

ENGULFED IN DARKNESS: MOURNING POETICS IN
CLASSICAL JAPANESE LITERATURE

Beth M. Carter

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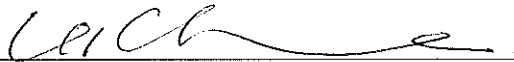
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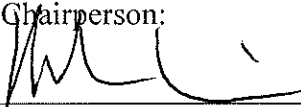
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For my teachers

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

In a famous passage in *The Tale of Genji*, Lady Murasaki declares her independence with the statement, “I am I.” However, like Lady Murasaki, I owe a great debt of gratitude to the teachers and benefactors who have helped shape who I am. Those who have imparted their wisdom to me have not only evolved this study and its prose, but me as well.

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ABSTRACT

ENGULFED IN DARKNESS:

MOURNING POETICS IN CLASSICAL JAPANESE LITERATURE

Beth M. Carter

Linda H. Chance

Since the fifteenth century scholars have been drawn to “The Seer” chapter of *The Tale of Genji* (c. 1000 C.E.), analyzing how the chapter’s unique structure of time depicts Genji’s grief after the death of Lady Murasaki, pacifies her spirit, and recapitulates their relationship. This study introduces the concept of “mourning poetics,” or the way Murasaki Shikibu layers mourning ritual outlined in the Yōrō code (718 C.E.) with structures of time and poetic lament to further shape Genji’s expressions of grief, clarify relationships, and negotiate the divide inherent in death. The key to the year-long structure of “The Seer” is to view it not only as Genji’s abnormally long mourning of Lady Murasaki, but also as a wife’s prescribed year of mourning for a husband. Murasaki Shikibu creates a “Lady Murasaki of Memory” who mourns and pacifies Genji prior to his death, ensuring his eventual Buddhist enlightenment. The result pacifies the spirit of the reader, who may be left unquieted by the upcoming divide in the tale and abrupt disappearance of Genji.

Authors of the “Crane Grove” chapter of *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes* (1034 C.E.) and the *Initiate’s Chapter* of *The Tale of the Heike* (1371 C.E.) translated the mourning poetics based upon “The Seer” to eulogize and pacify the historical heroes and heroines in their own tales. All three chapters revolve around the main character in a year

of mourning for a loved one, which summarizes the life of the mourner and concludes with promises of Buddhist salvation for both mourner and mourned.

The mourning poetics in “The Seer” are present in modern *Genji* manga such as *Asaki yume mishi* and *Ōzukami Genji monogatari maro, n?*. These full-length treatments of the *Genji* retain, in altered form, the chronology and mourning ritual crucial to the spirit pacification function of “The Seer.”

Since the Heian period, Murasaki Shikibu’s mourning poetics has been translated and replaced over time. Weaving together references to time, lament, and mourning ritual eulogizes and pacifies characters, as well as negotiates existential and literary divides.

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Introduction

Engulfed in Darkness:

Mourning Poetics in Classical Japanese Literature

“Although he recalled feeling like himself when the mother of his son died, since he clearly remembered a bright moon, tonight he was engulfed in darkness.”¹ With these words Genji, hero of the eleventh century Japanese *The Tale of Genji* (*Genji monogatari*, c. 1000 C.E.), does what all humans, across cultures, do when eternally separated from a loved one: he begins to mourn. Genji dons a mourning robe, enters seclusion, participates in a year of memorials, and spends the rest of his life longing to be reunited with his lost love. However, these scenes of mourning are more than a point along the plot line or a device to demonstrate a character’s grief. The author’s novel weaving of mourning ritual and codes with well-known lament poetry suggests that the mourning scenes in the *Genji* have other, more complex, functions. More than an illustration of sorrow, the *Genji*’s “mourning poetics” reflected changing concepts of court culture and spirit pacification as well as prefigured mourning scenes in later tales. Readers, using shared cultural and literary knowledge, translated these carefully calibrated and multi-layered references to Genji’s depth of grief, virtue, and power.

¹ Murasaki Shikibu, *Genji monogatari*, ed. Abe Akio, Akiyama Ken, Imai Gen’e, and Suzuki Hideo, *Shinpen Nihon Koten Bungaku Zenshū* (SNKBZS) 23 (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1996), 521. For the English

This dissertation examines mourning as it was expressed in classical literature of Japan's premodern period (here defined as the 11th to 14th centuries), with a particular focus on the ways that works responded to each other. *The Tale of Genji* is widely known as a series of amorous love affairs and romantic trysts. The classic image of the tale's hero, Genji, is of him spying a potential lover through a gap in a fence, wooing this new love with Don Juan-like flair, and, eventually, moving on to another woman, leaving his previous lover distraught with sorrow and jealousy. But this common view overlooks another, equally important, side of Genji: his sorrow at the loss of one of his loved ones. From the opening pages of the first chapter, "Paulownia Pavilion," or "Kiritsubo," which details the death of Genji's mother when he is three years old, Genji is linked with loss and mourning. Throughout the tale, Genji loses lovers in a myriad of ways, but perhaps most heartbreaking for him is loss through death. In his first adult encounter with losing a lover through death, the tale's author, Murasaki Shikibu (c. 978 – c. 1014 C.E.) depicts Genji fumbling through the emotions of sorrow, guilt, and fear that accompany surviving the death of his lover, Yūgao. Genji's response to death--his mourning, memorialization, and spirit pacification practices--mature as he grows older, as evidenced by his actions after the deaths of his principle wife Aoi, his step-mother Fujitsubo, and his lover Lady Murasaki.² Within the narration of Genji's mourning, Murasaki Shikibu recapitulates and

² Note that "Lady Murasaki" is a (relatively) common naming practice for the character called Murasaki no Ue in Japanese. The name "Lady Murasaki" does not reflect an official court title. Additionally, there is debate over whether to call Lady Murasaki a wife or a lover. Genji conducts a private marriage ceremony with Lady Murasaki after the death of his principal wife, Aoi, and is granted the title of principal wife (*kitanokata*) but Lady Murasaki continues to feel insecure in her position as Genji goes on to also officially marry the Akashi Lady and the Third Princess. Based on Lady Murasaki's fears, I attempt to keep her position in relation to Genji ambiguous. For more on Lady Murasaki's position as a wife, see Ivan Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), 218; *The Tale of Genji*, trans.

clarifies Genji's relationships with each woman. This schema climaxes in the chapter, "The Seer," or "Maboroshi," which is entirely devoted to Genji's mourning of Lady Murasaki, and which retells the tale to date, repositioning each of his lovers against Lady Murasaki, and pacifying spirits (including that of the reader, who might be disquieted by the loss of the tale's hero/ine).

By the eighth century Japan had legal codes outlining the correct way for the Emperor (and those close to him) to mourn. The funeral and mourning regulations in the Yōrō code (718 C.E.) prescribed the length of mourning and style of dress depending on the survivor's relation to the deceased.³ Records vary in how accurately these codes were adhered to, but the mere presence of these codes reveals some social need to regulate the experience of mourning. Was the display of mourning and grief getting out of hand? Was it not enough? Was there an "incorrect" way of mourning in need of correction? In essence, the existence of mourning codes points to mourning as a social act (as opposed to a private act), which, if done correctly, could ameliorate a perceived danger. These perceived dangers could have political, social, and religious effects. For instance, if one remained in mourning seclusion too long, he or she neglected his or her work duties, which resulted in ineffective governance. Similarly, if one did not go through the mourning process, the contact with the pollution of death would not be mitigated and social boundaries would be breached. Finally, mourning provided a way to pacify the

Arthur Waley (New York: Tuttle Classics, Reprint edition 2010), 622 n. 1; and William H. McCullough, "Japanese Marriage Institutions in the Heian Period," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 27 (1967), 138.

³ "Sōsōryō," in *Ritsuryō*, ed. Inoue Mitsusada, *Nihon shisō taikō*; 3 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1976), 439.

spirits of the recently deceased, which could become dangerous and threaten the natural, political, and social orders.

In premodern Japan it was commonly believed that unnatural deaths produced spirits who could be dangerous to the living if they were not pacified through ritual means. Prayers, offerings, and memorial services were routinely held in order to pacify these spirits—helping them attain enlightenment and preventing them from causing disturbances in this world. Jien (Head Abbot of Enryakuji, 1155-1225 C.E.) clearly describes the link between malevolent spirits and natural disasters in his historiography, *Gukanshō* (*The Future and the Past*, c.1220 C.E.):

Since ancient times, there has been the principle that vengeful spirits ruin the state and destroy man...The first thing to do about this is to pray to Buddhas and

Kami...The main point about a vengeful spirit is that it bears a deep grudge and makes those who caused the grudge objects of its revenge even while the resentful person is still alive. When the vengeful spirit is seeking to destroy the objects of its resentments – all the way from small houses to the state as a whole – the state is thrown into disorder by the slanders and lies it generates...And the vengeful spirit is unable to obtain its revenge while in this visible world, it

will do so from the realm of the invisible.⁴

As Lori Meeks has argued, because vengeful spirits were believed able to affect the world of the living through natural disaster and other nefarious means, pacification was a

⁴ As quoted in Steven T. Brown, *Theatricalities of Power: the Cultural Politics of Noh* (Stanford: Stanford University Press: 2002), 39.

serious concern for not only authors and those in mourning, but also for those interested in protecting the social order.⁵

It was not only mourning ritual and practice that could pacify the spirit of the deceased, but also language. From as far back as the *Kojiki* (*Records of Ancient Matters*) and the *Nihon Shoki* (*The Chronicles of Japan*, both 8th C) textual representations of mourning were linked with special uses of language. At the death of Ame-no-wakahiko (a mythological god in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki*), his parents constructed a mourning hut and performed songs.⁶ As Gary Ebersole, Anne Commons, Roy Andrew Miller, H. Mack Horton, and Esperanza U. Ramirez-Christensen have demonstrated, from *kotodama* in the mid-eighth-century poetic anthology *Man'yōshū* (*Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves*) to linked verse (*renga*) in medieval Japan, carefully constructed literary language also had a place in ritual pacification of the spirits of the dead.⁷ Scholars such as Aileen Gatten, Norma Field, Haruo Shirane, and Edith Sarra have investigated female characters of *The Tale of Genji* and rituals of remembrance and spirit pacification as literary

⁵ Lori Meeks, "Survival and Salvation in the Heike Monogatari: Reassessing the Legacy of Kenreimon'in," *Lovable Losers: the Heike in Action and Memory*, ed. Mikael Adolphson and Anne Commons (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2015), 142-165.

⁶ Ō no Yasumaro, *The Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697*, trans. William George Aston (London: Herne Ridge Ltd, 2013), Kindle edition 7951-7953; and Ō no Yasumaro, *The Kojiki: An Account of Ancient Matters*, trans. Gustav Heldt (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014). Kindle edition, 44.

⁷ See Gary Ebersole, *Ritual Poetry and the Politics of Death in Early Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), especially pages 123-215; Gary Ebersole, "The Buddhist Ritual Use of Linked Poetry in Medieval Japan," *Eastern Buddhist* 16.2, n.s. (Autumn 1983): 50-71; Anne Commons, *Hitomaro: Poet as God* (New York: Brill, 2009); Roy Andrew Miller, "The 'Spirit' of the Japanese Language," *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 3: 2 (Summer 1977), 251-298; H. Mack Horton, "Renga Unbound: Performative Aspects of Japanese Linked Verse," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 53:2 (1993), 486-7; Horton, *Traversing the Frontier: The Man'yōshū Account of a Japanese Mission to Silla in 736-737* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2012); Esperanza U. Ramirez-Christensen, *Heart's Flower: The Life and Poetry of Shinkei* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 72,93; and Ramirez-Christensen, *Emptiness and Temporality: Buddhism and Medieval Japanese Poetics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 19, 107.

devices.⁸ Words were not simple expressions of grief; they held power. Authors consciously crafted the words of their works to simultaneously express the grief associated with longing and pacify the spirits of the dead.

For this reason, the forty-first chapter of *The Tale of Genji*, “The Seer,” is especially important, as it uses specially crafted “mourning poetics” to pacify the spirits of the dead and to pre-pacify the spirit of the principal mourner, that is to perform the actions of eulogy and mourning before the death of the character. The chapter’s detailed description of Genji mourning the death of Lady Murasaki couples traditional mourning rituals with elegant descriptions of extended grief and sorrow. The length of Genji’s mourning is highlighted by allusions to Bai Juyi’s famous ninth-century Chinese poem, “The Song of Everlasting Sorrow,” (*Chang hen ge*) and the chapter’s yearlong structure of time. Much like early commentators, as Lewis Cook explains, readers also relied on these “intertexts, intersections between *The Tale of Genji* and contexts available to either its author or its readers at any given moment” to fully grasp the meaning of a scene.⁹ Murasaki Shikibu uses the structure of time (here, literally, the progression from month to month within a year) to underscore the length of a character’s mourning. I contend that through Genji’s remembrances and acts of mourning, Murasaki Shikibu creates a new

⁸ See Aileen Gatten, “Death and Salvation in Genji Monogatari,” in *New Leaves: Studies and Translations of Japanese Literature in Honor of Edward Seidensticker*, eds. Aileen Gatten and Anthony Hood Chambers (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 1993), 5-27; and Norma Field, *The Splendor of Longing in The Tale of Genji* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987) 51-53, 188-; Haruo Shirane, *The Bridge of Dreams: A Poetics of The Tale of Genji* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987); and Edith Sarra, *Fictions of Femininity: Literary Inventions of Gender in Japanese Court Women's Memoirs* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 169-221.

⁹ Lewis Cook, “Genre Trouble: Medieval Commentaries and Canonization of *The Tale of Genji*,” *Envisioning the Tale of Genji: Media, Gender, and Cultural Production* (New York: Columbia University Press) Kindle edition, locations 3689-3691.

character within the *Tale*, a “Lady Murasaki of Memory.” This new character is able to act within the world of the tale through Genji’s mourning practices. The “Lady Murasaki of Memory” bests all of her former rivals and pre-mourns and pre-pacifies Genji’s spirit.

Murasaki Shikibu’s idealized, lengthy, and moving version of mourning is in direct contrast to the concise, emotionless, and abbreviated mourning codes. Why? Why would Murasaki Shikibu choose to lengthen Genji’s mourning instead of shorten it (as was common practice)? Why would this representation of mourning resonate within the world of the court (as well as later readers)? Why would authors look to “The Seer” to articulate important scenes of mourning in their works?

Genjis

The *Tale of Genji* is the representative Japanese classic *monogatari* and has been widely studied. My work follows in the tradition of Haruo Shirane, Mitani Kuniaki, and Michael Emmerich, and others identifying the *Genji* as a reconstructed text imbued with ten centuries of history, commentary, translation, discredit, re-canonization, and popularization.¹⁰ The *Genji* can neither escape its history, nor be isolated in the past or

¹⁰ See Haruo Shirane, “The Tale of Genji and the Dynamics of Cultural Production: Canonization and Popularization,” *Envisioning The Tale of Genji: Media, Gender, and Cultural Production*, ed. Haruo Shirane (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008). Kindle edition; Haruo Shirane, “Introduction: Issues in Canon Formation,” *Inventing the Classics: Modernity, National Identity, and Japanese Literature*, ed. Haruo Shirane and Tomi Suzuki (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 1-30; Mitani Kuniaki, *Genji monogatari shitsukeito* (Tokyo: Yūseidō, 1991); and Michael Emmerich, *The Tale of Genji: Translation, Canonization, and World Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).

For a discussion of reader reception of these (what Emmerich calls) “replacement texts,” see T. J. Harper, “Genji Gossip,” in *New Leaves: Studies and Translations of Japanese Literature in Honor of Edward Seidensticker*, eds. Aileen Gatten and Anthony Hood Chambers (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies,

the present, as it is a truly hybrid construction. Nowhere is this more clearly demonstrated, I would argue, than in its mourning scenes, central to the tale's broader themes of love, longing, and substitution. No canonical work, not even the *Genji*, is stable in the face of reinterpretation and reinvention, and my research investigates the ways in which the structures and imagery of mourning ritual fluctuated and operated over time between the chapters of the *Genji* and related works of art and literature.

By the late twelfth century the *Genji* had become a source for other literature. Although the tale was (presumably) originally intended for aristocratic women, the vast corpus of (male authored) commentaries on the text definitively demonstrate that it had a large male readership as well. By the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the *Genji* was well known outside of the world of the court and courtly literature and was popular (in various forms) among powerful warlords. Shirane postulates that the *Genji*'s popularity among "warrior leaders, who typically had far less education than members of the aristocracy, [was because] *The Tale of Genji* represented a connection to a heritage of court culture that they did not possess."¹¹ In the Kamakura period (1185-1333), two new recensions as well as new commentaries of the text appeared, making the *Tale* easier to

The University of Michigan, 1993), 29-44; and Haruo Shirane and Thomas Harper, eds. *Reading The Tale of Genji: Sources from the First Millennium* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015).

For a discussion of how Edo period audiences received the tale, see Patrick W. Caddeau, *Appraising Genji: Literary Criticism and Cultural Anxiety in the Age of the Last Samurai* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006); and Lewis Cook, "Genre Trouble: Medieval Commentaries and Canonization of The Tale of Genji," Kindle edition, chapter five; and P.F. Kornicki, "Women, Education, and Literacy," *The Female as Subject: Reading and Writing in Early Modern Japan*, eds. P. F. Kornicki, Mara Patessio, and G. G. Rowley (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 2010), 7-38.

¹¹ Haruo Shirane, "Introduction," in *Reading The Tale of Genji: Sources from the First Millennium*, ed. Thomas Harper and Haruo Shirane (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 6.

understand for a wider audience.¹² By the mid-Muromachi period (1392-1573), the poems in *The Tale of Genji* spread in popularity, and a wider base of readers came “into contact with the *Genji* through classical linked verse (*renga*), a new poetic genre that dominated the late medieval period.”¹³ Throughout the Edo period (1600–1867), readership of the *Genji* grew and urban commoners and a wider array of educated samurai became familiar with the tale. By the Meiji period *The Tale of Genji* had become a cornerstone of national literature, with portions added to government-approved textbooks and an increase in scholarship. In the modern period, the text has been translated, and while many people have not read the *Genji* (save for a required chapter or two in school), most know the broad brush-strokes of the story through manga, movie, and/or television drama. Therefore, we can’t really speak of one *Tale of Genji*. Rather, we must speak of *Genjis*: *Genji* as it was created during the Heian period (of which we know very little), *Genji* as it has been canonized as a classical tale, *Genji* as it has been replaced by picture books with selected poetry, *Genji* commentaries, *Genji* noh drama, *Genji* kabuki, *Genji* manga, *Genji* anime, and *Genji* television dramas, and so on. As I mentioned earlier, there is no extant “original” *Genji*. Therefore it is impossible to claim that any one of these versions of the *Tale* is more honest or truthful to an original.

However, the canonical fifty-four chapter version of the *Tale* is most likely closest in

¹² The recensions were Fujiwara Teika’s (1162–1241) *Aobyōshi-bon* (Blue Cover Variant) and Minamoto Mitsuyuki and Chikayuki’s *Kawachibon* (Kawachi Variant). New commentaries included Fujiwara Teika’s *Okuri* (Endnotes, ca. 1233) and commentaries of the Kawachi family: Mitsuyuki and Chikayuki’s *Suigenshō* (Water Spring Notes, thirteenth century), *Ihon shimeishō* (Variant Notes on Explicating Murasaki, 1252), Priest Sojaku’s *Shimeishō* (Notes on Explicating Murasaki, 1267, 1294), and *Genchū saihishō* (Secret Notes of the Suigenshō, 1313, 1364). See Haruki Ii, “Didactic Readings of *The Tale of Genji*: Politics and Women’s Education,” *Envisioning the Tale of Genji: Media, Gender, and Cultural Production* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008) Kindle edition, locations 4399-4407.

¹³ Haruo Shirane, “*The Tale of Genji* and the Dynamics of Cultural Production: Canonization and Popularization,” Kindle edition, chapter one.

form to what was read (or listened to) in the Heian period, and that is the version I base my research upon.¹⁴

Jumping off from Edith Sarra's focus on feminist readings, gender, and gaze, and Richard Bowring's work on narratorial presence, I focus on how Murasaki Shikibu uses four scenes of mourning in *The Tale of Genji* to pacify the spirits of deceased women and pre-mourn the mourner him/herself.¹⁵ I then demonstrate that the authors of the "Crane Grove" (*Tsuru no hayashi*) chapter in the *Eiga Monogatari* (*A Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, c. eleventh century) and the fourteenth-century text, often considered sacred, *Kanjō no Maki* (*The Initiate's Chapter*, of the Kakuichi version of *The Tale of the Heike*, by 1371 C.E.) adapted Murasaki Shikibu's mourning poetics to invoke complex scenes of virtuous and sorrowful mourners who eulogize and pacify the spirits of the deceased.¹⁶

¹⁴ The fifty-four chapter version is based on the Aobyōshibon texts. By the Muromachi period the Aobyōshibon line of texts, the oldest extant, were considered standard. These texts are traceable to Fujiwara no Teika (1162-1241), who completed this version of the *Genji* in 1225.

¹⁵ Edith Sarra, *Fictions of Femininity: Literary Inventions of Gender in Japanese Court Women's Memoirs*; and Richard Bowring, *Murasaki Shikibu: The Tale of Genji* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

¹⁶ Labeling the *Kanjō no Maki* a sacred text is contentious. For a discussion on the possible role of institutional Buddhism in the creation of the text, see Elizabeth Oyler, *Swords, Oaths and Prophetic Visions: Authoring Warrior Rule in Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), 15. Jin'ichi Konishi makes the association between Heike recitation and *shomyō*. See Jin'ichi Konishi, *A History of Japanese Literature*, trans. Aileen Gatten and Nicholas Teele; ed. Earl Miner, (Princeton: Princeton University Press: 1984), 319. However, Helen Craig McCullough asserts this association cannot be certain and may rely on faulty evidence linking Heike performers to Buddhist temples. See Helen Craig McCullough, "Introduction," in *The Tale of the Heike*, trans. Helen Craig McCullough, (Stanford: Stanford University Press: 1988), 8.

The value of the *Kanjō no maki* as *goryō* pacification and historiography coincides with what Fabio Rambelli calls a "sacred materiality," or "the economic price for which [schools, their texts,] and their related rituals could be bought and/or exchanged and also their symbolic and religious values." By restricting the content of these texts to an individual temple or school, the text's sacred materiality, its worth, increases and can be used "as economic and political bargaining chips to preserve their status." See Fabio Rambelli, *Buddhist Materiality: A Cultural History of Objects in Japanese Buddhism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press: 2007), 90.

By positioning principal mourners engaged in elegant mourning in the scene directly preceding his or her own death, these chapters mirror the *Genji* and function as spirit pacification of the historical mourner him/herself. This means that Murasaki Shikibu's portrayal of an elegant (and thus not dangerous) form of mourning stayed in the literary consciousness of premodern Japanese for nearly four hundred years.

The Dawn of a New Mourning

In the *Genji*, Murasaki Shikibu invites readers to translate and comprehend multi-layered references to sorrow, eulogy, and spirit pacification in scenes of mourning. I term this “mourning poetics”: an amalgamation of elite mourning ritual with well-known elegiac and lament poetry in Japan. The *Genji*'s mourning poetics reach a climax in the pivotal chapter “The Seer,” in which, through the passage of time and the performance of mourning, the author describes Genji's year-long mourning of Lady Murasaki, recapitulates the couple's history, and eulogizes and pacifies both Murasaki's and Genji's spirits. Mourning poetics provides a site to reflect the concerns of a specific section of society in a given time (for instance, the Heian court, Muromachi period Buddhist institutions, or modern Japanese young women), giving us unique insight into relationships, the practice of ritual and religion, and the power of words on the page.

Jacqueline I. Stone argues that as the competition for patronage became more intense in the Kamakura era (1185-1333 C.E.), secret transmission of knowledge through *kanjō* (initiation) ritual was one way to “emphasize the uniqueness of [a school's] own rites and to develop methods of secret transmission to protect that uniqueness.” See Jacqueline I. Stone, *Original Enlightenment and the Transformation of Medieval Japanese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press: 1999), 108.

It is essential to define “ritual” and “translation” in order to understand these mourning scenes. First, ritual: Bourdieu’s theory of ritual in society requires investigation into the subjective, objective, and temporal aspects of ritual, allowing for a reconstitution that incorporates supporting structures, individual action, and the position of the researcher.¹⁷ By applying Bourdieu’s insights to mourning ritual in medieval literature, I demonstrate the ways in which Murasaki Shikibu manipulated religious, social, political, and literary themes in order to create a new mourning poetics. To describe mourning ritual and practice, I employ Robert Sharf’s shift away from the study of experience to that of practice.¹⁸ I also incorporate Catherine Bell’s suggestion to investigate the performance of practice, since all textual explanations of practice are also acts of performance.¹⁹ Sharf cautions that scholars cannot capture the meaning of practice “in the experiences they elicit in the minds of practitioners” (either individual or collective) which is “a dimension inaccessible to strictly objective modes of inquiry” and which cannot be separated from a description of that experience (since the descriptions do not provide a “transparent window” into the experience).²⁰ Bell states that the investigation of performance, although ambiguous, “stresses the execution of a preexisting script for activity...or the explicitly unscripted dimensions of an activity in process” and explores “how activities create culture, authority, transcendence, and whatever forms of holistic

¹⁷ Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 114.

¹⁸ Robert Sharf, “Experience,” in *Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 94-116.

¹⁹ Catherine Bell, “Performance,” in *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*, ed. Mark C. Taylor (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 205- 224.

²⁰ Sharf, “Experience,” 94-5.

ordering are required for people to act in meaningful and effective ways.”²¹ Similarly, my use of the term “mourning ritual” follows Sharf’s definition of ritual as an act “set apart from the affairs of mundane existence” through “the extensive use of scripting, repetition, and highly mannered modes of speech and movement.”²² I investigate mourning ritual in codes through the performative approach, asking “how do participants come to do what they do?”

Mourning ritual is different from mourning practice. Rituals are scripted and “highly mannered,” and may, or may not, carry religious meaning. Mourning practices are actions performed during mourning which are not the “ideal,” not the scripted and highly mannered rituals.²³ As Carl Bielefeld defines it, practice can represent opposition to, or violation or subversion of, prescribed ritual action.²⁴ Investigation into practice, therefore, can often reveal the rhetoric or ideology behind the creation of ritual.²⁵ This raises the question, “Who prescribes rituals, and why?” in chapter one, the answer to “Who prescribes?” is the imperial court. (What the imperial court is, and why it prescribes, will also be wrestled with.)

Naoki Sakai’s translation theory and Michael Emmerich’s definition of “replacing the text” are useful to explore the ways in which the author reflected contemporary society and in which the reader understands text. Sakai’s theory of the “heterolingual

²¹ Bell, “Performance,” 205-206, 208.

²² Robert Sharf, “Ritual,” in *Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism*, edited by Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 247-8.

²³ Carl Bielefeldt, “Practice,” in *Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism* ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008). Kindle edition.

²⁴ Ibid., Kindle edition, locations 3696-3697.

²⁵ Ibid.

mode” of translation argues that primacy should not be given to the original utterance, but to the subsequent act of translation that constantly occurs as the audience seeks to comprehend.²⁶ Therefore, mourning poetics is constructed not only by the author, but also by the various ways an audience would (or would not) understand references to mourning. For example, authors produce mourning scenes that describe grief while also making allusion to political reigns, court ritual, and classical literature. The audience then translates the enunciated mourning scenes in terms of the scenes presented and the prior knowledge they bring to the text. Emmerich illustrates that the histories of reading and textual transmission of *The Tale of Genji* are acts of replacing the text with new versions, not of a cannibalistic reception of the text.²⁷ All subsequent readings of the text, which are translations of an unknown original, are not really being “received”; rather, they are replacements. Therefore the story is replaced with each translation, including the translation that occurs in each transition.

Chapter one begins with an analysis of eighth-century mourning and funerary portions of the *Kojiki* (*Records of Ancient Matters*), *Nihon shoki* (*The Chronicles of Japan*), and the Yōrō code, informed by the insights of Sharf, Bell, Inada Natsuko, and Masuda Yoshiko. The earliest evidence of mourning in ancient Japan indicates that there was a three-step mourning process: *mogari*, *hafuri*, and *mo*. *Mogari* (or *araki*) occurred immediately after death and was a time of ritual seclusion in order to both wait for the

²⁶ Naoki Sakai, *Translation and Subjectivity: On “Japan” and Cultural Nationalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

²⁷ Michael Emmerich, *The Tale of Genji: Translation, Canonization, and World Literature*.

dead to revive (which frequently occurred) and to pacify the spirit of the deceased.²⁸ *Hafuri* was the process of discarding of the corpse, be it by exposure, cremation, or burial. *Mo* is the period of mourning, which lasted anywhere from one day to one year, included a wide array of activities to express inner grief and relation to the deceased and pacify the spirit of the deceased. The earliest mourning practices recorded in the *Kojiki*, *Nihon Shoki*, and *Man'yōshū* reveal that mourners cried out for the deceased and wore robes that were typically made of undyed, white, hempen cloth. There was also a strong association between mourning and birds, with the parents of Ame-no-wakahiko assigning mourning duties to birds and *Man'yōshū* poets describing the actions of mourners in terms of birds. However, marked differences in mourning ritual can be found in the Yōrō code of 718 C.E. For example, there is no codification of crying out to the dead and the emperor was prescribed to wear black, not white, mourning robes after the death of a relative of the second degree or closer. Scholars debate the specific reasons why these codes differ from their Chinese counterpart (which requires calling out and white robes), but roughly attribute the changes to differences in Japanese practice and hierarchy of government.²⁹ In any case, Inada Natsuko and Masuda Yoshiko demonstrate that mourning codes were rarely followed as written.³⁰ Over time, systems to shorten the

²⁸ Nakada Taizō, “Mogari ni okeru minzokugakuteki kōsatsu” *Sōsō Bosei Kenkyū Shūsei*, modern edition, ed. Inokuchi Shōji (Tōkyō: Meicho Shuppankai, 1979), 120. While some scholars state that *mogari* for anyone other than the king (or emperor) was prohibited, Nakada Taizō argues that by the beginning of the Heian period (794-1185 C.E.) commoners also performed *mogari*. See pages 104, 108. See also Gary Ebersole, *Ritual Poetry and the Politics of Death in Early Japan*, 123-215.

²⁹ See Okada Shigekiyo, *Imi no Sekai: Sono Kikō to Henyō* (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1989), 2-8; Michael Como, “Introduction,” in *Weaving and Binding: Immigrant Gods and Female Immortals in Ancient Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2009), xiii-xiv; and Ōtsu Tōru, “Tennō no fuku to ritsuryō: rei no keiyū,” *Kodai no Tennō Sei* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1999), 154-5.

³⁰ Inada Natsuko, *Nihon Kodai no Sōsō Girei to Ritsuryō Sei* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 2015); and Masuda Yoshiko, “Heian jidai,” *Nihon Mofukushi Kodai Hen: Sōsō Girei to Yosooi* (Tokyo: Genryūsha, 2002), 221-3.

mourning and seclusion periods were widely adopted and by as early as 930 C.E. black mourning robes were being worn by those other than the emperor, usually as a way to express depth of grief instead of relationship. Other systems of mourning were practiced, such as “Heart-mourning,” (*shinsō*)--mourning that was not ritually or legally prescribed but reflected a desire to continue mourning. The robes worn during heart-mourning varied in color and depended on the level of sadness the mourner wished to convey. In summation, early records and mourning code articles of the eighth century played a supporting role to mourning practices of the eleventh century, when mourning practice took on forms that reflected personal preference.

Chapter two turns to the *Genji*’s new construction of mourning and to its use of mourning ritual and practice in an analysis of three major scenes: Genji’s mourning of his secret lover, Yūgao; of his first wife, Aoi; and of his step-mother and lover, Fujitsubo. Within *The Tale of Genji*, the main character, Genji, endures the deaths of four lovers: Yūgao, Aoi, Fujitsubo, and Lady Murasaki. Murasaki Shikibu narrates the mourning scenes for Yūgao, Aoi, and Fujitsubo in detail and they provide a good point of comparison with Genji’s mourning for his love Lady Murasaki, which is the subject of “The Seer,” or “Maboroshi.” In chapter two of this study, I describe how, similar to how other mourners personalized the mourning codes, Murasaki Shikibu reveals Genji’s depth of love for each woman through his mourning. Specifically, I argue that Murasaki Shikibu weaves together the structure of time with poetic lament and mourning ritual and practice to recapitulate Genji’s relationship with each woman. Murasaki Shikibu retells these relationships by using present seasonal imagery to recall past events, which pushes

Genji's mourning into the future. The first of Genji's lovers to die in the *Tale* is Yūgao. The brevity of Yūgao's death scene (a little more than forty-nine days), coupled with few poetic laments and no mourning ritual, underscores the secrecy of Genji and Yūgao's relationship. Next to greet death is Genji's first wife, Aoi. Through a description of Genji's mourning, Murasaki Shikibu reveals that feelings and private actions demonstrate a superficial mourning period, as he maintains relationships with lovers, does not don darker mourning than required, does not stay in seclusion for the entire period, and takes a wife. While mourning Fujitsubo, Genji reveals he is beginning to mature in his experience with death, more artfully navigating the balance required between publicly mourning an empress (and step-mother) and privately mourning a secret lover. In a reversal of the mourning scenes for Aoi, Genji's private emotions for Fujitsubo reveal the depth of his sorrow that his public mourning ritual cannot express. In this way, Murasaki Shikibu uses mourning to reveal Genji's depth of feeling for each of his deceased lovers.

The portrayal of Genji's mourning for Yūgao, Aoi, Fujitsubo is drastically different, but each also functions as spirit pacification. For various reasons, such as dying at the hand of a malign spirit or with a shameful secret, each of these women requires spirit pacification so that she will not wreak havoc on the later tale and so Genji can move forward with his life and relationships. During each mourning period, Murasaki Shikibu reintroduces the women, allowing for the stories of their lives to be retold. When Genji is able to truly understand the position of his lover, from her point of view, he becomes able to mourn deeply, cleanse himself and the deceased character of "sins," and aid in a better rebirth.

In chapters three and four I focus on “The Seer” and outline how its content and structure are unique within the *Tale*, describing both the emotions and the acts of mourning. Chapter three focuses on the unique month-by-month, yearlong, structure of time in “The Seer,” noted since at least the fourteenth century.³¹ The structure of time, analyzed through seasonal poems, functions to: 1) recapitulate the major events in the *Tale* and contrast Genji’s former glory with his present decline; 2) describe Genji’s depth of sadness over the death of Lady Murasaki; 3) craft an elegy for, and pacify the spirit of, Lady Murasaki and Genji; and 4) create—with the help of the reader—a new character: a

³¹ Sojaku and Yotsutsuji Yoshinari, Shimeishō, *Kakaishō*, ed. Tamagami Takuya, Yamamoto Ritatsu, and Ishida Jōji (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1968), 163; Sanjōnishi Sanetaka, *Rōkashō*, ed. Ii Haruki (Hiroshima: Hiroshima Heian bungaku kenkyūkai, 1967), 224; Sanjōnishi Kin’eda, preface to *Myōjōshō*, ed., Ii Haruki, *Sairyūshō*: Naikaku bunko-bon (Tokyo: Ōfūsha, 1975), 329. Kujō Tanemichi, *Mōshinshō*, Nomura Seiichi, ed (Tokyo: Ōfūsha, 1982), 398.

For a discussion of the manipulation of seasonal imagery in the *Genji*’s “Maboroshi” mourning scene, see Norma Field, *Splendor and Longing in The Tale of Genji* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 213-14; Steven D. Carter, “‘The End of a Year--the End of a Life As Well’: Murasaki Shikibu’s Farewell to the Shining One,” in *Approaches to Teaching Murasaki Shikibu’s The Tale of Genji*, ed. Edward Kamens (NY: Modern Language Association of America, 1993), 124–25; Haruo Shirane, *The Bridge of Dreams: A Poetics of The Tale of Genji* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), 131.

For a discussion of how the *Genji* uses seasonal imagery in the *Kokinwakashū*, see Gustav Heldt, *The Pursuit of Harmony: Poetry and Power in Early Heian Japan* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2008), 152–69.

For works stating that the focus of the structure of time is to express grief, see Takahashi Yuki, “Toki o heta aishōka to *Genji Monogatari*” *Genji Monogatari to Girei*, ed. Kojima Taoko and Hasegawa Noriaki (Tokyo: Musashinoshoin, 2012), 741-760; Kannotō Akio, “Bannen no Hikaru Genji zō o megute Maboroshi no maki o dō yomuka” in *Monogatari/Nikki Bungaku to Sono Shūhen: Imai Takuji Hakase Koki Kinen*, ed. Imai Takuji Hakase Koki Kinen Ronsyū Hensyū Iinkai (Tokyo: Ōfūsha, 1980), 353-371; Abe Akio, “Rokujōin no jūkai” in *Hikaru Genji Ron: Hosshin to Shukke* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1989); and Amano Kiyako, “Genjutsushi kara ‘Maboroshi’ e: *Genji Monogatari*, aitō no hōhō” in *Nihon Bungaku Shiyō* 76 (2007), 2-11.

For research stressing the structure of time recapitulates the lives of Lady Murasaki and/or Genji, see Suzuki Hiroko, “‘Maboroshi’ no maki no jikan to waka – sōkisareru kako/ hibi o kizamu uta” *Genji Monogatari no Tenbō*, ed. Mori Ichirō, Iwasa Miyoko, and Sakamoto Tomonobu (Tokyo: MiyaiShoten, 2008), 210-243; and Hirokawa Katsumi, “*Genji Monogatari* Maboroshi machikō: nenchūgyōji to eika: shunka bu” *Kodai Chūsei Bungaku Ronkō*, ed. (Tokyo: Shintensha, 1998), 147–272.

For works that stress the salvation of the characters, see Komachiya Teruhiko, “‘Maboroshi’ no hōhō ni tsuite no shiron: waka niyoru sakahinron e no apuroochi” *Genji Monogatari to Murasaki Shikibu: Kenkyū no Kiseki*, ed. Murasaki Shikibu Kenshōkai (Tokyo: Kadokawagakei, 2008), 273-286; Takahashi Bunji, “Shinkō toshite no Monogatari – ‘Suma’ no maki, besturi no ba to ‘Maboroshi’ no maki, shikijūno no ba wojiku ni” in *Genji Monogatari no Tankyū* 14 (1989), 123-43; and Go Matsuume, “*Genji Monogatari* Maboroshi no maki no Hikaru Genji to Genshin no Tōbōshi: San Hikaiwoyaru to Rishi Gosyū shiyo o chūshin ni” in *Kokugakuin Daigaku Kiyō* 46 (2008), 45-60.

“Lady Murasaki of Memory.” With the passing of each month, present-day seasonal and ritual images prompt Genji to recall his past with Lady Murasaki. These remembrances cause Genji to understand Lady Murasaki’s point of view. Grasping Lady Murasaki’s position, through the structures of time and mourning, allows Genji to deeply mourn Lady Murasaki, pacifying her spirit, which was in need of pacification because she died having suffered a maligned reputation (believed by, and created by, Genji).³²

Genji’s poems in “The Seer” conjure the memory of Lady Murasaki, but they do not allow her to act or evolve. The “Lady Murasaki of Memory” exists only in Genji’s laments, therefore she can not act in the larger world of the tale. It is only through Genji’s actions that express his laments, his acts of mourning, that this “Lady Murasaki of Memory” can evolve and influence others. In chapter four I demonstrate how Murasaki Shikibu’s mapping of specific Heian period mourning rituals and practices onto the chapter’s structure of time reveals that Genji is not only *lamenting* the death of Lady Murasaki, but also *mourning* her death. Genji’s acts of mourning, significantly longer than prescribed, demonstrate the depth of his grief, pacify Lady Murasaki’s spirit, and permanently divide him from both the earlier world of the *Tale* and from Lady Murasaki. While Genji mourns Lady Murasaki and pacifies her spirit, the “Lady Murasaki of Memory” mourns the soon-to-be-deceased Genji and pacifies his future spirit. In this way, Genji’s remembrances create the “Lady Murasaki of Memory” and his actions allow this new character to act.

³² It is necessary to note that Lady Murasaki is never referred to by the term “dangerous spirit.”

Genji's death is not described in *The Tale of Genji* and his spirit needs to be pacified in the chapter "The Seer" because there is no memorial or mourning scene later in the tale. The risk of Genji becoming a troublesome spirit can be traced to his high rank in life and to readers' uncertainty as to whether he takes religious vows before death, releasing his attachments to the world. In addition, by pacifying Genji's spirit in "The Seer," Murasaki Shikibu is able to mark a divide in the tale, jumping from forty-one chapters of the world of Genji to eleven chapters without him. Murasaki Shikibu's new character, the "Lady Murasaki of Memory," the pacified spirit of Lady Murasaki, pre-pacifies the spirit of Genji. Through Genji's year-long mourning in "The Seer"—a time too long for mourning a wife but appropriate for mourning a husband—the "Lady Murasaki of Memory" recapitulates the story of Genji's life, allows Genji to tell his story from his own point of view, forgives Genji of his worldly "sins," and pacifies his spirit.

"The Seer" introduces to the world of literature a new and unique way to mourn, adopting the rituals of elegant mourning and Buddhist salvation to pacify the spirits of fictional characters, situated within the world of the late Heian court. Chapters five and six demonstrate how the mourning scenes in the "Crane Grove" chapter of *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes* and *The Initiate's Chapter* drew upon the mourning poetics in the *Genji*. In "The Seer," "Crane Grove," and *The Initiate's Chapter*, deep mourning immediately precedes the main character's death. When these mourning scenes are analyzed and compared with the *Genji*, three distinct parallels appear: references to classical elegy and lament poetry, structures of time, and allusion to mourning ritual. For example, each of these works employs similar poetic allusions to calibrate the mourner's

virtue and depth of grief. They also share structures of time, either seasonal or religious, to recapitulate the histories of the deceased and the mourner, functioning as a kind of eulogy, or spirit pacification. All three of these texts use mourning and memorialization rituals to calibrate the depth of the mourner's grief and pacify the spirits of the dead. Therefore, by linking the principal mourners of "Crane Grove" and *The Initiate's Chapter* with Genji, these later authors eulogized their historical characters with passages of elegant and sage-like mourning.

In addition, these texts use techniques that first appeared in *The Tale of Genji* to pre-mourn and pre-pacify the spirit of the principal mourner, who, like Genji, would no longer appear after their final scene of mourning. In the final chapter of Fujiwara no Michinaga's (966-1028 C.E.) life, in the "Crane Grove" chapter of *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, it is the narrator who performs Michinaga's spirit pacification by detailing his devotion to Buddhism, suggesting his good rebirth, and comparing him to the historical Buddha. In *The Initiate's Chapter*, the spirit of Emperor Antoku (1178 – 1185 C.E.), like the "Lady Murasaki of Memory" Murasaki Shikibu creates in "The Seer," pre-mourns and pre-pacifies the spirit of his mother, Kenreimon'in (1155–1213 C.E.).

This is not to say, however, that canonical scenes of mourning were static over the course of 400 years. While I argue that "The Seer" was the model for important mourning scenes in "Crane Grove" and *The Initiate's Chapter*, I also investigate deviations. Most important among these deviations is the portrayal of time. For example, the mourning period of the principal mourner in *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, Fujiwara no Michinaga, is marked by courtly time. In *The Initiate's Chapter*, Kenreimon'in's

extended period of mourning is depicted not through the *Genji*'s seasonal poetic time, but through "Buddhist time," recapitulating the lives of the deceased through a tracing of the Buddhist realms of rebirth. This demonstrates that, in response to issues of patronage and religion, authors revised the structure of "The Seer" to more accurately meet the needs of their patrons and audience.

The final chapter continues with the theme of investigating how authors and patrons used the vignettes of mourning in "The Seer" in their own works through a study of illustrated descriptions of the *Genji*.³³ Here, I utilize Shirane's concepts of readerly and writerly reception, as well as Emmerich's theory of replacement, to demonstrate ways in which modern manga artists replace "The Seer" through looking at Murasaki Shikibu's text "for models of composition, style, and poetic diction and for creative inspiration."³⁴ Through a synthetic treatment taking into account text, materiality, and image I argue that modern manga artists who "replace" all fifty-four chapters of *The Tale of Genji*, while making choices to omit and embellish based on categories of genre and form, are surprisingly faithful to Murasaki Shikibu's "The Seer."³⁵ These manga illustrations are also in dialogue with Edo-period (1603-1868 C.E.) depictions of "The Seer," showing a

³³ Following Shirane and Yukio Lippit, rather than categorizing the representation of chapters in illustrated *Genji*'s as scenes, they are better labeled as vignettes because "the excerpts are lengthy enough to convey sequences of action, descriptive prose, or interior monologue that correspond to the textual blocks that constitute the raw material of the *Genji*'s narrative movement." See Lippit, "Figure and Factice in the *Genji* Scrolls: Text, Calligraphy, Paper, and Painting," *Envisioning the Tale of Genji: Media, Gender, and Cultural Production* (New York: Columbia University Press). Kindle edition, location 1640; and Shirane, *Bridge of Dreams*, 55-6.

³⁴ Shirane, "*The Tale of Genji* and the Dynamics of Cultural Production: Canonization and Popularization," Kindle edition, location 379.

³⁵ For an argument for the advancement of a synthetic treatment of *Genji* illustrations, see Lippit, "Figure and Factice in the *Genji* Scrolls: Text, Calligraphy, Paper, and Painting," Kindle locations 1588-1592; and Yoshiaki Shimizu, "The Rite of Writing: Thoughts on the Oldest *Genji* Text," in *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 16 (1988): 54-63.

remarkable conversation with *Genji* over the course of more than a thousand years. Since the Edo period, illustrations of Genji in mourning after the death of Lady Murasaki have varied and increased. This suggests that each reader of the *Genji* translates the tale, creating a personal replacement text. However, Murasaki Shikibu's mourning poetics resonate throughout these replacement texts, always relying on the structures of time, lament, and mourning.

This investigation of mourning scenes across tales, illustrations, and generations reveals the structures and imagery utilized and refined from one text to another. Through a thorough study of the mourning scenes of *The Tale of Genji*, I show how Murasaki Shikibu wove together ritual, law, and classical elegy and lament poetry in order to construct a contemporary mourning poetics that reflected new ideas of power, authority, and spirit pacification. Later authors addressed the social and religious beliefs of their time through an adaptation of the content and structure of the *Genji*. Audiences were invited to translate these scenes in a connected manner, allowing later works to be read and performed as a sort of historiography that recapitulates the major events in the life of the main character, prolongs the presence on the page of the deceased (and soon-to-be-deceased), and pacifies spirits through messages to better the deceased's rebirth.

Chapter One

The “Who,” “What,” “When,” and “Where:” Mourning in Premodern Japan

After the death of Genji’s great love, Lady Murasaki, Genji—who is nearing the end of his own life--begins to mourn longer and deeper than at any other time in *The Tale of Genji*. Throughout the forty-first chapter “The Seer,” Genji demonstrates that he mourns Lady Murasaki in ways that exceed both codified and social norms of mourning. For example, Genji mourns for more than a year and wears mourning robes darker in color than those for his wife (*kitanokata*), Aoi.³⁶ The first extant mourning articles (eighth century) in Japan base the length of mourning on relationship, with a husband mourning a wife for three months. Early examples of mourning detail that mourners wore white hempen mourning robes, and only emperors wore black robes when mourning a relative within the second degree. How then, over the course of nearly three hundred years, did Murasaki Shikibu come to express Genji’s mourning of a lover by having him wear dark mourning robes? How did it come to be that the author of a tale could believably write of yearlong mourning for a lover?

In this chapter I give an overview of ancient and premodern Japanese mourning rituals, practices, and law articles as well as summarize modern Japanese scholarship in

³⁶ Although it was common practice to keep relationships with many women, Heian law mandated a man have only one wife. See Royall Tyler, “Marriage, Rank, and Rape in *The Tale of Genji*,” *Intersections: Gender, History and Culture in the Asian Context* 7 (2002). Accessed online July 20, 2016: <http://intersections.anu.edu.au/issue7/tyler.html#n7>; Kudō Shigenori, “Ippu issai sei to shite no Heian bungaku,” *Gobun Kenkyū* 69 (1990): 1-11; William H. McCullough, “Japanese Marriage Institutions in the Heian Period,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 27 (1967); and Peter Nickerson, “The Meaning of Matrilocal: Kinship, Property, and Politics in Mid-Heian,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 48:4 (1993).

these areas. Different cultures at different times have ways to express the emotions of grief and sorrow that occur after the death of a loved one or an influential figure. Existing documents, diaries, legal codes, histories, and fictional tales form the basis of what scholars today can piece together of mourning practices in the ancient and pre-modern periods. From these sources we can conclude that, although by the early eighth century the Japanese had formalized and codified mourning practices related to the emperor, there was no widespread adherence to this system either by emperors or those below them. These sources demonstrate that, despite the existence of mourning regulations in the Yōrō code of 718 C.E., mourning was carried out due to personal preference, with a tendency to reduce the length of time in formal mourning.

