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PANIC ATTACKS:

VIOLENT FEMALE DISPLACEMENT IN *THE TALE OF GENJI*

A Thesis Presented

by

OTILIA CLARA MILUTIN

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

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VIOLENT FEMALE DISPLACEMENT IN *THE TALE OF GENJI*

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OTILIA CLARA MILUTIN

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DEDICATION

To my parents

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I would like to gratefully acknowledge the support of my advisor, Professor Doris G. Bargen, for inspiring me to write this Master's thesis, for patiently guiding my academic project, and for trusting my abilities unwaveringly. Without her, not only my thesis, but also the person I am today, would not exist.

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INTRODUCTION

"I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –
I took the one less traveled by
And that has made all the difference."

Robert Frost – "The Road Not Taken" [1]

I. The Road to Violent Displacement

The Heian period (794-1185) in the history of Japan has often been called the "Golden Age" for the remarkable refinement of its court life, for its lack of major conflicts and upheavals, although, ironically it ended with a most cruel civil war, but most of all for the unprecedented flourishing of its arts, especially literature. The greater the temporal distance between a period in the past and the moment one calls "present" the more powerful the tendency to idealize this distant past. It is thus that Heian Japan often came to be confounded with a utopian ideal, encouraged also by the name of this historical age of "peace and tranquility."[2] *The Tale of Genji* (*Genji monogatari)* written by Murasaki Shikibu at the beginning of the eleventh century, the peak of the Heian period, and considered one of its masterpieces, if not *the* masterpiece, has been naturally credited with the same absolute values attributed to the historical period itself. Centuries after its composition, the *Genji* has been perceived as the manual of courtly values and its

[1] Robert Frost, *The Mountain Interval* (New York: Henry Holt and Comp., 1920); available from www.bartleby.com/119/; Internet; accessed 4 April, 2008.
[2] Heian 平安 is the association of the characters 平 (normally "average"; here, "peaceful") and 安 ("peaceful, tranquil").

heroes, whether the eponymous Hikaru Genji, or his literary heirs, Kaoru and Niou, as embodiments of refinement, elegance, and subtle amorous seduction.

The twentieth century, however, has brought about less reverent and awe-inspired inquiries into the realities conveyed in the *Genji* narrative and, with them, the discovery of the controversial and uncomfortable topic of sexual violence. Nowadays, sexual violence in the *Tale of Genji* is no longer a revolutionary hypothesis; yet it remains an unstable ground constantly reclaimed in the incentive debate between the much smaller *Genji-girai* ("hate/ detestation of Genji") party and the much more numerous defenders of Genji. The high stake of this ideological conflict lies in solving the accusation of Genji's as rapist, in regard to several incidents of the tale, but most conspicuously to Murasaki's loss of virginity in the "Heartvine" ("Aoi") chapter. Therefore, sexual violence in the *Genji* seems to be alarmingly limited to its manifestation as rape, that is, as non-consensual, forced intercourse. Although numerous critics have identified other cases of sexual violence, not necessarily connected to rape, few have gone beyond an incidental mentioning of them in the larger context of their scholarly pursuits. Unfortunately, it may be that these small and inconspicuous incidents ultimately hold the key to unlocking the far more visible cases of forced intercourse.

If by sexual violence one understands a variety of behavioral acts that have as their purpose a man's access to and control of a woman's body, independently of her own desire, then this definition should hardly be limited to rape. Thus, sexual violence could refer to acts of both physical and psychological aggression; each category is further divided into more nuanced manifestations: physical sexual violence could refer to rape or

to acts that create a context that facilitates rape; psychological sexual violence may also incorporate acts that range from deceit and manipulation to harassment.

In this thesis, I will explore one manifestation of physical sexual violence that does not fall under the incidence of the act of rape, but in several cases it precedes and facilitates it: violent female displacement by a male (often referred to as "violent female displacement," "violent displacement" or simply as "displacement"). The basic etymological definition of displacement is "dislocation" or "relocation" and in the context of *The Tale of Genji* it refers to the act by which a male protagonist changes the spatial position of a female character with a variety of purposes in mind, most conspicuously, with the intent of gaining or retaining access to and control over her body. As stated, violent displacement may create a context for rape; nevertheless, since the connection between the two acts of physical aggression is more often incidental than planned, violent displacement should be approached independently from its potential finality in forced intercourse. Only by identifying, analyzing and advancing violent female displacement as a distinct manifestation of male sexual violence in the *Genji* can one hope to establish a solid ground from which to address other, more controversial, incidents of sexual violence in the tale.

Violent displacement became the topic of my research due to a fortunate conjunction of factors. My undergraduate thesis at the University of Bucharest focused on the limitations of Genji's strategies of seduction and on his repeated failures in facing many of the tale's heroines, who resisted him. The logical next step would have been to question what happens when the man's attempts of seduction fail and to see how *Genji* heroes choose to act to attain their purposes. Indeed, failed seduction seems to be the

breeding ground for sexual violence. Yet, although determined to pursue the study of sexuality in *The Tale of Genji* from the perspective of its female characters, I was slow to take the obvious next step and, when I finally did, due to an epiphany rather than to a coherent rational process, I too was more fascinated by the controversial appeal of rape incidents than by anything else. For an extended period of time, I dedicated my entire energy to understanding such incidents as Murasaki's loss of virginity, Genji's consummation of the affair with the Akashi lady in spite of the door that blocks his way to her, the Third Princess's dubious affair with Kashiwagi and Niou's intrusion and subsequent intercourse with Ukifune, but despite my efforts I did not seem to get any closer to the destination of my scholarly pursuit and the episodes in question persisted in remaining as elusive as ever. The research on rape, however, has not been wasted time for it has warned me of the obstacles one faces when trying to approach a fictional incident in a work written one thousand years ago from the perspective of the modern discourses on sexual violence; it has also advised me to caution and objectivity in my approach; and finally, it has made me realize that every journey starts with the first step and that one cannot reach his or her destination without following the path to it. The road that I have chosen to take in this thesis, the road that I hope will lead me closer to understanding other incidents of sexual violence in *The Tale of Genji,* is the road of violent female displacement.

My research began with the attempt to establish the position of sexual violence within the larger theoretical background on the phenomenon of violence, of which sexual violence is all but a form of manifestation. Apart from the interesting entries on

"Violence" and "Sacrifice" in Mircea Eliade's *Encyclopedia of Religion*[3] which tend to focus more on the context of controlled violence and on the role of religion as mediator in the manifestations of violence by means of sacrifice, René Girard's complex anthropological study, *Violence and the Sacred,*[4] has had a most significance influence in the way I approached sexual violence in my thesis. Nevertheless, instead of trying to subordinate my critical discourse to a pre-set theoretical frame on violence, I attempted selectively to apply Girard's theories on violence, sexuality and religion whenever they seemed to fit the context of my own ideas on these topics. Thus, throughout my research I have used Girard's theory of the contagious nature of violence to underline the way in which *Genji* characters once featured in violent incidents, either as aggressors or as victims, tend to continue to be caught amidst acts of violence, even to the point where former victims become aggressors themselves. In addition, the author's concepts of "mimetic desire" and the "monstrous double" have greatly enriched my perception and interpretation of amorous triangles such as Yūgao – Genji – Tō no Chūjō and Ukifune – Kaoru – Niou. In the last case, Girard's concepts have served to explain the way the two male protagonists gradually become indistinguishable in their use of violent displacement towards Ukifune.

On a more practical level, Georges Vigarello's sociological study of rape in French legislation between the fifteenth and the twentieth centuries[5] has presented me with the opportunity to observe the importance of cultural context in dictating the approaches to sexual violence. It has become evident to me, under the influence of

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[3] Mircea Eliade et al., ed., *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. 16 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1987), 268-271; 544-557.
[4] René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred,* trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1997).
[5] Georges Vigarello, *Histoire du viol, XVe- XXe siècle* (Paris: Seuil, 1998).

Vigarello's study, that an anachronistic analysis of violent displacement risks being inaccurate.

Danielle Haase-Dubosc's research on matrimonial abduction in eighteenth-century France[6] focuses on a form of sexual violence subsumed under violent displacement. Abduction with apparent matrimonial designs is a recurrent event in the *Genji* in the cases of Yūgao, Murasaki and Ukifune, but, unlike Haase-Dubosc's study cases, *Genji* abduction cannot be traced back to the anthropological phenomenon of "marriage by capture." Thus, in order to differentiate between what some anthropologists term as a primitive marital custom and the incidents in the Heian tale that have little to do with marriage and more with sexual violence, I have had to further explore the practice of marriage by capture in two anthropological studies, by John F. McLennan[7] and Edward Westermarck.[8]

One of the imperatives derived from anthropological and sociological studies on violence has been the necessity of determining a clear context for my analysis of violent female displacement; this context refers both to the larger frame of Heian society and to the particular frame of the *Genji* narrative.

Ivan Morris's *World of the Shining Prince*[9] has proved if not a deep analysis of Heian society, then at least an extremely comprehensive one. The author covers a large ground in his research, from Heian-kyō as the setting proper to its political system, from its economy and administration to its religious practices and superstitions. The section

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[6] Danielle Haase-Dubosc, *Ravie et enlevée: de l'enlèvement comme stratégie matrimoniale au XVIIe siècle* (Paris : Albin Michael, 1999).
[7] John Ferguson McLennan, *Studies in Ancient History. Comprising a Reprint of Primitive Marriage* (London, Macmillan, 1886).
[8] Edward Westermarck, *The History of Human Marriage,* 3 vols. (New York: Johnston Reprint Corp., 1971).
[9] Ivan Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince: Court Life in Ancient Japan* (New York: Kodansha International, 1994).

most important to my research was Morris's overview of Heian courtship practices in his chapter on "Women of Heian and Their Relations with Men," which has served in establishing one of the criteria I use in defining violent female displacement as an act of male sexual violence, namely, its delineation as a deviation from the commonly observed courtship regulations.

A precious source of information on the volatile concept of Heian marriage have been William H. McCullough's article, "Japanese Marriage Institutions in the Heian Period"[10] and Wakita Haruko's "Marriage and Property in Premodern Japan from the Perspective of Women's Studies."[11] McCullough's research, already a classic in the field, warns against the difficulties of identifying a rigid form of marriage within the polygynous system of Heian Japan, in which only the position of principal wife benefited from easily discernable characteristics. Since none of the *Genji* heroines who becomes the victims of violent displacement holds the desirable position of *kita no kata* ("main, principal wife"), but oscillates between the undetermined status of secondary wife or mistress, I was able better to understand what a relative degree of protection marriage offered to Heian women and to *Genji* heroines.

Moreover, both McCullough and Wakita resort to the spatial factor in determining the various forms of Heian marriage. Whereas Wakita's division is more complex, but less accessible, McCullough's is the one more widely acknowledged; according to the latter, Heian marriages comprised four subcategories, based on the couple's place of residence: uxorilocal (the wife's or her parents' residence), neolocal (new residence),

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[10] William H. McCullough, "Japanese Marriage Institutions in the Heian Period," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies,* no 27 (1967): 103-167.
[11] Wakita Haruko, "Marriage and Property in Premodern Japan from the Perspective of Women's Studies," trans. Suzanne Gay, *Journal of Japanese Studies* 10, no. 1 (1984): 73-99.

duolocal (separate residences for husband and wife), and virilocal (the husband's residence)[12]. Both scholars further seem to agree that a Heian woman's independence relied on her place of residence: in an uxorilocal and duolocal marriage, the wife retained more autonomy from her husband, whereas in a virilocal marriage, she risked becoming entirely dependent on him.[13] The *Genji* heroes are conspicuously not involved in any uxorilocal marriage, unless one counts Genji's time spent at Akashi as one. Instead, most amorous relationships are of the duolocal type and it is in this context that violent displacement occurs. Or, since displacement has a primordial spatial coordinate, which refers to the man's violent removal of the woman from her initial location, it can also be perceived as the *Genji*'s heroes' attempt to determine a change from a duolocal type of marriage to a neolocal (seldom) or an "imperial" virilocal (predominantly) type of setting.

In addition to McCullough and Wakita, Peter Nickerson[14] and Hitomi Tonomura[15] also address the important aspect of women's right to property in the Heian society and incline to consider Heian women's position as favorable when compared to women's rights in the later warrior society. Women's rights to inherit and pass on property may have been a given in Heian Japan, but in the case of *The Tale of Genji*, few female characters enjoy such rights. The Nijō-in is a case in point. This estate had been the property of Genji's mother, Kiritsubo, thus, originally a feminine space. However, at his mother's death, the property passed on to Genji, mainly because of the absence of heirs of feminine sex, and hence became a purely male-controlled territory. Another case

[12] The virilocal type of marriage applied to the emperor and crown princes only.
[13] The neolocal type of marriage is extremely rare and, when happening, it rather falls into the category that allows the wife more independence form her husband, considering that in most cases it was her family that supported the costs for the couple's new residence.
[14] Peter Nickerson, "The Meaning of Matrilocality, Kinship, Property, and Politics in Mid-Heian," *Monumenta Nipponica* 48, no. 4 (1993): 429-467.
[15] Hitomi Tonomura, "Women and Inheritance in Japan's Earlier Warrior Society," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 32, no. 3 (1990): 592-623.

is that of Murasaki, who, although the grand-daughter of a Major Counselor, is prohibited from claiming her inheritance precisely as a result of her violent displacement (kidnapping) by Genji.

Hitomi Tonomura's research well exceeds the problems of women's rights to inheritance. To the benefit of my own scholarly pursuit, she brings into question the women's legal rights when confronted with acts of sexual violence.[16] Although Tonomura constantly compares the context of Heian society with the warrior society that replaces it to underline the gradual degradation in the women's position, she acknowledges the limited efficiency of the *ritsuryō* legal code, implemented in the eight century and still in use in the Heian period, in protecting women confronted with sexual violence or in punishing such incidents of sexual violence. Moreover, by switching her focus from history to literature, she observes that "other encounters, conducted under the guise of romantic pursuits, such as those featured in *The Tale of Genji*, equally suggest the marginal role laws played in directing people's daily lives, especially their sexual relations."[17] Tonomura's strong views on the limited efficacy of the legal codes available during the Heian period has seriously undermined my attempts to approach violent displacement as a form of sexual violence based on the stipulations of the *ritsuryō* laws. At the same time, the conclusions of her research have encouraged me to pursue my attempts to define violent displacement from other angles and to explore other directions.

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[16] Hitomi Tonomura, "Black Hair and Red Trousers: Gendering the Flesh in Medieval Japan," *The American Historical Review* 99, no. 1 (1994):129-154; "Sexual Violence against Women: Legal and Extralegal Treatment in Premodern Warrior Societies," in Hitomi Tonomura, Anne Walthall and Wakita Haruko, ed., *Women and Class in Japanese History* (Ann Arbor: center for Japanese Studies, 1999); "Coercive Sex in the Medieval Japanese Court: Lady Nijō's Memoir," *Monumenta Nipponica* 61, no.3 (2006): 283-338.

[17] Hitomi Tonomura, "Coercive Sex in Medieval Japanese Court: Lady Nijō's Memoir" (see previous note): 288-289.

With Terry Kawashima's *Writing Margins: The Textual Constructions of Gender in Heian and Kamakura Japan,*[18] I crossed the border between sociological studies and literary studies centered on the problem of Heian women's position. Scholars of literature, such as Kawashima, are less preoccupied with the position of real Heian women, than with that of their fictive counterparts, or rather with the way their position is constructed in the fictional, literary discourse. Without embracing stereotypes that claim the marginality of the entire female gender, Kawashima still remarks that "gender plays a prominent role in the process of marginalization"[19] and that it is always one aspect of femininity or another around which marginality is constructed, whether loose sexuality, old age, or female jealousy. The author's compelling argument of a marginality constructed in the permanent negotiation between the centers and the peripheries of power led me to believe that a similar construction was at work in the case of women's status and position, both within the primary and secondary sources available. Thus, I concluded that if I were to bring the concepts of sexual violence and its subcomponent of violent female displacement from exterior, sociological, anthropological, and even literary sources, and forcefully apply them to the *Genji* context, they might ultimately risk to be exposed as constructions fundamentally different from those of Murasaki Shikibu. Kawashima's work has dramatically changed my focus in approaching violent female displacement from outside Murasaki's text and encouraged me to pursue what was for me an experimental textual analysis. In other words, I became more aware of the importance of the *Genji* author's own construction of sexual violence, as revealed by the narrative.

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[18] Terry Kawashima, *Writing Margins: The Textual Construction of Gender in Heian and Kamakura Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001).
[19] Ibid., 2.

At the same time, I did not discard or abandon the research into the larger context of Heian society because I believed that Murasaki Shikibu may have constructed her concepts, characters and narrative under the direct influence of the everyday realities she was familiar with. As a direct result of that research on Heian society, I developed one of the criteria I used in defining violent female displacement as a manifestation of sexual violence, namely the importance of the characters' rank and status.

Edith Sarra in *Fictions of Femininity: Literary Inventions of Gender in Japanese Court Women's Memoirs*[20] approaches the discourse on femininity from a perspective that contrasts with Kawashima's. Instead of focusing on the way the centers of power construct a discourse of marginalization for certain categories of the female gender, Sarra is more preoccupied with how women writers seek to reclaim their position of power and to question the dominant culture. Her discoveries in the field of Heian women's memoirs have advanced the hypothesis of women's writing as a means of empowerment and further encouraged me to consider Murasaki Shikibu's authorial intentions in writing *The Tale of Genji* as a potential attempt to subvert the dominant discourse on female gender and also Ukifune's use of writing within the *Genji* text as a strategy of resistance to and escape from male aggression.

In correlation with my study of this heroine, Ukifune, and of the last ten "Uji chapters" of the tale, I reached a point where my general research on Heian society became insufficient in addressing the importance of the Buddhist discourse in connection to Murasaki's tale. If references to Buddhism are frequent before the Uji chapters, but they occur rarely in connection to sexual violence (one case being Murasaki's desire to

[20] Edith Sarra, *Fictions of Femininity: Literary Inventions of Gender in Japanese Court Women's Memoirs* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999).

take holy orders as a potential means to escape Genji's domination), in the Uji chapters Buddhist religion comes to play a decisive role in the incidents of Ukifune's violent displacement. For that reason, I felt the imperative to research in detail the Buddhist discourse on women typical of the Heian period.

Bernard Faure's two comprehensive studies, *The Red Thread* and *The Power of Denial*[21] have proved to be extremely beneficial to my research by establishing a clear panorama of the Buddhist views on femininity. Thus, although Buddhism did not make its debut as a discriminating religious and ideological system, by the time of the Heian period it came to exhibit a strong tendency towards gender discrimination. Still, the Buddhist discourse was never as clear-cut in terms of gender inequity as it might appear, for, even while expounding on women's limitations in reaching enlightenment, it strove to provide means for them to overcome these limitations. Genshin's *Ōjō yōshū* ("The Essentials of Rebirth", 984-985), for instance, advocated salvation for everyone, even for women, through the simple recitation of *nembutsu*. Together with the *Lotus Sutra,* Genshin's work became extremely influential among the court aristocrats of Murasaki Shikibu's day. George and Willa Tanabe's *Lotus Sutra in Japanese Culture*[22] and the collection of articles edited by Barbara Ruch under the title *Engendering Faith: Women and Buddhism in Premodern Japan*[23] have helped me better understand the influence of this religious writing in Heian society and literature.

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[21] Bernard Faure, *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); *The Power of Denial: Buddhism, Purity and Gender* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).
[22] George J. and Willa Jane Tanabe, *The Lotus Sutra in Japanese Culture* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1989).
[23] Barbara Ruch, ed., *Engendering Faith: Women and Buddhism in Premodern Japan* (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1999).

In terms of direct influence on my thesis, Edward Kamen's analysis of the religious-literary topoi of the dragon-girl and of the maidenflower in waka poetry[24] was paramount in establishing the basis of my association between Ukifune and the Naga girl of the *Lotus Sutra*. By focusing on the topos of the Dragon Girl, identified and detailed by Kamens in poetry, I was able closely to observe Murasaki Shikibu's own interpretation of it and, by extension, of the religious discourse typical of the *Lotus Sutra* and to conclude that the author of the *Genji* displays a subversive, irreverent attitude in regard to the Buddhist discourse. Her heroine, Ukifune, like other previous heroines before her, Utsusemi, Murasaki or the Third Princess, resorts to Buddhist religion not as an expression of true devotion, but as a strategy to ensure her own escape from a world dominated by sexual violence. Ironically, and it is here that one can perfectly detect Murasaki Shikibu's own views on Buddhism, in the case of Ukifune, religion does not constitute a viable method of salvation.

The idea that Heian women in general often resorted to Buddhist practices either as a means to escape from unsatisfactory amorous relationships or as a way to express gender discontent has become apparent in two studies by Barbara Ambros[25] and Young-ah Chung,[26] respectively. Although the two scholars referred to the *monomode* or the practice of pilgrimages by Heian women, their conclusions could easily be extended to the practice of taking religious vows.

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[24] Edward Kamens, "Dragon-Girl, Maidenflower, Buddha: The Transformation of the Waka Topos, *The Five Obstructions,*" *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 53, no. 2 (1993): 389-442.
[25] Barbara Ambros, "Liminal Journeys: Pilgrimages of Noblewomen in Mid-Heian Japan," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23, no. 3-4 (1997): 301-345.
[26] Young-ah Chung, "Heian Noblewomen's Pilgrimage: The Language of Gender Discontent and of (Re)Construction of the Self," *West Virginia University Philological Papers*. Available from http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-85240558.html. Internet; accessed April 11, 2006.

Finally, when it came to applying the information acquired from my research on violence, Heian society and Buddhist religion to the particular context of *The Tale of Genji*, several studies focusing on various aspects of this tale were extremely influential in shaping my own perspective and ideas on *Genji* violent female displacement.

The scholar whose theories I had to confront when I first approached sexual violence in the *Genji* was Margaret H. Childs. In her article on the value of vulnerability in amorous relationships portrayed in Japanese court literature,[27] Childs advances what she calls "the erotic potential of powerlessness" as an explanation and a motivation for male sexual aggression. In doing so, the critic approaches sexual violence through the lens of an exclusively male construct which diminishes the gravity of male aggression, taming it into a seduction strategy. Her defense of Genji, which comes in response to the *Genji-girai* discourses of some Japanese scholars, went little beyond the theory according to which male characters employ limited aggression on a temporary basis and with the only purpose of making women's vulnerability tangible. Childs's theories failed to answer the frequent *Genji* incidents in which women, who are already vulnerable, whether because of their low social position, insecure spatial location or age, are further victimized by male characters who do not seem to be content with the simple revelation of women's vulnerability.

At the same time, as part of her attempt to undermine the incidents of sexual violence in Heian women's literature, Childs supports the view that Heian women and their fictional counterparts possessed various strategies to resist male aggression and thus were not as helpless as one might like to believe. Nevertheless, Childs reaches a point

[27] Margaret H. Childs, "The Value of Vulnerability: Sexual Coercion and the Nature of Love in Japanese Court Literature," *The Journal of Asiatic Studies* 58, no. 4 (1999): 1059-1079.

where she blatantly contradicts her own ideas: if the idea of vulnerability and male limited aggression were mutually accepted components in the act of seduction, then what need was there for women to contrive elaborate strategies to escape from something apparently as harmless as courtship? Unaware of this contradiction, the critic advances several strategies that female characters presumably could rely on to escape male aggression: flight, the company of women, an appearance of invulnerability and passivity. Although only the first two strategies apply to *Genji* incidents, Childs's preoccupation with observing feminine reactions to sexual violence led me to investigate not only the *Genji* heroines' resistance strategies which, I discovered, were more complex than Childs had inferred, but also their concrete responses during the incidents of violent displacement. Moreover, I did not limit my investigation to the main heroines of each incident, but extended my research to secondary characters, such as ladies-in-waiting, who sometimes offer a remarkable reaction to the hero's aggressive acts. The results of this investigation are visible in two of the criteria that define displacement as an act of sexual violence: the heroine's reaction to violent displacement and her entourage's castigation of the hero's behavior.

On the same side of the barricade as Margaret H. Childs is *Genji*'s most recent translator, Royall Tyler, who addresses the topic of sexual violence in two articles, one focusing on the character of Murasaki, the other on the broader connection between marriage, rank and rape in *The Tale of Genji*.[28] For someone who had such an intimate contact with the original text of the tale in the process of translation, Tyler peculiarly fails

[28] Royall Tyler, "I am I: Genji and Murasaki," *Monumenta Nipponica* 54, no. 4 (1999): 435-480; "Marriage, Rank and Rape in *The Tale of Genji,*" *Intersections: Gender History and Culture in the Asian Context*, no.7 (2002), available from http://wwwsshe.murdoch.edu.au/intersections/issue7/tyler.html. Internet; accessed 20 March 2006.

to notice the textual evidence surrounding such episodes of textual violence as Murasaki's loss of virginity. In fact, in his arguments that strive to dismiss all forms of sexual aggression from the text of the tale, *Genji* itself is peripheral; instead Tyler relies on intuitive ideas based on what he determines to be "common sense," or "propriety," or "norm." For the sake of his argument, the critic prefers to claim not to detect any reactions from the women involved in incidents of sexual violence; in the absence of such reactions, he can then try to erase the uncomfortable issue of sexual violence altogether.

Moreover, there is little consistency in Royall Tyler's critical thinking not only from one article to another, but even within the same writing. He praises Genji's management of the Murasaki incident (the loss of her virginity) as extremely beneficial for the development of this female character and of the *Genji* narrative, while at the same time acknowledging that such behavior could only have occurred with a woman rendered extremely vulnerable by her rank. After trying patiently to pursue Tyler's meandering thoughts on sexual violence in the *Genji*, the most important conclusion I could reach was that in the absence of logical consistency and of a careful consideration of the *Genji* text one can hardly hope to produce a coherent account on sexual violence.

The faction that both Childs and Tyler arduously fought against, that of the *Genji-girai* is led by two important figures: Setouchi Jakuchō,[29] the most recent translator of the tale into modern Japanese, and Komashaku Kimi.[30] Both critics have a keen eye in identifying the incidents of sexual violence in the tale and a similarly keen tendency of classifying almost every encounter between a *Genji* hero and a female character as a manifestation of aggression. With little concern about the incongruity between the

[29] Setouchi Jakuchō, *Genji ni aisareta onnatachi* (Tōkyō: Kodansha, 1993).
[30] Komashaku Kimi, *Murasaki Shikibu no messēji* (Tōkyō: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1991).

modern terms associated with sexual violence and the actual phenomena described in the *Genji,* both Setouchi and Komashaku give the impression of wanting to bring Genji in front of a modern court of law.

Setouchi, for instance, terms as "rape" (and she uses the *gairaigo* "reipu" instead of the more appropriate "gōkan" employed even as early as the *ritsuryō* code) any incident that starts with a man's intrusion into a woman's sleeping chamber, almost regardless of its outcome. She chooses to exemplify her definition with the case of Utsusemi, which, as I will try to prove in this thesis, does not end in intercourse.

Similarly, Komashaku Kimi feels more comfortable with words borrowed from sources in English, such as "sexual harassment" ("sekusharu harasumento") to discuss the case of Yūgao or the reference to Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* in relation to the character of Murasaki, whom Genji models as his Galatea, but tends to treat as his pet ("petto").

From the perspective of my research, the discourse employed by these two Japanese critics has proven too exaggerated to count as reliable. Nevertheless, I appreciated their refreshing tone, their boldness in exploring new ideas, even in the absence of pertinent arguments, their courage in advancing their personal agendas. In contrast with Japanese traditional scholarship which persists in phrasing and rephrasing the same set of conventional interpretations of the *Genji* heroines, Setouchi and Komashaku's writings provided ideological innovation, and even moments of humorous relief. To cite but one title in many, Watanabe Jun'ichi's study of female characters in *The Tale of Genji,* which, ironically shares the exact same title as Setouchi's book,[31] is a bland compilation of conventional ideas, long since surpassed by most Western scholarship: Utsusemi happily gives in to Genji's advances, although only once; Yūgao

[31] Watanabe Jun'ichi, *Genji ni aisareta onnatachi* (Tōkyō : Shūeisha, 2002).

is the soft-spoken, unassertive little creature, whose possession by the jealous spirit of the Rokujō lady ends a life that could have been of uncontested happiness; and Murasaki, obviously, is the most fortunate of them all, considering that Genji bestows upon her his care, protection and everlasting love.

As much as I wanted to avoid a display of irreverence towards the work of Japanese scholars, most of their ideas, had I chosen to accept them, would have made me abandon my research while still in the stage of a project. Therefore, instead of pursuing the directions followed by Japanese scholars, I decided to seek guidance in the numerous serious monographs published in the last three decades in the United States.

Haruo Shirane's *Bridge of Dreams*[32] provided interesting information in concern to the *Genji*'s use of intertextuality and its reinterpretation of some consecrated literary topoi, but overall little relevance to my topic of violent female displacement. The author politicizes sexuality in the tale to the extent that the perspective on and of female characters is greatly ignored.

Richard H. Okada's *Figures of Resistance*[33] provides a complex analysis of Murasaki, but offers little in regard to other female characters. Utsusemi is the major blind spot in his writing, whereas Yūgao and Ukifune are only episodically mentioned. The reason behind Okada's tendency to ignore these characters is that he defines feminine resistance as referring to those "women who disrupt masculine schemes,"[34] namely, Aoi, Rokujō, Asagao and Tamakazura. I firmly believed that this scholar's

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[32] Haruo Shirane, *The Bridge of Dreams: A Poetics of The Tale of Genji* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987).
[33] Richard H. Okada, *Figures of Resistance: Languages, Poetry and Narrating in The Tale of Genji and Other Mid-Heian Texts* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991).
[34] Ibid., 173.

exclusion of the characters featured in my thesis from the community of "resisting" women was unfair, and I tried to the best of my abilities to prove otherwise.

A more rewarding reading was Norma Field's *Splendor of Longing in The Tale of Genji*[35] considering that the declared purpose of its author was to pursue an analysis of the heroines of the tale and to challenge Genji's centrality. Field's topic of research was not sexual violence, but in her lengthy study of *Genji* heroines and of the way they influence each other, by means of the paradigm of substitution, she came across episodes of male aggression and repeatedly brought them into relief. The critic's ideas on the aggressive nature of male *kaimami* constituted the starting point of my analysis of violent intrusions which often precede displacement in *The Tale of Genji*; her theories on abduction and captivity as forms of violence in the tale found an echo in my own approach to violent displacement; finally, her vocabulary which distinguished between "abduction" and "kidnapping" in the cases of Yūgao and Murasaki encouraged me to seek a similar differentiation between the various incidents subsumed under the general concept of violent female displacement.

The last and by far the most influential work in the process of enouncing and writing my thesis was Doris G. Bargen's research on spirit possession in *The Tale of Genji. A Woman's Weapon*[36] was, in many respects, the stepping stone on which I built my argumentations and on which I relied to support and confirm my ideas. Bargen's opening words, which lures her readers into the fascinating world of the *mono no ke*

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[35] Norma Filed, *The Splendor of Longing in The Tale of Genji* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).
[36] Doris G. Bargen, *A Woman's Weapon: Spirit Possession in The Tale of Genji* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997).

phenomenon have been engraved into my mind throughout my two-year research on violent female displacement:

> ”Aggression, which seems to be an integral part of human nature that can never be entirely eliminated, emerged most drastically in the private lives of the Heian aristocracy, especially in gender relations. That aggression was an element of Heian courtship is easy to overlook because violent acts took place within an elegantly mannered social context. Aggressive acts were concealed in a courtship ritual so refined as to almost elude us.”[37]

Whenever I reached a dead end, whenever I felt that my research was stagnating or I was chasing quixotical windmills, I turned back to those words and found the motivation to pursue my quest and a confirmation of the validity of my theories.

According to Bargen, spirit possession is an “oblique aggressive strategy,” that is, a mode of expression that allows the possessed women to voice their grievances and direct their anger at a male third party whose acts often trigger the “spirit possession.” In other words, the critic advances a reading that the key to understating the phenomenon of *mono no ke* is a closer look at male behavior, because the women’s reactions expressed in the possession episodes are often the effect of their victimization by men. This victimization may be the result either of the pressure endured by women because of their matrimonial position within the polygynous Heian society, or because of the concrete violent acts inflicted upon them by men. This last possibility is the converging point between my research on violent female displacement and Bargen’s study of spirit possession. Whereas she articulates the *mono no ke* phenomenon as a potential effect that male sexual violence can have on women, I strive to determine the exact causes leading to such effects. Here too, Girard’s theory of the contagious nature of violence seems to apply: male violent behavior towards women results in the accumulation of a tremendous

[37] Bargen, 1997, 1.

amount of pressure; when no longer capable of withstanding this pressure, women find a violent outburst in spirit possession; thus, violence contaminates both aggressors and victims.

Although placed at the two opposite ends of a logical chain, spirit possession and violent displacement are intimately linked in a relationship of cause and effect that validates the presence of sexual violence in *The Tale of Genji.*

Bargen's influence extended beyond the theoretical frame of her theories; her work provided countless references to instances of sexual violence in the *Genji* and astute observations on its female characters and I have often cited her in my thesis whenever I felt the need to reinforce my arguments.

Apart from the research dedicated to various aspects indispensable to my approach to violent female displacement in the *Genji,* I also spent considerable time in developing a theoretical set of tools to be applied to the identification and analysis of the episodes featuring violent displacement.

The most important step in this process was defining the terms of my discourse. In my research I received repeated warning against the dangers of applying concepts too modern to accommodate Heian phenomena, yet at the same time I was not able to invent a completely new vocabulary to refer to the *Genji* incidents. Therefore, I took a leap of faith in believing in the efficiency of terms such as "sexual violence", "displacement", "abduction", "kidnapping" and even "rape" which, if stripped to their basic meanings, might satisfactorily cover the range of violent acts featured in the Heian tale. My attempt was to find suitable definitions for each of them, as little charged with contemporary connotations as possible, and for that reason I often turned to their etymological meaning.

However, I admit that my concepts are the result of a premeditated construction or deliberate deconstruction on my part and I ask my readers to accept them as a convention. I could have simply named the violent female displacement as Act A and its subdivisions of abduction and kidnapping as Act A.1 and Act A.2 had it not been for the lack of appeal such denominations possess.

Therefore, whenever I refer to violent female displacement I do not rely on preexistent knowledge of the phenomenon, but try to define it in the course of my analysis. Similarly, when claiming the identification of displacement with sexual violence I provide a set of criteria that help establish this equivalence. The four criteria, the difference in rank and status between the male and the female characters involved in the displacement, the man's violation of standard courtship regulations, the woman's opposing reaction and her entourage's condemnation of the man's acts, were the result of a careful consideration of the secondary sources, but also of the constant reference to the original text of *The Tale of Genji.*

In many instances, in order to be able to observe the heroines' reactions, their attitude, speech, gestures, display of feelings, as well as those of the secondary characters, in particular the ladies-in-waiting, I could not always rely on the available English translations of the tale. Edward Seidensticker's version[38] is extremely fluid and beautifully phrased, but not always accurate. Royall Tyler's version[39] is superior in terms of accuracy but less satisfactory in its use of language. As for René Seiffert's French translation,[40] it tends to be, at times, quite convoluted. Therefore, I was often forced to resort to my own translations, especially in the episodes of Utsusemi, Oborozukiyo,

[38] Edward Seidensticker, trans., *The Tale of Genji* (1976; New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993).
[39] Royall Tyler, trans., *The Tale of Genji* (New York: Penguin Books, 2001).
[40] René Seiffert, trans., *Le Dit du Genji* (Paris: Publications Orientalistes de France, 1988).

Yūgao and Murasaki, which I used in correlation to Seidensticker's.[41] My main focus in doing the translations was not to obtain a literary rendition of the text into English, but to reveal words and sometimes even entire phrases important to my analysis of violent displacement but which were lost in the two English translations mentioned. My primary source was the *Genji monogatari* edition by Ishida Jōji and Shimizu Yoshiko[42] and occasionally the Iwanami Shoten edition by Yanai Shigeshi.[43] I also relied on several renditions of the tale in modern Japanese, the most important being the versions by Yosano Akiko,[44] Tanizaki Jun'ichirō[45] and, more recently, Setouchi Jakuchō.[46]

After exploring the textual evidence pointing at the existence of violent female displacement and at its identification with sexual violence, I also decided turn my attention to the various collections of *Genji* paintings in hope of discovering visual evidence to support my hypothesis on violent displacement in the tale. My analysis of *Genji* art is far from exhaustive, yet it incorporates works of art from the thirteenth to the twenty-first century that display a wide array of artistic interpretations of the most important displacement episodes or, in their absence, of other episodes featuring what I considered to be manifestations of sexual violence.

The structure of my thesis comprises four chapter preceded by a short introductory section dedicated to the paradigm of displacement in the early chapters of *The Tale of Genji*. Each of the following chapters is dedicated to a *Genji* heroine who becomes the victim of violent female displacement: Utsusemi, Yūgao, Murasaki and

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[41] All translations that do not cite as author Edward Seidensticker in the note format are mine.
[42] Ishida Jōji and Shimizu Yoshiko, ed., *Genji monogatari* (Tōkyō: Shinchōsha, 1976-1985).
[43] Yanai Shigeshi, ed., *Genji monogatari* (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1993-).
[44] Yosano Akiko, trans., *Genji monogatari: zen'yaku* (Tōkyō: Kadokawa Shoten, 1971).
[45] Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, trans., *Jun'ichirō yaku Genji monogatari* (Tōkyō: Chūō Kōronsha, 1979-1980).
[46] Setouchi Jakuchō, trans., *Genji monogatari* (Tōkyō: Kodansha, 1996-1998).

Ukifune. The first three chapters are part of the early paradigm, whereas the last focuses on the more complex outburst of sexual violence in Uji chapters.

Chapter 1, entitled "Uprooting Young Bamboo: Utsusemi's Violent Displacement" attempts to establish the case of Utsusemi as the prototype for all ulterior incidents of violent displacements. For that reason, my analysis is not limited to Genji's displacement of Utsusemi, but tries to investigate two other cases that share a series of similarities with the Utsusemi incident, but do not feature violent displacement. By approaching the case of Nokiba no ogi, whose circumstances place her in a similar position to Utsusemi, I try to determine the factors that cause Genji to resort to displacement in one case, but not in the other. Moreover, I also address the case of Oborozukiyo which displays an incident conspicuously similar to violent displacement in order to underline, in a comparison between Utsusemi and Oborozukiyo, those specific clues that signal the presence of sexual violence in the first case, as opposed to the second.

Chapter 2 of my thesis, dedicated to Yūgao, derives its title from a poem Genji utters during his abduction of this heroine: "Lost on the Road at Dawn." This chapter introduces the phenomenon of abduction as a subdivision of violent displacement and analyzes the factors that qualify Yūgao's case as a manifestation of sexual violence.

Chapter 3, whose title, "A Baby Sparrow in a Golden Cage," plays on the metaphorical association between young Murasaki and her pet sparrow, introduces and investigates kidnapping as a form of violent female displacement. In addition, this section closes the paradigm of displacement detailed in the first three chapters of my thesis.

Chapter 4 and final, "Adrift in Murky Waters," is dedicated to violent female displacement in the Uji chapters and focuses on the character of Ukifune, from which it

also derives its title. With Genji's disappearance from the tale and the debut of two new heroes, Kaoru and Niou, displacement cannot be as easily forced into an organizing paradigm. Moreover, in the Uji chapters, sexual violence becomes a constant presence in the narrative. In an attempt to structure the various cases of displacement befalling Ukifune, I have chosen to address each of them separately, in distinct subdivisions. Thus, I have successively approached Ukifune's displacement by Kaoru (which takes the form of abduction), by Niou and by the Yokawa Sōzu and the Ono nun and I have tried to advance their reading as acts of a sexual nature.

The textual coordinate of my analysis of violent female displacement is reinforced by a study of *Genji* imagery. At the end of each chapter, there is a separate section that addresses the visual representations of the scenes featured in that chapter. This visual part of my thesis can constitute a separate discourse and can sometimes be read independently from the textual part. However, there is an active dialogue between the two parts, visual and textual, and my analysis of *Genji* paintings restates and reinforces the theories advanced in my analysis of the *Genji* text. For that reason, even though I could admit a separate reading of the two sections, I would not encourage it.

All there is left is to invite my readers on a journey along a road of violent displacement that will lead them through some very disquieting episodes of *The Tale of Genji.* They need the courage to stare straight in the face of "reality," historical or fictional, and the strong belief that the fascination of the *Genji* lies not in its identification with a utopia, but in its author's skillful association of beauty and ugliness, of love and hate, of power and submission, or tranquility and violence.

II. The Paradigm of Displacement in the Early Chapters of *The Tale of Genji*

When trying to identify and analyze the instances of sexual violence in *The Tale of Genji* one deals with a double-edged sword. On the one hand, the use of modern definitions of the term "sexual violence", whether perceived as rape or abduction for sexual purposes, might lead to an exaggerated reading of the cases in the tale. On the other hand, the absence of a legalized discourse on sexual violence in the Heian context would possibly motivate an understated interpretation of the textual examples. It may therefore not be possible to rely on definitions, simply because they are intrinsically relative, depending on variables such as geo-historical positioning, but at the same time one cannot conclude either that the lack of such definitions in Heian Japan suggests the non-existence of the phenomenon.

Thus, one can only try to closely examine interactions between male and female characters for disruptive behavior indicates a violation of standard courtship rituals and that might, if supported by a series of criteria, delineate a case of sexual violence.

One example of a repetitive disruptive action, undertaken by a male character in his interaction with a female character, is the physical removal of the woman, from the space that presumably was unfavorable to the man's sexual pursuit to another location of his choice. The umbrella term that I will be using to describe such actions is *displacement,* defined as "removal of a thing from its place; putting out of place; shifting, dislocation"[47] and this definition will incorporate patterns of behavior ranging from room shifting, to what nowadays might be defined as abduction or kidnapping.

However, identifying cases of displacement is only the first step in delineating instances of sexual violence. In order for displacement to represent sexual violence each

[47] *Oxford English Dictionary,* 2nd Edition, 1989.

case has to fulfill certain criteria, such as whether or not the act of displacement is part of a larger courtship attempt, or if its protagonists are in an appropriate hierarchical relationship. Furthermore, it is critical to observe the reactions of the female characters involved in such an act, as well as the reactions of the minor characters around them. Finally, the narrator's and the author's voices, when present, may contain further evidence or clues in determining a reading of sexual violence. Thus, a prototypical case of displacement as an act of sexual violence that occurs in direct violation of the basic courtship rules is facilitated by a hierarchical gap between the protagonists, with the man having the upper hand and with the woman displaying traumatic reactions in the face of male aggression, as reflected in the text. Ideally, the secondary characters featured in one such episode, such as the ladies-in-waiting or servants, would also clearly state their disproval of the act, and the narrative voice would further criticize the "perpetrator".

There are multiple instances of displacement in *The Tale of Genji,* some of them having Genji as the protagonist, others featuring Kaoru and Niou*,* but not all of them fall under the category of sexual violence. Needless to say that most of them do not fulfill all the requirements of the above prototype, but instead introduce new criteria or variations on the previous ones. Other cases however, although by all appearances following some of the general criteria, do not constitute acts of sexual violence, either because one aspect differs enough to overwhelm the other circumstances, or because the narrator offers enough evidence as to indicate consensus between the man and the woman involved in the displacement incident. Therefore, displacement as sexual aggression in the *Genji* seems to refute all attempts of generalization, to the point where its defining criteria are nothing more than interpretation guidelines and not absolute requirements. Nevertheless,

the identification of violent displacement is possible through systematic analysis of each and every case of its manifestation. Only by doing so can one can hope to isolate violent, non-consensual displacement from non-violent, consensual displacement. In other words, for a deeper understanding of displacement as sexual violence, one needs to address both the examples and the counterexamples to violent displacement in order to grasp the subtle change in criteria that determines the dichotomy described above.

Furthermore, a feasible construction of the displacement paradigm in *The Tale of Genji* also requires the analysis of two factors that have not been included in the defining criteria for violent displacement: the spatial distance and the method of displacement.

Spatial distance in the case of displacement refers to the range between the original location and the destination. This term "spatial distance" also separates three areas of control: feminine space, defined as the locus inhabited and controlled by women to ensure their protection; neutral space, defined as the area situated outside both masculine and feminine-controlled locations; and the masculine space, by definition the place under masculine dominance. Depending on the case, feminine space can be represented either by a room inside the residence, commonly the *moya* 母屋, or by a residence itself, in the case where women live alone, outside the direct control and protection of a male figure. Nevertheless, taking into account Heian women's rights to inherit and posses real estate properties, feminine space may encompass entire residences, even when the woman shares that space with a male relative. Neutral space can be perceived as liminal space, physically or psychologically separated from the other two gender-divided areas and it can be anything from an uninhabited mansion to a boat on the Uji River as long as it retains its neutrality at the initial moment of the displacement. Still,

the neutrality of a location is only temporary, since, through the movement of displacement, a man interferes upon that location in an attempt to control it. At the same time, a woman may also divert the initial neutrality of a place and render futile the man's attempts of control. In other words, the question of "neutrality" is highly volatile in the context and can be applied at best only in the initial stages of displacement. By analogy, the masculine space presupposes masculine control and differs from the two other areas not necessarily in expanse, but in stability, in that once a location enters masculine control, its status becomes difficult to change.

The method of displacement is another crucial factor in the analysis of this phenomenon. Violent displacement includes violent methods but it is not limited to them and the use of physical force is most often doubled, metaphorically, by the use of deceit. When for some reasons the man cannot accomplish a successful act of displacement through sheer force, either because he fears resistance or because he wants to safeguard his image, among other reasons, he might resort to temporarily coaxing the woman into leaving her protective space, either in favor of a movement into neutral ground, or, when the displacement proves truly successful, for a repositioning within masculine-controlled space.

Thus, whereas the criteria enumerated so far, hierarchy, courtship and feminine reactions, determine the delineation of a displacement episode as sexual violence, the two factors of distance and method of displacement facilitate the readings of violent displacement in terms of paradigms, following an evolutive pattern of the spatial movement and of the methods employed. The earliest paradigm of violent displacement in *The Tale of Genji* is developed in the first five chapters, starting with the character of

Utsusemi in the "Broom Tree" chapter, continuing with Yūgao in the "Evening Faces" chapter and concluding with Murasaki in the "Lavender" chapter.[48] In terms of the spatial distance and of the methods of employed, there is an obvious evolution in Genji's manipulation of displacement.

The Utsusemi incident represents the initial phase of the paradigm, when by means of physical force Genji moves the woman within the same residence, from one room to another. His act of displacement revolves around the central area of the *moya* which represents the feminine space, and because of this aspect, his attempts of spatial control eventually amount to nothing.

In the Yūgao episode however, Genji's preferred method of displacement is deceit, and the spatial movement gains a wider range since it takes the woman out of female space and into neutral ground. Yet, because Genji still cannot extend his control over the Neutral area, represented by the uninhabited villa where he takes Yūgao, this second instance of violent displacement also ends in failure.

Finally, with Murasaki, violent displacement reaches its most complex manifestation, with the hero employing both physical force and deceit in order to take the woman outside the female haven and into his own mansion, the Nijō-in, which represents at that particular narrative moment the epicenter of masculine space, which is quite ironic in the light of the fact that Nijō-in once belonged to Genji's mother, Kiritsubo.

A schematic illustration of this first paradigm of displacement can best capture the development of the displacement strategy in terms of spatial distance and employed methods (Figures 1, 2, and 3).

[48] For the titles of the chapters in the tale I follow Seidensticker's translation.

According to these illustrations and to the analysis of the two parameters, of spatial distance and of employed methods of displacement, the first example of the displacement paradigm, the Utsusemi episode, appears to be the least severe of the three cases, in that the woman is displaced over a short distance, within the same residence, and Genji only resorts to the use of physical force as displacing strategy . However, as the first occurrence of the phenomenon of violent displacement in *The Tale of Genji,* it constitutes the example closest to the prototype of displacement, and sets the criteria for all subsequent incidents. Furthermore, the two chapters of the tale that set the stage for the Utsusemi incident, "The Broom Tree" and "The Shell of the Locust", also offer a relevant counterexample to the cases of sexual violence through the character of Nokiba no ogi. A closer examination of the two chapters will provide a more proficient explanation of displacement as an act of sexual violence and also of the shifting criteria that influence the reading of a particular incident as an act of violence.

Figure 1.The Utsusemi incident

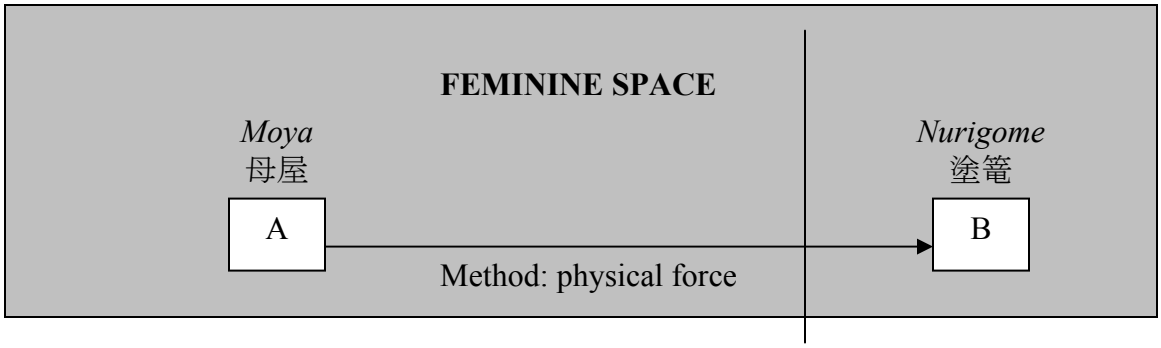


Figure 2. The Yūgao incident

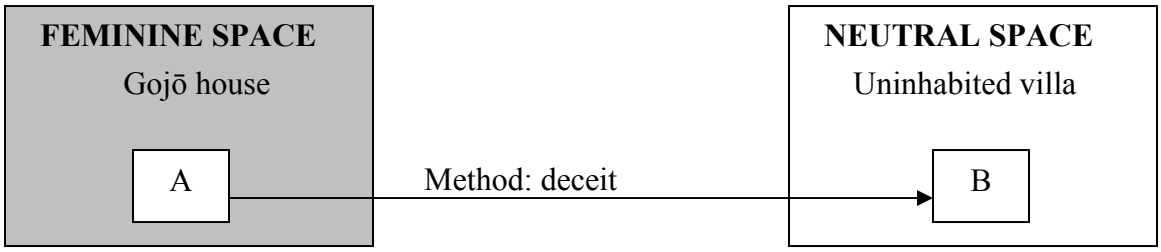
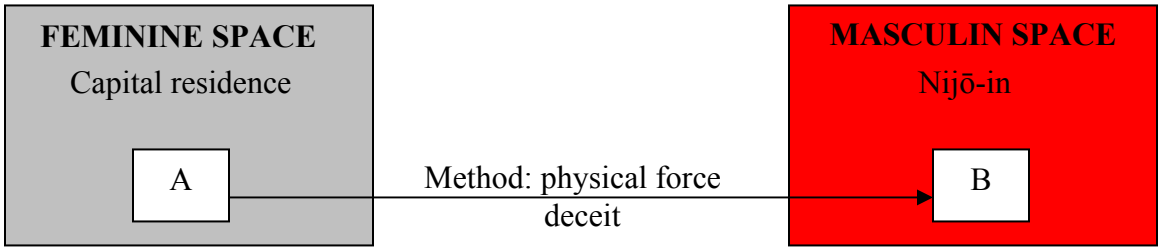


Figure 3.The Murasaki incident



CHAPTER 1

Uprooting Young Bamboo: Utsusemi's Violent Displacement

I. Utsusemi: The Presence of Displacement

The Utsusemi episode, spread over two chapters in *The Tale of Genji*, "The Broom Tree" and "The Shell of the Locust," displays two cases of potential sexual violence, having Genji as the "perpetrator" and Utsusemi and Nokiba no ogi as the alleged "victims." However, a closer examination will reveal that, although the two cases appear similar in form, only the former constitutes an instance of sexual violence in the form of physical displacement, whereas the latter does not. Before comparing the two instances, it is imperative to examine the tales' chronology to verify Utsusemi's displacement as the first representation of sexual violence in the tale.

