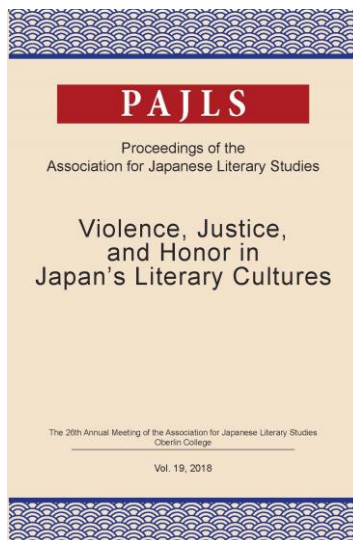


“When Elegance Becomes Inconvenient: Violence in Word and Deed in Nijō Yoshimoto’s *Ojima no kuchizusami* (Solace of Words at Ojima)”

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**WHEN ELEGANCE BECOMES INCONVENIENT:  
VIOLENCE IN WORD AND DEED IN NIJŌ YOSHIMOTO'S  
*OJIMA NO KUCHIZUSAMI* (SOLACE OF WORDS AT OJIMA)**

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At the turn of the fourteenth century, generations of strain upon imperial succession practices had led to a court fractured in violent political rivalry. By the 1350s, this generations-long conflict manifested as two would-be emperors and a range of symbols invested with political authority and the right to rule. To put it simply, the Southern Court, established by Emperor Go-Daigo 後醍醐 (1288–1339, r. 1318–1339) in Yoshino, maintained possession of the imperial regalia and claimed a pristine ancestral lineage to the earliest gods and sovereigns, a point that Kitabatake Chikafusa 北畠親房 (1293–1354) emphasized powerfully in his treatise, *Jinnō Shōtōki* 神皇正統記 (ca. 1339). The Northern Court held but one claim to imperial authority, but it was a powerful one: they occupied the imperial palace in the Capital (Kyoto). When there was an attack on the Capital in the sixth month of Bunwa 2 (文和 2 年 / 2.7.1353), Northern Court Emperor Go-Kōgon 後光嚴 (1338–1374, r. 1352–1371) was forced to flee. Accompanied by an entourage, he immediately sought refuge in Ojima, a remote landholding in Mino province, at a home of Toki Yoriyasu 土岐頼康 (1318–1388), the Mino provincial military governor (*shugo*).

This exile from the Capital left the Imperial Palace effectively vacant, and posed a significant threat to Go-Kōgon, a young and inexperienced emperor, when his other claims to power were tenuous at best. From the point of view of Emperor Go-Kōgon and his court, the ability to claim imperial legitimacy in a convincing way was at stake. Go-Kōgon's sponsor and military supporter, Ashikaga Takauji 足利尊氏 (1305–1358, in office 1338–1358), responded to this threat quickly by amassing an army and moving to run the Southern Court forces out of the Capital, reinstating Go-Kōgon in the imperial palace within a few short months.<sup>2</sup>

Nijō Yoshimoto 二条良基 (1320–1388), preeminent poet and regent to the emperor, describes this excruciating time of uncertainty in his travel diary, *Ojima no kuchizusami* 小島の口ずさみ (*Solace of Words at Ojima*,

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<sup>2</sup> For a detailed discussion and analysis of this series of these offensives by Go-Daigo's forces against the Capital in the aftermath of the Kannō disturbance of the Kannō 観応 era (1350–1351), see Conlan 2011.

1353).<sup>3</sup> His own departure from the Capital, delayed about a month after that of his emperor's, rings with a sense of urgency:

A letter came from east of the Barrier [from the emperor]: “In a treacherous world such as this, what gives you the confidence to tarry even for a moment?”<sup>4</sup> Correspondence of this kind came one after another. Indeed, the state of the world is such that one cannot find refuge even in a rock cave. With the frequent news of the ferocious storms blowing through the pines, I wondered in vain about the concealed mountain trail on which I could rely. And so, a little after the twentieth day of the seventh month, when it was still deep in the moonlit night, I departed from my hut, my thoughts fixed on the long road to the east.<sup>5</sup>

