NEGOTIATING PUBLICITY, PUBLICISING DOMESTICITY: WOMEN-AUTHORED HEIAN KANA MEMOIRS, CIRCULATION, RECEPTION, AND POWER

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the evolution of the socio-literary image of female middle-ranking producers of text in the late Heian period, and how it was informed by different understandings of domesticity and its interplay with the public sphere—both in these authors' work and in later re-contextualisations. It discusses, therefore, relations between these writers and higher ranking patrons/husbands, the negotiation of loss of control over textual production and public persona, and it contemplates questions of patronage, forced circulation, and intertextuality. In order to do so, it focuses primarily on the power dynamics underlying the portrayal and significance of domestic and household-centred spaces in women-authored texts and others that exemplify their reception; addressing firstly, the different ways in which household and court-based *kana nikki* 仮名日記 (diary, memoir) authors conceptualise domesticity and their position within it as a tool to articulate their relation to broader society, and secondly, how they respond and negotiate around this conception.

Structurally, this dissertation is divided in three chapters, revolving around the figures of Fujiwara no Michitsuna's Mother 藤原道綱母 (935-995), Izumi Shikibu 和泉式部 (b. 976?) and Sugawara no Takasue's Daughter 菅原孝標女 (ca.1008- after 1059) and the three famous *nikki* associated with them. Through these texts, it examines different constructions of socio-literary positioning, patterns of reception, and unequal social relations created around the distinct relation of each of this women with the spheres of the house and the court. It, however, also refers to other contemporary authors such as

Akazome Emon 赤染衛門 (956?-after 1041) or Murasaki Shikibu 紫式部 (978?-1014?), as well as other texts where these author's work is recontextualised, disrupting or reconstructing the literary personae created in their diaries.

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List of Abbreviations:

SNKZ Shin *Nihon koten bungaku zenshū* 日本古典文学全集

SNKT *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 新日本文学大系

KT *Shinpen kokka taikan* 新編国歌大観

Teikabon *Kunaichō Shoryōbu zō den Sarashina nikki Teikabon* 宮内庁書陵部蔵伝更級日記定家本

Sanjōnishibon *Kunaichō Shoryōbu zō den Izumi Shikibu nikki Sanjō nishibon* 宮内庁書陵部蔵伝和泉式部日記三条西本

When more than one edition has been used, unless otherwise indicated, citations refer to the most modern available version, as indicated in the Bibliography.

Introduction:

In the year 1039, a woman we know only by the name of Sugawara no Takasue's Daughter (Sugawara no Takasue no musume 菅原孝標女, ca.1008- after 1059) went to serve at court, as a lady-in waiting, for the first time in her life. In spite of the chances for social betterment this position may have procured their daughter, her parents—we are told—wept miserably not to have her home; not just out of longing for her, but also because of what her presence meant for their household, socially and financially. If she were to become a full time palace attendant, she would not be able to administer the house, as her father intended when her mother took vows to become a nun. As she tells us in her *Sarashina nikki* 更級日記,

> "When you are here, we see people, and there are servants and all that. These past days we have not heard a human voice or seen a single face, it has been so lonely and sad. If [you] keep it up just like this, what will become of me?" [said my father] crying violently, which I was really sad to see.[1]

Shortly after, the young woman would marry a man, leave court service and be "shut away at home" —"こめ据ゑつ" (SNKZ: 328)—by her parents. This short snippet of domestic life is very illustrative of the sort of tensions—emotional, social, material—that defined the place of aristocratic middle-ranking women, both within the world of the house, and that of the court. Support and allegiance for them were contested; in consequence, the work of female literary producers in the late Heian period must have expressed the negotiation

[1] 「おはするときこそ人目も見え、さぶらひなどもありけれ、この日ごろは人声もせず、前に人影も見えず、いと心ぼそくさびしかりつる。かうてのみも、まろがをば、いかがせむとかする」 (SNKZ: 326). See also Arntzen: 2014, 161-162. All translations are mine, unless otherwise stated.

between expectations of domestic-oriented production and self-presentation, on the one hand, and the socio-literary adroitness and deference to courtly symbolic power required by imperial circles, on the other. Up to a point, every woman creating texts, whether serving at court or not, participated of both of these spheres, requiring their work to examine and define the divisions and interplays between them in their authors' life experiences and understandings of society. In response, the network of circulation and reception in which these texts were deployed, would pass moral and literary judgment on the appropriateness of the niche each of these writers was able to carve on the domestic/public literary continuum. Looking back to our filial Takasue's Daughter, both the house manager and the lady-in-waiting, who would her cultural production and management abilities be owed to, and who would define her degree of success in fulfilling them? Her father? Her household? The imperial salon that patronised her?

Answering these questions, and others that arise from them, this dissertation will examine the evolution of the image of women writers of the Heian court as producers of texts, and more specifically the way in which different understandings of domesticity and its interplay with the public sphere—both in their own works and in later re-contextualisations of these—inform the socio-literary image of female middle-ranking writers. I will, discuss their relations with higher ranking patrons/husbands, the negotiation of loss of control over textual production and public persona, and will contemplate questions of patronage, forced circulation, and relations of intertextuality. When possible, the materiality of the text will be considered in the discussion of the history and framing of each of the diaries. Ultimately, however, my exploration will focus primarily on the power dynamics underlying

the portrayal and significance of domestic and household-centred spaces—that is, their deployment as tools to revise and reframe socio-literary roles—in women-authored texts and others arising from their reception. In summary, my thesis addresses firstly, the different ways in which female middle-ranking authors in the late Heian period conceptualise domesticity and their position within it as a tool to articulate their relation to broader society in *kana nikki*.

Structurally, this dissertation will be divided in three chapters, mainly revolving around the figures of Fujiwara no Michitsuna's Mother 藤原道綱母 (935-995), Izumi Shikibu 和泉式部 (b. 976?) and Sugawara no Takasue's Daughter, and the three famous *nikki* 日記 (diary, memoir) associated with them, through which I will discuss the texts' constructions of authorial persona, patterns of reception, and concepts of domesticity and unequal social relations. I will, however, also refer to other contemporary authors such as Akazome Emon 赤染衛門 (956?-after 1041) or Murasaki Shikibu 紫式部 (978?-1014?), as well as other texts where these authors works are recontextualised, disrupting or reconstructing the literary personae created in their diaries. These will include imperial anthologies (*chokusenshū* 勅撰集) like *Shūiwakashū* 拾遺和歌集 (1005) and *Goshūiwakashū* 後拾遺和歌集 (1086)—hereon S*hūishū* and *Goshūishū* respectively—and the historical chronicles *Eiga monogatari* 栄花物語 (first part ca.1028-1034, second part ca. 1092-1117) and *Ōkagami* 大鏡 (ca. 1086-1123). An effort was made in these texts to, through literary means, explain—and sometimes subvert—the authors' position within social relations of

subservience or powerlessness, where perceived patterns of propriety are followed in order to frame their actions as socially effective, and norm-compliant. As these texts are auto-biographical in nature, I do take each of the authors as a starting point for the different arguments I make throughout the dissertation, and consider authorial intention when possible. However, I am more interested in the contention between different understandings of the relation between unofficial channels of textual circulation—that is, those taking place either away from the court or not based on politically justified social or interpersonal hierarchies—domestic roles in literary creation, and the use of literary tools as a mechanism for social mediation.

The Texts and their Authors:

In *Kagerō nikki* 蜻蛉日記 (ca. 974), Michitsuna's Mother portrays herself distinctly in the role of a wife, as a producer of texts and textiles for her husband, Fujiwara no Kaneie, and showcases her surrogate composition of poetry and matchmaking for her children. The diary does not see this domestic position as separate from the bigger society of the court, but rather presents it as an integral part of it; its author's work furthers her husband's agenda, as a member of the Fujiwara regent family looking to assert his political and cultural dominance, and later serves her children in socially applicable ways. Her literary and textile production serves to create a public image for the Fujiwara in a double manner; both socially and historically. Later imperial poetic anthologies, however, would not portray this author within this conception of public-domestic engagement; in the *Shūishū*, she is almost exclusively presented as a composer of public poetry for imperially sanctioned circumstances, including screen poems, compositions for poetry matches, etc.,

removing her from the context of the house. In the *Goshūishū* and later collections, this productive domesticity is also erased, and Michitsuna's Mother is reduced to the more passive role of a stereotypical "pining woman"—*matsu onna* 待つ女. This chapter will deal extensively with the figure of the middle-ranking textual producer linked to the Fujiwara regent house, and the way in which women occupying this position were fundamental in developing a cultural centre parallel and intersecting with the imperial one.

The question of domesticity as identity-defining becomes complicated when confronted with women writers whose socio-literary image was based on a distinctly double role, as both women of the house and visually and textually accessible ladies-in-waiting (*nyōbō* 女房) at the imperial court. *Izumi Shikibu nikki* 和泉式部日記 (dates unknown, covering events from 1003-1004) presents a different approach to the social impact of interpersonal relations between a woman and a higher-ranking man than *Kagerō nikki*; in an attempt to manage scandal, the affair between Izumi Shikibu and Prince Atsumichi 敦道親王 (981-1007) is shown as completely detached from the public sphere. This neutralises its potentially disruptive nature, but at the same time denies the possibility of turning it into a form of support or social designation for the poet. This analysis will serve to examine the idea of "scandal" as an apparent break in the public sphere/intimate sphere dichotomy, and the attempts of the protagonist of the disruptive events to navigate a narrative out of her control.

When compared to a similar figure, Akazome Emon, it seems evident that the existence of a well-publicised normative domestic role—as mother and wife—contributed immensely to the way the woman's image was handled in later texts. Akazome Emon, while expressing traits similar to those of her aforementioned fellow palace attendant, would become known after her death as the prototype of "wise mother and wife." The plasticity of a woman's poetry, that is, its ability to be re-contextualised in either a courtly or domestic setting would have an enormous impact on both literary and moral criticism subsequently, while not necessarily negating the most public, "professional" aspects of the poet. In this way, this second chapter offers an examination of different approaches to the amalgamation of the domestic and courtly spheres for women who found themselves in situations of cultural dependence both at home, and in the context of the imperial literary salon.

In my third chapter, I will address *Sarashina nikki*; a text that, by contrast, is mostly interested in freeing its account of the author's life from these relations of literary and social dependence, whether at the domestic or the public level. Takasue's Daughter both served as a lady-in-waiting to an imperial princess and as a wife and household manager; and yet, she defines herself by neither of these attributes in her diary. In this sense, my examination of *Sarashina nikki* is the keystone of this thesis, as I explore how the text negotiates its author's sense of dispossession, not by struggling to express her social positioning through the different models of domestic/public relations afforded to her, but by questioning this very model as the only possibility. Takasue's Daughter shows a keen awareness of *kana* diaries' ability to represent the roles allowed to a woman of her

position; however, unlike Michitsuna's Mother and Izumi Shikibu, she finds this strategy wanting. In this way, while still deploying very similar stylistic and formulaic methods of expression, her memoir considers more marginal social networks; a stance reflected by her interest in nuns, itinerant female entertainers, and commoners.

Sarashina nikki is, therefore, ground-breaking as an exploration of the alternatives to the hierarchical courtly/marital formula presented in tales (*monogatari* 物語) and memoirs, both in form and content. This diary, unlike other works of the same time period it is often grouped with, does not frame textual circulation in terms of relations between wives and husbands or lovers—as is the case with *Kagerō nikki,* or *Izumi Shikibu nikki*—or patrons and subordinates—*Makura no sōshi* 枕草子(1002)*, Murasaki Shikibu nikki* 紫式部日記 (ca. 1010)—and focuses instead on the role of its author as a consumer—and acquirer—of tales.[2] It is for this reason unique in its contestation of the radial nature of the seat of imperial power for the circulation of tales. In this sense, the memoir stands in stark contrast with all of the other texts mentioned above, questioning the centrality of the institutions of court and household as the defining framework of social relations for a woman producer of *kana nikki*. It is for this reason, based on the memoir's use of tale and *nikki*-like established forms to destabilise the model of social relation they portray, that I refer to this text as a Queer *nikki*; a text that subverts and presents alternatives to the pre-established socio-literary model, and the normative expectations placed on the author. My focus will not be so much the Queerness of the diary itself, as an exploration of how this

[2] Takasue's Daughter was, however, well aware of the existence of *Kagerō nikki* and *Murasaki Shikibu nikki* (Arntzen: 2014, 61).

text can serve as a tool to investigate the Queering of *kana* diaries and the power dynamics they portray.[3]

My three main chapters present an increasingly questioning framework of the processes at play between the authors of the diaries and the rest of Heian society.[4] The first part of my Michitsuna's Mother's chapter articulates the distinction between the *hare* and *ke* spheres of performance and circulation—roughly translatable as "formal" and "informal"—followed by an exploration of how *Kagerō nikki* negotiates the integration of the domestic "*ke*" realm its author inhabits into the official realm. She does not negate the existence of this division, but rather presents a *hare*-ness supported by the literary and material production of the household belonging to the regent family. Finally, through the re-contextualisation of her figure in imperial poetic anthologies, her vision of this nuanced, layered interplay between courtly power and the house is erased, as the collections either fail to address the diary's view of domesticity, or render the middle-ranking woman poet/high-ranking Fujiwara patron amorous dynamic as politically and socially unimpactful.

[3] It has been pointed out that the imposition of identities such as "gay," "lesbian" or "Queer" on non-Western contexts and experiences may be more obscuring than illuminating in discussing social and literary dynamics (Traub: 2008 15). In this sense, I must briefly justify my employment of this term here. I refer to the Queering of *nikki* in two ways; firstly, as the questioning of understandings and assumptions displayed by modern day Japanese literary scholarship, and secondly, as the study of the subversion of socio-literary models depicted by historico-literary works such as *Sarashina nikki*. That is, I do not intend to discuss the Queering of Takasue's Daughter as a question of identity, but as an action, following the old adage about this term functioning not only as a claim "for the non-heteronormative sex, gender, or sexuality of someone or something" but rather to "to disrupt or deconstruct binary categories of sex, gender, and/or sexuality; and to disrupt or deconstruct any entity by rejecting its categories, binaries, or norms" (Lanser: 2018, 924).

[4] Using a visual metaphor, it could be said the diaries present women whose identities are framed around increasingly visible and vulnerable social relations than the ones preceding them; a woman-of-the-house, a lady-in-waiting, and a woman defined by extra-courtly and familial connections.

My examination of *Izumi Shikibu nikki*, observes how this same idealised perspective on unequal poetic-romantic relations is taken to its ultimate conclusion by a woman-authored text that depicts the complete separation between the *ke* and the official/public as a justification of potentially antisocial behaviour or to neutralise its social impact. In this sense, the text refuses to acknowledge the potential social implications of privately performed actions, precisely by stressing the very separation between these two ambits. And so by following the same *hare*/*ke* model that denies the overarching social relevance of this type of unequal poetic-romantic liaison, she defends herself in the public arena, negotiating the loss of control over her own personal and historical image, once public opinion—not necessarily framed in terms of the *hare*, as we will see—hones in on her notoriety. Where Michitsuna's Mother uses the tale structure and tropes to represent herself as tied to Kaneie and her son, even after her marriage has cooled off, Izumi Shikibu's idealisation of her amorous relation, *monogatari*-fies it into social irrelevance. However, a domestic literary background would have been able to express an engagement with the rest of the court through approved relations of subordination, counteracting the liminal, public position she occupied as a *nyōbō.* Unlike Michitsuna's Mother, or Izumi's fellow lady-in-waiting Akazome Emon, she is morally vilified in later literary texts, not because of her "scandalous" behaviour in life, but because her only depictions of publicly impactful social interaction happen within the courtly sphere.

Sarashina nikki, coming both after these texts and other great works of Heian period *kana* writing, has to negotiate socio-literary expression within this literary tradition as much as with the institutions that define the possibilities of acceptable public and domestic roles

for middle-ranking aristocratic women. Ultimately both Michitsuna's Mother's and Izumi Shikibu's attempts to use domesticity to define themselves socially and historically, can be said to be doomed to failure. As the second half of both of these chapters show, both reinterpretations of the female non-official role are potentially neutralised; one by the negation of socially impactful domestic roles by the *hare* sphere, the other, by a requirement to justify public presence with a domestic literariness. Takasue's Daughter, in a way, refuses to fully participate in this power dynamic, while still presenting enough of the trappings of conventional *kana nikki* familial and courtly relations not to appear completely as an outsider to the community—in spite of Takasue's Daughter's wish to portray herself in this position within her text.

As I will be discussing these issues throughout the present thesis, it will be useful here to briefly outline in more detail three factors that will be both fundamental and often assumed in my analysis; firstly, the relationship between tales and domesticity; secondly, the different possibilities for the classification of cultural and literary circulation through public and domestic spaces; and, finally, this thesis' outlook on the power relations underlying this circulation and the interactions between textual producers, patrons, lovers, and husbands.

Tales:

The claimed moral and social conventionality *nikki* portray does not only echo direct interpersonal relations with a lover/husband or patron, but rather exposes an understanding of the act of literary creation and reception as an exercise in courtliness and

correctness in the eyes of the whole community. For this reason, the different uses of tales in the diaries will play a fundamental part in my exploration of literary self-representation. On the one hand, *Kagerō nikki* juxtaposes the expectations set by old tales on middle-ranking women with her own experiences as the wife of a high-ranking man, both employing and subverting *monogatari*-typical structures and tropes (Imanishi: 1989, 515), thus creating her own "personal tale" (Noguchi: 1995, 88). *Izumi Shikibu nikki*, on its part, presents the events of its author's affair as socially unimpactful, by modelling the presentation of the relationship on an idealised lovers' narrative (Walker: 1977, 135), indicating an understanding of the separation between *monogatari*-like discourse and public relevance. *Sarashina nikki*, finally, deals with *monogatari* in a more overt way than either of these other two, as the "tale-ness" does not only occupy the structure of the text, but also its content.

All three of the *nikki* discussed in this thesis exist as part of a conversation on the appropriateness of *monogatari* as a moral and social tool for expression, where arguments are poised against each other not in theoretical disquisitions, but through the practical production of texts. In other words, all three of these works use the literary structures taken from tales not only to interrogate literature's place in the shaping of human interaction at several social levels, but also to criticise and comment on the validity of *monogatari*-ness as a tool to frame life experience, and as a social guide. This understanding of tales' place in Heian life constitutes an important part of my approach to all the texts examined in the dissertation; however, it is the third chapter, the one focusing

on the explicitly tale-centric *Sarashina nikki,* that will address the implications of this type of critical reading and writing most directly.

And so, depending on where each of these texts position themselves in terms of this conversation on appropriateness, the degree with which a diary deploys "tale-ness," allows for a certain degree of ambiguity, defined by an understanding of the role of *monogatari* in regards to morality, identity, and interpersonal relations. Diaries may be used to justify or describe the writers' position in regards to the rest of society, but these choices made here become not only a reflection of social self-positioning and moral justification, but ultimately of literary convention. In this sense, moral and literary rules become intertwined, and the depiction of domesticity and of proper feminine behaviour tied to it have the potential to become normative on the literary as well as the social plane. Decisions made about how to record household-based socio-literary and material relations —including what of them is left out or not—in these diaries, build a socially and historically impactful image for those depicted in them, both the authors and others around them. In this sense, the way in which tales are considered or not as an appropriate tool to express socially impactful real-life status in this diaries is inseparable from to the portrayal of domestic spaces; and more specifically, from their interplay in the (re)construction of the cultural status enjoyed by different individuals in the eyes of the Heian community.

