“The Emperor’s Old Clothes: Classical Narratives in Early Modern Japan”

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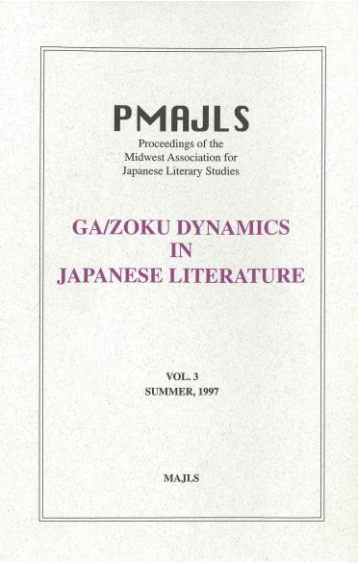

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The Emperor's Old Clothes: Classical Narratives in Early Modern Japan

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Western-language scholarship on Japan has over the past two decades convincingly revised the notion that the *kinsei*, or early modern, period was one of stagnation, repression, and confinement; or in other words, a dark, feudal age brought to an end only by the triumphant entry of the advanced and "enlightened" West. Current discourse focuses, rather, on problematizing the notion of "westernization," especially in the context of bakumatsu and Meiji Japanese elites, and concurrently reviewing Japanese "modernity" from perspectives that include colonialism, imperialism, sex and class exploitation, and environmental degradation, as counterweights to scientific and technological progress.

The early modern period in Japan predates these developments, but at the same time provides the social, economic, political, religious, intellectual, and aesthetic grounds upon which the bakumatsu and Meiji changes occurred. Donald Keene's premodern "world within walls" has yielded to Henry Smith's early modern "world without walls" and C. Andrew Gerstle's "fluid and dynamic...urban society."[2] While

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[1] A version of this paper was presented at the MAJLS meeting in Bloomington, Indiana, November 2, 1996, with made at University of Pennsylvania East Asian Studies Colloquium, November 20, 1996.

[2] Keene, *World Within Walls: Japanese Literature of the Pre-modern Era, 1600-1867* (New York: Grove P, 1976); Smith, "World Without Walls: Kuwagata Keisai's Panoramic Vision of Japan," in Gail Lee Bernstein and Haruhiro Fukui, eds., *Japan and the World: Essays on*

recognizing that access to the outside world was severely limited, we must also consider the fact that the proliferation of imported ideas and techniques we encounter during this period could have occurred only under the conditions of peace and relative social stability that existed in early modern society. To cite just one example, seventeenth-century woodblock printing and publishing techniques, acquired in the aftermath of Hideyoshi's disastrous Korean invasions, played a vital role in the diffusion of information and ideas that fostered the so-called Genroku "renaissance" of narrative in Saikaku, of verse in Bashō, of drama in Chikamatsu, and of scholarship in Jinsai, Keichū, and Kigin.

We thus conduct research into early modern Japan from perspectives unlike those held by scholars in the heyday of modernization approaches. Western language scholarship continues, however, to stress those aspects of the early modern period that help us explain elements of modern, and even postmodern Japan. Without forcing the pendulum too far in the opposite, Orientalist, direction of actively seeking out only the most bizarre and exotic aspects of early modern Japan, can we examine the Edo period on its own terms? Nakano Mitsutoshi suggests, in a discussion of Edo literature, that the most distinctive characteristics of early modern Japan are in fact the very characteristics that no longer survive.[3] The residents of Edo, Osaka, Kyoto, and the other cities generally took for

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Japanese History and Politics in Honour of Ishida Takeshi (London: Macmillan, 1988); and Gerstle, *Eighteenth Century Japan: Culture & Society* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1989), xvii.

[3] Nakano Mitsutoshi, "Revising Edo" (R. Campbell, trans.) in *The Japan Foundation Newsletter* 21-1 (July, 1993), 1. He states,"In fact, the very culture that dies off, never to be passed on or resuscitated by anyone, is inevitably that most telling of its period and that most richly matured. Finding ways to savor this unrevivable culture provides us the essential key to the study of antiquity."

granted those cultural artifacts, literary and artistic genres, sake brews, and even noodle recipes that have failed to survive past the Meiji period (and that in some cases lasted only a few months or years). In order better to understand this period, we might try to find ways to "get inside" and experience life from the perspective of those who never gave a second thought to the Indonesian pattern on their yukata, or to the new hairstyle the daughter next door copied from a flyer for a kabuki performance. We run the risk, from a narcissistic tendency to make connections with a posited "us," to draw a picture of the other while constantly keeping one eye at our reflection in the mirror. Therefore, instead of viewing Tokugawa or Edo Japan as a "precursor" or "forerunner" of whatever we wish to identify as having followed it, let us examine some elements of the period that perhaps lead nowhere--nowhere, that is, except to the early modern period itself. I trust that whatever connections we can make in the course of our examinations will be more helpful to our understanding of early modern Japan, and ourselves, than those connections we attempt to make as preconditions.

