

The Current State of Research on *Monogatari-sōshi*: Women, Changelings, and Other Worlds in *Otogi-zōshi*

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【Summary】

The term *otogi-zōshi* refers to a group of short tales produced during the Muromachi period, that is, from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century. These Muromachi-period tales differ from their predecessors insofar as they feature not only princes and princesses, but members of the warrior class, commoners, dramatic performers, religious figures, deities, animals, and a great array of other various non-human creatures. These tales present us with a number of vibrant worlds full of action. Naturally, such bizarre and fantastic worlds lend themselves readily to pictorial representation. As the art of illustrating *otogi-zōshi* evolved from relatively simple picture books (*ehon*) to splendid picture scrolls (*emaki*), so, too, did their readership expand to include ever greater numbers of people.

This paper, after reviewing previous scholarship and considering some modern trends in this field of research, proceeds to discuss the various roles of women as they appear in Muromachi tales. More specifically, I have attempted to consider this topic in the light of two main themes, namely, metamorphosis and other worlds. Reexamining Muromachi tales from the perspective of women is especially promising in virtue of the fact that it resonates so well with similar attempts being made in other fields of modern research, both within Japan and abroad. It is in hopes of furthering the cause of international collaborative research, therefore, that I have decided to publish my research in English. Furthermore, as a means of opening up this field of research, I have thought it fit to conclude this paper with a selected list of recent publications relating to the field of Muromachi tales.

【日本語要旨】

物語草子研究の現在 — お伽草子の女・変化・異界 —

14世紀から17世紀にかけて制作された短編の物語群であるお伽草子(室町物語)には、前代までの物語とは異なり、貴公子や姫君だけでなく、武士や庶民、芸能者や宗教者、神仏や異類にいたるまで、実にさまざまなモノたちが物語の主人公となって多彩な活躍を見せる。奇想天外な物語は絵とも結びつき、素朴な絵本から豪華な絵巻まで、多種多様な展開を見せ、形成・享受の層を拡げていった。

本稿では、そのようなお伽草子について、先行研究や近年の研究動向をふまえながら、そこにあらわれたさまざまな女性像を概観し、とくに「変化」と「異界」という二つの観点から、物語草子をめぐる女性の役割の多様性について論じた。お伽草子を女性という視点から読み解くことは、近年の諸分野横断的、かつ国際的な研究状況においてもなお、極めて有効な方法と考える。そのため、本稿では、国際共同研究の成果発信のひとつとして、物語草子をめぐる女性の諸問題を英文によって概述した。なお末尾には、研究案内をかねて、近年刊行された物語草子に関連する主要な研究書の一覧を付した。

Introduction

In response to the spirit of reform from the 14th to 16th century, those engaged in literature expanded to include not only aristocrats but a much wider range of social classes, and the stories they created were rich in imaginative power and woven in multiple hues. This was a fertile literary world. And in the midst of it was the *Otogi-zōshi* お伽草子.

In the *Otogi-zōshi*, which consists of over 400 types of stories with highly diversified contents, the involvement of women can be seen in the various aspects of the stories—from the main characters, art performers, the religious figures reflected in works, and the narrators of the stories and folklore in the background, to copyists, recipients, and even the commissioner for the production of picture scrolls and "*Nara-ehon* 奈良絵本".

Interpreting the *Otogi-zōshi* from the perspective of women is something that extends beyond the conceptual provisions of reading material for "*Fujo dōyō* 婦女童幼 (women and children)" and is an effective method even in the multi-disciplinary research environment seen in recent years. In fact, in recent literary studies, substantial monographs that emphasize the involvement of women in *monogatari-sōshi* 物語草子 have been published, including *Taima Mandala to Chūjōhime* (Bensei Shuppan, 2011) by Hioki Atsuko and *Megamitachi no chūsei monogatari* (Shintensha, 2011) by Hamanaka Osamu. Moreover, in the topic of the realities of *Nara-ehon* productions, a series of studies such as *Nara-ehon, emaki no tenkai* (Miyai Shoten 2009) by Ishikawa Tōru have elucidated the activities of "Isome Tsuna 居初つな", who was a female writer in early to mid-modern times. With the recent publication of *Muromachi jidai no shōjo kakumei: "Shin Kurōdo" emaki no sekai* (Kasama Shoin, 2014), which

consists of annotated translations and studies on *Shin Kurōdo Monogatari* 新蔵人物語 edited by Eguchi Keiko, Shikatani Yūko and Tamada Saori, the discussion of women's issues in the *Otogi-zōshi* has become more active than ever.

