a collection of Bashō’s sayings.

³ See Confucius, *Analects*: XI–25, slightly adapted by Kuki.

⁴ From the preface of the *Shundeishū* 春泥集 by Kuroyanagi Shōha 黒柳召波 (1727–1771). Shōha was a disciple of Buson, who wrote for him a preface explaining his view on *rizoku*: “*Haikai* uses the language of the world (*zoku*) and at the same time wants to get away from the world (*rizoku*). Transcending the world and acting with the world at the same time: the rule of detachment is the hardest one.”

setting one's heart right and breaking away from the common world.”⁵ Etymologically, someone has arbitrarily reduced *fūryū* to the life of a refined (風声 *fūsei*) and classy (品流 *hinryū*) non-conformist; but even apart from such origin, in the essential structure of *fūryū* we have “wind flows” (風の流れ *kaze no nagare*). A stream of water is limited by the bed it flows on, but the wind's flow has no bounds. A living soul (気魄 *kihaku*) willing to remove itself from the mundane, to get away from old uses, to escape fame and success, and breathe in the emptiness of the sky (虚空 *kokū*): that must be the grounding of *fūryū*. The first step of *fūryū* is a destruction or an opposition to the common values that take the form of social everydayness. “[Poetry] is like a fireplace in summer and a fan in winter, it goes against the mass and it has no good use”⁶: this unrestrained, lofty character is indispensable to *fūryū*. A true man of *fūryū* is the free individual who has rejected both the temptations of the few and those of the many. The first ground of *fūryū* is the moral quality of detachment.

However, *fūryū* does not consist of this negative aspect alone: it must be immediately followed by another, affirmative one, and the maturation of some new content must be directly realized by that very individuality which broke away from everydayness. Also, this new content that must come to fruition is mainly understood as aesthetic activity. In the lived experience of beauty, the negative freedom of inspiration and adventure might already reflect this destructive aspect of *fūryū*.⁷ Indeed, in the majority of cases this affirmative, artistic aspect determines the negative and moral one from within. This second moment of *fūryū* can be called *aesthetic immersion* (耽美 *tanbi*).

With its excellence, the experiential value that we call “beauty” is unavoidably thought of as something absolute: and yet in it there is also a

⁵ *Jisan no ron* 自賛論, A section of the *Haikai Mondō*; Bashō Taisei 芭蕉大成 (BTS), ed. by Ogata Tsutomu et al. (Tokyo: Sanseidō, 1999), 565.

⁶ *Saimon no ji* 柴門辭, or *The Brushwood Gate* (also referred to as *Words of Farewell to Kyoriku*), a short prose from 1693 left by Bashō as a gift to his disciple. David L. Barnhill, trans., *Bashō's Journey: The Literary Prose of Matsuo Bashō* (Ithaca: State University of New York Press, 2005), 139.

⁷ The notion of adventure here very likely refers to Oskar Becker's 1929 essay *Von der Hinfälligkeit des Schönen und der Abenteuerlichkeit des Künstlers*, which Kuki knew both from the original and from the 1932 translation by Yuasa Shinnosuke.

necessary movement towards the relative, towards single individuals and ages. Rooted here is the duality of “constancy” (不易 *fueki*) and “change” (流行 *ryūkō*). In the moment of its social expression, this aesthetic character (*tanbisei*) assumes the relative forms of a “style” (風 *fū*) or “current” (流 *ryū*). We have, as instances of the former, the *Kofū*, the *Danrinfū*, the *Shōfū*, and of the latter, the *Senkeryū*, the *Yabunouchiryū*, the *Sekishūryū*.⁸ On one hand, *fūryū* possesses the structure of the “wind’s flow,” in which the discovery of the individual and the spiritual energy of creativity manifest themselves in full force, concentrating on the self to avoid the neutralizing restrictions of the world. On the other hand, it is only normal that once this content has been constructed and realized it also acquires a collective quality by rules of imitation and habit, and thus assumes the fixed forms of styles and currents. However, “the style of yesterday is not good for today, and that of today will be hardly useful tomorrow.”⁹ The old forms must be perpetually renewed.

Moreover, it is rightly said, “Thousands of changes, ten thousand mutations: this is the principle of spontaneity (自然 *shizen*). Without change, a style does not renovate itself. Someone who does not strive for such change ... is not pursuing the poetic truth (誠 *makoto*).”¹⁰ To take *fūryū* as “the task of one’s life,”¹¹ one needs to pursue such sincerity with all himself. One must keep true to this “one thin thread”¹² that follows the truth of beauty. What is required here is once again the destructive character of wind flow, breaking the shell of those styles and currents that after becoming fixed and popular have fallen into everydayness:

⁸ The former three are the two major *haikai* styles before Bashō, those of Matsunaga Teitoku and Nishiyama Sōin, and Bashō’s own style; the latter three are three schools of tea ceremony.

⁹ *Kyoraishō* 去来抄, a compilation of notes by Bashō’s disciple Mukai Kyorai, considered some of the most faithful accounts of Bashō teachings. *Kōhon Bashō zenshū* 校本芭蕉全集, ed. by Komiya Tomotaka, 11 vols. (Tokyo: Fujimi Shobō, 1988–1991) (KBZ) 7:63, or in R. Sieffert’s French translation (1983).

¹⁰ From the *Akazōshi* [Red Booklet] 赤冊子, one of Hattori Dohō’s *Sanzōshi* 三冊 (1702), KBZ 7:173; see Sieffert 1983 and also another translation (often very interpretative) found in Toshihiko Izutsu and Toyo Izutsu, *The Theory of Beauty in the Classical Aesthetics of Japan* (Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publisher, 1981).

¹¹ *Oi no kobumi* 笈の小文.

¹² *Saimon no ji* 柴門辭. See note 5.

Empty chestnuts were born, and the poems in echo
withered; winter days arrived, and the chestnuts fell too;
the winter days found no space under the monkey's straw
coat, and the straw coat was destroyed by a sack of
charcoal.¹³

Here we see how the change that constantly “digs the bottom”¹⁴ is the gift of one's vote to the eternal (不易). Within *fūryū* the ethical-destructive detachment and the artistic-constructive aesthetic immersion must always work circularly. (It is highly interesting how this double correlation has also been clarified etymologically, as a reciprocal correspondence of “misao” and “miyabi,” in the work of Endō Yoshimoto).¹⁵

In *fūryū*, there is also a third element that plays an essential role. It is nature (自然). In a synthesis of the first moment of detachment and of the second of aesthetic immersion, we may say that it is necessary to purify oneself from the worldly and go back to nature. The art created by *fūryū* has thus an extremely close connection to nature.

The spirit of poetry begins – up in the North a rice-planting song	<i>Fūryū no</i> <i>hajime ya oku no</i> <i>taue uta</i>	風流の はじめやおくの 田植歌
Singing the truth of poetic spirit a cuckoo (Bashō)	<i>Fūryū no</i> <i>makoto o naku ya</i> <i>hototogisu</i>	風流の まことを啼くや 時鳥

¹³ *Tō Kyoshi monnan ben* 答許子問難弁 [Answering to Kyoriku's Critique], a section of *Haikai mondō*, BTS, 553. Each of the images evokes the title of one of the poetic collections of the Bashō school, which marked the continuous evolution of Bashō's style.

¹⁴ *Uda no hōshi* 宇陀の法師 [The Priest from Uda], a collection of *haikai* notes by Morikawa Kyoriku published in 1702, KBZ 7:279.

¹⁵ Endō Yoshimoto 遠藤嘉基 was a professor of Japanese studies at Kyoto University from 1935. Kuki refers to the fact that the word 風流 *fengliu*, Chinese in origin, before acquiring the reading *fūryū* was pronounced either *miyabi* (雅), meaning “elegant,” “refined,” or *misao* (操), “simple,” “virtuous.” Endō (“Fūryū-kō” 風流攷, *Kokugokokubun*, 1940).

Within *fūryū* nature and art are two faces of the same thing. We can also say that the aim of *fūryū* is a life of pure beauty, in which artistic and natural beauty are subsumed (包摂 *hōsetsu*). A life of merely artistic beauty, that does not include within itself the beauty of nature, cannot be called *fūryū*. It is by the particular love of nature of Japanese people that *fūryū* possesses this strong Japanese hue in its intimate essence. In any case, *fūryū* must possess that particular flavour that made Bashō say, “Follow that which creates, be a companion of the four seasons. Nothing one sees is not a flower, nothing one imagines is not the moon.”¹⁶ This is also why the “Way of the Garden” (庭道 *teidō*) and the “Way of Flowers” (華道 *kadō*) have a relevant position within *fūryū*. However, we should not overlook the fact that natural beauty does not absolutely exclude the beauty found in human life. *Fūryū* orders “follow that which creates, go back to the creation,” but at the same time, “after bringing your heart to the highest realization, return to the common world (俗 *zoku*).”¹⁷ This “common world” is, however, not the same from which *fūryū* departed in its first moment. It is a world that has sublated (止揚 *shiyō*) *fūryū*. It is *fūryū* within the common world. The “Way of the Libertine” (色道 *shikidō*)¹⁸ and the “Way of Tea” (茶道 *sadō*) are the first steps to *fūryū*’s pursuit of beauty within human life as in:

The deep colour	<i>Iro fukaki</i>	色ふかき
of passion scatters	<i>kimi ga kokoro no</i>	君がこころの
the flower of your heart	<i>hana chirite</i>	花ちりて
as the body is pierced	<i>mi ni shimu kaze no</i>	身にしむ風の
by the blowing wind	<i>nagare tozomishi</i>	流れとぞみし

Here we find the expression of this sense of *fūryū*. For that which concerns the so-called “historical beauty,” can be included within human beauty: it is the beauty that history, conceived as an accumulation of human life, possesses in its temporal quality. What instead occupies a middle position between natural beauty and human beauty is “technical beauty.”

¹⁶ *Oi no kobumi*.

¹⁷ *Akazōshi*, KBZ 7:174.

¹⁸ The first one is the principal object of investigation in *Iki no kōzō*. However, Kuki does not use the word *shikidō* in the former work. It is possibly a reference to Fujimoto Kizan’s 1678 *Shikidō Ōkagami*, a great companion of histories and records to the floating world.

In the rainy season it relies on its moat: that little fort	<i>Samidare no hori tanomoshiki toride kana</i>	五月雨の 堀たのもしき 砦かな
Pounding grains – in the middle of the barley a waterwheel (two haiku by Buson)	<i>Usuzuku ya homugi ga naka no mizuguruma</i>	春や 穂麦が中の 水車

If the aesthetic contemplation represented by a moat or a waterwheel in these poems is genuinely oriented towards modernity, the technical beauty of a battery of guns, a warship, a plane, a telegraphic tower, a locomotive, and a metallic stove or a crane also becomes apparent:

In my rifle an angle of fire: upstream along river Han	<i>Hōshin ni shakaku ari Kankō o sakanoboru</i>	砲身に 射角あり寒江を 遡る
Over the autumn waves a warship is gliding with its long stern	<i>Aki no nami kantei nagaki tomo o hiku</i>	秋の波 艦艇長さ 艫を牽く
The wings and the wheel of a landing plane bouncing on the green field	<i>Ki no yoku to zenrin aoki no ni hazumu</i>	機の翼と 前輪青き 野に弾む
In an autumn night after the locomotive not a single wagon	<i>Shūya au kikansha ni tsuzuku sharyō nashi</i>	秋夜遭ふ 機関車につづく 車輛なし
It will snow soon just outside Kokura a burning stove (Yamaguchi Seishi ¹⁹)	<i>Yuki kizasu Kokura o suginu karo moyuru</i>	雪きざす 小倉をすぎぬ かろ燃ゆる

¹⁹ Yamaguchi Seishi 山口誓子 (1901–1994), a disciple of Takahama Kyoshi and part of the Hototogisu literary circle. The use of modern images was a noteworthy characteristic of his production, as also evident in the poems quoted by Kuki.

Given how *fūryū*'s content is the lived experience of natural beauty on one side and that of human beauty on the other, it is evident that travel and eroticism have an essential meaning and stand out by themselves in the life of a *fūryū* man. Shikō dedicated one of his *Five More Essays* (*Zokugoron*) to travel and one to love: this is indeed an excellent insight for the study of *fūryū* within human existence.²⁰ “Mountain, river, grass, trees: each of them shows itself in travel”: from the horizon of travel one is exposed to the generality (*ippan* 一般) of nature; “the Buddhist priest and the layman, the old and the young, all have to experience passion”: in the perspective of love one then approaches the generality of human life. The *fūryū* man asks to “call me traveller” and is full of desire:

The magpie held	<i>Kasasagi ya</i>	かささぎや
in a woman's hand	<i>onna no te ni te</i>	女の手にて
will show its song	<i>uta wa min</i>	哥は見ん
(Kikaku ²¹)		

Within *fūryū*, nature, human life and art are reunited in a harmonic whole at the very core of existence. Now, what is the relation between *fūryū* and pleasure? The experience of beauty is pleasurable, and in this respect, it is easy to understand *fūryū* as something that is also enjoyed as such. Both natural beauty and human beauty are enjoyed as pleasant. The appreciation of artistic beauty is by itself pleasurable too, and even the creation of art is rooted in pleasure. But it is also true that at the intersection of arts and morality-religion, aesthetic pleasure understood as the absolute enjoyment of experiential values eventually denies itself. A soul appreciating the real taste of *fūryū* will also understand, as such, the unique sense of the “white dew” (白露 *shiratsuyu*) that disappears just after autumn's dawn.

²⁰ Kagami Shiko 各務支考 (1665–1731) was another of Bashō's main disciples and *haikai* theorists. *Zokugoron* 続五論 is his first major theoretical treatise on *haikai*. Nihon Haisho Taiki 日本俳書体系, 17–34.

²¹ Kuki here is willingly, or unwillingly, merging two successive poems, in Takarai Kikaku's 五元集 *Gogenshū*: かさゝきや丸太の上に天川 “A magpie / over the wooden hut / the milky way,” and 星合や女の手にて歌は見ん “The bridge of stars / in the Woman's hand / it will start singing.” Both refer to the legend of Tanabata, but together assume a humorous, possibly erotic twist.

Part II.

Now we will try to reflect on the different forms of aesthetic values that *fūryū* develops through the expression of the experience of natural and human beauty. First, we have things *hanayaka* (華やか “brilliant,” “flourishing”) and things that have *sabi* (寂 “loneliness,” “rust”). According to a famous definition, “an image of kerria flowers (山吹 *yamabuki*) was poetic (*fūryū*) and full of colour (*hanayaka*), but with its simplicity the line about ‘the old pond’ reached the truth of things.”²² As we see in this case, it is not true that things *hanayaka* lack the grace that can be called *fūryū*: it is just that within today’s linguistic sensibility, it is unavoidable to immediately consider as *fūryū*, the “spirit of beauty” (風雅) associated with *sabi*. Therefore, within *fūryū* there is a side of *sabi* and a side of *date* (伊達 “showy”): “The style of the Master prefers the quiet loneliness, and it is subtle (細し *hososhi*); the style of Shinshi [Kikaku] likes gaudy things, and still it is subtle.”²³

Fūryū can thus be divided into the two great genres of “Bashō’s model” and “Kikaku’s model.” The mood of the first is that of:

Old pond a frog jumps in the sound of water	<i>Furu ike ya kawazu tobikomu mizu no oto</i>	古池や 蛙飛びこむ 水の音
On a withered branch a crow has perched – autumn dusk	<i>Kare eda ni karasu no tomarikeri aki no kure</i>	枯枝に 鳥のとまりけり 秋の暮
In the white dew never forget the taste of loneliness	<i>Shiratsuyu ni sabishiki aji o wasururuna</i>	白露に 淋しき味を 忘るるな

²² *Kuzu no matsubara* 葛の松原 (1692), a collection of *haikai* discussions and episodes by Shikō, KBZ 7:240. The episode quoted by Kuki reports the origin of Bashō’s haiku about the jumping frog. Hearing the frog jumping, Bashō immediately composed the second part of the poem, but was missing the first five syllables. Kikaku’s suggestion was a bright image of spring, but Bashō opted for the stillness of the old pond, producing his masterpiece.

²³ BTS, 565 (in *Haikai mondō*).

But the mood of the second one is that of:

Not a single day without a bell being sold: spring in Edo	<i>Kane hitotsu urenu hi wa nashi Edo no haru</i>	鐘ひとつ 売れぬ日はなし 江戸の春
Puppets are beating on their little drums at the cherry viewing	<i>Kairai no tsuzumi utsu naru hanami kana</i>	傀儡の 鼓うつなる 花見哉
The swaying flowers of a peach tree: the dance of Kabuki	<i>Hana sasou momo ya kabuki no waki odori</i>	花さそう 桃や歌舞伎の 脇踊

Between the two genres, there is a spontaneous divide. The contrast between the ink paintings of Sesshū and the rich colours of Matabei, the coarse (寂) texture of the Igayaki ceramics and the lustre of those from Ironabeshima, the grave echo of the songs accompanying Nō and the high pitch of the Kiyomoto style,²⁴ all correspond to these models. The former affirms that “the poems of my school must be like an ink painting: unlike the other schools, we consider the *sabi-shiori* as the most important of things” (*Yuigoshū*). The latter argues that, “There is more to admire in those who compose poetry with magnificence, than in those who dedicate themselves to *sabi-shiori* alone.”²⁵ They are, however, converging on some critical positions: it is said that “Bashō’s *sabi-shiori* can be left aside at least for the composition celebrating the New Year,” implying that there is a limit to the sphere of *sabi*, and at the same time suggesting that “what goes well in a meeting over Gion festival is the dissonant tone of autumn’s wind”: a limit that is also traced for *hanayaka*.²⁶

Among the beauty born out of *fūryū* there also are things with *okashimi* (可笑しみ “funny,” “ridiculous,” “eccentric”). “The *fūryū* found in the flower and the moon is the outer form of poetic spirit (風雅); in its very name, *haikai* (俳諧 “comic verse”) is *okashimi*; *sabi* is the essence of poetic spirit” (*Zokugoron*). In this quote, *hanayaka*, *okashimi* and *sabi* are neatly

²⁴ Style of music accompanying kabuki and bunraku.

²⁵ From the preface of the *Kachōhen* 華鳥篇 (1808), one of the poetic collections of Buson.

²⁶ Two quotes from the *Saitan no ji* 歳旦辞, a prose reflection by Buson.

distinguished. What is outside of them is pushed aside as “a triviality of the common world.” When it is said that “to compose *kyōka* one must not lose sight of its great principles: *okashimi* and *fūryū*,”²⁷ it sounds as if they are separate things: but this is not true at all. What does the image of the wind god Fūjin, painted by Tawaraya Sōtatsu, tell us? That one aspect of the character of the god is its humour. *Okashimi* is then another moment that can be seen within the structure of *fūryū*:

Looking like they don't care at all a crow and a willow	<i>Kerori kuwan</i> <i>to shite karasu to</i> <i>yanagi kana</i>	けろりくわん として鳥と 柳哉
The daikon farmer with a daikon has pointed the way	<i>Daiko hiki</i> <i>daiko de michi o</i> <i>oshiekeri</i>	大根引き 大根で道を 教へけり
I changed my robe and I tried to sit down but I am still alone (three haiku by Issa)	<i>Koromo kaete</i> <i>suwatte mite mo</i> <i>hitori kana</i>	衣更えて 坐って見ても ひとりかな

In poems like these it is clear that *okashimi* is also *fūryū*.²⁸ In their *okashimi*, Sōkan and the Danrin school are Issa's predecessors, and the dance of *Satokagura* invented by *Ame no uzume no mikoto* or the *Frolicking Animals* scrolls painted by the abbot Sōjō are also notable examples of “Issa's model.” If looked at in the right perspective, even the “Tiger cubs crossing” garden in the Ryōanji can be seen as belonging to this model.

