Rural Japanese Gothic: The Topography of Horror in Modern Japanese Literature

Citation

Bernard, Peter John. 2019. Rural Japanese Gothic: The Topography of Horror in Modern Japanese Literature. Doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, Graduate School of Arts & Sciences.

Permanent link

http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:42029604

Terms of Use

Share Your Story

The Harvard community has made this article openly available.
Please share how this access benefits you. Submit a story .

Accessibility

Rural Japanese Gothic:
The Topography of Horror in Modern Japanese Literature

A dissertation presented

by

Peter John Bernard, Jr.

to

The Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the subject of

Japanese Literature

Harvard University

Cambridge, Massachusetts

May 2019

Dissertation Advisor: Tomiko Yoda   Peter John Bernard, Jr.

Rural Japanese Gothic:
The Topography of Horror in Modern Japanese Literature

Abstract

Why does the countryside seem so haunted in the pages of modern Japanese fiction?

In this dissertation, I reassess the importance of non-urban spaces in the history of modern

Japanese literature through the concept of the "rural Gothic." Existing scholarship has

fruitfully examined the various ways that Japanese writers have registered the

overwhelming effects of modernity through the depiction of urban milieux. But what about

non-urban spaces? My project brings to light the ways that the "rural" has functioned as a

means to negotiate the delirium of modern experience through a particular nexus of

negative affective states—namely, feelings of disquiet, disorientation, and terror that align

with the concerns of the Gothic as a literary mode. Drawing on a broad body of modern

literary texts that link the Japanese countryside with what I identify as a Gothic rhetoric, I

identify a series of historical moments wherein these texts may be read as explorations of a

particularly rural modernity.

The dissertation comprises four chapters. In Chapter One, I consider short prose

fiction by Sasaki Kizen to uncover early experiments in thinking the rural in Gothic terms.

The haunting texts produced by Kizen *before* Yanagita Kunio's epistemological system of

minzokugaku had crystallized, I argue, pursue alternate ways of understanding ethnicity,

ethnography, and localized space that were silenced afterward. Likewise, Chapter Two

asks: if these early experimental works by Kizen, among others, were no longer possible in

post-Meiji literary and folkloristic discourses, what became possible in their stead? To

answer this question, I turn to Izumi Kyōka's late novel *Sankai hyōban ki* and argue that, by consciously scrambling the temporalities and prerogatives of both *kindai bungaku* and *minzokugaku*, the text puts forth a compelling vision of rural modernity as what I call "occult modernity." Chapter Three turns its attention to what I propose to be the *locus classicus* of rural horror in modern Japan: the 1938 Tsuyama Incident. This chapter focuses on one text inspired by this incident, Yokomizo Seishi's *Yatsuhaka-mura*, and analyzes how the excess of meaning produced by the Tsuyama Incident provides a productive backdrop against which an author like Yokomizo could approach the issue of rural horror. And Chapter Four looks at the contemporary genre of the "3.11 ghost story," exploring how these narratives of spectral visions, spirit possession, and other supernatural phenomena work to "re-canny" the uncanny disaster zone by summoning the past into the present.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank my advisor Tomiko Yoda. I have learned so much from her classes and our discussions, and, looking back, these moments are consistent high points out of all my time at Harvard. Thanks are due as well to the other members of my dissertation committee: Alexander Zahlten, Matthew Fraleigh, and J. Keith Vincent. I am profoundly grateful for their advice and guidance over the years. And I am thankful for all I have learned, and all the support I have received, in various forms, from the faculty, staff, and fellow students of the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations at Harvard.

Special thanks must go to the Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies and its staff for the almost inconceivable amount of support, including but not limited to financial support, that I have received over the years. The multiple trips to Japan made possible by the Reischauer Institute's generous funding have been truly life-changing.

Tatsumi Takayuki and Uzawa Yoshiko have been the most generous hosts imaginable during my time spent at Keio University in Tokyo for research, and our enriching and expansive conversations over weekly Tuesday lunches constitute some of my fondest memories of this period of graduate school. I am grateful as well to the other faculty and staff at Keio with whom I have had the privilege to interact over the time I have spent there. Special thanks goes, too, to Higashi Masao, Tanabe Seia, EnJoe Toh, Monga Mioko, Anakura Tamaki, Nakagawa Gaku, Isozaki Jun'ichi, Hijikata Masashi, Kuroki Aruji, and the members of the Izumi Kyōka kenkyūkai for their hospitality, advice, and various fascinating conversations of a generally ghostly nature. And a final expression of thanks

must go to my family, and friends, and various acquaintances with whom, over the years, I have crossed paths, and from whose generosity and goodwill I have benefitted in a myriad ways.

Prefatory Note

All translations in this dissertation, unless otherwise indicated, are my own. Generally, when translating from Japanese-language sources I have quoted the Japanese original alongside an English translation in the body of the dissertation for primary sources, and have omitted a quotation of the Japanese original for citation of secondary sources. When simply referencing the title of a text, for example, I have taken some liberty in updating orthography into modern (postwar) forms; when quoting Japanese directly from a text, I have striven to match my orthography in terms of *kana-zukai* and *kanji* with that text from which I am citing. If an accepted English translation of a Japanese title exists I generally follow that translation, unless a non-trivial difference in interpretation is important in some way to my argument, in which case I provide my own translation; if the citation of title is limited to a passing contextual reference I omit its English translation.

If an identifiably standard edition of a work or corpus of works exists, I have favored citation from that edition over other available editions (like first appearance in print, et c.). In concrete terms, this means, for example, citing from the *Sasaki Kizen zenshū* for Sasaki Kizen. Things get a bit more complicated, however, with Izumi Kyōka, where generally the *Shinpen Izumi Kyōka shū* and *Kyōka zenshū* are the preferred editions, in that order of preference, but in the particular case of *Sankai hyōban ki* there exists a superior edition in the form of *Shokō: Sankai hyōban ki* from 2014, which I cite over the *Kyōka zenshū* text. For postwar texts I generally cite the first major edition of the text available in book form.

I transcribe Japanese names in the Japanese order—family name first, given name last. The only exception to this is if the individual's work was written originally in English,

in which case I follow the English-language order. If an author used a penname, I follow

Japanese convention and refer to them by that penname, rather than by their family name.

INTRODUCTION

Modern Literature, Folklore Studies, and Narratives into Depth

This dissertation is an attempt to consider the relationship between affect, non-urban space, and literary production in the historical context of modern Japan. Put in more concrete terms, it asks: why does the countryside seem so haunted in the pages of modern Japanese fiction? My hypothesis is that, by turning our attention to the reading of texts that instantiate the association of a certain kind of geographical space—the "rural" or, to invoke the analogous Japanese term, *inaka* 田舎—with a certain kind of affective landscape—feelings of disquiet, disorientation, revulsion, and terror, sometimes momentary, sometimes sustained, which I cluster together as "Gothic" in a sort of shorthand—we can learn something about experiences and implications of modernity in Japan that would remain obscure to us otherwise. I have thus identified four moments wherein this synergy between the Gothic, the rural, and the literary is particularly productive of something new, and therefore something interesting. Each of the four chapters examines one of these moments.

It seems prudent, however, at the beginning of this study to make clear what it is not. It is not meant to be a literary history of rural Gothic literature in Japan, or merely that. Such a project would, no doubt, be useful in a number of ways, and indeed welcome, given that no such survey of the field exists in either Japanese or English.[1] But since my

---

[1] The closest analogue to such a project in English is probably to be found in Susan J. Napier, *The Fantastic in Modern Japanese Literature: The Subversion of Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 1996), which provides in-depth coverage of (one could argue) important rural Gothic writers like Inoue Hisashi and Ōe Kenzaburō. At the same time, her positioning of

methodology relies oftentimes on an understanding of literary-historical transformations for some nicety of argumentation, let me give the briefest of sketches of what such a project were to look like, if it were to be carried out, here, before we move on.

I am delimiting my field of enquiry in this dissertation to the modern period, which I am taking to mean the Meiji Period onward, but which *de facto* follows the accepted understanding of the emergence of modern literature in Japan: not 1868, in other words, but the mid-to-late 1880s. The question of what sort of texts would fall into a roughly rural Gothic classification in those intervening years is a fascinating one, but is outside the purview of the present study.[2] And there is a need—one that is likewise not sufficiently addressed by the present study—to consider the rich pre- or proto-history of rural Gothic storytelling in the Edo Period, both in a generalized literary-historical sense (for there is little doubt that episodes in Ueda Akinari and late *yomihon* 読本 read as rural Gothic, and indeed the *shokoku monogatari* 諸国物語 format from Ihara Saikaku onward functions as something of an anthology for rural Gothic storytelling) and in a sense more specific to a central argument of this thesis regarding the entwined development of *kindai bungaku* 近代文学, or modern literature, and *minzokugaku* 民俗学, or folklore studies, through points

---

Natsume Sōseki's *Yume jū ya* as an originary text for fantastic literature in Japan signals to the reader that this is not a study concerned primarily with rurality or with the affective terrain of horror and the Gothic, which is where our present interests lie.

[2] At the very least, there is a rich variety of stories construable as rural Gothic in the newspapers of this period, examples of which can be found in English translation as "Monsters! Monsters! Read All about It!: Tales of the Extraordinary from Early Meiji Newspapers (1875–1886)," trans. Matthew Fraleigh, in *A Tokyo Anthology: Literature from Japan's Modern Metropolis, 1850–1920*, eds. Sumie Jones and Charles Shirō Inouye (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2017), 109–130; and in facsimile form in *Meiji-ki kaii yōkai kiji shiryō shūsei* 明治期怪異妖怪記事資料集成, ed. Yumoto Kōichi 湯本豪一 (Tokyo: Kokusho kankō kai, 2004), which draws from a wide range of regional newspapers across Japan.

of contact manifest in rural Gothic forms. Yanagita-*minzokugaku*, or the brand of

minzokugaku associated with Yanagita Kunio (a topic to which we will turn in detail later)

did not come out of nowhere, nor was it willed into existence by dint of the genius of its

namesake; Yanagita's various engagements with preceding *kokugaku* 国学 epistemological

traditions are well documented in existing scholarship,[3] but a text like *Tōno monogatari* 遠

野物語 (*The Tales of Tōno*, 1910) is haunted by more immediate debts, in such forms as—

for example—*Tani no hibiki* 谷の響 (*Echoes in the Valley*, 1860), a collection of strange and

eerie tales from the Tsugaru region by local *kokugaku* scholar of the Hirata Atsutane school

and polymath Hirao Rosen.[4]

But let us return to the task at hand. In the modern period, rural Gothic storytelling

executed within the newly formed parameters of *kindai bungaku*—that is, as serious

"literature," not as oral *kaidan* 怪談 storytelling, et c.—can be perhaps assigned an

originary point with Kōda Rohan's "Tai dokuro" 対髑髏 ("Encounter with a Skull";

originally published as "En gai en" 縁外縁, "The Bond beyond Bond") in 1890. It is worth

observing, for literary-historical purposes, that this is the very same year as the publication

---

[3] H. D. Harootunian, for example, writes of the Meiji Period that "the dispersed fragments of nativism escaped becoming mere archaeological curiosities in the next century. At the center of the dispersion was an effort to appropriate and recombine elements of *kokugaku* to form a new discipline called *minzokugaku*, 'Japanese ethnology,' which itself was simply one inflection in a larger discourse on culture" (H. D. Harootunian, *Things Seen and Unseen: Discourse and Ideology in Tokugawa Nativism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 411), before proceeding to consider the central role Yanagita played in this formational process (see Ibid., 415–424).

[4] Hirao Rosen 平尾魯仙, *Tani no hibiki* 谷の響, ed. Aomori kenritsu toshokan 青森県立図書館 (Aomori City: Aomori kenritsu toshokan, 1969). Selections of this work translated into modern Japanese have been anthologized in a firmly rural Gothic context as Hirao Rosen 平尾魯僊, "*Tani no hibiki* yori" 「谷の響」より, trans. Kuroki Aruji 黒木あるじ, in *Michinoku kaidan meisaku sen vol. 1* みちのく怪談名作選 vol. 1, ed. Higashi Masao 東雅夫 (Sendai: Ara Emishi, 2010), 369–389.

of Mori Ōgai's "Maihime" 舞姫 ("The Dancing Girl"), by which I mean to say that rural Gothic considerations are immanent, albeit in rather cobwebbed corners, of modern literary discourse and canon formation right from the beginning.[5] The 1890s see further explorations along these lines by Rohan in texts like "Shin-Urashima" 新浦島 ("The New Urashima," 1895), although Rohan's texts from this period present a Hawthornean interpretive difficulty in a performative tension between allegory and figurality. But the most marked development in the 1890s is the emergence of Izumi Kyōka as an author, and thus as an *inaka* Gothic writer—Kyōka's influence over the field remains immense. One of Kyōka's very earliest works, before he had made a name for himself in the *bundan* 文壇 as an author of *kannen shōsetsu* 観念小説, is a story, entitled "Kurokabe" 黒壁 ("Blackwall," 1894) and framed within a *hyakumonogatari* 百物語 format, which recounts a terrifying witnessing of the *ushi no toki mairi* 丑の時詣 rite at the eponymous Mt. Kurokabe outside of Kanazawa. Kyōka would continue to explore rural Gothic themes in early works like "Ryūtandan" 龍潭譚 ("Of a Dragon in the Deep," 1896) and one of his best-known works, *Kōya hijiri* 高野聖 ("The Holy Man of Mount Kōya," 1900).

---

[5] Such considerations are by no means limited to trope. Kamei Hideo's reading of Rohan here is particularly interesting: by exploring how Rohan "depicts people who are possessed by *katagi* as if it were a demon of some sort," Kamei analyzes the obsessive, almost neurotic tendencies of Rohan's characters in the 1880s and early 1890s and shows how they may be read as critical historical probings of the kinds of relationships possible between self and society (Kamei Hideo, *Transformations of Sensibility: The Phenomenology of Meiji Literature*, trans. Michael Bourdaghs, et al., ed. Michael Bourdaghs (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 2002), 225). I believe we can expand upon this to consider how certain situational landscapes—whether in "Fūryū butsu" or "Tai dokuro" or even, from a different angle, *Chintō sansui*—effect certain kinds of language, which in turn effect a particular phenomenology of "possession." This tendency toward ratcheting up the tension between the spoken and unspoken—or the discursive and the non-discursive—in Rohan from this period is used to tremendous affective effect, and is something that has a clear successor in Kyōka's "Ryūtandan" or "Kōya hijiri."

The 1900s are important for the emergence of new figures in the formative years of *minzokugaku*, and indeed whose work straddles the dual paradigms of *kindai bungaku* and *minzokugaku* before the latter, at least, had fully cooled and settled into the stabilized ideology of Yanagita-*minzokugaku*, so to speak. Sasaki Kizen and Mizuno Yōshū are important figures here, as is, without a doubt, Yanagita's own *Tōno monogatari* as literary text; it is this historical moment that will form the backdrop for my Chapter One. Other important texts and figures from the 1900s and 1910s include Ogawa Mimei, Okamoto Kidō—especially in a work like *Hida no kaidan* 飛騨の怪談 (*The Hida Horror*, 1913), and even, after a certain fashion, Emi Suiin's *San-zen nen mae* 三千年前 (*Three Thousand Years Ago*, 1917), which narrates a fantastical battle between the Korobokkuru コロボックル race of little people from Ainu folklore (situated here as the indigenous inhabitants of the Japanese peninsula) and the Yamato *minzoku* 大和民族 (Yamato people).

The concerns and inflections of the rural Gothic literary field diversify significantly in the 1920s. This is, I would suggest, due to a variety of factors, central among which being the continued consolidation and centralization of Yanagita-*minzokugaku* as *the* epistemological paradigm for constructing and organizing the "folk," and as a consequence folk horror. Accordingly this means that various new forms and experiments sprung up around the edges of *minzokugaku*. The emergence of figures like Ogawa Mimei (mentioned earlier), Murō Saisei, and perhaps most significantly Miyazawa Kenji represent attempts to not only think about rural space but also let rural space think for itself, as it were, through a certain kind of literary production called *dōwa* 童話, which is not exactly reducible to the "fairy tale" but instead makes use of ambiguities between the "adult" and the "child," for

example, as well as grounded locality versus free-floating fantasy (Miyazawa's Iihatov being the paradigmatic example here) to create a particular affective literary experience.[6] From another angle, *denki shōsetsu* 伝奇小説, or the fantasy romance, emerges at this time, although a lineage may of course be traced back through a work like *San-zen nen mae* to the early speculative work of Oshikawa Shunrō in the Meiji Period: indeed, Shunrō's 1903 *Ginzan ō: Denki shōsetsu* 銀山王　伝奇小説 (*The King of the Silver Mountain: A Fantasy Romance*) carries that very phrase in its title.[7] Nonetheless, the *denki shōsetsu* as popular rural Gothic/fantasy form becomes markedly visible in the 1920s with the work of Kunieda Shirō in texts like *Yatsugatake no majin* 八ヶ嶽の魔神 (*The Daemons of Yatsugatake*, 1924–1926).

At the same time, we see rural Gothic forms being explored as offshoots of larger currents in the *eroguro nansensu* (erotic grotesque nonsense) cultures of the period, most prominently by Yumeno Kyūsaku in a series like *Inaka, no, jiken* いなか、の、じけん (*BOONDOCK INCIDENTS*, 1927–1930) or *Inugami hakase* 犬神博士 (*Doctor Dog-God*, 1931–1932).[8] And by the 1920s "rural" has, of course, attained a new polysemy in terms of not

---

[6] For a sustained study of these processes of *thinking regionality*—taken in a verb/object sense as well as adjective/subject sense—in Miyazawa, see Hoyt Long, *On Uneven Ground: Miyazawa Kenji and the Making of Place in Modern Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012).

[7] It is worth briefly noting here that this term's use in the context of literary genre stretches back much further than this, with its origin in the *chuanqi* tales of Tang China. The reception history of this genre in pre-Meiji Japan, as well as the process through which this term came to be used to signify the particular mode of speculative fiction that it does in modern Japanese literary discourse, is a topic worthy of sustained consideration in its own right, although such would be outside the immediate bounds of the present study.

[8] In terms of previous scholarship, important work has been done by Nathen Clerici on Yumeno Kyūsaku as a rural Gothic writer, although Clerici does not use these exact terms. In an article focusing on *Inugami hakase* and another story, "Sudama," Clerici writes, "for

only referring to non-urban spaces on Honshū, Kyūshū, Shikoku, and to a lesser extent

Hokkaidō, but also analogous colonialized spaces in the Japanese empire. The discourse of

internal colonization of rural periphery by the metropole—encountered with particular

frequency with regard to the Tōhoku region and indeed something that haunts the stories I

consider in Chapter Four—is now complicated by the presence of rural unevenness

enfolded within the unevenness of empire. Satō Haruo's "Jokaisen kidan" 女誡扇綺譚 ("The

Tale of the Bridal Fan," 1925) stands out in this regard in its Gothicization of layers of

colonial temporalities in the decrepitude of decaying sites in southern Taiwan during the

Japanese colonial period.[9]

Kyūsaku the countryside harbored latent phantasmal energy that burst beyond the confines of the past to collide with, and resist, the encroaching forces of modernization" (Nathen Clerici, "Yumeno Kyūsaku and the Spirit of the Local," *Japanese Studies* 39 (2019): 1). Clerici then goes on to argue that "Kyūsaku mined the local and the *fushigi* to highlight the ruptures of modernity, but his texts could not resolve the tension of the myriad vectors at play: traditional to modern, regional to centralized, urban to rural, supernatural to rational, native to foreign, enchanted to mundane, and all of these moving in both directions (Ibid., 2). Clerici's reading of *Inugami hakase* in particular highlights the latent political dimensions of this early-Shōwa *eroguro* rural Gothic moment while simultaneously suggesting how the unevenness of rural Gothic forms can be expressed not only in rural-urban or periphery-center forms, but also rural-rural/periphery-periphery forms: for the particular implications, aesthetic as well as political, of the Gothicization of the squalor of Chikuhō coal mines versus the very different kind of folk horror suggested by Kizen's Tōno or Kyōka's Hokuriku highlight the fact that, despite comparisons made between Kyūsaku and Kyōka at the time, the two writers were after very different ends with their rural Gothic means. All that being said, I find my conclusions differing from Clerici's somewhat, in that I hesitate to align the *fushigi* so cleanly with the "traditional" or, for that matter, the past; simply put, this thesis argues that Gothic forms are not a visitation of specters of the past upon the present so much as they are constitutive of the modernity by which that present is differentiated from various pasts. This is a point which I hope will become clearer later on.
[9] Robert Tierney's reading of another one of Satō's Gothic-tinged stories from this period, "Machō" 魔鳥 ("Demon Bird," 1923), illustrates not only how Satō's fiction explored ethnographic and pseudo-ethnographic discourses vis-à-vis colonial aborigines in Taiwan—and indeed how the text mimicked the trappings of ethnography in its narratology—but also how this text can function on an allegorical level, contracting the

What makes Kyōka such a singular figure, among all this, is the fact that he remains a constant presence amidst these various transformations in rural Gothic literary production, and furthermore his work shows a continued ability to not only engage with these various transformations but frequently push them to—and beyond—their breaking point while also scrambling their relationship with both Yanagita-*minzokugaku* and each other. It is for this reason that I have made a major work of Kyōka's prose fiction from this period the focus of Chapter Two.

To recapitulate to this point, by the early Shōwa Period I identify the following strands within what we can anachronistically call rural Gothic literary production:

1) Fiction that is working, to varying degrees of complicity, within or alongside Yanagita-*minzokugaku* discourse (Kyōka's *Sankai hyōban ki* 山海評判記 (*A Gazetteer of Mountains and Sea*, 1929) being the text I examine in depth)

2) Fiction that is coming out of a background in regional newspaper writing, which represents a fundamentally different relationship between "folk" and "event" (and therefore temporality) than that instantiated by Yanagita-*minzokugaku*. Taking Kyūsaku's *Inaka, no, jiken* as an illustrative example of this, it becomes clear how its succinct style of reporting "incidents" frames the rural Gothic event as a wacky, modular tidbit of serialized consumer print culture—a very different framing and thus affective experience for the

---

distance between "here" versus "there" or "now" versus "then" so that it can also be read as a story about domestic, metropolitan persecution in the wake of the 1923 Great Kantō Earthquake. In classic paranoid Gothic fashion, then, textual anxiety in ambiguity and latency of meaning can be put to good critical use. For Tierney's discussion of this text, see Robert Tierney, *Tropics of Savagery: The Culture of Japanese Empire in Comparative Frame* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2010), 89–109.

reader than *Tōno monogatari*, even though the nature of the content is similar. This in turn links this type of fiction to the larger cultural matrix of the time known as *eroguro nansensu*.

3) *Denki shōsetsu* narrative forms, epitomized in this era by Kunieda, who in such a work as *Yatsugatake no majin* is experimenting with an exploration of the boundaries of "native" identity (*sanka* 山窩 "mountain folk" versus pre-Yamato "water folk") that doubles as an exploration of the boundaries between localized "Japan" (in this case the Suwa region of Nagano Prefecture) as an historically "real" versus ahistorically "fantastic" site.

4) The melding, to varying degree, of *dōwa* fairy-tale models and agrarian literature to produce a fantastically refracted regionality in writers like Miyazawa and Mimei. The primary distinction here to be made between what Miyazawa was attempting to do and what Kunieda was attempting to do, I think, is to be found in a narratological approach to temporality; that is, whereas Kunieda's fantastical refractions of the Shinshū and Kōshū regions theorize "historicity" as one of their major themes, Miyazawa seems if anything intently interested in a *textual* ahistoricity (which is not to say that they are ahistorical texts).

I argue that these four basic parametric fields—less distinct, of course, in practice than such a schematic summary would suggest—remain more or less unchanged from this point onward into contemporary Japan of the 21st century. What does change in their stead is the media landscape. What this means is there is not so much a direct change in written discourse as there is a proliferation of means through which such discourses are being expressed—which, of course, has the effect of changing discursive contours over time in turn. The first of these proliferations is indeed not so much a new media form as it is the rise of popular fiction, already covered with Kunieda and Kyūsaku in the 1920s (albeit one

extreme end of a popular-fiction spectrum), as something recognizably oppositional to *jun bungaku* 純文学 or "pure literature." This means that new types of affects—the lurid, the gruesome, the grotesque—gain a certain kind of subcultural currency, and are thereby evacuated from the parameters of *jun bungaku*.[10]

But from the early 1950s onward, in addition to literature there are ample examples of rural Gothic representations in *manga*, in the works of Mizuki Shigeru, Tezuka Osamu and, later, Morohoshi Daijirō; and in film, in the early film adaptations of Yokomizo Seishi's Detective Kindaichi series from this period, or in *Kyū ju kyū hon me no kimusume* 九十九本目の生娘 (known in English as *The Bloody Sword of the 99th Virgin*), a 1959 *burakumin* exploitation film about ritual sacrifice in northern backwaters.[11] In the 1970s, we see a radical reconsideration of Gothicized rural space and the relationship between center and periphery in the transmedia work of Terayama Shūji.[12] And toward the end of the 20th century we see an even wider proliferation of rural Gothic in music, television, video games,

---

[10] What makes the mid-Meiji moment so interesting, by contrast, is the way that these "popular" affects were enfolded into "pure" literary production. When one moves beyond the distancing strategies of classical language, for example, the horrifying final paragraph of description in Rohan's "Tai dokuro" *feels*, if not reads, like something out of a modern horror film. See Kōda Rohan 幸田露伴, "Tai dokuro (En gai en)" 対髑髏（縁外縁）, in *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei: Meiji hen*, vol. 22: *Kōda Rohan shū* 新日本古典文学大系　明治編 22　幸田露伴集, eds. Noborio Yutaka 登尾豊, Sekiya Hiroshi 関谷博, Nakano Mitsutoshi 中野三敏, and Hida Kōzō 肥田晧三 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2002), 285–287.

[11] For more information on this film, see Michael Crandol, "*The Bloody Sword of the 99th Virgin*," in *The Encyclopedia of Japanese Horror Films*, ed. Salvador Murguia (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 29–30.

[12] For an examination of how this works in the context of Terayama's investigations of rural temporalities through his transmedia cluster of *Den'en ni shisu* 田園に死す texts, see Steven C. Ridgely, *Japanese Counterculture: The Antiestablishment Art of Terayama Shūji* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 139–173.

and *anime*, while new and innovative prose fiction continues to be produced by writers like Bandō Masako, Iwai Shimako, Ono Fuyumi, and Mitsuda Shinzō.

To reiterate, this is by no means meant to be a definitive or exhaustive survey of "major" or "canonical" texts; it is simply meant to give a sense of the general historical contours against which my particular chapters are situated. With this in place, let me explain how the chapters function against this backdrop. In Chapter One, I consider short prose fiction by Sasaki Kizen to uncover early experiments in thinking the rural in Gothic terms. The haunting texts produced by Kizen *before* Yanagita Kunio's epistemological system of *minzokugaku* had crystallized, I argue, pursue alternate ways of understanding ethnicity, ethnography, and localized space that were silenced afterward. Likewise, Chapter Two asks: if these early experimental works by Kizen, among others, were no longer possible in post-Meiji literary and folkloristic discourses, what became possible in their stead? To answer this question, I turn to Kyōka's *Sankai hyōban ki* and argue that, by consciously scrambling the temporalities and prerogatives of both *kindai bungaku* and *minzokugaku*, the text puts forth a compelling vision of rural modernity as what I call "occult modernity." Chapter Three turns its attention to what I propose to be the *locus classicus* of rural horror in modern Japan: the 1938 Tsuyama Incident. This chapter focuses on one text inspired by this incident, Yokomizo Seishi's *Yatsuhaka-mura*, and analyzes how the excess of meaning produced by the Tsuyama Incident provides a productive backdrop against which an author like Yokomizo could approach the issue of rural horror. And Chapter Four looks at the contemporary genre of the "3.11 ghost story," exploring how these narratives of spectral visions, spirit possession, and other supernatural phenomena work to "re-canny" the uncanny disaster zone by summoning the past into the present.

Kizen, in other words, provides an interesting case because he (along with early works by Kyōka from the 1890s and 1900s) represents an attempt to articulate rural Gothic horror in ethnographic terms *before* the discursive crystallization of Yanagita-*minzokugaku*. In Chapter Two, a discussion of *Sankai hyōban ki*—as opposed to a text from one of the other emergent parameters I have identified—is productive precisely because Kyōka is working both within and against Yanagita-*minzokugaku* after its crystallization, and unpacking it from the inside. My choice of the Tsuyama Incident in Chapter Three is meant to pick up on these emergent parameters, all of which come to bear on Yokomizo's text, I argue, while also acknowledging *Yatsuhaka-mura* as very much part of the expanding media environment in which rural Gothic horror, by the early 1950s, found itself. Chapter Four, with its consideration of texts from the present decade, is meant to function more speculatively, in an attempt to think about how rural Gothic "responses" to disaster or trauma do not simply rehash the historical forms we have already established but instead carry the potential to do something new.

Yanagita, minzokugaku*, and Yanagita Studies*

The next matter of clarification is what exactly I mean by Yanagita-*minzokugaku* and how the present study relates to existing discourses surrounding it. The amount of existing scholarship on Yanagita Kunio, his legacy, and the paradigm of folklore studies he is said to have pioneered is, particularly in Japanese-language scholarship, massive in scope. It comprises a dazzling range of interpretations, from Yanagita's interest in the "folk" or *jōmin* 常民 as a kind of agrarian Marxism, on the one hand, or as a kind of fascist nationalism, on the other.

English-language scholarship on Yanagita, though not quite as voluminous as its Japanese-language counterpart, has likewise engaged with Yanagita's texts and legacies from a variety of vantage points. Important Yanagita or Yanagita-adjacent studies that have influenced my thinking on this subject include work by Ronald A. Morse,[13] J. Victor Koschmann,[14] Marilyn Ivy,[15] Gerald Figal,[16] Michael Dylan Foster,[17] Alan Christy,[18] Christopher A. Robins,[19] and Melek Ortabasi,[20] among others. Generally speaking, these studies are not literary studies, though they oftentimes take literary texts as their objects of enquiry (e.g. Figal and Foster) or perform readings on what might at first glance not seem to be "literary" texts literarily (e.g. Ortabasi). The present study is thus an attempt to approach some similar issues from the "other side," as it were—not only in terms of a focus on Gothic horror, as *higan* 彼岸 might suggest, but also from the vantage point that literary production, as opposed to anthropology or folkloristics or cultural or social history, might afford us.

---

[13] Ronald A. Morse, "Personalities and Issues in Yanagita Kunio Studies," *Japan Quarterly* 22.3 (1975): 239–254.

[14] J. Victor Koschmann, "Folklore Studies and the Conservative Anti-Establishment in Modern Japan," in *International Perspectives on Yanagita Kunio and Japanese Folklore Studies*, eds. J. Victor Koschmann, Ōiwa Keibō, and Yamashita Shinji (Ithaca: Cornell University East Asia Papers, 1985), 131–164.

[15] Marilyn Ivy, *Discourses of the Vanishing: Modernity, Phantasm, Japan* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995).

[16] Gerald Figal, *Civilization and Monsters: Spirits of Modernity in Meiji Japan* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999).

[17] Michael Dylan Foster, *Pandemonium and Parade: Japanese Monsters and the Culture of Yōkai* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2009).

[18] Alan Christy, *A Discipline on Foot: Inventing Japanese Native Ethnography, 1910–1945* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2012).

[19] Christopher A. Robins, "Narrating Tono: Yanagita Kunio, Sasaki Kizen & Inoue Hisashi," in *Yanagita Kunio and Japanese Folklore Studies in the 21st Century*, ed. Ronald A. Morse (Kawaguchi City: Japanime Co. Ltd., 2012), 63–79.

[20] Melek Ortabasi, *The Undiscovered Country: Text, Translation, and Modernity in the Work of Yanagita Kunio* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2014).

That being said, my thoughts on these issues owe much to these studies as well as to the various circulating discourses on Yanagita in Japanese-language scholarship, and I willingly admit that a non-trivial amount of the rhetoric that follows is built on something of a straw man, in the sense that many studies of Yanagita have long taken as their raison d'être a decentering or destabilization of Yanagita's discursive centrality, which has the effect of simply kicking that myth further down the road. Figal wrote two decades ago of "the mythic grip that Yanagita has had as *the* founder and *Tōno monogatari* has had as *the* birthplace of that discipline"; surely, thanks to work done by Figal and others, the grip must have loosened at least somewhat by now.[21] And yet here we are, with yet another folklorically-oriented study that takes a zombified Yanagita as its bogeyman.

Figal, whose concerns perhaps fall the closest to my own here, explains his project in the following way.

> My principal goal is threefold: first, to foreground relations among persons and texts that have largely been underappreciated if not consciously silenced in the history of modern Japanese folk studies; second, to demonstrate that these relations were formed around figures of the fantastic (*fushigi* in a broad sense) to the extent that one can speak of a widespread discourse on the fantastic from which a variety of disciplinary and critical practices historically emerged; and third, to argue that this discourse on the fantastic was part and parcel of the production of modernity in Meiji Japan.[22]

This dissertation is in many ways an extension of the important work done previously by Ivy, Figal, and generations of Japanese scholars from Yanagita's own day up through the present. It attempts to change the parameters somewhat—from Figal's *fushigi* discourse (which might, in a different era and under a different light, be called *gensō* 幻想 as in *gensō*

---

[21] Figal, *Civilization and Monsters*, 13. It is worth noting that there are exceptions to this, in the form of studies that embrace the central role Yanagita has played in modern intellectual discourse in Japan (e.g. Ortabasi).
[22] Ibid.

14

bungaku 幻想文学 or "literature of the fantastic") to more Gothic discourses; and by focusing not *primarily* on the epistemologies that these discourses produce—though these remain important—but instead on affective inflections, felt both within the read text and within the reading body, to try to come at the issue of modernity from a different angle.

Likewise, I am in wholehearted agreement with the conclusions suggested by Christy's careful study of "minzokugaku as a heterogenous field," as opposed to a monolithic field in the form of Yanagita-*minzokugaku*,[23] even as it is equally undeniable that Yanagita-*minzokugaku* as discourse and "Yanagita" as source for this discursivity remain immensely influential and deserve to be considered on their own terms, which is a tack productively taken by Ortabasi. By acknowledging the historical discursive reality that the latter approach suggests, I hope to ultimately align myself with the former approach by poking around in a few corners that have yet gone relatively unexplored by previous scholarship. The first two chapters of this dissertation represent that impulse most clearly, in my attempt to finally give voice to Kizen on his own terms—it is almost eerie the regularity with which Yanagita's silencing of Kizen-as-voice in the text of *Tōno monogatari* is invoked in scholarship without actually pausing to listen to what Kizen's voice actually sounded like!—and likewise to pause to listen to a similarly silenced period late in Kyōka's career. Both of these readings against the grain serve, I hope, to show how not only a text but also its context, in literary-historical terms, can be deeply Gothic.

Gothic/Japan

---

[23] Christy, *A Discipline on Foot*, 9.