This study intends to provide an overview of the group of works included in the *Otogi-zōshi* that depict various female figures, and to examine in particular the issues regarding women with a special focus on two areas—that of the "Changelings" and the "Other Worlds."

1. Women in the *Otogi-zōshi*

In the *Otogi-zōshi* where there is a broadening in both the types of producers and recipients, as well as a diversification of themes, there are more depictions of women from various social classes compared to stories from previous ages. Not to mention the princesses of aristocrats and the wives and daughters of the "warrior" classes, even the women of the populace from the rural area (seen in *Bunshō Zōshi* 文正草子), prostitutes from both urban and rural areas (*Saru Genji Sōshi* 猿源氏草子), street vendors and female religious figures (*Oyō no Ama* およぶの尼) make appearances within their stories playing critical roles. Moreover, legendary court poets such as Ono no Komachi 小野小町 and Izumi Shikibu 和泉式部 also appeared in new tales that dealt with agony and salvation, which were respectively entitled *Komachi no Soshi* 小町の草紙 and *Izumi Shikibu* 和泉式部, depicting the female figures in medieval times.

In this same vein, the *Genji Kuyō Zōshi* 源氏供養草子, a story developed from the legend of Murasaki Shikibu 紫式部, who was thought to have been sent to hell for the sin of telling lies, is another noteworthy work. The story describes the ritual of "*Genji kuyō* 源氏供養", which was

actually created from the wishes of women in noble class and enjoyed by them, through depictions of a nun and a beautiful court lady who could not get the *Tale of Genji* 源氏物語 off of their minds. They eventually decided to use the pages of the book to transcribe the *Lotus Sutra* 法華經 and requested Seikaku 聖覚, who was a monk at Agui 安居院, to hold a memorial service. Moreover, what is significantly fascinating about this particular story is that while it was made into a picture scroll, which suggests its main audience was the noble class, there are copies of old transcriptions made along with other documents of confessions by monks of the Tendai sect 天台宗 still remaining in existence that indicate that the same *monogatari-sōshi* was accepted in both the societies of priests and the aristocrats.

Stories of court nobles, which included titles such as *Sagoromo no Sōshi* 狭衣の草子 and *Iwaya no Sōshi* 岩屋の草子, that were part of the lineage of tales from the Heian period, usually told stories of love affairs between young noblemen and unfortunate women. While the stories from the former ages focused on describing the details of the events in these love affairs, the *Otogi-sōshi* emphasized the sufferings and obstacles that occur to the main character in addition to the description of love affairs, taking on more of the characteristics of a tragedy, or stories of overcoming difficulties. Similarly, in so-called "*Mamako-mono* 継子物 (stepchild stories)", represented by titles such as *Sumiyoshi Monogatari* 住吉物語 and *Hachi Kazuki* 鉢かづき, the main themes depicted are that of the separation of a man and woman in love and their reunion after overcoming hardships. In particular, the story of a princess who was forced to wander after being ill-treated as a stepchild evokes the influence of a female preacher, who describes the heroine as the embodiment of or the former existence of the *kami* 神 and the Buddha.

In "*Buke-mono* 武家物 (warrior stories)", the story usually takes place in rural areas with someone from the warrior class as the main character. In representative tales such as *Akashi Monogatari* 明石物語 and *Morokado Monogatari* 師門物語, popular plots tend to contain lovers or married couples being forced separated due to some sort of obstacle, wherefore the woman sets off on a journey in search of the man. There are commonalities in the main characters' destiny taking a positive turn thanks to the blessings bestowed upon them by the *kami* and the Buddha, and in the obvious presence of the propagation for a particular religion seen in the story itself. Both of them indicate the involvement of religionists who advocate the miraculous virtues and blessings of the *kami* and the Buddha in the creation and circulation of this type of stories.¹⁾ Such plots of wandering and hardship can also be observed in "*Honji-mono* 本地物", a style of story that is constructed on the logic of the *kami* and the Buddha attributing the power of salvation towards people who suffer from a certain type of distress because the *kami* and the Buddha had experienced the same type of distress in the world of human beings. Stories depicting the suffering of women in particular employ specific and conventional expressions, such as, for example, heroines like "Jōruri-hime 浄瑠璃姫" from *Jōruri Monogatari* 浄瑠璃物語 or "Gosuiden no Nyōgo 五衰殿の女御" from *Kumano no Honji* 熊野の本地, bleeding from their feet because they were not used to the journey on foot. Along with the appearance of an old nun who takes the wandering woman under her protection, these plots indicate the reflection of female storytellers on their pilgrimage throughout the country. In other words, they suggest the existence of

