

The Relationship Between the Romance and Religious Observances: *Genji Monogatari* as Myth

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INTRODUCTION

It has always been my wish to re-examine *Genji monogatari*, in a way that would be different from the conventional interpretations, but I have not made much progress.

This will probably seem like a wildly abrupt change of subject, but there is a story told by a blind *itako*, or medium, called "The Life of Oiwaki-sama," the autobiographical tale (that is, it is related in the first person narrative style) of the Mt. Iwaki deity.¹ This seems to me to make use of a rather old form of narrative, of the type one might find in myth:

Oiwaki of Tsugaru is me, born in Kaga Province. My mother was the woman known as Osada, of Kaga Province. She had three children in three years—when she was sixteen there was Tsusōmaru, then my older sister, Ofuji, born when she was seventeen, and then me, born when she was eighteen years old. . . .

Translated by W. Michael Kelsey from "Monogatari to saishi: Shinwa toshite no *Genji monogatari*" 物語と祭祀——神話としての源氏物語. *Yūkyū* 悠久 1980/4, with later additions made by the author. It should be noted that the Japanese term *monogatari* has been rendered as "romance" and the word *matsuri* (or *saishi*) as "religious observance" throughout. Titles of the chapters from *Genji monogatari* have been rendered in the original, and all passages from *Genji monogatari* quoted by Professor Fujii have been translated by Kelsey, with references to the Seidensticker translation (see References) provided in the text.

1. *Oiwaki-sama ichidai ki*, or "The life of Oiwaki," was first collected in 1931 by Takeuchi Nagao. It was published in the November 1940 issue of the journal *Bungaku*, and reprinted in *Nihon shomin seikatsu shiryō shūsei*, Vol. 17 in 1972. The narrative goes to the point at which Anjugahime, the child of the deity, is reunited with her mother. It is thought to have originally been a longer prose poem in the *kojorūri* style. See Iwasaki 1978.

Then follows a description of “my” horrible ordeals, a minute tale of personal experience. “I” is Anjugahime,² who, after undergoing a variety of ordeals, becomes the deity of Mt. Iwaki. As is implied in the first words—“Oiwaki of Tsugaru is me, born in Kaga Province”—the narrator has already become a deity; the form of the work is her own account of her previous existence.³ Such a narrative method must be said to faithfully preserve the original narrative found in myth. The myth is composed of two sections: an account of the previous existence of the hero, and his or her transition to deity, something that takes place because the hero is revered for the depths of the sufferings undergone in the first part.

The very intention of the myth, naturally enough, results in an emphasis on the account of the process of the hero’s deification. Even so, is this transition process not something that is actually quite secret and hence cannot be narrated in itself, remaining instead a factor external to the narrative? It is for this reason that a myth inevitably focuses all its narrative attention on the romance-like account of the deity’s previous existence: because the myth is intended to show that this transition to deity is a certainty, such a narrative concern simply cannot be absent from the story. When this account of the deity’s previous existence comes finally to the point that it has spun off from the myth, we have arrived at the “evening before the dawn” of the birth of the romance.

Genji monogatari, typical as it is of the romance, has already

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2. Anjugahime is identical to “Anjuhime,” a character in the Sanshō Dayu legend cycle. The daughter of a late Heian official, she is sold, with her brother, to Sanshō Dayu, a former mountain lord; she helps her brother to escape and is herself tortured and put to death (see Yanagita 1915). In the Kansai area, however, “Anjusama,” like “Anjosama” of the Hokuriku area, is simply a general term for a nun.
 3. An account of one’s previous existence (*zenshōtan*) is similar to the tales in the *Jataka*, which relate the previous existences of Buddha. This concept can be used to explain the impetus for this story. It is similar to the so-called *honji mono*, or accounts of the “original form” of deities.

expelled any narrative of the gods to some place outside the text. *Genji* is a wholly this-world centered example of romance literature. True as this may be, there is, as I noted above, something in the structure of the myth that, from an early point, has already begun leaning toward the romance. Somewhere, there is a link between the myth and the romance. Is it not possible, then, to find myth existing within the romance—even if it is not actually contained there, does it not exist at least in the manner of a shadow's reflection on a white wall? I am convinced that the expression that the romance exists at the end of myth is more than a mere figure of speech.