Speaking of which: what is at stake by thinking about the "Gothic" in the context of "Japan"? This project follows on the heels of a continuing scholarly discussion addressing that question. Previous scholarship applying the term "Gothic" to Japanese literary texts includes work by Cody Poulton,[24] Charles Shirō Inouye,[25] Henry J. Hughes,[26] Mark Jewel,[27] Anna-Marie Farrier,[28] J. Keith Vincent,[29] and Michael J. Blouin.[30] Much, though not all, of this discussion has revolved around the question of whether or not Kyōka can be read as a Gothic novelist: Inouye, Hughes, and Jewel, in particular, are interested in this question, and they each in their own way use the issue of "applying" the label of "Gothic" to Kyōka to attempt to theorize that model in a way that respects its original historical parameters in the form of the Gothic Romance, which I take to refer to a genre flourishing over the span of six decades between the bookends of Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) and James Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824), while simultaneously displacing it therefrom.

---

[24] Cody Poulton, "The Grotesque and Gothic: Izumi Kyōka's Japan," *Japan Quarterly* 41.3 (1994): 324–335.
[25] Charles Shirō Inouye, "Japanese Gothic," in *A New Companion to the Gothic*, ed. David Punter (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2012), 442–454; and Inouye, "Globalgothic: Unburying Japanese figurality," in *Globalgothic*, ed. Glennis Byron (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2013), 202–214.
[26] Henry J. Hughes, "Familiarity of the Strange: Japan's Gothic Tradition," *Criticism* 42.1 (2000): 59–89.
[27] Mark Jewel, "Risks and Rewards: Reading *Nihonbashi* as a Gothic Novel," *Hikaku bungaku nenshi* 比較文学年誌 39 (2003): 1–23.
[28] Anna-Marie Farrier, *Circulating Fictions: The Novels of Natsume Sōseki and the Gothic* (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2007).
[29] J. Keith Vincent, *Two-Timing Modernity: Homosocial Narrative in Modern Japanese Fiction* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2012), 152–174.
[30] Michael J. Blouin, *Japan and the Cosmopolitan Gothic: Specters of Modernity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

The Gothic is, like all genres, slippery and evasive when it comes to definition, and perhaps singularly so. Instead of trying to nail down my own catch-all definition that not only encompasses the original Anglophone texts but also the rural Gothic texts I have proposed to define as such above, let me instead step back and think about the possible ways that "Gothic" can be used to signify. The first of these is on the level of trope—the ghost, the monk, the madman, the haunted castle, the vampire. In this way, the haunted villa in Kyōka's *Kusameikyū* 草迷宮 (*The Grass Labyrinth*, 1908) suggests a Gothic reading.

The next is on the level of the way the story is told—frame narratives, discovered manuscripts, generally convoluted narratologies. Such aspects are very much in place in Kyōka's *Sankai hyōban ki*, again suggesting a Gothic reading.

A third way is in prose style—a tendency toward histrionics of prosody, hyperbole, and "telling" as opposed to "showing." Once again, a sampling of almost any major Kyōka text will yield passages that fit this bill.

A fourth way might perhaps be broadly called thematics, but which I mean to invoke more particularly in terms of a particular kind of relationship with the past—a privileging of the "barbaric" over the cultured, or, indeed, the "Goth-ic" over the Classical, as well as a heightened attunement to delineating distinctions between "native" ("English" and, at a deeper level, pagan in the Gothic Romance context) and "foreign" (the central signifying force of which in the original Gothic Romance being Catholicism). In his classic treatment of the Anglophone Gothic Romance, David Punter describes the process of inversion at work here in the following way:

> Gothic stood for the old-fashioned as opposed to the modern; the barbaric as opposed to the civilised; crudity as opposed to elegance; old English barons as opposed to the cosmopolitan gentry; indeed, often for the English and provincial as

17

opposed to the European or Frenchified. Gothic was the archaic, the pagan, that which was prior to, or was opposed to, or resisted the establishment of civilised values and a well-regulated society. And various writers, starting from this point, began to make out a case for the importance of these Gothic qualities and to claim, specifically, that the fruits of primitivism and barbarism possessed a fire, a vigour, a sense of grandeur which was sorely needed in English culture. Furthermore, they began to argue that there were whole areas of English cultural history which were being ignored, and that the way to breathe life into the culture was by re-establishing relations with this forgotten, 'Gothic' past.[31]

This quote immediately puts us on unstable footing: substitute "Japanese" for "English," and "Sinitic" for "European or Frenchified," and we find ourselves in *kokugaku* nativist territory. The similitude of means of emergence and function in Gothic discourse—to say nothing of the startling synchronicity of that emergence—in both the Anglophone and Japanese context will remain an undercurrent present in all the chapters of this study, and there exists in these implications, I sense, a tantalizing opportunity to argue for a compelling reading of, say, Hirata Atsutane as every bit as, if not more, Gothic in intention and fact of form than the perhaps more obvious application of that term to *Ugetsu monogatari*. At any rate, the notion of Gothic temporality, I hope to show in the following chapters, can and should be productively applied to Kizen, and to Kyōka, and to *kokugaku/minzokugaku*.

A fifth and final way might be in terms of the affects the text evokes. Although I have been using the term freely to this point, the relationship between "affect" and "text" seems to me a tricky one, for there is, to begin with, the bifurcation between affect within the text (representations of affect via characters' bodily experiences as well as interiorities) and affect within the reader (the affects the text effects in the reader). These do not always go hand in hand, and, if anything, the texts I analyze in this dissertation are interesting

---

[31] David Punter, *The Literature of Terror: A History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the Present Day: Volume 1: The Gothic Tradition* (New York: Longman Publishing, 1996), 5–6.

precisely because of a tension between these two levels of affect. This is, ultimately, why I think Gothic is a particularly useful term for our discussion at hand: whereas "horror," as a body genre, seems to almost necessitate sustained affective experience on the part of the experiencer that stays within a relatively constrained swath (fear, surprise, shock, fright, anxiety, terror), the relationship between textual affect and readerly affect in the Gothic is much more open-ended. There is, by definition, it seems, judging from its constant presence in Gothic fiction from *Otranto* onward, a campy titillation in the Gothic that is difficult to put into words—an intermingling of fear and fascination that propels the reader through the pages. This affective awkwardness—the voyeuristic relationship between not-frightened-but-titillated reader and moments of horror on the page—is the heart of my own working definition of the Gothic I pursue in this study, and it is an aspect that we can find in Kizen, Kyōka, Yokomizo, and contemporary *kaidan* storytelling.

Narratives into Depth

Let me conclude this Introduction with two quotes from Anglophone Gothic scholarship. Tanya Krzywinska, writing on cinematic representations of the British pagan countryside, puts forth the following argument: "the existing features of ancient landscapes and their presentation in film and other popular media are often used to explore and create histories and identities that extend beyond, or challenge, those offered by conventional 'national' and historically grounded narratives."[32] This quote is a useful starting point for a discussion of rural Japanese Gothic discourses, but we can expand outward from it in two

---

[32] Tanya Krzywinska, "Lurking beneath the skin: British pagan landscapes in popular cinema," in *Cinematic countrysides*, ed. Robert Fish (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2007), 75.

important ways. Firstly, "pagan" here, being historically tied to the British context, can be broadened to an understanding of how landscapes—and the monumental nature of *things that abide in landscapes*, whether they be graves, *haikyo* 廃墟, the *yakata* 舘 "manors" of Kizen's Tōhoku, old wells, *jinja*, the caves of a fictionalized Tsuyama, religious idols, or commemorative warnings constructed after an 1896 earthquake that pepper the Tōhoku coastal landscape—come to not only represent but rather "enfold" or "instantiate" the past. This is a dynamic that this dissertation seeks to explore: the *minzokugakusha*/author/modern subject traveling "deeper" into the landscape to collide with these mute, unmoving manifestations of the past. And what I think rural Gothic texts do, in different ways, is dramatize and think about that very modern moment of ethnographic or archaeological "discovery" of the object or artifact, and question the implied or assumed relations of power there—the relations of power are flipped so that the *past*—not a humanist "ghost" so much as an immanent understanding of rural object-landscapes—is in the position of power over the modern subject. This is just as true of Parkins and the whistle he finds in M. R. James's "Oh, Whistle, and I'll Come to You, My Lad" (1906) as it is of Yano in Kyōka's *Sankai hyōban ki*.

The second way that we need to expand outward from the above quote has to do with "historically grounded narratives": namely, I strive here focusing in on the *speculative* nature of these rural Gothic texts, and the power of other ontologies—Gothic, dream-narrative, fantasy: the "rural" angle of these Gothic texts ground them in a particular kind of localized lived reality, and they seek to organize and make sense of that reality, or more specifically the *affective contours* of that reality, in speculative ways that indeed challenge "historically grounded narratives" by exploring narratives grounded in something else.

The second quote comes from the final chapter of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions*, her first book, which, in its 1986 edition with its nested temporalities of the Preface on top of a revised Chapter 1 and a new Chapter 4 on top of Chapters 2 and 3, makes for a fascinating experience of Gothic scholarship as archaeological Gothic practice. And it is precisely archaeological Gothic practices that we are after:

> The revival since the late 1950's of critical interest in the Gothic novel has, as I discussed in Chapter 1, made room for a lot of intelligent writing about depth and the depths. Markedly and more or less consciously, critics have recognized and valued the Gothic most readily when they have been able to perceive it in terms of inner warfare, inner spaces, inner dimensions. […] As Chapter 1 points out, it is the same critics who have been the most intent on grasping the essence of the Gothic novel whole who have also been the most impatient with its surfaces, and quickest to label them with the would-be demeaning names of "claptrap," "decor," and "stage-set." But their plunge to the thematics of depth and from there to a psychology of depth has left unexplored the most characteristic and daring areas of Gothic convention, those that point the reader's attention back to surfaces.[33]

This is a fascinating passage when applied to our concerns with rural Japanese Gothic for multiple reasons. Firstly, Sedgwick identifies a critical tendency toward the association between interiority—"inner warfare, inner spaces, inner dimensions"—and the Anglophone Gothic novel that, while not denying the importance of surfaces, of the "claptrap," "decor," and "stage-set" of these texts, reads as absolutely bizarre when applied to Japanese literary history. By which I mean: if we take, as previous scholarship has generally done, Kyōka as the paradigmatic modern Japanese Gothic writer, and we consider his critical relationship with *jun bungaku* in historical terms, we see that it is precisely because of a *perceived* lack of psychological "depth," a lack of classic I-novel interiority that

---

[33] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions* (New York: Methuen, 1986), 140–141.

got him the "Gothic" moniker in the first place. As Inouye writes with regard to the role of figurality in what he proposes as an answer to the Japanese Gothic:

> Studying the period from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries, I identify three major semiotic trends that aided the development of modern thought: firstly, a shift toward phonocentricity, or a sound orientation of signs; secondly, a shift toward realism, or a homogenisation of signs; and thirdly, a shift toward symbolic framing, or a perspectival use of signs to symbolise the mundane world as a reflection of various ideological formations. What phonocentricity, realism and symbolic framing have in common is a suppression of figurality, or what I define to be the expressive potential of the grapheme.[34]

It is clear that Inouye's figurality, whether in Kyōka or in the animated films of Miyazaki Hayao, represents a fascination with surfaces; what, then, are we to do with the issue of depth in the Japanese Gothic?

This dissertation, and the particular kind of narratives it considers, represents one potential way to answer that question. What I propose, in a sort of mirroring gesture to Sedgwick's intervention by asserting the importance of surfaces in Anglophone Gothic texts, is the *exteriorization* of depth.[35] That is, the narrative movement of depth in rural Japanese Gothic texts—and this, above all else, is what makes them important as Gothic texts—is not deeper inward, whether it be literally in terms of subterranean crypts, labyrinths, and similar spaces of claustrophobia or in terms of psychological movement toward those realms of "inner warfare, inner spaces, inner dimensions," but outward, into the distance, into the landscape, into the peripheries.

---

[34] Inouye, "Globalgothic," 205.

[35] For the classic discussion of interiority, landscape, and modern Japanese literature, see Karatani Kōjin, *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*, trans. Brett de Bary, et al., ed. Brett de Bary (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998).

CHAPTER ONE

Sasaki Kizen and Emic/Etic Negotiations at the Intersection of Ethnographic and Literary Writing

Introduction

In October 1906, two young men with a shared interest in stories of the strange and supernatural met for the first time. One, Mizuno Yōshū, was a recent graduate of Waseda University; the other, Sasaki Kizen, was currently enrolled as a student there. This encounter, later recreated in Yōshū's 1908 short story "Kitaguni no hito" 北国の人 ("The Man from the North Country"), gives us a memorable portrait of Kizen as a gloomy, odd individual filled with gloomy, odd tales from far-flung Tsuchibuchi Village (土淵村) deep in the heart of Iwate Prefecture. Toward the beginning of that story, the narrator (clearly mirroring Yōshū) and Hagiwara (mirroring Kizen) exchange the following dialogue.

「お国は何処（どちら）です」
と聞いた。すると、萩原は
「え？......国ですか、国は花巻の方です」
と言ったが、私には充分に聞き取れなかった。
「どちらですって？」
「花巻」
「え？」
「花巻」少し声が鼻にかかる。
「え？」
　まだ聞き取れないので、聞きなおすと、きまりの悪るそうな顔をして口をつぐんでしまったが、暫くすると、
「盛岡の方です」
「あ、そうですか、では寒い方？　そうですね」
「え、そうです」

"And where do you call home [*o-kuni*][36]?" I asked.

"Hm? I'm…I'm from around Hanamaki."

I couldn't catch what he said.

"Where did you say?"

"Hanamaki."

"What?"

"Hanamaki." His voice was somewhat nasal.

"What?"

I still couldn't understand him, so I asked again. He went quiet, with an embarrassed look on his face; but after a while he said,

"Around Morioka."

"Ah, I see. Must be cold up there, I imagine."

"That's right."[37]

"The Man from the North Country" occupies far from a central place in any orthodox canon of modern Japanese literature; and yet I believe that Yōshū, in this passage, performs a small formal innovation that presents the translator with a unique problem. He writes Hagiwara's (i.e. Kizen's) dialogue using standard Japanese orthography: for "Hanamaki" he writes 花巻, with no *rubi* gloss.[38] And yet Hagiwara's accent is so thick as to make the narrator ask him repeat himself not once, not twice, but three times before Hagiwara finally just says "Morioka" instead. It is clear that Hagiwara, this man from the north country, is more or less speaking a different language from that spoken in Tokyo; what is more ambiguous is whether the narrator was unable to understand Hagiwara because of the accent, because he did not understand "Hanamaki" as a reference, or both. The question,

---

[36] There is a point here to be made about the ambiguity of the term *o-kuni* at this historical juncture, where it could signify both domestic region (something like "province") as well as "nation." "Kitaguni no hito," on one level, is very much about navigating that ambiguity in late-Meiji Tokyo.

[37] Mizuno Yōshū 水野葉舟, "Kitaguni no hito" 北国の人, in *Tōno monogatari no shūhen* 遠野物語の周辺, ed. Yokoyama Shigeo 横山茂雄 (Tokyo: Kokusho kankō kai, 2001), 11–12. The story originally appeared in the January 1908 issue of *Shin-shōsetsu* 新小説.

[38] We should be wary of reading too much into this point, however, given the varying degree to which *rubi* implementation represents authorial intent (as opposed to editorial dressing) in Meiji letters.

then, is what the gloss, and the phonetic representation of 花巻, should be: "Hanamaki," or

something that reflects his thick accent?[39]

Shortly after this we come to the pivotal moment in the conversation, when

Hagiwara's character becomes more defined. Yōshū's narrator continues the conversation:

> 「僕は九州で育ったもんですからね。寒い国の事はちッとも知りませんが、お国の方になると、景色なんぞも、ずっと変ってましょうね」と言う。
> 「え、変っています、私の国じゃ、もう今頃からは、からッと晴れた空なんぞはめったに見られません」
> 「へえ、じゃ陰鬱ですね」私は一寸眉に皺をよせる。
> 「陰鬱です」
> 　不思議！……話がここになると萩原の眠っていたような眼が、光って来る。

> "I was raised in Kyūshū, you see. I don't know a thing about the colder provinces, but I'd imagine the scenery's quite different, where you're from," I said.
> "Yes—different. Where I'm from, from around this time of year onward a crisp, clear sky's a rare thing."
> "Sounds gloomy," I said, furrowing my brows a little.
> "*It is gloomy.*"
> How odd! At this point in the conversation there came a glint into Hagiwara's till-then sleepy eyes.[40]

The narrator quickly recognizes something odd in Hagiwara's personality: a predilection

for the gloomy, a musty scent of old folk custom. Through his accent, his mannerisms, and

his predilections, he is presented in the story as a figure sticking out like a sore thumb in

the Meiji cityscape of Tokyo: a man from another place, or another time. And Yōshū's

narrator is drawn to him for that. Incidentally, the same year "The Man from the North

Country" appeared in print, Yōshū introduced Kizen to an acquaintance of his eager to meet

this young man from the north. That acquaintance was a young bureaucrat by the name of

---

[39] This issue of voicing the written text is, incidentally, one that is equally important for "Omaku," a text by Kizen discussed later in this chapter.
[40] Yōshū, "Kitaguni no hito," 13–14.

Yanagita Kunio. Yanagita transformed Kizen's tellings of the stories of his native "home" into his 1910 publication, *Tōno monogatari*.

Kizen, to his death, would be a figure haunted by the sort of ambiguity of legibility and identity that we see in "The Man from the North Country," which functions as the literary origin story of "Kizen" as a rural Gothic figure. This is on the one hand a masterly creation on Yōshū's part of a Gothic authorial persona along the lines of the anecdotal stories surrounding Anglophone Gothic writers like William Beckford or Charles Brockden Brown or Nathaniel Hawthorne[41]; but it is also an act of representational violence in the form of a particular type-casting done at the hands of the slightly senior Yōshū. Throughout his life, Kizen would struggle, and ultimately fail, to gain control over the persona of "Kizen." "Kizen," as a discourse that included not only the texts Kizen himself wrote but also what others wrote and spoke of him, would itself become a site where the nature and limits of the "peripheral intellectual" in prewar Japan were negotiated in a minor key, a site that was ever only partially under Kizen's control.[42]

What is elided from Yōshū's telling of this origin story is that Kizen was, at the time of their first meeting, trying his hand at becoming a novelist, and was, in February and March of 1907, to have short stories published in Ueda Bin's *Geien* 芸苑 magazine. Kizen wrote under the penname Kyōseki 鏡石, an homage to Izumi Kyōka. Although his writings

---

[41] To give a sense of what I mean by this, see Leslie A. Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel* (New York: Stein and Day, 1966), 145: "In a sense, Brown invented Edgar Allan Poe—all, that is to say, that the American writer came to seem to the mind of Europe and the sensibility of Romanticism—before Poe had ever written a line."

[42] Drawing on the work of Edward Said, Joseph A. Murphy reads Kyōka (via the story "Kechō") as a "peripheral intellectual"; see Murphy, "Conceptions of Equality in Izumi Kyōka's *Kechō*," in *New Directions in the Study of Meiji Japan*, ed. Helen Hardacre with Adam L. Kern (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 246–269.

went through numerous cycles of critical obsolescence and rediscovery in terms of

reception both during his life and after, Kyōka, ultimately, was a master at controlling his

authorial persona. This persona preceded him—famous anecdotes remain about his

superstitions, his phobias, his quirks—and ultimately endeared him to a committed group

of followers in the *bundan* (Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, Minakami Takitarō, Kubota Mantarō,

Satomi Ton—the list goes on) who would ensure his legacy, in the long run, was secure.

Through a careful coordination of prose style (ornate and labyrinthine), narrative content

(focusing on the supernatural, the weird, the grotesque, the sublime), the selection of

where and how to appear in print (allegiance to magazines like Gotō Chūgai's *Shin shōsetsu*

and publishing houses like Shun'yōdō), and above all the effective performance in public

and semi-private spaces of the quintessentially eccentric author whose eccentricity was

inextricably linked to the character of his native place, Kanazawa, Kyōka remained, through

1939's "Rukō shinsō" ("The Heartvine"), in control of "Kyōka."

　　　This aura clearly allured Kizen, and until *Tōno monogatari* Kizen, through his

fictional output, was in a sense trying to forge for himself a new identity as Kyōseki in the

Kyōka-esque mode. What is also clear is that he was not in the long run successful. Kyōka's

work, despite the challenges it poses to the contemporary reader in its unfiltered state,

remains popular in no small part thanks to the inherently interesting nature of the "Kyōka"

persona as well as a steady stream of adaptations of Kyōka's work in other media (theater,

film, *manga*, and so forth). And, as has been already covered in the Introduction, Yanagita

went on to be regarded as *the* central figure of what would eventually be called

minzokugaku[43] and remain one of the most influential intellectuals in twentieth century Japan. To make the comparison of the treatment and presentation of their work posthumously, Iwanami shoten's newest incarnation of the *Kyōka zenshū*, or *Complete Works of Kyōka*, reaches thirty volumes; the most recent iteration of Yanagita's complete works, Chikuma shobō's *Yanagita Kunio zenshū* or *Complete Works of Yanagita Kunio*, currently reaches thirty-five volumes, with the final three volumes in production; whereas the *Sasaki Kizen zenshū*, or *Complete Words of Sasaki Kizen*, is a four-volume set produced by the Tōno City Museum (*Tōno shiritsu hakubutsukan*) in Tōno City in a limited print run. When it comes to cultural capital, both Kyōka and Yanagita, though in different ways, seemed to have been winners. Kizen's legacy, however, is less clear.

Just as it seems impossible to talk about the formation and development of the discourse called *minzokugaku* without talking about Yanagita, so, too, it seems impossible to talk about Sasaki Kizen without talking about Yanagita and *Tōno monogatari*. To date, no sustained "author-based" study that takes Kizen as its sole focus exists in either Japanese- or English-language scholarship. Not that I mean to say that one needs to exist; rather, that its absence tells us something not only about Kizen's posthumous reception but also about the contours of valuation embedded in the discourses of *bungaku*, or "literature," and *minzokugaku* more broadly. Where Kizen is mentioned—and even when the intent is to reevaluate his work, or critique Yanagita's work vis-à-vis Kizen's, and Yanagita's appropriation of it—he is always, inevitably, in Yanagita's shadow. On the English side, he

---

[43] Various English translations of this term exist; I tend to prefer "folklore studies" when the word is written as 民俗学 (as opposed to 民族学, which more clearly means "ethnology"), but that graphical slippage is, of course, important, and I thus find it easiest to refer to the Japanese term throughout.

is considered briefly in Marilyn Ivy's 1995 *Discourses of the Vanishing: Modernity, Phantasm, Japan*[44] and Gerald Figal's 1999 *Civilization and Monsters: Spirits of Modernity in Meiji Japan*[45] in lines of argument that are ultimately focused on Yanagita; and likewise, in Alan Christy's 2012 *A Discipline on Foot: Inventing Japanese Native Ethnography, 1910–1945*,[46] which is a book that successfully moves beyond a Yanagita-centric approach to examine *minzokugaku* as a network of various disparate bodies, sites, and texts, Kizen only receives a passing mention. Christopher A. Robins' "Narrating Tono: Yanagita Kunio, Sasaki Kizen & Inoue Hisashi,"[47] which features Kizen in its title, devotes the majority of its attention to Yanagita and Inoue, not Kizen.

On the Japanese-language side, there has been more attention given to Kizen, especially by what is now considered his hometown, Tōno City; see, for example, vol. 2 of the journal *Tōno-gaku* 遠野学 (*Tōno Studies*), published by the Tōno bunka kenkyū sentā 遠野文化研究センター under the supervision of Akasaka Norio, which includes a "special feature" (*tokushū* 特集) on "Who Is Sasaki Kizen?" ("Sasaki Kizen to wa dare ka" 佐々木喜善とは誰か).[48] Tellingly, however, this is the second *tokushū* in the magazine, being preceded by a *tokushū* on "Yanagita Kunio in the 21st Century" (「21 世紀における柳田国男」). Likewise, the production of the *Sasaki Kizen zenshū* by the Tōno City Museum (the first volume was published in 1986; the last, in 2003) marks an important turning point in the reception and circulation of Kizen's texts. In terms of secondary literature, material

---

[44] Op. cit.
[45] Op. cit.
[46] Op. cit.
[47] Op. cit.
[48] *Tōno-gaku* 遠野学, vol. 2, ed. Akasaka Norio 赤坂憲雄 (Tōno City: Tōno bunka kenkyū sentā, 2013).

available on Kizen, needless to say, pales in comparison to the mountain of varied

scholarship on Yanagita's long and multi-faceted career, but there are some notable

volumes that attempt to relativize or otherwise historicize Yanagita's contributions

through the figures of Kizen and/or Yōshū. An important early figure in this regard is

Yamada Norio, whose *Tōno monogatari no hito: Wa ga Sasaki Kizen den* 遠野物語の人　わ

が佐々木喜善伝 (*The Man behind the Tales of Tōno: A Personal Telling of the Life of Sasaki*

Kizen) in 1974[49] and *Yanagita Kunio no hikari to kage: Sasaki Kizen monogatari* 柳田国男の

光と影　佐々木喜善物語 (*Yanagita Kunio's Light and Shadows: The Tale of Sasaki Kizen*) in

1977[50] were among the first works to take Kizen seriously as an object of enquiry. More

recently, as part of the "Kadokawa sensho" line, two studies have fruitfully given Kizen and

his work sustained attention. The first, Ōtsuka Eiji's 2007 *Kaidan zengo: Yanagita*

minzokugaku to shizenshugi 怪談前後──柳田民俗学と自然主義 (*Around* kaidan*:*

Yanagita minzokugaku *and Naturalism*),[51] pays attention to Kizen's literary as well as

minzokugaku-oriented output as part of a larger attempt to re-contextualize Yanagita's

early work in particular. And the second, Higashi Masao's 2010 *Tōno monogatari to kaidan*

no jidai 遠野物語と怪談の時代 (*The Tales of Tōno and the* kaidan *Era*),[52] effectively argues

for a reading of *Tōno monogatari* as a *kaidan jitsuwa shū* 怪談実話集, or collection of "real-

---

[49] Yamada Norio 山田野理夫, *Tōno monogatari no hito: Wa ga Sasaki Kizen den* 遠野物語の
人　わが佐々木喜善伝 (Tokyo: Tsubaki shoin, 1974).
[50] Yamada Norio 山田野理夫, *Yanagita Kunio no hikari to kage: Sasaki Kizen monogatari* 柳
田国男の光と影　佐々木喜善物語 (Tokyo: Nōsan gyoson bunka kyōkai, 1977).
[51] Ōtsuka Eiji 大塚英志, *Kaidan zengo: Yanagita minzokugaku to shizenshugi* 怪談前後──
柳田民俗学と自然主義 (Tokyo: Kadokawa gakugei shuppan, 2007).
[52] Higashi Masao 東雅夫, *Tōno monogatari to kaidan no jidai* 遠野物語と怪談の時代
(Tokyo: Kadokawa gakugei shuppan, 2010).

to-life scary stories," as opposed to a work of *minzokugaku*, while situating Yanagita in the midst of a late-Meiji network of *kaidan* production and circulation that also included Kyōka, Kizen, and Yōshū. So doing, Higashi considers these latter three figures as *kaidan* storytellers, as well.

I hope to contribute to this budding discussion of Kizen by starting from the basic question of what happens when we take a literary "loser" seriously. Judged in terms of mainstream literary aesthetics—whether ahistorically from a pursuit of "good art" in terms of positing a transcendental aesthetics of form and content, or from a more historically attuned consideration of what was valued or otherwise popular as literature at the time Kizen was writing—Kizen's fiction is not necessarily "good." It is not hard, when read uncritically, to understand why he did not make a splash in the *bundan* of his day. Kyōka, despite his critics from around 1896 onward, was at least provocative, in terms of both form and content; so was Yanagita with the peculiar prose narratology of *Tōno monogatari*. At first glance, it seems hard to say the same about Kizen's literature. This is an easy conclusion to make, and thus it is easy to see why he has primarily been valued till now as a semi-local gatekeeper of local lore. He quite literally "translated" localized Tōhoku folk knowledge for a national readership, either through the filter of Yanagita in the case of *Tōno monogatari*, or, after *Tōno monogatari* when he gradually relinquished his more literary aspirations, his reluctant adoption of the folklorist mantle in the Yanagita-*minzokugaku* mold. Yanagita, for one, saw value in Kizen not as a storyteller in his own right—going so far as to famously state that Kizen "was not a skilled speaker" (鏡石君は話

上手には非ざれども) in the preface to *Tōno monogatari*[53]—but as a man with a particular set of skills, namely, the ability to natively understand localized Tōhoku folk discourse and reshape it into a discourse legible for a modern national (i.e. Tokyo-centric) readership.[54]

Accordingly, the important distinction that needs to be made here is that Yanagita valued Kizen's ability on one level while denying it on a deeper level. For Yanagita, Kizen's value was to be found in the more-or-less mechanical process of transforming ephemeral, personal, oral speech in the form of localized dialect into timeless, impersonal, written language in the form of *hyōjungo*, or "standard" Japanese—or at least the literary analogue thereof. Such a process, in the logic of the Yanagita model, takes something opaque—the content of the knowledge expressed by the folk in this ephemeral, personal, dialect form of written language—and renders it visible, accessible, clear. This, for Yanagita, was Kizen's abiding instrumental value. But as this chapter will show, Kizen himself was attempting something similar in his own writing, albeit at a far deeper level of discursive transformation, by telling his own stories based on this same folk knowledge. The end result, I will argue, is crucially the opposite of the process for which Yanagita valued Kizen: instead of providing epistemological visibility and clarity to something opaque, Kizen's own fiction goes in the opposite direction, by doubling down on the opacity not simply by emphasizing the locally delimited epistemologies at play but by short-circuiting between different epistemologies at different scales of circulation for Gothic effect.

---

[53] Yanagita Kunio 柳田國男, "Tōno monogatari" 遠野物語, in *Yanagita Kunio zenshū* 柳田國男全集, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1997), 9.
[54] For Kizen as Yanagita's pet interpretor and transcriber of localized discourse, see Figal, *Civilization and Monsters*, 241.

To rephrase the above more abstractly, when dealing with something so discursively uneven as prewar *minzokugaku* I think the scholar is faced with two options: one, to see what sort of observations can be made by "going with the flow" of discourse formation, by tracing its flows and seeing how they are structured and where they lead; or two, to try to "swim upstream," to go against the historical discursive flow and see what can be learned from the pull of the current. Most scholarship, to varying degree, has chosen the first option, oftentimes with great success in terms of new insights. In the case of *minzokugaku* this means respecting the structure of knowledge distribution that was historically built around "Yanagita." I will, to some degree, follow this approach in this chapter, since it cannot be denied that in methodological terms triangulating Kizen amongst Yanagita or Yōshū or Kyōka or Tayama Katai, as Ivy, Figal, Christy, Ōtsuka, and Higashi all do in different ways, helps bring into much clearer focus the dimensions of how *minzokugaku* and *bungaku* functioned in tandem at this historical moment as a method of organizing, understanding, and ultimately imagining the world.

That being said, what I hope to ultimately engage in, in this chapter, is more speculative. What if we take a "minor" figure like Kizen seriously? What new insights might that provide that a close reading of Yanagita exclusively, or a well-tuned unpacking of the discourse at which he was the center, cannot? By shifting the focus away from Yanagita, or "Yanagita," or even Yanagita-*minzokugaku* and toward "Kizen" as a minor discourse, I intend this chapter to be an experiment in answering that question.

To begin approaching this question, I will borrow from anthropological disciplines the concepts of "emic" and "etic," and apply them to the literature at hand as a sort of spectrum for understanding how the texts—again, not just the printed text but larger

paratextual constellations like "Kizen"—code themselves to their readers, and how their

readers in turn decode them. This is not an inherently smooth process, and "unevenness"

necessarily arises in the coding/decoding process—a self-consciously "emic" text can, for

example, in certain contexts and certain conditions be read as "etic" by a particular

historical readership. In simplest terms, "emic" and "etic" mean something akin to

methodologies of "insider" and "outsider." To give one representative pair of definitions,

emic is "the *inside* perspective of ethnographers, who strive to describe a particular culture

in its own terms," whereas etic is "the *outside* perspective of comparativist researchers,

who attempt to describe differences across cultures in terms of a general, external

standard."[55] When used in its usual sense—in terms of a methodological apparatus applied

by the scholar to the scholar's object of study—emic comes close to the "going with the

flow" approach mentioned above, whereas etic is not "speculative" in the "going against the

current" sense I use but instead involves the application of some kind of external standard

outside of the discourse against which the contents of that discourse are interpreted.

This emic/etic binary, even in its original methodological sense, is of course

simplistic, and since the inception of these terms the impossibility of its either/or

supposition has been frequently noted. And in terms of practice, the interplay between

observation and interpretation in cultural anthropology was explicitly and influentially

explored by Clifford Geertz, which would serve to blur the line between emic and etic and

attempt to find a way to traverse between the two.[56] If we take the basic emic/etic model

and repurpose it as a way to understand how texts have been coded in relation to place,

---

[55] Michael W. Morris, Kwok Leung, Daniel Ames, and Brian Lickel, "Views from Inside and Outside: Integrating Emic and Etic Insights about Culture and Justice Judgment," *Academy of Management Review* 24.4 (1999): 781.
[56] See Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1973).

however, this messiness is productive: it alerts us to how the relationship between the "local" and the "national" was constantly shifting and being renegotiated, and how the process of constant relativization of "insider" and "outsider" was in fact a central byproduct of the dual engines of *bungaku* and *minzokugaku*.

To return to Kizen and Yanagita: Yanagita, at first glance, seems to be a clear example of an etic approach to the discourse of *minzokugaku*, with a central tenet—despite various forms of unevennes and heterogeneity in practice, as Christy shows—of Yanagita-style *minzokugaku* being the subsumption of localized particularity into a stratified compendium of knowledge that defines the national. A work like Yanagita's *Kagyū-kō* 蝸牛考 (*A Treatise on Snails*), first published in 1927 but revised extensively in 1930, provides a clear example of this in its concentric model of dialect distribution throughout the Japanese archipelago.[57] Using the regional variation of words for "snail" as his cipher, Yanagita constructs a spatio-temporal theory of Japan wherein the philologically older forms—and thus the "older" culture—are found in inverse relation to their geographical proximity to the historical capital. Linguistic and cultural fossils, in other words, become more abundant the "deeper" you head in the direction of primarily the northeast or the southwest. Yanagita himself notes how this approach to a study of dialect was, at the time, novel: there were various studies of particular dialects *in toto* in various regional locales, but nothing, he claims, before *A Treatise on Snails* that used a particular dialect term to cut a swath across the various dialects and synthesize the data to form a new theory of the Japanese nation with far-flung rural places (like Tōno) recast as repositories of national authenticity.

---

[57] For an English-language discussion of *Kagyū-kō*, see Ortabasi, *The Undiscovered Country*.