Here Yoshimoto imagines his hut on the outskirts of the Capital as a remote and inadequate refuge among the rocks (*ihaho no naka* 巖の中). This is a reference to an anonymous poem, no. 952 from the book Misc. II, in the first imperial anthology, *Kokin wakashū* 古今和歌集 (905), hereafter *KKS* (*SNKBT* 5: 286):

いかならん巖の中に住まばかは世の憂きことの聞えござらむ  
 ikanaran / ihaho no naka ni / sumabaka ha / yo no uki koto no /  
 kikoekozaramu

<sup>3</sup> Rival Northern and Southern imperial courts disagreed over imperial succession and stewardship of the land. The men associated with the Northern Court and the Ashikaga shogunate wrote these journals in an effort to organize land and geography into political units, and to establish a historical narrative in support of Ashikaga authority. A primary feature of this diary is that it describes the poet-traveler's movement through the landscape, taking note of the famous places along the way. In addition to (or in place of) visual descriptions of the famous places, the text tends to focus on the literary and historical aspects of the place by alluding to past canonical poems that have been composed about the landscape in question. In English language scholarship, Yoshimoto's *Ojima no kuchizusami* has been read as simply conforming to its genre, only marginally remarkable for its brief but vivid descriptions of the first Ashikaga Takauji, the first shogun of the Northern Court.

<sup>4</sup> The letter is from Emperor Go-Kōgon, who has already gone to Ojima in Mino province. The “Barrier” Yoshimoto mentions here refers either to the Ōsaka [Afusaka] or the Fuwa Barriers, two points though which all travelers to the east of the Capital typically pass. The treachery mentioned in Go-Kōgon's letter is the Southern Court's invasion of the Capital, and he urges Yoshimoto not to linger there.

<sup>5</sup> All translations are by the author unless otherwise indicated.

In how deep / a mountain cave must I hide? / No matter how  
remote my home, / will news of the terrible things of this world /  
yet reach my ears?

In speculating that there is no reliable place to hide near the Capital,  
Yoshimoto refers to another poem in the same sequence, *KKS Misc. II*, no.  
955, by Mononobe no Yoshina 物部良名 (SNKBT 5: 287).

世の憂き目見えぬ山路に入らむには思ふ人こそほだしなりけれ  
yo no uki me / mienu yamaji ni / hairamu ni ha / omofu hito koso  
/ hodashinarikere

My resolve to enter / upon a mountain path / whence I cannot see  
/ the sorrows of this world / is bound by the shackles of the one I  
love

Drawing heavily on such references to old poetry, this opening passage of *Ojima no kuchizusami* mirrors a conventional travel diary introduction by alluding to personal motivations for travel. The opening passage of a travel diary also tends to detail the preparations made before setting out on the road, a convention which Yoshimoto upholds by describing treatment for malaria that he seeks in the Kitayama hills, in a heavy-handed reference to the *Tale of Genji* (*Genji monogatari* 源氏物語, Murasaki Shikibu, ca. 1008). The passage is peppered with references to turbulent experiences, both abstract and personal, but there is no overt statement of the reason for the emperor's travel, nor for his anxious correspondence; the closest Yoshimoto ever comes to this is his mention of the "frequent news of storms blowing through the pines," a mere gesture toward the attacks of the Southern Court upon the Capital.

In this way, *Ojima no kuchizusami* starts out unequivocally as a travel diary, and is consistent with the genre in its application of the alternating prose-poem format that contemporary readers would anticipate. The predictable and strict literary formula thus works to impose order upon the chaotic experience of fleeing the Capital. Similarly, the travel-diary convention of narrating a lone traveler further allows Yoshimoto to skirt contextual details, which explains the ambiguous and oblique references to the political situation that necessitates his sudden flight from the Capital. Once the narrated figure of Yoshimoto arrives in Ojima, however, and throws himself into the effort of maintaining a makeshift court in the backwaters, the travel diary format dissolves into a flowing, unselfconscious prose that consciously abandons much of the structure and

rhetoric of a conventional travel diary. This jarring stylistic shift midway through the diary suggests a purposeful manipulation of literary conventions for an informed audience.

