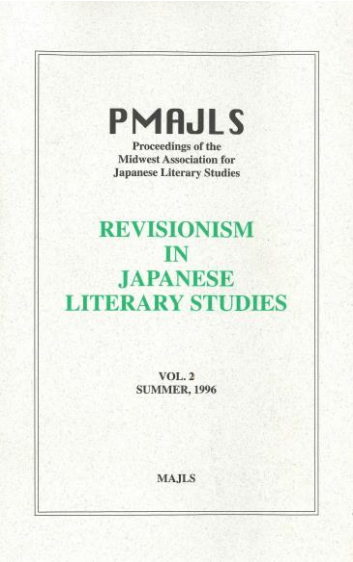
“Space / Time of Monogatari and Psycho-Perspective”

Tōru Takahashi

Proceedings of the Midwest Association for Japanese Literary Studies 2 (1996): 32–62.



PMAJLS 2:
Revisionism in Japanese Literary Studies.
Ed. Eiji Sekine.

SPACE / TIME OF MONOGATARI AND PSYCHO-PERSPECTIVE

TŌRU TAKAHASHI
Nagoya University

Aspects of the term monogatari

Best represented by The Tale of Genji (ca. 1011), monogatari (story telling) held in the Heian period a broad meaning, taking in mere chatter as well as written literature. This word, which appeared with sudden frequency in Heian documents, was a combination of the Nara period word katari ("relating") and the morpheme mono ("thing"). This morpheme, which distinguishes Heian story telling from that of the preceding Nara period, was used to characterize something suspect, incoherent, or unidentified. Children's utterances, and lovers' accounts, for example, were called monogatari. In short, monogatari meant a suspicious kind of talk which could not be officially transmitted to the public.

This sense of monogatari was deeply related to the nature of narrative fiction in the Heian period. In contrast to the usage of katari ("relating") in the Kojiki (712), Nihon Shoki (720), Fudoki (ca. 713) and Man'yōshū (ca. 759), which conveyed an official appearance of a veracity based on legend and religious belief, this term characterized narrative literature as a suspicious, promiscuous, and unofficial form of fiction. The genre of tsukurimonogatari ("made-up tales"), which included works ranging from The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter (901-933) to The Tale of Genji, occupied the phase at which this practice of "suspicious talk" gained clear recognition from the public as a literary activity. "Suspicious talk" was also among the connotations of the corresponding contemporary Chinese term hsiao-hsuo,

which then denoted marginal works of fiction, as opposed to canonic documents.

Heian treatises and official records were written in Chinese. Chinese characters were called "true names" (mana) or "male hand" (otokomoji), while the written form for story telling was described as "temporary names" (kana), or "female hand" (onnamoji), since monogatari were generally thought of as addressed to female readers. Of course, from the beginning narrative fiction had male readers and authors, but those facts did not alter the gender-based structural hierarchy which divided writing into public and private, male and female. In addition to this distinction, Heian ideology was governed by Buddhist values which dictated the following descending literary hierarchy: Buddhist writing such as sutras > Confucian and Taoist writing > History > Chinese poetry >Japanese poetry > story telling.

The source for this hierarchy is Genji Ipponkyō Hyōbyaku, written in Chinese in the 12th century and based in conception on the "kyōgen kigokan (狂言綺語観)" by Po Chü-i (recorded in Hakughi Monju). This concept holds that although fiction, and literature in general, consist of crazy words decorated with rhetorical flowers, it can still be a useful tool for praising Buddha. This book is framed as a memorial service dedicated to The Tale of Genji, and its main purpose is to save the author Murasaki Shikibu from hell, where she was supposed to have gone for having written such a sinful tale. According to Genji Ipponkyō Hyōbyaku, not only the author but also the readers of The Tale of Genji are in danger of damnation if they are not prayed for. However, I want to caution the readers that there exists a contemporaneous work that holds to an opposite standpoint: according to Imakagami (ca. 1170), a history book written in the

female hand, Murasaki Shikibu was an incarnation of the bodhisattva Kannon, who wrote The Tale of Genji in order to lead people filled with sinful secular desires to Buddhism. In any case, both books rank writing either high or low ideologically according to value judgments based on Buddhism.

I wish to point out that, even though the Buddhist interpretation of story telling is rather extreme, it is nevertheless consistent with themes of The Tale of Genji. Many of the major characters in The Tale of Genji, including Genji himself, believe in Buddhism; and many female characters, among them Fujitsubo, the Third Princess, and Ukifune, become nuns. However, none of them is described as having achieved rebirth in nirvana. On the contrary, several characters, such as Emperor Kiritsubo and the Eighth Prince of Uji, are said either to have gone to hell or not to have succeeded in being reborn in nirvana. Of course, the spirit of Lady Rokujō does not obtain rebirth in nirvana, and therefore she is lost in the world between this world and the other. The fate of these characters in The Tale of Genji contrasts with what is reported in the contemporary Honchō Ōjōden and the Nihon Ōjō Gokurakuki, which describe how people look and what they see when they die and are born in the Amida western paradise. These stories show stereotypical signs of rebirth: at the moment of death music echoes from heaven, fragrance floats in the air, and dying people see rainbow-colored clouds. Also, the deceased persons customarily show up in living persons' dreams to tell them whether or not they have been reborn and, if so, into which of the nine ranks in the hierarchy of heaven.

Thus, in the context of Buddhist ideology, The Tale of Genji explores but finally rejects the possibility of Buddhist enlightenment. This skepticism is related to the fact that, as a male-centered ideology, Buddhism treated women's salvation very

severely. Because women were regarded as prone to seduce men and to lead them astray, they were considered sinful in their very existence. The protagonists in The Tale of Genji cannot overcome their feelings of love and family attachment even after taking religious orders. While they look for salvation of their souls, the people in The Tale of Genji cannot forsake absurd human feelings such as attachment to others or to objects, or grief caused by their loss (mono no aware). Moreover, as a piece of female writing in a female hand, The Tale of Genji protests against the official male discourse, written in Chinese characters, of Buddhism and Confucianism, even scheming to overturn the literary hierarchy outlined above. We can see the author's ambition in the "Fireflies" chapter when Genji jokes that Japanese history books tell only one side of events, and then argues that Buddhist narrative logic is the same as that of story telling. The Tale of Genji is itself the result of the author's ambition to challenge the literary hierarchy.