Yanagita's basic spatio-temporal theory of the Japanese nation as presented in

Kagyū-kō (among other texts) is perhaps a paradigmatic example of a larger modern

epistemological transformation that Tessa Morris-Suzuki identifies in the following way:

> Until the early nineteenth century the Japanese state had, by and large, perceived the frontier regions in geographical terms as 'foreign' or 'exotic.' But during the nineteenth century new ideas of historical progress, imported from Europe and North America, allowed officials and scholars to reinterpret the unfamiliar features of the outerlying societies in terms of time rather than space: to see them, in other words, as symptons of 'backwardness' rather than 'foreignness.' This reconceptualization of difference was a crucial step in the formation of the image of Japan as a single, clearly bounded modern nation and of the Japanese as a single 'ethnic group.'[58]

Although Yanagita's work is not the central focus of Morris-Suzuki's study, she does cite

Kagyū-kō as an example of the process of reconceptualization she is defining here.[59]

Morris-Suzuki is of particular interest for our purposes more generally in this study—

extending beyond our immediate concerns of Yanagita and Kizen—because this very

process she is considering is, as I shall argue piecemeal across the following chapters, not

merely central to a Gothic logic of modernity, but is in fact centrally constitutive of that

which makes modernity an emphatically Gothic phenomenon.

If, at any rate, Yanagita's approach is etic in something like *A Treatise on Snails*, then

what about *The Tales of Tōno*? And, for that matter, what about Kizen's own fiction and

minzokugaku work? The answer to both is, I think, yes and no; and it is that messiness, that

tension both within and beyond the printed text that I hope to untangle and unpack

through the lens of Kizen in this chapter.

---

[58] Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *Re-Inventing Japan: Time, Space, Nation* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1998), 10.
[59] Ibid., 31.

Sasaki Kizen as Novelist

In her consideration of *The Tales of Tōno*, Ivy articulates how Yanagita has his

discursive cake and eats it too in that text:

> Under the guise of transparently recording someone else's tales Yanagita maintains the ruse of direct transcription and description, while his prose announces its distance from all worldly referents (exemplified by the voice itself). At the same time, the terseness and brevity of his literary writing mimics the simplicity of naturalistic writing; he writes as if he has abandoned all figuration. Yanagita had to repress a writing that was too close to voice in order to constitute the unwritten as the proper object of what would become nativist ethnology. Yet he dissimulated that repression by the appearance of a direct transcription, a dissimulation that allowed him to establish himself as the doubled amanuensis and author of the tales.[60]

The "someone else" is, of course, Kizen. Let us consider Kizen's own relationship with

figuration, voice, and the unwritten in the bounded context of the Tōno region.[61]

One month after the appearance of his first major work, "Nagagutsu" 長靴 ("Boots"),

a dreamlike piece that received praise from Ueda Bin, Kizen published the short story "Tate

no ie" 舘の家 ("The Manor House") in the March 1907 issue of Ueda's literary magazine

Geien. Unlike the Tokyo setting of "Nagagutsu," "Tate no ie" is set deep in the Tōno region.

Three years before the appearance of *Tōno monogatari* and one year before Kizen and

Yanagita first met, this story marks Kizen's first attempt to explore the themes of rural folk

custom through the format of literature in what ultimately provides a different vision of the

---

[60] Ivy, *Discourses of the Vanishing*, 82.

[61] One detail worth noting at this juncture: I have been careful throughout to not make the claim that Kizen was "from" Tōno. He was born in Tsuchibuchi Village, Kamihei County; and he was the mayor (*sonchō* 村長) of Tsuchibuchi Village from 1925 to 1929. Tsuchibuchi would not merge with the Tōno Town (遠野町) and a number of other surrounding villages to form the current municipality of Tōno City until 1954, more than twenty years after Kizen's death. Tōno Town, a small-sized castle town, was a cultural center for central Iwate and not the creaky old hinterland predominantly portrayed in *Tōno monogatari*, which is clearly coded in that text by the use of local place-names. *Tōno monogatari* is about the *outskirts* of the Tōno region.

relationship between the twin discourses of "modern literature" and the "folk" at a time when the parameters of the former had already firmed up considerably but the parameters of the latter were not yet defined.[62] It gives us a roadmap—one that Kizen would admittedly not himself stick to from the 1910s onward—for understanding Kizen's vision of how the two discourses might be intertwined.

The story begins with the following sentence.

舘の家（舘とは奥州地方に残つてある、昔時豪族の拠つて専ら其の権勢と暴挙とを逞しうした城址なので、即ち平泉舘、衣川舘、阿部舘の如きもの、こゝに記すのは我が故郷遠野郷四十八舘の一つに事拠つたのである）。といふのは昔時の有名な豪者の居つた屋敷趾なので、森の中に建てられた古い家の名である。

Manor House (*Manor* [*tate*] being a fortified site, seen in the Northern Provinces [*Ōshū chihō*], which was held by the powerful clans of olden times whose might and violent recklessness were given free rein whereby: the likes, in other words, of Hiraizumi Manor[63], Koromokawa Manor[64], and Abe Manor[65]; what follows is based on one of the forty-eight manors of my home county, Tōno.), being, as it was, on the

---

[62] There is much to unpack in this statement. To begin in terms of literary history, I believe that the Ken'yūsha in particular provided a discursive space for other possibilities of what literature could be to be explored: not Kōyō so much as Hirose Ryūrō, Tokuda Shūsei's *hisabetsu buraku*-themed "Yabu-kōji" 薮かうじ in 1896, Oguri Fūyō's "Ne oshiroi" 寝白粉 about *hisabetsu buraku* and incest, also in 1896, Ikuta Kizan's 1899 "Uchiwa-daiko" 団扇太鼓, and of course Kyōka's work until that point. It also needs to be reiterated here that Kyōka's work from the 1890s serves as a clear precedent for *minzokugaku*/*bungaku* interweavings—consider not only resonances between "The Manor House" and something like "Ryūtandan" (1896) or "Kōya hijiri" (1900), but also how Kyōka has already built an argument for *bungaku-minzokugaku* discursive relations into what is likely his first written (not first published) piece, "Hebi-kui" 蛇くひ. Finally, besides Kyōka, consider other prehistories of *minzokugaku*-esque discourse before Yanagita/*Tōno*: Tsuboi Shōgorō and the *korobokkuru* debates, as discussed in Tierney.
[63] Referencing what is now known as Yanagi-no-gosho 柳之御所 in Hiraizumi, Iwate Prefecture.
[64] In Hiraizumi, Iwate Prefecture.
[65] In Nikaho, Akita Prefecture. Note, though, that there is an 阿部舘 place-name in Ōshū, Iwate Prefecture, which, geographically speaking, could have been what Kizen was referring to.

site of the residence of a famous clan of considerable wealth from times long past, was the name of an old house that stood in the forest.[66]

This is an undeniably clumsy way to start a piece of fiction. Embedded right at the beginning of the sentence is essentially a long footnote about the category of archaeological site known as *tate* 舘, after which the "Manor House" (*tate no ie*) of the story's title is named. Furthermore, the basic definition of *tate* is repeated, with some variation, twice, once within the parenthetical sentence, and once in the main sentence. In formal terms, the prose reads more like a fieldwork report than it does a piece of fiction, with the heavy-handedly explanatory nature, the clear presence of a first-person voice outside of the diegetic world of the story (the implication being that the "I" is Kizen-the-author, actually from the Tōno region), and the repetitions of *na no de* and *de aru*. This circular bagginess is almost the exact opposite of the lean, suggestive classical *bungo* syntax of *Tōno monogatari*. But setting aside issues of style, the opening of this story makes it crystal-clear to the reader that Kizen is keen on finding a way to merge the discursive potential of narrative fiction and folk knowledge, and this story will be an attempt to do so. The tension between *bungaku* and *minzokugaku*—even if the latter had not yet been thus named—is on full display in the first sentence.

The story proceeds to describe the history of the manor in a fashion that conjures up images of Dracula's castle more than it does one of the quaint traditional *magariya* 曲り家 houses that can be visited now as a folk museum in Tōno City. When the brooding forest surrounding the house sways in the wind, it is "as if a band of giants whisper amongst themselves, whispering secrets of a sort inscrutable through the eons" (巨人共がさゞめ言

---

[66] Sasaki Kizen 佐々木喜善, "Tate no ie" 舘の家, in *Sasaki Kizen zenshū* 佐々木喜善全集, vol. 2 (Tōno: Tōno shiritsu hakubutsukan, 1987), 8.

をいふて居る様な亦そこに千古に解くべからざる秘密を囁いてゐるやうでもある).[67]

Three hundred years prior, the lord of the manor led an attack on the manor of a

neighboring village, and the narrative dwells upon the spectral images of that slaughter, of

bloodied shields and blades. The imagery and the language slips into the medieval, verging

on the Arthurian, borrowing, perhaps, from a new lexicon for enunciations of the fantastic

forged by Sōseki in his story collection *Yōkyo-shū* 漾虚集, which had appeared the previous

year, in 1906.[68] Needless to say, this sort of feudal warfare was not a historical reality in the

Tōno region in the middle of the Edo Period. We have swung, quite abruptly, from the

pseudo-academic discourse of the first sentence into a world of fantasy.

  The narrative then focuses in on the scene at hand: two children, sitting by the fire,

in this old, decrepit house on a spring night. The sound of dishes clinking as they are

washed can be heard faintly from the kitchen. The children's thoughts turn to talk they

---

[67] Ibid., 8. Kizen's prose is so classically Gothic here, and so *unnatural*, that it makes one wonder what he was reading in terms of foreign literature. His (and Yanagita's) interest in Maeterlinck is documented but there are potentially deeper connections to be made, in the context of Ueda Bin, Kambara Ariake, Susukida Kyūkin, as well as Lafcadio Hearn, of course, and contemporaries like Ogawa Mimei.

[68] Regardless of provable influence, it is more important to note here how—similar to the *kaidan* "boom" and the discourse that goes along with that that Higashi documents—the last decade of Meiji saw, largely for the first time, the emergence of a discourse of the trans-national fantastic *within* serious literature, in *Yōkyo-shū* most conspicuously but also in the more minor fringes like "Tate no ie." There is an emerging discourse of medievalism, in other words, that is quite distinct from what Kyōka is doing and that connects with the attempts to blur the line between translation and literary production by Ueda Bin, and then later someone like Hinatsu Kōnosuke, most obviously. Rohan, of course, is the major exception here, having explored the connections between translations of the "fantastic" into the nascent language of *bungaku* as early as "Fūryū butsu." but in Sōseki/Ueda/Hinatsu we see a dual exploration of "translation," in both a cultural as well as linguistic sense: the interplay between literary translation from Anglophone (as well as French, German, et c.) literature and the new avenues for expressing and representing fantastic worlds in Japanese that this opened up; and Kizen is part of this milieu—his later interest in Esperanto is not a coincidence.

heard that day of the *zashiki-warashi*. Once again, the narrative is interrupted by a

parenthetical explanatory aside:

> （その話は、此の館の家に昔しから座敷童と言ふ物が居て、真夜中の人が寝沈ん
> だ時刻に奥座敷で遊んで居ると言ふので………それが丁度九つ十位の童の様なの
> で人々が恁う言つて居る。）

> (As for the talk they heard, it is said that there resides in this manor a being called
> the *zashiki-warashi*, which has been here since long ago, and which comes out to
> play in the backmost room of the manor in the middle of the night, when its
> inhabitants are deep in slumber… The *zashiki-warashi* has the appearance of a child
> nine or ten years in age, which is why people speak thus of it.)[69]

The production of a diegetic fictional space, and the production of a textual space for the

explication of folk knowledge, continue, at this juncture, to be embedded one within the

other, vying for attention. Kizen, in other words, is attempting to have his discursive cake

and eat it too in a manner fundamentally distinct from Yanagita's *Tōno monogatari*

experiment that Ivy considers in the quoted passage earlier; here, Kizen—really an

amalgamation of two "Kizens"—is attempting to simultaneously function as a diegetic and

non-diegetic narrator within a single textual space. Similar experiments can be found in

Kyōka's work of this period, like *Shunchū/Shunchū gokoku* (1906) and *Kusameikyū* (1908),

but there the very limits of diegesis—where "showing" becomes "telling," to put it

crudely—are called into question, and by the end we become unsure whether we are being

told a story or whether we are being told about being told a story. The same cannot be said

with Kizen's experiment here.

    The children work themselves up worrying over whether or not there really is a

zashiki-warashi in the house, and whether such an entity is benevolent or malevolent. Soon

enough, the old woman with whom they live enters the room. She sees the look of fear on

---

[69] Kizen, "Tate no ie," 9.

the children's faces, and responds out of habit with an amuletic *kuji-kiri* 九字切り gesture,

which is then explained once again by non-diegetic aside.

> （これは此の婦人の僻なので日に幾遍となく、かく繰り返へすのだ、時々乞食が
> 門に立つ時なども『仏よ助け給へ。』と言つて宙に九字を切る事がある。」

> (This was one of the old lady's habits, which she would repeat a number of times
> throughout the day. There was occasion, too, when a beggar came to the door from
> time to time and so forth, when she would incant "Buddha save us!" and cut through
> the air with her fingers in this gesture.)[70]

This incessant drive to explain as well as narrate, to show as well as tell, is, I argue, a

defining trait of Kizen's early attempts at rural Gothic fiction. This has the effect of breaking

down the clear-cut chain of exchange in Yanagita's *minzokugaku* texts, starting with *Tōno*

monogatari. In that text, it is clear where every enunciating subject stands along the line of

discursive exchange. Yanagita might be "the doubled amanuensis and author of the tales,"

as per Ivy's formulation, but the universalizing gesture of his *bungo-tai* redressing amounts

on a deeper level to a complicity with a modern, national "universality" hiding behind the

ruse of antiquarianism: the classical language might have been an outdated *lingua franca*,

but it was still a *lingua franca*, and Yanagita's genius was to recognize it as such at that

particular historical moment that allowed him to plug his new *minzokugaku* paradigm into

a modern discourse of the flattened "national" while still appealing to the nostalgia of the

old and the obsolescent which would remain thematically central to Yanagita-*minzokugaku*.

And then we have "Kizen," the in-between native informant who was "not very good at

telling stories" but served as a walking encyclopedia of localized folk knowledge; and then

---

[70] Kizen, "Tate no ie," 9. Note what seem to a modern reader to be orthographic infelicities
in Kizen's text: the closing 」 quotation mark here instead of the expected closing
parenthesis is probably little more than an error, but the use of the *kanji* 僻, where one
assumes *kuse* 癖 is meant, contributes to the sense of textual strangeness, peculiar to
Kizen's texts, that I am exploring here.

we have the silenced "folk" themselves, within the text, speaking through the filter of Yanagita's *bungo-tai* like the Man from Another Place in David Lynch's Red Room.

But with "The Manor House," what we see is Kizen, quite consciously, repeatedly short-circuiting himself. In these parenthetical asides, he assumes for himself the dual role of ethnographer and informant—the clinical and consistent *na no de...de aru* rhythm of these passages, in contrast with the plain past-tense mode of the non-parenthetical passages of the story, emphasize the former, while the repeated first-person references to "*my* hometown" and so forth emphasize the latter. And yet, the self-consciously fictive, fantastical nature of the bulk of this piece washes over those personae and swallows them up in the larger discursive space of fable.[71] As a result, the relationship between "Kizen" the narrating voice and "Tōno" the narrated space becomes increasingly ambiguous and unclear.

In the second section of the story (which is divided into six short parts), we learn the background of these characters. The boy, Haruo, at seven years old, is the son of the current lord of the manor, his mother having died two years earlier. The girl, Ochō, is the child of a cousin of Haruo's, having come to the manor after being orphaned as a baby. And the old woman is the sister of the previous lord of the manor. We learn later that Haruo's father is away on a journey, and returns to the manor only four or five times each year. The theme of the absent father, and the mystery surrounding his absence, hangs over the manor and over the story. And likewise, the theme of bloodlines, and particularly the anemic bloodline, being a mainstay of the Gothic, is on full display here; with its theme of

---

[71] On the other end of the spectrum we have, as mentioned in the introduction, Miyazawa as the fable-spinner with the personae of ethnographer/informant effaced, in something like *Kaze no Matasaburō*; for an engament with this text see Long, *On Uneven Ground*.

the last two scions of a dying line living inside a haunted house, it almost seems too easy to reach for a comparison to Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher" as a way to understand the narrative world being constructed and the concerns at work.

The old woman attempts to calm the children's nerves, assuring them that *o-hotoke-sama* (not necessarily to be understood as "Buddhist" in the folk-religious *shinbutsu shūgō* combinatory matrix Kizen is tapping into with this character) will keep them safe from the *zashiki-warashi*, or the *Samuto no babaa* サムトの婆々 child-snatching monster, or the *mokko* モツコ fiend.[72] There is a relatively clear binary of "good" and "evil"—one that becomes increasingly pronounced as the story goes on—that stands in stark contrast to the moral reticence—the "*shizenshugi* by other means" that Ōtsuka finds in Yanagita's prose—of the narrative world of *Tōno monogatari*. One is tempted, in fact, to, in light of literary history, chalk this up to an innovation on Kizen's part, and indeed "The Manor House" in one particular sense feels very modern and very much informed by an Anglophone Gothic sensibility: namely, the way its narrative tension, from Part Four onward, crystallizes around a binary moral melodrama of Good versus Evil that feels, to a contemporary reader, more in league with *Melmoth the Wander* or *The Exorcist* than it does with *Kōya hijiri* or *Tōno monogatari*. As the shadows darken and the unease of the old woman's premonition grows, she resorts with increasing frequency to her amuletic habit of "Buddha save me!" and *kuji-kiri*; but what the narrative does most effectively in these last three parts is use its strange mix of narrative voices—the *minzokugaku* side and the *bungaku* side—to, simply, give the impression of a doom that will, soon and unavoidably, call upon the manor.

---

[72] "*Mokko*" likely being a regional variant of the *momongā/momonjī* monster.

Here is how the climactic scene plays out. We are told how the previous lord of the manor—the old woman's brother, in other words—dropped dead under mysterious circumstances one night, a "quiet night just like this one" (丁度今夜のやうな静かな夜であつた).[73] The old woman harbors in her breast a fear that there is a curse on this house, in the double sense of the bloodline and the building itself.[74] She fears that the hand of the curse will reach out and put its touch on Haruo's father, and, eventually, Haruo. And it is implied that this is somehow related to the *zashiki-warashi* legend.[75] The night is dead silent; the children, asleep.

The old woman is startled awake by a nightmare. She checks on the children, who are still sound asleep. She tries to go back to sleep, but cannot. She checks the children again, and this is what happens next.

> 　老婦は静かに子供らの枕の上に九字を切つて。そして手を引かうとした時、どんな夢を見て居るのか、お蝶はニタと笑つた。
> 　笑つたと思ふと、宛然人に呼び立てられたやうに、ムックりと起き上つて、スタスタと大房の方へ歩いて行つた。

---

[73] Kizen, "Tate no ie," 12.
[74] Higashi compares this story to Maeterlinck, but again the "Usher" parallels—duality of bloodline and building in the "house/*ie*" of the title, the sibling or sibling-esque relationship of the last scions, et c.—are very suggestive here.
[75] This is an interesting point, because, according to the orthodox transmissions of Tōno folklore (including *Tōno monogatari*), *zashiki-warashi* are taken to be omens of good luck, both for the house they inhabit and for those who happen to catch a glimpse of them. Their *departure* from the house is what is to be feared. But at the same time, there seems to be a deep affective ambivalence in the figure of the *zashiki-warashi* that ultimately makes them more interesting in a rural Gothic context than something like the *kappa*, namely, they are simultaneously welcomed and feared, it seems, even in a folkloric context, and carry with them overtones of sadness. There is an interesting point here about representations of children in the Gothic (as symbols of "innocence," vulnerability, et c.) and affective representations of sadness/pathos, that Kizen is using to great effect; cf. in this regard Miyazawa's *zashiki-warashi* material and particularly Miura Tetsuo's *Yuta to fushigi na nakama-tachi* ユタとふしぎな仲間たち which is a meditation on this theme.

老婦は驚いて。「蝶や。」といつもよりは大きい声で言つたので、春雄は、ぱツちりと眼をさまして老婦の顔を不思議そうに瞶めた。お蝶は、その声も聞えぬらしく、すた／＼と人形の歩くやうに暗の中に入つた。

と思ふと、透き通るほのぼのとした声で。

「ぶらり提灯魔よけのあかし、想ひついたり消されたり。」

お蝶の声が春の水の流れのやうにとろとろと、やがて消えた。

お蝶は人形のやうにまたすた／＼と戻つて来て自分の寝床の中に入つてそのまゝ、すやすやと眠つた。

      The old woman quietly cut the air with a *kuji-kiri* above the children's pillows. And as she went to pull her hand away—what kind of dream might she have been having?—Ochō's face flashed a smile.

      And, just as the smile came to her face, she rose abruptly to her feet, as if summoned by something, and walked briskly toward the room at the center of the house.[76]

      The old woman in her surprise called out, "Chō, dear!" in a voice louder than usual. Haruo's eyes popped open, and he stared at the old woman's face in astonishment. It was as if Ochō could not hear the old woman calling her; with a brisk gait that made her resemble a doll, she disappeared into the darkness. And then, in a voice that was both soft and clear—

      "*Hanging lantern's the talisman's sign, it comes to mind, it fades away…*"

      There was a murmuring sweetness to Ochō's voice like a running stream in spring; soon enough it trailed off. And then Ochō returned, still walking briskly like a doll, crawled into bed, and soon was fast sleep.[77]

The meaning of Ochō's somnambulance, and of the enigmatic sentence she utters, goes unexplained in the text; but the old woman is now convinced that Ochō is possessed by some malevolent entity, all the more so because she is an orphan, and then—murmurings, far off, wind on a windless night: the sound of voices.

Kizen seems to have been skilled at this particular type of dreamlike, hallucinogenic description, of the recreation of the impression of sounds and other phenomena that one has when one is in the place between wakefulness and sleep. In this regard, at least, his early fiction can be placed within a particular *gensō bungaku* tradition that not only shows

---

[76] In another parenthetical aside earlier, Kizen has noted *uchi* as a regional term for the large room at the center of the house in Tōhoku folk architecture.

[77] Kizen, "Tate no ie," 13.

his debt to Kyōka (one need to only think of the *tanuki-bayashi* scene in *Shunchū* or the sounds that draw the protagonist deeper and deeper into the eerie neighborhood in *Kagerō za* to get a sense of this) but also is part of a larger interest in dream and particularly the *narrativization* of dreams that we see in Yōshū's work around the same time (e.g. *Hibiki*) as well as, most famously, Sōseki's *Yume jūya*. This particular subgenre of "dream literature" within *gensō bungaku* would continue on in a trajectory via Sōseki through Uchida Hyakken and beyond. Once again, we see in a passage like this how Kizen is cognizant of the literary trends and currents of his day, and is not content to perform an unadorned (*a la* the "*kanjitaru mama*" of Yanagita's preface) retelling of folklore on the printed page but is attempting to forge a new form that can embrace folk knowledge, medieval-historical fantasy, and the narrativization of dream.

The voices turn out to be the concretization of the old woman's worst fears: the current lord of the manor has perished, and a group of men dressed in black come bearing his body back to the manor on this dark night. The story ends inside the mind of the old woman, fretting and wondering to herself whether the same fate will befall the little boy now solely in her care. And then we are left with the parting comment that the "Manor House stands as it was before, unchanged in the midst of that solemn forest" (舘の家は依然として旧観を保つて荘厳なる森の中に立つて居る).[78]

The swirling pot of different narrative modes—folk knowledge, fantasy, dream—is on full display in other, shorter pieces, as well, which were classified at the time as *shōhin* 小品, or something like sketch-pieces. In some ways, these provide for a clearer comparison with the episodes of *Tōno monogatari* than Kizen's more narrative work. Here

---

[78] Kizen, "Tate no ie," 14.

is one from 1907, with the title 念惑. The title is given no gloss, and is left ambiguous as to

what its pronunciation or even its precise meaning should be, something that is thematized

within the work itself. This is, to my knowledge, a word of Kizen's making and not found in

any major dictionary. Following the content of the piece, let us tentatively read it as

"Omaku."

> おまく、真当の語は何と言ふのか知らないが、私の国では私の今言ふやうなこと
> をおまくといふ。怨念幻影（おんねんまぼろし）といふ意も含まつてゐるやうだか——ここでは単念惑（たゞ）
> といふ字の意味にとりたい。もう少し明瞭（はつきり）した意味の文字もあるだろうが思ひ付
> かないから先づ此の当字（あてじ）を使つておく。

> *Omaku*—I do not know what it is properly called, but where I am from we call what I
> am about to describe *omaku*. It appears as though the term carries the nuance of a
> vengeful apparition—but here I wish to simply take it to mean something like
> "bewildering impression" or "hallucination." There is probably a way to represent
> the term more clearly, but nothing comes to mind so for the time being I will use the
> above characters for it.[79]

Kizen then goes on to describe the experience, while visiting a graveyard, of seeing

someone run by, far off in the distance, only to learn that that person was in school the

whole time and thus could not have been possibly in the place the narrator saw her.

Ueda Bin curiously praised the prose style of "Boots" when it appeared in *Geien* in

1907 by saying it was "like the work of a Westerner proficient in the Japanese language"

(日本語の上手な西洋人の作のようだ).[80] One wonders if the ghost of Lafcadio Hearn

hangs over this allusion, seeing as how Ueda was Hearn's student at Tokyo Imperial

University and would go on to teach in Hearn's old department there; the key difference

nonetheless being that Hearn was *not* proficient in spoken nor written Japanese through

---

[79] Sasaki Kizen 佐々木喜善, "Omaku" 念惑, in *Sasaki Kizen zenshū* 佐々木喜善全集, vol. 2
(Tōno: Tōno shiritsu hakubutsukan, 1987), 32.
[80] Quoted in Ōtsuka, *Kaidan zengo*, 19.

the end of his life. But I think Ueda's roundabout way of praising Kizen has important implications for our understanding of the issues considered so far in this chapter. Ueda Bin's comment links, via Kizen's prose, the foreignness of the West—*seiyō* 西洋—to the foreignness of Tōhoku, or Tōno more particularly. His comment, in other words, highlights the *strangeness* of Kizen's language by recasting Kizen's native place, and the identity to which it gives birth, as "foreign." This certainly puts Yanagita's seemingly out-of-place dedication at the beginning of *Tōno monogatari*, "I dedicate this book to those in foreign lands" (此書を外国に在る人々に呈す) in a new light.[81] This is generally taken to be a dedication to Yanagita's bureaucrat friends who were abroad at the time, as a nativist gesture that these old-time tales will conjure up feelings of warmth and nostalgia for their native land. But when we properly situate Kizen's (silenced) voice in the narratological equation of *Tōno monogatari*, the meaning of this dedication becomes destabilized. In both "Kitaguni no hito" and the first sentence of "Omaku," we see *kuni* or *watakushi no kuni* (私 の国) being employed to mean Tōno—a Tōno, if we follow Ueda, that is every bit as foreign from the perspective of Meiji Tokyo as Berlin or London.

But the "foreignness" of a work like "Tate no ie" or "Omaku" and the many other short pieces Kizen published before 1910 is not monolithically linked to the uncanny strangeness of rurality transposed into the cultural context of late-Meiji Tokyo. It is not, in other words, simply due to the fact that Kizen had a thick accent that he wrote funny. Instead, as I have tried to show, it is due to this one aspect—the palpable sense that as he goes he is still getting the hang of what is now called *hyōjungo*, but which was then an as yet new phenomenon—being employed as one of many "voices" within the text, alongside

---

[81] Yanagita, "Tōno monogatari," 7.

other voices that may not try to hide their allegiances—the medievalism of something like

Sōseki's "Kairo-kō" in the opening passages of "Tate no ie," or the experiments in published

"dream diaries" by the likes of Rohan and Sōseki and Yōshū—but that are made new by

juxtaposition. What pieces like "Tate no ie" and "Omaku" seem to be trying to do is enact

polyphony on a minor scale within the discursive confines of the late-Meiji *shizenshugi*

moment. With Kizen, the narratological tension is not between different voices within the

narrative space but to be found in the singular enunciating subject. This is fundamentally

different from a Kyōka-esque sense of polyphony, which functions formally along more

traditionally Gothic lines of interweaving, nested narrative voices in the vein of *Melmoth

the Wanderer* or, to use Todorov's example of choice, *The Saragossa Manuscript.*

This brings us back to the framing of emic and etic positionalities introduced earlier,

and allows us to more clearly question a basic understanding of Yanagita as the "etic"

minzogugaku figure and Kizen as the "emic" informant. Kizen's relentless engagement with

other discourses outside of the boundedly local—through literature, through language (in

his later pursuit of Esperanto and experiments, like Takuboku, of writing in Rōma-ji),

through the connections he made during his brief stint in Tokyo—call into question

whether folk knowledge can really be contained, caught like a bug in a net, so that it can be

plugged into the discourse of Yanagita-*minzokugaku* as something simultaneously timeless

and spatio-temporally specific. Kizen's proto-*minzokugaku* is always bleeding in and out of

other voices, other places, other traditions, folk or otherwise. He was both country

bumpkin and *haikara* dandy, as his excitement in a letter to Yanagita about how *Tōno

monogatari* (of whose initial printing in 1910 of 350 copies he received the first) "felt like a

50

Western book" (西洋の本の様), right down to the paper quality and physical construction of the book.[82]

When viewed in this light, we can begin to understand how Kizen's pre-*Tōno* prose is productive of a new way of apprehending the world and "seeing" the rural, and more particularly the rural Gothic, in terms of *dozoku* 土俗, which is essentially an earthier term for *minzoku*, in a way that moves beyond the smoothing mechanism of concealment in *Tōno monogatari* and instead performs the odd feat of recasting *dozoku* as *haikara*. And this is all funneled through a single vantage point—"Kizen"—in the texts, which, until the appearance of *Tōno monogatari*, at least, Kizen was able to manage and coordinate with considerable skill. We might conclude, following this reading, that, if—as Ōtsuka and others posit—*Tōno monogatari* represents Yanagita's response to *shizenshugi* and Katai in particular by divorcing objective description from the "I" of the modern subject, then Kizen's pre-*Tōno* writing in works like "Tate no ie" represents something like the I-novel-ization of the discourse that would later be called *minzokugaku*.

This, it seems, irked Yanagita, and might explain what led to the "Kizen is not a good storyteller" jab in *Tōno monogatari*'s preface. In a much later letter from 1925 to Kizen, Yanagita admonishes him for writing up a particular piece of folklore "in the style of a novel" (それを小説風に書かれしは甚だしく気持ちわるく候ひし也).[83] Kizen largely abandoned his attempts at the novelization of folklore after 1910, producing works like *Tōō ibun* 東奥異聞 that generally capitulated to the discursive demands of post-1910 Yanagita-

---

[82] Sasaki Kizen 佐々木喜善, letter to Yanagita Kunio 柳田國男, June 18, 1910, in *Sasaki Kizen zenshū* 佐々木喜善全集, vol. 4 (Tōno: Tōno shiritsu hakubutsukan, 2003), 1.
[83] Quoted in Ōtsuka, *Kaidan zengo*, 61–62.

minzokugaku. But even then, in a work like *Enjo kibun* 縁女綺聞 from 1930, we can see, in its poking around in the bawdy details of stories of human-animal marriage, an attempt to reinstate in folklore the contingencies of individualized human desire, and thereby produce a space within the discipline for thinking about what that desire means in a particular place and time. This was something Yanagita refused to do, though it was explored more famously by Orikuchi Shinobu 折口信夫 (1887–1953), whose fiction and poetry destabilized the discursive assumptions of Yanagita-*minzokugaku* in a manner reminiscent of Kizen's early experiments.

There is one important distinction between Kizen and Orikuchi, however, and that is the remarkable degree to which a work like "Tate no ie," on the level of both structure and rhetoric, throws into question the very possibility of understanding the rural through the lens of an emic/etic model. Orikuchi's major non-*minzokugaku* achievements, like *Umi yama no aida* 海やまのあひだ (1925) in *tanka* or *Shisha no sho* 死者の書 (1939; revised 1943) in the novel form or *Kodai kan'ai shū* 古代感愛集 (1947) in *shintaishi* verse, never fully engage the ethnographic gaze of what would become Yanagita-*minzokugaku* in the way Kizen's texts do; it is difficult to read any sort of insider-outsider dynamic mappable onto the "folk" in any of these texts. But Kizen consistently, in fiction and non-fiction and in his own persona, thematized and problematized this dynamic. The stylistic bagginess and occasional chaos of Kizen's early prose, his attention to the juxtaposed construction of academic, fantastic, dreamlike, and I-novelistic patterns of narrative serve to uncover the fractal unevenness of rural experience in modernity, and to think about ways that that experience might resist the totalizing flatness of Yanagita's *minzokugaku* on the horizon.

CHAPTER TWO

Izumi Kyōka's *Sankai hyōban ki* and Occult Modernity in Prewar Japan

Introduction

In Chapter One, I considered a moment—a two-decade span in modern Japanese history in which writers were in the unique position of attempting to think the "rural"—and especially the rural as something *not* in negative relation to the urban and the modern—through the nascent form of "literature" and the *kindai shōsetsu* more specifically before *minzokugaku*, or Yanagita's particular formulation of it, existed in any recognizable form. Put in simpler terms, these writers were practicing "*minzokugaku* before (Yanagita-)*minzokugaku*" through ethnographic fictions. My focus was on the early work of Izumi Kyōka in the 1890s and of Sasaki Kizen in the 1900s; but Kyōka (explicitly) and Kizen (implicitly) were part of a larger discourse which I identify as dominated by a late-Ken'yūsha mode: namely, not Kōyō *per se*, but including figures like Ryūrō, early Shūsei, early Katai, Fūyō, and Kizan.

I do not want to suggest too drastically that the modes of imagining rurality, peripherality, and an unsettling yet alluring Otherness—and a nuanced consideration of these through affective topographies more specifically—that we see in texts like "Hebi-kui" or "Tate no ie" disappear immediately or entirely post-*Tōno*, or that early Yanagita, for that matter, did not himself explore these very themes in his own writings. But I nonetheless believe that it is clear that the discursive fields after circa 1910 are fundamentally different from what they were in the 1890s or 1900s: *Tōno monogatari*, or at least Yanagita, changed the way that these issues were talked about, and there was no going back.

These discursive changes, centered on the emerging post-1910 field of *minzokugaku*,

occurred alongside, and indeed were in many ways intertwined with, rapid and profound

changes in the cultural technologies of the time. I have in mind two fields here in particular:

one, widespread change in print culture in the Taishō Period; and two, similarly

widespread change in transportation technology and the forms of travel it enabled. With

regard to the former, we see in the 1910s a consolidation of till-then more-or-less inchoate

structures of promoting and "selling" the literary text as an extension of literary persona in

the form of *kojin zenshū* 個人全集 (e.g. the first *Sōseki zenshū* 漱石全集 after Sōseki's death

in 1916), in the marketing of new work by authors like Shimada Seijirō 島田清次郎 and

Akutagawa Ryūnosuke 芥川龍之介, and in the popularization of forums and contests for

"amateur" writers to publish their work for a national audience of readers. This

consolidation, among other things, had the effect of the crystallization of the "Kyōka"

authorial persona I explored in the previous chapter, epitomized, perhaps, by the

publication of the first *Kyōka zenshū* 鏡花全集 by Shun'yōdō in the mid-1920s. It also

changed the way that *minzokugaku* publications were published, packaged, and read, with

emergence of various scholarly and quasi-scholarly journals dedicated to the field, as well

as hardcover books by Yanagita and others in his circle aimed at a more general readership.