In composing *Ojima no kuchizusami* after his emperor's triumphant return to the Capital, Yoshimoto applies some of the most central and conspicuous conventions of an inherited literary tradition, but at the same time rejects and occasionally subverts many of those conventions to powerful rhetorical effect. In addition to shifting away from the travel diary format, he dismisses or otherwise undermines some of the most important *utamakura*<sup>6</sup> sites he encounters, and draws his literary references almost exclusively from the poetry or literature about exiles. Yoshimoto thus aestheticizes the violent acts and equally violent consequences that form the basis of those narratives. Finally, he proceeds to suggest a new aesthetics that finds precedent in unconventional narratives of rulership—from the ancient sovereigns of pre-imperial eras, to Takauji as a contemporary “savior” figure. Yoshimoto uses jarring stylistic shifts throughout his diary to characterize the violence of the situation in which he finds himself, and to explore how violent acts and expressions assert political power, especially in representations of geography. The first portion of the text, which employs a travel diary format, uses *waka* to identify and ultimately dismiss conventional *utamakura*. Then the formulaic structure rapidly disintegrates at the point in the text that narrates his arrival at Ojima and Tarui, the site of Go-Kōgon's exile. The style and tone of the narrative shifts again with Takauji's arrival as Yoshimoto fervently aestheticizes the capacity and potential for violence in his representation of Takauji, and justifies the embrace of such violence by aristocrats who must depend on Takauji and his army for their survival.

#### TRAVEL-DIARY PORTION: YOSHIMOTO'S JOURNEY TO JOIN THE IMPERIAL PARTY

Yoshimoto uses *utamakura* throughout what we may call the “travel-diary” portion of the first half of the text. In conventional poetic practice, stopping to view *utamakura* sites on the road—and then performing the poetic space by recalling past poems and composing new poems about the site—provides a means for the traveler-poet to draw upon the deep knowledge that is necessary for making reference to famous place names and the poets and poems they recall. Yoshimoto's poem at Kagami-yama

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<sup>6</sup> *Utamakura* 歌枕 are toponyms that have become famous for their use in the poetic canon.

[Mirror Mountain] is a good example of such a conventional response to an utamakura site:

Next, we passed a mountain called “Mirror.” I wanted to “approach to look,” but my destination was far and I was rushing along, so I passed, leaving it as little more than a sight along the road.

はるはると行末とほく鏡山かけて曇らぬみよそ知らるる  
harubaru to / yukusue tōku / Kagamiyama / kakete kumoranu /  
miyo zo shiraruru

So far, so far, / our destination lies — / Mount Mirror, / I look to  
your unclouded peak, / and know the long-lived splendor of his  
reign

I presented a celebratory air, only hinting at the wish that lay  
within my heart, which people could not know. It was very  
difficult indeed. (*Kuchizusami* 348)

This prose-poem passage is conventional in its reference to the canonical poem that is among the most closely associated with Kagami-yama, as well as in its acknowledgment of the common expectations for exhibiting the appropriate mood for the occasion.<sup>7</sup> Such adherence to literary precedent allows a traveler-poet such as Yoshimoto to demonstrate his literary expertise, while also creating tension in the contradiction between the image of his emperor’s “unclouded reign” and the acknowledgment that this was little more than a private wish for his future. In later encounters with other utamakura sites, Yoshimoto conspicuously alludes to Prince Genji in the “Suma” chapter of *The Tale of Genji* (*Genji monogatari*, ca. 1008) and poets such as Bai Juyi (772–846) and Ariwara no Yukihira (?818–?893) who, in the case of Yoshimoto’s selection and perspective, wrongfully suffered exile in Japanese and Chinese literary history.

However, in contrast to the above example, Yoshimoto more frequently dismisses the utamakura sites that he encounters, with expressions ranging from a vague sense of distraction to palpable distaste.

<sup>7</sup> Yoshimoto quotes from *KKS Misc. I*, no. 899 (poet unknown): “Mirror Mountain! Well, I will go forth, approaching to look—the years that go by, piling up on this aged body, make me know old age has come” (「鏡山いさ立寄りて見て行かむ年経ぬる身は老いやしぬると」 SNKBT 5:271).

On the one hand, it is a logical and entirely relatable reaction by Yoshimoto, who presumably has in mind the concrete danger of a violent expulsion from his home in the Capital. On the other hand, introducing utamakura only to disrupt the typical travel diary format does violence to the poetic tradition of recalling poems, poets, and other historical or literary events that may be associated with the famous place names.