There is a distinct difference between the practice of mourning ritual and the experience of mourning emotions. Even though a mourner has taken off mourning clothes or stopped participating in mourning ritual, he or she might still be experiencing the emotions of grief that accompany mourning. Therefore, the preference to shorten mourning ritual might have no relation to the cessation of sorrow. This distinction, following Robert Sharf and Catherine Bell, between experience, which we cannot access, and practice, which we can attempt to reconstruct, has meaning. Even though a survivor may not be engaged in mourning ritual, expressions of grief are still made possible through mourning practice. Engaging in mourning practice, as opposed to ritual, is evidence of some sort of lack inherent in ritual. My analysis begins with the actions of the mourner as described by the author, focusing on performed practices that either

adhere to, or deviate from, preexisting scripts in order to demonstrate how mourning creates meaning in literature.

The mere existence of codified mourning ritual raises the question, “Who prescribes, and why?” The existence of multiple centers of power (both in the worlds of court and religion) complicates the possible answer to this question. For instance, was the purpose of mourning ritual to regulate absence from court service? Was it to contain pollution associated with death? Was it to appease spirits of the dead to better their afterlife and ensure they did not inflict harm on the social, political, and natural order of this world? Was it any combination of the above? In addition to the question of whether the prescriber had political or religious aims, Barbara Ambros cautions that religious pluralism within medieval Japan presents an additional dilemma for researchers of ritual in literature.³⁷ It is frequently difficult to locate ritual within one religious sphere. Some of the mourning rituals and practices performed had religious meaning (indigenous, *Onmyōdō*-ist, and/or Buddhist) while others did not. However, the focus of this study is not to definitively locate ritual or practice in one religious category. Focusing on only one tradition obscures the religious landscape, as multiple beliefs “do not fall into obsolescence [under religious epistemic change] but either remain active options or else thread their way through the literature as parallel constructs.”³⁸ In this chapter, rather than

³⁷ Barbara Ambros, *Emplacing a Pilgrimage: the Ōyama Cult and Regional Religion in Early Modern Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 2.

³⁸ Barbara Ruch, “Coping with Death: Paradigms of Heaven and Hell and the Six Realms in Early Literature and Painting,” in *Flowing Traces: Buddhism in the Literary and Visual Arts of Japan*, eds. James H. Sanford, William R. LaFleur, and Masatoshi Nagatomi (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 103.

Bialock’s study of the Heike variants illustrates that Daoism and yin-yang practices had distinct influence alongside Buddhism, Confucianism, and “Shinto” in medieval Japan. See David T. Bialock, *Eccentric*

determine which belief system was dominant, I am more concerned with prescriptions of mourning activities as they were codified in civil codes, translated into scenes of mourning in canonical texts, and received by the Heian period elite. Therefore, in this chapter, the answer to “Who prescribes?” is the imperial court. (I will also address what the imperial court is and why it prescribes.)

We must rely on histories and tales to piece together early Japanese mourning practices before their codification. The earliest evidence of mourning in ancient Japan indicates there was a three-step mourning process: *mogari*, *hafuri*, and *mo*. *Mogari* (or *araki*) occurred immediately after death and was a time when survivors secluded themselves in a specially constructed room (*araki no miya*) for varying time periods in order to both wait for the dead to revive and to pacify the spirit of the deceased.³⁹ This waiting period was most likely a practical concern, a step to verify death. *Hafuri* (*haburi*) was the process of burial, cremation, or discarding of the corpse. In the Heian period, cremation became the preferred method. Prior to the Heian, the corpses of high-ranking officials (and their family members) were typically buried, while the corpses of commoners were frequently discarded by the riverside or in the mountains and left to decompose.⁴⁰ The final discarding of the corpse could occur at varying periods after the

Spaces, Hidden Histories: Narrative, Ritual, and Royal Authority from The Chronicles of Japan to The Tale of the Heike (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).

³⁹ Nakada Taizō, “Mogari ni okeru minzokugakuteki kōsatsu” in *Sōsō bōsei Kenkyū Shūsei*, modern edition, ed. Inokuchi Shōji (Tōkyō: Meicho Shuppankai, 1979), 120. While some scholars state that *mogari* for anyone other than the king (or emperor) was prohibited, Nakada Taizō argues that by the beginning of the Heian period (794-1185 C.E.) commoners also performed *mogari*. See pages 104, 108. See also Gary Ebersole, *Ritual Poetry and the Politics of Death in Early Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), especially pages 123-215.

⁴⁰ Mark Rowe, “Grave Changes: Scattering Ashes in Contemporary Japan,” in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 30:1-2 (2003), 93. See also Masuda Yoshiko, “Heian jidai,” in *Nihon Mofukushi Kodai Hen: Sōsō Girei to Yosooi* (Tokyo: Genryūsha, 2002), 221-23.

confirmation of death, or the conclusion of *mogari*. As we will see in later chapters, funeral and cremation dates were sometimes based upon individual taboo days. *Mo*, or mourning, was a far more complicated process. In the ancient period, mourning confinement was done in the same structure where *mogari* occurred (in this final phase, called the *mo no miya*) and had varying time limitations. However, as Buddhist practices became more prevalent in the Heian period, mourning confinement was done in various locations, including temples and family homes, and, in some cases, was extended to forty-nine days in accordance with the Buddhist memorial services offered every seventh day for seven weeks. The extent to which these practices were carried out is unclear, but their presence in works of literature suggests that they would not have been alien concepts to their audience.

The process of mourning in premodern Japan is frequently referred to as the act of wearing “mourning clothes” (*fukumo*) rather than “mourning” (*mo*). As Inada Natsuko describes, *fukumo* is the act of mourning the deceased in Japan and refers to wearing a special garment of mourning and undergoing a temporary lifestyle of restraint as a means to express feelings of grief regarding the death of a deceased relative or those related as lord and subject.⁴¹ This broad definition encompasses all of the varying rituals and practices associated with mourning in premodern Japan, which could include abstaining from eating meat, abstaining from sexual relations, seclusion, taking up floorboards, and changing screens to mourning colors and hanging them in reverse. Therefore, by

⁴¹ Inada Natsuko, *Nihon Kodai no Sōsō Girei to Ritsuryō Sei* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 2015).

referencing a mourner was wearing mourning robes, an author could also be alluding to various other simultaneous mourning activities.

The earliest “records” of mourning practice in Japan are found in the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki*, including the tale of Ame-no-wakahiko (Young Lad of Heaven, a god sent to quiet Japan.).⁴² Inada argues that rituals and practices of *fukumo* cannot be found in the mortuary and funerary customs of the Yamato people recorded in the Chinese histories, the *Kojiki* (*Records of Ancient Matters*), or the *Nihon shoki* (*The Chronicles of Japan*, both eighth century).⁴³ While it is true that there are no sustained ritual instructions on mourning clothing in these texts, there are descriptions of other mourning practices. For example, it is recorded that after Ame-no-wakahiko died, his parents came down from heaven and built a mourning room (*moya*); assigned mourning duties to various birds; and wept, danced, and sang for eight days and nights.⁴⁴ These actions

⁴² The *Nihongi* has Regulations for Burial and Tomb sizes, which includes a prohibition on some mourning activities: “When someone dies, strangling yourself, or strangling other people, or forcing the sacrifice of the dead man’s horse, or putting jewels inside the tombs for the deceased, or cutting your hair or stabbing your thighs while saying a eulogy for the deceased, all the old customs like these are completely forbidden.” See Ō no Yasumaro, *The Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697*, trans. William George Aston (London: Herne Ridge Ltd, 2013), Kindle edition 7951-7953.

⁴³ Inada Natsuko, *Nihon Kodai no Sōsō Girei to Ritsuryō Sei*.

⁴⁴ The *Kojiki* records: “So the sound of weeping from the wife of Young Lad of Heaven, Lady Downward Shining, was carried on the wind and reached all the way up to heaven. Now the father of Young Lad of Heaven, Land Soul of Heaven, who was with his son’s dear wife and children in heaven, heard her, and straightaway they went down together to weep and grieve and build a funeral hut. They had a river goose carry the funeral offerings. They had a long-legged heron carry the broom to sweep the hut. They had a kingfisher prepare the food. They had a sparrow be the grain-grinding woman. They had a pheasant be the mourning woman. Having thus assigned each bird its role, they sang and danced to music for eight whole days and eight whole nights. At this time, the spirit Lofty Little Lad of Fine Plows came to join in the mourning for Young Lad of Heaven, whereupon the father of Young Lad of Heaven and his dear wife, who had both come down from heaven, wept and spoke, saying: “My child did not die. Here he is!” “My lord husband did not die. Here he is!” And so saying, they clung to his hands and feet and wept with grief. The reason for this mistake was the close resemblance these two spirits bore to each other. That is why they mistook him. Now the spirit Lofty Little Lad of Fine Plows grew greatly angered and spoke, saying: “I only came to mourn for my beloved friend. Why do you liken me to his foul corpse?” And so saying, he unsheathed the sword ten hand spans long that was girded by his mighty side, cut down the funeral hut, and kicked it away. The mountain where this happened lies in the land of Fine Soil, by the upper course of

correspond to the *mogari no miya* rituals as outlined by Ebersole.⁴⁵ The Ame-no-wakahiko scene also appears in the *Nihon shoki*, along with other mourning scenes, most notably the one after Emperor Tenmu's (631-686 C.E.) death.⁴⁶ This is important because it is the first time we have a scene of humans (rather than gods) performing extended mourning. The *Nihon shoki* records that, after Emperor Tenmu died on the ninth day of the ninth month, *mogari* was performed for three days, mourning began on the eleventh day of the ninth month, and concluded only after his final burial, more than one year later.⁴⁷ Crying in a loud voice for the deceased (*koai*) was performed at his temporary burial on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month and on the thirtieth day of the ninth month. In the eleventh month, the *tatafushi* dance (a martial dance in which the performers wield a shield and sword) was performed.⁴⁸ After his funeral (ninth month ninth day), on the twenty-fourth day an envoy from Silla wore mourning clothes, bowed three times facing east, and did *koai* three times. Therefore, even though we cannot point to these practices as a set mourning ritual, there is evidence of practice.

In the mid-eighth-century poetic anthology *Man'yōshū* (*Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves*), references to early Japanese mourning practices can be gleaned from *banka* (literally “coffin-pulling songs,” sung at the temporary burial site of emperors and

Indigo Waters, and is called Mount Mourning. The broadsword he used to cut down the hut is named Great Leaf Reaper, also Sacred Sharp Sword.” Ō no Yasumaro, *The Kojiki: An Account of Ancient Matters*, trans. Gustav Heldt (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014). Kindle edition, 44.

⁴⁵ Ebersole, *Ritual Poetry and the Politics of Death in Early Japan*, 123-215.

⁴⁶ Ō no Yasumaro, *The Nihongi*, Kindle edition 891-906.

⁴⁷ Ibid., location 9846.

⁴⁸ Bialock states, “they performed a martial dance called the *tatafushi no mai*, in which the performers wielded a shield and a sword. The yin-yang principles enacted in these dances, of which an early example is the shield dance (*ganqi*) recorded in the *Li ji*, performed the dual function of ritually driving out evil spirits and affirming the harmonious balancing of the four breaths that regulated the seasons, heaven and earth, and the four directions- a motif echoed in the language of the *ōharae* incantation.” See David Bialock, *Eccentric Spaces, Hidden Histories*, 98-99.

princes). For example, in Empress Jitō's (d. 702) *banka* after the death of Emperor Tenmu (d. 686), she writes:

やすみしゝ 我が大君の 夕されば 見したまふらし
明け来れば 問ひたまふらし 神岡の 山のもみぢを
今日もかも 問ひたまはまし
明日もかも 見したまはまし
その山を 振りさけ見つゝ 夕されば あやに悲しみ
明け来れば うらさび暮らし
あらたへの衣の袖は 乾る時もなし

Oh, the autumn foliage
Of the hill of Kamioka!
My good Lord and Sovereign
Would see it in the evening
And ask of it in the morning
On that very hill from afar
I gaze, wondering
If he sees it to-day,
Or asks of it to-morrow.
Sadness I feel at eve,
And heart-rending grief at morn –
The sleeves of my coarse-cloth robe
Are never for a moment dry.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ MYS II:159. *The Man'yōshū: The Nippon Gakujutsu Shinkokai Translation of One Thousand Poems*, trans. Theodore De Bary (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 18.

In this poem Empress Jitō clearly equates wearing “coarse-cloth” garments (*aratae*) as an expression of mourning upon the death of her husband. The coarse material used to create robes could have been mulberry bark (*kōzo*), arrowroot vine (*kuzu*), or wisteria (*fuji*) and was white in color.⁵⁰ A similar reference to mourning robes can be found in a poem attributed to Yamabe no Akahito (fl. C. 724-736 C.E.):

<i>Tago no ura ni</i>	Going out on Tago Bay,
<i>Uchi idete mireba</i>	When I look,
<i>Shirotae no</i>	On Fuji’s high peak,
<i>Fuji no takane ni</i>	White as hempen sleeves,
<i>Yuki wa furitsutsu</i>	Snow is falling ⁵¹

In Akahito’s poem, the robes are made of wisteria (*fuji*), as white as the snow falling at the peak of Mt. Fuji. While these cannot be definitively labeled “mourning robes,” they are most certainly the garments in which to mourn and are closely related to the white hempen mourning garments, called *sofuku*. *Sofuku*, as well as other mourning practices, is also evident in the following excerpt of Kakinomoto no Asomi Hitomaro’s (c. 662 – 710 C.E.) poem commemorating the temporary enshrinement of Prince Takechi at Kinoe:

<i>Sakayuru toki ni</i>	But when the white flower of his glory
<i>Wa go ōkimi</i>	Bloomed at its fairest,

⁵⁰ Ōtsu Tōru, “Tennō no fuku to ritsuryō: rei no keiyū,” in *Kodai no Tennō Sei* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1999), 67.

⁵¹ *Shinkokinshū* VI: 675 (winter, topic unknown). Translation in Anne Commons, *Hitomaro: Poet as God* (New York: Brill, 2009), 80.

<i>Mikado no hito mo</i>	Our great lord our Prince's gates
<i>Kamumiya ni</i>	Became a godly shrine
<i>Yosoimatsurite</i>	And to that end were reverently adorned
<i>Tsukawashishi</i>	Then the servitors
<i>Mikado no hito mo</i>	Who waited on him in his princely court
<i>Shirotae no</i>	Put on rough garments
<i>Asagoromo kite</i>	All of hemp, white as barken cloth,
<i>Haniyasu no</i>	And in the fields
<i>Mikado no hara ni</i>	Before his gates at Haniyasu
<i>Akane sasu</i>	While yet the sun
<i>Hi no kotogoto</i>	Shone madder-red to light the day,
<i>Shishijimono</i>	As if they had been deer
<i>Ihaifushitsutsu</i>	Fell down and crawled upon the ground,
<i>Nubatama no</i>	And when swart evening came,
<i>Yūbe ni nareba</i>	Dark as the berry of the leopard flower,
<i>Ōtono o</i>	Bent back their necks
<i>Furisakemitsutsu</i>	To gaze aloft at the great hall,
<i>Uzura nasu</i>	And crept like quail
<i>Ihaimotōri</i>	In aimless circles through the grass
<i>Samoraedo</i>	Serve him though they would,
<i>Samoraieneba</i>	There was no way to serve him now,
<i>Harutori no</i>	And so they went forlorn,
<i>Samayoinureba</i>	Whimpering soft as birds are wont in spring. ⁵²

⁵² MYS II:199-202. In Edwin A. Cranston, *A Waka Anthology - Volume One: The Gem-Glistening Cup* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 221-22.

In this poem Hitomaro notes that the mourners all wear white hempen robes. In addition, he compares the mourners to birds, similar to the scene when Ame-no-wakahiko's parents assign mourning duties to birds. These mourners behave like deer and quail, crawling on the ground and whimpering. While these are just some of the examples of mourning recorded in the earliest Japanese "histories" and poems, a mix of myth and historical record, they reveal that by at least the eighth century there was some "normative" understanding of mourning that resonated with a wider audience. Common mourning practices included wearing mourning clothes white in color and hempen in material and crying out for the deceased. However, there is not enough evidence to label this "mourning ritual" with certainty, as the purpose of these texts was not to detail or prescribe ritual performance.

The Yōrō Code: Creation and Content

The Yōrō code of 718 C.E. contains the first documented prescribed mourning ritual. The Yōrō code was compiled in 718 C.E., but was not promulgated until 757 C.E. It is a revision to the earlier Taihō code of 701 C.E. and contains the first example of codified mourning for the Japanese emperor. The code is divided into two equal parts (*ritsu* and *ryō*), each of which comprises ten sections. Each section, in turn, is made up of a number of individual laws/articles. The Yōrō code's funerary customs (*sōsōryō*) is located in the ninth section of the codified customs (*ryō*). Within the funerary customs subsection, articles two and seventeen outline how long to mourn and wear mourning

clothes, depending on the emperor's relationship to the deceased.⁵³ Although not as detailed as the codified mourning for the emperor, articles two and seventeen also outline mourning ritual for others at court. For instance, section three of the customs for taking leave (*ken'yōryō*, also in article nine of the codified customs) details the number of days to stay away from work after the death of a relative.⁵⁴ The lengths of mourning rituals described in the Yōrō code are summarized in chart 1 below.

Chart 1⁵⁵

Mourning period	Remain secluded (seclusion schedule for government workers)	Relationship
1 year/ 13 months*	1 year (30 days)	Sovereign, master
1 year/ 13 months*	1 year (30 days)	Parent, husband
5 months	5 months (30 days)	Paternal grandparent, adoptive parent
3 months	3 months (20 days)	Maternal grandparent
3 months	3 months (20 days)	Great-grandparent, paternal uncle or aunt, wife, sibling, husband's parent, eldest son
1 month	1 month (10 days)	Great-great-grandparent, wife's parent, father's legitimate wife, step mother, step father living with the family, paternal half-sibling, child, eldest son's descendent

⁵³ "Sōsōryō," in *Ritsuryō*, ed. Inoue Mitsusada, *Nihon shisō taikē*; 3 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1976), 439. The other articles deal more with funerary customs than with mourning.

⁵⁴ "Sōsōryō," in *Ritsuryō*, ed. Inoue Mitsusada, *Nihon shisō taikē*; 3 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1976), 430.

⁵⁵ See Masuda, "Heian jidai," 88.

7 days	7 days (3 days)	Grandchild, paternal cousins, child born to one's brother
n/a	n/a	Child under the age of 7

*In the case of an intercalary month

The codified mourning dress for the emperor in the Yōrō code's funerary customs is outlined in chart 2 below:

Chart 2

Deceased	Mourning clothes
Relation in the second degree	<i>Shakujo</i> (black hempen robes)
Relations of third degree (or more) and retainers	Various colors of silk

According to the Yōrō code, periods of mourning differed based on one's relationship to the deceased. For instance, as detailed above, mourning one's mother or father was done for one year. For a husband, grandparent, etc., mourners secluded themselves for thirty days; for a wife or sibling the mourning period of family members was three months, with twenty days of seclusion.⁵⁶ Within the mourning articles, special rules were put in place for the emperor, who was only to mourn relatives within the second degree and

⁵⁶ See Masuda, "Heian jidai," 88.

wear *shakujo*, a black hempen robe. These codified mourning rituals were presumably directed, at the very least, to those who served at court.

The imperial court did not create these codes in a vacuum and scholars debate whether the articles were directly imported from Chinese law or whether they represent Japanese customs at the time. Ōtsu Tōru argues that Japanese articles were significantly different from the Chinese and that these differences were meant to underscore the subject's relation to the Japanese Emperor.⁵⁷ In other words, the Japanese articles were emperor-centric in a way that the Chinese were not. Okada Shigekiyo suggests that differences between Japanese and Chinese mourning articles can be attributed to the Japanese desire to combine cleansing and avoidance ritual with mourning, thereby reconciling “the irrational world of the spirits and the more civilized norms of mourning.”⁵⁸ Okada's argument, therefore, is that the divergences in the articles were meant to underscore unique Japanese religious and ritual needs pertaining to death and spirit pacification. Michael Como weighs into this argument, fighting back against what he sees as “Meiji conceptions of the royal house as a central engine in the development of new cultic practices across the Japanese islands.”⁵⁹ Como contends that many of the Japanese spirit pacification rites have clear continental influences and reflect “the pervasive influence of commonly held cultic forms that had taken root throughout the Japanese islands.”⁶⁰ While Como does not address the funeral and mourning articles

⁵⁷ Ōtsu, “Tennō no fuku to ritsuryō: rei no keiyū,” 177.

⁵⁸ Okada Shigekiyo, *Imi no Sekai: Sono Kikō to Henyō* (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1989), 2-8.

⁵⁹ Michael Como, “Introduction,” in *Weaving and Binding: Immigrant Gods and Female Immortals in Ancient Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009), xiii-xiv.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, xv-xvi.

directly, his argument logically extends to incorporating the idea that continental ideas shaped local practices.

While scholars can only speculate as to the connection between Chinese and Japanese mourning articles, there are identifiable differences between the two. For example, the first article in Chinese mourning articles was the performance of *koai*, and the second article regarded mourning clothing for those below the Emperor. Japanese mourning articles do not begin with codification of the performance of *koai*, and mention of this practice only occurs in articles seven and nine of the customs for taking leave codes.⁶¹ Instead, the customs for funerals and mourning begins with a mandate of who should guard the tomb of the deceased emperor. Another significant difference between the Chinese and Japanese mourning systems was the codification of mourning clothes for the emperor. Chinese mourning articles do not prescribe the emperor's mourning dress, whereas Japanese mourning articles set forth a precise system of imperial mourning robes. Ōtsu argues that the Japanese codification of the emperor's mourning clothes reveals a desire to underscore the deceased's relation to the Japanese Emperor.⁶² He goes on to state that, in later times, when others wore mourning robes originally reserved for the emperor, because permission to wear these robes was granted by the emperor, it had

⁶¹ Citing Ikeda On, Ōtsu, "Tennō no fuku to ritsuryō: rei no keiyu," 154-55. For example, Japanese customs adopted the sixteenth line from the middle of the thirtieth Chinese, deleted the thirteenth line, added the seventeenth line from the Chinese.

However, Ōtsu Tōru points out that the performance of *koai* was still customary but differed from Chinese ritual. Chinese *koai* was performed twice, once on the first day of mourning and once at the end of the funeral or final burial. Japanese *koai* was performed three times in one day. This is not to say there are no instances of *koai* performed in the Chinese style in Japanese texts, simply that the performance and codification were different. Ōtsu speculates that, by the mid-ninth century, the *koai* practice transformed into, and merged with, the ritual of calling back the dead and weeping lamentation seen in the *mogari no miya*. Since both *koai* and *mogari* were performances of ritualized weeping, this association makes sense. See Ōtsu, "Tennō no fuku to ritsuryō: rei no keiyu," 155-57, and 162-63.

⁶² Ōtsu, "Tennō no fuku to ritsuryō: rei no keiyu," 176.

the function of strengthening the political and religious connection between the Japanese emperor and vassal.⁶³ In my opinion, since we are unable to prove that the Chinese did not have detailed codified rituals of mourning dress, the argument that Japanese mourning articles were inherently different from their continental counterparts seems unimportant (unless one is trying to argue for some sort of nationalistic view of the Japanese royal house). However, because Japanese mourning articles granted only the emperor permission to wear *shakujo*, there does appear to be a conscious effort to separate the emperor's mourning rituals from others. Following this, for people other than the emperor to then be granted permission to wear *shakujo* does reinforce the emperor-vassal relationship. The visual display of wearing *shakujo* serves to publically connect the mourner with the power and authority of the emperor. If these scholars' interpretations hold any weight, the articles were created for many reasons (with practical concerns at their heart), such as solidifying the position of the emperor, creating a system ensuring the pacification of the deceased, and limiting the number of days a mourner was required to refrain from working.

***Ritsuryō* versus Practice**

Rarely are rules followed as written. As we shall see, this is also the case for premodern mourning articles. As discussed above, the Yōrō code was promulgated around the same time as the *Kojiki*, *Nihon Shoki*, and *Man'yōshū*. In all of these texts, when mourning clothes are detailed, mourners are described as wearing white hempen

⁶³ Ōtsu, "Tennō no fuku to ritsuryō: rei no keiyu," 176.

garments. Why, then, was the emperor prescribed to wear black hempen mourning robes? Why, then, by the time Murasaki Shikibu wrote *The Tale of Genji* (c. 1000 C.E.), was it widely understood that mourning clothes, even those worn by people who were not the emperor, were to be some shade of black? How this shift from white to black mourning clothes occurred is not entirely clear.

Mourning dress underwent significant changes in Japan between the eighth and eleventh centuries. By the compilation of the Yōrō code in the eighth century, the Emperor was mandated to wear black *shakujo* for mourning relatives of the second degree or closer and wear white or variously colored clothes for the mourning of all other relations.⁶⁴ Ōtsu proposes that the change to black mourning clothes may be related to the Chinese Emperor system. The *Book of Tang* (*Jiu Tangshu*, 945 A.D.) states that Chinese Emperors wore a garment described as *shakusai* when mourning those of high rank. In China, the first character of *shakusai*, alternate reading *suzu* 鈴, refers to finely woven hemp clothes white in color. However, in Japan the color of *suzu* was understood to be the color of tin—black—and so coarse black cloth was used.⁶⁵ While this explains how the Japanese emperor’s mourning robes became black, it does not clarify how all robes became black.

⁶⁴ The “various colored clothes” is not explained in the articles. If we look at *The Tale of Genji*, mourning clothes could look as colorful as those worn by the deceased Lady Murasaki’s serving woman, Chūjō: “trousers of a scarlet veering toward yellow and a leaf gold shift under dark, dark grey and black, which lay untidily one layer over another; and she had slipped off a train and Chinese jacket that she now attempted to put back on again.” See Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, trans. Royall Tyler (New York: Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition), 773.

By the eleventh-century, acceptable “various colored clothes” for mourning seem to be based on cultural tradition rather than codified mourning articles.

⁶⁵ Ōtsu, “Tennō no fuku to ritsuryō: rei no keiyu,” 79.

Textual evidence reveals that, over time, those other than the Japanese emperor were granted the right to wear black *shakujo* while in mourning. By the death of Emperor Daigo (d. 930), princes wore white *sofuku* during the three-day period of *mogari* and then changed into *shakujo*.⁶⁶ Masuda speculates that the women who mourned Emperor Go-Ichijō (d. 1036) wore the same white or black and grey as other mourners.⁶⁷ Tracing the timeline, the eighth-century Yōrō code stated that only emperors could wear black robes when mourning a relative in the second degree. By the early tenth century, princes were also wearing black mourning robes after the death of an emperor. Finally, by the early eleventh century, even women were wearing black mourning robes after the death of an emperor. Therefore, between the time of the promulgation of the Yōrō code and the death of Emperor Go-Ichijō, roughly three hundred years, it became common for those other than the emperor to wear mourning robes in various colors of black and grey.

In addition to a change in the color of mourning clothes, how mourners wore these robes underwent change over time. Until the mid-Heian period the *shakujo*, the black mourning robe, was worn under an outer garment. So, for instance, the outer garment could be a white or colored robe, and underneath the mourner would wear *shakujo* (which was usually allowed to be seen from the hems of the outer robe). This changed in the later period when it was worn over the outer garment.⁶⁸ Further refinements were made in later periods, such as leaving the armholes unstitched, so as to further separate mourning robes from the appearance of everyday robes.

⁶⁶ Masuda, “Heian jidai,” 149.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 153.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 188-89.

In addition to the change in the color and style of mourning clothes in later years, which appears to have been affected by the existence of the mourning codes, there was also a change in the length of the mourning period. The *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki* describe an eight-day mourning period after the death of Ame-no-wakahiko, and a one-year mourning period after the death of Emperor Tenmu. The Yōrō code mandates one year of mourning after the death of an emperor. However, later texts detail different—shorter—mourning periods that were frequently observed.⁶⁹ This is summarized in chart 3 below:

Chart 3⁷⁰

Year	Deceased Emperor	Mourner (relationship to deceased)/ mourning clothes	Date of Death	Date of entering mourning	Funeral Day	Date to come out of mourning (total days)
806	Kanmu	Kōtaishi (son)/ <i>shakujo</i> ⁷¹	3 rd month 17 th day	3 rd month 19 th day	unknown	unknown
840	Junna	Ninmyō (nephew)/ <i>sofuku</i>	5 th month 8 th day	5 th month 9 th day	5 th month 13 th day	5 th month 23 rd day (15 days)
850	Ninmyō	Montoku (son)/ unknown	3 rd month 21 st day	3 rd month 23 rd day	3 rd month 25 th day	4 th month 6 th day (11 days)
858	Montoku	Seiwa (son)/ <i>sofuku</i>	8 th month 27 th day	9 th month 4 th day	9 th month 6 th day	9 th month 16 th day

⁶⁹ Mourning for Emperor Kanmu is detailed in the *Nihon Kōki*, Junna in the *Shoku Nihon Kōki*, Ninmyō in the *Montoku Jitsuroku*, Montoku and Seiwa in the *Sandai Jitsuroku*, Daigo and Uda in the *Rihō Ōki*, Ichijō in the *Gonki*, Reizei in the *Nihon Kiryaku*, Go-Ichijō in the *Sakeiki*, and Horikawa and Shirakawa in the *Chūyūki*. See Masuda, “Heian jidai,” 89.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ The mourning clothes were not normal clothes, but black thick silk. It is interesting to note that the material was silk, as they were traditionally made of hempen cloth. See Masuda, “Heian jidai,” 112.

						(10 days)
880	Seiwa	Yōzei (son)/ <i>shakujo</i>	12 th month 4 th day	12 th month 7 th day	12 th month 7 th day	12 th month 12 th day (6 days mourning)
930	Daigo	Suzaku (son)/ <i>shakujo</i>	9 th month 29 th day	10 th month 1 st day	10 th month 10 th day	10 th month 12 th day (12 days)
931	Uda	Suzaku (grandson)/ <i>shakujo</i>	7 th month 19 th day	7 th month 25 th day	8 th month 5 th day	7 th month 28 th day (4 days)
1011	Ichijō	Sanjō (cousin)/ <i>sofuku</i>	6 th month 23 rd day	7 th month 8 th day	7 th month 8 th day	unknown
1018	Reizei	Sanjō (son)/ <i>shakujo</i>	10 th month 24 th day	11 th month 16 th day	11 th month 16 th day	11 th month 27 th day (12 days)
1036	Go-Ichijō	Go-Suzaku (brother)/ <i>shakujo</i>	4 th month 17 th day	5 th month 19 th day	5 th month 19 th day	5 th month 21 st day (3 days)
1107	Horikawa	Toba (son)/ <i>shakujo</i>	7 th month 19 th day	7 th month 24 th day	7 th month 24 th day	8 th month 5 th day (12 days)
1129	Shirakawa	Toba (grandson)/ <i>shakujo</i> ⁷²	7 th month 7 th day	7 th month	7 th month	7 th month

⁷² In 1129 C.E., Toba's *shakujo* consisted of a black headscarf, black thick cloth outer garment (*hou*), black thick cloth clothes under the outer garment and hakama. The outer hakama were also black thick cloth. This is important because it is another demonstration of people below the emperor being granted permission to wear *shakujo*, or black mourning robes. This evidence demonstrates the growing prevalence of black robes into the twelfth century. Since Toba was mourning his grandfather, a relation outside of the second degree,

				15 th day	15 th day	27 th day (13 days)
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From this chart we can see that, after the year 1000 C.E., it was common to enter mourning on the same day as the funeral, and mourning periods were drastically reduced. Even when mourning a father who was emperor, the mandatory one-year of mourning and thirty days of seclusion were drastically reduced, averaging around only eleven days.

Heian period texts include various scenes of mourning, and from these we can also draw tentative conclusions about non-prescribed mourning practices.⁷³ One such conclusion is that although the use of dark mourning robes spread to those below the emperor, distinctions between prescribed and non-prescribed mourning robes for the emperor were retained. For instance, Matsuda describes a period of “heart-mourning,” (*shinsō*)--mourning that was not ritually or legally prescribed--when the Emperor wore mourning for those other than his parents, he did so wearing a lighter shade of mourning clothes than the black *shakujo*.⁷⁴ When Fujiwara no Michinaga died in the twelfth month on the fourth day of 1028 C.E., Emperor Go-Ichijō wore clothes of heart-mourning and not *shakujo* or *sofuku*.⁷⁵ “Heart-mourning” clothing varied in color (such as dark blue or

he was not considered to be in heavy mourning. However, he wore clothes of an emperor in heavy mourning. See Masuda, “Heian jidai,” 189.

⁷³ Significantly, all of these examples refer to the practices of the court. There are not enough extant records of commoner funerals or mourning clothes during the Heian period to make a conclusion as to whether or not the court rituals were also practiced by those not in service to the court. The evidence we do have is contained in highly fictionalized tales. What these tales do describe are burial methods, with corpses often laid out on top of a mat and allowed to decompose. See Masuda, “Heian jidai,” 221-23. See *Konjaku monogatari*.

⁷⁴ Masuda, “Heian jidai,” 88, 157.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

another color) and depended on sadness.⁷⁶ Emperor Daigo wore dark mourning clothes for the death of his first love; Emperor Murakami (926-967) wore dark mourning for the death of his brother.⁷⁷ Such examples are evidence that, by the mid-tenth century, there are examples of wearing darker mourning to express sorrow based in love.⁷⁸ The use of dark mourning clothes was extended to encompass non-prescribed mourning, but retained meaningful distinction of shade.

The following chapters investigate these topics of length of mourning and color of mourning robes as they relate to *monogatari*. As we will see, these tales support the conclusions of scholars who research histories and legal codes: that while there was a cursory understanding of mourning ritual, actual practice demonstrates that codified articles of mourning were not routinely followed. However, as Inada states:

We know from debates about mourning the emperor that even amongst elite scholars practical knowledge of mourning was uncertain and no common awareness of mourning practices existed. Changes to mourning practices in Japan also cannot simply be understood as a loosening of *ritsuryō* customs or a mere formalization; instead, it is better to look at [the loosening] as an innovative product forged out of the ways people implement laws in their actual lives.⁷⁹

Mourning rules were not always followed, and frequently took on a more personal form. I believe it is through tales that we can attempt to better understand this idea of a “personal form,” since tales are created with the express purpose of getting the audience to understand the mindset and motivation of their major characters.

⁷⁶ Masuda, “Heian jidai,” 159.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 124.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Inada Natsuko, “Between Protocol and Practice: The Emergence of Japanese Mortuary Practices” (paper presented at the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) Annual Conference 2015, Chicago, Illinois, March, 28, 2015).

Chapter Two

“Such losses strike often enough:”

Genji’s Mourning of his Lovers

Many scholars and readers of *The Tale of Genji* classify the tale as one of romance, detailing love affairs and amorous trysts. However, the tale also includes stories of loss, longing, and death. Within *The Tale of Genji*, Murasaki Shikibu describes the deaths of thirty-seven characters. Many of these characters are nameless, but fourteen of these deaths are of named (i.e. important) characters.⁸⁰ In this chapter I will explore the deaths of three of Genji’s lovers: the women known as Yūgao, Aoi, and Fujitsubo.⁸¹ The deaths of these three lovers warrant special attention for two reasons: 1) they provide detailed and lengthy scenes of mourning; and 2) they form a contrast against Genji’s final scene of mourning, which occurs in the chapter “The Seer,” or “*Maboroshi*,” when Genji mourns the death of Lady Murasaki. In all of Genji’s scenes of mourning a lover, Murasaki Shikibu uses various structures of time, be they Buddhist ritual time, natural time, and/or the time denoted by court ritual, to communicate the *length* of Genji’s

⁸⁰ None of the characters actually has a given name, but the “names” by which we know the characters are part of the later reading convention. Tyler states, “Women without a title or a meshina may have no personal appellation at all in the narration. Aoi, Genji’s first wife, is an example. Readers call her Aoi only for convenience. “Murasaki,” like “Aoi,” resembles a name, but the word actually starts out as a common noun alluding to Fujitsubo, and it does not refer regularly to Murasaki until much later in the book. A great lady (like, in historical practice, a great lord) may also be designated by the place where she lives. Fujitsubo, for example, lives in the Fujitsubo (“Wisteria Pavilion”). See Royall Tyler, “Introduction,” in *The Tale of Genji*, trans. Royall Tyler (New York: Penguin, 2002) Kindle edition, locations 442-50.

⁸¹ For an earlier discussion on ways these death scenes differ, especially in terms of a “good” or “bad” Buddhist death, see Aileen Gatten, “Death and Salvation in *Genji Monogatari*,” *New Leaves: Studies and Translations of Japanese Literature in Honor of Edward Seidensticker*, eds. Aileen Gatten and Anthony Hood Chambers (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center For Japanese Studies, 1993), 5-27.

mourning. Additionally, Murasaki Shikibu layers on top of this structure of time, in order to demonstrate the *depth* of Genji's mourning, time-honored poetic laments and mourning practice and ritual. By weaving together time, laments, and mourning, Murasaki Shikibu creates a new "mourning poetics," which isolates Genji, highlights his sorrow, recapitulates his romantic relationship, and functions as spirit pacification.

As discussed in chapter one, the length of mourning was codified by the eighth century. The Heian calendar was based on the Chinese lunar calendar. Therefore, the first month of the year roughly corresponds to the second month (February) of the Gregorian calendar. Each of the four seasons was comprised of three months, with the New Year occurring in spring (first through third months), summer beginning in the fourth month, fall in the seventh month, and winter in the tenth month. Following a long and well-known poetic tradition, in literature each month was associated with specific seasonal imagery or court ritual. The words that describe these seasonal poetic references are known as *kigo*, or seasonal words, used in poetry not only to mark time, but also to express emotion. For instance, popular images of spring include the snow, New Year, and *ume* (plum) blossoms of the first month, followed by the seasonal blooming of plants and flowers as spring progresses. The beginning of summer in the fourth month called for changing into summer clothes, the emergence of the cicadas, and attending the Kamo festival (one of the major court festivals, held at the Shimogamo shrine), the fifth month was famous for the beginning of the rainy season, and the sixth month for the arrival of different species of birds and flowers, especially the lotus blossom. Autumn began in the seventh month, most famous for the Tanabata festival on the seventh day, which

celebrates the annual meeting of two stars, representing parted lovers, which come together only once a year. The theme of autumn loss and longing continues in other autumnal imagery of fireflies (which could symbolize burning love for one far away), crying deer and geese, and lonely grassy moors. The tenth month brings winter, and traditional images of the migration of geese, snow, and the annual ritual of the reading of the Buddhist names, or *Butsumyō-e*, held on the nineteenth of the twelfth month. The season of a mourner's activities was often expressed by seasonal words, linking feelings of grief with natural occurrences.

These (and numerous other) natural and courtly markers of time were anthologized in the *Kokinwakashū* (*The Collection of Japanese Poems of Ancient and Modern Times*, often abbreviated to *Kokinshū*) an imperial anthology of the waka form of Japanese poetry completed around the year 920 C.E.⁸² *The Kokinshū* was compiled by four court poets, led by Ki no Tsurayuki (872-945 C.E.). The poems in the first six sections are organized around the progression of the seasons (1-2 for spring, 3 for summer, 4-5 for autumn, and 6 for winter). Seasonal references in poems were frequently coupled with emotions, such as sadness, longing, or celebration. The seasonal poems (as well as other poems not based on seasonal imagery) in the *Kokinshū*, and in the second and third anthologies, the *Gosenwakashū* (*Later Collection*, 951 C.E.) and *Shūiwakashū* (*Collection of Gleanings*, 1005 C.E.), were well known to those at court, and reusing these images in new poems was a way to signify learning and elegance. Therefore, poets

⁸² An earlier anthology, the *Man'yōshū* (*Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves*, eighth century), also categorized poems by season and emotion. However, the number of poems in *The Tale of Genji* drawn from the *Kokinshū* far outnumber those drawn from the *Man'yōshū*.

and authors strategically selected imagery from past poems to more precisely convey present emotion to their audience. For instance, asking cherry blossoms to bloom in gray would cause readers to bring to mind the famous poem in *Kokinshū* (number 832) by Kamatsuke no Mineo (fl. ca. 890), lamenting the death of Fujiwara no Mototsune:

ふかく さののべの桜し心あらば今年計は墨染めに咲けかむつけのみねを
O cherry trees upon Fukakusa Moor, if you are kind, just for this year, I beg,
blossom in gray!⁸³

Here, the poet begs the natural world to eschew colors of happiness and conform with the sadness in his heart and the color of his mourning robes.

During Murasaki Shikibu's lifetime, one of the most well known poets of love and loss was a ninth century Chinese poet, Bai Juyi (772–846 C.E.). Many of his lament poems are referenced in *The Tale of Genji*, but I focus on Murasaki Shikibu's use of one particularly important poem, "The Song of Everlasting Sorrow" (Chang hen ge, c. 809 C.E.). "The Song of Everlasting Sorrow" retells the story of Tang-dynasty Emperor Xuanzong's (685- 762 C.E.) love and mourning of his great love and concubine, Yang Guifei (719-756 C.E.). In this poem, after Yang Guifei's death, Emperor Xuanzong is so troubled that his attendants call on a Seer, or Daoist priest, to ask if he could find Yang Guifei in the afterlife in order to give the Emperor comfort. Emperor Xuanzong loses interest in the world after the death of Yang Guifei and only longs to be reunited in the

⁸³ SNKBZS v. 21, 448, note 4. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, trans. Royall Tyler (New York: Penguin, 2002), Kindle edition, "Usugumo" note 23.

next life. The Seer is able to find Yang Guifei in the afterlife, and returns to the Emperor with a message of undying love and a gift of a comb. In late Heian literature, allusions to “The Song of Everlasting Sorrow” were expressions of grief so deep, and so long-lasting, that it clouded the judgment and function of the mourner.

In her “mourning poetics,” Murasaki Shikibu layers mourning codes, rituals, and practices with poetic lament. In this chapter, I define scenes of mourning as those that have the following elements: a survivor of a loved one’s death, descriptions of grief and sorrow, and mourning ritual and/or practice. As detailed in chapter one, in ancient Japan, there was a three-step mourning process: *mogari*, *hafuri*, and *mo*. *Mogari* (or *araki*) occurred immediately after death when survivors waited for the dead to revive or pacified the deceased spirit.⁸⁴ *Hafuri* was the burial, cremation, or discarding of the corpse. *Mo*, or mourning, was a period lasting from seven days to one year, based on relationship to the deceased.⁸⁵ As an example, according to the Yōrō code, a husband was to mourn a wife for three months and a wife was required to mourn a husband for one year. These mourning articles also prescribed the appropriate color of mourning robes. From entries in diaries, histories, and tales, we know that typical mourning practices also included such actions as taking up floorboards, reversing folding screens, abstaining from sexual activity, fasting, and seclusion. In her mourning scenes in *The Tale of Genji*, Murasaki Shikibu frequently uses both poetic lament and description of mourning

⁸⁴ Nakada Taizō, “Mogari ni okeru minzokugakuteki kōsatsu” in *Sōsō bōsei Kenkyū Shūsei*, modern edition, ed. Inokuchi Shōji (Tōkyō: Meicho Shuppankai, 1979), 120. While some scholars state that *mogari* for anyone other than the king (or emperor) was prohibited, Nakada Taizō argues that by the beginning of the Heian period (794-1185 C.E.) commoners also performed *mogari*. See pages 104, 108. See also Gary Ebersole, *Ritual Poetry and the Politics of Death in Early Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), especially pages 123-215.

⁸⁵ The other articles deal more with funerary customs than with mourning.

ritual/practice to calibrate the sorrow of the mourner, reveal to the reader the depth of Genji's bond to his deceased lover, and relive their relationship.

Strike One: The Death of Yūgao⁸⁶

The first of Genji's lovers to die in the *Tale* is Yūgao. In the chapter "The Twilight Beauty," or "Yūgao," Genji, at this point nineteen, has stolen Yūgao away for a romantic encounter in an eerie remote villa, which turns out to be haunted. During the night of the sixteenth day of the eighth month, Genji drifts off and dreams of a woman who is angry at his advances to Yūgao. In Genji's dream the woman shakes Yūgao. When Genji awakes, he finds Yūgao unconscious. Genji comes to understand this "dream woman" as a spirit, intent on doing Yūgao harm. To chase away the spirit, Genji calls for a number of Onmyōdō rituals to be conducted. For instance he has his servants twang the bowstring and cry warnings in order to scare off the spirit. To revive Yūgao, Genji calls on her to wake up, exclaiming, "come back to life!" (*ikiidetamae*) but to no avail.⁸⁷ The pacing of this event is quick, occurring within a single evening. As we might expect in a scene detailing Genji's first "adult" experience of death, Murasaki Shikibu shows us a hero who has little experience of managing death, and choices that might otherwise seem odd make sense if we bear in mind the learning curve that Genji is faced with.

⁸⁶ Although Genji experienced the death of his mother and grandmother earlier in the tale, he was too young to fully comprehend or respond to these deaths.

⁸⁷ SNKBZS v. 20, 167. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, trans. Royall Tyler (New York: Penguin, 2002), 68.

The first choices Genji confronts concern death ritual and practice. Because Yūgao had shown no signs of illness prior to this evening, her death was unexpected and confused with fainting. In an attempt to revive Yūgao, Genji engages in an act of spirit calling, or calling for one to revive. In the Heian period, death was frequently difficult to confirm, and the waiting period between potential death and the disposal of the corpse, *mogari*, gave time for conclusive signs of death to manifest. During the period of *mogari*, people often performed spirit-calling to bring someone back from apparent death. When Genji calls for Yūgao to come back to life, he is both gradually becoming aware that she is dead and not merely unconscious, and attempting to recall her to life. This time between Yūgao's death and her funeral, when Genji calls for her to revive, is her period of *mogari*. Despite his efforts, Genji understands that his calls do not revive Yūgao and her death is confirmed to the reader when she is depicted as growing cold and no longer breathing.

Genji, now fearing Yūgao is dead, must deal with the second phase of death ritual: discarding of the corpse, *hafuri*. Genji has Yūgao's body taken away to a mountain temple for a funeral and cremation and he returns to the capital. In an effort to hide Yūgao's death, Genji does not have Yūgao's serving woman notify Yūgao's family of the death or the upcoming cremation. Feeling some guilt, and worried what Yūgao would think of him if she revived (a sign of Genji's desperate hopes) and found he had her carried off for a lonely funeral, on the seventeenth day of the month Genji rides to the mountain temple to see Yūgao's body before her cremation. There, presumably sponsored by Genji, monks are calling on Amida Buddha, thought to come to rescue the

dead after their forty-nine day liminal waiting period and escort them to his Buddhist paradise. Yūgao's appearance, now that she is in a Buddhist context and obviously dead, is described remarkably differently than when she was in the haunted house and in a liminal state between life and death. At the temple, Yūgao was "as lovely as ever," showing no signs of death. This underscores that she will ultimately have a good rebirth despite her bad death.⁸⁸

After cremation, Genji should, presumably, move on to the third stage of death and mourning practice: mourning, or *mo*. Although Genji is keeping Yūgao's death a secret from the world, his actions broadcast that he is in ritual defilement from contact with death. This is evidenced when Genji asks visitors to remain standing and refrains from going to the palace in order to stop the transmission of pollution. However, this type of ritual seclusion is different from mourning seclusion. Lee Mi Sook demonstrates that the term for the defilement that Genji suffers from after Yūgao's death is *kegare*, pollution incurred after contact with death or childbirth. The period of *kegare* defilement associated with death is thirty days (seven days for contact with childbirth).⁸⁹ Therefore, since Yūgao died on the sixteenth or seventeenth of the month, Genji was still defiled on his way back from the temple on the morning of the eighteenth. That morning, on his return trip to the capital, Genji stops by the Kamo river to wash his hands and call on the

⁸⁸ Gatten, "Death and Salvation in *Genji Monogatari*," 6.

⁸⁹ Lee Mi Sook, "Genji monogatari ni okeru shi no 'kegari' to 'imi'," in *Kaishaku/ Kaishaku Gakkai* 60: 3/4 (2014), 27-37. *The Tale of Genji*, the term *kegare* is only used 12 times, and only used after the deaths of Yūgao and Ukifune. In other cases of death, the term *imi* or *ki*, abstinence or mourning, is used. The period for this purification is different, and is associated with being in mourning and the forty-nine day Buddhist memorial rituals.

bodhisattva, Kiyomizu Kannon.⁹⁰ This ritual cleansing was not a purifying action related to *kegare*. Genji remains polluted, as we learn later that Genji emerges from the “twenty days and more” seclusion imposed by his defilement (sometime around the twentieth day of the ninth month).⁹¹ Genji does not participate in any mourning ritual or practice after Yūgao’s death.⁹²

Instead, Genji participates in memorial rituals. The difference is key to understanding the way that the author employs mourning and memorial ritual to pacify the spirits of the deceased. For Genji to publically mourn someone he had no relation to would be socially unacceptable (and give away his secret.) Genji is able to privately participate in and commission memorial rituals for Yūgao. As an example of Genji’s secret participation in memorial ritual for Yūgao, he has Buddhist images made every seven days for her memorial services to help in Yūgao’s rebirth. These mourning rituals are a way to better Yūgao’s rebirth, pacify her spirit (since she died at an early age in an unseemly manner, she could become an angry spirit), and absolve Genji of the role he played in Yūgao’s death.