EXTERNAL TO THE ROMANCE

The "religious observance" (*matsuri*), in *Genji monogatari*, often appears in tandem with the "purification" (*harahe*).

When Prince Niou is overcome with sorrow at having lost Uki-fune, we are told that he is surrounded in commotion by people who have "rites, sutra readings, observances and purifications" performed (Kagerō chapter).

There is a similar passage in the Yūgao chapter: Genji, also overcome with sorrow, is confined to his sickbed, and his father the emperor also creates such a commotion as can scarcely be described, with ceaseless prayers and "observations, purifications, rites and the like."⁴

These are descriptions of characters desperately clinging to the gods and the buddhas.

As for "purification," that which would come to the mind of almost anyone is the scene of the Doll Festival at the end of the

4. The so-called "Kawachi text" has this as "sutra readings, rites, observances and purifications." This text is a variant text of *Genji monogatari* put together by the Governor of Kawachi Province, Minamoto no Mitsuyuki, who lived in the thirteenth century. The fact that several independent versions of it have been discovered indicates that it was based itself on various commentaries. It is a vital text for those who would do research on *Genji monogatari*.

Suma chapter. Here Genji goes to the beach and, “having nothing but some very crude curtains erected, summoned the various fortunetellers who had come to that province and had them perform a purification” (Seidensticker, Vol. I, p. 245). In this ceremony a large doll is put into a boat and floated out to sea.

This is a purification, and it differs from a religious observance. Summoned here are fortunetellers.⁵ Genji, however, composes a poem here, which I will cite later, and in this poem has he not called plaintively to the gods? It is probably unnecessary to note that the result is a mysterious, violent storm. It would appear that here the religious observance and the purification are somewhat commingled. Why have they become commingled?

The “curtains” of the “very crude curtains” that Genji has put up⁶ are natural enough for an aristocrat’s purification ceremony at the beach, and there is nothing strange about them, but they bring to mind a penetrating observation once made to me by the poet Satake Yayoi, who thought they were similar to the bamboo found in *Taketori monogatari* or the hollow (or cave) of *Utsuho monogatari*—an enclosed, empty space, a place where communication can be made with the Other World.⁷ Such communication with an existence not of this world is made both in *Taketori monogatari* and *Utsuho monogatari*, but in *Genji monogatari* it is only here, in the Suma chapter, where the Other World pops in and out of sight like a transparency.

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5. Most of these fortunetellers (*onmyōji*) appear to have been magic practitioners who were dispersed in the various provinces. The phrase “fortunetellers who came to that province” makes it appear that they lived in the capital and only came when summoned to the province, but this is merely an explanation that they themselves concocted.
 6. Normally this is a kind of curtain that would be put up around a screen inside a house (*zenjō*). Here, however, it is outside, and appears to have been a sort of makeshift tent, draped on three sides, so that Genji might have some privacy.
 7. “Other World” means the spirit world. In *Taketori monogatari* this world is referred to as the “capital on the moon” (*tsuki no miyako*).

So these curtains have been erected for a purification, but without our really becoming aware of it they come to play the role of a mysterious implement which can effect communication with the mythical Other World.

Following this scene is the poem which Genji uses to appeal directly to the gods:

You myriads
of gods; will pity
you not take on me?
No crime
have I committed . . . (Seidensticker I, p. 246)

Poetry must originally have had an important role in religious observances. We might even go so far as to say that it was a "sacred implement." Here we have a poem close to the very source of poetry itself, a poem packed with magical power. It is an appeal to the gods.