In *Ojima no kuchizusami*, from the moment he departed from the Capital, Yoshimoto was eager to make quick progress to meet Emperor Go-Kōgon in Ojima. His urgency is evident in the treatment of the famous places he passed as a distraction to the progression of the narrative as they were an outline for it.<sup>8</sup> As he makes his way along the road, Yoshimoto feels that he is nearing his destination:

Such places as Mount Toko in Inugami, and Isaya River did not exactly stand out, and so I did not remark where we were [I did not distinguish it from its surroundings]. Although I wanted to inquire into well-known places, it is inconvenient to keep seeking elegance under the skies of this sort of journey, and so I passed right through them. [...As for my wasting condition in the countryside, as they say, “Tell no one of my fickle repute, even in the afterlife.”<sup>9</sup> And I certainly longed to order these mountain people into silence.<sup>10</sup> ...] Nearing Mount Ibuki, I gazed across at it from afar, meaning to get to its base, and thinking that while it was not quite in the clouds, it was very close to being so. (*Kuchizusami* 349)

The already hurried pace picks up even more speed, and Mount Toko and Isaya River blend into the scenery, barely distinguishable from the landscape around them, as Yoshimoto rushes by. These are both

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<sup>8</sup> This is in reference to the way the format of a travel journal tends to be shaped by an itinerary based both on the literary canon and on the geography. In short, the place names provide the structure of a *kikōbun* text much in the same way that dates provide the structure of a diary.

<sup>9</sup> This phrase recalls the line, “do not let slip my name!” in the poem about Inugami, Mount Toko, and Isaya River, below.

<sup>10</sup> A reference to “The Twilight Beauty” (Yūgao) chapter of the *Genji*, which also uses the phrase, “do not let slip my name!” When Genji and his lover, Yūgao, go together to a remote estate, a low-ranking steward, seeing that Genji is traveling without his usual entourage, asks whether he should summon additional help, and Genji “orders him to silence” with a sharp command: “Genji quickly silenced him. ‘I came here purposely to hide. Say not a word about this to anyone’” (Tyler, 65). (「さらに心よりほかにもらすな」と口固めさせ給ふ。SNKBT 19:119).

utamakura, but the only indication that Yoshimoto is aware of this is in the oblique reference, “do not let slip my name!”, a perfunctory nod to the famous poem attributed to Sovereign Saimei 齊明 (594–661, reign as Saimei 655–661) about Ōmi Province (*KKS Deleted Poems [Love III]*, no. 1108 [*SNKBT* 5:336]):

いぬがみのとこの山なるなとり河いさとこたへよわかなもらす  
な

Inugami no / Toko no yama naru / Natorigawa / isa to kotaheyo /  
waga na morasuna

Oh, unknowing River Isaya / at Mount Toko / of Inugami— /  
answer, “No, I don’t know!” / and do not let slip my name!

But there also emerges a pattern of reconciling and justifying this state of exile, and a turn toward asserting the emperor’s legitimacy to rule despite his compromised position in Ojima. From his vantage point around Inugami, Yoshimoto, looking in the direction of where Ojima would lie to his east, sees Mount Ibuki. He must pass the mountain in order to reach Ojima, where he has planned to meet Emperor Go-Kōgon. Mount Ibuki is an utamakura site, known for the plant called *sashimo*, a type of mugwort, and also for the smoke from this vegetation as it burns in brush fires.

Instead of the typical image of smoke, Yoshimoto uses the phrase, “cloudy” (*kumoi* 雲い). This may be in part a description of clouds around the peak of the mountain, but it also acts as a metaphorical reference to clouds, which would vaguely resemble the famous imagery of smoke from burning mugwort. Regardless, the passage suggests the imperial palace (*kumoi* 雲井), for which clouds have been a common metaphor since the eighth century (*WD*). Yoshimoto thus takes an unconventional view of Ibuki, interpreting its namesake (smoke from the mugwort fires) as clouds in order to imagine the imperial court in its place, deconstructing the traditional associations of the famous utamakura site of Ibuki in order to explicitly posit the neighboring Ojima as a new, if temporary, location of the imperial palace.