The narrative of sexual violence in the *Genji* commences in the second chapter, *"Hahakigi,"* commonly translated as "The Broom Tree" chapter.[49] Genji is forced to spend the night at the house belonging to one of his retainers, the Governor of Kii, due to a directional taboo that prohibits him from staying at his father-in-law's residence. There he takes an interest in the Governor's very young stepmother who, at the time, is forced to take shelter in the same house because of a ritual of purification which has driven her and her women away from her husband's residence. Genji, who happens to occupy a room to the south from the one where the lady herself spends the night first overhears the tempting rustling of women's silk garments and then the voice of the lady herself and decides to take advantage of the circumstances and steal into the lady's chambers hoping,

[49] Both Edward Seidensticker and Royall Tyler, who rarely agree upon similar chapter titles, have preferred the "broom tree" for their translations.

if not to initiate an amorous affair, then at least to find someone to spend the night with. His behavior would have passed for extreme boldness or simply for a spontaneous expression of a young man's promiscuous instincts, were it not for a series of factors that suggest an altogether different reading.

First, Genji's inopportune intrusion breaks all the rules of etiquette as comprised in the Heian courtship ritual. In theory at least, a Heian aristocrat in pursuit of a lady initially would try to woo her by means of frequent poetic exchanges, based on which the lady would grant or deny a meeting with the man. In practice however, the woman's consent was sometimes undermined, either by the interference of one of the men in her family, usually her father, who would encourage the amorous affair despite the lady's personal wishes, or by one of her ladies-in-waiting who would serve as an accomplice to her mistress's suitor, possibly in the hope of ulterior compensation, either monetary or sexual. Even so, the common procedures for a man to be allowed into a woman's space presupposed either direct consent from the woman or direct support from someone belonging to the woman's household.[50] Thus, Genji's sudden intrusion into Utsusemi's room constitutes a flagrant violation of the basic courtship procedures and denies her the option of refusal that she might have had if he had played by the rules.

The second factor that classifies Genji's behavior as a case of sexual violence is his abuse of the hierarchical discrepancy between him and Utsusemi. As the son of an emperor, even demoted to the status of a Minamoto, Genji still belongs to the highest echelon of the Heian aristocracy whereas Utsusemi is the wife of a humble provincial

[50] A more comprehensive account of Heian courtship practices can be found at Ivan Morris, "The Women of Heian and their Relationship with Men" in *The World of the Shining Prince: Court Life in Ancient Japan* (New York, Kodansha International, 1994), 199-250. Illustrations of this courtship ritual can be found in tale and memoir literature of the Heian period written by women writers.

governor whom Genji condescendingly treats as one of his retainers. Furthermore, the lady is deprived of any parental support, since her father, a mere guard officer, and her mother are no longer alive at the time of the narrative. Her only support remains her elderly husband who treats her with the utmost care despite the disapproving attitude of the other members of his family who do not regard his decision to take such a young wife as appropriate for someone of his age.

Genji's attitude prior to the episode in question reinforces the status discrepancy: he almost forces the Governor of Kii to grant him hospitality despite the fact that the latter is in the situation of having his house filled with his father's women. Thus, from Genji's perspective, it was only natural to assume that just as he was able to use the house of someone lower in the hierarchy so he will be able to use the woman of the house as his bedmate. In fact, in a scene that precedes the hero's intrusion upon Utsusemi, Genji drops an obvious innuendo in his conversation with the Governor who, trying to maintain a stern attitude, pretends not to notice it. Genji's insinuation refers to a *saibara* entitled *Waihen, My House*: "The curtains are all hung/ Come and be my bridegroom./ And what will you feast upon?"[51] The *saibara* implies, on the one hand, that Genji naturally considers his retainer's house as an extension of his own property and, on the other hand, that he expects full service in the form of female companionship.

The Governor of Kii, however, does not take the hint and Genji, displeased by the idea of spending the night alone, presumes that taking advantage of whatever lady he might stumble across is nothing more than extended hospitality. In a different social context, however, the hero would not be offered similar excuses. If, for instance, Utsusemi had been of a more noble blood or if she had belonged to a more powerful

[51] Edward Seidensticker, trans., *The Tale of Genji* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993).

family or husband, Genji would have been chastised for his deed. This aspect hints essentially at the double standard applied within the Heian society when judging a similar act, in the sense that men of high social status could freely and with impunity ensnare women of lower status. The situation may get slightly more complicated when the woman in question is somebody's wife, because in such instances she is perceived as being the property of her husband.[52] Thus, the violation is no longer directed at the woman herself but at her husband. Again, a distinction is required here between husbands of high and husbands of low status. If the woman is the "property" of someone equal to or higher in status than the "perpetrator", then the aggression is acknowledged and, if necessary, punished.[53] If, however, the "property owner" is of similar lower status as the woman herself, the aggression, even if disclosed, would result in shame for the harmed party while maintaining the impunity of the aggressor. Unfortunately for Utsusemi, her case falls within the latter category; calling attention to the intruder would only make matters worse both for her and for her husband.

Nevertheless, it is Utsusemi who offers compelling evidence to reinforce the idea of sexual violence underlining the displacement episode, for the original text splendidly captures her reactions to Genji's initial intrusion and ulterior acts:

> "The lady simply could not understand what was happening and she felt as if being assaulted by an evil spirit in a nightmare. Even though she uttered a

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[52] In a study of acts of sexual violence in *Konjaku monogatari*, a collection of tales from the end of the Heian period, Hitomi Tonomura notices that "a man's violation of a woman's body is actually a crime committed against another man, the one with the power and authority over the woman victim." Hitomi Tonomura, "Black Hair and Red Trousers: Gendering the Flesh in Medieval Japan," *The American Historical Review* 99, no.1 (1994), 153.

[53] A literary illustration of the punishment enforced in the case of a relationship between a man of lower status than the woman is offered in *The Tales of Ise*. Ariwara no Narihira's involvement with Fujiwara no Kōshi, referred to as "the future empress from the Second Ward" (*The Tales of Ise. Lyrical Episodes from Tenth-Century Japan,* trans. by Helen Craig McCullough, 1968, 73), although not clearly delineated as consensual or forced, results into the man's exile to the Eastern Provinces.

frightened cry, she had covered her face with her garments and it was not audible."[54]

The short paragraph in the original employs two very powerful verbs to describe Utsusemi's reaction to Genji's spatial aggression: *osoharu* which translates as "to be assaulted as in a dream by something frightening" and *obiyu* meaning "to frighten, to scare, to terrify". Neither word is rendered in the two most recent English translations of *The Tale of Genji,* which may account for the Utsusemi incident sometimes passing as inconspicuous. However, as is obvious from their meaning, both verbs convey more than simple surprise in the face of an unexpected event. They capture on the one hand, Utsusemi's fear in the presence of Genji and, on the other, the implausibility of the situation in a society governed by rules of refinement and propriety. The female protagonist perceives the assault as if it had happened in a dream and not as something that might happen in the real world, simply because it constitutes an unimaginable violation of courtship rules. The moment Genji begins to speak to her trying to convince her of his feelings of love, Utsusemi realizes that she is facing a real situation from which she cannot escape by simply appealing to outside help, because, as stated previously, exposure will create shame for her and her husband: "She had split feelings and could not utter a cry, not even to say 'There is someone here!'"[55]

Utsusemi's indecisiveness at this moment can be subjected to a double interpretation: it may be that her terror gradually gives way to attraction and she feels she does not have the heart to reject Genji, or, upon realizing that exposure would only be

[54] Murasaki Shikibu, *Genji monogatari,* ed. Ishida Jōji, Shimizu Yoshiko (Tōkyō: Shinchōsha, 1976-1985), 88. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are mine.
[55] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 88.

harmful to her, she censures her initial impulse to cry out for help and instead starts to think of an alternate strategy out of this situation.

Further textual evidence reiterates Utsusemi's feelings of disbelief, as well as the pain she experiences by being subjected to Genji's behavior. Murasaki Shikibu's choice of words in describing Utsusemi's state of mind varies greatly, but they all spell out clearly psychological torment: *wabishi* ("painful"), *arumaji* ("impossible, implausible"), *kiemadofu* ("to be tormented by thoughts to the point of expiring"), *nayamashi* ("ill, indisposed, in pain"), *kokoro yamashi* ("unhappy"), and *kurushi* ("distressed, painful").

However, despite Utsusemi's overt display of feelings, Genji further aggravates his actions by physically removing her from her room. This particular action constitutes the culminating point of the hero's display of aggression. It is an outrageous scene that deserves detailed analysis. The problems that arise as part of the act of displacement refer, on the one hand, to the reasons that motivate the movement and, on the other, to its importance in terms of geographical coordinates.

Thus, by taking Utsusemi into his arms and moving her away from her original location, Genji resorts to a strategy of empowerment after his "soft-spoken"[56] words fail to shatter the lady's verbal resistance: "She thought the entire situation was deeply painful and utterly impossible, so she replied in surprise: 'It seems that you have mistaken me.'"[57]

Utsusemi's verbal rebuke also displays a touch of irony, implying either that she is not as naïve as he thinks or that his gestures might be found appropriate only with a lady who has already accepted his formal courtship, a procedure that he has simply

[56]*Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 88.
[57] Ibid.

ignored to follow in her case. Thus, facing the lady's resistance, Genji attempts to convert his initial verbal courtship into physical violence.

Furthermore, similar to military strategy, from Genji's perspective at least, the displacement may insure territorial supremacy, in that it takes his "opponent" out of her familiar territory, away from her ladies-in-waiting who might be able to ensure her protection, and into a space that Genji hopes he will be able to control better. One might wonder why Genji feels the need to resort to such an act considering that the displacing movement occurs within the confines of the same house and what he had to gain by changing Utsusemi's location.

The answer can be found when defining Utsusemi's initial location in terms of Heian feminine space. In other words, the *moya* 母屋, the innermost chambers of a Heian *shinden-zukuri* 寝殿造り mansion, was usually the space that the women of the house used as living and sleeping space. This interior chamber served as the ultimate bastion in protecting the women's invisibility and normally would offer security from outside aggressions of any type. The *moya* was separated from the surrounding *hisashi* 廂, which in its turn had protective lattice shutters dividing the *hisashi* from the outer veranda, the *sunoko* 簀の子. The ladies-in-waiting, who also served as guardians of their mistress, at night would normally occupy either the *moya* or one of the areas in the *hisashi* which could be separated into several sleeping quarters by means of curtains or screens.

Thus, the text of the tale offers an accurate description of Genji's location prior to his intrusion into the *moya* where Utsusemi is sleeping: he is offered a room in the Eastern Wing *higashi no tai* 東の対, in the *hisashi* south of Utsusemi's chambers. From there, he intrudes upon the lady and proceeds to move her somewhere else. The original

text is not clear in describing the destination point of Genji's movement of Utsusemi, but there are only two possibilities[58] in this case: back to the initial starting point, the southern *hisashi* or further into the most secluded area of the pavilion, the *nurigome* 塗篭 (Figure 4, with the two potential directions, in red and blue).

Following the first route, traced in red in the outline, Genji takes Utsusemi out of the inner *moya* and into a space that, although not entirely open, cannot guarantee privacy and territorial control. This space – the *hisashi* – is quite exposed to intrusions because its rooms were not clearly separated one from another and they were also too close to the exterior *sunoko*. Moreover, considering that Genji's own drunken retainers were also sleeping somewhere on the veranda, presumably next to Genji's initial sleeping space, his common sense might have advised him against such a relatively public location.

Therefore, the second route, traced in blue in the above diagram, would seem the most plausible one in this case and would also be more faithful in obeying the few directing indications offered by the author, who describes the destination point of Genji's displacement as *oku naru omashi* 奥なる御座, "an inner room."[59] This inner room, however, cannot be other than the *nurigome,* a space unlike any other room in the mansion, because it is completely surrounded by built-in walls and separated from the *moya* by a *tsumado* 妻戸, a solid double-opening door. Normally, such a room would serve as storage for art or religious objects, but at times it could also serve as a room for sleeping, or, as in the present case, as an improvised "prison".

[58] Any other movement would mean taking Utsusemi out of the Eastern Wing, which would risk resulting in exposure.
[59] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 89.

In choosing the most secure area in the house – the *nurigome* – for his displacement of Utsusemi, Genji not only safeguards his territory and prevents further interference from Utsusemi's ladies-in-waiting, but he also consciously eliminates any possibility of physical escape that the lady might have contemplated. Thus, although only a few steps apart from what initially constituted a safe haven for her, the *nurigome* becomes a prison from where she cannot escape by conventional means. One may further speculate that in moving Utsusemi into the artistic-religious space of the *nurigome,* Genji further objectifies her, transforming her into a precious commodity whose possession he must ensure.

Another aspect that connects both to Genji's motivations in displacing Utsusemi, and to the delineation of his act as physical violence is the appearance of Chūjō, Utsusemi's lady-in-waiting, whose absence and whose sobriquet, "the captain", facilitated Genji's initial intrusion. Thus, Genji's retreat into the *nurigome* is, as stated earlier, an attempt to avoid the interference of the lady's protectors. In fact, on his way out of the *moya* he is startled by Chūjō's arrival, but, aware of his own status, Genji dismisses the encounter casually, not allowing her to interfere in any way. Chūjō, for her part, does not question the aggressive nature of Genji's actions, even though she might as well have assumed that the incident she was witnessing was in fact a mutually accepted tryst which required her to retreat discreetly. On the contrary, she considers that under normal circumstances, she would have fought for her mistress, but given the discrepancy between her mistress's and Genji's status, she could not simply interfere without thinking of the repercussions:

> "Chūjō, finding this suspect, approached him to investigate, but the second she felt his wonderful perfume abundantly drifting toward her face, she realized

> whom he was. Although confused and unable to decide what exactly she was supposed to do, there was probably no way for her to speak out. Had he been an ordinary person, she would have *violently pushed him aside*, but as it was, many people would have probably found out, so how would that be possible? She pursued him, her heart beating fast, but he went into an inner room, completely unperturbed."[60] (my emphasis)

The use of the adjective-derived adverb *araraka ni* あららかに ("violently"), as well as of the transitive verb *hikikanaguru* 引きかなぐる ("to push aside, to rip away from") reveals the extent of violence that Chūjō would have employed to save her mistress, had Genji not have benefited from his privileged status. Thus, both from Utsusemi's perspective, and from that of her lady-in-waiting, Genji's displacement of her represents a case of clear-cut violence. He furthermore objectifies Utsusemi, by condescendingly ordering her servant to come pick her up at dawn, presumably after he no longer wanted to retain possession of her.

However, whether this initial display of violence did or did not escalate into rape, once Genji has secured his physical control over Utsusemi in the secluded *nurigome,* has constituted a debate among scholars of the *Genji,* who either refute the perspective of rape, or propose it, according to their differing interpretations. Indeed, rape seems to be the anticipated action in this case, and the moment the door closes in Chūjō's face, separating her from her mistress, "the lady felt on the verge of death at the very idea of what Genji might be thinking."[61] If Utsusemi herself fears Genji's subsequent intentions, how could one determine if intercourse really occurred behind closed doors or in between the lines? The narrator's prying eye fortunately does penetrate the *tsumado,* into the *nurigome,* and her minute description of Utsusemi's psychological reactions constitutes

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[60] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 89.
[61] Ibid.

relevant evidence for determining whether the incident ends with Genji's victory or with his defeat.

Moreover, since later in the tale Genji repeatedly meditates on this particular incident as one in which he has been defeated and continues to think of Utsusemi as the one lady who managed to escape his advances, it would only be appropriate to start from the premise that Utsusemi does indeed succeed in finding a strategy to resist Genji, despite the fact circumstances place her in a most disadvantageous position. What maybe said to constitute her salvation is her unique ability to analyze the situation she finds herself in, to constantly devise strategies to deter Genji's aggression, and to summon up her entire inner force to employ those strategies. Nevertheless, instead of being constructed as a powerful female character, in the manner of Rokujō or Aoi for instance, she is presented as vacillating, sometimes weak or in doubt, but what truly stands out is her amazing power to adapt to the situation.

Throughout the entire displacement episode, from the moment Genji intrudes into her chambers to the moment he has to finally let go of her at dawn, Utsusemi passes through a series of psychological states that indicate a permanent shifting of her defensive strategies that prevent Genji, still young and inexperienced, from breaking through her resistance. When comparing Genji's own devices to win her over, which are fairly limited to his verbal attempts to persuade her to comply to his demands, to his stereotyped vows of everlasting love, and to his physical aggression in the form of displacement, to Utsusemi's subtly nuanced strategies of deterrence, one finds further reasons to support a favorable denouement for the lady.

Thus, Utsusemi's initial feelings of fear, confusion and disbelief are overcome by her verbal refusal that ironically hints at the possibility of mistaken identities. Displacement then triggers further confusion and even sheer panic, but again, Utsusemi manages to overpower and verbally defy Genji while reiterating her decision to resist him:

> "This cannot be real! As insignificant as I am, I understand that you probably have no idea how shallow your own feelings truly are, despite the fact that you want them to seem otherwise."[62]

Similarly, when she feels her resistance is about to melt in front of Genji's comforting words and peerless beauty, she acknowledges her weakness. From it she derives her strength and puts forth a disconcerting appearance of indifference and coldness that masks her inner turmoil. She holds to this glacial persona just long enough to disorient Genji again when she swiftly resorts to tears and to a pathetic discourse meant to arouse his sympathy. Finally, at the right moment, when the cocks announce the dawn, she abruptly returns to displaying her resilience.

The variety of Utsusemi's reactions and defensive strategies is simply overwhelming (see Table 1) for Genji's limited abilities to adapt. Her ingenious use of apparently conflicting devices, her ability to sense the right moment to renounce one strategy and replace it with another suggest that Utsusemi is not given enough credit when she is reduced, as it commonly happens, to the status of a minor heroine, or, when one assumes, based on Genji's traditional image as the ultimate seducer, that she did not have the force to withstand his advances.

On the contrary, one can safely assume, based on the above textual evidence, that Utsusemi's resourcefulness constitutes a major deterrent to Genji's aggressive attempts to

[62] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 89.

take possession of her. The displacement incident does place her into the situation of being physically and psychologically cornered, but it by no means succeeds in reducing her to helplessness. The aggressive act in itself does not deny Utsusemi her agency, nor do Utsusemi's strategies of empowerment erase the existence of sexual violence. It would be incorrect to assume that feminine agency and male aggression reciprocally invalidate one another. Utsusemi's case is paramount in counteracting this hypothesis.

TABLE 1. Utsusemi's Psychological Reactions.

Utsusemi's psychological reactions	**Defensive strategies**	**Textual evidence**	**Original text**
Fear Confusion Disbelief	Verbal irony/ rejection	"It seems that you have mistaken me."	人違へにこそはべるめれ。
Panic	Verbal defiance	"I understand that you probably have no idea how shallow your feelings truly are."	おぼしくたしける御心ばへのほども、いかが浅くは思うたまへさらむ。
Acknowledgement of her own weakness Inner strength	Coldness Tears Pathetic appeal	"She simply behaved indifferently." "He…found her tears pitiful."[63] "My miserable lot has already been decided."[64]	つれなくのみもてなしたり。 泣くさまなど、いとあはれなり。 いとかく憂き身のほどのさだまらぬ。
Final determination	Verbal dismissal	"There is no other way, do not tell anyone that we met, she said and truly made up her mind on it."[65]	「よし、今見きとなかけそ」とて、思へるさま、げにいとことわりなり。

[63] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 91.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid.

Furthermore, some of the aspects noted above are reinforced by Genji's next intrusive attempt upon Utsusemi, which takes place at the end of the "Broom Tree" chapter and constitutes the necessary thematic link with the following "Shell of the Locust" chapter.

After several days have passed in which Genji's fervent letters received nothing but cold answers from Utsusemi, the hero decides to risk another approach and, taking advantage of the same kind of directional taboo as before, he stops again at the Governor of Kii's residence. This time, however, Utsusemi takes better precautions, already able to predict his intentions. Therefore, she does not wait for his intrusion to take place, but chooses to take flight and refuge into a secluded gallery, accompanied by her women. If in the previous episode, the lady chose to employ some very unconventional, even experimental, strategies of resistance, at this point she resorts to two more conventional methods, as Margaret Childs observes: "The most common choice when seeking to avoid unwanted sexual intimacy was flight. Retreat to inner rooms and the company of other women apparently offered safety."[66] However, it is only when warned beforehand of Genji's presence and when already confronted with a similar experience, that Utsusemi has access to these two means of defense, which were obviously either impossible to use (flight) or completely ineffective (women's company) in the first case of aggression.

Nevertheless, by observing Utsusemi's behavior in this second incident, one can detect the same level of determination as before, all the more potent because she fights against her attraction to Genji. Genji's behavior, on the other hand, supports the hypothesis of his failure in the preceding episode, as well as the impossibility of sexual

[66] Margaret H. Childs, "The Value of Vulnerability: Sexual Coercion and the Nature of Love in Japanese Court Literature", *The Journal of Asian Studies* 58, no. 4 (1999): 1064.

intercourse actually occurring between the two characters. Thus, Genji repeatedly thinks of Utsusemi as "cold and insensitive", "uncommonly strong" and of possessing a "unique stubbornness."[67] Had he not been defeated in his previous attempt, Genji would not have continued his pursuit with a similar fervor and would not have displayed his poignant bitterness when thinking of Utsusemi. However, ironically enough, it appears that a woman's resistance to male aggression is by no means a definitive success, but, on the contrary, that it further enflames the pursuer and drives him to employ ever new and varied strategies to obtain possession of her. The same pattern applies to Genji's pursuit of Utsusemi, which after two failed attempts, remains as fervent as ever.

"The Shell of the Locust" chapter constitutes the stage for the final attempt made by the hero to gain access to Utsusemi's body, but it cannot simply be read as a mere reiteration of the events that took place in the "Broom Tree" chapter. Not only is the outcome of the intrusion different, but there is also one aspect that brings into focus the topic of displacement, not by its presence in this episode, but precisely by its absence.

II. Nokiba no ogi: The Absence of Displacement

A close analysis of "The Shell of the Locust" chapter may seem irrelevant from the perspective of this research, which focuses on the aggressive use of physical displacement and its reading as an instance of sexual violence, considering that no such physical displacement occurs in this chapter. Nevertheless, the settings of the events taking place at this moment are conspicuously similar to the ones of the preceding episode, starting with the same geographical location, the Governor of Kii's mansion, and ending with the hero's intrusion upon a sleeping woman with the purpose of

[67] Seidensticker, 1993, 48.

appropriating her body. The fact that displacement does not occur in this case would come as an unexpected deviation from the previous course of action, were it not for a major distinction between the two incidents of intrusion: the women involved are different.

The author's use of the same pattern of events, but with different protagonists and with a different outcome, cannot be a simple coincidence, but rather as a masterfully crafted device meant to support a comparative reading of the two episodes. One can only speculate on Murasaki Shikibu's purpose in wanting to advance such a comparison. She may have wanted to draw a sharp contrast between two female characters in the tale, Utsusemi and Nokiba no ogi, by means of describing their reaction to the same type of male behavior. However, the difference between the two women does not only influence their position in facing Genji's intrusion, but also Genji's own behavior when pursuing them. One may wonder why he would choose to employ aggressive displacement in the case of Utsusemi, but not even consider resorting to the same method with Nokiba no ogi.

Furthermore, if the presence of displacement in the "Broom Tree" episode facilitated the analysis of the criteria that determine its reading as sexual violence, and represented a definition of the term by means of examples, the absence of displacement in the "Shell of the Locust" chapter asks for a reconsideration of the same criteria. Moreover, as hinted so far, the employment of displacement becomes closely connected to the author's representation of the female characters constituting the targets of male desire. Therefore, before proceeding to an analysis of the absence of displacement in this particular chapter and of the retrospective values that this absence attaches to the "Broom

Tree" incident, it is imperative to bring into discussion the diametrically opposed female characters, Utsusemi and Nokiba no ogi, as revealed by Genji's *kaimami.*

In disguise and taking the utmost precautions, Genji secretly enters the Governor of Kii's mansion for the third time, with the help of Kogimi, Utsusemi's younger brother. Taking advantage of the boy's absence, he spies on Utsusemi and her young stepdaughter, Nokiba no ogi, absorbed in a game of *go.* Genji's unobstructed view also reveals the two female characters to the readers and the image one gets of them is the result of Genji's gaze, mediated by the narrative voice. The difference between the two characters is thus created simultaneously in Genji's eyes and in the reader's imagination, as the two women are not only physically different, but also adopt contrasting stances, exhibit opposing reactions and resort to dissimilar gestures (Table 2).

TABLE 2.[68] Differences between Utsusemi and Nokiba no ogi.

Utsusemi vs. Nokiba no ogi Kaimami scene	
Physical distinction	
- "delicate features" - "the eyelids seemed a trifle swollen, the lines of the nose were somewhat erratic, and there was a weariness, a want of luster, about the face"	- "very handsome, tall and plump" - "it was a sunny face, with a beguiling cheerfulness about the eyes and the mouth"
Psychological distinction	
- "she evidently wanted to conceal her face even from the girl opposite" - "she kept her thin little hands tucked in her sleeves" - "a model of demureness" - "there were details likely to draw the eye to a subtler sensibility"	- "Genji had a full view of her face" - "both garments were somewhat carelessly open all the way to the band of the red trousers" - "her manner might have been just a touch inelegant" - "a shallow, superficial thing, no doubt"

[68] All quotations, Seidensticker, 1993, 50-51.

Whereas the physical description of the women is in no way relevant to revealing their different attitudes in facing Genji's later intrusion, it still represents one of Murasaki Shikibu's techniques to underline the characters' distinction. Usually, physical descriptions of the female characters in the tale are scarce to the point where any physiognomical distinctions disappear in traditional graphic representations of famous scenes from the tale. Such a detailed description of the characters' faces, coming from an author who does not normally demure on physical representations, may in fact suggest an intentional attempt to sharpen the psychological distinction between the two protagonists of the scene by means of physical differences. It may also cast a shadow of doubt on Genji's later actions which, at least in appearance, are motivated by a case of mistaken identity. In fact, starting with this moment, the author's criticism of Genji's behavior becomes progressively more audible.

The psychological distinction between Utsusemi and Nokiba no ogi, on the other hand, clearly foreshadows the outcome of subsequent events and offers a first motivation for the absence of displacement in this episode. Utsusemi is described as extremely cautious: not only does she try to hide her face from her own stepdaughter, but she would probably like to cover every visible inch of her body. Similar displays of circumspection would seem exaggerated for a woman whose only other companion is a female relative, but in the case of Utsusemi, it is not Nokiba no ogi whom she shies away from, nor any potential male intruder that might happen to peep in on her, but precisely Genji. Having experienced two incidents, of which the first endangered her physically, Utsusemi seems to remain on constant alert about Genji's next intrusion. Her reaction this time is indeed more extreme than her flight in the second incident, and it illustrates and reinforces her

ability to think and to adopt shifting strategies meant to deter Genji's manifestations of aggression, whichever form they might take. Thus, in this very limited context, from the perspective of a single female character, one might define *kaimami* as a mitigated form of sexual aggression.[69]

In sharp contrast to Utsusemi, Nokiba no ogi appears even more unconstrained than the situation permits it. Her familiarity with her companion does not fully account for her behavior and one might detect here yet another of the author's attempts to illustrate the extreme difference between the two characters. Her lack of caution may thus be interpreted both as a lack of experience in dealing with men and as a lack of propriety. She may be as naïve as not to think of the possibility of male intrusion or as carefree as to not care about that at all or even to welcome it. It becomes clear, for the reader at least, that everything Nokiba no ogi is and does stands in distinct opposition to Utsusemi. The question that arises immediately is whether Genji is aware of the contrast as well.

By this time, Genji must clearly be aware of Utsusemi's ability to resist his stratagems. Seeing her in the company of her stepdaughter further enhances his realization, while also casting the other woman, Nokiba no ogi, in a different light altogether. However, if the kaimami scene were not enough to make Genji understand on the one hand, Utsusemi's power to resist and, on the other, Nokiba no ogi's vulnerability or availability in the case of a sexual encounter, there is another aspect that has been overlooked in the criticism of the *kaimami* scene: the game of *go.*

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[69] This definition does not apply to all instances of *kaimami.* It simply constitutes an interpretative hypothesis that might apply to this limited context. However, the *kaimami* motif is a topic in itself, which deserves deeper analysis than the present attempt and does not constitute a part of the current research on sexual violence.

Doris G. Bargen is the first to have established an innovative connection between the practice of *kaimami* and the game of *go,* which constitutes, in her opinion, "a perfect training strategy for women's existential situation."[70] In other words, Utsusemi's superior ability at *go* translates into a similar ability to defend her stand in the act if *kaimami* and her victory against Nokiba no ogi reveals this double ability to Genji. Pursuing the same logical strand, her brilliant *go* performance constitutes an undeniable proof of her intellectual capacity, of her proficiency in dealing with *kaimami*, but also of her hidden resources and strategies of countering male aggression. Genji might not realize the full extent of Utsusemi's resourcefulness yet and for that reason he attempts the third intrusion, despite all the evidence that would suggest that any such attempt is bound to fail. He may not have grasped Utsusemi's strength, but he most certainly realized that Nokiba no ogi is, by comparison, an easy prey.

What follows next is Genji's third intrusion, facilitated again by Utsusemi's younger brother, Kogimi. He enters once more the inner chamber, *moya,* in the hope of finding Utsusemi all alone, but unlike in the previous incident of the "Broom Tree" chapter, the Genji of the "Shell of the Locust" seems to have lost his initial arrogant self-confidence and almost expects to face defeat: "Genji was suddenly shy, fearing he would be defeated once more."[71] It may be that the realization of what he has seen during the *kaimami* and the game of *go* is gradually eroding his self-assurance, but for a change, he is now the victim of his own stratagem and decides to see it through, despite the numerous signs that spell out his future failure.

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[70] Doris G. Bargen, "The Self under Siege: Interactive Games of Courtship and Resistance in the Utsusemi Story of *Genji monogatari,*" *Festschrift fűr Irmela Hijiya-Kirschnereit* (work in progress): 16.
[71] Seidensticker, 1993, 52.

This third intrusion also represents the rupture from the "Broom Tree" pattern, since this time Utsusemi is more aware of the dangers lurking in the dark as she immediately senses Genji's presence in his unusual perfume and sneaking shadow. Once more, there is a sharp contrast between Utsusemi's constant vigilance and Nokiba no ogi's indolent slumber, their respective states representing accurate metaphors for their degrees of agency. Thus, despite her initial panic, which, ironically, seems to be the most powerful effect that Genji has on her so far, Utsusemi is still able to make her escape, discarding both her robe and her stepdaughter, the one just as "empty" as the other. Nokiba no ogi, on the other hand, wakes up only to find a complete stranger lying next to her, but her surprise rapidly changes into compliance. Genji consummates this unasked-for affair without further ado, and, most importantly, without attempting anything resembling violent physical displacement of the type he employed with Utsusemi in the "Broom Tree" chapter. In other words, Genji's unsolicited sexual act is not perceived as violent but as an ordinary sexual affair because the woman involved – Nokiba no ogi – does not protest or resist in any way.

In my analysis of Utsusemi's displacement of the "Broom Tree" chapter, four factors are listed to help delineate the incident as a manifestation of sexual violence: (1) the violation of courtship ritual, (2) the hierarchical abuse, (3) the unsupportive behavior of the entourage, and (4) the resistance of the woman involved. Of these four, the first three are extremely similar in the cases of Utsusemi and Nokiba no ogi. The fourth is not.

That Genji's behavior is inappropriate is clear. He intrudes upon a sleeping woman without having previously initiated a formal courtship, that is, without having announced to the woman his interest in her. In effect, the woman Genji is truly after is

not Nokiba no ogi, but Utsusemi; therefore his interest in Nokiba no ogi is limited at best. The *kaimami* act would normally count as a part of the courtship ritual, at least under certain circumstances, but in the case of Nokiba no ogi, she is not the focal point of Genji's *kaimami*. She is certainly a little more than a prop on the Utsusemi stage, not important enough, but somewhat intriguing for Genji to purposely shift his attention to her and abandon his pursuit of Utsusemi.

Since Nokiba no ogi, being the daughter of the Iyo Deputy, Utsusemi's husband, is virtually in the same social position as Utsusemi, the hierarchical gap between her and Genji is just as wide as between Utsusemi and Genji.

Finally, Utsusemi's reaction to Genji's intrusion is very relevant. Having no other witnesses to the scene, Utsusemi's reaction is the closest equivalent to "entourage reaction", despite the fact that it is shaped by her previous experience with Genji and not by an objective assessment of the incident. Similarly to Chūjō of the "Broom Tree", Utsusemi quickly recognizes Genji's intrusion as a potential act of aggression, presumably because she had already experienced a similar situation and because she is aware that she is the one targeted by Genji. In fact, she panics and flees, with no apparent concern about what might happen to the woman she is leaving behind.

However, despite the three factors that permit a reading of sexual violence, the fourth factor, the reaction of the woman involved in the incident, constitutes the decisive element in determining whether an act does not does not represent an instance of aggression. Thus, compared to Utsusemi's complex reactions when faced with sexual assault, or finding a stranger in her bed, Nokiba no ogi's response can be limited to a single stance: "The girl was now awake, and very surprised. Genji felt a little sorry for

her."[72] Not only does she not oppose any serious resistance at all, but she seems quite eager to accept the situation, gullibly believing Genji's improvised lies. The narrator notes her inexperience as a handicap: "A more experienced lady would have had no trouble guessing the truth, but this one did not sense that his explanation was a little forced."[73] Genji's sympathy toward her may in fact be motivated by a slight remorse for planning to take advantage of her inexperience, but it must not be taken at face value, since, after all, he does end up sleeping with her, not necessarily because it was the "chivalrous" way out of the situation, but simply because he may have wanted to spite Utsusemi, who scored yet another victory over Genji, troubling his mind as he consummates his affair with Nokiba no ogi.

This last factor that overturns the other three in determining the violent/ non-violent nature of Genji's actions can be reduced to the notion of female consent, stripped down to its basic meaning of "voluntary agreement to or acquiescence in what another proposes or desires; compliance, concurrence, permission."[74] Outside the modern context of the legal discourse and feminist criticism, the term can be applied to Heian society if only for lack of a better word to describe the fact that the relationships between men and women were not as promiscuous as to imply that any woman would agree to sleep with any man at any given time. As such, the term "consent" reflects a woman's voluntary, unforced acceptance of sexual intimacy, which is exactly the case with Nokiba no ogi. Her consent undermines the other three factors that otherwise would have cast her affair with Genji as one of sexual violence.

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[72] Seidensticker, 1993, 53-54.
[73] Ibid., 54.
[74] *Oxford English Dictionary, Second Edition,* 1989.

Thus, from her perspective at least, Nokiba no ogi legitimizes the existence of previous acts of courtship, as fictional as these may be, by accepting Genji's makeshift explanations. Genji lies about coming to visit her on purpose, thus insinuating that he has known about her for some time and starting from this false premise, even the *kaimami* scene could be reread, assuming that Nokiba no ogi had been aware of it, as a part of Genji's courtship. The reader obviously sees through Genji's bluff, but Nokiba no ogi does not possess such in-depth knowledge and from her standpoint Genji's behavior is not transgressive in any way. Moreover, the hierarchical gap is of no importance to her either. Being single and unburdened by a value placed on virginity, which in Heian Japan did not constitute such an asset, Nokiba no ogi can indulge in seeing Genji's courtship as flattering and potentially beneficial. Unlike Utsusemi, she does not have to worry excessively about her reputation, much less that of a husband, and so she does not have any reasons to resist. Both women are strongly attracted to Genji, but, whereas Utsusemi places a high value on reputation, Nokiba no ogi is under no constraints or she simply lacks the imagination to think about such aspects, as the author ironically comments on her at the end of "The Shell of the Locust" chapter:

> "The other lady, her stepdaughter, returned in some disorder to her own west wing. She had her sad thoughts all to herself, for no one knew what had happened. She watched the boy's comings and goings, thinking that there might be some word; but in the end there was none. She did not have the imagination to guess that she had been a victim of mistaken identity."[75]

Finally, since she is asleep at the beginning of Genji's intrusion takes place, she cannot witness Utsusemi's reaction to it and realize the danger of the situation from her stepmother's sudden disappearance. What is extremely conspicuous nevertheless is the fact that Utsusemi's absence does not arouse suspicions on the part of Nokiba no ogi.

[75] Seidensticker, 1993, 55-56.

After all, since Nokiba no ogi has joined her stepmother in her chambers, has fallen asleep next to her, and wakes up in Genji's company, it is surprising that she does not question for even a second what might have happened to her stepmother. One plausible reason behind her silence or indifference about her stepmother's disappearance might be that, in her gullibility in accepting Genji's courtship fairytale, she imagines Utsusemi as Genji's accomplice in facilitating his access into the inner chambers. The ironic contrast between fact and fiction is enough to motivate Genji's future contempt of Nokiba no ogi, one of the few women with whom Genji had relations, but whom he did not bring into his Rokujō estate. In fact, unlike Utsusemi, who will feature again in the narrative, Nokiba no ogi will insipidly exit the tale, just as she insipidly performed in it. All we hear about her in the "Evening Faces" chapter is that she is about to get married, but the news leave Genji unperturbed:

> "As for the stepdaughter, he was certain that she would receive him hospitably enough however formidable a husband she might acquire. Reports upon her arrangements disturbed him not at all."[76]

The analysis of the four criteria exposed so far has partially explained the reasons why the incident with Nokiba no ogi does not constitute an episode of sexual violence. Thus, it has been mainly argued that what invalidates the existence of violence is her consent, which disqualifies Genji's sexual affair with Nokiba no ogi as rape. What is left unaddressed, however, is the problematic relationship between a woman's sexual consent and her violent displacement, in other words the question why Genji resorted to physical displacement in the case of Utsusemi, but not in the case of Nokiba no ogi.

If indeed displacement had been an incidental act, motivated by Genji's desire for privacy, or simply an idiosyncratic strategy of seduction, then Genji might have

[76] Seidensticker, 1993, 62.

employed it in both cases. Although he does not have more privacy with Nokiba no ogi than he did with Utsusemi, he does not attempt to remove her to a more secure location. Nor is displacement a repetitive characteristic of Genji's methods of seduction, since there are other cases, such as Suetsumuhana, Hanachirusato, and Akashi, where Genji did not feel the need to employ displacement. The only reason that legitimizes Genji's use of physical displacement is its connection to the question of female consent. Thus, when faced with a woman's immediate compliance to his wishes, Genji is not motivated to further corner the woman into submission. When, however, a woman opposes verbal or physical resistance, Genji deliberately resorts to displacement in order to break through her defenses by disorienting her.

While the aggressive nature of physical displacement may be obvious enough, the effectiveness of the male strategy of physically displacing the woman is still questionable as it depends greatly on the woman's ability to resist and on her adaptability in extreme circumstances. In regard to its effectiveness, Genji's strategy has proven to be fallible in the "Broom Tree" chapter, where the woman managed to counteract Genji's actions, and again, in the "Shell of the Locust" chapter, where Utsusemi flees, thereby displacing herself as a preemptive strike against another violent displacement by him. Thus, she puts an end once and for all to Genji's intrusions. By all appearances, all she does is merely repeat the strategy of retreat she has used during Genji's second intrusion at the end of the "Broom Tree" chapter. In effect, however, she employs what may constitute the ultimate defensive strategy: sacrificial substitution. Nokiba no ogi plays the role of a double substitute: from Genji's perspective, she replaces the woman he really desires and

from Utsusemi's perspective, she experiences a sexual experience with Genji that Utsusemi has denied herself.

The sacrificial nature of this substitution introduces the theme of all-female violence, which although not sexual in nature, is intimately connected to acts of male sexual violence. In other words, when put in extreme situations of male aggression, some female characters deflect sexual violence from themselves onto other women, usually close relatives. Such are the cases of Utsusemi, who uses Nokiba no ogi as a substitute, and of Ōigimi and Nakanokimi of the Uji chapters. Neither woman takes into account the feelings of the one she proposes as a substitute, but not because she is simply inconsiderate or egotistic, but because all other defensive strategies have failed and she is facing a desperate situation. In Utsusemi's case, moreover, assuming that, just like Genji, she too realizes Nokiba no ogi's disposition for romantic affairs, her decision to abandon her stepdaughter to ensure her own safety may not be so extreme after all. Utsusemi's strategy may have been considered violent if Nokiba no ogi had opposed resistance or perceived Genji's acts as somewhat traumatic, but since this is not the case, in terms of efficiency, Utsusemi's strategy is impeccable. From this moment on, Genji does not try to intrude again, but instead will soon focus his attention on someone else, Yūgao.

Utsusemi will never again be in real danger from Genji and later feels confident enough to move into Genji's Nijō-in mansion after having taken Buddhist vows upon the death of her husband. Certainly, she is protected by the religious taboo, but what truly renders her invulnerable is this ability of hers to develop multiple strategies of resistance, including the ultimate device: violence. In fact, by means of this desperate last stand, women who have been the objects of male sexual violence become themselves subjects

"employing" violence against other women, although not always intentionally. In trying to deflect violence from themselves onto another woman, they too become entangled in what René Girard defines as "the contagious nature of violence."[77] This ultimate, self-empowering strategy comes at a high price, blurring the line between victims and victimizers.

The fact the Utsusemi was driven to the point where she could find no other means of escape except for the sacrificial substitution ultimately reinforces the violent nature of Genji's displacement. Her case comes as one of the foremost examples of displacement in the tale because of its complexity, but also because of its clear-cut resolution in terms of success and failure. Moreover, as the first incident of such a nature taking place in the tale, it creates the contextual criteria that would later apply to some of the other incidents that involve displacement and dictate their potential delineation as instances of sexual violence. Nevertheless, the Utsusemi episode cannot constitute a solid prototype of displacement without facing the ultimate challenge: a counterexample that features the same displacing movement but without constituting an act of sexual violence. This counterexample is offered in the Oborozukiyo episode.

III. Oborozukiyo: The Presence and Absence of Displacement

The Oborozukiyo displacement incident takes places approximately three years after the events described in the "Broom Tree" chapter, when Genji has reached the age of twenty, and is detailed in chapter eight of the tale, "The Festival of the Cherry Blossoms".

[77] René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), 42.

At the end of the cherry blossom festivities, Genji wanders around the imperial palace in hope of finding an open door to Fujitsubo's pavilion. Not being able to gain access to his stepmother, he then makes his way to a gallery by Kokiden's pavilion and there, he comes to an open door and a woman who apparently came half-out to admire the moon. This woman is Oborozukiyo, Kokiden's younger sister and, unknown to Genji, the future consort to the crown prince. Pleasantly surprised to find someone to spend the night with, Genji lifts the woman in his arms and carries her to a more private place in the surrounding gallery, the *hisashi.* This incident, which evokes so well the physical displacement of Utsusemi, constitutes in fact the perfect counterexample to violent displacement, in that, although it seems to allow some of the four criteria applied so far in delineating sexual violence, it does not constitute an act of aggression similar to the one involving Utsusemi.

Thus, of the four criteria examined before, one is missing entirely from the Oborozukiyo incident: the reaction of the entourage. Since the event takes place late at night and all her ladies-in-waiting are sound asleep, there are no witnesses and therefore no reactions to be observed in this situation.

Among the three remaining factors, the violation of standard courtship ritual cannot be denied. Genji comes across an unidentified woman, someone with whom he has never had previous contact of any kind, and yet, apparently disregarding most rules, he seems to want to skip to the moment of sexual intercourse. However, there is a brief, unplanned exchange of poetry between the two protagonists which immediately precedes the displacement. Oborozukiyo comes to the open door reciting a poem in praise of the misty moon, the source of her sobriquet, and Genji picks up the imagery of the moon to

reply with a poem that proposes sexual intimacy. Therefore, it might be appropriate to consider their poetic exchange as an abbreviated impromptu form of courtship rather than a complete violation of rules.

On the hierarchical scale, Oborozukiyo could not be much farther above Utsusemi, since she is the daughter of the Minister of the Right with the prospect of being an imperial consort. Genji might not be aware of the latter, but he is most certainly able to identify the unknown woman as a sister of Kokiden, whose political faction opposed him fiercely and was dominant at the time. Consequently, once the woman herself identifies Genji for who he is, each becomes conscious that in this particular case, Oborozukiyo holds a similar, if not superior status, to Genji's. In similar situations, according to Margaret H. Childs, "men in court society tended to consider sexual coercion of women, *at least women of equal or higher status*, to be bad form" [my emphasis].[78] If this theory applies to Genji's actions in this episode, then his displacement of Oborozukiyo does not aim at sexual violence, but is rather motivated by some other reasons to be explored at a later time.

Finally, considering Oborozukiyo's reaction to Genji's displacement, one finds a very limited palette of emotions, quite similar to Nokiba no ogi's attitude: she is initially surprised and scared, but is quickly reassured, once she recognizes Genji's voice. The woman's only attempt at resistance is her cry for help, which, considering that her ladies-in-waiting were sleeping close by, must have been suspiciously inaudible. Unlike Utsusemi, Oborozukiyo does not have reasons to fear for her reputation to the point of being forced to suppress her cries. In fact, were she to alert the household of the intrusion, Genji's own reputation, and even social position, would be highly at risk. Here, Childs is

[78] Childs, 1999, 1077.

quite accurate in observing that "in contrast to Utsusemi, Oborozukiyo demonstrates token rather than sincere resistance."[79]

Considering all the above aspects, it can be safely assumed that Oborozukiyo is not forced into consenting to sexual intimacy by means of physical displacement. The decisive element that marks the woman's consent in this case is the sound of Genji's voice, which reveals his identity. For Oborozukiyo, knowing the identity of her aggressor, could have constituted a means of escape if she had really wanted to escape the situation. Her facile consent however may indicate, on the one hand, that she was familiar with Genji and possibly attracted to him, and on the other, that she displayed her openness to amorous relations. Thus, for a Heian woman to be able to recognize a man in the dark, only by the sound of his voice, indicates that the woman must have engaged in *kaimami,* that is, sometime before, she had spied on the man from inside her enclosure. As discussed before, the presence of *kaimami,* even in this diverted form, may be yet another indication of formal courtship.

As for Oborozukiyo's prior availability, it may not be distinguishable in the episode of displacement, but it is revealed by the details of the larger context in which this incident takes place. Prior to encountering Oborozukiyo, Genji has wandered through the imperial palace in search of a particular lady, but has abandoned his plans when faced with that lady's closed door: "Expecting no visitors, his own lady might have left a door open a crack. He went quietly up to her apartments, but the door of the one whom he might ask to show him in was tightly closed."[80] Interestingly enough, the author creates a parallel between open doors and women's sexual availability. Whereas a tightly shut door

[79] Childs, 1999, 1067.
[80] Seidensticker, 1993, 151.

dampens Genji's amorous pursuits, an open one spells out an invitation. Moreover, in this particular context, the imperial palace in the moments preceding public festivities is swarming with courtiers in search of amorous adventures and it practically becomes an open hunting ground in which both sides involved, the "hunter" and the "prey", are perfectly aware of the rules. Thus, for Oborozukiyo to have left her door open implies to have accepted the possibility of a tryst, or to have committed a mistake too flagrant to be unintentional:

> "Although he secretly went to the Fujitsubo pavilion, *the doors there were locked* and there was no one to speak to. He sighted, unwilling to give up. Then, as he approached the Kokiden pavilion, he found *the third door open*. Because the Kokiden consort was at that time visiting the imperial chambers, there were few people around. *The hinged door inside was also open* and there was no sound of people. '*This is indeed how women mess up in this world!*' he thought, then entered quietly and looked around. Everyone was no doubt asleep." [81][my emphasis]

Furthermore, when considering the spatial delineation of this incident, in terms of feminine, neutral and masculine spaces, it is relevant to note that the woman voluntarily exits feminine space which offers her safety and that Genji's displacement does not have as its purpose her removal from secure ground. On the contrary, the dislocation takes Oborozukiyo back into the feminine space, which further indicates that safety does not constitute an issue for Genji or for the woman. To be more accurate, when Genji encounters Oborozukiyo, she is at the threshold between the *hisashi,* the outer gallery surrounding the *moya,* the core of feminine space, and the *sunoko,* the open veranda, which can be considered masculine space, because of its public nature and lack of privacy. Her movement may indicate in fact, and Genji is quick to sense this interpretation, that Oborozukiyo is in fact taking the initiative:

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[81] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 51.

> "'Nothing can compare with a night with a misty moon' someone whispered in a young, elegant voice which did not sound like that of a commoner. Was she coming his way? Delighted, he suddenly grabbed her sleeve."[82]

One can further speculate that the lady is purposely waiting for a visit, either from someone with whom she is engaged in an amorous relationship or from any courtier who might make a promising lover, such as Genji. The text does not offer evidence to support the former hypothesis, but the latter is reinforced by the encounter between Genji and Oborozukiyo and by the later evolution of their relationship.

Therefore, in the context of female consent and sexual availability, Genji's displacement cannot be read as an instance of sexual violence, despite the fact that some criteria used in delineating aggressive displacement do apply to this incident. The question that arises next concerns the reasons that motivate this displacement in the absence of the man's desire to force the woman into submission. For one thing, Genji, who was in an inebriated state, might have been carried away by his own impetuosity. As stated before, displacement is not a part of his regular seduction pattern, but considering his state, it might have seemed appropriate to him in that case.

Second, Genji intrudes upon Kokiden's territory and his act may, if discovered, have dire consequences. It is only natural then for him to exert a little caution and try to avoid exposure by leaving the veranda. Moving Oborozukiyo from the threshold between the gallery and the veranda, he insures safety, privacy, and comfort. As trivial as it may appear, for sexual intercourse to take place, even without the risk of exposure, the veranda is the least convenient place.