The romance has expelled the world of the deities to a spot outside its narrative, but *Genji* is, of course, a work itself written in a fairly ancient period, and it doubtless contains elements of a strong sense of co-existing with the deities that, while understandable both to the characters in the work and to the work's first readers, cannot be fully comprehended by the modern reader. The characters in this work are being watched intently from some place outside the work. The characteristic of the romance is that it includes that area outside its actual descriptive passages as one of its parts. Because the descriptions in the romance relegate the world of the deities to a place outside the actual work, there is no particular need to depict this world, as in the manner of a tale of a visit to the Other World, nor is there any need to continually remind the reader that its characters are constantly under observation. Even so, *when, on occasion, the romance depicts a religious observance, or when it comes itself to take on some of the structure of such an observance, the romance then comes to correspond to this observance, and from the outside of its pages, the Other World makes*

a forceful appearance—such is the relationship between romance and religious observance.

The poem, “You myriads . . .” brings forth a violent storm. This is the sort of storm that blows up violently when things are not being conducted properly in the world of man. From the midst of this storm appears the god of Sumiyoshi, who is to become Genji’s ally. When we move into the following chapter, the Akashi chapter, the dead emperor Kiritsubo (Genji’s father) also makes an appearance.

FOR THE PACIFICATION OF THE SOUL

How did *Genji monogatari* come to be so long, and, in particular, why was it necessary to add what is almost like an appendix, the account of the people left in the world after Genji’s death?

This has profound connections with *Genji monogatari*’s structure: the internal world of *Genji monogatari* is being watched by forces outside it.

The discipline of folklore teaches us that after a person dies he becomes a deity (that is, he merges with the ancestral spirits), whether this may take thirty-three years or fifty years. There is a long period before he is able to become a deity, and during this period the dead person demands offerings from the descendants he has left behind. Spirits of the dead called forth by mediums sometimes complain bitterly that the offerings of their descendants are not sufficient.

What, then, is the profound reason behind the fact that the one and the same medium (*itako*, or blind shamaness) performs both the duty of transmitting the words of the dead⁸ and the duty of looking after the myths—such as was the case of Oiwaki, mentioned at the beginning of this paper? It seems obvious that the myth of Oiwaki was told by the deity, through its possession of the medium, that it was, in short, the very words of the deity. It is

8. “Oracle of the dead,” in Japanese, is *kuchiyose*. *Kuchi* here refers to words (*koto*), so the expression means to “draw the words” of the dead out.

for this reason that "The Life of Oiwaki" is told in the first person narrative style.

There are many dead people who make appearances in *Genji monogatari*. There are also many characters who undergo various tribulations in the world of the living before their deaths. These characters do not become deities; rather, they keep watch on their descendants within the story, from houses, from the sky, or from other places that are outside the story but still close to this world.

There is, for example, Yūgao.

She falls in love with the young Genji, though his rank is far above hers, and rashly allows herself to be led off by him; during the night she is murdered by a spirit.⁹

She had had a daughter by a different relationship. This is the woman who later appears as Tamakazura, her daughter by Tō no Chūjō. Because Yūgao met with such an unexpected and youthful death, she was unable to leave a final testament, even though she had this child. The final testament was an important element, setting forth the taboos to be observed after one's death,¹⁰ but Yūgao was unable to express hers. We must see Yūgao's painful anguish as being something left accumulated in this world.

Well after the Yūgao chapter we have the Tamakazura chapter, which develops as a tale of brilliance around this beautiful, grown-up young lady. The Yūgao chapter, seen from the perspective of the Tamakazura chapter, could be called the account of a char-

9. She is murdered by a *mono no ke*, a low ranking spirit in the spirit world, or one who is evil and causes calamities. These might also be thought of as "fallen" members of the Other World.