Opposed to things with *okashimi*, there are inevitably things *ogosoka* (厳か “sublime,” “severe”). The style of the sculptures of Fudō Myōō in the Sanmyōō-in at Mount Kōya or the Shōren-in at Awata belongs to the same space of:

Stormy sea stretched over Sado the Milky Way	<i>Araumi ya</i> <i>Sado ni yokotau</i> <i>Amanogawa</i>	荒海や 佐渡によこたう 天の川
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²⁷ *Kyōkashoshinshō* 狂歌初心抄, an introduction to the genre by Karagoromo Kisshū (1743–1802).

²⁸ “Wit” as “spirit.”

Its clear sound up to the Northern Cross a cloth-beating block	<i>Koe sumite</i> <i>Hokuto ni hibiku</i> <i>kinuta kana</i>	声すみて 北斗にひびく 砧かな
Lightning going towards darkness a heron's cry	<i>Inazuma ya</i> <i>yami no kata yuku</i> <i>goi no koe</i>	稲妻や 闇の方ゆく 五位の声
With Summer rains it has grown faster: the Mogami River (four haiku by Bashō)	<i>Samidare ya</i> <i>atsumete hayashi</i> <i>Mogamigawa</i>	五月雨や 集めて早し 最上川

As *fūryū* refuses the common world and strives for a transcendent truth, things *ogosoka* are naturally born. If *fūryū* was the self-realization of *hanayaka*, *sabi* and *okashimi* only, and lacked that of *ogosoka*, it would be a great disgrace for the spiritual life of the Japanese people. “If we listen to the poems of the Master, some of them are *ogosoka*,”²⁹ remembered Kyorai, but his words have sometimes been forgotten even by men of *fūryū*. Recently the intellectual quality of art has been discussed a lot: but if this thought is conceived as ethical or religious, most of it will have a character inherent to the model of *ogosoka*. In the following poem:

Wild tangerines and a cuckoo, yes but in which past field? (Bashō) ³⁰	<i>Tachibana ya</i> <i>itsu no no naka no</i> <i>hototogisu</i>	橘や いつの野中の ほととぎす
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Through the perfume of tangerines casually smelled by the poet, the past rises from its deep slumber and comes back to life in the present instant, keeping its unique shape (姿 *sugata*). On a more concrete level, what is perceived in that perfume is a connection between tangerines and the cuckoo, but behind

²⁹ *Tō Kyoshi monnan ben*, BTS, 555.

³⁰ See *L'expression de l'enfini dans l'art japonaise*, KSZ 1:272, and *Metaphysics of Literature*, KSZ 4:22, for two more discussions of this *hokku*, both concentrating on the Proustian (that is discontinuous and metaphysical) temporal dimension opened by olfactory memory.

them lies the emotion full of *ogosoka* of a metaphysical, eternal present. This poem reads:

They come and go,	<i>Kore ya kono</i>	これやこの
return or leave	<i>yuku mo kaeru mo</i>	行くも帰るも
they know each other	<i>wakarete wa</i>	別れては
or they do not	<i>shiru mo shiranu mo</i>	知るも知らぬも
at the barrier of Ōsaka	<i>Ōsaka no seki</i>	逢坂の関
(Semimaru)		

It also possesses the philosophical sense of *ogosoka*, carrying within itself the mystery of chance and destiny, and holding past and future together in a temporally infinite horizon. *Ogosoka* can also show itself as the sheer force present in poems like:

Blown by the wind	<i>Fukitobasu</i>	吹きとばす
stones in the monsoon	<i>ishi wa Asama no</i>	石は浅間の
on Mount Asama	<i>nowaki kana</i>	野分かな
End of month, no moon	<i>Misoka tsuki nashi</i>	三十日月なし
A centenary willow	<i>chitose no sugi o</i>	千とせの杉を
hugged by the storm	<i>daku arashi</i>	抱く嵐
(two haiku by Bashō)		

In the field of sound, we should look for *ogosoka* in the storm-like use of the plectrum in the style of Ōzatsuma, it is probably there that we are allowed to hold some new hopes.³¹ Born out of *fūryū* is also the subtlety of *hosomi* (細み “thin,” “fine”). A classic example of this model is:

Might the birds too	<i>Toridomo mo</i>	鳥どもも
be fast asleep?	<i>neirite iru ka</i>	寝入りてゐるか
On Yogo lake	<i>Yogo no umi</i>	余語の湖
(Bashō)		

³¹ Ōzatsuma is the name of a distinctive shamisen style accompanying *jōruri*, in which the chords are repeated very rapidly, in an almost violent manner, and then abruptly stop. The effect does suggest an intense tension.

But we can also feel the heart of *hosomi* penetrating in the poetical object and the noise of a chisel finely sculpting the artwork in poems like:

Stillness piercing the rocks cicada cries	<i>Shizukasa ya iwa ni shimiiru semi no koe</i>	しづかさや 岩にしみ入る 蟬の声
A begonia's hue now that it has flowered just like watermelon (two haiku by Bashō)	<i>Shūkaidō suika no iro ni sakinikeri</i>	秋海棠 西瓜のいろに 咲にけり

In the erosion basin that surrounds the quiet lake of Yogo, birds and water alike have fallen into a deep slumber. When the poet is even able to notice if birds are sleeping, the subtlety (*hosomi*) of his heart has reached an exceptional degree. The voices of cicadas penetrate the cracked stones, and the finest point of his hearing is at work. He perceives the very same watery hue in a begonia and a watermelon because his sense of colour is most keen. Leaving the correspondence between /tori/ and /iri/ aside, even the rhyming relation between /shimi/ and /semi/, /shūka/ and /suika/ has the allure of a fine sensibility for detail. Also, in the following there is the sensibility of *hosomi*:

Mountain rose could it be born, too from a willow's thread? (Kikaku)	<i>Yamabuki mo yanagi no ito no harami kana</i>	山吹も 柳の糸の はらみかな
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It has been written that “this subtlety is the way of the Master, [the different styles] attune themselves to it,”³² and in fact both *sabi* and *date* often undergo a process of refinement that brings them to *hosomi*. If *hosomi* is “something thin,” it is only natural that opposed to it we have “something bold” (太い *futoi*). Statements like “To compose a good poem, open all your heart,” or the happy carelessness of are probably part of this turn towards *futoi*:

³² *Jisan no ron* in BTS, 565, is a discussion about different styles becoming *hososhi*, thus the reference to Kikaku, famous for the gaudier style, but also learning from Bashō's great eye for the detail.

Plums blossoming I don't care if you call them <i>mume</i> or <i>ume</i> (Buson)	<i>Ume sakinu</i> <i>dore ga mume ya</i> <i>ume ja yara</i>	梅咲きぬ どれがむめやら うめぢややら
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They reveal the same movement of the heart, skipping over the details and appreciating what is bold and hazy.

Falling peonies piling up, two or three over each other	<i>Botan chite</i> <i>uchikasanarinu</i> <i>nisanpen</i>	牡丹散て 打かさなりぬ 二三片
From where has that stone fallen? A summer grove	<i>Izuko yori</i> <i>tsubute uchikemu</i> <i>natsu kodachi</i>	いつこより 礫うちけむ 夏木立
Seeping through the <i>futon</i> in my bones this frosty night	<i>Waga hone no</i> <i>futon ni sawaru</i> <i>shimoyo kana</i>	我骨の ふとんにさはる 霜夜かな
To the Lord of Toba! Five or six knights running in the monsoon (four haiku by Buson)	<i>Tobadono e</i> <i>goroku kiisogu</i> <i>nowaki kana</i>	鳥羽殿へ 五六騎急ぐ 野分かな

Works like these are all aiming for the opening of *futoi*. It does not matter whether the sensation is one of colour, sound, touch, or motion: what matters to all of them is enjoying the open quality (*rairaku*) of things bold and rough, without filters in their immediate wholeness. *Futoi* might perhaps be called “the model of Buson.” Contemporary art is also mostly about “bold things,” contemplated within geometrical points, line, planes and movement. Opposed to the *esprit de finesse* oriented towards *hosomi*, there is the so-called *esprit de geometrie*, which turns to the thickness of *futoi*. The contrast between *hosomi* and *futoi* in a certain sense can also be seen in the difference between the paintings of the Maruyama-shijō school and those in the literati style, between the dance of the Fujima school and the Inoue style, and between the short and long ballads accompanying kabuki.

Part III.

The essential structure of aesthetic values born out of *fūryū* can then be reduced (還元 *kangen*) to three different contrastive relations.

hanayaka [brilliant] and *sabi* [loneliness]
hosomi [fine] and *futoi* [thick]
ogosoka [sublime] and *okashimi* [eccentric]

Among them, it is in the first and second ones that the aesthetic value presents itself in a relatively pure form. Also, the first couple is a pure and simple qualitative determination, but the second can also be considered, up to a certain degree, as a quantitative one. This is because the opposition between *hosomi* and *futoi* can be thought of as dependent on the quantitative spatial relation opened up between consciousness (心 *kokoro*) and object (対象 *taishō*). To use a metaphor, we might say that if the eyes of a net are wider they will catch only the biggest fish, but by making them smaller the net is able to catch smaller fish too. When the net is thrown on a school of fish the spatial relation between larger or smaller eyes in the net determines quantitatively the spatial gap between the net and fish. An almost identical relation exists between consciousness and object. If the former stays wide open, the object will reveal itself from afar, only in its roughest outlines. If one sharpens his spirit instead, it can follow the object up to its finest details. The spatial relation between consciousness and object is determined by the individual quality of *fūryū*'s spirit. *Hosomi* has been called “the heart (心) of a verse.”³³ This is because in it we see the fine point of consciousness penetrating the flesh of the object.

An object also changes its hue if it is seen in the full light of day or in the shadow of dusk. In this case it is not space, but a temporal relation – the flow of time – that assumes a determinant meaning. Something quite

³³ Kuki probably refers to the discussion about *hosomi* reported at the end of the *Kyoraishō*, but changes the exact wording of the quote, and thus does not specify his source: “Kyōrai answered: *shiori* does not mean that a poem is sad, and *hosomi* is not about it being poor: *shiori* is something in the image (姿 *sugata*) of the poem; *hosomi* is something in its intention (句意 *kui*),” KBZ 7:149. *Kui* is not easy to translate, but the character 意 can refer to “conception,” “intention,” or “consciousness,” and in this quote is not far from the quasi-phenomenological sense of *kokoro* suggested by Kuki.

similar happens with the creation of a work of art: the object presents itself surrounded by a colour gradation whether it be that of *hanayaka* or that of *sabi*. *Sabi* has been called “the colour of the poem”³⁴ exactly because the poetical object was perceived as something with its own hue. The difference between the first and second couple can be described in this way, although even the relation between *futoi* and *hosomi* is not resolved in just the quantitative relation of the gap between consciousness and object. In fact, the quantitative relation present in that distance turns spontaneously into a qualitative determination of the object, so that a certain colouring emerges there too. We should be ready to recognize this movement, which unperceivably moves from quantity to quality.

When it comes to the third couple, we see that within it there is a considerable mixture of different, non-aesthetic values. Ethical and religious values give to *ogosoka* its gravity, and intellectual or scholarly values contribute to the lightness of *okashimi*. Unlike the purely aesthetic values of the first two couples, for lack of a better term we could call the values belonging to this third couple “semi-aesthetic” (準美 *junbi*). In the first couple, the aesthetic value on the side of *hanayaka* shows itself independently and in saturated colours, but on the side of *sabi*, the aesthetic value reflects the shadows of *ogosoka* and *okashimi*, and thus matures in more complex hues. If we reflect again on the three contrastive couples from this perspective, we can see that in the second couple of *futoi* and *hosomi* the aesthetic value manifests itself in the purest way, in the first one, *hanayaka* and *sabi*, extra-aesthetic values begin to be mixed in, and in the third, *ogosoka* and *okashimi*, external qualities assume a further relevance.

Now I would like to examine more precisely the mutually negative relations between the terms of this three contrastive couples. Within the second couple of *futoi* and *hosomi*, once one of the terms has negated the other their relation is fixed and does not change. It does not matter if *futoi* is negated to have *hosomi* or if *hosomi* is negated to have *futoi*. As a result, once one of the two has been chosen, it has a definitive sense. To choose again and negate for a second time the first negation is obviously possible, but the necessity of slowly or abruptly moving from the first chosen negated pole to the other does not in any way belong to the character of the negation itself. Once the subjective determination of the consciousness (心) of *fūryū* has fixated the object in a certain sense, there appears its *static character*.

³⁴ This is an observation at the end of *Kyoraishō* KBZ 7:148 and BTS, 554.

Between the first couple, *hanayaka* and *sabi*, exists instead a unilateral negation, whose necessity increases gradually with the passage of time. Within the structure of *fūryū* there is a necessity that eventually negates all things *hanayaka* and moves them towards *sabi*. “I am now forty-two and my blood is still young: it is normal for my verses to seem *hanayaka*. When I become older though, nothing will be more natural than looking for the sober tranquillity of *sabi* and *shiori*”³⁵ – as it is somehow already said here, there exists a *gradual character* that modifies the “hue” of the object, passing from *hanayaka* to *sabi*.

If we move to consider what kind of negation occurs between the third couple of *ogosoka* and *okashimi*, we see that here the necessity of a mutual negation is always present within the negation itself. At all times, both *ogosoka* and *okashimi* are ready to suddenly switch into the other. *Ogosoka* is grounded in the relation between a small subject and a great object, *okashimi* in that between a small object and a great subject. But since big and small are relative things, with a change of perspective their position can turn around, and small and huge can switch suddenly.

Astronomy	<i>Tenmon o</i>	天文を
might be on its mind:	<i>kangae kao no</i>	考へ顔の
the face of a frog	<i>kawazu kana</i>	蛙かな
(Issa)		

In this haiku, the world of the frog is transferred into that of human beings: the small subject and the big one swap their position, the big object and the small one turn over each other. Thus *ogosoka* becomes *okashimi*. In other words, the *ogosoka* based on the relation between a frog (a small subject) and the sky (a big object) is turned into the *okashimi* of the relation between human being (a greater subject) and frog (a small object). On the other hand we have:

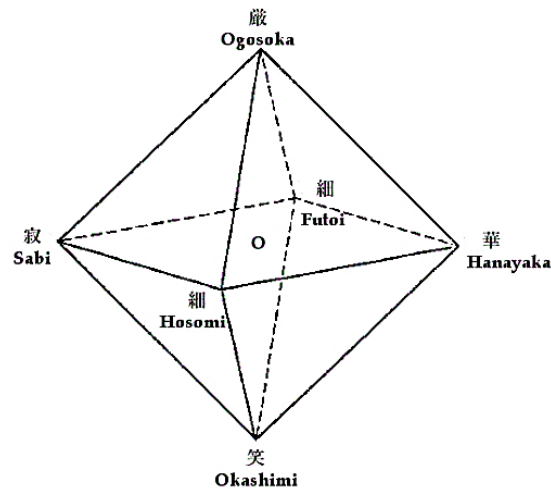
Scrawny frog	<i>Yasegaeuru</i>	瘦蛙
please don't give up	<i>makeru na Issa</i>	まけるな一茶
Issa is here!	<i>kore ni ari</i>	是にあり
(Issa)		

³⁵ *Zō rakushisha Kyorai no sho* 贈落柿舎去来書, a section of *Haikai mondō*. The quote is from a letter to Kyorai from Kyoriku, who stresses how *sabi* and *shiori* are natural developments of an older poetic personality, and should not be constructed artificially; BTS, 552.

Here we rise from an intellectual horizon to a moral one: a small object gives way to a great one, and a big subject defers to the small one. As a result, *okashimi* transforms into *ogosoka*. The *okashimi* that stood on the ground of the relation between the small object of a frog and the big subject of human being is turned into the *ogosoka* of the relation between the great object of moral virtue and the small subject of human being. It is thanks to this *revolving character* that *fūryū* can be a witness of the comedy and tragedy of human existence. In short, the negative relations that arise from these three contradictory couples show a gradual character in the first, a static character in the second, and a revolving character in the third one. The fact that the increase of variability that we see in the progression of *static*, *gradual* and *revolving* is proportional to the mixture of extra-aesthetic values, as opposed to the purely aesthetic ones, is a point worth of notice.

Part IV.

These relations can be represented schematically by this octahedron.



The six models of *fūryū* each occupy one of the apexes of this solid. In the construction of this shape, we can first trace the square whose diagonals are the two perpendicular segments going from *hanayaka* to *sabi* and from *futoi* to *hosomi*. This bi-dimensional shape is the plane of strictly aesthetic values: the diagonal of *hanayaka* and *sabi* has a *gradual* quality, and that between

futoi and *hosomi* a static one. Then, from the point *O* at the center of the square we can trace a segment perpendicular to its plane and highlight on it the two points of *ogosoka* and *okashimi*, so that all the diagonals connecting them to *hanayaka*, *sabi*, *futoi* and *hosomi* have the same length: the line between *ogosoka* and *okashimi* expresses their quasi-aesthetic value and possesses a revolving quality. If we then connect the apexes of *ogosoka* and *okashimi* to the flat square of *hanayaka*, *futoi*, *sabi* and *hosomi*, we obtain a solid shape: this is the octahedron of *fūryū*. All the values produced by *fūryū* have a position on the surface or the inside of this octahedron.

What is called *shiori* can be expressed as an asymptotic curve on the edge that connects *sabi* and *hosomi*, or a random parabolic line inscribed in the right triangle traced by *sabi*, *O* and *hosomi*. *Shiori* has been called “the shape of a verse,”³⁶ but what is found here is not simply an objective “form” opposed to subjective feelings: in the word *sugata* we must recognize instead a structure even more complex of the single *sabi* and *hosomi*.

The ten <i>dango</i> too	<i>Tō dango mo</i>	十団子も
are smaller already:	<i>kotsubu ni narinu</i>	小粒になりぬ
autumn wind!	<i>aki no kaze</i>	秋の風
(Kyoriku)		

This poem is said to have *shiori*: if we observe it, we recognize that as the mass of *dango* becomes smaller, the season is passing from summer to

³⁶ A quote from *Kyoraishō* KBZ 7:149. The word *sugata* does not effectively correspond to an objective and static form (形 *katachi*). See for instance the description by Imamichi Tomonobu, who resembles the insight of Kuki in this matter: “the Japanese *sugata* does not refer to a ‘form,’ but that instead, as we described before, it expressed the appearance of a singular movement that never stabilized itself as a form as such; it was a word implying into one modality movement and quiet.” Since “wind” is a breathing élan (勢い *ikioi*) and a repeating habit (習わし *narawashi*) [...] words like wind-image (風姿 *fūshi*, “wind-shape”) express both a form and a flowing image, and also the “appearance” of someone (風采 *fūsai* “wind-colors”) and a “landscape” (風景 *fūkei*, “windscape”) should not at all be taken as rigid, defined “forms,” but rather as “living atmospheres” (佇い *tatazumai*) [...] and in terms like *fūryū* (windflow) and *fuzei* (風情 wind-feelings) we need to recognize this aspect. Imamichi Tomonobu, *Tōyō no bigaku* 東洋の美学 (Tokyo: Tōbōshoin, 1980), 285.

autumn. There is a transformation, both in space and time, going towards a condition of gradual fading. And thus, while the length of the spatial line and of chronological continuity are distinctly perceivable in the “shape of the verse,” they both exceed and extend over the verse itself. “A poem's *shiori* lies in a feeling just suggested (余情 *yōjō*).”³⁷ “*shiori* is in what is evoked by the poem (余勢 *yosei*).”³⁸

Kurai (位 “distinction”) lies on the edge connecting the two apexes of *ogosoka* and *hosomi*, probably closer to the side of *ogosoka* than to the center:

I will limit the gap between	<i>U no hana no</i>	卯の花の
these white flowers:	<i>taema tatakan</i>	絶間たたかん
a dark door	<i>yami no mon</i>	闇の門

This verse is considered to have a particular *kurai*. It has been said that “*sabi*, *kurai*, *hosomi* and *shori* all pass from heart to heart, with no need for words (以心伝心 *ishindenshin*)”³⁹ and I do not know if in my observations I am being too impertinent, turning my back on the purport of Bashō's teachings. Maybe my own attempt rests on the misguided assumption that such *esprit de finesse* (細みの精神) can be translated in *esprit de geometrie*. And yet to me also this latter one is holding the “one thin thread” that connects all life, so that it is hard not to do so.