The Official and Non-Official Worlds:

Hare and Ke:

A very general classification for literary works in the Heian court can be drawn by their relation to the spheres of *hare* 晴 and *ke* 穢, which could roughly be translated as "formal" and "informal." *Hare* refers to literature produced in the open; that is, legitimised by court ritual, whereas *ke* is applied to texts created unofficially, without imperial legitimisation. According to Lamarre (2000: 148), based on the way Ki no Tsurayuki 紀貫之 (868-945) employs these terms in his *Kokinwakashū* 古今和歌集 (ca. 912)—hereafter *Kokinshū*—*kana* preface, each of these concepts are endowed of the following characteristics:

Hare	***Ke***
Han/T'ang poetics	Yamato poetics
Court ceremonies	Amorous exchanges
Imperial collections	House collections
Day, clarity	Night, obscurity

He goes on to describe these concepts as pertaining to overlapping political spheres, where *ke* love poem exchanges reflect marriage alliances that determine the status and position of houses within the courtly structure. This demarcation of spaces has also been identified

as a gendered one in modern scholarship, adding masculine and feminine under *hare* and *ke* respectively (Chino: 2003, 10-11). However, it is worth remembering that the notion of literature existing as a social regulator might have originally been applied to Chinese writing, but native verse was also considered in this light quite early in this historical period. The very *kana* preface to the *Kokinshū* states that Yamato *uta*, or native verse, "eases the relations between men and women and soothes the hearts of fierce warriors."[5] and the sovereigns of the past, "it seems, saw in people's hearts and surely knew the wise from the fool"[6] when they read their subjects' compositions. *Uta* 歌—native verse; particularly poems following a 5-7-5-7-7 morae structure—were granted an official place in literary culture not only through poetic collections like this one, but also through imperially sanctioned poetry matches, *uta awase* 歌合, solemnly held at court since the late 9th century (Heldt: 2008, 81). An effort was made, therefore, to integrate the flourishing *kana* inside the official sphere of imperial influence.[7]

Furthermore, as Heldt points out, the status of a text is not necessarily related to its content or style, but to the way in which it was **performed**. If the sovereigns asserted their supremacy over the body of society through "manipulation and control of language" (Heldt: 2008, 110), the distinguishing characteristic of officiality did not depend on the use of *kana* or *kanbun*; what gave a poem the quality of *hare* was its exposition to the

[5] 男女の中をも和らげ、猛き武士の心をも慰むるは歌なり(SNKZ: 17). See also Rodd: 1996, 35.

[6] 心々を見たまひて、賢し愚かなりとしろしめしけむ(SNKZ: 23). See also Rodd: 1996, 40.

[7] It must also be stressed that the distinction between *hare* and *ke* is not a simply binary one. *Ke* could be understood more as "what is not *hare*" than as a fully formed category with defined boundaries. In the same way, social class of the audience involved, context, and other factors could render a situation more or less *hare*-like (Smits: 2015, 16).

legitimizing eye of the emperor.[8] That is, its ritual presentation in an official context. And so, in this emperor-centric view, literature's regulatory power emanates from a higher centralised authority downwards; in other words, the issue of imperial anthologies such as the *Kokinshū* would grant *hare* status to a poem previously circulated in *ke*-like contexts. Poetry matches sponsored by the members of the imperial family worked in a similar way; through the performance of text not limited to the recital of poems, but being tied to a plethora of other media and artistic elements, including music, sculpture, flower arrangement, etc. In this way, compositions that could originally have responded to informal circumstances, and particular intentions, were recontextualised to fall within the emperor centric, official eye.

It becomes impossible to discuss the socially-effecting and literary aspects of texts such as these, without addressing questions of presentation and context that little have to do with their content. This also turns the labels of "private" and "public" into problematic ones to use, as a text could be circulated in the court without abandoning its *ke* nature, but later become part of the recorded officialdom by being performed, or recorded, under different circumstances. Ultimately, words became part of the visible world of the official system only once they had been ratified by imperial authority.

This distinction between *hare* and *ke* spheres is a relevant one, and we will see the way in which it impacts re-contextualisation of particular texts in chapter number one, but it

[8] I will refer to the Japanese monarch interchangeably as "emperor," or "*tennō*" 天皇, for the sake of simplicity, without going into debates about the accuracy of the first term to describe this position.

would be a mistake to limit a classification of courtly literature (*ōchō bungaku* 王朝文学) to this dual categorization.[9] Firstly, as we have seen, the boundary between one realm and the other is not clear-cut or unchangeable. Secondly, the emperor was most definitely not the only centre of poetic and literary creation at court. As the 10th century marched on, the Fujiwara Northern branch, the regent family, disputed the emperor's cultural centrality in the imitation of a *hare*-like style of presentation by celebrating poetry matches in the imperial fashion, outside of the emperor's direct influence (Heldt: 2005, 29). It is also not hard to imagine that emperors would answer this tendency by attempting to regain control over the use of *uta* by the issuing of imperial anthologies (Smits: 2015, 26), turning potentially subversive or non-compliant poetry into innocuous texts that tacitly supported imperial power. Sources of legitimacy and public relevance were contested, but so was the political signification of literary text.

It is more useful when referring to *hare* and *ke* spaces, therefore, to speak of a gradual sense of a separation between the emperor-centric sphere—focused on the pivotal figure of the monarch—and what stands outside of it, existing as a model that can be applicable to other social and cultural hierarchical structures at court—like the one led by the Fujiwara. In this sense, these structures can be described as a pyramid, where textual producers exist under the wing of defined political and cultural centres of downward legitimisation. Other socio-literary divisions co-exist with this up-down description of literary and cultural

[9]The most common term used in the field of Japanese studies to refer to writings by women in the Heian period is "(courtly) women's literature/diary" (王朝)女流文学/日記. Although the term *nyōbō nikki* 女房日記, "lady-in-waiting diary" is also employed. On this, see also note 25.

relations, however, qualifying networks of circulation, social significance, and cultural capital. In the diaries I discuss in this thesis, I would like to refer to an inside-out distribution of literary production that is perhaps as fundamental to the understandings of literary circulation and social positioning as the *hare*/*ke* dichotomy; texts of the domestic, and non-domestic sphere.

This is a classification of literary spaces that very much follows this same blurry, politically negotiable, subjected to re-contextualisation dichotomy; however, it is in a sense, the polar opposite of the conceptualisation just presented. For the author, the *hare*/*ke* dichotomy is centred on an upward movement where legitimisation is granted through the adherence to certain rules of presentation and performance derived from an external figure of authority. The domestic/extra-domestic distinction focuses on the household-based centres of textual production and circulation as the source of literary and social validation, In domestic-centric texts, even when engagements with more public realms of society are portrayed, when extra-domestic interactions are considered deserving of being preserved, they are justified by socially effective actions taking place in the home. This is the case of Michitsuna's Mother's *Kagerō nikki*, where an active effort is made to represent the continuity between domestic and *hare* spaces.

Domesticity:

As the question of domesticity and its different conceptualisations is integral to my discussion, it will be relevant to briefly address what I mean by this term. As defined by Monica F. Cohen,

> domesticity refers to the lived experience of private life, the material dimensions of the home, and an ideology that imaginatively organizes complicated and often contested ideas about privacy, work, gender identity, family, subject formation, socioeconomic class, civilizing morality, and cultural representation (Cohen: 2012).

However, "domesticity," whether in Heian life or in other historical moments, need not be confined to one discreet space or limited to the people living in it. "Home" can be understood in terms of material and social relations that support familial or quasi-familial groups, rather than as the physical space they inhabit (Blunt and Varley: 2004, 3). As a modern example of this process, anthropological studies have addressed the re-staging of dwelling amongst transnational Filipino families through the use of mobile media (Cabalquinto: 2018, 796); in the same way, for Heian aristocrats a shared material space was created through the stream of dispatches, poetic or otherwise, that circulated between the different family members of a shared imagined unit.

The varied nature of marital relations during the Heian period included duolocal, or visiting marriages (*tsumadoikon* 妻問い婚), and uxorilocal ones (*shōseikon* 招婿婚), creating fluid, unstable conjugal units. Even though, the origins of the patriarchal family model can be traced all the way back to the 7th century *ritsuryō* 律令 reforms (Wakita: 1984, 79), it was not until the Kamakura period when the *ie* 家 structure, centred around a cohabiting husband and wife was developed (Yoshie: 2005, 442-444. See also McCullough: 1967).[10]

[10] Wakita Haruko speaks of the bureaucratic organisation of households in the *Ritsuryō* codes around a single head (*koshu* 戸主) as proof of the development of patriarchal authority already in the 7th century (Wakita:

And yet, already in the earlier centuries of the period, we find examples of an understanding of imagined familial shared communities; as an example, here is the poem Sugawara no Michizane's 菅原道真 (845-903) mother wrote on the occasion of her son's coming of age ceremony, wishing he would carry on the spirit of his father's scholarly family forward:

> On the night of the Sugawara Minister [Michizane]'s donning of the cap, his mother composed,
>
> *Enough even to break the katsura tree on the faraway moon, may the wind of the house/the family tradition blow*[11]

This poem clearly expresses a desire for her son to be a worthy Sugawara, indicating her own connection to the name. Of course, this is a heavily Sinicised context, that alludes to success in the civil service examinations (Borgen: 1986, 69), which makes sense in relation to the Chinese literary expertise of the Sugawara, and should not be taken as an example of actual familial organisation. However, it is precisely this type of connection, established not necessarily through the sharing of space, but common goals, promises of social support, and sense of identification that I take as my starting point to discuss domesticity versus the

1984: 79). I do not dispute the patriarchal character of Heian society prior to the implementation of the *ie* system—particularly at court; however, Wakita's view is contested by Yoshie et al.'s more recent annotated translation of the codes, where they argue the position of household head was ill-defined in practice and women were known to function as residence unit heads (Yoshie, Ijūin, and Piggot: 2013, 367-368). In any case, the degree of impact of the codes on family structure until the 9th century seems to be up for debate.

[11]菅原の大臣かうぶりし侍ける夜、母の読み侍ける

久方の月の桂も折る許家の風をも吹かせてし哉 *Shūishū*, 473 (SNKT: 134). See also Borgen: 1986, 69. The expression "wind of the house" (*ie no kaze* 家の風) would appear sporadically later on in 11th and 12th century poetry. A similar example to this can be found in Akazome Emon's personal collection, where she hopes her son will make his father's name thrive (Bundy: 2012, 217).

more public sphere.[12] This poem does not preclude the inclusion of either Michizane or his parents in different familial groups, but at the same time, it underpins the belonging of all three within an identifiable unit.

In this sense, my domestic sphere is defined as *a group of individuals that understand themselves as part of a permeable, amorphous, but identifiable informal support network, whose members are interrelated through emotional/familial, material, and literary bonds*. Although it stands in contrast to relations of patronage created in the court, it includes servants and other members of the household that are involved in the creation, communication, and distribution of the material culture cementing these relations. In the same way, these relations may at times be used to underpin and promote social advancement in courtly circles. Formal relations of employment and economic dependence are, therefore, present within domestic units, but are not their defining characteristic.

It is a fundamental component of my argument that the different texts articulating my discussion present a variety of conceptions of what the role of the domestic and non-domestic spheres play within the rest of society, and what domestic roles as expressed in each of these memoirs signify for the position of individuals. Here, in each of these diaries, the potential of these diversely instituted, informal relations is negotiated in order to chart their author's social position in relation to other members of the community and the

[12] The use of the labels "private" and "public" is a problematic one, when referring to the Heian period. When I do, for the sake of convenience, "private" refers to the sphere of the house, and "public" to the non-house realm. "Public" is, therefore, distinct from "official," which refers to the space formulated under imperial authority.

community as a whole. At the same time, they create socially impactful literary records that may reflect this bargained-for status for their peers and descendants.

Power Relations:

While discussing women in the domestic space in relation to Early Modern British religious "pamphlet literature," Katharine Gillespie exhorts her readers to move

> "from politics conceived (anachronistically) as the business of institutions, bureaucracies, and officers to the broader politics of discourse and symbols, anxieties and aspirations, myths and memories." It will mean viewing politics as "something done by " ordinary men and women rather than "to them" by rulers or for them by great thinkers. It will further illustrate the fact that "the public– private divide" and other liberal ideas were themselves "the object of struggle … rhetorical construct[s] which [were] deployed in kaleidoscopically shifting ways to a variety of ends" and that, "in this process, moreover, women were participants as well as objects" (Gillespie: 2004, 13).

In the same sense, I consider the choices to portray domesticity as a tool for social advancement—Michitsuna's Mother's—to deny it this power to do so—Izumi Shikibu's—or to bring into question the constitutive elements of its support network—Takasue's Daughter's—as a politically motivated choice made by women whose engagement with the rest of society might have taken place through limited, but also multifaceted, active lenses. All of these texts reveal types of engagement with the world, that are understood to be potentially influential, at one level or another, both in the eyes of their peers, and for future generations, both in the domestic and the larger social stage. The separation between these spaces is a porous one.

Gillespie also asserts that in texts that discuss British women's interactions outside of the house, it was only the perceived transgression of wifely/daughterly/servant duties—that is, the purely domestic ones—that allowed women a claim to centrality in popular narratives. That is, that women who achieved authority outside these acceptable roles were perceived "not only as disorderly, but criminal" (Gillespie: 2004, 45-46), but dutiful women were mostly absent as subject in these texts. Although the pattern followed by the *nikki* described here is the opposite—that is, centred precisely around domestic duties—there exists in these texts a similar understanding of both propriety and the potentially antisocial connotations of feminine action and subjectivity.

It is within this perception that we can place *nikki*'s tendency to define the authors' behaviour in relation to conventionally acceptable household-based social relations. This trend is present both in these diaries, and in the texts that later recontextualise them—as the case of Izumi Shikibu's image in medieval imagination shows, having failed to negotiate a domestic framing. These memoirs do not portray their authors as trying to break away from domestic trappings, but rather, they outline their actions, whether potentially subversive or not, in domestic terms. Neither *Kagerō nikki* nor *Izumi Shikibu nikki* can really be called "transgressive;" the first one very much presents a socially acceptable role allowed to Michitsuna's Mother, and reinforces her position of household-based literary producer, while the second one is at pains to remove the account of the love affair in its pages from the intersection between private life and the socio-politically relevant.

What does this mean, then, for the power-relations that guide and influence the choices behind the content of these diaries, and that are inescapably tied to the very creation of these self-depicting texts? It is not my intention to talk about these *nikki* as examples of a subjugated group finding their voice against oppression, as some feminist readings of these texts have done in the past, but neither as a "collaborationist" product—that is, a form of cooperation with, or servitude to an oppressor in detriment of fellow women. On *Giving an Account of Oneself,* Judith Butler states,

> [T]he moment I realize that the terms by which I confer recognition are not mine alone, that I did not single-handedly devise or craft them, I am, as it were, dispossessed by the language that I offer. In a sense, I submit to a norm of recognition when I offer recognition to you, which means that the "I" is not offering this recognition from its own private resources. Indeed, it seems that the "I" is subjected to the norm at the moment it makes such an offering, so that the "I" becomes an instrument of that norm's agency. Thus the "I" seems invariably *used* by the norm to the degree that the "I" tries to use the norm. (Butler: 2005, 26).

Butler is referring here to structures of self-presentation as a literary subject, but it is worth tracing an equivalence between their operations and the social dynamics surrounding *nikki* subjects that try to portray themselves as relevant within the community. *Nikki* authors, even in subversion, become subjected to the social norm, just by participating in the *nikki*/*monogatari*/*shū* structures of circulation. In this manner, *Kagerō nikki* and *Izumi Shikibu nikki* take the model of unequal, hierarchical interaction purported by Heian social structures, and reflected by *monogatari* and *nikki* before them, and adjust the description of their behaviour and literary creation to fit acceptable models, rather than to challenge them. As they bend this framework to their best advantage, they too participate in the creation of and reinforcement of a socio-literary norm that requires their situation to be

defined by dependency and disempowerment; for this is the one that allows them a space for personal expression and comment on their circumstances.

This is not to say that the power-relations between textual producers and their patrons can only be explained in terms of oppression; this is definitely not the way in which they are framed by the authors. Rather, their relation to patrons and authority figures lies somewhere between defiance, acceptance, and willing collaboration; a nuanced position where their relevance within different sets of society is constantly negotiated. This lack of outright rebellion, but rather, attempting to find the most advantageous position within the pre-existing social configurations is a common tactic within vulnerable groups, which has been addressed in other areas of academia, but that may well be applied here. In the words of James Scott, when discussing Indonesian peasant resistance,

> It is no simple matter to determine just where compliance ends and resistance begins, as the circumstances lead many of the poor to clothe their resistance in the public language of conformity. (…) [H]ow is one to categorize the subtle mixture of outward compliance and tentative resistance involved in the attempted boycott of combine-using farmers? (Scott: 1985, 289).

The women described in this thesis portray themselves as dependant and exposed, however, they still occupy positions of privilege that are justified precisely by this framing. In this sense, I use this language of dispossession and resistance cautiously. But, since social vulnerability is both an actual issue faced by these authors, as well as a fundamental part of their literary construction, I believe these comparisons are relevant to my discussion. *Kagerō nikki* and *Izumi Shikibu nikki* are, too, "clothed in the language of conformity," and

so, any attempt to criticise their patrons, or justify their personal behaviour must be supported by the subsistence of the system of power dynamics they are entrenched in, for the personal benefit of the author. A similar approach arises within *nyōbō* authored works—*Murasaki Shikibu nikki* and *Makura no sōshi*—where the vulnerability of the authors is presented, although not denounced, as a disagreeable factor that plays a significant role for the textual circulation of their works. This will be more thoroughly discussed in the second chapter.

Sarashina nikki is, however, an interesting case, as this "clothing" is used precisely to discuss alternatives to the social configuration presented and preserved by her foremothers, rather than endeavouring to describe its author's place within them. In this sense, Takasue's Daughter comes the closest to uncloaking herself from the layer of conformity, as she examines the norm, both linguistic and social, under which her self-expression must be framed. Her text is still very much entrenched in socio-literary dynamics that support the hierarchical relations I mention here—that is, in its *monogatari* and *nikki* framing, in style and content—and her self-presentation as an outsider of the group renders her, in a way, a non-threat to power. However, her text, while aware of the possibilities afforded to her by the spaces of circulation and socio-literary expectations she participates in, reveals the normativity of these structures, which is, perhaps, the extent of the critique someone in Takasue's Daughter's position could realistically exert.

Theoretical Background and Works Consulted:

My initial approach to this project had much to owe to Gérard Genette's idea of paratext, understood as a "certain number of verbal or other productions, such as an author's name, a title, a preface, illustrations[,] (…) to ensure the text's presence in the world, its "reception" and consumption in the form (nowadays, at least) of a book" (Genette: 1997, 1). Traces of this framework are still perceptible in the present work, even if the wording employed deviates from such a terminology. My analysis is not only based on strict close reading, but rather on a holistic approach, that contemplates the texts within a network of circulation and reception. Even though, Genette's conception of this term was deployed mostly on literary works in print, in a markedly modern context, its definition allows for a greater applicability of the one expounded in his critical writing. For this reason, in later years it has been included as a methodological tool for the analysis of other forms of media, orality, television, and, finally, in manuscript studies (Ciotti and Hang: 2016, vii), following a broader definition of what "text" means.[13] After all,

> More than a boundary or sealed border, the paratext is, rather, a *threshold,* or—a word Borges used apropos of a preface—a "vestibule" that offers the world at large the possibility of either stepping inside or turning back. It is an "undefined zone" between the inside and the outside, a zone without any hard and fast boundary on either the inward side (turned toward the text) or the outward side (turned toward the world's discourse about the text), (…) "a fringe of the printed text which in reality controls one's whole reading of the text" (Genette: 1997, 1-2).

[13] "We may say that texts "can be any physical structure at all made to embody ideas in the semiotic sense," and that text is "the primary element (basic unit) of culture," generated by the systems of cultural codes. Hence the application of text semiotics to a broad range of cultural phenomena. Danesi for example, includes "routine conversations," along with "musical compositions, stage plays, dance styles, and ceremonies," as examples of "products of our text-making capacity." (…) A text must have definable parameters; it must be separable from other phenomena of experience by spatiotemporal boundaries" (Kilroe: 2000, 126). Performativity is in this sense, the "textualization" of human behaviour.