10. The testament, in *Genji monogatari*, leaves us with a very strong impression; it is something that limits the acts of those still living, and something that must be followed closely by the living. In cases where these testaments are not kept, there is usually punishment, as in the case, for example, of the Suzaku emperor, who disregarded his father's instruction and treated Genji badly. As punishment he was inflicted with pains in his hands. Blindness or the loss of rank could also result from ignoring a final testament. It must be said that there was a belief that these testaments in themselves had magical power.

acter's previous existence. And in the Tamakazura chapter, Yūgao, as a spirit of the dead, guards the young lady.

If, at this juncture, we had a medium who could call forth the spirits of the dead, then Yūgao would appear before Tamakazura. She would tell her the story of this previous existence and inform her that she would protect her happiness from the sky. Then she would most likely demand substantial offerings, and finally leave the medium's body, apparently full of regret.

Yūgao must stay on guard until the princess has her final happiness well in hand. The story has been lengthened so that it can describe clearly how such young ladies are able to obtain happiness. If the tale did not continue through two, or three, generations, of mother-daughter relationships, it would not be able to pacify the souls of the dead. These ten chapters—Tamakazura, Hatsune, Kochō, Hotaru, Tokonatsu, Kagaribi, Nowaki, Miyuki, Fujihakama and Makibashira—called the "Ten Tamakazura chapters" (Tamakazura *jūjō*), are, I think, the chapters dealing with the pacification of Yūgao's soul.

Folklorists have reported that if a woman were to die before being married, or to end her life in an inauspicious way, this would be a serious sin. Because Yūgao herself was temporarily, at least, married, and has even had a child, she is able to escape the sin of dying unmarried,¹¹ but even so, she dies at the age of nineteen, which is both unnatural and untimely. The bitterness she left behind should be dissolved, if only slightly, by the happiness experienced by her daughter.

THE CALLING OF YŪGAO'S SOUL

Does Yūgao's dead spirit appear?

We cannot say that there are no cases of the souls of the dead making appearances in *Genji monogatari*, for in the case of the females, the soul of Lady Rokujō appears before Genji in the Wakana chapter and also in the Kashiwagi chapter. In the Waka-

11. I will deal with this in greater detail below.

na chapter she appears first as a woman, to relate her hatred and her torments, and then as the mother of the princess Akikonomu, to demand offerings, before she departs (see Fujii 1982).

We will not, in the character of Yūgao, find this type of appearance. But Yūgao must, nonetheless, be a presence hovering in the sky over the entire ten Tamakazura chapters, even though she might not appear with the violence of Lady Rokujō, who breaks through the framework of the story in order to make her appearance in this world. So in the Kagaribi chapter the atmosphere is thick with the presence of the spirit of Yūgao.

Genji is lying together with the young lady Tamakazura. What are these “watch fires?”* They burn brightly in the estate grounds, casting illumination over the area. The nights during the transition period from summer to autumn are, while not summer nights, still by no means easy to endure, and at such times the illumination, flashing brightly, is actually cool to one who is far enough away from the fires themselves.

Is the scene in the story autumn at this point, or is it still summer? Although the work itself tells us it is already early autumn —“it had become autumn,” the texts says—we discover on reading further that Genji “thought that a summer night when there is no moon and no light in the grounds is stifling and awful” (see Seidensticker I, p. 455).

When do the ancestral spirits, accompanied by the spirits of the newly dead, come to visit the living? The *bon* festival was carried out on the fifteenth day of the seventh (lunar) month. This ceremony, linked to ancient belief concerning the ancestral spirits and carried out in the period between summer and autumn, had probably been fixed by the Nara period. The watch fires here are unquestionably a kind of welcoming fire for the spirits, religious implements for the purpose of inviting the souls. The grounds, flickering brightly in the flames, are thus the site of a religious

*The “watch fires” (in Seidensticker, “flares”) are the *kagaribi* of the chapter title. TRANSLATOR.

observance.