Thus, unlike a typical case of violent displacement, as illustrated by the Utsusemi incident, the Oborozukiyo displacement has little connection to the male desire to

[82] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 51.

pressure the woman into submission, since sexual intimacy is mutually accepted. What motivates displacement in this case is in fact practical reasoning on Genji's part in his attempt to find an appropriate location to consummate a consensual affair. If compared to the characters in the previous incidents, Oborozukiyo resembles Nokiba no ogi more than Utsusemi, with a major distinction however: whereas Nokiba no ogi was duped into consenting to the affair, Oborozukiyo manifested her free will in inviting, accepting, and continuing the relationship with Genji with severe consequences for him (he would choose to displace himself by going into self-imposed exile at Suma). Taking into account the evidence discussed so far, it can be inferred that the Oborozukiyo incident stands in opposition to Utsusemi's case, not because of its absence of displacement, but because its displacement is of a different type that does not qualify as sexual violence.

The three episodes analyzed so far, the first characterized by the presence of, the second by the absence of, and the third by the diversion of violent displacement have contributed to the identification and definition of the phenomenon, either by means of examples or counterexamples. At the same time, they constitute a warning concerning the frailty of the interpretative tools available when approaching the topic of violent displacement in the context of *The Tale of Genji,* for, even though the criteria apply to certain cases and situations, they do not support a unidirectional reading in terms of sexual violence. On the contrary, the four criteria become variables that in conjunction with detailed textual evidence may lead to a particular interpretation. Even so, as a result of the comparative reading of three distinctive incidents in the tale, the Utsusemi episode has emerged as the closest so far to being a prototype of displacement. As such, it will

become a tool of reference for later cases that feature displacement in a typical or distorted form.

IV. Imaging the Three Heroines: Utsusemi, Nokiba no ogi and Oborozukiyo

Identifying the instances of sexual violence in the text of *The Tale of Genji* raises numerous challenges, but not half as many as trying to investigate *Genji* art, such as scrolls, screen, and woodblock prints among others, in the hope of revealing concrete, visual evidence of sexual violence in any of its forms, violent displacement in particular. There are two major reasons why the study of *Genji* illustrations is unlikely to reveal the same detailed evidence of sexual violence that the text of the tale provides: first, for a long period of time, from about the thirteenth century until the seventeenth, *Genji* paintings closely obeyed a canonized interpretation of the text which prescribed the episodes to be illustrated and the details pertaining to these episodes; and, second, the artists responsible for producing works of art inspired by *The Tale of Genji* were rarely readers of the tale themselves. Instead, they tended to rely on preset guidelines and artistic traditions, often sacrificing accuracy to convention.

Genji monogatari emaki, the earliest extant set of illustrations of the tale dating from the beginning at the twelfth century, offers important evidence concerning the *Genji* paintings before the creation of an artistic canon. Unfortunately, too much has been lost of the *Genji monogatari emaki* to allow a comprehensive analysis of the displacement scenes discussed in this paper, but of the twenty extant scenes, the second *Azumaya* painting, is intimately connected to one of the cases of violent displacement discussed in

chapter 4 of this thesis.[83] However, this painting is the sole illustration of any scene relevant to my topic. After *Genji* painting became canonized, the episode in question was never again illustrated in a similar manner. Miyeko Murase interprets such differences between the choice of scenes in the *emaki* and those in later works as indicating "a distinct trend through the later periods to select those scenes for illustration that most effectively helped further the major plots of the novel; that is, scenes were chosen with the idea in mind that the main features of the novel could be transmitted even in the absence of a text."[84] In addition, one may speculate that in later periods scenes were chosen for their aesthetically pleasing qualities rather than for their depiction of potentially disturbing details. It would be no surprise if scenes of violence were in fact consciously eliminated as "un-courtly" or anti-aesthetic by later artists.

In fact, there is evidence of debates around *Genji* illustrations as early as the thirteenth century.[85] The result of such debates was the establishment of a canon prescribing the rules to be obeyed in illustrating *The Tale of Genji.* The first extant canonical text of such kind is the Ōsaka manual, dating from the sixteenth century, but it is most probably not the first *Genji* manual to be written, only the earliest one to have survived.

In this Ōsaka manual, the "Broom Tree" chapter is represented with six scenes, of which the last two capture Genji's departure after his first intrusion upon Utsusemi and Genji spending the night with Kogimi after his failed second intrusion. The *ekotoba*

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[83] The analysis of this painting will be resumed in chapter 4.
[84] Miyeko Murase, *The Tale of Genji: Genji monogatari ekotoba* (New York: Weatherhill, 1983): 22.
[85] *Genji higijō* (Notes on a Confidential Conference on the *Genji*) documents such a dispute under the rule of shogun Munetaka (1252-1266). The document is currently in the Imperial Library (Murase, 1983, 13).

detailing the stage directions for the first episode completely disregards the presence of sexual violence and instead depicts the scene as a conventional love affair:

> "Genji, who has made his way through to the side of Utsusemi (the lady of the locust shell), is returning at dawn. She sees him to the door."[86]

Tosa Mitsunori's seventeenth century painting of "Hahakigi" from the Mitsunori Album of the Tokugawa Reimeikai Foundation is a typical traditional illustration of the episode, depicting Genji on his way out from the inner *moya* and Utsusemi guiding his way across the *hisashi* toward the *sunoko.* Chūjō is also featured, awaiting her mistress in front of the open lattice shutters of the gallery.

The painters of the late Edo period were far less constrained in illustrating the "Broom Tree" chapters and they no longer saw the need to obey the *Genji-e* canon. Their work is, therefore, sometimes more irreverent and subversive than their predecessors', but that is not to say that they were always revolutionary in their art.

The "Hahakigi" scene from *Genji gojūyomai no uchi* (*Genji in fifty-four sheets,* 1730-1737)[87] attributed to Shigenaga (Figure 5) is innovative only as far as it does not depict Chūjō and it stages Genji and Utsusemi in a manner different from Mitsunori's rendition and from the instructions given in the Ōsaka manual. In Shigenaga's *haribako-e* (hand-colored print) Utsusemi remains seated inside the gallery while apparently admiring Genji who is taking his leave. Both protagonists gaze longingly at each other, the woman coquettishly lowering her eyes, Genji turning his head to take one last look at her, and, in complete disregard of the text of the tale which clearly states otherwise, the painting creates the illusion of a consensual amorous relationship. In fact, by illustrating

[86] Murase, 1983, 47.
[87] The first half of this work is attributed to Shigenaga, while the second half to Kiyomasa II.

the parting at dawn, Shigenaga appears to support the reading according to which Genji and Utsusemi engage in intercourse upon Genji's first intrusion on her.

By comparison, the "Hahakigi" woodblock print (ca. 1857) by Kunisada II (Figure 6) is completely unconventional: the man, Genji, halfway through a curtain, reaches out his hand, almost threateningly, towards the woman, Utsusemi, who, obviously scared, seems to be getting ready to flee. She holds one hand to her chest, either as an indication of fright and surprise, or in an attempt to hold on to her robes which might come undone during her attempt to escape. Her back is completely turned at Genji, but she anxiously looks at him over her shoulder. Her posture reinforces the idea of an unexpected "attack" on Genji's part and the false sense of security that prevented Utsusemi from divining Genji's intentions. In addition, the curtain that creates the background for this scene is decorated with a watery landscape, giving the impression of Utsusemi being surrounded by water. One may speculate that it hints at the security offered by the *moya,* the feminine space, but that it also reveals its vulnerability, for Genji's intrusion through the same curtain abruptly puts an end to the visual illusion of the surrounding water. Whether the artist's intention was to depict violence or simply to "spice up" the episode and make it more interesting to the viewers, is difficult to infer. Whatever his intentions, however, this "Hahakigi" print is relevant precisely because it offers a reading of the episode uncommon in earlier centuries and it stresses the details, present in the text, that indicate the existence of sexual violence.

"The Shell of the Locust" episode is assigned only two scenes in the Ōsaka manual: the first depicting Genji's *kaimami* of Utsusemi and Nokiba no ogi at *go*, the second, Genji's retreat after his failed third intrusion on Utsusemi, her discarded robe in

hand. The *kaimami* scene, a favorite among traditional artists, reveals much less than the text itself.

The seventeenth century "Utsusemi" scene attributed to Tosa Mitsuoki (Figure 7) is undoubtedly beautiful in its use of colors and gold leaf, but rather bland in content. It depicts Genji looking through the opening of a sliding door at the two women playing *go*; Kogimi is also present, despite the fact that the text does not mention this. The staging is very unfortunate in its disregard of the text: Genji should have a clear, full-front view of Nokiba no ogi and only a partial view of Utsusemi. Instead, from his standpoint in Mitsuoki's picture, he is able to see only the profile of the two women, but has an unobstructed frontal view of Kogimi. Also, it is not clear which of the women is Utsusemi and which is Nokiba no ogi, since the textual details are totally overlooked. The women's postures are identical; their robes are of different colors than described in the *Genji;* none seems to attempt to cover her face as an indication that she is Utsusemi, or to expose her bosom like Nokiba. The game of *go* itself, despite being the focal point of the image, does not translate Utsusemi's superiority and Nokiba's failure, simply because the artist had no interest in painting the *go* moves in detail.

Modern artists prove to have a keener eye than their predecessors. Miyata Masayuki's illustrations (2001), accompanied by Setouchi Jakuchō's summaries of the *Genji* episodes,[88] are darker, more inclined to hint at the existence of violence (Figure 8). The artist's "Utsusemi" scene captures the same game of *go*, but in a radically different context. Genji is no longer featured and the focal point of the image becomes Nokiba no ogi. Her breasts generously show from underneath the white singlet she is wearing and

[88] Miyata Masayuki et al., *The Tale of Genji: Scenes from the World's First Novel* (Tōkyō: Kodansha International, 2001).

she thus takes the spotlight, displaying an expression of self-satisfaction. Presumably, the moment captured by the artist is the one in which Nokiba no ogi still believes that she has won the game of *go*. In sharp contrast to her, Utsusemi is virtually invisible. She is completely enveloped in shadow, her only distinguishable feature being her long, sensual hair. The artist's use of shadows is such that viewers can either look at the two women borrowing Genji's perspective, or they can detect Genji's dangerous presence in the darkness surrounding Utsusemi. Whatever the case, the result is disquieting, hinting at an imminent danger threatening the two women. One, Utsusemi, is already a prisoner of the shadows; the other, Nokiba no ogi, is only temporarily enjoying the limelight. The darker outer robe that she holds around herself seems to be a prolongation of the shadows engulfing Utsusemi and it gives the impression of darkness rising closer and closer to the woman's face. Considering Setouchi's drastic views on sexual violence in the *Genji,* her collaboration with Miyata is hardly accidental, considering that the artist superbly conveys many of Setouchi's ideas in his illustrations.

Kajita Hanko's illustration (1996) of the "Utsusemi" chapter (Figure 9) is the opposite of Miyata's in terms of the use of light and darkness. The picture is luminous, with predominating shades of white. Her back turned to the viewers and holding a white *go* stone between her fingers, Utsusemi is wearing an outer robe of olive green. Her face is not visible, but Nokiba no ogi's face, and especially her breasts are in full view. The artist had obviously no intention of introducing a subtler discourse on sexual violence in his paintings and rather focuses on the differences between the two women. As described by the text of the tale, Nokiba no ogi is carelessly exposing herself, not only by facing Genji, here, the viewer, but also by keeping her garments open and her breasts exposed.

Kajita pushes the limits of Nokiba's indecency by depicting her lurching forward, with her left breast actually hanging above the *go* board. By comparison, not only is Utsusemi almost literally camouflaged, considering the color of her robe, but there is also a hanging screen protecting her somewhat from the viewer's gaze.

However, Kajita's care for details subsides when it comes to illustrating the game of *go*, a major element in understanding the psychological differences between the two women. The Utsusemi and Nokiba no ogi in his picture are playing an implausible and impossible game of *go*, in which both seem to be rookies. Three details concur to support this conclusion: first, there are visibly more white stones on the board than black stones, but in between the white stones there are no places where the captured black stones must have previously been placed; second, the clusters of white stones placed at a distance from the black stones indicate a poor strategy on Utsusemi's part; and third, the spacing on the board does not match the one on an actual *go* board; the *go* board in the picture appears to be larger than a normal board.[89]

Kajita's carelessness is by no means a capital sin, but it is symptomatic of how *Genji* artists usually approached the tale: not through direct reading, but by relying either on manuals, or on previous extant illustrations of the scenes they were planning to depict. By increasingly distancing themselves from the original text, errors proliferated, whereas actual details from the text were lost in the pictures.

Unlike Kajita, who negotiated his position as an artist between tradition and modernity, other contemporary artists, such as Amano Yoshitaka (Figure 10)[90] created works of art free from all textual and canonical conventions. His "Utsusemi" (2006) is

[89] The analysis of the *go* board was provided by Simon Wechsler (12 kyū unofficial go ranking).
[90] Yoshitaka Amano, *The Tale of Genji* (Milwaukie: DH Press, 2006).

unlike any other Utsusemi before: Amano does not need to stage a background to hint at the identity of his characters; the characters convey who they are through corporal and facial expressions. His Utsusemi is caught in mid-flight, presumably illustrating Genji's third intrusion in the tale, at the end of which he is left with her discarded outer robe. The woman in the picture has disheveled and wild hair; her face, bearing an expression similar to pain, is turned backwards toward her pursuer, and her arched leg, visible from beneath her layers of clothing, suggests the physical effort of her resistance. Amano's illustration is full of hyperbole and drama; his heroine is frightened to the point of panic. The viewer does not see the aggressor, but the sense of imminent danger is vividly conveyed by the colors and patterns of the woman's robes, which occupy the foreground of the picture. Tones of violet, black and mud grey create intricate patterns, disturbing swirls of color that surround the fleeing woman. Her outer robe, possibly the one that she discards behind her, bears a decoration of dragons chasing swans and constitutes a picture within a picture, illustrating Genji's pursuit of Utsusemi. The woman's contorted body, the delicate swans defenselessly arching their long neck, and the fiery dragon, occupying the central position in the picture, concur to create an image of undeniable violence.

Unfortunately, what Amano has gained though artistic intuition and innovation, he has lost when trying to provide an objective description of his picture. The modern *ekotoba* accompanying the illustration, by Itō Anri and Imura Junichi, offers a very traditional interpretation of the scene, the kind of interpretation that betrays unfamiliarity with the text:

> "When everyone was asleep, Genji stole into her bedroom and despite her resistance he gently persuaded her and made her his own. She became ashamed to have had this casual affair despite her married state. When Genji stole into her

> bedroom again, she sensed his arrival, cast off her dress, and swiftly ran away in her undergarments."

The incongruity between the violence of the picture and the conventionalism of the text must not be imputed to Amano, but it comes as proof of the difficulties faced by artists in their attempts to discard tradition completely when illustrating *The Tale of Genji.*

Finally, a less controversial episode comes from the chapter, the "Festival of the Cherry Blossoms." The Ōsaka manual dedicates three scenes to this chapter, of which the first refers to Genji's encounter with Oborozukiyo.

The Tosa schools offers once again the best examples of canonical illustrations of the Oborozukiyo episode, while at the same time exposing the errors committed by artists who relied entirely on picture manuals in their depiction of *Genji* scenes. Tosa Mitsuyoshi's seventeenth-century "Hana no en" (Figure 11) is a typical interpretation of the meeting between the two characters. What stands out as extremely unusual in Mitsuyoshi's picture is the positioning of the two characters: Genji comes out from the inner *moya* while Oborozukiyo strolls carelessly alongside the *sunoko.* Such an error can best be explained by the Ōsaka manual not giving any hint of the characters' positions in the picture. Mitsuyoshi followed all other instructions *ad litteram*: the woman is holding a fan with three-ply cherry blossoms and outside the blinds the misty moon is reflected onto the waters. However, when left on his own to determine the location of the characters, the artist, obviously not familiar with the text, committed a blunder, since the text of the *Genji* specifically indicates that the woman is inside, whereas Genji is the one coming from the outside.

This unintentional reversal of roles takes a parodic turn in the nineteenth-century *shunga*[91] of Utagawa Kunisada (Figure 12). The two lovers engaged in foreplay before intercourse represent two modern versions of the Heian characters. To make the association even clearer to his audience, Kunisada inserts in the upper right corner a small image of a more conventional picture for this episode, in which Genji and Oborozukiyo sit side by side on a veranda. Kunisada's characters however, unlike their reserved traditional models, are deeply engaged in the act of making love, with the woman on top, in an apparently domineering position. One may speculate that the reversal of the traditional roles in courtship and lovemaking, of the passive female and of the active male, reflects accurately the text of the tale, where Oborozukiyo initiates the affair with Genji, by exposing herself to the outside and by triggering his reaction with a poem on the beauty of the misty moon. Moreover, by depicting the two lovers engaged in what seems to be consensual intercourse – the woman kisses the man while holding an arm around his neck to draw him closer – Kunisada may also reveal the artistic consensus in interpreting this episode as a common love affair. But one must not dwell too much on interpretative accuracy in *shunga,* considering that the same *Mitate Genji sadame* album contains a similar scene for the "Hahakigi" chapter. In fact, when it comes to *shunga* illustrations of the *Genji,* every chapter, independently of its actual content, is a perfect opportunity to offer the viewers a licentious treat. Questions regarding the textual evidence indicating intercourse, or the problems raised by the distinction between consensual and non-consensual intercourse were of little importance to *shunga* masters and the fact that sometimes their pictures happen to be accurate in terms of textual evidence does not make them paragons of insightfulness.

[91] Literally, "spring images", in fact Edo period licentious pictures.

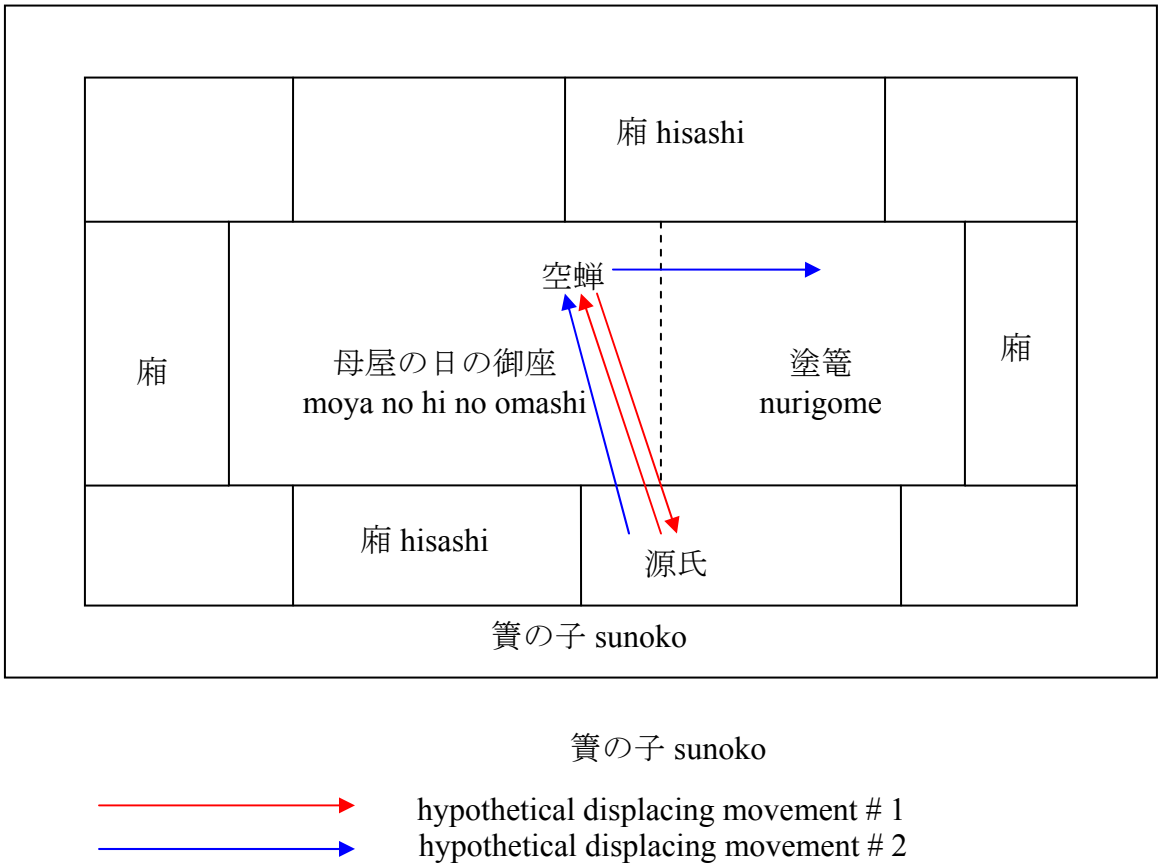
The least conventional depiction of the "Hana no en" episode can be found in Kajita Hanko's work (Figure 13, 1996). Unlike the previous "Utsusemi" picture, his choice of scene this time departs drastically both from the instructions in the Ōsaka manual and from traditional representations of the episode. Thus, instead of focusing on the encounter between Genji and Oborozukiyo, Kajita chooses to illustrate the moments that precede this encounter, specifically Genji's attempt to visit Fujitsubo. The man, Genji, in opulent court dress, seems to be arrested by a closed door, probably the one leading to Fujitsubo's chambers. Incidentally, Kajita's picture raises the importance of the closed-door incident to the central scene in the "Hana no en" episode. The intimate connection between the closed door and the woman's inaccessibility advances and supports the opposite association between Oborozukiyo's open door and her amorously inclined disposition. Kajita's choice of this particular scene foreshadows and explains Genji's imminent encounter with Oborozukiyo and the artist accomplishes two goals at the same time: he evokes the upcoming encounter in the viewer's mind and also offers a new interpretation of that encounter through the door metaphor.

Therefore, it is conclusive even from the limited selection of *Genji* illustrations provided in this thesis that there is a wide variety of works of art inspired by the Heian tale, some traditional, others utterly innovative in approach. Their creators too chose their own position concerning the original text; some were completely ignorant of it, others had a deeper understanding revealed by their artistic intuition. With so many variables at work, a generalizing statement concerning the graphic representation of sexual violence in *Genji* art may be almost impossible, but so is its complete dismissal from artistic representations of the tale. Although violent displacement as such is rarely illustrated,

some illustrations depicting episodes which feature displacement in other types of sexual violence often support ideas that determine a reading of sexual violence. As unreliable as they may sometimes be, *Genji* pictures can constitute important circumstantial evidence.

FIGURE 4. Utsusemi's East Wing.[92]

Eastern Wing – *higashi no tai* 東の対



[92] Adaptation of the map from Ishida Jōji and Shimizu Yoshiko, eds., *Genji monogatari* (Tōkyō: Shinchōsha, 1976-1985), 86.

FIGURE 5. *Shigenaga and Kiyomasa II. "Hahakigi" scene from Genji gojūyomai no uchi* (*Genji in Fifty-Four Sheets*). Ca. 1730-1735. *Haribako-e* (hand colored print). Boston Museum of Fine Arts, William Sturgis Bigelow Collection.

FIGURE 6. Kunisada II. "Hahakigi" scene. Ca. 1857. Woodblock print. University of Alberta.

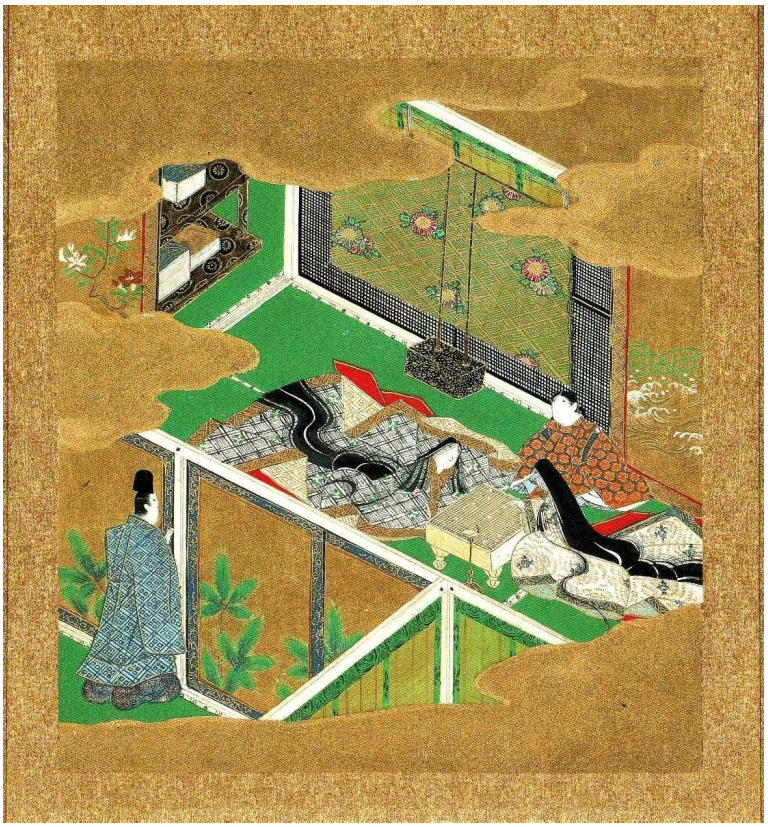


FIGURE 7. Attributed to Tosa Mitsuoki. “Utsusemi” scene. 17th century. Ink, color and gold leaf on paper. The Mary and Jackson Burke Collection.

FIGURE 8. Miyata Masayuki. “Utsusemi” scene from *The Tale of Genji: Scenes from the World’s First Novel,*. Tōkyō: Kodansha International, 2001.

FIGURE 9. Kajita Hanko. “Utsusemi” scene from *Meiga de yomu Genji monogatari,* Tōkyō : Taishūkan Shoten, 1996.

FIGURE 10. Amano Yoshitaka. “Utsusemi” scene from *The Tale of Genji,* Milwakie: DH Press, 2006.

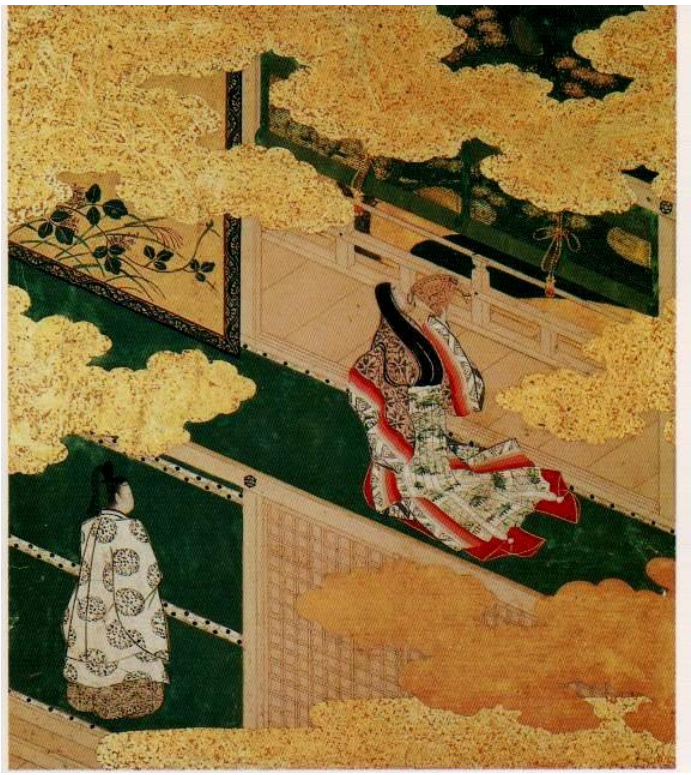


FIGURE 11: Tosa Mitsuyoshi. “Hana no en” scene. 17th century. Ink, color, and gold leaf on paper. Kyōto National Museum.

FIGURE 12. Utagawa Kunisada. “Hana no en” scene from *Mitate Genji shinasadame.* 1855. In *Enshoku Genji e,* Tōkyō: KK Besto Serazu, 1991.

FIGURE 13. Kajita Hanko. “Hana no en” scene from *Meiga de yomu Genji monogatari,* Tōkyō : Taishūkan Shoten, 1996.

CHAPTER 2

Lost on the Road at Dawn: Yūgao's Abduction

"Are the people of old still wandering lost
On this road at dawn, still unknown to me?"[93]

I. Displacement, Stage 2: Abduction

According to my paradigm of displacement, the fourth chapter of the tale, "Evening Faces" ("Yūgao"), shows a new variant that represents a development in terms of geographical movement and displacing strategy from the earlier, simpler pattern employed by Genji in the Utsusemi episode. Whereas the displacement in the "Broom Tree" chapter took the form of a spatial relocation of the woman within the confines of the same territory, the Governor of Kii's mansion, the displacement of Yūgao becomes an abduction, and it is characterized both by a longer distance between the point of departure and that of arrival and by a subtler strategy employed by Genji in the act of displacement.

What are the criteria that distinguish "abduction" from "displacement"? According to the basic definition of "abduction," it is "the act of illegally carrying off or leading away anyone, such as a wife, child, ward, voter; any leading away of a minor under the age of sixteen, without the consent of the parent or guardian; and the forcible carrying off of any one above that age. The definition attributed to the verb "to abduce/ abduct," derives from the same Latin root as the noun "abduction" (L. ab-ducere; ab-off,

[93] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 145.

away + ducere= to lead), indicating the meaning of "to lead or draw away by act or persuasion."[94]

In anthropological studies, abduction is often connected in with the phenomenon of "marriage by capture,"[95] defined as the carrying off a "woman by force both without her consent and without the consent of her kindred,"[96] with the purpose of marrying her. The custom is considered a primitive practice and has been identified in the history of various populations across the globe. One of the most famous cases in the Western world is probably the historic-legendary account of the rape of the Sabine women by the Romans led by Romulus.[97]

Western definitions have limited applicability for the Heian context, but two aspects of these definitions apply to Yūgao's case and determine its reading as abduction: its illegality, albeit not so much in terms of its violation of a code of law but of an established custom regulating courtship; and its use of persuasion as a main strategy of implementation.

However, the interesting phenomenon of "marriage by capture," although so intimately connected to abduction, has little in common with Genji's displacement of Yūgao. One argument to support its inapplicability to the *Genji* incident concerns the existence of Heian marriage practices which retained little of the primitive "marriage by capture" custom. Within such a context, Genji's behavior stands out as an anomaly and

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[94] *Oxford English Dictionary,* Second Edition, 1998.
[95] *The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics,* s.v. "Abduction."
[96] Edward Westmarck, *The History of Human Marriage,* 3 vols. (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1971), II:240.
[97] For a more comprehensive anthropological approach to "marriage by capture" see also Edward Westmarck, "Marriage by Capture" in *The History of Human Marriage,* 3 vols. (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1971), 240-278 and John Ferguson McLennan, "Primitive Marriage: An Inquiry into the Origin of the Form of Capture in Marriage Ceremonies" in *Studies in Ancient History* (London, Macmillan and Co., 1886), 2-161.

not as a continuation of an archaic custom. Moreover, the purpose of the abduction has nothing in common with the idea of marriage since Genji has no intention of publicly acknowledging his liaison with Yūgao. Or, since "marriage by capture" is defined by its finality in marriage as much as by its violet methods, because it lacks one of its main defining coordinates, it can hardly accommodate Yūgao's case. In the absence of a more suitable definition to be applied to violent displacement in *The Tale of Genji,* one is forced to rely on the meaning derived from the etymology of the word "abduction."

Yūgao's abduction represents a central phase in the paradigm of displacement that has Genji as its agent, establishing a link between the less radical form of displacement in the Utsusemi sequence and the aggravated form of kidnapping, basically a form of abduction involving a child, of Murasaki a year later in the narrative of the tale. In terms of spatial distance, the evolution is clear: the distance of displacement for Utsusemi was only the few steps necessary to move her from the *moya* to the *nurigome.* The lady does not leave the Eastern Pavilion, not to mention the estate belonging to her stepson and, despite the fact that she is forced into departing from the safety of the feminine space, the *moya,* she is relocated into an area tangential to this feminine space.

Although Utsusemi is not on her "own" territory to begin with, since she is forced temporarily to take residence in her stepson's mansion, she does have a space of her own that she shares with her female companions. In addition, she benefits from some protection due to the fact that she lives in the presumably guarded residence of a provincial governor. Had Genji attempted anything even closely resembling abduction he would have been faced with exposure. It was one thing to try to secure possession of Utsusemi within the governor's mansion and a completely different thing to try to

remove her from the premises. In other words, in the battle for territorial control, Genji had limited options and therefore could not choose a space that was under his direct, absolute control.

With Yūgao however, Genji succeeds in removing the woman completely from her protective surroundings, by taking her from the house on the Gojō (Fifth) avenue (五条) to an abandoned mansion, known as *nanigashi no in* ("a certain estate, farther East on the same avenue. The case of Yūgao is different from Utsusemi's not so much in terms of "possession" over the space she inhabits, for like Utsusemi, Yūgao too is forced to take shelter, because of a directional taboo, in a temporary residence identified as belonging to an Honorary Deputy Governor (presumably the husband of Yūgao's nurse), as in terms of male protection. Utsusemi can, for better or worse, rely on the presence of the Governor of Kii whereas Yūgao is accompanied only by her ladies-in-waiting.

The distance between the point of departure and the destination point in Yūgao's displacement is considerable, almost one kilometer, requiring the use of a carriage. Furthermore, the displacement transcends the limits of the feminine space, here, the Gojō house inhabited and controlled by women, and introduces the neutral, namely the *nanigashi no in.*

Traditionally, this Nangashi no in, best translated as "a certain residence", is associated with Minamoto no Tōru's Kawara no in[98] which was reputed to be haunted by its deceased owner's ghost.[99] However, at the moment of the abduction, the original text gives no clear evidence to support this association. The destination of the displacement is

[98] Both the *Nanigashi no in* and Genji's later *Rokujō in* are traditionally modeled on Minamoto no Tōru's mansion, *Kawaranoin* (Field, 1987, 91), which in its turn had acquired the reputation of a haunted house (Tyler, 2001, 64).
[99] A detailed analysis of the Nanigashi no in – Kawara no in association and its implications for the Genji-Yūgao-Tō no Chūjō triangle can be found in Bargen, 1997, 48-49.

described only as *sono watari chikaki nanigashi no in* ("a certain residence close in the area").[100] If one interprets the "area" as meaning the Gojō Avenue, then "close" can only mean at a distance in between one and two kilometers (two kilometers would be half the distance of the *miyako* along the Gojō Avenue from East to West, so crossing half the width of the capital would probably not be considered "close").[101] No further indications of directions are provided in the text: one can hardly speculate if Genji and Yūgao head East or West, or even North or South, assuming that they do leave Gojō Avenue after all (Figure 14).

Such a lack of evidence regarding the geographic coordinates of the abduction may indicate that Murasaki Shikibu's audience was either as familiar with the author's implications as to naturally equate the Nanigashi no in with the Kawara no in or that the author did not have such an association in mind to begin with. Had she meant to draw on the rich implications of the Kawara no in, she would have made the reference to it more obvious. As it is, without necessarily implying that centuries of traditional interpretation are mistaken, there is no explicit evidence in the text of the association, at least at the moment of the abduction.[102] The potential Nanigashi no in has to mirror Kawara no in becomes more relevant to the episode of spirit possession, which, because of its common interpretation in terms of the supernatural, needs a suitable stage. Even so, in the light of Bargen's interpretation of spirit possession not as a supernatural, but rather as a psychological phenomenon, the Nanigashi no in no longer has anything to gain from being equated with the Kawara no in.

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[100] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 145.
[101] Ivan Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince* (New York, Kodansha International, 1994), 22.
[102] Without investigating all references to the Nanigashi no in in the *Genji*, one cannot eliminate the possibility of its association with the Kawara no in. However, at the moment of the abduction no such reference is made.

Moreover, in the episode of Yūgao's abduction the Nanigashi no in is relevant only as a symbol of the unknown. Independently of its location, North or South, East or West from Yūgao's house, the important thing for the paradigm of displacement remains the fact that this abandoned mansion is not a territory under Genji's direct control, that is, it retains its neutrality.

Apparently, Genji's use of displacement in the Yūgao episode proves to be more successful than its Utsusemi antecedent, considering that her hero initially manages to escape the female-controlled space in his quest for territorial supremacy. However, by choosing neutral ground as the final stage of the abduction, Genji is faced with territory he cannot control. Having abducted a woman, he feels out of place himself. This is a situation that ultimately leads to failure. As Norma Field observes, "the Yūgao episode represents an excursion into foreign territory – foreign, it should be remembered, for its unaristocratic realism as well as its supernaturalism"[103] and the unfamiliarity of the terrain, coupled with the unexpectedness of uncanny events divert Genji's abduction from its initial purpose and deprive him of any ability to control the territory, the uncanny events, and, implicitly, the woman.

The other new aspect of Yūgao's abduction is Genji's novel capacity of employing strategies of displacement apart from sheer physical force. With Utsusemi, Genji simply resorted to his physical superiority; he swiftly took the woman into his arms and moved her to the desired location. With Yūgao, such a tactic would be futile, since the very distance and the potential exposure to public view prohibit the simple scenario of Genji carrying Yūgao in his arms along Gojō Avenue. Such a movement does occur

[103] Norma Filed, *The Splendor of Longing in The Tale of Genji* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987): 90.

when he lifts Yūgao into the carriage, but the use of physical force is limited to the initial stage of displacement. The strategy that truly ensures the effectiveness of the abduction is the use of deceit: [104] Genji approaches Yūgao, begins a relationship with her, partially earns the trust of her women, and finally resorts to displacement adroitly disguised as a movement by which he assumes responsibility of her. In other words, Genji serves Yūgao a tempting scenario of amorous commitment that is exposed only when the two reach the *Nanigashi no in*, instead of the *Nijō-in,* Genji's official residence at the moment. By that time, however, the displacement is successful as far as the movement of the woman from one place to another is concerned.

Because the abduction is performed without dramatic opposition from Yūgao or her ladies-in-waiting, one might presume that it does not constitute an act of violence. However, a closer look at the four criteria used to identify sexual violence in *The Tale of Genji* (rank, courtship, the reactions of the woman and her entourage) will help reveal textual and contextual evidence for a less benevolent and forgiving reading of Genji's action.

[104] The discussion of Genji's strategy of deceit and of Yūgao's expectations will be resumed at a later time.

II. Yūgao's Abduction as an Act of Sexual Violence

The four main criteria that I have listed above to support reading an episode in the tale as an act of sexual violence are: the rank difference between the male and female protagonists, the violation of the courtship rules, the opposition encountered from the woman and the censuring reactions of the woman's entourage.

Yūgao's rank and status are far below Genji's and, even lower than Utsusemi's, who enjoyed a modicum of protection due to her marriage to the Iyo Deputy and to her connection to the Governor of Kii. By contrast, Yūgao does not have a male relative, not even one subordinate to Genji, to ensure her safety. In fact, Tō no Chūjō first introduced her during the "rainy night discussion" (雨夜の品定め, "*ameyo no shinsadame*") as a representative of the lowest level of the aristocracy. Genji too infers, based on the exterior appearance of the house Yūgao inhabits, that she belongs to "the lowest of the low."[105] In addition to her lowly estate, she is also deprived of the protection a male relative, and she has lost the patronage of her lover, Tō no Chūjō. Yūgao is in hiding as a result of the threats received from Tō no Chūjō's main wife (*kita no kata).* The only male figure associated with her is "a certain honorary vice-governor" who is, from the perspective of Koremitsu, Genji's retainer, "a fellow too poorly placed to know the details."[106] Therefore, at the moment of her encounter with Genji and of her abduction, Yūgao can rely only on the limited protection of the women in her entourage.

As far as the observance of the courtship ritual is concerned, Yūgao's case is the first flagrant anomaly in the tale. Not only is the customary poetic exchange that sets in

[105] Seidensticker, 1998, 62.
[106] Ibid., 60.

motion the preliminary stage of courtship initiated by the woman herself but Genji is replaced by Koremitsu in all the arrangements preceding the sexual encounter.

During a visit to his sick nurse, Koremitsu's mother, who lives on the Gojō Avenue, Genji notices the profusion of *yūgao* ("evening face") blossoms covering the humble gate of the house next door. He sends a page to pick a few flowers and is presented with a fan from one of the inhabitants. Later, he notices a poem written on the fan and this poem apparently constitutes the woman's attempt to initiate a relationship. Yūgao's actions at this stage are highly atypical since she reverses the customary rules that stipulate the man's role in initiating the courtship of a woman and generates this ambivalent comment from Genji:

> "A rather practiced and forward young person, and, were he to meet her, perhaps vulgar as well – but the easy familiarity of the poem had not been at all unpleasant."[107]

Furthermore, Yūgao's behavior at the initial stage of courtship seems totally inconsistent with her image. One reason may be the woman's hidden resources of boldness and determination in approaching complete strangers, but the text itself discourages this hypothesis and favors the reading of the incident with the poem as a case of mistaken identity. In other words, there is relevant textual evidence suggesting that Yūgao initially mistook Genji for Tō no Chūjō. The poem opening her courtship reads:

> "This evening flower, glowing in the light of the clear dew,
> Knows who you might be."[108]

The tone of the poem, as Genji himself notices, denotes familiarity between its writer and its intended reader, which is not the case between Genji and Yūgao, but is definitely applicable to Yūgao's relationship to Tō no Chūjō. The metaphor of the

[107] Seidensticker, 1998, 60.
[108] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 125.

"evening flower" refers to the lady herself, and not to Genji, as translators of the tale have often suggested. The *yūgao* flower is too humble an image for the Yūgao lady to apply to someone whom she suspects to be of high rank. Furthermore, the syntax of the poem connects the attributive clause *"kokoroate ni soreka to zo miru"* directly to *"yūgao no hana"* which it modifies. Therefore, the *yūgao* flower, namely the woman, is the one speculating on the identity of the man.

The text becomes all the more explicit when presenting Yūgao's circumstances in composing her poem and her reaction to Genji's tardiness in answering her message:

> "Thinking it a familiar profile, the lady had not lost the opportunity to surprise him with a letter, and when time passed and there was no answer she was left feeling somehow embarrassed and disconsolate."[109]

In fact, the original text goes beyond the implications of the translation here which does not indicate that the lady's familiarity refers specifically to the man, and not to the situation or the courtship customs involved, as the unspecific "it" may suggest.

> "Mada minu onsama narikeredo ito shiruku omohiateraretamaheru onsobame wo misugusade […]"[110]
> "Although she has not seen him yet, she clearly guessed who he was, without even taking the time for a glimpse."

In other words, Yūgao is convinced of having correctly identified the man at her gate and of initiating the poem exchange not with a stranger, but with a former lover. In the absence of the theory of "mistaken identity" Yūgao's ability to know the identity of a complete stranger with whom she had no previous connections is uncanny. Rather than depicting Yūgao as a Heian Pythia, Murasaki Shikibu reinforces the woman's ultimately tragic mistake.

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[109] Seidensticker, 1998, 61.
[110] *Genji monogatari* 1976-1985, 126-127.

Yūgao's women have been keeping a constant vigil for Tō no Chūjō's carriage passing by, secretly peeping from inside the shutters, but taking the utmost care not to be discovered. Their mistress is, in fact, a runaway; she wants to avoid to the best of her ability an encounter with Tō no Chūjō, but at the same time she does not dismiss the possibility of it happening, at least not on her new territory that is unknown to Tō no Chūjō's principal wife. Informed of the presence of a young gentleman in front of her gate, she may have hoped, when she sent out her poem, for her discovery by her former lover. Her poem is an attempt to save face at the same time that it is intended to retie a bond that she had severed before. Hence, she is surprised at not receiving an immediate answer. Her feeling of embarrassment signifies either her fear that Tō no Chūjō is no longer interested in her, or the realization that she has unwittingly opened up to a stranger. By the time Yūgao realizes that the man she approached is not the one she imagined, her affair with Genji is already in progress.

Genji's courtship of Yūgao which starts after receiving her poem is also highly atypical, at least compared to his behavior in the case of Utsusemi. With Utsusemi, Genji took charge of the action from the very beginning: he attempted to get closer to the woman, engaged in *kaimami* and sent her poems through Kogimi, his intermediary. In the case of Yūgao, Genji delegates Koremitsu not only to inquire about the woman but also to lay the foundation necessary for a relationship. One has to wonder what Genji's reasons were in departing so drastically from his usual behavior.

The woman's lowly estate may constitute a partial motivation in Genji's desire to avoid exposing a misalliance that was extremely shameful for someone in his position. However, since he was bound to visit her sooner or later after initiating the affair, his

extreme caution appears to be hypocritical, or it indicates that Genji may have had other concerns in mind when he decided furtively to hide behind Koremitsu. Genji learns only later that Yūgao is Tō no Chūjō's lost lover, but he may already have understood that her poem was only mistakenly addressed to him. When trying to profit from the opportunity offered by Yūgao's poem, Genji's reply poem triggers the woman's defense, as Doris G. Bargen observes:

> "Shocked by the realization of her embarrassing mistake, Yūgao is unable to send a reply. Before Genji had an opportunity to look at her poem, she has excitedly dashed off a "letter" (S:61; 1:215) – which he never sees because it was sent to Tō no Chūjō, the man addressed in her poem. It is, therefore, only when Yūgao receives Genji's reply that she realizes the full extent of her mistake and lowers her shutters as a barrier to further contact."[111]

Realizing that he can no longer approach the woman once the case of mistaken identity has been solved, Genji has no choice other than to rely on Koremitsu to pave the way for a relationship. Deceit, in this case by substitution, starts to become a crucial strategy in Genji's behavior towards Yūgao.

In other words, Koremitsu comes in handy as someone who can distract the woman's attention from her initial mistake. However, Genji entrusts Koremitsu with the opening acts in the courtship process only to take over at the right moment. Not only does Koremitsu inquire into the woman's situation, but he also engages in *kaimami* and in the preliminary poetic exchanges required in courtship. One might imagine that Yūgao was more than a little confused when she was approached by one man, but ended up sleeping with another and that, in fact, Koremitsu's loyalty to Genji went as far as yielding his own warm spot in Yūgao's bed.

[111] Bargen, 1997, 44-45.

Yūgao's abduction occurs in the context of these violations of courtship regulations. Her abduction is in itself an anomalous act. At the time of the displacement/ abduction, Genji has already gained physical access to Yūgao, so this case of sexual violence, unlike Utsusemi's, is not related directly to physical control over the woman's body. Genji must fear other scenarios that would disempower him by removing Yūgao from under his control.

Thus, the most obvious reason motivating the abduction is the fear of exposure. Yūgao's Gojō house was located one avenue away from Lady Rokujō's estate and right next to the house belonging to Genji's nurse. The Rokujō Lady, who is already discontent at being neglected, could have Genji followed any time, the way Yūgao tries to unsuccessfully, in order to discover his identity, but most probably with better results, considering the different resources available to the two women. The nurse's household might also accidentally discover Genji's affair and unintentionally spread the word. Genji remains circumspect about keeping the affair a secret from his nurse even after Yūgao's death. In addition, there are other parties that might discover Genji's shameful secret and make it known to the world: the women at his Nijō residence who are concerned about his nightly outings, the household of Aoi, his principal wife, whom he neglects as well, and even his royal father, who goes as far as to send a search party after him when he does not make his appearance in the imperial palace. Therefore, his fear of exposure should by no means be underrated as a factor in Genji's behavior during the abduction of Yūgao.

An additional reason motivating the abduction is Genji's mistrust of Yūgao. It soon becomes obvious to him that the woman's Gojō house is only a temporarily abode

from where she can disappear anytime. Moreover, once he discovers who Yūgao really is, Tō no Chūjō's story comes to play an important part in the way Genji relates to her. When talking about her in the "Broom Tree" chapter, Genji's friend concluded:

> "And the one I have described to you – her very lack of jealousy might have brought a suspicion that there was a man in her life."[112]

Genji is not fooled by Yūgao's appearance of submission and knows quite well from Tō no Chūjō's story that the woman is capable enough of reaching the dramatic decision of abandoning him without even a word. Thus, despite having gained access to her body, her mind still eludes him, that is, he feels unable to control her emotions and intentions and so tries to compensate this weakness by a better control of her location. Immediately prior to the abduction, Genji ponders the possibility of moving Yūgao to his Nijō residence and although he does not seem to reach a clear decision on the matter, his anxiety is captured in the text:

> "Genji had his own worries. If, having lowered his guard with an appearance of complete unreserve, she were to slip away and hide, where would he seek her? This seemed to be but a temporary residence, and he could not be sure when she would choose to change it, and for what other."[113]

Moreover, similarly to Tō no Chūjō, who came to suspect infidelity as the real reason behind Yūgao's disappearance, Genji is all the more aware of the threatening presence of a rival in love, who in this case is no longer a mere speculation, but a reality. Genji enters an unfair[114] competition with his friend, Tō no Chūjō, over Yūgao and speculates on the case of mistaken identity in his favor (not unlike Niou's impersonation of Kaoru in order to gain access to Ukifune later in the Uji chapters). Genji, however,

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[112] Seidensticker, 1995, 34.
[113] Ibid., 66.
[114] The competition between the two men is "unfair" because only Genji is aware of the existence of a rival, whereas Tō no Chūjō remains in the dark until the end of the story (Genji's first suspicions occur early in the chapter, Seidensticker, 1995, 64-65).

cannot continue to hide behind another man's persona because Yūgao realizes her mistake at an early stage. From the moment Genji is exposed as not being the man Yūgao expected, the possibility of the rival's appearance becomes imminent. If Doris G. Bargen's assumption is correct, Yūgao has already sent a letter to Tō no Chūjō before answering Genji's poem and, by this, she may have disclosed her location to him. It thus becomes a problem of timing for the two rivals, a competition in which the winner is the one to make the first move. Genji's haste to remove Yūgao from her current residence, even before having reached a conclusion regarding the outcome of his actions, is motivated by his desperate attempt to avoid Tō no Chūjō's interference.

Finally, a less conspicuous reason motivating Yūgao's abduction lies in her disquieting vicinity to Genji's nurse, not so much because it creates the threat of exposure, but because it brings too close together two realms that should be kept apart: the profane world of sexuality and the religious world of death. There is a thin threshold separating the two women, the ailing nun who has already left society and is preparing to leave this world altogether and the young woman who cannot seem to escape the impermanence of sexual relationships. These two separate worlds can easily permeate one into the other with dramatic consequences, as René Girard places the acts of sexual violence at the point of collision between sexuality and religion:

> "The connection between sexuality and religion is a heritage common to all religions and is supported by an impressive array of convergent facts. Sex and violence frequently come to grips in such direct form as abduction, rape, defloration, and various sadistic practices, as well as indirect actions of indefinite consequences."[115]

[115] René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977): 35.

Genji may unconsciously want to avoid the association, but before he realizes it, his initial desire to avoid death pollution, which is but a manifestation of the contagious nature of violence,[116] is diverted to abduction, that is, another manifestation of violence. Furthermore, despite the attempt to remove himself and Yūgao from death and violence, Genji cannot contain the manifestations of these phenomena which recur even after the displacement. The cycle of events that is triggered by Genji's discovery of Yūgao on the threshold of eros and thanatos and continues with Yūgao's violent abduction, her spirit possession and her death, reinforces René Girard's theory of contagious violence. If violence had been simply confined to Yūgao's location, Genji's displacement might have been successful. But violence is not attached solely to geographical coordinates; it becomes an inherent part of the protagonists. The hero naively believes that the neutral ground of the *Nanigashi no in* may ensure complete safety and control, but as Doris G. Bargen observes, "the villa seemed ominously to bring the two Gojō houses together, without any fence to mark the division between love and death, eros and thanatos."[117] Neutral ground thus becomes unstable ground, but not necessarily because of its hidden traditional potential to constitute the stage for violent manifestations, but because violence enters *Nanigashi no in* together with the protagonists.