"Paratext" would be in this sense the colophon to a diary, the foreword to a poem—*kotobagaki* 詞書—in an imperial anthology, or its location within a set of volumes; but it is also the poetry match—both its written record, and the other material pieces of media surrounding it—where it is presented, or the literary exchange performed while contemplating an illustrated screen. It is in this light that certain works have informed my presentation of the *nikki* in these pages; engaging with issues of materiality and performance as fundamental—and inseparable—framings of these texts. Noguchi Motohiro's expression of the Heian understanding of the material power of words, particularly poems, to affect reality (1979); Gustav Heldt's views on poetry's performative, symbolic, ritual, and ultimately political power (2008)—although my thesis brings it away from the exclusively courtly context—and Thomas Lamarre's interrogation of the multiplicity of modes of material engagement between "readers" and text in the Heian period (2000) are all relevant to my discussion.

The concept of lady-in-waiting in tales as a *ficelle*—a literary device meant to smooth the progress of the narration without detracting from the centrality of the protagonist—presented by H. Mack Horton (1993), is relevant to my discussion of women-writers as active, involved chroniclers of their social superiors' lives; however, I do not apply this concept merely to the fictitious lady-in-waiting, as he does, but as a sort of self-framing employed both by women serving at court and by those writing from a domestic context. Moving away from the consideration of more performative aspects, Joshua Mostow's arguments against the common understanding of *kana nikki* as confessional and apolitical (Mostow: 2004) and Edith Sarra's notion of Heian women authors as aware of their role as

writers (Sarra: 1999), have also been deeply influential for the conception of this thesis. Unlike Sarra, however, I do not focus my examination of relations of patronage and power dynamics on the "construction of ideals of femininity" (Sarra: 1999, 8), but on the management of social interactions for which gender is but one of the constituting factors.

My final chapter moves away from this approach to paratexts and reception as the main tools to discuss the principal text, and focuses on taking the theoretical results of the first two chapters on domesticity, and critical reception/creation to their logical conclusions. Both the chapters on Michitsuna's Mother and Izumi Shikibu discuss a contemporary literary response to the reinterpretation of social relations presented in their *nikki;* whereas, *Sarashina nikki* is shown here to give its own response to both of these approaches, while using the same language Takasue's Daughter has acquired from texts like her foremother's diaries. The call is coming from inside the house. For this chapter I have derived inspiration from Terry Kawashima's discussions on the literary creation of a sense of geographical and social marginality and centrality (2016),[14] as well as Rajyashree Pandey's re-examination of the concept of agency, as applied to classical Japanese literature and the relations of its authors to the world around them (2018), and the questioning of Western preconceptions relating to understandings of womanhood, feminism, and social relations in the examination of literary figures (2016).

[14] Although of this work, I draw more from general ideas about the framing of literature as a tool to define marginality, centrality, and power relations than on the actual arguments presented by Kawashima.

For modern editions of the diaries, I refer mostly to *Nihon Koten Bungaku Zenshū*, in its latest and previous editions, however, Inukai Kiyoshi's edition of *Kagerō nikki* (1982) has also been used. In addition, copies of manuscripts of all three texts, held in the Imperial Household Agency have been consulted; particularly *Izumi Shikibu nikki* (*Sanjōnishibon*) 和泉式部日記(三条西本),[15] *Sarashina nikki* (*Teikabon*) 更級日記(定家本)—both of these accessible online through the Public System of Catalogues/Images of Materials Belonging to the Imperial Household Agency Archives and Mausolea Department—and *Kagerō no nikki* (*Miyabon*) 蜻蛉日記(宮本)—accessible online through the National Institute of Japanese Literature Online Database; classified by the Imperial Household system as *Kagerō no nikki Goshobon* 蜻蛉日記御所本.[16]

The monumental nine volume *Kagerō nikki kaishaku taisei* (1983-1995) by Etsuko Uemura, and Itō's *Sarashina nikki no kenkyū* (1995) must be mentioned alongside the modern editions of these texts, as these two works deeply inform Sonja Arntzen's translations and commentary of these diaries, *The Kagerō Diary* (1996) and *The Sarashina Diary* (2014), which have been consulted extensively for this dissertation,[17] as well as the older translations of *Kagerō* and *Sarashina nikki* under the titles *The Gossamer Years* (Seidensticker: 1964) and *As I Cross a Bridge of Dreams* (Morris: 1975). *Kagerō nikki* also has a French translation, *Mémoires d'une éphémère (854-974)* (Pigeot: 2006), which clearly

[15] A facsimile edition of this manuscript exists under the title *Izumi Shikibu nikki: Kunaichō Shoryōbu zō den Sanjōnishi Sanetaka hitsu* 宮内庁書陵部蔵伝三条西実隆筆 (Fujioka: 1983).

[16] The page numbers given for these manuscripts refer to those used in their respective online viewers.

[17] Itō has also edited more recently *Sarashina nikki enkinhō* (2014), coinciding with the publication of his co-translation with Arntzen.

has been influenced by Arntzen's version. *The Diary of Izumi Shikibu* by Edward Cranston (1969) still remains the main translation of the *nikki* in English in spite of its age.[18] Newer translations have been produced in other languages more recently, however; for this thesis the more relevant ones are *Journal et pòemes* (Sieffert: 1989) in French, and *El Diario de la Dama Izumi* (Rubio and Imoto: 2017) in Spanish.

This thesis remedies a gap in the English-speaking scholarship on Heian diaries, which had never approached the different conceptions of interaction between overlapping spheres of socio-literary influence—transcending the public/domestic, or official/unofficial dichotomies often used to frame them—in which these writers place themselves. In this sense, it engages with questions of patronage, power dynamics, and their influence in the distribution and dissemination of (auto-)biographical Heian narratives by women that have not been considered thoroughly, even though this perspective completes the picture by not only focusing on matters of gender but also on those of social position and social dynamics. At the same time, this project holds an interest beyond the field of Japanese Studies, particularly for literary and historical scholars interested in a comparative approach to different modes of authorship, dynamics of patronage, questions of publicity, the circulation of women-authored texts, and their relation with the sphere of domesticity; as well as the intersection between premodern literature and Queer studies.

[18] And older version of this translation exists, in *Court Ladies of Old Japan* (Omori and Doi: 2003), which includes 1920 translations of *The Sarashina Diary* and *The Diary of Izumi Shikibu.* Neither of these have been particularly influential for this work, however.

1. Publicising Domesticity: Fujiwara no Michitsuna's Mother and *Kagerō nikki*:

The author this chapter is centred on is traditionally known to us as Fujiwara no Michitsuna's Mother (?-995) (Fujiwara no Michitsuna no haha 藤原道綱母). She was the daughter of one Fujiwara no Tomoyasu 藤原倫寧 (?-977), a man who would serve as governor (*zuryō* 受領) of several provinces throughout his life; she belonged, therefore, to the middle-ranking aristocracy. She was renowned as an accomplished poet already in her lifetime, and her compositions were recorded, as we shall see further down, in several imperial collections. It is due to her *Kagerō nikki*, however, that she is most remembered today. This memoir has been considered by modern scholarship as one of the foundational examples of self-narration in *kana* in the Heian court, and as such, a canon-defining work of Japanese literature (Suzuki: 2000, 71).[19] The main focus of the work is her marital relationship with Fujiwara no Kaneie 藤原兼家 (929-990), a man who would eventually become the propellant of the regent-chancellor system (*sekkan* 摂関) dominating the politics of much of the Heian period. Her account deals mainly with personal matters pertaining to her marriage and family life, and it hardly ever moves away from events happening within Michitsuna's Mother's direct perception and those who most matter to her personally (Watanabe: 1984, 372). However, it would be a mistake to consider this element of the text as an indication of solipsism or lack of interest in the rest of society.

[19]Ki no Tsurayuki's*Tosa nikki* 土佐日記 (935) is the earliest preserved example of *kana nikki*, and although some other self-narrative works appear between the two, they would not go on to become as influential. For other *kana* texts in this vein written in the *interim* see Mostow: 2004.

As shown later, through her relation to the members of her closest circle and her marriage, Michitsuna's Mother describes her engagement with the world of the court, while highlighting her perceived role as a woman of the house as fundamental to this social relation. In this way, not only does she attach herself to the figure of Kaneie—and later on to that of her son, Michitsuna—she also presents a noteworthy contrast to other women authoring self-narratives during this time period—such as Murasaki Shikibu or Sei Shōnagon—who, as imperial ladies-in-waiting, do not express their bond to their patrons through the lens of domesticity. In *Kagerō nikki,* the sphere of the emperor-centric production of text and socio-literary performance is cemented and supported by a household-based textual creation, rather than by courtly literary salons. This conception of a domestic role integrated into the greater sphere of the court showcased in the diary would, however, be erased by other texts that later recontextualise it, particularly by imperial anthologies; the quintessentially *hare uta*-based works.

I will introduce my discussion of this author with a more general interrogation of the social and literary circumstances that allowed for the relations of patronage and negotiation *Kagerō nikki* showcases. In the second part of this chapter, my examination of the literary production of Michitsuna's Mother itself will be divided in two parts; firstly, I will comment on the relations between the author and different possible sources of patronage or relations of dependency, as they are depicted in the diary. Secondly, I will shift my focus to latter works where Michitsuna's Mother's poetry and prose was re-contextualised by the network of editors and compilers who worked around the diary's portrayal of the author's domestic role and its social significance. In this way, my first chapter will make observations

on three topics; firstly, the way in which literary production could be understood as a bridge between the public and domestic spheres occupied by high-ranking Heian courtiers like Fujiwara no Kaneie; secondly, how this literary production could be used as a tool to reinforce and define connections of patronage between these courtiers and their middle-ranking wife-poets; and finally how the social functions and dynamics Michitsuna's Mother's diary presents are erased or undermined by later *hare*-centric texts that disregard them. I will, therefore, not offer an in-depth analysis of all three *Kagerō nikki* scrolls, but rather, I will highlight the elements that reflect these domestic-centric arrangements.

Conceptions of Literariness and Circulation in the Heian Court:

Following on what has already been presented in my introductory chapter, I will now briefly expand on the power dynamics taking place around the main centres of cultural production and patronage at the court, and the way in which these affected literary dissemination. This will set the starting point for latter discussion about how literary works were deployed within these dynamics, and how the middle-ranking women employed by the regent house as text producers had to navigate the networks of patronage and cultural legitimisation that controlled the diffusion of their work.

At the beginning of the 9th century, Emperor Saga 嵯峨天皇 (786-842) and his descendants became patrons and champions of poetry and the literary arts in an effort to adapt literary continental models, attempting to ensure the place of the imperial family as the centre of

political and cultural legitimisation at court. Of course, these efforts did not merely suppose an act of acquisition of knowledge for knowledge's sake; the figure of the emperor would rest at the very axis of the contemporaneous understanding of what was literary and what was not. Following the example of a sentence found in the *Lun wen* (3rd century)—"writing binds the realm"—*monjō keikoku* 文章経国—Chinese style poetic composition would become an essential principle (Borgen: 2005, 169). And so, a series of reforms would be undertaken; adopting Chinese models, developing an orthodoxy of reception for Sinitic texts (Webb: 2005, 22), strengthening the imperial hold on the national university,[20] and promoting literary creation supported by this conception. In this way, the political and cultural microcosm of the court would be defined by an emperor-centric understanding of literature.

Control of written language would legitimise and guarantee the emperor's cultural authority over the nobility and, by extension, the realm. Literature—that is to say, Chinese poetry and literary theory—would be taken as a powerful social regulator. And so, by controlling the production and dissemination of texts, emperors would establish themselves as the drivers behind this regulation (Heldt: 2008, 46). Texts copied down and performed under the emperor's gaze would, on the one hand, serve as a record of events; but they would also be considered as a creative force shaping social relations. The performance and reception of Heian court poetry functions as a particularly clear example of this literary understanding; in spite of the potential literary power of particular *uta,* this

[20] This was an institution detailed by the 701 Taihō Codes meant to instruct future court bureaucrats in Chinese Classics, Confucian Studies, Mathematics, etc. (Borgen: 1986, 71-72).

belief in world-harmonizing texts is not primarily focused on the poems themselves. Rather, it is their interaction with other poems and their ability to enable further compositions that reflects and creates the harmonic nature of social relations between sovereign and subject (Webb: 2005, 168). Saga's sponsorship of Chinese poetry brought about approaches different from those of previous emperors precisely because he himself was a poet, and so, he was able to turn unidirectional praise from his courtiers into poetic dialogue. From this point on, emperors would not only exist at the top of the (literary) world; they would become its keystone and its driving force (Webb: 2005, 168). As such, they would not limit themselves to the role of an enabler of poetic dialogue; rather they would lead the harmonisation of the compositions of other poets through the commissioning of imperial anthologies, *chokusenshū* 勅撰集*,* and the sponsoring of poetry matches, *uta awase* 歌合.

On the other side of this relation, for writers and readers in the Heian court, literature was to be understood from a pragmatic sense, as a tool both for social expression and control. Particularly through poetry, anyone could give voice to their feelings, positive or negative, and make them known, in the right circumstances. At the same time, these circumstances would be constructed, and the voices presented in them elected, by very particular hierarchical dynamics. Not all texts could claim the same social usefulness, or would be included under the legitimising eye of the emperor; the channels and contexts in which this control was effected would determine what texts were "harmonising" or "harmonised"—in other words, which texts deserved to be part of the emperor-centric "world." Notwithstanding, textual producers themselves were, ideally, capable of affecting the worldview of their peers and superiors through their poetic and artistic talent. Albeit

unequal in the manner of its social impact, a consciousness existed of the implementation of literature as an exertion of power, both for those who had the ear of the mighty, and for those who felt they had been removed from more overtly political faculties (Marra: 1991, 48).

Furthermore, the figure of the emperor was not the only one capable of standing as cultural arbiter and promoter of literary production. Public composition of *uta* would play an important role in cementing relations of cultural dependence around other courtly centres, particularly around the different members of the Fujiwara Northern branch; regents, consorts, etc. (Heldt: 2008, 15). On this second centre, however, two caveats must be made; firstly, although both the imperial family and the Fujiwara may seem like two well defined political centres, it is worth remembering as well that the regent family were not an indivisible bloc; several factions would support different literary salons depending on different political and personal factors (Sorensen: 2012, 86-87). Secondly, it would also be a mistake to understand the Fujiwara cultural production as merely contesting imperial centrality; both spheres fed off each other, both at court and outside of the direct reach of the palace. As an example of the first point, the aforementioned Murasaki Shikibu and Sei Shōnagon famously used their literary prowess to further oppose Fujiwara interests in the women's quarters of the palace, championing the cultural relevance of their respective mistresses as imperial consorts; Michitsuna's Mother, too, as we will see later on, used her *nikki* to stress her and Kaneie's proximity to the imperial family. The second point will be addressed further down, in the second half of this chapter.

And so, if we consider "literariness" in the Heian court as the characteristic of texts created in order to harmonise and affect social relations within the nobility, we are not just facing an in (*hare*) and out (*ke*) situation, but a series of circles with differing relations to these two concepts. These can be sometimes overlapping, trying to support the literary legitimacy of their texts in different ways and with diverse intentions, but ultimately they all rely on the existence of an authority figure as the propelling element of their literary and social world, and a context imbued by a certain degree of ritualization. Ultimately, a literary text is characterised by its performance under a legitimising eye and its ability to produce harmony between unequal members of society. The literary text is, therefore, not only performed; it is performed in a way that publicly showcases its place within the harmonic, social fabric of the court's microcosm, under the gaze of the imperial family or the Fujiwara. Only then can it be considered literary.

This first section has described how supervising the inclusion of texts in the official sphere through public performance and ritual was used to claim a cultural centrality, and how this behaviour applied to the imperial family and the Fujiwara regent house. Following this notion, I will now expand on particular types of works that were produced outside of the direct influence of the emperor, but were still circulated following this model; and how said circulation positioned their writers and patrons in the politico-cultural world of the court, in the context of the *ke*/*hare* dichotomy. With these notions in mind, I will be dealing in this chapter with the advent of a particular kind of female writer, intrinsically tied to works defined by the historic-poetic value they hold for their patrons. In order to further contextualise this figure, I will now move on onto the types of texts that were produced

under the model presented in this first section; exploring the social significance of the biographical "genres" of *nikki*, memoir, and *kashū*, poetic collection. Although, as it will be seen, the distinction between diary, anthology, and tale is not always a practical or useful one.

Nikki and *Shū*:

I will often, in the following chapters, refer to these two types of text more or less interchangeably, in terms of their social significance, and so here, I trace a brief history of the usage of this terminology, and present some tentative definitions and clarifications, worth keeping in mind. Konishi (1986, 256) defines *nikki* as "a prose composition, written in the present tense, that is concerned with the life of a historical person" and *shū* as "a complex made up of prose in the *monogatari* (past tense, historical or fictional characters) or *nikki* stile and a *waka* sequence." Although these definitions establish general rules, they present their own problems; *Kagerō nikki*, for instance, jumps between non-past and past tense in order to distance or bring the narrator closer from the facts that are being presented (Wallace: 2005, 85-86) and uses structures typical of fiction works (Yokoi: 1999, 398). Therefore, stylistic considerations are not always enough to distinguish between the categorisations of "tale" and "diary;" often, what distinguishes *nikki* from *monogatari* is not the truthfulness of their content, but rather an appearance and performance of factuality in the eyes of society.

It is also undeniable that most works by the name of *nikki* contain, and in many cases are articulated by *uta* sequences, making the distinction between *shū* and *nikki* oftentimes a

matter of context. Due to the malleability of *nikki* as socially effective texts, it will be useful, first of all, to place here works such as *Kagerō nikki* within their appropriate historical context, in relation to the social significance of the literary production they embody; in regards of *shū*, *kanbun* diaries, and other *kana* prose.

Personal poetry collections were understood from the early Heian period on as the property of a house and they are reflected as such by the use of the character "*ke* 家" in their titles, as we can see in Sugawara no Michizane's own *shū Kankeshū* 菅家集, *Kankebunsō* 菅家文藻 and *Kankegoshū* 菅家後集 (900). Not many collections from this early period are extant, however, other than those belonging to high ranking families and lineages of strong poetic tradition such as the Sugawara and the Ki (Harries: 1980, 305). This would later change, as Emperor Uda 宇多天皇 (867-931) and his descendants pushed to bring *uta* to the public—that is, the *hare*—light; by the time of the *Kokinshū,* we count several personal collections circulating through the court (Inukai: 1994, 519). These compilations of poems were presented to the emperor, possibly as material for future imperial anthologies, by the poets themselves or by their descendants (Harries: 1980, 303).

As a certain amount of background information was needed to demonstrate a poem's appropriateness to a situation, and its author's poetic elegance, collections strived to reflect or even re-imagine the circumstances tied to the poems they presented. During the 10th and 11th century we find personal *shū* with large narrative sections, sometimes in the third person, even on occasions when the poems were collected by their authors

themselves (Harries: 1980, 315). *Ise shū* 伊勢集 or *Hon'in no Jijū shū* 本院侍従集 are good examples of this tendency; each text chronicles a full blown love affair, including poems by the lovers and other people close to them, and at the same time they showcase the poet's position in the court under a particular patron.

As prose texts in *kana* penned by women, articulating real life events, we can consider the reports of *uta awase*—like those recorded by Lady Ise (872-938) in 913 and 921 (Ito: 1982, 212-213)—as a partial precedent for memoirs like the *Kagerō nikki*, as they are organised as accounts of literary and cultural expression to which the authors are subservient. It is, however, the *kanbun nikki* 漢文日記 created within the upper echelons of the Fujiwara household that hold a greater interest for us. Heldt talks about these texts appearing as a form of political legitimisation inspired by imperial records, where a lower rank narrator would observe and write down the emperor's every movement, and asserts that "circulation of texts affirmed social, economic and political distinctions in Heian Japan" (Heldt: 2005, 11). In other words, having someone writing about a particular figure, proves them worthy of becoming an "object" to be behold; someone admirable enough to be retained in other people's memories.[21] The Fujiwara were aware of this fact, and they became the first noble group to write *nikki* centred around figures outside of the imperial family (Matsuzono: 1989, 10). The Fujiwara used the *nikki* as a means to distinguish themselves from the other noble families in two ways; firstly, by controlling the creation

[21] It is worth remembering that *nikki* does not need to be translated as "personal diary;" there is no reason for the person the text is centred around to be the same as the author, either in real life or fiction (Konishi: 1986, 282).

of historical records, intertwining their own house history with that of the imperial family; and, secondly, by creating a socio-literary image handled by women writers from their own sphere of influence.