As I have noted already, *in scenes when an observance is being conducted or which have themselves taken on the structure of an observance, the tale begins communication with the spirit world existing outside the tale.* Genji and the young lady Tamakazura cannot, certainly, remain indifferent to the sacred atmosphere unwittingly created here by the sacred implements such as these watch fires. Is not the spirit who has descended here, who now exists so close to the two of them, that of Yūgao? Kindle the watch fires, make them burn brighter—Genji orders, “Keep someone there and the fires going constantly.”

At this point Genji and Tamakazura exchange poems. Is this exchange of poems merely an indication of the love between Genji and Tamakazura? The poems are as follows:

(Genji)

With the watch fires
rising love
smoke, indeed,
will not, in this world, die—
these flames.

(Tamakazura)

With no destination
disappear in the sky!—
the watch fires’
message it is:
were it but that sort of smoke.

(See Seidensticker I, pp. 455–456)

These are, of course, very like love poems. Even so, what is “love?” If Yūgao were still alive, there would be no need for her to be pushing love on Tamakazura so she would marry; “love” here is an emergency state of affairs, brought on by the absence of the mother. But even so, Tamakazura’s mother is causing this to happen, from somewhere above the sky. The girl’s love is being

watched by her real mother. This is the reason that the so-called "step-daughter tales"¹² inevitably take the structure of a love story, and it is quite clear that the ten Tamakazura chapters are themselves a variation of this pattern.

The step-daughter who is being tormented by her step-mother pleads, as in the case, for example, of *Ochikubo monogatari*, that her real mother come quickly to take her because her life is so painful. In this instance, the Lady Ochikubo, alone and unable to sleep, cries out, "Mother, please come and take me with you. It is so painful here," and makes the following poem:

If, on me, a mere dewdrop
of pity you would recognize,
then I would disappear,
leaving, with you
this dismal world

This takes place in the first days of the eighth month. One could almost say that such scenes, in which the girl makes this plea to her natural mother, are obligatory in the tales of mistreated step-daughters.

In their exchange of poems in the Kagaribi chapter, I believe that both Genji and Tamakazura have implicitly recognized the existence of Yūgao as a strong pressure on them, and have made their poems accordingly.

12. "Step-daughter tales," or stories of *mamako ijime*, begin with works such as *Sumiyoshi monogatari* and *Ochikubo monogatari* in the Heian period, and during the medieval period and later they were produced in inexhaustible quantities. They also appear frequently in myth and folktale. They were apparently popular because they took the form of a heroine who was able to receive happiness as the result of love. The step-mother in these tales is nothing more than a prop; the essence of the tale is that the natural mother, in order to arrange a marriage for the daughter she has left behind, causes the daughter to fall in love. Love is the institution through which the marriage is brought about, then, rather than the normal parental arrangement.

In Genji's poem, the lines, "will not, in this world, die—these flames," are nothing less than an attempt to kindle the love of Yūgao. The smoke of love has worked continually to tie the sputtering flame of passion from the mother Yūgao to the daughter Tamakazura.

I repeat myself, but this is *not* the case of a man losing a woman through death, then, unable to forget her, continuing to keep burning the flames of his grief; this is a picture of the dead person, unable until thirty-three or fifty years have passed, to fully die, demanding offerings from the living. Yūgao is *not* merely living on in Genji's heart as a memory, because even after some fifteen years or so, at the least, his feeling of her presence has yet to dim even a small amount, and he cannot stop making offerings to her. Or, to take the case of Kaoru, whom I will discuss below, it is an utter mistake to interpret him, the way most modern people are prone to do, as having made away with Ukifune because he could not forget the existence of the Uji Ōigimi.

To whom is Tamakazura calling when she says, in her poem, "With no destination disappear in the sky!?" This is nothing other than a call, in the style of the step-daughter tale, to her natural mother, to come and take her away. Does her poem not strikingly resemble the poem of the Lady Ochikubo quoted above?