Let us come back now to the meaning of the morpheme mono in monogatari. There has been a traditional discussion among scholars concerning whether mono is a simple morpheme, or whether it also contains meanings such as spirit (rei) soul (tama) or demon (oni). The interpretations which relate mono directly to spirit and soul tend to come from folklore and ethnology scholars such as Orikuchi Shinobu, and stand in opposition to interpretations based on the majority of word examples which show mono as a simple, uncomplicated, morpheme. As for my own interpretation, I want to emphasize that the meaning "suspect," or "suspicious," which I have already mentioned as contained in mono, has its basis in the ancient and medieval belief that spirit and soul are immanent in material objects and phenomena, and that spirit and object make one inseparable set. "Suspect" characterizes our

reaction to phenomena not seen in everyday life, or in the face of unidentified existence. The mono in monogatari is the same as the mono in mononoke or spirit.

The structure of expression in telling ("katari") and reading

There are objections to the etymological derivation of katari (telling) in monogatari (story-telling) from katadori ("molding"). Apart from issues of etymology, and by seeing "molding" as expressive of a function of writing peculiar to "telling," we can find a basis for our argument about story telling in Western theories of mimesis, representation, and narratology. However, the fact that our investigation has already necessitated an account of the meaning of mono seems to indicate that studies of monogatari cannot be identified with a simple general narratology. While emphasizing the difference between monogatari studies and western narratology, this paper's aim is to situate indigenous Japanese literature in the sphere of general theory by seeing its "story telling" as a model of narrative in general.

The basic diagram represents my attempt to schematize the problem of "telling" in archetypes or narrative types (see Figure 1 in p. 37). The diagram represents the three time/space areas of: 1) Other World, 2) Intermediary Area, and 3) This World. Line X moves from the Other World to visit This World, then goes back to the Other World. Conversely, Y moves from This World to visit the Other World, and comes back to This World. X and Y meet in the Intermediary Area, intersecting first at point (a), then at (b). The important thing to note at this stage is first the creation of this Intermediary Area and second that X and Y are mirror images.

Figure 1: Basic diagram

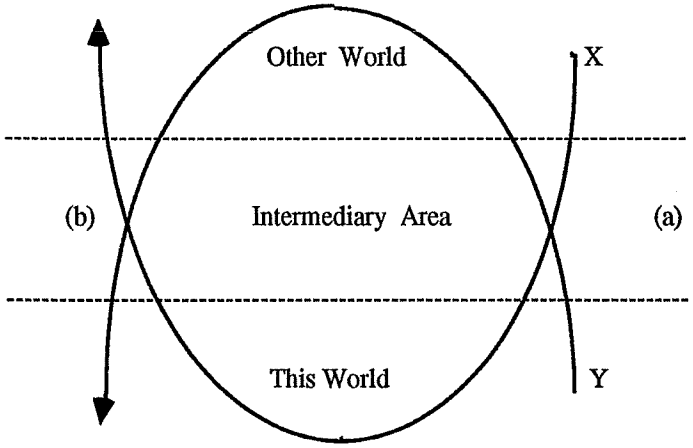
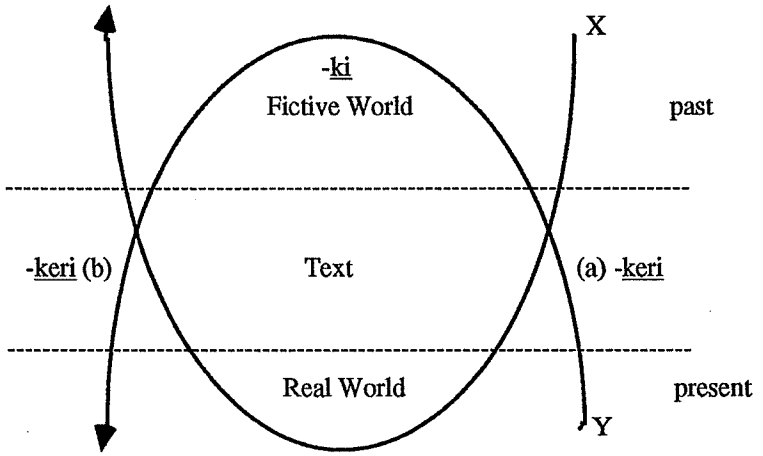


Figure 2: diagram with -ki and -keri



First of all, our act of reading may be thought of as following the path of Y. The Other World is the world of fiction in story telling, and the Intermediary Area is that of the text. Now if we identify the Story teller as X, we have reader/listener Y effectuating a fantasy trip through the fictive world with story teller X's guidance. Heian tales are written literature, but take the form of oral story telling recorded in writing. The first paragraph of The Tale of Ise (ca. 905-920) begins with "Once upon a time there was a man" (mukashi otoko arikeri); The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter begins, "Now, in other words a long time ago, there was an old man who cut bamboo" (imawa mukashi taketori no okina arikeri). Etymologically the word mukashi ("old time") is considered to be derived from muka + shi (向か処), "a place facing where we are from far away." "Now, in other words a long time ago" seems to represent an opening formula uttered with the intention of uniting the present reality of the existing world with the fictional world of story telling in order to transform it into the space and time of the told story. These opening formulae have not been observed in tales earlier than The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter; and so it seems that these words stand as indices of a special beginning of fiction.