This presentation identifies ideas and literary creativity that appeared in the middle part of the early modern period, especially those that arose in the context of *kokugaku*, or national learning. H. D. Harootunian, Peter Nosco, and Naoki Sakai have published long, and at times dense, monographs on this subject in recent years, so in the present study we are well advised to narrow our focus.[4] Here we shall examine the significance of an emphasis on archaic language on the part of

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4 Harootunian, *Things Seen and Unseen: Discourse and Ideology in Tokugawa Nativism* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1988); Nosco, *Remembering Paradise: Nativism and Nostalgia in Eighteenth-Century Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard U, 1990); and Sakai, *Voices of the Past: The Status of Language in Eighteenth-Century Japanese Discourse* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1992).

the articulators of *kokugaku* positions, and then consider how this emphasis relates to a corresponding interest in literary composition. Such attitudes toward language combine with a concomitant emphasis on the act of writing to result in the so-called "elegant novel" (*gabun shōsetsu*), or "pseudo-archaic novel" (*gikobun shōsetsu*), as a sub-genre of early modern fiction.

The first *kokugaku* scholar to promote the virtues of poetry and prose composition in the ancient style was Kamo no Mabuchi (1697-1769). In his *Bun'ikō* (first appearance 1762), Mabuchi identified his forebears Keichū (1640-1701) and Kada no Azumamaro (1669-1736) in terms of the emphasis they had placed on distinguishing between meanings among words, and between styles among texts in ancient writings, toward the aim of recognizing certain ancient "truths".[5] Azumamaro, in his *Sō gakkō kei*, or "Petition to Establish an Academy", had already outlined the parameters for the new learning he wished to have the *bakufu* support.[6]

> If ancient words are not intelligible, then ancient meanings will not be clear; if ancient meanings are not clear, then Ancient Learning will not be revived.[7]

Mabuchi inherited the Keichū/Azumamaro emphasis on reading to familiarize oneself with the past, but then extended the concept to include the element of active composition in

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5 See Abe Akio, ed., *Kinsei Shintō ron/Zenki Kokugaku* (KSRZK), Nihon Shisō Taikei:39, (Iwanami Shoten, 1972):340-47.

6 Published in 1798 as appendix to Azumamaro's posthumously collected waka, *Shun'yōshū*. Autograph manuscript (reputed to date from 1728) survives in Hagura (Kada) family collection, and is reprinted in KSRZK:442-43.

7 KSRZK:337, Japanese transcription:336. In English, see Ryusaku Tsunoda, et al., *Sources of Japanese Tradition* (Columbia UP, 1958, 1964; 5th printing, 1970), Vol. 2:9.

emulation of the ancient forms. One example of Mabuchi's approach is found in his 1767.6.18. letter to Saitō Nobuyuki. Here he states:

> Because the *Kojiki* has especially transmitted the Divine Age in prose (=*bun*), if you do not create prose yourself you cannot well discern that writing. In order to write (such) prose you must also comprehend ancient poetry. It is efforts in these two fields that constitute the singular learning of our land.[8]

Mabuchi's disciple Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801) took this line of reasoning to its logical conclusion. As quoted below, Norinaga couches his comments as a transmission of the master's teachings, but to my knowledge, it is Norinaga himself who first explicitly declares the objective of this study into archaic texts. The following statement is found in his *Uiyamafumi* (pub. 1799).

> In his lectures, (Mabuchi) constantly taught us, "If you wish to know the Ancient Way, you first are to study ancient poetry, and compose poems in the ancient manner. Next you are to study ancient writings and practice composition in the ancient manner. (Then) knowing ancient words well, you must read the *Kojiki* and the *Nihongi* closely. Without knowing ancient words, you cannot know ancient meanings; without knowing ancient meanings, it is well-nigh impossible to know the Ancient Way."[9]

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[8] Quoted in Nakamura Yukihiko, "Gikobun ron":399, in *Kokugakusha kitan*, Nakamura Yukihiko Chojutsu Shū series:12 (Chūō Kōron Sha, 1983).