The four reasons that motivate Genji's abduction of Yūgao, namely his fear of exposure, his lack of confidence in the woman's intentions, his desire to avoid unwelcome rivalry, as well as his uneasiness in the vicinity of religion and death, are powerful enough to dictate a violation of courtship etiquette. Abiding by the rules was the

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[116] René Girard interprets any kind of ritual impurity, including the pollution caused by exposure to death, as fundamentally motivated by the manifestation of violence, which represents a contaminating process (Girard, 1977, 28-30).
[117] Bargen, 1997, 54.

last thing on Genji's mind at the moment of the abduction. Still, before definitively classifying his actions as manifestations of sexual violence, one has to take a closer look at Yūgao's reaction as one of the most important factors indicating violent physical displacement.

Unlike Utsusemi, who resorted to various strategies to deter Genji from reaching his purpose, Yūgao reactions to the abduction are either absent, at least from the text, or, when disclosed, extremely difficult to interpret. When Genji suggests that they should spend the night in a different location, apparently because he was disturbed by the commotion raised by Yūgao's neighbors, humble people who were starting their everyday labor, the woman's reaction seems only to indicate surprise:

> "Well, how about spending the rest of the night comfortably at a place not far from here?! This way, it is simply too unpleasant."
> "Why? It is so unexpected" she replied in an *unsuspecting voice*.
> When Genji assured her that their bond would endure beyond this life, her heart, which previously had opened up to him, now changed mysteriously."[118] (my emphasis)

The adjectival verb *oiraka nari* used here adverbially normally translates as "calm, peaceful, straightforward, direct", but in this particular context it can also bear the meaning of "candid, unsuspecting, innocent," possibly indicating the woman's inability to divine Genji's plans. What is particularly interesting is Yūgao's reaction to Genji vain promises of everlasting love. As discussed previously in connection to Utsusemi and Nokiba no ogi, similar vows of enduring fidelity aroused Utsusemi's distrust and Nokiba's complete submission. Yūgao's attitude changes suddenly from trusting to cautious, which makes her less naïve than she initially appeared. It would therefore be

[118] *Genji monogatari* , 1976-1985, 142.

safe to assume that, at least as far as her power of discernment is concerned, she is not inferior in any way to Utsusemi.

After Genji's casual proposal to change residence for the night, Yūgao's feelings become all the more apparent. When Genji persists in projecting their relationship into an undefined future, in the apocalyptic age of Miroku, even the narrative voice qualifies his hopes are "excessive" (*ito kochitashi*).[119] As for the woman, she replies with a poem that cuts short Genji's reveries:

> "Such was the burden of the bonds I bore from previous lives
> That it is hard for me to have hope in what lies ahead."[120]

The soft-spoken Yūgao becomes unexpectedly very straightforward in expressing her skepticism at Genji's hollow words and in hinting, almost threateningly, at her previous relationship to Tō no Chūjō. Furthermore, at this point, she is portrayed as being visibly anxious and unsatisfied (*kokoro motonakameri* – "anxious, impatient, irritated, unsatisfied, uneasy").[121] In her confusion and inability to decide on whether or not to accept Genji's suggestion, Yūgao is compared to the waning moon about to disappear behind the rim of the Western Hills and for the first time, her abduction is associated with extinction. From this moment on, the woman becomes the moon, and the movement of the celestial body mirrors the movement of the woman herself:

> "She could not decide whether she should disappear unexpectedly like the waning moon behind the rim of the Western Hills. As Genji tried to persuade her, the moon suddenly hid in the clouds and the sky of dawn became beautiful."[122]

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[119] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 142.
[120] Ibid., 142.
[121] Ibid., 143.
[122] Ibid., 143.

Just as the moon has no control over its itinerary in the night sky and no power to avoid the clouds that cover it, so is the woman deprived of any means to decide her future. In the passage immediately following, Genji hurriedly carries Yūgao to the carriage and proceeds to move her to the *Nanigashi no in*, without waiting for her to voice her decision. Yūgao remains silent until their arrival at the abandoned residence, where she expresses her feelings once more, employing the same moon metaphor:

> "She shyly answered:
> 'The traveling moon, unsure of the mountain's rim
> Might disappear without a trace in the sky above.
> I feel helpless.'
> It pleased him to see her so awfully frightened."[123]

The choice of powerful adjectives in the original text, such as *"kokorobososhi"* ("lonely, helpless, unsure"), *"osoroshi"* ("frightened, scared"), and "*sugoge nari"* ("terrified") indicates the psychological condition of Yūgao as a result of the abduction. She may not choose to oppose Genji physically, but oppose him she does.

However, every Genji heroine has a different reaction to male aggression, motivated both by the circumstances of her violent displacement and by her character. With Yūgao, the context of the abduction and the personality of the heroine play an important role in determining an accurate reading of her attitude in the abduction episode. It is paramount to assess the context of the abduction from the continuing tug-of-war between Yūgao's expectations and Genji's strategy of deceit.

In particular, after her relationship with Tō no Chūjō failed because of his neglect of her and his lack of protection from his principal wife's intrigues, Yūgao must be hoping to avoid similar problems in her relationship with Genji. What she is looking for in this new relationship is the security that she lacked in the previous one. Pragmatist that

[123] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 144.

she is, she realized that someone of her status could not become a main wife to a high-ranking aristocrat. But if her position as a secondary wife were officially recognized by the man, she would enjoy a fairly decent degree of financial security. For someone with no familial backing and with a child from a previous relationship, obtaining the basic means of subsistence is vital. Thus, the perfect scenario for Yūgao must have been to be acknowledged by Genji who would either move her to his Nijō-in residence or provide a house for her where he could visit her frequently, no longer fearing the gossip. In addition, he would also have to make the commitment to support her financially for the rest of her life.

Yūgao's expectations, however, are far from what Genji has in mind for her. Although he appears to be infatuated with her and visits her often at her Gojō residence, his commitment begins to crumble when he considers the risks of being exposed and made the laughing stock of the entire high aristocracy. He muses about bringing her to his Nijō-in but quickly dismisses the idea, unwilling to put his reputation at risk for Yūgao's sake. Once he decides to abduct her, he does so without thinking of the consequences. The place he chooses to take her to, the *Nanigashi no in*, has the advantage of being deserted but still in the vicinity; privacy and proximity is all that Genji thinks of as essentials. Ironically, he can either think ahead a million kalpa into the future or only as far as the next day. By acting on the spur of the moment, Genji does not consider what might happen to Yūgao after a few days of dalliance and his return to his residence and to court. Obviously, the *Nanigashi no in* was not prepared in view of Yūgao taking permanent residence there, so Genji must not have intended to transform it into a lovers' nest. Did he assume he could take Yūgao back to her house once he finished playing

around with her or was he planning on abandoning her in the deserted villa? Probably neither, simply because he was busy enough seizing the day and hardly inclined to contemplate the next step, much less the consequences of his dangerous moves. In a way, Yūgao's death came at a very convenient time for Genji since he no longer had to look for an answer to the question what to do with the woman, only what to do with her corpse, in order to be able to return to his everyday business.

Nevertheless, when he first proposes a change of location to Yūgao, Genji is careful enough not to reveal what the destination point is. His strategy of deceit is more intuitive than planned, but successful nevertheless in offering the appearance of finally answering Yūgao's expectations. From the woman's perspective, Genji's sudden proposal may in fact indicate that he is willing to commit to her. For that reason, she is cautious and surprised at his decision, but does not oppose Genji during the carriage ride to the *Nanigashi no in*. Once at the destination, Yūgao realizes Genji's true intentions and "can interpret the physical isolation of the villa as a sign of her lover's refusal to acknowledge her and as an omen of inevitable disavowel."[124]

Komashaku Kimi pushes to extremes the incompatibility between Yūgao's expectations and Genji's intentions, by equating their case with modern instances of sexual harassment:

> "The man's and the woman's positions are different. Whereas for him, that night is nothing more than a whimsical adventure, for the woman, it is the source of great anxiety. Murasaki Shikibu clearly perceives the misunderstandings between the two, as well as the man's obtuseness to the woman's insecurity.
> That difference in position and perception between the man and the woman is exactly the same as sexual harassment, which has become a problem in contemporary society."[125]

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[124] Bargen, 1997, 49.
[125] Komashaku Kimi, *Murasaki Shikibu no messēji* (Tōkyō: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1991): 89.

Even without qualifying as sexual harassment, the negotiation between Yūgao's expectations and Genji's intentions looms large in the background of the abduction and partially justifies the woman's limited reactions to the event. When comparing her inconspicuous manifestations of anxiety prior to the abduction and the clear cut terror she experiences after reaching the destination point, it becomes obvious that Yūgao has already attached a tag of violence to the displacement. As long as the destination remained unknown, the abduction still had the potential to transform into a matrimonial practice, a simple relocation of a woman prior to initiating a socially accepted relationship. Yet *the Nanigashi no in* is nothing but Genji's trap that Yūgao falls into. By the time she realizes her tragic mistake, spirit possession remains her only visible and audible strategy of resistance to male aggression.

The other factor that modulates Yūgao's reactions to her abduction by Genji refers to the way her character is portrayed in the tale. From her very debut in Tō no Chūjō's account, she appears to be extremely contradictory, or rather the men in her life view her to be so. Tō no Chūjō complains about her reticence in expressing her feelings, which he judges to be the real cause for their separation, yet he concludes his story by voicing his suspicions of her infidelity. Genji too at one moment fears abandonment and at the other wishes Yūgao were a little more assertive:

> "If only she would possess the ability to show her feelings (anger, *kokorobamu*), he thought, and wanted to see her opening up to him."[126]

However, despite his moments of doubt, Genji persists in perceiving Yūgao as "surprisingly yielding" (*"ito asamashiku yaharaka ni"*), "lacking depth and seriousness" ("*monofukaku omokikata ha okure"*) and "entirely child-like" ("*hitaburu ni wakabitaru*

[126] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 142.

mono").[127] She would have probably continued to be remembered only for "her delicate character and precarious social circumstances"[128] were it not for Bargen's observation that "Yūgao is a much more ambiguous character. On the one hand, she is bold enough to have taken her daughter and left Tō no Chūjō because of his disagreeable principal wife; on the other hand, Genji perceives her to be timid and helpless."[129] The few textual references that pass unobserved amidst Yūgao's portrait as a pliant woman indicate that there is a hidden facet to her that represents a serious cause of anxiety for the men in her life.

In other words, Yūgao is not as docile as her outward attitude leads one to believe, but able to censure her reactions and built up tremendous amounts of determination within. Her behavior in amorous relationships follows an established pattern according to which she patiently tolerates the man's actions for a period of time, before bringing forth the energy to oppose him. The same pattern occurred in her relationship with Tō no Chūjō, whose neglect she endured repeatedly, but whom she finally abandoned when she had reached the limits of her patience and encountered an event that triggered her opposition, namely the threat from his main wife. Similarly, she withstands Genji's non-committal attitude until the moment her abduction to the *Nanigashi no in* enflames her pent-up discontent in the extreme form of spirit possession.

Therefore, the two factors that refer to the abduction in terms of the negotiation between the woman's expectations and the men's true intentions, and to the character and behavioral patterns of the woman involved help elucidate Yūgao's limited reaction. At

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[127] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 137.
[128] Haruo Shirane, *The Bridge of Dreams: A Poetics of The Tale of Genji* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987): 68.
[129] Bargen, 1997, 55.

the same time they serve to explain the meager opposition Genji encounters from Yūgao's ladies-in-waiting who, on the one hand, interpreted their mistress's relative silence as consensus and, on the other hand, were also seduced by Genji's strategy of deceit:

> "Her ladies too, seeing that his intentions towards her were not at all foolish, eventually put their trust in him, although his decision was somewhat disturbing."[130]

One may safely assume that the women's expectations were very much similar to Yūgao's and that, as dubious as Genji's sudden decision to move Yūgao was, they still could not predict that it disguised an act of violence. Ukon alone rides along with her mistress and becomes the only witness of the events at the deserted villa, but after Yūgao's death Genji prohibits her from returning to the Gojō house and informing the other women of the situation, thus reducing her to silence. For the rest of Yūgao's entourage, left behind after their mistress's abduction, the mystery of what truly occurred determines the reaction that was missing at the moment of the abduction:

> "In the house of the "evening faces", the women were at a loss to know what had happened to their lady(…) For the poor women *it was all like a nightmare*. Perhaps the wonton son of some governor, fearing Tō no Chūjō, had spirited her off to the country?"[131] (my emphasis)

Obviously, the women's distress is not caused by Yūgao's death, of which they know nothing, but by the revelation that their lady's disappearance indicates that she was the victim of an act of violence and not the fortunate recipient of Genji's favor. As late as it comes, Yūgao's entourage does voice some criticism of the abduction, further reinforcing its violent aspect.

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[130] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 142.
[131] Seidensticker, 1995, 82.

III. Religious and Poetic Pointers to Violent Displacement

As if the four factors that determine the reading of Yūgao's abduction as an act of sexual violence were still not enough, the text reveals further circumstantial evidence in support of this reading. One such piece of evidence refers to the ill-boding signs encountered by the protagonists during and after the abduction. Omens and premonitions are narrative techniques the author sometimes uses when wanting to discreetly pass her judgment on events that are particularly connected to violent physical displacement. (In the Uji chapters, such forebodings transform Kaoru's abduction of Ukifune into a funeral procession.)

With Yūgao too, the abduction is diverted, if not to a funeral procession than at least to a journey to the netherworld. Before the departure from the Gojō house, Genji and Yūgao hear the voice of a pilgrim invoking the name of Miroku, the Buddha- to-come, and Genji, eager to turn the harbinger to the future world into a poem on his everlasting fidelity involuntarily includes an ill-boding reference to Po Chü-i's *Song of Everlasting Sorrow:*

> "The dawn was approaching. There was no sound, not even that of cocks crowing. All they could hear was the voice of an old man who prostrated himself, maybe in preparation for a pilgrimage to Mt. Mitake. He underwent strenuous Buddhist practice, standing, and then falling again to the ground. Genji wondered sympathetically for what deep desires he was breaking his back in this world no different from the morning dew.
> "Hail to Miroku, the Buddha to come!" he prayed.
> "Listen to him. He is not thinking only about this world", Genji said and, moved, he composed:
> "Find guidance on the path that this devout man follows
> And do not betray the deep bond that we share in the ages to come."
> The old reference to the Hall of Everlasting Life was inauspicious, but he turned the line of poetry that refers to the "two birds sharing a wing" into a prediction for the ages to come. He had excessive hopes for the future."[132]

[132] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 142-143.

Next, the moon metaphor discussed earlier further indicates that the abduction will end with the Yūgao's disappearance into death. Finally, upon reaching the *Nanigashi no in*, the very appearance of the location generates feelings of uneasiness in Genji and of terror in Yūgao. The villa, with its dilapidated gate overgrown with grasses of forgetfulness, with its trees projecting shadows and darkness and its cover of heavy fog is truly "an extremely creepy place" (*"ito keutoge ni narikeru tokoro"*)[133] in which demons are likely to appear. Obviously, if one contents with interpreting the spirit possession as a paranormal occurrence, then Murasaki Shikibu is simply setting the stage for her supernatural drama; but if one sees the spirit possession episode as Yūgao's reaction to her victimization, thus also recognizing retrospectively her abduction as an act of violence, then the author's use of omens achieves something more than simply creating an exotic location: it comes to corroborate the feminine voice which is not always audible.

In addition to the prophetic occurrences, Genji's behavior after Yūgao's death is also highly relevant in determining the violent nature of the abduction based on his own guilty confessions and uncensored reactions. Thus, immediately after Yūgao's seizure, Genji, still unwilling to admit that she is dead, regrets having chosen the *Nanigashi no in* as a destination point in the displacement. His explicit reason is the strangeness and solitude of the place, but, implicitly, he may also feel remorse for not offering Yūgao what she expected from him: a secure place and position. His feelings of guilt subside once he starts thinking about the consequences of the entire affair, were it to be discovered. Somehow, his superficial concern for his reputation so soon after the loss of his beloved risks to expose him as a hypocrite, yet readers everywhere stubbornly continue to weep at Genji's grief despite evidence provided by Murasaki Shikibu's own

[133] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 146.

critical testimony about Genji's character that raises more than a few question marks. In fact, the arrangements for Yūgao's funeral fall into Koremitsu's care and strangely, the same man that seduced her on behalf of his master is now in charge of burying her and swiftly erasing all traces of Genji's affair.

After returning to his Nijō residence, Genji is overcome by a strange illness, which may confirm the extent of his grief at the loss of his lover, but also a divine retribution for his behavior toward Yūgao, abduction included. Similarly, his arduous trip to the mountain temple where Koremitsu has taken Yūgao's body for cremation, can be interpreted either as the devotion of a forlorn lover or as the atonement of a sinner. Genji's recovery from his illness conspicuously coincides with the end of the period of defilement caused by Yūgao's death, establishing a connection between one event and the other and supporting the reading of Genji's illness as punishment or retribution for his deeds. Based on such evidence, one may infer that the author passes a "guilty" verdict on the hero, and through it, she directs once more the attention of the reader to the abduction episode.

The end of the "Evening Faces" chapter marks a turning point in Genji's amorous life, the moment where he feels the urge to inventory his successes and failures. Incidentally, the two women he pursued, Utsusemi and Yūgao, both became the victims of his ultimately unsuccessful attempts of violent displacement . With Utsusemi, his use of physical force was no match for her varied strategies of resistance; with Yūgao, deceit led him a step closer to his goal, but the lady found ultimate refuge in death. Failures these two episodes may be, but they also record Genji's strategic development of violent

displacement. Still, for the time being, he must admit defeat on all fronts, and so he poetically resigns himself to his own dislocation:

> "One has died, the other parted from me today.
> At the end of autumn, I do not know the destinations of their paths."[134]

But whenever two roads are blocked, another one is opened, a road of violent displacement that eventually takes Genji from failure to success.

IV. Imaging Yūgao

Despite the fascinating events that occur in the "Evening Faces" chapter of *The Tale of Genji*, including the main heroine's abduction, spirit possession and death, it is surprising that there are only six scenes in the Ōsaka manual chosen for illustration. Out of these six, two are completely unrelated to the character of Yūgao, describing instead Genji's visit to the Rokujō lady and his poetic exchange with Nokiba no ogi. Among the other four, one illustrates Koremitsu's disposal of Yūgao's dead body and another Genji's return trip from Kiyomizu-dera where Yūgao's body was taken for cremation. The very first scene of the manual refers to the famous fan exchange between Genji and the then still anonymous woman residing on Gojō Avenue. Only the third scene is dedicated to the aftermath of the abduction, featuring Genji and Yūgao after their arrival at the abandoned Nanigashi no in. This last scene should be most relevant as a potential source of evidence indicating the violent nature of Yūgao's abduction. In practice, however, the Nanigashi-no-in scene is often replaced by an illustration of the two lovers while still at the Gojō house, with particular highlight on Yūgao's noisy low-class neighbors.

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[134] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 179.

Even at first glance, it becomes apparent that the most controversial events of the chapter are missing entirely from the selection of scenes to be illustrated by traditional artists. Whereas in respect to other episodes the choice of scenes was motivated either by the artists' desire to avoid troubling incidents or by the necessity to further the narrative plot through the use of images, even in the absence of the text, none of the above criteria seems to apply in the case of "Evening Faces" On the one hand, there is too sudden a transition from the fan episode to the moment at the Nanigashi no in, making it impossible for someone unfamiliar with the text to understand what happened in between. On the other hand, the funeral scenes at the end of the chapter are included in the canonical selections, despite the fact that death is hardly an aesthetic and "courtly" topic. Thus, what could have possibly motivated the compilers of the Ōsaka manual and the artists who obeyed the traditional canon to completely eliminate such climatic moments as Yūgao's displacement and spirit possession from their illustrations of the tale?

One potential motive might be the tendency to safeguard Genji's "shining" image and avoid associating him with incidents that raise more than one question regarding his behavior. Even without interpreting Yūgao's abduction as sexual violence, there is a logical chain of causes and effects that intimately connects Genji to the woman's death: because Genji took her to the Nanigashi no in, she fell prey to spirit possession; because she was possessed, she ended by dying.[135] Hence, in accordance with this syllogism, Genji's displacement of Yūgao to the Nanigashi no in caused her death. This simple chain of events was probably easy to grasp even for the artists with little knowledge of the original text and their determination to avoid the chronological narrative of the tale

[135] According to the supernatural interpretation, it was the possessing spirit that killed Yūgao; according to Doris G. Bargen's reinterpretation of the phenomenon, it was not the possession that killed her, but the accumulated stress of the abduction that led to Yūgao's death.

may in fact be their attempt to keep the character of Genji as far apart from this sequence of events as possible, so as not to expose him to unwelcome criticism.

Moreover, as the best way to eliminate a fastidious association between Genji and the Nanigashi no in, the place of Yūgao's death, many artists took it upon themselves to disregard the instructions of the Ōsaka manual by moving the scene back to the Gojō house and changing the focus from the relationship between the two lovers in a dilapidated, haunted mansion to the "exotic" inhabitants of the Gojō neighborhood.

The early sixteenth-century "Yūgao" scene attributed to Tosa Mitsunobu (Figure 15) should be located at the abandoned mansion where Genji takes Yūgao. Instead, they are still at the Gojō house that Yūgao inhabited before her abduction.

As spatial indicators, the artist introduces Yūgao's neighbors, who, in the upper right side of the picture are busying themselves, making loud noises with their fulling hammers. The temporal coordinate of the illustration is also closely associated with these clamorous neighbors: because Genji finds their clamor unbearable to his delicate ears, he apparently decides to change location, from the Gojō house to the Nanigashi no in, or at least this is his stated reason behind the abduction. Thus, the presence of the neighbors indicates that the scene illustrated corresponds to the episode before the abduction. The other evidence indicative of time is the presence, in the lower left side of the painting, of the devout man who is preparing himself for the pilgrimage to Mt.Mitake. The old man in white garb prostrated in prayer and the presence of the moon still high on the night sky constitute conclusive evidence that the moment captured by the artist is the one immediately preceding Yūgao's abduction.

Despite the importance of this preparatory episode for the narrative, nothing in the depiction of Yūgao and Genji even hints at the events about to happen. In fact, the two are seated, calmly facing each other, seemingly oblivious of the lively bustle surrounding them. Little else is worth remarking about Mitsunobu's illustration, except maybe the unrealistic architecture of the house. According to the picture, Yūgao seems to be sharing one room in something that looks like a condominium rather than a typical Heian house. Only one wall separates her from her neighbor to the south, the Mitake pilgrim, and another one from her neighbors to the north, the people with the fulling hammers. This particular distribution of the actors in the painting may be effective in driving home the idea that this noisy neighborhood lacked even the minimum degree of privacy, but in doing so it risks reducing the upcoming abduction to merely ensuring the lovers their long awaited solitude.

The fulling-block scene at the Gojō house remained a favorite for the Tosa School even after Mitsunobu. In an early seventeenth-century painting by Mitsuyoshi (Figure 16), one detects the same temporal and spatial coordinates, only in a more elaborate composition. The Mitake pilgrim is considered superfluous and eliminated and the neighbors with their fulling hammer are moved to a more conspicuous position in the upper part of the picture. The condominium-style house is also replaced with something more appropriate and the two lovers switch position, with Genji now having his back turned to the viewer.

The evident differences between Mitsuyoshi and his predecessor only reflect changes in form, from the cruder style of the sixteenth century to a more elegant composition in the seventeenth century, without disturbing the bland content of the

illustration. The depiction of Yūgao's robes may be more elaborate, and one must praise the artist for his minute attention to details, but Genji is still wearing the same red robe as in Mitsunobu's illustration. Moreover, if one is looking for details that might serve to detect a trace of sexual violence in the two illustrations, one must frustratingly admit defeat.

As early as the seventeenth century, artists became eventually discontent with the omissions in the artistic *Genji* canon and no longer discriminated between the "Yūgao" scenes featured in the Ōsaka manual and those omitted as unaesthetic. However, in the battle between the two turning moments in the narrative, Yūgao's abduction and her spirit possession, the latter had more of the ingredients necessary to entice the imagination of painters. Its dose of what was then perceived as supernatural occurrences made it more appealing to artists and to their public than the pictorial capture of the abduction through a carriage or a dilapidated house The illustrations of the spirit possession episode proliferated from the seventeenth to the twentieth century and the spirit possession still continues to remain a favorite among manga artists such as Yamada Waki or Tsuboi Kou.[136] At the same time, Yūgao's abduction, charged with psychological rather than supernatural drama, receded into the shadows of artistic representations.

As if to compensate for one loss, some artists shifted their focus solely to Yūgao and chose to paint her in solitary portraits, which often reveal more of their interpretation of this character than the simple perception of Yūgao as a beautiful and tragic figure.

The nineteenth-century woodblock print that Yoshitoshi dedicated to Yūgao (Figure 17) in his *One Hundred Aspects of the Moon* (*Tsuki hyakushi*) captures a heroine

[136] For a more comprehensive analysis of the spirit possession illustrations see Doris G. Bargen, "Yūgao," *A Woman's Weapon: Spirit Possession in The Tale of Genji* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), 32-76.

on the threshold between corporeality and dissolution. Yoshitoshi's Yūgao may still be the living woman, constantly eluding the grasp of her lovers, or she may be a ghost who continues to linger among the living. Her silhouette is shown in profile, occupying the background of the picture, while in the foreground the artist depicts the winding gourd from which the woman derives her name. Although the association between the woman and the flower may simply be superficially based on their chance encounter prompted by Genji's sighting her flower , followed by the identification of her character with the flower in her poem, the vines of the yūgao flower, which seem to wrap around the woman, may also indicate Yūgao's inability to free herself from the entanglement of the sexual relationships she has with Genji and Tō no Chūjō. Ethereal she may be, but Yūgao still seems to be a prisoner of her inextricable ties with the world.

Moreover, the presence of the moon in the painting is consistent with Yoshitoshi's topic, as it is with Murasaki Shikibu's text. In the *Genji* Yūgao repeatedly compares herself to the moon in the night sky to the point where the celestial body and the woman mirror each other's movements. Ironically, in Yoshitoshi's print, the moon is free, while the woman is captive. She has her face turned toward the full moon, which calls to mind its association with Buddhist enlightenment, but her body cannot seem to detach itself from the organic web of the evening face flower.

Yoshitoshi's print is probably one of the most beautiful and haunting portraits of Yūgao and it comes as no surprise that it has influenced Miyata Masayuki's own illustration of this character (Figure 18). More than one hundred years after Yoshitoshi's print, Miyata's picture captures a very similar Yūgao, in the positioning of the woman and the flower and of the artist's choice of color. Still, when it comes to content, Miyata

dramatically diverts this illustration from the moment that captures Yūgao's demise to the moment that introduces her into the *Genji* narrative. His Yūgao, her back completely turned to the viewer, is writing down a poem on a white fan. By salvaging her from immediate death, the contemporary artist gives the positive impression of a second chance offered to this pitiable character. At the same time, she is writing the poem that sets her affair with Genji in motion, implying that fate is ultimately unavoidable. In the context of the fan incident, however, the yūgao gourd loses its symbolism as a web of emotional bonds and re-becomes a mere stage prop. Miyata's Yūgao of the beginning of the "Evening Faces" chapter and Yoshitoshi's Yūgao of the end of it may look very much alike, but they are nevertheless diametrically opposed. For the latter, her fate is sealed while the former still retains a modicum of power over her own life. At the same time, both illustrations retain traces of hope for their protagonists: the brightness of the moon, the blooming yūgao flowers, the lingering light that saves them from complete darkness. In the text of the *Genji,* however, Yūgao did not benefit from similar chances and she was inevitably drawn to a road of eternal shadows.

Interestingly, the appeal of this character has not died out with time and Yūgao still continues to converse with a young generation of artists who seem to have nothing in common with their predecessors. Itoh Miyabi is one of the many young artists in search of some form of recognition who exhibit their works on websites with self-declared artistic purposes or create their own virtual galleries. Unlike many, she draws much of her inspiration from Heian culture and from *The Tale of Genji* in particular. Her *Genji monogatari no himegimi* collection incorporates two drawings dedicated to Yūgao.

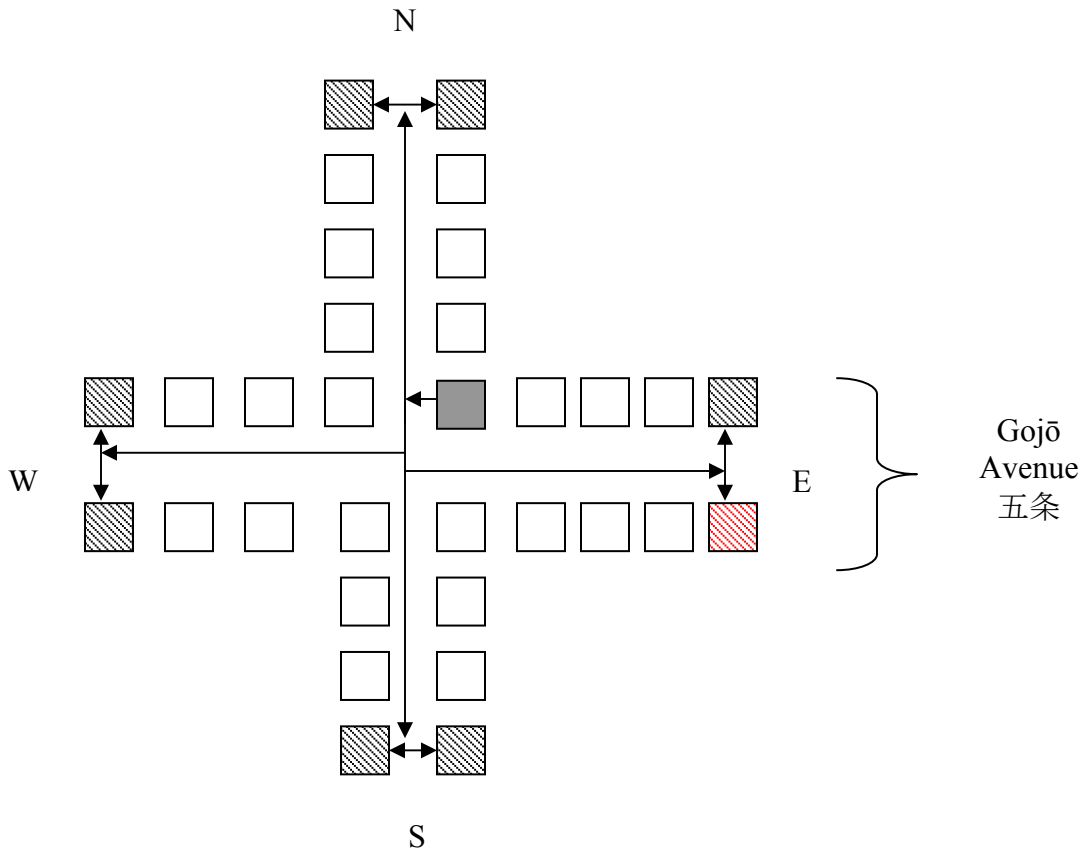
The first is entitled "Yūgao-hotaru" (Figure 19) and captures the famous "woman-flower-moon" association. Itoh's perception of the heroine is a serene and optimistic one. Her Yūgao is not entrapped by the winding gourd, but overpowers it, detaching herself from the flower's entanglement, which remains in the background. Moreover, although set against the canvas of a pitch-black night, she no longer seem to need the presence of the moon, which becomes an accessory. The Yūgao in Itoh's illustration maintains a composed attitude and radiates an inner light that illuminates the darkness around her. The shining halo that she extends around her dispels all darkness and the trail of fireflies which link her to the moon almost manage to suggest that it is not the woman who borrows the moon's brightness but the moon which bathes in the woman's inner glow. Itoh's Yūgao claims a feminine power that is seldom quite as apparent in the original text.

The second illustration in Itoh's *Himegimi* series is simply entitled "Yūgao" (Figure 20) and it is by far more conventional than the preceding one, perhaps because it is an obvious tribute to Yoshitoshi's Yūgao. The coloring of the illustration, the depiction of the woman in profile, the profusion of yūgao flowers surrounding the heroine point in the direction of Yoshitoshi's chromatic scale. However, Itoh, like Miyata, comes with her own interpretation which does not necessarily mimic Yoshitoshi's view. Her Yūgao does not retain the daunting air or the lack of corporeality of her predecessor. The woman's face becomes the focal point of the illustration and, although her robes and body are not distinguishable among the flowers, they are there, overwhelming the entire background of the picture. At a closer look, this half azure, half indigo background bares a kimono pattern similar to the one distinguishable on Yūgao's sleeve, the only part of her body visible from among the flowers. The flowers themselves are intertwined with the threads

tying Yūgao's sleeves and become a part of her attire, complimenting her beauty. The overall impression is that of a figure larger than life, in between a woman and a divinity. Such a perception completely overturns the traditional reading of the *Genji* according to which Yūgao is too transient a character to be attributed epic proportions.

In the end, one may be able to find sufficient points of interest in the illustrations of the "Evening Faces" chapter, even in the absence of a clear depiction of the violent abduction. Such omissions may be frustrating, but the history of *Genji* art is still being written. Someday some young artist will certainly recuperate the central position given in the text to the abduction episode.

FIGURE 14. Potential Directions in Yūgao's Abduction.[137]



The house of the Honorary Vice Governor; Yūgao's location prior to the abduction

The destination point of the abduction if *Nanigashi no in* equals Kawara no in

The destination point of the abduction if *Nanigashi no in* is any other mansion at less than 2 km from Yūgao's initial location

Possible directions of the abduction

[137] Diagram based on *Kyōto: Genji monogatari chizu* (Kyōto: Shibunkaku shuppan, 2007).

FIGURE 15. Attributed to Tosa Mitsunobu. "Yūgao" scene. Early 16th century. Ink and color on paper. Arthur M. Sackler Museum.

Available from http://instructional1.calstatela.edu/bevans/Art101/Art101B-11-Japan/WebPage-Info.00022.html

FIGURE 16. Tosa Mitsuoki. "Yūgao" scene of *Genji monogatari gachō*. Early 17th century. Gold, ink and color on paper. Private collection.

From Ken Akiyama and Eiichi Taguchi, *Goka "Genji-e" no sekai* (Tōkyō: Gakushū Kenkyūsha, 1988).

FIGURE 17. Yoshitoshi. "Genji – Yūgao no maki" from *Tsuki hyakushi.* 1886. Ōban woodblock print. Private collection.

FIGURE 18. Miyata Masayuki. "Evening Faces" in *The Tale of Genji: Scenes from the World's First Novel,* Tōkyō: Kodansha International, 2001.

FIGURE 19. Itoh Miyabi. "Yugao-hotaru" in *Genji monogatari no himegimi.* 2006. Webart. Available from http://www.loftwork.com/user/4705/download/.

FIGURE 20. Itoh Miyabi. "Yūgao" in *Genji monogatari no himegimi.* 2003-2007. Webart. Available from http://www.k5.dion.ne.jp/~himegimi/top.html

CHAPTER 3

A Baby Sparrow in a Golden Cage: Murasaki's Kidnapping

I. Displacement, Stage 3: Kidnapping

The third and final phase in the paradigm of displacement in the early chapters of *The Tale of Genji* occurs in chapter five, "Lavender" ("Wakamurasaki") in the form of young Murasaki's abduction, which marks the closure and the success of Genji's use of violent displacement as a strategy to gain access and control of the women he pursues. The three incidents that constitute the paradigm, Utsusemi's move, Yūgao's abduction and Murasaki's kidnapping, occur in four successive chapters, "The Broom Tree," "The Shell of the Locust,"[138] "Evening Faces" and "Lavender," and each instance evolves from the preceding one, both in terms of the displacing strategy used by the hero, and in terms of the magnitude of the displacement.

Apart from the development of the displacing strategy and the increasing spatial complexity of the successive displacements, there is also an increase in the severity of Genji's acts. As already discussed in chapter one, Utsusemi's relocation could have easily been motivated by Genji's youthful impetuosity were it not for the factors defining it as an act of sexual violence. Yūgao's abduction also risked passing as inconspicuous in the absence of a powerful feminine opposition. Genji's kidnapping of Murasaki, however, triggers a powerful reaction, both from the characters and from the narrator, and the general opprobrium marks it as a serious offense.

[138] "The Broom Tree" and "The Shell of the Locust" are connected by the same narrative, focusing on Utsusemi, and, although only the former details Utsusemi's displacement, the latter continues to describe Genji's courtship of her.

The noun "kidnap/ kidnapping" is derived from the verb "to kidnap", which implies "originally, to steal or carry off (children or others) in order to provide servants or laborers for the American plantations; hence, in general use, to steal (a child), to carry off (a person) by illegal force."[139] This definition applies to Murasaki's case because Genji's act is directed toward a child (Murasaki is ten years old at the moment of the displacement) and it presumes the use of illegal force (illegal both in terms of violation of courtship ritual and of societal regulations about parental control).

As in the case of Yūgao, the phenomenon of "marriage by capture" identified by anthropologists seems to be applicable to Murasaki's displacement. As discussed in the second chapter of this thesis, the archaic practice of marriage by capture is defined by two coordinates: its use of violent methods to obtain control over a woman (abduction) and its outcome of marriage. In the case of Yūgao, the latter coordinate could not be applied, disqualifying the abduction from being considered a form of marriage by capture. With Murasaki, however, both criteria can apparently be satisfied: Genji resorts to a violent method of gaining control of the girl (kidnapping) and in the long run, the abducted woman (girl) becomes Genji's wife. Despite the similarities between the primitive practice and Genji's kidnapping of Murasaki, there is one major difference that seriously threatens the cogency of this association: whereas marriage by capture occurred as a last resort when the man could not procure the woman by any other means due to her family's fierce opposition, Genji's kidnapping of Murasaki takes place before the hero has exhausted all possibilities of obtaining the girl. In fact, with Genji, it is not the fear that he will not be able to obtain parental permission to marry the girl, but his desire to

[139] *Oxford English Dictionary,* Second Edition, 1998.

overwrite this parental permission altogether that determines his acts.[140] Therefore, it would be safer to assume that it is not marriage that compels Genji to kidnap Murasaki, but his desire for control. Incidentally, the two, marriage and control are connected but not identical, and because the purpose of Genji's acts is more complex than the simple desire to marry Murasaki, his kidnapping falls short of being equated with marriage by capture.

By identifying Genji's displacement of Murasaki as kidnapping, the incident becomes more severe than the previous dislocation and abduction, mainly due to the fact that it involves not a woman, precarious as her status and financial position might have been, but a child, who is, in addition, disadvantaged psychologically. The immaturity of the victim is one of the main factors in determining the aggressor's success of the physical displacement. Genji can both employ a better strategy of displacement – better in the sense that its chances of success are higher when directed toward a child than towards an adult – and control the movement more proficiently.

The distance of Murasaki's displacement is not significantly different from Yūgao's: the girl is moved from her house on Sanjō Avenue (Third Avenue, 三条) to Genji's estate, the Nijō-in, on Nijō Avenue (Second Avenue, 二条) (Figure 21). As in the case of Yūgao, the distance itself is long enough to require the use of a carriage which also provides concealment from prying eyes, but much shorter than the distances of the displacements in the Uji chapters. Thus, it is not the exact length of Murasaki's displacement that determines its reading as the ultimate stage in the paradigm of

[140] Genji's intentions in resorting to kidnapping will be detailed at a later moment.

displacement, but its successful transfer of the girl from her protective feminine space to the more dangerous confines of masculine space.

The point of departure in Murasaki's kidnapping is the house located on Sanjō Avenue that the girl and her nun grandmother inhabit after their return to the capital from their retreat in the Northern Hills. This residence is identified in the text as "the inspector's house"[141] (*Ko- Azechi dainagon no ie*), hence the property of a man. It is currently inhabited only by women, at first by Murasaki and her grandmother, and, after the death of this grandmother, by the girl and her ladies-in-waiting. Due to its association solely with feminine characters, and to the fact that as long as she occupies it, Murasaki enjoys a certain degree of security, the Sanjō house can be taken to represent feminine space.

By contrast, Genji's Nijō residence had been associated with feminine control, since it had belonged to Genji's mother, Kiritsubo. After her death, however, Genji came to inherit the property and used it as his own home. Whatever the associations prior to Genji's succession to this property, at the moment of the Murasaki episode, the Nijō-in had become an undeniably masculine space, and it would remain so until the construction of the Rokujō-in, approximately seventeen years later.[142] That is not to say, however, that no women inhabit the Nijō-in, for Genji has an entourage of ladies-in-waiting there who see to his everyday needs and neither threaten the overwhelming presence of the hero nor undermine his possession and control over the Nijō territory.

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[141] Seidensticker, 1995, 100.
[142] According to Royall Tyler's translation, Genji is at the time of Murasaki's kidnapping and thirty-three in "The Maiden" chapter, when the Rokujō-in is finally completed. Royall Tyler, trans., *The Tale of Genji* (New York: Penguin Books, 2001).

Thus, the first sign of evolution in the paradigm of displacement comes from Genji's success in choosing a safe destination for the girl's kidnapping. Utsusemi's dislocation could not achieve a complete departure from feminine space and, because of that miscalculation, it failed; Yūgao's abduction took the protagonists into a new, neutral territory, but Genji's inability to control that space eventually turned against the abductor and the abducted; with Murasaki, however, Genji seems to have learned his lesson and effectively selected his own territory, that is a safe haven for keeping his prey that is under his complete control even from before the displacement.

In addition, in this most accomplished version of the paradigm, the hero sums up the strategies of displacement he had previously employed with Utsusemi and Yūgao. He reaches a powerful combination of physical force and deceit that proves effective in the case of Murasaki. As discussed before, the displacement of Utsusemi was achieved entirely though the use of physical force, but Genji failed when confronted with the woman's diverse strategies of resistance. With Yūgao, the use of force was extremely limited and, for the most part, replaced by a strategy of deceit; still, the choice of destination in the displacement and the exposure of Genji's pretenses after reaching this destination turned the abduction into yet another failure. The same mistakes are not repeated with Murasaki: Genji finds an effective balance between the two strategies; when physical force is not effective, he switches to deceit; when deceit reaches its limitations, Genji returns to the use of physical force. The Murasaki episode is truly the first case of the paradigm of displacement which replaces the portrait of an inapt, disorganized Genji with the image of an adept who is highly calculating and dangerous.

II. Strategy and Premeditation: Negotiating the Custody of Murasaki

Genji's kidnapping of Murasaki also differs from the previous cases of displacement in terms of the hero's manner of planning his actions and making decisions. Genji's intrusion upon Utsusemi and his subsequent displacement of her were dictated by circumstances threatening his exposure and thus called for a "now or never" decision on Genji's part. With Yūgao, the hero's proposal to change location came just as unexpectedly, on the spur of the moment, and, as is obvious from his choice of the Nanigashi no in as destination point, the abduction was not preceded by careful planning. In contrast, Murasaki's kidnapping necessitates more than eight months of preparation on Genji's part, from the moment he first spots the girl to the moment he dashes into her house and spirits her away, to the complete shock of her women, because for this entire period Murasaki was protected under the custody of her grandmother.

It is in the Third Month that Genji travels to the Northern Hills in search of a cure for his attacks of malaria and accidentally stumbles across the house inhabited by young Murasaki and her grandmother, a nun. Accompanied by Koremitsu, his *menotogo* ("breast brother" or wet nurse's son), Genji engages in *kaimami* and is more than delighted to discover a little girl of around ten years of age, who closely resembles his beloved and inaccessible Fujitsubo.

Incidentally, at this moment, Murasaki is not only defined by her age, but also by her immaturity: she childishly complains about the loss of her pet sparrow, released by one of her playmates, Inuki. One may speculate that the baby sparrow becomes a metaphor of the girl's vulnerability, since this association between a woman's immaturity, hence vulnerability, occurs once more in *The Tale of Genji*, in the episode detailing the

beginning of the affair between the Third Princess and Kashiwagi. Murasaki Shikibu does not introduce such associations haphazardly; for the most part, apparent fortuitous events are later revealed to be powerful narrative techniques employed by the author to further the plot. Similarly, Genji's witnessing of the child Murasaki in conjunction with the loss of her pet sparrow is no more accidental than Kashiwagi's revelation caused by the Third Princess's cat. The two men view the presence of the animals as something more than a chance occurrence: they seem to read it as important evidence of the women's psychological state. Interestingly, the vulnerability that the pets expose in their mistresses does not go unnoticed, for both Murasaki and the Third Princess themselves become targets of sexual violence.

Thus, due to the girl's resemblance to Fujitsubo and to her obvious display of immaturity and vulnerability, Genji immediately decides to initiate his kidnapping plan and obtain the girl at any price:

> "What a discovery! (…) Such a rare outing for him, and it had brought such a find! She was a perfectly beautiful child. Who might she be? He was beginning to make plans: this child must stand in the place of the one whom she so resembled. (…) What a delight if he could take her into his house and make her his ideal."[143]

Despite his sudden determination, there is little Genji can do to fulfill his desires, considering that the girl is under the protection of "a certain bishop"[144] and of his sister, a nun, who is Murasaki's grandmother. Under less constricting circumstances, Genji would have simply stormed in and seized the girl from among her ladies-in-waiting. The fact that he himself realizes that such a strategy is impossible in this case signifies a newfound maturity for the male character, a better ability to assess a situation, as well as the realization that the girl's protectors are no low-ranking people whose opinions and

[143] Seidensticker, 1995, 89-90.
[144] Ibid., 85.

reactions he can afford to disregard. In the absence of an immediate resolution for his desires, Genji inquires in detail about the girl's situation and devises a new strategy of deceit meant to ensure the success that the use of physical violence can not.

Genji negotiates his acceptance as Murasaki's future protector with the two people currently in charge of her: the bishop and his sister. His trump card in these negotiations is the girl's semi-orphanhood – she has lost her mother presumably when she was still a baby[145] and her father, Prince Hyōbu, has put her in the care of her grandmother to protect her from her stepmother. Genji uses these circumstances as a pretext for his desire to take charge of her. Thus, when he attempts to convince the bishop of his good intentions, Genji poses as a potential parent to the child, and not as a lover. Aware of his inappropriate desires, Genji hypocritically proclaims intentions that flagrantly contradict the plans he made when he first set eyes on the girl:

> "What I am about to say will, I fear, startle you – but might I have charge of the child? I have rather good reasons, for all the suddenness of my proposal. If you are telling yourself that she is too young – well, sir, you are doing me an injustice. Other men may have improper motives, but I do not."[146]

In an interesting use of reverse psychology, Genji can intuit what the bishop's objections will be, namely, that the request is altogether unexpected and the girl too young for a marriage arrangement. He therefore formulates his plea in an attempt to offer the bishop what he needs to hear, as untruthful as that may be. Genji has no good reasons for desiring the girl other than his own selfish design to transform her into a woman always at his discretion, as Fujitsubo can never be. His motives are as improper as they can be, for he does not act out of altruistic concern for the girl or charitable inclinations.

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[145] The narrative indicates the moment of Murasaki's mother's death approximately ten years before the beginning of the "Lavender" chapter.
[146] Seidensticker, 1995, 90.

Still, the bishop is not a man to fall for Genji's lofty promises; he becomes distant and stern all of a sudden and cuts short Genji's pleading discourse by invoking the plight of his sister, who must also be consulted about the girl. From that moment on, Genji engages in intense negotiation, in a war of arguments which has him on one side, fighting to obtain the custody of the child, and Murasaki's protectors, the bishop and the nun on the other, trying to make him renounce his outrageous demands.

Genji's next step in his strategy is to approach the nun directly, in the hope that she will be less strict than her brother. When he intrudes into the women's quarters late at night and asks to speak directly to Murasaki's grandmother, the ladies-in-waiting and the nun first assume that this young gentleman must be misinformed about the age of the girl in their care and that he must be thinking of initiating an amorous affair. They are shocked, however, to discover that Genji is perfectly aware of Murasaki's age and that he nonetheless asks to become her protector. Once again, Genji makes use of the death of Murasaki's mother and, as one who has gone through a similar loss, tries to appeal to the nun's compassion and, out of pure magnanimity, or so he claims, intends to substitute for the girl's lost parent.

Obviously, the nun is just as difficult to convince as her brother, for she too has seen through Genji's adroit words and discovered his true intentions. Partially, the fault is Genji's for having committed two faux pas that betrayed him to the nun. First, his abrupt intrusion into the women's quarters at a very inappropriate time of the day may suggests to the women his penchant for amorous indiscretions, as well as his lack of consideration for the women whom he puts in embarrassing situations. Second, Genji's proposition itself is offensive to the nun, to whom he suggests bluntly that he is more qualified than

she is to look after the girl. Even for someone less strict than the nun, the hero's conduct is simply too disrespectful to overlook and so the nun's explicit refusal comes as no surprise. In addition to her answer, the woman's thoughts, which are not disclosed to Genji out of politeness and etiquette, but are reported to the readers, define the nun's opinion of Genji very clearly:

> "I repeat that I have heard the whole story. Your admirable reticence does not permit you to understand that my feelings are of no ordinary sort."
> But to her they seemed, though she did not say so, *quite outrageous*."[147] (my emphasis)

Despite the blunt refusal, Genji still does not give up his plans and until his return to *miyako*, he insists on being allowed his way, but to no avail because the girl's grandmother is not so easily impressed by Genji's handsome looks and high status, nor by his hallow yet beautiful words. She does not exclude the possibility of considering him as a candidate for Murasaki's hand in four or five years, but even when thinking of that moment, she does not make a definite commitment, but leaves open the possibility of a refusal: "It is very premature. If in four or five years he has not changed his mind we can perhaps give it some thought."[148]

In short, the nun is not one to be easily deceived by mere appearances or sheer forcefulness. She intends to test Genji's perseverance before considering his offer serious. It turns out that, fortunately, Genji will not have to pass her test, for he would fail it.

Murasaki's reaction is of little relevance at this stage in her development as a child and only reinforces her infantile perception of Genji as someone in between her father and her favorite doll:

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[147] Seidensticker, 1995, 93.
[148] Ibid., 95.

> "The little girl too thought him very grand. 'Even handsomer than Father,' she said.
> 'So why don't you be his little girl?'
> She nodded, accepting the offer; and her favorite doll, the one with the finest wardrobe, and the handsomest gentleman in her pictures too were thereupon named 'Genji'."[149]

Murasaki Shikibu makes one of her rare authorial statements when she contrasts Genji's future sexual designs for the girl and Murasaki's juvenile preoccupations and thoughts. Young Murasaki's apparent eagerness to accept him as a surrogate parent has little substance; it is the product of the same fantasies that children indulge in, very much similar to playing with dolls and immersing oneself in picture books. One of her ladies-in-waiting, most probably her nurse, is no doubt teasing her about her feeling for Genji the way adults often tease children with questions on matters that they consider absurd to begin with, so neither the question, not the answer should be taken as anything more than a game. The girl's true answer to the parentage problem will be given only when she is faced with a matter-of-fact situation that requires her immediate response: the kidnapping.