Genji’s poetic laments comprise three poems on the topic of Yūgao’s death. The first lament occurs during Yūgao’s forty-nine day memorial services after Ukon has revealed Yūgao’s full identity. Ukon reveals that Yūgao was the orphan of a high-ranking family. After the death of her parents, she began a love affair with Genji’s best friend, Tō

⁹⁰ The Kannon at Kiyomizu temple is the thousand-armed Kannon. This Kannon is believed to protect against danger and grant good fortune. See SNKBZS v. 20, 171, note 15.

⁹¹ SNKBZS v. 20, 183. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 74.

⁹² Yūgao’s serving woman, Ukon, is wearing dark robes and is the only character in visible mourning for Yūgao.

no Chūjō. After Tō no Chūjō's wife sent threatening letters, Yūgao went into hiding. The revelation of Yūgao's identity to Genji (and the reader), and her point of view, also serves as a eulogy and as spirit pacification. It allows Yūgao to be justified and corrects her maligned reputation (as she was not just a lowly "diver's daughter" as she described herself to Genji). Additionally, once Genji comes to understand the true identity of Yūgao, he is able to feel genuine sorrow at her death, turning his poetic laments into spirit pacification. For example, after learning of Yūgao's true identity, Genji composes:

見し人の煙を雲とながむれば夕べの空もむつまじきかな

When the clouds to me seem always to be the smoke that rose from her pyre, how fondly I rest my gaze even on the evening sky.⁹³

This poem plays on the traditional coupling of cloud and smoke imagery after a funeral pyre. However, because Genji did not witness Yūgao's incineration, he can only imagine that the clouds would have been like the smoke rising from her pyre. Also, Genji fondly rests his gaze on the evening sky, despite the fact that Yūgao died after dark. Rather than the evening sky recalling terror for Genji, he chooses only to remember the love affair, which he can recall fondly. Genji then goes on to think, "the nights are very long now."⁹⁴ This is a phrase from a poem in Bai Juyi's poetry anthology (*Hakushi monjū*, 1287 C.E.) composed in the voice of a man who is mourning his wife. By invoking this phrase, Murasaki Shikibu draws a comparison between the nights Genji spent together with Yūgao, when time passed quickly in her company, and the present, when she is no longer alive. This poetic lament reframes Genji's relationship with Yūgao, elevating her status,

⁹³ SNKBZS v. 20, 189. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 76.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

erasing her “bad” death, and pacifying her spirit with an acknowledgment of Genji’s understanding and love.

Genji’s second poetic lament after Yūgao’s death occurs at her forty-ninth day memorial service. During this time, Genji makes offerings, including a new set of clothes for Yūgao, who was still wearing the clothes she died in. After making this offering Genji says (presumably to the monks in the room, as no one else was present):

泣く泣くも今日はわが結ふ下紐をいつれの世にかとけて見るべき

Amid streaming tears today a last time I knot this, her trouser cord— ah, in what age yet to come will I undo it again?⁹⁵

This poem demonstrates that Genji is still painfully aware of Yūgao’s death and that she will be moving from the liminal forty-nine day period in the afterlife to her next rebirth. Genji wonders if they will meet again in another life. Similar to Genji’s first poetic lament, this poem expresses a newfound respect for Yūgao and a pledge (or hope) that their love will last through their rebirths.

Genji does not participate in mourning ritual or practice for Yūgao and does not dwell on attempts to reach her in the afterlife. Therefore, it is only through the structure of Yūgao’s forty-nine day memorial period that Genji expresses his sorrow and pacifies Yūgao’s spirit. For example, at the conclusion of the forty-nine day period, Genji has sutras read and personally calls on Amida to save Yūgao from the realms of rebirth and allow her into his heavenly paradise. Whether or not Yūgao enters Amida’s paradise is

⁹⁵ SNKBZS v. 20, 192. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 78.

ultimately unknown, but we do know that she is forever gone from the world, as even Genji cannot reach her. This is made especially clear when, hoping to dream of Yūgao, Genji instead sees the spirit of the woman who haunted the house. While this spirit can visit Genji in his dreams, Yūgao is completely inaccessible, divided from him in death. Once and for all, by being outside of his reach even in his dreams, Yūgao is beyond the reach of Genji.

Genji's third poetic lament after Yūgao's death betrays his sorrow and demonstrates that his longing and devotion are short-lived. Before Yūgao's forty-nine day memorial services have concluded, Genji pounces on an opening to win back the affections of a former lover, Utsusemi. Genji succeeds in gaining Utsusemi's attention, but does not win her, and she moves off with her husband. At this parting, Genji casually composes:

過ぎにしもけふ別るるも二道に 行く方知らぬ秋の暮かな

One of them has died and today yet another must go her own way, bound I know
not to what end, while an autumn twilight falls⁹⁶

This poem links Utsusemi and Yūgao, two lovers who have gone away from Genji “as twilight falls.” Instead of lamenting their loss (which was not equal, since Utsusemi did not die), Genji struggles to understand the impermanence of their bonds, which reveals Genji's immature heart. The timing of this final poetic lament signals to the reader that, similar to his cutting short the thirty days of *kegare* (to “twenty days and more”) and not

⁹⁶ SNKBZS v. 20, 195. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 79.

publically participating in any type of heart-mourning, Genji does not dwell on his love for Yūgao during her forty-nine days of memorial.

Overall, Yūgao's death episode spans little more than forty-nine days. During this period, Murasaki Shikibu includes details on death rituals and practices done on Yūgao's behalf: *mogari*, *hafuri*, and the forty-nine day memorial services for the rebirth of her spirit. Murasaki Shikibu did not include any mourning practices as Genji was under no obligation to mourn Yūgao since they had no official relationship. Occasionally a scholar who is interested in Genji's sadness over the absence of a lover will suggest that Genji does mourn Yūgao, as Ueno Tatsuyoshi does, but his is a different concept of mourning, not that of mourning practice and ritual.⁹⁷ Ueno instead is interested in Genji's sorrow, not the actual mourning ritual/ practice after the death. The brevity of Yūgao's death scene, coupled with few poetic laments and no mourning ritual, underscores the secrecy of Genji and Yūgao's relationship.

Murasaki Shikibu's mourning poetics couples Genji's poetic laments with Buddhist ritual time, the forty-nine day memorial period, in order to clarify and recapitulate the relationship between Genji and Yūgao. Although Murasaki Shikibu depicts Genji "in distress" after Yūgao's death, it is from having caused her death and from worrying that the world at court will find out. Genji's response to Yūgao's death is therefore told from his point of view. The recapitulation of their relationship that includes Yūgao's point of view comes from a speech made by Ukon, in which she lays out at

⁹⁷ Ueno Tatsuyoshi, "Onna o ushinau hikaru Genji: seinenki no sōshitsu taiken," in *Bungakubu Ronshū* 98 (20014), 94-108.

length her lady's pathetic situation. Upon learning why Yūgao hid her true identity from him, Genji is able to internalize Yūgao's perspective. It is only after this revelation, made during the forty-nine day memorial period, that Genji employs poetic laments to describe his feelings of sorrow after Yūgao's death. When Yūgao's serving woman retells the circumstances of Yūgao's life and relationship with Genji, through Yūgao's point of view, Murasaki Shikibu creates a type of eulogy, which pacifies Yūgao's spirit and absolves Genji of his contribution to her death.

In addition to Genji's poetic laments during Yūgao's forty-nine day memorial services, Genji's acts of memorialization also serve to pacify Yūgao's spirit. Readers would assume that Yūgao receives a good rebirth based on her appearance at her funeral (when she is described as "as lovely as ever," showing no signs of death.)⁹⁸ Murasaki Shikibu validates this assumption by narrating that Genji's efforts at the memorial service were to assist Yūgao's rebirth. Genji's memorialization efforts begin to absolve him of his actions that lead to Yūgao's death. Once Genji comes to understand Yūgao through her point of view, he is able to comprehend the real character of Yūgao (and not his conception of her) and pacify her spirit. This, then, releases Genji from his guilt, allowing him to live, and love, another day.

⁹⁸ Gatten, "Death and Salvation in *Genji Monogatari*," 6.

Strike Two: The Death of Aoi

In the next scene where Genji mourns a lover, it is his first wife, Aoi. While giving birth, Aoi is repeatedly attacked by the spirit of one of Genji's lovers. After successfully giving birth and seeming to recover from the spirit attack, Aoi is left alone. Seizing this vulnerable moment, the lover's spirit strikes again and kills her. This lonely death by spirit attack is similar to Yūgao's death, described above. After Aoi's death her father commissions rites for her to revive and observes a *mogari* period of more than twenty days. When the signs of death are too apparent to ignore, Aoi is taken to Toribeno for cremation, *hafuri*.

After cremation the official mourning period, or *mo*, begins. According to the Yōrō code, Genji was required to mourn his wife Aoi for three months. At the beginning of this mourning period, Genji thinks back over his life with Aoi and wonders why she was always so displeased with him. Here, Murasaki Shikibu's recapitulation of Genji's relationship with Aoi focuses on him, on the survivor of the death, rather than the deceased and her point of view. Although the narrator describes Genji as "consumed in his bereavement by fires of longing" after Aoi's death, this sadness was not directed solely at his loss of Aoi.⁹⁹ After Aoi's death, the narrator remarks that, "Such losses strike often enough, but no doubt because Genji had known so few—perhaps only one."¹⁰⁰ This statement signals to the reader that Genji's response to Aoi's death is mingled with grief

⁹⁹ SNKBZS v. 21, 48. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 177.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. "Fires of longing" is Tyler's translation of たぐひなく思し焦がれたり.

over his own misfortune at having lost both Yūgao and Aoi.¹⁰¹ The “fires of longing” here refer not to the depth of his love, but to the cremation fires of an amalgamation of deceased characters. This association is confirmed by Genji, when after Aoi’s cremation, he composes poems referencing the smoke from the funeral pyre:

のぼりぬる煙はそれと分かねどもなべて雲居のあはれなるかな

No, I cannot tell where my eyes should seek aloft the smoke I saw rise, but now all the skies above move me to sad thoughts of loss.¹⁰²

This poem continues the theme of Genji’s preoccupation with the losses he has suffered in life as there is no specific reference to Aoi in this poem, which could be about any of the cremations of the women he loved. Genji’s “sad thoughts of loss” are about both of his experiences at cremation sites: after the deaths of Yūgao *and* Aoi. Genji’s first expressions of sorrow during the period of mourning for Aoi demonstrate that it is not the loss of Aoi, specifically, that moves him, but the experience of loss itself.

Murasaki Shikibu uses mourning ritual to differentiate Genji’s mourning of Aoi from other characters. After Aoi’s death, Genji is wearing the prescribed light gray clothes of mourning a wife. Genji composes the following poem about these clothes:

限りあれば薄墨衣あさけれど涙ぞ袖をふちとなしける

I may do no more and the mourning I now wear is a shallow gray, but my tears upon my sleeves have gathered in deep pools.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ It must be noted that here, the narrator is also expressing doubt as to whether Genji was able to process the deaths of his mother and grandmother. By stating “perhaps only one,” the narrator does not disclose which “one” death also affected him: his mother, grandmother, or Yūgao.

¹⁰² SNKBZS v. 21, 48. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 177.

¹⁰³ SNKBZS v. 21, 49. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 178.

Here, Genji references the light gray robes he wears to mourn Aoi. This is in contrast to the dark gray Aoi would have been required to mourn for him, and to the deep pools of tears that have gathered on his shallow gray sleeves. Lest the reader think that Genji truly grieves over the death of Aoi, one must remember that during the Heian period it was common to don mourning robes darker than prescribed in order to reflect depth of emotion. Genji does not choose to wear mourning robes darker than prescribed. Therefore, by coupling lament and ritual/practice, Murasaki Shikibu's mourning poetics reveals to the reader the true shallowness of Genji's feelings for Aoi.

Similar to Genji's poetic laments and mourning ritual for Aoi, his memorial practices also demonstrate his insincere love of Aoi. Immediately after composing the poem above regarding his mourning robes, Genji calls on Fugen. This is notable, because he does not call on Amida, known to take the dead to paradise. Instead, Fugen is the bodhisattva of wisdom and deep insight, especially into impermanence. Therefore, rather than seeking Buddhist assistance for a better rebirth for Aoi, Genji appears to be seeking Buddhist assistance so that he can better understand the turmoil of his own life. Genji looks the role of a mourning husband in shallow grey, but just like after Yūgao's death, he is preoccupied with his own emotions and life.

Despite Genji's private preoccupations, his public acts of mourning conform to codified ritual. After the beginning of the winter season, while in mourning for Aoi, Genji receives a visit from her brother and his good friend, Tō no Chūjō. During this visit Genji composes two poems about Aoi's cremation and the clouds overhead. These poems

strike Tō no Chūjō, who did not think Genji cared very deeply for Aoi, and make him change his mind about how Genji feels about his former wife. However, these poems were public displays of mourning (as opposed to revelations of private emotions): they were meant to serve as evidence of Genji's adherence to mourning and laments *because* they were directed to Tō no Chūjō.

This public/private discrepancy continues throughout Genji's period of mourning Aoi. For example, over the course of the forty-nine day memorial period for Aoi, Genji remains secluded, fasts, and is sexually abstinent.¹⁰⁴ By maintaining the decorum of mourning ritual in front of Aoi's family (they were all in seclusion together), Genji appears to be dutifully mourning Aoi. However, during this period, Genji continues to send letters to his many lovers. Therefore, although Genji appears to be ritually mourning, his private correspondence reveals his emotions, which are decidedly not dwelling on Aoi. Genji's true feelings are further evidenced by his decision to leave mourning seclusion at the end of the forty-nine day memorial period. Genji "knew he could not stay shut up like this forever," and went to see his father, the Kiritsubo emperor, as well as Fujitsubo, and eventually returned home to his Nijō residence.¹⁰⁵ Genji's actions are in direct contrast to Aoi's father, who remains in mourning seclusion after the forty-nine day period. Since Aoi was a legitimate child, her parents would be prescribed to mourn her death for the same three-month period a husband was prescribed to mourn a wife. While Genji leaves seclusion before the three-month period, Aoi's

¹⁰⁴ In an exchange with a serving woman named Chūnagon, we learn that Genji "had made no approaches to her during this time of sorrow." SNKBZS v. 21, 59. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 182.

¹⁰⁵ SNKBZS v. 21, 61. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 183.

father does not. After Genji has left Aoi's house, her father finds Genji had written a line from Bai Juyi's "Song of Everlasting Sorrow" on a scrap of paper in his room. The line read:

旧き枕故き衾、誰と共にか

Who will now share with me our old pillow, our covers.¹⁰⁶

This discovery is notable since Genji, unlike Emperor Xuanzong, does not spend the rest of his days in mourning of his deceased love. Genji ended his mourning early. The line from the poem, left to be found, does not reference unending sorrow, but the end of a marriage. Although Genji is writing about the loss of his wife, it is not endless mourning Genji is truly concerned about, it is the topic of this line: who his next lover will be. Additionally, he writes this line (and two poems) while he is leaving the family home, a clear demonstration of moving on, and not endlessly remaining in sorrow. To prove this, when Genji leaves Aoi's family home to return to his Nijō residence, the furnishings, despite Genji still being in a period of mourning, are bright and gay. When he went to call on the emperor he wore gray mourning robes, but when he returned home, he changed. At Nijō there are no gray screens or sparse furnishings indicative of the mourning period Genji is supposed to still be observing. Genji, although publicly still wearing mourning robes, has privately ceased mourning. There can be no doubt of this when Genji delights in Lady Murasaki, decides that he will not wait any longer to commence a sexual relationship with her, and marries her in an intimate ceremony. Genji

¹⁰⁶ SNKBZS v. 21, 65. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 185.

is aware that socially he is in mourning, as the narrator explains: “That evening they were brought baby boar cakes. The event was nothing elaborate, since Genji was still in mourning.”¹⁰⁷ Genji himself knows that he is in the three-month mourning period, as he has celebratory mochi made only for Lady Murasaki. We know that Genji publicly takes off his mourning robes after the three-month mourning period has passed, when he puts on the colored robes Aoi’s mother has made him for the New Year. In this way, Genji publically mourns through laments and ritual to the bare minimum required and privately, he does not mourn much at all (except his own misfortune at having survived the death of two lovers).

Murasaki Shikibu expresses Genji’s mourning of Aoi through mourning poetics, structured by a combination of seasonal time, memorial, and mourning ritual. Genji publicly mourns Aoi for three months: from her autumn death, to the early rains and changing of clothes in the tenth month, to the celebration of the New Year. He participates in the forty-nine-day memorial period and remains in mourning seclusion with Aoi’s family during that time. However, Genji’s feelings and private actions demonstrate a superficial mourning period, as he maintains relationships with lovers, does not don darker mourning than required, does not stay in seclusion for the entire period, and takes a wife. While mourning Aoi, Genji demonstrates that he has grown to understand his place in the world and the mourning rituals socially expected of him, but his private actions betray his continued immaturity in the experience of death and loss, as he focuses on his other lovers during the mourning period. Through her mourning

¹⁰⁷ SNKBZS v. 21, 72. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 187.

poetics, Murasaki Shikibu underscores that, like Genji's mourning of Aoi, the relationship between Genji and Aoi was a social contract, publicly observed, but privately often ignored.

Strike Three: The Death of Fujitsubo

Genji's next scene of mourning follows the death of Fujitsubo, his step-mother and secret lover. In the chapter "Wisps of Cloud" (or "*Usugumo*"), Genji is thirty-one or thirty-two years old and Fujitsubo has taken the tonsure in part to end her affair with Genji and to attempt to absolve her sin of having an affair with her step-son, resulting in giving birth to an heir-apparent, Reizei, who is not the biological son of the emperor. Fujitsubo has been ill for some time and feels that Reizei's learning that Genji is his father would "burden her unhappy spirit forever."¹⁰⁸ Genji grows increasingly concerned for Fujitsubo's health and has rites performed in the hopes she will recover. However, in the spring when he goes to see her, as he is unburdening his heart to her, she dies. While mourning Fujitsubo, Genji reveals he is beginning to mature in his experience with death.

Murasaki Shikibu describes Fujitsubo's death in ways unique to a cloistered wife of an emperor. There is no description of Fujitsubo's body after her death and no *mogari*, as there is no attempt at reviving her or wondering if she is dead (as is the case for Aoi and Yūgao). An angry spirit does not cause Fujitsubo's death and she is not alone at the time she passes away. Therefore, despite being marked by the sin of her affair with Genji,

¹⁰⁸ SNKBZS v. 21, 445. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 353.

Fujitsubo has a “good” death.¹⁰⁹ There is a simple mention of a funeral, but no detailed description of *hafuri*, or the burial or cremation of the corpse. Although emperor’s wives were commonly buried during the Heian period, we can surmise that Fujitsubo was cremated based on the poem Genji composes about her funeral, and from which the chapter of her death takes its name:

入日さす峰にたなびぐ薄雲はもの思ふ袖に色やまがへる

Those thin wisps of cloud trailing there over mountains caught in sunset light
seem to wish to match their hue to the sleeves of the bereaved.¹¹⁰

This poem is remarkably similar to Genji’s smoke/cloud poems after the deaths of Yūgao and Aoi. Here, the “thin wisps of cloud” references both the actual clouds overhead, as well as the smoke from a funeral pyre rising to the heavens. The image of the wisps of cloud being “caught in sunset light” alludes to Fujitsubo’s rebirth, signaling that her spirit is going to a good place, according to a footnote, Amida’s Buddhist heaven.¹¹¹ The fact that the clouds are “there over mountains” and “match their hue to the sleeves of the bereaved” further supports the conclusion that the clouds represent the gray smoke from Fujitsubo’s funeral pyre since the dead were thought to pass into the afterlife in the lands of the mountains and mourners wore black or dark gray after the death of an empress.

Similarly, Murasaki Shikibu’s depiction of Fujitsubo’s mourning period (*mo*) befits the mother of an emperor. After Fujitsubo’s death, the narrator describes her from the point of view of those who mourn her. She is extolled for her many virtues, but

¹⁰⁹ Gatten, “Death and Salvation in *Genji Monogatari*,” 7-9.

¹¹⁰ SNKBZS v. 21, 448. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 355.

¹¹¹ SNKBZS v. 21, note 6.

readers are not given insight that these mourners now know Fujitsubo from her point of view.¹¹² Because of Fujitsubo's rank in society, all at court were expected to wear mourning clothes for a year after her death. This is not detailed in the mourning codes, where society was to wear mourning for a year only after the death of an emperor. However, by the time of the writing of *The Tale of Genji*, it had become the custom to mourn an empress for the same length of time as mourning an emperor. Genji's character would be expected to mourn for one year as a ranking courtier rather than mourn for one month as a stepson.

Murasaki Shikibu uses laments and mourning ritual to reflect the complicated relationship between Genji and Fujitsubo. During the year of mourning, Genji wears dark grey robes, darker than those he wore after the death of Aoi. It is important to note that, despite Genji's deep affection for Fujitsubo, this color reflects customary mourning and not personal affection. Genji has no official (or public) relationship with Fujitsubo that would require him to mourn in any deeper manner, and, if he did so, it would betray their secret relationship to the world. Following the same reasoning, Genji does not enter any type of mourning seclusion (as he did for Aoi), refrain from going to the palace, or undergo any type of purification due to proximity to the deceased (as he did for Aoi and Yūgao). This is notable since he was *with* Fujitsubo when she died, therefore he was

¹¹² As Gatten argues, the point of view in the *Genji* shifts constantly but centers on Genji's perspective. Mitani proposes that the narratorial voice belongs not only to ladies in waiting, but also to "a wholly depersonalized and purely functional discursive subject, *washa*," which unifies the text and its multiple perspectives. Tomiko Yoda, *Gender and National Literature: Heian Texts in the Constructions of Japanese Modernity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 166-68. See Aileen Gatten, Review of [*A Woman's Weapon: Spirit Possession in the Tale of Genji*](#), by Doris G. Bargen, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 59:1 (1999), 247-48; and Mitani Kuniaka, *Monogatari bungaku no hōhō* 1 (Tokyo: Yūseidō, 1989), 3.

polluted (*kegare*) by close contact with the deceased.¹¹³ The fact that he is not required to undergo any sort of purification or seclusion underscores the deep secrecy regarding Genji's close relationship with Fujitsubo. By not acknowledging the pollution he incurred at Fujitsubo's death, Genji hides their contact to a further extent than he hid his presence at the death of Yūgao (when he made visitors stand and remained away from the palace, polluted.) This act is one of maturity and spirit pacification (and also self-preservation). As will be demonstrated below, although assured a good rebirth, Fujitsubo's spirit could become a vengeful spirit, since she died with a heavy sin. Keeping Fujitsubo's secret by downplaying the closeness of their relationship, by not observing *kegare*, Genji calms Fujitsubo's spirit.

Genji's poetic laments after Fujitsubo's death combine his sorrow and mourning ritual. In private, Genji uses seasonal imagery and poetic laments to express sorrow over Fujitsubo's death. This dynamic is in contrast to his mourning of Aoi, which was publicly deep but privately shallow. In the spring immediately following Fujitsubo's death, Genji murmurs: "Just for this year, I beg," which, as noted above, is in reference to a poem in *Kokinshū* (number 832) by Kamutsuke no Mineo, lamenting the death of Fujiwara no Mototsune:

¹¹³ Although Genji was with Fujitsubo when she died, they were separated by some distance and a screen. The two did not speak directly to each other, but through an intermediary serving woman who relayed messages back and forth. Therefore, Genji's pollution from contact with her death would have mitigated by this distance, but, presumably, would have still occurred.

ふかく さののべの桜し心あらば今年計は墨染めに咲けかむつけのみねを

O cherry trees upon Fukakusa Moor, if you are kind, just for this year, I beg,
blossom in gray!¹¹⁴

Because Genji constructs this poem to himself after recalling the party to honor the cherry blossoms twelve years earlier, this poem reflects Genji's private emotions, wanting the natural world to follow the mourning customs of the world of the court and eschew color in favor of a gray expression mourning the death of Fujitsubo. In this way, the Aoi and Fujitsubo deaths stand as opposites in terms of Genji's public/private mourning stances. While Genji publicly mourns Aoi, Genji can not publicly mourn Fujitsubo to the extent he desires. Genji's private emotions reveal the depth of his sorrow that his public mourning ritual cannot express.

The mourning robes Genji wears in "Wisps of Cloud" (Usugumo) are at times difficult to interpret, as there are many deaths of high-ranking figures in the chapter. For instance, right after Fujitsubo's death, Genji's robes are noted to be a dark gray. However, when Genji is with his (secret) son, Emperor Reizei, who is in mourning for his mother Fujitsubo and the newly deceased Highness of Ceremonial (father of Asagao), Genji's robes are described by the narrator thus: "a sober costume that inclined unusually toward black, he looked exactly like his Majesty."¹¹⁵ These robes, blacker than normal, suggest mourning deeper than prescribed since it was not common to darken the color of mourning based on multiple deaths. If Genji was not supposed to wear such a dark color

¹¹⁴ SNKBZS v. 21, 448, note 4. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, Kindle edition, "Usugumo" note 23.

¹¹⁵ SNKBZS v. 21, 454. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 357.

after the deaths of either Fujitsubo or His Highness of Ceremonial (because he has no relation to them other than court rank), it can only be deduced that he did so because of the depth of his feelings for Fujitsubo. Although Genji was not publically mourning Fujitsubo to the extent he desired, it can be interpreted that, with their son (who recently learned the truth of his parentage), Genji allowed himself to privately express the depth of his grief. That the robes fell “toward black”¹¹⁶ on the color spectrum indicates this depth of emotion, as even husbands were only required to wear dark gray after the death of a wife (as Genji did after the death of Aoi). This color choice also links Genji’s appearance with Reizei’s. The author notes that Genji “looked exactly like his Majesty.”¹¹⁷ Their appearance--wearing the same robes, sitting side by side--allows the reader to imagine the similarities between Genji and Reizei, the first hint that the secret relationship between Genji and Fujitsubo is about to be revealed.

In addition to poetic lament and mourning ritual, Murasaki Shikibu also employs time to describe Genji’s mourning of Fujitsubo. Although mourning for Fujitsubo lasts a year and is detailed through the use of natural and court time, Murasaki Shikibu skips over the summer season. After Fujitsubo’s spring death the chapter proceeds directly to autumn, when Genji is still wearing dark gray (presumably in mourning for Fujitsubo). Genji remarks on the season:

¹¹⁶ “常よりも黒き御装ひ” SNKBZS v. 21, 454. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 357.

¹¹⁷ SNKBZS v. 21, 454. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 357.

はかばかしき方の望みはさるものにて、年の内ゆきかはる時々の花紅葉

This year has been so sad, but it is touching that the flowers still enjoyed their season's display¹¹⁸

This statement is of note because it directly contradicts Genji's reference to the "Just for this year, I beg," poem that he referenced after Fujitsubo's death. In the *Kokinshū* poem to which Genji alluded earlier, the author implores nature to stop its showy display and instead conform to the solemn colors of mourning. In Genji's poem, which takes place at least three months after Fujitsubo's death, he commends the flowers he once condemned. This poem signals that, with the passage of time, there occurs a change in Genji's heart, a moving away from mourning Fujitsubo, an end to his private mourning.

This move toward the end of Genji's private mourning, despite his public mourning ritual, is further evidenced as time progresses. For instance, during the autumn and winter months after Fujitsubo's death (detailed in the following chapter "The Bluebell," or "Asagao") Genji is promoted at court to Chancellor, demonstrating his increased involvement in the social and political worlds. Rather than secluding himself in mourning, as after Aoi's death, Genji continues to participate in the world at court. Similarly, Genji's involvement with his lovers resumes (although the reader has no reason to assume he refrained from sexual activity as an act of mourning), as he formally decides to court Akikonomu, travels to see his wife, the Akashi Lady, corresponds with and visits Asagao, and visits Lady Murasaki. The public conclusion of Genji's mourning for Fujitsubo comes in the following chapter, "Otome" or "The Maidens." The first line

¹¹⁸ SNKBZS v. 21, 461. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 357-58.

of this chapter announces the arrival of the New Year and the end of mourning for Fujitsubo. However, before this end of mourning, Murasaki Shikibu uses natural winter imagery to bring Fujitsubo back into the *Tale* and into Genji's heart. For instance, when Genji has his serving women create a giant snowball he reflects on his time with Fujitsubo (as well as his other lovers, including Lady Murasaki, Asagao, Oborozukiyo, and the Akashi Lady). Genji concludes that, among the list of them all, Fujitsubo wins his heart after seeing Lady Murasaki. Lady Murasaki is in some ways a memento of Fujitsubo, since they are cousins and have a similar appearance. At the sight of Lady Murasaki "the sweep of her hair, her face, suddenly brought back to him most wonderfully the figure of the lady he had loved, and his heart, which had been somewhat divided, turned to her alone."¹¹⁹ Here, the figure of Lady Murasaki makes Genji remember Fujitsubo. It is to Fujitsubo that he turns his, previously divided, heart. To stress that true lovers mate for life, Murasaki Shikibu heightens the poetics of the scene by setting it in winter. Genji caps the scene off with the winter image of mandarin ducks, believed to mate for life. This parallel between Genji's relationship with Fujitsubo and the relationship between mated mandarin ducks underscores that, although his public and private mourning are coming to an end, he remains devoted to Fujitsubo.

To date in the tale, Genji, no matter his devotion, is unable to communicate with his deceased lovers and only learns of the true nature of each woman through an intermediary (or not at all, as in the case of Aoi). However, Genji comes to understand Fujitsubo when she appears in his dream. In the dream, Fujitsubo is furious that Reizei

¹¹⁹ SNKBZS v. 21, 464. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 374.

has been told the truth of his parentage. It is important to note that, unlike when Genji comes to understand Yūgao's position from her serving woman, in Fujitsubo's case it is the deceased herself who articulates her position. Fujitsubo speaks her own thoughts even though her point of view is projected through Genji's subconscious in dream form. The reader knows that Genji understands Fujitsubo, as the narrator states:

It was torture to him at last to understand, after a process of deep reflection, that her anger at what he had put her through was well and truly meant, and despite her devotions, despite all the things she had done to lessen her fault, she had still failed because of that one lapse to cleanse herself of the foulness of this world; and he longed again and again to go to her in that alien realm where she must be now, to bring her comfort there, and to make her sin his own.¹²⁰

Despite the decidedly unromantic content, the occurrence of the dream itself demonstrates that Fujitsubo is still accessible to Genji in some manner (similar to Emperor Xuanzong and the Kiritsubo Emperor, who both receive "messages" from their deceased loves). By finally coming to understand Fujitsubo's point of view, Genji realizes his need to help absolve her of the sin they committed together and to pacify her spirit. Absolved of sin, Fujitsubo can go on to her good rebirth, and Genji goes on to live, and love, another day, his heart once again divided.¹²¹

¹²⁰ SNKBZS v. 21, 465-66. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 376.

¹²¹ However, Shimizu Yoshiko speculates that Genji's advances toward Asagao are because of the similarity between the two women. See Shimizu Yoshiko, "Fujitsubo chinkonka," in *Genji no Onnagimi* (Tokyo: Hanawa Shobō, 1967), 43-9 and Royall Tyler, "I am I," in *Monumenta Nipponica* 54:4 (1999), 447. Akiyama Ken and Suzuki Hideo similarly see Lady Murasaki as a replacement for Fujitsubo. See Akiyama Ken, *Genji monogatari no Sekai* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1964), 93-113 and Suzuki Hideo, "Fujitsubo kara Murasaki no ue e: Asagao no maki ron," in *Genji monogatari Shiron Shū*, vol. 4 *Ronshū Heian bungaku*, eds. Gotō Shōko, et al (Tokyo: Benseisha, 1997), 140, 144.

Conclusion

In each of the deaths of Yūgao, Aoi, and Fujitsubo, Murasaki Shikibu uses mourning poetics to calibrate the depth of love and sorrow Genji felt for each woman.¹²² Various structures of time, be they Buddhist ritual time, natural time, and/or the time denoted by court ritual, communicate the *length* of Genji's mourning. Time honored poetic laments coupled with mourning ritual and practice (or the absence thereof) demonstrate to the reader the *depth* of Genji's mourning. The structures and methods used to underscore Genji's mourning (or lack thereof) after the deaths of Yūgao, Aoi, and Fujitsubo will be useful as we explore, in the next chapters, Genji's mourning of his (arguably) greatest love, Lady Murasaki. In the following two chapters I will demonstrate that Murasaki Shikibu couples the structures of time with mourning practice and ritual to create a unique and long-lasting image of mourning, unparalleled within the *Genji*.

¹²² For an earlier discussion on ways these death scenes differ, especially in terms of a “good” or “bad” Buddhist death, see Aileen Gatten, “Death and Salvation in *Genji Monogatari*,” *New Leaves: Studies and Translations of Japanese Literature in Honor of Edward Seidensticker*, eds. Aileen Gatten and Anthony Hood Chambers (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center For Japanese Studies, 1993), 5-27.

Chapter Three

“What can have drawn spring again to come round as it did then?”:

Time and Remembrance in “The Seer”

After Lady Murasaki’s death Genji puts on a darkly dyed mourning robe, enters seclusion, participates in a year of memorials, and spends the rest of his life longing to be reunited with his lost love. Through a novel weaving of elite mourning ritual and codes with well-known elegy and lament poetry, the *Genji*’s author, Murasaki Shikibu, invites readers to comprehend multi-layered references to sorrow, sage-like authority, eulogy, and spirit pacification infused in the mourning scenes of the *Genji*’s forty-first chapter, “*Maboroshi*” (“The Seer”). Over the course of the year depicted in “The Seer,” Genji laments and mourns Lady Murasaki. His remembrances and laments are evidence of Genji’s extended heart-mourning and are the methods through which Genji comes to understand Lady Murasaki through her point of view and pacify her spirit. In addition, these remembrances create a new character in the tale, a “Lady Murasaki of Memory.”

The chapter’s unique month-by-month, yearlong structure, has been noted by scholars since at least the fourteenth century.¹²³ The structure of time in “The Seer”

¹²³ Sojaku and Yotsutsuji Yoshinari, Shimeishō, *Kakaishō*, ed. Tamagami Takuya, Yamamoto Ritatsu, and Ishida Jōji (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1968), 163; Sanjōnishi Sanetaka, *Rōkashō*, ed. Ii Haruki (Hiroshima: Hiroshima Heian bungaku kenkyūkai, 1967), 224; Sanjōnishi Kin’eda, preface to *Myōjōshō*, ed., Ii Haruki, *Sairyūshō*: Naikaku bunko-bon (Tokyo: Ōfūsha, 1975), 329. Kujō Tanemichi, *Mōshinshō*, Nomura Seiichi, ed. (Tokyo: Ōfūsha, 1982), 398.

For a discussion of the manipulation of seasonal imagery in the *Genji*’s “*Maboroshi*” mourning scene, see Norma Field, *Splendor and Longing in The Tale of Genji* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987),

mimics the yearlong seasonal structure of the lament section of *A Collection of Early and Modern Japanese Poetry* (*Kokinwakashū*, an imperial anthology of poems compiled in the early tenth century, hereafter *Kokinshū*.) However, modern scholars such as Steven D. Carter, Norma Field, Hirokawa Katsumi, Haruo Shirane, and Suzuki Hiroko have elaborated on this concept, and argued that the chapter's structure of time is a method to recapitulate the major events in the *Tale* and contrast Genji's former glory with his present decline. Others such as Takahashi Yuki, Kannotō Akio, Abe Akio, and Amano Kiyako stress that time imagery, both the passing of time and sorrowful seasonal prompts, describes Genji's depth of sadness over the death of Lady Murasaki. A third strain of Japanese scholarship, led by Komachiya Teruhiko, Takahashi Bunji, and Go

213-14; Steven D. Carter, "'The End of a Year--the End of a Life As Well': Murasaki Shikibu's Farewell to the Shining One," in *Approaches to Teaching Murasaki Shikibu's The Tale of Genji*, ed. Edward Kamens (NY: Modern Language Association of America, 1993), 124-25; Haruo Shirane, *The Bridge of Dreams: A Poetics of The Tale of Genji* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), 131.

For a discussion of how the *Genji* uses seasonal imagery in the *Kokinwakashū*, see Gustav Heldt, *The Pursuit of Harmony: Poetry and Power in Early Heian Japan* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2008), 152-69.

For works stating that the focus of the structure of time is to express grief, see Takahashi Yuki, "Toki o heta aishōka to *Genji Monogatari*" in *Genji Monogatari to Girei*, ed. Kojima Taoko and Hasegawa Noriaki (Tokyo: Musashinoshoin, 2012), 741-60; Kannotō Akio, "Bannen no Hikaru Genji zō Maboroshi no maki o dō yomu ka" in *Monogatari/Nikki Bungaku to Sono Shūhen: Imai Takuji Hakase Koki Kinen*, ed. Imai Takuji Hakase Koki Kinen Ronsū Hensū Iinkai (Tokyo: Ōfūsha, 1980), 353-71; Abe Akio, "Rokujōin no jūkai" in *Hikaru Genji Ron: Hosshin to Shukke* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1989); and Amano Kiyako, "Genjutsushi kara 'Maboroshi' e: *Genji Monogatari*, aitō no hōhō" in *Nihon Bungaku Shiyō* 76 (2007), 2-11.

For research stressing that the structure of time recapitulates the lives of Lady Murasaki and/or Genji, see Suzuki Hiroko, "'Maboroshi' no maki no jikan to waka – sōkisareru kako/ hibi o kizamu uta" in *Genji Monogatari no Tenbō*, ed. Mori Ichirō, Iwasa Miyoko, and Sakamoto Tomonobu (Tokyo: Miyai Shoten, 2008), 210-243; and Hirokawa Katsumi, "*Genji Monogatari* Maboroshi machikō: nenchūgyōji to eika: shunka bu" in *Kodai Chūsei Bungaku Ronkō*, ed. (Tokyo: Shintensha, 1998), 147-272.

For works that stress the salvation of the characters, see Komachiya Teruhiko, "'Maboroshi' no hōhō ni tsuite no shiron – waka ni yoru sakahinron e no apuroochi" in *Genji Monogatari to Murasaki Shikibu: Kenkyū no Kiseki*, ed. Murasaki Shikibu Kenshōkai (Tokyo: Kadokawagakugei, 2008), 273-86; Takahashi Bunji, "Shinkō to shite no Monogatari – 'Suma' no maki, besturi no ba to 'Maboroshi' no maki, shikijūko no ba o jiku ni" in *Genji Monogatari no Tankyū*, vol. 14, ed. Genji Monogatari Tankyūkai (Tokyo: Kazamashobō, 1989), 123-43; and Go Matsume, "*Genji Monogatari* Maboroshi no maki no Hikaru Genji to Genshin no Tōbōshi: San Hikaiwoyaru to Rishi Gosu shiyo o chūshin ni" in *Kokugakuin Daigaku Kiyō* 46 (2008), 45-60.

Matsuume, promotes the idea that Murasaki Shikibu used time to craft an elegy for, and to pacify the spirit of, Lady Murasaki and Genji (who will disappear from the *Tale* after this chapter, and therefore, must be pacified in advance of his death).¹²⁴ Despite these varied ideas, the consensus is that the cycle of time in “The Seer” is unique within the *Tale* and is crucial to the movement of this pivotal chapter’s plot and the behavior of its characters.

In this chapter, I build on this work, and propose that through depictions of Genji’s remembrances over the course of a year, Murasaki Shikibu uses present seasonal imagery to recall scenes from the past and, as we shall see, create—with the help of the reader—a new character: a “Lady Murasaki of Memory.” Naoki Sakai’s translation theory is useful to explore the ways in which the author constructs the text, and the ways in which the reader (including readers who would become authors) receives it. Sakai’s theory of the “heterolingual mode” of translation states that primacy should not be given to the original utterance but to the subsequent act of translation that constantly occurs as the audience seeks to comprehend.¹²⁵ In this way, the recapitulation of the *Tale* and the demonstration of depth of grief are constructed not only by the author, but also by the various ways an audience would (or would not) understand references to time, mourning, and memory. Without the translation by the audience, pre-modern or modern, the author’s enunciation would be incomplete because the communication would fail to be received. An author’s original utterance is a translation of his or her thought process, and

¹²⁴ It was believed that those who died with a grudge to bear or who were wrongly treated could affect the world after their death and it was necessary to pacify these spirits to ensure the safety of those remaining in this world.

¹²⁵ Naoki Sakai, *Translation and Subjectivity: On “Japan” and Cultural Nationalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

each reader translates the utterance based on his or her life experiences. In this way, there is no “original” that can be recovered and no “final” version of a text.

The poems in “The Seer” reveal the innermost thoughts and feelings of the composing character, as tradition encourages us to think of *waka* as tokens of inner feeling and interpret them that way. Of the twenty-six poems in “The Seer,” Genji composes nineteen. Of Genji’s nineteen poems, fifteen transform or highlight seasonal references to recall Lady Murasaki. I argue that by bringing past memories to the present through Genji’s poems, Murasaki Shikibu creates a new character integral to the chapter, a “Lady Murasaki of Memory.” However, as chapter four will elaborate, because this “Lady Murasaki of Memory” exists only in Genji’s laments, she cannot act in the larger world of the tale. It is only through Genji’s actions that express his laments, his acts of mourning, that this “Lady Murasaki of Memory” can evolve and influence others.¹²⁶ The sheer number of poems in “The Seer,” which has the highest ratio of poems to prose of any chapter in the *Genji*, begs the reader pay them special attention, and their content and composition do not disappoint.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ Komachiya argues that the progression of time in the chapter is not of seasonal time but of internal time that reveals Genji’s emotions. Genji’s solitary poems are not expressions of remembrance but of loneliness, and are not answered because he remains secluded. See Komachiya, “‘Maboroshi’ no hōhō ni tsuite no shiron: waka ni yoru sakahinron he no apuroochi,” 277-83. The other four poems either use seasonal references to describe Genji’s general sadness or use death imagery unrelated to the season to recall Lady Murasaki.

¹²⁷ The “Suma” chapter has both the highest number of poems and solitary poems composed by Genji. However, because “Suma” is much longer than “The Seer,” the poems are not presented in such a dense fashion. It is worth noting that in “Suma” Genji also says goodbye to the world of the capital and many of his lament poems are about being separated from those he loves.

The first month of “The Seer” is unusually quiet. Genji declines visitors, remains behind blinds, and has his New Year celebration with no music.¹²⁸ Although this is not the only New Year Genji remains indoors, readers would compare this year with the notable festivities in “*Tamakazura*” (“The Tendril Wreath”) and “*Hatsune*” (“The Warbler’s First Song”), when Genji visits each of his women, delivering robes he specially selected for them based on their personal qualities and appearance. In “The Seer,” Genji does not visit his women during the New Year and only begrudgingly accepts a customary visit from his brother, His Highness of War, Hotaru.¹²⁹ During this meeting the men exchange poems based on the *ume* (plum) blossoms, a traditional seasonal image of spring and the New Year. Genji uses this seasonal image to compose:

わがやどは花もてはやす人もなしなにか春のたづね来つらん

This house is my home, and yet there is no one here to love the blossoms:
what can have drawn spring again to come round as it did then?¹³⁰

In this poem, the *ume* blossom, like the New Year and Genji’s sorrow, returns in the spring. This is in contrast to Lady Murasaki, who cannot return to enjoy the blossoms. Here, the seasonal image of the *ume* blossom underscores the progression of natural time despite the finality of Lady Murasaki’s death (which occurred on the fourteenth day of the eighth month in the previous year). Readers of the *Genji* were connoisseurs of court poetry, and they would have recognized that Genji’s poem borrowed phrases from book

¹²⁸ SNKBZ, v. 23, 522. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 767.

¹²⁹ The pre-modern Japanese calendar was based on the lunar calendar and divided into four seasons of three months each, with spring beginning in the first month of the year (which roughly corresponds to the second month of the Georgian calendar).

¹³⁰ SNKBZ, v. 23, 521. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 767.

seven of the second Japanese imperial compilation of poetry, *The Later Collection of Japanese Poems* (*Gosenwakashū*, 951, hereafter *Gosenshū*).¹³¹ The anonymous poem reads (emphasis added):

何にきく色そめ返し匂ふらむ花もてはやす君もこなくに

I have not seen him in so long, and since he who loves the blossom has not come:

Why should I again smell the deeply hued chrysanthemum?¹³²

In the fall-themed *Gosenshū* poem, the desired person has been absent for a long period of time. In Genji's spring-themed poem, the desired person does not exist. By borrowing only the phrase "the one who loves the blossoms," and changing the verb from "come" to "there is no one," Murasaki Shikibu underscores Lady Murasaki's death, her inability to "come," her non-existence *except* in Genji's thoughts.

Murasaki Shikibu uses the trope of the progression of natural time to express Lady Murasaki's absence and Genji's mourning of her death. This, in turn, creates a "Lady Murasaki of Memory." This new character is not the same as the true Lady Murasaki, as she is rebuilt and validated not through Genji's acts of instruction (as when Lady Murasaki was alive), but through his remembrances.¹³³ As discussed in chapter two, Genji also comes to understand the world from the point of view of Yūgao and Fujitsubo (but never Aoi) while in mourning. However, Genji's acts of mourning these women are

¹³¹ Sojaku and Yotsutsuji Yoshinari, *Shimeishō, Kakaishō*, 522. See also Hirokawa Katsumi, "*Genji Monogatari* Maboroshi machikō: nenchūgyōji to eika: shunka bu," 188.

¹³² *Shinpen Kokka Taikan* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1983, vol. 1) for reference. University of Virginia Library Japanese text initiative, "Gosenwakashū." <http://jti.lib.virginia.edu/japanese/gosenshu/Ano07Gs.html>

¹³³ For example, Genji built Lady Murasaki into a refined woman, teaching her to have fine handwriting, compose witty poems, and play the koto.

incomplete, prohibiting the creation of their “character of memory”. Genji does not publically mourn Yūgao, cuts his mourning of Aoi short, and does not extend the obligatory state mourning for Fujitsubo. Therefore, it is only in “The Seer” that Genji’s act of extended remembrances for Lady Murasaki creates a new character.

The first example of present natural imagery recalling the past and allowing Genji to understand Lady Murasaki occurs later in the first month of “The Seer.” When Genji hears the serving women excited about the falling snow he composes:

うき世にはゆき消えなんと思ひつつおもひの外になほぞほどふる

When I only long to melt from this sorry world as this snow will soon,
how strange still to linger on once again to watch it fall! ¹³⁴

Although the reference to Lady Murasaki in Genji’s poem is indirect, the narrator later explains that this poem is about a scene in “*Wakana Jō*” (“Spring Shoots I”), when, on the third day of Genji’s marriage to the Third Princess (here, Her Cloistered Highness), he rushed back to Lady Murasaki and waited for her to open the door while he stood, cold, in a snowstorm.¹³⁵

¹³⁴ SNKBZ, v. 23, 521. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 768. For other poems using falling snow and disappearing, see *Kokinshū* (spring 1, 18), *Gosenshū* (spring 1, 1), (spring 1, 2), *Shuishū* (Spring 4), See Hirokawa, “*Genji Monogatari* Maboroshi machikō: nenchūgyōji to eika: shunka bu,” 192.

¹³⁵ There is no unified narrative voice in *The Tale of Genji*. At times there is a narrator, or implied author, who comments on a scene. At other times there is an omniscient, seemingly omnipresent, narrator who elaborates and fills in “gaps,” especially in scenes that focus on the inner-workings of character’s motives. For works on the narrative voice in the *Genji*, see Amanda Mayer Stinchecum, *Narrative Voice in The Tale of Genji* (Chicago: University of Illinois, Center for East Asian and Pacific Studies, 1985); H. Richard Okada, *Figures of Resistance: Language, Poetry, and Narrating in The Tale of Genji and Other Mid-Heian Texts* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991); and Lewis Cook, “Genre Trouble: Medieval Commentaries and the Canonization of *The Tale of Genji*” in *Envisioning The Tale of Genji: Media, Gender, and Cultural Production*, ed. Haruo Shirane (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008) Kindle Edition.