Makoto (“sincerity”) is “the model of Onitsura,”⁴⁰ but in the octahedron of *fūryū* it stands for a point of generation hidden in the depth of its center *O*. The point *O* generates the solid shape through its three-dimensional activity. Everything “is just rooted in *makoto*.”⁴¹ Artworks are nothing more than a centrifugal movement: “from the depth to the surface.” It is noted that, “A real artist does not simply rely on what is superficially interesting: in his work there is rather a subtle, deep perfume. And as he progresses further, he eventually arrives to a place with no colour and no

³⁷ *Tō Kyoshi monnan ben*, in *Haikai mondō*.

³⁸ *Haikai goroku* 俳諧語録, *Lexicon of the Bashō School*, a collection of writings by Chōmu (1732–1796).

³⁹ *Kyoraishō*, KBZ 7:149.

⁴⁰ Uejima Onitsura 上島鬼貫 (1661–1738).

⁴¹ *Hitorigoto* ひとりごと, a 1718 *haikai* treatise by Onitsura (accessed May 21, 2019, <http://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/1019874>).

smell.”⁴² The centrifugal movement of *makoto* is thus at the same time centripetal, and the result is a vortex centered on the *O* point. Within *makoto*, however, one has to recognize the distinction between the “*makoto* of reality” and the “*makoto* of *fūryū*.” In the dialectic between “real and unreal” (虚実論 *kyojitsuron*)⁴³ the *makoto* of reality can only grasp what is “real.” The *makoto* of *fūryū* instead not only constitutes the principle of the “right” (正) poetical expression that synthesizes “real” (実) and “unreal” (虚) but is sometimes able to embrace even unreal as such. The *makoto* of *fūryū* is wide enough to equally include the reality of:

As the thread	<i>Ito kirite</i>	糸切て
of my kite snapped	<i>kumo yori otsuru</i>	雲より落つる
it falls from the clouds	<i>ikanobori</i>	鳳巾

The “right” synthesis of:

Its thread has snapped	<i>Ito kirite</i>	糸切て
and yet my kite didn't	<i>kumo to mo narazu</i>	雲ともならず
turn into a cloud	<i>ikanobori</i>	鳳巾

And the “falseness” of:

Its thread has snapped	<i>Ito kirite</i>	糸切て
and my kite is gone.	<i>kumo to narikeri</i>	雲となりけり
turned into cloud ⁴⁴	<i>ikanobori</i>	鳳巾

To *fūryū* a square egg, the *nue*, “white hair long a thousand lengths,” the bridge of magpies, princess Kaguya born of bamboo and stone lions that

⁴² From the preface of Onitsura's *Haikai nanakuruma* 俳諧七車.

⁴³ The couple *kyojitsu* 虚実 refers to a complex dialectic of real and unreal. It is developed in particular by Kagami Shikō, to the point of being considered more his idea than Bashō's but is actually present (at least in a seminal form) already in the preface of *Minashiguri*.

⁴⁴ These three examples are taken from a little-known *haikai* treatise titled *Uyamuya no seki* 有也無也の関 (or *Genjūan haikai uyamuya no seki*) 1794; it is not included in most collected works of Bashō's school and its often considered spurious, given the similarity of its theories with that of Shikō's. A printed edition is included in *Zoku haikai ronshū* 15 (1889): 30.

raise and roar can all be *makoto*: “To make an example, for someone drunk on sake one street may look like many lines, and a bridge might appear like three or four: we should call this the *makoto* of drunkenness. And is it any different when one is oppressed by sadness or cannot hold its joy?”⁴⁵ The one and only issue of the man of *fūryū* is to “pursue the *makoto* of the poetic spirit”⁴⁶ that lies in depth below aesthetic consciousness.

The ideal of *mono no aware* (物の哀れ “feeling of things”) fully reveals itself in the *Genji monogatari*, in koto music, in the paintings of the Tosa school and in gardens built in Enshū’s style, but it could also be taken as the triangle traced by the *sabi*, *hosomi* and *hanayaka* apexes. A classic of *mono no aware* is shown in the following:

If only cherry trees	<i>Yo no naka ni</i>	世の中に
disappeared from	<i>taete sakura no</i>	たえて桜の
this world of men	<i>nakariseba</i>	なかりせば
how more peaceful would it be	<i>haru no kokoro wa</i>	春のこころは
our heart during spring	<i>nodokekaramashi</i>	のどけからまし
(Ariwara no Narihira)		

And also:

When at dusk	<i>Take no ha ni</i>	竹の葉に
the wind blows more quietly	<i>kaze fukiyowaru</i>	風ふきよわる
through the bamboo leaves:	<i>yūgure no</i>	夕暮れの
not just in autumn	<i>mono no aware wa</i>	もののあはれわ
the feeling of things	<i>aki to shite mo nashi</i>	秋としてもなし
(Kunaikyō)		

Here, *mono no aware* has a character that is mostly related at the surface of things, and yet despite this superficiality there is in it a strong gravitational pull towards the center *O* of the octahedron, which makes possible its deepening as existential sensitivity.

⁴⁵ From the preface of Buson’s *Zoku akegarasu* 続暁鳥 (accessed May 20, 2019, <http://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/1077481>). Kuki takes the example of Li Bai’s poem “white hair long three thousand leagues” from this quote.

⁴⁶ *Akazōshi*.

Turn to me 'cause I am lonely too: Autumn dusk Winter confinement once more nestling close to this wooden post (two haiku by Bashō)	<i>Kochira muke</i> <i>ware mo sabishiki</i> <i>aki no kure</i> <i>Fuyugomori</i> <i>mata yorisowamu</i> <i>kono hashira</i>	こちらむけ 我もさびしき 秋のくれ 冬籠 又よりそはむ 此柱
Of the gate I left in the night just one look: the flag of my son (anonymous woman) ⁴⁷	<i>Sararetaru</i> <i>kado o yoru miru</i> <i>nobori kana</i>	去られたる 門を夜見る 幟かな

As it is visible in these haiku, *mono no aware* rises from the depth of *makoto*, and turns its gaze on the humanity of human beings as a living creature. Therefore, it seems that once it has taken the point *O* as its center, this solid figure also possesses an essential impulse towards the surface of things. Within *yūgen* (幽玄 “deep mystery,” “dark and hazy”) this three-dimensional quality becomes even more relevant. We see it in poems like:

Rowing at dawn over the bank of Naniwa while a cuckoo raises his voice in Takatsu-no-Miya (Shinrasha Utawase)	<i>Naniwagata</i> <i>asa kogi ikeba</i> <i>hototogisu</i> <i>koe o Takatsu no</i> <i>Miya ni naku nari</i>	なには渦 あさ漕ぎ行けば 時鳥 声をたかつの 宮に鳴くなり
As the wind blows the white flower clouds by and by disappear every night clearer the moon over Yoshino (Emperor Go-Toba) ⁴⁸	<i>Kaze fukeba</i> <i>hana no shirakumo</i> <i>yaya kiete</i> <i>yonayona haruru</i> <i>Yoshino no tsuki</i>	風吹けば 花の白雲 やや消えて よなよな晴るる よしのの月

⁴⁷ Collected in Issa, *Ore ga haru*, chap. 13. English translation in Sam Hamill, *The Spring of my Life* (Boston: Shambhala, 1997).

⁴⁸ See p. 227 of 群書類従 12 (和歌部 *wakabu*), Miidera Shinrasha Utaawase (1980), judged by Fujiwara no Shunzei in 1173. The composition belongs to

If we trace a pyramid that has as a base the square of *hanayaka*, *futoi*, *sabi* and *hosomi* and as a point the apex of *ogosoka*, and then we cut it with another plane parallel to the base halfway through its diagonal edges, we obtain another pyramid with this intersection plane as its base. This second pyramid can be taken to represent the spatial positions of *yūgen*. However, within *yūgen* an important role is also played by shadow. If we think of the octahedron of *fūryū* as semi-transparent, and place a point of light close to the area of “laughter” (笑 *wara*), in the middle of the edge between *hanayaka* and *okashimi*, the shadow in the pyramid of *yūgen* would become gradually darker as we go closer to its top. Among the examples of *ogosoka* quoted before, those who become notable as examples of *yūgen* are:

Lightning / going towards darkness / a heron’s cry

Wild mandarins /and a cuckoo, yes / but in which past field?

End of month, no moon / and a centenary willow/ hugged
by the storm

In addition, the secret *biwa* themes that make “heavenly beings come down on earth” and the images of the “welcoming descent of Buddha Amida and the twenty-five bodhisattvas” are examples of *yūgen*. Throughout the course of the Heian period, the meaning of *yūgen* shows a certain shift, which could possibly correspond to the following alteration in the pyramid of *yūgen*: the corners at the base of the pyramid started to move further away from the apex of *ogosoka*, extending the diagonal edges of the pyramid, and gradually getting closer to the square of *hanayaka*, *futoi*, *sabi* and *hosomi*. At the same time, close to the apex of *ogosoka*, the pyramid was cut by another parallel plane, effectively becoming truncated.

Lastly, there was one more alteration: the descending movement of the four base edges did not occur at the same speed, and so it was as if the regular pyramid of *ogosoka-hanayaka-futoi-sabi-hosomi* got cut diagonally. The pyramid of *yūgen* lost the regular and horizontal quality of its base and redefined itself as an oblique square pyramid. In those cases where the movement towards the two apexes of *sabi* and *futoi* was faster than that towards *hanayaka* and *hosomi*, *yūgen* assumed the mode of *kanjaku* (閑寂), and where the base got instead closer to *hanayaka* and *hosomi*, the sense of

the second section about “the cuckoo of old times” and the author was quoted with the title *Chūnagon*, first of the right of the poetic sitting.

yūgen changed into *yōen* (妖艶). Due to all these effects, the shadow of *yūgen* eventually reduced its depth, and the “deep mystery” of *yūgen* lost most of its “darkness” (玄), assuming the lighter and simpler meaning of “dim” (幽).

Yūbi (優美), “graceful beauty,” develops itself three-dimensionally in the direction opposite to *yūgen*. *Yūbi* would be the tetrahedron created by the four apexes of *hanayaka*, *sabi*, *hosomi* and *okashimi*. To the range of *yūbi* belong poems like:

Much indeed I'm thanking the flowers as I go away (Bashō)	<i>Kono hodo o hana ni rei iu wakare kana</i>	此程を 花に礼いふ 別れかな
Summer rains hanging from a wax umbrella a little doll (Kikaku)	<i>Samidare ya karakasa ni tsuru koneyō</i>	五月雨や 傘につる 小人形
Warmth: just enough for only one flower of plum (Ransetsu)	<i>Ume ichirin ichirin hodo no atatakasa</i>	梅一りん 一りんほどの あたたかさ
Stirring through the clouds a heavenly spring breeze turns into perfume: all over mount Takama cherries must be in bloom	<i>Kumo sasou amatsu harukaze kaoru nari Takama no yama no hanazakari kamo</i>	雲誘ふ 天つ春風 かおるなり 高まの山の 花ざかりかも
Beat your wings and let me hear now your song, cuckoo this night of moon and deutzias will fade away soon	<i>Uchi habuki ima mo nakanan hototogisu u no hana tsukiyo sakari fukeyuku</i>	打ちはぶき 今もなかなん 郭公 卯花月夜 さかりふけ行く

The particular quality of *yūbi* is the gentle, light smile arising at the corner of one's mouth. *Mono no aware* is probably internal to *yūbi* but has lost its *okashimi* and within it the *hosomi* has a stronger stress. *Yasashimi* (優しみ “gentleness,” “shy grace”) can be in some cases seen as *yūbi*, and in some others as *mono no aware*. I think that *sōrei* (壮麗 “magnificence”) and *gōka*

(豪華 “splendor”) refer to the tetrahedron formed by the four apexes of *hanayaka*, *futoi*, *ogosoka* and *O*.

The meaning of the “boldness and grandeur” (太く大きに *futoku ōki ni*) opposed to the “subtle and dry” (細く乾び *hosoku karabi*) is not simply that of *futoi*, as it expresses the full tetrahedron of *sōrei*. In the *Mumyōshō*, Chōmei says that “boldness and grandeur are for summer and spring, while the right style for winter and autumn must be subtle and dry,”⁴⁹ then gives examples of the former. Here belong also poems like:

Seven reigns in Nara, seven pavilions in each temple: eight petals in a cherry. (Bashō) ⁵⁰	<i>Nara nanae</i> <i>Shichidō garan</i> <i>Yaezakura</i>	奈良七重 七堂伽藍 八重ざくら
--	--	-----------------------

The Hell's king mouth a crimson hole ready to spit a peony (Buson)	<i>En'ō no</i> <i>kuchi ya botan o</i> <i>hakan to su</i>	閻王の 口や牡丹を 吐かんとす
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This is the ground where painters like Eitoku and Kōrin stand, and on which the garden of the Daigo Sambōin is based.

Wabi (詫び “rustic poverty,” “withered beauty”) is the exact opposite of *sōrei*, and it could be a point inside the regular triangle of *hosomi*, *sabi* and *O*. As poetic examples of *wabi* we have:

Mountain village even more desolate when autumn comes: once more awakened by the call of deer (Mibu no Tadamine)	<i>Yamazato wa</i> <i>aki koso koto ni</i> <i>wabishikere</i> <i>shika no naku ne ni</i> <i>me o samashitsutsu</i>	山里は 秋こそことに わびしけれ 鹿の鳴くねに 眼をさましつつ
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Just like the tears of a man poor and lonely	<i>Wabibito no</i> <i>namida ni nitaru</i>	わび人の 涙に似たる
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⁴⁹ In Hisamatsu Sen'ichi, Nishio Minoru, ed., Karonsha, Nogakuronsha, *Nihon koten bungaku taikei*, 65; KSZ (1973): 77–78.

⁵⁰ Also in *L'expression de l'infini*, in a translation by Kuki: Nara à sept clôtures / Temple de sept chapelles / Fleurs de cerisier à huit clôtures.

are cherry blossoms:	<i>sakura kana</i>	桜かな
both first to fall	<i>kaze mi ni shimeba</i>	風身にしめば
when a cold wind is blowing	<i>mazu koboretsutsu</i>	まづこぼれつつ
(Saigyō)		

Be poor! Live serene!	<i>Wabite sume</i>	侘びてすめ
The Moongazer recluse sings	<i>tsukiwabisai ga</i>	月侘齋が
poems of tea-gruel	<i>naracha uta</i>	奈良茶歌
(Bashō)		

As Bashō said: “I would answer that I am poor and lonely, but there is no one to ask: even more poor and lonely.”⁵¹ Here we see that *wabi* is loneliness (寂) and a subtle mood of the heart (心細い気分 *kokoro hosoi kibun*). If we remove from *mono no aware* the triangle *hanayaka-hosomi-O* we have the area of *wabi*. This means that *wabi* is just a case of *mono no aware*. Even the *wabi*-tea of Sen no Rikyū is a full enjoyment of *mono no aware*. All *wabi* is *mono no aware*, but not all *mono no aware* must necessarily be *wabi*. For that which concerns its relationship with *shiori*, we can see that *shiori* is a curve, and *wabi* is instead a point inside the same triangle. We could think of *shiori* as the trace left by *wabi* as it moves according to certain conditions as in this poem:

Wet and forlorn I am	<i>Wabinureba</i>	わびぬれば
like floating weed:	<i>mi o ukigusa no</i>	身をうき草の
I would cut my roots	<i>ne o taete</i>	ねをたえて
if only a stream wanted me	<i>sasou mizu areba</i>	誘ふ水あらば
to drift away with it	<i>inantozo omou</i>	いなんとぞ思う
(Ono no Komachi) ⁵²		

We might not be able to find again the objective realism of the poem about the ten *dango* on mount Utsu, and yet in the touching image (姿) that is projected on the screen of subjective feelings, we can see an example of *shiori* as a trace of *wabi*. The tunes of Utazawa and the rough lines of *sumie* could also be explained by this relationship between *wabi* and *shiori*.

⁵¹ From the *haibun* 月侘齋. The imagined question is a reference to *Shinkokinshū*. Collected in *Musashiburi* (1982), from the *maegaki* of the last poem by Bashō.

⁵² *Kokinshū*, verse 938.

We have hitherto considered an octahedron as the solid shape able to represent the aesthetic values generated by *fūryū*, but someone might indeed protest this choice. The reason for this is that historically the most relevant forms assumed by *fūryū* have shown a tendency to be inclined towards *sabi* on the line between *sabi* and *hanayaka*, to be closer to *hosomi* than *futoi* in the segment between the two, and to choose *okashimi* over *ogosoka*. Somebody could therefore argue that the shape of *fūryū* is not an octahedron, but rather the tetrahedron formed by the four apexes *sabi*, *hosomi*, *okashimi* and *O*. But if we think that this interpretation would forbid us to consider as examples of *fūryū* Hōtaikō [Hideyoshi] celebrating his huge cherry-viewing banquet at the Daigo temple or Ogata Kōrin throwing his painted scrolls in the river Ōi, such objections lose all their credibility.

The philosophers of antiquity thought that four elements existed: earth, water, fire and wind. The shape of an atom of earth was a hexahedron, that of water a dodecahedron, fire atoms were cubic, and the shape of the atoms of air was an octahedron.⁵³ The same octahedron that was considered as the form of the atoms of “wind” is able to represent the system of values produced by *fūryū*: it is a coincidence, but a very appropriate one.

Part V.

Fūrai Sannin,⁵⁴ the author of *The Amazing Story of Shidōken* [Fūryū Shidōken den], refers to earth, water, fire and wind as “water, fire, earth and *ki* (気),” but when he discusses the wind present within the human body, he writes that:

Water, fire, earth and *ki* fill up every space between heaven and earth: it is then just natural for them to be stored within the human body, too, and all four also come out of it. Day by day the food we eat turns into feces, and becomes fertilizer for cereal fields: is this not earth coming out of the human body? Water leaves the body as sweat and urine. As for the air, it leaves the body going up, as breathing, or escapes it from below, and in this case, we call it fart.

⁵³ It is a reference to Plato’s *Timaeus*.

⁵⁴ Pseudonym of the polymath and comical author Hiraga Gennai (1728–1780).

In *The Amazing Story of Shidōken* he describes a *sennin* (仙人) who “lets his body freely float in the air, and lets the wind decide where to go: so that he calls himself *Fūrai sennin*, ‘the immortal who comes with the wind’ (風来仙人).” He possesses a magic fan that “holds the secret of the arts of immortals,” and “summons a fresh gust when it is hot, a warm breeze when it is cold, becomes like wings if one wants to fly,” and mocks “those bloated Confucian scholars, who cling to their musty Chinese papers and have forgotten how to be free.” It is when one entrusts his body to the wind of the great blue sky through the “wind” of its own embodied breathing, that he really becomes *fūryū*.