[9] Muraoka Tsunetsugu, ed., *Uiyamafumi/ Suzunoya tōmonroku*, Iwanami Bunko series, 1934 (20th printing, 1978):43. In English, see Sey Nishimura, "First Steps into the Mountains: Motoori Norinaga's *Uiyamabumi*" (*Monumenta Nipponica* 42/4, Winter 1987, pp. 449-93):475.

We thus find in Norinaga a synthesis of Azumamaro's appeal for an academy of ancient philology and Mabuchi's procedure for mastering the archaic language. Furthermore, we learn the aim, as well as the means, for early *kokugaku* scholars in their endeavor: ancient words--ancient meanings--the Ancient Way. In other words, through a process by which the aspirant makes archaic vocabulary second nature, and is thus able to participate both passively (as a reader) and actively (as a writer) in discourse employing these archaic forms, the power of language is enhanced to a point whereby it can transform one's spirit from within, thereby elevating that individual to a level approaching that of the idealized Ancients.

Norinaga goes on to remark at another point in *Uiyamafumi* on why passive study of the texts is insufficient, requiring the direct experience of composition.

> Now in all things, if we consider some matter as another's, this differs from that which we consider as our own, just as shallow differs from deep. As for that matter which is another's, regardless of how deeply we consider it, it will not penetrate as deeply as that which is our own. Poetry is the same, so for ancient poems, regardless of how deeply we ponder them, since they are another's, we cannot reach any further. However, if we ourselves compose, since this becomes our own matter, we employ our minds to a greater degree, and come to realize deep meaning. This is why my Master also taught that we ourselves compose verse in the ancient manner and write compositions in the ancient style.[10]

The *kokugaku* fascination with Japan's distant past is a thought-provoking focus of inquiry, and provides a major underlying rationale behind the pseudo-archaic language

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10 Ibid., 45-46. Cf., Nishimura tr., 477.

movement championed by these scholars. We shall limit our discussion of this attitude to a single observation by Mabuchi.

> (The rhythms of ancient songs) derive from a lofty and upright heart. Moreover in this loftiness is refinement and in the upright is a spirit of valor.[11]

In other words, Mabuchi and other Ancient Way theorists fantasized the inhabitants of Japan's earliest ages as being simple, honest, direct, and pure, especially with regard to their emotions and the expression of those emotions. According to this view, when systems of ethical rules and regulations derived from non-native Confucianism and Buddhism were introduced, the Japanese lost their state of original purity, and patterns of deviousness and empty speculation identified as "Chinese" replaced simple candor in human affairs.[12] Yet while this perceived Chinese spirit of rationalization for the sake of artificial theories had been successful in achieving its aim of drawing the Japanese away from their originally implicit "Way," Mabuchi and his contemporaries shared the conviction that this surface framework had failed to penetrate into the personal realm of the human emotions, especially as scholars read them in the Japanese classics of poetry and fiction. While linguistic forms differed between the locales of the Nara and the Heian courts (and Mabuchi himself clearly preferred the more "masculine," *masurao* Nara forms as his ideal), students should also esteem the Heian romances and poetry as worthy of emulation, first as a step in

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11 In *Niimanabi* (1765, published 1798). KSRZK:358. In his note on this point, Mabuchi declares, "Within this (i.e., the upright), men of old, when they thought things, even if they were aberrant matters, did not hide their thoughts but expressed them in verse. It is in this very uprightness that we discern the striking in poetry." (Ibid.:369.)

12 This view is presented in detail in Mabuchi, *Kokuikō* (1764, published 1806. Cf., KSRZK:374-93).

the direction of the truly archaic modes of expression, but more importantly, as examples of a refined Japanese sensitivity, worthwhile as models in themselves.[13]

Thus in the *kokugaku* renunciation of abstract speculation, and the related celebration of the perceived archaic Japanese spirit of direct candor, we encounter an explicit affirmation of the value of unmediated human expression of emotion in literature (and extended to life as well). This position, comparable in many respects to Romantic thought, reflects an underlying rejection of the didactic role of literature, as discerned first in Buddhism, and then in the teachings of the bakufu-supported the Ch'eng-Chu school of Sung Confucian studies.[14]

The fact that *kokugaku* theorists vehemently condemned imported systems of thought leads us to draw a revealing comparison. We may summarize the *kokugaku* positions identified above as follows: first, to idealize Japan's distant past; second, to realize this ideal through a direct examination and subsequent emulation of ancient texts; and third, to affirm the expression of human emotion in a literature independent of didacticism. These positions did not, it turns out, originate within *kokugaku*, however. In fact these positions may all be identified in the Horikawa School of Ancient Meanings (*Kogigaku*) of Itō Jinsai (1627-1705), and then more fully developed in the Ken'en School of Ancient Rhetoric (*Kobunjigaku*) of Ogyū Sorai (1666-1728). The Jinsai/Sorai and

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13 Such a tendency to extol the values of the Heian aesthetic over those of the Nara and earlier eras is strongest in the literary thought of Kada no Arimaro (1706-51) and Norinaga, and represents one of several alternative strains within the broad wagaku discipline.