In the meantime, Genji returns to the capital, without having relinquished his desire to obtain possession of the girl. Having failed in convincing the bishop and his sister to give him custody of Murasaki, Genji changes strategy and employs Koremitsu to advocate his cause. Genji relies on him because he had, in the case of Yūgao, proven able to tread where his master feared to tread, thereby paving the way for Genji's future amorous success. But this time, Koremitsu is no match for the experienced nun:

> "He was a persuasive young man and he had made a convincing case, but to the nun and the others this suit for the hand of a mere child continued to seem merely capricious."[150]

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[149] Seidensticker, 1995, 96.
[150] Ibid., 98.

The case is dropped for a few months during which Genji is too engrossed in his affair with Fujitsubo, but in the Seventh Month, after Fujitsubo has returned to the palace and revealed her pregnancy, Genji learns that the nun and the little girl have also returned to the city and taken residence in the house of a certain inspector (*Ko-Azechi dainagon no ie*), on Sanjō Avenue, due south of Genji's Nijō-in. Stopping there for a visit in the course of one of his amorous escapades, Genji does not feel at all hindered by the nun's serious illness and presses his case again, with much eagerness. No longer physically fit and mentally prepared to oppose Genji and present him with arguments supporting her refusal of his proposition, the nun is nevertheless struggling to keep Murasaki as far from him as possible and refuses to let him see her on account of the child being asleep. The girl is not asleep, however, and Genji can even hear her voice, but for once he is tactful enough to withdraw without any further comments in order to await a more suitable opportunity.

Genji's visit constitutes the nun's last chance to protect her grand-daughter: having rebuked Genji repeatedly and won the war of words against him, this time she can no longer do anything more than physically shield Murasaki from Genji. This accomplishment is also her last in that her death finally rids Genji of an insurmountable obstacle in his plans of gaining control of the girl. From this moment on, none of Murasaki's protectors will ever again be able to raise such a fierce opposition to Genji. The nun's death becomes a turning point in the narrative of sexual violence. It is a moment that decides Murasaki's fate.

III. A Preview of Displacement: Genji's Violent Intrusion

The nun's death occurs at the end of the Ninth Month. Not long thereafter, in the Tenth Month, Genji learns the news of her death through his correspondence with the bishop, the nun's brother. Before this dramatic change in the girl's situation, Genji was almost on the point of giving her up, discouraged by the fierce opposition he had encountered from her grandmother. Were it not for this lady's death, Genji would probably have confirmed her expectations regarding his lack of perseverance and integrity of purpose:

> "In the autumn evening, his thoughts on his unattainable love, he longed more than ever, unnatural though the wish may have seemed, for the company of the little girl who sprang from the same roots. (…) At the same time he feared that if he were to bring the girl to Nijō he would be disappointed in her."[151]

After only five months of negotiations and promises, Genji seems to be having second thoughts regarding his desire to take the girl into his custody, but not because he doubts the legitimacy of his demands, but because, entirely concerned with the satisfaction of his desires, he fears complicating his existence for the sake of someone who might not meet his expectations after all. Maybe deep down, he fears the comparison with Fujitsubo. What if his ideal woman were, in his mind, to lose the contest with her niece? His compassion for the motherless Murasaki, his belief in the powerful bond between him and her established in a previous existence, his promise to commit to her unconditionally, are exposed for what they are: beautiful phrases in Genji's strategy of deceit. Still, it is difficult to assess whether Genji's doubts are motivated by his frustration resulting from his failed negotiations with Murasaki's grandmother or if he has in fact begun to question the girl's potential to become his ideal woman. Whatever

[151] Seidensticker, 1995, 102.

the case, the nun's sudden death is too perfect an opportunity for Genji to miss, so as soon as he finds out about this tragic event, and he does only after one whole month has passed, he rushes to visit Murasaki who has just come out of mourning.

Behind Genji's display of sympathy for the girl and of concern for her forced isolation, there lie a series of less innocent motivations. Assuming that Genji is genuinely questioning Murasaki's qualities before reaching a definite decision concerning her future, his visit is yet another opportunity for him to evaluate her potential. On the other hand, if he is simply venting his frustration without considering giving up his designs for Murasaki, then a visit to the house she inhabits constitutes a perfect scouting operation. What Genji may have hoped to achieve with his visit is to renegotiate the girl's custody, this time involving the women left in her entourage after the death of the grandmother, in particular her nurse. At the same time, he may have wanted to evaluate the girl's new situation, to identify potential accomplices and opponents to his plans, and to discover the defensive breaches that may facilitate the use of displacement.

His visit of sympathy is initially very formal and restrained, but the voice of young Murasaki, who comes running in convinced that the gentleman visiting is her biological father, Prince Hyōbu, is enough to make Genji's composure crumble and to trigger an inappropriate, even violent reaction from him. At first he seems content to convince Shōnagon, Murasaki's nurse, to allow him into the girl's presence, but once he gains access to her curtains, Genji can no longer contain his impulses to touch her through the blinds, and he eventually eliminates all obstacles between them, in a flagrant breech of all social etiquette. Thus, Genji's formal visit quickly degenerates into a violent intrusion which takes both Murasaki and her women completely unaware. Nevertheless,

their straightforward reactions to Genji's inappropriate behavior qualify his intrusion as an insolent act of violence.

Murasaki, being still a child, provides the most uncensored reactions to Genji's actions. Even before Genji turns from politeness to aggression, the little girl rejects him when she discovers that he is not her father. She refuses to stay in his presence and begs Shōnagon to accompany her to bed, pretending that she is sleepy. So much for her eagerness to become Genji's little girl! At Shōnagon's urgings, the girl reluctantly agrees to sit inside the blinds, closer to Genji, but no sooner does he stretch his hand to touch her than she retreats, scared:

> "When Genji grabbed her hand, Murasaki was terrified to have a complete stranger come so close to her, so she said to Shōnagon: 'But I told you I want to go to sleep!' and drew back completely. Genji slipped in after her and said: 'It is I that you must love now. Do not detest me!'"[152]

Genji's intrusion into the women's chambers in pursuit of Murasaki comes as a complete shock to her women and as a traumatic move to the girl. Here is this complete stranger, whom she happened to learn about months ago in the Northern Hills, and who, without any warning, adopts a behavior that would have seemed strange even for a father, all the while pretending it is nothing out of the ordinary. In addition, when the girl attempts to flee and seek protection by her nurse, he immediately follows her, completely disregarding her feelings and making her all the more afraid. When Genji finally gets hold of Murasaki and lies next to her for the night, she no longer has anywhere else to run to and is so overcome with panic that she cannot even oppose him verbally:

> "*The girl was terrified and trembled with her entire body*. Genji, who found her lovely skin for some reason cold to the touch, thought that she was adorable. He

[152] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 224.

wrapped another robe around her, then, although he knew how offensive his feelings were, he began to talk to her gently."[153] (my emphasis)

The little girl lying among her women is the very image of powerlessness, but Genji does not seem as affected by her condition as to retreat and put an end to a situation which obviously distresses Murasaki. Instead, he selfishly pursues his own desires, although he does try to calm down the girl by talking to her about things that he assumes might interest her. Her panic recedes, but not completely, and the young Murasaki spends a sleepless night next to the man who still frightens her.

The girl's panic and hasty retreat is also fueled by the reaction of her ladies-in-waiting, who are outraged, but just as powerless in confronting Genji's violent intrusion. The nurse, Shōnagon, is the first severely to rebuke Genji when he tries to eliminate the physical barriers between him and Murasaki: "The nurse exclaimed appalled: 'Please, I beg of you! How detestable all this is! As much as you try to explain, you will get no further reaction from her'."[154]

Similar to Murasaki's grandmother before her, Shōnagon easily identifies Genji's interests as sexual in nature, despite his attempts to persuade her otherwise. She understands that his behavior can seriously endanger her mistress. Moreover, her castigation of Genji's acts is all the more severe since it comes from someone who is of much lower status than Genji himself and thus in no position to reprimand him. The fact that Shōnagon violates proper manners indicates the degree of her concern for her mistress's physical safety. Yet her verbal slap in the face has no effect whatsoever on Genji, no more than did Chūjō's interference in the episode of Utsusemi's displacement. Aware of the limited possibilities available to someone in her position, Shōnagon can do

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[153] [153] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 226.
[154] Ibid., 224.

nothing more than judge Genji's acts for what they are: manifestations of violence. When Genji intrudes through the dividing blinds into the women's chambers, the nurse has already realized the futility of her protests:

> "When he then walked into the girl's curtained bedroom with the most natural attitude in the world, the women remained all seated in complete astonishment, able only to think that it was outrageous.
> Although the nurse found Genji's behavior unreasonable and distressing, because she could not raise a violent commotion, she just sat there sighing."[155]

As is evident from Genji's behavior, he has learned that there is no one in Murasaki's household to challenge his authority. Once the grandmother is no longer watching over Murasaki, none of Murasaki's women, her nurse included, has the power conferred by status to oppose his actions. Moreover, the house on Sanjō Avenue, defined as a feminine space at least by its occupants if not by name, lacks the protection of a male figure. Although the house is referred to as belonging to the Ko-Azechi dainagon or major counselor, the nun's husband and Murasaki's maternal grandfather, the person in question died even before Murasaki's mother. Had he not been dead at the time of the narrative, he might have been able to defend his granddaughter better than the Governor of Kii could protect his stepmother, but as it is, his rank is completely useless. Thus, Genji seems to be very much aware of the power imbalance between him and Murasaki's entourage. It allows him to take all sorts of liberties, including the chance violently to intrude upon the girl and her women without fear of punishment.

Although aware of her limited opportunities to oppose Genji, Shōnagon does what every good nurse must do to ensure a modicum of protection for her mistress: she "quite

[155] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 225.

refused to budge from their side."[156] In the Uji chapters, a similarly determined nurse, resorts to a similar strategy to stop a man's intrusion on her charge (Ukifune) from turning into a more severe form of sexual aggression. For better or worse, the strategy employed by the two women works, for no *Genji* hero ever possessed the degree of exhibitionism required to disregard their presence. Thus, Shōnagon proves herself a quick-witted woman, who is not afraid to raise her voice in opposition to someone of higher status, but who is also able to evaluate her realistic chances against such a person and to adapt her strategies according to the circumstances, all the while striving to ensure the safety of her mistress.

Despite Murasaki's protests and clear-cut panic in his presence and her women's outrage toward his behavior, Genji ends up spending the night at the Ko-Azechi Sanjō residence, on the pretext of wanting to alleviate their fear of the storm raging outside. The storm does come as if to support Genji's designs and the sound of sleet pounding against the roof makes Murasaki's ladies-in-waiting more afraid of the danger outside than of the danger within. One may speculate that had it not been for the storm, the other women in Murasaki's entourage might have joined Shōnagon in chastising Genji's flagrant behavior. However, all women, except for Shōnagon, remain silent and tend to see Genji's presence among them as a blessing rather than as a threat. Only the main female actors in the intrusion episode, Murasaki and her nurse, recognize what is happening as an act of aggression. As proven later, their instincts are correct in perceiving Genji as a menace.

When morning comes and Genji is forced to return to his own Nijō residence, he can regard his night adventure as a scouting success. On the one hand, he has confirmed to himself the authenticity of his desire for Murasaki; on the other hand, he has realized

[156] Seidensticker, 1995, 104-105.

her vulnerability in time (her immaturity) and space (her dislocation). He is also aware of the limited opportunities her ladies-in-waiting have to oppose him and to ensure her protection. If the plan to kidnap Murasaki and take her to the Nijō-in has never been far from his mind, then his visit to the Ko-Azechi Sanjō house and his subsequent intrusion into the women's chambers can be seen as a preview for the displacement to come. The facility with which Genji approached the girl's nurse, forced his entry into Murasaki's room and overwhelmed her physically during this rehearsal, virtually guarantees the success of his planned displacement.

What Genji achieves as a result of his violent intrusion is not only temporary physical closeness to Murasaki, but also the realization of his own unchallenged power. As long as he can take possession of Murasaki and ensure her nurse's silence, his plans of kidnapping the girl become inevitable.

IV. Murasaki's Kidnapping as an Act of Sexual Violence

As reassured as he is after his successful intrusion on Murasaki and her women, Genji does not hurry to act out his plans. It is only Prince Hyōbu's decision to take custody of Murasaki and move her to his own residence that finally triggers Genji's reaction and transforms his designs into reality. Had it not been for the imminent danger of losing Murasaki to her father, Genji might have been inclined to wait a bit longer before making a definitive move toward the girl. One may wonder if it was not a twinge of guilt towards his transgressive intentions that stopped Genji from profiting from his intrusion and turning it into displacement. Whatever the case, Genji can afford to postpone his decision only as long as there is no one else to claim custody of the girl, but

once such a rival appears, in the person of Murasaki's father, the hero must either completely renounce his claims or set his plans in motion.

Prince Hyōbu's decision to take Murasaki into his house and expose her to the likely abuses of her stepmother, his principal wife, the same person who caused much suffering and eventually the death of Murasaki's mother, is not truly welcome by the girl and her entourage, as is evident in Shōnagon's complaint to Genji, during his visit:

> "My young lady's father would seem to have indicated a willingness to take her in, but she is at such an uncomfortable age, not quite a child and still without the discernment of an adult; and the thought of having her in the custody of *the lady who was so cruel to her mother* is too awful. Her sisters will persecute her dreadfully, I know."[157] (my emphasis)

Still, Murasaki's attachment to her father is powerful and she weeps when the moment comes to see him leave her side. Her women, as concerned as they are for what the future has in store for the girl, have no choice but to accept the situation and prepare for the move to take place the following day. Genji does not appear to be a reliable alternative to any of them and Shōnagon, propelled by the news of Murasaki's imminent moving, gives Koremitsu, whom Genji has sent to make excuses for his absence, a piece of her mind:

> "Has he quite forgotten his manners?" said Shōnagon. "I know very well that this is not as serious an affair for him as for us, but a man is expected to call regularly at the beginning of any affair. Her father, if he hears of it, will think that we have managed very badly indeed."[158]

Shōnagon's words refer both to Genji's intrusion on the previous night and to his hypocrisy in pretending to treat Murasaki as someone important to him, yet without behaving according to the proper courtship regulations. Once more, the nurse exposes

[157] Seidensticker, 1995, 103.
[158] Ibid., 106-107.

Genji's interests in the girl as evidently sexual in nature, but she does not condemn the inappropriateness of his intentions so much as the lack of steadfastness revealed by his behavior. At the same time, Shōnagon's forceful discourse hints at one of the four factors that qualify Genji's kidnapping of Murasaki as an act of sexual violence, namely his violation of proper courtship ritual.

Although the very idea of an eighteen-year-old man courting a ten-year-old girl is patently absurd, even in the age-permissive Heian society, according to Murasaki's grandmother and her brother, the bishop, let us assume, for the sake of the argument, that such an act was socially acceptable. Genji has observed Murasaki in the customary *kaimami* and found her desirable; then he proceeded to approach the parties in charge of her, the bishop, his sister, and Murasaki's nurse. To his complete dismay, his frequent correspondence and his poetic exchanges with the girl's grandmother failed to ensure the desired results; to put it differently, he was bluntly rejected as an unsuitable candidate for the girl's hand. However, in complete disregard to Murasaki's close family and to her entourage of ladies-in-waiting, Genji does not renounce his suit, but proceeds to intrude upon the girl and then to kidnap her only to ensure the success of his courtship. Thus, even when disregarding Murasaki's unsuitable age and allowing for the existence of a courtship which was by all standards unacceptable, Genji's aggressive behavior in the intrusion and kidnapping episodes constitutes a major transgression of the norm in courtship.

Genji's acts are all the more reprehensible when taking Murasaki's age into the equation. As repeatedly stated by her grandmother, the girl's age prohibits the possibility of courtship altogether. Genji's desires, sexual or not, may have been aroused at the sight

of the little girl who so resembled her aunt, Fujitsubo, but the same cannot hold true for Murasaki, who regards Genji either as a father figure or as a fantasy character in her doll plays. Moreover, whereas normally an adult woman could override parental resistance to a relationship and take it into her own hands when truly interested in a man, Murasaki can not do so, since she is not yet a "woman" who could be expected to write down the basic poems used in the education of young ladies. Thus, showing interest in Genji, sexual or otherwise, is simply out of the question for the child Murasaki; even if she had a childish interest in his persona, the girl could not have accepted either orally or in writing. The absence of any direct encouragement from a lady and the clear-cut refusal from her family would mean the end of all courtship attempts for any hero less predisposed to acts of aggression than Genji. For him, however, a rebuff simply indicates the need to change strategy, from patient negotiation to violent displacement.

Murasaki's age is relevant not only in relation to the plausibility and appropriateness of courtship, but also as a replacement for one of the factors that normally points to the applicability of displacement as an act of violence. The obvious discrepancy in age between this child heroine and Genji distracts attention from a not so obvious difference in rank and status. At the same time, one must not hasten to the conclusion that Murasaki enjoys a similarly favorable position as Genji. In fact, at the moment of their first encounter, when Murasaki was in the custody of her grandmother, her circumstances were rather dire and her opportunities for the future limited. She is, after all, the daughter of Prince Hyōbu by a secondary wife, whom his principal wife easily eliminated from the scene.

On her father's side, Murasaki enjoys a noble lineage, since her father and his sister, Fujitsubo, are of imperial descent; her mother may not have a similar proximity to royal blood, but she is of noble descent, as the daughter of an inspector major counselor, *azechi dainagon*, "Azechi (Inspector), originally a title used of an official sent to the provinces to review the work of local officials, had by this time (970) become a nominal additional post for a Middle or Major Counselor,"[159] a position usually occupied by aristocrats of the Senior Third rank. In other words, Murasaki's maternal grandfather's rank was higher than Genji's at the moment of the kidnapping (Genji is captain in the Palace Guards of Junior Fourth Lower rank). Unfortunately for Murasaki's mother and the girl herself, the death of this *Azechi dainagon* deprived them of the backing so crucial to insuring a woman's rise in Heian society. Consequently, Murasaki's mother was not in a good position to become Prince Hyōbu's main wife. Thus, at the moment of Genji's *kaimami* in the Northern Hills, Murasaki, although fully recognized by her father, cannot be protected and promoted by him. In addition, she has little to expect from her mother's side of the family, her grandmother and the bishop being the only living relatives and neither of them having a position of particular social, political or financial influence.

The imbalance in rank and status between Genji and Murasaki is about to change once the girl's father, Prince Hyōbu (*Hyōbukyō no miya*) is ready officially to accept her into his family and protect her. As a Minister of War, head of the War Ministry (*Hyōbushō*)[160] and imperial prince (*miya*), Murasaki's father has a double advantage over Genji: that of rank, motivated by the difference in age between the two, and that of royal blood. Although the difference between the two seems a mere formality, considering that

[159]William H. and Helen Craig McCullough, trans., *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes: Annals of Japanese Aristocratic Life in the Heian Period,* 2 vols. (Stanford: Stanford University Press), I: 74 n. 27

[160] Historically, the ministership was a sinecure position customarily held by imperial princes. Ibid., II: 810.

Genji too is the son of an emperor, by being demoted to the status of a commoner, Genji has lost the privileges of the *miya* – imperial prince – title. What Genji wants to avoid when kidnapping Murasaki is the reversal of the situation, which would put him at a clear disadvantage. As long as Prince Hyōbu does not take Murasaki into his custody and fully claim her as his daughter, she remains in a position slightly inferior to Genji's.

The problems of courtship rooted in Murasaki's age further contribute to the fluctuations in her status and determine her subordination to Genji. Her circumstances could change dramatically only if her father took her into his home, thereby allowing her to rise from being the unfortunate descendent of a former inspector major counselor to being the officially recognized daughter of an imperial prince and the niece of a current imperial consort. However, as far as age is concerned, the eight-year difference between her and Genji cannot suddenly rid her of her vulnerability. Genji is not the only one to recognize the handicap created by the girl's young age; the people in her entourage also perceive the age difference between the two as a major impediment to a formal relationship and as a potential threat once the girl is deprived of her grandmother's protection. The age problem has been repeatedly addressed in connection to Genji's *kaimami*, to the negotiations between him and Murasaki's grandmother and to the social acceptability of his courtship, so there is no further need to dwell on it only to reinforce the disadvantage it creates for Murasaki.

The only area where the heroine's age becomes invaluable is in the meta-textual assessment of Murasaki's reactions to the kidnapping because it ensures a genuine response, unmediated by social conventions to which the girl is not yet accustomed. As in the episode of Genji's violent intrusion, there are no false pretenses in the way Murasaki

responds to Genji's aggressive behavior. Obviously, there is little chance of encountering a coherent verbal opposition from a ten-year old girl, or a plausible attempt physically to resist Genji, but are Murasaki's panic and tears not just as revealing as any strategy of resistance an adult woman might employ?

When hearing of Prince Hyōbu's imminent move of Murasaki to his estate the following day, Genji arranges a visit, stealthily has his carriage drawn inside the Ko-Azechi Sanjō house and dashes in to fetch the sleeping Murasaki. He easily passes by Shōnagon, quickly finds his way to the girl – showing great improvement in the facility with which he finds his way through the house and locates Murasaki – and takes her up in his arms and to the carriage:

> "Genji went in and the women did not even have the time to cry in surprise. The girl was innocently sleeping and, when Genji embraced her to wake her up, she opened her eyes, but was still half-asleep and thought he was her father, the Prince, coming to get her. Only when Genji arranged her hair and told her 'Come now. I came here on the Prince's behalf' did Murasaki realize that he was not her father after all. Seeing her *shocked and frightened*, Genji said: 'My, my, but I am the same as your father.'"[161] (my emphasis)

Apart from Murasaki's reaction, which indicates the state of panic caused by Genji's behavior, the text also provides important evidence regarding Genji's by now masterful use of deceit in conjunction with physical force. At first, he tries to fool Shōnagon, pretending that he has come to watch the morning mist in the company of Murasaki and say farewell to her before the announced move to her father's residence; when the nurse is less than cooperative, he simply forces his way inside. In a similar manner, he lies to Murasaki, pretending to be her father's emissary sent to bring her to his house, but all the while he takes possession of her and moves her to the carriage. It comes

[161] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 234.

as no surprise that not only Murasaki, who is, after all, still a child, but also her ladies-in-waiting, far more advanced in years and experience, are at a loss for a proper reaction. In addition, the girl is clearly in a state of panic, so when a reaction does come from her, it can only be in the form of tears.

When Genji is about to get into the carriage with Murasaki, she is sobbing; later, after their arrival at the Nijō-in, she is still "trembling frightened" and making efforts "not to cry in a loud voice." After settling down in the East Wing of the Nijō estate, Murasaki is "sadly weeping" [162] as Shōnagon keeps a vigilant watch over her. There is little more a child can do in similar circumstances, still Murasaki's relentless crying reveals as much determination as Utsusemi's adapting strategies of resistance. Inexperienced she may be, but Murasaki's reaction is all the more relevant because it comes from a child, who should – presumably – be more easily deceived than an adult. Yet she puts to shame other heroines such as Oborozukiyo or Nokiba no ogi, who would not or could not resist Genji.

Norma Field, however, finds it difficult to detect agency in Murasaki's behavior during the kidnapping incident. She states that:

> "Murasaki's removal to the Nijō-in places her in a constellation with certain other *Genji* heroines. The abduction of Yūgao, the kidnapping of Murasaki, the captivity of Tamakazura in the Rokujōin and in the Uji chapters, the removal of Ukifune to Uji by Kaoru, all share an informality of arrangement. Words such as "abduction" and "captivity" may have a hyperbolic ring since the victims rarely protest, but that is because they cannot, either from ignorance or from the knowledge that life offers them no suitable alternatives. A profound passivity characterizes these women at these junctures."[163]

As accurate as Field's observations are in regard to some characters such as Yūgao and Ukifune, whose attitudes during their respective displacements give an

[162] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 236.
[163] Field, 1987, 167.

appearance of passivity, her statement can hardly be generalized as to incorporate all heroines who become the victims of violent female displacement. Moreover, in some episodes, as in Murasaki's case, the scarcity of the women's reactions does not equal passivity or acceptance, and their protests may seem inaudible, but they are not nonexistent.

The factor which Field most egregiously overlooks in conjunction to the episodes of displacement is the reaction of the woman's entourage, which comes either to reinforce the woman's own protests, or to replace the female victim's voice, when absent from the text. The "Lavender" chapter and the narrative of Murasaki's displacement in particular offer a remarkable consonance of female voices criticizing the hero's behavior.

Quickly recovering from the shock of Genji's second intrusion into their sleeping chambers, Murasaki's women join their voices in "a chorus of protests;" yet there is little else they can do physically to oppose Genji except for "fluttering around helplessly."[164] Only Shōnagon, who inherited not only the nun's sharp tongue, but also her duty to protect young Murasaki, can do something concretely to help her mistress, and that is to follow her wherever Genji intends to take her, the way the faithful Ukon followed Yūgao to her place of doom. Moreover, it is through the words and reactions of this seasoned woman that the narrator summarizes Genji's actions as manifestations of violence:

> "Shōnagon hesitated: 'I have the feeling this is a nightmare!' (…)
> The unexpectedness of it all was confusing and Shōnagon could not calm down. Thinking of what Murasaki's father, the Prince, must be thinking, of how the situation of the girl will turn out in the future and, most of all, of the girl's sad case of having been separated from the people she could rely on, Shōnagon could not suppress her tears, but because they were ominous, she tried to hold them back."[165]

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[164] Seidensticker, 1995, 108.
[165] *Genji monogatari,* 1976-1985, 236.

It is interesting to note that male sexual violence is often associated with nightmare in the tale: Utsusemi compared Genji's violent intrusion to the haunting of an evil spirit in a bad dream, Shōnagon too compares the kidnapping to a nightmare, and Ukifune, later in the Uji chapters, recovers from her panic after Niou intrusion on her in the Nijō-in as if awakening from a nightmare. There can be little doubt that the author's choice of the same "nightmare" comparison[166] in three similar situations that depict acts of male aggression is not intended as a positive remark, but as a harsh exposure of the events for what they truly are: cases of sexual violence.

In concordance with the reactions of Murasaki's ladies-in-waiting and of her nurse, one can also identify the presence of a strong disapproval from the implied general public, as it were, paradoxically represented by Genji, who introduces the standard reaction of society to his acts, when, before kidnapping Murasaki, he envisions the opposition he will face after performing such an act:

> "If he were to take her from her father's house, he would be called a lecher and a child thief. (…) People would say that his appetites were altogether too varied. If the girl were a little older he would be credited with having made a conquest, and that would be that. Though Prince Hyōbu would be very upset indeed, Genji knew that he must not let the child go."[167]

Several specifications must be made in regard to Genji's comments. First, the public opprobrium he fears never materializes, since he manages to keep the kidnapping a well-hidden secret until the moment it is no longer dangerous to disclose the girl's presence at his residence. Therefore, the reaction he expects is only hypothetical and

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[166] Murasaki Shikibu does not employ the same word for all three cases. She either includes the meaning of nightmare in the verbs she employs (*osoharu,* "to be assaulted by an evil spirit in a nightmare") or she uses the neutral *yume* ("dream") which is charged with negative connotations by the context.
[167] Seidensticker, 1995, 107-108.

there is no guarantee that the general public would react exactly according to Genji's expectations, were his acts exposed.

Second, Genji seems to distinguish between the way Murasaki's kidnapping would be perceived depending on its point of departure, implying that were he to spirit her away from her father's residence, he would commit a much more serious offence than if he took her from the Sanjō house. The reason for this is that once Murasaki enters the Prince's household, his status extends to her so that kidnapping a Murasaki recognized as the official daughter of a prince is not the same thing as kidnapping a girl with no serious protectors. In addition, since in the first case Genji would have to steal the girl from under her father's nose, the offense directed at the prince's persona adds up to the crime of abducting a child.

Third, for all her illegitimate status, Murasaki's disappearance constitutes an event bound seriously to disturb her father and, were he to find out about Genji's culpability, the hero would most certainly face some sort of punishment. In fact, the prince is at first shocked and then devastated by the news of Murasaki's disappearance. Genji is fortunate in that all of Prince Hyōbu's suspicions turn to Shōnagon, who is credited with having spirited the girl away out of respect for the grandmother's wishes to keep her protected from her stepmother. At the same time, one wonders if Genji's willingness to allow one of the women in the household to accompany Murasaki is not meant from the very beginning as a strategy to deflect attention from himself to a third party. If the girl had been the only one to disappear from the Sanjō house, the prince would have no doubt initiated a thorough search and, sooner or later, he would have caught wind of Genji's improper interests in her. But with Shōnagon mysteriously gone

at exactly the same time, it is the nurse who becomes the main suspect in this detective case: "He was aghast. 'Her grandmother did not want me to have her, and so I suppose Shōnagon took it upon herself, somewhat sneakily I must say, to hide her away rather than give her to me.'"[168]

Furthermore, Murasaki's kidnapping is not the first time Genji's resorts to the strategy of a "suspicious third party." He must have realized ever since Yūgao's abduction that involuntarily taking along Ukon on the ride to the Nanigashi no in could have been ultimately beneficial to his case, since, had Tō no Chūjō come to inquire about Yūgao's whereabouts, her women would have reported that she left accompanied by her trusted servant, thus dispelling all suspicions regarding the involvement of a rival.

However, Genji's strategy would not be effective without the unwitting cooperation of the women left behind who, mainly out of guilt for not being able to stop the displacement from happening, refuse to give an accurate account of the events. Murasaki's women act no differently: through Shōnagon, Genji has already bought their silence even before Prince Hyōbu sends for his daughter. The promise of financial compensation and the fear of the prince's severe punitive measures, were he to find out the truth about their incompetence to ensure his daughter's safety, are enough to keep their lips shut. Interestingly, Murasaki's own ladies-in-waiting betray her and, by switching sides, deprive her of all support. In the end, there can be only one victim and Murasaki is sacrificed both to Genji's selfish desires and to her own women's financial and social interests.

[168] Seidensticker, 1995, 110.

V. The Culmination and Closure of the Paradigm of Displacement

In the paradigm of displacement with Genji as protagonist, Murasaki's abduction shares as series of similarities with the two previous cases, of Utsusemi and Yūgao, but by representing the culminating, most advanced stage of this series, it displays several characteristics that the other two episodes do not possess. The similarities refer to the basic features of any displacement in the *Genji*: its ultimately sexual purpose, its dislocation of a woman and its use of physical force and/or deceit. The differences between the three episodes generally refer to variables in the distance of the movement, the use of different means of transportation, and the idiosyncrasies of the women involved which determine a shifting in the strategies the hero employs during their displacement. These differences come to represent in fact variations of the basic features of displacement.

In the case of Murasaki's kidnapping, it is precisely its peculiarities that contribute greatly to its becoming the most developed form of displacement Genji resorts to in the early chapters of the tale. In addition, although sharing certain features with the previous cases of displacement, Murasaki's kidnapping takes the characteristics of displacement to an entirely different level. As already discussed, Genji's ultimate goal has been of a sexual nature: with Utsusemi, he desired immediate possession of her body; with Yūgao, he wanted to ensure continuous possession of her, by eliminating the chances of her escape or of the interference of a rival; finally, with Murasaki, "despite his assertions, Genji's devotion is undeniably carnal from the beginning,"[169] and it remains carnal until its fulfillment in the "Heartvine" ("Aoi") chapter when Genji finally has the chance to satisfy his sexual desires for Murasaki.

[169] Field, 1987, 168.

In terms of the displacing movement, there is evidently a gradation from a case of displacement which takes the woman from a feminine space to a tangentially feminine space (Utsusemi), to one in which feminine territory is abandoned for a neutral ground (the Nanigashi no in "Yūgao"), and eventually to a kidnapping that takes the female protagonist out of the confines of her feminine space into the very center of a masculine-controlled area (Genji's Nijō-in).

Genji's strategies to facilitate displacement also evolve with each case. Whereas in the first two displacement episodes he makes use either solely of physical force or of deceit, in the form of lies and compelling scenarios meant to diminish the woman's vigilance, with Murasaki, aggression and deception combine to Genji's advantage.

If out of the three factors that characterize the cases of displacement involving Genji, the last two, referring to movement and displacing strategies, allow a clear perception of the evolution characterizing the paradigm of displacement, the first factor, which subsumes all three episodes under a similar, common sexual purpose makes it more difficult to establish the way in which Murasaki's case is different, that is more complex, than the others.

One aspect in which Genji's pursuit of his sexual designs in regard to the child Murasaki is more proficient and better organized than in the previous two cases refers on the one hand to the type of goal that Genji envisions for Murasaki and, on the other, to the minute planning and execution of the displacement.

One of the reasons why the first two cases of displacement ended in failure is that Genji had very limited sexual objectives regarding the women he displaced and struggled to achieve their immediate satisfaction without concerns regarding a long-term strategy.

He envisions such a strategy only after his second failure, with Yūgao, when he seems to remember the teachings of one of his companions during the "rainy night discussion," as Richard H. Okada has observed:

> "One characteristic of the middle ranks, we recall, was the difficulty in determining desirability and the highly valued "trustworthiness", and one way to guarantee those qualities was to fashion a woman, Pygmalion-like, to fit one's preferences. According to the director, the best sort of Galatea was the lovable, teachable women (…)."[170]

The Galatea metaphor appropriately captures the painstaking planning Genji devotes not only to forming Murasaki once he has gained possession of her, but to the very displacement meant to bring her into his orbit. Thus, Genji is no longer preoccupied with the immediate thought of consummating his affair with Murasaki, partially because she has not yet reached the proper age for lovemaking; yet the fact that he is willing to set in motion a plan which can be realized only after some years, indicates that Genji has learned a precious lesson from his previous failures: no matter how successful he is in ensuring temporary control over a woman and her location and in gaining access to her body, unless he proves able to maintain this control indefinitely and reduce the woman to complete powerlessness, there will always be the threat of the woman devising some strategy of resistance which will free her from his grasp, one way or the other.

Therefore, Genji's reasons for kidnapping Murasaki relegate his sexual expectations to an indefinite moment in the future and focus instead on insuring permanent control over the girl. Immediate concerns, such as avoiding Prince Hyōbu's imminent interference with all its implications, reversal of the status imbalance and the risk of a severe social castigation, also play an important role in determining Genji's

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[170] Richard H. Okada, *Figures of Resistance: Language, Poetry and Narrating in The Tale of Genji and Other Mid-Heian Texts* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991): 258.

actions, but their influence is limited only to the variables of "when" and "where" that define Murasaki's kidnapping and have little if any consequence in the larger picture of Genji's designs.

The hero's aspiration to unchallenged control over Murasaki is possible only though the use of displacement and the kidnapping lays the premises for the fulfillment of four criteria that will forever relegate Murasaki to a position of inferiority vis-a-vis Genji: physical isolation, economic dependency, separation from a supportive father and psychological dependence on Genji.

After Murasaki's kidnapping, the Nijō-in estate, which, although initially the property of a woman, Genji's mother, has ironically become the epitome of masculine-controlled space, becomes an ideal location from Genji's perspective in which to ensure Murasaki's sequestering from the outside world. The mansion may be beautifully furnished, with exquisitely designed gardens, and Murasaki may enjoy the companionship of girls her age, but these eye-catching details can hardly hide the fact that the estate is all but a prison, a golden cage from which young Murasaki will not have a chance to escape. Clearly, it is no accident that Murasaki was first sighted at the moment when her baby sparrow was released from the *fusego* improvised to function as a bird cage. When Murasaki does move to the Southeastern Wing of the Rokujō-in, she seems to exchange one "prison" for another. Heian women were generally confined to the interior of their houses, but these houses were most often their property, a matrilineal legacy passed down to them. Murasaki does not enjoy such a privilege and is confined in a territory which she can never claim as her own.

In addition, while in Genji's custody, she becomes economically dependent on him. Once her ties with her family are completely severed by the kidnapping, she cannot hope to have access to any potential inheritance that might insure her basic means of subsistence or to rely on a male member of the family to provide for her. Haruo Shirane notes concerning Murasaki's dire circumstances that "economic dependence on one's husband, such as Murasaki's on Genji, was considered shameful and demeaning for an aristocratic lady."[171]

Murasaki's relationship with Genji which lasts through the years has its share of drama, yet, whereas a woman more confident in her economic position might have decided on a separation by no longer receiving the man, Murasaki is denied a similar escape. Even a woman like Yūgao, who is remembered by her low status, has the necessary means to leave Tō no Chūjō when she can no longer put up with his behavior and with his main wife's threats. "Necessary means" refer here both to some sort of land inheritance that would bring a stable income (Yūgao must have had even the smallest income to be able to survive prior to Genji's arrival) and to connections with the outside world (Yūgao takes refuge in the house of her former nurse). Murasaki, on the other hand, can hardly claim inheritance after her "disappearance" of many years. In addition, because of the abduction, all her ties with the outside world, whether with her father or with her former ladies-in-waiting, have been severed. The first time Murasaki dares to voice her desire to abandon Genji is in her last years of life, when she expresses her wish to take holy orders ("New Herbs II" chapter), but Genji inconsiderately dismisses her request, leaving her with the yearning for a more independent life, a life she could have

[171] Shirane, 1987, 48.

had if the kidnapping had never happened: "She envied these other ladies, free to lose themselves in religion."[172]

Murasaki's economic dependency on Genji is correlated to the social insecurity triggered by her separation from her father, Prince Hyōbu. As already discussed, the prince's official recognition of Murasaki as his daughter would have determined a considerable improvement in her social position and a cancellation of the status quo which upheld Genji's superiority in rank and status. Indeed, if Genji had waited for the Prince Hyōbu to take custody of the girl and agreed to a proper marriage to Murasaki when she reached the appropriate age, he would have had more to gain by making his father-in-law one of his political allies than by simply kidnapping Murasaki while she was a nobody. Both options are available to him, yet he chooses sexual control over political advantage, disproving Shirane's statement that "when Genji takes a girl with absolutely no political backing or social support into his house, rears and marries her(…) this becomes a sign of excessive, romantic love."[173] Without questioning Genji's feeling of love for the girl, the fact remains that he does not take her into his care *despite* her status in the absence of her father's recognition, but precisely *because* of it.

Other critics are more duplicitous in assessing Murasaki's handicap as a result of her lack of status. Royall Tyler, for one, initially advances the theory according to which Genji prefers a socially vulnerable Murasaki to one on equal positions with him:

> "Genji could not have abducted Murasaki if she had been her father's recognized daughter, nor might he then have been so keen to have her, since success would have made him responsible to a second father-in-law."[174]

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[172] Seidensticker, 1995, 628.
[173] Shirane, 1987, 49.
[174] Royall Tyler, "I am I": Genji and Murasaki," *Monumenta Nipponica* 54, no4 (1999): 442.

In another outburst of philosophical optimism, Tyler retracts his previous statement and qualifies Genji's kidnapping of Murasaki as the best decision of all possible decisions insomuch as it propels Murasaki into the position of wife to an Honorary Retired Emperor and adoptive mother to an Empress[175], an outcome which could hardly have been foreseen at the moment of her kidnapping. Little good does it do to tease Murasaki with an approximation to power; on the contrary, it may in fact increase her frustration in regard to her own powerlessness over her life, frustration that she eventually vents in an episode of spirit possession.

Ultimately, in displacing young Murasaki to the Nijō-in, Genji hopes also to establish the girl's psychological dependence on him which would allow him to mold her into his ideal woman. He gradually gains her trust by posing as a parental figure and taking responsibility for her education. Then, when she reaches the age of fourteen, he changes roles, conveniently for him, from father to lover, betraying Murasaki's trust in him and causing a severe trauma.

While Genji's strategy of lie and deceit was blamable enough even when directed toward adult women, such as Yūgao, Mursaki's grandmother, or her nurse, it appears all the more despicable when used to delude a child, who has few mechanisms of self-protection, but much discernment. All the while, Genji does not question the legitimacy of his designs on her, nor does he concern himself with thinking of Murasaki's feelings. While still a child, she is a toy-daughter to him; after becoming a woman, she changes into a doll-wife and remains in that state until spirit possession and then death finally set

[175] Royall Tyler, "Marriage, Rank and Rape in *The Tale of Genji*," available from http://wwwsshe.murdoch.edu.au/intersections/issue7/tyler.html; Internet; accessed October 10, 2005.

her free. Doris G. Bargen best captures the traumatic effects that Genji's long years of training have caused to Murasaki on the eve of her possession:

> "The more Genji's formidable mentorship shaped her into his true and her pretended ideal, the more she despised herself for the false image of docile conformity that belied her true feelings."[176]

The fact that Murasaki is never broken inside despite Genji's attempts to ensure her total submission makes the events in her life all the more dramatic. Had she crumbled under pressure, renounced her individuality and confided completely in Genji, she might have been happier than she truly was. Her ability to resist Genji even in her last hour casts a long shadow over the event that decided her entire future, her kidnapping, and over the thirty-three years in which Genji retained control over her. On the other hand, one may argue that Murasaki's last acts of rebellion could have done little to change a life of submission. At the end of the first forty chapters of the tale a final judgment of success or failure in relation to the kidnapping through which Genji gained control of Murasaki can hardly be totally objective. In the end, such a judgment depends greatly on how one chooses to perceive Murasaki's entire career.

In a more immediate context, however, Murasaki's kidnapping represents the only successful displacement of the paradigm. Genji's premeditation in devising an appropriate strategy, his minute planning of the kidnapping and Murasaki's subsequent future, his inspired choice of location as destination point for the displacement converge with fortuitous circumstances, such as the girl's age and the propitious death of her grandmother, to ensure the effectiveness of the displacement. The same aspects spell out disaster from Murasaki's standpoint, but from Genji's perspective they facilitate his first and last great amorous accomplishment.

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[176] Bargen, 1997, 140.

At the end of the "Lavender" chapter, the last scene captures Genji toying with young Murasaki, much as the girl herself has done with the pet sparrow when first introduced in the narrative. Her grandmother's words on that occasion were that it is a sin to put a bird into a cage. How little did Genji listen to the old woman's wisdom! How more of a sin it is to imprison a girl budding into a woman!

VI. Imaging Young Murasaki

The "Lavender" chapter of *The Tale of Genji* has been a goldmine for visual artists, competing in popularity only with the "Boat upon the Waters." The scene of Genji's *kaimami* of the young Murasaki has become a consecrated landmark of the tale, together with Niou and Ukifune's boat excursion.

From the perspective of the study of violent displacement in the *Genji*, this *kaimami* episode, featured as Scene 1 in the Ōsaka manual, promises to hold important evidence for the analysis of the later kidnapping of Murasaki by Genji. In addition to it, the manual also includes a scene dedicated specifically to the displacement episode and two others that capture the moments after Murasaki's arrival at Genji's Nijō-in.

The importance of Genji's first encounter with the young Murasaki becomes evident from the lengthy and detailed instructions given in the canonical manual. Thus, the information provided for this scene refers not only to the general temporal and spatial coordinates, but also to the characters to be included in the painting, their specific positions, wardrobe, and props:

> "Genji is seventeen years old. The place is in the northern hills, and the time is either late in the Third Month, or the first of the Fourth Month. Genji, accompanied by Koremitsu, peers over from behind a wattled fence. The blinds are slightly raised. A nurse, perhaps in her forties, is making an offering of

> flowers. She is leaning against a central pillar and has a holy text spread out on an armrest. There should be two women and some children. Murasaki has on a soft white singlet and a russet robe, and her hair spreads over her shoulders like a fan. She is lamenting for the baby sparrows that have got loose."[177]

The Tosa artists who were among the first to uphold the Ōsaka manual to the rank of tradition did not always follow it precisely themselves. A "Wakamurasaki" illustration (Figure 22) by Tosa Mitsumoto (fl. 1530-1569), dating from approximately the same period as the earliest extant manuscript of the Ōsaka manual, of the early sixteenth century, retains only a few of the canonic specifications. At a closer look, one detects an awkward Genji half-exposed by an flimsy brushwood fence staring at a Murasaki who is much too adult to have failed to notice him from her higher vantage position. It could as well be that the woman in the illustration is not Murasaki after all, but her nurse, Shōnagon, whose age would better qualify her to become Mitsumoto's heroine. If that is indeed the case, one has to wonder why the Tosa artist chose to switch the focus of Genji's *kaimami* from Murasaki to Shōnagon and not only that, but to eliminate one of the main actors of the scene, Murasaki, altogether. If Murasaki had been present in the picture next to her nurse, one could have more readily accepted Mitsumoto's depiction as a recurrent technique in Tosa paintings: the change of focus from a quite banal little girl to a more seductive mature woman. As it is though, one finds it more compelling to accept that the heroine is featured in the painting, as more mature than her age in the text.

The landscape and the architecture are also very erratic: Murasaki seems to be standing on a veranda raised on high pillars beneath which the use of blue color indicates the presence of water; the green of the surrounding hills is almost swallowed by the traditional clouds which obstruct much of the viewer's line of sight. At least the bird,

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[177] Miyeko Murase, *The Tale of Genji: Genji monogatari ekotoba* (New York: Weatherhill, 1983), 58. The correct reading for "nurse" is "nun," Murasaki's grandmother.

which soars straight up from the overturned cage in a most unnatural way, is still present in Mitsumoto's painting.

This illustration has little in common not only with the Ōsaka manual but also with the text of the *Genji*. Had it not been for the wattled fence and the flying bird, little would have suggested that it is meant to illustrate the *kaimami* scene of the "Lavender" chapter and not any other such scene abounding in Heian literature.

Tosa Mitsuyoshi (1539-1613), Mitsumoto's successor as head of the Tosa School and of the Imperial Painting Bureau (*Edokoro*), was much more scrupulous in abiding by the artistic rules than his predecessor. His late sixteenth-century "Wakamurasaki" (Figure 23) is a typical illustration done by the book. Still, whereas it is easy to distinguish between Genji and Koremitsu, based on their garments and positions in the illustration – Genji obviously being the one engaged in *kaimami* and, as if to avoid any confusion, wearing an *eboshi* – it is not so easy to tell Murasaki apart from her companions. The heroine is ten at the time of this episode, and so it would be logical that she be one of the two little girls dressed in white *uchigi* (outer robe) over red *hitoe* (inner robe, chemise). However, it is impossible to determine which of them she is, the one on the *sunoko* or the one on the *hisashi,* since both have their arm stretched in the direction on the bird. The tall woman in olive *uchigi* over a dark green *hitoe* must be Murasaki's nurse, Shōnagon, since the other woman depicted seated towards the interior is Murasaki's grandmother, the nun, judging from the fact that she is engaged in reading a holy text.

What is conspicuous is that neither of the two girls seems to occupy a prominent role in the illustration. In fact, the viewer's and, implicitly, Genji's gaze seem to be drawn to the woman standing at the edge of the veranda, who, by her stature and by the

color combination of her robes which differs from that of the other three women, steals the spotlight from young Murasaki, whichever of the two girls she might be.

The question that arises immediately concerns the reasons why two artists of the same Tosa School chose to illustrate such an unsuitable Murasaki: one too old for her real age, the other too bland to play the central part in the illustration.

As with the selection of scenes to be illustrated for the "Evening Faces" chapter, one must consider the possibility of traditional artists trying to protect Genji's character from criticism. The abduction of Yūgao with its lethal consequences was one such reason for criticism of Genji; his erotic attraction to a mere child is yet another. Therefore, to dispel all suspicion, Tosa artists such as Mitsumoto aged his Murasaki by more than a few years, sacrificing accuracy to convention (assuming that the female figure in Mitsumoto's picture is Murasaki, and not Shōnagon). Mitsuyoshi on the other hand, was more subtle than his predecessor and instead of an "age artifice" he resorted to another diversion: by switching the focus from the unidentifiable Murasaki to the very conspicuous Shōnagon, he depicts a very acceptable *kaimami*, that of a mature man on a mature woman. Genji's declared purpose may be the young Murasaki, but judging from Mitsuyoshi's illustration, one is eager to believe that Shōnagon is just as much of a target as Murasaki herself, if not more. This interesting technique, which might well be called a "distorted *kaimami*," may actually have succeeded in protecting Genji's image from the guilt of surreptitiously spying on a mere child. If Mitsumoto's adult heroine were in fact Shōnagon and not Murasaki, then the "distorted *kaimami*" technique finds another exemplification outside Mitsuyoshi's painting. Whether he used the "age artifice" or the "distorted *kaimami*", it seems clear that Mitsumoto was just as concerned with the

negative connotations of an adult male's *kaimami* on a ten-year-old girl as his successor, Mitsuyoshi.

Unfortunately, the "distorted *kaimami*" technique seems to have caught since it was still used in a mid-eighteenth century "Wakamurasaki" painting by an unknown artist (Figure 24). The illustration discards Koremitsu as unnecessary and reduces the number of women to three: one woman positioned next to a bird cage on the *sunoko*, another one behind her, at the edge of the *hisashi*, and a little girl. The child's limited appeal and general immobility makes her quite uninteresting in comparison to her nurse, the woman at the edge of the veranda, who, once again engages the viewer far more than the young Murasaki.

The painting is also important in revealing how easily traditional artists were sometimes inclined to sacrifice textual accuracy, pictorial realism and even plain common sense in favor of a prescribed interpretation. Because the Ōsaka manual mentions the existence of a wattled fence from behind which Genji engages in his *kaimami*, the anonymous artist improvises a completely absurd enclosure, with no apparent purpose other than to hide Genji. In that respect, Mitsuyoshi's fence can be considered a masterpiece of realism, for it naturally blends with the landscape and gives the impression of predating the moment of Genji's arrival.

At the same time the incongruous fence of the eighteenth-century "Wakamurasaki" has the unintentional effect of reversing the power balance in the picture. Normally, Genji would be perceived as controlling the women's territory through his intruding gaze. He has the upper hand over the unsuspecting women because he is hidden from their view, yet has unobstructed visual access to them. His gaze is

empowering and by it, Genji takes possession of the surrounding territory. The anonymous artist unwittingly relinquishes this position of male control. His Genji is enclosed on three sides by the tall brushwood fence and gives the impression of being literally trapped within his own limited space. The women, on the other hand, have the advantage of a higher position on the raised veranda and access to the entire landscape surrounding them. It is as if they, like the bird, could soar across the landscape into the sky. The artist's intention was most certainly not to present a mock *kaimami*, but, by relying entirely on undigested artistic mannerisms, he obtained that very effect.

To say that old habits die hard would be an understatement in regard to the Japanese artistic tradition. Although the Tosa School gradually slipped into desuetude, its use of the "distorted *kaimami*" in depicting the Murasaki of the Kitayama *kaimami* scene survived the passage into woodblock print illustrations. One encounters it as late as the nineteenth century, in the work of an unconventional artist such as Utagawa Kunisada (Figure 25). In addition, the artist also revitalizes the imagery of Tosa Mitsumoto's cliff-hanging veranda which he chooses to place in what seems to be a marine landscape that barely leaves a ripple effect of the original location in the Northern Hills. In the lower part of the picture, one distinguishes Genji hiding behind a brushwood fence, covering his face with a yellow fan. The entire upper part is occupied by the depiction of Murasaki's residence. On the veranda, there is the Murasaki's grandmother, easily identifiable as a nun by what appears to be either her grey-white hair or a head-cover. Remarkably, she has abandoned reading her sacred texts in the interior and is conspicuously perched on the *sunoko,* scanning the sky for the bird. Beside her, there is a little girl, obviously Murasaki, who finally emerges from her traditionally passive pose.

