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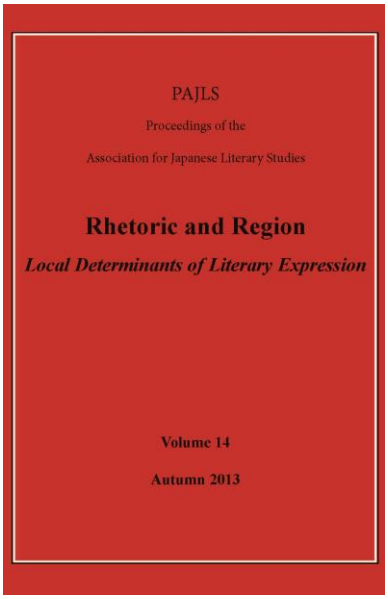

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Images of Kanazawa in Izumi Kyōka's *Yuna no tamashii*

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The Toyama region (modern-day Toyama Prefecture) occupies a special place in the body of Izumi Kyōka's work. Mountains stretching beyond Kanazawa, the Ishikawa Prefecture's capital, where Kyōka grew up and lived until the age of seventeen, are in Charles Shiro Inouye's words, a "space of loss and confusion, a sacred and threatening territory where the impossible becomes possible."[1] Kanazawa is also, as Tamaki Anakura has written, the "native landscape of Izumi Kyōka's literature."[2] If we are to consider, as readers, Freud's notion of poetic creation as the extension of child's play, the presence and image of the Toyama and Hokuriku regions in Izumi Kyōka's writing, those worlds inhabited by monsters and apparitions and abound with magic and the supernatural, fits the Freudian concept of the "world of fantasy," one, which the writer "invests with large amounts of emotion – while separating it sharply from reality."[3] It is, however, the second part of the Freudian formula that offers a challenge to and a decoding device for reading Kyōka's texts. For Izumi Kyōka's vision precludes any such separation of fantasy from reality; *chūkan*, the ill-defined space between the worlds is where Kyōka's *iroha no toku*, the "power of letters" resides."[4] While the Toyama region is the setting of many of Kyōka's works dealing with the supernatural, it is much more than a mere geographical feature; it is part of Kyōka's cosmology, and as such, it represents not so much a topographical referent, as a state of mind, a peculiar kind of vision, and a geographical extension of the *chūkan* concept. The supernatural, dwelling in the Toyama region, does not provide an opposing force, or a counterpart to modernity in Kyōka's writing; rather, it seeps through the many *sukima* – holes in the fabric of existence, as Kyōka perceived it, contaminating the modern world, but also rendering it one with itself.

Izumi Kyōka's work has long been seen by the literary critics and historians of Japanese literature as a counter-thesis to modernity. Kyōka has been variously described as opposing, undermining, and countering the idiosyncratic changes of the Japanese society and psyche brought about by the myriad reforms introduced during the Meiji era. In this vein, Izumi Kyōka's recourse to and use of the themes of the supernatural is seen as a literary tool of countering the onslaught of the modern age. Using my translation of

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[1] Charles Shiro Inouye, *The similitude of blossoms: a critical biography of Izumi Kyōka (1873-1939), Japanese novelist and playwright* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Asia Center, 1998), p. 9.

[2] Anakura Tamaki. In *Izumi Kyōka: bi to gen'ei no majutsushi, Bessetsu Taiyō: Nihon no kokoro* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2010), p. 45.

[3] Sigmund Freud, "Creative Writers and Daydreaming," in *Freud Reader* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1989), p. 437.

[4] Inoue, p. 118.

Kyōka's novel, *Yuna no tamashii* (The Spirit of the Bath Girl, 1900), I will argue that the prevailing paradigm is somewhat two-dimensional, and that a more complex picture could be gleaned from some aspects of Kyōka's writing, namely the role of geography and space play in his work. I will attempt to show that Kyōka's treatment of space is suggestive of a more complex relationship with modernity, namely, that it is evocative of a symbiotic, rather than adversarial relationship between modernity and the supernatural.