#### PROSE-ONLY PORTION: THE IMPERIAL PARTY AT OJIMA

Upon his arrival in Ojima, Yoshimoto expresses his deep unease at their reduced circumstances:



The court felt enclosed on a mountaintop amidst the clouds that never cleared, and it was quite gloomy. The eaves immediately before were completely shrouded in the misty clouds, and wind in the mountain pines blew fiercely down from the peak. In all, there was an abundance of nothing but alarming things. To rely upon such a place as a stronghold for the court is a sign of trying times indeed. (*Kuchizusami* 372–373)

Yoshimoto's outlook is undeniably pessimistic, but he immediately attempts a different interpretation of their situation. In the same passage, he continues:

But the so-called “log palaces” of ancient times were truly no different. Also, as precedents for imperial travel through this province [Mino], Empress Genshō and others have repeatedly traced their footsteps over this land, so there is no cause for alarm. Although there have been times when such emperors have made unfamiliar mountains their temporary home, still the unfamiliar abode in the mountains made us feel very unsettled, and we missed the Capital greatly, thinking of it from dawn until dusk. (*Kuchizusami* 372–373)

This is a reference to a specific journey by yet another ancient sovereign, Genshō 元正 (680–748, r. 715–724); Yoshimoto identifies her with the title “empress” (*tennō* 天皇), and returns to discuss the legends surrounding her rule in more detail in his conclusion to *Ojima no kuchizusami* (*Kuchizusami* 380). Yoshimoto begins even here to find parallels between Go-Kōgon's plight and earlier examples of past rulers who maintained authority even while temporarily away from court. Again, contemporaries would be familiar with these examples, but they are nonetheless unconventional within the practice of waka composed upon an *utamakura*. Yoshimoto draws on his knowledge of waka and court precedent to justify their time spent in what he begins calling a “temporary palace,” and applies his knowledge of court ritual to invest that space with imperial authority.

At first, the Ojima Palace, with its “roof made of wooden boards” and with “the mountains themselves right up to the eaves” seems a ramshackle and claustrophobic place. Nonetheless Yoshimoto finds a symbol of status in the roof, the construction of which, he writes, “was rare in this area.” The looming mountain, too, with its crags, trees, and flowing streams, lends a dramatic aesthetics to their immediate surroundings. Yoshimoto's descriptions suggest that he has access to a rugged beauty that is

unavailable in the more urbane environment of his home: “even if this were in the midst of the Capital a place such as this could not be more captivating in its landscaping” (*Kuchizusami* 370), he writes. This is as much a contradiction as it is a justification and reevaluation of otherwise negative aspects about the place.

Yoshimoto’s seeming ambivalence continues throughout, but nearly every loss, expressed as a discomfort or inconvenience, is balanced with a reassertion of authority by emphasizing the value inherent in his situation.<sup>11</sup> The phrase, “clouds that never cleared” describes the weather while reflecting the gloomy mood among those who fled to Ojima, as well as the dire outlook for Go-Kōgon and his court (*kumoi*). Similarly, the fierce wind from the mountaintop suggests the anxiety about possible attack on the Capital by the Southern Court, which Yoshimoto had compared in his introduction to “the ferocious storms blowing through the pines” (*Kuchizusami* 366). The sense of being enclosed and even immobilized within dense clouds, unable to see out and get a clear picture of things, evokes an alarming political situation.

Yoshimoto thus begrudgingly acknowledges the fear and discomfort of their situation, brought about by the concrete violence of warfare. In response to this, Yoshimoto’s writing enacts a subtler but no less violent assault upon notions of a literary canon associated with and upheld by the imperial post, in an effort to reposition and assert an unquestionable claim to power for Go-Kōgon. For example, even while describing their party’s precarious position in the wilderness of Mount Ojima, Yoshimoto reminds us that “the so-called ‘log palaces’ of ancient times were truly no different” (*Kuchizusami* 372–373). Once again, history and precedent are important in justifying the apparently reduced circumstance, but this is achieved not through elegant references to the poetic canon of Heian waka, but by reflecting on earlier examples of rustic imperial lodgings. Yoshimoto thus constructs a new set of literary precedents when physical violence and the threat of failure renders a more conventional system impotent.