¹⁾ Matsumoto Ryūshin "*Honji-mono* syūhen no Muromachi-ki monogatari: *Akashi Monogatari hoka Buke-mono* syōhen ni tsuite" from *Chūsei shōmin bungaku* (Kyūko Shoin, 1989), pp.347-365.

female art performers or religionists who manage the stories of women who are in agony. Likewise, works such as *Kachō Fugetsu* 花鳥風月, which reflect the lives and activities of shrine maidens in the Muromachi period, or *Karaito Zōshi* 唐糸草子 (Fig.1), which depicted the success of female art performers who were mother and daughter, along with the famous stories of "Giō and Gi'nyo 祇王・祇女" or "Shizuka and Iso no Zenji 静・磯禪師" portrayed the realities of female art performers.



Fig.1. *Karaito Zōshi*. Courtesy of National Institute of Japanese Literature.

Moreover, the majority of women in the *Otogi-zōshi* are those who have almost exclusively converted to Buddhism, who admire the accomplishment of birth into the Pure Land, and who are set at the preliminary step of achieving rebirth by assuming the form of the *kami*'s and Buddha's embodiment. Therefore, the distress of women depicted in the stories mentioned above can be grasped as functioning as ascetic rituals that have to be overcome in this life in order to be able to teach about the "*Honji* 本地", or the true form as a Buddha, as well as the expedients for preaching the birth of women in the Pure Land. From these aspects, with the example prominent in the tale of "Chujōhime 中将姫", it can be

indicated that *Mamako-mono* that depict the suffering and salvations of women are quite often utilized as metaphors or examples of cause and effect relationships when delivering sermons and preaching about Buddhism.²⁾ In relation

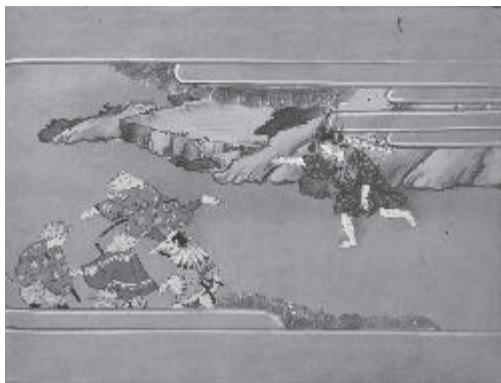


Fig.2. *Hioke no Soshi*. Courtesy of National Institute of Japanese Literature.

to that, there are other notable stories that need to be studied in comparison with the statements of the sermons and preaching or other situations in temples, namely such works as *Isozaki* 磯崎 and *Himeyuri* 姫百合 that deal with the jealousy and infatuation of women and preached the doctrine of the "Five Obstacles and Three Subordinations 五障三従", or *Tokiwa no Uba* 常盤の姥 and *Hioke no Soshi* 火桶の草子 (Fig.2), which were stories of old women in relation to Buddhist teachings. It is my intention to start with a consideration of the various aspects of stories about women and changelings, and compare them with lectures on sutras and statements in Buddhist preaching.

2. Changing Women: Discourses in the Temple and *Monogatari-sōshi*

There are countless examples of women changing into snakes and goblins due to their evil nature, not just in the *Otogi-zōshi*, but also in

²⁾ Abe Yasurō "Chūjōhime setsuwa to chūsei bungaku" from *Nihon jōdo mandara no kenkyū* (Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1987), pp.290-320. et al.

many of stories and literary works during medieval to modern periods. In particular, the transformation into snakes is thought to be related to ancient mythologies and the preaching stories of Buddhism. What is fascinating is that there are considerably fewer stories of men transforming compared to that of women, and even in the few in which they do, their snake forms are nothing more than either the punishment for unrestrained lust (*Jizōdō Sōshi* 地藏堂草紙) or a convenient means of allowing travel between this world and the next (*Suwa no Honji* 諏訪の本地 and *Amewakahiko Monogatari* 天稚彦物語), which are quite different from the reasons for women being transformed. Women's transformation into snakes is considered to be caused by their evil nature, namely their jealousy and infatuation, which indicates the general Buddhist concept of considering women as sinful beings. It evokes the ideological influence of such preaching episodes as the "Four Elements and Four Snakes 四大四蛇" in the *Nirvana Sutra* 涅槃經 and the "Dragon's Daughter Attaining Buddhahood 龍女成仏" in the *Lotus Sutra* that can be found in the background, which indicates the connection to sutra lectures and Buddhist preaching statements. Taking the example of the *Dōjōji Engi* 道成寺縁起, the famous story picture scroll that tells of the benevolence of the *Lotus Sutra* with the focus on women's infatuations, I would now like to reexamine various phases of "transforming or changing women" in the Muromachi period.