While the eye travels downward, following the vertical strings of Izumi Kyōka's text, flowing from top to bottom, the mind's eye tracks the narration from right to left, following the direction of the printed narrative. Somewhere between these two directions, at the cross-section of the upper and the lower, the dextral and the sinistral, is located a third dimension of Izumi Kyōka's writing – the extra-dimensional literary space of the other-worldly and the supernatural. This is an attempt to map out this extra dimension, to give it form, render it visible, albeit temporarily, in order to come to a better understanding of the role of language and image in Izumi Kyōka's vision of the world of Meiji-era Japan. In François Lachaud's words, "In Japan, as elsewhere, the fantastic has always had a privileged connection with the past. Above all, it is an inventory, a re-reading of it; better still: a constant dialogue with it."[5] Izumi Kyōka's stories of the supernatural are no exception: having distinct antecedents in the Japanese literary past, they are inhabited by ghosts and monstrous apparitions, haunted by spectral metamorphoses and transformations, and are a literary space, as some researchers believe, where the old Japan found refuge from the relentless onslaught of Meiji reforms and modernization.

Even the basic premise of *Yuna no tamashii*'s story is borrowed from the classical Chinese tales of the supernatural, of the kind that describe some promising student's encounter with the demonic forces, usually far from what is seen as "civilization," such as an abandoned mansion, the woods, or the mountains. Having employed this form, Kyōka's vision is engaged in a dialogue with the past, drawing from it, basing itself on it, but at the same time, re-inventing and re-envisioning the physical, spiritual, and literary space of Meiji Japan, in which the story is set. Kyōka's reinvention of the past, his redefinition of the relationship between the past and the present, can be explored via his handling of such notions as space, movement, and travel. *Yuna no tamashii* provides interesting material for exploring Kyōka's treatment of those concepts. Kyōka's use of language in defining and redefining space can in itself be an informative tool in researching his work, especially in the current philological paradigm of seeing his literature as opposing modernity.

Izumi Kyōka's work has long been seen as an antithesis, a "counter-discourse" to Meiji modernity. Susan Napier wrote that, "he [Kyōka] offered in place of a new order, a return to a magical past."[6] On the surface at least, *Yuna no tamashii* lends itself particularly

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[5] François Lachaud, "La Belle Dame sans Merci: Les Fantômes médiévaux a l'âge moderne," *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie*, v. 13, (2002), p. 313.

[6] Susan Napier, *The Fantastic in Modern Japanese Literature: The Subversion of Modernity* (London: Nissan Institute/Routledge Japanese Studies Series, 1996), p. 34.

well to the reading and interpretation of Kyōka's work as "undermining" modernity. Indeed, the storyline, if rendered to its structural skeleton, can be seen as "counter-modern": one Komiyama Ryōsuke, a student from Tokyo and a smug and shallow character, travels the Japanese countryside, with the specific purpose of meeting a particularly beautiful bath courtesan (*yuna*) recommended to him by his friend Shinoda back in Tokyo. The reader does not know what kind of a student Komiyama is; no mention is ever made of what it is he is studying, but we can be certain of one thing—he he is not perusing old classics in order to become a government official.

Though Japan never had the Chinese examination system, the choice of a student for the protagonist may have been a deliberate reference to the classical Chinese tales of the supernatural along Pu Songling's and Yuan Mei's lines, and the text of the novel leaves the unequivocal impression that Komiyama is, in fact, an antithesis to the "old" kind of a student in the classical Confucian sense, and represents the "new" kind, modern and enlightened, the kind that the new Meiji elite is made up of. He belongs or will belong, in Kyōka's words, to "the bearded, those who are wheeled about in rickshaw carts, and those who are wearing overcoats."[7] Kyōka's language and treatment of Komiyama is also vaguely suggestive of the author's "vehement opposition" to modernity: the reader is left with an unmistakable feeling that the student is a suitably smug and self-contented fellow, shallow, superficial, and one-dimensional.[8] In short, he is thoroughly "modern" in the worst sense of the word, in the sense that contemporary researchers attribute to Kyōka's own view of modernity, to his "disdain for the crass, unfeeling world of *risshin shusse*, the Meiji-period (1868-1912) ethic of 'success at all costs."[9] Komiyama's image is, at times, bordering on comic, which, admittedly, is an unflattering view of someone epitomizing modernity.