14 See Maruyama Masao, *Studies in the Intellectual History of Tokugawa Japan* (Princeton and Tokyo UP, 1974). See also Yoshikawa Kōjirō, *Jinsai, Sorai, Norinaga: Three Classical Philologists of Mid-Tokugawa Japan* (Tokyo: Tōhō Gakkai, 1983).

Mabuchi/Norinaga movements resemble each other in so many respects that the naive observer might even suggest that the main difference between the two general modes thought lies in the simple fact that for the former, the ideal could be found in ancient China, while for the latter, an idealized ancient Japan was the focus of concern. In terms of specific influences, we know that both Mabuchi and Norinaga received training in their youth by individuals associated with the Sorai school, the former by Watanabe Mōan (1687-1775), and the latter by Hori Keizan (1688-1757).

Like Mabuchi, Sorai and his followers stressed composition in archaic Chinese as a means of gaining insight into the minds of Chinese in the earliest ages. With regard to the sources they consulted for creating their own archaic Chinese prose, these scholars might compose themes drawn from current events, or they might refer to Japanese texts, such as the *Taiheiki*, and then render them in the style of works like the *Shih chi*. Hino Tatsuo has analyzed two works Sorai composed in this vein, and concluded that, in the act of taking the original text and transforming it into the pseudo-archaic Chinese text, Sorai introduced his own personal motifs into the structure, and implemented several techniques for the support of these motifs, thus creating in Chinese what later writers were to produce in Japanese, in the genre we refer to as the *yomihon*.[15]

Let us now turn our attention to the *kokugaku*-oriented pseudo-archaic writers and their works. Our first task is one of identification. Based on the few treatments of the subject available in the canon of studies of early modern Japanese literature, we can thus compile the following list.

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15 See Hino Tatsuo, "*Yomihon zenshi*", in *Norinaga to Akinari: Kinsei chūki bungaku no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1984):89-130.

Shirosaru monogatari (Tale of a White Gibbon), by Kada no Arimaro, written in 1739, first published in 1814 (in a collection of pseudo-archaic writings entitled *Bun'en gyokuro*).

Ochiai monogatari (Tale of Ochiai), by Arimaro. Written in 1742, this work remained in manuscript until published in Volume VII of the Kada zenshū in 1932.

Hanabusa sōshi (A Garland of Heroes), by Tsuga Teishō, 1718c.94. Published in five volumes in 1749.

Shigeshige yawa (A Cascade of Rustic Talks), by Teishō. Published in five volumes in 1766.

Hitsuji gusa (Sheepweed), by Teishō. Published in five volumes in 1786.

Nishiyama monogatari (Tale of the Western Hills), by Takebe Ayatari (1719-74), published in 1768 in three volumes.[16]

Yura monogatari (Tale of Yura), assumed to be by Ayatari, although at one time believed to have been Mabuchi's own composition. This also remained in manuscript until published in 1959 by Maruyama Sueo of the Seikadō Bunko, National Diet Library, but seems to have well known among literati after its completion sometime during the Meiwa (1764-72) period.

Honchō Suikoden (A Shui-hu of this Court), also by Ayatari. Original title, *Yoshino monogatari* (Tale of Yoshino). The first ten volumes were published in 1773, while the last fifteen (entitled, Honchō Suikoden kōhen),

16 English trans. by Blake Morgan Young, "A Tale of the Western Hills: Takebe Ayatari's *Nishiyama Monogatari*" (*Monumenta Nipponica*, Spring 1982):77-121.

remained in manuscript until published together with *Yura monogatari* in 1959.

Ugetsu monogatari (Tales of Rain and Moon), by Ueda Akinari (1734-1809). First published in 1776 in five volumes.[17]

Harusame monogatari (Tales of Spring Rains), by Akinari. First completed in 1808, but later revised until the author's death. Not published in full until 1951.[18]

Tamakura (Arm for a Pillow), by Motoori Norinaga. First written around 1763, and later revised to conform to Keichū's *kana* usage, as opposed to Teika's *kana* usage, which was determined to contain errors. However, *Tamakura* was published in 1797 in its earlier, unrevised version for reasons unclear at this time.