However, her attitude of surprise at the loss of the bird is completely devoid of any grace. In comparison, Shōnagon appears much more elegant and desirable and succeeds in becoming the focus of the illustration.

As it is impossible to accuse Kunisada of conventionalism or discretion, his depiction of an insipid Murasaki and of a seductive Shōnagon may not be the result of the same type of careful strategy the Tosa artists employed. It may simply be that by his time, this rendition of Murasaki and her nurse was so deeply rooted in the artistic imagination that artists resorted to it intuitively without even suspecting its artificiality. The fact that *Genji* painters were seldom avid readers of the tale may have further facilitated the survival of iconographic relics.

Closer to our day, a similar phenomenon to the one affecting the depiction of Yūgao began to leave its imprint on the illustrations featuring young Murasaki, namely, as artists manifested an increasing preference for solitary portraits of the heroine, disregarding the landscape and the other actors of the original scene. Unlike Yūgao, however, whose portraits are often independent of a specific narrative moment (the presence of the yūgao gourd serves more as identification of the heroine than as marker of the narrative time; only when Yūgao is associated with the writing of the poem on the fan, does the illustration refer to a specific moment in the narrative), the child Murasaki is always illustrated with a sparrow, precisely indicating the *kaimami* episode. In a way, the young Murasaki remains forever trapped in that one instant of her existence, completely exposed to the viewer's eye, who, in the absence of Genji from the scene, borrows his voyeuristic tendencies.

Yasuda Yukihiko's "Wakamurasaki no maki" (Figure 26) captures a very innocent Murasaki quietly sitting at the edge of the veranda. Her physical appearance is remarkably faithful to the description provided by the tale, both in regard to the color of her robes and to the style of her hair. The heroine's isolation and passivity are suggestive of her vulnerability before Genji's intrusion. She is portrayed alone because after her grandmother's death and her ladies' betrayal, she has to face her fate all by herself. Her docile posture also speaks of the limited possibilities a girl her age has to resist Genji's acts of aggression, starting with the *kaimami* and ending with the kidnapping.

It is interesting to note also that in Yasuda's painting the baby sparrows do not fly to freedom but remain trapped inside the cage, next to the girl. At the risk of reading too much in the picture, one may advance the hypothesis according to which the artist was perfectly aware of the subtle, yet powerful association between young Murasaki and her caged sparrows. Whereas in the original text the association is only momentary, since the sparrow escapes the girl's trap, while she herself never has a similar chance, with Yasuda's rendition it becomes definitive: the fate of the birds foretells the fate of the heroine. If indeed the artist's intentions had been to arouse the pity of the viewer for the young Murasaki and cast a shadow of suspicion in regard to Genji's behavior towards her only though the use of the caged birds metaphor, then his artistic interpretation of the tale is undoubtedly complex.

At the same time, Yasuda may be capturing a moment that precedes the release of the birds by the careless Inuki. In that case, the illustration is dissociated completely from Genji's *kaimami*, since the hero first notices the little girl after the birds are accidentally set free. Therefore, his heroine might be a Murasaki completely freed of Genji's gaze, a

Murasaki still free to enjoy her childhood in the Northern Hills. Since the pet sparrow was a source and joy and comfort for the girl, the fact that she still retains possession of it might indicate that she has not yet faced the dramatic events that will change her life: the loss of the bird, which comes as a foreboding for the loss of her grandmother and of her safety.

Yasuda's bold disregard of the escape of the birds as the moment dramatized in the original text entices the viewer to dwell with Murasaki on her loving possessiveness while anticipating her loss of the birds. Moreover, the artist creates the dramatic tension due to the imminence of this loss and foreshadows the girl's own imprisonment by Genji.

No other artist after Yasuda presented a similar iconography of Murasaki in the *kaimami* episode. Kajita Hanko's 1996 "Wakamurasaki" (Figure 27) is a paragon of childish innocence and charm. Her reaction to the loss of the pet sparrow is not the irritation at Inuki's carelessness implied in the *Genji,* but sheer grief, as if at the loss of a dear friend or relative. On the other hand, Kajita's crying Murasaki may prove to be more than simply an adorable little girl. Her distress over the loss of her pet anticipates her attitude to the death of her grandmother and, to venture a more radical interpretation, panic at the loss of her self as a child when faced with Genji's intrusion and violent displacement.

A similarly endearing Murasaki emerges from Miyata Masayuki's 2001 illustration (Figure 28). Such a cheerful depiction of a *Genji* heroine would be astonishing coming from an artist who excels in capturing the most troubling details of the narrative and whose imagination blooms in and with the shadows, were it not for a dramatic change of perspective in Miyata's picture.

There is a dramatic change of color palette in this illustration of Murasaki compared to Miyata's other paintings. Whereas his art usually makes use of darker shades and gloomy colors, this "Murasaki" is bight and cheerful. The pink of the cherry blossoms beautifully compliments the leaf green of the upper background; the little girl's clothing is made of strong associations between pale orange, azure blue and deep red; finally, most of the background is bathed in light. A closer look also reveals that the viewer is no longer impersonating Genji. The bird's eye view of Murasaki from among the branches of the cherry tree in full blossom completely excludes Genji's presence from the scene. Not only that, but Murasaki is suspended in space rather than running to the edge of the veranda. Seen from any other perspective except from above, Miyata's Murasaki is drawn simply too short and chubby; only when viewed from above do her proportions retain their realism. At the same time, the possibility of a Genji perched high in the cherry tree and spying on Murasaki is too absurd to admit. Therefore, it is safe to assume that the artist recreates the space for his Murasaki so as to ensure her safety from Genji's eyes. The viewers are invited to gaze upon her, not as intruders, but as partakers in her childish games.

One has to admire Miyata's ingenuity in depicting a happily innocent Murasaki without flagrantly going against the *Genji* text. Aware that he cannot possibly charm his viewers with a fake image of serenity for an episode too charged with problematic events, the artist chooses to take a subtle side approach. The only possibility of keeping Murasaki in the state of childhood in the Northern Hills, which probably constituted her only time of unobstructed happiness, is for Miyata to eliminate the intruder, Genji. Only in his absence can Murasaki and her surroundings continue their harmonious existence.

The *kaimami* scene of the "Lavender" chapter is a fortunate case in that an impressive number of its illustrations are preserved. Scene no. 6 of the Ōsaka manual which details the climatic moment of Murasaki's kidnapping is impossible to illustrate with extant examples. Miyeko Murase, who conducted extensive research hoping to find suitable illustrations for each of the two hundred and eighty two scenes comprised in the Ōsaka manual which she translated in its entirety, could not discover any existing images for thirty-nine of them. Murasaki's kidnapping is unfortunately one of those thirty-nine.

For lack of artistic materials representing the episode of Murasaki's violent displacement, one can only turn to the staging directions in the Ōsaka manual and try to imagine the abundance of evidence such illustrations might have contained had they but survived:

> "It is in the winter, following the above episode.[178] It is still dark and the morning mist should be rising, *it is the scene of Genji's abduction of Murasaki*. Koremitsu's horse should be positioned outside the gate, and Koremitsu should be in the garden. Genji's carriage is pulled inside the gate. Genji carries Murasaki into the carriage. Shōnagon comes out with several of Murasaki's robes. There should be two retainers."[179] (my emphasis)

One is free to hypothesize on how this episode would have been illustrated by the traditional Tosa School. Murasaki might have been made to look much older or too passive, as in the *kaimami* scene, so as to shield Genji from criticism. Shōnagon's attitude might have been too placid to allow her opposition to Genji's acts. This much one can infer based on the extant Tosa illustrations of other controversial episodes. But the imagination fails to provide a satisfactory scenario in regard to the nonconformist, even irreverent, *ukiyō-e* artists. As for the contemporary painters, and my search could not

[178] Genji is at Aoi's Sanjō residence when he learns from Koremitsu about Murasaki's imminent move to her father's residence.
[179] Murase, 1983, 62.

have been comprehensive, one can only wonder about their reasons for seeming to avoid this scene. Can the absence of a tradition justify the artists' lack of interest in this scene or is it the controversial nature of the kidnapping that appears to discourage them from approaching it? Whatever the case, one can only hope that there may be such paintings, after all, or that the situation will be rectified in the future.

In the apparent absence of illustrations for this fascinating displacement scene, one must turn for compensation, as it were, to the one succeeding it in the Ōsaka manual, which details the circumstances of Murasaki's arrival at the Nijō-in:

> "In winter Murasaki is brought to Nijō. Genji has four girls sent to her quarters. There should be small screens, curtains, and pictures. Genji accompanies Murasaki, who is dressed in dark mourning robes. They come to the east wing. She peers at the flowers in the foreground, delicately touched by frost. Streams of courtiers of medium rank should be shown."[180]

Nothing in the manual's indications hints at the fact that the previous episode was one describing Murasaki's abduction, for, instead of depicting the girl's tears and her nurse's distress upon their arrival at the Nijō-in, the manual focuses on the aesthetic representation of Genji's mansion. However, despite the detailed staging directions, even artists of the Tosa School took the liberty to disregard many of them.

A "Wakamurasaki" illustration by Tosa Mitsunori dating from the beginning of the Edo period (Figure 29) eliminates a great number of details required by the Ōsaka manual: the props used for the interior, the flowers that Murasaki is supposed to admire, even the medium rank courtiers who busy themselves all around. In fact, the heroine in Mitsunori's painting does not retain any of the features suggested by the manual. There is no indication, for example, of her movement to or from the east wing; in fact, unlike the manual, the original text does not specify anywhere that Murasaki ever leaves the west

[180] Murase, 1983, 63.

wing that she occupies from the moment of her arrival. Mitsunori's point is, rather, that Murasaki does not seem fascinated with her new surroundings, for she is shown is an extremely passive posture.

By disregarding all canonic specifications, Mitsunori's intention may have been to focus the viewer's attention on the Genji-Murasaki pair. Although there are other actors featured in the scene, notably the four little girls mentioned in the manual, they are of little importance compared with the main protagonists, not to mention the fact that they are separated from them through a strong use of architectural partitioning by a set of *fusuma* that cut diagonally through the picture. Thus, Genji, Murasaki, and another woman, presumably Shōnagon, are in a separate chamber to the left; to the right, beyond an open sliding door, there are the four girls meant to become Murasaki's playmates. The interest of the painting resides not so much in its depiction of the right side, but in the squeezed space of its left side. It is there that the viewer encounters the most unusual scene: Murasaki is lying down, her head on Genji's lap, with an attitude of complete trust and submission, while her nurse, Shōnagon, observes the scene as if it were the most natural thing in the world.

Nowhere in the original "Lavender" chapter can such sentiments be detected. On the contrary, the text points to quite the opposite situation: Murasaki's uneasiness in her new home, her desire to sleep with her nurse and her tears at Genji's refusal to grant her request. A comparison between Mitsunori's scene and Murasaki's text indicates beyond doubt that readers unfamiliar with the text might interpret the painting as peaceful but those familiar with it could hardly fail to notice that sometimes a pretty picture hides great inner turmoil. It may seem that the painter completely disregards the author's words

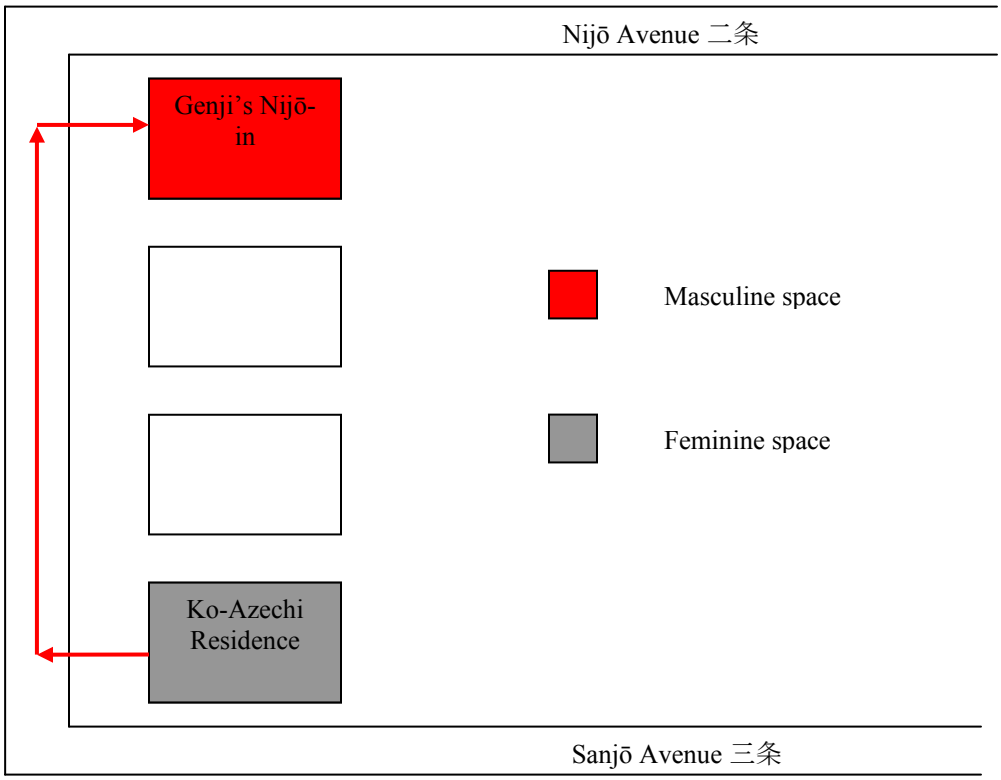
and "rewrites" the scene himself: Murasaki does not look like the terrified child of the narrative, but had already embraced the idea of having Genji as protector, while her nurse brushes off all her criticism of Genji and placidly accepts the situation.

At the same time, there is another interesting aspect revealed by the positioning of Genji, Murasaki, and Shōnagon. The girl is depicted at an equal distance in between Genji and her nurse who sit facing each other, but her entire body is leaning against the hero. Thus, she is not only accepting Genji, but also somehow rejecting her nurse, her only link to her relatives and entourage. Murasaki is thus forced to sever her family ties and rely largely on Genji. Dwelling on the kidnapping seems fruitless. Whether this is what the artist might want to suggest in his illustration of the scene is not entirely clear, but such a reading would be entirely consistent with the Tosa tradition of a soft approach to the conflict in *The Tale of Genji* and would indicate that, had Mitsunori ever painted the kidnapping scene, he might have distorted it beyond recognition.

Murasaki's arrival at the Nijō-in in the "Lavender" chapter is one of the more obscure scenes of the Ōsaka manual and few artists, except for Tosa disciples, chose to illustrate it. Considering that the common practice was to illustrate *The Tale of Genji* with one painting per episode and that the *kaimami* scene became the preferred choice, one can hardly expect to find relevant pictures of this neglected Scene 7. Moreover, since the Tosa interpretation of it is by now obvious from the study of Mitsunori's version, unless one discovers this scene featured in the art of painters that do not belong to or share the tradition of the Tosa School, the chances of discovering new interpretations of it are minimal. Therefore, as with the episode which details Murasaki's kidnapping, Scene 7 confronts the viewer with a closed door.

If in the case of illustrating the "Yūgao" chapter omissions were made intentionally, so as to avoid problematic incidents that might have exposed the character of Genji to criticism, in the case of the "Wakamurasaki" chapter, where artists had no excuse for disguising problematic aspects (such as that of an adult man engaged in the *kaimami* of a little girl), the lack of variety in the illustrations may not be motivated by strategic omission, but rather by accident. It is the result of an unfortunate circumstance that no paintings of the kidnapping incident were preserved or that the scene following it never gained the popularity of the *kaimami* episode. Maybe one day, when works of art may miraculously be found and restored to existence or when young generations of artists will contribute their talent and imagination to the interpretation of the events featuring young Murasaki, the "Lavender" illustrations will serve as powerful testimony of the trauma inflicted upon a child through violent displacement.

FIGURE 21. The Direction of Murasaki's Kidnapping.[181]



[181] Diagram based on *Kyōto: Genji monogatari chizu* (Kyōto: Shibunkaku shuppan, 2007).

FIGURE 22. Tosa Mitsumoto. "Wakamurasaki" in *Genji monogtari gachō*. Early 16th century. Gold and color on paper. Private collection.

From Murasaki Shikibu and Enchi Fumiko, *Genji monogatari* (Tōkyō: Gakushū Kenkyūsha, 1979).

FIGURE 23. Tosa Mitsuyoshi. "Wakamurasaki" in *Genji monogatari gachō.* Momoyama period. Ink and color on paper. Tōkyō National Museum.

From Ken Akiyama and Eiichi Taguchi, *Goka "Genji-e" no sekai* (Tōkyō: Gakushū Kenkyūsha, 1988).

FIGURE 24. Anonymous. “Wakamurasaki” in *Genji monogatari emaki.* Mid-18th century. Color on paper. Hood Museum of Art.

Available from http://www.dartmouth.edu/~arth17/Genji.html

FIGURE 25. Utagawa Kunisada. “Wakamurasaki” in *Genji monogatari: Kaoru no zu.* Early 19th century. Woodblock print. National Diet Library.

Available from http://www3.ocn.ne.jp/~mh23/gennz05.htm

FIGURE 26. Yasuda Yukihiko. "Wakamurasaki no maki." 20th century. Private collection.

From Enchi Fumiko, *Genji monogatari* (Tōkyō: Gakushū Kenkyūsha, 1979).

FIGURE 27. Kajita Hanko. "Wakamurasaki" scene from *Meiga de yomu Genji monogatari,* Tōkyō: Taishūkan Shoten, 1996.

FIGURE 28. Miyata Masayuki. "Young Lavender" in *The Tale of Genji: Scenes from the World's First Novel,* Tōkyō: Kodansha International, 2001.

FIGURE 29. Tosa Mitsunori. "Wakamurasaki." Early Edo period. Color, gold and ink on paper. Tokugawa Art Museum.

From Ken Akiyama and Eiichi Taguchi, *Goka "Genji-e" no sekai* (Tōkyō: Gakushū Kenkyūsha, 1988).

CHAPTER 4

Adrift in Murky Waters: Ukifune's Successive Displacements in the Uji Chapters

I. Violence in the Uji Chapters

In the first forty-one chapters of *The Tale of Genji*, the incidents of sexual violence, some more, some less conspicuous, punctuate the main narrative, like the dissonant voices of musical instruments, unable to impress the audience with a coherent sound. The last ten chapters, however, largely located in Uji, create a symphony of violence, in a pattern of incidents that do more than simply underscore the main narrative frame: they orchestrate it. The cases of sexual violence described in the Uji chapters are more conspicuous than the ones in earlier chapters. Whereas in previous chapters, various female characters faced male aggression at a certain point, without being entirely defined by such encounters, in the Uji chapters, the heroines seem to be shaped by such incidents of sexual violence. Of the Uji women, Ukifune in particular emerges as an epitome of the displaced, her whole existence being subjected to aggressive dislocations by male and female figures.

In fact, by her very name, Ukifune becomes an embodiment of displacement. Her eponym derives from her poem about a most flagrant instance of sexual violence in the form of displacement, namely Niou's escapade across the Uji River. Faced with this prince's radical move, the dislocated woman defines herself as "a boat upon the waters."[182] Furthermore, when first introduced into the narrative, in a discussion between Kaoru and Nakanokimi, as a potential substitute of the dead Ōigimi, Ukifune, still

[182] Seidensticker, 1993, 991.

nameless at that point, takes the form of a *hitogata*, an image meant to be discarded down a river during lustrations ceremonies. Just like her later acquired name, the *hitogata* is associated with the ceaseless flow of the river, reinforcing yet again Ukifune's association with spatial displacement.

As if the heroine's ascribed role as *hitogata* were not dramatic enough, her first appearance could not be more memorable in its imagery. The first time Kaoru ever sets his eyes on her is upon her return from a pilgrimage to Hasedera to the Eight Prince's villa at Uji. The location that Murasaki Shikibu chose for her last female protagonist's introduction is the Uji Bridge, a place by definition suspended between two shores, neither here nor there, an very unstable location. Later on in the narrative, it is again Ukifune who defines this bridge, and implicitly her own position, as precarious and vulnerable, in a poem to Kaoru:

> "The bridge has gaps, one crosses gingerly.
> Can one be sure it will not rot away?"[183]

Just like the boat, the *hitogata* or the bridge, Ukifune herself is caught in an almost perpetual displacing movement, imposed on her by other characters, or later on, self-imposed. Nevertheless, not all displacing incidents befalling Ukifune are representations of sexual violence. Some of them, though still violent in nature, escape such a classification. Because of her father's refusal to recognize her as his daughter, she is first displaced to Michinoku and then Hitachi and becomes the step-daughter of the local governor (1) (Figure 30). Then, because of her mother's ambitions for her and her step-father's brutal interference in her marriage plans, she is again displaced by her mother to Nakanokimi's Nijō residence (2). From there, Niou's unsolicited attention

[183] Seidensticker, 1993, 990.

compels Ukifune's mother to move her once again to the Eastern Cottage (3) from where she is finally abducted to Uji by Kaoru (4). The series of displacements does not end at that, however, and, upon being discovered by Niou at Uji, she is further moved, although only temporarily, across the Uji River (5). Her later disappearance and attempted suicide is but another displacement, self-imposed this time, which takes her away from the Uji villa to the late Suzaku emperor's villa, on the other shore of the Uji River (6). From there, she is further displaced, by the bishop of Yokawa and his sister, the Ono nun, and finds another temporary abode at the foot of Mount Hiei, at Ono (7). This Heian odyssey ends with this last location, but not without implying that Ukifune might be again displaced, either by Kaoru, who knows of her existence, or by Niou, who is bound to find out about it.

Of all the cases briefly described before, one (1) is motivated by her father's indifference (the Eighth Prince's rejection of Ukifune as a child allows Chūjō, Ukifune's mother, to remarry and move to Michinoku and Hitachi), two (2,3) by her mother's lofty ambitions (Ukifune's leaving her step-father's house and then the Nijō-in), two (4,5) are conspicuously sexual in nature (Kaoru's abduction of Ukifune from the Eastern Cottage and Niou's boat adventure across the Uji river), one (6) represents Ukifune's own attempt to escape a painful position (her disappearance and later discovery at Suzaku villa), and finally, the last one (7), represents an ambiguous mixture of sexual motivations (the bishop of Yokawa) and parental ambitions (the Ono nun). All the cases of displacement above, except for Ukifune's self-displacements, are violent in nature, yet only three of them, with Kaoru, Niou, and the bishop of Yokawa as agents of displacement, constitute

cases of sexual violence. It will be, therefore, relevant to analyze each of these three cases in order to elucidate their characteristics in terms of sexual violence.

II. Sexual Displacement in Context

The first case of displacement as sexual violence, featuring Ukifune and Kaoru, occurs toward the end of chapter 50, "The Eastern Cottage" ("Azumaya"). Despite being the first incidence of such kind involving Ukifune, this case of displacement cannot be read independently of previous incidents that help shape its context as well as its main protagonists, Ukifune.

At the time of the Eastern Cottage incident, Ukifune has already been subjected to several types of displacements which defined her in terms of *rank and status uncertainty*, *spatial insecurity*, and she has become the victim of Prince Niou's sexual aggression, an incident which underlined the heroine's *sexual vulnerability* to an inopportune intrusion.

Shortly after losing his only wife in childbirth, the Eighth Prince has a fleeting affair with one of the women in his household, Chūjō, a relative of his deceased wife, and fathers a child, Ukifune. The Prince's reaction, however, is rather extreme:

> "He was embarrassed, yes, even disgusted, knowing it might well be his. He did not want to be troubled further and refused to see her again (…) Back in the capital after some years, she let it be known that the girl was in good health. The prince told her very brusquely that the news had nothing to do with him or this house; and so the poor woman could only lament her inability to do anything for the girl."[184]

Not only does he not acknowledge the child as his, but he also chases the mother away, with no concern about what might happen to the two. The woman subsequently marries the then governor of Michinoku and, together with the girl, has no choice but to

[184] Seidensticker, 1993, 920.

leave the capital for the provinces. Later, Chūjō's husband becomes governor of Hitachi, a title generally used when referring to him later in the narrative.

In other words, due to her father's irresponsibility, even hypocrisy considering his display of fatherly love toward his other two daughters and his lament that parental attachments have become impediments to his religious salvation, Ukifune loses the main supporter a Heian woman could count on, her father. Also, she has to endure the trial of leaving the capital for the provinces, a movement that echoes Genji's exile to Suma, and even more, Tamakazura's departure for Kyūshū. Like Tamakazura, or her comic counterpart, the Ōmi lady,[185] Ukifune has to bear the burden of the provincial handicap, which might seriously threaten a Heian lady's eligibility for a proper marriage. In addition, by not being officially recognized by her princely father, she suffers a "demotion" in terms of status, from the position of a Prince's daughter to that of a governor's step-daughter. However remote from the centers of power the Eighth Prince might have been, unlike Genji, his half-brother, he has not been demoted to the status of commoner, but, like Suzaku, his other half-brother, his ties with the imperial line have not been severed. In fact, at one point in the narrative, coinciding with Genji's self-imposed exile at Suma, the Eighth Prince had, for a short time, real chances of acceding to the throne. Benefiting from her father's imperial rank, despite his handicap in terms of real political power, Nakanokimi, Ukifune's elder sister, does live to become Niou's

[185] Both Tamakazura and the Ōmi lady are illegitimate daughters of Tō no Chūjō, raised in the provinces, then discovered and brought to the capital, the first by Genji, the second one by her real father. Despite these similarities, whereas the former differs little from capital ladies, the latter is countrified and rather vulgar. The comic comparison between the two is meant to enhance Tamakazura's appeal and Genji's superiority.

main wife, his *kita no kata,* whereas Ukifune herself, reduced to the *zuryō* class,[186] can hope at best to enter the service of such a lady as her sister.

Therefore, Ukifune's father, the Eighth Prince, is the main agent in this first case of displacement, not only determining Ukifune's removal from the capital and her repositioning in a provincial background, but also creating uncertainty in respect to her rank and status.

On the other hand, Chūjō, Ukifune's mother, becomes the displacing agent in the two following incidents: Ukifune's departure from her step-father's residence to Nakanokimi's Nijō-in[187] and her retreat from Nijō-in to the Eastern cottage. As well intentioned as Chūjō appears in her ambitious desires to find a suitable marriage for her daughter, with each residence that she chooses for Ukifune, she only manages to further endanger her and thus to underline Ukifune's spatial insecurity.

For instance, when she first decides to leave her husband's residence, as a result of his mingling in Ukifune's arranged marriage to the guards lieutenant, she takes the girl to her sister, Nakanokimi, who resides in Niou's Nijō palace. In doing this, Chūjō hopes to spite her husband, but also compel Nakanokimi to grant Ukifune what her father, the Eighth Prince, had denied her: recognition. Chūjō's logic is not mistaken when she assumes that Ukifune would benefit from her sister's position and find more opportunities to acquire a suitable husband. What she does not take into account though, and her overlooking proves a fatal mistake, is Niou's own reputation. In other words,

[186] Aristocrats who took offices in the provinces, moving away from the capital for the duration of their mandate.
[187] In fact, Nijō-in belongs to Niou, but since he has installed Nakanokimi there, she is a permanent resident of the palace. By referring to the place as "Nakanokimi's Nijō-in" I do not imply that the Nijō-in was the property of Nakanokimi, but only that is was her place of residence.

Chūjō is in fact throwing her daughter into the lion's den, by disregarding Niou's reputed predilection for all kinds of amorous affairs.[188]

No wonder then that Niou makes his move on Ukifune; after all, it was too great an opportunity for him to miss: having a vulnerable, beautiful woman under his own roof was simply something his gallant nature could not overlook. After this incident, Chūjō interferes again and moves her daughter from the Nijō-in to the Eastern cottage, a small residence that she owned and used to avoid directional taboos, and which was still partly under construction. The counterintuitive result of this displacement is that Ukifune is once more in danger, this time from Kaoru, who finds out about her hiding place and takes advantage of her mother's absence to abduct her.

Thus, Chūjō's rash decisions, fueled by unrealistic ambitions for her daughter, are to blame for Ukifune's spatial insecurity. Had she remained in the residence belonging to the governor of Hitachi, even in a secluded room in a remote pavilion, she would still have benefited from her step-father's protections and the chances of becoming a victim of violent sexual displacement would have been considerably reduced.

Finally, it is Ukifune's first encounter with Niou that shapes her position in terms of sexual vulnerability. Shortly after Ukifune's arrival to the Nijō-in, while Nakanokimi is having her hair washed, Niou, in an attempt to release his boredom, accidentally stumbles across the unsuspecting Ukifune. Just as in the case of Genji's discovery of Oborozukiyo in the "Festival of the Cherry Blossoms" chapter, it is an open door that invites disaster for the lady. However, in contrast to that previous incident, Niou has the

[188] Another hypothesis is that Chūjō does indeed know what she is exposing Ukifune to, but that she secretly hopes her daughter might replace Nakanokimi, to make up for the way she herself could not replace the Eight Prince's deceased wife. Nevertheless, her prompt intervention after Niou's intrusion on Ukifune, and her decision to hide her daughter away might also constitute sufficient evidence to disprove this hypothesis.

advantage of the territory, since after all, the Nijō-in is his property. Also, unlike Utsusemi or Oborozukiyo who have faced Genji's violent intrusions and answered them either by defending themselves until the end or by acquiescing to his desires, Ukifune is simply too shocked by this intrusion to be able to put forth any other defense except a stubborn silence. In fact, when defining Niou's intrusion as an act of sexual violence, one can rely on the two factors dealing with the difference in rank between the protagonists and with the violation of standard courtship ritual, but as far as the woman's reactions are concerned, Murasaki Shikibu, just like her heroine, chooses to maintain silence. There is only one phrase that captures Ukifune's feelings and seems to echo Utsusemi's first reaction upon facing Genji's violent intrusion: "Soaked in perspiration, Ukifune sat with bowed head. It was as if she had awakened from a nightmare."[189]

After the incident, however, again similarly to Utsusemi, she seems to be tortured by worries concerning her reputation and that of her sister: "Ukifune was in an agony of embarrassment. What would they all be thinking? Almost too docile and yielding, she allowed herself to be led off."[190]

In addition to Ukifune's psychological condition, there is a lengthy description of the uncompromising resistance that Ukifune's elderly nurse puts forth and of Ukon's reactions to this incident (Ukon is Nakanokimi's lady-in-waiting who first arrives on the "scene"). Ukifune's nurse is quick to perceive the intrusion as an act of violence and, although she cannot physically threaten Niou by her simple presence, she keeps things from going the way he wants. When the nurse finally encounters Ukon, she reports: "The

[189] Seidensticker, 1993, 956.
[190] Ibid., 958.

most dreadful thing has been going on in here. I've worn myself out keeping watch. I haven't been able to budge from this spot."[191]

Ukon, in turn, is experienced enough to understand the nature of the situation. She is obviously outraged by this incident, but also commends the nurse for her resistance:

> "Ukon groped her way through the darkness, and came upon a fragrantly reclining figure in a man's singlet. So he was at it again! *She knew immediately that he did not have Ukifune's permission.*"
>
> "That nurse of hers is quite a woman. Nothing could make her budge an inch. I almost thought *she was going to separate them by sheer force.* "[192] (my emphasis)

By detailing the reactions of the ladies-in-waiting, the narrator illustrates the way such intrusions were most likely perceived by the woman's entourage and the importance of the *nyōbo* in defending their mistress against male aggression. The reader is also made aware, in no uncertain terms, of Ukifune's helplessness in dealing with similar incidents. What becomes obvious at this point is the heroine's inability to stand her ground, inability caused by all the previous displacements she has been subjected to and which have deprived her of firm ground, both in terms of location and familial backing. To put it differently, Niou's intrusion only adds sexual vulnerability to Ukifune's pre-existing status uncertainty and spatial insecurity.

Subsequently, Ukifune's mother, upon finding out about this unwelcome complication, tries to protect her daughter both from Niou's future aggressions and from Nakanokimi's potential jealousy by removing her to the Eastern cottage, which, again contrary to her wishes, exposes Ukifune to still greater danger and becomes the stage for the first case of displacement as sexual violence.

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[191]Seidensticker, 1993, 955.
[192] Ibid., 955.

III. Ukifune's Displacement by Kaoru

When finally hearing of Ukifune's whereabouts from the nun Bennokimi, Kaoru can no longer keep his distance and decides instead to act out a strategy different from the one he has previously attempted with the dead Ōigimi. He enlists the help of Bennokimi, whom he persuades to visit Ukifune, by hypocritically resorting to his sober reputation and religious inclinations. Although not completely sure of Kaoru's designs, the nun complies with his demands and on the appointed day sets out from Uji to visit Ukifune's Eastern cottage.

Unlike Genji's strategies of displacement, Kaoru seems to have devised a completely different strategy. Whereas Genji usually acted on his own, or, when the movement involved longer distances, through his male retainers, Kaoru enlists the help of the only woman who, although loyal to him, can also gain easy access to Ukifune's entourage without raising suspicions. Apart from that, Bennokimi's credibility is ensured by her status as a nun. In fact, it is Bennokimi's opportune intervention that prevents Ukifune's women from raising a commotion and from informing Ukifune's mother of Kaoru's unanticipated visit. Just as in the case of Niou's intrusion, the male aggressor's main enemy is Ukifune's fierce nurse, but here Bennokimi swiftly dispels her suspicions:

> "He's here, and there's nothing you can do about it", said her nurse impatiently. "You can at least ask him to sit down. We can have someone slip out and tell your mother. She's so near."
> "Don't be silly – there is no need to tell her", said the nun. "A couple of young people need to speak to each other, and you assume they're going to fall in love on the spot? He is a quiet, thoughtful man, not at all the sort to force himself on a lady."[193]

[193] Seidensticker, 1993, 965-966.

Thus, in this one-on-one battle between the protagonist's female supporters, Kaoru's party gains the upper hand, which facilitates his access to Ukifune. The two spend the night together, but the text gives no clear evidence of intercourse taking place. Whatever the case, the brief description of Ukifune's reactions indicates that she raised no significant objections, but rather tried to please Kaoru. Interestingly, it is at this point, when the affair between the two seems to be going smoothly, that Kaoru calls forth his carriage and abducts Ukifune, before her women have time to react in any way.

As in previous cases of violent displacement, the question that automatically arises concerns the motivations of the male protagonist for resorting to displacement in any of its forms, from simple spatial dislocation to abduction. From Kaoru's perspective, his forcible appropriation of Ukifune translates, on the one hand, his desires to secure possession of her body, and, on the other, his attempt to avoid external threats to his claim. Independently of whether Kaoru managed to consummate his affair with the woman during the night previous to the abduction or not, it is at this moment in his best interest to completely take possession of her. If he did not have intercourse with her, moving Ukifune to Uji would undoubtedly ensure future success. Even if he did have intercourse, being able to control and guard her location implied the ability to control her body.

As far as exterior threats are concerned, these are of two types: from Ukifune's female protectors (mother, nurse, and ladies-in-waiting) and from Kaoru's own potential rivals (Niou in particular). Ukifune's mother might constitute a great impediment to his plans, since she has not yet officially accepted his courtship of her daughter. It has already been observed how Chūjō reacted to Niou's aggression, namely by immediately

removing Ukifune from his mansion, and Kaoru fears that he might share the same fate, were this strong-willed woman allowed to take charge of her daughter's future. He, of course, does not seem to know of the Nijō incident, but he has been informed by Bennokimi that the Eastern cottage is but a temporary residence for the girl and that her mother would most certainly choose to move her as soon as she found a better location. In addition, the nurse has also proven herself to be quite a formidable guardian when it comes to defending her mistress and Kaoru might have detected her opposition to his visit. In other words, the farther from these two meddlesome intruders, the better it is for Kaoru.

On the other hand, the protagonist has much to fear from rivals, even without taking Niou into account. Ukifune is a vulnerable, attractive young woman, living in the company of her ladies-in-waiting, without male protection. Therefore, it is only a matter of time until a young gallant discovers this beauty and spirits her out of Kaoru's reach and it would be all the more critical if Niou were the one to set his eyes on her. Still bitter about losing Nakanokimi to his rival, Kaoru must certainly have found suspicious Ukifune's sudden departure from the Nijō-in. Knowing Niou the way he does, he might as well be aware that his friend already has plans for the lady and waits for a suitable moment to take possession of her. Abduction thus appears as a very "sensible" solution for any "proper" *Genji* hero who feels the urgent need to ensure his total possession of a woman in a vulnerable position, without having to go through all the intermediary steps required and, most of all, without facing the possibility of refusal, either from the woman or from her protectors.

Irony aside, Kaoru's abduction of Ukifune qualifies as an act of sexual violence because it abides by the rules outlined in previous chapters of this study: rank difference, violation of courtship rituals, relevant reactions from the woman or her entourage. In addition, as in the case of Yūgao's abduction, the narrative voice punctuates the episode with elements that indicate clear disapproval of the man's actions through omens that admonish.

As discussed earlier, Ukifune's illegitimacy and her forced relegation to the *zuryō* class mark her status uncertainty. Another indication of her low position is her failed marriage arrangement with the guards captain, who, upon finding out that she is not the natural daughter of the governor of Hitachi, abandons his plans, goes back on his promises and ends up marrying the governor's favorite child, Himegimi. As shameless as the captain's behavior might have been for Ukifune and her mother, he is nevertheless quick to notice that Ukifune does not benefit from parental support and, young and ambitious as he is, he chooses the wife that will help him advance his career. In fact, the typical Heian marriage was more of a political alliance between the bridegroom and his father-in-law than a romantic union between two people in love, so Murasaki's Heian readers were probably not as half as surprised as Ukifune and her mother by this sudden change of events.

Therefore, the difference in rank between Ukifune and Kaoru should be all the more evident in light of this event. If she is, moreover, compared to Kaoru's newly acquired wife, the Second Princess, who is no less than the daughter of a former emperor, Ukifune appears to be in the low category of women meant to become the servants or the

playthings of high-ranking young aristocrats such as Kaoru and Niou. The irony is that she is still the unrecognized daughter of a prince.

As far as the second factor is concerned, namely the violation of courtship ritual, Ukifune's abduction occurs in rather complicated circumstances. For one thing, Kaoru has properly followed the initial steps of courtship: he has been involved in an act of *kaimami* and has tried to persuade Ukifune's mother of his steadfastness and good intentions in several exchanges of letters. Nevertheless, instead of waiting for a positive answer from the girl's mother or from the girl herself, he decides to skip the entire procedure in favor of abruptly abducting her. Thus, with no proper permission from Ukifune's protectors and with no complicity from her ladies-in-waiting, he resorts to calling upon the unsuspecting Bennokimi who, unwittingly, becomes a "Trojan horse" in Ukifune's stronghold and creates the necessary breach for Kaoru's intrusion and displacement.

Finally, the most persuasive evidence is usually obtained by observing the reactions of the woman involved in the act of displacement and of her entourage. However, in this case, just as in the case of Niou's intrusion, Ukifune is silent:

> "Ukifune sat with bowed head, too stunned to look about her (…) He forced her to look up. Her face shyly hidden by a fan, she was remarkably like Ōigimi. But there was something too docile and passive about her. It made him uneasy."[194]

Moreover, her bowed head, here as before, in the Nijō-in incident, can be read both as an act of submission and as an act of powerlessness. The two should not be equated, since submission would imply that Ukifune is willingly accompanying Kaoru to Uji, whereas powerlessness, more appropriate in this context, would refer to her three-fold handicap (status uncertainty, spatial insecurity and sexual vulnerability), to her lack

[194] Seidensticker, 1993, 968.

of experience in dealing with male aggression, and to her over-exposure to displacements of different types. Her seeming indifference to his abduction of her does not fall within the expected range of responses and makes Kaoru "uneasy."

Ukifune's ladies-in-waiting, taken completely by surprise by this course of events, also remain rather inaudible. We are briefly informed that "the women were in a panic," that even Bennokimi was "as startled as the rest," and finally that, when left behind, Ukifune's nurse was "in a daze."[195] These reactions are drowned out by Jijū's silly excitement in the face of such an adventure, yet one must carefully balance this young servant's lack of experience in judging such incidents against Bennokimi's and the nurse's trained reactions.

By comparison, the narrative voice seems to compensate for the missing female voices, in an attempt to pass judgment on the hero's actions. Again, as in the Yūgao episode, the author chooses to do so by appealing to ill-boding omens that charge this abduction with very negative connotations. Murasaki Shikibu adds one dark element to another so as to transform this abduction into a quasi-funerary scene.

First, the moment of this displacement is the Ninth Month, an inauspicious time for marriage in Heian Japan. Second, Bennokimi, in a nun's garb, "her face… contorted with grief,"[196] cries when remembering her beloved mistress, Ōigimi. Kaoru's own robes, of superimposing reds and blues, become, in the mist of Uji, ashen-colored, as if he were in mourning himself. Finally, Ōigimi's shadow looming over Kaoru and Ukifune, as well as the destination of this displacement, Uji,[197] a place associated, both traditionally and in

[195] Seidensticker, 1993, 967.
[196] Ibid., 968.
[197] The standard poetic association between the place name Uji and the adjective *ushi* translated as "miserable", "painful", "difficult" has charged the toponym with negative connotations.

the *Genji,* with gloom and melancholy, but also the location that witnessed the death of the Eighth Prince and Ōigimi, leave no doubt concerning the association of abduction and funeral.

Ukifune was meant from the very beginning, both by Nakanokimi and Kaoru, to become an inanimate substitute of her dead half-sister, a *hitogata*. During her abduction to Uji, however, her physical and psychological presence is completely erased and the disquieting atmosphere transforms her into something else: Ōigimi's beautiful corpse. Except for Jijū, who has not been in the deceased lady's service and thus has no memories of her, Kaoru and Bennokimi, the main actors of the carriage episode look at Ukifune but all they see is Ōigimi. The author superbly captures the disjunction between the object of their gaze and the object of their thoughts as well as their consonant reactions: "The nun heard him, and would have liked to wring her own sleeves dry. (…) The nun's sobs were coaxing sniffles from Kaoru."[198]

It is only after arriving at Uji that Ukifune finally eludes the shadow of her sister and becomes her own self. The purpose of the abduction regains its initial motivation of sexual control, and the displacement, after being temporarily diverted in the course of the travel to funeral procession, regains its position as an act of sexual violence.

Apart from the distance from Heian-kyō to Uji, which makes Ukifune's abduction the lengthiest displacement of *The Tale of Genji,* the fusion of Eros and Thanatos, or rather the replacement of sexuality by death in the carriage sequence, makes this particular case of displacement quite unique in the context of the tale.

[198] The one the nun hears is Kaoru, reciting a poem in which he expresses his yearning for Ukifune and his inability to replace her. Seidensticker, 1993, 968.

IV. Ukifune's Displacement by Niou

Kaoru's aggressive behavior towards Ukifune subsides after he secures her position at Uji, in what has become his own territory, away from her over-protective mother and nurse, under the close scrutiny of his ally, Bennokimi. Nevertheless, despite the distance that he has put behind him and *miyako*, and also, implicitly between Ukifune and Niou, the four *ri*[199] that separate the capital from Uji make a difficult, but not impossible journey. Kaoru is reassured by the relative remoteness and isolation of the place and lowers his guard, but in doing so, he is at least partly guilty of the future displacements befalling Ukifune.

In many cases of displacement involving Ukifune, sexual or non-sexual in nature, two parties are instrumental: one who is active in the displacement and another, who participates indirectly. For instance, in the case of Ukifune's first displacement, from the capital to Michinoku and then Hitachi, the person making the decision of moving her away was her mother, but the one who actually initiated the move by his irresponsible behavior was the Eight Prince, Ukifune's father. In fact, in this case, the prince is the decisive "actor" in Ukifune's displacement; he is the "passive agent" determining her fate.

Similarly, Kaoru plays an important part in Ukifune's displacement by Niou; it is his false sense of security, his non-committal attitude towards Ukifune, and his neglect of her that create the breach necessary for Niou's intervention. The evidence to support this assumption is offered in the episode of Niou's second intrusion on Ukifune at Uji (after the Nijō-in incident).

The secret of Kaoru's frequent visits to Uji does not go unnoticed by Niou, who, through his privy secretary, a fellow with connections to Kaoru's household, gradually

[199] Approximately 10-12 kilometers.

learns some details concerning his friend's trips to Uji and comes to suspect that Kaoru's pious pilgrimages in fact mask an amorous affair. It does not take long for Niou to suspect that Kaoru's amorous interest at Uji is the same woman who caught his eye at the Nijō-in and off he goes scouting for the truth.

Arriving at Uji, Niou finds an opportune opening in the blinds which allows him to engage in *kaimami* on Ukifune and her women, the former languidly laying her head on her arm and staring pensively into the lamplight, the latter actively engaged in sewing, in preparation for a pilgrimage to Ishiyama-dera that Ukifune is supposed to undertake in the company of her mother. This scene reveals, on the one hand, Ukifune's passivity and docility, much as the first Nijō-in intrusion did, and on the other, her serving women's power of decision over their mistress's destiny, as Doris G. Bargen has accurately observed:

> "The "Ukifune" sewing scene (…) is not the picture-book image of female patience and industry as it seems to be. Unknown to Ukifune, her women are attempting to shape their own destiny by plotting their mistress's future."[200]

It comes as no surprise that Ukifune's exposure to Niou's aggression is a direct result of one of her servant's slips. Ukon mistakes Niou for Kaoru and, unwittingly, opens his way to Ukifune. This blunder on Ukon's part might be seen as the author's hidden comment on the problem of guilt in respect to the two male heroes' behavior toward Ukifune. Thus, at this point, Niou strategically becomes Kaoru: he borrows his friend's voice, manners, even his idiosyncratic perfume. By "becoming" Kaoru, Niou illustrates the girardian idea of contagious violence, but also initiates a transfer of blame between himself and Kaoru. In other words, by impersonating Kaoru, Niou shifts some of

[200] Bargen, 1997, 217.

the blame for his aggressive acts onto his friend, while at the same time being charged himself with Kaoru's acts of violence toward Ukifune.

In the light of René Girard's theories of violence, it is "mimetic desire" that constitutes the core of male rivalry[201] and generates the "monstrous double," that is, a non-differentiation between the two rivals that "gives rise to violence and chaos."[202] In this way, Ukifune becomes the object of Kaoru's and Niou's desires, not because she is desirable herself, independently of the relationship between them. She is desired by one simply because she is desired by the other. The acts generated by their desires are acts of violence that lead to the one becoming indistinguishable from the other. Illustrating the idea of monstrous double, Niou can identify with his friend and rival to the point where he "becomes" Kaoru, thereby reenacting the same type of aggressive acts in his pursuit of Ukifune.

Having "become" Kaoru, and having gained access to Ukifune through her lady-in-waiting, Ukon, Niou resorts to violence in order to make her submit to him. His intrusion is in itself an act of violence, different from the earlier Nijō-in incident only in that Niou, by using deceit instead of physical force, manages to better disguise his actions this time. Once in the presence of Ukifune, however, he unscrupulously changes strategy when his pretense is exposed, from deceit, back to aggression:

> "Ukifune was stunned. She knew that it was not Kaoru; but *whoever it was had put his hand over her mouth*. (If he was capable of such excesses at home, with everyone watching, what would he not be capable of here?) Had she known immediately that it was not Kaoru, she might have resisted, even a little; but now *she was paralyzed*. She had hurt him on an earlier occasion, he said, and she had been on his mind ever since; and so she quickly guessed who he was. Hideously

[201] René Girard, "From Mimetic Desire to the Monstrous Double," *Violence and the Sacred* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1979), 143-168.
[202] Girard, 1979, 51.

> embarrassed, horrified at the thought of what was being done to her sister, she could only weep."[203] (my emphasis)

This episode is the closest the text of the tale ever gets to illustrating a case of forced intercourse, but the term "rape" may not be the best alternative to describe it, even for lack of a better word.[204] The four criteria (rank and status difference, courtship violation, opposition by the woman and the entourage) that define displacement as an act of sexual violence in this particular incident may be sufficient to indicate the presence of sexual violence, but not enough to build a comprehensive definition for this type of aggressive behavior. Certainly, Ukifune's status has not changed dramatically since the preceding incidents of violence. Kaoru intends eventually to recognize her position as a secondary wife, but nothing has been done so far to ensure the stability of her position, leaving the gap between Ukifune and Niou just as wide as in the Nijō-in incident. As for the observance of courtship procedures, two intrusions and one *kaimami* can hardly qualify as proper courtship.

Ukon's reaction, as a representative of Ukifune's entourage, is also unsatisfactory and unreliable, because, being the one responsible for this incident she tries to deflect the blame from herself onto fate:

> "Ukon was aghast. Why had she not been more careful? But she was soon in control of herself once more. What was done was done, and there was no point in antagonizing him. Call it fate, that he should have gone on thinking about Ukifune after that strange, fleeting encounter. No one was to blame."[205]

Had she not been involved in this incident and been guilty of not properly protecting her mistress, she might have recognized the violent nature of Niou's acts. As it

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[203] Seidensticker, 1993, 980.
[204] "Rape" is a volatile term, highly dependent on the context for its definition. Using it to describe a fictional event in a tale written in eleventh-century Japan, might risk overcharging it with meanings that do not apply to the context.
[205] Seidensticker, 1993, 981.

is, though, she quickly discards any responsibility, turns a blind eye to Niou's display of aggression, and denies the presence of violence altogether. According to Ukon, nothing out of the ordinary has taken place, but when one revisits all those previous cases where ladies-in-waiting verbally sanctioned or physically opposed acts of male aggression against their mistresses, one simply cannot help but be suspicious of Ukon's reaction.

Ukifune's position in this episode is difficult to ascertain. Her only reaction to the two previous cases of sexual violence, Niou's intrusion upon her at the Nijō-in and Kaoru's abduction of her from the Eastern cottage, resulted in no increase of resistance by her. She remains silent and passive. Why assume that her reaction would be different this time? The text gives two hints to suggest Ukifune's attempts to resist Niou. First, unlike in the previous incidents, she has to be physically silenced so that she can not cry out. From this, it can be inferred that something in Ukifune's attitude differs from her previous behavior in the Nijō-in incident and that Niou fears that difference. Ukifune may have considered raising a commotion designed to attract the attention of her ladies-in-waiting and, presumably, of the guards that Kaoru has planted around the Uji villa. At the Nijō-in, Niou was on his own turf, but at Uji, he has illicitly entered Kaoru's territory and exposure would spell both defeat and embarrassment for him. Thus he resorts to stifling Ukifune's voice, because he understands that she can only cry out for help before anything happens. Her credibility in front of her women and in front of Kaoru stands as long as she remains untouched by another man and it is critical for Niou to ensure her possession and submission: he imposes silence upon her, forces himself upon her, and by this, guarantees her silence. Whereas Ukifune's silence prior to intercourse suggests a

form of resistance, her silence after intercourse represents compliance from lack of options.