To sum everything up: *fūryū* is nothing other than human existence, living affirmatively the experience of aesthetic immersion grounded in natural beauty in its relationship with the social configurations of style and current: This artistic affirmation, however, always already presupposes, as an essential condition to it, a destructive character that is to be found on the ethical level. Before anything else, *fūryū* is the life attitude of someone who has become free by leaving the world (離俗), it has the detached, unbound character of the wind flow. This destruction, however, has rather the sense of an internal subversion; it does not imply an external rupture from the forms of social cooperation.

On the contrary, we might say that today's true *fūryū* could be realizing one's own natural freedom within the very forms of social cooperation. And yet, in the end, a man of *fūryū* is “someone chosen.” With all its capacity to project and throw in the world, *fūryū* first depends on its own thrownness. To call *fūryū* in one's life one must wait for the “heavenly wind” to turn its breath, as in the first verses of the poem:

Heavenly wind!	<i>Amatsu kaze</i>	天つ風
the road between clouds	<i>kumo no kayoiji</i>	雲のかよひ路
shut with your blow	<i>fujitoji yo</i>	ふきとぢよ

The experience of aestheticism within *fūryū* is nothing other than the truth (誠) of a heart that suddenly sees the dancing figures of the heavenly maidens before him, and cannot help but beg:

Just hold for a while ⁵⁵	<i>otome no sugata</i>	乙女の姿
the shape of these maidens	<i>shibashi todomen</i>	しばしとどめん
(Sōjō Henjō ⁵⁶)		

Ultimately, *Fūryū* awaits and imagines as its ultimate ground the faith in the god Shinatobe no Mikoto, born out of the living breath of Izanagi, and a prayer to the wild *Fūrai sennin*, descending from the path of clouds, one with nature and carried by the wind.

⁵⁵ Note the phrase “vermeile doch, du bist so schön” (Becker, *Bi no hakanasa*), which is the sentence uttered by Goethe's Faust. Kuki quotes this same passage in the conference on *Time and Literature* in KZS 3:346–347. He is interested in the particular temporalities opened by literary experience, both as recall of an eternal past and as an eternal fixation of the present instant. Bashō's school discussion of *fueki-ryūkō* is a likely influence for both these conceptions.

⁵⁶ *Hyakunin Isshu*, verse 12.

Essays

WAKAMATSU FARM AND THE BIRTH OF JAPANESE AMERICA

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The large Japanese American population in California has played a major role in the history of the state. Its presence began with the establishment of the Wakamatsu Tea & Silk Farm Colony during 1869 in northern California in an area called Gold Hill, near Coloma, in a town named Placerville. The colony survived for a scant two years, but it served as the harbinger for the immigration of hundreds of thousands of Japanese who began arriving in the 1880s. Today Wakamatsu Farm is owned and preserved by the American River Conservancy (ARC), which bought the property in 2010 as an important historical site and community resource.

Congresswoman Doris Matsui has declared that “To many Japanese Americans, the Wakamatsu Colony is as symbolic as Plymouth Rock was for American colonists.” Small numbers of Japanese had visited the United States prior to the opening of the Colony, but the Wakamatsu venture was the first serious attempt to create a large self-sustaining Japanese enclave before the initial large waves of Japanese immigration in the mid-1880s. Today, Wakamatsu Farm is an important center for pilgrimages by Japanese Americans to honor their ancestors and for the study of the huge contributions people of Japanese ancestry have made in North America since the colony was established in 1869.

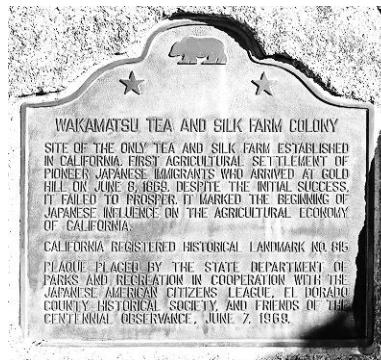


Figure 1. Historical Marker for the Wakamatsu Colony Unveiled by Governor Ronald Reagan in 1969

The Wakamatsu Colony, including at least 22 workers from Japan, is historically important for a number of reasons. First, they established the largest Japanese enclave in the United States before the start of massive Japanese immigration in the mid-1880s. Second, they were the first group of Japanese who planned to settle permanently in North America. Third, they were the vanguard of Issei (first-generation Japanese immigrants) to the United States. Fourth, they set the pattern for Japanese agricultural activity that, by the early 1900s, made the Japanese a dominant force in Californian agriculture.

The Wakamatsu Colony, despite its ultimate failure, demonstrated that Japanese tea could be grown in California. During the Colony's time at the Placerville farm, Jou Schnell, the Japanese wife of the Wakamatsu Colony's founder, John Henry Schnell (born in the early 1840s) gave birth to the first child of Japanese parentage in North America. Okei Ito (1852–1871), a young woman brought over to care for the daughters of the Schnells, became the first Japanese woman and immigrant to die in the United States and be buried on American soil, where she still rests in peace at Wakamatsu Farm.

Research on the history of Wakamatsu Farm is difficult because of the paucity of written records. Neither John Henry Schnell nor any of the Japanese workers left any records of their motivations in coming to California, what they did while there, and what had been their life history before coming to California. We have identified a handful of the workers and can trace the evolution of their lives, but the identity and history of most of the workers remains a mystery. The best source material consists of many articles in contemporary northern California newspapers. American journalists were very curious about the Japanese colonists, and they gave the Wakamatsu Colony Farm considerable coverage. The problem is that the journalists always talked to Schnell and not the Japanese workers.

There is a legend that many of the Japanese workers were from the samurai class. This is impossible to verify because there are insufficient details concerning the identity of the workers, but the U.S. Census of 1870 does provide some clues. It lists 22 Japanese with Schnell in the Gold Hill District of Coloma, including 14 men, six women and two children. Their occupations are listed as carpenters and farm workers, which in most cases is probably accurate. It is entirely possible, however, that one or more of the Japanese were indeed of samurai rank, but we cannot be absolutely sure.

A final group of Japanese, perhaps numbering up to ten, arrived during the summer or autumn of 1870 after the census. Even though the

number of Japanese colonists remained small, this was the largest known group of Japanese in the United States at that time and the first group that came with the intention of making their permanent home in the U.S.

The Isolationist Policies of the Tokugawa Regime and the Collapse of the Shogunate

To understand the significance of the Wakamatsu colony, it is important to understand political conditions in nineteenth century Japan, as it was a nation in crisis since the mid-1800s. A group of young and highly nationalistic samurai from western Japan successfully challenged the power of the ruling Tokugawa Shogunate (1600–1868) when Western powers led by the United States forced Japan to open its doors to Western influence and commerce in the 1850s and 1860s. The Japanese refugees who came to live and work at the Wakamatsu Colony in America were most likely refugees from the Aizu domain in northern Japan which had fought unsuccessfully against the new imperial government.

While hundreds of thousands of Chinese had been fleeing their strife-torn land for such destinations as Southeast Asia, Hawaii and North America since the early 1800s, Japan's Tokugawa government had successfully isolated Japan from almost all contact with the outside world. The Shogunate forbade the entry of foreigners, and Japanese were not allowed to leave their home islands. This closed-door policy enabled Japan to maintain its independence and domestic peace for well over two centuries.

This isolationist doctrine remained in place until Commodore Matthew Perry and his fleet of American naval ships forced the Japanese to open several ports to U.S. trade in 1853–1854. Growing numbers of Europeans and Americans began entering Japan in the 1850s, 1860s, and beyond, but the prohibition of free Japanese travel abroad remained in force through the mid-1880s. After 1868, the Tokugawa government and its successor, the Meiji government, permitted officials to travel to Europe and North America through to the 1880s, but their numbers remained quite small. Some of the early visiting Japanese in Hawaii and the United States were fishermen whose boats had drifted far out to sea and who were rescued by ships from the West. As one Hawaiian official noted as late as 1881, "The

Japanese are not an emigrating people.” That is why an attempt to create a Japanese colony in California in 1869 is so significant.¹

The reasons for the founding of the Wakamatsu Colony and the later massive emigration from Japan are very different. The forced opening of Japan in the 1850s brought on a profound political crisis for the Tokugawa government. Its inability to fend off the West while allowing foreigners to live and work in Japan caused groups of highly nationalist samurai officials, many from western Japan, to openly challenge the Shogunate. They advocated the creation of a new stronger national government, based on direct rule by the Emperor and his officials, that could withstand the challenge from the West.

The nationalist groups formed a powerful army around the teenage Emperor Meiji and forced the Shogun, his government, and his army to surrender in early 1868 after several years of hard fighting. The new regime inaugurated the Meiji era (1868–1912) that brought about the intensive modernization and transformation of Japan into a powerful military and industrial complex by the early twentieth century. However, despite the Shogun’s resignation and collapse of his government and army in early 1868, a coalition of Northern provinces remained loyal to the Tokugawa regime. They opposed the new Meiji government and decided to resist the new imperial army.

The strongest of the Northern provinces resisting the new Meiji government was Aizu. Aizu’s governor (*daimyo*) was Katamori Matsudaira (1835–1893) whose base was at Tsuruga Castle in the town of Wakamatsu. Aizu had a proud military tradition. Clan lord Matsudaira and his small samurai army were determined to continue the fight against the Meiji government. Because the Meiji army had access to ample supplies of modern weapons, it had a strong advantage against domains such as Aizu. Since the Aizu samurai lacked modern guns and cannons, they turned to two German arms dealers, John Henry Schnell and his brother Edward (c. 1840-?) who supplied them with a large cache of weaponry, including remnants from the American civil war.

Matsudaira was one of the Schnell’s best customers and the brothers also trained the Aizu samurai in the use of these modern guns and cannons.

¹ For a detailed history of Japanese emigration during this period, see John E. Van Sant, *Pacific Pioneers: Japanese Journeys to America and Hawaii, 1850-80*.

Matsudaira's relationship with John Henry Schnell was close enough that he gave him an honorary Japanese name which included two of the same kanji (Chinese characters) in Matsudaira's name. John Henry married a Japanese samurai class woman (named Jou²) with whom he had two daughters by 1870, including Mary Schnell who was born at Wakamatsu Farm in 1870.

The Boshin civil war of 1868–1869 involved a large well-armed imperial army marching north of Tokyo to attack the Tokugawa regime supporters one by one. The imperial army attacked Matsudaira's forces in October 1868, quickly laying siege to the town of Wakamatsu and firing endless rounds of cannon fire into Tsuruga Castle. Matsudaira gathered approximately 5,000 people in Tsuruga Castle, including 1,000 elderly, women, and children, and continued their resistance as the castle was sieged by the troops of the new imperial government.



Figure 2. Tsuruga Castle in Aizu-Wakamatsu

Casualties were high on both sides, but by early November 1868, it became clear to Matsudaira that he had to surrender. By then much of Aizu lay in ruins, and villages and farms were totally destroyed. The Meiji government forced many Aizu survivors to march north to barren regions, where they had to fend for themselves during a bitter cold winter. The Matsudaira was quickly condemned to death on a charge of treason and held in prison, but the Meiji government soon decided that killing him would make him a martyr. Instead, he was stripped of his wealth and power,

² Mrs. Schnell is also referred to as Oyoo.

received a pardon, and spent the rest of his days as a priest at the Toshogu Shrine at Nikko where the founder of the Tokugawa Shogunate is interred.

John Henry Schnell's Plan for a Tea and Silk Farm in California

The privileged position of western people in early Meiji Japan may have saved the Schnell brothers from severe punishment for their assistance to domains like Aizu that had resisted the new imperial government. We know little about the life of Edward, except that he was a map maker and may have continued working in Japan. John Henry probably concluded that he had no occupational future in Japan, although his relations with the new government are unclear. It was probably at this point that he decided on a bold move to start a farm in California, staffed by workers from Japan, that would produce tea and silk for the American market.

Although Wakamatsu Farm was the first Japanese colony in North America, it seems that the scheme was directed by John Henry. It is likely that he conceived the idea, recruited the Japanese workers, bought agricultural supplies to bring to California, financed the transport of Japanese, bought the land at Gold Hill, and directed all the operations from June 1869 to June 1871. Indications are that Lord Matsudaira also supported the venture as a potential retreat for himself, although to what extent is not known.

John Henry's plan to create a silk and tea farm in California was most likely a response to widespread interest in creating a vast silk industry in that state. A few years earlier, a French producer of silk came to California preaching the idea that California was better suited than France for the growth of a sericulture industry. The California State Legislature adopted a program in the mid-1860s that would pay a bounty of \$250 for every farmer who had a plantation of 5,000 mulberry trees at least two years old and \$300 for 100,000 merchantable cocoons produced. These bounties encouraged the planting of trees and the production of cocoons. According to one report in 1869, there were over ten million mulberry trees in various stages of growth in central and southern California, which reportedly put a strain on the finances of the state government. However, a severe drought around 1870 and a lack of any palpable demand for cocoons led to a strong downturn in the silk industry by the early 1870s.

There was also considerable interest in promoting the production of tea in California. Imported Japanese and Chinese teas unloaded in San Francisco then shipped by rail to the East coast suggested the state might benefit from the domestic production of such types of teas. There was also a

bounty offered by the state government to those farmers who would attempt the cultivation of tea plants. However, both the silk and tea bounties were rescinded by the state legislature in 1870, merely a year after the Wakamatsu Colony was established.

Since he left no written record of any kind, we can only speculate what went through Schnell's mind when he developed plans to open a tea and silk farm in California. There is no record of his having visited California before the Spring of 1869, and there is no record of what he read or heard about the geography and state of agriculture there. It may have occurred to Schnell that the growing demand for tea and silk in the United States caused a rise of Japanese exports of those products. Therefore, if he could open a farm producing those goods and could persuade a team of experienced Japanese workers to work on his farm, he could sell his products directly to the American market at prices lower than the imported goods from Japan.

Travel to California

John Henry, his wife Jou, their infant daughter Frances, and six Japanese left Yokohama on the PMSS China and arrived in San Francisco on May 20, 1869. Because the presence of Japanese in the United States was such a rarity at that point in history, and no Japanese had ever come with the intention of settling in the U.S., the first Japanese Colonists' arrival attracted the attention of local newspapers.

Despite the strong anti-Chinese prejudice that was evident in California since the start of the Gold Rush, the Japanese at the Wakamatsu colony received a warm welcome from journalists and the public in general. The sentiments of a July 1869 writer for the Daily Alta California were widespread:

The Japanese are as intelligent as we are. They are brave, industrious and economical. They have a sort of cooperative principal which maintains the dignity of labor and takes away its subservience. They will win universal respect by a sort of heathenish habit they have of minding their own business.

An article in the California Alta Daily News of 27 May 1869 stated:

Arrival of Japanese Immigrants
Three Japanese Families—Thirty More Coming Soon—
Probability That The Defeated Prince Will Follow—Japan
No Home For Them Since the Civil War

A Prussian gentleman, Herr Schnell by name, who for ten years lived in the northern part of Japan, has landed in San Francisco with three Japanese families. These three families form the advance guard of a group of forty families now on its way to this port. Eighty more families are to follow, making a total of 120 families and 400 persons coming to California to establish a permanent colony here.

Most of them are silk producers, while some are cultivators of tea. They have brought with them 50,000 three-year-old kuwa trees, which are used in the production of high-quality silk... Besides these, 500 three-year-old, five feet saplings of the wax tree and six million tea seeds are coming later... These Japanese, far from being serfs, are free people. Should the prince of Aizu come, many more immigrants and their families are due to follow....

The whole Japanese party is dignity incarnate. By their nature they are a people who will put up with no insult or deception; that must always be borne in mind. It is dangerous to treat Japanese in the same fashion as Chinese. With their industry and highly developed skills, they have come with their families to help develop our resources.

Schnell's wife Jou also received considerable adulation in the press. They wrote that she had a "refined delicacy, very pretty forms and features, and a very winning address," and that she was seen as being most "healthy, frugal, industrious and very affectionate."³ This is the only time we hear of any commentary about Mrs. Schnell and direct communication may have been difficult given the probable language barrier. The newspaper article quoted here promised a large influx of Japanese, including the former daimyo, Matsudaira. We know that six came with the Schnells in May 1869, and that there were 22 when the 1870 census was taken a year later. A few more Japanese arrived in late summer or autumn 1870, but there were never more than 30 or 35 Japanese in the colony. There were no other

³ *California Alta Daily News*, May 27, 1869.

concentrations of Japanese as large as the group from Wakamatsu in 1870 elsewhere in the United States.

The Colonists had labor contracts signed in Japan committing them to work for the Schnells for a small monthly wage. We know nothing about these contracts, but one contemporary newspaper stated that the amount paid to each worker was four dollars a month, a wage far below the cost of living in California at that time. The same paper indicated that some of the Japanese workers left Schnell's employ in early 1871 with hopes of finding higher pay elsewhere.

Settling in at Gold Hill

John Henry acted quickly upon arrival in San Francisco to find a permanent home. He negotiated a purchase of a 160-acre farm at Gold Hill near Placerville and Coloma in El Dorado County whose owner, Charles Garner, had placed his land on the market to realize his desire to move to San Francisco. The purchase price was \$5,000. Schnell gave a down payment of \$500 and signed a promissory for the rest, and then quickly boarded his group on the PMSS China, which took them to San Francisco. They then took a steamer to Sacramento where they procured enough wagons to take them and their goods the last 40 miles to Gold Hill. According to California Registered Historical marker #815, the colonists arrived at Gold Hill on June 8, 1869.

We must rely on contemporary newspaper accounts to trace the history of the Wakamatsu colony from June 1869 to June 1871 when Schnell and his family left Gold Hill never to be heard from again. These journalists focused on the progress that the colonists were making in planting and caring for their crops, but we hear nothing concerning the management, distribution of labor or the day-to-day operation of the colony. We know that they made a quick recovery from their arduous journey from Japan to Gold Hill. They planted extensive areas of tea seedlings and mulberry trees that had been grafted and shipped from Japan.

Initial newspaper reports of the colony's progress were quite positive. Six weeks after the tea seedlings were planted, they were "up to a finger's height." Three months later Schnell displayed some of their agricultural products, including tea, other plants, and fine cocoons at the California State Agricultural Fair in Sacramento. That summer, a reporter from the Placerville Mountain Democrat visited the colony at nearby Gold Hill and wrote that he saw tea plants that were in "vigorous health." Later visits generated a report that the colony's mulberry trees appeared to be in good health, that tea plants had adapted well to the soil and climate, and that

the silk worms were larger and had a brighter color than similar worms elsewhere.

A reporter for the Daily Morning Call who visited the Farm in January 1870 wrote:

Here I saw, for the first time in my life, the tea-plant in growth. From the experiments thus far made, Mr. Schnell is convinced that the problem of tea culture in California is solved, and there is no longer doubt but as we can raise as good teas here as are produced in China and Japan. The few plants which I saw were only an experimental crop, planted in July [1869], when the ground was dry, hard and parched, raised under the most dis-advantageous circumstances, in one of the driest seasons ever known, but show all the signs of a healthy and vigorous condition.

Schnell and two unnamed colonists attended the 1870 Horticultural Fair in San Francisco and entered some of their products in the prize competition. An article in the June 1870 issue of the San Francisco Call took note:

Herr Schnell of the Japanese Colony in Gold Hill, El Dorado County makes a fine display of Japanese plants, grown from imported shrubs and seeds. Among his articles are fine healthy tea plants, which were planted on March 14, 1870 last. These plants are about four inches high and are vigorous and healthy. He also exhibited samples of rice plants and a specimen of the Japanese pepper tree.