Personal *kanbun nikki* started appearing around the same period the last of the imperially commissioned historical chronicles was issued (Matsuzono: 1989, 9). This collection of six records was completed with the *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* 日本三代実録 at the beginning of the 10th century. With the emergence of personal *nikki,* a greater emphasis seems to have been made on the involvement of individual members of particular families in the events of the court, rather than on overarching historical narratives. These diaries would have been mostly kept in the *ke* sphere, as the property of the household (Matsuzono: 1989, 10), pointing to a sense of family history separated from the one regulated by the emperor. By substituting the grand narrative of the Chinese-style chronicles with personal narratives, a new understanding of historiography arose, with a multipolar—albeit limited to higher ranking men—range of perspectives, and records based around particular individuals' experiences, creating an alternative space, outside of the purely emperor-centric official sphere, while still supporting itself on the imperial structure for legitimacy.[22] *Kana nikki*, when understood as record of poetry and action of members of the Fujiwara sphere, should be taken as following this same model.

[22] It might be remembered that other history-oriented *kana* texts created later on, like the *Eiga Monogatari* or the *Ōkagami*, also belonged to the Fujiwara sphere of influence and dealt with Fujiwara subjects. These may be understood as a third, more tale-like approach to historical narration.

It would seem that *shū* and *nikki* fulfil two clearly defined and differentiated roles, and yet, when it comes to the classification of actual texts within each of these categories, the distinction between the two appears to be elusive. It is not uncommon to find *kana* works being indistinctively referred to with either name—*Izumi shikibu nikki*/*Izumi Shikibu shū*, *Ise shū*/*Ise nikki*, *Takamura nikki* 篁日記/*Ono no Takamura shū* 小野篁集—(Konishi: 1986, 252). If we consider *kana* diaries, as we do with their *kanbun* counterparts, a tool for the record of a particular kind of history, we may retroactively consider referring to as *nikki* to those texts that have actively been used as a historical source for latter records—as it is the case of *Kagerō nikki* and *Ōkagami,* as it will be discussed further down, and *Murasaki Shikubu nikki* and *Eiga monogatari*. Following this same logic, we would refer to the texts that were to be presented to the compilers of imperial anthologies, or to preserve the family's poetic legacy as *kashū*. The distinction between these two "genres," then, would be merely a contextual one, rather than one depending on content. In consequence, since we can find many of these works accomplishing both roles, we can discuss them as either diaries or poetic collections.

It is noteworthy that, even though both types of texts were created in a *ke* context—pertaining to the alternative Fujiwara centrality I mentioned in the previous section—parts of a work considered as a *shū* would often become included in a *chokusenshū*, an intrinsically emperor-centric *hare* text. This process was not limited to particular poems, as several poetic collections see their status fluctuate as whole texts; Fujiwara no Kintō's 藤原公任 (966-1041) *Shūishō* 拾遺抄 is intrinsically tied to the third imperial anthology, the

Shūishū;[23] and Fujiwara no Kiyosuke's 藤原清輔 (1104-1177) *Shokushikawakashū* 続詞花和歌集 (1165), compiled by order of Emperor Nijō 二条天皇 (1143-1165), would eventually remain as a private collection after the sovereign's death (Harries: 1980, 301). An aspect of *hare* texts that separated them from unofficial works was their immutability; personal collections, being considered the property of a household, were subject to changes by their primary author and their descendants (Harries: 1980, 310), whereas editions to imperial collections were, in theory, strictly controlled and required sanctioning by the imperial authority.

It seems slightly ironic that we usually consider *kana nikki* as the more personal, private and emotional counterpart of *kanbun* diaries (Suzuki: 2000, 82), when most of them can be linked to a certain degree of patronage and sponsorship from higher ranking members of the aristocracy, whereas *kanbun* diaries seem to have tended to be more centred around their own authors (Tamai: 1982, 256). Indeed, the identification of *kana* with a more intuitive, creative, personal type of production, as opposed to the "factual" and "drier" *kanbun* is a later historical development, propagated by 18th century *kokugaku* scholars (Smits: 2017, 48). Although traditionally "interiority" (*naisho* 内証) has been considered as defining characteristic of women-authored memoirs (Heldt: 2005, 10), this is an understanding of Heian texts that disregards the social relations in which women authors produced their work. After all, some of the first *kana nikki* preserved to this day were

[23] This is the commonly accepted view of the relations between these texts, but the precedence of either is contested, as the circumstances of the anthology's compilation are not clear. It has been attributed to Emperor Kazan 花山天皇 (968-1008) since at least the 11th century (Smits: 2015, 29-30).

penned by imperial ladies-in-waiting writing about their mistresses. *Taikō gyoki* 大后御記 (960) details the life of Empress Fujiwara no Onshi 藤原穩子 (885-954) (Heldt: 2005, 10); the prose sections of *Ise shū* cover the period of Ise's service to the same Empress and finish when this one dies, even though the focus of the text is the lady's love life (Mostow: 2004, 27). Therefore, as we can see, *kana nikki* followed a trajectory similar to personal *kanbun* diaries by high-ranking Fujiwara men; they initially were created within an imperial model that would later be imitated outside of a directly *tennō*-centric context, when they took high/ranking Fujiwara men as patrons.

This model of patron/husband hovering over the life of the literary producer/wife can be found as a pattern in many of the texts created within the Fujiwara sphere—and in some outside of it—either drawn from an existing relation, or fictionalised by the structure of the text. *Takamitsu nikki/Tonomine shōshō monogatari* 高光日記/多武峯少将物語 (ca. 962) presents a real-life example of this type of narrator; a nameless female lady-in-waiting serving the grieving wife of an aristocrat—Fujiwara no Takamitsu 藤原 高光 (ca.939-994)—turned monk (Gatten: 1998, 167). The fictionalisation of this literary structure can take place even when the content of the narration is based on a historical arrangement; adopting influences of the way earlier texts handled this structure (Mostow: 2004, 5). And so, in *Tosa nikki*, the author, Tsurayuki, disguises himself in the figure of the female low-ranking narrator who follows his steps back to Heian-Kyō from the provinces. We do not know if *Ise shū* was compiled by Ise herself, but it seems likely (Mostow: 2004, 145) that the prose fragments were a later addition. As this might also be the case with *Izumi Shikibu*

nikki (Cranston: 1969, 44), either of these texts could be considered examples of the fictionalisation of this structure.[24] In any case, both *Izumi Shikibu* and *Kagerō nikki* are structured around the depiction of the poetesses' engagement with a man of higher rank on which they come to depend.

This model is not limited to these few texts. In the poetic-biographical works Imanishi (1989, 517) describes as having been created around the members of the Fujiwara household—*Tonomine shōshō monogatari*, *Kagerō nikki*, *Hon'in Jijū shū, Ichijō sesshō gyoshū* 一条摂政御集, and later *Michinobu Shū* 道信集*, Murasaki Shikibu Nikki, Midō kanpaku ki* 御堂関白記*, Makura no sōshi, Asamitsu Shū* 朝光集*, Yoshitaka shū* 義孝集 (all of these, mid to late 10th century)—all of the central female figures appear in a subordinate position reminiscent of this arrangement, although the literary expression of their individual voices on the facts narrated is varied. In the aforementioned *Takamitsu nikki*, we find the subsidiary figure both in the abandoned wife of Takamitsu, whose poetry is central to the narrative—a model that *Kagerō nikki* will repeat—and on the narrator herself—an attendant of this wife—whose personal interjections are limited to exclamations of sympathy. *Murasaki shikibu nikki* and the *Makura no sōshi* on their part rely too much on the literary ability of their authors to let them fade into the background as mere mouthpieces; their knowledge of the classics, their wit, and their writing are an asset for their respective mistresses, and, as such they must be revealed.

[24] I do not believe, however, that *Izumi Shikibu nikki* responds to this model, as will be discussed in the following chapter, pages 130-132.

And so, these middle-ranking female figures we find in *nikki* vary from little more than a literary device that showcases their superiors' qualities to fleshed out characters. Even in this second case, however, their role as reflectors of their patrons' behaviour remains central to their characterisation. In this sense, they bring to mind Horton's description of the figure of the lady-in-waiting in *Genji monogatari* 源氏物語 (ca. 1000) as a "*ficelle;*" what he describes as any device used to "obviate a difficulty in the method of narration or presentation of a character," "without detracting from the centricity of the main character" (Horton: 1993, 98-99).[25] However, the centre of consciousness in these Fujiwara-centric *kana* narratives may still remain with the woman, rather than with the "main character" of their lives. The comparison is interesting, nevertheless, not because the women in these texts fulfil this purpose narratively; but rather because it would seem the authors themselves understood their socio-literary role regarding their high-ranking counterparts in similar terms to Horton's attendant. As these writers' relationship to their high-ranking patrons is a fundamental part of their existence as a subject, it is no wonder that even when the text expresses their own subjectivity, the "masters" that hover above it occupy a central place.[26]

[25] In this sense it is also worth tracing a distinction between the figure of the "woman of the house writer," as we may call Michitsuna's Mother or Jōjin Ajari's Mother 成尋阿闍梨母 (988?-1073?), and the "female attendant writer," like Murasaki Shikibu or Sei Shōnagon, rather than thinking of diary literature of the period as *joryū nikki bungaku* 女流日記文学 or women's diary literature, as will be discussed in the second chapter. An overlap between this classification and *nyōbō* 女房日記 does exist; however, this latter one is used by scholars as a distinct category described as memoirs by palace attendants where the prosperity of their patrons' lives is chronicled (Miyazaki: 1996).

[26] I am not arguing here that she is actively attempting to showcase a sense of subjectivity, but rather a fulfilment of a social role on which her agency does not necessarily necessitate intentionality. See this thesis, pages 214-215.

As it has been shown, a tendency towards a fictionalisation of both the content and the framing device of the story can be observed in these *shū/nikki*; in some, like *Tosa nikki* and *Takamitsu nikki,* the use of third person forces the demarcation between different narrator voices and the author. In the case of *Tosa nikki,* this becomes a rhetoric device, taken from the established model of the lowly anonymous author shadowing the authority figure (Mostow: 2005, 24); it could be said, this hierarchical expression had become prototypical. *Takamitsu nikki* poses a more complex example of this phenomenon, since we find in it a double structure of dependence; the figure of the abandoned wife is being defined as a character based on the husband's tragic decision to leave, but we also count with the lady-in-waiting narrator, dependant on her mistress, Takamitsu's Wife. The patronal figure that looms over the composition of the narrative does not need to occupy is central place; *Makura no sōshi* is dominated by Empress Fujiwara no Teishi's 藤原定子 (977-1001) presence, but the substance of the text remains very much with Sei Shōnagon. The same happens with the *Kagerō nikki* author and her patron/husband Kaneie.

It can be confidently asserted, therefore, firstly, that the historical classification of these texts must be defined by their intended mode of circulation, rather than their content. Secondly, that poetic-narrative texts authored by women of the Fujiwara sphere established Fujiwara high-ranking figures of both sexes as cultural and literary motivators for the production of their works, regardless of later categorisations as *nikki* or *shū*. Texts described as either of these two terms share one important characteristic in content and structure, taken as a mark of prestige from earlier imperially sponsored texts; the reflection

of a relationship of patronage between a lower ranking woman and a social superior. I would like to turn now to the way in which this double structure was both imposed by the social superiors and managed by the producers of texts in order to define and negotiate their social role within this position of subordination.

Nikki of the Fujiwara Sphere and Questions of Patronage:

As we have seen, *kana nikki* authored by middle-ranking Fujiwara women should be considered as playing a similar role to the *kanbun nikki*—as it has been described in the previous section—in terms of the creation of a historical record. Although stylistic differences are indeed present between each kind of memoir, it is indubitable that *kana nikki* were, too, used to chronicle the lives and cultural production of the powerful scions of the Fujiwara clan. There is also evidence to support that the authors were well aware of their role as producers and definers of their patrons' image. The preface-like section of the *Kagerō nikki*, where we are told this text might be a good answer, "should anyone ask what it is like to be [attached to] a highly placed person" —天下の人の品高きやと問はむためしにもせよかし (SNKZ: 89. See also Arntzen: 1997, 57)—in clear reference to her husband Kaneie, is a good example of this. It also reminds us somewhat of a latter text, written by another famous author serving a Fujiwara empress:

> "Then, I'll give them to you," said [the empress], so I filled many pages ceaselessly with all the curious bits of this and that. So many mindless things! All in all, these are the amusing things in the world—those people must think marvelous—that I selected. Poems and such too, trees, plants, birds, bugs, I brought forward, and because of this, I believed it would be said "it's worse than we thought. Her

> true thoughts are showing [心見えなり],” Well, as naturally I wrote down for myself the things I thought were fun (…).[27]

Both this final section of Sei Shōnagon's *Makura no sōshi* and Michitsuna's Mother's preface, express characteristics typical of commissioned works. They both open with an exposition of the causes of their compilation—Sei Shōnagon even mentions the empress' "command" directly—more than a hint of self-deprecation, and mention the expectancy of a social response to the text. It is true that they also include an assurance that these texts are merely personal endeavours, but this sounds very much like a show of humility on the part of two authors anxious to outwardly assert their lack of social relevance. This tendency towards expressions of modesty is also shared by *Murasaki Shikibu nikki*, and it seems to align with the assertions of incapacity and dullness often found in prefaces to imperial anthologies and other commissioned works. Interesting too how showing the author's "true thoughts" appears as a negative criticism; maybe this is precisely because she would have been expected to keep a semblance of objectivity through her work. My translation of this phrase here refers to "*kokoro mienari* 心見えなり," literally "her heart

[27]「さは得てよ」とて給はせたりしを、あやしきをこよか何やと、つきせずおほかる紙を書きつくさむとせしに、いと物おぼえぬ事ぞおはかるや。
おほかた、これは世の中にをかしき事、人のめでたしなど思ふべき、なほ撰り出でて、歌などをも、木、草、鳥、虫をも言ひ出だしたらばこそ、「思ふよりはわろし。心見えなり」とそしられめ、ただ心一つにおのづから思ふ事をたはぶれに書きつけたれば (…) (SNKZ: 467-468). See also McKinney: 2006, 255 and Morris: 1971, 263-264. The interpretation of this passage is not necessarily as straightforward as it might appear here. In SNKZ (1997, 467) this passage reads "人のめでたしなど思ふべき、なほ選り出て"—"Furthermore, I selected [the things] people must think marvelous and such"—where in Hagitani Boku's version (1977, 277), following a different manuscript, reads "思ぶべき名を選り出て;" "I selected the names people must think marvelous." The SNKZ does not include "poems and trees, grasses, birds, and insects" as belonging to the "splendid [names] of things", but as a different set of the descriptions presented by the text, unlike Hagitani and McKinney's translation. The "つきせず," my "ceaselessly," could apply to either the "pages" or the "these and thats" that fill them.

can be seen," and it probably describes the supposed shallowness or literary incapacity that would be perceived by Sei Shōnagon's readers. This awareness of historical significance was indeed justified, as works like these would be used as source for historical tales like the already mentioned *Eiga monogatari* (McCullough: 1980, 52).[28]

It is perhaps this distinction between text owned by its producer and text produced under someone else's protection that truly distinguishes *kana nikki* and *kanbun nikki*'s social role, where *kana* diaries authored by women, according to Miyake (1996, 51) and Cavanaugh (1996, 601), perform the latter. This arrangement brings to mind two similar examples of rank-based power dynamics underlying literary creation at the Heian court; firstly, the cases of dual "authorship" of poems in imperial *uta awase*, where a lower ranking courtier would compose (*utayomu* 歌読む) a poem that was to be recited (*yomu* 読む) by someone of higher status—Michitsuna's Mother herself would compose poems for poetry matches from her home—a duality that, according to Heldt (2008: 121), is paramount to the concept of *hare.*[29] Secondly, this pattern brings to mind Tsurayuki's use of a low ranking woman as the narrator of his *Tosa nikki*.

Heldt (2008, 128) points out that poetry composition (*utayomi*) in *hare* settings was understood as a form of deference to a higher authority. He mentions the diary of one of

[28] On the lack of control of lady-in-waiting authors over their texts, see pages 123-124 of chapter 2.

[29] We do also count with texts following the opposite model, as is the case of *Ichijō sesshō gyoshū,* where the regent Fujiwara no Koremasa 藤原伊尹 (924-972) hides his amorous adventures behind the thinly veiled disguise of the low ranking Toyokage 豊蔭. On the political significance of this choice see Mostow: 2004, 19.

Fujiwara no Michinaga's 藤原道長 (966-1028) political rivals, enraged at the thought of having been asked for some poems to adorn a screen in honour of the regent's daughter, and bitterly complaining about the authors having to inscribe their names under their compositions (Heldt: 2008, 266). We do know that most courtiers of both sexes composed *uta*, and definitely not in secret. What seems to have been considered humiliating here is composing for someone else's sake; that is, playing the part of producer for a text that is to belong to someone of higher rank. In this particular example the producers are not unnamed, but one of them is allowed not to write down his real name as an act of deference. Maybe this is just because anonymity is not necessary when the author is irrelevant. In a circumstance like this, where the poet cannot refuse to have their composition recorded in a context outside of their control, we could speak of a case of forced patronage. A similar case emerges when poems composed in *ke* contexts—like the ones recorded in diaries—are included in anthologies without the knowledge or consent of their composers.

Maybe the literary weight of the male patrons in women-authored *nikki* is not enough to consider them collaborative compositions, but these texts are clearly engaged in a double struggle; a literary dialogue between the house and the court, on the one hand, and between the Fujiwara man of *belles lettres* and what Mostow (2004, 19) calls "essentially professional poets," on the other. That is, women who allow the members of the regent house to showcase their "natural" talents, trying to demonstrate to their peers their essential courtliness through the publicity of their poetic and amorous engagements. This arrangement, however, need not be necessarily a harmonic effort, neither at a literary or

at a social level; the male/higher ranking members of the household had the power to circulate the manuscripts at their convenience, with the authors having very little control over who actually was able to read their texts (Sarra: 1999, 20). Even through a superficial reading of the *Kagerō nikki* text it is not hard to believe that the relationship between the author and her patron/husband/partner in poetry was based on a complicated game of power dynamics. Just like when we see the author both refusing to take care of Kaneie's clothes and nostalgic for a time when she was allowed to do so, it is likely we can extrapolate the presence of similar feelings when it came to having to compose and write for him. Even though Michitsuna's Mother expresses her poetic and material creations in terms of domesticity, and her social role in terms of Kaneie's presence in her life, this does not make her diary into a work of blind praise for her husband or the state of their relations.

It can be inferred that cultural authority in the Heian court—and particularly within the Fujiwara household—was partially defined by a dichotomy in its relationship with language. On the one hand, the dominance of its high-ranking members—regents, imperial consorts, etc.—was expressed by controlling and regulating utterances about themselves, their decisions, and their historical context; on the other hand it was also essential that utterances *were* produced, not by those who have a claim to power, but by nameless or unimportant subordinates. The ultimate proof of relevance would not be being able to narrate history, but, rather, existing as an object of discourse. This is no wonder, since an important part of the cultural legitimacy of these prominent figures was based on their poetic skills, while living in a society that considers poetry composition as essentially dialogical (Shirane: 2012, 197).

We could ask ourselves why, then, would these figures need to be objectified as a historical or literary figure by a subjective producer, when adding a counterpoint to their own literary expression would seem enough to record their poetry as a form of conversation. This framing of the higher-ranking person being socially produced by his partners in poetry is ultimately born from an understanding of language as a creative force (Noguchi: 1979, 105). Richard Okada describes, following Noguchi (1979), how a conception of poetry as either "true speech," or "true things" (*makoto* 真言/真事),[30] leads to the deployment of poetry in tales as an effective propellent of "story" (Okada: 1991, 80). This conception of the power of words, and ultimately of poetry, is also easily ascribed to non-fictional human interactions, as we will see largely exemplified by *Kagerō nikki* and Michitsuna's Mother's poetic relation to Kaneie. There is, therefore, an interest in the depiction of "true" poetic engagement, driven by speech acts capable of engendering responses that will show the heart of the superiors, and, with it, their courtliness and class.