Komiyama travels in Etchū (modern-day Toyama Prefecture), and there, in a remote Ogawa mountain hot springs inn, he encounters the purpose of his travels and the object of his curiosity – an exceptionally beautiful hot springs maiden by the name of Oyuki. From the staff of the bath house Komiyama learns that Oyuki has taken to bed with a mysterious illness that no amount of care or medicine can cure; fear of supernatural possession hangs in the air at the inn. Komiyama, the self-styled "Child of Edo," a term, which came to mean a native of Tokyo, and paragon of urban modernity in notions outright.[10]

Meeting Oyuki and seeing how frail, worn, and tormented she has become, Komiyama feels pity for her and agrees to everyone's unusual request—to spend the night by Oyuki's side. When the two of them are alone, Oyuki recounts the nature and history of

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[7] Izumi Kyōka, "Katsushika Sunago," in vol. 5 of *Kyōka zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1973), p. 408.
[8] Maeda Ai, "Kyokaisenjo no bungaku: Kyōka sekai no genkyō," *Kokubungaku*, v. 30: 7, (1985), p. 16.
[9] Izumi Kyōka, *Japanese Gothic Tales*, trans. Charles Shirō Inouye (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996), p. 3.
[10] Kawakami Chiyoko, "The Metropolitan Uncanny in the Works of Izumi Kyoka: A Counter-Discourse on Japan's Modernization," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, v. 59: 2, (1999), p. 561.

her illness and in the course of the conversation, Komiyama learns that every night Oyuki is visited by a goddess-like supernatural being, who takes her outside and subjects her to excruciating torments in order to rid Oyuki of her love for Shinoda, Komiyama's friend back in Tokyo. Albeit sympathetic to the girl's obvious physical suffering and her plight, Komiyama is nonetheless dismissive of any notions of the supernatural; in fact, he attempts to cheer the girl up, attributing her condition to a simple neurological ailment. In line with the modern fad, Komiyama uses the word *shinkei* (神経, nerves), a concept and a word that became fashionable around mid-Meiji.[11] One cannot help but wonder at this point in the narrative, whether Komiyama is actually a student of Western medicine. However, later that same night, his world is turned upside-down.

To his horror, he witnesses the exact scenes Oyuki describes, meets the terrifying entity tormenting Oyuki, and finds himself in the goddess's otherworldly abode. There, Komiyama is "entrusted" with the girl's spirit, and told to take it all the way back to Tokyo. Thus, Komiyama (and, ostensibly, the entire Meiji modernity in his person) faces the first shock when he discovers that Oyuki was not delusional at all, and that the realm of the supernatural does exist, since he himself has entered it. However, the modern "subject-citizen" is not to be swayed easily, and on the way back to Tokyo, the reader is given a hint that Komiyama is inclined to treat the whole incident as *his own* delusion, when he thinks, on the way back in a train, how ludicrous it would be to believe that the deity could really charge him with Oyuki's spirit. However, upon his arrival in Tokyo, he is stunned to find out from Shinoda that Oyuki, whom he left unconscious back in the Ogawa inn, had just arrived; apparently, Shinoda was convinced Komiyama brought her to Tokyo with him. When the friends enter the room where Oyuki was supposedly sitting "up until now," it is empty: Oyuki is nowhere to be found. Later, when the two of them write a letter to the Kashiwaya hot springs inn, they receive a reply that Oyuki had passed away.

The modern "subject-citizen" receives the second shock; not only does the supernatural exist, but he himself has served as its hapless vehicle in the most direct and physical sense, delivering Oyuki's spirit from Etchū to Tokyo. Thus, in the eyes of researchers who see Kyōka's work as an antithesis to Meiji modernity, modernity suffers defeat at the hands of the old Japan, the Japan of the ghosts, spirits, and apparitions.

This defeat is all the more poignant since one of the most important Meiji-era's public education projects was specifically directed at eradicating the populace's belief in monsters and spirits, and aimed at replacing the fear of the supernatural (化物, *bakemono*, 妖怪, *yōkai*) with the fear of the natural (disease, blindness, madness).[12] In *Yuna no tamashii*, "progress" is powerless before the very world it attempted to exercise control over. One element of that defeat is Kyōka's construction of space and movement in the

[11] Gerald Figal, *Civilization and Monsters: Spirits of Modernity in Meiji Japan* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999), p. 29.
[12] Ibid., p. 92.

novel, for his treatment of those notions is a tool he employs to reinvent both modernity and old Japan.