In the passage quoted above, we also find the auxiliary -keri. Etymologically derived from ki + ari (来あり), it marks the transition into the world of story telling. The frequent occurrence of this particle at the beginning and end of each chapter in The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter is indicative of its function, that of initiating the passage first into the world of the tale and then back out of it, as we return to the real world when the reading is over. There is also another verb inflection for the recollected past, -ki; it appears frequently in records of old times such as the Kojiki. As an indicator of "relating" (katari) peculiar to the

statement of mythological and historical facts, -ki is distinct from -keri. A characteristic usage of this particle drawn from The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter is in the speech of a suitor attempting to lend veracity to his faked story. Thus, -ki conveys, in principle, the recollection of the past as true historical facts, while -keri conveys story telling not bound to factual experience. In a way, -keri is like a time machine which, on the subjective plane, connects the real with the fictive world in the place and at the moment of story telling. Using our diagram, we can sketch in this act of reading tales (see Figure 2 in p. 37). I want to add a caution here: it is only in the written text, in the time and space of the Intermediary Area, that the author/teller meets the reader/listener, and the world of fiction comes into effect. More rigorously speaking, author/teller and reader/listener do not co-possess the fictive world in the above diagram. The reality of the fictive world, and the real world in which the reader lives, exist outside this shared domain of story telling. The narrative style of The Tale of Genji involves a complex but subtle elaboration of this structure of expression. The effect is that of stories arranged chinese-box fashion, as we pass from the narratives of ladies-in-waiting and servants who directly witnessed Genji's and Murasaki's lives to those of old ladies-in-waiting who once heard of them, and from there to the words of those who recorded and edited the hearsay. We cannot construct a coherent diagram for this sequence of story transmission, but what is important here is the chinese-box topological structure of this continuously evolving sequence of story telling. Tamagami Takuya drew the following diagram in order to illustrate his tale recitation theory, which I would like to reproduce (see Figure 4 in p. 40), along with my own as adapted to The Tale of Genji (see Figure 3 in p.40).

Figure 3: Takahashi's diagram on the world of Genji

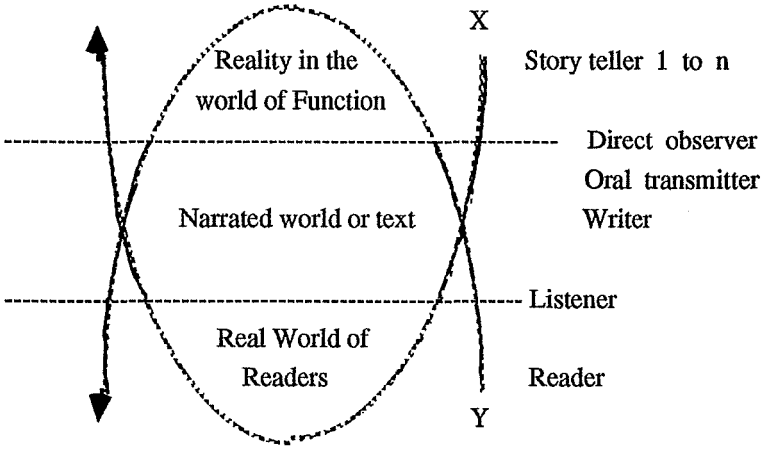
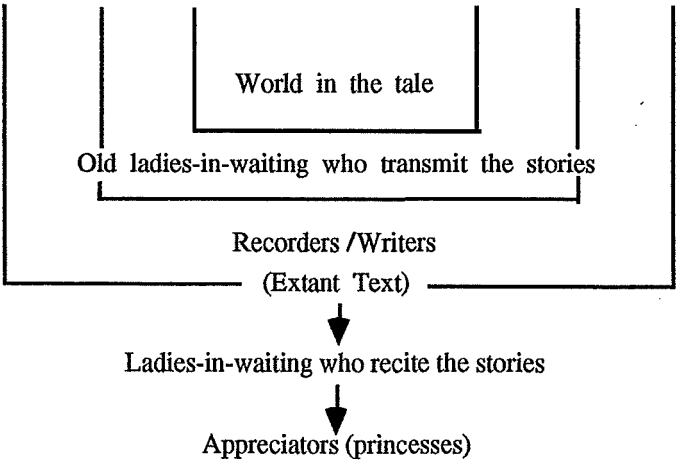


Figure 4: Tamagami's diagram on the world of Genji



I want to add that the nō theater, especially the two-part, dream kind called mugen nō, perfected the style of expression schematized in this version of my basic diagram. In Izutsu, a typical example of the mugen nō narrative style, an itinerant monk encounters the heroine disguised in the form of a village woman. While he is talking with her, the monk discovers that she is actually the ghost/spirit of someone dead. Then the heroine takes on her true form and begins to tell and dance her life story. At the end the monk performs the rite of commemoration for the dead spirit. The itinerant monk corresponds to Y in my diagram, while the village woman and spirit are X; the encounter of X and Y occurs in the ruins of an old temple dedicated to Ariwara Narihira. Structural symmetry sets up a beautiful balance between the two halves of the play, featuring first Y (the monk), and then X (the woman/spirit). These formal reciprocities support a lucid exposition of the exchange between This World and the Other.

Original Structure of Story Types

My first use of the above diagrams was in the course of a critical rethinking of theory of story types. The first developments in Japanese story type theory for monogatari were based on folklore studies by Yanagita Kunio and Orikuchi Shinobu, and then on the structuralist theories of such thinkers as Vladimir Propp, Algirdas Julien Greimas, and Roland Barthes, as well as on Carl Gustave Jung's archetype theory. I learned a lot from Orikuchi Shinobu and structuralist analysis, but there are clear limitations to the application of their analyses of folk tales and mythology to the highly sophisticated and complex discourses of the Heian tales. monogatari studies should not aim at the mere classification of story types, but at a clarification of the Ur-structure of katari

along with the mechanisms through which various story types are transformed and evolve to the height of monogatari. The initial form of my story type theory was as a grammar of texts. My story type models, conceived in terms of the above-mentioned basic diagram, are as follows:

A. Hagoromo type: The heroine X is a woman from the Other World who meets a man Y from This World in the Intermediary Area. She lives in This World and then goes back to the Other World. ("Heavenly Maiden of Nagu"' in "Tango," Fudoki)

B. Urashima type: The hero Y is a man of This World who meets a woman X from the Other World in the Intermediary Area. He lives in the Other World and then comes back to this world. ("Tango" in Fudoki, "Toshikage" in The Tale of the Hollow Tree)

C. Miwayama type: The hero X is a man of the Other World, who meets a woman Y of This World in the Intermediary Area. He lives in This World and then goes back to the Other World. (Kojiki, Fudoki)