It is not necessary to conclude that she is clearly calling out to Yūgao in this poem. Poems are formed from a variety of original contents that are buried within them. It is enough that we know that the atmosphere of the religious observance here has called forth the form of the step-daughter tale plea to the natural mother, and that Tamakazura's poem is constructed on the basis of this form.

THE CASE OF THE UJI ŌIGIMI

Here I will give in to my desire to move into the Uji chapters and say something about the story of Ukifune. Can we not read these chapters with many of the same concerns applied above?

The Uji Ōigimi is a woman who died without being married.

Is this not, from the standpoint of folklore, a deep sin? Uematsu Akashi, who is engaged in research on the folklore of Taiwan, has told me of examples from the Chinese society there of women who died before marriage and were then married to men after their deaths. And Nakada Mutsuko (1979), who has done research on actual cases of marriages between living people and spirits on Taiwan, reports the case of a woman who, if alive, would have been twenty-nine years old, being married to a living male. In this case the woman had died at the age of three months old, and then appeared to her father twenty-nine years later in a dream, demanding to be married. Uematsu, also, has mentioned cases of the danger of not worshipping the spirits of the dead (Uematsu 1980 p. 66).

I myself not long ago happened to have the opportunity to climb up to Ryūshakuji (famous as "Yamadera") in Yamagata Prefecture, where I saw a large number of bridal dolls¹³ and tablets on which were painted wedding pictures. These had been presented for women who had died before they married.¹⁴

The old women who were in the service of Ōigimi have this to say about their unmarried mistress: "She must have been possessed by the *frightful deity* that people always speak about" (emphasis added, Agemaki chapter; see Seidensticker II, p. 835). These lines, however, are a part of a conversation after the women have successfully led Kaoru into Ōigimi's bedroom, and most likely were spoken as a sigh of relief, an old woman finally feeling some peace of mind and saying something that otherwise would never have been mentioned.

This "frightful deity," according to *Sairyūshō* (an old *Genji monogatari* commentary), is explained as follows: "According to a

13. The idea seems to be that through presenting these dolls a marriage can be brought about. The reason for offering pictures of the wedding ceremony is that they had, of course, no photographs.

14. In northeast Japan the spirit marriage customs have been documented by Sakurai (1974, p. 547 and 1977, pp. 457-469). Sakurai has also offered examples of this custom as it exists in Okinawa (1978).

popular saying, a woman who passed the marriage age without getting married is possessed by a deity.” There is also a poem in *Man'yōshū* on the topic:

Jewelled creeper vine,
trees that bear no fruit
a violent deity
it is said, possesses you
each tree that bears no fruit. (*Man'yōshū*, Vol. II)

There is, then, a deity who stands in the way of marriage.

Kaoru crept into Ōigimi's bedroom, but Ōigimi fled and the marriage failed to take place. The joke made earlier by the elderly lady-in-waiting about the “frightful deity,” then, soon ceases to be a joke. Ōigimi dies in her unmarried state. She must, doubtless, become an angry spirit destined to wander in the area of Uji. Another name for Ōigimi is Hashihime.¹⁵ According to legend, Hashihime herself is an angry spirit, a “frightful deity.”

The above might be called the account of the previous existence of the angry spirit Ōigimi, and the tale most certainly does not end here, but must go on to depict the developments after the death of Ōigimi. This is the most pressing reason for the inclusion of the tale of Ukifune.

Ukifune is a half sister, of a different mother, to Ōigimi and Nakanokimi. She does not appear as a character until midway through the Uji *jūjō*, that is to say, after the Sawarabi chapter. While Ōigimi is still alive, in short, the character Ukifune is not idealized in the work.