The story of *Dōjōji* originates in *Dainihonkoku Hokekyō Genki* 大日本国法華経験記 (hereafter abbreviated as *Hokke Genki*), and while developing in such forms as *Engi-emaki* 縁起絵巻 (picture scrolls that explain the origin and history of things and places), *Nara-ehon* and *emaki*, it also became a well-known motif in such performing arts as *Nō* 能 and *Kyōgen* 狂言. There is no question about it being one of the most famous stories of a

"transforming woman" in Japanese classical literature. While the said narrative in *Hokke Genki* originally had the main theme of preaching the benevolence of the *Lotus Sutra*, in the course of evolving into other forms such as *Engi-emaki*, *Otogi-zōshi* and ultimately into the performing arts, it had gone through various modifications with some elements added and amplified, and others reduced and deleted.

The *Hokke Genki* version of the story starts with a widow falling in love with a young monk who happened to take one night's lodging. The widow transforms into a serpent out of her infatuation for him, and ends up burning him to ashes with the flame of her passion along with the temple bell he was hiding inside. The two eventually reach the path in the heavens through the repose brought to them by the *Lotus Sutra*. Setting the benevolence of the *Lotus Sutra* as the main subject, the preaching story is made for monks in training, emphasizing the lust of the widow in order to draw attention to how much of distraction women can be to them. Unlike *Engi-emaki*, this version pays little attention to the process of the actual transformation of the woman into a serpent, which takes place while she shuts herself up in her home. A "woman transforming into a serpent" is merely an accompaniment metaphor for describing a woman being an obstacle to a monk. On the contrary, in Muromachi period, the story was made into a *Nō* play, and into more of an entertainment for the general public, which modified the lust of a widow into an earnest, platonic love of a maiden. Kiyohime 清姫, the more popular heroine figure, was created out of this trend.

On the other hand, the *Lotus Sutra*-centered preaching story for monks was also made into an *Engi-emaki*, with the title *Dōjōji Engi*. This piece utilizes its characteristic as a visual media, modifying the process of transformation into a serpent so that it appeals in visual aspects,

describing the gradual changes taking place in the Hidaka River 日高川 with both descriptive texts and pictures. Moreover, the transforming heroine was now made into the bride of Kiyotsugu 清次, in other words, a married woman, which is another notable modification.

A married woman was considered a much more sinful status than a widow or a maiden, and seems to be an unsuitable plot for a picture script that deals with the history and miraculous virtue of a temple. In fact, the text of the *engi* does emphasize the infatuation of women, quoting the Buddhist hymn of *Nyonin Jigokushi* 女人地獄使 (literally "women are messengers from Hell"), which is a cliché in Buddhist preaching. Nevertheless, in the end of this version, the man and woman were made into expedient embodiments of the Kumano Gongen 熊野権現 deity and Kannon 観音 (the goddess of Mercy), respectively, indicating an intention for a new interpretation in which the woman is apprehended as a holy embodiment of Kannon. The negative element of a married woman is utilized to later emphasize the holiness of Kannon, making the *Engi-emaki* a more effective a tool for explaining the causation of things to the people.

Dōjōji Engi developed a traditional preaching story into a tale of the embodiments of Kumano Gongen and Kannon, by telling it as if it were an actual record of events that took place while on the pilgrimage to the Kumano shrine. It can be considered as a strategic modification executed by the Dōjōji temple, which was located on the pilgrimage route, in order to get tourists to stop by on their way to Kumano. While it may seem to deviate from its original purpose of telling the origin and the history of temples, it does suggest the new value in *Jisha-engi* 寺社縁起 (the history and origin of temples and shrines), which appeals to the originality of the temple while propagating the faith.

The technique of utilizing the emphasized infatuation of women as the

expedient to tell a story of benevolence and salvation evokes the reality of preaching and allocution using picture scrolls. After the formation of *Dōjōji Engi*, which focused on the infatuation of women, it became easier for the story of Dōjōji to accept the female audience. For example, in the story titled *Isozaki* 磯崎, which was intended to be an exhortation for women, the story of Dōjōji is quoted as an example to discourage women's jealousy. By focusing on explaining the infatuation of women, the quotation in *Isozaki* has become a direct indication of the new state the Dōjōji story has reached, in which it is accepted as what may be called a "woman's story".