D. Sumiyoshi type: The heroine Y is a woman of This World, who meets a man of the Other World in the Intermediary Area. She lives in the Other World and then comes back to This World. (The Tale of Sumiyoshi, The Tale of Ochikubo, Alice in Wonderland)

There are in fact some awkward features to this classification of story types. On the one hand, the story types are

taken from Japanese folklore tales, and naturally bound to their content. On the other, the basic concepts of this classification are drawn from structuralism, which induces a feeling of mismatch between native Japanese and structuralist concepts. I hesitated especially in naming the Sumiyoshi type, because old Japanese folk tales include no story corresponding to this type, which I myself associated with Alice in Wonderland. With the Alice connection in mind, I named this type after The Tale of Sumiyoshi; but Princess Sumiyoshi's wonderland is Sumiyoshi in Osaka, close to Kyoto, and hence very different from Alice's. If Y can be a goddess or a maiden in the service of a shrine, we have examples like Empress Jingō, Princess Yamato in the Kojiki and Nihon Shoki or Princess Hayasasura in Ōharae Norito, all of whose stories can be considered variants of the Hagoromo type. Note the gender switches between the Hagoromo type and its variant Miwayama type, and also between the Urashima type and its variant Sumiyoshi type. I arranged things this way in order to highlight the love-story nature of monogatari. As for the Miwayama type, I named it after "Miwayama shinkontan (三輪山神婚譚)" in the Kojiki and Fudoki.

The Hagoromo type is world famous, existing both in the east and, as the Swan maiden type, in the west. Prominent Japanese examples occur in the "Tango," "Ōmi," and "Itsubun" Fudoki. The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter is a representative of this type from the realm of monogatari. The Urashima type is also taken from a well known story, that of Urashima Tarō in the Fudoki ("Tango," "Itsubun") or in Otogizōshi. This story type exists throughout the world as the "tale of visiting the Other World" (ikyō hōmontan). It would be interesting to analyze The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter and Urashima Tarō, along with their

motifs such as "bamboo," "magic gown," and "jewelry box" according to my diagram, but I shall skip that part since I have already written about these matters elsewhere. Even in modern novels, we often see a combination of the Urashima-type hero Y and the Hagoromo-type heroine X, as in Kawabata Yasunari's The Dancer of Izu and Snow Country.

As above in the case of Izutsu, what is important here is that the Hagoromo and Urashima types are mirror images. So if we turn The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter and Urashima Tarō the other way around, new situations arise and Hagoromo becomes Urashima and vice versa. For example, if the bamboo cutter goes to the moon with Princess Kaguya, the bamboo cutter becomes the Urashima type, and if Urashima Tarō takes home the beauty whom he sees in the boat on the sea (this is the original story), Urashima becomes the Hagoromo type. By the way, the bamboo cutter in the Man'yōshū is the Urashima type, since he meets fairies in a bamboo forest and spends his time exchanging poems with them.

Story types as grammar and tales of wandering nobles

My grammar of story types, as it applied to the basic structural principles of monogatari, identifies several basic organizational models: 1) quotation or rewriting of preceding texts, 2) the continuation in time of events taking place within the fictive world, and 3) mutual relationships between protagonists. We can also point out the phenomenon that in Heian monogatari, especially in the tsukurimonogatari genre, the Hagoromo type becomes the basic structure of long stories, while the Urashima type seems to be restricted to short and middle length stories. Why?

My story types represent a structuralist revision of

Orikuchi Shinobu's study of folk tales of wandering nobles ("kishu ryūritan"). Orikuchi's noble race goes back in time to gods and heroes who were not men and who came from the Other World. From this we can deduce that the Hagoromo and Miwayama types are the Ur-types of all story types. In Heian monogatari, with the exception of Princess Kaguya, who is a superhuman creature from the moon (although this tale tells about her only when she is in human shape), all the heroines are humanized, but retain clearly the mark of their superhuman origins. Beginning with Genji monogatari, the heroes and heroines of Heian tales are all rare beauties, artistically and literarily talented and popular with the other sex. As for echoes of Orikuchi's "noble race," it is common in Heian heroes and heroines to be an "only child of imperial blood." Even though those tales were written during the mid-Heian period of Fujiwara dominance, practically no heroes or heroines from the Fujiwara family are described in the tales. "Imperial blood" means that the hero's or heroine's father is the emperor, or that one or both parents are related to the emperor by blood. Such heroes and heroines naturally lead Hagoromo-type or Miwayama-type lives, and hence follow these two narrative Ur-types.

If we interpret this underlying folk tale of wandering nobles as an initiation type of story, it turns out to center on the Urashima and Sumiyoshi story types. Initiation is a rite of emancipation through which one becomes a member of a community; it is the name of the process by which boys and girls of This World become adults after undergoing ordeals. The Bildungsroman is an initiation-type story. Representative Heian examples are The Tale of Sumiyoshi and The Tale of Ochikubo, both stories of mean stepmothers belonging to the Sumiyoshi

type. In any case, in Heian tales, since the heroes and heroines were humanized, the boundaries between the Hagoromo and Sumiyoshi types on one hand, and the Urashima and Miwayama types on the other, were gradually disappearing. In The Tale of Ochikubo, and in The Tale of Sumiyoshi, (extant manuscripts are rewritings from the Kamakura period), the heroine is an only child of imperial blood; and to the extent that the power of mystification granted by imperial blood is weakened, the ease with which we can exchange this World for the Other is increased. Related from the beginning as mirror images, the Other World and This World are virtually interchangeable.

In his visits to ladies in The Tale of Genji, Genji fits in with the Miwayama type. In fact, in the "Yūgao" chapter we can observe a direct appropriation of elements from Miwayama shinkontan. Other chapters dealing with the institution of uxorilocal (living with the wife) or kayoikon (husband visits the wife) marriage show a more generalized form of the Miwayama type. "The Shining Genji"'s special epithet indicates that he is, like Princess Kaguya, a moonly creature; on these grounds we can argue that The Tale of Genji is a male version of the Hagoromo type story. As for Genji's banishment to Suma and Akashi, we can analyze it as a story of the Urashima type. While I may seem to be deconstructing my own story types by finding several of them mixed up in one tale, the fact is that, on the contrary, this capacity for identifying combinations proves the meaningfulness of story type theory.