Toward the end of the Yadorigi chapter Ukifune finally shows herself as a character. The Yadorigi chapter has been included

15. Hashihime is also known as “Uji-no-hashihime” (see Fujii 1972). This deity is the guardian spirit of a bridge, but there are many cases of the deity belonging originally to the ranks of violent deities before becoming such a benevolent guardian spirit. These deities are often the object of medieval tales of the slaying of monsters.

expressly for the purpose of Ukifune's appearance; this appearance is then put off until the chapter is nearly finished—a finely crafted structure, indeed. The reader has been waiting impatiently for this appearance, and Ukifune comes into our vision in a starkly impressionistic way:

He [Kaoru] saw coming just then from across the bridge an unimposing woman's carriage, escorted by rough Easterners dangling something from their hips, and apparently attended by a large number of servants (see Seidensticker II, p. 931).

The "bridge" here is, of course, the Uji bridge. Kaoru immediately feels something fatalistic in the figure of Ukifune, who appears from the opposite side of this bridge that, earlier, Ōigimi had disappeared across: "When he saw this he could remember *her* and, as usual, tears fell from his eyes" (see Seidensticker II, p. 934). And further:

After going all the way to Hōrai and seeing the hairpin she had sent as a token, that Chinese Emperor of old must have felt better. Though she was a different person, Kaoru still thought she [Ukifune] might make him feel better, and that he would soon make vows to this person (see Seidensticker II, pp. 934–935).

Kaoru thinks it is fated that his love for Ōigimi should cause his heart to go out to Ukifune.

Here we have Ukifune as *hitokata*, or *katashiro* ("substitute," or "doll").¹⁶ But let us, however, recognize clearly that *hitokata* and *katashiro* are names totally unknown to Ukifune herself. This very ignorance, indeed, is what sees to it that her fate is to be a

16. A "substitute form" is, in Japanese, *katashiro*. The essence of Ukifune is her transferability. Does this cause her to shed this transferability and return to a physical existence? In order to return to a physical existence, she must enter the water. Because Ukifune is like a "doll" (*hitokata*), she is carried away by the water. Has she returned to a physical existence through the act of being swept away by the water? Whatever the cause may be, restoring one's physical existence means to enter the world of physical desire. The Uji chapters pursue Ukifune to this dilemma.

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“substitute.”

Toward the end of the Azumaya chapter Kaoru finally goes with Ukifune, the “substitute form” of Ōigimi, to Uji. As the time passes and the location shifts, the inside of the cart in which they are riding gradually comes to be enveloped in the now-familiar spirit atmosphere:

(Kaoru)

As a keepsake, indeed,
I put my glance on you
the morning mist
so fills the air
and this it must be that wets my sleeves

(see Seidensticker II, p. 968).

This poem, which he has recited to himself, must be thought of as a sacred implement. To compose a poem for oneself—or, to put it in other words, to present it to the spirit of a dead person—amounts to a one-way poem exchange. Where is the spirit of Ōigimi now? It is, of course, at Uji. It is calling these two from the sky. Ukifune has been called to Uji. Kaoru is clearly aware of all this when he arrives at Uji: “Ah, the soul of the dead—stay on for a time, and look on me.”

Ōigimi’s shadow lengthens over the ground like that of the evening sun. Is this not because the problem of the soul, so to speak, of Ōigimi (who is supposed to have been killed off by now) has not, either within the work or the mind of the author herself, been completely resolved? The dead by no means die with finality; rather, they are standing quietly off the stage of the romance but close to the action. Ōigimi has obviously left her desires behind in the world at her death. Kaoru is unable to forget her. Is this inability not, then, a manifestation of the desires of the dead? Returning to the Yadorigi chapter, let us examine the passage that foreshadows an important motif in the drama of Ukifune’s appearance:

His [Kaoru's] heart was, though, still filled with longing for the one who had departed [Ōigimi], and he thought he would never be able to forget and wondered why, in spite of the deep bonds between them, *she had departed so forlornly; it was not easy to understand*. "Even if it were someone of lamentably low rank, if she were to be just a little like her [Ōigimi], I know I would fall for her. Oh, how I wish I could, like that emperor of old, blend with the smoke of the incense, and see her just once more!"—such thoughts constantly occupied his mind, and he was in no hurry to rush to this noble lady (see Seidensticker II, p. 890).