It is this physical aspect of movement and space in Kyōka's *Yuna no tamashii* that I would like to explore. Much of the novel's narrative consists of movement—movement through both the physical and the metaphysical space. The actual narrative begins with Komiyama's travel from Tokyo along the Hokuriku Highway in Etchū Province to the Ogawa hot springs inn called Kashiwaya. When Komiyama arrives in the town of Tomari, he has the chance to rest at a teahouse and take in his surroundings, "A fairly prosperous place, the town was along the highway, which was facing the sea, so there was no space for expanding, and the commercial area was cramped" (5, 668).[13] A small town, squeezed between the rough sea in the front, and mountains in the back:

> Thirty- to fifty-ton ships like "Ichigo-maru" and "Kannon-maru," passed each other in the offing, their smoke thick—as if from exertion of crossing such a violent sea—which darkens the sea and makes the scene seem all the more valiant.
>
> At the rear of the teahouse, mountains upon mountains, like ridges of high waves, waves higher than the surface of the sea itself, which had calmed that day. (5, 669)

In the above description of the scenery, as seen through Komiyama's eyes, the key elements framing the scene are the ships in the sea to the front and the mountains in the back, with a cramped town squeezed in between. The description is a fitting metaphor for Japan of the early twentieth century: on the one end of the space-time continuum, thirty- to fifty-ton modern steel-clad ships out at sea, epitomizing Meiji's technological progress and industrial might, and suggestive of future naval expansion. Indeed, only five years after the publication of *Yuna no tamashii* in 1900, that same modernity that put Ichigo-maru and Kannon-maru in the scene above, ensured Japan's naval supremacy at the battle of Tsushima in 1905 during the Russo-Japanese War.

On the opposite end, in the back of the scene, behind the inn where Komiyama is resting are "mountains upon mountains," long associated in Japanese tradition with the supernatural, the fantastic, and the transcendental. This second extreme is further elaborated later in the novel, as it is there that the protagonist finds the mysterious woman's shed, in which one of the climactic moments takes place. Between these two extremes is the "Tokugawa-era designated way station," where Komiyama's travels took him during his travel from Tokyo, and from which he is soon to set off into the mountains. The two visual elements framing the scene—the ships on the one hand and the mountain shed, on

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[13] Parenthetical page citations refer to volume and page of Izumi Kyōka, *Kyōka zenshū*, 29 vols. (Tokyo, Iwanami Shoten, 1973). Translations of *Yuna no tamashii* are my own.

the other, are chronotopical elements in the Bakhtinian sense: they encapsulate in themselves notions of both time and space, and are reference markers both geographically and historically.

Komiyama's travels include the towns of Iwase, Yokkaichi, and Uotsu in Toyama Prefecture, followed by the towns of Itoigawa, Seki, Oyashirazu, and Gochi, ending at the town of Tomari. Komiyama's travel from Tokyo to Etchū has been rectilinear thus far, and therefore, quite modern; the reader can safely assume that he took the train from Tokyo in order to get to the Sea of Japan side of the country, and then, as the novel says, boarded the steamboat at Fushiki. In other words, the linear movement that takes Komiyama from Tokyo to Tomari is representative of modernity: he uses thoroughly modern means of transportation, which carry him along the straightest possible routes between different points of his journey. In fact, it would probably be safe to say, that while Komiyama's travel remains rectilinear, he remains in the familiar, modern and physical space of Meiji Japan.

Here, in Tomari, however, much like in the Hida Mountains in *Kōya hijiri*, where the protagonist's map ceases to work, the train from Tokyo and the steamboat that Komiyama takes, can only get him so far. Oyuki, the object and goal of his travels is up in the mountains, and in order to continue along his chosen path, Komiyama must walk. Kyōka's choice of walking as Komiyama's mode of movement towards the Ogawa inn is significant for two reasons. First, as he sets out on his way to the Kashiwaya hot springs inn, the space he traverses is no longer the familiar physical space of Meiji Japan, but is now a metaphysical space; he is now in the supernatural world of the mountains, of the spirits, the ghosts, and the deities. Komiyama's is now an otherworldly journey; much like Ishtar shedding her clothes on her way to the underworld, Komiyama, approaching his destination, is forced to shed layers of modernity, in this case, not only is he no longer able to use trains or steamboats to travel to his destination, he literally has to give up the most basic form of civilization—the wheel (of the rickshaw cart).