Thus, the story of Dōjōji can be characterized by its flexibility to develop and modify various factors in the story, such as the process of transformation or the profile of the heroine, accordingly to the media or the audience. This is prominent also in the *Otogi-zōshi* entitled *Hidakagawa no Sōshi* 日高川の草紙 (also known as *Kengaku Sōshi* 賢学草子) (Fig.3),



Fig 3. *Dōjōji Emaki (Hidakagawa no Sōshi)*.
Courtesy of National Diet Library, Tokyo.

which is considered to be the alternative edition of *Dōjōji Engi*. In *Hidakagawa no Sōshi*, the Dōjōji temple was modified into a nameless temple, and the Hidaka River was put in the center of the story. Newly incorporating the story of the inescapable destiny of man and woman, a different tale is woven out while evoking the story of Dōjōji. Moreover, by not mentioning the latter part of expiation through the *Lotus Sutra*, the heroine is left without salvation, making the tale one that emphasized more strongly the causations of man and woman as well as on the lust and infatuation of woman, which consequently made the content more *Otogi-zōshi*-like compared to *Engi-emaki*.

While modifications were commonly done, it seems that the story of Dōjōji was still used on the occasions in which the *Lotus Sutra* was annotated. The example can be seen in the preaching story included in the section 26, volume 5 of *Jikidan Innen Shū* 直談因縁集, which was transcribed in 1585 by a person named Shun'yū 舜雄, who was a descendant of the Kantō Tendai sect. The story depicts the escape journey of a monk, which resembles the story of Dōjōji, with some association to the *Anrakugyō* 安楽行 piece in the *Lotus Sutra* entitled *Ke'nyo* 寡女 (widow). Two monks from the Kazusa 上総 region named Kenshō 顕性 and Hōtoku 法得 were on their pilgrimage throughout the provinces, but they parted in anger after a quarrel they had in the city. During his pilgrimage alone, Hōtoku took one night's lodging at the house of a widow in Kaga Province 加賀国. Though he was suspicious of a woman living all by herself, he ended up exchanging lovers' vows and living with her for a few years. When Kenshō showed up later, Hōtoku tries to deceive her and escape. The deceived woman tries to chase after the man who escaped from her on a boat, and ends up transforming into a fierce god out of her rage at the inlet of the river. The man prayed to various *kami* and took refuge in Mt.

Haguro 羽黒山, where he devoted himself to Buddhist training and eventually attained Buddhahood. This story of an infatuated woman transforming at the waterside because of the betrayal of a monk shows great resemblance to the story of Dōjōji, which must have been widely known by the time of the formation of this book.

There seem to be some differences from the conventional story of Dōjōji, such as a woman being transformed into a fierce god instead of a serpent and a monk ultimately succeeding in escaping from her, and there is evoked instead the legend of an ogress in Adachigahara 安達原, depicted in works such as the Nō play entitled *Kurozuka* 黒塚. However, there are crucial differences in subject matters between the episode of the ogress of Adachigahara who reveals her true identity out of the anger for breaking the taboo, on the one hand, and this story depicting the monk's sin of having sexual relations with a woman and the woman's transformation out of her own infatuation, on the other. Moreover, this story insists at the end that this tale of *Ke'nyo* 寡女 was a true story, which suggests the scale of Dōjōji story's diffusion. That is to say, this story can be assessed as a development example, which makes the infatuation and transformation of the woman in the Dōjōji story stand out by removing all the other elements, created in response to the request from the *Lotus Sutra* meetings intended to launch the lesson of avoiding widows. It shows a similarity to the method utilized in *Hidakagawa no Sōshi*, which abstracted elements of the Dōjōji story and focused on the inescapable vows between man and woman. Just as the readers of *Hidakagawa no Sōshi* recalled the Dōjōji story, the audience of this story must have also remembered the story of the man and the woman in Dōjōji from the monk who escaped from the woman and the widow who turned into an ogress while chasing him.

Stories of women and transformation seem to include clues to

understanding the correlation between the worlds of narrative literature and preaching occasions at temples.

3. Women Inviting into Other Worlds: Nuns as Mediators

Otogi-zōshi depicts quite a few variations of nuns. In stories before *Otogi-zōshi*, female religionists were mostly depicted as either a priestess in temples and religious groups or a Holy mother-type of homemaker. However, by the Muromachi period, nuns started to have a more specific description of them as sort of vocational people, or *Amagozen* 尼御前, who crossed between the societies of temples and the secular world. *Otogi-zōshi* started to have these *Amagozen* as the main characters of their stories, the main characteristics of which tied in with both religiosity and popular entertainment, as if to resonate with that period of time, in which the solicitation activities of temples and shrines increased and religion infiltrated the populace.