Additional news articles reported good progress in the production of tea plants and other crops, but there were occasional comments concerning the many tea plants that had perished due to the prolonged drought that affected the region. It is apparent that Schnell was able to grow a few “experimental” tea plants and the like but was unable to produce these crops on a large scale – a factor that would lead to the dissolution of the colony in June 1871.



Figure 3. The farm house at Gold Hill used by the Wakamatsu Colony from 1869 to 1871

The End of the Colony

The Wakamatsu Tea & Silk Farm Colony ceased operations in June 1871, just two years after it began. There were numerous reasons for the unsuccessful end of this venture including a prolonged drought, a lack of funding to keep the project afloat, contaminated water that killed the young plants, and perhaps too small a workforce to work the land.

Contemporary journalists visiting the farm in 1870 and 1871 viewed first-hand the awful effects of a prolonged California drought. Schnell and his Japanese workers were accustomed to a moist Japanese climate in Aizu with cold winters filled with snow and rainy humid summers. The climate in California is much different, with moist winters and long, hot, dry summers. The reporters described how most of the tea plants simply withered away in the intense summer heat and that few plants ultimately survived. While Schnell had initially resisted irrigating crops, the drought made it necessary for him to purchase water from a local mining ditch. This water contained

large amounts of the contaminant iron sulfate, which coated and ultimately killed many of the remaining plants.

Financial difficulties also helped to doom the colony. The fact that Schnell purchased the land with a down payment of only \$500 and signed a promissory note for the rest of the \$5,000 is an indication that his finances may have been stretched. He may have hoped to get some bounty money for his tea and silk operations from the state, but those payments dried up by 1870. Another severe blow probably came when the former daimyo Matsudaira was released from captivity by the Meiji government with the condition that he surrender all his wealth.

There was also the question of payments to Schnell's Japanese workers. The farm would have been a severe drain on funding with little immediate return on the investment. Newspapers reported a drain of workers who, by spring 1871, were leaving the colony in search of better paying work elsewhere in California. When Schnell made his departure, many of the Japanese workers had probably already left. We know very little about the Japanese workers and how they felt about Schnell and working on the farm. After leaving, some found employment elsewhere in America and others returned to Japan.

Two of the Japanese, Okei Ito (Okei-san; c. 1852–1871) and Matsunosuke Sakurai (c. 1834–1901) remained at the farm site and were soon taken in by the nearby large Veerkamp family, who acquired the Wakamatsu Farm property by 1873. The Veerkamps were fond of their Japanese friends, regarding them as family. Shortly after joining them, Okei-san, whom they treated like a daughter, developed a fever and died at age nineteen. Matsunosuke, however, lived with the Veerkamps until his death in 1901. He became their valued employee as a gardener and produce marketer in San Francisco.

Another colonist, Masumizu Kuninosuke (also known as "Kuni") moved to Coloma and became a farmer and miner. He married Carrie Wilson, a woman of African and American Indian descent in 1877, and they moved to Sacramento to raise a family. Kuni died at age 66 in 1915 and was buried in a cemetery in Colusa, California. Kuni's family is the first Japanese, African American, and Native American family in world history, and some of his descendants still visit Wakamatsu Farm on occasion.

Okei-san, who as a youth had lived in Aizu, had spent her time looking after the two small Schnell daughters until the Schnells departed and left her behind. She is said to have spent many evenings walking to a nearby knoll north of the main farm house to watch the sun setting in the direction

of her homeland, Japan. When she died, the Veerkamp family buried her on the knoll she loved to visit. Matsunosuke saved enough money to eventually purchase a headstone to honor her grave. The original headstone cracked with age and has been replaced by an exact replica that remains on her grave site today.

Okei-san's grave is the first burial site of a Japanese woman and immigrant on American soil. To this day, Japanese, Japanese-Americans and other visitors travel to Okei-san's grave to pay respects to the girl from Japan who was never able to see her family and homeland again. As a tribute to her life and loss, an exact replica of Okei-san's headstone sits at the top of Mount Seaburi in Aizu Wakamatsu, where it is visited by travelers in Japan.

Okei-san and the Symbolic Importance of Wakamatsu Farm

Anthropologist Margaret Mead⁴ stressed that every defined culture has its own creation myth and heroic personages who played key roles in the founding of the cultural group. The Bible has its Genesis, and Japan has its Izanagi-no-Okami. Japanese-Americans were the largest Asian cultural group in the United States for much of the twentieth century. Many of the Japanese-Americans feel that Wakamatsu Farm is the symbolic point of origin for Japanese America and that Okei-san is a symbol of the early pioneer spirit that allowed for the creation of Japanese America.

There is little connection between the Japanese who worked at Wakamatsu Farm between 1869–1871 and the tens of thousands of Japanese who began immigrating to North America every year starting in the mid-1800s. But when the original Issei population attained old age in the early 1920s, a number of Issei historians researched and later wrote comprehensive histories of the Japanese presence in North America. Some California Issei heard rumors of the Wakamatsu Tea & Silk Farm Colony, so they went to Gold Hill to investigate. It was there that they learned of the history of the ill-fated colony and discovered the grave of Okei-san.

These Issei histories, some published in the late 1920s and early 1930s, designated the Wakamatsu Colony as the point of origin for Japanese America. Okei-san became a symbol of the early settlers, a virtuous young woman who led the way for other Japanese pioneers whose hard work and dedication won them the admiration of later immigrants from Japan. These historians created their own version of Okei-san. She became a romantic hero

⁴ Interview with Margaret Mead, November 1971.

in their eyes. As the first Japanese woman to die in North America, her pure young virginal state, short life and early death enhanced her status as a pioneer hero. Later ethnic Japanese began to monumentalize her gravesite as a key element of Japanese in America. Groups of ethnic Japanese started to clear away the brush around the grave and made the fading inscription more legible by adding black ink. At the biannual convention of the Japanese American Citizens League in 1934 near San Francisco, representatives voted to “beautify the grave of Miss Okei, the first Japanese woman pioneer.” Setting up a special fund, they proclaimed, “Miss Okei has carved a niche in the memory of her contemporaries and her posterity. Her name is now tradition, an inspiration that has guided others to pioneer along the same lines.”



Figure 4. Grave Stone of Okei Ito (1852–1871) at Gold Hill

It is in this way that Wakamatsu Farm and Okei-san have become symbols of the founding of Japanese America and the site of frequent pilgrimages by ethnic Japanese and Japanese Americans.

Wakamatsu Farm Since 1871

After the neighboring Veerkamp family acquired the Wakamatsu Farm property, Francis Veerkamp and his six surviving sons abandoned any type of tea and silk cocoon cultivation. Instead, the Veerkamps grew fruit, grains, nuts, cattle, swine and poultry. Their descendants maintained successful farming operations on the property for over 130 years. They used the land to support a dairy for many decades. Maintained as their own private property, few knew the significant history of the Veerkamp's beautiful, rolling farm land in the heart of Gold Hill. Fortunately, the Veerkamp family preserved Okei-san's grave marker and a few precious artifacts, thus ensuring the Wakamatsu Colony story would survive.

During the year of the Japanese American centennial in 1969, then-Governor Ronald Reagan flew to Gold Hill by helicopter to dedicate the historic landmark for the Wakamatsu Tea & Silk Farm Colony. The plaque and memorial garden remain on the Gold Trail School property just below the knoll where Okei-san is buried. Nearly 50 years later, the land and buildings became mainly unused and dilapidated. In 2007, the Veerkamp family decided to sell their run-down farm.

In 2010, a non-profit land trust called the American River Conservancy (ARC) purchased the 272-acre historic farmland from the Veerkamp family for fair market value. Shortly before the purchase, the Conservancy worked with the National Park Service to place the property on the National Register of Historic Places at a level of "National Significance." Since then, the Conservancy continues to raise funds and work diligently to preserve and share the impressive Wakamatsu Farm resources with the world. No longer is the history of the Farm one of El Dorado County's best kept secrets. Now the Conservancy offers Wakamatsu Farm to the world as a community place to experience natural resources, sustainable agriculture, and cultural history.

The heart of the Conservancy's mission at Wakamatsu Farm is connecting people with the land, in all its abundance. Simultaneously, a charming and magnificent place, with a wealth of resources and stories, visitors and volunteers of all ages are inspired to learn, work, and enjoy a thriving natural playground at Wakamatsu Farm. Each year, hundreds of school children experience field trips on the property where they learn about science, farming and history. The Conservancy supports organic and sustainable farming operations that grow and sell produce, animals, and other products to benefit the community. The public enjoys scheduled events, tours, and various programs throughout the year. One major ongoing project

is the restoration of the old white farm house where the Japanese colonists lived, including a new commercial kitchen to support farm meals and events.

Since the Conservancy acquired the property, tremendous progress is being made at Wakamatsu Farm. Each year, more and more people benefit from a unique community resource, which is becoming a destination farm for tourists. To support the future of the farm, ARC continuously welcomes donors, volunteers, and other supporters eager to contribute to the future of a heritage site that honors Japan and Japanese Americans unlike any other place in the world.⁵

⁵ The public can discover more about landmark Wakamatsu Farm, including ways to support its mission and visit this private property at www.ARConservancy.org/wakamatsu. For further reading, there are several books, pamphlets and articles which give a broader coverage to this topic: See Daniel A. Métraux, *The Wakamatsu Tea & Silk Colony Farm and the Creation of Japanese America* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2019); and John E. Van Sant, *Pacific Pioneers: Japanese Journeys to America and Hawaii, 1850–80* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000). Eichiro Azuma also gives a broad explanation of the legend and symbolic importance of Okei Ito in *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005). Erika Lee provides a broad history of Japanese immigration to the United States in her *The Making of Asian America: A History* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015). The American River Conservancy has published a pamphlet (“The Wakamatsu Tea & Silk Colony Farm: America’s First Issei—The Original Japanese Settlers”) on the history of the Farm as well as many articles in its various newsletters.

**JAPANESE STUDIES IN ISRAEL:
A RESPONSE TO MERON MEDZINI'S "FROM ALIENATION TO
PARTNERSHIP: ISRAEL – JAPAN RELATION" IN THE
CONTEMPORARY REVIEW OF THE MIDDLE EAST**

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The two could hardly be more different - Japanese politely obviating any debate; Israelis demonstrating friendship through arguments. But their conversation, which some might have dismissed as globally unimportant, acquires deep meaning. In this regard, the idea to write an article about the relationship between both countries is an interesting one. But in the midst of such conversation one should not develop misconceptions by uninformed research assumptions that do not help to understand the other. An example of such is, unfortunately, Meron Medzini's "From Alienation to Partnership: Israel-Japan Relation" contribution to the *Contemporary Review of the Middle East*, 5(3) 232–240. This text seeks to clarify its mayor flaws.

Japanese Studies in Israel traces back to the Department of Chinese and Japanese Studies established at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in the early 1960s. Due to the popularity of East Asian Studies among Israeli students, it has since expanded to include departments of East Asian Studies at the universities of Tel-Aviv and Haifa, as well as East Asian Studies programs offered by other universities and colleges throughout Israel. I am aware of currently more than 30 professional scholars in Israel whose PhD degree or research focus is in the field of Japanese Studies. Moreover, the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem carries about 10,000 books in Japanese. These numbers are both remarkable given the relatively small size of the country.

Of the three major universities in Israel offering programs in Japanese Studies, each developed its own emphasis: Tel Aviv University, with brilliant scholars on Japanese Buddhism like Erez Joskovich, emphasizes Japanese traditional art, culture, and religion; Haifa University focuses on modern Japanese society and culture; and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem highlights Japanese history and politics, most notably the work of Ben-Ami Shilony, the honorary president of the Israeli Association of Japanese Studies (IAJS).

In February 2012, the IAJS was established at a special symposium at Hebrew University on the 60th anniversary of the establishment of

diplomatic relations between Japan and Israel. It is a cross-university organization made of scholars of Japanese Studies in Israel and is dedicated to the promotion of research and teaching on Japan in Israel. The symposium was titled *Israel and Japan: Regional, Bilateral, and Cultural Perspectives* and consisted of three clusters, one being *Geopolitics and Diplomacy in Japan-Israel relations*. But unfortunately, this cluster did not lead to any significant publications.

Prior to the symposium Daniel Ari Kapner and Stephen Levine's "The Jews of Japan"¹ appeared, which gives a valuable overview of Jewish-Japanese history after David Kranzler's study of the Jewish refugee community of Japanese occupied Shanghai was published in Israel 13 years earlier.² The only significant publications on Japanese-Jewish connections one finds, however, are two books: *The Jews and the Japanese: The Successful Outsiders* by Ben-Ami Shilony,³ in which he compares both groups' interactions with what he sees as the "Christian West," their attempts to integrate into the West, and its repeated rejection of them; and the outstanding study *Jews in the Japanese Mind: The History and Uses of a Cultural Stereotype (Studies of Modern Japan)* by David G. Goodman and Masanori Miyazawa.⁴

What makes *Jews in the Japanese Mind* so compelling is the authors' discussion of the Aum Shinrikyo religious cult, which published a vicious 95-page anti-Semitic tract that declared war on the Jews shortly before releasing deadly sarin gas on the Tokyo subway in March 1995. The authors convincingly trace the tragedy back to a century of Japanese antisemitism. Importantly, *Jews in the Japanese Mind* also reveals the truth about various Japanese books, with publications in the millions, that echo the fabricated text *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and blame Jews for the decline of the Japanese Yen or the 1995 Kobe earthquake. The authors also

¹ Daniel Ari Kapner and Stephen Levine, "The Jews of Japan," *Jerusalem Letter* 425/24 Adar I. 5760 (2000).

² David Kranzler, *Japanese, Nazis and Jews: The Jewish Refugee Community of Shanghai, 1938–1945* (Hoboken, N.J.: KTAV Pub. House, 1987).

³ Ben-Ami Shilony, *The Jews and the Japanese: The Successful Outsiders* (Rutland, VT: Tuttle Publishing, 1992).

⁴ David G. Goodman and Masanori Miyazawa, *Jews in the Japanese Mind: The History and Uses of a Cultural Stereotype (Studies of Modern Japan)* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2000).

convincingly demonstrate how Japanese attitudes toward Jews have had real political and cultural consequences.

The other text which shaped the image many Japanese have regarding Jews is the Talmud. Interestingly, books (supposedly) dealing with the Talmud have been bestsellers in Japan. The Talmud, or what people believe it to be, was first made popular in Japan by a Rabbi named Marvin Tokayer. I have already written about Tokayer in the context of antisemitism in South Korea which, unfortunately, constitutes a similar case.⁵ Someone looking for a copy of the Talmud in Japan will eventually come across Rabbi Tokayer, as many of the books name him as the author, even having a picture of him inside their front covers.

The first book he published in Japan is entitled *Five Thousand Years of Jewish Wisdom: Secrets of the Talmud Scriptures*. It was written over only three days and has gone through about seventy printings and sold about half a million copies. Tokayer went on to publish more than twenty books on Judaism, mainly for the Japanese market, covering topics such as Jewish education, Jewish humor, or debates around sex dreams in the Talmud.⁶ Many of these books entitled “Talmud” show more cartoons of people in front of churches than text, and for most of these books Hideaki Kasei served as Tokayer’s translator, since he was not able to speak Japanese himself. Shamefully, Kasei is now chairman of the Society for the Dissemination of Historical Facts, which refutes Japanese war crimes during World War II.⁷

Goodman and Miyazawa highlighted Tokayer’s dependency on Kasei in *Jews in the Japanese Mind* very well: “Tokayer cannot read his own work and does not always know what is in it.” With Kasei “speaking through” Tokayer, they argue that Tokayer’s publications lend “credence to the strangest myths and most stubborn stereotypes of Jews in Japan.”⁸ To see how right they are in their observation, one only needs to browse through

⁵ Christopher L. Schilling, “Jewish Seoul: An Analysis of Philo- and Antisemitism in South Korea,” *Modern Judaism* 38/2 (2018): 183–197; Christopher L. Schilling, “Review of *Under the Shadow of the Rising Sun: Japan and the Jews during the Holocaust Era* by Meron Medzini,” *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 36/3 (2018): 194–204.

⁶ Schilling, “Jewish Seoul,” 4–5.

⁷ Schilling, “Jewish Seoul,” 5; and Schilling, “Review of *Under the Shadow*,” 196.

⁸ Goodman and Miyazawa, *Jews in the Japanese Mind*, 285.

some of the Tokayer publications, such as, *There Is No Education in Japan: The Jewish Secret of Educating Geniuses*. Tokayer certainly has commercialized Judaism in Japan in order to sell copies while ignoring that it could inflame Jewish myths in probably the last regions of the world that have not yet been infected by the disease of antisemitism.

Medzini, however, calls Tokayer a “pioneer in the study of Japan and the Jews,” and praises him for giving “much-needed advice” to the publication of Medzini’s book *Under the Shadow of the Rising Sun: Japan and the Jews During the Holocaust Era*.⁹ Medzini is an adjunct associate professor of modern Japanese history and Israeli foreign policy at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where he started teaching modern Japanese history in 1964. He began his teaching career after gaining the position of director of the Israel Government Press Office in Jerusalem from 1962 to 1978. Tellingly, Zev Furst, former political consultant to various Israeli Prime Ministers, called Medzini in the *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs* “wrongheaded” and missing fundamental and overriding points of the discussion around Israeli public relations.¹⁰ Among Medzini’s previous publications, one finds “The Chinese Are Coming,” “Hands Across Asia,” and *Under the Shadow of the Rising Sun*, which he completed with a scholarship from the Louis Frieberg Center for East Asia Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

I have already written in great detail in *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* about the academic sloppiness that led to *Under the Shadow of the Rising Sun*. Particularly, the book misunderstands the history of the Holocaust as well as German so-called “reparations” (*Wiedergutmachungszahlungen*), and downplays Japanese war crimes in China. It calls Bulgaria, a country that murdered over thirteen thousand Jews, a “brave nation”¹¹ during the Holocaust for not having murdered more. And it shamefully calls Franco’s Spain a “bright ray in the darkest nightmare.”¹² Moreover, Medzini seems unaware of anti-Semitic writings within Buddhist modernism in Japan, wrongfully claiming “there was nothing that dealt with

⁹ Meron Medzini, *Under the Shadow of the Rising Sun: Japan and the Jews during the Holocaust Era* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2016).

¹⁰ Zev Furst, “Responses to Meron Medzini,” *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs* 1/3 (2007).

¹¹ *Ibid.*, ix.

¹² *Ibid.*

antisemitism.”¹³ The book also does not mention Ivar Lissner, who had Jewish ancestry and was a Nazi spy in Japan (though he was later arrested by the Japanese). The reader might also wonder why the book’s title calls the Holocaust an “era,” even though it happened shockingly fast just within a couple of years. The book also appeared in an Academic Studies Press series on “Jewish Identities in Post-Modern Society,” though it is clearly not on post-modernism nor on Jewish identities at all.