Another reason for Komiyama's having to walk is the nature of the entity he is on his way to meet: the terrifying deity tormenting Oyuki is quite unlike the beautiful female sorceress elsewhere in Kyōka's stories. Komiyama does indeed find himself in the underworld. If the witch in *Kōya hijiri* is primarily beautiful, seductive, and alluring, with a hint and a promise of danger, the female deity in *Yuna no tamashii* is outright frightful. No mention is made in the text of her beauty; on the contrary, the word Kyōka uses most frequently to describe her is *osoroshii*, 可恐し (frightful, terrifying). Not for her the ambiguous seductive advances, unspoken allusions, and psychological tensions that characterize the relationship between the protagonist and the witch in *Kōya hijiri*; hers is the realm of power and fear, as attested to by both Oyuki and Komiyama. She is the queen of the night, deity of the abject, and as such, she is a chthonic deity, associated with the underworld. Her shape-shifting, turning into a bat, only strengthens this association; not only are bats, being nocturnal creatures, associated with the night, with the cavernous

underworld and the mountains, the treatment of the bat in the text is rather peculiar—for the most part, it does not fly high up in the air, but remains close to the ground, crawling and creeping about Oyuki's bed. Komiyama's going by foot from Naoetsu to the Kashiwaya hot springs inn with the resulting physical proximity to the earth puts him firmly within the terrifying deity's grasp and in her power.

The next description of space that the reader encounters in *Yuna no tamashii* is that of the Kashiwaya inn. From the Naoetsu tea house owner's description we learn that the inn at Ogawa consists of four or five two-storey buildings. When Komiyama arrives, he is taken to the inner room, a 160 square-foot space with an alcove. Several details stand out in the description of the inn: first, due to the off-season period, it is practically deserted when Komiyama arrives. The stage is set for the forthcoming encounter with the demonic; much as in Pu Songling's classical Chinese stories of the supernatural, the Kashiwaya inn is characterized by the feeling of abandonment, the sense of desolation.

> [T]here were no guests to speak of staying there. Both the first and second floors were empty.
>
> It was as if Komiyama had encountered a deserted ship [wreck] huddled in the shadow of the mountain. (5, 673)

The description of the scene leaves the reader wondering whether Komiyama, indeed, may be the *only* guest at the inn. Another aspect of this description of the Kashiwaya inn is, paradoxically, the people he encounters there, for they are part of that space in ways that are not immediately apparent. From the start, the personnel are enumerated by Kyōka, as follows: "The woman who welcomed him at the reception area when he arrived, the woman who guided him to his room, the woman who brought him the *yukata*, the woman who offered to wash his back in the bathing pool, each one had been different" (5, 674). In this sentence, four female servants are thus in attendance. Later on, in the following conversation between Komiyama and one of the serving girls, this is confirmed again, when Komiyama asks,

> "This is the Kashiwaya then. Are you here alone, young lady?"
> "In all, there are four of us here."
> "Four? I see. Four."
> "Yes, Okiyo-san, Omitsu-san, Oyuki-san, and myself." (5, 675)

Again, four female servants are mentioned, including the one Komiyama is speaking with. However, hers is an eerie presence. Discussing aspects of Kyōka's language, Chiyoko Kawakami makes note of an interesting linguistic peculiarity encountered in Kyōka's ghost stories: in a conversation between a protagonist and a ghost, there is little meaningful exchange between the two, as in the following example from *Yōjutsu*,

"And your name?"
"My name? Woman…"
"Woman. Yeah, it makes sense. And your age?"
"My age is… old." [14]

The ghostly woman in *Yōjutsu* evades the protagonist's questions, deflects them and though the two of them seemingly speak the same language, there is little meaningful communication between them, despite it outwardly having the form of a dialogue. As Kawakami notes, "The sign exists, but it never specifies its meaning."[15] Remarkably, the dialogue between Komiyama and the serving girl in *Yuna no tamashii* follows the same pattern when Komiyama attempts to learn the girl's name:

"What did you say your name was?"
"I only greeted you, sir. I've got no name. I'm a nobody." (5, 676)

The communication between them evolves into a ritual, as it continues more or less along the same lines later on:

"What is your name?"
"I'm Kashiwaya." (5, 676)