And with regard to the latter transformation in travel technologies, things like the

continued expansion of the railway network and the introduction of the automobile led—to

give just one example—to a transformation of hot springs from folk-medicinal sites for

long-term healing to sightseeing getaways. Access to, and passage through, rural spaces

was fundamentally different from what it was only a few decades before—mountain passes

and steep ravines were rendered logistically irrelevant by tunnels and bridges, and

previously remote religious sites like Mount Atago in Kyoto (among other things

folklorically prominent for its strong association with *tengu*) became something of a resort

destination, complete with a cable car, ski hill, and even amusement park. Needless to say,

these transformations changed the nature of literary representations and re-imaginations

of rural space, as well—reflected, as I hope to show, in rural Gothic developments.[84]

      With an eye on these concurrent cultural-technological changes, the central

question I want to consider in this chapter is then the following: how could a writer write

the rural as Gothic *after* the stabilization of what I am calling Yanagita-*minzokugaku*

discourse? How did *minzokugaku* ways of seeing and understanding what lurks in the

backwaters and shadowed corners of the countryside change the ways that these themes

were, or could be, thought about through literature? To answer this, I will turn to Kyōka's

late novel, *Sankai hyōban ki* 山海評判記 (1929).

      Before I address the reception history of this text—which will in turn help explain

why I have chosen it as the focus of this chapter—let me try, as best I am able, to provide a

synopsis of the story being told. This exercise will be useful not only to establish the basic

silhouette of what is being narrated and how it is being narrated, but will be equally

instructive through its limited success: put simply, *Sankai hyōban ki* is structured in such a

way as to almost intentionally frustrate any attempts to summarize it.

---

[84] Compare, for example, two works firmly within the *gensō bungaku* canon that are set in
the Kiso region: Rohan's "Fūryū butsu" 風流仏 (1889), set in in pre-Chūō Main Line Kiso
when travel in that region was still primarily on foot, and Kyōka's "Mayu kakushi no rei" 眉
かくしの霊 (1924), in which rail travel figures significantly; the stakes, with regard to how
gensō is configured vis-à-vis the rural landscape, vary dramatically depending on
contemporary technologies of travel and access.

Sankai hyōban ki is the story of Yano Chikai 矢野誓, a novelist, who has come to an inn in Wakura Onsen on the Noto Peninsula from Tokyo. The novel begins with Yano being told a *kaidan* tale with an evocative name, "Is Chōta Here?" (「長太居るか」), from a masseur. That night, he hears women's voices calling out that very phrase—*Is Chōta here?* The scene then shifts to a new character, Orie お李枝 (an acquaintance of Yano), in Tokyo, and a conversation revolving around a *kami-shibai* show put on by a candy peddler named Kadenji depicting three women peering down a well in a ritual whose interruption—as it is claimed in the show—can bring about dire consequences.

Next, we return to Wakura Onsen, where the driver of Yano's automobile claims to spot a woman's head by the side of the road. Yano, drawing on knowledge he learned from a scholar friend named Kunimura Ryūkyō 邦村柳郷, speculates that the manifestation is tied in some way to the *oshira-gami* オシラ神 deity, linking *oshira-sama* folk religious practices in the Tōhoku region to the *Shirayama shinkō* belief system centered on Hakusan in the Hokuriku region. On the drive back, they hit a fierce storm, and the car stalls on the bridge, but they are saved by a mysterious goddess-like figure.

Orie heads to Wakura to converge with Yano there, and Yano proceeds to dictate to her the story of his past, and in particular of his connection with someone named Himenuma Ayaha 姫沼綾羽. The next day, the two head out by car for some local sightseeing, but are waylaid by a violent band of lawless packhorsemen, at which point a factory girl who had been traveling with them transforms into a "Shirayama messenger" and ably dispatches the ruffian band. Yano asks whether she is an acquaintance of Ayaha, to

which the mysterious figure replies that he will hear from her master, in due time—and then she departs with a song that darkly portends an ill-boding future for Orie.

The above synopsis, by virtue of it being a synopsis, already fills in some aspects of the story only hinted at implicitly, but, even still, such a summary should make clear how relentlessly suggestive and enigmatic the narratology of *Sankai hyōban ki* is. Kyōka's elliptical, impressionistic, grammatically elusive style, which he has been honing with modulation throughout his long career starting in the 1890s, reaches something of an apogee in this long text. Kyōka's focus on the "scene" and on dialogue throughout the text has the effect of excising almost all plot-related exposition, demanding the reader to do the labor of connecting the (admittedly sparse) dots. And yet *Sankai hyoban ki* is no detective story—no "puzzle-box" where the clever reader picks up clues and puzzle pieces scattered stealthily along the way to assemble them into a coherent story at the end. Instead, *Sankai hyōban ki* works toward the peculiar achievement of imparting to the reader the impression that there is a story being told, below the surface, without ever revealing to the reader what that story is. This, as I will consider later, is ultimately the engine of its Gothic effect.

After reading the text, we can infer with relative safety that there exists some kind of shadowy cult, connected in some way with Hakusan/Shirayama; that Ayaha is its leader; that the seemingly supernatural things Yano witnessed—the women and the well, and so forth—were actually scenes "staged" by this cult;[85] and that Ayaha was once Yano's childhood acquaintance and rival, meaning that this area—it is not a stretch to assume that

---

[85] This revelation, in and of itself, is firmly in a "revealed-supernatural" Gothic tradition epitomized, perhaps, by Ann Radcliffe but also found in Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland*, for example.

we are meant to read "Kanazawa" here, in classic Kyōkaean fashion—is where they once both lived. *Sankai hyōban ki*, on its simplest level, is about the latter-day encounter—if what happens in the novel can actually be called that—between Yano and Ayaha in and around Wakura Onsen.

But elements that are left ambiguous at the story's end ultimately outnumber the elements that we are able to safely infer. What, for example, is the precise relationship between Yano and Ayaha? What, precisely, is the shadowy group over which she presides, and what is their purpose? As Higashi Masao writes, "Among all of Kyōka's works, *Sankai hyōban ki* is a long novel that can boast his most mystery-laden narrative architecture. The deep relationship between Yano and the secret society-esque group devoted to *Shirayama shinkō* is to the end never more than hinted at, and the full narrative picture remains buried in a localized folk darkness."[86] Reading *Sankai hyōban ki* is like reaching the frayed end of an old rope: all loose ends, none tied together.

This has frustrated many critics for primarily two reasons. Needless to say, critics reading for a more traditional *shōsetsu* form defined structurally by "plot" will find *Sankai hyōban ki* perplexing and ultimately lacking. Much of the criticism leveled against it has certainly been of this nature. But perhaps more insidious is the second reason, although it is oftentimes intertwined with the first: *Sankai hyōban ki* confuses not only the reader who is unfamiliar with Kyōka's work and the "Kyōka" authorial persona, but proves equally if not more confusing when an attempt is made to read it through the method of exegetical decoding encouraged by Kyōka's more famous work from earlier in his career—texts like

---

[86] Higashi Masao 東雅夫, *Nihon gensō bungaku taizen: Nihon gensō bungaku jiten* 日本幻想文学大全　日本幻想文学事典 (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 2013), 163.

Kōya hijiri 高野聖 (1900) or *Shunchū* 春昼 (1906) or *Uta andon* 歌行灯 (1910), to name a

few. In other words, *Sankai hyōban ki* cannot be effectively read by using "Kyōka" as a

critical-interpretive cipher, that is, it demands to be read differently from what came before

it, generally speaking, in Kyōka's oeuvre. It thereby effectively destabilizes not only the

reader unfamiliar with Kyōka's particular brand of *gensō bungaku*, but also readers who

think they know what they are in for when they sit down to read a Kyōka novel: *Sankai*

hyōban ki is just familiar enough formally to highlight the ways in which perspectives and

footings have changed.

  Let us consider some examples of how this critical destabilization, and the

consternation that sometimes arises therefrom, works. In his book-length study of Kyōka's

life and works, Charles Shirō Inouye uses the literary biography format to form a meta-

narrative cipher through which he reads Kyōka's individual texts. Inouye calls this the

"archetype," and he defines it in the following way:

> A young (or otherwise sexually hesitant) male passes through a watery barrier.
> Water (in its various manifestations) connotes death but is, at the same time, an
> ambivalent sign of birth and possibility. It establishes limits and, therefore, makes
> possible the high drama of trespass. The protagonist, driven by intense desire to
> heal an emotional loss, moves from the normative world of the day-to-day into a
> space of the sacred and the dead. There he encounters an alluring yet nurturing
> woman, who is always in some way a manifestation of the author's mother. With her,
> he experiences both horror and fascination. Her extraordinary powers allow him to
> survive this encounter, even though she herself is part of the danger. Returning to
> his normal state, he learns something about his own nature and about the deeper
> meaning of love.[87]

---

[87] Charles Shirō Inouye, *The Similitude of Blossoms: A Critical Biography of Izumi Kyōka (1873- 1939), Japanese Novelist and Playwright* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 1998), 141–142.

This archetype fits works like *Kōya hijiri*, "Ryūtandan" 龍潭譚 (1896), and many others in Kyōka's oeuvre. Elsewhere, Inouye writes about the significance of rural space—and a specific type of rural space in particular—in Kyōka's work:

> For Kyōka, rural Japan would come to have a special importance. His need to construct the regressive male required a nostalgic regard for the space of his hometown on the Sea of Japan, since the dependent male required childhood and childhood required the places that had formed it: the narrow alleys of his neighborhood along the Asano River, the ribbon of water that was the river itself, and the mysterious world of mountains, temples, and villages of the non-human that lay beyond its far bank. Kyōka's continuing search for an archetype that would allow him to address the sense of loss and impoverishment that so profoundly plagued him required the overwhelmingly strong impressions of youth—perhaps the most insightful and direct encounters with reality that come our way.[88]

Inouye thus moves to read the "rural" in Kyōka as a particularized site of childhood regression, centered above all on more-or-less fictionalized recastings of Kyōka's actual hometown, Kanazawa, from 1890s works like "Ryūtandan" and "Kechō" 化鳥 (1897) through later works like *Yukari no onna* 由縁の女 (1919). For Inouye, the above archetype becomes an evaluative tool, so that works that cleave most closely to it while modulating or developing it in some productive way receive the most attention. As I have already hinted at, this is certainly a productive way to read much of Kyōka's work, and the intensely iterative nature of much of his output—his *zenshū* can read like an extended forty-year experiment in a literary "theme and variations" form—almost seems to actively encourage it. Accordingly, many other examples of critical work on Kyōka follow a similar trajectory, a corollary thereof being that the early (i.e. Meiji and early Taishō) works receive significantly more attention that the later (i.e. late Taishō and Shōwa) works.

---

[88] Ibid., 106.

But something interesting happens when one tries to read late Kyōka, and *Sankai hyōban ki* in particular, through this interpretive-evaluative lens: the rubric *seems* like it should work (many of the important components are there: semi-autobiographical male protagonist returning to the Kanazawa-esque region of his hometown where he meets, after many years, a female acquaintance with whom he was close in some way when he was young), and yet it more or less completely breaks down. Inouye is harsh in his reading of the novel: citing "the obvious truth that the work is a failure," he writes that it is "uneven and rambling, posing tremendous problems for even the most dedicated readers."[89] We can imagine here that "readers" includes the two groups I have noted above, namely both those who are generally unfamiliar with Kyōka's other work as well as (and more importantly, it seems, in terms of Inouye's archetypal reading) the avid readers in Kyōka fandom, then and now, who know and love his other work and bring that knowledge to bear on the text.

Inouye's critique of the text is leveled on both the thematic and structural level. With regard to the former, he summarizes his view with the following:

> With the admission of guilt comes a very different state of awareness, a maturity that is almost paralyzing since it corrodes the more formal and mythic construction of meaning that had served Kyōka so well for so long. Having given up on the paradigm, Kyōka was flushed from the ideal world of his imagination. Intimated in earlier works, the crisis finally plays itself out here. In the end what destroyed the usefulness of the archetype was the tendency, in Kyōka's final years, for his men to be more sharply aware of sexual appetite.[90]

It is interesting that Inouye's focus is on Yano here; if anything, I see less of a change between Yano and the many other male protagonists that come before him than I do between Ayaha and the many other female characters that come before her. In other words, I am uncertain whether *Sankai hyōban ki*'s deviation from Inouye's archetype is

---

[89] Ibid., 317.
[90] Ibid., 321.

precipitated primarily by the fact that Kyōka's late protagonists "became men,"[91] and in my

own reading later will suggest instead that the primary point of deviation is to be found in

the way that Ayaha, unlike the "beautiful winged lady" in "Kechō" or the witch in *Kōya hijiri*,

does not fit into the role of the mothering monster. She was once a sort of literary rival to

Yano, and now is at the head of a cult: she is not a balm, but a threat. And in so being, she is

one of the most interesting characters in Kyōka's entire output.

For our immediate purposes, Inouye's structural critique—a critique, that is, of how

Kyōka's narratology has grown loose and blurry as the archetypal center ceases to hold—is

of more interest. Inouye cites the following passage, which occurs partway through the

penultimate chapter (the text is broken into twenty-four named chapters).

　矢野は、なき母の乳を思ひつゝ胸、——いや、胸に歯の届かぬ、片腕を、——左の腕を嚙んで裂かうとした。
　筆を取る右の手を庇はうとしたのである。
　あゝ、わが知る、兵庫岡本には谷崎潤一郎氏。——もとより東京に、水上、里見、久保田の諸家、もし此処にあらば、其の才能と、機略と、胆勇を以て、一呼吸して此の危地を脱しよう。其の他、友一人、誰とても。……また異つた意味では、第一此の人の母、花柳数枝、わが妻の澄とても、お李枝を全うし得ようと信ずる。——甚しきは、反対に地を転ずとせよ。彼奴輩、馬士と雖も、其の愛人を救ひ得ざらんや。
　たゞ、われ一人、手段を誤り、前後を忘じ、挙措を失した。
　かくて、群狼の毒牙、馬妖の乱脚に、お李枝の白身の四肢を擲つて、其の五体の狼藉委泥さるゝを、面のあたり見ねばならない、目を潰せ、胸を裂け、——それで済むか——腕が何だ！

（七）

　いま、われお李枝を救ひ得ずして、文章が何だ、小説が何だ。作者が何だ。

Yano's thoughts returned to his departed mother's breast as he bit into his chest—no, his teeth wouldn't reach his chest: his arm—as he bit into his left arm to rip it open.

He did not want to harm his right hand—his writing hand.

O, my friend Mr. Tanizaki Jun'ichirō in Okamoto, Hyōgo Prefecture! —And of course Misters Minakami and Satomi and Kubota in Tokyo, if they were here, then with their talent and their wit and their stalwart courage they would, I doubt not, need but one breath to escape from this dire predicament. Or someone else, one lone acquaintance, anyone! ...And in a different sense, even if it were, firstly, Hanayagi Kazue, the mother of this girl, or my wife Sumi, then I have faith that they could keep Orie safe from harm. —Let desperation compel you to spin the earth upside-down! Though these brutes be packhorsemen, can he not save his lover?

But I have made a mistake in my method, I have forgotten the order of things, and I have erred in my conduct.

Thus I must bear witness, before mine very eyes, to fair Orie's limbs being ripped from her body, and that body wantonly besmirched with mud, by the poison fangs of a pack of wolves and the wild hoofs of horse-fiends: close your eyes, rend your chest—as if that would suffice—what use is an arm!

Seven

If I cannot save Orie here, what use is a sentence, what use is a novel? What use is an author?[92]

Inouye reads this passage un-ironically, as a thinly veiled call for help from not only Yano but also—as the references to Kyōka's real-world acquaintances like Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, Minakami Takitarō, Satomi Ton, and Kubota Mantarō would seem to indicate—Kyōka himself. In such a reading, the above passage does seem to self-consciously emphasize the fact that Kyōka has lost his script, so to speak, or gone off the rails. Inouye writes, "The fictive distance between artist and character has been reduced to almost nothing. Consequently, Kyōka found himself trapped in something like a confessional I-novel and in

---

[92] Izumi Kyōka 泉鏡花, *Shokō: Sankai hyōban ki* 初稿・山海評判記, ed. Tanaka Reigi 田中励儀 (Tokyo: Kokusho kankō kai, 2014), 522–524. Note that Inouye gives a translation of this passage in *The Similitude of Blossoms*; I provide my own translation here.

danger of becoming just the sort of artless artist that he had so often derided."[93] Inouye thus takes this passage as something of a false ending that comes shortly before the "actual" ending with the Shirayama messenger.

When considered more dispassionately, however, this clash between Platonic archetype and the actuality of the individual text seems to me to indicate not so much an aesthetic or critical failing on the text's part but instead that the text demands to be read in a different way. Kyōka is very consciously playing with our expectations here. And if I allow myself a moment of confessional I-novel-ism, it was this very passage, quoted in Inouye's book, that planted the first seed of readerly interest in *Sankai hyōban ki* in my mind: it feels—especially, perhaps, when taken out of its larger narrative context—experimental and bold, breaking free of familiar Kyōka tropes that have become well-worn to the point of cliché after almost forty years.

I wish to reiterate here that I am not suggesting that Inouye's model does not work as a productive tool for reading many of the most important works in Kyōka's career— especially because many of those works, through various paratextual mechanisms, seem to encourage a reading informed by "Kyōka" as authorial persona. I am instead suggesting that the breakdown of this model when it comes to *Sankai hyōban ki* and other work from Kyōka's late period indicates that these late works require a new hermeneutical approach. This is something that has indeed been signaled implicitly by many generations of critics: after its first publication in 1929, *Sankai hyōban ki* received scant critical attention until the larger "Kyōka revival" of the late 1960s and early 1970s, when works by Kyōka and, to a lesser extent, writers like Kunieda Shirō, Yumeno Kyūsaku, Oguri Mushitarō, et al., began to

---

[93] Inouye, *The Similitude of Blossoms*, 320–321.

be reconfigured into an emerging discourse of *gensō bungaku* by figures like Mishima Yukio, Shibusawa Tatsuhiko, Tanemura Suehiro, and Kawamura Jirō. *Sankai hyōban ki* received some attention during this time, though not as much as many of Kyōka's other now-canonized *gensōteki* works like *Kusameikyū* 草迷宮 (1908) or *Tenshu monogatari* 天守物語 (1917). Shinoda Hajime's reading of *Sankai hyōban ki* from this time is one example of this early wave of criticism, and it is worth noting that most of these early figures involved in the rediscovery of Kyōka-as-*gensō* more generally were critics coming from foreign-literature backgrounds—Shibusawa from French literature, Tanemura and Kawamura from German literature, Yura Kimiyoshi from English literature. As Shinoda's early critique of *Sankai hyōban ki* shows, it was being read not as *kokubungaku* but as something foreign, something weird, something not, ultimately, novelistic or even literary at all—a discourse that brings to mind the estimation of Kizen's writing as "like the work of a Westerner proficient in the Japanese language" discussed in the previous chapter.[94]

This is not so say, however, that a reading informed by authorial biography is necessarily an inadequate tool for approaching *Sankai hyōban ki*; it simply needs to be recalibrated. In fact, recent trends in scholarship on Kyōka have begun to move away from the model of privileging the early Meiji works and taking the topography of the Hokuriku region as the space onto which childhood regression is projected, and instead focus on addressing the task of how we might take Kyōka's late work seriously on its own terms. Let me define "late Kyōka" here as roughly his literary output that comes after the Great Kantō

---

[94] By denying description, work by Kizen and especially Kyōka get at that which lies beyond discourse; and they do so not so much through "content" as they do narratologically—through the *way* the thing is being told. In these texts, the *telling* is just as Weird, if not Weirder, than the nature of the thing being told.

Earthquake of 1923. Perhaps the clearest articulation of this can be found in Shimizu Jun's

2018 monograph, *Kyōka to yōkai* 鏡花と妖怪, but can also be seen in recent work by

Tominaga Maki, Higashi Masao, and other members of the Izumi Kyōka kenkyūkai research

group.

Shimizu makes the case for a sustained study of Kyōka's late work in the following

way. Focusing on critically neglected works from the period like "Hiken gen nari" 飛剣幻な

り (1928) and "Hantō ikki shō" 半島一奇抄 (1926) as well as relatively better-known texts

like "Mayu kakushi no rei" 眉かくしの霊 (1924) and *Sankai hyōban ki*, Shimizu repeatedly

acknowledges the relative dearth of critical material on this period of Kyōka's output, and

generally begins his enquiries by asking why this is. In so doing, he acknowledges the

difficulties these texts oftentimes pose to their reader; at the start of a chapter on "Hantō

ikki shō," he summarizes succinctly the issues at hand:

> Many works in Kyōka's output include leaps and gaps in plot, but such a tendency
> becomes especially pronounced in the late novels, and great difficulty accompanies
> attempts to understand events occurring in the story. Even in representative works
> from this period like "Mayu kakushi no rei" and *Sankai hyōban ki*, in the former the
> protagonist, Sakai, is sucked into the folkloric realm of the "Lady of Bellflower Lake"
> without his knowing it, and in the latter the protagonist, Yano, is ultimately unable
> to grasp the motives of Himenuma Ayaha, who is engaged in attempts to move in
> upon him, and is thereby left behind at the end. In both cases, the protagonists are
> unable to comprehend the circumstances in which they find themselves placed, and
> remain baffled and unenlightened in the midst of an atmosphere of mystery;
> likewise, the reader, too, in a manner similar to Sakai and Yano, find themselves
> unable to comprehend the plot and in a continued state bafflement. What is more,
> the situation is not one that can be resolved simply by filling in the leaps and gaps in
> the plot. [...] In these texts, it seems that there is a decreased importance in
> uncovering a clear "narrative" in the text.[95]

---

[95] Shimizu Jun 清水潤, *Kyōka to yōkai* 鏡花と妖怪, ed. Kaii kaidan kenkyūkai 怪異怪談研究
会 (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 2018), 170–171.

Instead of taking this characteristic as a weakness, however, Shimizu instead investigates it

as a strength, and through readings of a series of texts successfully shows how these late

works ask questions and explore possibilities that were not asked and not explored in

Kyōka's earlier work. In so doing, he pursues two general conclusions: one, that it is not

only possible but critically productive to read much of Kyōka's post-1923 literature as

more timely, more deeply engaged with the cultural-historical fabric of the time in which it

was published than what came before. Shimizu suggests that this is the result of conscious

decisions made by Kyōka, which in turn are influenced above all by the lingering trauma of

the 1923 earthquake. Shimizu thus reads a work like "Hiken gen nari" as a type of disaster

fiction. The second conclusion, which is more immediately pertinent to this chapter, is that

we see in Kyōka's work at this time a more self-conscious engagement with the *discourses*

of *minzokugaku* than in his earlier works. In other words, folkloric beings and tropes shift

from being a primarily ontological issue for Kyōka to an epistemological one, with the

result being that Kyōka is more focused on how *minzokugaku* knowledge is produced and

disseminated in a text like "Hantō ikki shō" or indeed in *Sankai hyōban ki* than he ever was

before. In so doing, Shimizu is joining a recent scholarly conversation on this issue with

other scholars like Tominaga, Abe Ayumi, Kobayashi Teruji, Nakanishi Yukiko, Tanaka Reigi,

and Higashi Masao.

Writing the Unspoken/Unspeakable: Shirayama shinkō*, the* oshirasama *Debates, and a*
Gothic Ontology of Ethnicity

　　　　Characters patently modeled on Yanagita Kunio make multiple appearances in

Kyōka's works, beginning with "Yushima mōde" 湯島詣 in 1899 and perhaps most

famously in *Yasha ga ike* 夜叉ヶ池 (1913). As has been well documented already, Kyōka

and Yanagita enjoyed a long and mutually productive friendship, first beginning in the late

1890s. Higashi Masao, for example, has focused on their collaborative work in the late Meiji

era with regard to *kaidan-kai* 怪談会 and *hyakumonogatari-kai* 百物語会 media forms.[96]

Both men, furthermore, left behind positive evaluations of each other's work in print: see,

for example, Kyōka's "Tōno no kibun" 遠野の奇聞, written in praise of *Tōno monogatari*,

and Yanagita's warm recollections of Kyōka in *Kokyō shichi jū nen* 故郷七十年.

 A Yanagita avatar makes a cameo in *Sankai hyōban ki*, as well, in the form of the

character Kunimura Ryūkyō 邦村柳郷, whose name leaves little room for doubt on the

matter—the "kuni" 邦 of "Kunimura" echoing the "kuni" 國 of "Kunio" and the "Ryū" 柳 of

"Ryūkyō" being the same character as the "yanagi" 柳 of "Yanagita"; one furthermore

wonders if the "kyō" 郷 of "Ryūkyō" is meant to echo the title of the journal *Kyōdo kenkyū*

郷土研究, thus solidifying the link between this character and Yanagita-as-*minzokugakusha*

all the more. And that is exactly the role this character plays in the text—that of the

minzokugakusha, who provides Yano with the lore about the *oshira-sama* deity that forms

one of the thematic pillars of the text. Clearly acknowledging that the knowledge comes

from his acquaintance Kunimura, Yano speculates that the severed head of a woman that

the driver of his automobile saw on the side of the road is not a severed head at all, but an

oshira-sama effigy:

---

[96] See Higashi Masao 東雅夫, "Ryūka no majiwari: Kyōka gensō no engen o megutte" 柳花の
交わり──鏡花幻想の淵源をめぐって, *Anahorisshu kokubungaku* アナホリッシュ國文學
6 (2014), as well as *Tōno monogatari to kaidan no jidai*.

可、うけ売で、学問を見せつけよう。生首だの何の、と飛でもない！——それは、ある、御神体だよ。姫神のお姿……もしくは其のお姿のうつしだよ。

All right—let me demonstrate for you some secondhand scholarship. Severed heads and what have you: nothing of the sort! —That thing, it was a particular kind of sacred object, an idol possessed of godhead. It was the figure of a goddess…or a likeness, a copy made thereof.[97]

This Gothic encounter, in other words, is transformed through Kunimura's epistemology (filtered in turn through Yano) into something of a minor breakthrough in *minzokugaku* fieldwork.[98] Yano presents it as essentially field evidence corroborating a *minzokugaku* theory of Kunimura's, linking the folk religious rites and iconography surrounding *oshira-sama* in the Tōhoku region to *Shirayama shinkō* in Hokuriku:

その霊徳を伝うるために、白山権現、こゝには主に姫神と言ひたい。其の姿を奉じて、むかし、出羽、奥州へ伝授、布説したものがあらうと思ふ。

I think that there must have been worshippers of this figure—the Hakusan *gongen*, which I would here like to mainly consider as a goddess-deity—who, in order to spread its holy efficacy, transmitted it to and propagated it among Dewa and Ōshū.[99]

Yano's speculation on these matters continues, unhurried and weaving in and out of other conversational forms, for many pages at this point in the text. But the central point is that

---

[97] Izumi Kyōka, *Shokō: Sankai hyōban ki*, 210.

[98] This is an important point: Kyōka is interested in what happens at the point of slippage between two kinds of discourse—Gothic (*kaii* 怪異) discourse, where the *thing* encountered in the countryside is Weird in the sense that Mieville uses the term, and *minzokugakuteki* discourse, where the thing becomes an archaeological artifact, a data point in a larger matrix of scientific knowledge. But by purposely using an "outdated" theory of Yanagita's, Kyōka is dramatizing the ultimate slipperiness of the Gothic/Weird—exploring the limits of Yanagita-*minzokugaku* to "understand" rurality, and thereby positing his own theory of rurality in terms of what I call "Occult Modernity" later through the character of Ayaha and her enigmatic cult. The important thing is how the text breaks down the Yanagita-*minzokugaku* epistemological paradigm *in narratological terms*—Yano's epistemological "upper hand" in these middle chapters is thoroughly undercut throughout, and especially at the end, when he is consistently unable to figure out what on earth is transpiring around him, or to Orie.

[99] Izumi Kyōka, *Shokō: Sankai hyōban ki*, 223.

he uses knowledge imparted to him by Kunimura to link the northern provinces of Dewa

and Ōshū—which he refers to as a "remote land" (僻遠の地)[100]—to the area surrounding

Hakusan via exactly the sort of national-scale epistemological matrix that drives Yanagita-

minzokugaku, as we have already seen.[101]

So it should perhaps come as no surprise that this theory is not Kyōka's creation but

is in fact drawing on Yanagita's very own treatises on the matter. In "Miko-kō" 巫女考,

published in *Kyōdo kenkyū* in 1913—a full sixteen years before the publication of *Sankai*

hyōban ki—Yanagita puts forth the following argument.

南方さんなどはオシラ神はもと養蚕の神ならんと言われた。今日の通説もまずは
そうであろう。これは神体を桑の木で造ること、馬の霊が蚕の神となったという
『捜神記』以来の伝説が日本のオシラサマにも結び着いていること（遠野物語）、
東北の方言では蚕をシロサマなどということ、及び蚕の病気であるところの
白殭蚕を蚕の舎利と言い、かえって尊敬することなどが良い根拠である。羽後
仙北郡横沢村大字中里の白神社などは俗にオシラ神またはオシラサマといって養
蚕の神である（月の出羽路巻二十一）。越後長岡辺では昔は蚕の神を四郎神とい
い、正月二月六月の午の日に小豆飯をもってこれを祭った（北越月令）。上野勢
多郡の宮田などでも正月十四日の夜をオシラマチと呼び、神酒と麺類とをもって
蚕影山の神を祭るという（宮田村沿革史巻六）。しかし自分がまだ賛同に躊躇
するのは、養蚕の保護神に対する信仰が今日のごとく伝播したのはこの生産業の
大いなる普及とともにいたって近代のことであるゆえである。神体の材料の桑で
あることと、神をも虫をもともにシロということとの二つは偶然併存したとも見
られる。馬と蚕の話などは後に来てオシラ神に附着したのかも知れぬ。[...] オシ
ラサマの正しい本名が白神であることは前の羽後仙北の白神社のほかに、北海道
渡島の岬端白神崎の白神山にも石室の奥にオシラサマを祀ってあるというのでよ
く分る。しこうしてこれらの白神はるいは白山権現ではなかったかと思う。

70

Mr. Minakata[102] and others have said that the *oshira-gami* was originally a god of sericulture. And such a view, it is safe to say, is the prevailing theory today. There are solid grounds for this view: the fact that its idol is fashioned from the wood of the mulberry tree; the fact that legends, dating from the *Soushen Ji* onward, of the spirit of a horse becoming the god of silkworms are to be found in connection with the *oshira-sama* of Japan, as well (cf. *Tōno monogatari*); the fact that in the dialect of the Tōhoku regions "silkworm" is "*shiro-sama*" et c.; and the fact that white muscardine disease, which affects silkworms, is called "silkworm's relic-bones" and, contrary to what might be expected, is approached with veneration. The Shira Shrine of Nakazato District, Yokosawa Village, Senboku County in Ugo Province[103] is, to cite one example, popularly referred to as *oshira-gami* or *oshira-sama* and is a sericulture deity (cf. *Tsuki no Dewa-ji*, vol. XXI[104]). Around Nagaoka in Echigo Province[105] the god of silkworms was in olden times called *shirō-gami*, and was celebrated with adzuki rice on the Day of the Horse of the first, second, and sixth months (cf. *Hokuetsu getsurei*[106]). And in Miyada of Seta County of Kōzuke Province[107] the fourteenth night of the first month is called "*oshira-machi*" ["waiting for *oshira*"], whereon the deity of Kokage [Silkworm-Shadow] Mountain is reportedly celebrated with sacred wine and noodles (cf. *Miyada-mura enkaku shi*, vol. VI). Nonetheless, the reason I yet hesitate to endorse this view is due to the fact that the propagation of such belief in protective deities of sericulture as we see today is, like the large-scale popularization of this industry, a thoroughly modern phenomenon. It is possible to view the two facts that the material from which the idol is made is mulberry wood, on the one hand, and that both god and insect are likewise called *shiro*, on the other, as coincidentally compatible with a different truth. Stories regarding horses and silkworms could have arrived at a later date and become affixed to the *oshira-gami* then. [...] We can see clearly enough that the true name of *oshira-sama* is *shira* ("white") *gami* ("god") from Shira ("White") Shrine in Senboku in Ugo Province, mentioned earlier, as well as from the fact that *oshira-sama* is worshipped in a grotto at Shirakami Mountain on Cape Shirakami on the tip of Oshima Peninsula in Hokkaidō.[108] Hence I wonder if these *shira* ("white") *gami* ("god") deities were not, in fact, the Hakusan *gongen*.[109]

---

[102] Referring, of course, to Minakata Kumagusu.

[103] Corresponds to present-day Daisen City, Akita Prefecture.

[104] By Sugae Masumi 菅江真澄, 1826.

[105] Corresponds to present-day Nagaoka City, Niigata Prefecture.

[106] By Koizumi Sōken 小泉蒼軒, 1849.

[107] Corresponds to present-day Shibukawa City, Gunma Prefecture.

[108] Located in present-day Matsumae Town, Matsumae County, Hokkaidō.

[109] Yanagita Kunio 柳田國男, "Miko-kō" 巫女考, in *Ryūka sōsho: Sankai hyōban ki/Oshira-gami no hanashi* 柳花叢書　山海評判記／オシラ神の話, ed. Higashi Masao 東雅夫 (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 2013), 400–401.

The line of reasoning here is remarkably similar to Yano's in the novel, and ultimately accomplishes the same thing—namely, linking one rural Gothic topography (Tōhoku, as made clear by Yanagita's own citation of *Tōno monogatari* as evidence in the text) with another (Hokuriku, signified here by the "Hakusan *gongen*" which becomes the epistemological destination of both Yano and Yanagita) through the iconography of the *oshira-sama* idol.

This passage is also classically Yanagita in all his dispassionate ideological concealment: his deployment of various late-Edo gazetteers et c. (Sugae Masumi is a consistently important source and model to emulate for Yanagita) from disparate regions serves, like his space-time theory of concentric circles for dialect antiqueness in *Kagyū-kō*, to smooth and subsume discrete nodes of localized lore into a sleek, grand theory on a national scale. This is, in other words, an excellent snapshot of how structures of knowledge are created and curated in Yanagita-*minzokugaku*. But this is, at the same time, a piece from relatively early in Yanagita's career as a *minzokugakusha*, only three years after the publication of *Tōno monogatari*, and it is equally clear, from the reference to Minakata and the general way he methodically considers the "prevailing theory" before putting forth his own, that other theories and other ways of knowing remain in circulation.