In this scene, Kaoru, so deeply in love with Ōigimi, pines for a woman to take her place, even if she were to be of "lamentably low rank." It could be said that this expression, of a "lamentably low rank," prefigures the appearance of Ukifune.

Is it not rather simple to mistakenly conclude that, in loving a person, one's love is a matter of fate, and that the mysterious nature of this feeling is due to the fact that one is being called by his lover's soul? The words, "why she had departed so forlornly; it was not easy to understand," call to mind a feeling of doubt, or a lack of persuasive power, concerning the fate of a love that was never physically consummated. This presumably expresses the fact that Ōigimi herself, because the problem of her soul has not been adequately taken care of, has not completely died. It is Kaoru who has sought out Ukifune, and through Ukifune we see an attempt to deal with Ōigimi's soul. To speak rather figuratively, Ōigimi wants Ukifune's body. There is no other way for her to become united with Kaoru if not through the utilization of the body of her half sister.

Let us return, for the moment, to the Azumaya chapter and the cart in which Kaoru is taking Ukifune to Uji. The spirit-laden Uji has been transformed, in its entirety, into the location of a religious observance. What religious observance is this? Ukifune is a "substitute." Has not the spirit of Ōigimi demanded her body? The ritual in which Ōigimi's spirit is implanted in Ukifune's body is being conducted at Uji. The ritual, seen from this perspective, must take the form of an account of the character's deification.

I would like to close with a few words about the concept of the *hitokata* or *katashiro*. This, needless to say, is an extremely important concept, and one which defines the character of Ukifune in her totality. It reveals, as I have noted, the way in which her existence has flowed, in a single stream, from Ōigimi. In order for Ukifune to shed this *hitokata* or *katashiro* image, and obtain her own individual existence, she must, in an action perfectly suited to the name *hitokata* (“doll”), attempt an act of suicide in which she will flow away in the river. The scene which paves the way for Ukifune’s bold decision to throw herself in the water comes in the Yadorigi chapter, at the point at which the word *katashiro* first appears; it can only be seen as Nakanokimi’s perversion—“it is painful to think even of those dolls close to the Mitarashi River”—of Kaoru’s words, “they made a doll reminiscent of those made long ago.”

This is the first scene in which Ukifune is talked about by Nakanokimi. From this we can see that Ukifune’s transformation from a *hitokata* or a *katashiro* to a new woman with her own individual existence—something which is brought about by her entering the water and her subsequent rebirth—has already, at the time of her first appearance in the book, been clearly outlined for us.

GLOSSARY

Anjugahime あんじゅが姫	<i>onmyōji</i> 陰陽師
<i>bon</i> 盆	Ryūshakuji (Yamadera) 立石寺 (山寺)
<i>harabe</i> 祓へ	<i>Sairyūshō</i> 細流抄
<i>hitokata</i> 人形	<i>saishi</i> 祭祀
<i>honji mono</i> 本地物	<i>Sumiyoshi monogatari</i> 住吉物語
<i>kagaribi</i> 篝火	<i>Taketori monogatari</i> 竹取物語
<i>katashiro</i> 形代	Tamakazura <i>jūjō</i> 玉鬘十帖
<i>mamako ijime</i> 継子虐め	<i>tsuki no miyako</i> 月の都
<i>matsuri</i> 祭	Uji <i>jūjō</i> 宇治十帖
<i>mononoke</i> 物の怪	<i>Utsuho monogatari</i> 宇津保物語
<i>monogatari</i> 物語	<i>zenjō</i> 軟障
<i>Ochikubo monogatari</i> 落窪物語	<i>zenshōtan</i> 前生譚

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