Komiyama insists more than once, always with the same result,

"Really, tell me your name, won't you?"
"Kashiwaya, sir."
"I am asking you your own name"
"Kashiwaya, sir." (5, 677)

Indeed, Rosemary Jackson's notion of "semiotic excess" coupled with "semiotic vacuity"[16] quoted by Kawakami in the context of *Yōjutsu*, seems equally applicable to *Yuna no tamashii*. The sign is there, but the meaning is not. What is the reader to make of this bizarre exchange between Komiyama and the girl, who wishes to remain unknown to him (and to us) for mysterious reasons? One possibility that could shed some light on this bizarre series of exchanges (especially in the context of our discussion of Kyōka's language of the otherworldly space) is that the choice to be nameless can be seen as a linguistic equivalent of being faceless; in the context of the Japanese literary tradition of the

[14] Kawakami, p. 571.
[15] Ibid., p. 571.
[16] Rosemary Jackson, *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*, (London; New York: Methuen, 1981), p. 41.

supernatural, it is the linguistic equivalent of a *nopperabō* (のっぺら坊), the uniquely Japanese ghostly apparition that is known for not having a face. This may be another indication for the reader to treat the Kashiwaya inn as an otherworldly, metaphysical space inhabited by ghosts and apparitions, where the usual laws of reason and logic are not applicable, and where the language itself is warped and the usual linguistic signs do not carry the same meaning as they would in a "normal" world based on what Kawakami terms as "conventions of realism."[17]

If we are to treat the Kashiwaya girl as a ghostly presence, then she herself is part of that otherworldly space of the Kashiwaya inn and is not so much a character as a spatial referent. However, the strange maid's presence is not the only hint to the reader that not everything is as it seems at the Kashiwaya inn. Komiyama is either the only guest at the inn, or one of the few; however, it does not explain the fact that from the moment he arrives, the "treatment accorded him seemed inappropriate to his mean appearance." Not only is Komiyama pampered and indulged, he appears to be the object of everyone's unusual attention; there is a distinct impression that, unwittingly, Komiyama is being cast for a role or, on a more chilling note, that once he is inside Kashiwaya, he is wholly in the possession of some unearthly power, watching him, appraising, and calculating. The hunter, who had been hunting Oyuki, has become the hunted. From the inn's master, who studied Komiyama's face intently in the course of a conversation, to the mysterious maid who refused to be named (and was probably the one listening in to the conversation from behind the *shoji*, in the hallway at the end of Chapter VIII), there are hints interspersed throughout the description of Kashiwaya that suggest that something more than simple hospitality is afoot.

I mention the hallway outside Komiyama's room for a reason. Another important descriptive element in Kyōka's treatment of space is the use of the hallway/corridor, *rōka* (廊下). Every time it appears in the novel, it is suggestive of a passage between worlds and states, serving as a bridge, either between reality and a dream, or alternatively, separating one dream from another. There are three distinct instances of hallways appearing in *Yuna no tamashii*. First is Komiyama's description of his acquaintance's delirium, which includes a passage along a corridor towards a washroom, the passage at the end of which, an encounter with the frightful hag awaits. Interestingly, although the description of Komiyama's encounter with the spectral woman is presented as a passage from reality into a nightmare, the two states separated by her passage through the hallway, the status of the story itself is ambiguous, as the reader does not quite know where the reality ends, or indeed, if it ever began at all, since the entire story occupying Chapters XII through XIII is hearsay. We do not know whether the entire story is a figment of her imagination, whether some of it took place in the physical world, or indeed, all of it. However, assuming that the story does deal with the physical reality of the Shitaya daimyo's mansion, even if

[17] Kawakami, p. 571.

to a limited extent, the corridor between the woman's sleeping quarters and the washroom does serve to both separate and bridge the physical world of the Shitaya mansion and the metaphysical reality of the hag's presence.

The second instance of the corridor's appearance is the description of the woman's ascent towards the Tenmangu Shrine. Although, technically, not a corridor in the strictest sense of the word, to anyone familiar with the Japanese mountainous paths towards shrines, the ascent towards the top of the hill "up the steeper of the two paths," walled in on both sides by the centuries-old woods, fulfills the role of a corridor and has the same function of bridging two realities (albeit the same ambiguities and qualifiers apply as before). Assuming that the ascent took place in the physical world, yet another encounter with the transcendental was awaiting the protagonist at the top.