Second, the text indicates Ukifune's decision to resist Niou "even a little,"[206] which may not seem much when compared to the resistance strategies employed by other female characters in similar situations, but which is in fact relevant considering Ukifune's usual passivity. At the Nijō-in, Ukifune could afford the luxury of silence and passivity, because she had her nurse to protect her. During the carriage ride from the Eastern cottage to Uji, she was in no immediate physical danger because the presence of Bennokimi and Jijū restricted Kaoru movements, even assuming that Kaoru would have chosen to become physically aggressive towards Ukifune in the carriage. This second incident with Niou, however, is greatly different in that Ukifune is for the first time in imminent physical danger. Therefore, she envisions resistance, but she is at the same time realistic enough to understand that her lack of experience in dealing with male aggression can deter Niou only for a short while.

From the moment Ukifune breaks down in tears, for lack of a more efficient strategy of resistance, she fades into the background once more, as in the abduction episode. What she thinks and how she acts during this time, one can only speculate about. The focus changes to Niou and Ukon and their attempt to cancel Ukifune's pilgrimage to Ishiyama-dera. The next day, a completely different Ukifune emerges, one who is open to and impressed by Niou's vows of love. This sudden shift leaves the reader with a poignant feeling of incongruity and anxiety.

Not long after, another act of violence occurs, just when one is led to assume that things are definitively settled between Ukifune and Niou. By now, however, *The Tale of*

[206] Seidensticker, 1993,980.

Genji has proven repeatedly that acts of sexual violence do not necessarily end once the man has ensured his possession of the woman's body.

As if to reinforce this conclusion, about two months after his first visit,[207] in the middle of the Second Month, Niou ventures through heavy snow and reaches Uji late at night. He displaces Ukifune again, this time across the Uji River. Prior to his arrival to Uji, Niou has made arrangements through Tokikata, his trusted retainer, to have a house on the other bank of the river ready for him. In other words, this displacement is not made on the spur of the moment, nor is it motivated by Niou's desire to avoid prying eyes, as the text leads one to believe. If he managed to get through his first visit at Uji, with Ukon as his sole accomplice in detracting Ukifune's mother from visiting her daughter by inventing a fictive pollution, why would he fear exposure this time, when Jijū has also joined the conspiracy?

The answer to this question can only be that Niou's reasons for displacing Ukifune have little to do with his desire to avoid exposure or to insure intimacy. As proven during his first visit to Uji, Niou was ingenuous enough to keep Ukifune's women at bay. Rather than desiring intimacy, Niou desires territorial control motivated by the rivalry between him and Kaoru whose fragrant shadow looms large. When he senses his friend's perfume still lingering in Nakanokimi's garments, he throws a fit of jealousy, accusing his wife of infidelity. One must assume that the same perfume is all the more imbedded in Ukifune's robes since the two actually share intimate moments and that Kaoru's scent triggers similar reactions from Niou, just as in the case with Nakanokimi.

[207] Niou's first visit to Uji takes place, according to the text, after the end of the year.

Therefore, what Niou hopes to achieve by taking Ukifune across the Uji River is to exit Kaoru's territory. Prior to his visit he realized that he does not in fact have complete physical control over her, but he only shares access to the same body as Kaoru:

> "'Does she wait for me?' he [i.e. Kaoru] said to himself, able to somehow infuse even such tiny, disjointed fragments of poetry with sudden life.
> Of all the poems he could have picked, thought Niou. His heart racing, he pretended to be asleep. Clearly his friend's feelings for Ukifune passed the ordinary. He had hoped that the lady at the bridge had spread her cloak for him alone, and it was sad and annoying that Kaoru should have similar hopes. Drawn to such a man, could the girl possibly shift her attentions to a trifler like himself?"[208]

As revealed by the text, what Niou seems to fear most is a comparison by Ukifune between him and his rival, a comparison that is all the more plausible within the boundaries of Kaoru's territory. Thus, not only does he not have complete physical control over the woman, but by meeting her and sleeping with her in the same location his rival shares for similar pastimes, he cannot escape the comparison and can only exist in Ukifune's eyes as Kaoru's "other." Ironically, the non-differentiation that has served Niou's purposes during his first visit to Uji so well now comes back with a vengeance.

Besides ensuring his territorial control and his total, if only temporary, possession of Ukifune's body, Niou also has one other reason to attempt the displacement after the two lovers have crossed the river and taken refuge in the house of the governor of Inaba, Tokikata's uncle, where they spend the following two days. On one of these days, Niou dresses Ukifune in Jijū's apron, imagining how well she would perform as one of his sister's servants, while at the same time he vows to her that he will take her away and tries to force her into promising not to meet Kaoru anymore:

> "Taking up Jijū's apron, he had Ukifune try it on as she ladled water for him. Yes, his sister the First Princess would be very pleased to take such a girl into her

[208] Seidensticker, 1993, 990.

> service. Her ladies-in-waiting were numerous and wellborn, but he could think of none among them capable of putting her to shame.
> But let us not look in too closely upon this dalliance.
> He told her again and again how he wanted to hide her away, and he tried to extract unreasonable promises from her. 'You are not to see him, understand, until everything is arranged."[209]

Several aspects can be inferred from Niou's actions and speech in order to elucidate his reasons for displacing Ukifune: (1) he is planning another displacement in the near future; (2) this displacement, contrary to Niou's words, will not ensure Ukifune's stability, but will further relegate her to positions of inferiority; and (3) prior to this displacement, Niou would like to win Ukifune over definitively by taking advantage of this new territory of which his rival is not in control. The last aspect comes as confirmation of Niou's desire to ensure territorial control as one of the reasons for displacing Ukifune. The other two, however, hint at the possibility that this displacement across the Uji River is merely a premeditated rehearsal for a final displacement to come, one that would ensure Niou's complete victory over Kaoru. In that event, Niou would have complete control over Ukifune, while at the same time maintaining a non-committal relationship with her. He would displace her within a territory that Kaoru has no access to: the First Princess's entourage.

In other words, Niou's reasons for resorting to violent physical displacement revolve more around Kaoru's presence than around the woman herself. One recalls Genji's abduction of Yūgao, in which Tō no Chūjō's proximity posed a similar threat.

Of the four factors I have identified as determining the violent nature of this displacement, the factor referring to the woman's reactions is more important here than in previous episodes featuring Ukifune. When faced with suddenly being displaced by Niou,

[209] Seidensticker, 1993, 994.

Ukifune hardly shows any reaction, as before, but her psychological state is superbly captured in the text:

> "Without a word, he took Ukifune up in his arms and carried her off. Jijū followed after and Ukon was left to watch the house. Soon they were aboard one of the boats that had seemed so fragile out on the river. As they rowed into the stream, she clung to Niou, *frightened as an exile to some hopelessly distant shore*. He was delighted. The moon in the early-morning sky shone cloudlessly upon the waters"[210] (my emphasis).

Curiously enough, to Ukifune, this river crossing seems lengthier than her abduction to Uji and the author's use of water imagery and symbolism further underline the character's anguish and despair. Ukifune's reply poem to Niou's vows of everlasting love introduces her image as a "boat upon the waters," a metaphor for her instability and insecurity. Moreover, according to art historian Melinda Takeuchi, the boats carrying brushwood on the Uji River have sometimes been associated, in paintings, with anguished love,[211] a fitting association in Ukifune's case.

At the same time, the crossing of the river introduces Buddhist overtones to Ukifune's displacement. The correlation between the Uji River and Pure Land Buddhist thought creates a religious landscape in which the river stands as the border between life and death, between *shigan,* this shore of the phenomenal world, and *higan,* the other shore of the world after death.[212] The profane, sexual connotation of the displacement is once again, as in the carriage abduction to Uji, translated into the sacred, with Ukifune's crossing to the other shore becoming prophetic of her demise, a fate that has for its cause male sexual violence. Whenever she becomes the victim of a violent displacement,

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[210] Seidensticker, 1993, 991.
[211] Melinda Takeuchi, "The Golden Link: Place, Poetry, and Paradise in Medieval Japanese Design," *Worlds Seen and Imagined: Japanese Screens from the Idemitsu Museum of Arts* (New York: Asian Society Gallery, 1995), 49.
[212] Ibid., 49.

Ukifune cannot seem to elude the shadow of death. Both of her displacements, by Kaoru and Niou, have only led her closer to it. Ironically, all the while the cloudless moon, the Buddhist icon of enlightenment, witnesses from afar the tribulations of a heroine who may yet have to find salvation.

V. Ukifune's Displacement by the Bishop of Yokawa and the Ono Nun

For Ukifune to find salvation, she will first have to escape her Uji prison and the stifling, triangular relationships with Kaoru and Niou and then be "reborn" outside secular space, in a sacred realm. Escape she does, and for an entire chapter, "The Drake Fly" ("Kagerō"), she is presumed dead. When she reappears in chapter 53, "At Writing Practice" ("Tenarai"), she seems to have succeeded in her plans. At the beginning of this chapter, Ukifune is discovered unconscious near the late Retired Emperor Suzaku's villa, on the other shore of the river from the Eighth Prince's estate. Her apparent savior, the Bishop of Yokawa, or Yokawa Sōzu, has taken refuge in that villa in order to tend to his sick mother, on their return pilgrimage from Hatsuse. He is accompanied by his sister, a nun from Ono, who becomes another "savior" figure for Ukifune. The two bring her back from the threshold of death and, once she has recovered well enough, they move her to the nunnery at Ono, at the foot of Mount Hiei.

So far, the two devotees seem to have unwittingly granted Ukifune freedom from the violent world of sexual relationships, but her life at Ono is no less traumatic than her life at Uji. Her abrupt transfer from Uji to Ono raises suspicions regarding her benefactors. In fact, the last known chapter of the tale, "The Floating Bridge of Dreams" ("Yume no ukihashi"), reveals Ukifune's position to be as unstable as ever. The

presumed sacred world of Ono and the secular world of Uji are exposed as the different sides of the same coin. Therefore, in light of later events, Ukifune's displacement from Uji can no longer be perceived as an act of salvation, but as an act of violence, an abduction, imposed on her by other characters, namely the bishop and his sister.

Unlike other cases of violent displacement involving Ukifune, her movement from Uji to Ono cannot fall into one of the two neatly distinct categories: sexual and non-sexual abduction. In fact, this particular case of displacement is defined by two coordinates, one that is sexual, the other that is non-sexual in nature. In other words, Ukifune's displacement to Ono has two agents whose efforts concur, but whose intentions are different: the Ono nun resorts to displacing Ukifune so that she can appropriate her as a replacement for her dead daughter; the Yokawa Sōzu stages the displacement not necessarily for his sister's sake, but out of his own desire to maintain his control over Ukifune, control which includes his erotic attraction to her.

In the case of the Ono nun, it becomes obvious very early in the "At Writing Practice" chapter that she perceives Ukifune's presence as a miraculous gift from Kannon, who has finally reunited her with her lost daughter:

> "I had a dream at Hatsuse." The nun was in tears. "What is she like? Do let me see her?"
> "Yes, by all means. You will find her over beyond the east door." The nun hurried off. (…)
> "My child, my child. I wept for you, and you have come back to me." She had some women carry the girl to the inner room."[213]

Ukifune's newly found freedom ends very soon, with her becoming, against her desires, the embodiment of yet another dead woman. For Nakanokimi and Kaoru, she was Ōigimi's *hitogata;* for the Ono nun, she is her dead daughter brought back to life by

[213] Seidensticker, 1993, 1047.

Kannon. Moreover, the nun's first encounter with Ukifune, who is still unconscious, generates a small-scale displacement: the girl is moved by the nun's servants into the inner room that their mistress occupies. As insignificant as this incident may first appear, it indicates nevertheless two important aspects: first, that the nun already considers Ukifune to be her property, and, second, that she is not in the least concerned with what Ukifune herself might desire, since she proceeds to move her while in a state of complete powerlessness. In a more neutral light, the nun's actions may also translate her genuine care for Ukifune.

Another questionable aspect of the two benefactors' behavior refers to their apparent inability to determine Ukifune's identity, coupled with their desire to keep her discovery a secret from the people at Uji. Before Ukifune has recovered from her state of unconsciousness, the nun warns her servants: "But you are not to tell anyone. If you do you can expect an even worse bother."[214]

Her remark seems completely unfounded, unless one considers it to be the expression of the nun's desire to maintain her possession of Ukifune. This desire for secrecy, were it genuinely out of concern for some unexpected trouble befalling the household as a result of the girl's discovery, seems counterintuitive. The only trouble that Ukifune might cause the people around her is by dying and polluting them while on their return from a pilgrimage. From this perspective, it might even be better for the bishop and his entourage to rid themselves of her in order to avoid a potential defilement. Despite this, the nun's orders seem to go against common sense, which would advise against exposure to defilement, unless it is not common sense the nun cares most about but the possibility of someone claiming the girl from her.

[214] Seidensticker, 1993, 1047.

Once the bishop has ascertained that Ukifune is not an evil spirit but a human being, though not a commoner, the normal procedure would be to inquire about her family and to return her to the care of her relatives. What the clerical brother-sister pair choose to do, however, is to keep the secrecy of Ukifune's discovery and move her to Ono before she has fully recovered her strength:

> "But the lady is still really weak," someone objected. "Do you think she can really travel?"
> They had two carriages. The old nun and two others were in the first and the girl was in the second, with an attendant."[215]

Curiously, the two alleged benefactors do not seem concerned any longer with Ukifune's well being but with removing her immediately from the Uji surroundings, despite the fact that a carriage ride might endanger her life, hanging as it does on a thread. Displacing her to Ono, they ensure her position within their own territory, but not even then do they lower their guard, continuing to maintain the secrecy of the girl's existence:

> "Because it had not been proper company for a cleric to find himself in, he kept the story to himself. The younger nun, his sister, also enjoyed silence, and was very uneasy lest someone come inquiring after the girl."[216]

The constant need for secrecy and the haste of the displacement define this incident in terms of illegality and violence as an abduction, erasing completely all pretense of salvation, religious or not. Furthermore, the Ono nun gradually turns herself into a mother figure for Ukifune, with all the negative connotations this transformation has for Ukifune. Similarly to Chūjō, Ukifune's real mother, the nun may constitute a protective, but also a threatening figure. In sheltering Ukifune in the Ono nunnery, the nun ensures her temporary physical safety, but at the same time, she also develops high ambitions for her, ambitions that risk throwing her back into the violent secular world she

[215] Seidensticker, 1993, 1048.
[216] Ibid., 1048.

has barely escaped from. One such design is the nun's plan to offer Ukifune to her son-in-law, the guards captain, as a substitute for her dead daughter. But her efforts hit a brick wall, for Ukifune cannot be persuaded to cooperate and the nun is forced to answer the captain's poems herself. Moreover, at this point, it seems that the nun is the one involved in courtship in Ukifune's place, but one has to wonder whether in fact she is not the one actually attracted to the captain, but tries to project her feelings onto Ukifune who should serve not only as a substitute for her daughter, but for herself as well.

Eventually, the limitations of the nun's benevolence become clear even to Ukifune:

> "They seemed intent upon pushing her into his arms. (…) They were far from as withdrawn and unworldly as she would have wished, and the youthful zest with which they turned out bad poetry did nothing to restore her composure. What further humiliations must she expect?"[217]

Once the safety of the religious haven becomes illusory and one of the pious figures inhabiting it, the Ono nun, turns out to be a reflection of Ukifune's mother, who has repeatedly displaced her daughter in pursuit of vain personal ambitions and involuntarily exposed her to male aggression, the halo around the bishop's head also becomes tarnished. He was part of his sister's conspiracy, acting as an agent of Ukifune's displacements. But in his case, what worldly motivations could have made this holy man stray from his righteous path?

Unlike his sister, the Ono nun, the bishop does not have parental, but rather carnal ambitions for Ukifune. This character, unfortunately identified for a long time with the historical figure of Genshin, has been finally exposed by Doris G. Bargen, who

[217] Seidensticker, 1993, 1059.

underlined Sōzu's sexual interests in Ukifune as a primary factor in determining Ukifune's spirit possession:

> "Not only did the Sōzu have rather a good look at her when he pronounced her human; he also arranged for other chances to look in on his sister's new charge. When the whole party returns to the Ono nunnery, the Sōzu stays with the women for some time. His overt reason is that he must supervise his mother's recovery. But there is also a covert reason for his lingering at the Ono nunnery: his interest in Ukifune(…)."[218]

In the bishop's displacement of Ukifune, sexual desire is an important factor that may indicate the presence of violence, but it alone does not constitute an unshakeable argument. Whereas in cases of displacement pertaining to the lay world, such factors as rank, status, and courtship regulation could be used in determining the violent nature of a displacing act, in the religious realm such criteria do not seem to hold any meaning. When taking holy orders, one presumably renounces all attachments, either to power or to sexuality. In practice, however, renunciation often takes a different form. The Bishop of Yokawa does not have an aristocratic rank at the imperial court, but he has one nevertheless in the religious community. In addition, his connections with the center of power seem to be well established: he is summoned at court to perform prayers for the possessed First Princess and is even allowed in the presence of the Akashi empress. Moreover, having successfully performed the exorcizing rituals on the Princess and having saved her life, the Sōzu gains quite a reputation at court. When comparing the Sōzu's status to Ukifune's own situation after being discovered at the Suzaku villa, the difference between the two becomes evident. Independently of whether the Sōzu knows Ukifune's identity or not, by not acknowledging it, he relegates Ukifune to the lowest position imaginable: she becomes nameless. The loss of her identity also implies the loss

[218] Bargen, 1997, 231.

of familial connections and support, as well as the loss of protective patrons. Had the Sōzu recognized Ukifune's identity, he would have been forced to also accept that she is in Kaoru's possession. By avoiding to identify her as Kaoru's lost princess of Uji, the bishop claims ignorance and avoids any responsibility were Kaoru to find out about his involvement in Ukifune's abduction. At the same time, he disempowers Ukifune and creates the status chasm necessary for him to have control over her.

In regard to the second factor that defines displacement as sexual violence, namely the violation of courtship ritual, it becomes rather difficult to associate the bishop's behavior towards Ukifune with normal courtship procedures, mainly because his sexual designs occur in a religious landscape that obeys different rules from lay society. Even so, the Sōzu has already had his "*kaimami*" – in fact, the Sozū's examination of Ukifune upon her discovery at the Suzaku villa allows him even a better look of her than a normal *kaimami* would have – when discovering the unconscious Ukifune and ever since, she has been constantly exposed to his gaze. Under the guise of the holy man, the bishop needs no further poetry exchanges to manifest his interest in Ukifune; all he needs are some well-placed sermons. Finally, as if to mimic the consummation of a love affair after the appropriate steps have been followed, the bishop administers the vows to Ukifune and by this, hopes to gain undeniable possession of her.

Lastly, the episode of displacement yields no significant reactions from Ukifune or from her companions, who, in this case, were accomplices of the abductors. As far as Ukifune is concerned, her reaction comes much later, in the episode of spirit possession, which occurs as a confirmation of the previous cases of sexual violence, displacement included:

> "Her possession occurs when the saviors of her body attempt to become the captors of her psyche. In a curiously paradoxical way, Ukifune might be seen as now forming an alliance with her father's spirit in opposition to the forbidden fantasies of the Sōzu."[219]

What ultimately defines Ukifune's displacement from Uji to Ono as abduction, that is as a case of violence, sexual and non-sexual at the same time, is the failure of the religious realm to ensure safety and salvation. Although the waters of Uji have been equated with delusion and the mountains of Yokawa with religion,[220] the non-differentiation of the two locations becomes obvious in Ukifune's destiny at Ono, which is in fact a reenactment of her destiny at Uji. If the Ono nun is similar to Ukifune's mother in her ambitions to forge Ukifune's future, and if the other nuns are just as involved in plotting Ukifune's amorous relationships as Ukifune's ladies-in-waiting at Uji are, then would it not be possible to find a Kaoru or a Niou underneath the Sōzu's priestly garb?

A metaphorical cloudless moon keeps watching over Ukifune's fate from high in the skies,[221] but whether this last displacement exposes her to other displacements to come or whether it finally provides Ukifune with an unbreakable strategy of resistance, the tale does not discloses it until its very end. The only possibility to demonstrate Ukifune's final ability to resist male aggression can be found in a close examination of the strategies she has employed so far and in the analysis of the options she is left with at the end of the tale.

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[219] Bargen, 1997, 235.
[220] Earl Miner, "The Heroine: Identity, Recurrence, Destiny," *Ukifune :Love in* The Tale of Genji (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 75.
[221] In other words, having entered religion, Ukifune seems to come closer to salvation, represented by the cloudless moon, but her attempts seem futile by the end of the tale. Religious salvation may seem close at hand, but it is unattainable nevertheless.

VI. Ukifune's Resistance Strategies

Despite the fact that she has been the victim of numerous cases of violent displacement, sexual or not, Ukifune employs surprisingly few strategies of resistance. Even when taking into account the cases of sexual violence that do not qualify as displacements, namely Niou's first intrusion at the Nijō-in and his second intrusion at Uji, which ends in forced intercourse, the palette of Ukifune's resistance strategies remains peculiarly limited. When compared to Utsusemi, the character who opened the narrative of sexual violence in *The Tale of Genji* and who proved a remarkable ability to adapt to situations of male aggression, Ukifune's lack of resourcefulness or apathy may indicate her unwillingness to resist. Nevertheless, the few strategies that she tries to implement when exposed to sexual violence, in the form of displacement or otherwise, come to disprove the conclusion that she passively accepts everything that befalls her. The reason why Ukifune does not employ more varied strategies may come not from her unwillingness, but from her inability to do so, in other words, from her lack of experience. Two aspects concur to make Ukifune powerless in the face of male aggression: her provincial upbringing and her successive displacements.

Being raised in the provinces constitutes for Ukifune not only a handicap in terms of status, but also in terms of experience. The complex world of amorous relationships at court or in the capital at large is hardly replicable in the provinces. The world a country lady lives in is less endangered by the presence of young gallants populating the world of her counterparts in the capital and, therefore, she has fewer opportunities to face male aggression and to learn how to deter it. In addition, the two women, of the capital and of the provinces, may not be different as far as theoretical knowledge is concerned, of

poetry, of arts, and of men, but a lady of the capital will always have the upper hand in putting her knowledge into practice. For instance, in the "Wild Carnations" chapter there is a letter exchange between Tō no Chūjō's two daughters, the lady of Omi, raised in the provinces, and Kumoinokari, a true lady of *miyako*. What makes the Omi lady's letter strikingly countrified is not her lack of knowledge about poetry, but her inability to use her knowledge in the appropriate context. The same may be said to hold true in amorous relationships, and Ukifune's inability to counteract male aggression indicates her lack of practical knowledge in the matter.

Ukifune has another handicap that comes as a result of her displacements. By continuously displacing her daughter, Chūjō has involuntary taught her that displacement is a common occurrence in a woman's life and that the appropriate reaction is acceptance. This educational faux pas on Chūjō's part accounts for Ukifune's lack of significant resistance in all the incidents of sexual displacement: by Kaoru, by Niou, and by the Yokawa Sōzu.

All in all, the impression Ukifune gives to male characters is that of extreme malleability, which successfully disguises all her attempts to resist male violence, assuming she was in fact trying to resist it. According to Andrew Pekarik:

> "Ukifune is repeatedly called immature. Although she is not particularly young (…), she is often described as a person with "youthful feelings" and "childlike." Women of that sort are themselves held to be at fault if they are victimized."[222]

Of the few resistance strategies that Ukifune attempts to employ, silence and passivity seem to be often preferred to others. She maintains her silence when Niou intrudes on her at the Nijō-in and during Kaoru's abduction to Uji, but whereas the first

[222] Andrew Pekarik, "Rivals in Love," *Ukifune: Love in The Tale of Genji* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 226.

incident leaves her untouched, the second one spells out the failure of her strategy, not because there are significant differences in Ukifune's passivity in the two episodes. What ensured Ukifune's safety at the Nijō-in was not her silence but the presence of her over-protective nurse. The absence of her nurse in the abduction episode makes it obvious that Ukifune's passivity is far from being an effective strategy, because, as Margaret H. Childs noticed : "Passivity that arose from confident indifference might be effective, although passivity which stemmed from weakness or fear was no deterrent at all."[223]

Another strategy that Ukifune employs, not as a direct reaction to violent displacement but as a result of her frequent exposure to it, is self-displacement as an escape strategy. At the end of the "Boat upon the Waters" chapter, Ukifune disappears with the declared intention of throwing herself into the Uji River. Royall Tyler's recent translation and Doris G. Bargen's scholarship in connection to spirit possession point out that the text of the tale seems to have been previously misinterpreted as to fulfill the readers' expectations regarding the results of Ukifune's decision to commit suicide when in fact there is no textual evidence to indicate that she has jumped into the river. Ukifune's later fantasy of the spirit of a young man carrying her across to the Suzaku villa points in the direction of her attempt of suicide becoming self-displacement:

> "As she sat hunched against the veranda, her mind in a turmoil, a very handsome man came up and announced that she was to go with him, and (she seemed to remember) took her in his arms. And what had happened then? He carried her to a very strange place and disappeared."[224]

The conversion of Ukifune's death wish into self-displacement does not question the authenticity of Ukifune's feelings, but it does brings into focus the reasons why

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[223] Margaret H. Childs, "The Value of Vulnerability: Sexual Coercion and the Nature of Love in Japanese Court Literature," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 58, no4 (1999): 1073.
[224] Seidensticker, 1993, 1050.

Ukifune abandons the thought of death for the more complicated, less likely to succeed strategy of self-displacement. Death may be an extreme strategy of escape from the clutches of male violence, but it is an infallible one; yet Ukifune eventually rejects this possibility. Is the motivation behind Ukifune's decision of flight over death simple cowardice or is it a spirit of rebellion awakening within her upon realizing the true, egocentric nature of the people around her? Assuming that Ukifune considers death not only as a means of escape from the situation she is in but also as defiance in face of her lovers, of her mother, of her entourage, and ultimately, of society, once she reaches the understanding that death equals compliance and not rebellion, it is only natural that she decides to discard self-inflicted death as a viable solution.

Thus, whereas initially suicide by drowning might have seemed the best slap in the face of people who constantly abused her one way or another, Ukifune may have realized that death has already been inscribed as a part of her destiny, and that by choosing death she would actually comply with people's expectations. Kaoru and Nakanokimi introduce her as a *hitogata* to be discarded down the Mitarashi river; Ukon tells Ukifune the story of her sister, reduced to shame because she was caught between two lovers, thus introducing the legend of the maid of Unai, who drowned so that she could put an end to similar male rivalry; Ukifune's mother does not quite spell out a death sentence for her daughter, but she threatens to abandon her if she attracts shame. The perspective of losing her mother's support immediately forces Ukifune to consider death as an alternative and the sudden change of perspective in the narrative, from Ukifune's inner turmoil to the roaring of the Uji River, establishes a connection between her mother's words and Ukifune's potential death by drowning:

> " '…if something were to happen, something to set the tongues to wagging, well, I should be very sorry, of course, but that would be that. She wouldn't be my daughter anymore.'"
> The girl felt as if she were being cut to shreds. She wanted to die. It could only be a matter of time before word reached her mother.
> And outside the river roared."[225]

It seems that death is forced upon Ukifune, independently of her will, the way displacements, sexual and non-sexual, have been forced upon her. Her death wish, therefore, indicates her submission to the will of others, but something within Ukifune stops her before death can become her last defeat rather than her last resort. In contrast to Ukifune's death wish as passive acceptance of social expectations and demands, her self-displacement manifests itself as Ukifune's first act of rebellion. Her revolt is at the same time a success, because it allows her to escape the Uji environment and all its pressure, but it is also a failure, because it does not ensure her permanent safety; on the contrary, it creates the prelude for other displacements.

Moreover, Ukifune's strategy of self-displacement as an act of rebellion is not consciously implemented but realized through her fantasy of abduction by a spirit. Her self-displacement is clearly triggered by Ukifune's experiences of being sexually displaced. Although she is still unwilling to face the brutal reality of her situation, as a way to avoid responsibility for her acts, Ukifune creates a scenario to explain her self-constructed displacement to herself and others that has several aspects in common with her previous displacements.

Thus, the displacement occurs at a point when Ukifune is highly vulnerable, both physically and psychologically. In the incident at the Eastern cottage, she barely escaped Niou's acts of aggression and still suffers as a result of the traumatic intrusion. In

[225] Seidensticker, 1993, 998-999.

addition, the unfinished, partially exposed cottage spells out Ukifune's spatial insecurity and allows Kaoru's abduction to take place in conjunction with Ukifune's twofold vulnerability.

Similarly, the incident in the "Boat upon the Waters" marks another instance of Ukifune's instability, resulting from Niou's second intrusion and forced intercourse with her. At the moment of this displacement, she feels increasing pressure from her feelings of guilt toward Kaoru and Nakanokimi, whom she was forced to betray.

Finally, her self-displacement, disguised as abduction, results from the difficult logistics of her triangular affair: Kaoru has found out about her relationship with Niou and is preparing her move to the capital; Niou makes plans to spirit her away before Kaoru can take action; her ladies-in-waiting, Ukon and Jijū pressure her to make a decision, each according to her own preferences; and finally, her mother cruelly threatens to deprive her of all support were she to shame her family. Considering Ukifune's limited possibilities to comply with all those demands and her inability to choose between Kaoru and Niou, her situation at the moment of the spirit abduction/ self-displacement is the most unstable and vulnerable she has ever faced.

The second aspect that indicates that Ukifune, in her abduction fantasy, is following a scenario of sexual displacement she is perfectly familiar with, is the presence of the imagined agent of displacement: an unidentified, handsome young man. As numerous critics have pointed out, this faceless, nameless figure can easily take the identity of either Kaoru or Niou, since both have previously displaced Ukifune in a similar manner. The very description of this "surreal" displacement is identical to the actual cases of sexual displacement, to the point where Ukifune maintains the superfluous

detail of the man taking the woman into his arms. This gesture is superfluous because in effect Ukifune moves on her own from the Uji residence to the Suzaku villa and thus need not go to such lengths to maintain the pretense of a forceful abduction. The fact that she nevertheless clings to this particular detail suggests that the many traumatic incidents of sexual displacement inflicted upon her have created a powerful subconscious pattern of displacement that Ukifune uses to camouflage her flight.

Finally, Ukifune's self-displacement offers her a possibility to escape immediate danger, but it creates the circumstances for future displacements, thus again exposing her to violence. As a result of her self-displacement, Ukifune is discovered by the Yokawa Sōzu and becomes subject to another violent displacement, from Uji to Ono.

Therefore, the failure of the particular strategy that Ukifune employs resides in its origin as a male strategy of sexual control. In other words, Ukifune has tried to appropriate a male pattern to a female problem, but displacement, especially the male sexual displacement that inspired her spirit abduction fantasy, can never be successfully converted into a feminine strategy of escape. Ukifune does not succeed in adopting a male pattern of control for herself by converting displacement into self-displacement because she is still unable to transform passivity into agency. Even admitting that Ukifune's flight is an extreme deviation from her normal pattern of behavior, dominated by passivity and silence, as long as she is unable to accept this self-displacement as a manifestation of her agency, she cannot break away from her position as a victim. She is lacking the awareness that would allow her to control her actions.

Ukifune's discovery by the Yokawa Sōzu marks the failure of her self-displacing strategy and the debut of an attempt to regain control over her life and deflect the Sōzu's

sexual interests. This new strategy consists of Ukifune's turning to religion. By taking Buddhist vows she hopes to escape the Ono milieu of violence, a replica of Uji in a religious setting. Ukifune's entry into the sacred space of religion was swiftly staged from the moment she envisioned death by drowning in the Uji River, since her intention to immerse herself into the water recalls the figure of the Dragon Girl, from the "Devadatta" chapter of the *Lotus Sutra.* Murasaki Shikibu specifically associates the two female characters through the words of the bishop of Yokawa. After administering religious vows to Ukifune, he tells her story to the Akashi empress and concludes, in clear reference to her, that "ours is a world in which even an ogre maiden finds salvation."[226]

Ironically, the association with the Dragon Girl subverts Ukifune's use of religion as an escape strategy and instead encourages a reading of her plight as a quest for religious salvation. Based on this association, later literature[227] tried to fill in the ambiguity of the tale's open ending with scenarios reinforcing Ukifune's dedication to the spiritual path and her eventual enlightenment.

There are certain resemblances between Ukifune and the Dragon Girl which support reading the tale of Ukifune as her progress towards enlightenment. Apart from their female gender, which exposes them to discriminations by men,[228] both Ukifune and the Dragon Girl come from marginal realms that confirm their ineligibility for Buddhahood. In fact, the Dragon Girl's story "was always read as a paradigm for all

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[226] Seidensticker, 1993, pp. 1072. Seidensticker's translates "ogre maiden" for "dragon girl," but the reference is clear.
[227] The Nō plays *Ukifune* and *Kodama Ukifune,* analyzed in Bargen, *A Woman's Weapon* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997).
[228] Kaoru frequently delivers discriminatory discourses in regard to women's dedication to religion, in a manner that reminds one of Sariputra's words in the *Lotus Sutra*.

women and indeed, for all those who are seen as inferiors, all those handicapped in one way or another in their quest for ultimate salvation."[229] Ukifune's marginality derives from her association with the countrified governor of Hitachi, her cultural distance from the capital and thus from rank and status. Her handicap is her semi-orphanhood as the unrecognized daughter of the Eighth Prince; she also stands for a shameful and well kept secret.

Moreover, both female protagonists are burdened by the five obstructions; in the case of the Dragon Girl, the literal incapacity of accessing the five superior types of rebirth; in Ukifune's case, her complicated pattern of sexual relations. The *Genji* heroine is passively attached to others; she is tied by the people around her: while her mother and her ladies-in-waiting devise plans of an advantageous marriage, her lovers dispose of her at will. She does not control her own soul, if indeed it can be said that she possesses one at all, at least in the early Uji chapters.

It may be argued that Ukifune does not undergo the transformation into a man before reaching enlightenment. However, the ritual of taking the tonsure implies renouncing the world through the act of cutting a woman's hair, which is widely seen as a renunciation of sexuality and therefore gender. By becoming a nun, it may be suggested that Ukifune becomes, if not a man, then at least more undifferentiated in terms of gender.

There is also an interesting parallel of imagery and geographical movement. The Dragon Girl presumably emerges out of the water and subsequently attains Buddhahood. Water plays a key role in the Uji chapters as well. The Uji River, rich as it is in poetic and religious allusions, is the omnipresent background of the last ten chapters of the tale. It is

[229] Kamens, 1993, pp. 405.

no surprise that Ukifune herself states her desire to plunge into it and is then "reborn" to follow a new spiritual path.

In addition, there are other religious motifs that enhance the plausibility of Ukifune's enlightenment: according to the Ono nun, she is saved because of Kannon's miracles. Kannon interferes again in the episode of the heroine's spirit possession, when the possessing spirit finally gives in to the bishop's ritual of exorcism and because of Kannon's power of protecting those in need. Ultimately, after taking the vows, Ukifune engages in the study of the sutras, the *Lotus Sutra* in particular, and, according to the text she is studying, her salvation is assured by this very act of devotion. After all, "the Lotus Sutra teaches that 'The Lotus Sutra is a most wonderful sutra'"[230] and by placing their faith in it even women and evildoers can reach perfect enlightenment.

Were this particular reading of Ukifune's dedication to religion infallible, then not only would *The Tale of Genji* benefit from a noble and uplifting "happy end" but the discourse of sexual violence in the tale would find its resolution in Buddhism. Such is, however, not the case and, as is obvious from the author's treatment of the Yokawa Sōzu's character, Murasaki Shikibu's view of Buddhism was less than reverential, if not even subversive. Repeatedly throughout the tale, she advances religion solely as an escape strategy for women subjected to some type of male aggression, violent displacement included: Utsusemi takes the tonsure to escape the pursuit of her stepson, the Governor of Kii, after the death of her husband; the Third Princess renounces the

[230] Yoshida Kazuhiko and Margaret H. Childs, "The Enlightenment of the Dragon King's Daughter in the *Lotus Sutra,*" in *Engendering Faith: Women and Buddhism in Premodern Japan*, ed. Barbara Ruch (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2002): 301.

world as a result of her affair with Kashiwagi;[231] for Murasaki, religion is the last, though never granted, escape from a world under Genji's complete control.[232] But whereas in the earlier cases, religion as an escape strategy had a higher rate of success, in the Uji chapters, where the strategy is reenacted in the case of Ukifune, her situation is far too complex for a resolution to be reached

Ukifune's association with the Dragon Girl contributes significant details to underlining the difference between the two characters. Ukifune does not jump into the Uji River, which means that her reemergence from its waters is impossible; her benefactors are tormentors in disguise; her safe religious haven is too accurate a copy of the profane, violent world she has escaped. In addition to all these aspects that disqualify Ukifune from becoming a Dragon Girl, there is also the problem of her decision to renounce the world, a decision that may not be as irrevocable as it is made out to be. She is successful in tricking the Yokawa Sōzu into administering holy vows to her, but the same bishop who performed the sacred rites is willing to betray her as soon as Kaoru starts to put pressure on him:

> "The bishop was in a difficult position. He understood Kaoru's wishes, and the girl could be said to have taken a step that was irrevocable. But the most ascetic of clean-shaven monks had strange urges occasionally, and nuns were still more susceptible. He would put the girl to a cruel and unnecessary test, as much as inviting transgression."[233]

Ironically, as much as the bishop tries to shift the blame onto Ukifune and her condition as a woman prone to fall into temptation, it is not her resolution that falters, but

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[231] In the case of the Third Princess, her decision to take the tonsure is intimately connected with the discovery of her affair with Kashiwagi. Although outside the range of this study, the Third Princess's case is one in which one may detect more than a few traces of sexual violence.
[232] Before the Uji chapters, most of the women pursued by Genji end up by taking religious vows, though not always as a direct result of his courtship. In addition to the three cases already mentioned, Suetsumuhana and Asagao also enter the religious path.
[233] Seidensticker, 1993, 1083.

his shallow patina of religious devotion that wears off to reveal his true nature. In fact, during her stay at Ono, before and after taking religious vows, Ukifune strictly abides by the religious rules and refuses all contact with the lay world. Her companions, however, the Ono nuns and the Yokawa bishop, constantly try to force her back into the world and behave in the least pious way possible: the bishop's sister, posing as Ukifune, engages in poetry exchanges with her former son-in-law, the guards captain; her mother proudly entertains the same captain with her old fashioned koto performance; Shōshō, another of the Ono nuns, facilitates the captain's *kaimami* and uses Ukifune, already a nun at that moment, to further fan the flame of his desires. Thus, as much as Ukifune clings to religion as an escape strategy, its salvific potential is threatened by the interference of the same people meant to uphold it. Earl Miner states that "With such a teacher as her model[234] in the mountains of Yokawa, her feet are not likely to stray as Kaoru's do. Some day, sooner or later, her holy fisherboat, which has already left these shores, will arrive in the west."[235] However, once religion fails as an effective escape strategy, Ukifune's holy boat may shipwreck long before reaching the Western Paradise, assuming it will ever be allowed to set sail. Despite the frequent references to the *Lotus Sutra* in the last chapters of the tale, for Ukifune, the Dragon Girl turns out to be only a Fata Morgana. Contrary to the traditional reading, Murasaki Shikibu ends her monogatari with a bang, not a whisper.

In short, the tale of Ukifune's plight does not end in pessimistic overtones, because this last *Genji* heroine, un-resourceful as she first appears, finds one possibility that is not only an escape strategy but also a means of empowerment: writing.

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[234] That is with the Bishop as Genshin figure.
[235] Earl Miner, "The Heroine: Identity, Recurrence, Desitny," *Ukifune: Love in* The Tale of Genji (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982): 79.

Edith Sarra, in her extensive research into the meaning of gender in Heian women's literature has discovered that through writing:

> "(…) members of a fragmented community of writers *inscribe spaces for themselves*, textual grounds from which to enter into and sometimes to question the dominant culture in spite of the rhetorical, ideological, and political system in which their own writing participates.(…) Within and between these texts (there) are traces of a dialogue that asks questions about feminine disclosure and concealment and the significance of reading and writing as means of empowerment, oppression, knowledge of self and other, and the expression of desire."[236] (my emphasis)

Similarly to her real, historically attested counterparts, what Ukifune does through the act of writing is to create her own, impenetrable psychological space, one from which she cannot be forcefully removed, one that is completely under her control. Chronologically, the first time Ukifune's writing activity is mentioned is in "At Writing Practice," immediately after she has taken religious vows. Interestingly, the moment of its introduction reinforces the role of writing as an ultimate escape strategy, after self-displacement has failed and after the religious strategy has already been employed. Whether Ukifune becomes aware of the fallibility of religion immediately after taking the vows or she realizes it only much later, in the "Bridge of Dreams," when it becomes obvious to the readers of the *Genji,* is debatable. At first she seems happy being able at last to cut her ties with the world, to immediately realize that the people around her will not accept her decision so easily. As a result, she keeps her curtains closed, avoids all communication with the outside and dedicates herself to writing:

> "She had never been an articulate girl, and she had no confidante with whom to discuss the rights and wrongs of what had happened. She seated herself at her inkstone and turned to the one pursuit in which she could lose herself when her thoughts were more that she could bear, her writing practice."[237]

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[236] Edith Sarra, *Fictions of Femininity: Literary Inventions of Gender in Japanese Court Women's Memoirs* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999):8.
[237] Seidensticker, 1993, 1069.

Writing, therefore, represents to Ukifune not only a self-exploratory act, through which she advances her self-knowledge, as evidenced by the text, but also a means to negotiate her position within the world and in relation to the people around her. She did not have a voice to scream, or to protest, as a victim of violent displacement; now she has a voice through her writing, and despite the fact that her voice is still inaudible to others (she keeps her poems to her self), it gains power by being recorded in writing. She did not have a firm ground on which to stand and defend herself; now writing creates the space that she needs.

By the time Ukifune reemerges from behind her curtains, writing has become her communication mode with the world, the metaphorical river in which she submerged herself and from which she has been reborn as a new being. Thus, for the first time after coming to Ono and catching the attention of the guards captain, Ukifune is no longer afraid to answer her suitor's poem. At this point, however, her motivation may also be her newly acquired confidence and the feeling of protection conferred by a nun's garb.

Unlike other escape strategies, writing is a long-term plan that may or may not ensure a woman's successful escape from male aggression. While it certainly can empower a woman and create a psychological ground from which she can fight her battles, this virtual ground cannot protect her from concrete attacks. When Kaoru learns Ukifune's location and sends her younger brother to persuade her to return to the lay world, Ukifune's newly found strategy crumbles under the pressure put on her by her former lover. Her last reaction before the end of the tale is strangely similar to her reactions to male aggression, shortly after her debut, panic and silence: "The girl was

trembling violently and wished to hear no more. She lay with her face buried in her sleeves."[238]

However, her initial reaction which translates her shock is not enough to suggest that writing, her last escape strategy, fails. Unfortunately, the end of the tale leaves may questions unanswered and many potential scenarios unexplored. In decoding the last scenes of the *Genji,* one important factor is the figure of the author herself. One has to ask what reasons Murasaki Shikibu would have to bestow upon her heroine the gift of writing only to dismiss it at the very end. A woman writer herself, the author of *The Tale of Genji* has often made her voice audible in the tale, one such episode being the *monogatari ron,* the "defense of fiction" in the "Fireflies" ("Hotaru") chapter. In a discussion with Tamakazura, Genji first heavily criticizes the *monogatari* genre as deceiving fabrications, extremely harmful to women, but then he is forced into admitting that even such tales are Buddhist *hōben,* means of revealing deeper truths. If this "defense of fiction" can be considered Murasaki Shikibu's *ars poetica*, then an ending of the tale in which she abandons writing as an unviable strategy of empowerment for women would go against her very effort of writing the tale.

Thus, Murasaki Shikibu's own literary agenda and beliefs constitute important circumstantial evidence to support a theory according to which writing retains its efficacy as a strategy of escape and empowerment for Ukifune. The text of the tale indicates that she temporarily retreats from Kaoru's attempts, but it does not spell out defeat. In fact, had Ukifune given in to the Ono nun's insistent demands that she reply to the boy's letter from Kaoru, had she fallen prey to feelings of regret over abandoning her family, then submission and defeat would have seemed plausible denouements. As it is, though,

[238] Seidensticker, 1993, 1090.

Ukifune's withdrawal may represent her attempt to organize a passive resistance and to return to writing in order to find the inner strength she needs to uphold this silent yet eloquent resistance. Of course, Ukifune's success in confronting male aggression is only a matter of speculation, but for us, the readers of the tale, there is nothing else but to hold our breaths and place our beliefs in the power of writing, in which Murasaki Shikibu surely believed herself.

VII. Imaging Ukifune's Displacements

Considering the large number of displacements featuring Ukifune, three of which are manifestations of sexual violence, namely her displacements by Kaoru, Niou, and the Bishop of Yokawa respectively, one would expect to find an overwhelming number of illustrations detailing the heroine's involvement in spatial movements and, within them, conclusive evidence to support her victimization as a result of violent displacement. However, five out of the seven displacements are rarely if ever illustrated.[239] The remaining two, Ukifune's abduction by Kaoru from the Eastern Cottage and her subsequent trip to Uji in the "Eastern Cottage" (Azumaya) chapter and her displacement by Niou across the Uji River in the "Boat upon the Waters" (Ukifune) chapter, have attracted a very different degree of attention from the twelfth to the twenty-first century. Whereas the illustrations for the former chapter tend to focus on the events preceding and following the abduction, with no consideration whatsoever to the carriage ride between *miyako* and Uji, the images for the latter chapter are predominantly preoccupied with the boat trip across the Uji River.

[239] Only exhaustive knowledge of all *Genji* illustrations ever produced can justify an absolute affirmation regarding the absence of the five cases of displacements from *Genji* art.

VII. 1. The Carriage Ride

Fortunately, Ukifune's abduction by Kaoru in the "Eastern Cottage" is the source of inspiration for the oldest illustration of a scene of sexual violence in the *Genji*: the twelfth century "Azumaya II" of the *Genji emaki* (Figure 31). In the absence of the complete work of art, one can hardly speculate if "Azumaya II" was indeed the only illustration focusing on a case of displacement in the tale. Its survival would indicate the contrary and one can only bitterly resent the loss of the illustrations accompanying other chapters, such as "The Broom Tree," "Evening Faces," "Lavender" or "A Boat upon the Waters."

As the first extant illustration of a scene immediately preceding Ukifune's abduction by Kaoru, and dating from a time when an artistic canon was not yet established, the "Azumaya II" image is extremely revealing of the way readers/ viewers imagined the abduction episode as early as the twelfth century, before successive layers upon layers of traditional interpretation of the tale had irreversibly altered its perception. Thus, "Azumaya II" constitutes "ground zero" in the approach to *Genji* art from the perspective of its representations of violent displacement.

The image captures Kaoru's visit to Ukifune's temporary abode, the Eastern cottage, which sets in motion the events that culminate in his abduction of Ukifune. A closer look at the picture reveals a clear spatial delimitation between the right side, the exterior, where Kaoru is, and the left side, the interior of the house, where Ukifune and her women are located. The importance of this segmentation hardly passes unnoticed as a symbolic rendition of the relationship between the two protagonists:

> "This clear contrast between the two narrative spaces suggests a psychological contrast between Kaoru and Ukifune. While he patiently waits in the garden to be

> invited inside, Ukifune and he ladies are in a state of panic. This psychological gap between Ukifune inside and Kaoru outside is intricately related to their romantic relationship."[240]

Kaoru is shown with his back turned to the viewers, in an attitude that suggests a masterful dissimulation of his true intentions. By not showing his face, the anonymous artist(s) hints at the impossibility of divining Kaoru's expression and, by extension, his mind. His non-threatening seated position, his elegant pose, fan in hand on the edge of the veranda or *sunoko*, lure the viewers into a trap: if, forgetting for an instant the dramatic events following this moment of recess, namely Ukifune's abduction by Kaoru, the viewers declare Kaoru innocuous, they fall for the same display of "proper" behavior which persuaded the nun Bennokimi to become his accomplice in Ukifune's abduction. Yet, as the *Genji emaki* unrolls revealing the women inside the house, one finds, based on the attitudes revealed by their postures, more and more reasons to suspect Kaoru.

Ukifune is shown amidst her ladies-in-waiting, lying face down in what seems to be an attitude of absolute despair and sheer panic. As Julia Meech-Pekarik observes:

> "She is the defenseless victim, intimidated by an unexpected visit from another suitor, Kaoru. Terrified, she crouches face down on the floor at the center of a circle of attendants."[241]

When comparing the attitudes of the two protagonists, one calm and composed, the other extremely troubled, one finds it difficult to rejoin the disjointed parts of the picture in the absence of an unstated threat that connects Ukifune's distress to Kaoru's presence. If the *emaki* illustration were but an exclusive rendition of the visit, Ukifune's extreme manifestations of panic would be incongruous. But "Azumaya II" exceeds the

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[240] Masako Watanabe, "Narrative Framing in Handscrolls and *The Tale of Genji* Scrolls" (Ph.D. diss., University of Columbia, 1995), 128.
[241] Julia Meech-Pekarik, "The Artist's View of Ukifune," in *Ukifune: Love in The Tale of Genji,* ed. Andrew Pekarik (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 177.

simple illustration of the narrative: it hints at and previews the abduction, creating a narrative context much larger than Kaoru's visit. In this context, the depiction of Ukifune constitutes compelling evidence indicating the artist's and the viewers' strong perception of Kaoru's acts as being aggressive. The result is a disconcerting image which leads Meech-Pekarik to conclude that "Ukifune may often look vulnerable, but never as pitiable as in the second 'Azumaya' scene,"[242] which later artists eventually ruled out as unappealing.

With the emergence of the Ōsaka manual, the second "Azumaya" scene of the *Genji emaki* was condemned to oblivion for its depiction of disturbing details and its overall lack of "courtly" aesthetics. Although Kaoru's visit to the Eastern Cottage still figures among the scenes prescribed by the Ōsaka manual, possibly out of deference for this earlier work, most artists have focused exclusively on the next scene sanctioned by the artistic canon: Kaoru and Ukifune's arrival at Uji. Scene 6 of the manual (Kaoru's visit to the Eastern Cottage), could not be more different from the *emaki* rendition.

One Edo period painting by Tosa Mitsunori of Scene 6 in the Ōsaka manual, currently in the Mary Griggs Burke Collection, succeeds in completely diverting the events following the visit, from Kaoru's abduction of Ukifune to the lovers' elopement to Uji. Kaoru and Ukifune, the only relevant actors of the scene – the rest of the cast is made of Ukifune's noisy neighbors, not of her ladies-in-waiting – are peacefully strolling towards the carriage drawn close to the house. Nothing in the woman's attitude suggests the existence of violent displacement: in fact, she is shown literally clinging to Kaoru's sleeves, and he graciously turns his face towards her.

[242] Meech-Pekarik, 1982, 178.

The distorting trend continued for centuries to affect the scene first depicted by the "Azumaya II" of the *Genji emaki*. Only recently did artists turn again to this first artistic illustration of *The Tale of Genji* in an attempt to recover its lost meanings. An interesting restoration project is Noda Kazuko's series of carvings inspired by the *Genji emaki,* using the Isekatagami technique (carvings into Isekatagami paper, commonly used for making patterns for kimono fabrics).[243] Her reproduction of the "Azumaya II" scene (Figure 32) seems hardly more than a detailed copy of the original *emaki* painting, with a new recreation of colors and patterns which are no longer discernable in the original, yet at the same time, it enables a new perspective on the original which had suffered the effacing effects of time. In the "Azumaya II" of the *Genji emaki* one can distinguish the protagonists of the scene and the other relevant props and details with the feeling of looking through a veil of fog that distorts the perception. In Noda's version, the view is unobstructed and the viewer free to pry into the most intimate details of the scene, to shed light on the darkest corners of the house interior and of the characters' souls.