Tsukushi bune monogatari (Ship from Tsukushi), by Murata Harumi (1746-1811). Originally intended to be Book I, "Tsukushi bune", of an unfinished *Ōi no Sammi monogatari,* this was published in two volumes in 1814 with annotation by Oyamada Tomokiyo as *Tsukushi bune monogatari kataegaki.*

Ama no hagoromo (The Heavenly Feathered Robe), by Ishikawa Masamochi (1753-1830). Published in two volumes in 1805.

Ōmi no agata monogatari, by Masamochi, published in five volumes in 1805.

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17 English trans. by Kengi Hamada (*Tales of Moonlight and Rain: Japanese Gothic Tales by Uyeda Akinari*, University of Tokyo Press, 1971), Leon Zolbrod (*Ugetsu Monogatari: Tales of Moonlight and Rain*, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1974, repr. by Charles E. Tuttle, Co., 1977), and Sasaki Takamasa (*Ueda Akinari's Tales of a Rain'd Moon*, Hokuseido Press, 1980). The last is rendered into a fascinating pseudo-archaic English.

18 English trans. by Barry Jackman (*Tales of the Spring Rain: Harusame Monogatari*, U of Tokyo P, 1975).

Hida no takumi monogatari, also by Masamochi. Published in 1805 in six volumes.[19]

Finally, although not usually included in treatments of this subject, we should also add the historical narratives of Arakida Reijo (1732-1806) to this list.

Ike no mokuzu (Pond Grasses), completed in 1771 in fourteen volumes.

Tsuki no yukue (Path of the Moon), completed in 1771 in three volumes.

These works share the following characteristics. First, they were all consciously written as works of prose narrative fiction. Second, they were written by individuals who were associated, either directly or peripherally, with the *kokugaku* movement. Third, the works were written with the intentional use of the vocabulary and grammar of Heian or pre-Heian Japan, and a corresponding desire to avoid the contemporary parlance found in the dominant narrative genre of the early and mid-eighteenth century, the *ukiyo zōshi.* The above-listed writers and other *kokugaku* scholars routinely wrote in the archaic mode in other nonfictional genres, priding themselves in the styles they employed in their annotations and studies of the Japanese classics, in their theoretical writings on poetics or the Ancient Way, in their prefaces, postscripts, and inscriptions, and in their travel diaries and miscellanies. Such examples comprise, in fact, the bulk of pseudo-archaic writings. Prized as exemplary samples of "fine prose" by Meiji and Taishō academics, these texts were

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19 English trans. by F. V. Dickens (*The Story of a Hida Craftsman,* Gowan & Gray, Ltd., 1912), repr. by the Charles. E. Tuttle Co., under the title, *The Magical Carpenter of Japan.*

selected for inclusion in the primary and lower secondary school Japanese curricula, and even in the university entrance examinations. This is indicative of the impact these writings had on Japanese post-*kinsei* intellectuals, and also suggests one source of inspiration for the Meiji pseudo-archaic movement lead by such figures as Kōda Rohan and Masaoka Shiki. Moreover, by the nineteenth century, *kokugaku* scholars were writing textbooks on archaic diction, in an attempt to broaden and further their movement.

However, when we examine the textual sources for the above works of fiction, it seems that we are treated to a perspective other than that which we might expect to be the case, in light of the anti-Chinese bias *kokugaku* leaders held, and of the explicit archaism in the form of their works. The textual and other sources for the works on our list of pseudo-archaic narratives may in fact be a surprise.

Shirosaru monogatari: Recent studies have connected this work to a contemporary event, a highly publicized Urashima Taro-type shipwrecked sailor who was rescued and returned to Japan after several years living on a southern island. The work also shares an affinity with the first half of tale number 91 (Volume VI, Number 9) in the *Uji shūi monogatari*, entitled, "Sō Kyata Rasetsu no kuni ni yuku koto". Both stories concern men who are shipwrecked on a remote island and have relations with the females residing there. However, while the island in the *Uji shūi* is inhabited by monsters in the form of beautiful women, the island in *Shirosaru* is inhabited by apes, the leader of which is a white one. The T'ang classical tale, "Po yuan ch'uan" is also an allusion, although the content is unrelated.