The corridor appears for the third time in *Yuna no tamashii* as the hallway outside Komiyama's sleeping quarters at Kashiwaya, the hallway where his encounter with the bat takes place. This corridor not only links Komiyama's sleeping quarters with the bat's presence, but in a larger sense, it bridges Komiyama's entire modern notion of reality with the "other side," with the mysterious woman's dilapidated shed. Komiyama encounters the monstrous bat in this warped netherworld of a space. The bat seeps through to the other side of the wall as though there was no wall, draws Oyuki out, and with her—Komiyama.

Thus begins the last leg of Komiyama's journey. Kyōka's obsession with the twilight, the "world of singularly subtle shades" and the "momentary space of moving from good to evil" contributes to the feeling of uncertainty and unsteadiness, tinged with dread in the corridor scene.[18] The description of that corridor is suitably "twilightized": the dim light of the lanterns, and the flickering of the light inside the room, illuminating the hallway in an eerie light both from within and without, all serve to create what is known as Kyōka's *chūkan* (中間), the middle world, the world between worlds. This corridor marks the appearance of the mysterious woman of Oyuki's story in the shape of a bat, and it is there that Komiyama enters into direct contact with the supernatural and the last part of his voyage begins. The encounter with the bat, begun in the hallway, takes Komiyama to the opposite extreme of the space-time continuum he had been hitherto traveling—the deity's abode in the netherworld.

Several images are used for her dwelling. An interesting metaphor used by the author describing the shed through Komiyama's perspective, is a "snail house" ((蝸牛みたような住居). This comparison is important for it conjures up two images essential to the reader's visualization of the deity's otherworldly dwelling: that of a shell, and that of a spiral. Both find descriptive confirmation in the text. The dwelling is shut, offering no entrance for the uninitiated and the uninvited. The comparison with the shell of a snail is also a chilling reminder: not only can the uninvited not enter, but the hapless victim cannot leave. Much like the snail's shell is twisted in a spiral pattern, so is the inside of the

[18] Figal, p. 1.

goddess's shed. Komiyama runs from one room to the next. Finding one room a mirror image of the previous one, he runs in circles, crossing the inside space in a manner that is unsupported by its outwardly appearance; it is too small to house all those rooms, the space itself is warped inside the deity's hut.

Several more details stand out from the description of the goddess's dwelling: it is linked to the Kashiwaya inn in more ways than one. One of the most obvious indications is that at the end of the encounter, Komiyama instantaneously finds himself back in his sleeping room at Kashiwaya. One gets the feeling that he may not have left at all and the reader is once again left wondering whether we are dealing with the 'normative' physical space and movement, a metaphysical world, or a dream. Another mysterious link between the goddess's space and the Kashiwaya inn is the image of the god of medicine (草を銜えた神農様の像) holding medicinal herbs in the alcove, present in both places.

Essentially, Oyuki's and Komiyama's descriptions of the woman's shed match, so the image the reader gets of the outside of the shed in Chapter X and Chapter XV is essentially identical: a dilapidated hut, shut from the outside, without a slit of a window or door. However, there is an interesting discrepancy between Oyuki's description of the inside of the shed, and Komiyama's. To Oyuki, the inside of the shed appeared "overflowing with mold," yet to Komiyama's eyes, it was pristine and spotlessly clean. The image of that space, as seen through Oyuki's eyes, clearly conveys a sense of decay; it is reminiscent of deathly putrefaction, and is teeming with morbid death-associated artifacts, replete with the smell.

Why such divergence of perspectives? It appears that Oyuki's horror is of a different nature than Komiyama's: while Komiyama's reaction is that of an incredulous "modern" man faced with the unexpected and the incomprehensible, Oyuki never questions the world where she is taken by the deity, and she experiences it in a much more painfully vivid way. She herself is part of the deity's world; she is an insider, while Komiyama is a passer-by. In a curious twist, an exchange of worlds and spaces takes place at the end of *Yuna no tamashii*. While Oyuki's spirit, which in the novel's (and ostensibly, Kyōka's) understanding, is Oyuki herself, is being sent to Shinoda in Tokyo, "she" is physically relocating to and becoming part of the modern world. Conversely, Komiyama, who had previously been living in the thoroughly modern world unconcerned with deities, ghosts, and spirits, is thrust into a mysterious world in the course of his experience at Kashiwaya, and having been allowed inside, is marked by it, albeit temporarily, becoming part of it, as there are indications that he is a changed man in Tokyo.