In *hosshin-shukke tan* 発心出家譚 (stories of people having religious experience and taking up the religious life), which grew out of Buddhist teachings and which are exemplified in such titles as *Chūjōhime no Honji* 中将姫の本地 and *Chiyono no Sōshi* 千代野の草子, the main characters are portrayed as pious religionists. This suggests the high possibility of these literary works being created on occasions when the nuns actually got together, and indicates the deep involvement of *monogatari sōshi* with the activities in the temples.³⁾ On the contrary, such titles as *Tsurenashino Amagimi* 一尼公 or *Oyō no Ama* およぶの尼 utilize the style of a comedy to depict in a lively fashion nuns who had been secularized from the

³⁾ Yoneda Mariko, "Ukiyo no Tomo kara Chiyono Monogatari e : Chusei ni okeru Chiyono kaigo tan no tenkai" from *Setsuwa Bungaku Kenkyū*, vol.43, 2008.

religious world. In particular, we can see this in *Oyō no Ama*, where a nun peddles clothes and daily necessities as a so-called *Watari no Ama* わたりの尼 (traveling nun), which evokes the real image of a *bikuni*, that is, a fully ordained Buddhist nun travelling throughout the country. Examples of these wandering *Amagozen* can be observed in various versions, such as the itinerant *bikuni* who exchange questions and answers about Zen with an old *bikuni* living alone in the mountain (*Genchū Sōda ga* 幻中草打画), Dōkōbō 同行坊, who wanders throughout many provinces with her husband, Rengebō 蓮花坊, who had become a *nenbutsu* 念仏 practitioner (*Boroboro no Sōshi* ぼろぼろの草子), or the *bikuni* named Keishin 慶心, who once traveled through Hell at the invitation of the agency of the *Enma-ō* 閻魔王, who came back to life to tell about the suffering and agony in Hell (*Hirano Yomigaeri no Sōshi* 平野よみがへりの草紙). Thus, *Amagozen*, who can travel back and forth between the sacred and the profane, started to show various aspects as facilitators of the story, playing an important role if not the main character of the story.

There is a story of an old nun who provided protection for a bewildered princess against her stepmother who chased her away from her own house. In *Fuseya no Monogatari* 伏屋の物語, a princess who almost was forced to be drowned in Lake Biwa 琵琶湖 ends up finding her place to be in the Fuseya 伏屋 region of Shinano province 信濃国, after meeting with a nun who was over sixty years old and was on her way descending from Kumano Shrine. In *Akizuki Monogatari* 秋月物語, we also see a nun who finds herself in an encounter with a princess who was left behind on Hiru ga kojima 蛭が小島 as a blessing given from the deity of Kumano, and ends up attending her at the Imperial palace in the Akizuki region of Tsukushi Province 筑紫国. Nuns of these kinds are, as mentioned before, surmised to be the reflections of a travelling *bikuni* of Kumano. The evidence of this

hypothesis can be seen not only in the text but also in accompanying pictures.

The illustrated prints of *Jōruri Janidan Zōshi* 浄瑠璃十二段草子, published around the Kanbun period (寛文, 1661-1673), depict an old nun who guides the princess and her servant named Renzei 冷泉 to the moribund Yoshitsune 義経; these prints include an illustration with notes that read "*Kumano Gongen* Deity – transforming nun – guide" for the episode of the resuscitation of Yoshitsune at the Fukiage no hama 吹上の浜 beach. Tokuda Kazuo focused on the fact that the illustration was completely different from the text of the story, which described the guide as the Bodhisattva of Shōhachiman 正八幡 disguised as a boy. Tokuda

points out that the reason for putting up an illustration that was different from the contents of the text was due to the intention of the publisher of the Kanbun edition 寛文版 (Fig.4) who desired to add more of a feeling of miraculous virtue to the love story between the scion and Jōruri-hime 浄瑠璃姫, by superimposing the image of the Kumano *bikuni*, who solicited throughout the country for the purpose of women's



Fig 4. *Jōruri Janidan Zōshi*. Courtesy of National Diet Library, Tokyo.

salvation, by the means of adding the appearance of the nun to the text descended from the original version upon publishing the new version.⁴⁾

A question remains as to why nuns, especially old nuns, are chosen for the role of helping the princess. Nuns as the protectors of princesses can be seen in such examples as the nun of Sumiyoshi from *Sumiyoshi Monogatari* 住吉物語, and they include the images of homemaker-type nun characters as well as nanny-types who take the tonsure and enter the priesthood together with the princesses they intend to protect, which reflects their images in reality. Tsukudo Reikan suggests that nuns in these stories were shaped from the background of the belief in shamans who administer the rituals of water based on the similarity of the sound in their names, *Ama* (尼, a nun, and 海女, a female diver).⁵⁾ In addition, these nuns also bore a role as a mediator between the ordinary and the Other World, which was possibly inherited as part of the plot of salvation for princesses.