[Lady Murasaki] had betrayed no hint of her feelings even when Her Cloistered Highness first came, although [Genji] gathered sadly at certain moments how much she was hurt. The most vivid was that snowy dawn when he stood waiting, frozen, until the sky became threatening and she sweetly and warmly took him in, meanwhile hiding sleeves wet with tears and tactfully disguising the state she was in. He spent the night wondering, even while he dreamed, in what future life he would ever see her again. He felt as though he were reliving that moment when dawn came and he heard a gentlewoman on her way back to her room say, “Why, look at all the snow!” Her absence from beside him gave him unspeakable pain.¹³⁶

In this scene, the seasonal imagery of snow evokes for the reader the histories of Genji, Lady Murasaki, and Lady Murasaki’s greatest rival, the Third Princess. Genji’s recollection validates and pacifies the spirit of Lady Murasaki by revealing that he *now* understands her position. This reveals Genji’s contrition to the “Lady Murasaki of Memory” and allows her character to absolve Genji of his guilt for hurting Lady Murasaki, paving the way for his soul to go, unburdened, into the next world.¹³⁷ In this way, this first month scene layers the image of Genji’s present lonesome figure against his past (which was overflowing with romantic companions), pacifies the spirits of both Lady Murasaki and Genji, and allows Genji’s mourning to begin to construct a character out of his memories who, despite being “deceased,” still influences the actions of the “living.”

¹³⁶ SNKBZ, v. 23, 523-4. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 768.

¹³⁷ This conclusion is significantly different than the one contained in the anonymous *Menoto no sōshi* (The Tale of a Wet Nurse, ca. late fourteenth century), a handbook for women’s behavior that extols Lady Murasaki for masking her resentment at Genji’s marriage to the Third Princess. Lady Murasaki’s compliance is regarded as the reason that Genji eventually realizes he loves her above all his other lovers. See Haruki Ii, “Didactic Readings of *The Tale of Genji*: Politics and Women’s Education,” *Envisioning the Tale of Genji: Media, Gender, and Cultural Production* (New York: Columbia University Press) Kindle edition, locations 4595-4602.

In the second month, a warbler in an *ume* tree provides the seasonal backdrop for Genji's poem and further understanding of Lady Murasaki:

植ゑて見し花のあるじもなき宿に知らず顔にて来ゐるうぐひす

How the warbler sings, just as though nothing had changed,
there among the flowers, in the tree she planted then, even when she is no
more.¹³⁸

Here, the *ume* and the warbler (a bird of recollection) represent Genji's disbelief that the garden continues to bloom, and natural time continues to progress, although Lady Murasaki is no longer alive. This scene builds upon the first-month theme of linking nature imagery to scenes of Genji's marriage to the Third Princess. In "Spring Shoots I," after returning to Lady Murasaki, Genji sends a note of apology to the Third Princess tied to a branch of *ume* blossoms. As Genji waits for a reply from the Third Princess, a warbler sings, and he converses with Lady Murasaki:

When her answer seemed a little long in coming, he went back in and showed off his flowers. "This is how blossoms should smell," he said. "If only one could give cherry blossoms this perfume, I doubt that people would care any longer for any other kind." And he went on, "I suppose these catch the eye because there is little else now to look at. I should like to put them beside cherry blossoms at their best."¹³⁹

In this passage, Genji compares the cherry blossom (associated with Lady Murasaki) to the *ume* blossom (associated with the Third Princess) and concludes that the cherry lacks the scent of the *ume*. In other words, according to the widely accepted reading of this

¹³⁸ SNKBZ, v 23, 528. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 769.

¹³⁹ SNKBZ, v. 23, 71-2. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 595.

scene, Genji acknowledges Lady Murasaki's beauty, but finds her lacking in rank.¹⁴⁰ Commentaries on passages within *The Tale of Genji* provide the modern reader with translations of scenes as they have come to be understood. While this does not make these readings "correct," it does provide an additional layer of information to be digested by the current reader. However, in "The Seer" the warbler/*ume* imagery expresses only Genji's sadness at Lady Murasaki's death. There is no comparison. By transforming the *ume* into a symbol for Lady Murasaki (who was previously equated with the cherry blossom), this poem demonstrates that Genji understands how deeply he hurt Lady Murasaki by marrying the Third Princess. He replaces the former *ume* blossom (the Third Princess) with the new *ume* blossom (the "Lady Murasaki of Memory"). Thus, Murasaki Shikibu validates Lady Murasaki and consoles her spirit. Additionally, by omitting any narration about Genji's beauty (as opposed to the "Spring Shoots I" scene), Murasaki Shikibu draws a contrast between how others formerly held him in awe and his current isolation.

Readers would also notice that the warbler scene in "The Seer" is similar to the one in "*Otome*" (The Maidens), when Genji and his father, the Emperor, use warbler imagery to mourn Genji's step-mother (and lover), Fujitsubo, and reminisce about "a train of fond memories of that reign."¹⁴¹ Like his father, Genji composes his warbler poem in "The Seer" while lamenting the death of his lover, comparing her to other women, and ruminating over a glorious past in a lonely present. This creates a "Lady Murasaki of Memory" who, as will be discussed in the following chapter, in her death

¹⁴⁰ Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, Note 53.

¹⁴¹ SNKBZ, v. 22, 71-2. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 399.

and through Genji's active mourning, has bested two former rivals: The Third Princess and Fujitsubo.

Murasaki Shikibu's third month mourning poetics brings the deepening of spring and a wider variety of blooms to Lady Murasaki's garden, which brings to Genji's mind the sadness of Lady Murasaki's death. While viewing her garden, Genji wonders:

今はとてあらしやはてん亡き人の心とどめし春のかきねを

Now the time has come, must I consign to ruin what she who is gone specially loved with all her heart, her hedge bright with spring flowers?¹⁴²

In this poem, Genji is thinking of becoming a monk. Because tonsure should ideally require letting go of all worldly attachments, Genji's reluctance to abandon Lady Murasaki's garden demonstrates his sadness, and his attachment to her memory, despite the progression of time since Lady Murasaki's death. This tells us that in "The Seer" each season brings new memories of Lady Murasaki and that Genji continues to practice heart-mourning well after the prescribed three month period. Both are important as they reveal Murasaki Shikibu's use of the progression of time.

Murasaki Shikibu uses the image of Lady Murasaki's garden to set up another recapitulation of the histories of Genji, Lady Murasaki, and the Third Princess, as well as to create a "Lady Murasaki of Memory." On his visit to the Third Princess (who has taken the tonsure), Genji notices her altar flowers, which "handsomely caught the light of

¹⁴² SNKBZ, v. 23, 530. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 770.

the setting sun” and “look pleasant when offered to the Buddha.”¹⁴³ Soon after, his attention is diverted to the blooms in Lady Murasaki’s garden, leading him to conclude “their richness and exuberance...are simply delightful!”¹⁴⁴ Readers would notice the similarities between this scene and one in “*Suzumushi*” (“The Bell Cricket”).¹⁴⁵ In the earlier chapter, Genji held an elaborate event for the Third Princess’s taking of the tonsure and the sight of her altar caused him to pledge to be reborn with her. In “The Seer,” Lady Murasaki’s expertly cultivated garden trumps the altar flowers of the Third Princess. In this scene, Murasaki Shikibu uses natural imagery to provoke Genji’s memories of Lady Murasaki, dismiss the Third Princess from the *Tale* completely, and declare Lady Murasaki, now only a memory, the victor of Genji’s heart and their shared history.

Later in the same month Genji continues his “tour of women,” and goes to see the other wife who had worried Lady Murasaki, the Akashi Lady. Although Genji still finds the Akashi Lady to have “perfect composure and grace,” and to be “remarkable,” in his ultimate conclusion he decides that Lady Murasaki’s “range of gifts and accomplishments” was superior.¹⁴⁶ During his conversation with the Akashi Lady, Genji remembers his despair after Fujitsubo’s death and concludes that his sadness over Lady Murasaki’s death is deeper, since he raised her from childhood, was with her for more than twenty years, and had with her a relationship that surpassed being merely lovers.¹⁴⁷

The final judgment of Lady Murasaki in the third month comes in Genji’s “morning-

¹⁴³ SNKBZ, v. 23, 531-2. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 770-71.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Suzuki, “‘Maboroshi’ no maki no jikan to waka – sōkisareru kako/ hibi o kizamu uta”, 218.

¹⁴⁶ SNKBZ, v. 23, 532-3. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 771.

¹⁴⁷ SNKBZ, v. 23, 535. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 772.

after” poem following his meeting with the Akashi Lady, when he does not spend the night:

なくなくも帰りにしかな仮の世はいづこもつひの常世ならぬに

Crying as geese cry, I made my way home again in a fleeting world where no creature ever finds a last haven beyond time.¹⁴⁸

Murasaki Shikibu utilizes homonyms in order to double the meaning of this poem. The homonyms for the crying of tears (*naku naku*) and the crying of geese (*naku naku*) link Genji’s teary return trip to his own bed to the calls of geese on their migration. In addition, the “*toko*” of “eternity” (*tokoyo*) is homonymous with “marriage bed” (*toko*), suggesting there is no promise of permanence either in the world, or in love.¹⁴⁹ As Field states, “Genji can not guard his marital bed from change let alone fly off to a world where change is unadmitted.”¹⁵⁰ To underscore this point, Murasaki Shikibu uses the word “transience,” or “fleeting” (*kari*), a homonym of geese (*kari*), to underscore both Lady Murasaki’s passage from the world and the Buddhist idea of the impermanence of life.¹⁵¹ Readers would equate Genji’s refusal to stay with the Akashi Lady with the scene in “The Warbler’s First Song,” when he spends the night with the Akashi Lady instead of Lady Murasaki.¹⁵² In these scenes, Genji’s mourning compares his wives, repairs his mistakes, and creates a new, more perfect, Lady Murasaki who exists only in his mind. This appeases Lady Murasaki’s spirit, absolves Genji of guilt over how he hurt Lady

¹⁴⁸ SNKBZ, v. 23, 535. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 772.

¹⁴⁹ SNKBZ, v. 23, 536, note 3.

¹⁵⁰ Norma Field, *Splendor and Longing in The Tale of Genji*, 203.

¹⁵¹ SNKBZ, v. 23, 536, note 3.

¹⁵² Go Matsuume, “*Genji Monogatari* Maboroshi no maki no Hikaru Genji to Genshin no *Tōbōshi*: *San Hikaiwoyaru to Rishi Gosu shiyo o chūshin ni*,” 50.

Murasaki with his other relationships, and demonstrates that, unlike after the death of other women, Genji is not looking for a new lover, but rather is unable to move on from Lady Murasaki.

The structure of time in “The Seer” quickens as the season advances into summer and the fourth month begins with another reference to the transience of life: the change from winter to summer clothes. One of Genji’s lovers, The Lady of the Falling Flowers, sends him summer clothes along with a poem:

夏衣たちかへてける今日ばかり古き思ひもすすみやはせぬ

Summer clothes today: and with the new season's change there will come,
I know, a tide of old memories to sweep all else from your thoughts.¹⁵³

To which Genji replies:

羽衣のうすきにかはる今日よりはうつせみの世ぞいとど悲しき

Today, with the change to clothing gossamer thin and feathery light,
I lament this life the more, this flimsy cicada shell.¹⁵⁴

Suzuki Hiroko summarizes three common interpretations of The Lady of the Falling Flowers’ poem, based on two readings: “old memories” (*furukiomohi*) and “to sweep” (*susumi*).¹⁵⁵ The most commonly accepted interpretation is that the “old memories” are of Lady Murasaki (who used to prepare Genji’s clothing) and The Lady of the Falling Flowers wishes that these memories would sweep all else from his thoughts

¹⁵³ SNKBZ, v. 23, 537. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 773.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Suzuki, “‘Maboroshi’ no maki no jikan to waka – sōkisareru kako/ hibi o kizamu uta”, 221.

(*susumiyasenu*) and Genji would cease to mourn.¹⁵⁶ This interpretation hinges on reading *susumi* as “to move forward” or “to sweep” (*susumi*). The second interpretation also reads *susumi* as “to sweep,” but the “old memories” instead refer to Genji’s love of The Lady of the Falling Flowers. The third reading, promoted by Suzuki, hinges on supplying voicing to read *susumi* as “to cool” (*suzumi*). Again, the “old memories” refer to Lady Murasaki, but, rather than wishing these memories would sweep away all other thoughts, The Lady of the Falling Flowers wishes that Genji’s memories of Lady Murasaki would cool (*suzumiyasenu*) as the body is cooled by summer clothes.¹⁵⁷ Despite the various interpretations, Genji’s reply poem rejects the suggestion that it is only today (or “today of all days,” *kyou bakari*) that he should recall old memories. Instead, he counters with the statement that it is today, more than others (*kyou yoriwa*) that he laments this life, this “flimsy cicada shell.” The cicada’s shell, like summer clothes, is an image of impermanence, as the insect casts off its shell, like seasonal clothes. Lady Murasaki, like the cicada, has also cast off her body, her corporal shell. Genji’s reply poem is one of sorrow as well as dissatisfaction with his life, which continues despite Lady Murasaki’s death.

“The Seer” scene of changing into summer clothes is reminiscent of one in “*Yomogiu*” (“Waste of Weeds”) when Lady Murasaki made and sent Genji garments while they were parted by his exile in Suma. However, despite being exiled, Genji’s days

¹⁵⁶ Suzuki, “‘Maboroshi’ no maki no jikan to waka – sōkisareru kako/ hibi o kizamu uta”, 221.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid 221-25. This interpretation is first seen in *Tamano Ogushi* compiled from 1796-1799. In Heian period writing it was common to leave off the hiragana *dakuten*, or voicing marks, to indicate the consonant should be voiced. In this example the second *su* in *susumi* can be read as *zu* ず. Rather than finding the double readings confusing, they deepened the meaning of the poem and readers took delight in the possibility of multiple meanings.

of glory were not behind him, as he would be reinstated and exalted in the future. In “The Seer,” Genji is again parted from Lady Murasaki, again wearing robes stripped of rank, but this time due to mourning rather than exile. In contrast with “Waste of Weeds,” after “The Seer,” Genji will never again wear court robes. Readers would parallel these two scenes, turning a simple exchange of seasonal clothes in “The Seer” into a memory of a “chapter” of Genji’s life, a farewell to the Lady of Falling Flowers, a demonstration of Lady Murasaki’s virtues (sending him clothing while he was in exile).

The fourth month in “The Seer” is also marked by the celebration of the Kamo festival. Within the *Tale*, the most prominent description of the Kamo festival occurs in “*Aoi*” (“Heart-to-Heart”). Murasaki Shikibu underscores the link between these two Kamo festival scenes by mimicking Genji’s amorous poetic exchange with the Dame of Staff in “Heart-to-Heart” with his exchange with Chūjō in “The Seer.” The Dame of Staff sends Genji a poem insinuating that she hoped to have a romantic liaison with him (as did many others, as the narrator describes later onlookers in awe at the sight of him) but her hopes are dashed when she sees Genji in the company of Lady Murasaki. The narrator notes that Genji is irritated by the poem, and his reply dismisses The Dame of Staff’s advances. In “The Seer,” it is the serving woman Chūjō who creates a poem for Genji, implying that since the death of Lady Murasaki Genji no longer looks at her. Genji replies:

おほかたは思ひすててし世なれどもあふひはなほやつみをかすべき

In most things by now I have given up the world and its temptations,

but I shall perhaps today wickedly pick heart-to-heart!¹⁵⁸

This poem equates Chūjō with the *aoi* flower (a hollyhock, homophonous with *aoi*, the “day of meeting” or “sexual encounter”), which Genji is tempted to “pick” (*tsumi*, homophonous with *tsumi* “sin”).¹⁵⁹ On the surface, Genji’s playful response has a marked shift in tone from his lament poems. However, Sugiura Kazuaki concludes that Chūjō is not a potential lover, but is instead a memento of the deceased Lady Murasaki, whom she had served when she was alive.¹⁶⁰ In this way, Genji’s feelings are not directed to Chūjō, but to Lady Murasaki, and this poem demonstrates his continued longing. Despite Genji’s coy reply, the narrator stresses his isolation (he does not participate in the events at court) and informs us he “still sleeps alone.” By linking scenes of the Kamo Festival in “Heart-to-Heart” and “The Seer,” Murasaki Shikibu recapitulates major moments in Genji’s life, dismisses other women from Genji’s heart (and the *Tale*), and allows the memory of Lady Murasaki to continue to triumph over her rivals.

Genji’s fifth month lament poem features the arrival of the mountain cuckoo:

なき人をしのぶる宵のむら雨に濡れてや来つる山ほととぎす

Have you come hither with your wings wet with showers,

¹⁵⁸ SNKBZ, v. 23, 539. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 773.

¹⁵⁹ Indeed, In “The Seer” Genji responds to Chūjō twice (once here and once later in the eighth month), whereas he only responds to others once. Sugiura Kazuaki, “*Genji Monogatari* ‘Maboroshi’ no makizōtōka kō: Hikaru Genji to Chūjō no kimi” *Aichi Shikutoku Daigaku Kokugo Kokubun* 33 (2010), 95-110.

¹⁶⁰ Sugiura, “*Genji Monogatari* ‘Maboroshi’ no makizōtōka kō: Hikaru Genji to Chūjō no kimi”, 98. For another reading of Genji’s response poem to Chūjō, Hirokawa states that the poem is more a separation poem revealing Genji’s desire to take the tonsure than a love poem. See Hirokawa, “*Genji Monogatari* Maboroshi machikō: nenchūgyōji to eika: shunka bu”, 235.

O mountain cuckoo, from so many memories this evening of one now gone?¹⁶¹

As in the majority of Heian period poetry collections, in the *Genji* mountain cuckoo imagery is rare and only appears in this scene in “The Seer.”¹⁶² Although the poem does not explicitly mention Lady Murasaki, the reader would infer the memories are of her because, in classical Japanese poetry, the mountain cuckoo has the ability to travel between the land of death (in the mountains) and this world. In this case, “the one now gone” is undoubtedly Lady Murasaki. The narrator confirms this by describing the thoughts of Genji’s son, Yūgiri, who is pained to see his father in such distress. During his deliberation, Yūgiri thinks about the rainy scene in “*Nowaki*” (“The Typhoon”), when Genji was in full public view and Lady Murasaki was at home behind blinds:

How can his devotions possibly bring him peace if he can think of nothing else?
he wondered. I can hardly blame him, though—even I can never forget that
glimpse of her.¹⁶³

Yūgiri’s recollection praises Lady Murasaki, forgives Genji his attachments to the world (since Lady Murasaki was truly an exceptional woman), and sets the stage for the introduction of another of Genji’s former love interests, his adopted daughter, Tamakazura.

¹⁶¹ SNKBZ, v. 23, 541. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 774.

¹⁶² Takahashi Yuki, “Toki o heta aishōka to *Genji Monogatari*”, 748-9. Summer lament poems that employ the cuckoo typically recall someone’s death in the previous summer, marking the death anniversary month. However, in “The Seer,” the cuckoo makes its appearance *before* the death anniversary month, while Genji and Yūgiri are sitting by the garden during a sudden rainstorm. The cuckoo is used forty three times in the *Kokinshū*, fifteen times in *Iseshū*, once in *Kinjo wakashū*, at least fourteen times in *Sankashū*, and nineteen times in *Gosenshū*. The mountain cuckoo is used once in the *Kokinshū*, once in *Iseshū*, twice in *Gosenshū*, and at least six times in *Sankashū*. A link between the cuckoo and recalling the dead can be found in the *Shūiwakashū* poem 1307.

¹⁶³ SNKBZ, v. 23, 540. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 774.

During the same scene in which Yūgiri glimpses Lady Murasaki in the chapter “The Typhoon,” he witnesses an exchange revealing Genji’s amorous intentions toward Tamakazura. This scene would be in mind as the reader advanced along to the sixth month poem in “The Seer” when Genji, like Emperor Xuanzong mourning his lover in Bai Juyi’s ninth-century poem “The Song of Everlasting Sorrow,” looks out over a lotus pond at the fireflies:

夜を知るほたるを見てもかなしきは時ぞともなき思ひなりけり
Fireflies rule the night, and it is sad to see them when at every hour one burns
with the searing flame of love now forever lost.¹⁶⁴

In this poem, Murasaki Shikibu combines classical Chinese poetic references with allusions to the firefly as the soul of a loved one, or the soul of one who burns with love.¹⁶⁵ This combination equates the depth of Genji’s emotion with that of Emperor Xuanzong and underscores that it is not limited to the night when one sees the light of the fireflies, but continues “at every hour.” While this poem is undoubtedly about Lady Murasaki, readers, with the relationship between Genji and Tamakazura fresh in their minds, would add to this poem a layer referencing the famous scene in “*Hotaru*” (“The Fireflies”) when Genji shows off Tamakazura by releasing fireflies in her room. In “The Fireflies,” Genji was in the world, not behind blinds (in that case, Tamakazura was behind blinds), and was reveling in his power – he was able to “adopt” the daughter of his friend and rival Tō no Chūjō, and determine the fate of yet another woman. In this way,

¹⁶⁴ SNKBZ, v. 23, 543. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 775.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid. Paul W. Kroll translates this passage as, “fireflies flit through the hall-room at dusk, as he yearns in desolation.” See Bai Juyi, “The Song of Everlasting Regret,” trans. Paul W. Kroll, in *The Columbia Anthology of Traditional Chinese Literature*, Translation from the Asian Classics, ed. Victor H. Mair (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 482. For images of fireflies representing the soul in Japanese poetry, see, for example Izumi Shikibu’s poem in *Shinkokinwakashū* Book 16, Misc 1, 1495.

the sixth month “fireflies” poem in “The Seer” re-introduces Tamakazura, and allows readers, and Genji, to say farewell to her character.

This “fireflies” poem also fuses with the scene in “*Wakana Ge*” (“Spring Shoots II”) when Genji and a gravely ill Lady Murasaki looked out over the lake:

The beautifully cool-looking lake was covered with flowering lotuses, and dewdrops shone like jewels on the deep green leaves. “Look at that!” Genji said. “They look nice and cool anyway!” She sat up and followed his gaze, which was a wonder so rare that he went on with tears in his eyes, “It is almost a dream to see you like this! You know, I often felt as though I, too, would soon be gone.”¹⁶⁶

In this scene, Genji is at Lady Murasaki’s sick bed, as she struggles to recover from illness. The lotus imagery in “Spring Shoots II” conjures the Buddhist concept of the jeweled lotus throne in Amida’s paradise, where Genji pledged to be reborn with Lady Murasaki.¹⁶⁷ By combining the scenes of Lady Murasaki’s false death in “Spring Shoots II” with her real death recollected in “The Seer,” as well as Genji’s *pledge* to be reborn together in “Spring Shoots II” with his *desire* to be reborn together. This association pacifies the spirit of Lady Murasaki by reminding the reader of her exceptional qualities, which, in turn, forgives Genji for his continued attachment.

In the seventh month, Tanabata (an event celebrating the annual meeting of two stars, representing parted lovers, which come together only once a year) prompts Genji to describe his melancholy:

たなばたの逢ふ瀬は雲のよそに見てわかれのにはに露ぞおきそふ

¹⁶⁶ SNKBZ, v. 23, 245. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 657.

¹⁶⁷ SNKBZ, v. 23, 244, note 14.

Far above the clouds the Tanabata stars meet in another world,
while below, gathering dew, water the garden she left.¹⁶⁸

This poem is the *Genji*'s lone use of Tanabata imagery to express longing for a lost love, a link to Emperor Xuanzong's pledge to reunite with his love, even after death, in "The Song of Everlasting Sorrow."¹⁶⁹ The narrator's direct comparison between this year's event and those in "earlier years" is necessary, because no previous Tanabata is described in the *Tale*. Here, rather than recapitulating a scene, Murasaki Shikibu creates a new seasonal image. Because the narrator expressly states that on this day "very little resembled earlier years," the reader would fill in the gap that, although no Tanabata events were described in the *Tale*, they must have been rather spectacular (since they included music and not just a viewing of the stars). By describing the event (or, more specifically, the non-event) only in "The Seer," Murasaki Shikibu elevates the importance of this scene: that Genji and Lady Murasaki are parted and lack any means to reunite while Genji remains in the world. The stars, despite their separation, had time on their side. Each year, according to the calendar, because of the progression of time, they are afforded a meeting. In this poem, Genji laments that the progression of time was not as kind to him; he did not get an annual meeting with his love, and remains in the garden she left behind.

¹⁶⁸ SNKBZ, v. 23, 543. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 775.

¹⁶⁹ In the chapters that cover the lifespan of Genji, the term "Tanabata" is used only three times: twice in "The Broom Tree" and once in "The Seer." The first two mentions of Tanabata occur when the Chief Equerry recalls the sewing skills of his first love, comparing them to the Weaver Star. Because that reference to Tanabata regards a woman's sewing skills rather than her absence, I argue that the lone use of Tanabata to express longing for a lost love, as in "The Song of Everlasting Sorrow," is reserved for Genji in his poem about Lady Murasaki. (It must be noted that Genji refers to the meeting of the Tanabata stars in "The Wind in the Pines" when he ponders bringing the Akashi Lady and his daughter to Nijō. However, in this scene, it is the Akashi Lady who longs for Genji, and the text does not explicitly mention Tanabata.) See SNKBZ, v. 21, 424. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 344. For the mention of Tanabata in "The Song of Everlasting Sorrow," see Bai Juyi, "The Song of Everlasting Regret," 485.

Nature imagery is replaced by Lady Murasaki's one-year memorial service in the eighth month. On the day of the event, Chūjō and Genji exchange poems:

Chūjō writes:

君恋ふる涙は際もなきものを今日をば何のはてといふらん

When there is no end to the tears I shed for you after all this time, who could ever call today the day when we cease to mourn.¹⁷⁰

Genji responds:

人恋ふるわが身も末になりゆけどのこり多かる涙なりけり

I, who mourn her so, soon enough will find my life reaching its own term, but I still have even now many tears as yet unshed.¹⁷¹

In this month, and only in this month, the reader, as well as the principal characters, trace time not through traditional scenes of nature or court ritual, but through the passage of time since the death of Lady Murasaki, marked by the annual memorial service performed in accordance with Buddhist ritual time. Here, nature and court time stop, and are replaced with only memorial offerings to Lady Murasaki. Murasaki Shikibu's mournful description of Genji, his participation in a ritual of pacification, and simple mention of the passage of time convey Genji's isolation and sadness.

“The Seer” covers an entire year, from the first month to the twelfth month. Since Lady Murasaki died in the eighth month in the chapter “The Law,” the ninth month of

¹⁷⁰ SNKBZ, v. 23, 544. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 776.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

“The Seer” signifies that Genji continues heart-mourning for more than a year. In the ninth month Genji remembers performing the Chrysanthemum Festival with Lady Murasaki and composes the following poem:

もろともにおきゐし菊の朝露もひとり袂にかかる秋かな

Chrysanthemum dew from the mornings we both knew in life together moistens for me this [*sic*] autumn sleeves that I must wear alone.¹⁷²

Here, the morning dew that gathers on the mums in Lady Murasaki’s garden is another signifier of the progression of time despite Lady Murasaki’s death. Formerly, when Genji was with Lady Murasaki, they used the dew of the chrysanthemum in celebration and in hopes of a long life. Now that they are apart, the dew is like the tears on Genji’s sleeves, on which he sleeps alone. Here, the dew used in a ritual for longevity instead suggests the reverse: the feeble tears of an old man mourning his deceased love.¹⁷³ This lonely scene is in direct contrast with former celebrations featuring the chrysanthemum. In “*Momiji no ga*” (“Beneath the Autumn Leaves”), when his father advances to the palace, Genji dances the “Blue Sea Waves” dance and “the brilliance of [Genji’s] face” shames his costume, his skill inspired awe in the audience, “who could not imagine what they saw to be of this world.”¹⁷⁴ In “The Seer,” descriptions of Genji’s beauty and affect are entirely absent, heightening his present isolation, sorrow, and decline. Heightening the feeling of loss, readers would have noticed the similarity between Genji’s poem and the *Gosenshū* poem 1409 (emphasis added):

¹⁷² SNKBZ, v. 23, 544. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 776.

¹⁷³ SNKBZS, v. 23, 544. note 8.

¹⁷⁴ SNKBZ, v. 20, 314-5. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 137.

もろともにおきゐし秋の露ばかりかからんものと思ひかけきや

Only the fall dew from the morning we both knew in life together, I yearned for
the one who is no longer¹⁷⁵

In both Genji's poem and the *Gosenshū* poem, the composer is alone, longing for a non-existent lover, with emotion triggered by the fall dew.

Although autumn lament poems following an autumn death in the previous year are common in Japanese poetry, readers would recall that in the second chapter of the *Genji* ("Hahakigi," or "The Broom Tree") the Chief Equerry lectured Genji and his friends that it is improper to turn a poem about the Chrysanthemum Festival into a lament poem about the deceased.¹⁷⁶ As a time when the Emperor goes to the palace, the festival is a time of celebration. Therefore, in "The Seer," Genji's Chrysanthemum Festival poem is of note, and demonstrates that his sorrow is so deep, his memories of Lady Murasaki so strong, he cannot participate correctly in society.

In Genji's tenth-month "Oh seer" poem, Murasaki Shikibu depicts a mournful Genji, watching the geese flying overhead, painfully aware of his separation from Lady Murasaki:

大空をかよふまぼろし夢にだに見えこぬ魂の行く方たづねよ
O seer who roams the vastness of the heavens,
go and find for me a soul I now seek in vain even when I chance to dream.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁵ *Gosenshū*, 1409. SNKBZ, v. 23, 544, Note 8.

¹⁷⁶ SNKBZS, v. 20, 90. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 35.

¹⁷⁷ SNKBZ, v. 23, 545. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 776.

At the mention of a Daoist Seer, similar scenes in “The Song of Everlasting Sorrow” and the first chapter of *The Tale of Genji*, “*Kiritsubo*” (“The Paulownia Pavilion”) spring to mind, linking Genji’s mourning with that of his father’s mourning of his mother. In both of these instances, the deceased’s spirit has gone into the heavens but cannot be located or reached. Therefore, Genji’s “Oh Seer” poem arches back to his early childhood and transverses his early adulthood, when his future stretched out before him, comparing his past to his current state, when all his hopes are behind him.

The reference to the seer, or Daoist priest, in “The Song of Everlasting Sorrow” in Genji’s tenth-month poem expresses Genji’s desire to be reunited with Lady Murasaki. This use of “seer” imagery (here, accomplished through the natural time of geese migrating in *winter*) is unique in the *Genji*. The fall and spring migration (in the eighth and second months) of geese is highlighted in “Suma,” but the “world beyond the clouds” to which the geese travelled was not the afterworld, but the capital city, from which Genji had been exiled.¹⁷⁸ In “The Seer,” Genji pleads for the winter geese to “find for me a soul” that lives not in the capital, but in the afterworld. That soul is Lady Murasaki. But, because Genji cannot command geese, his hopes go unfulfilled.

Genji witnesses the Gosechi festival in the eleventh month, and composes:

みや人は豊の明にいそぐ今日ひかげもしらで暮らしつるかな

Those of the palace hasten there today to join in the Warmth of Wine while I let the day drift by, now a stranger to the sun.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁸ Amano, “Genjutsushi kara ‘Maboroshi’ e: *Genji Monogatari*, aitō no hōhō,” 4. This image is also used in “The Maidens,” but as geese calling for to their mate. See Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 423.

¹⁷⁹ SNKBZ, v. 23, 546. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 777.

In this poem, although others know the warmth of the sun, Genji knows only darkness and is a “stranger to the sun,” which implies he is a stranger to love.¹⁸⁰ With the mention of the Gosechi festival in the eleventh month, Murasaki Shikibu continues to reference Genji’s history and his “tour of women.” Unlike previous years, Genji does not participate in this event, but the narrator informs the reader that the sight of the participants “must have brought back to him after all his mischief that day with the sunshade band”¹⁸¹ (emphasis added.) This reference is important, as “that day with the sunshade band” is not actually described in the *Tale*. The reader would think back upon previous mentions of the Gosechi festival, and recall when, in “The Maidens,” Genji presents a Gosechi dancer judged to be the most beautiful. This Gosechi dancer (who may also be the one mentioned in the “Falling Flowers” and “Suma” chapters) sends Genji a poem (emphasis added):

かけて言へば今日の事とぞ思ほゆる日蔭の霜の袖にとけしも

Since you mention it, all that is present to me as though it were new: how beneath my sunshade band I melted like frost on your sleeves.¹⁸²

“The Maidens” gives great detail of Genji’s presenting his son to society, training his women, hosting events, and planning his Rokujō residence. In “The Seer” Genji does not participate in the festival or in any grand social efforts, but instead comes across a packet of letters Lady Murasaki sent him while he was in exile and revisits his despair at being

¹⁸⁰ The “Warmth of Wine” is *Toyo no Akari*, a court banquet that took place after the First Fruits Festival (*Niinamesai*) or the Enthronement Festival (*Daijōsai*), and that was accompanied by the Gosechi dance; the name means literally “ruddy faces” (from drink). “Sun” alludes to the *hikage* (literally, either “sunshade” or “sunlight”) worn by the dancers; hence “stranger to the sun” implies “stranger to the pleasures of dalliance.” Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, Note 44. SNKBZ, v. 23, 546, Note 1.

¹⁸¹ SNKBZ, v. 23, 546. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 776.

¹⁸² SNKBZ, v. 22, 63. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 396.

separated from people he loved when he was in Suma. The natural progression of time brings around an annual festival that recapitulates the history and love of Genji and Lady Murasaki, reintroduces and dismisses another of Genji's lovers (the Gosechi dancer), and contrasts Genji's positions in society.

The only annual Buddha names event, held over the course of three days in order to cleanse the sins of the previous year, in the *Tale* is in the twelfth month of "The Seer." The narrator describes Genji's meticulous preparations, ostensibly because Genji knows this will be the last time he sponsors the event. In this way, the event is yet another comparison between his current position and his former glory. Genji, who is about to leave the *Tale*, needs to have his "sins" absolved. Despite the attention to detail, the event was not glorious, and was keeping in tone with Genji's mourning and his desire to take the tonsure:

梅の花のわづかに気色ばみはじめてをかしきを、御遊びなどもありぬべけれど、なほ今年までは物の音もむせびぬべき心地したまへば、時によりたるもの、うち誦じなどばかりぞせさせたまふ。

Plum blossoms were just beginning to open, and there should have been music, but Genji felt that at least this year it would still unman him, and he only had poems sung in consonance with the occasion.¹⁸³

Thus, the reader learns that Genji is still bereft over the death of Lady Murasaki, and her presence, like the *ume* (plum) blossoms once again in bloom, remains.

In the twelfth month, in his second to last poem of the year and of his life in the *Tale*, Genji composes:

¹⁸³ SNKBZ, v. 23, 549. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 778.

春までのいのちも知らず雪のうちに色づく梅をけふかざしてん

We who may not live until spring comes round again: here amid our snows let us sport for all to see the hue of new-budding plum!¹⁸⁴

Although this poem does not directly refer to Lady Murasaki, by employing the spring *ume* blossom, the flower associated with Lady Murasaki at the beginning of “The Seer,” Murasaki Shikibu links this last seasonal poem with Genji’s first. Now, like Lady Murasaki, Genji believes he will not witness another bloom.

It must be noted that “The Seer” concludes with a depiction of a shining Genji:

御容貌、昔の御光にもまた多く添ひて、あり難くめでたく見えたまふを、この旧りぬる齡の僧は、あいなう涙もとどめざりけり。

The light of his face far surpassed even his radiance of long ago; he was such a marvel to behold that for no reason the old monk wept on and on.¹⁸⁵

The description of the “light” (*gokō*) of Genji’s face is not only meant to assure the reader that Genji will be reborn in a Buddhist Pure Land, appeasing his soul, but is also another encapsulation of history.¹⁸⁶ Hinata Kazumasa goes further, and argues that Genji’s light

¹⁸⁴ SNKBZ, v. 23, 549. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 778.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Others agree and disagree with this. Kannotō summarizes the research on this question: Abe Akio states that Genji’s gloomy view of human history should not be understood as a direct result of Lady Murasaki’s death, but, when faced with her death, Genji is obligated to accept it as the final form of sadness in his life, and is therefore obliged to take the tonsure. This is an optimistic reading of the chapter, one that ends with Genji attaining salvation. However, Fuji sees Genji’s struggle to decide whether or not to take the tonsure as proof that Genji finally embraces his “confusion,” and the tale concludes with Genji as a figure that does not take the tonsure. This is a pessimistic reading of the chapter, as it doubts Genji’s salvation, either through death or the tonsure. Suzuki furthers Fuji’s argument, pointing out that “The Seer” is a chapter that describes the despair of humanity, its attachment to this world, and its lack of salvation. In this way, Suzuki’s reading is also pessimistic, and concludes that Genji’s tonsure cannot be depicted, and that he cannot be “saved.” See Kannotō, “Bannen no Hikaru Genji zō Maboroshi no maki o dō yomu ka”, 356-58. See also Komachiya, “‘Maboroshi’ no hōhō ni tsuite no shiron: waka ni yoru sakahinron e no apuroochi,” 284.

at the Buddha names ceremony is like the Buddha's light.¹⁸⁷ As Jinno Hidenori has demonstrated, in "The Seer" Genji is not referred to by any of his court titles.¹⁸⁸ While he is not referred to as the "Shining Genji" (*Hikaru Genji*) or the "Shining Prince" (*Hikaru kimi*) in "The Seer" (as these titles are perceived as Genji's names during his youth and are limited to the beginning of the *Tale*), by contrasting his current "light" (*gokō*) with his "his radiance of long ago," Murasaki Shikibu calls to mind Genji's childhood in "Paulownia Pavilion."¹⁸⁹ This, in turn, reinforces the structural links between the two chapters, including their use of "The Song of Everlasting Sorrow."¹⁹⁰ Kannotō also stresses the chapter's link to "Paulownia Pavilion," where as a child the Shining Genji lamented the death of his mother.¹⁹¹ These feelings of sorrow span Genji's life, as they are transferred first to Fujitsubo after her death, and then, finally, to Lady Murasaki, whom he mourns in the mode of his father – in the mode of "The Song of Everlasting Sorrow."¹⁹²

An attentive reader will have noticed that while Genji's post-spring poems conjure the memory of Lady Murasaki, they do not allow her to act or evolve. In the next chapter, I will demonstrate how, by mapping specific Heian period mourning rituals and practices onto the chapter's structure of time, Murasaki Shikibu's mourning poetics transforms earlier tropes of mourning and lament to reveal that Genji is not only

¹⁸⁷ Hinata Kazumasa, "Hikaru Genji no shukke to *Kako Genzai Ingya Kyō*" in *Genji monogatari to Bukkyō: Butten, Kōji, Girei* (Tokyo: Seikansha, 2009), 79.

¹⁸⁸ Jinno Hidenori, "Hikaru Genji no saigo no 'hikari': 'Maboroshi' no maki," in *Genji monogatari no Hanashigoe to Hyōgen Seikai* (Tokyo: Bensei Shuppan, 2004), 237.

¹⁸⁹ Jinno Hidenori, "Hikaru Genji no saigo no 'hikari': 'Maboroshi' no maki," 238-39.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Kannotō, "Bannen no Hikaru Genji zō o megute Maboroshi no maki o dō yomu ka," 366.

¹⁹² Ibid.

lamenting the death of Lady Murasaki, but also *mourning* her death. This distinction is important, as it permanently divides Genji from both the earlier world of the *Tale* and from Lady Murasaki. The addition of external mourning, *visible mourning*, in “The Seer” is notable, as the chapter confirms the “permanent impassability of the divide”: be it Genji’s inability to reach Lady Murasaki in the other world, or the divide approaching in *The Tale* itself, after which Genji will no longer appear in the following chapters. This divide necessitates the creation of a different Lady Murasaki character: a “Lady Murasaki of Memory” who will pre-pacify and pre-mourn our hero.

Chapter Four

“He wore a rather darker shade than when he had spoken of ‘light gray.’”:

Mourning and Spirit Pacification in “The Seer”

In the chapter “The Seer” Genji mourns the death of his love, Lady Murasaki, over the course of a year. Murasaki Shikibu’s mourning poetics expresses Genji’s mourning through poetry, ritual, and practice, structured by time. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, Genji’s lament poems are solitary expressions of his internal sorrow, as the majority of his poems are not expressed to another character. Murasaki Shikibu uses these poems to recapitulate Genji’s life and his relationship with Lady Murasaki as well as create a “Lady Murasaki of Memory.” However, because Genji’s poems are solitary and internal, this “Lady Murasaki of Memory” cannot act in the larger world of the *Tale*. Within the world of the *Tale*, Genji’s visible expression of mourning, his act of prolonged mourning ritual and practice, allows the newly created character of the “Lady Murasaki of Memory” to also act. Because Genji and Lady Murasaki are permanently divided in death, Lady Murasaki needs the creation of this new character in order to influence the world of the *Tale*. In order to activate this “Lady Murasaki of Memory” as a character, Genji has to shift from internal expression through poetry to visible mourning. While Genji mourns Lady Murasaki and pacifies her spirit, the “Lady Murasaki of Memory” mourns the soon-to-be-deceased Genji and pacifies his future spirit, in turn pacifying the spirits of readers who mourn the loss of their hero.

In the first half of this chapter I demonstrate how Murasaki Shikibu used the structure of time to demonstrate Genji actively mourned Lady Murasaki for longer than prescribed. The three-step mourning process of *mogari*, *hafuri*, and *mo* marked the period from the moment of death, the discarding of the corpse, and the mourning of the dead. The length of each ritual accorded with personal preference, though the mourning codes detailed in the Yōrō codes of 718 C.E. prescribed a period of mourning, lasting anywhere from seven days to one year, based on relationship to the deceased.¹⁹³

In the second half of this chapter, I establish that the structure of Genji's mourning and laments in "The Seer" transform into ritual spirit pacification. Genji's yearlong laments and mourning practice are structured through these senses of time, but also become a rejection of older rituals of communion with the dead and ritualized mourning and spirit pacification. For instance, Murasaki Shikibu builds on and interweaves structures of time and themes of lament, replacing Daoist beliefs in the afterlife with an impassable divide, which Genji understands through Buddhist ideas of impermanence and paradise.¹⁹⁴ For Buddhists, return from the afterlife was possible through reincarnation. However, reincarnation in the human realm in order to resume a romantic relationship was not the goal of Heian period Buddhists. Instead, the prized

¹⁹³ "Sōsōryō," in *Ritsuryō*, ed. Inoue Mitsusada, *Nihon shisō taikēi*; 3 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1976), 439.

¹⁹⁴ Here, I focus on the replacement of Daoist beliefs because Genji's mourning in "The Seer" is paralleled with Emperor Xuanzong's mourning in "The Song of Everlasting Sorrow" and Genji's father's (the Kiritsubo Emperor) mourning detailed in the first chapter of *The Tale of Genji*, "Paulownia Pavilion." Both of these literary accounts hinge on the Kiritsubo Emperor and Emperor Xuanzong's desire for a Daoist seer to contact their deceased love and bring back a message. In "The Song of Everlasting Sorrow," a Daoist priest travels to find Yang Guifei in the other world. "The Seer" in the "Paulownia Pavilion," the woman servant, Myōbu, contacts the Kiritsubo Intimate's mother in order to have young Genji (a memento from the deceased, her son) and a hair ornament sent to him at the palace. As a result of their requests, both men—the Tang and Kiritsubo emperors—also receive "messages" from their deceased loves.

reincarnation was co-rebirth in one of the Buddhist paradises, most frequently the Pure Land of Amida Buddha. In the Buddhist paradigm, the division between the realms of the dead, the reborn, and the living were impassable during a lifetime and reunion was only possible after death. In contrast, Daoist concepts of a return from the afterlife were focused on communication between the two realms. Daoist seers could facilitate communication between the living and the dead, allowing for relationships to continue, albeit in an altered state. While physical reunion was only possible for the seer in this paradigm, communication was more easily achieved and the division between the realms of the living and the dead was penetrable. As Joan Didion so eloquently explains, “visible mourning reminds us of death,” of the “permanent impassibility of the divide.”¹⁹⁵ The addition of external mourning, *visible mourning*, in “The Seer” is important, as the chapter confirms the “permanent impassibility of the divide”: be it Genji’s inability to reach Lady Murasaki in the other world, or the divide approaching in *The Tale* itself, after which Genji will no longer appear in the following chapters.

Bai Juyi’s “Song of Everlasting Sorrow” (ninth century) plays an essential role in the structure of *The Tale of Genji*. For example, in the first chapter of the tale, “The Paulownia Pavilion” (“Kiritsubo”), the emperor mourns the death of his great love, the Kiritsubo Intimate (Genji’s mother), in scenes that mimic “The Song of Everlasting Sorrow.” The Kiritsubo emperor, Genji’s father, neglects his duties because of his sorrow, sends a messenger for a memento of his deceased love, and receives a comb in response. The rituals described in the chapter alert the reader to the time and setting of

¹⁹⁵ Joan Didion, *The Year of Magical Thinking* (New York: Vintage International, 2007), Kindle Edition, 192, 195.

the mourning, dating before 905 C.E. when children under the age of seven were not exempt from mourning and could therefore remain in the service of the emperor.¹⁹⁶ In contrast, “The Seer,” which also relies on “The Song of Everlasting Sorrow” to illustrate Genji’s depth and length of sorrow, does not depict any method of successfully contacting the deceased. In this way, “The Seer” is not about Tang-dynasty (618–907 C.E.) China or a past-Japan. Instead, “The Seer” uses allusion to earlier poetic laments to describe mourning and spirit pacification in the time the chapter was written, in the early eleventh century.¹⁹⁷

Mourning in “The Seer”

In the *Genji*, only *hafuri* and *mo*, the stages of discarding the corpse and mourning, are described after Lady Murasaki’s death. Masuda Katsumi breaks down the mourning of Lady Murasaki into two steps: first is the *mo* of the forty-nine days of seclusion (that occurs in “The Law,” or “*Minori*”) and the second is the entire chapter of “The Seer.”¹⁹⁸ Lady Murasaki dies on the fourteenth day of the eighth month in “The Law.” She is cremated the very same day (*hafuri*). Immediately thereafter, Genji and his son, Yūgiri, enter forty-nine days of mourning confinement (*mo*). Other than the lack of any time between Lady Murasaki’s death and cremation (as there was no attempt at

¹⁹⁶ See Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, Kindle Edition, note 9.

¹⁹⁷ There is no surviving evidence of when chapters were completed. Royall Tyler states, “that something like the present text existed in 1021.” See, Royall Tyler, “Introduction,” in Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, trans. Royall Tyler, (New York: Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition, 2006) Kindle edition, location 337.

¹⁹⁸ Masuda Katsumi, “Hikaru Genji no taijō: ‘Maboroshi’ zengo,” *Bungaku* 11 (1982), 40.

calling her spirit back or waiting for her to revive, and no *mogari*), “The Law” outlines a “normal” process of Heian-period mourning and memorial ritual.¹⁹⁹

In the first month of “The Seer,” already four months after Lady Murasaki’s death, Genji’s continued mourning is demonstrated through his behavior during the celebration of the New Year. Genji accepts only rare visitors, such as his brother, Hotaru, but even then, remains behind his blinds. He declines to see others, such as senior nobles and his siblings, outright. Visits from the women of the house only cause him pain, and he lets time go by without contacting them. Genji does not make New Year visits, nor amorous visits to his numerous lovers. In addition, despite the fact that Genji puts on the mandatory New Year’s celebration (which he would not have been obliged to do when in a formal mourning period), we learn that, as an expression of sorrow and mourning, there was no music, among other differences.

While not in formal mourning clothes, Genji extends his mourning through “heart-mourning” (*shinsō*). Masuda defines *shinsō* as internal mourning in one’s heart as if in mourning.²⁰⁰ This heart-mourning, as discussed in chapter one, was common practice in the Heian period and was a way to demonstrate depth of grief while relieved of the formal expectations of mourning. Genji’s practice of heart-mourning during the New Year scene in “The Seer” demonstrates that he has been in mourning for more than four months since Lady Murasaki’s death. Therefore, even if we accept that Genji would

¹⁹⁹ Here, the word normal is in quotes, as scholars such as Inada have demonstrated that there was no true normal mourning custom in Heian period Japan. Evidence suggests that time periods and mourning clothes were highly individualized, and that mourners often broke from and resumed mourning during the mourning period.

²⁰⁰ Masuda Yoshiko, “Heian jidai,” in *Nihon Mofukushi Kodai Hen: Sōsō Girei to Yosooi* (Tokyo: Genryusha, 2002), 157.

have been expected to mourn Lady Murasaki as a wife for three months, from the opening lines, Genji's mourning in "The Seer" is, and was depicted as, longer than deemed socially necessary.

After this New Year scene, Genji continues to survey the garden as spring progresses from within his residence and behind blinds (another symbol of Genji's heart-mourning). The women servants are still wearing mourning clothing while Genji wears plain and non-distinct clothing:

Some of the women still wore a gray that acknowledged their loss, while others had on common colors, although their damasks had nothing bright about them. Genji himself wore a dress cloak ordinary in color but intentionally plain and discreet.²⁰¹

Additionally, Genji has his rooms reflect his mood, as his furnishings were very discreet. Even though Genji is no longer wearing the prescribed colors of mourning, he continues to dress in a fashion to reflect his depth of sorrow and his heart-mourning. Similarly, although his room furnishings are not those directly associated with official mourning (floorboards removed, furniture removed, screens hung backwards), he has his room furnishings made to match the scene and his mood, that of sorrow.