And so, the poetic expression of their superiority is perceived as upholding this relation of dominance, both at a symbolic, and at a more tangential level. For this reason, composing a poem as the lower ranking member of a pair does not only allow a superior to peep into a poet's heart; at a more prosaic level, it also has the potential to move the superior—be

[30] This belief is directly linked by Noguchi to the concept of *kotodama* 言霊, which is defined as the "magic spirit power of special words" (Kimbrough: 2005, 3). However, I am not necessarily speaking here of the notion of the supernatural power of *uta,* but rather of its ability to call to action and move to pity, through the generation of empathy at a social level. That said, if this ability was considered supernatural or not, and if there is any difference between the social considerations behind composing poetry for a *kami* or for a human superior is entirely irrelevant to this point.

this a patron, an emperor, or a *kami*—to action. The women writing texts under the Fujiwara sphere of influence, whether at court or writing as members of a household, were, therefore, engaged in a complicated game of social dynamics, where their textual production was a fundamental element in building the cultural reputation of a higher-ranking individual, as long as the authors of these texts remained in a position of subordination or dependence.

Although in many senses the situation of the wife/producer was one of powerlessness, the consciousness of their politico-literary usefulness for their husband/patrons informed the choices made when it came to the composition of *nikki*/*shū.* At the same time, they had no control over the circulation of their works, which gave later editors and authors free reign to revise the negotiation for power and control of their text presented in their narratives and poems. In the second part of this chapter, I will explore the way in which these relations and their literary expression were deployed by the author, and later assumed or negated by commentators and compilers, making them part of a historical narrative of the author's relations to her patron/husband. I will use as my practical example the evolution of the perception of Michitsuna's Mother's as a poet and wife in the imperial anthologies and Fujiwara histories that make use of her text; focusing on the poems she exchanged with her husband Kaneie, as these are the ones that best illustrate the erotic-political dynamics of the distribution of her work at court.

The *Kagerō nikki,* its Author and her Patrons:

From its first conception, to its final form, the *Kagerō nikki* evolved significantly. Structurally, this text is divided into three scrolls; the first one is the closest of the three to an annotated collection of poems, without much space for the development of narration. It opens with Kaneie's courtship of Michitsuna's Mother in 954 and covers the first years of their marriage—954 to 968—the birth of their son, Kaneie's dalliances with other women, the correspondence between Kaneie and his superior, Prince Noriakira 章明親王 (924-990), and the death of the author's mother, among other things. After the death of Kaneie's mother-in-law, the core of the memoir becomes more subjective, and focused on its author, and Kaneie loses some of his centrality.

The second scroll—covering the years 969 to 971—portrays the growing discord in her marriage, Michitsuna's first steps at court and Michitsuna's Mother prolonged seclusion in a temple in Narutaki during the sixth month of 971 (Sarra: 1999, 35) caused by her marital unhappiness. This volume is less vague in terms of temporal framing, and closer in structure to a journal; slowing down, and allowing individual days to occupy more space in the pages of the text, without as many ellipses (Oka: 1986, 5). It is also much more heavily narrative than the first scroll, and the number of poems by Kaneie in it is reduced dramatically. It is believed this is the point in time when she started writing the memoir, which would account for the more day to day nature of its latter half as opposed to the summarised style of the first scroll (Noguchi: 1995, 87). Most theories take all three scrolls to have been completed by 974 or 975 (Laffin: 1999, 38).

Finally, in the third scroll—years 972 to 974—the relationship between the author and Kaneie is described as having almost completely cooled down, and the text turns much more of its attention to the now adult Michitsuna's love life, and to the author's newly acquired adoptive daughter's marriage offer. Due to this, the last volume goes back to arranging parts of its structure around the exchanging of "love" poems, similar to the first scroll, in spite of the evolution in the writing style. In terms of content, by the end of the third scroll, Michitsuna's Mother seems to be somewhat content with her situation, but resigned to having lost her husband's favour and finding herself in a less secure social position than the one she hoped to attain through her marriage.

There are some temporal gaps between the events described in the scrolls and the production of the text, and it is very likely the diary was being circulated before it took the final form it has been transmitted to us in, as it will be discussed later. For example, the first paragraph of the first scroll, a third person description of the work—that is, using *hito* 人, "a person," as its subject—[31] is thought to have been added after the fact; at the same time than the brief epilogue in the same scroll, where the diary takes its name from (SNKZ: 89). Sadly, we cannot trace the textual history of this work through the first centuries of its existence, as the earliest *Kagerō nikki* copy preserved to this day dates from the late 17th or early 18thcentury (Uemura: 1995, 7). This is the one known as *Kunaichō shoryōbuzō*

[31]The diary is usually translated as being written in the first person. Yoda argues that it often shifts from a first to a third person narrative, because of its particular use of the pronouns *ware* and *waga*, since Michitsuna's Mother wants to create different degrees of separation between herself as a character and as a writer (Yoda: 2014, 183). Mostow, however, reminds us not to project translations issues derived from English grammar onto the text, since *ware* 我 and *waga* 我が, can be translated both as I/one, and mine/one's own (Mostow: 2005, 134). This ambiguity between both meanings, is therefore, inherent to them. Whereas Arntzen (1997: 43-45) uses "I" in her translation out of the necessity for a pronoun in the English language, rather than out of choice, Pigeot strongly advocates for the first person to translate what she considers the first Japanese autobiography in her *Mémoires d'une Éphémere* (Pigeot: 2006, 278-284).

Katsura no Miyabon 宮内庁書陵部蔵桂宮本, held in the Imperial Household Agency, and considered the closest to the original. There is another textual line that includes annotations and critical comments inserted in the body of the text, but the *Miyabon* is the source of all modern editions of the *nikki.*[32]

The way Michitsuna's Mother openly expresses her grievances towards Kaneie, and her seemingly antisocial feelings towards him and other women in his life—like her happiness when informed of the death of her rival's infant child in the first scroll—has garnered her a reputation for jealousy and resentment amongst scholars; her text has been understood as characterized by unexamined anger and self-loathing (Sarra: 1999, 41-42). The expression of her negative feelings has been equated by some authors with a sort of self-centred narrow-mindedness. 20th century studies on the work, particularly, show a tendency to focus on the most negative or destructive aspects of the narrator's psychology, pointing to a pathologisation of Michitsuna's Mother's behaviour and her literary choices. And so, Watanabe Minoru refers to the work as solipsistic, with a tendency to self-exhibition (Watanabe: 1984, 379) and mostly confessional (Watanabe: 1984, 382); Ivan Morris characterises it as a jealous wail of hysterical proportions (Morris: 1985, 255); and

[32] Other than the works that directly derive from the *Miyabon,* two other textual lines originating in this work exist; a group of six complete texts, including the *Matsudaira bunkobon* 松平文庫本 and the *Anamikoku bunkobon* 阿波国文庫本 with similar copy errors, and four texts that are missing the second scroll; and finally, texts that derive from the *Yoshida Kōichizōbon* 吉田幸一蔵本 (Uemura: 1995, 7). The Imperial Household actually holds several copies of the text raging from the second half of the 17th century to the 19th century. Some of the newer versions incorporate explicatory notes within the text and biographical notes at the beginning.

Tsunoda Bun'ei (1970: 285-288) goes as far as devising a supposed calendar of the author's menstrual cycle in order to explain her actions.[33]

Later studies have been more sympathetic to Michitsuna's Mother's figure, but still very much focus on a supposed rejection of the social structure she inhabits; Wallace attributes her jealousy to an awareness of the competitive environment polygynous relationships placed her in (Wallace: 2005, 56);[34] whereas Jacqueline Pigeot understands her as a woman full of curiosity and longing for the freedom of the outside world (Pigeot: 2006, 235-236)—which, true or not, assumes a very escapist, and somewhat anachronistic reading of the diary—almost in complete contrast to Watanabe's interpretation of the text. Both of these approaches, however, fail to some extent. Wallace sees Michitsuna's Mother's engagement with Kaneie's other women as survivalist, and yet, these women are not the ones defining her position vis a vis Kaneie; it is the regent who holds the cards. Pigeot's view of the author as a proto-feminist model prevents her from accounting for her struggle to define herself socially within the sphere of influence of Kaneie, where she very clearly places herself. *Kagerō nikki* positions its author in the fulfilment of a very particular social role, that of a wife and producer for the household; and, as such, she is ultimately defined by the relations she establishes within the household and those mediated by her husband.

It cannot be said, in any case, that *Kagerō nikki* reflects a lack of awareness of either the world around its author, or of the relations outside the sphere of the household she

[33] Pigeot lists several psychiatric disorders suggested by scholars for Michitsuna's Mother: paranoia, masochism, hereditary neuropathy, etc. (Pigeot: 2006, 212).

[34] Wallace also posits, however, that judging the "self-occupied anxiety" of the diary to be "attractive and reasonable" or not is one of the readers' main concerns (Wallace: 2000, 126), going back to earlier readings of the text that seem more preoccupied with the proper fulfilment of Michitsuna's Mother's wifely duties.

inhabited directly. Even though the authors of the poems in her text are close to her heart, both the first and third scrolls include poetic exchanges—in which her level of participation ranges from non-existent to partially involved—well beyond her "immediate perception." A record of her poetic additions for a celebratory screen in the second scroll also points out to an consciousness of the potential social impact of her compositions at court; she describes in detail Kaneie's poems to Prince Noriakira in the first scroll, and Michitsuna's poems to several ladies, with their responses. Finally, we can read a conscious choice in the figures Michitsuna's Mother decides to describe—a prince, the adoptive mother of an emperor, etc.— or not in relation to herself and Kaneie that can only be described as politically aware (Wallace: 2005, 58). The fact that she apologises when she speaks of the exile of one of her husband's rivals and her poetry exchange with his wife in a text intended to deal "only with personal matters" (SNKZ: 173), also makes it clear she felt the need to respond to audience expectations.

I will now discuss each one of the scrolls the diary comprises in the context of the relations of patronage, social expectations, and relations of dependence presented in them by the author. This examination will illustrate how Michitsuna's Mother portrays her association to higher ranking members of the Fujiwara and the imperial families through her familial ties to Kaneie and her son; and how her choices further her image as a valuable cultural producer throughout her marriage and a member of Kaneie's familial circle, even after their relationship cools down. From this analysis, a conception of domesticity will arise, as it is expressed in the text, where the official and non-official relations established around Fujiwara men are ultimately rooted in the literary and cultural support of their female family members.

The First Scroll:

As has been explained before, the memoir's first scroll opens as a collection of poems exchanged between Kaneie and Michitsuna's Mother, where the contextual notes create a sort of limited narrative. In this sense, it is not too different from other personal poetry anthologies that include similar structures, and in many respects, it brings to mind the aforementioned *Takamitsu nikki* (Mostow: 2004, 5).[35] Unsurprisingly, it has been suggested the first part of this first scroll was likely to have initially functioned as Fujiwara no Kaneie's own personal *shū* (Imanishi: 1989, 515), a theory already proposed in the late 60s by Yamaguchi Hiroshi and well cemented nowadays (Noguchi: 1995, 88). Kaneie's poetic production occupies a central place in the first volume. In spite of the preeminence of poetic exchanges, the first half of the scroll does contain some more narrative sections—for instance, the author gives a short account of her grief when her father leaves for the provinces, or when Kaneie's carriage passes her gate with his new lover—but even these sections serve mostly to contextualize *uta.* It is with the death of the author's mother, slightly after the middle point of the scroll, that the narrative parts start taking precedence over the poetry, and that the poetry's pattern changes dramatically from generally dialogical in nature to an expression of personal feeling; aligning or not with the writer's external circumstances.

[35] Similarities include its beginning *in media res*, the inclusion of a long poem (*chōka* 長歌) to express marital grievances, and the general theme of spousal abandonment.

Until the section dealing with this death, most of the verses in the volume are poetic exchanges between Kaneie (thirty-three poems up to this point) and Michitsuna's Mother (thirty-six), with the exception of one poem by her father, Tomoyasu, two poems by her sister's husband, two brief exchanges with Tokihime 時姫—Kaneie's principal wife; one poem by the lady in each—one poem by an unidentified gossiper, and the aforementioned series of poems between Kaneie and prince Noriakira (eleven poems). Even though most of these figures are indeed quite close in terms of familiarity with the author, her role in these poetic conversations is not necessarily the central one. Tomoyasu's poem—composed as he leaves for the provinces—reflects his sadness at leaving his daughter behind, but it is addressed to Kaneie rather than to her;[36] Michitsuna's Mother's exchange with Tokihime is presented as an attempt by the author to commiserate on how their common husband is abandoning both of them in favour of a new lover. The focus, therefore, remains starkly on the figure of Kaneie.

Out of all the poems by the author in the first half of the scroll, only five are not directed at Kaneie. The poetry in this section, even when he is not on the receiving end is defined by the future regent's presence, his wit, and his love life. *Kagerō nikki* continuously presents Michitsuna's Mother's effort to frame herself as a fundamental part of the construction of Kaneie as producer of *uta,* and cultural figure. However, at times, this is achieved by her almost complete disappearance from the narration, as she becomes merely a relator of her husband's poetic and social standing.

[36] This exchange will be discussed further in the third chapter, pages 190-193.

In a similar way to the narrators of *Takamitsu nikki* and *Tosa nikki,* the poet here gives her superior a voice culturally legitimized by the record of a lower-class producer of text. A clear example of this trend emerges as the two spouses join forces to exchange poems with Kaneie's superior at the Ministry of War, Prince Noriakira, twice in this scroll. When the future regent neglects his duties at a post he does not particularly care for, the prince chastises him in a friendly manner, with a poem. The exchange that follows between the two men is recorded in full by the memoir's author, making the identification between Michtsuna's Mother and Kaneie clearer than in any other part of the diary (Uemura: 1995, 58). Here, in an excerpt of the first of these two dialogues, we find this extremely layered, teasing, and almost flirtatious conversation between the two men;

> [Noriakira:] *Is it because they are summer-spun threads? Perhaps enough time to weave/has passed for two or three (women)*
>
> [Kaneie's] reply,
>
> *Seven threads at least I did. [How could I say I had] no time to summer-spin that thread, if they were one or two?*
>
> Again, His Highness,
>
> *I feel you and I, as white threads, should disentangle ourselves without regrets*
>
> [Kaneie's] answer when he said this,
>
> *As ages pass/weave, even love promises run out, could we ever see something of such enormity [between us]?* [37]

[37] 夏引のいとことわりやふためみめよりありくまにほどのふるかも
御返り、
七ばかりありもこそすれ夏引のいとまやはなきひとめふために
また、宮より、
きみとわれなほしら糸のいかにして憂きふしなくて絶えむとぞ思ふ（…）
とのたまへる御返り、

The prince refers to Kaneie's involvement with women as the reason why he might be disregarding his official position, and the latter points out his affairs are more numerous than his superior imagines. The dialogue reflects Kaneie as his best; a quick-witted, elegant, cultured Casanova, appreciated by his royal superior. The poems could be in fact composed by Michitsuna's Mother, as her function as a surrogate poet is presented several times throughout the memoir.[38] At this particular point, however, it is irrelevant if the poems created by Kaneie or his wife—he is their "owner" regardless, and the fact that this ambiguity exists at all points to the literary identification of husband and wife. In any case, Michitsuna's Mother must still record them here as belonging to her husband.

This is an interesting passage, since the author presents a poetic dialogue between the two men that refers to Kaneie's erotic adventures,[39] presented after a section where the narrator has discovered and is deeply shaken by one of Kaneie's letters to another woman. As pointed out before, Michitsuna's Mother has often been described as jealous. Sonja Arntzen expresses surprise at the choice to include this dialogue, when at other times throughout the text, the author shows deep preoccupation with her husband's pursue of other women. Michitsuna's Mother might reflect on her jealousy as an internal household

世をふとも契りおきてし仲よりはいとどゆゆしきことも見ゆらむ (SNKZ: 122*).* See also Arntzen: 1997, 101-103. *Furu* in the first poem is a play on words between 経る, "to pass" and 振る, "to weave." *Me* in the first and second poems can be read as either 目, a counter for threads or 妻, "wife." *Bakari* ばかり on the second poem is also a pun between "as many as," and *hakari* 斤, another measure word for threads. The last poem again contains puns based on weave/pass, and thread (*ito* 糸)/even though *itodo* (いとど).

[38] A similar uncertainty about *uta* authorship emerges in the third scroll of the diary, where her son's poems to several women are detailed

[39] For a discussion of the several translations and interpretations of this passage in English, see Schalow: 2007, 83.

affair, but the juxtaposition of these two anecdotes points to her intention to portray her usefulness as the keeper of his outer image as a sophisticated ladies' man. Regardless of her feelings, she is not irrationally resentful; she presents herself here as a witness to her husband's life. Without her, Kaneie would lose a formidable chronicler and poet. In a way, by presenting both of this anecdotes, Michitsuna's Mother is showing us how, she may hold designs in regards to her own position vis a vis Kaneie, but she supports the erotic entanglements that may raise her husband's social capital. We do know her jealousy does not extend to Tokihime, Kaneie's principal wife, whom the author sends poems to in commiseration (Wallace: 2005, 56), when it looks like their husband might have stopped caring as much for both of them. Of course, the cautious responses from her co-wife make it seem like Michitsuna's Mother's poems were perceived more as veiled threats than as expressions of sympathy, but the context the diary offers never casts the sender in this light overtly. The author is careful not to attack the woman who actually has had a positive effect on Kaneie's social climbing.[40] Her jealousy is always socially aware, and directed towards those who may harm her own prospects in the eyes of Kaneie, but it does not express misdirected insecurity.

Examples of the familiarity between Kaneie and the prince are recorded several times throughout the first book, and are always expressed as extending to Michitsuna's Mother. The couple responds together to a perhaps jokingly flirtatious poem Noriakira sends Michitsuna's Mother; they pick up the prince in their carriage at his return from a lover's

[40] Tokihime's background was similar to the author's, and during the timeline of the first scroll their position regarding Kaneie may have been not that different, and was ultimately improved by her greater fertility. The diary, however, was recorded with the benefit of hindsight.

home; they are invited to his box to watch a parade. There are seventeen poems by prince Noriakira in this scroll; not an insignificant number, and yet, the author does not seem to play a big part in their communication—she appears here mostly as a witness to Kaneie's relation to his superior. She is along for the ride precisely because she is being taken by the prince as a part of her husband. She does not necessarily occupy a silent place in the relationship between the three, but her role is closer to that of a witness than to an equal. In opposition to this quiet friendship, her relationship to Tōshi 登子 (?-975), Kaneie's sister and consort to an emperor is also developed through the exchange of loving poems. Unlike the prince and Kaneie's, their warm correspondence keeps going into the second scroll, a point in the narrative where Kaneie has lost much of his centrality to the text.

After the death of the author's mother, however, Kaneie can only boast four more poems in the rest of the scroll, as opposed to his wife's twenty-six, of which only three are addressed to him. In the first part of the volume, there exist an understanding of poetic composition and performance as a communicative act—for instance, she describes writing her long poem as trying to write down and send him how she is feeling, since "she could not at all express it in words."[41] She also often records how her poems are the ones making Kaneie come back to her, even though otherwise his feelings seem to have cooled down. When her *uta* fail her in this regard, she complains about his willfulness.

> [Michitsuna's Mother] *Even though I see you have your reasons this time, as the evening grows darker, the autumn shower falls on deaf ears.*

[41] もの言はれずのみあり (SNKZ, 115). See also Arntzen: 1997, 89.