Komiyama's genuine horror described at the end of the novel when he learns that Shinoda did encounter Oyuki, indicates that Komiyama now carries inside him the supernatural space he had been drawn into and allowed to enter. For how long? Kawakami makes note of a structural technique employed by Kyōka in his ghost stories, whereby the "ghost story characteristically ends abruptly—while the protagonist is still dumbstruck, the

ghost swiftly disappears out of sight."[19] *Yuna no tamashii* also follows this formula and Oyuki's spirit disappears after showing up once; we do not know if she reappears later and the reader is left guessing the future development between Shinoda and Oyuki. However, there are linguistic indications that the effects of this excursion into the other world were not permanent. Kyōka informs us that the two friends could not forget the anniversary of Oyuki's death (which, obviously, encapsulates everything else as well) for a long time, *nagaku* (長く). However long that may be, it is ultimately, a finite measure of time. It is also a curious indication that Oyuki's spirit may not have lingered in Tokyo, and one is left wondering in what other space—physical or literary—it eventually found refuge. Kyōka's work is voluminous, and since ghosts in modern urban space came to occupy Kyōka's imagination at some point in his literary career, the reader can only hope that somewhere in the 29-volume collection of his works, Oyuki's spirit may eventually be encountered again, even if under a different name.

Komiyama's travel to Toyama Prefecture, his visit to the Kashiwaya inn, and the subsequent travel by Oyuki and Komiyama from Ogawa back to Tokyo is movement that can be seen as occurring on both the physical and metaphysical planes. They travel between worlds and the way that movement is rendered in the text, the descriptions of the spaces that are traversed in the process, may be suggestive of how Kyōka envisioned the relationship between modernity and the supernatural. *Yuna no tamashii* was published in 1900, the same year as *Kōya hijiri*, yet there is an important structural difference between the two novels in how space and movement are rendered: unlike the protagonist's travel in *Kōya hijiri*, nowhere does Komiyama encounter clear boundaries between the worlds, and the novel's delineations between spaces are so vague that the reader is left in perplexed bewilderment as to what part of it is physical space, what part of it is supernatural reality, and what part of it, if any, is a dream. The lines between them are not just blurry, they are non-existent. No streams to cross, no snakes to step over, and no forests of leeches to traverse. Space in *Yuna no tamashii* can be likened to the Moebius's strip: the protagonist begins his travel in a rectilinear and modern fashion, taking trains and boarding steamboats, and in the end, finds himself *on the other side*, without ever crossing a boundary, without stepping sideways, and without even noticing. And with him—the reader.

Thus, the relationship between the modern and the supernatural worlds in *Yuna no tamashii* is akin to a gradient, a gradual and imperceptible change of colors, whereby our rational perception is unable to tell where one ends and the other begins. That gradual shift in space, the uncertainty of boundaries and absence of clearly visible markers between worlds is suggestive of what I had previously called the "symbiotic" rather than "adversarial" relationship between the reality of Meiji Japan and the supernatural world of Kyōka's conjuring. Kyōka's world is a multi-layered palimpsest, where the multiple strata overlaying each other are transparent, or perhaps, the fabric of one layer is porous, allowing us to see the layers underneath; hence in the modern world of trains and steamboats, we

[19] Kawakami, p. 572.

encounter deities, apparitions, and ghosts. The two worlds do not oppose each other, they are in a symbiotic relationship and are mutually dependent; whereas Komiyama and Oyuki are in the very real power of the deity while they are in her world, the goddess herself is quite helpless without Komiyama and literally needs him to board the train in order to carry Oyuki's spirit back to Tokyo.

The palimpsest-like quality of space in *Yuna no tamashii*, the smooth transitions between layers and types of reality, and the nature of the characters' movements between different planes of existence, are indications that the modern and the old, the physical and the metaphysical, the natural and the supernatural of Kyōka's world are in a relationship whose nature defies a simplistic binary and two-dimensional characterization of "counter-modern;" rather, it may be seen as offering new readings—not only of the "old," but perhaps, of the "modern" itself.

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