For instance, the original *emaki* scene does not allow a clear understanding of the importance of the open doors featured in the painting. Watanabe, in her analysis of "Azumaya II," detects an opening in the *yarido* sliding door behind Kaoru which hints, in her opinion "that the romantic encounter is warmly anticipated."[244] Noda's illustration does not indicate any such openings of the sliding door, but instead makes clear the opening of the *tsumado,* the hinged door in front of Kaoru, which leads to an interior space that connects with Ukifune's location through a sliding door being opened by one of the women. The implication of this indirect access route suggested by the two adjacent

[243] Noda Kazuko's entire collection entitled *Carving of Picture Scroll of Genji* is available from http://www.isekatagami.com/en.genjil.html; Internet; accessed March 1, 2008.
[244] Watanabe, 1995, 131.

open doors is that Kaoru is contemplating indirect action as a means to gain access to Ukifune. Unlike Genji, who would have chosen the shortest, less complicated way possible, Kaoru uses a metaphorical "back door": he enrolls Bennokimi who, by winning the battle of wits with Ukifune's nurse, ensures access to her protégé. At the same time, by following the hypothesis of the two doors representing Kaoru's access to the inside, it is interesting to note that one of these doors is opened by a woman. Might she be Bennokimi? Her robe, darker and more sober than those of the women inside, might pass for a nun's garb and there is also a surreptitious quality to her intrusion through the sliding door. Since her hair is not visible from beyond the door, one can hardly guess whether is was cut in a nun's fashion or whether it was of regular length; still, Bennokimi's presence as a dangerous intruder who facilitates Kaoru's access would be consistent with her role in the tale's narrative. Identifying Bennokimi as the woman who opens the sliding door and, by extension, Kaoru's way in is not the traditional interpretation of the painting, which labels the woman at the door as one of the *nyōbo*, Ukifune's ladies-in-waiting,[245] and the woman wearing a yellow robe in Noda's picture (brown robe in the *emaki*) as Ukifune's nurse.

However, apart from Bennokimi's presence in the painting, reflecting her actual presence in the narrative, there is one other aspect that has been overlooked so far and that further reinforces the identification of the woman at the door with this nun. A closer look at the four women surrounding Ukifune reveals that only two of them are facing in her direction: the women on the right, Ukifune's nurse, and the woman at the door are in fact turned towards each other, apparently engaged in conversation. Or, according to the

[245] *Genji monogatari emaki* (Nagoya: Tokugawa Bijutsukan, 1985), 144.

text of the tale, the most relevant dispute of the visit is between the nurse and the nun as a result of which Bennokimi successfully negotiates Kaoru's access to Ukifune.

The symbolism of the open doors as Kaoru's potential route of intrusion, the presence of Bennokimi in the picture, the indication of her discussion with Ukifune's nurse, and finally Ukifune's own state of distress, all indicate that the creators of the *Genji emaki* had a more profound understanding of the text than any of their successors. Moreover, Noda Kazuko's faithful copy of the "Azumaya II" fills in the details that disappeared from the original due to its degradation over time and, by restoring its clarity, recuperates its lost meanings.

Not all contemporary artists show the same concern for details as Noda does. Ebina Masao, a *shin-hanga* artist of the first half of twentieth century, offers a more conventional interpretation of the "Azumaya II" scene. His "Pavilion," included in the series *Illustrations of Genji monogatari in 54 Wood-cut Prints* (Figure 33), is remarkable for its bold and original use of colors, but less revealing in contents.

By distorting some of the original features of the *emaki* painting, Ebina advances a completely different reading of the episode, in the same direction of Tosa Mitsunori's Edo period illustration. Kaoru is depicted with his face turned towards the viewer and thus he no longer retains any sense of secrecy in his intentions. The open doors do not reflect the same intentions as in the "Azumaya II" prototype: by blocking the *tsumado* in front of Kaoru with lowered blinds and opening the *yarido* behind him, the artist indicates that his access into the cottage is direct and natural. In fact, there is a woman behind the open sliding door and her presence suggests an invitation to the man outside. Whether she is meant to be Ukifune herself or simply one of her ladies-in-waiting, the

message is clear: the mistress of the house desires Kaoru's visit. If that woman is not Ukifune, but one of her *nyōbo*, then the heroine's absence from the illustration appears almost as an attempt to sweep under the rug the uncomfortable depiction of a distressed Ukifune. Ultimately, the image of a posing Kaoru, turned towards the viewer as if to ask for an opinion concerning his next move, and of an inviting *nyōbo* completely contradicts the narrative of the *Genji.*

Miyata Masayuki's 2001 illustrations accompanying Setouchi Jakuchō's summaries of *The Tale of Genji* are, just as in the case of the "Utsusemi" episode, a priceless source of disquieting interpretations. His "Eastern Cottage" (Figure 34A) might as well have been entitled "Abduction" because it leaves no doubt in regard to the aggressive nature of Kaoru's acts. The hero is shown lifting Ukifune into the carriage, while the woman appears to be struggling to resist him. The unnatural pose of the protagonists and the indication of Ukifune's resistance to the abduction are a departure from the original text of the tale and could be interpreted as the artist's disregard for it, were it not for the interesting parallel that immediately comes to mind when looking at Miyata's picture. In other words, Kaoru's strange way of embracing Ukifune and her body, contorted in the attempt to turn away from him, reproduce too faithfully Giambologna's statue, "The Rape of the Sabine Woman" (Figure 34B) to be disregarded as a mere coincidence.

Considered to be one of Giambologna's[246] masterpieces, the Renaissance sculpture captures an episode from the legendary history of Rome in which Romulus and

[246] Jean Boulogne/ Giovanni Da Bologna/ Giovanni Boulogne (1529-1608) was a sculptor of the late Renaissance renowned for his accurate and powerful renditions of human bodies in action.

his followers abduct Sabine women for marriage purposes.[247] Despite the different time periods in which the two works were produced and the distinctive artistic media used by the artists, not only the postures of the protagonists in the two works of art are similar, but also their topic links them together compellingly. In the absence of Miyata's own statement regarding his sources of inspiration for the "Eastern Cottage" picture, it is difficult to speculate on an intentional reference to Giambologna's work. Nevertheless, it is tempting to advance the provenance of a scene from the eleventh century Heian tale, illustrated by a contemporary Japanese artist who drew his inspiration from a Renaissance sculpture, by a Flemish artist, of an event in the legendary history of Ancient Rome. This might be the spatial and temporal border-crossing quality of art at its best.

Finally, an interesting illustration of the entire episode of Ukifune's abduction comes from a very modern and very Japanese artistic medium: manga. Yamato Waki's *Asaki yumemishi,* serialized from 1980 to 1991, offers an accurate depiction of the events in the "Eastern Cottage" (Figure 35). The artist faithfully obeys Murasaki Shikibu's narrative indications: she captures Bennokimi's surprise at Kaoru's sudden decision, Ukifune's passivity during the displacement, as well as the desperate, yet helpless attitude of her ladies-in-waiting. Even the caption dialogues seem to be a mere rendition of the original text: Kaoru is ordering Bennokimi and one of Ukifune's women (Jijū) to join him in the carriage and Ukifune's other ladies-in-waiting protest in vain, on account of not being able to inform Ukifune's mother of the incident and of the ominous Ninth Month. The close adherence to the text comes as a surprise from an unconventional artist such as Yamato, who does not have a problem supplying entire episodes missing from the text, such as Genji's affair with the Rokujō lady, whenever she is not satisfied with

[247] *Giambologna 1529-1608: Sculptor to the Medici* (London: The Council, 1978).

Murasaki Shikibu's alleged omissions. One feels almost disappointed about the lack of supplemental details which might have offered the possibility of a new, innovative reading of the Ukifune's abduction by Kaoru.

VII. 2. The Boat Excursion

The episode of Ukifune's displacement by Niou across the Uji River compensates for the loss of its *Genji emaki* prototype by the sheer number of illustrations created in the eight centuries of *Genji* artistic tradition.

The specifications of the Ōsaka manual, unlike those detailing the "Eastern Cottage" chapter, are mainly preoccupied with the displacing incident, and not with the events preceding or following it. One might wonder why an artist would choose to depict Ukifune and Niou in a boat on the Uji River, fully engaged in displacement, but not Ukifune and Kaoru inside the carriage on their way to Uji. One plausible explanation might be that the boat trip held a more exotic appeal to aristocrats, whereas the uncomfortable carriage rides were rather a nuisance. Another reason might be that traditional painters, who so excelled in applying the *fukinuki yatai* (blown-off roof) technique for lack of a better way to depict interiors, found it impossible to use it to show the interior of a carriage. Carriages viewed from the exterior, with or without oxen, were often featured in paintings, but their interior was never illustrated. Whatever the causes which determined the artists' preference of the boat displacement over the carriage abduction, the result was a large variety and number of illustrations which raised the boat excursion to the rank of an artistic landmark not only for the "Boat upon the Waters," but for the entire *Tale of Genji*.

As with many episodes in the Ōsaka manual, the staging directions are limited to temporal (the fourteenth or fifteenth of the Second Month) and spatial coordinates (boat, Uji River, Islet of Oranges) and to a brief list of the actors in the scene (Niou, Ukifune, Jijū and the boatman). Judging from the scarcity of details, one expects to find more freedom in the artists' interpretations of the scene and indeed, such instances of originality and depth do occur, but mainly outside the conservative Tosa School.

There is little to distinguish the seventeenth-century "Ukifune" scene by Tosa Mitsuoki (Figure 36) from any other "Ukifune" painting of the Tosa School from the same period. They might as well have been painted by one and the same artist. Mitsuoki's painting remains a paragon of conventionalism in interpreting the narrative of the tale. It shows Niou and Ukifune in a boat on an unnaturally meandering river, presumably the Uji River, on a winter night judging from the conspicuously exhibited piles of snow and the presence of the moon. Jijū and the boatman are not featured at all, in a bold disregard of the Ōsaka manual indications. Presumably, the two can be said to be on the missing side of the boat beyond the frame of the painting. Aside from the awkward depiction of the Uji River, the absence of the two companions of Niou and Ukifune underlines the romantic, rather than the violent nature of the boat excursion. The intimacy of the two lovers, the postures of their bodies, leaning one towards the other, Ukifune's lowered eyes in a coquettish display of shyness, seem to suggest a reading of the actual displacement as an escapade most welcome not only by the man, but by the woman as well. Were it not for the incidental presence of the moon up above, tarnished black by the effect of oxidation, which charges the painting with ominous overtones, one

would hardly find relevant details to connect it with the text of the tale, apart from the superficial accordance in terms of main cast and location.

The seventeenth century, however, offered more in terms of *Genji* art than the traditional illustrations of the Tosa School, which was going through its period of revival. Iwasa Matabei (1578-1650) produced "Ukifune" paintings more in tune with the darker mood of the original narrative. One such work is a six-panel "Ukifune" screen found in the Hasegawa Collection in the Yamagata Museum of Art, another, the "Ukifune" illustration found in the Fukui Prefecture Art Museum (Figure 37). In the former, the composition is more complex: the screen features on the three panels to the left the boat with the two lovers and the standing figure of the boatman and on the three panels to the right a threatening ensemble of contorted trees and sharp rocks protruding as if from beneath the waves of the river and threateningly spreading towards the boat carrying Ukifune and Niou. Meech-Pekarik highly praises Matabei's artistic view for its lack of sentimentality and interprets it as a "harbinger of a refreshing new breed of Ukifune imagery,"[248] yet she advances a reading of the screen illustration as a nostalgic reminiscence of the artist (the boatman is a self-portrait of Matabei) of his carefree days of youth spent on pleasure boats (Niou is Matabei's younger self). A modern regard of Matabei's painting, no longer strictly anchored in the artist's temporal and cultural milieu, might choose to associate Matabei's boatman with yet another boatman figure famous in the Western world: that of Acheron who carries the souls of the deceased across the River Styx in Greek mythology. As inappropriate as such readings might be in the context of seventeenth-century Japan, the funereal, even macabre overtones are strangely familiar to some of Murasaki Shikibu's narratives of violent displacement.

[248] Meech-Pekarik, 1982, 205.

The Iwasa Matabei painting included in this study retains many of the characteristics of the "Ukifune" screen painting from the Hasegawa Collection. The boatman is missing and the ensemble of trees and rocks moves to the left side of the composition, but the gloomy atmosphere changes little if at all from one painting to another, possibly indicating that its source is not the artist's melancholy at the memory of his own youth, but his perception of the *Genji* episode. The chromatic palette of the painting is sober, the only spot of color being Niou's reddish robe which focuses the viewer's gaze on the two lovers. The protagonists are not lost in an embrace, as in the illustrations of the Tosa School, but keep a certain distance from each other. Both their heads are slightly bowed and the woman, Ukifune, raises her sleeve, as if in an attempt to cover her face from the masculine gaze. Moreover, whereas in Tosa paintings the absence of witnesses gave a feeling of intimacy to an amorous outing, with Matabei it turns into anguished solitude and powerlessness. Here, the moon and the clouds, turned black with oxidation, do not come to contradict a landscape of careless meandering, but appropriately reinforce the dark tone of the painting.

Yet another direction in interpreting the boat excursion of the "Ukifune" chapter emerges from the eighteenth-century woodblock prints. This direction is different both from the serene, conventional perception of the Tosa artists and from the gloomy, emotionally charged illustrations of Iwasa Matabei. Kunisada II's woodblock print of "Ukifune" dating from around 1857 (Figure 38) brings a much welcome outburst of colors and a less serious, even humoristic approach to the displacement episode. Kunisada's boat is no frail structure, but a sturdy vessel swiftly cutting through the anemic waves of a less conventional Uji River. In fact, Kunisada's river retains few of

the traditional *keibutsu* (pictorial landmarks) which define the Uji River in art: there are no rushing waters, waves, or rapids around the lovers' boat, no trace of surrounding mountains, and the omnipresent fog, presumably depicted by the gray area in the upper side of the picture can barely compete with the flashy colors and patterns of the lovers' robes and with the azure blue of the water which constitutes most of the background. The rocks and trees, though present in the illustration, are no menace and remind the viewer more of Matsushima than of Uji.

As for the main protagonists, they are as far from the delicate portraits of Heian aristocrats as they could possibly be. The man, Niou, most certainly borrowed the features of some famous kabuki actor or another and is in fact depicted as if striking a *mie* pose. The woman too, resembles an elegant courtesan rather than the distressed Ukifune. She pretends to turn away from the man, while in fact she returns the masculine gaze with boldness. Finally, as if to make it clear once and for all that his "Ukifune" has nothing in common with the artistic tradition, much less with the original text, Kunisada II features two white cranes in their flight over the boat. The auspicious presence of the cranes definitively dismisses any attempt to read the illustration as deeply troubling in any way.

As with other *Genji* paintings, it is the contemporary artistic milieu which brings together all previous trends in a melting pot for both tradition and innovation. A modern "Ukifune" by Sata Yoshirō associates the very traditional *hakubyō-e* style (ink-line paintings) popular in the Muromachi period, used by the artist in depicting Niou and Ukifune, with a modern, very minimalist rendition of the Uji landscape (Figure 39). The contrast is a dramatic one causing the viewer's gaze to oscillate between the image of the

intertwined bodies of the lovers, all black and white, and the purplish colored pastel waters of the river which cover a large mirror image of the moon. Moreover, the postures of the two protagonists, Niou and Ukifune, reflect the Eros-Thanatos association at its best: one has trouble distinguishing between the image of a man making love to a woman and that of a man mourning a dead woman's body. The choice of white, with its funereal associations for the robes of both lovers only deepens the confusion and the anguish one feels at not being able to distinguish love from death.

In addition to the depiction of the lovers in an erotic embrace, which is not traditionally associated with the boat excursion, Sata's elimination of other superfluous details, such as the boatman, indicates the artist's profound understanding of the "drifting boat" metaphor which refers not only to Ukifune, but also to her relationship with Niou. Other illustrations which did not feature a boatman left open the question of his actual presence by not depicting the boat in its entirety. In that manner, one could always pretend to detect the boatman's presence outside the frame of the painting, on the missing side of the boat. Sata alone introduces the protagonists as utterly isolated on their flimsy boat at the mercy of the waves, a boat with an oar, but without an oarsman. With Niou and Ukifune, both too powerless to set a clear direction for their fate, or too absorbed by their affair to care for a direction at all, the drifting boat may lead them to an unavoidable shipwreck.

With the art of Kajita Hanko, the "Utsusemi" scene gains back its serenity, so typical of the traditional Tosa School. The 1996 picture featured in *Meiga de yomu Genji monogatari*[249] (Figure 20) depicts Niou and Ukifune alone in the boat on the Uji River.

[249] Saitō Shin'ichi, Sugiyama Hideaki and Tomita Akira, *Meiga de yomu Genji monogatari: Kajita Hanko, kindai nihonga no miryoku* (Tōkyō: Taishūkan Shoten, 1996).

Since only half the boat is in the picture, one cannot rule out completely the presence of the boatman or of Jijū, hinted at by the artist through his use of what is a revival of the old technique of "characters outside the frame." However, what is most relevant in Kajita's picture is his portrayal of the lovers situated at the fore of the boat, huddled together in a sweet embrace. Niou's right arm stretches protectively over Ukifune's shoulder, inspiring confidence and reassurance. Furthermore, both lovers direct their regards in the same direction, forward, in search of a future which appears just as bright as Kajita's use of colors.

The illustration of the river landscape surrounding the boat and of the vessel itself is neglected in favor of the protagonists. The Uji River, painted in a luminous grey, does not retain any of its threatening qualities. As for the boat, its awkward shape with the fore rising high above the waves is indicative more of an engine-propelled vessel than of an oar boat. All in all, Kajita's picture, with its inaccuracies and reinterpretations advances a positive perception of Ukifune's boat excursion that places Kajita's art in the continuation of the Tosa tradition, if not in terms of technique then in terms of content.

Miyata Masayuki breaks away once more from the artistic canon. With his 2001 "Drifting Boat" illustration (Figure 41), he takes a step farther towards artistic innovation both in choice of scene – Niou and Ukifune after their crossing of the Uji River – and in terms of interpretation. The illustration captures the transitional stage in between the boat excursion and the arrival at the residence of the Governor of Inaba. The Ōsaka manual features the two episodes in two successive scenes allotted to the "Boat upon the Waters". Miyata is not particularly interested in either of them, but has chosen to create his own artistic moment by illustrating the two lovers who have just reached the opposite shore of

the river. The lovers' boat may have appeared fragile in earlier illustrations, at the whim of the waves, and their position on the boat impermanent, but Miyata's view of Niou and Ukifune is one of greater ambiguity and vulnerability, for they are altogether deprived of even the smallest comfort of a temporary abode.

Moreover, the depiction of the protagonists comes in sharp contrast to earlier illustrations. Not only are they not intimately close to each other or lost in an erotic embrace, but they even turn their faces completely away from each other. Ukifune, in the foreground, offers an image of distress, as she desperately holds on to her robes and bows her head with an expression of defeat. Niou, his back half turned to her, is hunched under the load of an invisible burden. His sleeve, raised to his face, suggests either crying or shame. The psychological distance between the protagonists appears greater than even the *Genji emaki* could suggest through its use of architectural segmentation. There, Ukifune and Kaoru, separated by solid doors did not look as far apart as Miyata's Niou and Ukifune, who have no physical obstacles between them, but who are isolated by insurmountable psychological barriers.

In Miyata's background, one also notices the Uji River, the boat used by the lovers in their crossing and the silhouette of a man who appears to be the boatman. However, a closer look at this mysterious male figure reveals that he is wearing court robes and the high *eboshi* hat typical of the Heian aristocrats. Judging from his garments, he cannot possibly be a humble boatman. Who might he be then? He is unlikely to be Niou's trusted Tokikata who made all the arrangements for the lovers' excursion to the governor's villa, simply because he is never featured in connection with the boat crossing. In fact, according to the text, it appears that Tokikata is sent ahead to prepare for his

master's arrival and he returns to the narrative only after Niou and Ukifune reach the Governor of Inaba's mansion.

The most plausible guess concerning the mysterious man's identity would be Kaoru. Obviously, he is not present at the moment of Ukifune's displacement by Niou; yet it is his shadow that looms large in this episode and determines Niou's decision to take Ukifune away from a space under his rival's control. Kaoru's depiction in Miyata's illustration draws the important connection between the two rivals in love which relegates Ukifune to a secondary position in her relationship with the two men. The Kaoru in the picture is not a real person, but a projection generated by Niou's fear of his rival and by Ukifune's feelings of guilt. His unavoidable presence serves to explain the lovers' anguished attitudes, since it becomes clear to them that not even a spatial distancing from the Uji villa can rid them psychological of Kaoru's proximity. Moreover, his phantasmal apparition becomes the immaterial obstacle that separates the two lovers, each left with his or her own thoughts, each unable, ironically, to relate to each other without Kaoru as a common referential point.

Finally, in the *Asaki yumemishi* manga by Yamato Waki (Figure 42) the boat excursion scene is juxtaposed to a later episode, in which Ukifune, tormented by the impossibility of choosing between her two lovers, listens to her women's conversation about the dangers of the treacherous Uji River and contemplates suicide. By superimposing the two episodes, Yamato reinforces the violent nature of Ukifune's displacement by Niou.

The image of Niou carrying Ukifune in his arms towards the boat gives the only impression of extreme haste, but the boat scene is surprisingly conventional, reusing the

imagery of Tosa Mitsuyoshi's 1610 *Tale of Genji* screen[250] (Metropolitan Museum of Art) in which the lovers are protected from the spectators' gaze by a very elegant travel folding screen. The manga artist replaces the folding screen with a hanging screen, but does not abandon the idea of extreme comfort during the river crossing which is incongruous with the original text. There, the displacement comes as a surprise to Ukifune who does not even have the time to cover herself with proper clothing and feels ashamed at being exposed to Niou's gaze in such inappropriate garments. Or, the presence of a screen conveniently installed in the boat suggests much more preparation on Niou's part than the *Genji* text actually suggests.

On the other hand, the unconventional interpretive addition of Ukifune's suicidal impulses to the boat displacement scene hints at the artist's perception of the boat excursion as an act of aggression, or at least, as an act that physically endangers the woman. On the lower part of the page, following the images of Niou carrying off Ukifune and of the boat excursion, Yamato draws a portrait of the heroine, her faced lowered over the dark waters of the Uji River. The modern *ekotoba* accompanying the captioned image of Ukifune reads: "How deep is the water! How strong are its currents! I have the feeling of being swallowed by the dark waves."[251]

If Yamato's interpretation of the displacement episode had been in the positive vein of the artistic tradition, then she would have avoided the association of a presumably romantic outing with a state of psychological torment. On the other hand, her choice of depicting the boat adventure as a dramatic episode may also be motivated by the desire to increase the commercial appeal of her product by carefully constructing an artistic

[250] Mitsuyoshi's *Genji* screen is supposed to illustrate the "Miyuki" and "Sekiya" chapters, but for some reason it also illustrated the boat excursion of the "Ukifune" chapter.
[251] Yamato Waki, *Asaki yumemishi* (Tōkyō: Kodansha, 1980-1991), 52. My translation.

narrative that builds up the necessary tension to be released in the episode of Ukifune's attempted suicide. In fact, Yamato motivates the heroine's disappearance at the end of the "Boat upon the Waters" chapter by her attempt to drown herself in the Uji River, although, as discussed before, the original text gives no evidence to indicate Ukifune's immersion in the water.

As with other episodes in *Asaki yumemishi*, it is difficult to ascertain whether the artist's original interpretations spring from her deep understanding of the tale, or whether they are simple devices meant to enhance the sales of what is ultimately a product of mass consumption. Nevertheless, in an interview conducted by Hayashi Mikako,[252] Yamato Waki traces her knowledge of the *Genji* to Setouchi Jakucho's translation of the tale into modern Japanese. Considering Setouchi's keen eye for identifying sexual violence in *The Tale of Genji*, which transpired both in her translation and in her critical work, it is not impossible to assume that Yamato's manga was indirectly influenced by Setouchi's ideas.

In conclusion, there is a rich collection of illustrations of the "Ukifune" boat scene, exhibiting varied interpretations and artistic trends, which often coexisted during the same period of time. Even the most superficial look at this collection becomes a strenuous journey, not unlike a continuous meandering on the waters of the Uji River. The viewer reaches different shores, some of placid tranquility, others of deep psychological anguish; sailing among the treacherous rapids of artistic interpretation towards the firm ground of concrete evidence of violent displacement is often more perilous than it appears.

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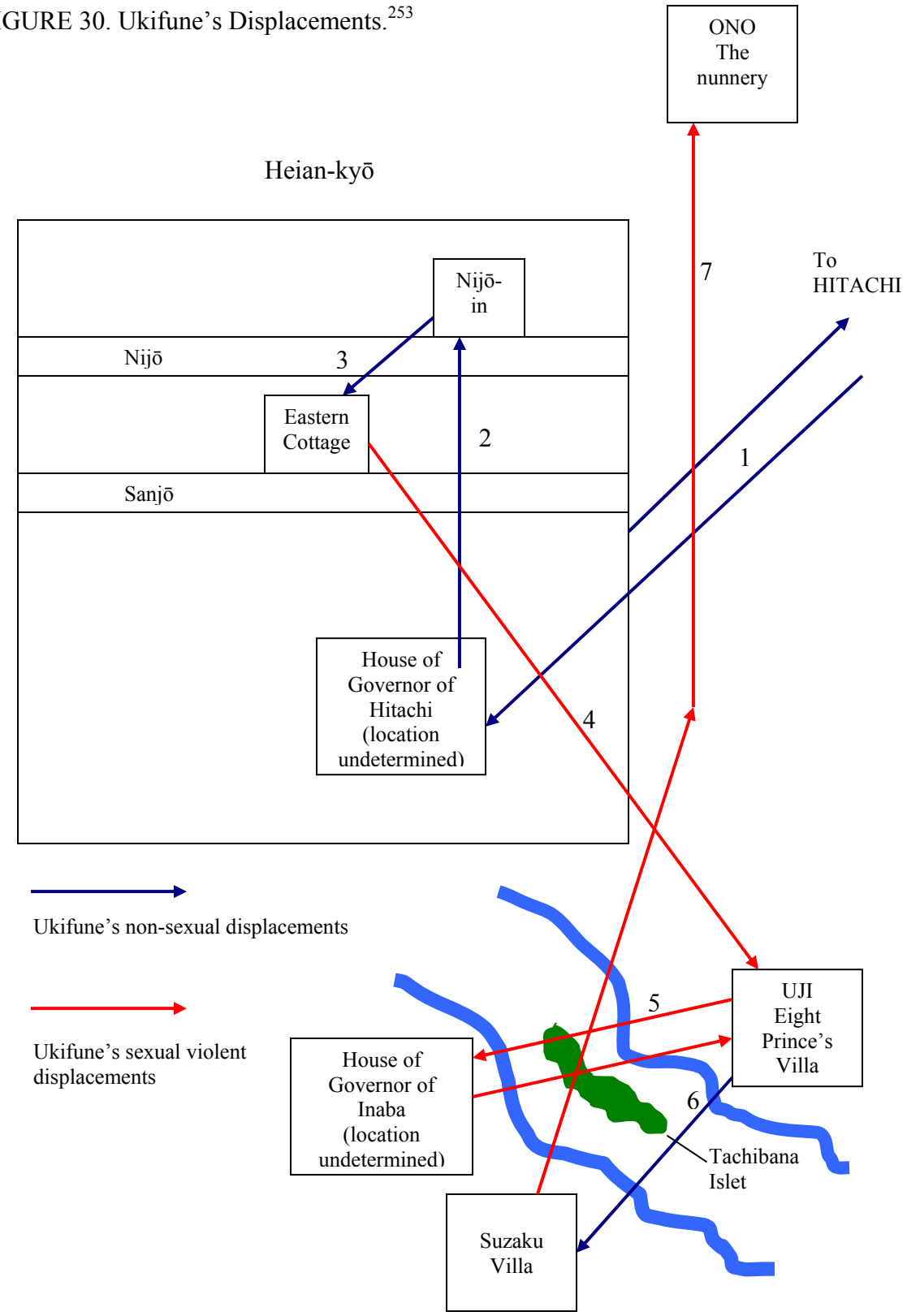
[252] Yamato Waki, "Watashi no Genji monogatari: *Asaki yumemishi*," in *Genji monogatari no ai*, ed. Setouchi Jakuchō (Tōkyō: Kodansha, 2000), 245-285.

FIGURE 30. Ukifune's Displacements.[253]



[253] Diagram loosely based on *Kyōto: Genji monogatari chizu* (Kyōto: Shibunkaku shuppan, 2007).

FIGURE 31. Second "Azumaya" scene from *The Tale of Genji* handscroll. Heian period, 12th century. Color on paper. Tokugawa Art Museum.

FIGURE 32. Noda Kazuko. Second "Azumaya" scene from *Carving of Picture Scroll of Genji Monogatari.* 20th century. Available from http://www.isekatagami.com/en.genjil.html

FIGURE 33. Ebina Masao. Print 50: "A Pavilion" in *Illustrations for Genji monogatari in 54 Wood-cut Prints.* 1953. Available from http://www.ohmigallery.com/Gallery/Ebina/Ebina-Genji_Set.htm

FIGURE 34 A. Miyata Masayuki. "The Eastern Cottage" in *The Tale of Genji: Scenes from the World's First Novel,* Tōkyō: Kodansha International, 2001.

FIGURE 34 B. Giambologna. "The Rape of the Sabine Woman." 1582. Sculpture. Florence, Accademia Gallery

FIGURE 35. Yamato Waki. “Uji jūjō hen” in *Asaki yumemishi,* Tōkyō: Kodansha, 1980-1991.

FIGURE 36. Attributed to Tosa Mitsuoki. “Ukifune” scene. 17th century. Ink, color and gold leaf on paper. The Mary and Jackson Burke Collection.

FIGURE 37. Iwasa Matabei. “Ukifune”. Early 17th century. Fukui Prefecture Art Museum.

FIGURE 38. Kunisada II. "Ukifune" scene. Ca. 1857. Woodblock print. University of Alberta.

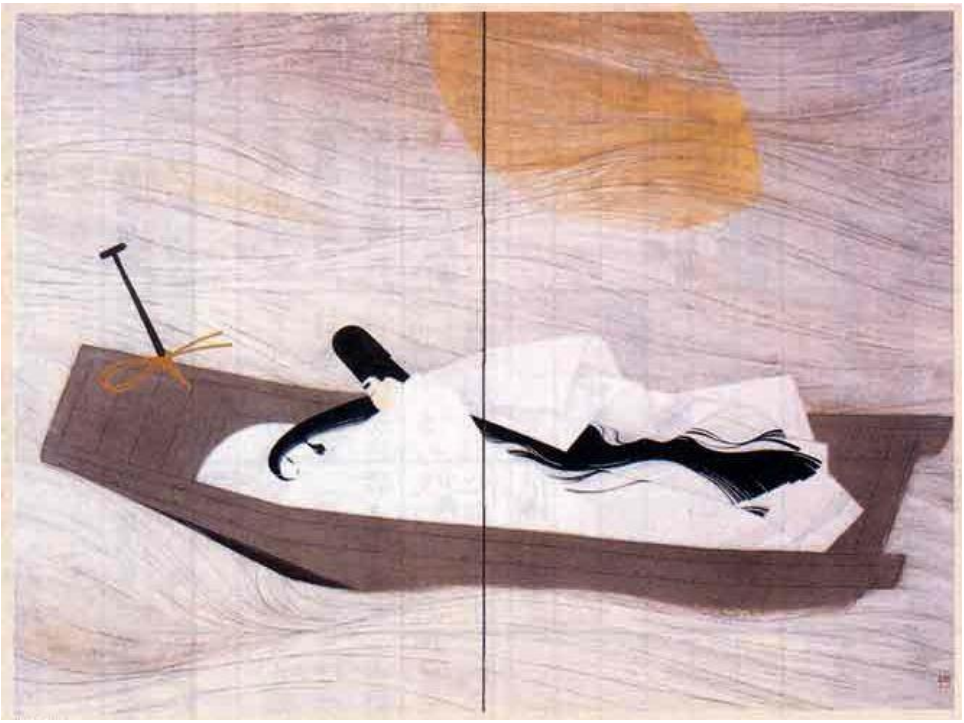


FIGURE 39. Sata Yoshirō. "Ukifune." 20th century. Osaragi Jirō Memorial Museum.

FIGURE 40. Kajita Hanko. "Ukifune" scene from *Meiga de yomu Genji monogatari,* Tōkyō: Taishūkan Shoten, 1996.

FIGURE 41. Miyata Masayuki. "The Drifting Boat" in *The Tale of Genji: Scenes from the World's First Novel,* Tōkyō: Kodansha International, 2001.

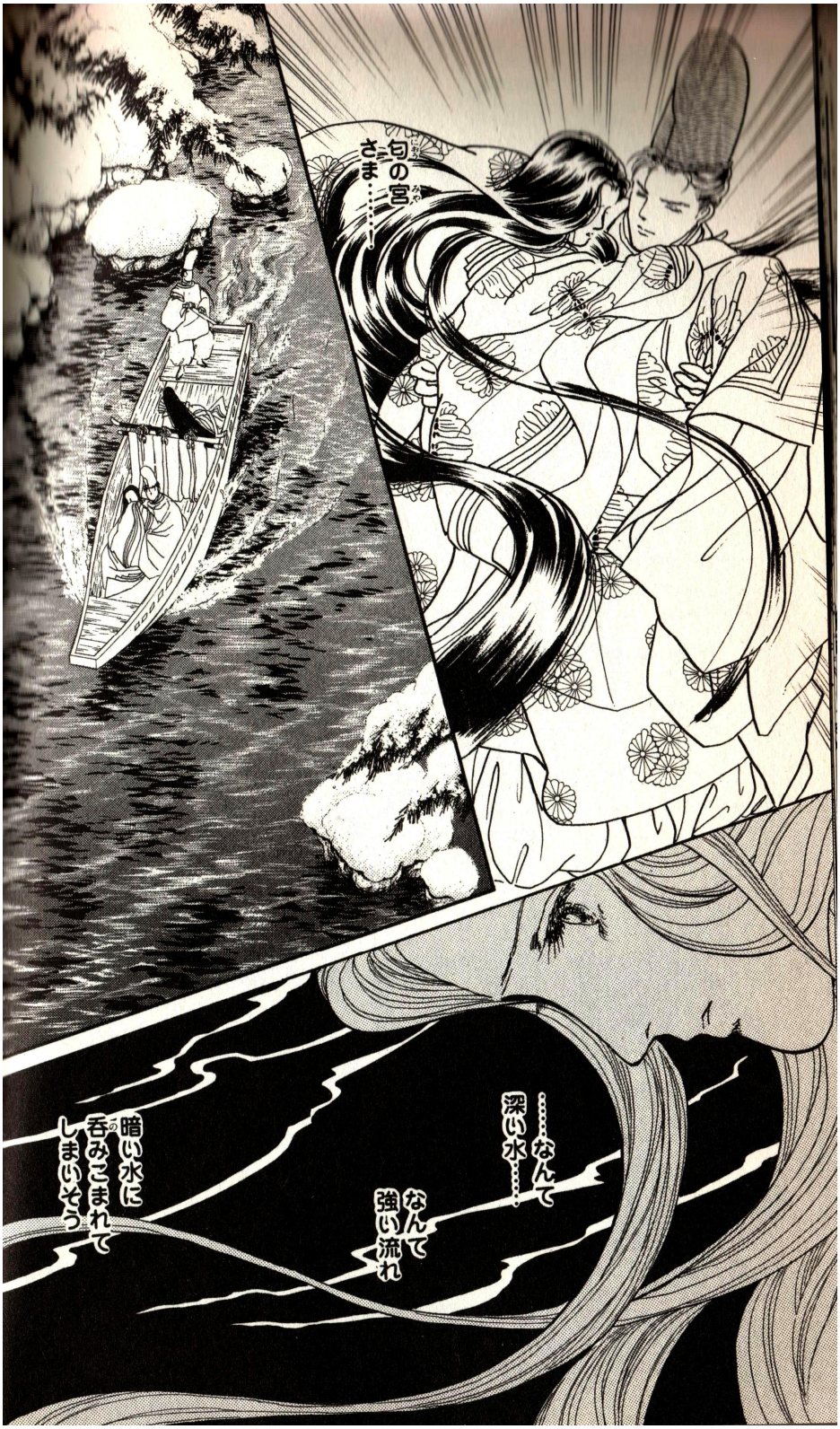


FIGURE 42. Yamato Waki. “Uji jūjō hen” in *Asaki yumemishi,* Tōkyō: Kodansha, 1980-1991.

CONCLUSION

> "All the roads we never wander,
> all the roads that stay in us,
> lead us, numberless, – somewhere."
>
> Lucian Blaga – "Inscription"[254]

The Roads Yet to Wander

In this thesis I have attempted to establish a new category of sexual violence within *The Tale of Genji*: violent female displacement by a male (frequently referred to as "violent displacement," or simply, as "displacement"). Although this form of sexual violence is of a physical nature and it often precedes and facilitates the occurrence of rape, violent displacement is an autonomous phenomenon that does not emerge as a mere prelude to rape, but has an existence of its own, defined by a combination of criteria and coordinates.

In order to define displacement in terms of sexual violence I have constructed four criteria: the difference in rank and status between the male and female protagonists of the displacement episode, the male's flagrant violation of the standard courtship ritual, the female's discernable reaction to her displacement by the male, and, finally, the entourage's criticism of male behavior. Sometimes, these four criteria are augmented either by a considerable age difference that reinforces the male's advantage over the female or by the interference of the narrative voice which sanctions male behavior by means of direct comments or admonitions that are subtly foreboding.

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[254] Lucian Blaga, *Complete Poetical Works of Lucian Blaga*, trans. Brenda Walker and Stelian Apostolescu (Iaşi: The Center for Romanian Studies, 2001), 277.

Based on these criteria, I have approached the cases of four *Genji* heroines and tried to determine whether their removal from their initial space by a male character constitutes an act of violent displacement and, by extension, one of sexual violence. Thus, on the one hand, I have investigated each heroine's circumstances and reactions to the removal from her initial space, which constitute the primary evidence pointing to violent displacement, and, on the other hand, I have tried to probe the hero's intentions in resorting to displacement with the purpose of determining a connection between his acts and sexual violence. Each time the narrative concurred with the four criteria to indicate the heroine's vulnerability in terms of status, her opposition to or distress resulted from the movement forced upon her and her entourage's criticism directed at the male agent, I concluded that what appeared to be a simple case of spatial relocation of the woman was indeed a case of female violent displacement by a male. Similarly, when the hero flagrantly violated the normative courtship regulations and pursued purposes that gravitated around his desire to possess and control the woman's body, I have inferred that his use of violent displacement is in fact a form of sexual violence.

Each of the four heroines whom I chose to observe has enriched the context and the interpretation of violent displacement. With Utsusemi as the prototype of violent displacement in the *Genji*, the movement was extremely limited in terms of distance, to the point where her case could have been easily overlooked had it not been for the four criteria. At the same time it was the Utsusemi incident that established the validity of these criteria: her violent displacement by Genji is facilitated by her inferiority in status; it occurs in the context of Genji's disregard for proper courtship, considering that the hero bluntly approaches a woman with whom he had no previous contact; and it triggers

a powerful desire to resist Genji's acts both from Utsusemi and from her lady-in-waiting, Chūjō, the only witness to the scene.

In addition, for further reinforcement of the four criteria, I have also addressed the cases of Nokiba no ogi and Oborozukiyo, which provided opportunities to put into practice the four-folded frame defining displacement and to prove its utility not only in identifying a case of violent displacement, but also in differentiating between genuine and false acts of violent displacement.

The case of Nokiba no ogi has proven that any of the four criteria, but most conspicuously the one referring to the woman's opposition, can, when distorted in any way, seriously sabotage the efficiency of the remaining three. With Nokiba, it was her lack of reaction, or rather her display of consent, that disqualified Genji's intrusion from becoming an act of sexual violence. Her case also advanced the hypothesis according to which a *Genji* hero resorts to violent displacement only when faced with the woman's opposition, as a means of aggression and not as an idiosyncratic strategy of seduction.

The Oborozukiyo incident, on the other hand, seemed at a first glance to possess all the necessary characteristics of violent displacement, including its featuring of the actual movement of the woman by Genji. Yet a closer reading revealed that not only was Oborozukiyo not inferior in any way to Genji in terms of status, but also her limited reaction indicated a token resistance rather than a genuine opposition. Furthermore, she was the one who exposed herself to Genji, maybe even in the hope of attracting his attention, and there were no witnesses to the scene to provide reliable testimonies. Thus, a case which initially looked very much like Utsusemi's turned out to be a mock violent displacement.

The second prominent *Genji* heroine featured in my thesis was Yūgao. With her, the four criteria of displacement were severely put to the test and showed their limitations, but, at the same time, new variations were introduced to compensate for their loss in strength, which was the direct result of the hero's use of a more complex strategy of execution for the violent displacement. With Genji's new reliance on deceit rather than physical force, it was difficult to detect a strong opposition from Yūgao and her entourage at the moment of the displacement, which in this case took the form of abduction. Genji's scenario of matrimonial promise may have silenced the heroine and her women for a while, but the author's use of omens charged the abduction with negative connotations. Moreover, Yūgao's role in the spirit possession episode indicated, when read from Doris G. Bargen's perspective, that she was in fact already counteracting her victimization be Genji.

With Murasaki, violent female displacement took the form of kidnapping and displayed the widest variety of factors that encouraged its reading as a form of sexual violence. Not only was the woman, or in this case, the girl, inferior in status to Genji, but also in age. Her entourage, starting with her grandmother and ending with her nurse, maintained a constant critical discourse of Genji's courtship of the girl and Murasaki herself offered an unmediated negative response to the kidnapping. Moreover, violent displacement reached its most severe form with Murasaki and created the premises of her further victimization, by means of captivity (a completely new form of sexual violence) and the all too infamous "rape" incident.

Finally, with Ukifune, violent displacement permeated the narrative of the Uji chapters. This heroine seemed to be constantly displaced, by one male character after

another, yet she turned out to be the most uncooperative of them all. Ukifune's display of passivity was difficult to break through and I often found myself relying more on her entourage's reactions than on her own. Fortunately, the narrative voice generously supplemented my research, mainly by the introduction of ill-boding omens, as in the episode of Yūgao. At the same time, it was with Ukifune that I was able to witness the most dramatic metamorphosis a *Genji* heroine ever suffered. When violent displacement after violent displacement finally exceeded Ukifune's ability to bear her victimization, she still had the power to reject the way out forced upon her by her entourage's expectations: death. Instead, she abandoned both of her lovers, her family, her status, even her name, and sought shelter in religion. When even religion failed to ensure her safety, she discovered, together with her true self, the best strategy a Heian woman could hope for in order to resist if not male acts than at least male discourse: writing.

All the while, in my analysis of violent displacement I have discovered that the four criteria I was using are tools efficient beyond the case of violent displacement, in the identification and analysis of any form of sexual violence in the *Genji*, rape included. Displacement in itself is defined largely by the two coordinates that refer to its distance and its method of execution and displacement alone, of all types of physical sexual violence, involves a type of movement, from one location to another.

Nevertheless, the four criteria (briefly summarized as status, courtship, the target of displacement and entourage) have the potential to make the problem of rape, or forced intercourse, more comprehensible in analytical terms. Thus, if I were to examine Murasaki's loss of virginity, I would choose to investigate this incident starting from the premises offered by these criteria. If her case displayed an inequality in terms of rank and

status between her and Genji, if it constituted a violation, not of courtship rules, but of marriage ceremonial and if it triggered a powerful negative reaction for Murasaki and her entourage, I would confidently identify it as an act of physical sexual violence, independently of whether I would call it "rape", or "forced intercourse", or simply "Act B" ("Act A" being reserved for violent female displacement).

In addition to the role that violent displacement assumes in establishing such theoretical tools as the four criteria, it also serves as a foundation from which to approach other forms of physical sexual violence. In other words, violent female displacement by a male becomes the precedent for all other more severe cases of sexual violence. In its absence, those other forms, including rape, may be dismissed as anomalies from the context of the *Genji.* For instance, invoking Genji's sensible behavior towards Murasaki in order to refute the accusation of rape as nonsensical, unprecedented or inconsequential to his usual behavior is one interpretive option that some critics have taken. But if one already bears in mind Genji's kidnapping of Murasaki, then his usual sensible behavior can be exposed with devastating effect as a disguise for his tendency to resort to aggression whenever he cannot find other means to advance his case. To put it differently, the identification of violent displacement establishes sexual violence not as an anomaly, but as a recurrence in the *Genji* narrative.

Moreover, in the course of my research on violent female displacement by a male I have often encountered other forms of psychological sexual violence. The taunting proximity of these other categories of sexual violence has made me reconsider all the roads I wanted to take in my research for this thesis, but had to abandon in favor of the pursuit for violent displacement. Without regretting the path I have chosen and which has

led me closer to all those other destinations, I cannot but eagerly anticipate the moment when I will be able to step on these pristine roads.

Psychological sexual violence is one of those directions that I believe the analysis of violent displacement has opened. In the cases of Yūgao and Murasaki, Genji makes use of deceit, of manipulation and of captivity in order to ensure his unchallenged possession of them, and all these acts are forms of psychological sexual violence. With Murasaki moreover, captivity creates a relationship of psychological dependency between the heroine and Genji, which is fueled by the hero's adroit disguise of his sexual interests in the girl behind the well-intentioned acts of a father figure. He thus creates a quasi-incestuous context which allows him to take advantage of parental opportunities for intimacy and divert them into sexual pursuits. This "strategy of parental impersonation" is not a lone occurrence in the context of *The Tale of Genji*. In the case of Murasaki it was successful, culminating in the loss of virginity episode (and one can only imagine the girl's shock when her long-time "father" turned literally overnight into a lover), but later, when Genji tries the exact same strategy with Tamakazura, he fails.

With Tamakazura, however, parental impersonation turns into a more subtle strategy of manipulation that I would like to refer to as the "incest menace." By concealing Tamakazura's identity from the rest of the world, especially from her brothers, Genji permits her courtship precisely to those who should be prohibited from courting her (Kashiwagi) and prohibits it to those who should be allowed to do so (Yūgiri). In this way, Genji smartly as much as selfishly attempts to block all possibilities Tamakazura has to initiate an amorous relationship with anyone but Genji himself. In addition, he takes dictatorial control over the heroine's life and mediates her encounters with Hotaru

and with Reizei (in the case of Reizei, the encounter is far more indirect than in the case of Hotaru), both of which are in fact attempts to enhance his own appeal in her eyes.

Beyond these categories of sexual violence, whether physical or psychological, there lies an entire range of other forms of violence that, although occurring in the context of gender relations, are not sexual in nature. In the course of my research on violent displacement, I have often glanced at peripheral incidents that spoke of a more complex panorama of violence in the *Genji.* One such aspect, unfortunately ignored by the vast majority of *Genji* scholars, although it conspicuously opens the tale's narrative, refers to women resorting to violence against other women. Genji's own mother, Kiritsubo, was frequently persecuted by the other imperial consorts to the point where she had to retreat from court and, if one were to speculate, even to point of death. Furthermore, all through the *Genji* narrative, ladies-in-waiting play a duplicitous role, both as defenders and allies of their mistresses and as instruments of their doom, when they choose to switch sides and become accomplices of male suitors.

In my analysis of violent female displacement by a male, I have encountered cases of ladies-in-waiting who were truly faithful to their mistresses, such as Ukifune's and Murasaki's nurses, but also of those willing to betray them at the slightest promise of material recompense. Murasaki's other ladies-in-waiting turn a blind eye to her kidnapping and fail to inform her father of her whereabouts when enticed by the prospects of entering Genji's service. Still, others, like Ukifune's close attendants, Ukon and Jijū, pressure their mistress into making choices that might better suit their own tastes and interests than her own. In this last case, the female community surrounding the heroine, whether at Uji or in the religiously inspired landscape of Ono, proves to be just

as violent to her as her male suitors, with the only distinction that her women employ psychological violence whereas Kaoru and Niou more often than not resort to physical violence in the form of displacement.

The most violent intervention of a lady-in-waiting in the life of her mistress may be in the case of the Third Princess's attendant, Kojijū, especially if one reads the affair with Kashiwagi as the result of forced rather than consensual intercourse. Kojijū's scheming and complicity with Kashiwagi, the male suitor, determines a most tragic denouement for both the woman and the man involved in the affair and illustrates the extent of a *nyōbo*'s influence in the destiny of a *Genji* heroine.

Another form of female violence that I have encountered, not in the course of my research on violent displacement, but rather in my reading of the tale, is the physical female violence directed at a man. This physical component comes to complete the account of feminine violence in which spirit possession represents the psychological side.

There are conspicuously few episodes in *The Tale of Genji* that depict clear instances of feminine violence. Earlier in the tale, in the "Broom Tree" chapter, during the "rainy night discussion," one of the young men sharing his amorous experiences, the guards officer, tells of a woman who in an outburst of anger and jealousy bit his finger. Later, in the "Cypress Pillar" ("Makibashira") chapter, Higekuro's first wife pours the contents of an ash censer over her husband's head, just as he is preparing to visit his new amorous interest, Tamakazura. Her gesture is quickly dismissed by the man as a sign of derangement, spirit possession and illness and it in fact serves Higekuro as a pretext to divorce his wife, in other words, to send her back to her parents, and bring in Tamakazura to take her place. Finally, in the "Evening Mist" chapter ("Yūgiri"), Kumoinokari,

Yūgiri's wife, snatches a letter that her husband received from the Second Princess's mother, assuming that it is in fact an amorous message from the princess herself. This last scene attracted more attention than the preceding ones, but mostly from the scholars of *Genji* art, because it features among the relatively few extant scenes of the *Genji emaki.*

All these instances of female physical violence are quickly dismissed by the male protagonists of the *Genji* narrative, yet the very fact that they are featured in it at all should raise multiple questions regarding their meaning. Without serious research in this direction, I dare not advance any hypothesis as to what they might signify or what Murasaki Shikibu's intentions might have been in depicting them. I can only hope to find, some day soon, a compelling interpretation for these overlooked episodes of the *Genji.*

Many are the roads to violence and its resistance in *The Tale of Genji,* so many that only idealists and fools may hope to cover them in one journey. I too used to believe in that possibility before I began my research on violent displacement. Now that I know better, I cannot regret being proven wrong, for if it had been possible to exhaust all the aspects of violence with one ox-cart, I would have had little traveling, no matter how arduous, left to look forward too. More than one thousand years after Murasaki Shikibu wrote her one and only masterpiece, scholars still walk the intricate roads of the *Genji* narrative. Just thinking about those long, strenuous journeys of the last millennium, makes me utter, not unlike Genji musing in mid-displacement of Yūgao: "Are the people of old still wandering lost/ On this road at dawn, still unknown to me?"

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