More than four months after Lady Murasaki's death, Genji is still actively mourning more deeply than he did after the death of his first wife (and the first relative he was expected to mourn for), Aoi. As discussed in chapter two, at the end of the forty-nine day memorial period for Aoi (before the end of the three-month mourning period), Genji

²⁰¹ SNKBZS, v.4, 530. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 770.

resolves to break his mourning seclusion, since he “knew he could not stay shut up like this forever.” Genji’s first action after leaving seclusion is to visit his father, the Kiritsubo emperor and Fujitsubo. The reader understands that by visiting the palace, and attending the emperor Genji is no longer associated with the pollution of death or mourning. After Aoi’s death, Genji appears to have publically adopted the ritual thirty days of seclusion after contact with death and forty-nine days seclusion for mourning a death. Additionally, Genji privately asserts the end of his pollution and mourning when he returns home to his Nijō residence, changes out of mourning robes, and is surrounded by furnishings that are bright and gay.²⁰² These actions belie his public behavior. Genji, although publicly still wearing mourning robes, has privately ceased mourning Aoi.

In the spring months in the chapter “The Seer,” despite visiting two of his women (the Third Princess and the Akashi Lady), he does not spend the night with any of them, underscoring his abstinence in his state of sorrow and heart-mourning for Lady Murasaki. Remaining behind blinds, not travelling, and abstinence were normal demonstrations of the mourning period. However, as discussed earlier, Genji did not remain abstinent during the official mourning periods for Yūgao, Aoi, or Fujitsubo. Although Genji’s relationships with Yūgao and Fujitsubo did not socially require him to remain sexually abstinent, the author might have chosen abstinence as a marker of his concern. Most notably, while in socially prescribed mourning for Aoi, Genji marries Lady Murasaki in an “event [that] was nothing elaborate, since Genji was still in mourning.”²⁰³

²⁰² SNKBZS v. 21, 61. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 183.

²⁰³ SNKBZS v. 21, 72. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 187.

As the seasons in “The Seer” advance into summer, Genji continues to self-impose mourning confinement and abstinence. For example, Genji remains in his residence, declining to attend the Kamo festival in the fourth month. In contrast, while in the three-month mourning period for Aoi, Genji calls on the emperor at the palace for the New Year before calling on Aoi’s family and officially (publicly) changing out of his mourning robes and into colored robes. It is during the celebration of the Kamo festival in “The Seer” that Genji has a flirtatious exchange with Chūjō that some see as Genji breaking his mourning abstinence after Lady Murasaki’s death. However, as discussed in chapter three, it is not Chūjō but the memory of Lady Murasaki with whom Genji flirts.²⁰⁴ Ultimately, whether or not Genji has sexual relations with Chūjō is not entirely clear, but we later learn that Genji still sleeps alone.

Fall in “The Seer” continues in much the same manner, and Genji composes poetry referencing Tanabata, “The Song of Everlasting Sorrow,” and continues to self-impose confinement and abstinence. As discussed in the previous chapter, this poem links to Emperor Xuanzong’s pledge to reunite with his love, even after death, in “The Song of Everlasting Sorrow.” In this scene, by *omitting* the Tanabata rituals, Murasaki Shikibu heightens the sense of sorrow and death as an impassable divide. Unlike the stars and the lovers they represent, Genji and Lady Murasaki lack any means to reunite. The Tanabata stars are destined to meet at an appointed time (the seventh day of the seventh month) every year based on the Earth’s rotation. After the separation of the stars, the progression

²⁰⁴ Sugiura Kazuaki, “Genji monogatari ‘Maboroshi’ no maki zōtōka kō: Hikaru Genji to Chūjō no kimi” *Aichi Shukutoku Daigaku Kokugo Kokubun* 33 (2010), 98. For another reading of Genji’s response poem to Chūjō, see Hirokawa Katsumi, who states that the poem is more a separation poem revealing Genji’s desire to take the tonsure than a love poem. Hirokawa Katsumi, “*Genji Monogatari* Maboroshi machikō: nenchūgyōji to eika: shunka bu” in *Kodai Chūsei Bungaku Ronkō*, ed. (Tokyo: Shintensha, 1998), 235.

of time will bring about an eventual reunion. Genji's Tanabata poem laments that the progression of time will not bring him a reunion with his lover. Nor does Genji get a memento from the deceased through the intermediary of a Daoist Seer, like Emperor Xuanzong in "The Song of Everlasting Sorrow."

Around the first of the eighth month, Lady Murasaki's annual memorial service is held and we learn that "on the anniversary day, everyone fasted, and he had the mandala dedicated."²⁰⁵ In a poem to Genji, Chūjō suggests it is this day that they are expected to cease crying over the death of Lady Murasaki:

Chūjō writes:

君恋ふる涙は際もなきものを今日をば何の果てといふらん

When there is no end to the tears I shed for you after all this time, who could ever call today the day when we cease to mourn.²⁰⁶

Genji responds:

人恋ふるわが身も末になりゆけど残り多かる涙なりけり

I, who mourn her so, soon enough will find my life reaching its own term, but I still have even now many tears as yet unshed.²⁰⁷

Genji's reply makes it clear that he has no intention to stop, or hide, his tears of sorrow even though it has now been a year since Lady Murasaki's death.

Genji's refusal to stop "heart-mourning" long after the prescribed mourning period is in direct contrast to his actions after the deaths of Yūgao, Aoi, and Fujitsubo.

²⁰⁵ SNKBZS, v. 23, 544. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 776.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

Genji's final mourning poem of Yūgao comes at her forty-nine day memorial service, when he accepts her death and understands that she will be moving from the liminal forty-nine day period in the afterlife to her next rebirth. Genji's final mourning poem of Aoi comes when he accepts colored New Year robes from her mother. Genji composes:

あまた年今日改めし色衣着ては涙ぞふる心地する

For so many years you have renewed on this day the bright hues I wear,
and now I don them again, I feel my tears fall like rain.

えこそ思ひたまへしづめね

My heart is overflowing.²⁰⁸

In this poem Genji recalls all the years the two played out the same scene when Aoi was alive, and feels sad that Aoi is no longer alive to participate. Genji's final mourning poem for Fujitsubo comes almost at the end of the one-year mourning period:

亡き人を慕ふ心にまかせても影見ぬ三つの瀬にや惑はむ

Should I let my heart follow this longing to seek the love I have lost,
I might, if she is not there, wander myself the Three Fords²⁰⁹

This poem expresses Genji's desire to absolve Fujitsubo of sin for having an illicit affair. As discussed in chapter three, shortly before composing this poem Genji comes to understand Fujitsubo's guilt and shame concerning Reizei's parentage. By wishing he

²⁰⁸ SNKBZS, v. 21, 79. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 190.

²⁰⁹ SNKBZS, v. 21, 496. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 376.

could “wander myself the Three Fords,” Genji acknowledges Fujitsubo is paying a price in the afterlife for the sin she committed in life. As Tyler notes:

The River of Three Fords (*mitsu no se*, usually *sanzu no kawa*), which encircles the afterworld. Those who crossed it did so via one of three fords— shallow, middling, or deep, according to the gravity of their sins.²¹⁰

Genji hopes that instead of Fujitsubo wandering the Three Fords, and perhaps having to traverse the deep river, he could instead pay her debt so that she could go directly to the afterlife. Genji’s final mourning poems for Yūgao, Aoi, and Fujitsubo look to the past, accept the death, and do not project his sorrow into the future. In contrast, his mourning poems for Lady Murasaki look to the future.

Throughout the winter of “The Seer,” Genji continues to self-impose confinement and abstinence, and express his sorrow through time-honored laments, such as “The Song of Everlasting Sorrow.” In Genji’s verse that we refer to as the “Oh seer” poem, he expresses jealousy toward the winter geese, which are able to travel to the heavens like the Seer, or Daoist priest, who has the ability to travel between “this world” and the other world, where the dead reside. Genji pleads in vain:

大空をかよふまぼろし夢にだに見えこぬ魂の行く方たづねよ
O seer who roams the vastness of the heavens,
go and find for me a soul I now seek in vain even when I chance to dream.²¹¹

This use of “seer” imagery is unique in *The Tale* and serves, counter-intuitively, to demarcate the limits of contact with the dead. This poem combines a reference to the

²¹⁰ SNKBZS, v. 21, 496, note 9. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, Kindle edition, note 33.

²¹¹ SNKBZS, v. 23, 544. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 776.

travel of the Daoist Priest in “The Song of Everlasting Sorrow” to find Yang Guifei in the other world, with the use of “the seer” in the “Paulownia Pavilion,” when Genji’s father, the Kiritsubo Emperor, employs the woman servant, Myōbu, to contact the Kiritsubo Intimate’s mother in order to have young Genji (a memento from the deceased, her son) sent to him at the palace. As a result of their requests, both men—the Tang and Kiritsubo emperors—also receive combs from their deceased loves.

I argue that Genji’s winter “Oh seer” poem in “The Seer” not only is a demonstration of Genji’s continued heart-mourning for Lady Murasaki, it also forms a dialogue with earlier forms of mourning practice, specifically those employed by Emperor Xuanzong and the Kiritsubo Emperor (Genji’s father who mourned his love, the Kiritsubo Intimate). By employing “The Song of Everlasting Sorrow” in his lengthy heart-mourning for Lady Murasaki, Genji’s solitary poem becomes external communication, a response to specific characters and mourning practice.²¹²

Notably, in “The Seer,” Genji does not employ any type of “seer,” either a Daoist adept or a servant, after the death of Lady Murasaki. Rather, he substitutes the migrating geese for the Daoist “seer” and his request for contact with Lady Murasaki, although heartfelt, cannot be considered a command.²¹³ Here, Genji rejects the efficacy of earlier rituals of communicating with the dead through the use of a Daoist seer. While the Tang emperor commanded a Daoist seer to contact his deceased beloved, and the Kiritsubo

²¹² Although Genji employed imagery from “The Song of Everlasting Sorrow” while mourning Aoi, Genji, unlike Emperor Xuanzong, does not spend the rest of his days in mourning her death. Instead, Genji privately ended his mourning for Aoi earlier than the prescribed three-month period.

²¹³ This use of the image of geese returning to the North in the fall is unique in the *Tale*. The migration of geese is used twice in “Suma,” but the “world beyond the clouds” to which they travelled was not the afterworld, but the capital city, from which Genji was exiled. Therefore, the first time geese are shown to migrate to the afterworld is in “The Seer.”

emperor commanded a servant to bring back a memento from the Kiritsubo Intimate, Genji does not expect the geese flying overhead to understand or submit to his desire that they travel to Lady Murasaki and bring him back a message. The migrating geese have the ability to travel to the mountains, where those in the afterlife dwell, but cannot communicate with them. As discussed in chapter one, the mourning scene of Ame no Wakahiko recorded in the *Kojiki* describes that birds were given the roles of mourners.²¹⁴ Akima Toshio argues that the *soni-dori* (kingfisher), who plays the *mono masa* (substitute for the dead) in this scene, is actually a shaman.²¹⁵ Genji's geese have no power to take roles such as we see in earlier literature and demonstrates his understanding of death as an impassible divide that he (or any living person) cannot cross.

Genji's inability to reach Lady Murasaki demonstrates the differences among the mourning styles of Ame no Wakahiko's parents, Emperor Xuanzong, the Kiritsubo Emperor, and Genji. Genji understands death to be an impenetrable divide and he is unable to communicate with or call back the spirit of Lady Murasaki. This signals a shift from earlier scenes of sorrow and mourning, and points to Genji's differing beliefs, which take on a decidedly more Buddhist tone. In Genji's "Oh seer" poem, the substitution of the seer for geese (*kari*) in transit is also a substitution of Daoist beliefs with Buddhist ideas of impermanence (*kari*) (as represented by both Lady Murasaki's death and Buddhist ideals).²¹⁶ The homophone *kari*, meaning both geese and temporality, would signal to Heian readers that geese are unable to bring messages from the deceased,

²¹⁴ Toshio Akima, "The Songs of the Dead: Poetry, Drama, and Ancient Death Rituals of Japan" in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (1982), 494.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 498.

²¹⁶ SNKBZS v. 23, 536, note 3.

since life is impermanent. Buddhist notions of return and reunion available for even the most glorious Heian aristocrat differ from Daoist notions of return.

As winter advances in “The Seer,” Genji prepares to leave the world, either through tonsure or death, and has the letters Lady Murasaki wrote to him while he was exiled in Suma burned. Before having them burned, he composes:

死出の山越えにし人をしたふとて跡を見つつもなほまどふかな

Swept on by longing to follow her now she has crossed the Mountain of Death, I looked on the signs she left, and still I strayed from the path.²¹⁷

As Tyler states, “The “Mountain of Death” (*shide no yama*) looms before those newly arrived in the land of the dead, who must cross it on the way to the palace of the King of the afterworld. ‘Signs’ (*ato*) refers both to footprints and to writing in a letter.”²¹⁸ In this poem the “signs (*ato*) she left” carries both meaning of “footprints she left” and “writings she left.” Taken in a straightforward manner, in the poem above, Genji watches Lady Murasaki as she walks to the Mountain of Death, leaving footprints behind her. He follows these footprints in a desire to stay with her, but, since he is alive, he “strayed from the path” of her footprints and is unable to reunite with her. When this poem is layered with Genji’s actions of burning the letters Lady Murasaki left behind, the verse takes on an additional meaning: although Lady Murasaki has died, her handwriting (*ato*) remains in the letters she left behind. Therefore, even after Lady Murasaki’s memorial service in the previous summer, Genji is still mourning her loss, and his tears, a sign of his continued heart-mourning, have not stopped.

²¹⁷ SNKBZS v. 23, 547. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 777.

²¹⁸ Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, Kindle Edition, note 33.

Upon having the letters burned, he composes:

かきつめて見るもかひなし藻塩草おなじ雲居の煙とをなれ

I shall have no joy from gathering sea-tangle traces of her brush: let them rise above the clouds as she also rose, in smoke.²¹⁹

This is a direct reference to Lady Murasaki's cremation, and an indirect reference to sending messages to the deceased through smoke. This is important because, as discussed earlier, Genji laments that there is no Daoist adept who can communicate with the deceased Lady Murasaki. This suggests that Genji has no way to communicate with Lady Murasaki. However, Suzuki Hiroko argues Genji does get a memento from Lady Murasaki from the other world, when he finds her letters from Suma.²²⁰ However, Suzuki's argument does not take into account that Genji did not ask for a memento from Lady Murasaki. Instead of seeking out a way to communicate with Lady Murasaki, Genji instead repeatedly laments the lack of any ability to reunite, be it the absence of a Daoist seer, the natural method of reunification for the Tanabata lovers, or his ability to communicate with Lady Murasaki when he dreams. Kawazoe Fusae suggests that the smoke from burning Lady Murasaki's letters substitutes for Genji's the "message to the afterworld."²²¹ However, Amano Kiyako argues that, similar to not believing in a seer's ability to reach the deceased, and differing from the burning letters scene in *The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter* (*Taketori Monogatari*, c. tenth century), Genji also does not expect

²¹⁹ SNKBZS v. 23, 548. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 776.

²²⁰ Suzuki Hiroko, "'Maboroshi' no maki no jikan to waka – sōkisareru kako/ hibi o kizamu uta" in *Genji Monogatari no Tenbō*, ed. Mori Ichirō, Iwasa Miyoko, and Sakamoto Tomonobu (Tokyo: MiyaiShoten, 2008), 210-243, 238.

²²¹ Kawazoe Fusae, "Genji monogatari hyōgen shi: satori to ōken no isō," in *Genji monogatari no nai naru Taketori monogatari* (Tokyo: Todai hakusei ronbun, 1999), 460-65.

the smoke from the letters to reach Lady Murasaki.²²² I agree with Amano's position, because Genji is not burning *his* messages to Lady Murasaki, but Lady Murasaki's messages *to* him. If this was an attempt by Genji to communicate with Lady Murasaki, the message she would receive would have been her own words, not a request from Genji.

The chapter's final mapping of mourning ritual with time comes in the twelfth month when Genji hosts the annual Buddha names ceremony and prepares to leave the world. The fact that the reader is left unsure of whether Genji ultimately takes Buddhist vows is the topic of copious research. However, in the Heian period it was normal to wait until after the mourning period to take the tonsure.²²³ Whether or not Genji ultimately becomes a monk is beside the point, as the important factor is that he did not do it *while in mourning* for Lady Murasaki. Following Masuda, I argue Genji's inaction can be read as a practice of visible mourning. In other words, by not taking Buddhist vows Genji demonstrates he is still practicing mourning for Lady Murasaki.

Throughout the chapter Genji demonstrates that he remains in mourning for far longer than deemed socially necessary or appropriate. For instance, after taking off the dark grey mourning robes (which were darker than those he wore for his wife, Aoi), Genji continues to remain behind blinds and wear clothes "ordinary in color but

²²² Amano Kiyoko, "'Maboroshi' e: Genji monogatari aitō no hō hō," *Nihon Bungaku Shiyō* 76 (2007), 8-9.

²²³ Masuda, "Hikaru Genji no taijō: 'Maboroshi' zengo," 40.

intentionally plain and discreet” in the spring after Lady Murasaki’s autumn death.²²⁴ Additionally, although mourning confinement would have been over at this time, Genji chooses to reside in a simply furnished room and remain behind blinds.²²⁵ These actions occur approximately seven months after Lady Murasaki’s death. Lest one think that these are simply signifiers of grief, pages later we learn that Genji continues to mourn after the one-year memorial service conducted in the eighth month of the following year and well into the twelfth month, extending the temporal disturbance of social life far longer than he need have.²²⁶ Grief is an emotion, which can be expressed in poetic lament. Mourning is an act, expressed through ritual and practice (such as heart-mourning). By continuing to have him wear discreet robes, isolate himself from the world, and remain abstinent, Murasaki Shikibu narrates Genji’s continued acts of heart-mourning.

Go Matsuume states that, in the world of tales, it was rare for a husband to be faithful to his wife after her death, and doing so was a way to pacify her spirit.²²⁷ In this light, as compensation for how he treated Lady Murasaki in life, Genji remains abstinent and heart-mourns her for a year.²²⁸ Genji himself is aware that the depth and length of his mourning is socially unacceptable, noting that his separation from society has made him “eccentric in some ways” and caused others to gossip that he was “no longer the man he

²²⁴ SNKBZ, v. 23, 530. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 770. Murasaki no Ue’s death is depicted as occurring on the fourteenth day of the eighth month. In the traditional Japanese calendar, autumn begins in the seventh month.

²²⁵ SNKBZ, v. 23, 530. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 770. In a noteworthy annotation, the *Sairyūshō* (an annotated edition of *The Tale of Genji* dated to 1510 C.E.) confirms that this style of dress reflects Genji’s feelings of mourning. Vol. 15 of NKBZ, note 12, 516.

²²⁶ Genji’s reemergence into society is depicted in the twelfth month, after the Reading of the Buddhist Names, which takes place on the nineteenth day of the twelfth month.

²²⁷ Go Matsuume, “*Genji monogatari maboroshi no maki no Hi* arku Genji to Genshin no Tōbōshi: *Sangen Hikai to Rishi Goshū sono 4 o chūshin ni*” *Kokugakuin Daigaku Kiyō* 46 (2008), 58.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 59.

had been.”²²⁹ In sum, even though Genji is no longer wearing the prescribed colors of mourning or in mourning confinement, his continuation of mourning practices (here dressing and living discreetly) is an external signal of his internal sorrow, his “heart-mourning.” Although Genji may not be practicing official mourning ritual, he continues to use heart-mourning practices to remain apart from the world of *The Tale*. Murasaki Shikibu utilizes mourning practices to isolate Genji, allowing his poetic laments to become solitary expressions of sorrow, heightening the reader’s perception of absence, the impassable divide between Genji and Lady Murasaki, and the growing divide between Genji and the world of *The Tale*.

Mourning ritual, and Genji’s deviation from mourning norms, demonstrates his deep sorrow over the death of Lady Murasaki. However, his actions are not imitations of earlier laments, instead, they are a unique and prolonged mourning of the death of Lady Murasaki. In this way, although “The Seer” borrows from the content and structure of the “The Song of Everlasting Sorrow,” the *Kokinshū*, or “The Paulownia Pavilion,” it uses these building blocks to create a new world of lament, a chapter entirely devoted to mourning. This mourning also does not follow the content or structure of existing mourning codes or customs, nor does it rely on earlier Daoist practices (as configured through literature). Instead, the chapter takes on a decidedly Buddhist tone, concerned with taking the tonsure, pacifying spirits, Buddhist funerary and memorial ritual. In this way, “The Seer” is neither a recapitulation of Tang-dynasty Chinese mourning codes or lament literature nor a past-Japan.

²²⁹ SNKBZ, v. 23, 514. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 769.

Memory and mourning continually pacify the spirit of Lady Murasaki, create a new character, a “Lady Murasaki of Memory,” and allow this new character to act despite Lady Murasaki’s death. According to Saitō Akiko, the spirits of the deceased are actively engaged in the story, and the realization of the will of the deceased is accomplished through the actions of the living.²³⁰ In the next section, I will demonstrate how this “Lady Murasaki of Memory” pacifies the future spirit of Genji (and by extension, the spirit of the reader).

“The Seer” as Spirit Pacification

Scholars have noted that as early as the *Kojiki* and the *Man'yōshū* (“Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves” c. 759 A.D.), Japanese poetry (and certain forms of narrative) has had ritual and magico-religious functions.²³¹ Specific to this study of mourning in “The Seer” is the understanding that *Man'yōshū banka*, literally “coffin-pulling songs,” were created for the ritual purpose of pacifying the spirits of the dead. The ritual procedure of spirit pacification, known as *chinkon* or *tamashizume*, could quiet a potentially dangerous spirit and stave off personal or social harm. In the Heian period, it was widely believed that the spirits of those who died early or who suffered a maligned reputation could inflict harm in the world of the living unless proper rites were conducted.

²³⁰ Saitō Akiko, “Shukke suru hitobito,” in *Jidai to Shūzoku*, ed. Morita Tei (Tokyo: Bensei shuppan, 1991), 331-32.

²³¹ See Gary Ebersole and Kevin Collins. Gary L. Ebersole, “‘Aki No No’ Sequence,” in *History of Religions* 23:1 (1983), 18-36; Kevin Collins, “Integrating Lament and Ritual Pacification in the *Man'yōshū* Banka Sequence for Tenji Tennō ” in *The Journal of the Association of Teachers of Japanese* 34:1 (2000), 44-77; and Toshio, “The Songs of the Dead: Poetry, Drama, and Ancient Death Rituals of Japan,” 494.

I argue that “The Seer” may not only be read as an expression of Genji’s sorrow, but must also be understood as ritual literature with the specific intention to pacify the spirits of the characters of Lady Murasaki and Genji. The author of the *Tale*, and the main character from whose point of view the chapter is written, play the roles of principal mourner and spirit pacifier respectively of the deceased Lady Murasaki. I will further argue that the newly created “Lady Murasaki of Memory” pre-mourns and pre-pacifies Genji’s spirit.

“The Seer” chapter operates in both the lyrical and the ritual modes. As Kevin Collins defines these terms in a literary context:

In the most common simplification, “lyrical” is understood as a reference to those features that originate with the poet’s own private emotions. It typically designates direct, first person articulation of feelings rather than events, manifested within the elegiac context by outpourings of private grief. The term “ritual,” in contrast, is used to describe the compulsory patterns of speech and behavior carried out collectively by a body of mourners as part of a programmatic response to death. While the ritual response normally incorporates displays of bereavement, the general orientation, or function, is one of consolation rather than lament, often relying upon a system of myth and religious beliefs.²³²

Within “The Seer,” Murasaki Shikibu grounds Genji’s lyrical responses to grief within the ritual structures of time and mourning. The Heian calendar was based on the Chinese lunar calendar and time was understood to progress from past to present and into the future. However, Gary Ebersole, Nagafuji Yasushi, Joseph Kitagawa, and Takahashi Bunji argue for another sense of time in literature that uses the present to recall the past

²³² Collins, “Integrating Lament and Ritual Pacification in the Man’yōshū Banka Sequence for Tenji Tennō,” 45.

and push it into the future.²³³ This type of structure of time gives the text a ritual effect.²³⁴ Take, for example, Genji's poem composed when he notices the falling snow in the first month of "The Seer:"

うき世にはゆき消えなんと思ひつつおもひの外になほぞほどふる

When I only long to melt from this sorry world as this snow will soon,

how strange still to linger on once again to watch it fall! ²³⁵

As described in chapter three, this poem is composed at the present falling of the snow. It recalls a past event, as the narrator later explains that this poem is about a scene in "Wakana Jō" (Spring Shoots I), when, on the third day of Genji's marriage to the Third Princess, he rushed back to Lady Murasaki and waited for her to open the door while he stood, cold, in a snowstorm.²³⁶ The poem pushes the memory into the future through the act of continuous lament of Lady Murasaki's death and eulogy. As described earlier, Murasaki Shikibu structures Genji's lament poems so that they use present time imagery

²³³ See Nagafuji Yasushi, *Kodai Nihon Bungaku to Jikan Ishiki* (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1979), 61; and Joseph M. Kitagawa, "Reality and Illusion: Some Characteristics of the Early Japanese 'World of Meaning'" *Journal of the Oriental Society of Australia* 11 (1976), 5-10.

²³⁴ See Nagafuji, *Kodai Nihon Bungaku to Jikan Ishiki*, 61; Kitagawa, "Reality and Illusion: Some Characteristics of the Early Japanese 'World of Meaning'" 5-10; and Takahashi Bunji, "'Omoide' shū to jōka no kiseki: *Genji monogatari* 'Maboroshi' no maki o megutte" in *Fūkei to Kyōkankaku: Ōchō Bungaku Shiron* (Tokyo: Shunjūsha: 1985), 158.

²³⁵ SNKBZ, v. 23, 521. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 768. For other poems using falling snow and disappearing, see *Kokinshū* (spring 1, 18), *Gosenshū* (spring 1, 1), (spring 1, 2), *Shuishū* (Spring 4), See Hirokawa, Hirokawa Katsumi, "*Genji Monogatari* Maboroshi machikō: nenchūgyōji to eika: shunka bu" *Kodai Chūsei Bungaku Ronkō*, ed. (Tokyo: Shintensha, 1998), 192.

²³⁶ There is no unified narrative voice in *The Tale of Genji*. At times there is a narrator, or implied author, who comments on a scene. At other times there is an omniscient, seemingly omnipresent, narrator who elaborates and fills in "gaps," especially in scenes that focus on the inner-workings of character's motives. For works on the narrative voice in the *Genji*, see Amanda Mayer Stinchecum, *Narrative Voice in The Tale of Genji* (Chicago: University of Illinois, Center for East Asian and Pacific Studies, 1985); H. Richard Okada, *Figures of Resistance: Language, Poetry, and Narrating in The Tale of Genji and Other Mid-Heian Texts* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991); and Lewis Cook, "Genre Trouble: Medieval Commentaries and the Canonization of *The Tale of Genji*" in *Envisioning The Tale of Genji: Media, Gender, and Cultural Production*, ed. Haruo Shirane (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008) Kindle Edition.

to recall the past, and push his mourning into the future. In this way, the “compulsory pattern of speech and behavior” that makes up ritual is held within the text itself. Genji’s mourning, and Genji’s mourning becomes, on each re-reading, a ritual act. Murasaki Shikibu structures the poems and mourning ritual and practices in “The Seer” through this type of ritual time, making it evident that Genji’s grief is not simply a lyrical expression of individual sadness, but a way to pacify the spirits of her characters who would no longer appear within the world of *The Tale of Genji*.

Within *The Tale of Genji*, Lady Murasaki is all but assured a good rebirth based on her own commitment to Buddhism and her extensive preparations for her own Buddhist funeral.²³⁷ Despite the signs in the text that suggest a positive rebirth, I contend that Lady Murasaki’s spirit is still in need of pacification because she died having suffered a maligned reputation.²³⁸ Lady Murasaki’s maligned reputation was not caused by engaging in amorous affairs outside of her “marriage” to Genji, but rather, was caused by Genji judging her character attributes as lacking when compared to his other wives. This maligned reputation was believed by, and created by, Genji. Throughout Lady Murasaki’s life with Genji, he repeatedly tormented her with various amorous affairs and never fully made her a “true” wife.²³⁹ Many times Genji directly compared Lady Murasaki to his other lovers, finding her lovely, but lacking. For instance, when Genji compared Lady Murasaki to Fujitsubo in “Wisps of Cloud” his heart resolved that Fujitsubo was the superior woman when the narrator concludes that at the sight of Lady

²³⁷ Fujimoto Katsuyoshi, “Genji monogatari ni okeru shi to kyūsai,” *Seisen Daigaku Jinbunkagaku Kenkyūsho Kiyō* (2015), 31-48.

²³⁸ It is necessary to note that Lady Murasaki is never referred to by the term “dangerous spirit.”

²³⁹ The fact that Lady Murasaki does not have influential backing and never has a child with Genji leaves her vulnerable to abandonment. See Royall Tyler, “I am I,” in *Monumenta Nipponica* 54:4 (1999), 444.

Murasaki “the sweep of her hair, her face, suddenly brought back to him most wonderfully the figure of the lady he had loved [Fujitsubo], and his heart, which had been somewhat divided, turned to her alone.”²⁴⁰ When Genji compared Lady Murasaki to another wife, The Third Princess, he associated the former with the cherry blossom and the latter with the *ume* blossom. This association expressed that, although Lady Murasaki had beauty, she did not have rank in society (demonstrated in the fact that although the two blossoms are similar in appearance, only the *ume* blossom has a sweet fragrance). Since Genji did not understand how he hurt Lady Murasaki and judged her unfairly it was necessary for Genji to understand her point of view after death in order to assure that Lady Murasaki’s spirit was pacified.

I contend that, although not yet deceased, Genji’s character also requires spirit pacification in “The Seer” chapter. Like Lady Murasaki, Murasaki Shikibu gives the reader clues that Genji will attain a good rebirth. Komachiya Teruhiko summarizes these clues (Genji’s release of his last attachments in life and reemergence into the world with a shining light) and deduces that through struggling with his sadness after Lady Murasaki’s death, Genji is perfected.²⁴¹ Genji’s perfection is confirmed after he emerges from the Buddhist names ceremony (in the twelfth month of “The Seer”) and “his face far surpassed even his radiance of long ago.”²⁴² Genji has been equated with light (*hikari*) since the first chapter of *The Tale of Genji*. However, throughout “The Seer” this association is absent, except once he re-emerges into the world after the Buddhist names

²⁴⁰ SNKBZS v. 21, 464. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 374.

²⁴¹ Komachiya Teruhiko, “‘Maboroshi’ no hōhō ni tsuite no shiron: waka ni yoru sakahinron e no apuroochi” in *Genji Monogatari to Murasaki Shikibu: Kenkyū no Kiseki*, ed. Murasaki Shikibu Kenshōkai (Tokyo: Kadokawagakugei, 2008), 284-5.

²⁴² SNKBZ, v. 23, 550. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 778.

ceremony. The use of “radiance” (*hikari*) to describe his face at this re-emergence suggests Genji’s Buddhist enlightenment. However, Genji’s death is not described in *The Tale of Genji* and his character receives no *mogari*, *hafuri*, or *mo*. Thus, we can see that Genji’s spirit needs to be pacified in the chapter “The Seer” because there is no memorial or mourning scene later in the tale. Although Genji is a commoner, he is the son of an emperor and attains the rank of Honorary Retired Emperor. Just like the spirit of an emperor, simply due to rank Genji’s spirit would require pacification. Additionally, because Genji is also not depicted as taking the tonsure, he is not depicted as having released all of his attachments to the world. Because there is the possibility that his character dies while still having attachments to the world, his powerful spirit (due to his rank in life) could cause harm in the world of the tale after his death. Readers would feel that pacification of Genji belongs in the tale in order to accept it as a good version of reality and to quiet their own spirits distressed by the loss of their hero. The literary trope of pacifying Genji’s spirit allows Murasaki Shikibu to make a dramatic shift in the tale (and take readers along with her), jumping from forty-one chapters of the world of Genji to eleven chapters without him.

It is important to note that the ritual “The Seer” plays out is spirit pacification. This is made evident by Genji’s repeated rejection of spirit calling and spirit contacting rituals. Unlike sequences in earlier literature, such as the *Man’yōshū*, Genji’s recollections of Lady Murasaki over the course of a year do not have the effect of recalling her spirit. In addition, there is no understanding on Genji’s part that his actions are creating a bridge across what he understands to be the impenetrable divide of death.

For example, as described in chapter three, Genji laments that unlike the Tanabata stars/lovers, he does not have a way to reunite with his deceased love. Similarly, in Genji's "Oh seer" poem, he laments that he does not have a Daoist seer that can find the soul of Lady Murasaki, and that he himself cannot locate her "*even when I chance to dream.*" Therefore, Genji's recovery of the past is not a ritual for renewal or bringing back the spirit of the dead. Instead, it rejects the rituals of spirit calling, Daoist seers, and dream meetings. As Kevin Collins argues, the rejection of the efficacy of ritual intensifies the lyrical power of laments, which becomes a new ritual strategy of pacification.²⁴³ Instead of focusing on the need to placate the sorrow of the living, the focus turns to pacifying the spirit of the deceased. In this way, *Genji's recovery of the past becomes both a lyrical lament on the irreversibility of death as well as ritual pacification of Lady Murasaki's spirit.*

Genji's remembrances of Lady Murasaki, recapitulation of their life together, and final judgment pacify Lady Murasaki's spirit. As described in detail in chapter three, Genji uses natural imagery he sees in the present to recalls scenes from the past and correct his judgment of Lady Murasaki. In the first month the falling snow reminds him of his marriage to the Third Princess and he comes to understand how much he hurt Lady Murasaki when he took the Third Princess as a wife. In the second month the *ume* blossoms prompt Genji to reverse his earlier judgment that the *ume* (then representing the Third Princess) was more desirable than the cherry blossom (Lady Murasaki). Finally, in the third month Genji makes comparisons between Lady Murasaki and his surviving

²⁴³ Collins, "Integrating Lament and Ritual Pacification in the Man'yōshū Banka Sequence for Tenji Tennō," 47, 52, 70.

wives (the Third Princess and the Akashi Lady) and concludes that Lady Murasaki was the best of them all. Lady Murasaki's spirit is pacified through Genji's acts of remembrance and mourning as he corrects his understanding of her, no longer maligning her spirit as deficient in comparison to any of his wives or lovers.

Murasaki Shikibu's new character, the "Lady Murasaki of Memory" is the pacified spirit of Lady Murasaki. Her function is crucial to the chapter, as she pre-pacifies the spirit of Genji. The mourning and pacification of Genji's character in "The Seer" is essential because his character will not appear later in the tale. Although readers advance into a tale that leaves Genji's character behind, they still hold his character in their minds: What happened to the former hero of the tale? Would the spirit of Genji's character return to the world of the tale and exact revenge?

"The Seer" provides a ritualized method to allow readers to release Genji's character and come to closure without any description of Genji's death. Genji's remembrances create a "Lady Murasaki of Memory" who is able to mourn for her (not-yet-deceased) husband, Genji. This yearlong mourning, although it would be too long for mourning a wife, is the appropriate time for mourning a husband. In addition, this mourning and pacification keeps intact a decidedly Buddhist understanding of mourning, memorial, rebirth, and pacification. In this way, the structures of time and mourning are required to create a "Lady Murasaki of Memory" who can perform mourning and spirit pacification ritual for Genji (for a concrete example, see the discussion of Genji's first month snow poem earlier in this chapter).

Genji's recapitulation of his life together with Lady Murasaki becomes a way for the "Lady Murasaki of Memory" to forgive him his trespasses against Lady Murasaki. His remembrances provide a ritual way to demonstrate his life is in decline. By contrasting Genji's former glory with his miserable present, Murasaki Shikibu draws attention to both Genji's achievements and his age. At fifty-two years old, Genji has lived a long and successful life. Therefore, his character cannot be considered to have died early or bearing any grudges. This is important because angry spirits were believed to exact revenge on the world of the living because they died early or suffered an attack on their character. Additionally, Genji's remembrances ritually release Genji of his attachments to this world. By reintroducing characters either through memory or visits and summarily dismissing them from the *Tale*, and from Genji's life, Murasaki Shikibu sets the stage for Genji to be absolved of his responsibilities toward his wives and children. "The Seer" unburdens Genji's character of guilt, ambition, and attachment, thereby pacifying his spirit in advance of his death and ensuring his enlightenment.

"The Seer" introduces to the world of literature a new and unique way to mourn. *Man'yōshū* and *Kojiki* authors also employed mourning rituals and Buddhist notions in order to pacify the spirits of the deceased, but the purpose of their mourning scenes differed from those in a fictional tale. Pacifying the spirit of a god or emperor is different than pacifying the spirit of an idealized fictional character (whose death is uncertain). By the late Heian period, readers would find earlier rituals of communing with the dead implausible. Therefore, Murasaki Shikibu instead adopts the rituals of elegant mourning (mourning that is neither perfunctory nor dangerous) and Buddhist salvation to pacify the

spirits of her characters, situated within the world of the late Heian court. In “The Seer,” lyrical laments of endless mourning are not structured like earlier *banka* to recall the spirits of the dead, but to maintain the divide between this world and the next and pacify the spirits of the deceased (or soon to be deceased). As we will see in the following chapter, this new form of mourning would resonate with audiences over centuries, and form the building block for future scenes of elegant, sage-like, Buddhist mourning.

Chapter Five

“The light of his face far surpassed even his radiance of long ago:”

Time, Ritual, and Spirit Pacification in *Eiga Monogatari*’s “Crane Grove”

In the world of the Heian court, there were few men who could compare to the political and social success of Fujiwara no Michinaga (966-1028 C.E.). Michinaga was a beloved, hated, and feared figure. His rise to power culminated in the rank of *sesshō* regent, the *de facto* ruler of Japan. However, even after he shed this title in favor of taking Buddhist vows, he still exerted tremendous control over the affairs of court. His political and social prowess was strengthened by his familial connections, as Michinaga was fortunate enough to father four empresses and be the grandfather to three emperors.²⁴⁴ However, Michinaga’s life was not without hardship, as he suffered from chronic illness and saw the death of many of his children. His life is chronicled in the tenth century historical tale, *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, or *Eiga monogatari*. The authorship of *Eiga monogatari* is still in question, but scholars agree that the first thirty chapters were most likely authored by Akazome’emon (956–1041 C.E.) between 1028 and 1034 C.E.²⁴⁵ Akazome’emon was a court poet and served Minamoto no Rinshi and Fujiwara no Shōshi, Fujiwara no Michinaga’s wife and daughter. Akazome’emon was a

²⁴⁴ According to *Ōkagami* his daughters were Ishi (married to Go-Ichijō), Kenshi (to Sanjō), Kishi (to Go-Suzaku), and Shōshi (to Ichijō).

²⁴⁵ The *Eiga monogatari* consists of forty chapters. The first thirty focus on the life of Fujiwara no Michinaga and cover the years 887-1027 C.E. These thirty chapters are believed to have been written by Akazome’emon and are considered central. The last ten chapters are a later addition to the texts and are not treated in this chapter.

contemporary of Murasaki Shikibu and would have been aware of *The Tale of Genji* and its contents.²⁴⁶ As Richard Bowring demonstrates, Akazome'emon and Murasaki Shikibu served members of Fujiwara no Michinaga's immediate family at the same time.²⁴⁷ The Akazome'emon chapters of *Eiga monogatari* culminate in the thirtieth chapter, "Crane Grove," or "*Tsuru no hayashi*," which encapsulates Fujiwara no Michinaga's life, details his death, and reveals his rebirth. In this chapter, I will demonstrate how Akazome'emon's "Crane Grove" utilized *The Genji*'s mourning poetics in "The Seer" (c. 1000 C.E.) to mourn and pacify the spirits of her historical character, Fujiwara no Michinaga. Both "The Seer" and "Crane Grove" use the structure of time to recapitulate the histories of characters as well as eulogize and pacify their spirits. Additionally, like "The Seer," "Crane Grove" functions as mourning and spirit pacification by detailing the main character's devotion to Buddhism, suggesting his good rebirth, and comparing him to the historical Buddha.

While *The Tale of Genji* is a work of fiction, *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes* is a blend of diary, history, and fiction. The events in the tale are recorded in what is known as chronicle-style tale, or *rekishi monogatari*, and the *Eiga* is recognized as the first of its kind. Authors of this style did not sharply distinguish between fact and fiction, and errors and embellishments can be easily located when compared against more event-based and less literarily embellished accounts, such as Fujiwara no Sanesuke's (957-1046 C.E.) diary, *Shōyūki*. The narrator of the *Eiga* is a woman with intimate knowledge of the

²⁴⁶ Akazome'emon was so familiar with Murasaki Shikibu's writings that some passages from *Eiga monogatari* were copied directly from her diary. See Richard Bowring, introduction to *The Diary of Lady Murasaki*, by Murasaki Shikibu (New York: Penguin, 1996). Kindle edition, location 649-700, 748.

²⁴⁷ Murasaki Shikibu, *The Diary of Lady Murasaki*, trans. Richard Bowring (New York: Penguin, 1996). Kindle edition, location 539.

affairs of ranking courtiers and concerned with presenting Michinaga in the best possible light. This is in contrast to the *Shōyūki*, which gives a more dispassionate view of Michinaga's life and a more accurate timeline of events. While there is no evidence that the tale was written to hold up to any sort of modern day historical standards, it presents events that would have been of interest or concern to readers of the day.

In the *Eiga monogatari*, the twenty-ninth and thirtieth chapters “Jeweled Decorations” and “Crane Grove” focus on the deaths of Fujiwara no Kenshi (994-1027 C.E.) and Fujiwara no Michinaga (respectively). Kenshi was the second daughter of Michinaga and Rinshi, and was the mother to an empress. As described in the chapter “Jeweled Decorations,” Kenshi died after battling a long illness believed to be caused by a malign spirit. Therefore, there were many attempts to drive away the potential harassing spirit before her death, but they came to no avail. Kenshi took the Buddhist tonsure and died on the fourteenth day of the ninth month, 1027 C.E.

During the period of Kenshi's illness and death, Michinaga, who had taken the tonsure in 1019 C.E., was also seriously ill. Since at least 1019 C.E. Michinaga is known to have suffered from various maladies, including poor vision (perhaps blindness), irritability, chest pains, and an unnatural thirst. Many scholars have speculated that Michinaga suffered from diabetes, which would explain his array of symptoms.²⁴⁸ Michinaga's illness is touched upon in the chapter “Crane Grove,” and Michinaga is depicted deteriorating rapidly over the course of the last year of his life. However, as

²⁴⁸ G. Cameron Hurst, “Michinaga's Maladies. A Medical Report on Fujiwara no Michinaga,” *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (Spring, 1979), 101-112.

many scholars have argued, the *Eiga* puts forward an embellished picture of Michinaga's physical state and death and leaves out a number of details.²⁴⁹ For example, although the *Eiga*'s narrator makes mention of Michinaga's temper and his bedridden state, she also relays the crown prince's conclusion that he "was suffering only from extreme physical debility; his faculties were unimpaired."²⁵⁰ As G. Cameron Hurst III points out, in the *Shōyūki* Sanesuke records that Michinaga's mental state was not as stable as "Crane Grove" suggests, such as when Michinaga forgot a promise regarding a position at court.²⁵¹ Moreover, as will be discussed in detail below, while the narrator of the *Eiga* details Michinaga's pious deathbed actions and his calm state in death, as Hurst, Jacqueline Stone, and Mimi Hall Yengpruksawan argue, Michinaga suffered from blindness and such acute pain that he would have been unable to die while holding strings attached to an image of Amida.²⁵²

The importance of institutional Buddhism to the content of "Crane Grove" is impossible to ignore. The chapter revolves around Buddhist devotions, Buddhist preparations for death, Buddhist memorial services, and Buddhist rebirth. Scholars such as William E. Deal, Yamanaka Uta, and Tamura Yoshirō have argued that the structure of the *Eiga monogatari* was meant to mimic the thirty chapters of the *Threefold Lotus*

²⁴⁹ See Hurst; Jacqueline I. Stone, "With the Help of Good Friends: Deathbed Ritual Practices in Medieval Japan," in *Death and the Afterlife in Japanese Buddhism*, ed. Jacqueline I. Stone and Mariko Namba Walter (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 62; and Mimi Hall Yengpruksawan, "The Eyes of Michinaga in the Light of Pure Land Buddhism," in *The Presence of Light: Divine Radiance and Religious Experience*, ed. Matthew Kapstein, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 251-54.

²⁵⁰ Akazome'emon, *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, trans. Helen C. and William H. McCullough (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980), 760.

²⁵¹ Hurst, "Michinaga's Maladies. A Medical Report on Fujiwara no Michinaga," 111.

²⁵² See Hurst, "Michinaga's Maladies. A Medical Report on Fujiwara no Michinaga," 106; Stone, "With the Help of Good Friends: Deathbed Ritual Practices in Medieval Japan," 62; and Yengpruksawan, "The Eyes of Michinaga in the Light of Pure Land Buddhism," 251-54.

Sūtra, which consists of the twenty-eight chapters plus opening and closing.²⁵³ Deal concludes that the author of the *Eiga monogatari* utilized the *Lotus Sūtra* in order to legitimate Michinaga's life work, comparing Michinaga's creation of the world at court to the Buddha's creation of the Pure Land.²⁵⁴ Akazome'emon employs these Buddhist references to guarantee Michinaga's good rebirth. Kenshi's spirit needed ritual pacification because "it was questionable, given her death at the hands of malignant spirits, whether she could become a buddha."²⁵⁵ Michinaga's spirit needed ritual pacification because, even though (by Heian period standards) he was old when he died (at sixty-two years of age) of natural causes, the power he held in life made his spirit potentially dangerous.²⁵⁶ Like a repetition of a prayer, each re-reading becomes spirit pacification of the deceased as it promulgates the message of Michinaga's glory.

Time: Recapitulating the Past and Demonstrating Decline

Like "The Seer," "Crane Grove" uses the structure of time, a chronology of events, to recapitulate the past and demonstrate Fujiwara no Michinaga's decline. In "The Seer," Murasaki Shikibu uses monthly benchmarks over the course of a year to remind

²⁵³ See William E. Deal, "The Lotus Sutra and the Rhetoric of Legitimization in Eleventh Century Japanese Buddhism," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 20:4, 1993, 262; Yamanaka Yutaka, "Eiga monogatari to Fujiwara Michinaga," *Eiga monogatari no Shinkenkyū: Rekishi to Monogatari o Kangaeru* (Tokyo: Shibunkaku, 2012), 275; and Tamura Yoshirō "Introduction," *The Threefold Lotus Sūtra*, trans. Katō and Bunnō, (New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1975), xiii-xviii.

²⁵⁴ Deal, "The Lotus Sutra and the Rhetoric of Legitimization in Eleventh Century Japanese Buddhism," 270.

²⁵⁵ SNKBZS v. 33, 140. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 752.

²⁵⁶ For a discussion of how powerful courtiers could become vengeful spirits, see David Bailock's work on Sugawara no Michizane and Michinaga in *Eccentric Spaces, Hidden Histories: Narrative, Ritual, and Royal Authority* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 171-72.

the reader of Genji's past glory and his present decline. While mourning the death of Lady Murasaki in "The Seer" Genji does not participate in events for the New Year (first month), Kamo festival (fourth month), or Tanabata (seventh month), all events in which he had been a key participant in the past. Murasaki Shikibu depicts Genji in isolation from the world of court and growing eccentric. Instead of rising in the world and engaging in amorous affairs, Genji instead retreats from his duties, focusing on his last days.

In a similar way, the author of "Crane Grove" uses the timeline of the last days of Michinaga's life to summarize his former glory, his present decline, and his focus on leaving the world (in this case, through a death demonstrating extraordinary Buddhist devotion). The chapter "Crane Grove" begins on the twenty-eighth day of the tenth month of 1027 C.E., the day after Kenshi's forty-ninth day memorial service. In the opening line of the chapter, Michinaga "was grateful that his illness had not prevented him from carrying through the preceding day's services."²⁵⁷ The narrator depicts Michinaga "in great pain" and making plans for Kenshi's true, second, forty-ninth day service the following month.²⁵⁸ Therefore, despite Michinaga's poor health, he is adamant that he will properly mourn and memorialize his daughter, a clear example of mourning. This is the first of the narrator's recapitulations of Michinaga's life, carried out through the symbols of his accomplishments: visits from his high-ranking children and grandchildren.