The book wrongfully claims that, “The concept of genocide was not known to the Japanese. Even the Rape of Nanjing, horrific as it was, was not intended to be, and did not amount to, genocide”¹⁴; and “Even if the Japanese may have sought to impress their wartime allies, they never adopted Germany’s genocidal policies.”¹⁵ It does, however, blame the Americans for “the only 31 Jews killed and approximately 250 wounded in Shanghai [as] the result of an American air raid on Hongkew on July 17th, 1945.”¹⁶

In *Under the Shadow of the Rising Sun*, Medzini aims to tell the story of Japanese innocence regarding the fate of the Jewish people during World War II: “The Japanese never built or operated extermination camps and crematoria, nor did they murder Jews because of their race or religion. The idea of genocide against this group of foreigners never crossed their minds”¹⁷; “The Japanese government claimed...that Japan never adopted Nazi-style antisemitism and that it did not take part in the implementation of Hitler’s Final Solution; rather, it tried to behave humanely toward the Jews under its rule”¹⁸; “the historically correct fact that Japan did not go out of its way to harm the forty thousand Jews in its territories”¹⁹; and “Unlike the Germans the Japanese were humane and fair to the Jews. And indeed, the Japanese did not hand over Jews to the Germans as did the French, Dutch, Belgian, Polish, Ukrainian, and other people in Nazi-occupied Europe. From a purely historical perspective, they are right.”²⁰

¹³ Ibid., 137.

¹⁴ Medzini, *Under the Shadow*, 155.

¹⁵ Ibid., 89.

¹⁶ Ibid., 81.

¹⁷ Ibid., vi.

¹⁸ Ibid., vii.

¹⁹ Ibid., 116.

²⁰ Ibid., 148.

Despite the Japanese imprisonment of thousands of Jewish refugees, and later all Jews (but the Russians), in the Shanghai ghetto, his book states that “Most of the Jews, who numbered some 40,000 in all, survived the war and were treated by the Japanese in a somewhat more humane manner than European Jews were by Nazi Germany during the Holocaust.”²¹ In Medzini’s view, thus, Jews should be thankful whenever they are treated in a more humane manner than a Nazi would treat them. He further wrote about the Shanghai ghetto, where 10 percent (about 2,000) of the Jewish inhabitants died due to the miserable living conditions that the Japanese occupiers created for them: “they lived in cramped quarters...but they were not physically molested or harmed.”²²

At one point in the book, Medzini even raises the question “Why did Japan display a relatively tolerant and lenient attitude toward most of the Jews under its control rather than cave into Nazi demands?”²³ Because this is the norm between humans: we normally do not become mass murderers. The right question would have been “Why do some people do these terrible things?” not “How come some people do not give in to the demand of killing millions of innocent people?”

Unfortunately, the author of “From Alienation to Partnership” came up with a highly questionable piece regarding the relation between Japan and the Jewish people. What he wrote about Japan in this piece is mostly trivial, and at times another attempt to whitewash Japanese war crimes during WW2: “Israel had no case for seeking reparations from Japan, although the latter was a member of the Axis Alliance, it did not go out of its way to persecute Jews in the territories it occupied during the war.”²⁴

On the contrary, Israel would have had a case: During WW2 the Japanese forced at first about 20,000 Jewish refugees of occupied Shanghai to live in an area of approximately one square mile in the Hongkew district of town, while the Japanese authorities increasingly stepped up restrictions. Moreover, under Japanese rule the Jews of Penang (today Malaysia) were forced to wear the Star of David with the word “Jew” written on it. But in the words of *Under the Shadow of the Rising Sun*: “Unlike the Germans the

²¹ Ibid., vi.

²² Ibid., 80.

²³ Ibid., 112.

²⁴ Meron Medzini, “From Alienation to Partnership: Israel-Japan Relation,” *Contemporary Review of the Middle East* 5/3 (2018), 234.

Japanese were humane and fair to the Jews”²⁵ and “the attitude of the government and basically the people of Japan towards the persecuted Jews under their control was by and large fair and even humane. At that time this fact was hugely significant and even today it is an event that the Jewish people will not quickly forget.”²⁶

In *From Alienation to Partnership* one reads that “Unlike Europe and America, most Japanese were never aware of the Holocaust, preferring instead to focus on their own Holocaust - the dropping of two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.”²⁷ But if one was to talk about a Japanese “Holocaust” or Shoah, one would do well to rather mention the massacres committed by Japanese troops in the occupied territories during WW2, such as the Nanjing Massacre. But Medzini does not agree with the description of them as genocides at all. Scholars like Bradley Campbell²⁸ have described the Nanjing Massacre as a genocide indeed, because it happened in the aftermath of warfare; mass killings continued after the outcome of a battle had been decided. In fact, between 40,000 and 300,000 innocent people of the city of Nanjing were murdered by Japanese troops between December 1937 and January 1938 alone.²⁹ This was not “intended to be genocide”?

Despite authoring an article on Israel-Japan relations, Medzini failed to visit the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan in Tokyo’s Azabubai district according to the references of *From Alienation to Partnership*. Overall, the reference list consists of only eleven publications, one from 1928 which does not deal with Israel-Japan relations which started decades later, and one questionable publication from Tokayer and Swartz. Not a single entry from the archives in Tokyo nor Jerusalem, not a single interview conducted, and no mention of scholars such as Goodman, Miyazawa, Kapner, Levine, or Kranzler.

What *From Alienation to Partnership: Israel–Japan Relation* surprisingly does not mention either is the high rate of antisemitism in Japan. According to the Anti-Defamation League 2014 poll, 23 percent of Japanese people were considered anti-Semites. This is more than in India or Estonia,

²⁵ Medzini, *Under the Shadow*, 148.

²⁶ Ibid., 177.

²⁷ Medzini, “From Alienation to Partnership,” 235.

²⁸ Bradley Campbell, “Genocide as Social Control,” *Sociological Theory* 27/2 (2009), 154.

²⁹ Schilling, “Review of *Under the Shadow*,” 201.

and about the same as in Argentina with 24 percent. Thirty-four percent of Japanese people hold the opinion Jews would have too much power in the business world, and 32 percent agreed with the statement that “Jews don’t care what happens to anyone but their own kind,” and almost half (46 percent) that “Jews think they are better than other people.”³⁰ Shouldn’t the fact that 28 percent of Japanese people, according to the poll, hold the opinion that “Jews have too much control over global affairs” be mentioned in an article on foreign relations between the Jewish State and Japan?

The article does not mention Japanese-Jewish common ancestry theory either. The number of Japanese people who believe their nation to be a lost tribe of Israel might be very small, but it does play a role in the relations between Israel and Japan when it comes to Japanese tourism and support, even the wish of some Japanese people to make Aliyah (Jewish immigration to Israel).

The article forgets to mention that Chiune Sugihara, who as vice consul in Lithuania helped about six thousand Jews flee the Nazis by issuing transit visas, lost his job as a diplomat because of his rescue mission in post-war Japan, which the article seeks to describe.³¹ And that although Yad Vashem in Israel recognized him as a “Righteous Among the Nations,” for the most part, Japan has not actively promoted knowledge of his efforts.

This article on the history of Israel-Japan relations also fails to mention the Lod Airport Massacre of May 30th 1972, in which three Japanese terrorists attacked Lod Airport (now Ben Gurion International Airport) murdering 26 people, including the renowned protein biophysicist and candidate for the upcoming Israeli presidency election, Professor Aharon Katzir, and injuring 80 others.

Nor does Medzini mention that in 1984, the book *Sekai wo ugokasu yudaya pawah no himitsu* [世界を動かすユダヤパワーの秘密, Secrets of the Jewish Power that Controls the World] was published by Eizaburo Saito, a

³⁰ “The ADL GLOBAL 100: An Index of Anti-Semitism,” Anti-Defamation League Global 100 (accessed June 20, 2019, <http://global100.adl.org/#country/japan/2014>).

³¹ Hillel Levine, *In Search of Sugihara: The Elusive Japanese Diplomat Who Risked His Life to Rescue 10,000 Jews from the Holocaust* (New York: Free Press, 1996).

leading member of the Liberal Democratic Party in Japan.³² Two years later the book *Yudaya ga wakaruto sekai ga miete kuru* [ユダヤが分かると世界が見えて来る, To Watch Jews Is to See the World Clearly] by Masami Uno became one of Japan's bestsellers. The premise of the book is that Ashkenazim, contrary to Sephardi Jews, are “fake Jews.”³³ The same year Kinji Yajima, an economist professor at Tokyo's Aoyama Gakuin University, published *Yudaya purotokoru cho-urayomi-jutsu* [ユダヤ・プロトコール超裏読み術, The Expert Way to Read Jewish Protocols] which also became one of Japan's bestsellers by claiming that the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* were “put together from the results of all the research ever done on the Jews...There is no doubt that the contents consist of the wisdom of the Jews.”³⁴

In February 1995, which Medzini calls the time “of much warmth and friendship at many levels,”³⁵ the Japanese magazine *Marco Polo*, with a quarter million issues monthly, published a Holocaust denial article by physician Masanori Nishioka that stated:

“The Holocaust is a fabrication. There were no execution gas chambers in Auschwitz or in any other concentration camp. Today, what are displayed as 'gas chambers' at the remains of the Auschwitz camp in Poland are a post-war fabrication by the Polish communist regime or by the Soviet Union, which controlled the country. Not once, neither at Auschwitz nor in any territory controlled by the Germans during the Second World War, was there 'mass murder of Jews' in 'gas chambers.'”³⁶

³² Michael L. Beeman, *Public Policy and Economic Competition in Japan: Change and Continuity in Antimonopoly Policy* (London: Routledge, 2003).

³³ Abraham H. Foxman, *Jews and Money: The Story of a Stereotype* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2010), 76.

³⁴ Esther Webman, ed., *The Global Impact of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion: A Century-Old Myth* (London: Routledge, 2012).

³⁵ Medzini, “From Alienation to Partnership,” 232.

³⁶ Masanori Nishioka, “The Greatest Taboo of Postwar World History: There Were No Nazi ‘Gas Chambers,’” *Marco Polo*, February 1995.

Four years later Japan's *The Weekly Post* wrote that:

"The strong will of Jewish finance capital, which prides itself on its enormous power and covers the world's financial markets like a fine net, was behind the buyout of LTCBJ. It is not hard to imagine that the offensive of Jewish finance capital will intensify the cutthroat struggle for survival among companies brought on by the 1997 Asian financial crisis."³⁷

After complaints by Jewish groups, *The Weekly Post* published an apology on its home page stating that "the problem stemmed from the stereotyped image of the Jewish people that many Japanese people have."³⁸ And more recently, in 2014, a total of 31 municipal libraries in Japan reported the vandalization of 265 copies of *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank.³⁹

None of this was mentioned in Medzini's article on the partnership between Israel and Japan. Unfortunately, he himself should be more careful in his writing. *From Alienation to Partnership: Israel-Japan Relation* produced the weird conspiracy theory of global Jewish communities advocating Israeli diplomacy in their countries:

"Unlike many countries in Europe, North, and South America, Israeli diplomats could not be helped by the tiny Jewish community in Tokyo. The local Jews had no influence on the Japanese media, politics, academia, and culture. Some were Jews who settled in Japan during the 7 years of American occupation of that country. They could not be counted on to open doors in the right places."⁴⁰

³⁷ Toshikawa Takao, "Jewish Capital Accelerates the Law of the Jungle," qtd. in Goodman and Miyazawa, *Jews in the Japanese Mind*, 276–78.

³⁸ Kapner and Levine, "The Jews of Japan."

³⁹ Martin Fackler, "Hundreds of Anne Frank Books Vandalized in Japan," *New York Times*, Feb. 21, 2014 (accessed June 20, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/22/world/asia/diary-of-anne-frank-vandalized-at-japanese-libraries.html>).

⁴⁰ Medzini, "From Alienation to Partnership," 233.

This holds no ground. Jewish people across the world are among the strongest critics of Israel and have always been so since the beginning of Herzl's Zionism until today. One must only look at countries with vast Jewish communities such as Russia, Argentina or France. They have certainly not always acted very Israel-friendly in history. So where are the Jews "opening the doors in the right places" for Israel in these countries? On the other hand, countries that have been rather friendly towards Israel such as Costa Rica, Guatemala, the Philippines, or South Korea have minimal Jewish presence. The Japan that Medzini imagines, and the actual one - the two could hardly be more different.⁴¹

⁴¹ This article became possible with the generous financial support of the Japan Society of the Promotion of Sciences (JSPS).

**GOLDEN KAMUY:
CAN THIS POPULAR MANGA
CONTRIBUTE TO AINU STUDIES?**

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Introduction

*Golden Kamuy*¹ is an incredibly popular Japanese manga that has been serialized in *Shūkan Young Jump*, a weekly comic magazine, since August 21, 2014. The magazine is produced by Shueisha that publishes its *komikkusu*² and digital media in Tokyo. The action adventure comic story by Satoru Noda revolves around two protagonists, Saichi Sugimoto, a returning Japanese soldier, and Asirpa, a beautiful Ainu girl in her teens. The manga also features many characters who play the roles of significant “supporting actors” for the dynamic development of the story. They all have strong and unique personalities, various criminal and non-criminal backgrounds, as well as complicated psychological characteristics. The compelling story also entails hunting, conflict, violence, food, and events in the history of Hokkaido, Japan and the world. *Golden Kamuy* has been creating much interest in the Ainu people, their history, and their culture among the *Wajin* (non-Ainu Japanese) in today’s Japan.³

I have been doing research on Japanese manga since the end of the 1980s and started my fieldwork on the Ainu during my sabbatical in the spring of 2011. In this essay, I am doing a content analysis of *Golden Kamuy*, paying special attention to the depiction of the Ainu and their culture as well as its educational values and contribution to the Ainu Studies.

¹ Noda Satoru, *Golden Kamuy*, vols. 1–8 (Tokyo: Shueisha 2019). *Kamuy* is an Ainu word that means “god(s).”

² The Japanese word *komikkusu* refers to softcover comic books that contain a collection of the chapters of a serialized manga in weekly or monthly comic magazines.

³ *Wajin*, *shisamu*, and *shamo* are Ainu words that refer to the non-Ainu Japanese. *Shamo* is a derogatory term. See Kurihara Noriyuki, ed., *Imakoso Shiritai Ainu Kitano Daichi, Sokoni Ikiruhitobito no Rekishi to Bunka, Manga Golden Kamuy* (Tokyo: San-ei Shobō, 2017).

Who are the Ainu?

The Ainu⁴ are an indigenous, ethnic minority group of Japan whose ancestors lived in what was once called the *Ainu Mosir*. The vast and peaceful land of the humans included northern Honshu, Hokkaido, Sakhalin, and the Kurile Islands. The estimated population of the Ainu today is approximately 25,000, but the number could be much higher. The majority of them reside in Hokkaido, and others live in the greater Kanto area near Tokyo and Chiba. Their lifestyles are totally assimilated in contemporary Japan, but their traditional music, dance, language, crafts, religion, and food distinguish them as an ethnic group.

The Ainu traditionally lived in harmony with nature as they engaged in hunting, gathering, fishing, and farming. They also traded goods with *Wajin* in Ezo (present-day Hokkaido), Akita, Aomori, and Iwate⁵ as well as other people in the northeastern part of China, Kamchatka Peninsula, Aleutian Islands, and the downstream of the Amur River in the 13th century. They traded *kombu* (kelp), sea otter skins, eagle feathers, salmon, bear gall bladder, and bear skins in exchange for precious stones, porcelain, samurai armor, and clothes made of Chinese silk.⁶

The Matsumae Domain controlled a segment of southern Ezo since the 15th century. The *basho ukeoi* system (contract fishing system) and the *Wajin* merchants made the Ainu engage in forced labor since the end of the 17th century. The Ainu men were “recruited” to work in distant places, and the only people left in the villages were elderlies, women, and children. Russian vessels started to frequent Ezo seeking ice-free ports in the 1760s. The Tokugawa government decided to take over the land from the Matsumae Domain as they feared that the Ainu might leave Japan and unite with foreign powers.⁷ The Tokugawa government started its direct control over the eastern

⁴ The original meaning of the word Ainu is “humans (as opposed to gods),” “humans in general,” “man,” and “father.”

⁵ Akita, Aomori, and Iwate are located in the northern part of Honshu.

⁶ Segawa Takuro, *Ainugaku Nyūmon* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2015), 104–114 and Uemura Hideki, *Ainu Minzoku Ichimon Ittō* (Osaka: Kaihou Shuppansha, 2008), 26–27.

⁷ Several main characters of *Golden Kamuy* attempt to establish the Republic of Ezo, which is independent from Japan.

part of Ezo in 1799 and the western part in 1807. The land was returned to the Matsumae Domain in 1821, but Ezo became a Japanese territory in 1854.⁸

The history of the Ainu is the history of an ethnic cleansing that officially began in 1869 when the Meiji government renamed Ezo Hokkaido and established the Hokkaido Colonization Board. The Japanese government started its vigorous assimilation processes on the Ainu in 1871. It needed to show to the world that the Ainu are indeed Japanese nationals, and Hokkaido belonged to Japan. The policies included adoption of Japanese sounding names and Japanese language and prohibition of the Ainu language, their traditional tattoos on women's mouths, pierced earrings of men, and performing their very important "sending off the sacred bear's spirit" ceremony called *Iomante*. Those Ainu who wanted to cultivate land were provided with houses and farming equipment, and they were encouraged to settle down. However, the *Wajin* took all the fertile land, and the lands given to the Ainu were often small and uncultivable. Prohibition of fishing salmon in rivers began in 1870. Traditional poisonous arrows and spring-loaded poison traps were prohibited in 1876, and hunting deer in 1889. Due to these restrictions placed by the Japanese government, the Ainu were forbidden from catching their staple food, leading them to starvation.⁹

The lifestyles of the contemporary Ainu people are basically the same as any *Wajin*, but some people might encounter problems in their daily life that are related to the consequences of inequality from the past which include poverty, prejudice, discrimination, bullying in education, employment, and marriage.¹⁰ The Ainu are supportive of one another, and the majority are self-sufficient. Many of them contribute to the maintenance

⁸ Ainu Minzoku Hakubutsukan, ed., *The Basic Knowledge of Ainu Culture* (Urayasu: Sofukan, 2009), 37–39; and ann-elise lewallen, *The Fabric of Indigeneity Ainu Identity, Gender, and Settler Colonialism in Japan* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2016), 129–132.

⁹ Ito Kinko, "An Elderly Ainu Man's Story: Ethnography," *Japan Studies Review* (2014):115–118; "Have You Heard about the Ainu? Elders of Japan's Indigenous People Speak," dir. Ito Kinko, *YouTube* video, 1:18:06. November 29, 2016 (accessed February 18, 2019, <https://youtu.be/0Q6cYEUUpBg>); Kurihara, *Imakoso Shiritai Ainu Kitano Daichi*, 82–83; and Uemura, *Ainu Minzoku*, 38–46.

¹⁰ Kayano Shigeru, *Ainu no Ishibumi* (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbun Shuppan, 2009); and Uemura, *Ainu Minzoku*, 90–93.

of their precious culture by learning the Ainu language, traditional crafts (woodcarving, embroidery, fabric production, and clothing making), songs, and dances.¹¹ The Ainu Cultural Promotion Act was enacted in 1997, and it enables the Ainu Cultural Foundation to administer a national budget for the preservation and promotion of Ainu culture as part of Japan's cultural heritage. Numerous Ainu women revivalists engage in creating cloth works – textile weaving, embroidery, appliques, and robe making that connect them to their heritage and tradition. Iewallen (this author uses all small letters for her name) observes this resurgence of Ainu culture as “broadening the discursive spaces within which Ainu can explore and express self-identity and determine how to *be* Ainu.”¹² Recently, the Ainu and their culture are getting more attention in Japan, and many events and exhibits about them have been frequently held at museums and cultural centers.¹³

Noda Satoru - the Author of *Golden Kamuy*

Noda Satoru was born in Kitahiroshima City in Hokkaido. His birth year is unknown, and it seems that he wants to remain “mysterious” by keeping a distance between his works and private life. When he engages in his research on the Ainu by visiting places and museums, he does not reveal that he is the author of *Golden Kamuy*.¹⁴ Noda debuted in 2003 with *Today, Kyoko's Misfortune*, and he won the 54th Chiba Tetsuya Award in its Young Division with *The Goalie Only Looks in Front* in 2006. His *Spinamarada!*, a manga about a high school ice hockey club in Hokkaido, was serialized in *Shūkan Young Jump* between 2011 and 2012. The series was compiled into six volumes of *komikkusu*. After a year's hiatus, research, and preparation, Noda started *Golden Kamuy* in the same weekly comic magazine in 2014.¹⁵

¹¹ “Have You Heard about the Ainu? Part 2–Toward a Better Understanding and World Peace,” dir. Ito Kinko, *YouTube* video, 30:08. May 9, 2018 (accessed February 18, 2019, <https://youtu.be/kOjXywT1UCo>).