When I said this, shouldn't this person [Kaneie] have been compelled [to come]?[42]

In the first half of the scroll—where this poem is taken from—only a couple of poems appear described as musings by the author, and one of them is found out and replied to by Kaneie, immediately, which casts doubts on Michitsuna's Mother's intentions regarding its secrecy. This dialogical quality is very much a characteristic of this period's personal collections, and of the Heian understanding of the social value of poetry itself (Shirane: 2012, 197). After her mother's death, however, the number of poems with no response required becomes much higher. It is here where poetry starts being deployed as a means of personal expression without a defined audience, rather than directed communicative act. One example;

Finally, as it was time to change, when I was performing the purifications and such with all the dark grey [clothes], even the fans, [I composed]

The mourning robes flowing, tears in the river water overflow even the banks/even more than when I wore them

Thinking this, as I cried inconsolably, I went on, not telling a soul.[43]

[42] ことわりのをりとは見れど小夜更けてかくや時雨のふりは出づべき
といふに、強ひたる人あらむやは (SNKZ: 114). There is a play on words between *furi* 降り, "fall" in reference to the rain, and *furi'idu* 振り出づ, "to shake off, or ignore." "Falls on deaf ears" is my compromise. See also Arntzen: 1997, 87.

[43] やがて服ぬぐに、鈍色のものども、扇まで祓などするほどに、
藤衣流す涙の川水はきしにもまさるものにぞありける
とおぼえて、いみじう泣かるれば、人にも言はでやみぬ (SNKZ:137). See also Arntzen: 1997, 121. The poem makes a pun between *kishi* 岸, riverbank, and 着し, to wear.

Even though some of the events described in the first part of this scroll are sometimes taken as evidence for Michitsuna's Mother's "raw confession" (Watanabe: 1984, 376), when compared to this later half, it becomes apparent she has merely taken herself as a sort of counterpart to Kaneie up to this point.

In spite of the overtly domestic, marital themes present in *Kagerō nikki*, there is one further aspect that hints at an intentionally public sphere being intended as an audience for this scroll; the preeminence and number of men present in the poetic exchanges of the first half of the text. Of its versed dialogues, forty-seven poems in the first part of the volume are penned by men. When Michitsuna's Mother sends a goodbye poem to her sister, it is her brother-in-law who replies; when her father leaves for the provinces, the parting poem he writes is addressed to Kaneie. It would make sense for her to record these in a personal collection meant for her husband to offer for an imperial anthology. In contrast, after the breaking point of her mother's funeral, only five out of forty-two *uta* are produced by male courtiers, including a mourning poem by the author's brother. The exchanges with women in this latter part of the scroll are also very different thematically from the ones before.

The characters in this second half include her aunt, the aforementioned imperial consort Tōshi, and a friend turned nun. The sadness expressed in the poems in the first part is that of a spurned lover, and intended to gain her husband back—that is, one meant to cause perceivable change. However, she writes to these women on occasions of mourning and loss. A couple of examples, where the author is moved to sympathy (*aware* あはれ), by the perceived feelings of these women:

> When I hear about the imperial tomb and all that, I try to imagine what it must be like for those who prospered thanks to [the now dead Emperor Murakami 村上天皇 (926-967)], and I am moved to compassion. Eventually, some days passed and I enquired after how the Lady of the Jōganden 貞観殿, [the imperial consort Tōshi,] was.[44]

> I hear the wife also became a nun. As she was a friend with which I had exchanged letters talking about our future and so on, I very intensely lamented these miserable circumstances.[45]

In these two excerpts, we read how Tōshi had just lost her lover Emperor Murakami; and her friend's husband had unexpectedly abandoned the lay life to become a monk. The second part of the scroll explores therefore pain suffered by women outside of her household, but echoing her own personal experience with grief; somewhat moving away from Kaneie's sphere of influence. It would be a mistake, however, to say that this disappears completely, as there are other two exchanges with women that do not meet this pattern; Kaneie's other sister, Fushi 怤子 (dates unknown), sends her an affectionate poem as a response to a gift—that we are told she then sends to the future Emperor En'yū 円融天皇 (959-991)—and Tokihime replies to a half poem from Michitsuna's Mother with an almost aggressive finishing line, highlighting again both the tension and the perceived connection between his wives.

[44] 御陵やなにやと聞くに、時めきたまへる人々いかにと、思ひやりきこゆるに、あはれなり。やうやう日ごろになりて、貞観殿の御方に、いかになど聞こえけるついでに、(SNKZ: 152).
[45] 妻はまた尼になりぬと聞く。さきざきなども文通はしなどする仲にて、いとあはれにあさましきことをとぶらふ (SNKZ: 153).

In this scroll, the figure of Kaneie emerges as a poetic creator and gallant figure, on whom several women depend and whose favour must be won by the author, through her poetic skill. Her poetry is repeatedly framed as capable of moving her husband to action and bringing him back to her, while revealing Michitsuna's Mother's role as a chronicler, poetic instigator, and recorder of both her poetic composition, and Kaneie's.

The Second Scroll:

On this following volume of the diary, as has been mentioned already, the text shows a more clear engagement with a presupposed audience. For the first time, the work shows an awareness of its potential readers and their expectations. The aforementioned apology for including the story of the exile in her personal account is an example of this tendency, as are other small comments made around the composition of poetry; for example, when she mentions the poems she has collected from her ladies-in-waiting, she adds "even though many were said, I have forgotten so much, [the reader] will have to imagine them;"[46] later, during her retreat at Narutaki, as she receives several letters and visits, she explains a line in a poem from a friend, stating "it mentions Narutaki in particular because that was the river that flowed from there."[47] It seems unlikely she would have felt the need to remind herself of this fact. The prose sections are also much more developed here, and particularly the ones describing her journeys to centres of pilgrimages are almost devoid of poetry; a characteristic the text shares with later, travel-centric diaries like *Sarashina nikki* (Pigeot: 1982, 199).

[46]口々したれど、忘るるほどおしはからなむ(SNKZ, 172). See also Arntzen: 1997, 171.

[47]鳴滝といふぞ、この前より行く水なりける(SNKZ, 246). See also Arntzen: 1997, 249.

On the first scroll the author presented time and again examples of a poetic relationship between Kaneie and herself that would present them as members of a distinct domestic unit. The second volume does stress the connection between the author and her husband as well, but it does so by describing in detail his efforts, as well as those of the circle of family members and friends around her, to prevent her from abandoning the relationship.[48] Here, Michitsuna's Mother hides herself away in a mountain temple, as she considers nunhood, and receives the visit of several of her relations and acquaintances, who try to convince her to return to the Capital. This scene takes place after proof of Kaneie's diminishing interest in the author, as he goes as far—according to rumours relied to the narrator—to break with her in preparation to gain another woman's favour, so his visits [to the authors] would not be known [to his new wife].[49] This information triggers the first pilgrimage of the author in this volume, to Ishiyama. Other examples of the stagnation of their relationship are provided and lamented before her final decision to retreat to the mountains; he is deterred by the rain (SNKZ: 215), and he fails to visit her on New Year's Eve, against what had been his custom for years (SNKZ: 216). When he finally visits after these events, she shows a keen awareness of the loss of her favour in his eyes, as he is courting a new wife; "the woman from Ōmi 近江."

[48] This scroll, however, also includes an instance of more public engagement, as she receives a request for poems for celebratory screens for Minister of the Left Fujiwara no Moromasa 藤原師尹 (920-969). Here we see Michitsuna's Mother stress her inability to refuse her participation in the composition of poems for the ceremony, her lack of participation in the use they are given, and her despondency about the choices made around them. (SNKZ: 186) This expression of impotence is very similar to the language Murasaki Shikibu and Sei Shōnagon employ to frame the interaction between their texts and the higher-ranking court figures who ultimately exert control over them, as we will see in the next chapter.

[49] ここに通ふと知らせじと、かねて断ちおかむとならむ (SNKZ: 203). See also Arntzen: 1997, 207.

Time and again, his neglect pushes her to religious ritual and penance, which she hides or postpones due to a sense of concern for members of her family—like her pregnant sister and Michitsuna—and exhortations by her servants. These connections, consigning her into the domestic role of mother and household manager, culminate in the general efforts to return her to the Capital by her own and Kaneie's relations when there is danger she may finally choose to abandon them. The portrayal of Michitsuna's Mother's cloistering in this volume reminds us again of *Takamitsu nikki*; when Takamitsu has taken the tonsure, a series of poems and gifts are presented to him by family members and friends, in accordance to the increasing rank of their authors (Gatten: 1998, 182). In a similar way, a parade of friends and acquaintances are shown to go out of their way to communicate with her at the temple and express their grief, although the class dynamics presented here are not the exact same.

In spite of the similarity between this *Kagerō nikki* section and the *Takamitsu nikki* scene, in Michitsuna's Mother's memoir there is a decided vagueness in the way her visitors and callers are described. First an aunt—presumably the one portrayed as the correspondent of some poems after the death of the mother of the author (Arntzen: 1997, 236)—later on, her sister, and a messenger from her husband. She also receives letters presenting her with gifts, and news; a missive showing her father' acquiescence, who supports her decision; an old maid's remembering "what a no-nonsense household we always had"—いつもおろかに思ひきこえさせざりし御住まひなれど(SNKZ: 242. See also Arntzen: 1997, 245)—

and a distant relative—who scolds her, but eventually understands her reasons to take these actions. Her cloistering is, therefore, a deeply influential issue to her family life that ripples throughout the house, and beyond it, and which ultimately affects both her image and Kaneie's in the eyes of society.

In spite of the reported lack of interest Michitsuna's Mother has described on the part of her husband, Kaneie seems determined to prevent her from becoming a nun. That is, the regent is portrayed as devoting his energies not so much to keeping his secondary wife content, but to maintain the connection between the two at a symbolic level. Two reasons can be offered for this; perhaps, Kaneie considers his neglected wife as depending on him and tied to him emotionally, regardless of the decreasing sharedness of physical and material spaces presented in this volume; socially, their marriage is a connection worth being maintained, whether or not it is being nurtured privately.

Michitsuna's Mother seems to point to the second of these as the main reason for the regent's interest, since Kaneie shows a clear lack of interest in his wife's actual feelings. When finally the narrator is pushed out of the temple and back to the Capital, she expresses to have no control over her own removal, as Kaneie marches forcefully to collect her and claims it is Michitsuna's decision for them to leave or not;

> When [Michitsuna] said in a downcast manner "it is very painful, but what is there to do?," [Kaneie] forcefully replied "so sad! Even so, in any case, it is your decision. If she ought to leave, let's have a carriage be brought!" Without giving him time to complete the sentence, [Michitsuna] stood and

> rushed to pick up all the things scattered around, wrapped them, and put into bags what needed putting into bags.[50]

Faced with her son's "decision" to have her leave, Michitsuna's Mother cannot bring herself not to fulfil her role in a model where the socially perceived power dynamic ought to place her under her son, even if she characterises the circumstances of this event as decidedly negative and painful. Even though she describes her position as not necessarily responding to subservience to her son, when this relation is challenged by Kaneie, is unable to deny the forces at work that place her under him. Her justification for her actions, then, is shrouded firstly on emotional dependence; and, secondly, on a need to see her son's primacy as the head of the household be respected.

The first scroll of *Kagerō nikki* very clearly portrays a productive understanding of the household as a space for literary creation that emerges both from the interactions between Michitsuna's Mother and Kaneie, but also from Michitsuna's Mother's efforts to record Kaneie's literary persona within and outside of her house's walls. The second scroll of the text, however, reflects the literary result of internal dissension and power struggles between a secondary wife and her husband on the one hand, and the wife and the servants and child who depend on her socially, financially, and emotionally on the other. Her decision to forego her accessibility is criticised and commented upon by several relatives, to whom she must explain her reasons, but ultimately, the author portrays her inability to

[50] 「いと苦しうはべれど、いかがは」と、うちうつぶしてゐたれば、「あはれ」と、うち言ひて、「さらば、ともかくもきんぢが心。出でたまひぬべくは車寄せさせよ」と言ひも果てぬに、立ち走りて散たるものども、ただ取りて、つつみ、袋に入るべきは入れて SNKZ: 250-251. See also Arntzen: 1997, 253.

invalidate her son's performance of authority, basing her sense of identification with growing boy on a combination of emotional dependence, and social support.

The Third Scroll:

Again in this scroll, poetry takes a central role, mirroring the first volume of the diary. The first scroll was originally formed as a *Kaneieshū*, with a focus on the love poems between the regent and his wife (Mostow: 1992, 305); in a similar way, the third scroll can be taken as an attempt to create a *Michitsunashū* on her son's behalf. This book chronicles several exchanges between Michitsuna and two or three women he courts, not always with great success. The great majority of the poems in the third scroll were authored by Michitsuna's Mother herself, pointing, again, to a social identification between mother and son; the authorship of some of these poems appears ambiguous, in the same way some of the poems between Kaneie and Prince Noriakira on the first scroll. How much she participated in their composition or copying down is left to the imagination. As Kaneie and his wife distanced themselves and the husband's support became more unreliable, Michitsuna's Mother started positioning herself in the diary as a witness to Michitsuna's life. However, his sentimental prospective is not the only one we are presented with in this volume; this scroll introduces also a new character shown to be dependent on the author, Michitsuna's Mother's adoptive daughter.

> [Someone] told me [Kaneie had said that] "'a girl was born in that place [I used to visit]. They say she is mine. It might be so. Could she be brought here to live?' and things of the sort, it must be that girl. Let's have her!" and so on.[51]

This girl is the daughter of a minor lover of Kaneie's, and her adoption is partially motivated by a wish to bring back her husband's interest, and perhaps also by the hope of bettering the author's own social position. However, Michitsuna's Mother describes her feelings for the child as those of a concerned parent. An interesting inversion of the role Michitsuna's Mother plays for her husband and son is presented here. I have described the author as an active witness in the lives of both Kaneie and Michitsuna; but the adopted daughter's portrayal as a character in relation to the author is very different from the way the diary shows us her brother or father. The child is pitied and cared for, but she is always silent; she does not produce poetry or speech, and when she is courted it is her adoptive mother who writes and feels for her. Kaneie's daughter's individuality does not seem to be worthy of recording.

In the second scroll, several members of Michitsuna's Mother's household showed their ability to impact her and move her to action as she hid away in Narutaki, whether they were named or not. Her servants, aunt, and family members, as well as Kaneie and Michitsuna, take part in the game of power dynamics and emotional dependence that eventually drives her back. This new character, however, never gets to instigate action by anything other than her mere existence. The girl is presented as a tool to pique again the

[51] 「(…)『ありしところに女子生みたなり。さぞとなむ言ふなる。さもあらむ。ここに取りてやはおきたらぬ』などのたまひし、それななり。させむかし」など言ひなりて、(SNKZ: 281). See also Arntzen: 1997, 291.

neglectful partner's interest, and later on, proving useful in attracting a suitor that will allow Michitsuna's Mother to showcase, through their poetic exchanges, her abilities as a marital negotiator. This is a position she was not able to fully occupy during the description of her own courtship, in the first scroll, where her marriage to Kaneie is almost from the beginning a *fait accompli*; she does not even present her own responses to several of the poems her husband wrote her on that occasion.

When this new potential husband—a colleague of her son's—directly asks to hear words from this adopted girl—"even if it is meaningless, she surely speaks!"言ふかひなきほども、物語はするは (SNKZ: 335), he says—he is told by the author the child is too young; the girl "sadly, still hates to be face to face [with new people]" –あやにくに面嫌ひするほどなればこそ (SNKZ: 335. See also Arntzen: 1997, 347). However, Michitsuna's speech as a child had been reported in the previous scroll, and his expressions recognised as mediating the relationship between his parents, or either supporting or chastising his mother. This new daughter, is, contrastingly, not considered capable of effecting the world with her speech, or of being an active receptor and correspondent.

The contrast between the descriptions of Michitsuna's attempts at romance and the Mother's opposition to the marital advances made to the young girl manifest, again, the role of the author as a house manager, overseeing and gatekeeping her wards' love life, as much as her production of Kaneie's clothes and her son's poetry. Her way of framing both

children presents a much gendered outtake on each of the two. Michitsuna has a distinct voice, and at times he contradicts and urges his mother. From the second scroll on he is referred to as "the master," (*taifu* 大夫) something that gives him a sense of authority within the household, and perhaps over a mother who gives him this title in relation to her, and sets him as a distinct character (SNKZ: 231). In contrast, the unnamed adoptive daughter is not even present in any of Michitsuna's Mother's dealings with her suitor. However, Michitsuna's Mother is playing the exact same role for both of her children; she is just adjusting her approach to the claim to agency each child has in her text.

The main difference behind the very dissimilar approaches to each children is, then, the role the diary is to play for them, outside of the directly familial relationship between them and the author; Michitsuna's Mother has no interest in preserving the poetry, or the social ability of this young girl. A figure emerges in *Kagerō nikki* of Michitsuna as a poet and romantic instigator who is worth of being upheld; the new child, if anything, only fleshes out the figure of Michitsuna's Mother herself. This girl is to Michitsuna's Mother what the author is to Michitsuna.

Going back to the idea of the lady-in-waiting in Heian literature as a "*ficelle*,"[52] I believe, despite the lack of a courtly context, this term fits well both the self-presentation of the author in this diary and the author's description of the young child. The centre of consciousness in *Kagerō nikki* remains very much with Michitsuna's Mother, and yet, her poetry and actions clearly construct a literary, social, and familial image both for Kaneie

[52] Described as any device used to "obviate a difficulty in the method of narration or presentation of a character, without detracting from the centricity of the main character" (Horton: 1993, 98-99).

and Michitsuna throughout the three scrolls. It would seem she herself understood her literary role regarding her high-ranking counterparts in similar terms to Horton's lady-in-waiting. This makes the way in which she describes someone depending on her very enlightening; her representation of the nameless daughter is the exact complete opposite of that of her son. Here it is the unimportant, lacking of subjective-existence child who is identified with Michitsuna's Mother to the point of disappearing in her, while giving her a chance to showcase her literary prowess and her ability to conduct poetic dialogue on her name.

Finally, one more aspect of the author's production for her husband must be mentioned here. *Kagerō nikki* presents Michitsuna's Mother as a manager and a creator for Kaneie's household, in a capacity not limited to the generation of text. It could be said that, in general terms, there exist two sources of desirability Heian women can boast; their robes—a visual proof not only of taste, but also of rank—and their texts; that is, their literary value. Both of them allow them to create amorous/political connections; both serve as a manner of representing themselves and the men they depend upon to external scrutiny. Carole Cavanaugh points out how Michitsuna's Mother, by taking care of Kaneie's clothes, has "authored the visual impact of his public persona as directly as she has authored the text that preserves it" (Cavanaugh: 1996, 600). Robes and texts do not only appeal to possible male supporters as a female attribute to be beheld; they are sought after as something that will help the new husband shape his own image in the eyes of both the family circle and its outsiders. In the third scroll, Kaneie keeps requesting robes from Michitsuna's Mother, even after he seems to lose interest in their relationship. In this volume, fewer poems exchanged between the couple are recorded than in the rest of the diary, however,

Michitsuna's Mother's production of clothing for her husband is mentioned more than in any other section. In this way the text highlights that the connection between the two spouses has not actually been severed and that she is still a valuable asset for him as a wife (Iwasa: 1995, 305).

Kagerō nikki is bound to portray Kaneie's image to the exterior as much as it must showcase Michitsuna's Mother's own desirability and capability. As someone who became more or less a poet for hire (Arntzen: 1997, 402), with her poems ultimately being circulated in the court beyond her own control, the prose parts of the memoir were this author's only way of controlling the significance her compositions would maintain when read by others, in her own time, and later on. They were not supposed to prove to the world the cultural and political relevance of Kaneie, but her own importance—erotic, poetic, social— to him and his political efforts. As will be shown in the following sections, her degree of success would be varied.