²⁵⁷ SNKBZS v. 33, 149. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 757.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

The narrator's retelling of Michinaga's former glory and present decline continues when his sons visit him where he is staying in Rinshi's Buddha hall. Michinaga's accomplishments, alluded to by his ability to reside within the Hōjōji, a Buddhist temple Michinaga himself sponsored, are contrasted with his present physical state, which was of concern to no one when he was a younger man, but now brings his sons "great distress." (惑わせ)²⁵⁹ In an attempt to help their father and ease his pain, his sons arrange for rites, but Michinaga has them cancelled, reprimanding his sons, "I shall take it amiss if anyone offers prayers because he feels sorry for me."²⁶⁰ Here, the once powerful Michinaga is aware that those around him may no longer be holding him in awe. Similar scenes occur in "The Seer." The first is during the first month when Genji says to himself, "I have been confused for months, and I must be eccentric in some ways."²⁶¹ A second is when Genji attempts to defend living in isolation as "nothing at all that strange," although Yūgiri "felt extremely sorry for him." (尽きせず心苦しければ)²⁶² This theme continues in the following month of "Crane Grove," after Kenshi's memorial services, Michinaga's health deteriorates. He had stopped eating and, feeling that "the time had passed for making a fuss," declines visitors, even Rinshi and his daughter (Shōshi).²⁶³ Michinaga accepts a visit from Princess Teishi and Sonshi, but at the end of the visits, Princess Teishi "grieved for her grandfather in secret" and Sonshi "left weeping, overcome by dismal forebodings."²⁶⁴ Here, like in "The Seer," Michinaga is becoming increasingly

²⁵⁹ SNKBZS v. 33, 149. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 757.

²⁶⁰ SNKBZS v. 33, 150. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 757.

²⁶¹ SNKBZS v. 23, 525. *The Tale of Genji*, 769.

²⁶² SNKBZS v. 23, 526. *The Tale of Genji*, 774.

²⁶³ SNKBZS v. 33, 151. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 758.

²⁶⁴ SNKBZS v. 33, 153-4. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 758-9.

isolated from the world at court and his rare visitors notice the marked change in his actions and appearance. Genji's son has a similar reaction after his visit with his father. Yūgiri decides to stay "on to keep his father company for the night... out of pity for all the nights that his father spent alone."²⁶⁵ In this way, just as Murasaki Shikibu positioned Genji as a man of former glory and present distress while recapitulating his life and heart-mourning his love in "The Seer," Akazome'emon similarly contrasts Michinaga's existence, highlights his life accomplishments, and depicts him in heart-mourning for Kenshi.

Similarly, both Murasaki Shikibu and Akazome'emon narrate their mourners attempts to release their worldly attachments and prepare for the life to come. In the eleventh month of "Crane Grove," feeling his life is drawing to an end, Michinaga gives his collection of poems to his daughter, Shōshi. Poetry anthologies of famous poems throughout history copied by hand were prized possessions, symbols of learning and wealth. By passing these along to Shōshi, Michinaga accepts that he will no longer be in the world. The poems the two exchange regarding this gift underscores the impermanence of life and power at court:

Michinaga writes:

風吹くと昔の人のこととのはを君がためにぞ書き集めける

Fearing the blast

Of the wind of impermanence,

I have gathered together

²⁶⁵ SNKBZS v. 23, 527-8. *The Tale of Genji*, 775.

The leaflike words of former poets
And set them down for you.²⁶⁶

Shōshi responds:

慰めも乱れもしつつ紛ふかなことのはにのみかかる身なれば
This gift of consolation
Brings turmoil to my heart,
And all is confusion,
For I am one who has no support
Other than your leaflike words.²⁶⁷

In Michinaga's poem, the "wind" is the cool wind that invites the dying to a Buddhist Paradise when his/her life has come to an end.²⁶⁸ Michinaga feels that his life is coming to an end and feels this cool air. Therefore, he has gathered for his daughter the "leaves" (or words, *koto no ha*) of poets of the past. In her reply, Shōshi notes that the book of poetry, written in Michinaga's own handwriting, gives her heart both consolation and turmoil since it is a generous gift but means he knows he is dying.²⁶⁹ Her confusion is based on the fact that Michinaga and the poetry anthology are mixed, becoming one.²⁷⁰ Michinaga's "leaves," the traces of himself (*koto no ha*), will be her only source of protection after his death.²⁷¹ In these two poems, the use of the words "leaves" and

²⁶⁶ SNKBZS v. 33, 154. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 759.

²⁶⁷ SNKBZS v. 33, 154-5. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 759.

²⁶⁸ SNKBZS v. 33, 154, note 8.

²⁶⁹ SNKBZS v. 33, 154, note 9.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

“wind” heighten the feeling of impermanence in the poems, acknowledging that Michinaga is approaching death.²⁷² Michinaga confirms Shōshi’s conclusion in his reply poem:

ことのはもたえぬべきかな世の中に頼む方なきもみぢ葉の身は

Leaflike words too

Must come to an end-

In the world of men

No hope remains for one

Sere as autumn leaves.²⁷³

In Michinaga’s poem, he conveys that Shōshi’s life under his patronage, like life itself, cannot be expected to last forever.²⁷⁴ He compares his life to the autumn leaves that die and fall.²⁷⁵ In this scene, Michinaga, knowing his life will come to an end, releases one of his remaining attachments to the world: his poetry anthology. However, like Genji, Michinaga cannot completely renounce the world, as he leaves his written legacy with his true legacy, Shōshi (a symbol of his life accomplishments).

This episode is similar to the scene in “The Seer” when Genji has Lady Murasaki’s letters burned. In “The Seer” Genji comes across a packet of letters Lady Murasaki sent him while he was in exile. In these letters, “the words (*koto no ha*) describing the depth of her despair over their separation” brought Genji sorrow at their

²⁷² SNKBZS v. 33, 154, note 9.

²⁷³ SNKBZS v. 33, 155. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 759.

²⁷⁴ SNKBZS v. 33, 155, note 10.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

present separation, and he had them burned.²⁷⁶ Similar to Lady Murasaki's words, *koto no ha*, of sorrow at their separation, Shōshi and Michinaga will be separated. In both scenes, the words are not just symbols; they are physical traces of attachments. By retelling the story of Michinaga giving his poetry anthology to his daughter, Akazome'emon makes yet another comparison between Lady Murasaki and Shōshi, Genji and Michinaga. Like Genji releasing his attachment to the written signs of Lady Murasaki, Michinaga releases himself of his words. Both men are rejecting language, refusing to be bound by it, paving the way for them to face their eventual demise free of attachments to the world, a requirement for a good rebirth.²⁷⁷

It is important to note that Akazome'emon chose to *narrate* the transfer of Michinaga's poetry anthology to Shōshi. Akazome'emon could not allow Michinaga to die without including a scene of him separating himself from the world of letters. Michinaga was a connoisseur and patron of literature. It is widely believed that he played some role in the requests to Murasaki Shikibu to write *The Tale of Genji*, and that he also requested Akazome'emon to compile her version of his history, *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*. And it was this world of letters that Murasaki Shikibu and Akazome'emon shared that made it impossible for Akazome'emon to show Michinaga's death without ritually detaching him from the world he helped create.

²⁷⁶ SNKBZS v. 23, 533. *The Tale of Genji*, 777.

²⁷⁷ Dying while still emotionally attached to a child was considered especially harmful for a good rebirth. This attachment could cause a parent to become a vengeful spirit, roaming the earth longing for a child. See Jacqueline I. Stone, "With the Help of 'Good friends': Deathbed Ritual Practices in Early Medieval Japan," in *Death and the Afterlife in Japanese Buddhism*, ed. Jacqueline Ilyse Stone and Mariko Namba Walter (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 187; and Hank Glassman, "At the Crossroads of Birth and Death: The Blood Pool Hell and Postmortem Fetal Extraction," in *Death and the Afterlife in Japanese Buddhism*, ed. Jacqueline Ilyse Stone and Mariko Namba Walter (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 75, 87.

After this episode, like Genji's advancement to the final scene of his life, Michinaga's health deteriorates rapidly, as does his interest in the world. Michinaga moves to his Amida (or Amitābha, the Buddha of Immeasurable Light) temple to await his death. On the twenty-fifth and twenty-eighth he receives visits from his grandsons, the emperor and the crown prince, both symbols of his great accomplishments in life. Although he remarks, "nobody has been as fortunate or successful as I" to receive visits from the emperor and the crown prince, he has to receive them from his sickbed.²⁷⁸ After the emperor's visit on the twenty fifth of the eleventh month, his heart swelled "with pity and sorrow as he gazed at his grandfather's emaciated, barely recognizable figure."²⁷⁹ On the twenty eighth, the crown prince realizes "with deep sorrow that his grandfather would not live to see his reign."²⁸⁰ After these visits, having reached a level of achievement never before recorded in history (being visited by an emperor), Michinaga had "no more room in his mind for worldly splendor."²⁸¹ Like Genji after his eleventh month burning of Lady Murasaki's letters, Michinaga, with his "life" retold through visits from all his high-ranking children and grandchildren, prepares to exit the tale.

By the second day of the twelfth month Michinaga was "in so piteous a state that [his daughters] could scarcely keep from shrieking."²⁸² Hurst summarizes Michinaga's reported health on that day:

He suffered several diarrhea attacks, lost the ability to eat or drink, and fell into a state of delirium like a drunkard. When his daughters Shōshi and Ishi came to

²⁷⁸ SNKBZS v. 33, 156-7. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 760.

²⁷⁹ SNKBZS v. 33, 156. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 760.

²⁸⁰ SNKBZS v. 33, 159. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 761.

²⁸¹ SNKBZS v. 33, 162. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 763.

²⁸² SNKBZS v. 33, 164-5. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 764.

visit him that day, they were unable to see him directly because of the taboo against uncleanness, but perhaps they were simply unable to face up to viewing him in such a state.²⁸³

While no character in *The Tale of Genji* sees Genji when he is on his deathbed, as described above, Genji's son is taken aback by his father's isolation and mental decline.

Michinaga dies on the fourth, surrounded by monks assisting him in his efforts to have a "right minded" death.²⁸⁴ His body grows cold by midnight, and his funeral is held on the seventh day.

The description of Michinaga's former glory does not end with his physical deterioration and death, but extends throughout the subsequent mourning and memorial period. Michinaga's funeral procession on the seventh day of the twelfth month "must have stretched for nearly twenty blocks": the sign of a powerful man.²⁸⁵ The New Year festivities of the first month of the year 1028 C.E. "brought no new carriages, no brilliant processions through the streets, and no festive costumes, not even for page-boys" because the court was in mourning for Michinaga.²⁸⁶ Michinaga's elevated status in life is celebrated through elevated mourning ritual, since "at the direction of the Court, nine out

²⁸³ Note that this episode occurs on the twenty first of the eleventh month, whereas the *Eiga* records it on the second of the twelfth month. Hurst translates that "on the second of the twelfth month, Michinaga requested the physician Tamba no Tadaaki to open the boil, and blood-mixed pus came out. The pain was so severe that the sick man groaned in agony." Hurst, "Michinaga's Maladies. A Medical Report on Fujiwara no Michinaga," 107. See also Murai Yasuhiko, *Heian Kizoku no Sekai* (Tokyo: Tokuma Shoten, 1968), 248.

²⁸⁴ As Stone states, in the Heian period "to die while unconscious, delirious, or wracked by pain thus came to be greatly feared, and the importance of ritual control over one's last moments was increasingly emphasized." Stone, "With the Help of Good Friends," 62.

²⁸⁵ SNKBZS v. 33, 167. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 765.

²⁸⁶ SNKBZS v. 33, 167. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 772.

of ten people were wearing gray, just as if an Imperial parent were being mourned.”²⁸⁷ By narrating these extraordinary mourning and death rituals, Akazome’emon honors a man who was powerful in life, and serves to pacify a potentially dangerous spirit.

This mourning scene for Michinaga is similar to the description of the mourning rituals conducted for Fujitsubo, which, as noted in chapter two, was crafted to reflect her high rank. Murasaki Shikibu describes Fujitsubo’s death in ways unique to a cloistered wife of an emperor. There is no description of Fujitsubo’s body after her death and no confusion surrounding her death. An angry spirit does not cause her death and she is not alone at the time she passes away. There is a simple mention of a funeral, but no detailed description of *hafuri*, or the burial or cremation of the corpse. Because of Fujitsubo’s rank in society, all at court were expected to wear mourning clothes for a year after her death. Therefore, despite being marked by the sin of her affair with Genji, Fujitsubo has a “good” death.²⁸⁸ By narrating Michinaga’s death and mourning rituals as similar to Fujitsubo’s, Akazome’emon stresses that Michinaga was similarly regarded as a kind and rightful ruler.

“Crane Grove” and Mourning Ritual: Kenshi and Fujiwara no Michinaga

The first line of “Crane Grove” depicts Michinaga’s desire to properly memorialize his daughter, Kenshi. Like *The Tale of Genji*, the chapter directly preceding

²⁸⁷ SNKBZS v. 33, 179. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 772.

²⁸⁸ Aileen Gatten, “Death and Salvation in *Genji Monogatari*,” *New Leaves: Studies and Translations of Japanese Literature in Honor of Edward Seidensticker*, eds. Aileen Gatten and Anthony Hood Chambers (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center For Japanese Studies, 1993), 7-9.

the final chapter of the hero's life depicts the death of a great love. Although Kenshi is not Michinaga's lover, she is his beloved daughter. For Akazome'emon, to commemorate Michinaga by recounting his amorous relationships would be unseemly. Instead, she focuses on his deep love for his daughter, a much better match to demonstrate Michinaga's wholesomeness, kindness, benevolence – in short, his “fathering” of the present world at court.

As described in “Jeweled Decorations,” after Kenshi's death there are *mogari*, *hafuri*, and *mo*. This is similar to the way in which Lady Murasaki's character is mourned and memorialized in *The Tale of Genji* chapters “The Law” and “The Seer.” Like Lady Murasaki, Kenshi dies in autumn (on the fourteenth day of the ninth month in the year 1027 C.E.). After Kenshi dies, Michinaga calls for her to “Wake up!”²⁸⁹ This attempt to call back her spirit takes place during her *mogari* period. However, knowing she is dead, like Genji for Lady Murasaki, Michinaga begins to make funeral arrangements and she is cremated the day following her death. This method of disposing of her corpse is her *hafuri*. In almost every way Kenshi's death rituals mirror those of Lady Murasaki, which strengthens the parallel between the two characters and the depiction of Michinaga as an elegant and powerful mourner, like Genji.²⁹⁰

After Kenshi's funeral, the mourning period, *mo*, begins. Kenshi's ladies in waiting wear mourning robes and compose poems about their “wisteria robes.” These robes are later described as “dark black” to reflect the depth of sorrow. Floorboards are

²⁸⁹ SNKBZS v. 33, 134. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 748.

²⁹⁰ The only difference between Kenshi and Lady Murasaki's post death descriptions is the inclusion of a *mogari* period. There was no period of *mogari* after Lady Murasaki's death. Kenshi's *mogari* period was one day.

taken up to create an earthen-floored mourning hut and mourners remain ritually secluded for forty-nine days, matching the Buddhist memorial period. Household furnishings are changed to signal mourning and black blinds and curtains are hung to reflect the sorrow of the occupants. Since Kenshi had a questionable death, there is a special thirty-fifth day service held to better her rebirth. The forty-ninth day service was to be conducted on the twenty eighth day of the tenth month, but as we learn in the following chapter, “Crane Grove,” the true forty-ninth day service was not until the fifth day of the eleventh month. All of the mourning and memorialization rituals (with the exception of the thirty-fifth day services) are similar to those described in *The Tale of Genji* after the death of Lady Murasaki. By paralleling the deaths and mourning rituals for Lady Murasaki and Kenshi, Akazome’emon equates Michinaga’s mourning with that of Genji’s.

The chapter titled “Crane Grove” opens with a Michinaga in physical decline, heart-mourning his daughter, happy that he was able to participate in the first of the forty-ninth day services for Kenshi.²⁹¹ Unlike Genji in the chapter “The Seer,” Michinaga is not depicted in endless visible mourning for the deceased. After the death of a child, a father was expected to mourn for one month, which, as explained in chapter one, was sometimes shortened to ten days. However, Michinaga does not observe any formal mourning period after Kenshi’s death. He does not stay in ritual seclusion (although his wife does) and is not depicted in mourning robes. The reason for the lack of mourning ritual has nothing to do with his emotions, since the reader would have understood that because Michinaga has taken the Buddhist tonsure he was not bound by this social

²⁹¹ Heart-mourning is a modern day descriptor of acts of mourning done outside of prescribed mourning ritual. Therefore, the term “heart-mourning” does not appear in *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*.

protocol. Instead, he heart-mourns, as the narrator informs the reader that he “had been further enfeebled since Kenshi’s death,” and “in spite of his illness, Michinaga probably would not have died when he did if it had not been for Kenshi’s loss.”²⁹² Additionally, in Buddhist terms, to die while still attached to the memory of a child was a hindrance to a good rebirth. Therefore, it was essential for Akazome’emon to portray Michinaga as a man mourning his daughter, but not so much that he could become a vengeful spirit forever wandering the earth in longing for his child. As a man who has renounced the world, Michinaga is not expected to conform to the mourning codes or demonstrate attachment through mourning, but that does not mean that Michinaga was not deeply affected by Kenshi’s death.

Similar to “The Seer,” which functions as pre-mourning and pre-pacification of the mourner Genji, “Crane Grove” is focused on the death, mourning, and memorial rituals for the mourner Michinaga. After Michinaga’s death on the fourth day of the twelfth month of 1028 C.E. there is *mogari*, *hafuri*, and *mo*. Michinaga was sick for a long time and, according to the *Shōyūki*, it was believed that he died on the third day of the twelfth month:

but movement was observed in the body that evening, and it was not until about four o’clock the next morning that he was pronounced dead. Subsequently, slight warmth was discovered under the arms, and it was midnight before Sanesuke received final confirmation of the death.²⁹³

Although there was no “calling back,” the waiting period was when the spirit was thought

²⁹² SNKBZS v. 33, 150, 180. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 757-58, 773.

²⁹³ *Shōyūki* 3: 152-53.

to have been coming and going from his body, the period of his *mogari*.²⁹⁴ It was not until after midnight on the fifth day, when his body began to show signs of death, that he was placed in a coffin. On the seventh day Michinaga's corpse was taken to Toribeno for cremation, *hafuri*. During his funeral services Ingen (954–1028 C.E.), a Tendai priest, delivered a prayer for Michinaga. This prayer explained “how Michinaga ought to speak to whatever buddhas and bodhisattvas he might encounter in the six paths.”²⁹⁵ As William H. and Helen C. McCullough note, this is “a prayer for Michinaga's salvation, in which instructions to the deceased are included.”²⁹⁶ After his cremation, the remains were gathered and given to Michinaga's sons and to some monks. As mentioned above, there were elaborate mourning rituals, *mo*, after Michinaga's death, which adopted the forty-nine day length of Buddhist memorial services. His sons spend the ritual mourning seclusion at Hōjōji, dedicating copies of sutras to assist their father's rebirth. His daughter, Shōshi, has a painting and sutras dedicated on the twenty-eighth of the twelfth month. By order of the court nine out of ten people were observing the mourning period for Michinaga and wearing gray mourning robes. There are no New Year celebrations because the household (and the state) is in mourning. Michinaga's family makes elaborate plans for his forty-ninth day memorial service, and that day the world witnessed “plentitude [that] is rarely seen.”²⁹⁷ It was on this day that his family ceased mourning seclusion and reentered the world. Like “The Seer,” the chapter the “Crane Grove” is a detailed description of longing and mourning, structured by time, with the express

²⁹⁴ “Sanesuke records that in the evening of the twenty-sixth, the astrologer Kamo no Morimichi performed the spirit-beckoning ceremony and tried to recall Michinaga's spirit, which had already begun to float about.” See Hurst, 107.

²⁹⁵ SNKBZS v. 33, 168-69. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 766.

²⁹⁶ *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 766, note 29.

²⁹⁷ SNKBZS v. 33, 181. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 773.

purpose of not only mourning a loved one, but mourning the mourner himself. Also, both chapters function as spirit pacification of the hero of the tale, and that is where I next turn my attention.

“Crane Grove” as Spirit Pacification: Fujiwara no Michinaga

In “The Seer,” Murasaki Shikibu creates a new character, a “Lady Murasaki of Memory” who can pacify the spirit of the soon-to-be-deceased man who mourns her loss, Genji. In “Crane Grove,” Akazome’emon narrates Michinaga’s mourning and departure from the world similarly to that of *The Tale of Genji*’s fictional character Genji. In addition, Akazome’emon uses the *Eiga*’s narrator, as well as Michinaga’s children and close friends, to pacify his spirit by describing his devotions, dreaming of his good rebirth, and describing his life in terms of the historical Buddha.

It has long been speculated that Genji’s character was, in part, based on Fujiwara no Michinaga. In *Eiga monogatari*, Akazome’emon reverses this trope and models Michinaga on Genji in order to express Michinaga’s glorious rule, elegant mourning, and certain enlightenment. As demonstrated above, Akazome’emon replaces Lady Murasaki with Kenshi. This replacement allows Akazome’emon to narrate Michinaga’s capacity for deep love and emotion, yet directs the strength of his feelings not to a lover, but to a “more pure” vessel, his daughter. In telling the final chapter of Michinaga’s life, Akazome’emon could have omitted his feelings of grief over Kenshi’s death. The elaboration of how Michinaga mourns Kenshi demonstrates that Akazome’emon is

utilizing Murasaki Shikibu's mourning poetics. While both Genji and Michinaga are depicted in heart-mourning and preparing to leave the world for the remainder of their lives, Michinaga's practices are focused on Kenshi's memorialization. This focus allows Akazome'emon to portray Michinaga as a devout Buddhist, keeping to his own Buddhist vows, concerned about his daughter's rebirth. Both Genji and Michinaga spend the final chapter of their lives exploring their religious affiliations, detaching from the world, and isolating from others until their eventual exit from the world stage. Both Murasaki Shikibu and Akazome'emon use this final exit as an opportunity to pacify the spirit and stress the good rebirth and eventual enlightenment of their "heroes."

Michinaga's devotion to Buddhism is an historical fact, as he sponsored the construction of many temples and the creation of countless Buddhist texts and artworks. Scholars such as George Sansom and Joseph Yamagiwa have questioned his piety, arguing that his belief was motivated more by hopes for worldly gain (such as improvement from ill health or protection from evil spirits) than by a true faith in the Buddhas.²⁹⁸ However, Ivan Morris, Hurst, and Yiengpruksawan counter that his possible (if not probable) motivations do not discount his religious acts and cannot be used to deem him a bad Buddhist.²⁹⁹ Akazome'emon uses "Crane Grove" to detail a number of Michinaga's extraordinary efforts of Buddhist devotion, especially at the time surrounding his death. Akazome'emon paints Michinaga's deathbed scenes through the lens of religious devotion, noting that Michinaga gazed "day and night at the Buddha in

²⁹⁸ See George B. Samson, *A History of Japan to 1334*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958), 164-65; Joseph Yamagiwa, ed. *The Ōkagami* (London: George Allan & Unwin, 1967), 419.

²⁹⁹ See Ivan Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), 102; Hurst, "Michinaga's Maladies. A Medical Report on Fujiwara no Michinaga," 109-111; and Yiengpruksawan, "The Eyes of Michinaga in the Light of Pure Land Buddhism," 251-54.

the hall where he was staying, without ever getting a decent night's sleep."³⁰⁰ After Kenshi's death he moved to his Amida hall in preparation for his own death. There, after saying goodbye to his family, and with death approaching, "Michinaga fixed his gaze on the nine Amitābha images."³⁰¹ At this time, the narrator informs us that "even the wisest men are said to feel the three attachments at the time of death, but there was no more room in his mind for worldly splendor – a clear indication of his future state."³⁰² The inclusion of this testament allows Akazome'emon to narrate Michinaga's Buddhist devotions throughout his life.

Michinaga continued his Buddhist practice until his last breath. While on his deathbed, Akazome'emon portrays Michinaga as devoid of any attachment to this life. She describes his deathbed scene as:

[Michinaga] lay facing west with his pillow to the north, his eyes on the signs and attributes of the Tathāgata Amitābha, his ears filled with holy invocations of the Buddha's name, his heart fixed on the Land of Ultimate Bliss, and his hands grasping the braids held by the Amitābha statues.³⁰³

Michinaga lays with his head to the north, just as the historical Buddha did before he entered nirvana. Michinaga faces west in order to be greeted by Amida Buddha and be welcomed into his western Pure Land. He grasps braided cords, which were attached to the statues of Amida, a deathbed ritual to connect the dying to Amida Buddha.³⁰⁴ As he

³⁰⁰ SNKBZS v. 33, 151. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 758.

³⁰¹ SNKBZS v. 33, 162. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 762.

³⁰² The three attachments are to one's family and possessions, one's corporeal life, and one's future life. See SNKBZS v. 33, 162, note 2, *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 762-63, and note 16.

³⁰³ SNKBZS v. 33, 162-3. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 763.

³⁰⁴ For more on this deathbed technique, see Jacqueline I. Stone, "By the Power of One's Last Nembutsu: Deathbed Practices in Early Medieval Japan," in *Approaching the Land of Bliss: Religious Praxis in the*

dies, he has Amida's name on his lips and "had it not been for his unflagging repetitions of the sacred name, it would have been impossible to tell that he was still alive...his mouth still moved in what appeared to be Buddha-invocations."³⁰⁵ Scholars have seriously questioned whether or not Michinaga would have realistically been able to accomplish these feats on his deathbed.³⁰⁶ However, what is important about their inclusion in "Crane Grove" is not their factualness, but Akazome'emon's decision to include these details in her narrative. Akazome'emon's narration of Michinaga's devotions is in the service of a greater pursuit: to assure the reader (and Michinaga's spirit) that he would have a good rebirth leading to eventual enlightenment.

Akazome'emon did not stop at modeling deathbed devotions to shape Michinaga's character as one who would receive a good rebirth; she also uses the narrator to remark upon his character in Buddhist terms. Near the second of the twelfth month the narrator remarks "Michinaga must have had good roots."³⁰⁷ This is in response to a quote from a Buddhist text stating that a person with good roots experiences a good rebirth and

Cult of Amitābha, ed. Richard K. Payne and Kenneth K. Tanaka (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004), 77-119. See also Stone, "Just Open Your Mouth and Say 'A': A-Syllable Practice for the Time of Death in Early Medieval Japan." *Pacific World Journal* 8 (2006): 167-189; "The Secret Art of Dying, Esoteric Deathbed Practices in Heian Japan," in *The Buddhist Dead: Practices, Discourses, Representations*, ed. Bryan J. Cuevas and Jacqueline I. Stone (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), 134-174; and "The Dying Breath: Deathbed Rites and Death Pollution in Early Medieval Japan," in *Heroes and Saints, The Moment of Death in Cross-Cultural Perspectives*, ed. Phyllis Granoff and Koichi Shinohara (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 173-264.

³⁰⁵ SNKBZS v. 33, 165. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 764.

³⁰⁶ Yiengpruksawan concludes, Michinaga's eyesight was so poor by the time of his death he would not have been able to fix his gaze on Amida's figure. Similarly, Stone and Hurst argue Michinaga suffered from blindness and such acute pain that he would have been unable to die while holding strings attached to an image of Amida. See Yiengpruksawan, "The Eyes of Michinaga in the Light of Pure Land Buddhism," 251-54; Stone, "With the Help of Good Friends," 62; and Hurst, "Michinaga's Maladies. A Medical Report on Fujiwara no Michinaga," 101-112.

³⁰⁷ SNKBZS v. 33, 166. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 764.

a death without pain.³⁰⁸ As discussed earlier, although in actuality Michinaga's death was most likely far from pain-free, the author of "Crane Grove" portrayed it as a calm and devout passing in an attempt at pacifying Michinaga's spirit.

To ensure that readers (and Michinaga's spirit) understood that Michinaga has a good rebirth, Akazome'emon leaves nothing to chance and includes not one, not two, but three events to verify his rebirth in Amida's Pure Land. The first, and most pointed, of the accounts of Michinaga's rebirth occurs on the tenth night of the twelfth month when Ishi has a dream that a monk delivers a letter from her father. The note says Michinaga had been reborn at the lowest level of the lowest class of paradise. In the second event, confirming Ishi's dream, the monk Narinobu reports that while he was assisting Michinaga with his deathbed nembutsu recitation, he fell asleep and had a dream. In that dream, Michinaga informed Narinobu that I "shall be content with the lowest class."³⁰⁹ Finally, while attending the dying Michinaga, the monk Yūseki had a vision that a monk emerged from the left side of the Amida statue and placed a censer by Michinaga's pillow.³¹⁰ All three of these scenes were included in "Crane Grove" to assure the audience of Michinaga's good rebirth.

Ishi's dream sequence is similar to the scene in *Genji monogatari*'s "The Seer" when Genji laments being unable to use a seer to contact the dead. In "The Seer," Genji

³⁰⁸ As Hurst states, "In *Eiga monogatari* Michinaga meets a fitting hero's end: lying in the Amida Hall of his Hōjōji temple-palace and facing westwards, holding a thread from the hands of the Buddha and chanting the nembutsu, he entered into Amida's Western Paradise. While indeed an appropriate picture of the end of a great man, this description does not capture the realities of the situation as recorded in *Shōyūki*. Sanesuke presents a very different and more human picture—that of a man desperately ill and nearing death, fighting a losing battle, and racked by persistent diarrhea, loss of control over his bowels, and painful boils." Hurst, "Michinaga's Maladies. A Medical Report on Fujiwara no Michinaga," 106.

³⁰⁹ SNKBZS v. 33, 175. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 771.

³¹⁰ Ibid.

does not believe in the efficacy of a seer and laments his inability to reach Lady Murasaki, even when he dreams. However, in “Crane Grove,” we see a different epistemological outlook. Whereas Genji’s realms of Buddhist rebirth represent a final divide where reunion is only possible by dual rebirth in the same Buddhist paradise, in “Crane Grove” especially talented Buddhist monks can transverse this divide and ascertain the rebirth of the dead. The supernatural powers of some Buddhist monks are popular themes of many popular Buddhist tales. These monks, some of whom are actually bodhisattvas, are able to transverse the six realms of rebirth, locate the deceased in the next life, and deliver spiritual assistance in order to better (or speed up) the next rebirth. Like Murasaki Shikibu’s move away from a Daoist belief in a seer, Akazome’emon moves away from the idea of an impassible divide in “The Seer” towards a more popular Buddhist scheme of the afterlife. Rather than seeing this as a rejection of Murasaki Shikibu’s mourning poetics and move to a Buddhist episteme, Akazome’emon updates the concept of the divide in order to meet the demands of her patron, artistic vision, and audience.³¹¹ Both Murasaki Shikibu and Akazome’emon operate within the Buddhist episteme.³¹² However, in writing a work of fiction, Murasaki Shikibu is free to deny Genji even the slightest ability to communicate with the dead, constructing a strict impassible divide. On the other hand, Akazome’emon was bound to her Fujiwara patrons to portray Michinaga, and his spirit, in an exemplary light with a less stringent divide. By granting monks the ability to confirm Michinaga’s rebirth, Akazome’emon transforms

³¹¹ For a discussion of the idea of “replacement” texts see Michael Emmerich, *The Tale of Genji: Translation, Canonization, and World Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).

³¹² For a discussion of the Buddhist episteme in Heian period literature, see William R. LaFleur, *The Karma of Words: Buddhism and the Literary Arts in Medieval Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, reprint edition 1986), 13-19.

Murasaki Shikibu's mourning poetics in the service of pacifying Michinaga's spirit.

In addition to stressing Michinaga's devotion and rebirth, Akazome'emon pacifies Michinaga's spirit by comparing him to the historical Buddha.³¹³ As described in chapter four, this device is also found in *The Tale of Genji*'s "The Seer." While Genji's "light" is compared to the Buddha's "light" in his final appearance, Michinaga is compared to the Buddha, and his light, in many episodes within "Crane Grove." The first of these episodes occurs when Michinaga lies dying and the nuns remark that the most recent Buddha to appear in the world

was the Tathāgata Śākyamuni, who attained the way of Buddhahood at the age of thirty-five and entered nirvana at eighty. Once our Buddha-sun has set behind the mountains of nirvana, we shall be lost in the darkness of birth and death.³¹⁴

In this statement, Michinaga is the nuns' "Buddha-sun," the man who has brought the true teachings of the Buddhist dharma to the world and radiates light. After his death, the nuns exclaim, "The Buddha who had appeared in the world as a savior for mankind has concealed himself in the mountains of nirvana...How lost we nuns shall feel without him!"³¹⁵ They lament that when Michinaga dies, and attains nirvana, or extinction, this light, and the teachings of the dharma, will be lost to them. This is similar to "The Seer's" passage in Genji's final month:

On that day Genji at last appeared in company. The light of his face far surpassed even his radiance of long ago; he was such a marvel to behold that for no reason

³¹³ For a detailed description of the comparison between Michinaga and the Buddha, see Deal, 280-88.

³¹⁴ SNKBZS v. 33, 163-4. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 763-64.

³¹⁵ SNKBZS v. 33, 166. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 764.

the old monk wept on and on.³¹⁶

In “The Seer,” the old monk weeps at the sight of Genji’s light. Although the narrator states that the monk did not know the reason for weeping, his emotional reaction comes after he expresses a desire that Genji live for another “thousand springs.” When Genji leaves this world, his light, like Michinaga’s light, will no longer be accessible to the monk.

Again, transforming Murasaki Shikibu’s mourning poetics, Akazome’emon pushes the parallel between her hero and the historical Buddha further. After Michinaga’s death, the scene of his carriage carrying his coffin is compared to “Śākyamuni’s departure through the east gate at Kusinagara when he entered absolute extinction.”³¹⁷ His mourners are said to have numbered “no fewer than the 92,000 who had gathered for that occasion.”³¹⁸ This comparison is to:

a late-twelfth-century collection of short tales, *Hōbutsushū* (p. 217), [which] lists ‘sixteen arhats, 500 principal disciples, the kings of sixteen great states, and 92,000 sentient beings’ as mourning for Śākyamuni.³¹⁹

Michinaga’s mourners were described as the mourners of the historical Buddha to demonstrate the depth of sorrow mankind had at Michinaga’s passing and Michinaga’s unique greatness in the world. “Crane Grove” concludes with a final parallel between Michinaga and the historical Buddha. After Michinaga’s memorial services, the narrator

³¹⁶ SNKZS v. 23, 535. *The Tale of Genji*, 778.

³¹⁷ SNKBZS v. 33, 163-4. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 765.

³¹⁸ SNKBZS v. 33, 167-8. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 765.

³¹⁹ SNKBZS v. 33, 167-8, note 23. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 765, note 27.

remarks that:

All the world was dark after Śākyamuni entered nirvana. And now that the lamp of this world had been extinguished, many indeed were those who groped in the long night's blackness!³²⁰

The parallel between Michinaga and the Buddha can also be found in The Palace

Chaplain's poem, composed after Michinaga's cremation, from which the chapter takes its name:

煙絶え行き降りしける鳥辺野は鶴の林の心地こそすれ

The smoke ended,

Toribeno in its snowy mantle

Seems to a grieving heart

Like the whitened trees

Of Crane Grove³²¹

This poem alludes to the youth of the snowy mountain, which “was a name used of Śākyamuni when he was a bodhisattva in a previous existence” and “‘Crane Grove’ was the site of Śākyamuni’s entrance into nirvana.”³²² McCullough suggests “the comparison of Toribeno and Crane Grove is semantically apt, since ‘tori’ may be interpreted to mean bird.”³²³ Breaking down the place name “Toribeno” into *tori*, or bird, and *no*, or field-region, one gets a place name with a meaning close to “Crane Grove.” In these passages, Akazome’emon builds upon the comparison of Genji and the historical Buddha in “The

³²⁰ SNKBZS v. 33, 183. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 775.

³²¹ SNKBZS v. 33, 172. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 768.

³²² SNKBZS v. 33, 172, note 1. *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 768, note 42.

³²³ *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 768, note 46.

Seer.” By taking the seed of comparison planted in “The Seer” and elaborating on the theme, Akazome’emon not only communicates to the reader the parallel between Michinaga and the Buddha, but also between Michinaga and Genji.

Conclusion

The “*Crane Grove*,” like “The Seer,” uses the trope of a mourner, over the course of his remaining days, recapitulating the tale to date (through the visits of his children and grandchildren) and pacifying the spirits of the dead. The structures of mourning and ritual pacification for Kenshi and Fujiwara no Michinaga parallel Genji’s mourning of Lady Murasaki in the chapter “The Seer.” While Michinaga is not seen in extended mourning of Kenshi because he has already taken the tonsure, the narrator gives clues that he was practicing heart-mourning and his grief over Kenshi’s death directly contributed to his own demise. Michinaga is in heart-mourning until his death, nearly three months after the death of Kenshi. Although he is supposed to have no attachments to this world because he has taken the tonsure, we learn that he is attached to the memory of Kenshi, and to his grandsons, the emperor and the crown prince. After Kenshi’s final forty-nine day memorial service and visits by his grandsons, Michinaga releases his worldly attachments (including his anthology of poems), and the recounting of his own devotions pacifies his spirit.

Like the structure of “The Seer,” “Crane Grove” is a chronology of Michinaga’s last days, a recapitulation of his worldly glory, and a depiction of his eventual decline.

Images of Michinaga's declining physical state are contrasted against the fortunes he accumulated in life, especially his high-ranking children. The mourning and funeral rituals ordered for Michinaga signaled that, although his life at court was over, the rank afforded to him followed him to his very end. However, even though these extraordinary rituals were assigned to him, it was only his spirit who could benefit from them. Like "The Seer," "Crane Grove" functions as a eulogy and spirit pacification ritual. Unlike "The Seer," where the reader is left unsure of Genji's ultimate fate, "Crane Grove" explicitly details Michinaga's death and rebirth. This crucial difference can be attributed to the fundamental difference between Michinaga and Genji: historical figure and fictional character. Whereas Murasaki Shikibu was only tasked with pacifying the spirit of a fictional character, Akazome'emon instead was concerned with pacifying the spirit of a real-life, powerful, larger-than-life man. In areas where Murasaki Shikibu could take poetic license and make elegant allusions, Akazome'emon instead needed to make her chapter of spirit pacification more straight-forward in order to be effective.

Chapter Six

“From so many memories this evening of one now gone:”

Practice, Time, and Spirit Pacification in the *Kanjō no maki*

In this chapter, I will demonstrate that the *Kanjō no maki* (*Initiates' Chapter*, author unknown, circa. 1371 C.E.), both a stand-alone text and the final chapter in the *Tale of the Heike*, transforms the structure of “The Seer” in *The Tale of Genji* (c. 1000 C.E.) in order to mourn and pacify the spirits of characters, both deceased and about-to-be-deceased. Considered by some as sacred because of its functions as a Buddhist sermon and ritual pacification of the Genpei War (1180-1185 C.E.) dead, the *Kanjō no maki*, like “The Seer,” uses the structure of time to recapitulate the histories of characters as well as eulogize and pacify their spirits.³²⁴ Similarly, the chapter functions as pre-mourning and pre-spirit pacification for the principal mourner, who will not be mourned or pacified later in the text.

The Tale of the Heike has many variants, but finds its source material in the history of the rise of the Taira family at court, the battles between the Taira and the

³²⁴ Jin'ichi Konishi makes the association between Heike recitation and *shōmyō*, or Buddhist chant. See Jin'ichi Konishi, *A History of Japanese Literature*, vol. 3, *The High Middle Ages* trans. Aileen Gatten and Nicholas Teele; ed. Earl Miner, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press: 1984), 319. However, Helen Craig McCullough asserts this association cannot be certain and may rely on faulty evidence linking *Heike* performers to Buddhist temples. See Helen Craig McCullough, “Introduction,” in *The Tale of the Heike*, trans. Helen Craig McCullough, (Stanford: Stanford University Press: 1988), 8. See also S. A. Thornton, “Meitokuki: Spirit Pacification and Political Legitimacy in the Late Medieval Japanese Epic,” in *History Compass* 12:7 (2014); Lori Meeks, “Survival and Salvation in the Heike Monogatari: Reassessing the Legacy of Kenreimon'in,” in *Lovable Losers: the Heike in Action and Memory*, ed. Mikael Adolphson and Anne Commons (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2015), 142-65.

Minamoto for power during the Genpei war, and the defeat and decline of the Taira. This tale, along with *The Tale of Genji*, is considered one of Japan's classical masterpieces of the premodern period and is still widely read to this day. Only some versions of the tale include the *Kanjō no maki*, a concluding chapter that recapitulates the tale. I focus on the Kakuichi *Heike* (a fourteenth century variant) as it is considered the standard variant that includes the Initiates Chapter. The *Kanjō no maki* colophon identifies the performer of the text as shamon Kakuichi (Akashi no Kakuichi, active mid-late fourteenth century), but the authorship of the Kakuichi variant and the *Kanjō no maki* is still a source of scholarly debate.³²⁵ Elizabeth Oyler suggests this version was sponsored by the head Tendai temple, Enryakuji.³²⁶ Although it is difficult to trace the Enryakuji-sponsored version of the *Heike* directly to any existing variant, there is ample evidence to conclude that institutional Buddhism had a heavy hand in the performance, structure, and content of the chapter's poetry and prose as well as the mode of the text's transmission.

The *Kanjō no maki*, like "The Seer," uses the trope of a mourner, over the course of a year, recapitulating the tale to date. I argue that the structures of Kenreimon'in's mourning and ritual pacification of Emperor Antoku parallel Genji's mourning of Lady Murasaki in the chapter "The Seer." In addition, the spirit of Emperor Antoku, like the "Lady Murasaki of Memory" Murasaki Shikibu creates in "The Seer," pre-mourns and pre-pacifies Kenreimon'in.

Before describing the many similarities between the *Kanjō no maki* and "The

³²⁵ SNKBZS v. 46, 530-32, n. 1. *The Tale of the Heike*, 426.

³²⁶ Elizabeth Oyler, *Swords, Oaths and Prophetic Visions: Authoring Warrior Rule in Medieval Japan*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), 6.

Seer,” it is necessary to outline their differences. First, “The Seer” depicts scenes of mourning and pacifying fictional characters, whereas the *Kanjō no maki* depicts historical characters. In a simplified outline of the tale, the child Emperor Antoku (1178-1185 C.E., r. 1180-1185 C.E.) presided over the imperial court during a major clash for power between the Taira and Minamoto. This disturbance became the Genpei war, which ended in the defeat of the Taira by the Minamoto. The final battle occurred at Dan-no-Ura at the western extremity of Honshu, and, when realizing all was lost, Emperor Antoku’s grandmother (the Nun of Second Rank, 1126–1185 C.E.) held onto him and leapt overboard, killing them both. Antoku’s mother, Kenreimon’in (1155-1213 C.E.), the daughter of the Chancellor Taira no Kiyomori (1118-1181 C.E.), witnessed the death of her son and mother. Although nearly all the Taira were killed during or after the war, Kenreimon’in’s life was spared.³²⁷

Although *The Tale of the Heike* is classified as a “tale” (*monogatari*), it was also widely accepted as a true version of the Genpei War. As Oyler describes, “throughout the Tokugawa period [1603-1868] and into the early Meiji [1868-1912], the *Heike* was considered a work of history.”³²⁸ Gomi Fumihiko posits that premodern Japanese histories often existed in two versions, with one serving as a more official version and another as a less official account.³²⁹ Gomi suggests that the Kakuichibon version of the *Heike* was the less official “double” of the *Gukanshō* (*The Future and the Past*, c.1220 C.E.), the first Japanese Buddhist historiography. There are no records to suggest that

³²⁷ It is generally accepted that Kenreimon’in also attempted to drown herself, but was pulled out of the water by her long hair.

³²⁸ Oyler, *Swords, Oaths and Prophetic Visions: Authoring Warrior Rule in Medieval Japan*, 6.

³²⁹ Gomi Fumihiko, *Azumakagami no Hōhō: Jijitsu to Shinwa ni Miru Chūsei*, (Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1990), 43-48.

either the *Heike* or the *Kanjō no maki* were compiled for the purpose of meeting a test of critical historical methods, although both use (roughly) a chronological series of events as a medium through which to tell a broader tale concerning war and Buddhist philosophy.

Jin'ichi Konishi demonstrates that, in addition to its function as history, the literary content of the *Kanjō no maki* “follows a design more worthy of a sermon” because of its message that “evanescence is inescapable and all are fated to perish; [and] evanescence should be linked to the hope that Amida’s mercy will lead one to rebirth in the Western paradise.”³³⁰ Konishi contends that the influence—whether direct or indirect—of public Buddhist services and their musical accompaniment strongly suggests that someone connected to institutional Buddhism composed the *Heike*.³³¹ Furthermore, the structure of the *Kanjō no maki* follows that of a medieval Buddhist service, in that both begin with solemn statements and prayers, move on to a sermon interspersed with stories of the Buddhas’ and bodhisattvas’ previous existences, and end with a promise of salvation. Like the anecdotes contained in the *Kanjō no maki*, Konishi explains that the stories imbedded in public Buddhist sermons could be secular in theme as long as the conclusion was Buddhist in nature.³³²

Throughout the *Kanjō no maki* the anecdotes of Kenreimon’in’s life are intertwined with Buddhist concepts of impermanence, karma, and salvation. However, the religious messages contained in the *Kanjō no maki* are expressed not only in Buddhist terms, but also through the inclusion of Chinese folklore, Daoist, Shintō, Indian Buddhist,

³³⁰ *A History of Japanese Literature*, 340.

³³¹ *Ibid.*, 319.

³³² *Ibid.*, 338.

and Confucian imagery. Rather than diluting the importance of this essentially Buddhist text, drawing upon various sects and religions reinforces its religious authority and sacredness. As Mark Teeuwen and Fabio Rambelli state, “the strength, impressiveness, and appeal of such associations [serve] to advertise the prominence and sacred power of the institutions that developed [the text].”³³³ If we accept the assumption that Enryakuji (head temple of the school of Tendai Buddhism) sponsored the compilation of the *Kanjō no maki*, the inclusion of non-Buddhist imagery does not corrupt the Buddhist messages of the text, but rather imbues the text with the power of all the religious and philosophical texts that came before it, be they Indian, Chinese, Japanese, or Korean.

The *Kanjō no maki*’s message of salvation for the Taira war dead (and Kenreimon’in) is directly related to the chapter’s devotional use as *goryō* ritual pacification. In medieval Japan it was commonly believed that an unnatural death produced spirits who could be malevolent to the living if they were not pacified through ritual means. Prayers, offerings, and memorial services were routinely held in order to pacify these malevolent spirits—helping them attain enlightenment and preventing them from causing disturbances in this world. Jien (Head abbot of Enryakuji, 1155-1225 C.E.) clearly describes the link between malevolent spirits and natural disasters in his historiography, *Gukanshō*:

Since ancient times, there has been the principle that vengeful spirits ruin the state and destroy man...The first thing to do about this is to pray to Buddhas and Kami...The main point about a vengeful spirit is that it bears a deep grudge and makes those who caused the grudge objects of its revenge even while the resentful

³³³ Mark Teeuwen and Fabio Rambelli, “Introduction: Combinatory Religion and the *Honji Suijaku* Paradigm in Pre-modern Japan,” in *Buddhas and Kami in Japan: Honji Suijaku as a Combinatory Paradigm*, eds. Mark Teeuwen and Fabio Rambelli, (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon: 2003), 51.

person is still alive. When the vengeful spirit is seeking to destroy the objects of its resentments – all the way from small houses to the state as a whole – the state is thrown into disorder by the slanders and lies it generates...And if the vengeful spirit is unable to obtain its revenge while in this visible world, it will do so from the realm of the invisible.³³⁴

Goryō had varying degrees of power and wrath, with the most feared being the spirits of high-ranking “aristocrats who had been falsely accused of some political crime and had died in disgrace, often in exile.”³³⁵ Many of these vengeful spirits were traced back to the late Heian period (794-1185 C.E.) and the bloody Genpei War. Because of the unnatural deaths caused by battle, the drastic change in political fortunes, and the great number of dead, medieval Japanese believed that the slain warriors (and overthrown aristocrats, sometimes one and the same) would haunt and possess their enemies in order to exact vengeance.

Lori Meeks argues that the *Kanjō no maki* is a product of the desire on the part of both Retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa and the Genji to pacify the spirits of the Genpei war dead.³³⁶ The earthquake that shook the capital after the end of the war was taken as a sign that Go-Shirakawa was not doing enough to pacify their spirits, and the new rulers became increasingly interested in spirit pacification rituals. Helen McCullough contends that medieval audiences would have experienced the recitation of the content of the

³³⁴ As quoted in Steven T. Brown, *Theatricalities of Power: the Cultural Politics of Noh* (Stanford: Stanford University Press: 2002), 39.

³³⁵ Teeuwen and Rambelli, “Introduction,” 26.

³³⁶ Lori Meeks, “Survival and Salvation in the Heike Monogatari: Reassessing the Legacy of Kenreimon'in,” 142-65.