¹² Iewallen, *The Fabric of Indigeneity*, 27–29.

¹³ Kurihara, *Imakoso Shiritai Ainu Kitano Daichi*, 4.

¹⁴ “‘Golden Kamuy’ Author Doing His Homework in Depicting Ainu,” *Asahi Shimbun*, June 23, 2018 (accessed May 8, 2019, <http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201806230010.html>).

¹⁵ “Satoru Noda,” *Golden Kamuy Fandom* (accessed March 14, 2019, https://goldenkamuy.fandom.com/wiki/Satoru_Noda).

Depiction of Hokkaido's natural environment is abundant with minute details in *Golden Kamuy*: the four seasons, forests, wild animals (especially those native to Hokkaido such as brown bears, *yuk* [deer], and squirrels), birds (both native and migrant), fish (in rivers and sea), mountain vegetables, grains, and fruits. Noda also depicts imaginary animals and birds that appear in certain Ainu legends.¹⁶

Kitahiroshima City is located in the southern part of Ishikari Plain. Mountains and forests occupy about 30 percent of the city's land area. There are broadleaf forests of quercus and maples as well as plantations of larch and fir. The city was originally settled by 103 people from 25 households who migrated from Hiroshima Prefecture in the western part of Honshu in 1884. They engaged in developing the primitive forests and cultivating the land. The city is endowed with beautiful nature, and the citizens also enjoy harvesting mountain vegetables and mushrooms in spring and fall as well as hunting between October 1 and March 31.¹⁷

The popular and successful comic story by Noda can be formulated as follows: His great grandfather's life + a novel on hunting in Hokkaido + Ainu culture = *Golden Kamuy*.¹⁸ Noda's great grandfather was a *tondenhei*, a soldier who guarded and cultivated land in Hokkaido. Noda wanted to use his great grandfather's experiences in his manga, and his editor gave him a book on hunting. Then, Noda added rich Ainu culture to create the compelling story.

In an interview, Noda was asked, "It has been rare that the Ainu culture is featured in comics. Why did you select this topic?" He answered:

Exactly because it is rare. It would look refreshing to the eyes of my readers. I think it is rather a delicate topic, and everyone has shied away from it. It also includes persecution and discrimination, a dark image. However, I was convinced that if I drew the theme in a positive and interesting manner, my manga would be popular. An Ainu whom I interviewed

¹⁶ Noda, *Golden Kamuy*, vols. 1–18.

¹⁷ See official site for Hokkaido Kitahiroshima City Hall (accessed February 22, 2019, <http://www.city.kitahiroshima.hokkaido.jp/>).

¹⁸ "Kanaeru Chikara (7) Mangaka Noda Satorusan," Asahi Shimbun Digital, January 8, 2017 (accessed February 22, 2019, <http://www.asahi.com/area/hokkaido/articles/MTW20170110011620001.html>).

said to me, “You do not need to portray the pathetic Ainu. Draw the Ainu who are strong.”¹⁹

Noda indeed does draw strong Ainu. For example, he depicts Asirpa as a new type of young Ainu woman. Asirpa’s grandfather was Polish and her grandmother was an Ainu on her father’s side. Her Ainu mother died soon after she delivered Asirpa. Her father named his daughter Asirpa, which means “new year,” and “future.” He taught her hunting and survival skills in the natural environment. She has a *fuci* (grandmother) on her mother’s side who lives in an Ainu *kotan* (traditional village community). She has a tattoo around her mouth, speaks only Ainu, and transmits her wisdom and the Ainu tradition to her granddaughter. The *fuci* is depicted as a “vanguard of cultural preservation.”²⁰

Asirpa is brave, intelligent, self-sufficient, mature, and talented. She also has a great sense of humor and sensitivity. She is at an age when Ainu girls start tattooing around their mouths, but she is ambivalent and reluctant. Asirpa recognizes herself as an Ainu woman in a new age. Noda portrays her as independent, powerful, and assertive. I am sure she has a very positive influence and effect on the minds of young readers, especially females. Asirpa is a great role model and an agent of socialization which the readers vicariously experience as they read the manga.

Noda definitely had confidence that *Golden Kamuy* would be very popular because of his on-going, in-depth research that entails not only reading resources, but also engaging himself in empirical observations and seeking information from specialists. For example, Noda went hunting with an Ainu hunter who taught him the techniques and knowledge to hunt various animals and meats. He actually ate the brain of a deer raw. Noda’s vigorous research, empiricism, and sincere respect and attitude toward the ethnic minority, their history, and culture won him much trust from the Ainu and other scholars.²¹

¹⁹ Excerpt from “Golden Kamuy Noda Satoru Interview,” Kono Manga, January 4, 2016 (accessed February 22, 2019, <http://konomanga.jp/interview/51952-2/2>).

²⁰ Iwawallén, *The Fabric of Indigeneity*, 92.

²¹ “Manga Taishō 2016 wa Noda Satorushi no ‘Golden Kamuy’ ni kettei,” Oricon, March 29, 2016 (accessed May 15, 2019, <https://www.oricon.co.jp/news/2069262/full/>); and “Kanaeru Chikara (7) Mangaka Noda Satorusan,”

***Golden Kamuy* – The Comic Story**

The unprecedented interest in the Ainu and their culture in recent years in Japan and elsewhere is partly due to the popularity of *Golden Kamuy*. In March 2016, the comic story won the *Manga Taishō* (Cartoon Grand Prize).²² It received another award *Hokkaido yukari no hon taishō* (Grand Prize for Books Regarding Hokkaido) in its Comics Division in 2017 and the *Manga Taishō* of the *Tezuka Osamu Bunkashō* (the Manga Grand Prix of the Tezuka Osamu Cultural Prize) sponsored by Asahi Shimbunsha (Newspaper) in 2018.²³ The animation version of the popular manga started to air in Japan in April 2018, and the video clips are streamed on YouTube worldwide.

The two protagonists in *Golden Kamuy* are Saichi Sugimoto, a returning soldier from the Russo-Japan War (1904–1905) and Asirpa, a young Ainu woman in her early teens.²⁴ It is a story about Sugimoto seeking the enormous Ainu treasure trove hidden in Hokkaido at the end of the Meiji Era (1868–1912). He needs money to take care of the wife of his late best friend by bringing her to the United States to operate on her eyes. Asirpa, on the other hand, wants to know the whereabouts of her father who disappeared and had something to do with the hidden trove.

Golden Kamuy belongs to a genre called *seinen manga* (manga for youth and young adults), and the themes include adventure, survival, conflict, battle, historical romance, gastronomy, and the Ainu culture. Tatsuya Matsuura, who has been writing news flashes about the *Manga Taishō* prize, states that *Golden Kamuy* is one of the hardest comics to write a review of and label its category. He says that any attempt to classify this manga always ends in incongruity. This manga has many elements, some of which do not always mix and match. Matsuura lists them as “history, ethnicity, hunting, gourmet food, suspense, action, battles, gag, *yaoi*, etc.”²⁵

Asahi Shimbun Digital, January 8, 2017 (accessed May 15, 2019, <http://www.asahi.com/area/hokkaido/articles/MTW20170110011620001.html>).

²² Kurihara, *Imakoso Shiritai Ainu*, 7.

²³ “‘Golden Kamuy’ Won the Osamu Tezuka Cultural Award for Manga! The New Birth Award is Shiodome Itagaki,” Comic Natalie, April 25, 2018 (accessed May 15, 2019, <https://natalie.mu/comic/news/279582>).

²⁴ Noda, *Golden Kamuy*, vol. 13; and Kurihara, *Imakoso Shiritai Ainu*, 7.

²⁵ Tatsuya Matsuura, “Manga Award 2016, Noda Satoru ‘Golden Kamuy,’” Excite News, March 29, 2016 (accessed May 15, 2019, <https://www.excite.co.jp/news/article/E1459217477604/?p=2>).

Golden Kamuy contains much violence and brutality, which is definitely adult content not suitable for children. There have been 18 volumes published in 2019. Some of the major characters that surround the two protagonists, namely, Sugimoto and Asirpa, include ex-prisoners, murderers, hunters, soldiers, ex-samurai, and several Ainu characters such as Kiroranke (Asirpa's father's friend), Inkarmat (a sexy Ainu fortuneteller), Osoma (Asirpa's cousin), Asirpa's grandmother, and Uiruku (Asirpa's father). Episodes with violent themes and scenes are very common, and they include murder by guns, pistols, swords, saws, knives, awls, poison, fire, poison gas, punches, kicks, stabbing, decapitation, and disembodiment. There are certain war scenes where a "legitimate" mass murder takes place as well.²⁶ Generally speaking, a paradox has always existed in regard to the duality of Japanese serenity and brutality. Manga is no exception. Certain comics for adult men and women have been notoriously known as violent and ruthless, but the violence rarely translates into real-life situations. The brutality experienced in comics is "properly distanced, and should therefore lead to catharsis," and the distance from reality must be just right to have maximum cathartic effects.²⁷ The aggression and cold-bloodedness vicariously experienced in comics might lead to the containment of the readers' own anger and frustration by catharsis that enables their release of pent-up negative and afflictive emotions.

Certain episodes of *Golden Kamuy* are sexually explicit with much nudity. A mosaic design seen in pornographic films and DVDs in Japan, mushrooms, and other phallic designs are used to cover the genitals in the comic story. The characters have various sexual orientations, and one of the characters in particular is a beautiful transgendered young woman who used to be an old medical doctor and prisoner. Different kinds of sex acts are also depicted in the stories, and they include coitus between couples, S&M, group sex, masturbation, and bestiality. Certain episodes also feature a pervert who engages in human taxidermy and another one who has a fantasy and a desire to be murdered violently.²⁸ The Japanese traditionally enjoyed sex more openly than any other people in the world, and sexuality and sexual acts are always one of the most important themes in both adult men's and women's

²⁶ Noda, *Golden Kamuy*, vols. 1–18.

²⁷ T.J. Scheff, *Catharsis in Healing, Ritual, and Drama* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 25.

²⁸ Noda, *Golden Kamuy*, vols. 1–18.

comics.²⁹ Sex found in *Golden Kamuy* is nothing new or perturbing to many Japanese readers. Noda said in an interview, “[To make stories more interesting] the characters have multifaceted personalities. Even an atrocious prisoner has a lovable personality with playful and sublime aspects.”³⁰ Noda also mentioned that he actually prefers to depict more complicated pervers in his comic story.³¹

Golden Kamuy and the Ainu Studies

One of the unique characteristics of *Golden Kamuy* is that it depicts various aspects of traditional Ainu life which many *Wajin* do not know or have not cared enough to know in contemporary Japan. The manga portrays their history, customs and manners, religion, food, clothing, language, and philosophy, among others. *Golden Kamuy* is the first Japanese comic that has an Ainu as one of the protagonists, and it indeed depicts positive and powerful images of the Ainu and their lifestyle. Readers learn the world of the Ainu through Asirpa as their guide. In this sense I would say that it is a groundbreaking comic series that is also educational. It is not too much to say that it belongs to a category called *benkyō manga* (“study comics”) that provides easy and joyful learning for children and adults alike. For example, the classic manga *Japan Inc. Introduction to Japanese Economics* by Ishinomori Shōtarō (a renowned Japanese comic artist) teaches the mechanisms of the Japanese economy and industries in the format of a comic story.³² Likewise, *Golden Kamuy* can be “a textbook” for the Ainu Studies.

The Ainu language is freely spoken by both the Ainu and non-Ainu characters in *Golden Kamuy*, and it is basically the first bilingual comic in Japanese and Ainu languages. Hiroshi Nakagawa, a professor of Ainu Language at Chiba University, supervises the Ainu language content. Ainu

²⁹ Ito Kinko, *A Sociology of Japanese Ladies' Comics Images of the Life, Loves, and Sexual Fantasies of Adult Japanese Women* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2011). 149–191.

³⁰ Excerpt from “Golden Kamuy Noda Satoru Interview – Motto hentaiwo egakasetekure! Fukuzatsuna kyarakutāga sakuhinwo omoshirokusuru!” Kono Manga, January 11, 2016 (accessed February 22, 2019, <http://kono-manga.jp/interview/52634-2>).

³¹ Ibid.

³² Shōtarō Ishinomori, *Japan Inc.: An Introduction to Japanese Economics (The Comic Book)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).

is considered an isolated language, and it is not related to Japanese at all. It does not have a system of writing, and everything has been transmitted orally. The Ainu have a very strong oral tradition such as *Yukar* (a long epic about heroes) and *Uwepekere* (traditional folk ballads). Noda eloquently introduces them in his comic story. Oratory gives the Ainu power, and it was one of the requirements for becoming a village leader.³³

The readers of *Golden Kamuy* will also learn many Ainu words, idioms, proverbs, and greetings in certain episodes. Noda provides his readers with the meanings and explanations of the usage when an Ainu word or idiom is introduced in his manga, as well as the visual images.

Certain Ainu words appear repeatedly, and the readers master them naturally. For example, the protagonists and other characters enjoy eating Ainu food together on many occasions, and they always say “*Hinna! Hinna!*” with big smiles. *Hinna* is a word of gratitude to the food, and it is translated as “delicious.” Sugimoto loves *miso* (fermented soy bean paste) and Asirpa always confuses it with *osoma* (an Ainu word for feces). She laughs and teases Sugimoto for eating *osoma* as she makes funny faces. Noda portrays Asirpa in such a comical way that the readers delight in her various facial expressions.

In a certain episode, Asirpa takes Sugimoto to her *kotan* and introduces her cousin to him. Sugimoto is quite surprised to find that her name is Osoma (feces). Asirpa explains that the Ainu give their babies nasty names when they are born so that bad spirits that cause illness do not take them away from the parents. Examples of the names include “Lump of Feces,” “Someone Who Farts,” and “Grown Up Stinky.” Sugimoto is amused when he learns that Asirpa’s baby name was “Grandfather’s Anus.” Traditionally, Ainu parents give their children their name based on their psychological characteristics and personal events when the child is about six years old.³⁴

Readers also learn and master many Ainu words related to hunting (arrows, bows, traps, poisons, medicines, etc.), fishing (boats, names of fish, seals, whales, traps, seasonal fishermen, etc.), gathering (names of plants, herbs, and mountain vegetables, peeling tree barks, etc.), family and kinship (father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, uncle, etc.), food (soup, cooking methods, ingredients, garlic, spice, storage, etc.), cooking devices and

³³ *Ainu Bunkano Kisochishiki* (Urayasu: Sofukan, 2009), 22–24 and Yoichi Tsunoda, *Zukai Ainu* (Tokyo: Shinkigensha, 2018) 182–185.

³⁴ Noda, *Golden Kamuy*, vol. 1, episode 12.

utensils (chopping boards, knives, bowls, spoons, pots, pans, etc.), animals and birds (rabbits, deer, bears, wolves, badgers, foxes, eagles, woodpeckers, etc.), religion (*kamuy*, altar, guardian gods, protective charms, rituals, etc.), music (songs, mouth harp, guitar, etc.), and household items and devices (robes, weaving machines, lights, toys, etc.) throughout the episodes.

Golden Kamuy komikkusu features Asirpa wearing traditional Ainu clothes on the cover of each volume underneath its slipcover. The Ainu use raw materials from the natural environment such as tree fibers, animal furs, fish skins, and bird feathers to make robes as well as cotton cloth. The first volume features *attus*, which is made of *ohyō* (a kind of elm tree fiber). According to Iwawaki, “Fabric woven from attus was resistant to inclement weather and made ideal outerwear for snow and rain.”³⁵ In 2013, Ainu *attus* made in Nibutani were recognized by the Japan Traditional Craft Association as “assets of noble vintage and national heritage” as well as “objects worthy of government funding.”³⁶ Other garments featured include *cijiri*, which is a black cotton robe embroidered entirely in thread, and the *ruunpe*, which is an ornate cotton robe that has appliqued pieces of cloths made of cotton, silk, and bleached cotton with elaborate embroidery.³⁷ Likewise, garments such as the *kaparamip* is a “reverse applique garment made by fastening white cotton cloth to a navy or dark-colored base cotton.”³⁸ On the cover of one of the volumes Shiraishi Yoshitake wears a prisoner’s clothes dyed in persimmon color.

Noda also introduces the readers to the history of the Ainu, their “literature” which is transmitted orally (e.g., folklores, legends, and proverbs), particular architectures (e.g., different kinds of houses and bear cages), customs and manners, and animal psychology. The readers learn much about the animal behavior as well, especially that of bears and deer, which is a must for successful hunting and continuing Ainu livelihood. Furthermore, Noda includes beliefs and rituals of the Ainu religion, various gods, and the Ainu’s relationship to nature.

³⁵ Iwawaki, *The Fabric of Indigeneity*, 157.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 171.

³⁷ “Ainu Cotton Clothes,” Ainu Life Culture Reproduction Manual of the Ainu Culture Promotion and Research Promotion Organization, April 2001 (accessed May 15, 2019, https://www.frpac.or.jp/manual/files/2001_04.pdf).

³⁸ Iwawaki, *The Fabric of Indigeneity*, 237–238.

The Ainu have been living peacefully in an ecological environment where “what goes around comes around.” They take only what they need when they go to the mountains to harvest plants and mountain vegetables. They leave the rest for harvesting in the following year. Additionally, greed and overharvesting cause terrible irreversible consequences. The Ainu do not wash clothes or dump feces in the river. Fish can live only in clear water, and when the river is contaminated salmon and trout cannot come back upstream from the ocean to lay eggs. No fish means no otters, foxes, and bears that live on fish. Thus, the consequences of polluting the environment brings a life or death implication to the Ainu. In many episodes of his comic story, Noda effectively portrays how the traditional Ainu interact with their natural environment and how they relate to it as they appreciate its abundance to various *kamuys*. Mother Nature is also depicted as something to fear and dealt with respect in certain episodes. Hence, these portrayals bring ecological awareness and environmental consciousness to urban readers who rarely see the mechanisms of nature firsthand in their busy lives.

Conclusion

Golden Kamuy has recently played a vital role in introducing Ainu culture to those *Wajin* who had not been interested in them before reading this compelling comic story. It is thereby crucial to read and understand the manga correctly in its historical contexts. As in this case, the time period is set at the end of the Meiji Era when Japan was still on its way to modernization and becoming a world power. The Ainu are totally assimilated living in modern homes with amenities and not in a traditional *cise* (house), which can easily burn and are thus dangerous. They get their food from their family gardens, stores, and supermarkets, drive cars and trucks, use cell phones and internet, and wear fashionable clothes.

Some of the Ainu men wear a traditional robe made of tree fiber and a head dress, and women might wear traditionally embroidered robes with headbands and necklaces for formal occasions, like attending a public ceremony or delivering a speech. Their unique attire gives them identity and a sense of pride and great heritage as it is transmitted for generations.