In spite of the name she is remembered by, the occurrences of Michitsuna's Mother's poetry in imperial poetry collections and other texts move her away from the attempts shown in the third scroll to identify her with her son's socio-literary persona. It is the relationship with her husband, and her more public poetry that forms the body of her selected compositions in later texts. The way in which the memoir is read by later commentators, and how Michitsuna's Mother is portrayed—what poems are chosen, what background information is kept or discarded—is very illuminating in terms of how the power dynamics between the author and her husband, and her poetic connections were

understood and reworked by court-centric editors and audiences, once this very domestic-centric text was taken as a source for *hare* texts. The next section will deal precisely with the creation of this narrative through the re-contextualisation of Michitsuna's Mother's prose and poetry in the main works that portray her relationship to Kaneie and to the court, particularly, in imperial collections.

Michitsuna's Mother's Poems in Other Texts:

As expressed in a previous section, when Michitsuna's Mother first composed and shared her poems, their readers or listeners would have taken them first and foremost as a communicative act and a prompt for further poetic response (Shirane: 2012, 197). Once this function is no longer being performed, the dialogical relation supporting Michitsuna's Mother's and her correspondents' *uta* is transformed into a set narrative, open for interpretation by copyist, anthology compilers, and commentators. Up to the *Shinkokinwakashū* 新古今和歌集 (1205) every one of her verses compiled in imperial anthologies belongs to either the personal collection section—a group of poems attached to the end of the third scroll—or the first scroll, except for one poem compiled both in the *Kin'yowakashū* 金葉和歌集 (1127) and *Shikawakashū* 詞花和歌集 (1151)—Poem 163 of the diary, in its second scroll. It makes sense that the first scroll would be made more easily available to other members of the court as a sort of *"Kaneieshū,"* particularly if it was ever presented to the emperor in the hopes of being included in an imperial collection (or intended for it). In later imperial anthologies, even though the number of poems by the author is smaller, several of them are taken from other parts of the *nikki*. I will focus on

these first anthologies, dealing more closely with the first scroll of the diary, since the nature of the poems more clearly illustrates my argument regarding different considerations of the effects of domestication and publicity on texts that may be understood as belonging to either of these spaces.

Michitsuna's Mother's posthumous image in *hare* works as a textual producer would be defined by what imperial anthologies chose to showcase about her literary relations in life, affecting their expression in the pages of her diary. In the second part of this chapter, I will present several examples of the re-contextualisation of Michitsuna's Mother's work, both poetic and in prose; analysing the choices made by compilers and editors, the circumstances behind them and their effect in the creation of Michitsuna's Mother, both as an author and a creator of text based around the domestic space. In the next section, I will first address one single poem, whose popularity allows for a comparison between the treatment it is given by different texts. Subsequently, I will move onto the Heian and Kamakura period imperial anthologies that include her compositions. Through this comparison, it will become apparent how two distinct aspects of the author—her role as a "professional" poet, and her status as Kaneie's abandoned wife—emerge and take centre stage in different anthologies accordingly to which one is more convenient for the compilers' poetic agenda, and their understanding of the place of domestic-centric poetic creation under the *hare* imperial gaze.

Sorrowing and Sorrowing: A Defining Moment:

The *nagekitsutsu* poem is possibly Michitsuna's Mother most well-known composition and is recorded in several texts, including Fujiwara no Teika's 藤原定家 (1162-1241) anthology of a hundred poems by a hundred famous poets, the *Hyakunin Isshū* 百人一首(ca. 1235), and *Korai Fūteishō* 古来風躰抄 (1197-1201); a poetry guide by his father, the scholar Fujiwara no Shunzei 藤原俊成 (1114-1204). I will, however, limit myself to works that give a relatively lengthy description of the circumstances of its composition; the imperial anthology *Shūishū* and the historical chronicle *Ōkagami.*

This is the description of the events as outlined on our different sources; shortly after giving birth to her child, Michitsuna's Mother discovers that Kaneie has started visiting a new wife—an event she responds to by crafting a poem presented later. When Kaneie visits her house again, she refuses to open the gate for him. According to *Kagerō nikki*, he leaves, and the following morning, the author decides to send him a poem. A reply from the husband is received soon after:

a) [Michitsuna's Mother]: *Sorrowing and sorrowing, how long it takes for the dawn to break, on the night when one sleeps alone*

b) [Kaneie]: *So it is, so it is, even the pinewood gate, though it is not a winter's night, how painful when it, too, is slow to break open*[53]

[53]なげきつつひとり寝る夜のあくるまはいかに久しき物とかは知る
げにやげに冬の夜ならぬ真木の戸もおそくあくるはわびしかりけり(SNKZ: 100-101). "Break open" tries to suggest the double meaning of "*akuru* あくる;" "to open/to dawn."

For brevity's sake, I will use a) and b) to refer to each of these poems in the texts that document the exchange, as I discuss the contextualisation of the events. Firstly, let us turn to the historical chronicle and the imperial anthology, and analyse the ways in which their description of the situation may not align with Michitsuna's Mother self-framing:

Ōkagami:

> Once when the Lord [Kaneie] visited her, she took too long to open the gate, and when, again and again he sent letters inside, the Lady [wrote]
>
> a)
>
> He thought it very skilful, and so
>
> b)[54]

Shūishū, 912, Love 4:

> Mother of the Commander of the Right Michitsuna
>
> A time when the Novice Regent [Kaneie] visited her and she took too long to open the gate, and then he let her know he was thinking of leaving…[55]
>
> a)

[54]殿のお座しましたりけるに、門をおそく開けければ、度々御消息いひ入れさせたまふに、女君、（…）いと興ありと思し召して、(SNKZ: 250). See also McCullough: 1980, 166-167.

[55]入道摂政まかりたりけるに、門を遅く明けければ、たちわづらひぬといひ入れて侍りければ (SNKT 7: 261). The headnote is virtually identical to the one in the *Shūishō*, a work very similar to this imperial anthology, so I do not include it here.

Kagerō nikki, 1st scroll:

> … [W]hen dawn was coming there was a knocking on the gate. Although I thought surely it was him, I felt miserable, and I did not have the gate opened, so it seems he went off to that place [a new wife's house].[56] The next morning, I felt I couldn't just leave it at that, so…
>
> a)
>
> With greater care than usual, I wrote this and sent it attached to a wilting chrysanthemum. In response; "I was going to wait until dawn[57] to see what would happen, but just then a messenger came and called me away. It was just as you say,
>
> b)"[58]

This anecdote seems to have been a popular one, as attested by its record in several texts composed after the diary. However, there is not enough evidence to assert the diary served as the source for them. It is impossible to say where the *Shūishū* gets its short poem preface from; as it has been shown, the text introducing it in *Ōkagami* and the headnote in the anthology offer slightly different pieces of information that are not included in the diary—the fact that he kept sending letters, and the fact that he addressed her to say he was going away, to be precise. However, they both also move away from the diary in their

[56] In translation, both Arntzen—"Thinking it must be him" (1997, 71) —and Pigeot— "Persuadée que c'était lui" (2006, 17)—understand this sentence as causal, however, several glosses of this passage—Inukai (1982, 20), SNKZ (1995, 100) —including the SNKZ edition that serves as a basis for Arntzen's text (1973, 136) interpret the "に" in "さなめりと思ふに" as a concessive "が."

[57] "あくるまで", as in Kaneie's poem, mimics the verb used by Michitsuna's Mother's composition and can be interpreted both as "until dawn" and "until you opened the door."

[58] (…)あかつきがたに門をたたく時あり。さなめりと思ふに、憂くて、開けさせねば、例の家とおぼしきところにものしたり。つとめて、なほもあらじと思ひて、(…)
と、例よりはひきつくろひて書きて、移ろひたる菊にさしたり。返りごと、「あくるまでもこころみむとしつれど、とみなる召使の来あひたりつればなむ。いとことわりなりつるは」(SNKZ: 100-101). See also Arntzen: 1997, 71.

contextualisation of her compositions, slightly changing the interpretation of the first poem.

Both *Ōkagami* and the *Shūishū kotobagaki* 詞書—poem preface— point to Michitsuna's Mother's "tardiness" to open the gate—*osokuakekereba* 遅く明けゝれば; the expression used is the same in both texts—rather than to a refusal to do so. Both texts also present her composition as a response; the first one prompted by the insistence of Kaneie's letters and the second one by his assertion of being about to departure (Imanishi: 2001, 4). In *Kagerō nikki* Michitsuna's Mother is irrefutably the one starting this exchange, a forceful approach on her part; as the female, dependant part of the couple, after a negative to let the man in (Arntzen: 1997, 70). If Kaneie justifies himself here, he does not do so until he has received her poem.

There has been a discussion dating as long back as the 19th century about which of these versions corresponds to the truth; and a lot of it has focused on the interpretation of the *Shūishū*'s "when he let her know" (Imanishi: 2001, 4-5). Does this line describe the composition of the poem as an immediate response to Kaneie's message or is the wording ambiguous enough to allow for Michitsuna's Mother's morning after letter? It is true that tardiness is also what Kaneie's poem complains about, perhaps intending to make light of the exchange. In any case, the scene is described in the *nikki* as an attempt to either establish or regain control over the situation in a delicate moment of her relationship. Kaneie's response either downplays the slight on her part or justifies his actions, placing

him in a pacifying position. The level of intentionality behind Michitsuna's Mother's actions, as well as this husband-wife dynamic, is noticeably shifted by the way in which the other two works arrange the events, leaving her in a responsive position. The *Shūishū* does not include Kaneie's response, a choice that supports the understanding of this poem as a public one, rather than belonging to a private love exchange, as it will be discussed in the following section. There are two poems by the regent in the anthology, but they have no relation to Michitsuna's Mother, but to his political career. This could be due only to the regent's and the compilers' tense relations.[59]

Ōkagami actually mentions the existence of the diary in the very same section where it presents the exchange of these two poems, linking the anecdote to the memoir, as follows;

> As this lady, his [Michitsuna's] Mother, was extremely skillful at *waka,* she wrote down and compiled the poems and so on from where this lord was visiting her, gave it the name of "*Kagerō Diary,*" and allowed to have it made public."[60]

She is recognised as the author and "publisher" of the text, but not necessarily as its focus, as it still is understood as a the record of Kaneie's visits, in spite of the other aspects of the memoir that do not concern him so directly. Even though here she is being used as a

[59]The compilation of imperial anthologies has been understood at some point as a way of asserting the cultural centrality of a sovereign after being deposed by the Fujiwara (Huey: 1990, 653). Since Kaneie was instrumental to Emperor Kazan's abdication, his minor role in *Shūishū* does not seem all that surprising. This anti-Fujiwara drive behind the compilation of imperial anthologies was not necessarily always present. Heldt describes the compilation of the *Kokinshū* as part of the Fujiwara effort to attach themselves culturally to the crown (Heldt: 2008, 136).

[60] この母君、きはめたる和歌の上手におはしければ、この殿の通はせたまひけるほどのこと、歌など書き集めて、「かげろふの日記」と名づけて、世にひろめたまへり (SNKZ: 250). See also McCullough: 1980, 166.

historical source, her interpretation of her own poems is not necessarily taken as authoritative. Of course, even though she has taken the trouble to compile all of the material surrounding the events of her marriage, she merely "allows" for the work to be circulated; in the view of *Ōkagami,* she does not have the capacity to properly circulate the text. Perhaps the chronicle merely intends to offer a semblance of passivity around Michitsuna's Mother's figure. Her talent may elevate Kaneie in historical records such as this, but she is very clearly appears occupying that subordinate position where anonymity is unnecessary.[61]

The *Shūishū* (1005), the *Kashū,* and the Public Michitsuna's Mother:

This is the third imperial collection, and the closest to Michitsuna's Mother's lifetime. The anthology itself is quite dominated by poets belonging to Emperor Kazan's circle, and contains an important amount of screen poetry (Smits: 2015, 30). It includes six poems by the author, and yet it hardly shares any poems with the main body of the *Kagerō nikki* text. All of the compositions recorded in this anthology do appear in the short *kashū* section at the end of the diary[62] with the exception of two; poems 26 and 27 in the first scroll of the *nikki*. However, based on the title this appendix uses to refer to Michitsuna—"imperial tutor" (*fu no dono* 博の殿)—it is quite possible the *kashū* section of the *nikki* was the one taking the *Shūishū* as its source, rather than the opposite. Fujiwara no Michitsuna only

[61]It appears noteworthy as well that this exchange is described in the *Ōkagami* section regarding their son Michitsuna, which includes little else than this short story; further proof that the mother's strife to identify herself politically with her son fared much better than her decades-long struggle to become a principal wife to her husband.

[62]This appendix attached at some point after the completion of the diary by an unknown hand includes for the most part poems composed on request or during celebratory occasions and showcases Michitsuna's Mother position in the court as a "public poet" (Arntzen: 1997, 383).

received this designation in 1007; two years after the *Shūishū* was formally presented, and long after his mother's death in 995 (Arntzen: 1997, 383). All the poems compiled in this section refer to later events than those described in the memoir (SNKZ: 365). Contrary to the thematic trend of the poems selected in later anthologies, with their focus in her relationship with Kaneie, this is the most "*hare*-fied" Michitsuna's Mother; the headings to her poems here relate them to poetry competitions or screens. The two more "personal" *uta*—one of which is the already discussed *nagekitsutsu* poem—are presented without Kaneie's reply, separating them from the original context of the *ke* love exchange.

The poems presented in the personal collection at the end of the diary deserve some attention here. Several poems by Michitsuna appear in this appendix detailing, almost to the point of forming a plot, his exchanges with one or several ladies. It is made clear by the headnote on the first of these exchanges that Michitsuna's Mother is the one composing on behalf of her son, but it is impossible to assert if we must assume the same of the following poems in the same vein, particularly, because we do know that Michitsuna presented a poem (*Shuishū*, second scroll, 102) by his mother in at least one *uta awase*, where it appears in the record registered under his name.[63] This *uta* is also logged in this final collection, under a *kotobagaki* that reads "On a picture, there was a woman gazing to a mountain village in the distance, and as the cuckoo sang, [she composed]."[64]

[63]The *Kan'na ni nen Dairi uta awase* 寛和二年内裏歌合 (986), a competition sponsored by Retired Emperor Kazan, heavily anthologised in *Shuishū* and *Goshuishū*—(Hideyo: 1997, 21).
[64] 絵のところに、山里にながめたる女あり、ほととぎす鳴くに、(SNKZ; 376).

In the final section of the personal collection, one succinct *kotobagaki* notes that the following *uta* was presented in a poetry match, with the following verses only being prefaced by the topic (*dai* 題) for each of the rounds, falling under the same general description—the topics recorded in the collection are "for a poetry match, the Deutzia flower," "cuckoo," "iris flower," "firefly," "the Sixth Month," "mosquito-repellent bonfire," "cicada," "summer grass," "love," "celebration."[65] Of these ten, five correspond with poems preserved in the record of the *Tachihaki no jin uta awase* 帯刀陣歌合, held on the 4th year of Shōryaku 正暦 (993) by Emperor Sanjō 三条天皇 (976-1017), who was at the time still a crown prince (KT/5: 1414).

Just as we take it for granted that their author is Michitsuna's Mother, the internal cohesion between the subjects of Michitsuna's love poems, may indicate that the copyist did not think it necessary to make clear they were also composed by her. On the other hand, they seem very similar to the series of exchanges between Michitsuna and women in the third scroll of the diary, where such ghost-writing is not suggested, except for one poem. The personal collection also includes poems written in the place of an unknown bride for her husband-to-be, Kaneie's, Michitsuna's Mother's niece, and the aforementioned poetry match series that is believed to have been presented by a male relative (SNKZ: 377). It does, therefore, very much present the range of Michitsuna's Mother's work as a surrogate poet.

[65] "卯の花," "ほととぎす," "あやめ草," "蛍," "とこなつ," "蚊遣火," "蝉," "夏草," "恋," "祝ひ" (SNKZ: 378).

The *Shūishū* anthology was compiled on the orders of retired Emperor Kazan, and supposedly with his and his poetry circle's collaboration (Hideyo: 1997, 1). He was forced to abdicate due to Kaneie's pressure (Huey: 1990, 652), which makes the inclusion of Michitsuna's Mother's poems, and the presence of her son at his *uta awase*, even more interesting. If members of the court—whether emperors or aristocrats—turned to a development of cultural capital in the face of the loss of power, in order to demonstrate their courtliness and social value (Marra: 1991, 48), this inclusion can be read as a dismissal of Kaneie's claim to control over his wife; Michitsuna's Mother is first and foremost, an imperial subject.

Michitsuna's Mother's image in *Shūishū* is defined by her compositions as a public poet, instead of being inescapably tied to her husband, as she will appear historically and in later imperial anthologies. The potentially complicated relationship between the regent and the ex-emperor behind this *chokusenshū* may also explain the number of Kaneie's compositions in its pages; just the last two poems in the second Miscellaneous scroll. The lack of poems from the main body of the diary could be caused, then, by a reluctance to celebrate a man who had wronged Kazan, rather than by its unavailability. The fact that most of Michitsuna's Mother's compositions here belong to a time when she had already—for the most part—severed ties with her husband, may be a good indication of this. By presenting her in connection to more *hare* events, she was being reclaimed as an integrant of Kazan's literary circle and away from her status as Kaneie's sounding-board. Once dead,

the poet's source for social legitimisation as it has been defined in her diary is, thus, contested.

However, her connection to her husband is not completely ignored in this anthology; let us first take a look at one of the only two poems the anthology takes from the first scroll—The second one, as is to be expected at this point, is the *nagekitsutsu* poem, already discussed. I have already referred before to this first *uta*—number 26 in *Kagerō nikki*—which is preceded by a description of the author's anguish after just finding out about a new woman in her husband's life right after giving birth to Michitsuna:

> And so, around the Ninth Month, after he left, playing around, I opened a box that was there and when I looked inside, there was a letter that must had been meant for someone else. Shocked, I thought at least I would let him know I had seen it. So I wrote this and attached it [to the letter]
>
> *I am suspicious. Because I have seen your traces/letters leading somewhere else, will you stop coming here?*[66]

Its *kotobagaki* in the anthology (*Shūishū,* 1202, Miscellaneous Congratulations) is the following:

> Once around the time when the Novice Regent was visiting her, she found a letter that had been sent to a woman, and so [she composed][67]

[66]さて、九月ばかりになりて、出でにたるほどに、箱のあるを手まさぐりに開けて見れば、人のもとに遣らむとしける文あり。あさましさに、見てけりとだに知られむと思ひて、書きつく
うたがはしほかに渡せるふみ見ればここやとだえにならむとすらむ(SNKZ:99-100). See also Arntzen: 1997, 69. There is a play on words between *fumi* 文, "letter," and *fumi* 踏, "traces" or "steps."
[67]入道攝政まかり通ひける時、女のもとに遣はしける文を見侍りて(SNKT 7: 348).

Here, there seems to be no contradiction between the context provided by the anthology and that of the diary. However, it should be noted that the poem is collected in the 18th scroll, that of "miscellaneous congratulations" (*saika* 雑賀); quite a surprising location, taking into account Michitsuna's Mother's description of her anguish. This scroll largely contains poems related to official and public occasions, such as festivals, ceremonies related to rites of passage, banquets, and other such circumstances. Maybe the editor chose this poem—as well as others by female poets at the end of this scroll similarly presenting the trope of the "pining woman" (*matsu onna* 待つ女)—because, regardless of the feelings of a pre-existing wife, a new marriage is indeed a felicitous situation for Kaneie.[68] This reaction in such a situation reveals how much he is needed and wanted (Koike: 1996, 14), and it also diverts the attention from the feelings of the poet to the public dynamics that run parallel to them.

It is true that poems in imperial collections do not always express their category's theme overtly (Huey: 2002, 212), but the sentiment must be somewhat suggested. Just like seasonal poems become love poems when placed under the right section (Cook: 2012, 356), this congratulatory categorisation changes Michitsuna's Mother's poem from a demonstration of personal grievance to a composition for a third party; from an intimate exchange, to a poem meant for public consumption. This is in keeping with the image the

[68] The pining woman is a common poetic trope, both in anthologies and *uta awase*. It has been suggested they stand in contrast to "abandoned woman" poems, where the woman has no hope of ever being visited again. This latter category would be in language very similar to the former, but "more emotionally charged" (Huey: 1993, 169).

anthology projects of the author as a "professional poet," even when it comes to poems that seem to epitomise the stereotypical idea of Michitsuna's Mother being defined by her rocky marital relationship. In a sense the anthology does the opposite of the *Kagerō nikki*; the relevance of this connection is erased, and she is presented not as a counterpart to Kaneie's poetic ability—as she seems to see herself in the diary—or as a wounded woman expressing her feelings through poetry, but as an employable poet.