The political and ideological stakes in these academic postulations were, and remained to be, high. And in fact this very topic—the meaning and origins of the obscure *oshira-sama* idol—became one of the major battlegrounds where Yanagita-*minzokugaku* clashed with a different model with different political investments, in the form of the so-called *oshira-sama ronsō* or "*Oshira-sama* Debate." In 1928—fifteen years after "Miko-kō, it is worth noting—Yanagita published "Oshira-gami no hanashi" オシラ神の話, in which he

argues that the *oshira-sama* is essentially a form of household deity in the Tōhoku regions.[110] Although "Oshira-gami no hanashi," like "Miko-kō," takes as its starting point a rejection of the popular theory that *oshira-sama* is at its core a silkworm/sericulture deity, what is more remarkable is that Yanagita essentially refutes and disowns his earlier conjecture—namely, that *oshira-sama* is rooted in *Shirayama-shinkō*—to put forth a new one—that *oshira-sama* is a household deity. In response to this, Kita Sadakichi 喜田貞吉, a historian and *minzokugaku* scholar himself, published "Oshira-gami ni kan suru ni san no okusetsu" オシラ神に関する二三の憶説, also in 1928, arguing that the *oshira-sama* was originally an Ainu hearth deity. As Tominaga notes, Yanagita, whose work at the time emphasized an epistemology that understood Japan as a single, unified community, reacted strongly against Kita's thesis, as can be seen in "Ningyō to oshira-gami" 人形とオシラ神, published the following year in 1929.[111]

By the late 1920s Yanagita's work, and the work of Yanagita-*minzokugaku*, had become—as has been noted by many commentators already—increasingly inclined toward an ideology of national unity and particularly the theory of Japan as a so-called *tan'itsu minzoku kokka* 単一民族国家, or "single-ethnicity nation." Yanagita's rejection of Kita's Ainu-centric theory—a theory of Japanese "origins" that is thus more diffuse and multivalent than Yanagita would perhaps like—is a clear example of this. The general narrative of Yanagita's work is that by this period—the early Shōwa Period, that is—

---

[110] For a detailed account of the *oshira-sama ronsō*, see Tominaga Maki 富永真樹, "Tochi no kami ga 'kaii' ni naru toki: Izumi Kyōka *Sankai hyōban ki* kara" 土地の神が〈怪異〉になるとき――泉鏡花「山海評判記」から, in *Kaii no jikū 1: Kaii o aruku* 怪異の時空 1　怪異を歩く, ed. Ichiyanagi Hirotaka 一柳廣孝 with Imai Hidekazu 今井秀和 and Ōmichi Haruka 大道晴香 (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 2016), 147–148.
[111] Tominaga, "Tochi no kami ga 'kaii' ni naru toki," 147.

Yanagita had turned away from an interest in the peripheries of the Japanese folk, the "mountain folk" and shadowy figures found in *Tōno monogatari* and *Yama no jinsei*, and toward the *jōmin* 常民, which are essentially the archetypal, timeless "abiding folk" that form the bedrock of a Romantic conception of Nation. My consideration of Kizen in the previous chapter was meant, in part, to challenge this narrative by showing that these *jōmin*-centric, flattening tendencies are present even in an early work like *Tōno monogatari* on the narratological level, even when the thematic content would seem to suggest a stance playfully antagonistic toward *heichimin* 平地民 mores. Kita, in a sense, makes for a good counterpart to Kizen: both figures represent "roads not taken" in the development of *minzokugaku* and its epistemologies and ideologies, though in markedly different ways.

Kita's work today receives only a tiny fraction of the critical attention afforded to Yanagita (or Orikuchi, for that matter). And yet, when considered as a whole, it represents a view of the past and modernity's relationship with the past that allows for a more dynamic, diffuse, critically aware conception of what "nation" was and is and might be than Yanagita's work. I bring this up here because it circles around to plug back into Yanagita's abandoned *oshira-sama*-as-*Shirayama-shinkō* theory from "Miko-kō": namely, a major component of Kita's *minzokugaku* work at exactly this time—the Taishō and early Shōwa Periods—focused on the question of the nature and origins of *burakumin* communities in Japan.

Any historical consideration of *burakumin* and *buraku* hamlets carries with it serious political implications and consequences. I wish to acknowledge that reality here—a reality that includes very real discrimination that continues to be felt by individuals and communities in Japan today—and hope that the following discussion of historical

74

discourses surrounding *burakumin* will be understood as just that—an archaeology of historical discourses and not any kind of value judgment regarding their accuracy or inaccuracy.

The question of the "origins" of *buraku* discrimination was, much like the question of the "origins" of the *oshira-sama*, considered an open one by *minzokugaku* scholars at this time. Yanagita, for his part, addressed these matters somewhat early on in his career, but generally avoided the topic of *burakumin* later on, as he did of other peripheral, marginalized, and itinerant groups, as well. The "prevailing theory" with which we are familiar today—that *buraku* discrimination is rooted in occupational discrimination and stems from the Edo Period—was not the only theory in circulation at the time. Kita, as can be seen in his work on the topic, was a major voice in these debates. Another figure was Kikuchi Sansai 菊池山哉, a sort of fringe *minzokugakusha* figure whose major object of enquiry (unlike Kita, who wrote broadly on various topics) was this very issue of the "origins" of the *burakumin*. He published in *Kyōdo kenkyū* on the subject as early as 1915, and in 1923 and 1927 he published *Eta-zoku ni kan suru kenkyū* 穢多族に関する研究 and *Senjū minzoku to senmin-zoku no kenkyū* 先住民族と賤民族の研究, respectively, in which he puts forth his theory that *burakumin* are essentially an indigenous group, ethnically distinct from "Japanese" *wajin*, and that this ethnic difference constitutes the original source of discrimination.

Kikuchi carried out extensive fieldwork in *buraku* communities—indeed, the systematic nature of his scholarship is a large part of why it is considered taboo today— and one of his findings, intriguingly, regarded the nomenclature of Shirayama/Hakusan shrines. He found, in other words, that 白山神社 were generally called "Shirayama Jinja" in

burakumin communities, whereas the same *kanji* were read as "Hakusan Jinja" in non-*buraku* communities.[112] With this in mind, I would like to suggest that Yanagita's rejection not only of Kita's theory of *oshira-sama* as having Ainu origins but also his own, previous theory of *oshira-sama* as having *Shirayama shinkō* origins both come from the same reactionary impulse—that is, an attempt to quarantine the "folk" (i.e. *jōmin*) aspect of "folk religion" found in a deity like *oshira-sama* from the ghostly remnants of ethnic diversity on the Japanese archipelago—or at least discourses of ethnic diversity on the Japanese archipelago.

How does all this relate to *Sankai hyōban ki*? As the above dates ought to make clear, Kyōka is writing in the very midst of not only the *oshira-sama ronsō* but also Kikuchi's (among others) work on *burakumin* as ethnic discrimination. The novel, however, contains an interesting anachronism in the way that Yano's and Kunimura's "theory" about *oshira-sama* is fifteen years out of date. By 1929, no one—not even Yanagita—seriously believed that there was a historical connection between the *oshira-sama* of Tōhoku and *Shirayama shinkō* of Hokuriku. As Abe, Tominaga, and others have already noted, however, this does not mean that Kyōka was merely being sloppy or opportunistic in his choice of *minzokugaku* materials. The conscious use of a debunked 1913 theory in a 1929 novel constitutes, I think, a commentary on the nature of that theory, and of the *oshirasama ronsō*, and of Yanagita-*minzokugaku* (and other latent *minzokugaku*s that were silenced or going silent at that moment) more generally. As Abe Ayumi convincingly argues, the nature of Ayaha's cult, its amorphous and ultimately itinerant nature, strongly suggests the image of

---

[112] For more on this topic, see Maeda Hayao 前田速夫, *Shiro no minzokugaku e: Shirayama shinkō no nazo o otte* 白の民俗学へ　白山信仰の謎を追って (Tokyo: Kawade shobō shinsha, 2006).

the "wandering *miko*" of Yanagita's "Miko-kō."[113] I would like to furthermore suggest that it

is tapping into a broader spectrum of discourses of marginalized identity in Japan at this

time—various forms of non-rice-cultivating itinerancy (*sanka*, "wandering *miko*," traveling

dancers and performers, et c.), ethnic difference (*burakumin*, Ainu, *sanka*), and obsolescent

lifeways, all swirling around the enigmatically Gothic symbol of a figure shrouded in white.

As Shimizu perceptively writes in the context of "Hantō ikki shō," another text that engages

discursively with Yanagita-*minzokugaku*, "It seems that, for Kyōka, *minzokugaku*, as a

scholarly discipline in the process of being established by Yanagita, resonated strongly with

interests he had been harboring on his own since long before; and that, at the same time, he

recognized it as something that could not wholly address the kinds of questions which he

himself was interested in addressing."[114] When we move past surface-level considerations

of motifs and tropes, and past the real-world camaraderie between the two figures, we find

that the questions each is asking are not only fundamentally different, but that Kyōka's late

works have their critical focus trained keenly on what for Kyōka are lacunae in Yanagita-

minzokugaku and are consistently responding to those lacunae.

Occult Modernity

If Kyōka was purposely embedding a buggy version of Yanagita-*minzokugaku* into

his novel to make a point, then what, exactly, was the point being made? What kind of

alternate folk epistemology does *Sankai hyōban ki* articulate? In the remainder of this

---

[113] Abe Ayumi 阿部亜由美, "Izumi Kyōka bungaku ni okeru Yanagita minzokugaku no juyō"
泉鏡花文学における柳田民俗学の受容, *Kyōto daigaku kokubungaku ronsō* 京都大学國文
學論叢 16 (2006): 20–21.
[114] Shimizu, *Kyōka to yōkai*, 187.

chapter I would like to pursue this question through the framework of what I call "occult modernity."

As should be clear by now, we do see in *Sankai hyōban ki* the trademark Kyōka "blurring of boundaries" that is on display throughout his career: Yano's repeated encounters with Ayaha and her cult posits the rural (in this case, the mountain passes and backwaters of the Noto Peninsula) as a Gothic site where the boundaries between self and other, reader and narrator, past and present, living and dead all begin to crumble. This basic dynamic—establishment of various boundary lines, via the use of complex and disjointed frame narratives, among other things, which are then put under increasing strain by the development of those narratives—is one of the central hallmarks of Kyōka's fiction, as can be clearly seen from celebrated works like *Shunchū*, "Mayu kakushi no rei," and many others.

But I think that Kyōka's use of folkloric tropes (the "Is Chōta Here?" legend, the motif of the women and the well, et c.) and *minzokugaku* knowledge, and the way they are embedded in the larger narrative, instantiate the affective experience, on a phenomenological level, of an urbanized individual in the 1920s trying to come to terms with what rurality "means" at that time. Yano's general confusion about what he is bearing witness to—what, exactly, is unfolding around him—and, in terms of reader experience, the frustratingly confusing nature of the plot powerfully illustrate how an important part of our modern experience is determined by the presence of things hidden and left behind in rural landscapes, and how, try as we might, our subjective positions vis-à-vis that presence prevent us from unearthing it wholly and bringing it to light—an idea that resonates powerfully with the contemporary philosophical considerations of the Weird as found in

Graham Harman, Eugene Thacker, China Mieville, and others. To put it simply, this is, I argue, Kyōka at his most prophetic.

When looked at this way, we can read *Sankai hyōban ki* as the dramatization of the clash between two epistemologies, represented by Yano/Kunimura, on the one hand, and Ayaha/the cult, on the other. Indeed, as Tominaga shows, *Sankai hyōban ki* is less a "story" than it is a meditation on two types of storytelling: the chain of eerie, seemingly supernatural events experienced by Yano in Wakura—which we eventually realize are staged for and directed at him by Ayaha's group—and the story Yano inconclusively dictates to Orie regarding his past and Ayaha.[115] Tominaga thus argues that *Sankai hyōban ki*, as a text, is less interested in diegesis per se than it is in the friction and slippage between these two productive storytelling modes, namely Yano's and Ayaha's: "By thus looking at the two axes of 'Yano's narrative,' staged by Ayaha, and 'Ayaha's narrative,' dictated by Yano, together, we are able for the first time to comprehend *in toto* the weird phenomena that pervade *Sankai hyōban ki*."[116]

I think this last point, about the nature of *kaii* or "weird phenomena," is worth pursuing in more detail. Despite their narrative and stylistic complexities, in the majority of Kyōka's fiction until the Showa Period—whether it be "Kechō" or *Kōya hijiri* or *Shunchū* or *Kusameikyū* or *Tenshu monogatari* or even, for that matter, "Mayu kakushi no rei"—the nature of the *gensō* is relatively straightforward. To cite an example of a common pattern:

---

[115] Tominaga Maki 富永真樹, "'Monogatari' ga tou mono: Izumi Kyōka *Sankai hyōban ki* to Komura Settai no sashie kara" 〈物語〉が問うもの──泉鏡花「山海評判記」と小村雪岱の挿絵から──, *Mita kokubun* 三田國文 60 (2015).

[116] Ibid., 61. It strikes me that this is a sort of updated version of the structural technique used more concisely in *Uta andon*—the strategy of having two narratives run parallel and gradually intertwine to reach a single climax.

in *Kōya hijiri* or *Shunchū* or "Mayu kakushi no rei," the *kaii*—a Weird or Gothic atmosphere, in other words—is generally hinted at in degrees of gradually increased intensity until the male protagonist meets the witch- or ghost-like woman, who acts as an embodiment or concretization of the "Weird" atmosphere of *kaii*. This narrative process might be summed up as "*kaii*-in-female-embodiment," and the way that this process works has already been explored fruitfully by Nina Cornyetz, Miri Nakamura, and others. In *Kōya hijiri*, for example, the snakes across the path and leeches raining down from the trees quite literally prepare the path, and prime the reader, for the main event—the monstrous female figure existing deep in the mountains in a chronotope clearly walled off from the "Modern."

This process is still there, to an extent, in *Sankai hyōban ki*, but *kaii* is no longer something embodied in character, cordoned off in monstrous-feminine corporeality; it is instead *in the air*, ambient, something simultaneously detectible but not quite legible, writ across the scenes and landscapes that Yano encounters. To continue to use *Kōya hijiri* as a comparative example, the lead-up in the first half of *Kōya hijiri*, with the snakes and the leeches, is protracted in *Sankai hyōban ki* until it becomes the focus of and driving force behind the narrative—a narrative end in itself instead of a means to a *kaii*-as-embodied-character end in a classically Gothic mold (*Frankenstein*, "Olalla," *Dracula*—the list goes on).

Sankai hyōban ki instead features a narrative dynamic—within, that is, the first axis Tominaga identifies of "Yano's narrative"—wherein active vision ("seeing") is gradually turned passive ("being shown"); this transformation from active (seeing) to passive (being shown) lies at the heart of the text's narrative movement, and is indeed necessary in order to understand the narrative composition of the text. What makes *Sankai hyōban ki* such a remarkable text, then, is that, at this late stage in Kyōka's career, he chooses to explore a

radically new way of expressing *gensō* through fiction. The question of "what is *kaii*," which once had a relatively straightforward answer (albeit with complicated implications) in Kyōka's earlier work, now becomes the central focus of the text, and its answer indeterminate, complex, and ultimately enigmatic.

Understood in this way, "Yano's narrative" is essentially a dramatic playing out of the failure of a Yanagita-*minzokugaku* epistemology and, more precisely, way of seeing. As discussed earlier, the sort of scholarly reasoning put forth by Yano/Kunimura/Yanagita is composed of data points and clear lines or trajectories between those points. This comes together to construct something that we might by means of metaphor roughly compare to one-point perspective—we come to understand each data point (which for Yanagita are, as we have seen, a particular dialect term in a specific sub-village district or nomenclature related to a specific shrine somewhere) *wholly through their relationship to other data points*. This is what Yano attempts to do in the novel not only with the *oshira-sama*/*Shirayama-shinkō* connection but also with the various eerie episodes he encounters—"Is Chōta Here?," the women and the well, and so forth. And he consistently and spectacularly fails to make any larger sense of what is going on, in Yanagita-*minzokugaku*-esque fashion, and therefore we the reader, too, consistently and spectacularly fail to make any larger sense of what is going on, in the traditional sense of what it means to "read" a "story." Furthermore, this plays out not only within "Yano's narrative" but also within Yano's dictated narration to Orie, which ultimately does not bring us any closer to understanding the events unfolding, or, put another way, any closer to understanding how the past (represented here by the personal pasts of Yano and Ayaha) is related to the present.

And this, finally, gets us to the crux of what I mean by Occult Modernity. Kyōka's relentless use of rural Gothic tropes in this text articulates a kind of modern experience that *needs* rurality in order to be articulated. The repeated movement "deeper" into rural space in this text—whether it is Orie on the train from Tokyo to Wakura, or the repeated trips Yano takes in the Hudson automobile into the wilder areas surrounding Wakura—necessarily brings the urbanized, modern subject into abrupt and disorienting contact with some kind of concretization of rural Gothic horror. In the first car ride, this is the "severed head" or, according to Yano, *oshira-sama* idol; in the second car ride, this is the otherworldly band of savage packhorsemen. Kyōka's "buggy" use of anachronistic *minzokugaku* ideas serves to bend that logic back against itself, so that the discourse is no longer about a gradual "spread" or "dissemination" deeper and deeper into the countryside and thus into the fossilized past (as it is in the *oshira-sama/Shirayama-shinkō* theory), but about the glaring actuality of opacity, about lines and trajectories that are not merely obscured but whose obscured state itself becomes a visible object that haunts and dominates our (modern) field of vision. The discourse of spoke-and-axle dissemination has turned into one of zigzagging itinerancy, like the "wandering *miko*" of Yanagita's discarded theory and Ayaha's cult, and like the ethnic indeterminacy of layered identities of outcaste groups that are able to break free of the discourse of stagnant "*eta-mura*" discriminatory lifeways to crisscross rural paths at twilight. Above all, *Sankai hyōban ki* expresses how rural space, far from being the curated object of Yanagita-*minzokugaku* and the simultaneously premodern and atemporal storehouse of folk tradition, can be prophetically imagined as a site where marginalized identities—given shadowy, shrouded form in Ayaha

and the group she leads—can exist in temporalities and spatialities sensed but unknowable

to urban forms of seeing and knowing.

CHAPTER THREE

The 1938 Tsuyama Incident and the Horrors of Rural Violence

Introduction

May 21, 1938, early morning, sometime after one o'clock.

You are asked to imagine the following scene: The hamlet of Kaio 貝尾, part of Nishikamo Village (西加茂村) in Tomata County (苫田郡) and deep in the mountains north of Tsuyama City (津山市) in Okayama Prefecture, lies under complete darkness. Kaio had no electricity that night; its power lines had been cut the previous evening. A young man named Toi Mutsuo 都井睦雄 puts on a uniform. He secures two flashlights to his head with a headband and hangs a bicycle lamp around his neck. He hangs a sack for ammunition across his chest, straps a Japanese sword and two daggers to his waist with a belt, picks up a Browning Automatic 5 shotgun, modified to hold nine rounds instead of the usual five, and, finally, takes up an axe, with which he hacks his grandmother's head off. He pulls on gaiters and outdoor split-toe *tabi* boots, and heads outside.

The three lights move from house to house, dimming or disappearing for a moment when the human figure steps inside. Shots ring out, echoing in the long, narrow mountain valley in which the dwelling-places of Kaio are loosely clustered. Screams can be heard. The three lights reemerge, and move to the next house. This continues, in the uneasy darkness, for well over an hour.

Toi killed 28 people that night, and wounded 5 others, two of whom would be dead within the day, before finally killing himself with the rifle, leaving 31 dead (including Toi)

in total. The Tsuyama Incident, or Tsuyama jiken 津山事件 in Japanese, remains the deadliest spree killing carried out by a lone individual in the history of modern Japan.[117]

The Tsuyama Incident is of interest for our enquiry into *inaka* Gothic forms not out of an indecorous concern for body count, however, but because of its far-reaching literary legacy. From soon after the events of May 1938 up through the 21st century, the Tsuyama Incident has inspired a wide range of cultural texts, including novels, feature films, television programs, *manga*, video games, theatrical productions, radio plays, and rock music songs. I would like to begin this chapter by suggesting that the answer to why this is—why the Tsuyama Incident has left such a profound impression on the cultural imagination of modern Japan—is to be found in another "why" question—namely, "why did Toi do it?"

Unlike many mass killings, in which the motive of the killer(s) is clearly defined either by statements made by the killer(s) themselves or by attempts to explain and thereby quarantine the event afterward by various disciplinary forces—law enforcement, psychologists—through various discursive strategies—abnormal psychology, sexology, childhood trauma, eugenicist explanations of family history, et c.—Toi Mutsuo's actions are markedly resistant to a single, dominant explanation. He left no clearly defined statement of motive, which has inspired a steady stream of attempts at explanation and interpretation.

---

[117] For an English-language retelling of the incident, see Mark Schreiber, *The Dark Side: Infamous Japanese Crimes and Criminals* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2001), 191–195. Schreiber's account seems to be following Tsukuba Akira's 筑波昭 1981 *Tsuyama sanjūnin-goroshi* 津山三十人殺し, which is now accepted to contain some factual inaccuracies pertaining to the case. In my retelling above I follow the generally popularized account as found in Matsumoto Seichō 松本清張 et al.

For generations of detectives, professional and amateur, fictional or otherwise, the Tsuyama Incident has been not a whodunit but a "whydunit."

The incident is such fertile ground for this kind of speculation, furthermore, due to the powerful constellation of tropes it can be connected to—tropes which, as the remainder of this chapter will argue, form *in toto* a picture of the Tsuyama Incident as the archetypal scene, the *locus classicus*, of rural violence in the *inaka* Gothic mode. The Tsuyama Incident came to represent (whether or not it actually *was* this is a different matter) a "perfect storm" of rural violence: a tangled web of discrimination, sexual violence, the stigma of illness, militarism and masculinity, and conservative village social dynamics. All of these elements are there, or *seem* to be there, but the relationship between them, and their relative ascendancy in the case at hand, were left more or less obscure with Toi's suicide, which leaves room for the sort of cultural speculation that we see to this day. Some historical moments are more loaded than others in terms of thinking about conceptualizations of the rural as a site of Gothic horror; my starting point for this chapter is an assertion that Tsuyama in 1938 is one such moment, and that the excess of meaning produced by the Tsuyama Incident provides a backdrop against which authors (broadly defined) could approach—but not overcome—the issue of rural horror.

I will thus use this chapter to look at the different ways three texts—primarily Yokomizo Seishi's 横溝正史 (1902–1981) *Yatsuhaka-mura* 八つ墓村 (*Eightgrave Village*), and then to a lesser degree Matsumoto Seichō's 松本清張 (1909–1992) "Yami ni kakeru ryōjū" 闇に駆ける猟銃 ("Shotgun Speeding into Darkness"), and Iwai Shimako's 岩井志麻子 *Yonaki no mori* 夜啼きの森 (*The Forest of Nighttime Cries*)—have formulated the Tsuyama Incident as the paradigmatic example of rural horror in modern Japan—the rural

Gothic equivalent to the "erotic grotseque nonsense" of the Abe Sada Incident of 1936.[118]

There are, as I have already suggested, a vast number of other texts I could have chosen; the reason I chose the ones I did will become apparent, I hope, from the implications of their respective readings. But before I continue on to read these texts, perhaps it is worth stating the obvious: we are dealing with a very different kind of material here than we were in the first two chapters. The raw stuff from which these *inaka* Gothic narratives sprout is no longer primarily folkloric, ethnographic, *minzokugakuteki*, but a "real-world" criminal incident. This is not coincidental. The primarily transformation, as expressed through literary-historical terms but applicable, I think, to larger transformations in cultural and social history, that I hope this chapter will show is the emergence of other *inaka* Gothic discourses alongside but distinct from Yanagita-*minzokugaku*. From roughly the early Shōwa Period onward, there emerge other ways of seeing, knowing, and feeling in *inaka* Gothic terms besides those made possible by the epistemological structure of Yanagita-*minzokugaku*.

In concrete terms, I see the emergence of three other discourses at this time that, while certainly interconnected among themselves and with Yanagita-*minzokugaku*, are yet

---

[118] This seems to me to be an important comparison to make for a variety of reasons, the most basic being that Toi himself, according to the accounts of Seichō et al., took a keen interest in the Abe Sada Incident and media coverage of it. But more importantly, it helps to frame the stakes of this chapter with the formulation that the Abe Sada Incident was to *eroguro nansensu* as the Tsuyama Incident was to the *inaka* Gothic—the Tsuyama Incident became a defining media touchstone that was paradigmatic of the cultural form (rural Gothic) that I am trying to define, essentially becoming a quasi-mythical narrative and site of popular speculation in a way similar to the Abe Sada Incident functioned for *eroguro nansensu*. See previous work done by Silverberg, Driscoll, Kawana, et al. here for a basic sense of how this works within a larger *eroguro nansensu* cultural formation, but at the same time note the imbalance in terms of long-term symbolic legibility—"*inaka* Gothic" is a term I coined, for one thing, versus *eroguro nansensu* which has retained long-term cultural currency, and it is interesting to think about why this is in terms of urban visuality vs. rural opacity—which is the point that I will ultimately return to at the end of this chapter.

distinct from it. I have already outlined two of these in my Introduction so let me just reiterate here. The first of these is the emergence of a new way of talking about rural "weirdness" through reportage in regional print journalism, with Yumeno Kyūsaku's *Inaka, no, jiken* as an illustrative example. The second is the emergence of the *denki shōsetsu*, or fantasy-romance, as a distinct, identifiable discourse in the fiction of someone like Kunieda Shirō. The third new discourse, which I have not yet explained, is what I call the "cosmopolitan Gothic," which, admittedly, sounds like the very opposite of "*inaka* Gothic" but by it I mean something working along a somewhat different vector: namely, a Gothic that embraces an aesthetic uprootedness, for which an association with a multiplicity of localities is a key part of its aesthetic, which means, as a corollary, that it discursively positions itself as overcoming "Japaneseness." Hinatsu Kōnosuke's magazine *Sabato* 奢灞都 (originally titled *Tōhō geijutsu* 東邦藝術), which ran from 1924–1927, is perhaps the central organ of what I see as the cosmopolitan Gothic movement at this time. But writers moving within this cosmopolitan Gothic sphere could and did take up the rural as a subject—as evidenced by the early writing of Yokomizo himself, before he had invented his famous detective Kindaichi Kōsuke 金田一耕助, and the vestiges of which remain, as I will argue, in a postwar work like *Yatsuhaka-mura*. (As a final aside: what makes Kyōka's *Sankai hyōban ki* so remarkable, in contrast, is how it is able to achieve something radically new from *within* the Yanagita-*minzokugaku* discursive system, by scrambling or "bugging" that system spatio-temporally, at precisely this same historical moment.)

Each of these avenues had come to be important alternatives to an *inaka* Gothic discursively aligned with Yanagita-*minzokugaku* by the time the Tsuyama Incident occurred. This is not to say that Yanagita-*minzokugaku* ceased to play an important role in

thinking rural horror from the 1930s onward—far from it: as others have already shown, the institutional apparatus of Yanagita's *minzokugaku* was fully established by this point, and its ideological implications were far-reaching. Accordingly, we see the continuation of the production of literary texts engaging with this mode to render rural space and rural life Gothic: Dazai Osamu's "Gyofuku ki" 魚服記 (1933) and Ishigami Gen'ichirō's "Chimimōryō" 魑魅魍魎 (1939) are two such examples for a national readership from this period. But in writers like Kyūsaku, Kunieda, Yokomizo, and, perhaps more tangentially, Orikuchi with *Shisha no sho* 死者の書, we now find writers of the *inaka* Gothic that are drawing on other epistemologies besides Yanagita-*minzokugaku* as their primary epistemology.

"Tsuyama," as a cultural region, is, after all, in many ways strikingly similar to "Tōno": both are geographically landlocked regions with a small-to-mid-size castle town at their center, surrounded by relatively low mountains (when compared with the Japanese Alps, for example). Just as Kizen was born in Tsuchibuchi Village, not Tōno proper, and this nested peripherality shaped both his own *inaka* Gothic storytelling as well as the topography of *Tōno monogatari*, so, too, did Toi Mutsuo live in Nishikamo Village, not Tsuyama proper, and this nested peripherality—the fact that Kaio is an off-the-beaten-track place within Nishikamo Village, which is in turn an off-the-beaten-track place within the Tsuyama region—would go on to shape the kinds of stories told about the killing spree he committed. But the nature of the telling, whether done by Yokomizo, Seichō,[119] Nomura, or Iwai, is fundamentally different. For the remainder of the chapter, I will explore how and why it is different, and consider the implications of such differences for our understanding

---

[119] Note that Yokomizo Seishi is customarily referred to by his family name, whereas Matsumoto Seichō is customarily referred to by his given name.

of the relationship between the rural and the Gothic in modern Japan. We see in the Tsuyama Incident texts, sure enough, another expression of rural horror as "occult modernity," but one that is fundamentally different from Kyōka's more speculative, Lynchian "occult modernity" in *Sankai hyōban ki*; the goal of this chapter is to explore that difference and situate it historically.

Yokomizo Seishi and Yatsuhaka-mura

     Yatsuhaka-mura was serialized in *Shinseinen* from March 1949 to March 1950, and then from November 1950 to January 1951 in *Hōseki*, as the fourth of Yokomizo's novels to feature detective Kindaichi Kōsuke. Though he wrote more explicitly supernatural, decadent fictions earlier in his career, immediately after the end of the Pacific War Yokomizo focused his efforts on *honkaku suiri* 本格推理, or "straight" mystery fiction, in the form of his detective Kindaichi series, which today comprise his best remembered works. These Kindaichi novels—including other perennially popular works like *Honjin satsujin jiken* 本陣殺人事件 (1946), *Gokumon-tō* 獄門島 (1947–1948), and *Inugami-ke no ichizoku* 犬神家の一族 (1950–1951)—craft an extraordinarily Gothic atmosphere and tone, featuring sprawling old mansions and a panoply of sinister, seemingly supernatural occurrences. Kindaichi, as the detective, inevitably produces a rational explanation for these events. But the damage has been done, both in terms of the plot (Kindaichi is famously ineffective at actually preventing murders from happening in the course of his investigation) as well as effect on the reader—the denouement of ratiocination does little to dispel the affective aura of supernatural horror that has built up over the course of the story.

The first thing we can observe, then, about Yokomizo's detective Kindaichi novels is a particular kind of relationship between "atmosphere"—the various furnishings and flourishes with which the plot is embellished—and the genre form of *honkaku suiri*. The former is unrelentingly and undeniably Gothic—so much so that, at times, a Kindaichi novel reads more like an updated take on the Ann Radcliffe brand of Gothic Romance—the "mysteries" part of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, if you will—than it does like most other *honkaku* mystery fiction of the interwar period. This tension between Gothic atmosphere and the ratiocination of the *honkaku suiri* "trick" in the novel's denouement is, I argue, the single defining feature of the detective Kindaichi novels. Commenting on this aspect in the "Kaisetsu" 解説 to the 1970s Kadokawa *bunko* version of *Inugami-ke no ichizoku*, Ōtsubo Naoyuki大坪直行, former editor-in-chief of *Hōseki* (where many of the early detective Kindaichi novels were serialized), writes that, for *Inugami-ke no ichizoku*, Yokomizo struck upon the "situation" (which I think we can take to mean "setting" or "atmosphere") first, and then devised a "trick" (on which the mystery hinges) that fit this setting, not the other way around. This represents a new development, Ōtsubo argues, in the history of the *honkaku* mystery in Japan.[120]

Regardless of whether the "situation" or the "trick" came first in Yokomizo's creative process, a similar productive tension between Gothic atmosphere and *honkaku*-style ratiocination is on full display in *Yatsuhaka-mura*. *Yatsuhaka-mura* features a long and complicated plot, designed to keep the reader on their toes in proper "whodunit" fashion, and I will give only the barest summary here. At its most basic level, *Yatsuhaka-mura*—like

---

[120] Ōtsubo Naoyuki 大坪直行, "Kaisetsu" 解説, in Yokomizo Seishi 横溝正史, *Inugami-ke no ichizoku* 犬神家の一族 (Tokyo: Kadokawa bunko, 1972).

most of the early novels in the detective Kindaichi series—is concerned with the

transformation and preservation of localized social standing in prominent rural households,

and more particularly with the localized socio-political ramifications of trans-generational

property inheritance and a certain temporal disconnect between the everyday realities of

immediate postwar Japan during the Occupation Era and codified rural ways of living. Sari

Kawana, writing on *Honjin satsujin jiken*, notes that "the rural obsession with *iegara*," or

localized social standing in prominent households, "is one of the important undertones" for

the novel; the same can be said of *Inugami-ke no ichizoku*, as Kawana goes on to explore, as

well as *Yatsuhaka-mura*.[121]

    Yatsuhaka-mura begins with an opening "Prologue" (*hottan* 発端), which sets the

scene for the story to follow. This prologue is narrated in what seems to be some sort of

authorial voice, but a complicated one: elements of rhetoric throughout suggest that this is

not so much a third person narration than it is a partially diegetic first person narration,

coming from an implied author yet separate from implied-author "Yokomizo." We realize

this from the following comment at the very end of the section:

> なお、そのまえに断っておくが、以下諸君の読まれるところのものは、この物語のなかで重要な役割を演じた、関係者の一人が書いたものなのである。私がどうしてこの手記を手に入れたか、それはとくにこの物語の筋に関係がないからここには書かないでおく。

> Let me add, by way of advance notice, that what you are about to read comes from the hand of a central player in this story, someone involved in the case. The circumstances through which I obtained this record are of no particular relation to the plot, and so I omit them here.[122]

---

[121] Sari Kawana, *Murder Most Modern: Detective Fiction and Japanese Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 200.

[122] Yokomizo Seishi 横溝正史, *Yatsuhaka-mura* 八つ墓村 (Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1971), 17.

This rhetorical gesture toward a "possession of the text" afterward is a classic Gothic framing device, found anywhere from *Melmoth the Wanderer* to any number of Lovecraft's stories to Kyōka, for that matter. But what is more interesting is how, after we enter the first-person narration that forms the bulk of the text, we get references *within* this written record to the Prologue; meaning that the record was written with the knowledge that the text would be passed on to the writer of the prologue. To cite one example: well after the story has begun we get a sentence like, "This matter ought to have been addressed in the affixed "Prologue," so I will not touch upon it again here" (そのことについては、別に発端として書き加えられるはずだから、私は改めてここに書かない).[123] In schematic narratological terms, then, this creates an interesting relationship between narrative voices: the first-person narration posits the existence of the author of the prologue within the diegetic world of the narrative; and then there is the implied author—"Yokomizo," let us say—behind *both* of these voices, behind which is, of course, Yokomizo; the point here being that the first-person narration makes it clear that we cannot conflate the author of the prologue with an extradiegetic implied author.