As seen in such examples as the *Amida* 阿弥陀仏 who assumes the appearance of a nun to weave a *mandara* 曼荼羅 on behalf of the princess in *Chajōhime no Honji*, the role of old nuns as the embodiments of the *kami* and Buddha saving the heroine was frequently seen in *Otogi-zōshi*. Moreover, there is also the example of a nun who takes on the aspect of a god of fortune in such tales as *Umezuno Chōja Monogatari* 梅津長者物語, a story of a wealthy couple who helped a travelling nun by guiding her way, which in the end the wife was asked to be the nanny of the *kanpaku* 関白 (the senior regent). The aspect of nuns that enable them to be the mediators for the ordinary and the Other World, namely to function as the embodiment of the deities, is most directly exemplified in the case of

⁴⁾ Tokuda Kazuo, "Kanbun ban *Jōruri Monogatari* no ichi sashie" from *Otogi-zōshi kenkyū* (Miyai Shoten, 1988), pp.631-641.

⁵⁾ Tsukudo Reikan, "Shōdō to Honji Bungaku to" from *Chasei geibun no kenkyū* (Yuseidō, 1966), pp163-195.

Amatengu 尼天狗, who provided shelter for the princess who was lost in the mountains, and eventually sacrificed her own life to protect her; this character is depicted in the story entitled *Chigo Ima mairi* 稚児いま参り. Negative images of belonging to the Other World and deceiving other *tengu* 天狗 are added to *Amatengu* who guides and saves the princess, providing a clearer indication of the ambiguous and well-bounded nature of the mediator.

What is notable in relation to the nuns as mediators is the existence of old women who guide princesses who are suffering. The story entitled *Asagao no Tsuyu* 朝顔の露 depicts an old woman in her sixties, who saves a princess abandoned in the mountains, saying that she was also abandoned when she was young by her

stepmother. She turns out to be the incarnation of Chūjōhime. In *Hanayo no Hime* 花世の姫 (Fig.5), a princess abandoned in Uba ga mine 姥が峯 meets a goblin-like mountain witch as a result of offering a prayer to Kannon, who grants a gift from the Other World that eventually leads the princess to happiness. In *Senju'nyo no Sōshi* 千手女の草子 also, an old woman appears in front of Senju,



Fig.5. *Hanayo no Hime*. Courtesy of Hiroshima University Library.

who was exhausted from the journey she was unused to. The old woman then tells Senju about some lodging with entertaining stories. Though the princess in *Asagao no Tsuyu* ends up dying later in the story, in the other two stories the encounters with the old women develop into events of good luck, which suggest the similarity of these two old women to the nun in the story of the Kumano pilgrimage mentioned earlier.

These old women who guide the heroines during their journey can also be considered as mediators who save princesses from suffering, which indicates their aspects as shamans serving the mountain gods. This commonality is also shared with old women who wear the mystique of someone standing on the border of the ordinary and the Other World, depicted in such examples as the *Shōzuka no uba* しょうづかの姥 (old woman from Shōzuka 葬頭河), who shows a child the way out from the Other World to this world, the two-hundred years old woman washing her clothes at the river, who provides information about *Shuten Dōji* 酒吞童子 to the party lead by Yorimitsu 頼光 (*Ōeyama Emaki* 大江山絵巻), and the six-meter tall *datsueba* 奪衣婆 (old female goblin who takes away the clothing of the dead for the boat fee to cross the river that runs between this world and the Other World), who appears in front of Konjiki Taishi 金色太子 on his tour around Hell. The existence of these *uba* and *datsueba* at the Sanzu River 三途川 (the river that divides this world and the world of the dead) (Fig.6) are depicted as having more of the characteristics of a shaman rather than of the Buddha as well as the added image of goddesses who symbolize both life and death, whose ambiguity is similar to that of the *Amatengu* mentioned earlier. An example of this can be indicated in folk beliefs, such as a god of coughing or an old goddess of tooth pain enshrined in places like village boundaries or crossroads. Old goddesses who embody the ugliness of old age were made into the object of faith, out

of awe and respect by women who perceived the divine force in the heteromorphic shape of them. It is well exemplified in the statue of Ono no Komachi 小野小町, which became the object of faith for women while taking the form of *Suirō rakuhaku setsuwa* 衰老落魄説話 (preaching story of decrepitude and declining) in the Middle Ages. The foundation of such old goddesses in folk beliefs must have been crucial in the creation and inheritance



Fig.6. Datsueba at the Sanzu River.
Fuji no Hitoana Sōshi. Courtesy of
National Institute of Japanese Literature.

of such images of old nuns as the savior of women, along with the real existence of Kumano *bikuni* who traveled throughout the country.