Even the references to more traditional literary texts are precise and reflect a keen awareness and knowledge, but are unconventional nonetheless. For example, Yoshimoto alludes to the *Tale of Genji*, particularly through multiple references to the awkward noise of uncouth neighbors in the “Yūgao” chapter, to express his distaste for such close contact with the neighboring commoners of which Yoshimoto is constantly aware. When the imperial party moves from Ojima to the nearby post station at Tarui springs, Yoshimoto writes,

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<sup>11</sup> As, for example, in the passage (*Kuchizusami* 372–373) quoted above.

It was the first time that the emperor's palanquin was draped with a cloth decorated with gilt phoenix, but it was quite fitting to do so in this case. It was improper for the rustic commoners to gaze upon the emperor, and so I had this arrangement made. (*Kuchizusami* 374)

Likewise, on more than one occasion during the return trip to the Capital, Yoshimoto complains of the road becoming “crowded with mountain peasants and woodcutters who gathered, gawking” at the spectacle of the large progression of the imperial party and military escort provided by Takauji (*Kuchizusami* 379). Yoshimoto thus defends his decision to proceed outside of the realm of precedent by having the special brocade cloth draped over the roof of the emperor's palanquin as a practical measure to obscure him from view of the commoner locals on the road. Yoshimoto is in effect demonstrating that such extreme measures are entirely justifiable in a tenuous situation such as this.

#### PROSE-ONLY PORTION: THE IMPERIAL PARTY WITH TAKAUJI

This rhetoric of combining allusions to the *Genji* with descriptions of the imperial party's present hardships continues throughout the latter half of *Ojima no kuchizusami*. The *Genji* references are carefully placed and work as much to demonstrate Yoshimoto's knowledge as to cultivate sympathy from the reader for his distress at the emperor's exposure. The references also cultivate in the diary a constantly dismissive attitude toward the “common locals” even while narrating the decisions to adopt practices that would otherwise be spurned by members of the aristocracy. For example, Yoshimoto and his contemporaries appear to happily discard their cumbersome robes to adopt a style of dress that is more practical for living away from the comfort of the Capital. The sight of other aristocrats doing this is incongruous at first, and draws Yoshimoto's ridicule: “The appearance of the courtiers in unfamiliar *ebisu* clothes gave them the look of warriors. Still they looked ready to battle over their poetry, each moved by his thoughts of the moment” (*Kuchizusami*, 373).<sup>12</sup> But the courtiers

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<sup>12</sup> Depending on the source or the context, the word *ebisu* (戎) can mean “barbarian” in the sense of the common attitude toward native peoples that lived in the northeastern region of Honshu, who were considered by the imperial court to be enemies, and against whom the construction of the highway barriers (*seki* 関) was undertaken. In *Ojima no kuchizusami*, the term *ebisu* clearly refers to the warriors, and perhaps in some ways, simply to the humble sort of person who is accustomed to physical labor of any sort. In any case, it means something like “outsider” from

frequently don the rougher *ebisu* dress, in many cases for days on the road, or in rainy weather, or when speed is required, particularly when traveling along with Takauji and his men, who are known for keeping a fast pace on the road (Conlan 2003). It is not portrayed in a negative way in these moments, as when the emperor and his entourage moved temporarily to Tarui: “There was no one in courtier dress there, and it was novel to see all the figures dressed in *ebisu* wear” (*Kuchizusami* 374).

When Takauji’s armies first arrive at Tarui, it is clear that clothing is an important tool for identifying the roles of each person.<sup>13</sup> Yoshimoto’s descriptions of the armor—on men and horses alike—are rich and we imagine Yoshimoto captivated by their brilliance:

The armor of various colors—the helmets with their prongs that gleamed as though there were water dripping down them and their tips sparkling in the light—shone in the evening sunlight. It gave a feeling like the festivities of that day, and every one of them looked as though they sparkled. (*Kuchizusami* 376)

In this passage, there are no fewer than five components that describe qualities of light, including “gleamed as though there were water dripping” (*mizu no taru yō naru* 水の垂るやうなる), “sparkling” (*kirameku* 煌めく), “shine” (*kagayaku* 輝く), “evening sunlight” (*yūhi* 夕日), and “sparkled” (*kirakirashi* きらきらし). Doubtless this rhetorical approach evokes the magnificent spectacle of the warriors as much as it does Yoshimoto’s exhilaration that Takauji has finally arrived in Tarui. Because the imperial party had to wait several weeks, and in multiple locations, Takauji’s appearance was surely a relief in the assurance of his military support.