Kanjō no maki as *goryō* pacification.³³⁷ The ritualized performance of the *Kanjō no maki*, she states, was:

conceived and presented as an offering to the departed Taira—a record for posterity of their names and deeds, disseminated far and wide by people in contact with the other world, which praises their achievements, views their shortcomings with a generally tolerant eye, and offers repeated assurances that their widows, their retainers, and others are praying for them.³³⁸

The *Kanjō no maki* is a work of historiography, patronized by the victors of the Genpei war (the Minamoto); the spirit-pacification functions of the text are closely linked with concerns of authority. By controlling the narrative of history, the text and recitation of the *Kanjō no maki* publicly reinforces the distinction between the winners and losers of the Genpei war. Hyōdō Hiromi argues that this Minamoto custodianship of the *Heike* as placatory performance points to the important connection between soothing of restless spirits and control of the country (and its history).³³⁹ This assertion buttresses the centrality of placatory ritual as part of the function of history and further suggests the important role of shogunal patronage of at least the Kakuichibon and the reciters associated with it. The recitation of the *Kanjō no maki* not only reiterated the authority of the Minamoto, but also served to protect the populace from disasters that could be caused by unpacified *goryō*.³⁴⁰

The *Kanjō no maki*'s function as *goryō* pacification is linked to the second major

³³⁷ Helen Craig McCullough, "Appendix C: The 'Heike' as Literature," in *The Tale of the Heike*, trans. Helen Craig McCullough, (Stanford: Stanford University Press: 1988), 471.

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ Hyōdō Hiromi, "*Heike monogatari ni okeru geino kami: Kenreimon'in monogatari shiron.*" *Kokubungaku: Kaishaku to Kanshō* (1988), 72-78.

³⁴⁰ By the time *Heike* was put to paper, the Seiwa Minamoto themselves had already become extinct. Therefore, the desire to pacify and placate the spirits of the Genpei War dead, as well as the victors, continued for centuries.

difference between “The Seer” and the *Kanjō no maki*: the revelation of the final circumstances of the chapter’s main character and mourner. While the reader of “The Seer” is left unsure if Genji takes the tonsure or dies, in the case of Kenreimon’in, both events are clearly described in the *Kanjō no maki*. On the first day of fifth month of 1185, Kenreimon’in became a nun and made an offering of one of Emperor Antoku’s robes to Chōrakuji. This action demonstrates both Kenreimon’in’s Buddhist devotion as well as her fervent prayers that her religious and ritual efforts lead not only to her salvation, but also to Antoku’s salvation. Kenreimon’in is represented as doing such after donating Antoku’s robe, “telling herself that the deed might also help the Former Emperor attain enlightenment.”³⁴¹ The narrator stresses Antoku’s role in Kenreimon’in’s religious practice. As I will argue below, Antoku’s spirit, rather than a hindering attachment, becomes a guiding force in Kenreimon’in’s attainment of enlightenment.

Like Genji in the chapter “The Seer,” Kenreimon’in remains attached to the memory of the deceased. Although Kenreimon’in should abandon all attachments before taking the tonsure, by donating Antoku’s robe and hoping for his enlightenment, she demonstrates that she is still deeply attached to her son. In the *Kanjō no maki*, rather than Kenreimon’in’s attachment to Antoku being an obstacle to her spiritual development, instead, it assists her along the Buddhist path.³⁴² Her constant concern over Antoku’s

³⁴¹ SNKBZS v. 46, 508. *The Tale of the Heike*, 426.

³⁴² Dying while still emotionally attached to a child was considered especially harmful for a good rebirth. This attachment could cause a parent to become a vengeful spirit, roaming the earth longing for a child. See Jacqueline I. Stone, “With the Help of ‘Good friends’: Deathbed Ritual Practices in Early Medieval Japan,” in *Death and the Afterlife in Japanese Buddhism*, ed. Jacqueline Ilyse Stone and Mariko Namba Walter (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2008), 187; and Hank Glassman, “At the Crossroads of Birth and Death: The Blood Pool Hell and Postmortem Fetal Extraction,” in *Death and the Afterlife in Japanese*

rebirth is not a worldly attachment, but allows his memory to function as a Buddhist helper from the afterworld, spurring Kenreimon'in on in her own spiritual advancement. As discussed in chapter four, although Genji did not take the tonsure while in mourning for Lady Murasaki (as a sign of his attachment and continued mourning practice), Kenreimon'in instead takes the tonsure while in mourning as a sign of her attachment and desire to pacify the spirit of Antoku. In the *Kanjō no maki*, Kenreimon'in, like Genji, is depicted in endless sorrow, heart-mourning, and spirit pacification over the course of a year, until her death.

Time: Recapitulating the Past and Demonstrating Decline

Like “The Seer,” the author of the *Kanjō no maki* structures Kenreimon'in's heart-mourning and ritual recapitulation of the past through time. Unlike “The Seer,” which depicts a year of mourning, the *Kanjō no maki* covers a total of six years. Both “The Seer” and the main part of *Kanjō no maki* cover a one year span, with the opening stating that Kenreimon'in took the tonsure on the first day of the fifth month of Bunji (1185 C.E.) and the rest of the chapter unfolding primarily over the course of the following twelve months (with the exception of the last paragraph, which details Kenreimon'in's death five years later). During this year there are detailed descriptions of Kenreimon'in's move to Jakkōin in the ninth month, her lodgings in the tenth month, and the imperial visit from Go-Shirakawa, originally planned for the spring of the second

Buddhism, ed. Jacqueline Ilyse Stone and Mariko Namba Walter (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 75, 87.

month of the second year of Bunji (1186 C.E.), but postponed until the summer (past the twentieth day of the fourth month) of Bunji (1186 C.E.). After Go-Shirakawa's visit, the chapter skips over the remaining five years of Kenreimon'in's life, concluding with her death in the second month of the second year of Kenkyū (1191 C.E.). Therefore, by compressing the final five years with just the mention of Kenreimon'in's death, the author does not to disturb the one year that the text wants to emphasize, the year of mourning.

In a method similar to that found in "The Seer," the author of "The Initiate's Chapter" uses natural and ritual imagery and poetry to mark the passing of time, give insight to Kenreimon'in's emotions, and conjure memories of the past. After taking the tonsure on the first day of the fifth month, Kenreimon'in begins to recapitulate her life. After becoming a nun, a ritual that marks the first month, she recalls her life at court and giving birth to Emperor Antoku, as well as the death of her entire family. Despite the fact that Kenreimon'in has become a nun, an act that should require abandoning all attachments to the world, the omniscient narrator tells us:

Never in all the lives to come could she forget her despairing kinsmen as they cast themselves into the sea; never could she forget the faces of the Former Emperor and the Nun of Second Rank.³⁴³

This passage makes it clear that Kenreimon'in, despite being a nun, still carries an attachment to the memories of her mother and son. It is this attachment that, instead of hindering her religious path, pushes her onward.

³⁴³ SNKBZS v. 46, 509. *The Tale of the Heike*, 427.

After recalling these memories and lamenting that she survived, she writes out an old verse on her inkbox:

ほととぎす花たちばなの香を止めてなくはむかしのひとや恋しき

That you raise your voice, / cuckoo, seeking the fragrance /
of the flowering orange— / is it from nostalgia / for that “someone long ago”?³⁴⁴

This poem is based on the orange blossoms and the cuckoo of the fifth month, both associated with past memories, and is similar to Genji’s fifth month poem in “The Seer”:

なき人をしのぶる宵のむら雨に濡れてや来つる山ほととぎす

Have you come hither with your wings wet with showers,
O mountain cuckoo, from so many memories this evening of one now gone?³⁴⁵

While these two poems are drawn from different sources, they both use the arrival of the cuckoo (albeit not a mountain cuckoo) in the fifth month (a well-established poetic allusion) to illustrate their heart-mourning for the deceased. In Genji’s case, “the one now gone” is undoubtedly Lady Murasaki. In Kenreimon’in’s case, the “someone long ago” represents Antoku, the Nun of Second Rank, and her Heike kinsmen. The *Shinkokinwakashū* poem is clearly a love poem, but here in this context Kenreimon’in uses it to refer to the people she has just mentioned, her family.

Nature continues to serve to describe Kenreimon’in’s emotions and bring back

³⁴⁴ SNKBZS v. 46, 509-10. *The Tale of the Heike*, 427.

³⁴⁵ SNKBZ, v. 23, 541. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, trans. Royall Tyler (New York: Penguin Classics: Reprint Edition, 2006), 774. See *Shinkokinwakashū* 244 (anonymous). University of Virginia Library Japanese text initiative, “*Shinkokinwakashū*.”
<http://jti.lib.virginia.edu/japanese/shinkokinshu/AnoShin.html>

memories of the deceased as the year progresses. In the seventh month there is a great earthquake, and Kenreimon'in's dwelling is badly damaged. The scene is described through the autumn cries of insects and the dew on the grasses, like Kenreimon'in's tears when she cries for her deceased family. The narrator states, "it was too much that the melancholy of autumn should be added to her ceaseless sorrow!"³⁴⁶

In the ninth month Kenreimon'in moved to Jakkōin, a temple in Ohara. Jakkōin is described through images of fall as a place steeped in dew, populated by fading chrysanthemum, and surrounded by the cries of deer and insects. She immediately begins to pray:

‘May the Son of Heaven’s holy spirit achieve perfect wisdom; may prompt enlightenment be assured.’ The face of the Former Emperor was before her as she spoke. Would she ever forget it in all the lives to come?³⁴⁷

Like the isolated and sorrowful surroundings of the Buddhist temple, Kenreimon'in's heart dwells on the memories of the deceased and her duty to pacify their spirits, here gradually narrowing her focus to one child: Antoku. The narrator presents this as Kenreimon'in's duty because her mother requested that she not kill herself at Dan-no-Ura and instead spend her days praying for the Former Emperor's enlightenment and cessation of suffering.³⁴⁸

Natural imagery to underscore Kenreimon'in's sorrow and isolation after the death of her family continues throughout the rest of the year. In the tenth month

³⁴⁶ SNKBZS v. 46, 511. *The Tale of the Heike*, 428.

³⁴⁷ SNKBZS v. 46, 513. *The Tale of the Heike*, 429.

³⁴⁸ SNKBZS v. 46, 526. *The Tale of the Heike*, 435.

Kenreimon'in's only visitor is a passing stag. The second and third months of spring are snowy and cold, with no visitors. In the fourth month, after the Kamo festival, the Retired Cloistered Emperor Go-Shirakawa undertakes a journey to visit Kenreimon'in. The lush growth of summer and the depiction of monkeys as her only visitors underscores Kenreimon'in's isolation in her devotions, her fall from society to wilderness, to bring about a good rebirth for Antoku.

In addition to conjuring memories of the deceased, and similar to the way "The Seer" uses seasonal imagery to demonstrate the fading glory of Genji, the recapitulation of Kenreimon'in's life through the use of natural imagery over the course of a year mirrors the downfall of her extended family. The *Kanjō no maki* preaches on the theme of impermanence through a depiction of Kenreimon'in's, and the Taira's, fall from power due to bad karma (*akuen*) in several "then vs. now" scenes, contrasting Kenreimon'in's former life as an Empress with her current position as a nun.

In the fifth month, after Kenreimon'in has taken the tonsure, the narrator draws a comparison with her present rank as nun and her former ranks of Junior Consort, Empress, and mother of an Emperor. The narrator of the *Kanjō no maki* similarly uses Kenreimon'in's physical appearance to express the drastic change in her social position. Early in the chapter, Kenreimon'in is described as still having beauty "but there was no further reason to preserve her kingfisher-black tresses, and so at last she had become a nun."³⁴⁹ By parting with her long hair, Kenreimon'in renounces any possibility of returning to the world at court, where her beauty had played a role in her rise. Instead,

³⁴⁹ SNKBZS v. 46, 509. *The Tale of the Heike*, 427.

she, like Genji, focuses on her present sorrow and her life to come.

In the seventh month, the state of her dilapidated home is contrasted with guarded palace gates. Upon first setting eyes upon Jakkōin in the ninth month, Kenreimon'in states "Even when we were going from bay to bay and island to island, nothing was as bad as this."³⁵⁰ Therefore, the reader learns that Kenreimon'in finds her life as a nun to be even more distressing than her life as an Empress fleeing the capital during the latter days of the Genpei war.

The narrator twice remarks on the change in her lifestyle, stating that "the lady who had once spent her time surrounded by brocade curtains in jade mansions, ... now found herself in that shockingly dilapidated abode" and "it seemed only a dream that the lady had once worn damask, gauze, brocade, and embroidery – the choicest stuffs of Japan and China."³⁵¹ Kenreimon'in's distance from the capital and those in it, as well as her new-found poverty, is also illustrated in laments that "nobody seemed left who might come to her assistance" and that she has to depend on her two younger sisters for a livelihood.³⁵²

The change in Kenreimon'in's outward appearance is also noted in the following poem attributed to the Tokudaiji Minister of the Left Sanesada:

いにしへは月にたとへし君なれどそのひかりなき深山辺の里

This is the Empress

whom we compared to the moon

³⁵⁰ SNKBZS v. 46, 513. *The Tale of the Heike*, 429.

³⁵¹ SNKBZS v. 46, 507, 520. *The Tale of the Heike*, 426, 432.

³⁵² SNKBZS v. 46, 511-12. *The Tale of the Heike*, 428.

in earlier days,
but no radiance brightens
the lonely mountain dwelling.³⁵³

In this poem, written during Go-Shirakawa's visit in the fourth month of the following year (it was inscribed on one of Kenreimon'in's hermitage pillars), not only is Sanesada comparing Kenreimon'in's former beauty with that of the moon, he is also remarking on her fall from power. The moon's radiance is caused by a reflection of the light from the sun. Therefore, by comparing Kenreimon'in to the moon, she reflects the light from the sun, or the Emperor, the Son of Heaven, a descendent of the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu. Now that Kenreimon'in has moved from the palace to "the lonely mountain dwelling" she is no longer connected to the power of the Son of Heaven and no longer reflects his "light" (*hikari*). This contrast of Kenreimon'in's former splendor and her present appearance conveys that she no longer has any power, as she is no longer a consort or an Empress with prized beauty. In this present situation her only worldly value is as a nun praying for the salvation of her deceased ancestors.

Time: Spirit Pacification of the Genpei War Dead

A major theme of the *Kanjō no maki* is Kenreimon'in's efforts to help the spirit of her son, Emperor Antoku, find salvation in the afterlife. Kenreimon'in's decision to become a nun is a direct result of her mother's request that she spend her days praying for

³⁵³ SNKBZS v. 46, 511-12. *The Tale of the Heike*, 530.

the Former Emperor's enlightenment and cessation of suffering, which is recorded as:

There is no chance in a thousand myriads that any male member of our house will survive. Even if some distant relative were to be left, we could not expect him to perform memorial services for us. Since it has always been the custom to spare women, you must do your best to come safely through the battle so that you may pray for His Majesty's salvation. I hope you will also say a prayer for the rest of us.³⁵⁴

Meeks stresses that the Nun of Second rank asks Kenreimon'in to inquire after them (*warera ga kōsei o toburau*) "to locate them in the world beyond, and to relieve their suffering."³⁵⁵ For Meeks, the use of the word *toburau* (to visit, to mourn) is important, because it is a request that Kenreimon'in "discover (often through shamanic means) the location and state of their spirits, and finally to offer them salvation or at least comfort through the performance of meritorious rites."³⁵⁶ As I will demonstrate below, Kenreimon'in accomplishes all of these feats.

Answering this plea, Kenreimon'in spends the rest of her life in acts of spirit pacification. In this way, her attachment to the memory of her son becomes the impetus for religious action. In the fifth month she takes the tonsure and offers Antoku's robe. In addition to providing Antoku with merit, this act memorializes him, as the narrator tells us that this offering "was made into a banner to be hung in front of the Buddhas at the Chōrakuji."³⁵⁷

Kenreimon'in's efforts on behalf of the former Emperor's spirit increase after she

³⁵⁴ SNKBZS v. 46, 526. *The Tale of the Heike*, 435.

³⁵⁵ Lori Meeks, "Survival and Salvation in the Heike Monogatari: Reassessing the Legacy of Kenreimon'in," 157.

³⁵⁶ Ibid.

³⁵⁷ SNKBZS v. 46, 508. *The Tale of the Heike*, 427.

moves from the periphery of the capital to her ten-foot square hut at Jakkōin in the seventh month. Rather than detach herself from all worldly concerns and concentrate solely on achieving enlightenment for herself, Kenreimon'in continues to pray for Antoku's enlightenment. In her hermitage, Kenreimon'in constructs a shrine, which includes the Welcoming Triad and paintings of Fugen, Shandao, and the Former Emperor. It is here that she "went before the Buddha to pray: 'May the Son of Heaven's holy spirit achieve perfect wisdom; may prompt enlightenment be assured.'"³⁵⁸ In each of these instances, not only is Kenreimon'in's religious act benefitting Antoku, but it is also accumulating religious merit for her own good rebirth.

Kenreimon'in's resolve to pray for Antoku's enlightenment is reiterated later in the chapter during Go-Shirakawa's visit to her hut in the fourth month. Kenreimon'in states:

There is no time when I do not await the Welcoming Triad, offering fervent prayers for my family's enlightenment...I pray faithfully for the Former Emperor's enlightenment, morning and evening.³⁵⁹

The narrator concludes the visit between Kenreimon'in and Go-Shirakawa with an additional prayer for Antoku and the Heike war dead. As Go-Shirakawa leaves Kenreimon'in's hermitage, she prays again to Amida:

May the holy spirit of the Son of Heaven and the dead spirits of the Heike clan achieve perfect wisdom and prompt enlightenment...May the holy spirit of the dead be reborn in Amida's Pure Land.³⁶⁰

³⁵⁸ SNKBZS v. 46, 513. *The Tale of the Heike*, 429.

³⁵⁹ SNKBZS v. 46, 522-23. *The Tale of the Heike*, 434.

³⁶⁰ SNKBZS v. 46, 529. *The Tale of the Heike*, 436-37.

Kenreimon'in's routine prayers follow Jien's advice on how to placate *goryō*, as he states in the *Gukanshō* "the first thing to do is pray to the Buddhas and Kami."³⁶¹

In addition to using natural time to depict the length of Kenreimon'in's heart-mourning and spirit pacification, the author adds an additional element of time in order to reinforce the chapter's recapitulation of history and ritual pacification of spirits of the Genpei War dead: the famous *rokudō* passage, or passage on the six Buddhist realms of rebirth.³⁶² In Buddhism, transmigration between the realms of existence can take countless eons (or *kalpas*). However, in this scene, Kenreimon'in demonstrates that she has traversed all six of the realms in one lifetime. She uses this Buddhist structure of time to recapitulate her twenty-nine years of life, recapitulate the tale to date, and assure the reader of the enlightenment of Antoku (and the eventual enlightenment of Kenreimon'in.)

Kenreimon'in employs the structure of the *rokudō* as she and Go-Shirakawa discuss their discomfort and shock at her drastic change in circumstances. *Rokudō* stories and hell scrolls gained popularity in the late Kamakura period (1185-1333 C.E.) as a way to teach Buddhist ideas of karma and rebirth to a wider audience.³⁶³ Many scholars trace this portion of the *Kanjō no maki* to this type of popular Buddhist literature of the time.³⁶⁴

³⁶¹ As quoted in Steven T. Brown, *Theatricalities of Power: the Cultural Politics of Noh*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press: 2002), 39.

³⁶² The six realms of rebirth are heaven, human, Asura, animal, hungry ghost, and hell realms.

³⁶³ Nozawa Yumi, "Kenreimon'in no rokudō meguri ni tsuite: Nyoirin bosatsu o baikai to shite no kōsatsu," *Nihon Bungaku Ronkyū* (Kokugakuin Daigaku Kokubun Gakkai, 1992), 65.

³⁶⁴ See Ubukata Takashige, "Sentei jusui denshō no kanōsei gunki to katari mono," *Gunki to Katarimono*, Kokuritsu kokkai toshokan (Tokyo: Gunki Katarimono kenkyūkai, 1988); Okada Mitsuko, "Kenreimon'in rokudō meguri monogatari," *Gunki to Katarimono*, Kokuritsu kokkai toshokan (Tokyo: Gunki Katarimono kenkyūkai, 1988); Nanami Hiroaki, "Kenreimon'in setsuwa gun ni okeru ryūchiku seibutsu to kanjō o megutte," in *Chūsei Bungaku*: 38 (6: 1993), 85-94; Ikeda Keiko "Nyōbō ni kaserareishi mono: Kanjō no maki rokudōtan shi," *Kokugo Kokubun* 63:3 (1994); Saeki Shin'ichi, "Nyōbō no mitsu no katari," *Gunki monogatari no mado* (Osaka: Izumi Shoin, 1997); and Sakai Kahori, "Heike monogatari Kenreimon'in

This framework illustrates Kenreimon'in has not just lived through this one transformation (from Empress to nun), but rather has endured the myriad experiences of each realm of rebirth during the five years of the Genpei War.

Kenreimon'in begins to describe her suffering in the lower realms of rebirth by equating her life at court with the Buddhist paradise, stating "I thought the bliss of heaven could be no more sublime than the pleasures I enjoyed day and night."³⁶⁵ This heavenly life came to an end for Kenreimon'in when she was expelled from the capital and propelled into the world of men, suffering exile and sorrow as illustrated by the Taira's expulsion and the suicide of her nephew, the Middle Captain Kiyotsune.³⁶⁶

Kenreimon'in's descent through the *rokudō* continues as the Taira are forced off the land and onto boats.³⁶⁷ On this flotilla, the hunger and thirst she experienced because, even if there was something to eat aboard the ship, she "could not eat it for lack of water" caused Kenreimon'in to equate this existence with "the sufferings of the world of hungry spirits."³⁶⁸ Despite their desperate situation at sea the fighting did not end and, like "the fighting between Asura and Taishaku...there was never a time when the battle cries ceased, early or late."³⁶⁹ While these experiences were unpleasant for Kenreimon'in, she expresses that she did not feel the suffering of the realm of hell until she witnessed the deaths of her mother and son. Kenreimon'in describes the sorrowful cries that followed

rokudō katari no seisei: 'Kankyo no tomo' to no kankei o chūshin ni," in *Chiba Daigaku Nihon Kokka Ronsō*, 12 (7:2011), 1-20.

³⁶⁵ SNKBZS v. 46, 523. *The Tale of the Heike*, 435.

³⁶⁶ SNKBZS v. 46, 524-25. *The Tale of the Heike*, 435.

³⁶⁷ Doctrinal explanations of the Buddhist realms of rebirth reject any hierarchical ordering of the different plains of existence, as they are fundamentally no different than Nirvana. However, in practice, the Buddhist realms of rebirth are ranked, with the highest realm being heaven.

³⁶⁸ SNKBZS v. 46, 525. *The Tale of the Heike*, 435.

³⁶⁹ SNKBZS v. 46, 526. *The Tale of the Heike*, 435.

these suicides as exceeding “even the shrieks of sinners under the flames in the hot hells.”³⁷⁰ After this hellish experience Kenreimon’in dreams that she is transported to a lavish place, which is revealed to be the Nāga palace, in the land of the Nāga, or serpents. She learns her deceased mother and son have been reborn here and experience the sufferings of the animal world.

Rather than ending with a message of suffering in the animal realm, Kenreimon’in’s tale ends with a promise of salvation as it completes the *rokudō* and references the enlightenment of the Nāga princess. Go-Shirakawa’s response to Kenreimon’in’s *rokudō* speech supports this conclusion, when he states:

We are told that Tripiṭika Xuanzhuang of China saw the Six Paths before he achieved enlightenment, and that the holy Nichizō of our land saw them through the power of Zaō Gongen. But [it] is rare indeed to behold them before one’s very eyes, as you have done.³⁷¹

Here, Go-Shirakawa ensures the audience that, like others who have seen the Six Paths, Kenreimon’in is assured Buddhist enlightenment. Similar to the earth, which witnessed the historical Buddha’s enlightenment, Go-Shirakawa’s statement is that of a witness to Kenreimon’in’s achievement.

By her own power, not relying on Zaō Gongen (the avatar of a powerful Buddhist deity), Kenreimon’in has lived through and witnessed each of the six paths in her own lifetime. This becomes especially significant because it was generally thought that as a

³⁷⁰ SNKBZS v. 46, 527-28. *The Tale of the Heike*, 436.

³⁷¹ SNKBZS v. 46, 528. *The Tale of the Heike*, 436.

woman, one was incapable of becoming a Buddha and realizing enlightenment.

Although there is disagreement as to whether or not canonical sūtras have any representations of a female Buddha, scholars agree that there are a number of sūtras and texts in which female bodhisattvas appear, such as *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* (*The Sūtra of the Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Verses*), *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka* (*Lotus Sūtra*), *Mahāratnakūta* (*The Collection of Jewels*), and *Candrottārādārikāvyākaraṇa* (*The Sūtra of the Dialogue of the Girl Candrottārā*). The traits and characteristics of female bodhisattvas vary between sūtras, but, in general, match those of male bodhisattvas, in that they are both extolled for their beauty, wealth, compassion, wisdom, and deep understanding of Buddhist doctrine to enable the propagation of the Dharma. There is one trait of the male bodhisattva that female bodhisattvas do not share: martial prowess. Some scholars suggest that female bodhisattvas lack this warrior-like trait because it was incompatible with feminine representations and that granting women spiritual martial arts (such as the ability to transverse the Buddhist realms of rebirth) made up for this lack.³⁷² In addition to sharing intangible characteristics with male bodhisattvas, in the sūtras mentioned above it was demanded that these women also share male “physical” characteristics. Specifically, in order for a woman to be able to transform into a bodhisattva, some sūtras require the woman undergo a male rebirth, either in this life, or the next life. This transformation, as well as seeing all the realms of rebirth in one lifetime, is one of the “spiritual martial arts” religiously advanced women could perform.

³⁷² Diana Y. Paul, *Women in Buddhism: Images of the Feminine in Mahāyāna Tradition* (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1979), 180.

By changing the order of the Buddhist realms of rebirth so that the final experience took place in the animal world of the Nāgas (dragons), the author draws a parallel between Kenreimon's salvation and that of the Nāga princess in the "Devadatta" chapter of the *Lotus Sūtra*. In the "Devadatta" chapter, although the eight year-old daughter of the Nāga king, Sagara, has many of the most idealized traits of either a man or a woman, her physical form is an obstacle to her attainment of Buddhahood. However, she uses her powers to transform into a male body and become a Buddha and demonstrates that she has attained the "highest level of understanding and can 'in an instant' attain Buddhahood."³⁷³ The *Lotus Sūtra* tells that the girl offers the Buddha a precious jewel (which is immediately accepted), and, unrestrained by her sex, transforms into a male and enters Nirvana. Therefore, those born in the Nāga realm (the Nun of Second Rank and Antoku) are not so bound by their karma, or their gender, that they cannot attain enlightenment "in an instant."

The possible role of Enryakuji's patronage and authorship of the *Kanjō no maki* comes out in the decision to make the dragon realm the final realm of the *rokudō* passage. In the tenth century, the head abbot of Enryakuji was a monk named Ryōgen (912-985 C.E.). Due to his fierce efforts to defend Enryakuji's religious and political dominance among other temples in the capital, Ryōgen came to be worshipped as a protector of Buddhism, especially Tendai Buddhism.³⁷⁴ He later became associated with the Dragon king who had the ability to pacify Ma (or Mara, a demon of temptation) and angry

³⁷³ Burton Watson, "Translator's Note" in *The Lotus Sūtra*, trans. Burton Watson, (New York : Columbia University Press: 1993), xviii.

³⁷⁴ Haruko Wakabayashi, "From Conqueror of Evil to Devil King: Ryōgen and Notions of Ma in Medieval Japanese Buddhism," *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 54, No. 4 (Winter, 1999), 481-507.

spirits.³⁷⁵ That Antoku and the Nun of Second Rank were reborn in the Nāga realm suggests they are not suffering in the realm of beasts, but are pacified by the Nāga king. The author underscores this message by having the Nun of Second rank tell Kenreimon'in, "This is the Nāga Palace."³⁷⁶ Kenreimon'in responds, "What a splendid place!" and then proceeds to ask if they are suffering.³⁷⁷ The Nun of Second rank says the suffering is described in the *Ryūchikukyō Sutra* (*Sutra on the [Realm of the] Dragons and Beasts*) and instructs Kenreimon'in to pray for them.³⁷⁸ Therefore, audience members would be assured that, although not reborn in a Buddhist Paradise, and although subject to some suffering, Antoku and the Nun of Second Rank were not reborn in a place that was not "splendid." Additionally, Kenreimon'in demonstrates her eventual enlightenment by revealing her religious super-power of being able to traverse the six realms of rebirth, locate her family members in the afterlife, and offer them salvation – all of the things the Nun of Second Rank requested of her.

***Kanjō no maki* as Spirit Pacification: Kenreimon'in**

To this point, I have demonstrated how, like "The Seer," the *Kanjō no maki* uses structures of time to conjure memories of the deceased, recapitulate the past, and pacify the spirits of the dead. However, unlike "The Seer," the author of the *Kanjō no maki* does not employ descriptions of mourning ritual (wearing mourning robes, abstaining from

³⁷⁵ Wakabayashi, "From Conqueror of Evil to Devil King: Ryōgen and Notions of Ma in Medieval Japanese Buddhism," 481-507.

³⁷⁶ SNKBZS v. 46, 528. *The Tale of the Heike*, 436.

³⁷⁷ SNKBZS v. 46, 528. *The Tale of the Heike*, 436.

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

sexual activity, seclusion, etc.) after Antoku's death. Although Kenreimon'in should be officially mourning the death of an emperor (her son) for a year, because she wears the black robes of a nun, and is no longer part of society, she cannot participate in mourning ritual. Additionally, because her family is in disgrace, there would have been no social or political value in public mourning. Instead, it was up to the surviving women to pray for the spirits of the deceased. Kenreimon'in then, like Genji, elects to participate in heart-mourning until her death, but instead of extending the mourning rituals of wearing dark robes, abstaining from sexual relations, and seclusion, she masks her heart-mourning with the rituals of the tonsure (which happen to look the same): wearing dark robes, abstaining from sexual activity, and seclusion.

As I argue in chapters three and four, in the chapter "The Seer," Genji's memories of his relationship with his deceased love Lady Murasaki create a new character, a "Lady Murasaki of Memory." However, because Genji's memories are *internal* expressions of his sorrow, this "Lady Murasaki of Memory" is confined to the realm of his heart and cannot act in the larger world of the *Tale*. It is through Genji's *external* expression of his sorrow, his extension of mourning ritual, that the "Lady Murasaki of Memory" is able to best her former rivals and perform pre-spirit pacification of Genji's character.

In the *Kanjō no maki*, the author employs a similar device. Through Kenreimon'in's acts of devotion and prayer for the enlightenment of her family, the memory of Antoku becomes her guide on her own path to Buddhist enlightenment. In this way, Kenreimon'in's spirit is pre-pacified through Antoku's "sponsorship" of her devotions.

The results of her efforts are confirmed in four different ways. Two methods are straightforward declarations. First, and most conclusively, Kenreimon'in's death scene includes a description of her probable ascension into Amida's Buddhist Pure land; "a purple cloud trailed in the west, a marvelous fragrance permeated the chamber, and the sound of music was heard in the heavens."³⁷⁹ Second, after Kenreimon'in's *rokudō* speech, Go-Shirakawa remarks that she is sure to attain enlightenment because she has seen all the realms of rebirth during her life (i.e. enlightenment is conditional, and she's fulfilled the conditions with Antoku as her stated companion in the realms of Asura, Hell, and Animal).

The remaining two methods to demonstrate Kenreimon'in's eventual enlightenment require a deeper reading, and illustrate that, like Akazome'emon, authors of the *Kanjō no maki* elaborate on their mourners' similarity to the historical Buddha due to the need to ensure that audiences understood the eventual enlightenment of their historical characters.³⁸⁰ Scholars such as Nozawa Yumi, Hyōdō Hiromi, and Kotsugai Tōru look at the chapter from the point of religious influence and conclude that the chapter confirms Kenreimon'in's rebirth in a Buddhist paradise.³⁸¹ While there are varying conclusions as to whether Kenreimon'in becomes/embodies the Nāga princess (who becomes a Buddha), the goddess Benzaiten, or the Bodhisattva Kannon, the

³⁷⁹ SNKBZS v. 46, 532. *The Tale of the Heike*, 438.

³⁸⁰ Additionally, as Meeks argues, the author of the *Kanjō no maki* also had to overcome their own uneasiness that Kenreimon'in did not committing suicide at Dan-no-Ura. See Meeks, "Survival and Salvation in the Heike Monogatari: Reassessing the Legacy of Kenreimon'in," 142-65.

³⁸¹ See Nozawa, "Kenreimon'in no rokudō meguri ni tsuite: Nyoirin Bosatsu o baikai to shite no kōsatsu," 66-67; Hyōdō, "*Heike monogatari* ni okeru geino kami: Kenreimon'in monogatari shiron," 72-78; Kotsugai Toru, "Kenreimon'in kanrenkiji no kosatsu," *Kodai Chūsei Bungaku Ronkō* (Tokyo: Shintensha, 2001), 212-37.

ultimate conclusion is that the author created the structure and message of the *rokudō* section in order to reveal Kenreimon'in's eventual enlightenment and a good rebirth.³⁸² Therefore, like public Buddhist services, the *Kanjō no maki* concludes with a Buddhist comment, in this case that not only can women escape suffering, they are also capable of traversing the six realms and bettering the rebirths of other sentient beings.

The second complex method the author uses to communicate Kenreimon'in's eventual enlightenment is by comparing her life with the life of the Buddha. The parallel between Kenreimon'in and the Buddha can be found in the following poem, penned by Kenreimon'in as she laments her turn of karma:

おもひきや深山のおくにすみひして雲みの月をよそに見んとは
Did I ever think
to find myself dwelling
deep in the mountains,
gazing at the moon on high,
far from the royal palace?³⁸³

In this poem, the theme of the impermanence of power is continued by referring to Kenreimon'in's move to the mountains, but new “enlightenment” imagery is introduced. In Japanese poetry, moon imagery is frequently a symbol of Buddhist enlightenment. By coupling this imagery with the theme of leaving the royal palace, the audience is

³⁸² See Nozawa Yumi, “Kenreimon'in no rokudō meguri ni tsuite: Nyoirin Bosatsu o baikai toshite no kōsatsu,” *Nihon Bungaku Ronkyū* (Kokugakuin Daigaku Kokubun Gakkai, 1992), 66-7; Hyōdō, “*Heike monogatari* ni okeru gei no kami: Kenreimon'in monogatari shiron,” 72-78; Kotsugai, “Kenreimon'in kanrenkiji no kosatsu,” 212-37. Kenreimon'in's two attendants are said to have “achieved their goal of rebirth in the Pure Land.” This unique conclusion to the *Kanjō no maki* reinforces the Buddhist truth illustrated in the “Devadatta” chapter of the *Lotus Sūtra* that everyone can attain salvation, no matter their karma, as long as they faithfully follow the Buddhist path.

³⁸³ SNKBZS v. 46, 520. *The Tale of the Heike*, 432.

encouraged to draw the comparison that Kenreimon'in, like the historical Buddha, is spending her life outside of the palace in search of enlightenment. (Even though, unlike the Buddha, Kenreimon'in did not leave the palace by choice.)

This parallel between the lives of the historical Buddha and Kenreimon'in is also found in the scene where Kenreimon'in's attendant describes why Kenreimon'in, and not a servant, has gone into the mountains to gather flowers. She states, "Prince Siddhārtha left Gayā at the age of nineteen, covered his nudity with garments of leaves at the foot of Mount Daṇḍaka, climbed to the peaks for firewood, descended to the valleys for water, and finally achieved perfect enlightenment through the merit of his difficult and painful austerities."³⁸⁴ Once again, the plot line of Kenreimon'in's departure from the palace, taking of the tonsure, and performance of manual labor mirrors the story of the Buddha's path to enlightenment. Kenreimon'in's attendant guarantees Kenreimon'in's eventual enlightenment by drawing this parallel, informing the audience that because Kenreimon'in performed these "austerities" she is as pious as the historical Buddha.

As discussed in chapters three and four, in "The Seer," Murasaki Shikibu also compares Genji's life with the historical Buddha and alludes to his eventual enlightenment. "The Seer" concludes with a depiction of a shining Genji:

御容貌、昔の御光にもまた多く添ひて、あり難くめでたく見えたまふを、
この旧りぬる齡の僧は、あいなう涙もとどめざりけり。

The light of his face far surpassed even his radiance of long ago; he was such a marvel to behold that for no reason the old monk wept on and on.³⁸⁵

³⁸⁴ SNKBZS v. 46, 519. *The Tale of the Heike*, 431.

³⁸⁵ SNKBZ, v. 23, 550. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 778.

The description of the “light” (*gokō*) of his face is not only meant to assure the reader that Genji will be reborn in a Buddhist pure land, appeasing his soul, but is also a mark of a Buddha.³⁸⁶

Conclusion

The *Kanjō no maki*, like Genji’s “The Seer,” uses the structure of time during a period of mourning to recapitulate the tale to date, demonstrate the decline of the mourner, pacify the spirits of the dead, and pre-mourn and pre-pacify the spirit of the principal mourner. Both the *Kanjō no maki* and “The Seer” use natural time imagery to mark the passing of a year of mourning. However, the author of the *Kanjō no maki* intertwines the Buddhist concept of the *rokudō* with the structure of natural time. The *rokudō* passage underscores the recapitulation of the past and the pacification of the spirits of the historical characters.

Both the *Kanjō no maki* and “The Seer” use the memories of deceased characters to pre-pacify the spirit of the principal mourner. In “The Seer,” the newly created “Lady Murasaki of Memory” pacifies Genji, and in the *Kanjō no maki*, Kenreimon’in’s attachment to her son, Antoku, helps her advance along the Buddhist path to enlightenment and rebirth in Amida’s paradise.

Audiences that knew both the *Genji* and the *Kanjō no maki* would have noticed

³⁸⁶ Buddhas were thought to have thirty-two “marks,” including light emitted from the “third eye,” golden skin, and a ten-foot aura.

the similarity in structure: a principal character who mourns a loved one for a year, pacifying the spirit of the deceased, focused only on mourning and the next life. Because the *Kanjō no maki* depicts an historical timeframe, in order to include messages of Kenreimon'in's salvation, the author of the chapter was unable to keep to the one-year structure of "The Seer." Instead, the *Kanjō no maki* blends the structure of "The Seer" with a Buddhist sermon, a technique that would appeal to a wide audience.

Each time the *Kanjō no maki* is recited, it takes on the devotional use of *goryō* pacification of the Genpei war dead. Although the *Kanjō no maki* contains instances of prayers for the entire Heike, the majority of prayers are directed to the salvation of the former Emperor Antoku. Because, as discussed above, medieval Japanese audiences believed the spirits of high-ranking aristocrats who died unnatural deaths would obtain revenge in the human world, the focus on placating the spirit of the highest-ranking member of the Taira seems a good strategy. If not pacified, the angry ghost of a child emperor who was forced to commit suicide would be capable of inflicting great damage (in the form of plagues, droughts, and invasions, among others) upon the survivors and victors of the war. Because the *Kanjō no maki* was recited publicly for years after the war, Kenreimon'in's story, and the prayers for the pacification of the Taira dead, were heard by a large and diverse audience. Each time the *Kanjō no maki* was performed, another act of spirit pacification occurred.

Chapter Seven

Replacing the Scene at Hand: Visual Depictions of “The Seer”

In this chapter, I extend my study of how authors translated and adapted mourning scenes in *The Tale of Genji* to premodern illustrations and modern manga series. Since at least the twelfth century *The Tale of Genji* has been presented pictorially, beginning with the creation of the *Genji Monogatari emaki* (*Tale of Genji Scrolls*, held by the Tokugawa Reimeikai foundation, the Gotoh Museum, and the Tokyo National Museum). Over the centuries, while many of the vignettes portrayed in the *Genji Monogatari emaki* have remained constant, some have been eschewed in favor of alternate expressions.³⁸⁷ As Lynne K. Miyake contends, “many of the Genji manga reflect the influence of the *Genji* painting (*Genji-e*) tradition but are also innovative.”³⁸⁸ Naoki Sakai’s translation theory, Shirane’s concepts of readerly and writerly reception, and Michael Emmerich’s definition of “replacing the text” are useful to evaluate how modern manga artists represent Murasaki Shikibu’s mourning poetics to a contemporary audience. Following Sakai, mourning poetics is constructed not only by the author, but also by the various ways an

³⁸⁷ Following Haruo Shirane and Yukio Lippit, rather than categorizing the representation of chapters in Genji illustrations as scenes, they are better labeled as vignettes because “the excerpts are lengthy enough to convey sequences of action, descriptive prose, or interior monologue that correspond to the textual blocks that constitute the raw material of the Genji’s narrative movement.” See Lippit, “Figure and Factice in the Genji Scrolls: Text, Calligraphy, Paper, and Painting,” *Envisioning the Tale of Genji: Media, Gender, and Cultural Production* (New York: Columbia University Press). Kindle edition, location 1640; and Shirane, *Bridge of Dreams*, 55-56.

³⁸⁸ Lynne K. Miyake, “Graphically Speaking: Manga Versions of ‘The Tale of Genji,’” *Monumenta Nipponica* 63:2 (2008), 361. See also Timothy Lehmann, *Manga: Masters of Art* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), 63.

audience would (or would not) understand references to mourning.³⁸⁹ The audience then translates the enunciations of mourning in terms of the scenes presented and the pre-knowledge they bring to the text.³⁹⁰ Shirane's concept of readerly and writerly reception fits within Sakai's framework. Authors of later *Genji* texts are both readers of the tale and writers of the tale (as both readers who have translated the tale and constructed their own meanings and readings, and readers who have become authors of *Genji* literature.)³⁹¹ Finally, Emmerich illustrates that these readers-cum-authors are replacing the text with a new version, not cannibalistically receiving the text.³⁹² Emmerich goes further, contending the story is replaced with each translation, including the translation that occurs in each reading. In this most recent theory of how texts are passed down, the story is replaced. Manga provide rich material to investigate how readers/artists receive and replace classical scenes in *The Genji*.³⁹³ While taking a synthetic approach that does not divorce the image from text and materiality, in this chapter I argue that modern manga artists who represent all fifty-four chapters of *The Tale of Genji*, while making choices to omit and embellish based on categories of genre and form, are surprisingly beholden to both Murasaki Shikibu's text and Edo period illustrations of "The Seer."³⁹⁴

³⁸⁹ Naoki Sakai, *Translation and Subjectivity: On "Japan" and Cultural Nationalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

³⁹⁰ Naoki Sakai, *Translation and Subjectivity: On "Japan" and Cultural Nationalism*.

³⁹¹ Haruo Shirane, "The Tale of Genji and the Dynamics of Cultural Production: Canonization and Popularization," Kindle edition, location 379.

³⁹² Michael Emmerich, *The Tale of Genji: Translation, Canonization, and World Literature*.

³⁹³ See Shirane, "The Tale of Genji and the Dynamics of Cultural Production: Canonization and Popularization," Kindle edition, location 379 and Michael Emmerich, *The Tale of Genji: Translation, Canonization, and World Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).

³⁹⁴ For an argument for the advancement of a synthetic treatment of *Genji* illustrations, see Lippit, "Figure and Facture in the Genji Scrolls: Text, Calligraphy, Paper, and Painting," Kindle locations 1588-1592; and

Edo Period *Genji Emaki*

The famous scene of Genji's mourning of Lady Murasaki, described in the chapter titled "The Seer" (or "*Maboroshi*"), is not extant in the *Genji Monogatari emaki*. In fact, there are no vignettes of mourning in these extant twelfth century illustrated scrolls. However, by the Edo period (1603-1868 C.E.), Genji's mourning in "The Seer" was included in Genji paintings and albums, such as those attributed to the Tosa school.

In an Edo period painting attributed to Tosa Mitsunori, a mourning Genji appears behind blinds while he accepts visitors for the New Year (fig. 1). The color of Genji's robes in this painting is white with a simple pattern, indicating plain and non-distinct clothing, and he receives visitors from behind his blinds, both clear indications of Genji's continued heart-mourning more than four months after the death of Lady Murasaki.

Yoshiaki Shimizu, "The Rite of Writing: Thoughts on the Oldest Genji Text," in *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 16 (1988): 54–63.



Fig. 1

Tosa school, The Seer (*Maboroshi*), chap. 41, from *The Tale of Genji*, Edo period.

Private collection, Japan.

Le Dit du Genji de Murasaki-shikibu Illustré par la Peinture Traditionnelle Japonaise, trans. Rene Sieffert (Paris: Diane de Selliers, 2007), 63.

In “The Seer,” Genji only accepts rare visitors over the New Year, most notably, his brother, His Highness of War, Hotaru. During the New Year festivities in “The Seer,”:

Outside, people gathered to his residence as usual, but he pleaded illness to remain behind his blinds. When His Highness of War arrived, he at last sent out a message that he would receive his visitor privately... Genji watched his graceful figure beneath the red plum blossoms and doubted that anyone else would enjoy them properly.³⁹⁵

In this Edo period painting, men are gathered outside Genji’s residence as he remains behind blinds and receives Hotaru. Hotaru is in the center bottom, under the red *ume* (plum) blossoms. Also in this painting is a child visitor. The child is not identified, but, based on other illustrations, is most likely Genji’s grandson, Niou. The inclusion of Niou

³⁹⁵ SNBZS v. 23, 514. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*. trans. Royall Tyler (New York: Penguin Publishing Group, 2006), 767.

in this vignette is an interesting addition, since Niou does not appear in “The Seer” during Hotaru’s visit, but only later in the first month when:

Her Majesty returned to the palace, leaving the Third Prince [Niou] to give Genji what consolation he could. The little boy looked very carefully after the red plum that stood before the wing. “Grandma told me to,” he said. Genji thought it extremely touching.³⁹⁶

The artist’s decision to combine two memorable events in the first month of “The Seer” into one painting could demonstrate a desire to represent all the activities of the first month within the confines of the media. However, the image omits one famous first-month scene in “The Seer:” when the falling snow reminds Genji of how he hurt Lady Murasaki after he married the Third Princess. The choice to omit this scene could signal an attempt on the part of the artist to focus on Genji’s grief rather than Genji’s coming to terms with his past misdeeds and mischaracterizations of Lady Murasaki.

Hotaru’s visit is also depicted in an anonymous Edo period black and white drawing (fig. 2). In this representation, Genji is behind blinds wearing dark-colored robes. Genji is shown seated behind blinds as he receives his brother, Hotaru. In this image, there are no men gathered for customary greetings, stressing Genji’s isolation and the privacy of his meeting with Hotaru. In the second picture of “The Seer” in this series of black and white drawings of the first month (fig. 3), Genji is depicted with three serving women, including Chūnagon and Chūjō. This represents the “missing” scene in the Tosa painting, when the women and the falling snow prompt Genji to recall the snowy night when he returned to Lady Murasaki after marrying the Third Princess. These

³⁹⁶ SNBZS v. 23, 514. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 767.

black and white drawings omit Niou's visit. This choice highlights Genji's emotions and point of view in "The Seer."



Fig. 2

Anonymous, The Seer (*Maboroshi*), chap. 41, from *The Tale of Genji*, Edo period.

Ishiyama temple, Japan.

Le Dit du Genji de Murasaki-shikibu Illustré par la Peinture Traditionnelle Japonaise, 64.



Fig. 3

Anonymous, *The Seer (Maboroshi)*, chap. 41, from *The Tale of Genji*, Edo period.

Ishiyama temple, Japan.

Le Dit du Genji de Murasaki-shikibu Illustré par la Peinture Traditionnelle Japonaise, 64.

In the third month illustration of “The Seer,” the Edo period Tosa painting depicts Genji and Niou viewing the cherry blossoms in the garden (fig. 4). In this scene Genji tells Niou that Genji will not be in the world much longer and that Niou should care for his grandmother’s blossoms. Niou reprimands Genji, saying such talk is bad luck. In the painting, Genji is wearing a robe similar in design to the one when he receives New Year visitors. He is leaning on the railing by his garden, looking in on the serving women who are inside the residence. The women are wearing various robes, some colored, and some gray. This image is faithful to the narrator’s description of the scene, which states:

Genji leaned against the railing outside the corner room and gazed sadly now out into the garden, now back through the blinds. Some of the women still wore a gray that acknowledged their loss, while others had on common colors, although their damasks had nothing bright about them. Genji himself wore a dress cloak

ordinary in color but intentionally plain and discreet. The room was furnished very simply indeed, and it felt sadly quiet and empty.³⁹⁷

Similarly, the garden Genji and Niou are commenting upon has the flowers of spring, “the single-petaled cherry blossoms fell, the doubles faded, mountain cherries bloomed, and the wisteria colored.”³⁹⁸ In the painting, the placement of the fallen single-petaled cherry blossoms in the background, the blooming mountain cherry in the foreground, the two figures on the veranda versus the ladies behind the blinds, and the wisteria beginning to color parallel Murasaki Shikibu’s description of the scene. By so perfectly capturing the scene, this vignette brings each important element of the text to the viewer’s eye: Lady Murasaki’s talent at cultivating a garden (especially a spring garden), the impermanence of life (through the fallen cherry blossoms), Genji’s isolation (since he is depicted only with women and children in a scene of mourning), and Niou’s pledge to take care of the cherry trees after Lady Murasaki’s death.