Manga and animation, which is usually based on popular manga, are huge, thriving, and popular mass entertainment industries that affect Japanese economy, politics, public opinion, education, and socialization. They are often so powerful that it is acceptable to say that the contemporary Japanese mindset and public opinion are deeply influenced by popular manga and anime. The readership and viewership are not limited to children, youth, or

young adults. Manga is for everyone, and even certain Prime Ministers have openly admitted that they were avid readers of manga.³⁹

As a result, manga serves as a bonding agent, influences people's values and political ideologies, and sets trends in fashion, hobbies, language, and economy. Manga has contributed to social changes in Japan over so many years and in so many ways.⁴⁰ *Golden Kamuy* increases the awareness of the ethnic minority group among the *Wajin*, and it also teaches the Ainu history, traditions, cuisine, religion, language, and values as well as survival skills in nature. In this sense, this manga is completely educational. One of the judges of the *Manga Taishō* selection committee admitted that "The contribution of this comic (*Golden Kamuy*) is extremely important in that it afforded an opportunity for many young people all over Japan to be interested in the Ainu culture." Another source pointed out that, "The author has been doing very good research on the literature and references and the manga depictions are refined and worth looking at."

The Tokyo Olympic Games will be hosted in Japan in 2020, and the Ainu culture will be showcased as the nation receives global media attention. Prior to this event, the Japanese government has begun a major effort to renovate the Ainu Museum in Shiraoi, Hokkaido. It was closed in 2018 and will reopen as a national museum solely dedicated to the Ainu and their culture in April 2020. The area where the new museum is located will be called Kokuritsu Minzoku Kyōsei Kōen (National Symbolic Space for Ethnic Harmony). The aims of the space is "to promote nationwide understanding of the history and culture of the Ainu" and "to pass on traditional Ainu culture and expand the horizons of Ainu culture toward the creation and development of new culture."⁴¹ The space will have various educational facilities and pedagogical tools to teach children, students, adults, and tourists alike about the Ainu people, their culture, history, and traditions.

³⁹ Ito, *A Sociology of Japanese Ladies' Comics*. 18–26.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Refer to "2020nen Shiraoi Poroto Kohanni Kokuritsu Ainu Minzoku Hakubutsukan, Kokuritsu Minzoku Kyōsei Kōen Tanjō," The Ainu Museum, August 13, 2016 (accessed May 8, 2019, http://www.ainu-museum.or.jp/kokuritsu/pdf/2020_kokuritsu03.pdf); and "Overview of the Master Plan for the Symbolic Space for Ethnic Harmony," Kantei, January 16, 2015 (accessed May 8, 2019, http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/singi/ainusuishin/pdf/symbolicspace_e.pdf).

The popularity of *Golden Kamuy* is very timely in this critical time in Japanese history when there is so much interest in the Ainu, and when Japanese society is moving towards more acceptance, tolerance, and inclusion of diversity, which includes all kinds of minorities. *Golden Kamuy* is a manga not only for entertainment, but also for the education of the masses in regard to the Ainu. Prejudice and discrimination prevail where there is no mutual understanding, tolerance, and compassion. I am convinced that the success of this comic story can definitely contribute to the promotion of Ainu Studies and revitalization of the endangered Ainu language.

Book Reviews

Jacobina K. Arch, *Bringing Whales Ashore: Oceans and the Environment of Early Modern Japan*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018. 272 pp. ISBN: 978-0295743295, \$40.00.

Reviewed by W. Puck Brecher

Since the International Whaling Commission's 1986 moratorium on commercial whaling, special interests have advanced conflicting claims about the historical development of whaling in Japan. Given the ongoing controversy over Japan's exploitation of a moratorium loophole to continue whaling for "scientific" purposes, it is surprising that so few have attempted to rigorously historicize this poorly understood issue. Jacobina K. Arch's *Bringing Whales Ashore* not only fills this need, it responds directly to many of the ahistorical claims and oversights that continue to obfuscate the debate: What is the precise nature and scope of whaling in Japanese history? Was it sustainably practiced? Historically, what sort of relationship did the Japanese have with whales? Answers to such questions are not readily apparent to modern Japanese, Arch suggests, who tend to assume that whales were as culturally and economically marginal as they are today, and that whaling was as sustainably practiced as it is today. But the book's value extends further than its analysis of historical Japanese whaling: Its examination of early modern maritime history also fills a critical gap within the growing body of scholarship on Japan's environmental history.

Arch's aim of examining early modern maritime history as environmental history is evident from the first chapter: "A Whale's-eye View of Japan." This unexpected perspective considers the natural history of whales as subjects, rather than as objects, of human exploitation. With the unlikely goal of "reconstructing historical whales' lives near coastal Japan," (27) the chapter speculates on the species, populations, feeding behaviors, and seasonal migration routes of whales around Japan during the Tokugawa period. Defending the familiar argument that whales and whaling bore considerable cultural and economic importance before the sudden collapse of their populations in the mid-nineteenth century, the chapter finds that whales were "a powerful presence" (47) and that whaling was not the isolated, fringe industry it became in modern times.

This point is further explored in Chapter Two, which presents evidence that whaling and overfishing upset a delicate ecological balance. Here Arch excavates Tokugawa whaling practices, explaining how coastal operations caught, killed, and processed their quarry. The adoption of net

whaling in the late seventeenth century did more than hurt whale populations, ultimately jeopardizing the industry in some locales: It disrupted the marine ecosystem. Some species migrating north and south along both Japanese coasts learned to avoid local whalers, and in other cases, overfishing also caused whales to change their movements.

Chapter Three examines the environmental and economic history of marine products. In this impressively comprehensive reconstruction of the industry's economic challenges, players, and payouts, Arch refutes claims that early modern whaling was merely a subsistence activity that provided for local communities alone. It was a lucrative national industry that included a multitude of whale-based products, including agricultural commodities like pesticides and fertilizers. People became dependent on marine resources, Arch suggests, which became integral to the expansion and even the protoindustrialization of Japan's early modern economy.

The book's final two chapters turn to discussion of whales and whaling within early modern Japanese intellectual and religious history. Chapter Four discusses how various forms of print media disseminated information about whales, ultimately serving to "bring whales ashore figuratively" (110). Chapter Five examines the Buddhist memorials, commemorations, graves, death registers, and posthumous naming of whales through which the sacrificial animals achieved a near metaphysical parity with humans. But Arch rejects claims that such rituals represent any Japanese love of nature or affective connection to the animals. Rather, whalers used them to assuage their guilt and placate whales' angry spirits.

Richly documented with local primary sources, the book identifies various misunderstandings about whales and whaling, some propagated by proponents of the industry. One is the presumed continuities in not only the culture of whaling in Japan, but also in the nature of people's relationships with whales, whaling, and the natural environment. These alleged continuities discount important ruptures in whale populations, hunting practices, and maritime ecosystems. A second myth is that the Japanese practiced subsistence whaling that was localized, economically marginal, sustainable, and informed by a deep emotional connection to whales. Such claims falsely depict whaling as a benevolent cultural practice with minimal ecological effects. Arch rejects traditional whaling as ecologically benevolent, arguing that early modern whalers helped obliterate whale populations, thereby playing a significant role in eradicating their own industry.

Though Arch is no fan of contemporary pro-whaling interests she is careful to avoid side-taking. Some of her conclusions even affirm certain pro-whaling positions. Her discussion of whale memorials, for example, finds that whales were a treasured component of Japan's cultural heritage. She also concludes that globalization has caused modern Japanese to forget their close cultural, economic, and spiritual connection to their maritime environment, an argument that again echoes pro-whaling rhetoric.

Bringing Whales Ashore is authoritative, well-crafted, but occasionally redundant, especially in its concluding chapter. At times it is also needlessly insistent about the uniqueness and importance of whaling in early modern Japan, claiming, for example, that "there was no clear dividing line between the ocean's inhabitants and the land's," (22) and "no other subject seems to have drawn quite so many different perspectives together as whales" (118). The author's point is that whales were keystone creatures in Tokugawa thought, economics, and culture, not the marginal creatures they are today. Such generalizing assertions are unnecessary, for the topic holds interest without them. And, if it is true that the whaling industry "was one of the largest and most interconnected specialized fisheries" and played "a major role in the Tokugawa economy," (77) the reader wonders why it has not figured more prominently in standard economic histories. One concludes that whales and whaling were indispensable to the Tokugawa economy and culture in specific contexts only.

In sum, Arch's fascinating study is more than an interdisciplinary maritime history. In addition to the issues already mentioned, it uses whales to reflect on broader aspects of early modern Japan: e.g., the development of communication and information networks; changing conceptualizations of the maritime environment; Buddhist and Shinto perspectives on meat-eating; and how Japanese people's gradual familiarity and connection to whales yielded an attraction to Western natural history that ultimately displaced faith in Chinese medical theory. Whales and whaling, here, wed the historical to the contemporary, enhancing knowledge of Japanese history while historicizing contemporary controversies, including the invented tradition of Japanese as nature-loving people spiritually connected to their natural world.

Emily T. Metzgar, *The JET Program and the U.S. – Japan Relationship: Goodwill Goldmine*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017. 199 pp. ISBN 978-1-4985-2603-6, \$90.00.

Reviewed by Gabriela Izaguirre

Founded in 1987, the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program is a grassroots movement that promotes internationalization through English language instruction in Japan's elementary, middle, and high schools. Over 60,000 participants have lived and worked in Japan, which has produced "a generation of willing interpreters and receivers." Although the JET Program is frequently criticized for its English Language education, or lack thereof, "the remarkable success it has had in public diplomacy program[s]" is considered its most important contribution (63–64).

In *The JET Program and the U.S. – Japan Relationship: Goodwill Goldmine*, Emily T. Metzgar argues that the JET Program is regarded, studied, and criticized for its efforts to improve English language education in Japan, and that this regard often clouds the results of improved opinions of Japan by young, college-educated people from around the world. Moreover, she argues that the cynicism of current participants and alumni often showcases the program as well-meaning but misguided in its efforts for foreign language education (8). Following the book's introduction, Metzgar discusses the theory-based framework of public diplomacy through public relations. By using the so-called Excellence Theory, Metzgar argues that the JET Program's public relations makes the organization successful and that public relations should be included as "a conscious part of organizational strategy" (23).

Metzgar also discusses Relationship Management Theory, which emphasizes mutuality. She also cites that "public diplomacy exposes foreign publics to a wide range of views among member[s] of the sponsoring country's population, not just the host government" (24). Nevertheless, as noted in various instances, the Japanese government has faltered with maintaining relations with alumni throughout the 30 years of the program's existence.

The third chapter shifts from a theory-based analysis and discusses the Japanese expertise in soft power. Through the lingering bitterness of World War II, Japan's passive approach to public diplomacy via soft power has established global cooperation and collaboration. Metzgar references the

appeal of traditional arts, such as *kabuki*, *ikebana*, and the tea ceremony. However, the “Cool Japan” movement, which has been in the forefront of the country’s soft power efforts in recent years, resulted in the increase of the public diplomacy budget by \$470 million. Furthermore, Metzgar mentions other organizations and resources, such as Japan House, the Japan Foundation, the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test, NHK World, and the Abe Fellowship Program. U.S.–Japan relations is also a source of soft power since Japan targets the United States in its diplomatic efforts. The push for soft power via the 2020 Olympics has also led to an increase in JET Program participants (64).

In the fourth chapter, Metzgar details the history of the JET Program and its establishment by various Japanese ministries: the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), the Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), and a pseudo-governmental agency, the Council of Local Authorities of International Relations (CLAIR). Through outreach to the nineteen alumni associations throughout the United States, Metzgar gathered data from 572 JET alumni in order to gain insight into their untapped population. In the results, she noted that 86% of the respondents were Assistant Language Teachers (ALT) and over 42% stayed for at least two years.

An interesting observation was that most alumni had international interest before participating in the JET Program and more than half had studied Japanese before applying. Additionally, more than half completed a graduate or professional degree after their stay in Japan. As a result, more than 94% of respondents stated that the participation in the program had been valuable and over 85% reported, that the experience was life changing. Nevertheless, only 59% reported that the experience had any relevance to their professional careers, with another 25% stating that the experience generated full-time employment after the program. Therefore, the JET Program has little or no direct relevance to future careers. Metzgar also gathered data on individual experiences, which showed that the frustrations of teaching English did not dampen the participant’s interest in the country or their enthusiasm for Japan (93). The study also showed that 95 percent of alumni believe that it is important to correct misconceptions and stereotypes about Japan or its people. Moreover, when explaining Japan, the participants do not view it with “rose-colored glasses” (94).

Chapter 6 discussed the development of the nineteen chapters of the JET Alumni Association (JETAA) across the United States. Most chapters

are near consulates or the Japanese Embassy located in Washington D.C., but other American cities without a consulate or Japanese presence have also established JETAA chapters. These chapters volunteer at local events, raise money for causes, such as the Tohoku Crisis, and participate in send-off and welcome-back receptions for new recruits and alumni. Nevertheless, Metzgar highlights that the alumni eventually begin to dwindle from the JETAA community due to family or career obligations, and that CLAIR and MOFA acknowledged that it has not put forth effort in maintaining contact with alumni after their return home. Moreover, the individual alumni associations do not keep records of the alumni once they fade from the JETAA community. Metzgar emphasizes that with “more than 60,000 alumni over its three-decade history...little information is available about where alumni are today, how they feel about Japan and what effect they think their participation in JET had on their lives overall” (114). Metzgar claims that “Japan has been unable to secure what is...the greatest potential benefit generated by [a] large-scale program: ongoing relationship with an extended community of college educated professionals” (123).

In *The JET Program and the U.S. – Japan Relationship: Goodwill Goldmine*, Emily T. Metzgar highlights the JET Program as an important tool for public diplomacy through public relations and encourages the Japanese government to research ways to utilize its growing alumni community. As alumni of the JET Program (Okinawa; 2013–2015) and a member of the JETAA in Florida, I identify with the results and conclusions of the data analysis and submitting this book review serves to display my support, interest, and enthusiasm in Japan.

Yoneyuki Sugita, *Japan's Shifting Status in the World and the Development of Japan's Medical Insurance Systems*. Singapore: Springer, 2019. 247 pp. ISBN: 978-981-13-1659-3. €84.16.

Reviewed by Carmen E. Schmidt

Professor Yoneyuki Sugita's book on the development of the Japanese health insurance system makes a unique contribution to the field of medical sociology because it considers Japan's changing status in international society in formulating policies within the health insurance system. Previous studies have focused on the politics of interest groups, particularly the role of government or elites in general, without considering the influence of the international environment on public policy.

Stakeholder policy is an indisputable factor in explaining how important legal institutions and systems have emerged. Negotiations between bureaucrats and large interest groups, such as the Japan Medical Association, continue to have a major impact on public policy. Studies of the political decision-making process have shown the influence of interest groups. In the many government advisory councils where the political interests of politicians, bureaucracy and interest groups are coordinated differently, big businesses and large professional associations play the most important role in deciding public policy. However, although specific interest groups act based on their own rational judgments, they are constrained by their external environment.

The role of the government and elites in the decision-making process is also discussed. Japan's health policy has traditionally been aimed at ensuring equality and has emphasized the expansion of insurance rather than promoting the quality of treatment. The scientists are, however, undecided about the role of the government. To what extent can we speak of the continuity of pre-war politics, and to what extent is it a product of the expansion of the social security system to include liberal democratic ideals? This book attempts to answer this question by analyzing primary documents on the role of the Japanese government in the development of Japan's health insurance system.

Another important issue that scholars have discussed is the role of the Second World War, namely the question of continuity or discontinuity in Japanese politics. This debate is a hot topic not only within medical sociology, more precisely the Japanese insurance program, but also in politics and sociology in general. On the one hand, the surrender of Japan in

World War II and the subsequent occupation by the Allies in the form of U.S. troops meant a radical democratic change from pre-war ultranationalism in Japanese politics as well as the radical reorganization of politics and society. On the other hand, elite studies have pointed to more continuity than changes in the Japanese political sphere. The same discussion is taking place in medical sociology with no end to date. However, the author attempts to overcome these approaches and discussions by introducing a new perspective – by looking at the international influence on national politics – rather than focusing on the relationship between national politics and national influences.

As far as methodology is concerned, it should be noted that the study is based on a detailed empirical analysis of the primary (official) documents and thus empirically based facts. The author focuses on the symbiotic relationship between Japan's changing status in the world and the development of the Japanese health insurance program. As can be seen from the debate on continuity and discontinuity, the Second World War marks a turning point in Japanese history. By analyzing major turning points and notable policies about the isolation of and participation in international society, the author clearly shows the link between Japan's international status and main policy outcomes.

Altogether, the author identifies four important turning points and associated political changes: First, the 1920s marked the first time in modern Japanese history that Japan was integrated into international society as a member of the Western-led world. During this period, the first health care system was established as part of the government's modernization efforts. Second, the late 1930s marked the next turning point when Japan became increasingly isolated from international society following its aggression against China and Manchuria. Domestically, the liberal state was replaced by a strongly centralized state. During this, the revision of the health care system in 1942 changed it considerably. Under rigid central planning, the medical system was expanded to maintain social peace. The third turning point was at the end of the Second World War when Japan was still isolated from the international community but under the auspices of the United States. This time, a more idealistic health insurance system was created. Fourthly, after the introduction of the Dodge Line in 1948, Japan returned to the international community. Within the framework of a balanced budgetary policy, the result was a departure from an idealistic social security policy.

In contrast to other scientists, the author shows that the embedding in the international environment had a significant influence on the concrete shaping of public policy. The most significant finding is that there is a symbiotic relationship between Japan's changing international environment and the development of the health insurance program. It also questions the importance of the Second World War as an essential turning point in addition to the debate about continuity and discontinuity, one of the bigger arguments put forward so far.

Since health insurance is only one of many policy fields, the future investigation of the path dependency of historical milestone with regard to the isolation of or participation in international society, and certain policies may prove to be an interesting field of investigation in policy field analysis. Thus, this book not only offers the reader a new perspective on the shaping of the health insurance policy in Japan, but also provides the scholar with a new historical framework for analysis. While considering the debate on the Japanese Constitution, Article 9, known as the "peace article," renounces war and prohibits Japan from maintaining an army as designed by the U.S. occupying forces. This framework can prove to be a fruitful instrument. For example, its application would suggest that the "idealistic" nature of the constitution adopted on May 3, 1947 should be linked to Japan's position in the international community. It could also be used to analyze its historical dimension, the "previous constitutions," and the current debate on the abolition of Article 9.

The Meiji Constitution of 1878, therefore, could be interpreted as a part of Japan's modernization efforts and the pressure of the Western world on Japan to become a fully accepted member among the modern countries. Following that, the *Kokutai no hongi* or the Cardinal Principles of Japanese National Entity in 1937, would be a transition from the liberal to the ultra-nationalist state in the wake of Japan's increasing isolation through its aggression against China and Manchuria. Given this short attempt of analysis, the application of this model to the development of other national policies could lead to new perspectives on the study of the formation of national decision-making processes.

Today, it is noted that globalization and international dependence play a decisive role in the shaping of national politics. Most scholars hereby point to the limitation of national decisions on public policies in the second modernity, as it can be seen in the member states of the European Union. Sugita shows, however, that domestic policy issues have never been exclusive of a domestic nature and that relations with the outside world

have always been of the utmost importance in shaping national public policy.

Overall, this book is an important contribution to the field of public policy and good governance as well as international relations and history. It will appeal to scholars and students in the fields of comparative public policy and governance, history, international relations, medical and health sociology, and Japanese studies. As evidenced in many universities, the sociology of medicine and health has gained importance in the social sciences and related disciplines with newly founded study modules and graduate courses underlying the significance of research in this field.

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