But the passage also ascribes the ritual air of a festival to Takauji’s arrival, and so places confidence in his role as both a military power and a political figure. It is uncertain to which festival (*matsuri* 祭) Yoshimoto

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the point of view of the courtier. As such, when *ebisu* refers to clothing, it emphasizes a style that allows significantly more freedom of movement.

<sup>13</sup> Clothing is used not simply to determine which members of the traveling party are courtiers and which are warriors, but works in its intricacy to identify individuals, such as Takauji’s page and Takauji himself, who wore “gold brocade beneath his full armor” (*Kuchizusami* 375). According to Yoshimoto’s account, each person’s clothing designated how far into the palace grounds he was permitted: when the party entered the “original imperial palace” (*moto no daira* もとの内裏) and the Emperor was transported to the central hall (*Shishin-den* 紫宸殿), we see that “the armored warriors proceeded until just beyond the outer gates” while “only those in court dress went as far as the inner courtyard” (*Kuchizusami* 380).

specifically refers by his phrase, “the festivities of that day.”<sup>14</sup> Based on the timing of Takauji’s arrival on the third day of the ninth month, together with the imagery of the lights and sun, it is likely that this refers to a lantern ritual called *Gotō* 御灯. The *Gotō* ritual, in which the emperor presents a lantern as an offering of light to the North Star, was conducted on the third day of the third and ninth months of the lunar year.<sup>15</sup> In this way, Yoshimoto uses this comparison between the sparkling light of the warriors’ armor to the lanterns of the *Gotō* ritual in order to make a concrete link between Takauji and the legitimizing function of ritual festivals that is reserved for the emperor and a limited group of the most influential political figures.

### CONCLUSION

From an Ashikaga institutional perspective, the months-long expulsion from the imperial palace of Go-Kōgon and his court represents a setback that appears brief in the context of generations of Ashikaga dominance. Yoshimoto’s diary characterizes this period of exile as a disruption to the order of life at the imperial palace, despite having ostensibly composed it at Go-Kōgon’s request after their triumphant return to the Capital. Such a narrative emphasizes the notion of an aesthetics of political stability that is disrupted by the violent but temporary intrusion of a concrete reality. But this interpretation is naturalized only with the hindsight that comes after their military success. And it in turn disrupts the literary conventions that represent a set of social and political standards that would otherwise undermine the position of Yoshimoto and his emperor.

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<sup>14</sup> Fukuda reads *hitohi* 一日 as “the day before” (先日) (*Kuchizusami* 376, n 11). I have translated it as “of that [same] day” based on the term *hitohi* as also meaning “the day” in a more general sense, as well as “the whole day through” (*NKD*). As for the festival, Fukuda suggests this could mean the Kamo festival (*Kamo no matsuri* 賀茂祭). Further, there is apparently a linguistic inconsistency here across the different textual variants of *Ojima no kuchizusami*, where the word is transcribed as either “festival” (*matsuri*) or “visit” (*mairi* 参り) (*Kuchizusami* 376, n. 11–12). Taking it to be “festival,” the Kamo festival is unlikely because it is held on the fifteenth day of the fifth month, and holds the seasonal *aoi* 葵 (hollyhock) as a central image. In contrast, the timing and the imagery of *Gotō*, as well as Yoshimoto’s use of *Gotō* in other examples of poetic composition, strongly support the reading as explained in the present study.

<sup>15</sup> *Gotō* is also read as *Mitō* or *Miakashi*. It has been practiced by the emperor and courtiers since at least the ninth century (*NGD*). Further, Yoshimoto has written about this lantern ritual on at least one other occasion, in his compendium of annual events, *Kenmu nenjū gyōji* 建武年中行事 (*Kidō* 314).

## ABBREVIATIONS

*Kuchizusami* = *Ojima no kuchizusami* by Nijō Yoshimoto, 1353. In Fukuda 1990.

NGD = Katō 2009

NKD = Nihon kokugo daijiten Dainihan Henshū Iinkai 2000–2002

WD = Kubota 1962

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