Our question, why it is that in Heian monogatari only the Hagoromo and Miwayama types develop into long stories while the Urashima and Sumiyoshi types are seen only in shorter stories, has to do with the special force of imagination evoked by monogatari, independent of the mythological origins of narrative

types. The world of the tales is situated in a fantastic time and space outside of everyday life, which constitutes for readers and authors the Other World. The reading and writing of tales produces, by way of the story-telling experience, an event comparable to Urashima's visit to the Other World. It is a natural consequence that protagonists in tales take on the status of creatures of the Other World who visit us. Readers/writers on the one hand and protagonists on the other are thus related as mirror images. Accordingly we find ourselves traveling in the Other World accompanied by Urashima type heroes, and may then choose either to identify ourselves with the protagonists, or to keep a distance from them by way of parody and irony.

The modern realistic novel is based on this sort of interaction between reader/writer and protagonists; and it seems that, especially in long novels, the Hagoromo type is a hidden Ur-story type of all versions. The heroes and heroines of Japanese Antiquity (kodai) and the Middle Ages (chūsei) continue to exist, transformed into mono, and provide the underlying forms that, developed through imagination and the conventions of fiction, have yielded the schemata of pre-modern and modern novels.

Story types and shamanism

If we think about the origins of my story types, we go back to notions of man and of soul and spirit in the Japanese Middle Ages and Antiquity. Our life makes a huge curving line X from birth to death. Putting our birth at a point (a) and our death at a point (b), we have another variation on my basic diagram, showing the traditional notion of the three phases of human life, phase one being childhood, phase two adulthood, and phase three old age. The point of change from phase one to

phase two is marked by the ceremony of initiation, and from the phase two to phase three by the forty-year-old celebration in the Heian Period and the sixty-year-old celebration in the modern era. In Antiquity and the Middle Ages, these three phases of life were clearly distinguished; rigorously speaking, the child and the old person were regarded not as humans, but as mono. Before childhood and after old age, men were gods or, in Buddhist terms, beings of the Other World called hotoke.

Furthermore, the two types of shamans in shamanism seem to have something to do with story- type imagination. The science of religion divides shamanism, as it is generally observed in the world, into the Ecstasy type and the Possession type. In the Ecstasy type, the shaman separates her/his spirit from the body, whereupon the spirit visits the Other World and there directly encounters gods' spirits. In the Possession type, the shaman calls gods' spirits from the Other World into his/her own body in order to make them speak or to converse with them. Fujii Sadakazu calls the latter the Spirit Descending type and the former the Flying-away Spirit type, and I shall use this terminology in the following discussion.

Briefly speaking, the Flying-away Spirit type is more common in Siberia and northern China, where shamans are mostly male, while the Spirit Descending type is more common in southern regions, where shamans are mainly female. Japanese shamans are mostly women; some, for instance the itako in the Tōhoku region and the yuta in Okinawa, are active even today. In the Tsurezuregusa (1330-1331) Yoshida Kenkō mentions a male shaman in the eastern region, but it seems that already at his time male shamans were rare and the majority of shamans were women. As for the correspondence between shaman types and story types, the Hagoromo type, whose main role is X, corresponds to the

Spirit Descending type, and the Urashima type, whose main role is Y, to the Flying-away Spirit type.

In relation to literature, The Everlasting Sorrow by Po Chü-i, which had a strong influence on Japanese literature, may be classified as the Flying-away Spirit type: in it a shaman named Lin K'ou Fangsi looks for and finds the late Yang Kuei-fei in the superhuman world of P'eng Lai, and brings back an object in proof. The Monkey King hero, Sun Wuk'ung in The Journey to the West (Hsi Yu Chi) is another typical Flying-away Spirit type shaman.

However, the Flying-away Spirit type shaman is absent from The Tale of Genji, even though it begins by presenting itself as a Japanese variant on The Everlasting Sorrow. In the opening "Kiritsubo" chapter the emperor writes a poem bemoaning the fact that he has no shaman to look for and find for him the spirit of his dead lover: "Oh for a master of magic who might go and seek her, and by a message teach me where her spirit dwells." The phrase "master of magic" (maboroshi) here indicates a shaman. This poem belongs to a scene where the emperor recollects the beauty of the late Kiritsubo while looking at a picture of The Everlasting Sorrow and comparing her to the Chinese poem's Lady Yang. Since Genji is the only child of Kiritsubo, The Tale of Genji, as a tale of the child, starts from the point where The Everlasting Sorrow ends.

By the way, allusions to The Everlasting Sorrow are used to great effect in the "Aoi" and "Mirage" ("Maboroshi") chapters, in which Genji laments, respectively, the deaths of Lady Aoi and Lady Murasaki. The poem by Genji after which the "Mirage" chapter is named reflects the emperor's poem in the "Kiritsubo" chapter. Genji's poem is: Oh wizard (maboroshi) flying

off through boundless heavens, find her whom I see not even in my dreams (trans. qtd. from E. Seidensticker). In other words, the beginning and the end of Genji's life are marked by poems which express the desire to communicate with the Other World through the intermediary of a shaman, but which lament the impossibility of that communication.

The heroines in The Tale of Genji follow the fate of heroines of the Hagoromo type, while its heroes are left in This World and continue to wander in it. Also at the end of the last chapter "The Bridge of Dreams ("Yume no Ukihashi")," we find a hidden allusion of The Everlasting Sorrow, when Ukifune refuses to go back to Kaoru. In this example, however, Ukifune is alive, and Ono, the place where she lives as a nun, is in the Intermediary Area rather than the Other World. Her brother Kokimi, who corresponds to Lin K'ou Fangsi in The Everlasting Sorrow, is not a shaman. At the end of The Tale of Genji the question of the possibility of communication between This World and the Other World deepens and transforms into another, about the possibility or impossibility of communication between this-worldly men and women. It is also possible that the chapter title "The Bridge of Dreams" is derived from The Everlasting Sorrow. At the end of an Edo period scroll of this Chinese poem painted by Kanō Sansetsu, a stone bridge is drawn as if disappearing in the clouds.