As the image of *Amagozen* that are suggestive of the *bikuni* traveling throughout the country became popular within stories, comedy stories like *watari no ama* seen in titles such as *Oyō no Ama* were established on one hand, while, on the other hand, the stories of *bikuni* traveling through the countries while knowing the mutability of the world, as exemplified in titles such as *Genchū Sōda ga*, were also created. These elements were part of the necessary steps and momentum required to develop these into the stories of the confessions of *bikuni*, as seen in *Kana-zōshi* 仮名草子. Nuns

who used to be the narrator were transformed into characters that tell their own stories. For example, in the story entitled *Inin Bikuni* 為人比丘尼 (Fig.7), in which the nanny who took the tonsure and became a nun for the princess, tells the story of the princess's suffering in front of the Zenkōji Nyorai 善光寺如来. Here, both aspects of the nun can be observed. There is the nanny-like existence who tries to protect the princess as discussed earlier, and there is the nun who maintains her position as a narrator of the story. Moreover, in the story of *Isozaki* mentioned earlier, the legal wife who killed the new wife decides to become a nun after she reformed herself, and sets off on a journey around the country to pray for the repose of her soul, making the entire story take the form of a confession of a *bikuni*. This blends well with the rather preachy plot of this piece, which takes in the *Ketsubon-kyō* 血盆經, an apocryphal sutra used in preaching to help women attain the Buddhahood and quotes the story of Dōjōji, which warns about women's jealousy. For example, the image of the legal wife as a traveling nun carrying a huge box on her back as depicted in the final pages of the horizontal *Nara-ehon* found in the collection of Keio University Library reflects



Fig.7. *Inin Bikuni*. Courtesy of Iwase Bunko Library, Nishio.

the image of the Kumano *bikuni* explaining pictures. It also suggests the possibility of the image of a nun as a mediator inviting us into the Other World being reflected in the image of Kumano *bikuni*, deciphering the picture of Hell at the foot of a bridge, depicted in *Sumiyoshi jinja sairei-zu byōbu* 住吉神社祭礼図屏風.

Conclusion

The discussion conducted above has surveyed various examples of *Otoghi-zōshi* about issues concerning women in these stories from two different viewpoints, namely, transformation and the Other World. Furthermore, for issues related to the old nuns seen in *Mamako-mono* 継子物, a role similar to what court ladies played in stories of Heian period can be identified in nuns of *bikuni gosho* 比丘尼御所 (literary, the palace for *bikuni*), which suggests the reality of nuns in the palace, where the daughters of the court nobles and samurai families gathered, as pointed out by Okami Masao.⁶⁾ In fact, the image of nuns in the *bikuni gosho* as the recipients, owners and commissioners of those *sōshi* vividly emerges when carefully tracing *monogatari sōshi* as well as books and old records related to it. Within the religious culture of the Muromachi period, the *bikuni gosho* kept close relations with the literary activities in the palace and of the nobles. Presumably, it became one of the main places for the creation and enjoyment of *monogatari sōshi*, and the possibility of it being an important hub for the literary culture of the time can easily be identified.⁷⁾

⁶⁾ "Omoshiro no hana no miyako ya", from *Muromachi bungaku no sekai* (Iwanami Shoten, 1996), pp.271-360.

⁷⁾ Koida Tomoko, "Bikuni gosho to bungei, bunka", from *Hotoke to onna no Muromachi: monogatari sōshi ron* (Kasama Shoin, 2008), pp.355-393.

There, the image of nuns as mediators of stories come to the surface as well.

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Finally, the author intends to list major monographs published recently that are related to *monogatari sōshi*, partly as a study guide. For *Otogi-sōshi* and issues around it, Tokuda Kazuo ed, *Otogi-zōshi hyakka ryōran* (Kasama Shoin, 2008) provides a comprehensive summary along with a detailed list of prior reference materials. Therefore this study intends to list monographs published after 2008 in the following.

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