Ochiai monogatari: This story is also based on a contemporary incident that occurred in Edo, and is chronicled with most events and dates corresponding with those in Arimaro's version, in volume 1 of *Mado no*

susami: tsuika, entitled "Meguro no byakko", by Matsuzaki Gyōshin, a contemporary of Arimaro's, and Edo resident.[20]

Nishiyama monogatari: While the basic plot is based on an event which actually occurred in a village on the outskirts of Kyoto, Ayatari goes to great pains to give the sources of his vocabulary and phraseology from the Japanese classics, in literally hundreds of intertextual notations. These notations, which were central to Ayatari's project, are excised, unfortunately, from the 1980 translation in *Monumenta Nipponica.*

Yura monogatari: The author himself identifies his source in the jōruri puppet play by Takeda Izumo, entitled *Sanshō-dayū gonin musume.*

Honchō Suikoden: From the title alone, it is evident that this work owes much to the *Shui-hu chuan.* The popular historical tale dealing with events in the Nara court, *Zenzen Taiheiki* (1715) has also been identified as source for this work.[21]

Ugetsu monogatari: This work is the representative example of the early *yomihon.* Akinari draws from a stunning array of sources among Ming vernacular novels and other Chinese and Japanese texts, ingeniously placing them in a Japanese historical setting. See Appendix 5 of the Zolbrod translation, op. cit.:273.

Harusame monogatari: Akinari seems to have relied mainly on indigenous sources here, which might be explained in the light of his decades of research into the Japanese classics.

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20 I am indebted to Nagashima Hiroaki for informing me of this fact, and to Satake Akihiro, for leading me in the direction of the *Uji shūi* as a possible source for *Shirosaru monogatari.*

21 See Terashima Kazuaki's, "Takebe Ayatari *Honchō Suikoden* shutten kō", in (Ronshū) Nihon Bungaku Nihongo, Volume 4, *Kinsei/Kindai*, Kadokawa Shoten, 1978.

Tamakura: As an intentional attempt to duplicate the style (and spirit) of the *Tale of Genji* by composing a chapter to it, Norinaga has taken us into the world of the *Genji*. According to a conversation with Genji scholar Ueno Eiji, close affinities exist between Norinaga's depiction of the onset of relations with Lady Rokujō and the manner in which Yūgiri develops a relationship with his friend Kashiwagi's widow, the Second Princess (Ochiba).

Tsukushi bune monogatari: Kyokutei Bakin in Volume XX of Series IX of his *(Nansō) Satomi hakkenden*, identifies Harumi's debt to Number 26 of *Chin-ku ch'i-kuan* (originally *Hsing-shih heng-yen* 36), namely, "Ts'ai hsiao-chieh jen ju pao ch'ou".

Ama no hagoromo: This work combines the *Hagoromo* legend with "Liang hsien-ling ching i hun ku-nü", from *Hsing-shih heng-yen* 1, among other Chinese sources.

Ōmi no agata monogatari: Inspiration for this work comes from the "Ch'iao t'uan-yüan ch'uan-ch'i", included in *Li-weng ch'uan-ch'i shih-cheng ch'ü*.

Hida no takumi monogatari: Again Bakin identifies the source for this work, in his "Honchō Suikoden wo yomu narabi ni hihyō". This is namely, the "Shen-chung-lou ch'uan-ch'i", also found in the *Li-weng ch'uan-ch'i shih-chungch'*.

Ike no mokuzu, Tsuki no yukue: While Rei is universally praised for her fidelity to historical fact in her *rekishi monogatari*, I am not aware of her specific sources.[22]

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22 For more details concerning the above source materials, see Asō Isoji, *Edo bungaku to Shina bungaku* (Tokyo: Sanseidō, 1946, retitled *Edo bungaku to Chūgoku bungaku*, 1955); Asō, *Edo shōsetsu gairon* (Tokyo: Yamada Shoin, 1956); Shigetomo Ki, *Kinsei bungaku ronshū* (Volume 5 of his collected papers, Bunri Shoin, 1972), especially "Rokujuen no gabun shōsetsu":206-33 (first written in 1936).

While work still remains to be done in identifying sources, the above survey yields some important results. First, it is evident that most of our authors show no hesitation whatsoever to draw from the world of Chinese fiction, especially the newly imported, and thus little-known to the general reader of the time, Ming and Ch'ing vernacular stories. This conclusion holds especially true for Harumi, who, while one of the leaders of the "Edo Wing" of non-court, or *jige*, *waka* poetics, and a central figure in the movement after Mabuchi's death, nevertheless denied the existence of the "Ancient Way" as a major component of Mabuchi's teachings, and instead stressed the literary side of the movement. Harumi (and Rei, as noted above) excelled in the Chinese prose and poetic forms alike, and actively associated with intellectuals of various persuasions. Masamochi, for his part, had published a partial translation of the *Hsing-shih heng-yen*, entitled *Tzūzoku Seise kōgen* , in 1790. As for Ayatari, besides being a famous Nanga painter in his own right, he was the first Japanese to produce a novel based on the *Shui-hu chuan*, composing his work after publication of the *Shui-hu* translation into Japanese by Okajima Kanzan, entitled *Tzūzoku Chūgi Suikoden*, had commenced (in 1757).