Rather than the shamanism of the intentional absence of the Flying-away Spirit type, it is the Spirit Descending type of shamanism that is clearly present in The Tale of Genji, expressing an important meaning. The exemplary case is that of Lady Rokujō and her spirit. Lady Rokujō is not a professional shaman, but unconsciously becomes a spirit who possesses and eventually kills Lady Aoi. This incident is based on a popular belief that a spirit can wander out of its body and travel via dreams.

Nevertheless, this incident fails to fit the Flying-away Spirit type, because the heroine who acts as shaman is unconscious of her deed. Lady Rokujō's haunting spirit is at the same time hers and not hers. In ancient and medieval Japan, the spirit was regarded as something which comes from outside in order to possess the body. This traditional Japanese conception leads to an idea of self which differs from the western conception of the subject.

Mononoke describes a spirit that moves abnormally, and in the case of Lady Rokujō, her relationship with the haunting spirit which possesses and kills Yūgao is only implied. Furthermore, even after Lady Rokujō dies, her surviving spirit possesses Lady Murasaki and the Third Princess. The belief that suffering related to sickness or childbirth was caused by haunting spirits was widespread in the Heian period. The haunting spirits in The Tale of Genji do not, however, represent a simple reflection of that popular belief. In the case of Lady Rokujō, her psychological evolution toward a haunting spirit is described through her own inner monologue as well as through the special circumstances surrounding her. Genji seems to be the only person who recognizes the spirit as Lady Rokujō, and this allows us to interpret Lady Rokujō's spirit as a demon living in Genji's mind.

Each major character in The Tale of Genji nurtures "a darkness of the mind (kokoro no yami)" of secrets and bad conscience. In the "Asagao" chapter, the spirit of Fujitsubo appears in Genji's dream on a snowy winter night as a beautiful phantom, just one step short of a haunting spirit. In the Uji chapters, there appears the spirit of a fallen priest, who possesses Ukifune, tries to guide her to suicide by drowning, and confesses that he also made Ōigimi die. The confession of this fallen priest would seem to be an unnecessary addition without importance, in that the

stories of Ōigimi and Ukifune show a degree of perfection without him. However, to be possessed by a spirit has as important a meaning as to become a spirit possessing the other, since to possess and to be possessed are mirror images in which the respective roles can be switched.

Psycho-perspective in The Tale of Genji and the imaginative force of the haunting spirit

There is a special reason to classify The Tale of Genji as a story of the Hagoromo type (with aspects of the Miwayama type), with a basis in shamanism of the Descending Spirit type. This is not so much because The Tale of Genji talks about haunting spirits or because we can abstract Hagoromo type stories from The Tale of Genji. Rather, it is because the act of story telling in The Tale of Genji encompasses the very process by which the story teller is transformed into a haunting spirit. This process is, moreover, the peculiar source of the imaginative force of the tale.

As I have mentioned, the transmission of hearsay from one story teller to another in The Tale of Genji resembles the Chinese-box effect. What makes this successive creation possible is that each story teller becomes, in the very act of story telling, a haunting spirit. In all likelihood, this spirit-effect is a consequence of the peculiar nature of katari as a method for transmitting stories from one person to another.

"Psycho-perspective" is a global term for the discursive grammar that makes this haunting spirit effect possible. In The Tale of Genji, the story teller is possessed by the characters and identifies herself with them, or inversely the story teller distances herself from the characters and flies away from them as they wish. Psycho-perspective even includes a semiologically complex

grammatical structure which constitutes the network of relationships between different story tellers and between story tellers and readers/listeners. I choose to use this concept of psycho-perspective as part of a theoretical hypothesis, without providing a rigorous definition or limiting the object of analysis to literature. I want to keep the meaning of this word intentionally undefined and broad, because I am not satisfied with characterizing the narrative structure of The Tale of Genji simply as multi-dimensional polyphony. Rather, I want to focus on that ontology of the human subject which unifies narrative and continually evolves in it. So conceived, the human subject differs from that established in modern western thought. Using the logic of oriental philosophy, this subject is expressible as "one and many, many and one ("ichi soku ta, ta soku ichi")." My aim is to formulate this Asian thought more concretely in order to set it on a common ground of argument with western narratology and discourse grammar, or so-called text grammar.

As for the "psycho" in psycho-perspective, I think of it in reference to the imaginative force characteristic of the haunting spirit. The "perspective" will be easier to understand if I explain it in terms of the grammar of Japanese painting such as The Illustrated Scrolls of The Tale of Genji (beginning ca 12th century). In Western painting since the Renaissance, single-point or linear perspective has been regarded as the scientific, and therefore authentic, representational convention, and has accordingly shaped Western ways of seeing and knowing the world. By contrast, the term "inverse perspective" may be applied as an analytic term to works such as The Illustrated Scroll of the Tale of Genji. Inverse perspective is in short, as the name suggests, an inverted single-point perspective. Of course, monogatari painting is not always

executed according to inverted perspective. In order to create a paradigm that will both take in and relativize single-point and inverse perspectives alike, I propose the term "psycho-perspective."

In The Illustrated Scroll of the Tale of Genji and other Japanese paintings, we often see parallel lines such as the contours of architectural beams drawn wider apart at the far bottom, or a person in the background drawn bigger than one in the foreground. But this kind of inverse perspective is not the only device used in Japanese painting; in fact we often see a mixture of inverse and single-point perspectives. It is not unusual for a viewpoint in the background of the painting to coexist with another from outside the painting or from the beholder. To add to the complexity of the situation, these multiple viewpoints express not only complex space structure, but also the flow of time. These paintings are not comparable to photography, which freezes images in a moment, but more resemble film and videotape images, as two-dimensional interpretations of four-dimensional images. In order to appreciate this effect, we need a mental disposition to convert two-dimensional pictorial versions back into four-dimensional ones. That mental disposition is identical to the imaginative force expressed in the form of haunting spirits and other wandering spirits.