The prologue opens with a sketch of the eponymous Yatsuhaka Village, a fictional setting, but one located deep in the mountains close to the Okayama and Tottori prefectural border. It then relates the story of the origins of the village's name: in 1566, in the middle of the Sengoku Period, eight fallen warriors entered the village, looking for a place to conceal themselves from their enemy. The villagers initially welcomed them, but, over time, grew anxious that the continued search for these warriors would bring misfortune upon themselves, while also growing envious of the large amount of riches the warriors were

---

[123] Ibid., 56.

said to have been carrying with them when they entered the village. The villagers cornered the warriors, killing all eight of them with spears, axes, knives, and hatchets. But on his deathbed one of the warriors cursed the village. In the aftermath, the villagers searched for the rumored fortune, to no avail; combing the vast complex of labyrinthine limestone caves that spread like a web beneath and beyond the village, they found themselves thwarted by a number of ill-omened accidents and injuries—the curse, they feared. Later, Tajimi Shōzaemon, the leader of the massacre against the warriors, grew increasingly unhinged in his actions, until one day, at the exact moment a strike of lightning rent in two a giant *sugi* tree on the grounds of the Tajimi estate, Tajimi went insane, killing servants, villagers, and anyone in his path before heading into the woods to cut his own head off. The final body count: seven dead, and then Shōzaemon himself, to total eight.

The prologue then jumps to the Taishō Period, which is contextualized in the text as "twenty-plus years before the present day" (すなわちいまから二十数年まえのことである).[124] There exist in Yatsuhaka Village the Higashi-ya, or "East House," comprising the Tajimi clan as descendants of Tajimi Shōzaemon, and the Nishi-ya, or "West House," comprising the Nomura clan. The head of the Tajimi house at the time is Tajimi Yōzō; a strain of madness has run in the family since Shōzaemon, and the same is true of Yōzō, who exhibits a proclivity for cruel and unusual behavior. Yōzō is married, with one son, Hisaya, and one daughter, Haruyo; he was raised by his unmarried twin aunts, Koume and Kotake. At age thirty-six, Yōzō abducts Tsuruko, a nineteen-year-old girl in the village, and imprisons her in the storehouse of the Tajimi estate as his lover. Tsuruko becomes pregnant, and gives birth to a boy, named Tatsuya, But rumor around the village is that the

---

[124] Ibid., 8.

child might not be Yōzō's—that the father might be Kamei Yōichi, a schoolteacher, with whom, it is speculated, Tsuruko could have met in subterranean trysts using the cave systems below the village. This possibility causes Yōzō to fly into a violent, abusive rage, from which Tsuruko ultimately flees with Tatsuya.

Some days pass. And then, one night, Yōzō goes on a rampage, killing thirty-two villagers and injuring many more before disappearing into the woods.

This brings us up to the present day, and to the end of the prologue; and with this, the main narrative starts, in the voice of Tatsuya, now a grown man. The basic gist of the story is that Tatsuya is drawn back to Yatsuhaka Village, after escaping with his mother as a young child; and with his return there are a series of unnatural, unexplained deaths, which seem to be fulfilling the old prophecy once again and repeating the same pattern that we have already seen with Shōzaemon and Yōzō. Kindaichi Kōsuke is brought in by the West House to investigate the murders. Eventually, it is revealed that the murders were carried out by Mori Miyako, the stepsister of the head of the West House, as part of a scheme to eliminate all other Tajimi heirs so that her lover, Satomura Shintarō (Yōzō's nephew), could inherit the Tajimi estate.

With this understanding of what "happens" in the story in place, let us return to the issue of atmosphere, or setting. As Chiho Nakagawa has already convincingly shown, and as I have already hinted at, *Yatsuhaka-mura* in many ways demands to be read as a Gothic novel. Nakagawa situates her argument in the following way. Drawing on prominent scholars in the field of Gothic studies like Victor Sage, David Punter, and Chris Baldick, Nakagawa writes, "I understand Gothic as a particular mode of writing that refers to the past in negotiation with the present and/or that emerges out of the changing social

structure in the modern era."[125] This aligns with David Punter's understanding of the

Gothic as a particular kind of relationship with the past, and it is an understanding central

to my own use of the term in this project—namely, it is oftentimes more productive, when

we push beyond the spatio-temporal restraints of the original Gothic Romance *circa* 1764–

1824, to define the Gothic in terms of thematically colored temporalities than it is in terms

of affect (*a la* horror) or incidental tropes (the spectral presence, the spooky castle, the

subterranean passage, and so forth). "In the same manner" to these original Gothic

Romances, Nakagawa writes, "but in a faraway place, *Yatsuhaka-mura* unfolds in the midst

of changing power structures," referring here to the tension between old ways and customs

dying hard in the countryside, on the one hand, with widespread and profound changes

brought about by total war and its aftermath, on the other.[126] An example that Nakagawa

cites from the novel is the flight of urban doctors into the countryside in response to

bombings, bringing with them whole new epistemologies in terms of hygienics, pathology,

and patient-expert social relations—something that is mentioned explicitly in the novel

and figures prominently in the larger murder-scheme plot.

But the Gothic is, at the same time, frustratingly difficult to pin down with a

definition, like any genre, perhaps, but in some ways particularly so: for the incidental

tropes, the window-dressing and furniture, rather than armature, of the text are so central

to what makes a text "Gothic." This tension remains present in Nakagawa's reading,

wherein, soon after citing the Punter-aligned understanding of the Gothic as noted above,

she writes how *Yatsuhaka-mura* "also accommodates many plot devices familiar in the

---

[125] Chiho Nakagawa, "Desire for the Past: The Supernaturalization of *Yatsuhaka-mura*," in
Transnational Horror Across Visual Media: Fragmented Bodies, eds. Dana Och and Kirsten
Strayer (New York: Routledge, 2014), 32.
[126] Ibid.

Gothic: an underground corridor that stretches from a mansion, maze-like caverns, a mummified body in warrior armor (in this case, Japanese warrior's armor) and a hidden treasure."[127] It certainly sounds like we are in Monk Lewis territory now!

And we are; but with a twist. And that twist is constituted by precisely the sort of epistemological difference I see—without going into too much Anglophone literary history here—between a work like *The Monk*, from the original late eighteenth century Gothic Romance moment, and a work like *Dracula* or Stevenson's "Ollalla," roughly one century later. The latter exhibit the same sort of *minzokugakuteki* epistemological tensions— modern (usually men, as opposed to the heroines of the old Radcliffe-style Gothic Romance) enunciating subject travels "deeper" into the countryside to come face to face with something outside the ken of the modern, urban discourses to which he has access: the drama of old ontologies, in other words, up against new epistemologies. This is the basic structure, when sufficiently abstracted, of "Kōya hijiri" just as it is of "Dracula's Guest" or just about any M. R. James story.

These references, I should hasten to reiterate, are not simply gratuitous; for, returning to the layered epistemologies introduced earlier in the chapter, they tie back to the fact that Yokomizo was in the dead center of a certain kind of cosmopolitan Gothic in the 1920s and 1930s that, I argue, carries over into his postwar *honkaku suiri* fiction, as well. In arguing for this continuity, I am departing from Kawana's reading of the detective Kindaichi stories, since Kawana reads these stories with an emphasis on Kindaichi himself as the personification of a rebooted rational subjectivity after the war that strives to find the modernist middle ground, as it were, between positivism and mysticism. Kawana

---

[127] Ibid., 33.

writes: "Kindaichi allows an element of chance to affect his ratiocination, acknowledging that there are elements of truth one can never know, or cannot make sense of. [...] The series of historical events in Japan—from urbanization to total war—showed Kindaichi and everyone else who lived through them that in modernity cause-and-effect relationships are never straightforward, and things are neither entirely deliberate nor completely accidental."[128] I like this last notion of Kindaichi's subjectivity being located in a sort of gloaming between deliberateness and randomness—bringing to mind Kyōka's own theorization of twilight in "Tasogare no aji." But I think a reading of any Kindaichi novel— whether it is *Honjin satsujin jiken* or *Inugami-ke no ichizoku* or *Yatsuhaka-mura*—that situates Kindaichi at the subjective center of the narrative experience is in danger of missing the central affective characteristic of these novels as epitomized by the "*honkaku suiri* vs. Gothic Romance" tension already mentioned.

I do not think, in other words, that it necessarily makes sense to read the *tantei* figure of Kindaichi un-ironically, that is, as essentially something other than parody. Nakagawa writes that "Yokomizo chose the style of detective novels over that of Gothic novels partly because British and American detective novels were more popular in Japan at that time, while Gothic had hardly been introduced."[129] This is misleading because, for one thing, Yokomizo was a central figure in doing just that in the preceding decade— introducing the Anglophone Gothic novel form to a Japanese readership. He did this through original fictions like *Onibi* but perhaps nowhere more strikingly than in *Dokuro kengyō* 髑髏検校, a tour-de-force reworking of Stoker's *Dracula* into a piece of Edo-Period

---

[128] Kawana, *Murder Most Modern*, 217–218.
[129] Nakagawa, "Desire for the Past," 33.

historical weird fiction where the Count Dracula figure is ultimately revealed to be none other than an undead Amakusa Shirō. Not only was the Gothic being introduced; moving far beyond a model of translation and reception, Yokomizo, from a literary-historical vantage point, was perhaps *the* central figure in the interwar era alongside Hinatsu Kōnosuke in the pursuit of a cosmopolitan Gothic rhetoric to question national as well as temporal boundaries, as evidenced by something like the experimental *Dokuro kengyō*.

All this is to say that Yokomizo was not only deeply familiar with Anglophone Gothic literature, but he was also deeply knowledgeable about its attendant epistemologies and its critical potential to challenge other epistemologies—the *minzokugakuteki* paradigm that we have been exploring in its particular Yanagita-inflected form in Japan but which has clear parallels in the work of antiquarians and folklorists in Anglophone ruralities and colonial spaces. And this is, I argue, brought directly to bear upon his reimagining of *honkaku suiri* in the detective Kindaichi stories, so that the Gothicism overwhelms any sort of new subjectivity Kindaichi himself might feebly embody. In this regard, I agree with Nakagawa when she writes, "Yokomizo's Kindaichi mysteries may not be properly categorized as detective stories because they question what a truly great detective must do. At the end of the novels, Kindaichi, like all great detectives, explains how a crime is committed and why a culprit commits the crime, but he usually does nothing to stop any crime from taking place; all the intended crimes are committed and completed before he announces his detective theory."[130] In light of this, Nakagawa concludes that "the experience of reading Kindaichi novels is similar to that of reading Gothic novels in which

---

[130] Ibid., 32.

narrators usually give us answers about alleged supernatural incidents several hundred pages later."[131]

This should all make a case, I hope, for reading the *setting* of a Kindaichi novel like *Yatsuhaka-mura* as its most central, defining feature, at least in affective if not narratological terms, and certainly more so than Kindaichi himself. This is a reading informed by Yokomizo's deep involvement with a more-or-less defined cosmopolitan Gothic movement in interwar Japan, which would go on to inspire succeeding generations of translator-writers like Hirai Teiichi, who would publish the first "translation" of *Dracula*—interestingly, still with various Edo-inflected mannerisms!—as well as write a distinctly Yokomizo-esque *inaka* Gothic quasi-mystery called *Mayonaka no ori* 真夜中の檻. Yokomizo's involvement with this cosmopolitan Gothic epistemology led, I argue, to a new understanding of how rural space could not only be represented in Gothic terms but be productive in a more speculative sense of a particular kind of modern subjectivity inexpressible through urban forms—an understanding that could not be arrived at in the same way if working solely through or against Yanagita-*minzokugaku*. Onto this he layered the Kyūsaku-esque rural reportage also mentioned earlier to achieve a splintering of emic-etic tensions across the grain, so that multiple etic informants within the novel become each in their own way incapable of expressing the rural horror of Yatsuhaka Village.

Let us see how each of these etic—or semi-etic, as the case may be—voices try and fail to capture the rural Gothicism of Yatsuhaka-mura and the events that unfold there, each in their own way, beginning with the prologue-author and the characterization of rural space with which the text begins. The first sentence of the prologue is, "Yatsuhaka Village is

---

[131] Ibid.

an out-of-the-way village [*kanson* 寒村] in the mountains on the Tottori and Okayama

prefectural border" (八つ墓村というのは、鳥取県と岡山県の県境にある山中の一寒村で

ある).[132] *Kanson*—at the risk of over-reading—is the way Yatsuhaka Village is introduced,

and first described: although denotatively meaning something like "lonely/out-of-the-way

village," the character-by-character meaning of "cold-village" carries some semantic weight,

I think, insofar as it delimits a certain kind of rural Gothic predicated on rural poverty,

backwardness, and a generalized temporal antiqueness—a place where things are "old," in

other words—in relation to a certain kind of landscape, namely, villages in the mountains

that accordingly experience colder climates. What this does is create a translocal

identifier—connecting this *kanson* in Okayama to Kizen's *kanson* in Tōhoku, for example—

that enables a certain kind of rural Gothic to form by excluding others (warmer fishing

villages along the coast or on a small island in the Seto Inland Sea, for example, no matter

how isolated or dilapidated or haunted they might be).

The prologue then starts to read like a local history gazetteer, or, as the case may be,

the introductory section of a police report, by surveying the economic, agricultural, and

social realities of the village, before reaching the following paragraph.

> 　八つ墓村。——ここにうまれ、ここに 屍 を埋め、代々永くこの名になじんでき
> た人々には、別になんの奇異な感じもあたえないのかもしれないが、はじめてこ
> の名を耳にする、他郷の人々にとっては、一種異様な名前のように思われる。何
> かしら無気味な曰く因縁がありそうに思われてならぬだろう。
> 　いかにもそのとおり、そしてその因縁というのはいまから遠く、三百八十余年
> の昔、永禄年間に端を発する。

> 　　　Eightgrave [Yatsuhaka] Village—for those who are born here, and will be
> buried here when they are dead and gone, and who for generation upon generation

---

[132] Yokomizo, *Yatsuhaka-mura*, 3.

have a familiarity with the name of this place, such a name does not, perhaps, impart any sense of weirdness; but for those from elsewhere who hear it for the first time, it leaves a certain odd impression. In such a case one could not help but think there must be some kind of ghastly story behind its origins.

And indeed there is: and those origins reach far back, three hundred and eighty-something years in the past, in the Eiroku Period, where it all started.[133]

This presents, in crystal-clear fashion, the sort of emic-etic dialectic that we have seen challenged and destabilized in the fictions of Kyōka and Kizen: the Gothicism of Yatsuhaka Village, we are told, is unfelt, unseen by those "insiders" who live and die there, but for outsiders it is a spooky place indeed.

The prologue then delivers the pertinent backstory already covered, in terms of the eight warrors, Shōzaemon, and then Yōzō. Throughout, it is clear that this voice is detached, *not* a Yatsuhaka native nor someone directly involved with the murder case, and whose gaze upon this backwater village with an ominous name comes from a safe distance away.

The prologue remains entirely silent on the main murder mystery; this is narrated in full, as already established, by Tatsuya. So it behooves us to consider Tatsuya's narration of Yatsuhaka Village as a rural Gothic site vis-à-vis that of the prologue author. Tatsuya, it should be noted, is very much a city slicker, despite his birth in Yatsuhaka Village: he has lived all his life, since his mother's flight from Yatsuhaka, in Kōbe. Here is how he recounts his first encounter with the village, as he stands on the threshold between the more-or-less self-contained world of the isolated village and the larger, more heterogeneous world without.

私がはじめてこの八つ墓村を望見したのは、まえにもいったとおり六月二十五日、すなわち梅雨時の黄昏ごろのことであった。雨は落ちていなかったけれど、雲は低く垂れさがり、摺鉢の底に点在する荒壁の家々のうえに何かしらまがまが

---

[133] Ibid., 4.

しいものがおそいかかってきそうな感じだった。私は思わずゾクリと身をふるわせた。

　　　　The first time I looked upon Yatsuhaka Village was, as I have already said, June 25th—the rainy season, in other words—at twilight. It was not raining, but the clouds hung low, and it felt as if over the houses with rough-plastered walls that dotted the floor of the mortar-shaped valley there loomed something ominous, something ready to swoop down and attack. An involuntary shiver ran down my spine.[134]

Tatsuya heads down into the valley with his liaison, Miyako; and they meet one of the many patently Gothic characters peopling the Yatsuhaka landscape, the Darktea Nun (Koicha no ama 濃茶の尼).

「来るな！来てはならぬ！かえれ！」
異様な風体をした人物は下から金切り声をあげて叫んだ。

[...]

　なるほど近づくにしたがってそれが尼であることがわかった。しかし、なんという醜い尼であったろうか。年齢はもう五十か、あるいはもっといっているのだろう。兎口のくちびるは三つに裂け、まくれあがって、その下から馬のような大きな、黄色い乱杭歯がのぞいている。

　　　　"Stop! Come no further! Go back!"
　　　　A strange-looking figure was shrieking at us from below.

[...]

　　　　Indeed, as we approached it became clear that the figure was a nun. But what a hideous nun it was. She must have been at least fifty years old, if not older. She had a harelip, split in three and upturned, from under which there could be seen a row of large, yellow, uneven horse-like teeth.[135]

The Koicha no ama, above all made famous via the *tatari ja!* (祟りじゃ！) catchphrase used in advertising for the 1977 film, is really one more component of Gothic dressing for the scene, rather than a full-fledged "character" in the sense assumed to have matured by this

---

[134] Yokomizo, *Yatsuhaka-mura*, 76.
[135] Ibid., 77–78.

point in the standard development-of-modern-Japanese-literature meta-narrative. She

shares more in common, in other words, with Kyōka's myriad grotesques, or, more to the

point, with the mountain enchantress/leper-woman in Rohan's 1890 "Tai dokuro," than

she does with a realistic literary representation of a modern human being.

The relationship between Tatsuya and Yatsuhaka instantiated in this "return" is

thus not so much a return at all as it is the very sort of paradigm we see in Yanagita's

preface to *Tōno monogatari* when he describes seeing the lonely festival in Tōno one

afternoon. What makes this interesting, though, is the narratology: Tatsuya, from this point

onward till the very end of the novel, functions as an etic informant embedded *within* the

narrative—embedded there, in other words, by layers of other etic informants in the form

of the prologue-author/"Yokomizo"/Yokomizo. We thus see, on the one hand, a kind of

splintering of eticness rendered through *Yatsuhaka-mura*'s narratology: all these etic

voices, swirling amongst or layering upon one another, and yet none of them can fully

articulate the totality of the unspeakable horror that Yatsuhaka Village represents. This is a

kind of destabilization on an emic-etic binary fundamentally distinct from the nested-doll

model of scaling localities we saw in Kizen's fiction, where an emic perspective at one level

of resolution becomes an etic perspective at another level, and where Kizen's own writing

serves, I argued, as an attempt to dramatize this ambiguity. Instead, what we have in

Yatsuhaka-mura is a fanning out, a proliferation of etic voices, each of which is ultimately

unable to encapsulate the rural horror of Yatsuhaka as chronotope within discourse. In this

way, *Yatsuhaka-mura* is to be read as an archetypally Modernist work, leaving it to the

reader to fit all the shards together to form a post-narrative picture of Yatsuhaka as rural

Gothic site.

Furthermore, the eminently Gothic theme of the cursed bloodline, which literally haunts Tatsuya throughout the novel, calls into question any meaningful distinction between emic and etic, at least in Tatsuya's case. For the majority of the novel, Tatsuya is led to believe that his father is indeed Yōzō; and thus to fear that the same cursed blood, the same horrors of rural violence, as yet unspoken in his case, lurk within his veins as well. After discovering a photograph of Kamei at the end of the story, he realizes that he was not Yōzō's son, after all. He is thus quite literally a "hybrid child" of the rural and the urban, half-Gothic and half-not, and this complicates his relationship with Yatsuhaka Village and the forms of being and seeing it represents; for by "marrying into" Yatsuhaka Village with his betrothal to Noriko at the end of the story while simultaneously leaving the village, we the reader are no longer sure whether he is an insider or outsider, from a Yatsuhaka perspective.

All of our potential etic informants are thus compromised in their function as such in some way. Tatsuya is compromised in the way just described. Kindaichi, another potential etic informant, ends up not being much of an informant at all through the figure he cuts as completely ineffectual in preventing this rural bloodbath from playing out to its seemingly inevitable conclusion, thus becoming something of a parody of the ace detective, as Nakagawa shows. And the prologue-author, "Yokomizo," and Yokomizo all are essentially interested in reifying rural Okayama as a quintessentially *inaka* Gothic site, ultimately stemming from the fact that Yokomizo did reside in Okayama as an outsider for many years during the war, which led to Okayama being his Gothic *inaka* of choice in the Kindaichi novels.

But we have strayed quite far indeed, with all this, from the Tsuyama Incident itself; and at the same time I have been dancing around a clear explication of what I mean when I say each of these etic voices fails in capturing the totality of Yatsuhaka Village's rural horror. The answer to the latter question gets us back to the former point, in the figure of Yōzō. Yōzō, as should be obvious by now, is clearly and unmistakably modeled on Toi Mutsuo:

その男は詰襟の洋服を着て、脚に脚絆をまき草鞋をはいて、白鉢巻きをしていた。そしてその鉢巻きには点けっぱなしにした棒型の懐中電灯二本、角のように結びつけ、胸にはこれまた点けっぱなしにしたナショナル懐中電灯をまるで丑の刻参りの鏡のようにぶらさげ、洋服のうえから締めた兵児帯には、日本刀をぶちこみ、片手に猟銃をかかえていた。

The man was wearing a straight-collared uniform, and straw sandals with gaiters around his legs, and a white headband around his forehead. Two shining flashlights were tied into the headband like horns, and on his chest there hung another light, also on, thereby forming a spitting image of an *ushi no koku mairi* scene. A Japanese sword was thrust into the band he had around his waist over his uniform, and in one hand he carried a shotgun.[136]

This is probably the single image for which the entire novel of *Yatsuhaka-mura* is remembered in the popular cultural consciousness, thanks in large part to Yamazaki Tsutomu's terrifying portrayal of Yōzō in Nomura's film adaptation (which, as Nakagawa explores in depth, makes significant changes to Yōzō's costume—substituting a kimono for the military undertones of the uniform). This is remarkable, because Yōzō's massacre is consigned to a brief passage in the prologue of an otherwise very long book, and is not directly connected to the main "plot" of the murder mystery. Yōzō's—and thereby Toi's—ghost looms over the entire *honkaku* mystery enterprise of *Yatsuhaka-mura*: quite literally, actually, when we discover partway through the novel that Yōzō's body, preserved through

---

[136] Yokomizo, *Yatsuhaka-mura*, 13.

corpse wax, is worshipped in an alcove in the subterranean labyrinth by Koume and Kotake,

forming perhaps the single most supremely Gothic image in the novel.

But I think that this peculiar instance of a single detail from the expository prologue

overshadowing everything else the novel has to offer can tell us something important about

the relationship between the constructions of rural social space, temporality, and affect. At

the most basic level, there can be found here the well-worn distinction made between rural

temporality as cyclical (Shōzaemon repeating as Yōzō repeating as the "mystery" Kindaichi

is called in to solve), but I think that the fact that the last of these iterations is shown up to

be something different—a very real-world, non-supernatural inheritance scheme on

Miyako's part—if anything undercuts and critiques a facile association of rural space and

rural lifeways with timeless tradition and cyclical time (as opposed to the assumed

linearity of modern, urban time). Writing at a particular historical moment during the

Occupation Era, Yokomizo is instead interested in the implications of a rupture—which

could in itself very well be an imagined one, too—in cyclical, rural temporality.

I would rather argue that the overpowering Yōzō-as-Toi motif serves to use affect—

the bodily experience of absolute, inescapable terror—to call into question *any* sort of

temporal epistemology whatsoever. Past and present certainly blur together in Yatsuhaka

Village, as the figure of Shōzaemon overlaps with Yōzō who overlaps, especially in the film

adaptation where she is a more thoroughly vampiric force at the end, with Miyako. But

more importantly, Yokomizo's use of the real-world particulars of Toi's spree killing in this

Gothic detective novel illustrates how, under certain affective parameters, we can lose

sense altogether of what era it is, and where we are historically. *This*, I think, is at the heart

of the horror Yokomizo discovered in the Tsuyama Incident: it is not that the Tsuyama

Incident, or the Yōzō fictionalization of it, transcends history, but that it renders our relational situation in history, at least for a moment, opaque, and registers that experience as one of horror.

By way of a conclusion, let me touch very briefly on two other texts, Seichō's "Yami ni kakeru ryōjū" and Iwai's *Yonaki no mori*, since the points I wish to make from these texts in the context of the larger argument about the Tsuyama Incident are relatively straightforward. Seichō's piece, which reads something like a nonfiction novella, is generally taken to be the first sustained treatment of the Tsuyama Incident in factual terms by a major writer. Seichō makes use of the police report from 1938, interviews with survivors, and various other documents to reconstruct the incident and to try to get at the heart of why Toi did it. The answer he arrives at is that the Tsuyama Incident was essentially the spectacularization of sexual violence—that a hypersexual Toi, known to make aggressive and violent sexual advances toward many of the women in Kaio, aimed to get revenge above all on those women he believed had "wronged" him. The Tsuyama Incident, in Seichō's reading, was thus, at its core, an act driven by misogyny.

When looked at from a literary-historical angle, however, I think that "Yami ni kakeru ryōjū" is making another, equally important argument, that is, an argument for the de-Gothicization of mystery writing. I read it, in other words, as a direct attack on the brand of Gothic *honkaku* mystery Yokomizo pioneered and popularized in the Kindaichi novels, and thus his choice of tackling the Tsuyama Incident, by this point firmly associated with *Yatsuhaka-mura* in the public consciousness, was, I assert, a calculated one. Seichō's attempt to make the mystery novel more socially conscious (cf. his association with the *shakai-ha* 社会派 style of mystery fiction) and less campy necessarily brought his method

108

into conflict with Yokomizo's method. This is particularly important for our purposes because of how Seichō's work engaged with two epistemological paradigms in particular—a reportage-based relationship with "events" stemming from his roots in journalism, on the one hand, and a sort of backdoor *minzokugaku* informed by this journalistic method that comes to the fore in a work like *Suna no utsuwa*, on the other—that are already familiar to us in an *inaka* Gothic context from earlier.

And yet—Seichō opens "Yami ni kakeru ryōjū" with no less than a quote from Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher," emphasizing the centrality of Gothic atmosphere in any attempt to understand the Tsuyama Incident.[137] Seichō's attempt to be a real-life Kindaichi and piece everything together to arrive at the truth is doomed from the start by the Gothic pall obscuring the Tsuyama landscape, and Seichō, by consciously invoking Poe in the first sentence, seems to be acknowledging this—that his attempt at interpretation, like that of Tatsuya in *Yatsuhaka-mura*, is bound to be incomplete, and fragmentary, and ultimately enfolded within the things felt beyond discourse that the Tsuyama Incident conjures, not the other way around.

Iwai's novel is worth noting here because it is an attempt to write the Tsuyama Incident through fiction (as opposed to Seichō's "nonfiction") in a way that consciously distances itself from the dominant *Yatsuhaka-mura* paradigm in a number of ways, the most interesting for our purposes being the performatively emic authorial voice. This is clearest in *Yonaki no mori*'s prologue, which is written in full-on Okayama dialect, with dialect featuring prominently in the main sections of the novel, as well. This is a technique

---

[137] Matsumoto Seichō 松本清張, "Yami ni kakeru ryōjū" 闇に駆ける猟銃, in *Misuterī no keifu* ミステリーの系譜 (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1968), 7.

that Iwai is known for as a horror fiction writer, and one that she pioneered in *Bokkee,*

kyōtee previously. Iwai is from Okayama, and especially earlier in her career this was a

central aspect of her authorial identity. This very performativity of the dialect acts to

distance the narrative voice from the actuality of the Tsuyama Incident, however; Iwai's

success, here as in *Bokkee, kyōtee* lies not necessarily in accurately reproducing how Toi

Mutsuo's sister would have actually talked in Tsuyama in 1938, but instead in cannily

catering to how a national Heisei-Period readership would imagine a rural Okayama

soundscape to sound like. The result is every bit as much a reification of rural Okayama as

backwater Other as Yokomizo's writing of Yatsuhaka Village was.

What all this has shown, I hope, is that we see in these literary representations of

the Tsuyama Incident something not unlike the occult modernity explored via *Sankai*

hyōban ki in Chapter 2. Due to the emergence of other epistemological paradigms as well as

other media forms, the terms have shifted somewhat, so that a writer like Yokomizo is able

to draw on a journalistic reportage paradigm (through his use of an actual criminal incident

as opposed to something like folkloric *oshira-sama* motifs) as well as a cosmopolitan Gothic

paradigm in addition to the Yanagita-*minzokugaku* paradigm already in place (which does

factor into *Yatsuhaka-mura* with things like the Yatsuhaka Myōjin, et c.) to think the rural in

Gothic terms. And like what we found with Kizen and Kyōka, this process of thinking the

rural in Gothic terms can be productive of something new, of an articulation of certain

facets of modern subjectivity that are not limited to real-world lived ruralities, on the one

hand, nor can be expressed through urban ways of seeing and feeling, on the other. Though

not "occult" in the metaphysical sense of the hauntings brought upon Yano in *Sankai*

hyōban ki, the Tsuyama Incident nonetheless represents a particular snapshot moment of

radical opacity in the cultural history of modern Japan. It is an opacity, furthermore, defined by an *excess* of meaning—the proliferation of possible motives, possible explanations, possible ontologies—that cannot be contained and express within one or multiple etic perspectives; and yet at the same time any true emic perspective is shown to be impossible in the emphatically gruesome figure of Toi's suicide or Yōzō's mummified corpse deep underground. The *inaka* Gothic texts spawned by the Tsuyama Incident do not only counteract a Romantic-nationalist conception of the village social unit as the pure, preserved form of an originary social polity by showing the reality of rural relations to be fractious, contentious, and necessarily predicated on a number of contingencies. They perhaps more importantly show that the very process through which "old" discourses of power—the perfect storm of rural social dynamics that can be said to have potentially caused Toi to go on his killing spree—can swirl together into something opaque and impenetrable from the "outside," how this opacity and impenetrability is expressed in negative affective terms of horror and Gothic disorientation, and how the process of our own encounter with this opacity—through news media in 1938, through a detective novel in 1951, through a nonfiction piece in 1969, through a movie in 1977, through a horror story in 2001—is just as central to our modern subjectivity as any of the other urban-inflected affective contours more commonly associated with it.

CHAPTER FOUR

***Kaidan jitsuwa*, 3.11, and the Futures of Rural Storytelling**

Introduction

In this final chapter I would like to reconsider the theme of narrative positionality in the context of contemporary *kaidan* storytelling, with a focus on stories that treat supernatural or otherwise Gothic aspects of the March 11, 2011 earthquake, tsunami, and their aftermath. The 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake (*Higashi Nihon dai-shinsai*), which swiftly and fundamentally altered the geographical, social, political, and economic landscape of Japan's Tōhoku region and beyond, comprises, like the Tsuyama Incident of Chapter Three, a moment of trauma against which we can read various responses to that trauma through the *inaka* Gothic mode. I am most interested here in the renegotiation of emic and etic perspectives—a topic introduced in Chapter One and that has provided a common framework through subsequent chapters—through the format of *kaidan jitsuwa* storytelling.

Kaidan 怪談 is, needless to say, a major form of what might loosely be termed "horror storytelling" in Japan. The genre is an old one, predating the modern period. The process through which supernatural tales with roots in *setsuwa* and similar genres were secularized occurred early in the Edo Period, and in terms of format and affective timbre *kaidan* have retained a relative consistency since then.[138] I would propose, in place of a pin-point English translation of the term, that traditionally *kaidan* can be defined by two

---

[138] Noriko T. Reider, *Tales of the Supernatural in Early Modern Japan:* Kaidan*, Akinari, Ugetsu Monogatari* (Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002), 3.

elements: one, that they are intended to create a sensation of fear in their audience; and two, that their mechanism of producing this sensation tends toward spectral elements as opposed to violent or gory elements (what we might term "body horror" or "splatter" in a contemporary context), although there are exceptions. *Kaidan* are, in other words, closer to what M. R. James means with his idiosyncratic use of the term "ghost stories"—whose "ghosts" are oftentimes emphatically *not* spectral but instead embodied, fleshy, hairy monsters—than they are to *horā* ホラー.[139]

Higashi Masao, in his treatment of the genre, provides a useful comparison of four adjacent genre terms:

1) *Kaiki* 怪奇: classical (old-fashioned) *horā*. Examples of this would be Kyōka's horror-heavy work like "Sea Dæmons" ("Kaiiki") or Hirai Teiichi's "Midnight Encounters" ("Mayonaka no ori"); the fiction of H. P. Lovecraft is generally referred to with this term in Japanese, as well.

2) *Kyōfu* 恐怖: modern *horā*; *horā* without supernatural elements such as psycho-horror. Murakami Ryū's *Audition* (*Ōdishon*) would be a representative example.

3) *Gensō* 幻想: *horā* displaying elements or traits of adjacent genres like fantasy and science fiction; or, *horā* fiction with prominent literary qualities positioning it within the category of *jun bungaku* or "pure literature." Most of Kyōka's well-known work, such as "The Holy Man of Mount Kōya" ("Kōya hijiri"), fits here.

---

[139] See M. R. James, *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary* (London: Edward Arnold, 1904).

4) *Kaidan* 怪談: classical (old-fashioned) *horā*, with an especial emphasis on the ghost story. Major modern examples include work in this genre by Okamoto Kidō and Uchida Hyakken.[140]

There is of course limited value in pursuing taxonomies such as this at any length; but I think these distinctions help clarify different positionings within the field in the twenty-first century as well as what is at stake when we take these genres seriously. The most important point I wish to emphasize here is that *kaidan*, as opposed to the more recent term *horā* and its linked term *kyōfu*, is generically positioned as classical, as old-fashioned. This is—any book whose cover has the word *kaidan* on it proclaims—a form of storytelling ostensibly concerned with tradition, and thereby with a certain discourse of Japaneseness. If *kaiki* is Lovecraftian and *horā* smacks of Stephen King, then *kaidan* conjures up images of Oiwa-san and Edo *hyakumonogatari* gatherings.

What is of more central concern to this chapter is how *kaidan* can be further broken down into two sub-genres: *sōsaku kaidan* 創作怪談, or "fictional" *kaidan*, and *kaidan jitsuwa* 怪談実話, or "true" *kaidan*. *Kaidan jitsuwa* can also be referred to as *jitsuwa kaidan* 実話怪談 or *kaidan jitsuroku* 怪談実録, but for the sake of simplicity I will use the term *kaidan jitsuwa* throughout. Here again, Higashi makes a useful three-way distinction within the *kaidan* genre:

1) *Kaidan shōsetsu* 怪談小説, or "*kaidan* novels," which correspond to *sōsaku kaidan*

2) *Kaidan jitsuwa* as entertainment

3) *Kaidan jitsuwa* as academic document[141]

---

[140] Higashi Masao 東雅夫, *Kaidan bungei handobukku* 怪談文芸ハンドブック (Tokyo: Media fakutorī, 2009), 34. The representative examples given are mine.