Secondly, we can discern the attempt to capitalize on unusual events that were the subject of gossip in the three urban centers, and recast them in an "elegant" mode. Arimaro did this with both *Shirosaru* and *Ochiai monogatari*, and Ayatari did the same with *Nishiyama monogatari*. It is also well known that Akinari drew on his knowledge of the events upon which *Nishiyama monogatari* was based to create his own version in *Harusame monogatari*, entitled "Shinikubi no egao". *Yura monogatari* is based on a recent puppet play. Only Norinaga and Rei seem to have been "pure" in their fidelity to the recognized

Japanese classics, but this conclusion may be more the result of an insufficient examination of these works, than the reflection of a true single-minded devotion to the "elegance" of the Japanese classics.

Returning to the efforts at pseudo-archaic Chinese by intellectuals in Sorai's school, it was noted that those writers took contemporary events and put them into old Chinese, or found material from a fictionalized history such as the *Taiheiki.* We can now identify the same kind of phenomenon, only in reverse in a sense, on the part of the *kokugaku* scholars. In their fiction, they took either Chinese sources or indigenous contemporary events, and rendered them into archaic Japanese. For each school of writers, the intellectual and creative act, and its intent (i.e., the creation of an entertaining and meaningful work in the mode of "archaic elegance") were by and large the same.

Motivations for this kind of activity have been suggested above, but aside from the ideological split between Chinese and Japanese "spirits", another debate was in progress throughout much of the eighteenth century. This conflict concerned the concepts of "*ga*" ("refined") and "*zoku*" ("common"). Literature throughout the early modern period may be categorized, and indeed was viewed by critics of the age, as either "ga" or "zoku", and I would suggest that one distinctive feature of Meiji literature was that a successful synthesis of the two was attained. Clearly the Sorai school writers and the *kokugaku* writers themselves identified with the "ga" end of the spectrum.

With the development of early modern period literary studies, Meiji and Taishō scholars first pointed to the writers of the pseudo-archaic novels as the forerunners of the Edo *yomihon.* Then, with the increased understanding of the literary role played by certain Tokugawa Confucian thinkers (not to mention the

stifling effect the Japanese defeat in World War II had on continued research into the xenophobic *kokugaku* theorists), the old *kokugaku* writers and their works slipped into near eclipse. In this examination, I have tried to shift our attention toward a balanced approach that incorporates both of these views concerning the development of the *yomihon*, one in which the rediscovery and reevaluation of ancient Japanese diction would provide one pillar, and the corresponding activities on the part of the Ken'en writers would provide another, creating a structure that could support the complexity and variety of the novels later produced by such figures as those masters of the genre, Kyōden and Bakin. Furthermore, I have tried to suggest that the respective China-oriented and Japan-oriented movements, at least in the realm of creative writing, were not the dichotomy they might appear to be from reading only ideological works. It is certainly true that the more creative *kokugaku* scholars, such as Akinari, Harumi, and Arimaro, were at least as comfortable in the world of Chinese studies as they were in *kokugaku* circles. Even Mabuchi counted Sorai's gifted disciple, Hattori Nankaku (1683-1759), among his closest friends. In the end we can submit with confidence that, despite the harsh words of criticism directed by the leaders against their intellectual foes, in the realm of literary practice, the ideologues, and their followers ignored their own teachings and utilized whatever might be available and compelling to then recast into their archaic idiom.

At this juncture, it is revealing to explore what writers themselves claimed to justify their acts of fiction. Let us first examine Ueda Akinari's preface to *Ugetsu monogatari.*

> Lo Kuan-chung wrote *Shui hu chuan*, and subsequently monstrous children were born to three generations of his descendants. Murasaki Shikibu wrote *Genji Monogatari* and subsequently she descended into hell. It is thought that the

> reason for their suffering was punishment for having led people astray with their fiction.

However, Akinari then goes ahead to praise the accomplishments found in these controversial narratives.

> Yet when we look at their works we see in them an abundance of strange and wondrous things. The force of their words draws near the truth; the rhythm of their sentences is mellifluous and lovely, touching the heart of the reader like the reverberations of a koto. They make us see the reality of the distant past.

Here we encounter Akinari's affirmation of the intrinsic value of literature, by which, in the act of fictional narration, eternal truths might become apparent.