In appreciating monogatari paintings or in reading monogatari fiction written in "the female hand," the audience must repeatedly first identify itself with the protagonists and situations in the tale and then distance itself from them. Both with bound books and, especially, with scrolls, a beholder understands visually while turning images in the depiction. The grammar of pictures and pictorial structure must be such as to induce the eye to follow a moving picture. To paint noble heroes

and heroines by the pictoral convention called "a line of eye and a hook of nose (hikime kagihana)" has the effect of inducing identity between the beholder and painted figures of the major characters, while supporting roles, painted with individualized faces showing rich emotional movements, distance the viewer psychologically. Viewers travel in the painted world of the tale like dreaming and wandering spirits.

The pictoral convention called "roofless building" (fukinuki yatai), which gives the effect of taking off the roof and letting the viewer peep into the house from above, is common in monogatari painting. It puts beholders in the position of haunting spirits. Heian people seem to have thought of haunting spirits as dwelling at the corner of a dark attic and looking down into a room. There are different hypotheses about the origin of this "roofless building" technique: one says that it came from blueprints or architectural plans, another that it came from doll houses. I support the latter hypothesis. "A line of eye and a hook of nose" has something in common with doll faces. I want to stress the scenes of doll play, as Heian girl culture is described many times in The Tale of Genji. Just as in doll play with a doll house, one creates a fictive world similar to a tale and plays in it, so we can argue that doll play is a cultural phase proper to girls who are not yet ready to read monogatari and appreciate their pictures. If I say that even doll play represents the imaginative force of a haunting spirit, some readers might feel uneasy. But we can substitute different terminology such as "dream imagination" without altering the meaning.

The discourse of the tales also contains various inverse-perspective grammars which allow readers to identify with, and distance themselves from, the world within written works. There

might be a way to analyze those grammars as a system, dividing them into syntax, morphology, semantics, and so on. But rather than establishing a formal system, I would like to emphasize the status of these grammars as a praxis in which texts generate meaning through the pleasure of texts.

Psycho-perspective in story telling

Evidence of psycho-perspective appears in story telling especially prominently at the beginning or the end of a tale, although it can also be found at the beginnings and ends of chapters and paragraphs. The "once upon a time" ritual expression for the opening of a tale becomes the posing of a riddle at the very beginning of The Tale of Genji, of which a rather literal translation would be: "In the reign of which emperor, I wonder." The voices of the story tellers, and auxiliary verb like -keri, invite the reader into the world of the tale. And -keri is also a code to bring the reader out of the fictive world. Sometimes, the end is marked by "so it says" (to zo) or "so it says in a book" (to zo hon ni), which has the framing function of englobing the whole tale in hearsay. The middle part of the tale is basically in the present tense, putting story teller and reader/listener in the present of the world within the tale. Here the effect of words expressing emotions such as utsukushi, aware--in which the story teller's voice is superimposed on the protagonist's inner monologue--allows readers to identify themselves with the protagonist. It has been observed that there is often in The Tale of Genji a migration of voices within one sentence, from ordinary narrative (ji no bun) to conversation (kotoba) between protagonists and then into inner monologue (shinnaigo).

Honorific expressions, which are still preserved in modern Japanese, and a variety of pronominals-- "ko-," "so-," "a-,"

"do-"--work as markers to generate identity or distance between story tellers and characters. Especially in The Tale of Genji, those grammatical features are used as literary tools to remarkable expressive effect. When a verbal honorific such as -tamau, often applied to Genji, disappears from the narrative, we sense the story teller identifying herself with Genji and uttering Genji's inner thoughts. Then when this honorific comes back again, we sense the story teller distancing herself from Genji. Choices among the more than fifty nominal designations used for Genji are likewise meaningful. When Genji is called by his professional titles, things like "the General" or "Prince of Rokujō," the storyteller is maintaining a respectable and publicly presentable distance from him, whereas when he is called "Shining Prince (kagayaku miya)" or "Prince ("miya")," we detect the story teller's private sympathy. Whereas if Genji is called simply "a man" (otokogimi, otoko), a term paired with "a woman" (onnagimi, onna), a love story is indicated, in which all human beings are reduced to simply a man or a woman, universal prototypes with which everyone can identify.

In The Tale of Genji, the use of true names is limited to low class nobles such as Koremitsu or Yoshikiyo. The majority of heroes and heroines are called by figurative denominations such as "Shining Genji" (hikaru Genji), "The Fragrant" (Kaoru), "his Perfumed Highness" (Niou), "Wistaria Quarter" (Fujitsubo), "Lady Lavender" (Murasaki no Ue). In the same manner, using flower symbolism for women's names, middle-ranked noble ladies are symbolized by names associated with their ranks, such as "Gourd Flower" (Yūgao), and "Bush Reed under the Eaves" (Nokibanoogi). These flower names connote susceptibility, while implying at times other qualities such as mean, wonderlous,

spooky, or frivolous.

This set of flower names is used in contrast to the other set, which symbolizes high-ranked noble ladies. A metonymy of ladies, connecting Kiritsubo - Fujitsubo - Murasaki no Ue - the Third Princess, runs through the first part of The Tale of Genji. Among them, only the Third Princess is excluded from metonymic name symbolism, and thus her tragic fate can be read in her name. Flower metaphors are not the only way to name women; we also have names like Utsusemi, Lady of Akashi, Lady Rokujō. A majority of these various names are derived from poems that allude to the thematic connotations of their life stories. So related, these poems and names are woven together into a structure of syntagma and paradigma, in order to construct the polyphonic text of The Tale of Genji. We have to emphasize that these symbolic names are not fixed once and for all: the characters change names according to situations in The Tale of Genji.

The psycho-perspective of names reveals evolutions and changes of meaning; discovering these, readers are prevented from systematizing The Tale of Genji into a frozen structure, but finds themselves deconstructing the tale into a constant flow of shifting meaning. In the latter half of The Tale of Genji, the stories about the chain of heroines Ōigimi - Nakanokimi - Ukifune develop according to the governing notion of substitution (katashiro 形代). In those stories, there is a logic of resemblance between ladies related by blood similar to that of the Murasaki set, but there is no metonymic chain of plant names relating them. In place of a name chain, the designation of the last heroine, Ukifune, makes her appear as a human figurine (hitokata) substituted for Ōigimi. This figurine of purification, set afloat on the stream to carry one's sin away with it, symbolizes the story of this heroine and links her into the chain of heroines.