Kaidan shōsetsu is a categorization that necessarily bleeds back out into *kaiki* and other

designations. But what is important for the discussion at hand is how there are multiple

layered meanings to the artificial/real distinction at play here. Most obviously, these three

categories each instantiate a different relationship between the storyteller, the story being

told, and the recipient of the story. With *kaidan shōsetsu* the fictionality of the text is

foregrounded. This generally involves an appeal to form—the way in which the story is

crafted and the means through which it is told. To give an easy-to-understand example

from Anglophone contexts, Bram Stoker's *Dracula* is a paradigmatic *kaidan shōsetsu*: the

reader is not meant to believe that the various texts across media through which this

epistolary novel is comprised are "real" historical documents; they are curated for a

specific literary effect. Kyōka's fiction in general functions similarly.

    Kaidan jitsuwa stories, on the other hand, function within a discourse of the real.

What this means in concrete terms is that they situate themselves not as the fabrication of

their author, but as recordings—representations of something that someone actually

experienced in mediated form. The issue of mediation, then, is central to *kaidan jitsuwa*: in

this model, "event" exists prior to "narrative," the latter being a mediation—or series of

mediations—of the former. In *kaidan shōsetsu*, by contrast, no "event" is posited as existing

prior to or outside of the "narrative."

    The relationship between the text and the experiencer of the text is usually more

complicated than this; *kaidan jitsuwa*, especially those in Higashi's second category above,

are oftentimes carefully crafted to look like artless, unadorned accounts of a "true"

experience. This is part of the appeal of the genre, and recalls the tension between the "just

---

[141] Ibid., 58.

as I heard them" claims to authenticity and the sterile *bungo* style of *Tōno monogatari*. But to reiterate, *kaidan jitsuwa* are presented to the reader (when in written format) as concerned with *event* over *narrative*: in formal terms, the narrative functions to explicate the details of the terrifying event, no more, no less. Accordingly, *kaidan jitsuwa*, as opposed to *kaidan shōsetsu*, are generally very short—only a few pages in printed form.

Formally, then, *kaidan jitsuwa* are driven by a terrifying event or series of events. A corollary of this is a central concern with setting, or place. A survey of printed texts in this genre reveals that *kaidan jitsuwa* books are often organized around a single location or region, and individual *kaidan jitsuwa* tales often begin with a brief specification of *where* it is the event occurred. To give one representative example of this pattern: *Yami-nuri kaidan* 闇塗怪談 (the title might be rendered as *Painted in Darkness: Scary Stories*) is a *kaidan jitsuwa* collection by Eigyō no K 営業の K (clearly a pseudonym) and published by Take shobō, one of the major contemporary publishers of *kaidan jitsuwa* in 2017. Eigyō no K, in the advertising material on the cover of the book, identifies as a Kanazawa native, and all of the *kaidan jitsuwa* recounted in the volume are stated to have taken place in or around Kanazawa. One such *kaidan jitsuwa*, titled "At a Bus Stop, Kanazawa City," begins in this way: "The following is an experience I had at a bus stop in the vicinity of Minma Elementary School in Kanazawa."[142] A fan of the *kaidan jitsuwa* genre already has a general sense of where this is going—namely, that this *kaidan* will draw in some way on the prominent "haunted school" trope. The *kaidan jitsuwa*, in other words, is not just built around an event; it is also built around a particular kind of place.

---

[142] Eigyō no K 営業の K, *Yami-nuri kaidan* 闇塗怪談 (Tokyo: Take shobō, 2017), 180.

In the rest of this chapter, I will consider various examples of *kaidan jitsuwa* that derive from a very particular type of place: the areas devastated by the March 11, 2011 earthquake and tsunami. In the years since 2011, there has been a growing interest in *shinsai kaidan* 震災怪談, or "disaster" *kaidan*, which are a further subdivision of *kaidan jitsuwa* dealing with hauntings, spectral visions, spirit possession, and other supernatural phenomena related in some way to the earthquake and tsunami. I will examine three representative examples of *shinsai kaidan* literature: one academic approach to the topic based on fieldwork carried out by a group of scholars at Tōhoku Gakuin University; one collection of stories compiled by a nonfiction writer; and one anthology of stories written by professional and amateur *kaidan* authors. In so doing I will continue to draw on the *emic/etic* framework established earlier. But before I turn to these texts, by way of contrast I will briefly consider the phenomenon of *shinrei supotto* 心霊スポット, or "paranormal sites," and the stories told about them as a paradigmatic example of etic *kaidan jitsuwa* storytelling in the twenty-first century.

Etic jitsuwa*: Accursed Villages off the Map*

In *Tōhoku no kowai hanashi* (*Scary Stories from Tōhoku*), part of a series of "*kowai hanashi*" books that are each centered on a prefecture or region—Saitama, Okinawa, Fukuoka, et c.—is included a *kaidan* set in Aomori Prefecture with the title, "A Village of Murder You Won't Find on Any Map."[143] The story begins in the following fashion.

> There was a time, back in Taishō, when it was carried out night after night, in backwater villages [*kanson* 寒村] deep in the mountains or along the coast.

---

[143] Terai Hiroki 寺井広樹 and Murakami Noriko 村神徳子, *Tōhoku no kowai hanashi* 東北の怖い話 (Tokyo: TO bukkusu, 2016), 133.

> *—Yobai—*
> Its nature unchanged since ancient times: sex between man and woman.
> It's often said that, unless you're a landowner, everybody's related to everybody else somehow in the smaller hamlets [*buraku* 部落] of about one hundred people. But in places like this, monogamy existed only in principle, and things were so loose that young girls and widows were said to belong to the young men of the village.[144]

It is quickly conveyed to the reader that the story being told is an *inaka* Gothic one. The beginning of the narrative clearly links "old" customs—*yobai*—to rural backwaters (*kanson*), thus establishing the basic *inaka* Gothic setup that we have seen in other material so far. Although it may seem a minor point, the use of *buraku* here for hamlet—as opposed to other terms like *shūraku* 集落 or *chiku* 地区—keys us in on a number of important aspects of both the text and paratext. *Buraku* remains a loaded term in the contemporary publishing landscape, due to its association with the *hisabetsu burakumin* minority, and is frequently self-censored by larger publishing companies and news outlets. Its broader meaning of hamlet makes its use here ambiguous—ostensibly it is used to mean a small rural community and nothing more—but can also be read to introduce an ambiguous aspect of Othering to the narrative, linking this backwater to *buraku* tropes. The use of this term simultaneously tells us something about the pedigree of the publisher: that it is small enough, and distant enough from the shared mores of the major Tokyo publishing companies, to use the term "*buraku*" in such a way in their publication.

Yobai is a concept that is central to the discourses surrounding the Tsuyama Incident material of Chapter Three; and indeed, "A Village of Murder You Won't Find on Any Map" soon reveals itself to be a retelling of the basic Tsuyama Incident story transposed northward to Aomori, with the village's name subsequently altered to Sugisawa

---

[144] Ibid., 133.

Village (Sugisawa-mura 杉沢村). Over the next nine pages, a story of envy and love gone awry in the context of *yobai* practices unfolds, culminating in the spectacular murder spree and site of rural horror that we are familiar with from Tsuyama. The narrative proper ends with Sugisawa Village dying out, its men unable to find mates from neighboring villages in the aftermath of the horror. It is, accordingly, wiped from the map.

What is interesting about this particular telling, however, is how it blurs the line between *kaidan jitsuwa* and *kaidan shōsetsu* format. It does this, for one thing, in terms of general style, eschewing the concise dispensation of information found in a more straightforward *kaidan jitsuwa* work like "At a Bus Stop, Kanazawa City" for more exposition. As a result a clear narrative voice is present in throughout, one that is clearly temporally as well as spatially distant from the events that unfold, as is made clear in the very first line through the reference to the Taishō Period and the use of the generally pejorative term *kanson*. It also does this through the basic use of dialogue, mainly between Tadashi, the Toi Mutsuo analogue, and Yasu, his love interest. But, most intriguingly, the narrative breaks the general *jitsuwa* illusion on its last page to make explicit the narrative's debt to the Tsuyama Incident, mentioning that "around the same time, there was the Tsuyama Incident in Okayama," and that people assumed that the Sugisawa Village story is made-up and inspired by Tsuyama.[145] Then the text ends with the following lines.

> And yet is that really the case?
> But one thing is certain—no one is to go trying to find that village. What is buried there must not be dug up.
> After all, the only thing for certain is that it has some awfully vengeful ghosts.[146]

---

[145] Ibid., 141.
[146] Ibid.

The narrative undercuts its *kaidan jitsuwa* mode only to resurrect it at the very end. And the way it does so is to bait the reader with the assertion that the precise location of the village *must not be found*. This serves, naturally, to cause readers to wonder where it is.

The Sugisawa Village narrative is clearly a fictitious retelling of the Tsuyama Incident, and as such is different from normal *shinrei supotto* narratives, which, quite simply, claim a certain place—oftentimes an old railroad or automobile tunnel, or an abandoned hospital, for example—to be a hotbed for paranormal activity, which includes visual, aural, and other phenomena. But I raise it here because it is essentially a basic *sōsaku kaidan* coopted within the framework of *kaidan jitsuwa* and *shinrei supotto kaidan jitsuwa* more specifically. Furthermore, the process through which this happened is indicative of the media landscape surrounding *shinrei supotto* narratives from the late 1990s onward. The Sugisawa Village narrative gained traction initially on internet forums dedicated to paranormally and supernaturally themed urban legends, and then continued to evolve through a process of gradual expansion across media, to the point that there is currently a limited media mix grown up around the concept which includes material in video, television, and even an app-based game.[147] In this way, it has become a prominent example of what Yamaguchi Bintarō calls the "village" category of contemporary urban legends (*mura-kei toshi densetsu* 村系都市伝説). Such narratives posit the presence of a village with some horrifying trait or secret—in addition to the murder spree of Sugisawa Village, other examples include a village of cannibals, or the "Bighead O" (*Kyotō o* 巨頭オ) story with its village of freaks with huge heads reminiscent of the "melonhead" urban

---

[147] Yamaguchi Bintarō 山口敏太郎, "Mura-kei toshi densetsu" 村系都市伝説, http://blog.goo.ne.jp/youkaiou/e/c99db61a0ddb757c20c57da1e4307179.

legend in rural Connecticut—to exist or have once existed, with the location being just specific enough to connote a sense of place and region, often tapping into stereotypes about that region (it is not a coincidence that Sugisawa Village was moved to Aomori, one of the most hyper-ruralized prefectures in the contemporary cultural landscape).

Another popular story, that of Inunaki Village (Inunaki-mura 犬鳴村) in the woods near an old abandoned tunnel in the Inunaki Pass (Inunaki-tōge 犬鳴峠) in Fukuoka Prefecture, more clearly illustrates the relationship between this kind of legendary "accursed village" narrative and the *shinrei supotto* phenomenon. The old tunnel, which was the site of a murder in 1988 and still exists (albeit cordoned off) as of 2018, is itself a *shinrei supotto*. The Inunaki Village story holds that, nearby, there exists an isolated village that, like Sugisawa Village, cannot be found on any modern map and which is peopled by violent, degenerate villagers. At the entrance to the village there stands a sign that reads, "AREA BEYOND THIS POINT OUTSIDE JURISDICTION OF THE CONSTITUTION OF JAPAN."[148] This is a common trope among these stories: that these villages are not only temporally distinct—places where time has "stopped" due to their isolation from the outside world—but that they represent Gothic pockets of extraterritoriality, sites where the local (on the village level) exists *without*, that is, both in the absence of and outside of, the national. Inunaki Village or Sugisawa Village, as crude as the stories are on a formal narrative level, are interesting in that they posit these sites as such *from the outside*: their isolation makes it a narrative necessity that the story is told firmly in the mode of the *minzokugakuteki* paradigm from Chapters One and Two, with an outsider stumbling into a rural Gothic space "deep" in the countryside. In this way, these stories provide a pessimistic

---

[148] Yamaguchi, "Mura-kei toshi densetsu."

flipside to something like Inoue Hisashi's *Kirikirijin*, wherein the utopian potential unearthed in that narrative is sapped out and replaced with horror.

The point I wish to draw from these kinds of stories, ultimately, is the relentlessly etic nature of their telling. They are either direct *kaidan jitsuwa* accounts of a hapless traveler who stumbles across one such village and lives to tell the tale, or, in the case of the way the Sugisawa Village narrative is retold in "A Village of Murder You Won't Find on Any Map," cloaked formally in the trappings of a *kaidan shōsetsu* but still retaining an etic perspective in the implied relationship between narrator and narrated place. In terms of where these narratives intersect with lived social and political realities, this etic nature is often a source of tension—the Inunaki tunnel continues to receive unwanted attention from thrill-seekers willing to risk a trespassing charge, and locals struggle to brand their hometown in a way that escapes the negative image of the urban legend. *Shinrei supotto* narratives are almost formally predicated on being spread by outsiders; they have no such meaning to locals who dwell in close proximity to or pass through these spaces on a daily basis.

Shinsai kaidan *as Fieldwork: Part One*

To reiterate, the stories of imagined places like Sugisawa Village or Inunaki Village are not *shinsai kaidan*. They do not narrate a relationship between place and (natural) disaster. What they are, however, are examples of how *kaidan jitsuwa* built around a specific locale predominantly function in the contemporary *kaidan* landscape. They are retellings of events via an outsider's gaze, and they trade in a particular type of fear—the fear of difference, of the Other. It is emphasized that, in both temporal and spatial terms,

these places are *not* 21st-century Japan. Even in more standard *kaidan jitsuwa* like Eigyō no

K's Kanazawa tales told by a Kanazawa native, there is a slippage between authorial

identity and local identity wherein small pockets of unfamiliarity are found within the

locally familiar (the "bus station" of the example above, for example), and the local is made

temporarily strange, and that strangeness is conveyed to the reader to convey a particular

emotional effect. If the author were "at home" with the ghosts, familiar with them, used to

their manifestations—well, the *kaidan jitsuwa* would lose its jolt of fear, which is above all

the aspect around which the genre is traditionally understood to be defined.

But what happens when ghost stories *are* told by insiders, by people close to and

familiar with the ghosts? When hauntings are not feared but welcomed? How does the

kaidan jitsuwa transform in formal terms, and what new meanings does that engender?

Shinsai kaidan provide a powerful opportunity to examine these questions.

There exists a growing corpus of post-3.11 literature, both primary and secondary,

which examines in different ways the events of March 11th, 2011, and the multiple

aftermaths it brought about. One small subsection of this literature has concerned itself

with *kaidan* that have emerged—through tellings in various contexts—out of the events of

3.11, and even this subsection shows diversity in its approach to the material. The first text

I will consider in depth is *Yobisamasareru reisei no shinsaigaku: 3.11 sei to shi no hazama de*

呼び覚まされる霊性の震災学　３・11 生と死のはざまで (*Spiritual Disasterology,*

Awakened: 3.11, between Life and Death), which was published in 2016. This book is unique

in that it comprises a series of fieldwork articles written by Kanebishi Kiyoshi, a sociologist

at Tōhoku Gakuin University, and the undergraduate students of his seminar for their

graduation theses. The aim of the book, Kanebishi explains in his introduction, is to,

"through careful fieldwork, clarify in what ways those affected by the disaster have had to face 'the dead,'" noting that "the dead" has an aspect of the taboo around it in this context.[149] Its approach to the topic is thus primarily sociological, and it is concerned with exploring the question of how people construct new meaning for themselves and for their communities out of a destructive event like the earthquake and tsunami of 3.11. In his introduction Kanebishi goes on to write, "Vis-à-vis a raging natural world beyond human power to resist, these survivors left behind nonetheless call out to the invisible dead, who call back; at times taken in, and at times resisting, they thereby bring about a 'spiritual' world unique to them."[150]

The articles in the volume cover a range of topics, which include a consideration of the politics of memory behind memorial stones (*ireihi* 慰霊碑), the social and economic dynamics that made possible the temporary burial and later cremation of 672 bodies of victims in the city of Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture, and a consideration of human-animal relations in the context of amateur hunters working around the Fukushima evacuation zone. But I wish to focus in particular on the first chapter, by Kudō Yuka 工藤優花, which examines what is perhaps the most famous *shinsai kaidan* trope to emerge out of 3.11, the "taxi *kaidan*," via fieldwork conducted primarily in Ishinomaki and Kesennuma, Miyagi Prefecture.

---

[149] Kanebishi Kiyoshi 金菱清, "Hajime ni: Yobisamasareru reisei" はじめに──呼び覚まされる霊性, in *Yobisamasareru reisei no shinsaigaku: 3.11 sei to shi no hazama de* 呼び覚まされる霊性の震災学　3・11 生と死のはざまで, eds. Tōhoku Gakuin Daigaku shinsai no kiroku purojekuto 東北学院大学 震災の記録プロジェクト and Kanebishi Kiyoshi (Zemināru) 金菱清（ゼミナール）(Tokyo: Shin'yōsha, 2016), x.
[150] Ibid., xii.

Kudō begins by noting that a wide variety of "experiential stories and rumors concerning paranormal phenomena" have proliferated in disaster-struck areas following 3.11.[151] She then proceeds to focus in on the stories of local taxi drivers' experiences with ghosts as being particularly endowed with a sense of "reality" (*riariti* リアリティ); what she means by this is, as opposed to most other stories which conclude ambiguously with a consideration that "it might have been a ghost"—she cites one example where a woman's wedding ring box mysteriously reappears one day about six months after 3.11, which she takes to be a message from her husband, who went missing in the tsunami—these taxi drivers assert, unambiguously, that they came face-to-face *and spoke with* a ghost. The ghosts, to them, are not ambiguous; they are "real."

Kudō selects four representative examples of taxi drivers' stories of their encounters with ghosts. Below is one such example.

> Taxi Driver #1's Experience (Recorded November 3, 2014; story told by S. K., male, aged 56 years)
> "I think it was about three months after the disaster? If I check the records I'd know exactly, but it was the beginning of the summer. One time late at night I was waiting for a customer near Ishinomaki Station, when a woman gets in wearing a big fluffy coat, like what you'd wear in midwinter."
> He said that, one night approximately three months after the disaster, while waiting for a customer in the vicinity of Ishinomaki Station, a woman looking to be in her thirties got into the cab wearing—despite it being early summer—a winter coat with fur. When he asked her where she was headed, "Minamihama" was her reply. He thought that was odd; and when he asked her, "Are you sure? Almost that whole area's empty, vacant now. Why Minamihama? Aren't you hot in that coat?" a quavering voice replied. "Am I dead?" "Huh?"—the driver, surprised, looked in his mirror. There was no one in the back seat.

---

[151] Kudō Yuka 工藤優花, "Shisha-tachi ga kayou machi: Takushī doraibā no yūrei genshō" 死者たちが通う街──タクシードライバーの幽霊現象, in *Yobisamasareru reisei no shinsaigaku: 3.11 sei to shi no hazama de* 呼び覚まされる霊性の震災学　３・11 生と死のはざまで, eds. Tōhoku Gakuin Daigaku shinsai no kiroku purojekuto 東北学院大学 震災の記録プロジェクト and Kanebishi Kiyoshi (Zemināru) 金菱清（ゼミナール） (Tokyo: Shin'yōsha, 2016), 2.

At first he was overcome with fear, and for a while was frozen there, unable to move. "But, when I think of it now, there's nothing particularly mysterious about it, you know? Lots of people lost their lives in the Great East Japan Earthquake, didn't they? It's only natural that there'd be those with a lingering attachment to this world. I think that [a ghost] is what she [the customer] must've been. I don't get scared about things like that any more. If I came across someone waiting for a taxi in out-of-season winter clothes like that again I'd pick them up, and treat them as I would a normal customer." The driver smiled as he spoke. Incidentally, this driver lost his daughter in the disaster.[152]

Although there are many variations to the taxi *kaidan* narrative, the basic points are here, which I identify as the following: 1) the taxi driver picks up a customer; 2) the customer asks the driver to take them to a disaster-affected area, often along the coast; the driver looks back to see the customer is not in the back seat, either when they arrive at the destination or earlier (as in the case with the above narrative). Kudō notes that these stories have proliferated despite the institutional structures of the taxi business; namely, it is relatively easy to check, due to regulatory systems installed, when a taxi driver turned their meter on, or where they drove according to their GPS, or the mileage difference on their car at any given point. This is part of what Kudō identifies as the heightened "reality" of this particular cluster of narratives.[153]

Furthermore, Kudō goes on to give some analysis of the affective responses she experienced among taxi drivers while they related their stories to her. She notes how, overwhelmingly, the relationship between the *kaidan* event (the encounter with the ghost) and the experiencer (the taxi driver) is not one of fear. When there are expressions of fear involved, as in the example given above, the impression is fleeting, and changes over time into something else. She notes, interestingly, that there is an affective distinction to be observed in the ghosts themselves: whereas "traditional"—or perhaps more accurately

---

[152] Ibid., 4–5.
[153] Ibid., 9–10.

"stereotypical"—ghosts within the *kaidan* genre from the Edo Period to the present typically function under an affective paradigm of *urami* 恨み, or "vengefulness," she sees instead in these taxi *kaidan* ghosts an affective paradigm of *munen* 無念, or "lingering regret."[154] This in turn shifts the affective relationship between *kaidan* agent (ghost) and experiencer: as Kudō explains, the appearance of these ghosts or spirits at a time when survivors attested to struggling with feelings of hopelessness and loss of meaning, and the meaning implied by that manifestation being that they remained so attached to their hometown for one reason or another that they chose to return even in death, shifted these survivors' emotions in the direction of respect or reverence for the ghosts and a renewed sense of commitment to the locality in which they lived.[155]

The taxi *kaidan* trope is not a new development unique to post-3.11 *shinsai kaidan* narratives. If anything, right from its inception as a genre in the early Edo Period, *kaidan* has always been a narrative structure well equipped to think about the relationship between affect and transportation technology. We could trace a lineage, if we were to expand the terminology to something more general like "transportation *kaidan*," from the 「熊本主理が下女、きくが亡魂の事」 episode in *Shokoku hyakumonogatari* 諸国百物語 (1677), which involves travel by horse, through the palanquin episode in San'yūtei Enchō's influential *Shinkei Kasane ga fuchi* 真景累ケ淵 (published in book form in 1888), through rickshaw ghost stories like Kyōka's *Maboroshi ōrai* 幻往来 (1899), to the emergence of what can be clearly recognized as taxi *kaidan* in the midst of the *en-taku*, or one-yen flat

---

[154] Ibid., 19.
[155] Ibid., 16.

fare taxi, boom in the 1930s.[156] *Kaidan*, in other words, have served, ever since an early foundational text in the genre like *Shokoku hyakumonogatari*, as a useful tool to think about the relationship between different modes of transportation, disorientation, and oftentimes fear. It is easy to see how the temporal ambiguity of transportation spaces, whether they be the inside of a palanquin or a train car or a taxi cab, and the anonymity of the subjects' bodies which are thrown into temporary close proximity therein, lends itself well to the formal demands of the *kaidan* story, namely, the appearance and disappearance of the ghost. There are of course multiple formal archetypes within the genre, but the "transportation encounter" is one such important archetype.

Following Kudō's analysis of taxi drivers' ghost encounters in post-3.11 Ishinomaki and Kesennuma, however, we see that the relationship between subject and place is being drastically reframed. In these stories, the ghosts are not anonymous or uncanny Others—they are locals. The mechanism of the ghost is the opposite of what we see in Kyōka's work, wherein the establishment of various linguistic, topographical and affective boundary lines toward the beginning of the narrative is succeeded by a narrative process that subjects those boundary lines to increasing stress and ultimately blurs them completely by the end of the narrative. A text like *Sankai hyōban ki* works by ultimately deconstructing the distinction between not just "living" and "dead" or "reality" and "fantasy," but on a more subtler level "insider" and "outsider" or, phrased another way, "local" and "foreigner." The taxi driver's story above, however, starts from the opposite position, wherein the flattened, otherworldly landscape of Minamihama (which was indeed leveled by the disaster) is

---

[156] For the latter, see, for example, "En-taku yūrei-banashi" 円タク幽霊話, *Asahi gurafu* アサヒグラフ, May 25, 1932. I am indebted to Higashi Masao for suggesting this lineage to me.

refamiliarized through the manifestation of the ghost. The Uncanny, as it were, "re-cannies"

the landscape, for the taxi driver, at least.[157] And Kudō, whose tack is ultimately sociological

and not based in literary or cultural studies, argues that this serves as a powerful starting

point for the rebuilding of community identity that, while not located radically *without* the

national as in the case of Sugisawa or Inunaki Village, is discursively resistant to being

smoothly re-subsumed into the rhetoric and structure of the national.

Shinsai kaidan *as Fieldwork: Part Two*

Okuno Shūji is a nonfiction author who, starting in 2013, made repeated trips to

disaster-affected areas in Tōhoku to talk to the people there and record their stories. The

result is his 2017 book, *Stay with Me, Even If It's Just Your Spirit: Listening to Post-3.11*

Supernatural Experiences (*Tamashii de mo ii kara, soba ni ite: 3.11 go no rei taiken o kiku* 魂

でもいいから、そばにいて　3・11 後の霊体験を聞く). Reflecting in his preface on a

brief anecdote he has just been told, Okuno writes the following.

> The story was sad and painful to hear [*setsunai* 切ない], but I felt a sense of relief
> from what he said, and at the same time I felt a throbbing in my chest. I had assumed
> until now that fear was the only response they would have to seeing a ghost; but, far
> from feeling afraid, these people were filled with a desire to meet the ghost of a
> loved one, of a family member or a lover. For these people, the difference between
> this world and the next is not a particularly large one. Is there anyone who would
> fear a reunion with a loved one, even if that loved one happened to be dead? I would
> imagine instead that the reunion with the deceased, experienced in the midst of
> great sadness, would grant the person left behind feelings of comfort and hope, even
> happiness.[158]

---

[157] It is worth emphasizing here the fact that *shinsai kaidan* represent a novel valence for
inaka Gothic storytelling where "canniness" and the affects that surround that, as opposed
to the assumed Uncanniness, is central.
[158] Okuno Shūji 奥野修司, *Tamashii de mo ii kara, soba ni ite: 3.11 go no rei taiken o kiku* 魂
でもいいから、そばにいて　3・11 後の霊体験を聞く (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 2017), 14.

This preface keys us in to Okuno's framing of the material. The affective focus, like the taxi driver accounts recorded by Kudō, is now far afield of fear. *Sadness*, if anything, best describes the emotional tenor of Okuno's book. Okuno records, frankly and powerfully, survivors' grief and their struggle to resume their lives amidst the devastation of the disaster, and this frankness, combined with the inclusion of photographs of those who lost their lives (and often feature in the stories as the spectral presences returning to communicate with the living), can make the book emotionally trying to read. The complex combination of emotions embodied in the lived experiences of the survivors recorded here comes through clearly to us as we read the work; it is a powerful example of the construction of empathy through textual mediation. In this way, *Stay with Me, Even If It's Just Your Spirit* is functioning in a *Tōno monogatari*-style framework: these are insider stories, incomplete and haltingly told and filled with numerous affective twists and turns, which are filtered and curated through an outsider's voice.[159]

The structure of Okuno's book is straightforward: each short chapter is a reconstruction of one survivor's tale. Let us consider one such representative story here. In the chapter, "'I Longed and Longed to See Him Again'—A Husband's Hug (Takahashi Mika-san's Experience)," we are introduced to the story of Takahashi Mika and her two children. Takahashi, 56, lost her husband in the tsunami on 3.11. They ran a small shop in Kesennuma, where they also lived. On the day of the earthquake, Takahashi and her son quickly made for high ground, but her husband lingered behind to close up the shop. As they anxiously watched and waited for him to follow, they saw the black wall of the

---

[159] There is no doubt a comparison to be made here, between the distinctions between Kizen's narratives vs. *Tōno monogatari*, on the one hand, and the snippets of insider storytelling we see in direct quotation in Okuno's prose vs. Okuno's first-person narration, on the other.

tsunami advancing toward the neighborhood below. Takahashi's husband's body was

found by Self-Defense Forces two weeks later, on March 25th. Here is how Okuno narrates

Takahashi's experience.

> Mika-san and her family's strange experience came either late the night before [Takahashi's husband's body was found] or very early that morning.
> "All of a sudden, he appeared in my dream. He was standing in the doorway of our bedroom and didn't say anything. He was staring at me silently. It was like a black-and-white still photograph. I was happy to see him, and said 'Oh, you're back!' and when I tried to hug him, I awoke. In the morning I got up, and when I told my son that I had a dream about Dad he said to me, 'I had one, too.' 'What kind of dream was it?,' I asked, and he said, 'He scolded me and told me to pull myself together.' It was the first time he had ever been scolded by Dad, so he said he couldn't look squarely at my husband's face.
> [...]
> "'The fact we both saw a dream about Dad at the same time must mean that something's going to happen today,' we were saying to each other, and then right after came the message from the police that they had found my husband's body."[160]

Okuno then goes on to explain how Takahashi and her husband met, and how they lost

their first child three months after birth and how their second and third children

experienced different infirmities around the time of their birth, as well. The chapter ends

with the following quote from Takahashi, speaking about how she resolved to reopen her

boutique, and what came after.

> "For a while I didn't have any dreams about my husband, but the times when I'm overwhelmed with grief and I think to myself how I feel so alone, times like when I'd drive home after I'd reopened the shop and be alone in the house—then he'll come to me in a dream. He won't speak, the same as before, but whereas in the first dream his face was expressionless and he stood inanimate like an object, after I started the business again he's started to smile. Whereas before it was me in the dream who went to embrace him, now he'll be the one to hug me. I wonder if he's happy that I finally resolved to do business again, and that I found a renewed will to live as well. Now and again he'll appear in my dreams, and sure enough he's smiling. I get the sense that my deceased husband's cheering me on, saying 'Don't give up!'"[161]

---

[160] Okuno, *Tamashii de mo ii kara, soba ni ite*, 166–167.
[161] Ibid., 171.

Takahashi's story is indicative of the general tenor of Okuno's book. Although there are moments where the language clearly conveys the ghostly quality of what is being narrated—Takahashi's comment about how, in her original dream, her husband's face "was expressionless and he stood inanimate like an object," taken out of context, is chilling—the intense grief experienced by the survivors is balanced out by a warmth provided by the manifestation of the ghost. This is the central inversion around which the book is structured: ghosts, in these survivors' tales, produce a centripetal, as opposed to centrifugal, force. Here, the encounter with the ghost is not, ultimately, a destabilizing event, but instead a catalyst for the forging of a new, regionally bounded "imagined geography." This represents, I argue, a new model for how *kaidan* produce meaning both within and beyond the text in a way distinct from what we have seen so far. The *Tōno* and para-*Tōno* texts of Chapter One are structured around a rhetorical *lack*—to follow Shibusawa's formulation— such that the textual encounter with this lack, as opposed to the ghostly event *per se*, instantiates a destabilizing event in the late-Meiji national literary context. Likewise, Kyōka's narratives, for all their modernist intricacies, follow the basic model wherein the (female) ghost or ghostly presence represents the destabilizing encounter that sets Kyōka's trademark cascade of blurred boundaries in motion. And *Yatsuhaka-mura* and the other Tsuyama-related material of Chapter Three are similar to what Okuno presents here in terms of a socio-historical *event*, as opposed to the ghostly encounter itself, creating the site of destabilization that is to be explored in the narrative, but the crucial difference is again how the horror (framed as a *tatari* discourse in *Yatsuhaka-mura* and its variants) is positioned vis-à-vis national and regional geographies. Put another way, the horror in the peripheral hauntings of *Yatsuhaka-mura* are extensions of the primary trauma of the event,

whereas in Takahashi's story above the appearance of her husband's ghost serves a new,

reparative function. There is, of course, a long tradition of the "gentle ghost story" in

transnational Gothic-horror storytelling; and although the affective emphasis on sadness or

pity makes positioning Okuno's text within that tradition a sensible gesture, at the same

time such a gesture serves only to highlight what is unique about these *shinsai kaidan*

stories—that is, living people are drawn towards the ghosts, as opposed to being repelled

by them.

In his preface, Okuno pauses to consider why this particular relationship between

survivor and ghost might be so prominent in 3.11-related narratives, sketching an

argument built around a particular though common construction of Tōhoku as a cultural

space.

> Even so, why is it that, although spiritual experiences and the like did not circulate
> to any great degree at the time of the 1995 Great Hanshin Earthquake, such stories
> are so high in number for the Great East Japan Earthquake? Perhaps it is because, in
> Tōhoku, the roots of a native [*dochaku no* 土着の] religiosity run deep, and a general
> sense of a belief in spirits remains alive to this day.[162]

This understanding of 3.11 *shinsai kaidan* is far from uncommon. Part of an established

matrix of internal colonization that predates the Meiji Period, it posits Tōhoku as the

dialectical other to the dominant aesthetics of folk religious discourse that is usually

discursively located in Western Japan. We might reductively term the latter a "*kegare*

discourse"—a worldview and social structure predicated (according to this dialectic) on

the taboo of defilement, central among which being the defilement of contact with the

corpse. This is, of course, one of the primary historical explanations in currency regarding

the origins of the *hisabetsu burakumin* class. Tōhoku, in contrast, becomes a site where this

---

[162] Ibid., 13.

133

kegare discourse is inverted. Through cultural signifiers like the *itako* and *okamisama*

mediums of Osore-zan and the Tsugaru Peninsula, respectively, or the "bride doll

marriages" between living and dead at Kawakura Sai no kawara Jizō-son 川倉賽の河原地

蔵尊 in Tsugaru or similar *mukasari ema* votive ghost-marriage illustrations in and around

Murayama City in Yamagata Prefecture, this discourse posits Tōhoku as a site where living

and dead cohabit, interact, and communicate in the course of daily lived experience. To

borrow Okuno's own words already quoted above, "For these people, the difference

between this world and the next is not a particularly large one." Okuno's discursive framing

of these survivors' stories thus reinvents Tōhoku once again as an internal Other

simultaneously defined in opposition to and thereby subsumed within the totalizing

framework of the national. Taken to its extreme, this is Tōhoku as self-parody, the

economically poor rural backwater where superstition still runs rampant.[163]

At the same time, however, the stories arranged and presented in Okuno's book are

productive of something new, namely, the inverted affective relationship between survivor

and ghost discussed above. Okuno (or more specifically, the survivors' voices he

documents) is, in a sense, refashioning nostalgia for a stereotypical vision of a "timeless"

yet simultaneously "old-fashioned" Tōhoku for new ends—those ends being an exploration,

via the *kaidan jitsuwa* form, of how the process of destabilization in the face of natural

disaster affords opportunities for the building of new structures of identity. In a way

similar to Kudō's taxi drivers, landscapes wiped clean of meaning by the disaster are

reendowed with affective meaning through the presence of ghosts. And in a way

---

[163] For more on this issue, see Nathan Hopson, *Ennobling Japan's Savage Northeast: Tōhoku as Postwar Thought, 1945–2011* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2017).

fundamentally different from the commodification of the *kappa* in 21ˢᵗ-century Tōno, these spectral visions of deceased loved ones signify a way to reset the parameters and bounds of local identity through affective as well as physical labor.