Motoori Norinaga, for his part, builds his theory of "knowing *mono no aware*" (or "compassionate sensitivity in interpersonal relations") as a literary ideal on his choice of the epitome of that ideal, the *Tale of Genji* itself. Norinaga's emphatic concern is also with the emancipation of the expression of human emotions in literature.

Furthermore, it seems clear that the *kokugaku* ideologues were concerned with more than just a greater amount of freedom in composition of a work of poetry or narrative fiction. Like their counterpart Sorai, who rejoiced when he changed his living quarters within Edo to a new location slightly to the west, and realized that he was that much closer to his beloved China, Mabuchi and Norinaga were actively involved in a movement to restore an ideal society which had presumably existed in Japan before the onslaught of "destructive Chinese influences." Portraits of Mabuchi show him with a full beard and unshaven pate, quite unlike the image one expects of a prominent resident of eighteenth century Edo. Norinaga also always appeared before

his students wrapped in his customized "Suzunoya cloak," commonly worn by physicians and scholars, but which nevertheless was an expression of Norinaga's nonconformism vis-a-vis the present. Thus by their life styles and even personal appearance, these scholars attempted to reform their environment according to a notion of "the good life" gleaned from their studies of the ideal state of affairs as they believed had existed in antiquity.

On the other hand, while perhaps most *kokugaku* disciples shared their Masters' reverence for the past, they certainly did not believe in the feasibility or even the desirability of the reappearance of its forms in the present. In the *Kagaika* dispute between Akinari and Norinaga around 1787, Akinari expresses his frustration with Norinaga's neo-Classicist attitude by remarking:

> All things are in motion according to nature (shizen), and one should not attempt to oppose those forces (of nature). Imitation of the past is something one can obtain through study; revival of the past is the useless talk that scholars make.[23]

Here readers might object by saying that Akinari was not a dyed-in-the-wool *kokugaku* scholar, or that he had misinterpreted the *kokugaku* ideal. Be this as it may, Akinari was not alone in his opinions, and to this analyst it seems, rather, that the "purists" of *kokugaku* ended up in later generations discarding the original basis of sound empirical method, upon which the theories had first been formulated. Hirata Atsutane and his school is the obvious case in point.

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23 Ueda Akinari in Motoori Norinaga, ed., *Kagaika* (in Ōkubo Tadashi, ed., *Motoori Norinaga zenshū*, Vol. 8, Chikuma Shobō, 1972, 3rd printing, 1976):407.

Thus, at least in the realm of literary expression, the "mainstream" disciples of Mabuchi and Norinaga were far less adamant about the pure application of the teachings of their masters, but rather preferred to "pick and choose" as it were, the elements of those teachings that would better yield a richer, truer literary from, opportunities for the development of which they sensed were emerging around them. Here lies the importance of the introduction of archaic words and structures for them, which they could apply to plot elements taken from any available source of sufficient exotic or newsworthy interest.

Let us close with a quotation from the 1768 preface to Takebe Ayatari's *Nishiyama monogatari,* written by his friend Kinryū-dōjin Kyōō (or Keiyū):

> That which is the same now as in the past is human feelings (*ninjō*). That which now differs from the past is language (*gengo*). What is it that differs in language? I believe that in the world there are meanness and elevation, and that people make a distinction between the elegant and the common. As for those who attempt to study to become knowledgeable in ancient words, how confused they may become; how difficult it can be. Although there may be those said to be well-versed, they generally seem like they are trying to scratch an itch through their shoe. How pleasant can this be? If there were one who by means of the past could well manipulate the present, or in following the common could achieve the elegant, he would have accomplished his task. Ayatari of Edo knows the present through extensive knowledge of the past, and follows the common to achieve the elegant... In this way, in the hopes that it might serve his students as an insight towards the act of handling the present by means of the past, and creating elegance out of the common, he recorded a contemporary

event in three volumes. This he calls *Nishiyama monogatari*...[24]

While they may not have been completely successful, Akinari, Ayatari, Teishō, Masamochi and the rest were engaged in an active appropriation of archaic diction, to the end of revitalizing Japanese narrative.

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24 Text annotated and translated by Takada Mamoru in Nakamura Yukihiko, Takada Mamoru, and Nakamura Hiroyasu, eds., *Hanabusa sōshi, Nishiyama monogatari, Ugetsu monogatari, Harusame monogatari* (Nihon Koten Bungaku Zenshū:48, Shōgakkan, 1973, 7th printing, 1979):253, Japanese transcription:251-52. See Young, op.cit.:89-90.