Perhaps I have paid too much attention to the central realization of the psycho-perspective of names in The Tale of Genji. But more generally speaking, this corresponds to the codes of high and low nobility in the grammar of monogatari painting. Only the faces of high ranked nobility are drawn with "a line of eye and a hook of nose" technique, while the other less highly ranked people have vividly realistic faces. In the discourse of The Tale of Genji, the physical and character descriptions of heroes and heroines who belong to the high nobility are more abstract, while supporting roles and lower ranked nobles are described in more concrete terms. This phenomenon constitutes what I call a "grammar of center and periphery." If we take very particular examples, the concrete and individualized descriptions of the faces and behavior of Suetsumuhana and Ōminokimi show the peripheral role of those princesses, because this type of defamiliarizing description provokes laughter and therefore a feeling of distance.

This psycho-perspective is reflected in the structure of chapters, as revealed by the grouping of chapters related to the same heroine. In the first half of part one (from "Kiritsubo" to "Fuji no Uraba"), the relations between the Murasaki line of chapters and the Tamakazura line (and especially the Hahakigi line) provide typical examples of psycho-perspective. The love stories of Genji with such middle ranked noble ladies as Utsusemi and Yūgao are told by story tellers who want to whisper slanderous tales about Genji's hidden affaires d'amour. And these explicitly told stories cast an indirect light on the love story of Genji and Fujitsubo, which so violates taboo as to be only implied but not described in The Tale of Genji. Throughout the Hahakigi line of chapters, Genji's relationships with Fujitsubo, and with Lady

Rokujō, another high ranked noble lady, are only insinuated, but as certainties. The beginning of Genji's affairs with the high ranked Fujitsubo and Lady Rokujō are unwritten, providing examples of the technique of omission and the aesthetic of suggestiveness. These elided stories go along with the fuller exposition of scandalous entanglements with the lower ranked Utsusemi and Yūgao: Utsusemi is a married woman and Yūgao dies from being possessed by a spirit.

From uniqueness to generalization

When we think about Heian monogatari literature and its pictures, it is important to establish a psycho-perspective between what is Japanese and what is Chinese. Chinese poetry and Chinese painting are postulated as official, authentic, male culture, while Japanese painting and prose fiction are developed as female culture, which both imitates and demolishes Chinese culture. The Tale of Genji internalizes this cultural situation and historical evolution of writing only in order to go beyond it. For this tale has created a form of prose expression that stands together with Japanese painting and Japanese poetry--all three having the "female "point of view as a common denominator. Thus The Tale of Genji originated a standard by which the world of Chinese painting and poetry is alienated. True, The Tale of Genji starts with a quotation from The Everlasting Sorrow, but the homage is mere appearance. The Chinese element shows itself consistently at major points of alienation: Suma, to which Genji is exiled, is described as "China-like." Rhetoric based on Chinese poetry is used very effectively to describe the alien appearance of Suetsumuhana.

Moreover, the grammatical characteristics that generate psycho-perspective are also preserved in modern Japanese,

especially in the spoken language--for example, in the pronominals "ko-," "so-," "a-," "do-," and in the absence of the topic or subject from a sentence. The discourse of The Tale of Genji exploits the spoken language of Heian ladies-in-waiting, but it is not a direct record of it. The Tale of Genji shows a literary method of tale writing, and as such, it is based on preceding texts by writers who may have been male, and on the tradition of waka poetry, women's diaries, and essays (sōshi). But at the same time The Tale of Genji creates a method peculiar to it by which it quotes and rewrites and thus displaces preceding texts. The haunting-spirit-like voices of storytellers are recorded in the text as a polyphony and not a monophony.

Is it impossible to translate this Tale of Genji without killing the haunting spirit in it--in other words, without damaging the polyphonic nature of the tale? Unfortunately the translation by Edward Seidensticker acquired its clarity of meaning by erasing the characteristics of psycho-perspective inherent in this tale. René Shieffert's French translation seems to fall into the same trap. My impression is that Arthur Waley's translation better preserves the characteristics of the discourse of The Tale of Genji. Since the technique used in the discourse of this tale is comparable to the free indirect discourse found in modern western authors such as Virginia Woolf and Marcel Proust, the wind is blowing against the trend of the time in the world of Genji translation. Of course, my opinion is an irresponsible one, since I do not understand the difficulties of translation, nor do I need to worry about producing something that will sell.

Psycho-perspective is a topological perspective which connects the inside and the outside of the story as one continuous sphere, and it is a perspective of evolution which contains temporal

change. This psycho-perspective is also the principle used in traditional Japanese architecture, which demolishes the symmetry on which it is based, to become subsequently an asymmetrical shindenzukuri, shoinzukuri, and kaiyūshiki teien or garden for strolling. Further, this psycho-perspective has supplied the driving force and principle of japanizing to create kana out of Chinese characters, and to develop that kana into the cursive calligraphy best represented by the technique of scattered writing (chirashigaki).

We cannot and should not enclose the possibility of psycho-perspective within an argument for Japaneseness. Picasso and twentieth-century western painters have also effected a rapid alteration in perspective and painting techniques. The devices employed in modern movies are close to psycho-perspective, which is also a form of multi-point perspective. Speaking from the modern era, and from the necessity of restructuring the western system of knowledge and its theoretical orientation, I want to emphasize in conclusion that the very special method of discourse we have observed in works such as The Tale of Genji, written one thousand years ago in Heian Japan, can possibly put into question western criticism of literature and culture, and may even revise certain problems of western philosophy and modern thought.

(Trans. by Aiko Okamoto MacPhail and Lewis Dibble)*

---

* All chapter titles, personal names, and translations from The Tale of Genji are taken from Arthur Waley's translation, where not otherwise specified.

Also, the editor appreciates the generous editorial assistance provided by professor Earl Miner for the final version of this translated essay.