³⁹⁷ SNBZS v. 23, 516. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 770.

³⁹⁸ Ibid.



Fig. 4

Tosa Mitsunori, *The Seer (Maboroshi)*, chap. 41, from *The Tale of Genji*, Edo period, 17th Century.

Tokugawa Museum, Nagoya, Japan.

Le Dit du Genji de Murasaki-shikibu Illustré par la Peinture Traditionnelle Japonaise, 67.

Other important events in the third month of the chapter “The Seer” that bring forth memories of Lady Murasaki include Genji’s visits to the Third Princess and the Akashi Lady. In an Edo period painting attributed to Tosa Mitsuyoshi and dated to 1611-1612 C.E., Genji is depicted in his visit to the Third Princess and the Akashi Lady (fig. 5). In this painting, Genji is wearing plain, non-distinct robes, a symbol of his heart-mourning. Genji and Kaoru sit behind screens outside of the Third Princess’s quarters. The Third Princess is not engaged with Genji, but is busy at her religious devotions. Instead, Genji’s gaze is out toward the garden, where a young pine grows and the kerria roses bloom in abundance. In “The Seer,” Genji remarks on these kerria roses:

They obviously do not pretend to good manners, but their richness and exuberance are simply delightful! It is sad, though, how they seem not to know

that this spring the lady who planted them is no more— they are only flowering more magnificently than ever.³⁹⁹

Therefore, like the text, the artist's vignette stresses the Third Princess's disengagement with Genji and Genji's preoccupation with how the spring gardens continue to bloom despite Lady Murasaki's death. Gazing upon the same garden from the opposite side of the veranda are a woman and Niou. Separating the gazes is a young pine in the garden. This young pine could signal either Genji's children or Lady Murasaki. While the text of "The Seer" does not highlight a young pine in the third month, readers would recall two other uses of the term in the tale. The first is in the chapters "The Pilgrimage to Sumiyoshi" ("Miotsukushi") and "Wisps of Cloud" ("Usugumo") where Genji compares his daughter with the Akashi Lady, whom he gives to Lady Murasaki to raise, to a little pine. Alternately, young pine (*unai matsu*) could also be a reference to Genji's thoughts when he sees his serving woman in the fourth month of "The Seer." As Tyler notes, "an early commentary refers to a line of Chinese verse to suggest that an *unai matsu* grows on a grave mound— presumably Murasaki's in this case."⁴⁰⁰ Therefore, similar to the strategy of combining multiple scenes in one painting scene earlier in the representation of the first month, by combining Genji's visit to the Third Princess with imagery of his daughter with the Akashi Lady, the Tosa artist captures Genji's third month visits to his wives (with Lady Murasaki notably absent, represented only by her garden).

³⁹⁹ SNBZS v. 23, 516. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 771.

⁴⁰⁰ Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, Kindle edition, location 27239, note 5.



Fig. 5

Tosa Mitsuyoshi, *The Seer (Maboroshi)*, chap. 41, from *The Tale of Genji*, Edo period, 1611-1612.

Kuboso Museum, Izumi, Japan.

Le Dit du Genji de Murasaki-shikibu Illustré par la Peinture Traditionnelle Japonaise, 68-9.

The 1688 version of the Kano school painting depicts Genji in the tenth month of “The Seer,” as he watches the geese flying overhead (fig. 6). It is in this scene that Genji composes the poem from which the chapter takes its name. In this painting, Genji is alone. He is wearing robes similar to the Tosa painting, which, in contrast to the robes of his New Year’s visitors, are plain and discreet. This indicates an attempt to consistently depict Genji’s robes as a reflection of his isolation, which I argue is a marker of his heart-mourning.



Fig. 6

Anonymous, Kano school, The Seer (*Maboroshi*), chap. 41, from *The Tale of Genji*, Edo period, c. 1688.

Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, Ireland.

Le Dit du Genji de Murasaki-shikibu Illustré par la Peinture Traditionnelle Japonaise, 71.

Moving on within the calendar year, the Tosa painting illustrates the eleventh month, when Genji has his letters from Lady Murasaki burned (fig. 7). In this painting, Genji is “tracing a poem goodbye in the margin of one of the letters” preparing to burn them all.⁴⁰¹ This scene matches the text of the tale in that Genji had two or three serving women burn the letters in his presence, and “he only wrote in the margin of a long one,

かきつめて見るもかひなしもしほ草おなじ雲みの煙とをなれ

I shall have no joy from gathering sea-tangle traces of her brush:

let them rise above the clouds as she also rose, in smoke.⁴⁰²

⁴⁰¹ *Le Dit du Genji de Murasaki-shikibu Illustré par la Peinture Traditionnelle Japonaise*, trans. Rene Sieffert (Paris: Diane de Selliers, 2007), 73.

⁴⁰² SNBZS v. 23, 534. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 778.

In this vignette, only his serving women and his letters surround Genji, demonstrating his continued isolation from the world. The entire vignette is walled in by the screens that enclose Genji on three sides. The outside world is frozen over, with the bamboo and pine of the winter season covered in snow. Other than the letters that Genji is writing on and one serving woman holds without looking at, all others lie scattered about. This, as well as the central burning fire, demonstrates these letters are not being read, but are in the process of being discarded, paralleling the text. By choosing to illustrate this scene, the artist highlights Genji's isolation, remembrances of Lady Murasaki, and grief.



Fig. 7

Tosa Mitsuoki, The Seer (*Maboroshi*), chap. 41, from *The Tale of Genji*, Edo period, 17th Century.

Private collection, Japan.

Le Dit du Genji de Murasaki-shikibu Illustré par la Peinture Traditionnelle Japonaise, 72.

In the Edo period partial sets described above the Tosa artist(s) single out the first, third, and eleventh months in order to portray an isolated and mourning Genji who is lamenting the fact that Lady Murasaki is no longer alive. In the first month, by showing

Genji behind blinds, the artist draws attention to his separation from other figures. In the third month, by depicting Genji with his surviving wives and children, the artist emphasizes Genji's separation from Lady Murasaki. Finally, in the eleventh month, Genji severs his final attachment to Lady Murasaki's belongings, her letters, by burning them. The artists of the Kano painting and the black and white drawings make similar choices, representing the first month of the year when Genji remains behind his blinds during New Year visits and when the falling snow prompts Genji to recall hurting Lady Murasaki. Additionally, the tenth month is illustrated to enhance Genji's isolation when he sees geese flying overhead and laments that he has no way to reunite with Lady Murasaki. When selecting how to represent "The Seer" visually, in choice of vignette and portrayal of clothes and furnishings, the Tosa artist(s) relays Genji's sorrow, grief, and preparations to leave the world.

This overview of Edo period Genji drawings and paintings is not meant to be a comprehensive list of every image made to depict "The Seer." My intention is to provide a representative sample of frequently found themes, which were an important part of the received tradition of the *Genji* that modern manga artists had to negotiate when making their own choices illustrating the tale. This, in turn, will help to put in perspective the choices of artists when they illustrate "The Seer."

Manga Versions of *Genji*: *Asaki yume mishi* and *Maro, n?*

There are more than twenty different manga versions of *The Tale of Genji*, each geared toward a different audience, with genres such as *shōjo* (girls'), *shōnen* (boys'), *redizu* (ladies'), *seinen* (youth/male), *seinen* (adult/male), and children's.⁴⁰³ Arguably, the most famous *Genji* manga are Yamato Waki's thirteen-volume best-seller *Asaki yume mishi* (*Fleeting Dreams*; 1980-1993) and *Ōzukami Genji monogatari maro, n?* (*Getting the Gist of The Tale of Genji, I/Chestnut?*; 2002) by Koizumi Yoshihiro. Both of these manga depict each of the fifty-four chapters in the *Genji*. However, the styles and choices of the artists are based on format and audience and are dramatically different. Investigating these two vastly different manga, both of which have wide readership, reveals that Murasaki Shikibu's mourning poetics, albeit in translated form, remain a crucial component to manga replacements of "The Seer."

Yamato's *Asaki yume mishi*, by far the most popular *Genji* manga, selling more than twelve million copies, is a lengthy replacement of the tale geared toward young women.⁴⁰⁴ Yamato's version is situated squarely in the genre of *shōjo* manga. John Treat gives a lengthy analysis of the *shōjo* genre, tracing the youthful, female focus back to the Meiji period.⁴⁰⁵ Contemporary signifiers of *shōjo* are female (yet "neither male nor female but rather something importantly detached from the productive economy of

⁴⁰³ Miyake, "Graphically Speaking: Manga Versions of 'The Tale of Genji,'" 360.

⁴⁰⁴ Kitamura Yuika, "'Shōjo no yume' no ōkan: 'Asaki yume mishi' ron," in *Kokusai Bunkagaku* 3 (2000), 160, 149.

⁴⁰⁵ John W. Treat, "Yoshimoto Banana Writes Home: *Shōjo* Culture and the Nostalgic Subject," in *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 9:2 (1993), 363.

heterosexual reproduction”), consumer driven, and cute obsessed.⁴⁰⁶ *Asaki yume mishi* presents *The Tale of Genji* from a female point of view, but one that still believes (perhaps because of inexperience) in romantic notions of heterosexual relationships. Therefore, Yamato’s replacement text highlights the romantic aspects of the tale, of particular interest for her contemporary audience. The result is that Yamato’s *Genji* alters the tale by omitting scenes that do not fit into the *shōjo* manga scheme and subsequently contributes to the popular notion that the *Genji* is not much more than an epic love story.

The forty-first chapter of *Asaki yume mishi*, which spans forty-nine pages, is a blend of the chapters “The Law” and “The Seer,” as well as a blend of old and new visual representation. Yamato’s chapter begins with Lady Murasaki’s funeral procession, cremation, and mourning period originally depicted in “The Law.” Genji is in dark mourning robes (even though Lady Murasaki is not his “official” wife) and utterly bereft after her death. There are tears of grief running down his cheeks, making it impossible to misinterpret Genji’s feelings. Seventeen pages later, Yamato depicts the first scene in “The Seer,” when Genji accepts a New Year’s visit from Hotaru, their abbreviated conversation rendered in speech bubbles. In her illustrations, Genji is still wearing dark mourning robes but is not behind his blinds (fig. 8), both following and violating the Edo templates previously introduced. The setting for this meeting is difficult to discern, as in some frames the pair are located inside Genji’s residence, and in others, they seem to be outside. In the first frame (*koma*), Genji and Hotaru are inside Genji’s residence; Genji is at the top right corner with Hotaru below him in the bottom left. This hierarchy is

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid., 364.

appropriate, since at this point in the tale Genji had acquired the rank equivalent to retired emperor, above Hotaru. Additionally, it is in this illustration that Genji delivers his New Year poem, rendered in both classical Japanese (in a text box) and a modern language translation (imposed on the illustration). In the next frame the hierarchy of the men is reversed, and Hotaru stands above Genji, delivering his response poem, rendered in similar fashion. Yamato's first illustration of this New Year visit is similar to the Tosa painting in its positioning of the two men, but favors showing Genji's face rather than positioning him behind blinds. The second illustration is a deviation from earlier images, reversing the hierarchy and the location of the two men, privileging the status of the speaker. These choices have the effect of reducing the reader's awareness of Genji's isolation and his privileged position in the world. Instead, functioning more like a camera in a movie that switches point of view, this vignette portrays the close relationship between Genji and Hotaru and, by including two versions, the importance of their poetic exchange.

As Hotaru's visit draws to a close, on the lefthand side of the page, Yamato, like the artist of the Tosa painting for this vignette, adds Hotaru to the scene depicting Niou's devotion to the *ume* tree. (fig. 9) Genji is at the top of the page, again, outside of his blinds, in dark mourning robes. Beneath him is Hotaru, who, instead of Genji or Niou, speaks the message of this vignette--the blossoms continue to bloom although Lady Murasaki is no longer alive. Finally, at the bottom of the page is Niou, dressed in grey mourning robes. All three characters are gazing at the *ume* tree, which represents the loss of Lady Murasaki and the season's continuation despite her death. By placing the

characters together in this fashion, and having only Hotaru speak, the reader is left with the impression that the grief the three experience is equal. In “The Seer,” Genji’s sorrow is unparalleled, as Hotaru expresses only condolences and Niou is too young to truly understand the depth of his loss.



Fig. 8.

Yamato’s “The Seer” chapter, Hotaru’s New Year visit. Yamato Waki, *Asaki yume mishi* v. 5, (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2015), 333.



Fig. 9.

Yamato's "The Seer" chapter, Niou's pledge to the *ume* tree. Yamato Waki, *Asaki yume mishi* v. 5, 336.

Moving onto the second month, Niou spots a warbler in the *ume* tree and Genji composes his second month poem, lamenting that Lady Murasaki is not alive to appreciate the blossoms, rendered in both classical Japanese and a modern translation. This representation of the month neither omits nor adds, but is a straightforward approach.

Yamato's depiction of the third month highlights Genji's visits to the Third Princess and the Akashi Lady, and his pleasure at seeing the children. Yamato has enough space to draw these scenes out, and does not combine Genji's visits into a single

vignette (like the Tosa paintings). However, she does make editorial decisions that alter the scene at hand. For instance, after Genji's visit with the Akashi Lady, although Yamato includes Genji's morning-after poem (again rendered in both classical and modern Japanese) she illustrates Genji, now in plain robes, at the top of the frame, walking away from the Akashi Lady as she looks on after him. The placement of Genji's poem to the Akashi Lady within this illustration (in the right-hand center frame of the page) makes it appear as if Genji composes this poem *while he is leaving* the Akashi Lady (fig. 10). This choice has the effect of lessening Genji's concern for the Akashi Lady and making his decision to leave more concrete. By changing the timing of this poem from a "morning-after" poem to an "as I'm leaving now" poem, Yamato does not depict Genji debating whether to spend the night. In "The Seer," it is only the morning after he left the Akashi Lady that he thinks back on the visit and realizes that he treated her badly by not staying, and, as consolation, sends her a poem.



Fig. 10.

Yamato's "The Seer" chapter, Genji leaving the Akashi Lady. Yamato Waki, *Asaki yume mishi* v. 5, 359.

In the book edition of *Asaki yume mishi*, Yamato concludes her forty-first chapter after the third month. As has been detailed throughout this dissertation, within *The Tale of Genji*, "The Seer" has a unique month-by-month, year-long structure. By breaking the chapter after the third month, Yamato disrupts the flow of time so central to the functioning of "The Seer." This decision robs readers of the uniqueness of the chapter, but underscores the difference between the spring chapters and the rest of the seasons. As discussed in chapter three, the spring season progresses at a slower pace than the rest of the seasons, leisurely using natural images from Lady Murasaki's garden to spur Genji's memories of his deceased love.

Yamato's fourth month begins in the forty-second chapter of *Asaki yume mishi*, featuring wisteria blossoms that remind Genji of Fujitsubo, the change to summer clothes, the Kamo festival, and Genji's flirtatious exchange with Chūjō. In this month, Yamato makes several choices that deviate from the text. First, Genji's clothing (earlier represented as dark mourning robes in the first month and plain robes in the third month) becomes more ornate. Second is the inclusion of comparisons to Fujitsubo. The textual version (as well as the Tosa painting described above, see fig. 4) of the fourth month in "The Seer" makes no mention of Fujitsubo, as this is done in the third month, when Genji visits the Akashi Lady. Finally, in Yamato's depiction of the Kamo festival, she takes artistic license (three and a half pages of it) to revisit the famous festival scene in the ninth chapter titled "Heart-to-Heart," when the Rokujō Lady's carriage was rustled by Aoi's carriage. This choice allows Yamato to interrupt Genji's sorrow and isolation during his mourning of Lady Murasaki in "The Seer," with a few pages of action, including swirling sex scenes of a time past--choice stuff for *shōjo* manga.

True to the form of Murasaki Shikibu's "The Seer," the pace of *Asaki yume mishi* quickens with the arrival of summer. Yamato illustrates Yūgiri's visit and remembrances of Lady Murasaki's beauty in the fifth month, lotus blossoms and fireflies in the sixth month, the lack of a Tanabata event in the seventh month, and Lady Murasaki's memorial service in the eighth month. (fig. 11) Yamato visually plays up Genji's grief during the memorial service, a ritual that is not a common scene in *shōjo* manga, by returning Genji to his black mourning robes and streaming tears. In this month, Yamato includes the laments of the household serving women, Genji's thoughts during the memorial service,

and his poetic exchange (in the same classical Japanese/modern Japanese pattern seen earlier) with Chūjō, who, through Genji's description of her as Lady Murasaki's favored serving woman, is clearly indicated as a memento of Lady Murasaki.



Fig. 11.

Yamato's "The Seer" chapter, Lady Murasaki's memorial. Yamato Waki, *Asaki yume mishi* v. 5, 387.

As the year progresses, Yamato does not depict the ninth month and jumps straight to the Gosechi festival, migration of the geese, and the "Oh seer" poem of the tenth month. Like the Kano school painting of Genji witnessing the geese flying overhead, Yamato's illustration features an isolated Genji, gazing upward at the birds, longing for his lost love. (fig. 12) This vignette is divided into three panels. In the first

panel, the geese flying against a bright full moon take center stage, while Genji, now wearing ornate robes, silently watches their flight. In the second panel, Genji, mournfully leaning on a railing, wishes that he had a seer who could travel to Lady Murasaki, a reference to the Daoist seer in “The Song of Everlasting Sorrow.” In the third panel, Genji composes the “Oh seer” poem from which the chapter takes its name. Yamato illustrates Genji, the moon, and the geese in nearly equal proportion, with the classical Japanese poem in a text box in the upper right hand corner and the modern translation in the lower left corner. In this panel Genji is no longer looking at the geese, but is instead looking at the reader. The placement of these poems privileges the classical Japanese over the modern, and equally draws the reader’s attention to the poem and the image of a solitary Genji, seemingly in dialogue with the reader. While the first panel is similar in construction to the Tosa image of this vignette (fig. 6), Yamato’s second and third panel illustrations draw the reader into Genji’s space and allowing Genji to enter into dialogue with the reader.



Fig. 12.

Yamato's "The Seer" chapter, Genji gazing at the geese. Yamato Waki, *Asaki yume mishi* v. 5, 388.

Yamato's eleventh month, like that of the Tosa painting (fig. 7), is signified by the burning of Lady Murasaki's letters (fig. 13). However, the two images of the same vignette could not be more different. In the Tosa painting, Genji is inside his residence, writing a farewell message on a letter, and his serving women are preparing to burn the letters in his presence. In Yamato's illustration, divided into two panels, Genji is outside. He stands in the foreground, eyes closed, head raised to the sky. The only text in this panel is Genji's poem, rendered in both classical and modern Japanese. Behind Genji is a large, flowering (despite it being the eleventh month) tree. Beneath the tree, Genji's serving women burn Lady Murasaki's letters. In the next panel, Yamato takes even

greater artistic license, and illustrates amongst the flaming cinders of the burning letters a pledge that Genji and Lady Murasaki will be reunited in the afterlife on the same lotus (or Buddhist Paradise). This addition omits the parallel between the feelings of sorrow at separation Lady Murasaki felt when Genji was in exile in Suma with Genji's current grief, as well as undermines the sense of separation and hopelessness found in Murasaki Shikibu's scene of burning Lady Murasaki's letters.

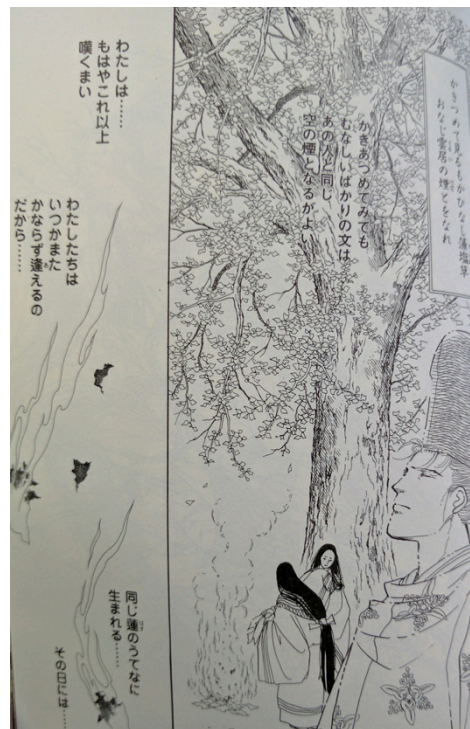


Fig. 13.

Yamato's "The Seer" chapter. The burning of Lady Murasaki's letters. Yamato Waki, *Asaki yume mishi* v. 5, 395.

Yamato's twelfth month concludes with the Buddhist names service and preparations for the New Year event. While in "The Seer" this scene comprises only

three pages in the classical Japanese and two pages in English translation, Yamato extends this scene for ten pages.⁴⁰⁷ At first glance, it might seem a strange choice to dwell on a Buddhist service in manga, as it is not a ritual known for feminine qualities or romantic overtones. Indeed, the function of Yamato's vignette is not to convey sorrow or romance, but to illustrate Genji's glory. One panel (the right-hand of five panels) is devoted to the excess of the event, demonstrating a return to Genji's former role of grand host. (fig. 14) In this vignette, a long table filled with food, serving dishes, art, and people contrasts other scenes in the chapter where Genji is pictured alone, or only in the company of close companions, in simple rooms or in nature. Later, in the upper left third of the page, Yamato depicts Genji's re-emergence in the world, and his guests remark that his "light" (*hikari*) is just as it once had been (fig. 15). In these panels, Genji is the focus. He is clearly out from behind blinds and wearing ornate robes, seemingly restored to his former self. "The Seer" also concludes with lines depicting the splendor of the event and Genji's light, but in brief passing. By exaggerating the importance of this scene, Yamato's vignettes downplay the sorrow Genji feels until his exit from the tale and assures readers of his power and glory. In this way, having built a Genji that contemporary young female readers could love, she validates their feeling for him by validating his "goodness."

⁴⁰⁷ SNKBZS v. 23, 534-36. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 778-80.

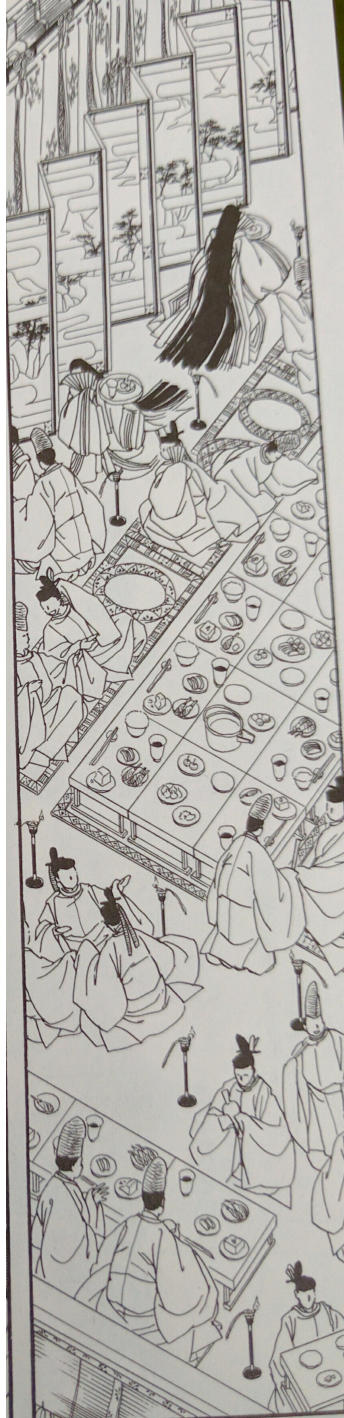


Fig. 14.

Yamato's "The Seer" chapter. The New Year event. Yamato Waki, *Asaki yume mishi* v. 5, 402.

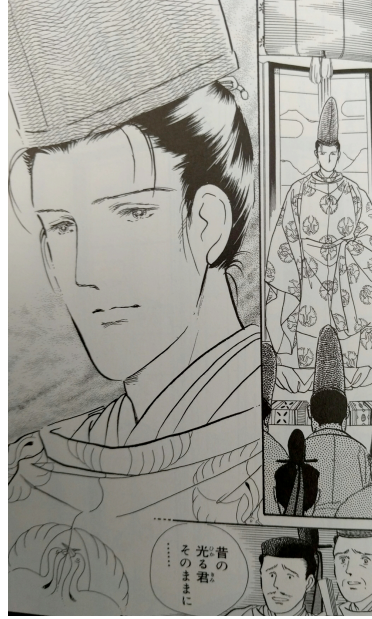


Fig. 15.

Yamato's "The Seer" chapter. The New Year event. Yamato Waki, *Asaki yume mishi* v. 5, 403.

Yamato's depiction of "The Seer" is faithful in the deployment of the year-long content of the chapter but there is a marked change in structure and notable omissions of seasonal poems. The pacing of Yamato's translation is also close to the original, with spring lasting the longest and the rest of the seasons progressing quickly. However, as mentioned above, the break between the seasons disrupts the flow of Genji's grief and creates an artificial division between his springtime laments and those that follow. Additionally, by dwelling on vignettes in the fourth and twelfth months, Yamato changes the emotions of scenes in "The Seer" from sorrow to conflict, romance, and splendor. Both Murasaki Shikibu and Yamato depict Genji in mourning and constant mental turmoil throughout "The Seer." Through her illustrations of clothing, hairstyles, and

interiors, Yamato reinforces Heian customs, architecture, fashion, and rituals. Yamato's use of facial expression portrays Genji's mental anguish and his romantic feelings toward the women in his life, while focusing on Genji's romance with Lady Murasaki and his sorrow at their parting.

While *Asaki yume mishi* retells the *Genji* at a leisurely pace and fits squarely in the *shōjo* genre, *Maro, n?*, on the other hand, is an almost absurdly compressed version of the tale categorized as a “youth/general” manga.⁴⁰⁸ Like Yamato, Koizumi also represents all fifty-four chapters of the *Tale*. However, the structure (as well as genre) of *Maro, n?* differs from Yamato's lengthy approach, as Koizumi opted to retell each chapter within the confines of two pages divided into eight frames.⁴⁰⁹ Koizumi's method, to serve up a general outline of the tale, certainly speeds up the telling of the tale, but also requires drastic omissions. In addition, his choice to represent Genji with a chestnut for a head is visual signal to the reader that he is not attempting to portraying a real, fully rounded man-character. Instead, Koizumi is presenting a replacement of Genji, stripped of complex emotion and reduced to a tool to communicate the bare essentials of his character.⁴¹⁰ For this reason, it is interesting to see what Koizumi chose to include, and how he portrays included scenes.

⁴⁰⁸ Miyake, “Graphically Speaking: Manga Versions of ‘The Tale of Genji,’” 367.

⁴⁰⁹ Some are augmented by additional information after the chapter, such as important poems, and character trees.

⁴¹⁰ As Miyake explains, “The last three syllables, however, are a pun: ‘Maro’ is a first person reference used in *Genji* that, according to the artist, makes the protagonist more accessible. When ‘maro’ is joined to ‘n,’ however, it forms the word ‘maron,’ a loan word from the French for ‘chestnut’ (marron)—hence: *Genji*, the chestnut. Following through visually on the verbal pun, Koizumi also depicts the hero as a chestnut. In his afterword, Koizumi explains that he first created Maro as a logo character to advertise a new confectionary product that he named Maro, n?. The project was never actualized, so he stuffed Maro, n? into a drawer. Later, on a lark, he began illustrating *Genji*, and, thinking that his chestnut character made

In the first frame, Koizumi's first month of the year in "The Seer" is heavily text-based. The chapter opens with a textual mention of Hotaru's New Year visit and Genji's isolation during the New Year. In the middle of this first frame is Genji, sporting the sign of emotional distress (a sweat drop on the side of his forehead) and wearing plain and indistinctive robes, recalling how he hurt Lady Murasaki by marrying the Third Princess. The final third of this frame highlights how the *ume* blossoms bring Lady Murasaki's memory. Although stripped to the bone, Koizumi manages to conjure each of the three first month scenes of Murasaki Shikibu's "The Seer."

The illustration of the next frame shows Niou and Genji looking at the cherry blossoms in the third month. (fig. 16) Similar to the representations in the Tosa painting (fig. 4), Koizumi's Genji is leaning on the railing as he talks with Niou.⁴¹¹ However, in Koizumi's representation, Genji is looking at the blossoms with Niou and not into his residence at the serving women in various stages of mourning. This changes the focus of Genji's attention, from his lonely interior, to the external world: both the garden and Niou's focus. The text begins from the right side of the panel, and, in type-face, the narrator explains that the Akashi empress (the daughter of Genji and the Akashi Lady) returned to the palace but, because Genji was lonely, Niou remained. The vignette moves left, featuring Genji (out from behind his blinds) leaning on a handrail, viewing the blossoms with Niou. Niou remarks that Lady Murasaki told him she wanted him to protect the *ume* and cherry blossoms. Genji's face reveals no traces of sadness, but his

a perfect Heian aristocrat, created Maro/Genji." Miyake, 367. See also, Koizumi Yoshihiro, *Genji monogatari maro, n?* (Tokyo: Gentosha, 2002), 257-58.

⁴¹¹ Yamato's treatment of this scene is drastically different, with Genji and Niou standing beneath the cherry tree, looking up at the blooming branches.

robes are plain and non-distinct. The narration at the far right of the frame gives the reader his/her only clue to Genji's state of mind, revealing that Genji only wanted Niou as his companion as he was a consolation to his heart. In this vignette, Koizumi's artistic choices minimize Genji's isolation and grief and highlight the basic plot points of "The Seer," moving the chapter along.



Fig. 16.

Koizumi's "The Seer" chapter, looking at the *ume* blossoms. Koizumi Yoshihiro, *Ōzukami Genji monogatari maro, n?* (Tokyo: Gentosha, 2002), 218.

The third and fourth frames of Koizumi's "The Seer" captures Genji's visit to the Third Princess and Akashi Lady during the third month. The third depicts Genji visiting the Third Princess, at her devotions, and children playing. (fig. 17) The narration, in typeface, on the right side is a description that although Genji went to visit the Third Princess, she had no sympathy for his sadness. This feeling is reiterated by the depiction of the Third Princess, her back to Genji, focused on her devotions, behind a screen. Meanwhile, Genji, visibly distressed (as evidenced by the pearl of sweat on his brow), thinks about Lady Murasaki. Genji's thoughts, in handwriting in a thought bubble,

compare Lady Murasaki to the Third Princess, admiring Lady Murasaki's sensitivity (and the Third Princess's lack thereof). In front of Genji two children, whom the narrator in the left text box identifies as Niou and Kaoru, play. Koizumi's depiction of the Third Princess is similar to the Tosa painting of the same vignette (fig. 5). Both place the Third Princess in the upper right hand corner at her devotions, her back to Genji below, seemingly indifferent to the events unfolding around her.

The fourth frame of Koizumi's "The Seer" highlights Genji's visit to the Akashi Lady. (fig. 18) The narration text on the right informs the reader that Genji is now conversing with the Akashi Lady. Genji, illustrated as distressed and weeping, judges (through handwritten text in a thought bubble) that even though the Akashi Lady is also refined, Lady Murasaki's taste was different (and better). The narrating text hemming in the vignette on the left informs the reader that, because Genji is only thinking of Lady Murasaki, he returns to his own quarters and does not spend the night with the Akashi Lady. In this vignette too, we find that Koizumi made similar choices, despite a different format and genre, to both the Tosa artist and Yamato. Koizumi privileges the third month with two frames (out of the chapter's eight), emphasizing the length of the season in Murasaki Shikibu's "The Seer." His illustrations are similar to the Tosa painting and Yamato's manga, choosing to represent the Third Princess at her devotions, the playing children, and the Akashi Lady with flowing hair and beautiful robes.



Fig. 17.

Koizumi's "The Seer" chapter, Genji's visit to the Third Princess. Koizumi, *Ōzukami Genji monogatari maro*, n?, 218.



Fig. 18.

Koizumi's "The Seer" chapter, Genji's visit to the Akashi Lady. Koizumi, *Ōzukami Genji monogatari maro*, n?, 218.

The second half of Koizumi's "The Seer" is heavily text based. The fifth frame features a drawing of a blooming lotus blossom (an image associated with the sixth month) but covers (in text) the fourth through the tenth months. However, each month is not represented, as, much like Yamato, Koizumi omits the ninth month. The change of clothes represent the fourth month, Yūgiri's visit and the rains represent the fifth month, the lotus in the lake represents the sixth month, the Tanabata festival represents the

seventh month, Lady Murasaki's memorial service represents the eighth month, and the migrating geese flying overhead represents the tenth month. By combining so many months, Koizumi mimics the quickening pace of "The Seer" after the third month.

In the seventh frame, Koizumi depicts Genji burning Lady Murasaki's letters in the eleventh month. (fig. 19) This image is similar to the Tosa painting (fig. 7) where Genji and his serving women sit around a fire to dispose of the letters. The narrator's text on the right side provides the background for Genji's actions, explaining that he is thinking about becoming a monk. However, in Koizumi's vignette, Genji himself is burning the letters. The choice to make Genji the actor is a big departure from Murasaki Shikibu's narrative and points to the fact that Koizumi's Genji is not the same as Murasaki Shikibu's Genji. Simply because Koizumi is operating within a very narrow frame, and his illustrations are already crowded with text, the choice to have Genji burn the letters is not a result of Koizumi's "paring down." In this frame there already exists the number of illustrated characters necessary to depict Genji's serving women burning the letters. While Murasaki Shikibu's Genji is too distraught to burn the letters himself (and of too high a rank to perform such a task), Koizumi's Genji is a symbolic reworking, a generalized character devoid of deep emotion or a "real" place in the world of a Heian *monogatari*.



Fig. 19.

Koizumi's "The Seer" chapter, burning Lady Murasaki's letters. Koizumi, *Ōzukami Genji monogatari maro*, n?, 219.

The final frame of Koizumi's "The Seer" illustrates Genji's illuminated reemergence into the world after the Buddha names ceremony. Genji is wearing patterned robes and is in the presence of men for the first time. The text that surrounds this image focuses on Genji and his light and fortunes. This is similar to both Murasaki Shikibu's and Yamato's decisions to include references to Genji's light as a signal to readers that Genji is assured a good rebirth and eventual enlightenment.

After the allotted eight frames per chapter, in "The Seer" Koizumi devotes an additional two pages to poems, in classical Japanese. The first is Genji's "Oh seer" poem from which the chapter takes its name and the second is Genji's final poem in *The Tale of Genji*:

もの思ふと過ぐる月日も知らぬ間に年もわが世もけふや尽きぬる

Lost in my sorrows I never knew months and days were still passing by—
is the year really over, and my time, too, in the world?⁴¹²

With this farewell message, Koizumi turns his attention to the Ukifune chapters.

Although Koizumi's version of the tale stands on its own as a replacement of the original text, the highly condensed nature of the work relies on the reader's prior knowledge to understand all the layers of the scene and the chosen language and image. *Maro,n?*, rather impressively, keeps fairly true to the unique year-long structure of "The Seer" and to the chapter's rhythm, where the spring scenes pass more slowly than the other months of the year. Koizumi's vignettes suggest a conversation with the Tosa paintings, at times appropriating similar images and perspectives, while at other times making changes to fit a more pared-down, emotionless, version of the chapter. For example, Koizumi chooses to omit Genji's seasonal poems and solitary laments, and instead illustrates Genji's grief through interactions with other characters.

Conclusion

When replacing "The Seer," either in painting or manga form, artists with the luxury of choosing more than one scene stress both Genji's heart-mourning of Lady Murasaki as well as the month-by-month year-long structure of the chapter. The way artists depict these scenes depends on the patron and audience. All of the artists had to grapple with how to convey the meaning of a purely textual work through illustrated

⁴¹² SNBZS v. 23, 536. Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, 780.

form. In addition, all of the artists had the challenge of translating material that was in an archaic language and situated in a world long since past, with different morals, values, fashion, architecture, and ritual.

Yamato reinforces the *shōjo* manga theme of all things love and romance, enhancing Genji's emotions of love and sorrow with tears and expressions of intense grief. She leisurely depicts the chapter, without feeling the need to restrict herself to illustrations of grief and longing in order to conform to a super-imposed structure, either of her own making or of Murasaki Shikibu's making. Yamato is concerned with showcasing "beautiful people," the deep effects of love, and elegant longing. Miyake describes this style as comprised of:

liquid, expressive eyes that mirror their deep emotions. Fragile, buffeted by the winds of fate, and so very humanly vulnerable, these men and women come to life in swooning, swooping lines of swirling hair, irregular frame sizes, diagonal perspective lines, and dark and light shadings. The drama of the presentation further emphasizes the agony and ecstasy of their lives in the Asaki world.⁴¹³

Without a female character to view the scene through, as *shōjo* manga, *Asaki yume mishi* presents "The Seer" through the prism of a man consumed with love and regret. It is through this overt expression that Yamato brings readers to understand the deceased Lady Murasaki.

Koizumi Yoshihiro uses a more pared-down approach, focusing on giving readers a general overview of the tale and positioning Genji in a light different from his "playboy" reputation. Koizumi's chestnut-headed Genji is too far removed from reality to be the object of scorn. However, at times, this technique works against Koizumi, such as

⁴¹³ Miyake, "Graphically Speaking: Manga Versions of 'The Tale of Genji,'" 377.

in scenes of sadness and longing. Because Koizumi's Genji is devoid of human facial features and frequently set against a white background, readers have trouble relating to his adorable character's sorrow (which, at times, looks more like he is suffering from exhaustion under the weight of his own head than in anguish).

Since the Edo period, illustrations of Genji in mourning after the death of Lady Murasaki have varied and grown more numerous. While vestiges of Edo-period scene selections remain, there is also a remarkable amount of individual choice in how to depict Genji's mourning in "The Seer." This suggests that each reader of the Genji translates the tale, creating a personal replacement text. However, each replacement hinges upon Murasaki Shikibu's "mourning poetics," her interweaving of the structures of time, lament, and mourning. While expressed in a variety of ways, Genji's heart-mourning provided centuries of artists rich textual and visual material to exploit in order to express Genji's depth and length of grief. Despite the passage of centuries between the Genji's "mourning poetics," artists' renderings focused on his dark mourning robes, isolation, and facial expressions of grief, signal his heart-mourning to contemporary audiences. Similarly, by maintaining the structure of time so central to "The Seer" and illustrating Genji's relentless sorrow, artists instructed readers that Genji's mourning was unusually long and deep.

Conclusion

This study explores the concept of mourning poetics in *The Tale of Genji* and later classical Japanese literature. Through an analysis of scenes where Genji, the eponymous hero of *The Tale of Genji* mourns a lover, I have identified Murasaki Shikibu's method of constructing scenes of mourning by layering references to classical laments and mourning ritual practices over a framework of time. Through this "mourning poetics," Murasaki Shikibu recapitulates and clarifies Genji's relationships with his lovers—treasuring some and dismissing others—, pacifying their spirits and allowing his character to advance within the world of the tale. This theme climaxes in the chapter "The Seer," or "Maboroshi," which describes Genji's year-long mourning of Lady Murasaki, encapsulates their history, and eulogizes and quiets their spirits. This new schema of mourning in "The Seer" was to be expected, as older literary representations of mourning, while resonant, did not accurately reflect changing concepts of mourning ritual and practice in the late Heian period. In this way, in "The Seer," Murasaki Shikibu expertly weaves together "present" images of time, poetic laments of the past, and contemporary expressions of mourning ritual to recall the past and push it into the future world of the tale.

This study has also illustrated the effect Murasaki Shikibu's mourning poetics had on later scenes of mourning throughout the late classical period and into the contemporary, specifically those in the "Crane Grove" chapter of *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, the *Initiate's Chapter* of *The Tale of the Heike*, and vignettes of "The Seer" in *Genji* manga. In an analysis of "Crane Grove" and the *Initiate's Chapter*, I demonstrate

that the authors (each of whom was familiar with the *Genji*) adapted Murasaki Shikibu's use of the deliberate structure of time to lament, mourn, and pacify the dead. An additional function of this mourning poetics in each of these later works, as in "The Seer," is the effect of pre-mourning and pre-pacifying the principal mourner him/herself, necessary because s/he would no longer appear in the tale.

Such poetics were, of course, based in traditional praxis that played an important real-life social role and that can be recovered in part from a variety of texts in the documentary record. The earliest records detailing mourning practices in Nara and Heian period Japan date to the eighth century. Literary accounts of mourning are contained in the *Kojiki*, *Nihon shoki*, and *Man'yōshū*. These works were not compiled with the intent of regulating ritual, so the mourning acts contained within cannot be considered prescriptive. However, the (repeated) inclusion of certain acts after the death of a loved one, such as wearing white hempen robes and remaining in seclusion, suggest that audiences understood there was some normative mourning behavior that occurred after a period of waiting for the deceased to revive (*mogari*) and the disposal of the corpse (*hafuri*). The earliest prescriptive mourning articles appear in the Yōrō code of 718 C.E. These articles reflect change based on social contexts and codified the length of mourning (from one year to seven days) and color of mourning robes based on the relationship to the deceased. Unlike the white mourning robes described in the *Kojiki*, *Nihon shoki*, and *Man'yōshū*, the prescribed mourning robes for an emperor mourning a relative in the second degree or closer are black in color, due to the translation of Chinese mourning robes as the color of tin, or black.

Despite the inclusion of mourning articles in the Yōrō code, research by scholars such as Inada Natsuko and Masuda Yoshiko demonstrates that, as early as the ninth century, mourning ritual and practice was rarely carried out as prescribed. Over time, mourners tended to reduce the interval spent in mourning and deepen the color of mourning robes. For instance, by the ninth century mourners who were not emperors donned dark mourning robes as an expression of grief and shortened their mourning periods, averaging around only eleven days.⁴¹⁴ By the time *The Tale of Genji* was written in the early twelfth century, dark mourning robes were common throughout all levels of those in court service, and time in mourning seclusion was done by personal preference, often either drastically shortened or made to correspond with the forty-nine day Buddhist memorial service.

The Tale of Genji is a captivating fiction of the world of the Heian court. Not intended to record court customs and rituals, it remains an important source-book for scholars because the author relied on both to create a satisfying world for her tale. The *Genji* presents daily life in an idealized, fictionalized way, but still within the realm of believability for Heian audiences. In the *Genji*, knowing her readers could translate and comprehend multi-layered references to sorrow, eulogy, and spirit pacification in scenes of mourning, Murasaki Shikibu created a “mourning poetics” with the ability to pacify the spirits of her fictional characters and her real-life readers.

⁴¹⁴ Masuda Yoshiko, “Heian jidai,” in *Nihon Mofukushi Kodai Hen: Sōsō Girei to Yosooi* (Tokyo: Genryūsha, 2002), 88.

In *The Tale of Genji*, the treatment of mourning is not static but progresses and loss is just as important as love. In Genji's mourning scenes for Yūgao, Aoi, and Fujitsubo, Murasaki Shikibu combined contemporary mourning practice with earlier laments to recast Genji's relationship with each woman and demonstrate Genji's depth of feeling, and of mourning. Genji's young love for Yūgao is matched by his age and immature reactions to death. Genji, who never actually participates in mourning ritual for Yūgao, only comes to understand her after her true identity is revealed by her serving woman. This revelation corrects Yūgao's maligned reputation and enables Genji to feel genuine sorrow at her death, turning his poetic laments into spirit pacification. Genji's mourning of his wife, Aoi, reflects his growing mastery over his public life at court and his private romantic life. While Genji publically participates in the bare minimum mourning rituals necessary and composes public laments with socially appropriate allusions, his private actions betray his mourning and shallowness of feeling. Because Genji never truly comes to understand Aoi from her point of view, his mourning is a reflection of his marriage: a social contract, publicly observed, but privately often ignored. In the end, Aoi's spirit pacification is accomplished through the mourning and memorialization efforts of other characters. In contrast to mourning Aoi, Genji's public mourning of Fujitsubo cannot reflect his emotions due to the secret nature of their affair. It is through Genji's adopting heart-mourning, mourning practices that are not ritually prescribed, and coming to understand Fujitsubo through her point of view that Genji aids Fujitsubo's rebirth and pacifies her spirit.

The mourning scenes in *The Tale of Genji* come to a climax in the chapter “The Seer,” which details Genji’s grief after the death of his love, Lady Murasaki. Throughout the tale readers have always known that Lady Murasaki was Genji’s most important love, but Genji only comes to understand this fact through the mourning process. In this chapter, Murasaki Shikibu utilizes a month-by-month, year-long structure to highlight the abnormal length of Genji’s mourning of Lady Murasaki. Since Lady Murasaki was not a formal wife, Genji was under no social obligation to mourn Lady Murasaki for a three month period as outlined by the mourning articles of the Yōrō code. However, as the passing of the months demonstrates, Genji mourns Lady Murasaki for more than a year. Through monthly remembrances prompted by nature or court ritual, Genji laments Lady Murasaki’s death and creates a new character, a Lady Murasaki of Memory. Because this “Lady Murasaki of Memory” is created within Genji’s solitary mourning remembrances, she can only act within the larger world of the tale through Genji’s mourning actions, his year-long heart-mourning. This “Lady Murasaki of Memory” acts to appease the reader’s curiosity as to Genji’s ultimate fate, as well as unburden Genji’s character of guilt and attachment, pacify his spirit in advance of his death, and ensure his enlightenment.

Lady Murasaki and Genji were not the only beneficiaries of Murasaki Shikibu’s mourning poetics. The structure and function of mourning in the “Crane Grove” chapter of *The Tale of Flowering Fortunes* is similar to Murasaki Shikibu’s “The Seer.” In both chapters, the author depicts the main character mourning the death of a loved one until his own exit from the world, and the tale. In “Crane Grove,” the author substitutes Fujiwara no Michinaga and his daughter, Kenshi, for Genji and Lady Murasaki. This

serves to illustrate Michinaga as a splendid and elegant courtier, who, even better than Genji, is driven to his grave with grief not over the death of a lover—a casual and potentially coarse relationship—, but his daughter. Through mourning poetics first found in “The Seer,” which serves as eulogy and spirit pacification, the author recapitulates Michinaga’s life, pointedly comparing him to both Genji and the historical Buddha, and ultimately mourns and pacifies Michinaga after his death.

Similarly, the *Initiate’s Chapter* of *The Tale of the Heike* also utilizes the mourning poetics found in “The Seer” to mourn Emperor Antoku and pre-mourn Kenreimon’in. Over the course of a year, overlaid with the Buddhist ritual time of the realms of rebirth, the author of the *Initiate’s Chapter* depicts a mourner, previously glorious and now in decline, unable to move on after the death of a loved one. Kenreimon’in’s efforts to aid Antoku’s rebirth after she becomes a nun, rather than being a hindrance to her spiritual development and eventual salvation, becomes a helper on her religious path. The memory of Antoku allows Kenreimon’in to act in ways that assure her own good standing in history and good rebirth. Therefore, like the Lady Murasaki of Memory, the memory of Antoku pre-mourns and pre-pacifies Kenreimon’in.

Murasaki Shikibu’s mourning poetics did not die out in the premodern period and can be found in the replacement texts of contemporary *Genji* manga. Although the artists and authors of *Genji* manga adapt the text of *The Tale of Genji* for modern audiences interested in specific genres, I illustrate that the bones of Murasaki Shikibu’s mourning poetics remain in the manga illustrating all fifty-four chapters of the tale. For example, in *Asaki yume mishi* and *Ōzukami Genji monogatari maro, n?*, artists such as Yamato Waki

and Koizumi retain (although in altered form) the crucial chronology in their versions of “The Seer.” Both of these artists adapt Murasaki Shikibu’s mourning poetics to present “The Seer” through the lens of Genji who comes to understand the deceased Lady Murasaki and pacify her spirit (and therefore, ultimately pacify his own). However, they transform mourning poetics in order to fit their respective genres, highlighting or minimizing romantic notions of love and loss as it would appeal to their readership.

Murasaki Shikibu created a unique mourning scene in “The Seer.” This scene’s mourning poetics were so effective that later authors used them to position their historical mourners similarly to Genji, in part because mourner remembrances and mourning ritual practice were thought to pacify the spirits of the deceased. Through the retelling of histories, and the good deeds of the mourner him or herself, the memory of the deceased (or the narrator alluding to the memories) mourns and pacifies the spirit of the mourner. Audiences translated these scenes and mourning poetics, negotiating centuries of poetic lament and mourning actions, to participate in the eulogy and spirit pacification and ultimately accept the upcoming break in the narrative. Readers of these scenes of mourning, through the act of translation, become actors within the tale itself. Murasaki Shikibu seems to have anticipated this, as her mourning poetics provide a place to pacify the spirit of the reader as well, who might have been left unquieted by the loss of their hero/ine. Just as Genji leaves *The Tale of Genji*, his light surpassing his radiance of long ago, with “The Seer,” Murasaki Shikibu left the world with a chapter of mourning that eclipses all others.

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