Shinsai kaidan *as Literature*

The final text I will consider is a 2016 anthology of *shinsai kaidan* entitled *On the Shore: Michinoku* kaidan *from 3.11* (*Nagisa ni te: Ano hi kara no <Michinoku* kaidan> 渚にて あの日からの＜みちのく怪談＞). This book was published by Ara Emishi, a small publisher based in Sendai whose publications are almost exclusively written by Tōhoku-based writers or otherwise about Tōhoku. Prior to 3.11, Ara Emishi, along with Higashi and a handful of *kaidan jitsuwa* writers, was already exploring regionally circumscribed *kaidan* storytelling through what they called their "Michinoku *kaidan*" project, which resulted in a literary anthology with selections by Higashi, on the one hand, and a "Michinoku *kaidan* contest" that solicited Tōhoku-related *kaidan*, primarily *kaidan jitsuwa*, and which published a selection of these stories in hard-copy volumes in 2010 and 2011, on the other. These latter volumes in particular provided a venue for amateur storytellers—people from various backgrounds for whom this was their first print publication—a chance to produce locally based literature for a largely regional readership.[164]

The dimensions of this Michinoku *kaidan* Project changed significantly after 3.11, so that it became, and remains, a project focused on *shinsai kaidan*, one of the main fruits of which being *On the Shore*. The book contains a selection of short *shinsai kaidan* by ten

---

[164] Ara Emishi's books are generally sold in larger bookstores in Tōhoku but have a much more limited representation in Tokyo and elsewhere, partly due to conscious efforts by its head, Hijikata Masashi.

authors, and is edited by the Tōhoku Kaidan Alliance (*Tōhoku kaidan dōmei* 東北怪談同盟),

a loose organization closely tied to the Michinoku *kaidan* Project. Interestingly, the cover

advertises "experiential accounts" (*taiken-dan* 体験談), "collected stories" (*saiwa* 採話),

and "original works" (*sōsaku* 創作). The *kaidan* content included therein is thus advertised

to include not only *kaidan jitsuwa*-style narratives in the form of the former two items, but

also *sōsaku kaidan* in the latter. That being said, in formal terms all of the *kaidan* follow a

kaidan jitsuwa format, with the *sōsaku* of the cover referring to the fact that the selection

includes fictional pieces written in the *kaidan jitsuwa* mold. The pieces comprise material

written expressly for this publication as well as reprinted material from other sources,

which includes the 2011 Michinoku *kaidan* Contest anthology mentioned above.

The ten authors represented in *On the Shore* comprise a spectrum of authorial

identity. The most established writer, in professional terms, is probably Kuroki Aruji, a

successful contemporary author of *kaidan* anthologies with whose work the book begins;

on the other end of the spectrum is a writer like Washū Daisuke, for whom this is his only

major appearance as a literary writer in print.

On the Shore is different from both *Spiritual Disasterology, Awakened* and *Stay with

Me, Even If It's Just Your Spirit* in that it situates itself clearly within a discourse of *kaidan* as

a literary genre, as opposed to *kaidan* as an object of sociological or anthropological

enquiry. In this way, its authors are more self-consciously interested in the *productive*

potential of the telling of *shinsai kaidan* than either Kudō or Okuno, whose main role

remains the Yanagita-esque gatekeeper (via a Tokyo publishing house) of localized lore. All

of the authors included in *On the Shore* either hail from the Tōhoku prefectures or currently

reside there. This spatial immediacy is creatively and dramatically reconstructed through

their *shinsai kaidan* narratives.

Let us consider how these issues intertwine by looking at one example by Sutō

Ayane, an author originally from Kesennuma and residing in Sendai at the time of *Nagisa ni*

te's publication. The title of the piece is "The White Petal" ("Shiroi hanabira" 白い花弁). It

was originally published in the 2011 Michinoku *kaidan* Contest anthology.

> I was in my apartment in Sendai when the quake hit. I immediately phoned my parents in Kesennuma.
> "We're fine here. Dad's at work, but he's probably all right."
> I heard nothing for a while after that. It was a week before I could get through again. My father still wasn't home.
> There was nothing I could do. The only option was to just keep moving forward through what limited routine I had.
> A friend took me to a public bath nearby. My tears dissolved in the warm water, camouflaged.
> On the way out, I took my boots out of the shoe locker in front, and the instant I slipped my foot in—something soft. I felt something soft against the sole of my foot.
> In my boot lay a single white petal, pure white, as fresh as if it had just been plucked.
> I'm confident it wasn't there when I put my boots in the locker. But I had no explanation to give, so I concluded with my friend that I just mustn't have noticed before, and we laughed.

> Two weeks later, my father came home in a wooden coffin.
> Only his face was visible through the glass window in the coffin; everything below the shoulders was out of sight. His face was pale from exposure to the water, and had suffered some scratches, but bore no large scars so I soon recognized it as my father's face. It wasn't possible for me to touch the body, but I wanted to touch it. I want to touch it. Even just for a moment.
> I looked in, in the direction of where my father's body ought to be, hidden in the coffin, and my eyes opened wide in astonishment at what I saw.
> A white flower lay on his chest. The same flower as what I had found in my shoe.
> When I think of my father, I think of that white flower. Of the soft, cool feeling I felt on the sole of my foot. And then I think of the clammy skin of my father that I

wasn't able to touch at the end, and of the chilly whiteness of March, and—oh, how I wanted to touch his skin one last time, even if it crumbled under my fingers.[165]

This is clearly a *kaidan jitsuwa*, functioning in the "experiential accounts" (*taiken-dan*) mode advertised on the book's cover. Sutō's father really did die in the disaster. And in formal terms, this is bare-bones *kaidan* storytelling: there is no ghost, only a mysterious coincidence—a flower petal in a shoe with no rational reason for being there.

Sutō's piece is effective as a *kaidan*, however, through its masterly treatment of its central object—the white flower petal—and the way it uses this object to organize an understanding of the world in affective terms. On the one hand, this seems to be a concise literary expression of an object-oriented ontology that is perhaps less flashy than the Lovecraftian geometries Harman explores but that has implications for a philosophy of objects in literature that points in directions that Lovecraft's histrionics do not go. Harman's understanding of Lovecraft's philosophy of objects can be reframed in such a way that it primarily becomes a relationship between object and landscape.[166] This is in keeping with the removal of phenomenological aspects central to Harman's project—and Lovecraft after all says again and again in letters and elsewhere that his primary interest lies in *places* and *things*, not people (nor representations of people)—but places a more central emphasis on the relationship between object and landscape (or world), which I assert the literature of Lovecraft understands as ontologically distinct from an *object*.

---

[165] Sutō Ayane 須藤文音, "Shiroi hanabira" 白い花弁, in *Nagisa ni te: Ano hi kara no <Michinoku kaidan>* 渚にて　あの日からの＜みちのく怪談＞, ed. Tōhoku kaidan dōmei 東北怪談同盟 (Sendai: Ara Emishi, 2016), 137–138.
[166] See Graham Harman, *Weird Realism: Lovecraft and Philosophy* (Winchester, UK: Zero Books, 2012).

In any event, the manifestation of a physical object—a white flower petal—with no tenable relation to human agency gives the object itself, on one level, a certain autonomy. Phrased more precisely, one reason Sutō's piece is effective is because it renders the location of autonomy ambiguous—it is clear that the narrator did not place the petal here; but was it the spirit of her deceased father (following the common "message from beyond" trope in *kaidan*), or does this white flower that rests mysteriously on his corpse's chest in the coffin possess its own agency? This ambiguity is productive in itself, but what it most clearly accomplishes is an extension of an understanding of the limits of human agency *beyond* the event itself—that is, the frequent rhetoric of the helplessness of humanity in the face of a catastrophic natural disaster like that of 3.11—into the everyday that lies beyond the event, that is, the daily labor of physical and emotional rebuilding afterward.

At the same time, "The White Petal" is a story built around affect. Lovecraft's mature stories, at first glance, *seem* to be built around affect—most commonly understood in Lovecraft's case as the palpitating build-up of "horror" or "fear"—but on closer reading, as Harman himself shows, they are really structured around a distorted black-hole vortex of absence where affect should be. The inability to communicate and to *feel* is central to Lovecraft's ontologically xenophobic vision of modernity. Sutō, on the other hand, explores a world in which a non-anthropocentric ontology of objects is possible while simultaneously allowing for affective resonances to define the relations of that world. In this regard, there are clear similarities here to the centripetal ghostliness of Okuno's book and indeed I argue that this is a central trait of *shinsai kaidan* as a contemporary form. The cool whiteness of the petal leads her to the cool whiteness of March in Miyagi and the cool whiteness of her dead father's skin—ending with a raw, powerful plea to be given the

139

chance to touch his corpse's skin one last time, to bridge the distinction between past and present, living and dead, through the process of *feeling* in both physical (sense of touch) and emotion meanings of that word. This short piece is simultaneously an attempt to bring her father back to life and an admission of the impossibility of that attempt. Sutō thereby finds herself, in Gothic terms, in much closer proximity to the entombed Shiga Tsuhiko in Orikuchi's *The Book of the Dead* than to Frankenstein's monster or "Herbert West— Reanimator."

There is one other major thread that runs through *On the Shore* that I would like to consider, however: the relationship between *kaidan* as a form and the signifiers of localized place. Kuroki probes this issue head-on in the second piece included in the book, which is entitled "The 'Power' of *kaidan*" ("Kaidan no 'chikara'" 怪談の「力」), originally published under a different title in vol. 15 of Higashi's *kaidan* magazine, *Yoo*. This is less a *kaidan* per se than it is a short mediation on the potential of *kaidan* as a literary form. After detailing his feelings of seeing the devastation in Kamaishi, Iwate Prefecture—his mother's hometown—on the news after the disaster, Kuroki proceeds to narrate the following.

> One day in May, when I met a distant relative of mine, I recalled those images I saw that night on the news.
> Originally from Sanriku, he was currently living in an apartment inland in Miyagi Prefecture.
> He haltingly told me of the hardship he had gone through since the day of the disaster. All I did was listen, nodding as he talked. Eventually, as his narrative of the events drew to a close, the following slipped like a droplet from his lips.
> "I can't picture it, you see."
> I remained silent, unclear as to what he meant; and he looked at me intently, and opened his mouth once more.
> "On the TV, they show my town, all turned to rubble, day after day. And, little by little, my memory of what the old landscape used to look like fades away. The small park by the beach, and the bridge beyond it where you used to be able to fish. Trucks for the market coming and going along the highway with its old tiled roofs.… I can't picture it any more, the landscape I saw every day."

Will I just continue to forget? That town I used to love, is it just going to be painted over in my mind as a wasteland of rubble?

Of course not—I started to say, and turned my thoughts desperately to his hometown, which I had visited a number of times. I tried to recall the smell of the seashore, the rumble of the waves, the blinding brightness of the summer sea.

There arose in my mind an image of the quiet town by the sea, but that image was soon replaced with another—a landscape laid to waste by the tsunami. Unable to find the right words for a reply, I realized that I, too, was unable to recall my mother's childhood home of days past.

Memory gets overwritten by ineluctable reality; the various "native places" (*furusato* ふるさと) we carry within us are painted over and vanish beneath the monotone hue of the "disaster zone" (*hisaichi* 被災地).

That, *that* is what gives me reason.

I listen and collect the stories of those who passed. I continue to gather *kaidan* so that what lies lost behind that fateful day will remain in collective memory. By telling, listening, writing, our "native places" will retain their old form in people's memory, and live on. Such is my hope. In *kaidan*, I hope, there resides that "power."

If, through *kaidan*, we might turn our thoughts to these various "native places," and if that would afford us an opportunity to think about these places and what they might mean, then I have faith that there is a new beginning, a first step to be taken there.[167]

Kuroki's vision of the power and potential of *kaidan* strays far from conventional understandings of the genre—as a social game in the original *hyakumonogatari* format, for example, or as part of a native/traditional-versus-foreign/innovational dialectic constructed in one small corner of modern literary discourse. *Kaidan*, for Kuroki, become a powerful node through which landscape, community, and memory are connected. Once again, the primary tenor of the narrative shifts from traumatic horror to longer-term reparation. To be sure, enfolded within Kuroki's vision of what *shinsai kaidan* can do is the horror of the disaster's moments, the images of the flames and waves that spread across media in the days and weeks after 3.11 with their own sort of disaster logic. But he

---

[167] Kuroki Aruji 黒木あるじ, "Kaidan no 'chikara'" 怪談の「力」, in *Nagisa ni te: Ano hi kara no <Michinoku kaidan>* 渚にて　あの日からの＜みちのく怪談＞, ed. Tōhoku kaidan dōmei 東北怪談同盟 (Sendai: Ara Emishi, 2016), 19–20.

consciously calls for a shifting of the focus away from that horrifying, disorienting process wherein *furusato* is turned *hisaichi* toward the open-ended question of what comes next.

Two things are central to Kuroki's vision: the *multiplicity* of "native places" or "hometowns" (*furusato*) versus the *singularity* of the "disaster zone," one the one hand; and the way that *kaidan* not only preserves the past but provides a space for, in his words, "an opportunity to think about these places and what they might mean." *Shinsai kaidan*, as rural Gothic narratives, are not unilaterally obsessed with the past, but can also act as rallying calls for positive change in the future. Likewise, their concern with "pasts" as opposed to "the past" furnishes them with the ability to consider "futures" as opposed to "the future," as well.

Viewed collectively, *Spiritual Disasterology, Awakened* and *Stay with Me, Even If It's Just Your Spirit* and *On the Shore* illustrate various strategies through which the production and consumption emic *kaidan jitsuwa* storytelling in the twenty-first century can enable ways to rethink the relationship between local identity and national structure, or the relationship between "human" and "non-human" in rural landscapes. As I have explored earlier, the fact that all of these geographies, no matter the scale of the map, are "imagined" means that true emic storytelling remains a fantasy; emic and etic are a dialectical construct, so that no matter how global or local a field of vision, emic/etic unevenness, like the lines on a topographical map, will remain. Absolute flatness is, needless to say, impossible. But the stakes are necessarily different with *shinsai kaidan*: there are serious implications that extend beyond the text for a writer who "fakes" a 3.11 experience or the loss of a family member. This is clearly not the case for the etic narratives of Sugisawa or Inunaki Village, for example, which work as *kaidan* precisely because they are told by

outsiders. And of course, *shinsai kaidan* is not a new phenomenon to 3.11; one need only to think of Episode Ninety-Nine in *Tōno monogatari*, a *shinsai kaidan* about the 1896 Sanriku Earthquake, or stories by Kyōka and others about experiences and tales told in the aftermath of the 1923 Great Kantō Earthquake.

While not a story about "disaster" or *shinsai* per se and thus lacking the temporal immediacy of contemporary 3.11 *shinsai kaidan*, M. R. James's "A View from a Hill," included in his 1925 collection *A Warning to the Curious and Other Ghost Stories*, is about the violence of temporal change immanent in the landscape, the scars and wounds of the past obscured but visible from the present. The ghost-story mechanism here is classically (M. R.) Jamesian, wherein antiquarian horrors lurking dormant in the rural English landscape are awakened by the probings of someone curious about the past.[168] It is, in other words, a classic example of the *minzokugakuteki* paradigm that we see grappling with the allegiance of the modern epistemological disciplines of *minzokugaku* and *bungaku* in the form of the rural Gothic story. This paradigm is already familiar to us through the work of Kizen, Kyōka, and Yokomizo. This final chapter, then, represents a break, or rather a new development for the possibilities of rural Gothic storytelling in Japan in the form of *shinsai kaidan*. The stories related by Kudō and Okuno and the stories written by Sutō and Kuroki do not simply serve to relativize the world "through a dead man's eyes," nor to scramble temporality in a way that anthropocentric temporalities are traumatically ripped open and thrown into disarray. They go further, flipping the basic affective relationship between narrator and ghost, between writer and text—a relationship that M. R. James, for one, perfected in its original formulation—on its head. In "A View from a Hill," the haunted

---

[168] James, M. R. "A View from a Hill," in *Collected Ghost Stories*, ed. Darryl Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 326–342.

binoculars render the English landscape uncanny by superimposing the past onto the present; the ghosts and unexplained phenomena in Tōhoku's *shinsai kaidan* re-canny the uncanny disaster zone by doing the same.

CONCLUSION

QUIS EST ISTE QUI VENIT

By way of a conclusion, let me briefly address a question which has lurked beneath the surface of this dissertation thus far: why Japan? It was a question that went unsatisfactorily deflected in the Introduction, and repeated intrusions of C. B. Brown or M. R. James or H. P. Lovecraft remind us that it might not be "Japan" that we are talking about, after all. Why delimit oneself to the rural *Japanese* Gothic?

I both do and do not have an answer to this question. Besides rather obvious institutional reasons (*this is a dissertation on Japanese literature so it should be about Japanese literature*), I believe that the rapidity at which Japan experienced and experienced *through* the processes of modernity is to such a degree that it provides a test case, as it were, of exceptional clarity. The conclusions, in broad strokes, one might reach in a study of rural British Gothic or rural American Gothic and rural Japanese Gothic might be the same, but they are reached more easily in Japan's case, particularly because of the near-synchronicity with which the dual discourses of *kindai bungaku* and *minzokugaku* came of age in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

This, in and of itself, is not a particularly new observation—the "compressed" nature of Japanese modernity has been remarked upon before. And of course there are certain very real sociological factors which change the nature of the stories told: rural New England, with its long, strung-out roads through forests with one isolated home every few miles, *feels* scary in a way different from rural Japan, where, no matter how remote, there is still a formalized retention—though increasingly vestigial with the shrinking population

rate of the current era—of a basic village unit, a *shūraku* 集落. Neighbors, in Japan, are always close; whether this is a source of comfort or terror depends on context.

But if we take the various productive critiques of Area Studies to heart, and allow ourselves to entertain the notion of a study of Japanese literature that does not tell us something about "Japan" so much as it does about something else, then another historical process, this time in the Anglophone context, comes into focus. A sort of doppelganger of this project could be conceived to look something like this: Chapter One looks at the lesser-known "informant" stories of eastern Europe that Bram Stoker consulted in his preparation of the mansucript of *Dracula* in the 1890s; Chapter Two recasts M. R. James' practice of "antiquarianism" as itself a sort of *minzokugaku* in the 1900s and 1910s; Chapter Three considers ethnic, racial, and class tensions in H. P. Lovecraft's "The Dunwich Horror" as a *locus classicus* for New England rural horror; and Chapter Four looks at the Caribbean Voodoo tales of Henry S. Whitehead as an examination of the relationship between homosociality and race in a colonial setting.

We see, in other words, that a remarkably similar thing is happening, at almost exactly the same time, in Anglophone Gothic literature, a fact that cannot be simply swept aside as a matter of reception or influence. Kyōka was not reading Lovecraft in the 1920s, nor vice versa. But perhaps more importantly, through this observation we become able to identify a marked break in Anglophone Gothic fiction in the 19th century, between the original 1764–1824 Gothic Romance and the ethnographic, narrative-into-depth brand of Gothic encounter that all of the texts I have cited above represent. There is, in the late 19th century, a discovery of the "folk" in Britain, as well as in Japan, and the latter cannot be

146

reduced to a derivative form of the latter—even if such anxieties pervade the discourse at certain times. Though particulars might diverge, these discoveries develop in tandem.

In an oft-cited essay from 1908, entitled "Tasogare no aji" たそがれの味, Kyōka, with uncharacteristically clear rhetorical force (which is part of what makes it easy to cite), meditates on the productive potential of in-between-ness, whether day and night, light and dark, or good and evil; he encourages his readers to pause a moment in the gloaming, which is not merely an admixture of two forms but represents a momentary manifestation of a new, third form, and wherein the distinctions between Self and Other become blurred. *Tasogare—ta so kare—Who is that?* It would be easy to use such an observation to try to glean something about a "Japanese" Gothicization of twilight. But let me end instead observing that, in the same decade, and in the most famous ghost story of his career, M. R. James posed to his readers the very same question: *quis est iste qui venit—Who is that who is coming?*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Note: I place a comma between Japanese names only when the author wrote the work originally in English; otherwise I follow the Japanese name order with no comma. I provide the title of Japanese works in the original typography alongside its romanization, as well as kanji *for Japanese names if the work was written originally in Japanese and is not a translation.*

Abe Ayumi 阿部亜由美. "Izumi Kyōka bungaku ni okeru Yanagita minzokugaku no juyō" 泉鏡花文学における柳田民俗学の受容. *Kyōto daigaku kokubungaku ronsō* 京都大学國文學論叢 16 (2006): 17–29.

Blouin, Michael J. *Japan and the Cosmopolitan Gothic: Specters of Modernity*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

Christy, Alan. *A Discipline on Foot: Inventing Japanese Native Ethnography, 1910–1945*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2012.

Clerici, Nathen. "Yumeno Kyūsaku and the Spirit of the Local." *Japanese Studies* 39 (2019): 1–20.

Crandol, Michael. "*The Bloody Sword of the 99th Virgin.*" In *The Encyclopedia of Japanese Horror Films*, edited by Salvador Murguia, 29–30. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016.

Eigyō no K 営業の K. *Yami-nuri kaidan* 闇塗怪談. Tokyo: Take shobō, 2017.

"En-taku yūrei-banashi" 円タク幽霊話. *Asahi gurafu* アサヒグラフ, May 25, 1932.

Farrier, Anna-Marie. *Circulating Fictions: The Novels of Natsume Sōseki and the Gothic*. PhD diss., Princeton University, 2007.

Fiedler, Leslie A. *Love and Death in the American Novel*. New York: Stein and Day, 1966.

Figal, Gerald. *Civilization and Monsters: Spirits of Modernity in Meiji Japan*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1999.

Foster, Michael Dylan. *Pandemonium and Parade: Japanese Monsters and the Culture of Yōkai*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2009.

Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1973.

Harman, Graham. *Weird Realism: Lovecraft and Philosophy*. Winchester, UK: Zero Books, 2012.

Harootunian, H. D. *Things Seen and Unseen: Discourse and Ideology in Tokugawa Nativism*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988.

Higashi Masao 東雅夫. *Kaidan bungei handobukku* 怪談文芸ハンドブック. Tokyo: Media fakutorī, 2009.

———. *Nihon gensō bungaku taizen: Nihon gensō bungaku jiten* 日本幻想文学大全　日本幻想文学事典. Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 2013.

———. "Ryūka no majiwari: Kyōka gensō no engen o megutte" 柳花の交わり──鏡花幻想の淵源をめぐって. *Anahorisshu kokubungaku* アナホリッシュ國文學 6 (2014): 37–54.

———. *Tōno monogatari to kaidan no jidai* 遠野物語と怪談の時代. Tokyo: Kadokawa gakugei shuppan, 2010.

Hirao Rosen 平尾魯仙. *Tani no hibiki* 谷の響. Edited by Aomori kenritsu toshokan 青森県立図書館. Aomori City: Aomori kenritsu toshokan, 1969.

Hirao Rosen 平尾魯僊. "*Tani no hibiki* yori" 「谷の響」より. Translated by Kuroki Aruji 黒木あるじ. In *Michinoku kaidan meisaku sen vol. 1* みちのく怪談名作選 vol. 1, edited by Higashi Masao 東雅夫, 369–389. Sendai: Ara Emishi, 2010.

Hopson, Nathan. *Ennobling Japan's Savage Northeast: Tōhoku as Postwar Thought, 1945–2011*. Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2017.

Hughes, Henry J. "Familiarity of the Strange: Japan's Gothic Tradition." *Criticism* 42.1 (2000): 59–89.

Inouye, Charles Shirō. "Globalgothic: Unburying Japanese figurality." In *Globalgothic*, edited by Glennis Byron, 202–214. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2013.

———. "Japanese Gothic." In *A New Companion to the Gothic*, edited by David Punter, 442–454. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2012.

———. *The Similitude of Blossoms: A Critical Biography of Izumi Kyōka (1873- 1939), Japanese Novelist and Playwright*. Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 1998.

Ivy, Marilyn. *Discourses of the Vanishing: Modernity, Phantasm, Japan*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Izumi Kyōka 泉鏡花. *Shokō: Sankai hyōban ki* 初稿・山海評判記. Edited by Tanaka Reigi 田中励儀. Tokyo: Kokusho kankō kai, 2014.

James, M. R. "A View from a Hill." In *Collected Ghost Stories*, edited by Darryl Jones, 326–342. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

———. *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary*. London: Edward Arnold, 1904.

Jewel, Mark. "Risks and Rewards: Reading *Nihonbashi* as a Gothic Novel." *Hikaku bungaku nenshi* 比較文学年誌 39 (2003): 1–23.

Kamei Hideo. *Transformations of Sensibility: The Phenomenology of Meiji Literature*. Translated by Michael Bourdaghs, et al. Edited by Michael Bourdaghs. Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 2002.

Kanebishi Kiyoshi 金菱清. "Hajime ni: Yobisamasareru reisei" はじめに――呼び覚まされる霊性. In *Yobisamasareru reisei no shinsaigaku: 3.11 sei to shi no hazama de* 呼び覚まされる霊性の震災学　３・11 生と死のはざまで, edited by Tōhoku Gakuin Daigaku shinsai no kiroku purojekuto 東北学院大学 震災の記録プロジェクト and Kanebishi Kiyoshi (Zemināru) 金菱清（ゼミナール）, vii–xvi. Tokyo: Shin'yōsha, 2016.

Karatani Kōjin. *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*. Translated by Brett de Bary, et al. Edited by Brett de Bary. Durham: Duke University Press, 1998.

Kawana, Sari. *Murder Most Modern: Detective Fiction and Japanese Culture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008.

Kōda Rohan 幸田露伴. "Tai dokuro (En gai en)" 対髑髏（縁外縁）. In *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei: Meiji hen*, vol. 22: *Kōda Rohan shū* 新日本古典文学大系　明治編 22 幸田露伴集, edited by Noborio Yutaka 登尾豊, Sekiya Hiroshi 関谷博, Nakano Mitsutoshi 中野三敏, and Hida Kōzō 肥田晧三, 249–287. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2002.

Koschmann, J. Victor. "Folklore Studies and the Conservative Anti-Establishment in Modern Japan." In *International Perspectives on Yanagita Kunio and Japanese Folklore Studies*, edited by J. Victor Koschmann, Ōiwa Keibō, and Yamashita Shinji, 131–164. Ithaca: Cornell University East Asia Papers, 1985.

Krzywinska, Tanya. "Lurking beneath the skin: British pagan landscapes in popular cinema." In *Cinematic countrysides*, edited by Robert Fish, 75–90. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2007.

Kudō Yuka 工藤優花. "Shisha-tachi ga kayou machi: Takushī doraibā no yūrei genshō" 死者たちが通う街——タクシードライバーの幽霊現象. In *Yobisamasareru reisei no shinsaigaku: 3.11 sei to shi no hazama de* 呼び覚まされる霊性の震災学　３・11 生と死のはざまで, edited by Tōhoku Gakuin Daigaku shinsai no kiroku purojekuto 東北学院大学 震災の記録プロジェクト and Kanebishi Kiyoshi (Zemināru) 金菱清（ゼミナール）, 1–23. Tokyo: Shin'yōsha, 2016.

Kuroki Aruji 黒木あるじ. "Kaidan no 'chikara'" 怪談の「力」. In *Nagisa ni te: Ano hi kara no <Michinoku kaidan>* 渚にて　あの日からの＜みちのく怪談＞, edited by Tōhoku kaidan dōmei 東北怪談同盟, 18–20. Sendai: Ara Emishi, 2016.

Long, Hoyt. *On Uneven Ground: Miyazawa Kenji and the Making of Place in Modern Japan*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012.

Maeda Hayao 前田速夫. *Shiro no minzokugaku e: Shirayama shinkō no nazo o otte* 白の民俗学へ　白山信仰の謎を追って. Tokyo: Kawade shobō shinsha, 2006.

Matsumoto Seichō 松本清張. "Yami ni kakeru ryōjū" 闇に駆ける猟銃. In *Misuterī no keifu* ミステリーの系譜, 5–104. Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1968.

Meiji-ki kaii yōkai kiji shiryō shūsei 明治期怪異妖怪記事資料集成. Edited by Yumoto Kōichi 湯本豪一. Tokyo: Kokusho kankō kai, 2004.

Mizuno Yōshū 水野葉舟. "Kitaguni no hito" 北国の人. In *Tōno monogatari no shūhen* 遠野物語の周辺, edited by Yokoyama Shigeo 横山茂雄, 9–29. Tokyo: Kokusho kankō kai, 2001.

"Monsters! Monsters! Read All about It!: Tales of the Extraordinary from Early Meiji Newspapers (1875–1886)." Translated by Matthew Fraleigh. In *A Tokyo Anthology: Literature from Japan's Modern Metropolis, 1850–1920*, edited by Sumie Jones and Charles Shirō Inouye, 109–130. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2017.

Morris, Michael W., Kwok Leung, Daniel Ames, and Brian Lickel. "Views from Inside and Outside: Integrating Emic and Etic Insights about Culture and Justice Judgment." *Academy of Management Review* 24.4 (1999): 781–796.

Morris-Suzuki, Tessa. *Re-Inventing Japan: Time, Space, Nation*. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1998.

Morse, Ronald A. "Personalities and Issues in Yanagita Kunio Studies." *Japan Quarterly* 22.3 (1975): 239–254.

Murphy, Joseph A. "Conceptions of Equality in Izumi Kyōka's *Kechō*." In *New Directions in the Study of Meiji Japan*, edited by Helen Hardacre with Adam L. Kern, 246–269. Leiden: Brill, 1997.

Nakagawa, Chiho. "Desire for the Past: The Supernaturalization of *Yatsuhaka-mura*." In *Transnational Horror Across Visual Media: Fragmented Bodies*, edited by Dana Och and Kirsten Strayer, 30–43. New York: Routledge, 2014.

Napier, Susan J. *The Fantastic in Modern Japanese Literature: The Subversion of Modernity*. New York: Routledge, 1996.

Okuno Shūji 奥野修司. *Tamashii de mo ii kara, soba ni ite: 3.11 go no rei taiken o kiku* 魂でもいいから、そばにいて　３・11 後の霊体験を聞く. Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 2017.

Ortabasi, Melek. *The Undiscovered Country: Text, Translation, and Modernity in the Work of Yanagita Kunio*. Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2014.

Ōtsubo Naoyuki 大坪直行. "Kaisetsu" 解説. In Yokomizo Seishi 横溝正史, *Inugami-ke no ichizoku* 犬神家の一族. Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1972.

Ōtsuka Eiji 大塚英志. *Kaidan zengo: Yanagita minzokugaku to shizenshugi* 怪談前後──柳田民俗学と自然主義. Tokyo: Kadokawa gakugei shuppan, 2007.

Poulton, Cody. "The Grotesque and Gothic: Izumi Kyōka's Japan." *Japan Quarterly* 41.3 (1994): 324–335.

Punter, David. *The Literature of Terror: A History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the Present Day: Volume 1: The Gothic Tradition*. New York: Longman Publishing, 1996.

Reider, Noriko T. *Tales of the Supernatural in Early Modern Japan:* Kaidan*, Akinari,* Ugetsu Monogatari. Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002.

Ridgely, Steven C. *Japanese Counterculture: The Antiestablishment Art of Terayama Shūji*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010.

Robins, Christopher A. "Narrating Tono: Yanagita Kunio, Sasaki Kizen & Inoue Hisashi." In *Yanagita Kunio and Japanese Folklore Studies in the 21st Century*, edited by Ronald A. Morse, 63–79. Kawaguchi City: Japanime Co. Ltd., 2012.

Sasaki Kizen 佐々木喜善. Letter to Yanagita Kunio 柳田國男, June 18, 1910. In *Sasaki Kizen zenshū* 佐々木喜善全集, vol. 4, 1. Tōno: Tōno shiritsu hakubutsukan, 2003.

———. "Omaku" 念惑. In *Sasaki Kizen zenshū* 佐々木喜善全集, vol. 2, 32. Tōno: Tōno shiritsu hakubutsukan, 1987.

———. "Tate no ie" 舘の家. In *Sasaki Kizen zenshū* 佐々木喜善全集, vol. 2, 8–14. Tōno: Tōno shiritsu hakubutsukan, 1987.

Schreiber, Mark. *The Dark Side: Infamous Japanese Crimes and Criminals*. Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2001.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions*. New York: Methuen, 1986.

Shimizu Jun 清水潤. *Kyōka to yōkai* 鏡花と妖怪. Edited by Kaii kaidan kenkyūkai 怪異怪談研究会. Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 2018.

Sutō Ayane 須藤文音. "Shiroi hanabira" 白い花弁. In *Nagisa ni te: Ano hi kara no <Michinoku kaidan>* 渚にて　あの日からの＜みちのく怪談＞, Edited by Tōhoku kaidan dōmei 東北怪談同盟, 137–138. Sendai: Ara Emishi, 2016.

Terai Hiroki 寺井広樹 and Murakami Noriko 村神徳子. *Tōhoku no kowai hanashi* 東北の怖い話. Tokyo: TO bukkusu, 2016.

Tierney, Robert. *Tropics of Savagery: The Culture of Japanese Empire in Comparative Frame*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2010.

Tominaga Maki 富永真樹. "'Monogatari' ga tou mono: Izumi Kyōka *Sankai hyōban ki* to Komura Settai no sashie kara" 〈物語〉が問うもの――泉鏡花「山海評判記」と小村雪岱の挿絵から――. *Mita kokubun* 三田國文 60 (2015): 52–85.

———. "Tochi no kami ga 'kaii' ni naru toki: Izumi Kyōka *Sankai hyōban ki* kara" 土地の神が〈怪異〉になるとき――泉鏡花「山海評判記」から. In *Kaii no jikū 1: Kaii o aruku* 怪異の時空 1　怪異を歩く, edited by Ichiyanagi Hirotaka 一柳廣孝 with Imai Hidekazu 今井秀和 and Ōmichi Haruka 大道晴香, 137–156. Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 2016.

Tōno-gaku 遠野学. Vol. 2. Edited by Akasaka Norio 赤坂憲雄. Tōno City: Tōno bunka kenkyū sentā, 2013.

Vincent, J. Keith. *Two-Timing Modernity: Homosocial Narrative in Modern Japanese Fiction*. Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2012.

Yamada Norio 山田野理夫. *Tōno monogatari no hito: Wa ga Sasaki Kizen den* 遠野物語の人わが佐々木喜善伝. Tokyo: Tsubaki shoin, 1974.

———. *Yanagita Kunio no hikari to kage: Sasaki Kizen monogatari* 柳田国男の光と影佐々木喜善物語. Tokyo: Nōsan gyoson bunka kyōkai, 1977.

Yamaguchi Bintarō 山口敏太郎. "Mura-kei toshi densetsu" 村系都市伝説. http://blog.goo.ne.jp/youkaiou/e/c99db61a0ddb757c20c57da1e4307179.

Yanagita Kunio 柳田國男. "Miko-kō" 巫女考. In *Ryūka sōsho: Sankai hyōban ki/Oshira-gami no hanashi* 柳花叢書　山海評判記／オシラ神の話, edited by Higashi Masao 東雅夫, 361–470. Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 2013.

———. "Tōno monogatari" 遠野物語. In *Yanagita Kunio zenshū* 柳田國男全集, vol. 2, 7–76. Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1997.

Yokomizo Seishi 横溝正史. *Yatsuhaka-mura* 八つ墓村. Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1971.