The *Goshūishū* (1086): Kaneie's Michitsuna's Mother and the Romantic Ideal:

This anthology was compiled between 1075 and 1086, roughly a hundred years after the composition of *Kagerō nikki,* and counts the highest number of poems from the memoir compared to other imperial collections. Personal politics regarding the characters of the work must have been left behind, replaced by a symbolic understanding of the author and her family's importance. Unlike the case of the *Shūishū,* the source of the poems included in it is indubitably the diary itself, as the grammar and choice of words of the *kotobagaki* are in many cases identical to the ones in the *nikki*. Not all of the poems by Michitsuna's Mother included here belong to exchanges with Kaneie, but the vast majority of them are; these are the ones we will be focusing on.

There is also one extra exchange between the couple, not found in the memoir—poems 822 and 823 in Love 4—comprising two poems by the husband, with one response by the wife in the middle. Although the anthology offers no explanation regarding their origin—the *kotobagaki* cryptically describes them as "sent to a woman/reply/to the same

woman,"[69] even though it gives Michitsuna's Mother's name in the heading—it is striking the description uses the term "a woman" instead of her son's name, unlike other poems in the collection. It is very likely this is due to the different origin of this particular exchange, further proof that the other poems were compiled from the memoir. This appellation is consistent to the other poem by Kaneie in the anthology that was not taken from the memoir, 813, which is also described only with the words "sent to a woman"—女につかはしける (SNKT: 261).

I present below three illustrative *Goshūishū* poem exchanges in translation accompanied by the immediately previous description in both the anthology and the *nikki*, with a brief commentary.[70] Interestingly enough, we find a clear preference for poems that, according to the *nikki*, would have been sent in letters, rather than merely recited. In spite of the grammatical closeness between both sources, however, the contextual notes all depart from Michitsuna's Mother's text in one way or the other. The ubiquitous personal commentaries of Michitsuna's Mother have not made the transition into the anthology; and yet, the difference is not just a matter of summarisation. The *kotobagaki* differ from the memoir's text through direct alterations and very specific omissions. At a first glance, the changes operated on Michitsuna's Mother's story by the anthology's headnotes seem minimal, and yet, taken as a whole, their effect becomes quite consistent. My first example:

[69]女のもとにつかはしける/返し/おなじ女に (SNKT: 263-264).

[70]For reasons of space I have only included these examples, but they are not the only poems the anthology takes from the memoir. Other poems by Kaneie are recorded in Love 4 (882, 824); Michitsuna's Mother's, can be found in Love 4 (823), and Miscellanea 1 (869, 870, 894). Also from the *nikki,* an exchange between Tomoyasu, Michitsuna's Mother's father, and Kaneie in numbers 471 and 472 in the Others scroll. As I have pointed out earlier in this chapter, this exchange is discussed in the third chapter, pages 190-193.

This morning I cannot tell apart the dew that appears and disappears over my sleeves, yet to dry, and this drizzling sky.[71]

In *Goshūishū*, (700, Love 2) is preceded by:

Around the Ninth Month, perhaps, on a morning after the Novice Regent had stopped visiting her, she composed and attached this to a reply to his letter.[72]

In *Kagerō nikki*, 1st scroll:

As [the Ninth month] was finishing, I did not see him for two nights. As a reply to the mere letter he sent.[73]

The change here does not appear drastic at a first glance, however, the *Goshūishū* merely points out that Kaneie "had stopped visiting"— 夜がれして侍りけるつとめて—in contrast to Michitsuna's Mother's more specific "I did not see him for two days"— 二夜ばかり見えぬほど. As Arntzen (1997: 62) points out, through this wifely complaint shines a statement of her pride; at this point in the relationship, Kaneie favoured her so much,

[71] 消えかへり露もまだ干ぬ袖のうへに今朝はしぐるる空もわりなし(SNKZ: 95). See also Arntzen: 1997, 63.

[72]入道摂政、九月許のことにや、夜がれして侍りけるつとめて、文おこせて侍りける返りにつかはしける (SNKT: 228).

[73]つごもりがたに、しきりて二夜ばかり見えぬほど、文ばかりある返りごとに、(SNKZ:95). See also Arntzen: 1997, 63.

despite of her unstable position as a second wife, that it was noticeable when he did not visit for two nights in a row. When contextualised by the other poems in the *shū* that share the abandonment theme, the claims to her erotic power disappear completely, and we have again an example of a woman who cannot depend on the continued affection of a man.

This poem referring to Kaneie's untrustworthiness receives a similar treatment:

> *Under the oak forest, the grass hears every dusk "keep trusting me," while water keeps dripping incessantly.*[74]

Goshūishū, 903, Miscellanea 2:

> Once when it looked like the Novice Regent had stopped caring for her, he sent a message saying he was going to visit that evening and the like, so it seems that she sent as a reply…[75]

Kagerō nikki, 1st scroll:

[74] 柏木の森の下草くれごとになほたのめとやもるを見る見る(SNKZ: 95). See also Arntzen: 1997, 65. "The oak tree" refers to the office of the Ministry of Military affairs (*Hyōbushō* 兵部省), where Kaneie occupied the rank of Captain (Watanabe: 1984, 370).

[75]入道摂政よがれがちになり侍りける頃、暮にはなどいひおこせて侍りければいひつかはしける (SNKT: 290).

> Again, when I had not seen him in a while, on a day when it was raining, there was a message saying "I'll come in the evening."[76]

The *Goshūishū kotobagaki* does not mention the letter was received on a rainy day, even though other poems in this collection to include such a description when their presented poem references the weather—see, for example, poems 925, 927 (where both the poem and the *kotobagaki* repeat the word *ame* 雨*,* "rain"), and 938 (*shigure* 時雨*,* "autumn shower") in this same scroll. The fact that Kaneie was willing to visit her in spite of the downpour suggests again her appeal (Mostow: 1992, 309), or at least his desire to ingratiate himself with her; something Michitsuna's Mother was very aware of. Later in the memoir, during a different rainy night—as I mentioned in a previous section—the author and her ladies-in-waiting remember longingly the time when such weather would not have deterred his visits.

A final example:

> *Though I was certain there was nothing that would bring up our memories, you said "arrow/hey" and I was startled.*[77]

[76]また、ほど経て、見えをこたるほど、雨など降りたる日、「暮に来む」などやありけむ(SNKZ: 95). See also Arntzen: 1997, 65.

[77] 思ひ出づるときもあらじと思へどもやといふにこそ驚かれぬれ (SNKZ:106). See also Arntzen: 1997, 77. Although commentators debate who is the one of the two spouses Michitsuna's Mother signals as the subject of her "*omoiduru*"—to remember—Arntzen retains the ambiguity by explicitly including "I" and "you" in the translation of the poem (Arntzen: 1997, 76). It is my tendency to make the subjects in *uta* always ambiguous, in the absence of clear contextual clues, so I follow her in this choice here. *Ya* can be read both as an exclamation or as 矢, arrow.

Goshūishū, 1215, Gods 6:

> Once at a time when the Novice Regent had made his visits scant as it was to be expected, he requested that a small arrow he had tied to a pillar of the bed platform would be taken down and returned to him. Thinking of sending it back, she composed…[78]

Kagerō nikki, 1st scroll:

> I received a letter; among other things, he said, "Send back the small arrow attached to one of the pillars of the bed platform." So this we still have, I thought, as I untied and took down the arrow.[79]

Here, Michitsuna's Mother interprets Kaneie's request to get his arrow back as a proof of nostalgia on the part of Kaneie; a feeling that is dispelled in the anthology by placing the poem not in the Love section, but in one dedicated to the *kami*. The omission of the wife's inner monologue—"so we still have this" (これぞありけるかし)—also transforms the feigned surprise of the poem into genuine one. In the first scroll of the diary, Kaneie sends her poems as she is thinking about him, without her needing to initiate communication directly; a mark of their mental connection. This is one such example. Of course, without the longer context of the *nikki,* this fact is completely erased as well, further highlighting the unexpectedness of the poem. The choice of this particular poem for this section is almost shocking, as *Kagerō nikki* actually includes several poems dedicated to the *kami,*

[78]入道摂政かれ／＼にてさすがに通ひ侍りける頃、帳の柱に小弓の箭を結び付けたりけるを、ほかにて取りにおこせて侍りければ、つかはすとてよめる(SNKT:395).

[79](…) 文あり。なにくれといひて、「帳の柱に結ひつけたりし小弓の矢取りて」とあれば、これぞありけるかしと思ひて、解きおろして、(SNKZ: 106). See also Arntzen: 1997, 77.

composed during Michitsuna's Mother's pilgrimage to Inari Shrine, in the same scroll as this one, that would have seemed more appropriate.

The archetype of the pining wife, waiting for her man's return while he visits other women or engages in a journey is a well-known one; it already appears in earlier Chinese literature and can be found abundantly in Heian texts, particularly in poetry (Sarra: 1999, 30); examples of the same include *Ise monogatari* 伊勢物語 (10th century) episode 23, *Yamato monogatari* 大和物語 (ca. 952) episode 149, and different *Genji Monogatari* sections. As the Heian period advances, it appears in a more and more aesthetised manner (Kawashima: 2001, 223). Michitsuna's Mother's situation is hardly idealised in *Kagerō nikki*, but she definitely places herself somewhere in between the pining wife and the abandoned woman. However, her waiting is not reflected as passive or resigned; as we have seen, she boasts a role in Kaneie's communications with the imperial family, and visits by her husband are described as victories she has achieved through her poetic skills and wit.

There are many reasons the anthology might have chosen to focus on this aspect of their relationship. Possibly, this less nuanced characterisation as a "pining woman," disregarding the less compliant characteristics of the *Kagerō nikki* narrator—her pain, her anger, her pride in her poetic-erotic power—has something to do with a late Heian/Kamakura tendency to alienate the negative reactions of women in polygynic contexts from the women themselves. In literature, abandoned wives who are not represented as faithful lovers turn into inhuman demons, transformed by jealousy into unnatural figures with no

place in civilized society (Kawashima: 2001, 256-257). It is possible, then, that Michitsuna's Mother was being placed into the less problematic group, as her depiction of motivated jealousy and negotiation becomes too nuanced for the literary tastes of the day.[80] Maybe compilers were trying to find the most "sublime" (*yūgen* 幽玄) expression of poetry in her texts, as this was in many cases more important to editors than historical accuracy, as composition manuals reflect (Cook: 2012, 358). It is interesting, in any case, to stop and take note of the change between the images of the author these two imperial collections project, and the reasons behind them.

Kagerō nikki is ultimately a defence of Michitsuna's Mother's poetic ability in a context where the production of verse, clothing, and other domestic-related activities were understood as having a direct impact both in her life, Kaneie's, and Michitsuna's, both within and without the house. The *kotobagaki* in *Goshūishū* see her being relegated to a responsive position, rather than an active one. It might be a stretch to declare that the anthology is making a conscious effort to discredit Michitsuna's Mother as a domestic author by encapsulating her poetry in the conventional archetype of the "pining woman;" nevertheless, regardless of any possible intentionality or lack thereof behind the compilers' decisions, the image of Michitsuna's Mother being projected loses much of her initial personality. At the same time, this image is also diametrically opposed to the one portrayed by the *Shuishū*. The fact that these pieces of the original diary's context were not considered worthy of being preserved is enough of an indication of where interest lay in

[80] This might be related, as well, to an increasing idealisation of the courtly past, as polygyny was being discarded in favour of the monogamous *ie*-system (Wakita: 1999, 81), and Michitsuna's Mother's description of married life in the court is anything but positive.

the eyes of the editors here; the negotiation for power within the domestic context holds no attraction within the idealised representation of human relations that makes its way to the *hare* sphere. And so, this tumultuous struggle to reassert control over one' social position is completely erased.

Conclusion:

Ultimately, *Kagerō nikki* showcases an understanding of the household as a space separate from the court and public life, and the woman of the house as a figure that remains invisible and hidden from the external gaze. However, this separation does not preclude Michitsuna's Mother from participating in other social spheres, with the mediation of her husband's connections at court, and her material and textual production within the domestic space. These two emergent fields do not necessarily represent the totality of the social and literary engagements between Michitsuna's Mother and the rest of the world, but she chooses to frame them in this manner, when she puts pen to paper to record her own life. In spite of the resentment that often colours her text, this memoir's author actively presents the domestic space she is a part of as integrated within the court and other public spaces, where her husband can achieve rank, influence, and cultural capital. When describing and recording her interactions with her son and daughter, too, whether private or public, the main characteristic of her role in regards to those who depend on her is that of the producer, and the administrator.

In a way, the relationship between textual producers of the Fujiwara domestic sphere like Michitsuna's Mother echoes the one established between the Fujiwara and the imperial families. Both groups supported each other socially and politically, while trying to create a sense of cultural centrality that would rank them over the other one in the eyes of their contemporaries and descendants. The low and middle-ranking wives/cultural producers employed by the regent house were engaged in a complicated game of collaborative creation and political struggle with their husbands/patrons. The mechanisms that ensured their usefulness, and as a result, their way of maintaining a safe position, were the same that stripped away the ownership of their texts from them. At the same time, the women so employed were able to explore, to the best of their abilities, how their role—and its usefulness for those they depended upon—created socially effective niches within their portrayal of domesticity. When taking these texts as *nikki*, these literary constructions are only relevant insofar they serve the historical and literary concerns of the house. The *Kagerō nikki* is a prime example of one such text; with Michitsuna's Mother continuously letting her importance to Kaneie be known, without ever sparing us the knowledge of how his lack of respect affected her life and her social position.

In a way, when the poetry penned by these women is placed in their *nikki* and *shū,* or ultimately in an imperial collection, their *uta* evolve from a tool of social lubrication and communication to a repository of legacy. In spite of this, the editors of the *Shūishū* define Michitsuna's Mother, not as part of the legacy of the Fujiwara or of Kaneie. Rather, she becomes part of the emperor-centric trends that claim the harmonising power of poetry as subordinate to the courtly seat of power; to them she was a "professional poet" first. In

this sense, the anthology ignores both the struggles *Kagerō nikki* devotes itself to, and the socially effective poetry tied to the household it explores. Instead, the anthology portrays the author as a poet linked to courtly *uta awase* and screen poems. When *Goshūishū* finally re-contextualises the poems based on the relationship with Kaneie, it does so with a completely different approach to the place marital dynamics play at a courtly level. The imperial anthology presents an idealised marital model where there is no room for the negotiation of Michitsuna's Mother's worth; for a woman in a position of dispossession there is only either abandonment or self-sacrificial hope. The integration of the domestic sphere, as a source for social support integrated into the *hare*, emperor and Fujiwara supported public realm of society is abandoned, in favour of a less nuanced one.

2. Negotiating Publicity: Izumi Shikibu and Akazome Emon:

In the previous chapter I discussed how, as a woman of the house, Michitsuna's Mother presented herself and her textual production in the context of her husband's household. I explained how this role was shown to fit within court society at large in her diary, and how this perception was transformed by the imperial anthologies that included her poetry after her death. In this way I posed firstly, how the definition of a married woman's identity was first expounded through the presentation of domesticity and domestic roles as integrated within the larger sphere of officiality; and secondly, how *tennō*-centric works would erase the importance of the house in her diary by attaching Michitsuna's Mother's compositions to official contexts and media—such as poetry matches and screens meant for celebratory occasions.

In this chapter I will approach the public reinterpretation of a *nikki* author's body of work from a different angle, contrasting with, and sometimes developing from the very self-portrait she tried to trace in her own writing. In order to accomplish this, I will discuss scandal as a morally normative force, in the context of medieval trends of socio-literary criticism that do not trace a distinction between an author's moral character and the quality of their work, and the strategies deployed by these authors to avoid social censorship. In this way, the line between intimate and public settings—and as such the *hare* (official, public, under the imperial gaze)*/ke* (unofficial, private, pertaining to the household) distinction becomes blurred. As has been noted in the introductory chapter, the division between these two spheres is a dynamic one, without tidy and well defined boundaries; however, the implications and meaning of these two concepts is insufficient

to describe the extent of women's literary roles in Heian society. Although I will mostly focus on the figure of Izumi Shikibu (976?) and her diary, this exploration will be centred on the Heian public women *par excellence*; the lady-in-waiting or *nyōbō* 女房, and the complicated position they occupied, as visually available cultural producers at court. I will finally contrast the different possibilities of literary representation for *nyōbō* authors who could both be framed as domestic-focused or court-focused creators. This will be achieved by juxtaposing the treatment Izumi Shikibu received in contemporary and later texts with that of the also renown lady-in-waiting poet Akazome Emon (956?-after 1041).

The concepts of *hare* and *ke* in regards to the circulation of texts at court have already been addressed in the previous chapter. However, rather than as an actual division consciously practiced by the members of the court, it is worth considering this dichotomy as a starting point in the understanding of how both texts and behaviours were deemed appropriate to certain circumstances and worth—or not—preserving for future generations as part of the official record. As has been shown already, the right of a text to be characterised by either of these terms was nebulous and extremely context dependant. Moving away from the exclusively domestic setting from the previous chapter towards more court-based dynamics, we find the figure of the *nyōbō* occupying a liminal space between *hare* and *ke*. The power relations generated both between the lady-in-waiting and patron-like figures, as well as between ladies-in-waiting themselves define spaces of circulation, normative behaviour, and public presentation that must also be taken as fundamental social structures.

Michitsuna's Mother's poems were performed and recited both in the intimacy of her own house and during imperially sponsored poetry matches, fulfilling in each situation a distinct role, and serving, in a way, different masters and purposes. However, in her case, in spite of the flexible ways in which her poetry was used, the clear-cut division between emperor-centric spaces and domestic residence delineates two distinct audiences in a clearer manner than what other contemporary authors' work would undergo. It would be a mistake, for example, to believe that inclusion in the imperially-sanctioned sphere under the designs of the ruling monarchs or their literary supporters should be equated with the creation of a public image for a woman writing—*uta* or otherwise—in the Heian court.

As it will be shown in this chapter, the case of Izumi presents an interesting contradiction; the choices made in the composition of her *nikki* have moral and practical consequences for its protagonist/writer's later portrayals. However, precisely because the diary makes an effort to separate the domestic sphere from the public realm the lady-in-waiting occupied in real life, Izumi loses the opportunity to be contextualised by an acceptable mode of domesticity—like the one Michitsuna's Mother or Akazome Emon would enjoy—integrated in her public persona. Her portrayal in latter texts, would disregard her self-framing separating her from courtly salons and the figure of the *nyōbō*, and describe her exclusively as a lady-in-waiting.

Nyōbō: The Court-lady and the Courtesan:

Understanding Izumi Shikibu, the author, as a *nyōbō*, rather than merely as the lover of a prince—as her *nikki* does—places her in a particular position in regards to relations of patronage and clientele under the Fujiwara and their female members married to the imperial family. This term, which I will translate as either "palace attendant" or "lady-in-waiting" interchangeably, refers to women of varied rank serving at different positions in the inner court—that is, the women's quarters; figures who played a central part in Heian social, cultural, and literary life at court. More precisely, here I will talk about female subordinates who were granted private rooms in the palace, and who, unlike lady officials (*nyōkan* 女官) who received a stipend from the national treasury before the 10th century, belonged to the personal household of the different imperial ladies (Ijūin: 2013, 42).[81] As we can see in the pages of *Murasaki Shikibu nikki* or *Makura no sōshi*, these women moved with relative freedom amongst the imperial family and their closer associates and were expected to be witty, educated and charming. In many ways, they were meant to serve as an asset to their mistress' appeal, as an extension and reflection of her own refinement (Sorensen: 2012, 94). They were both expected to perform a decorative function and one of social catalyst. *Eiga monogatari* describes the attendants accompanying Fujiwara no Shōshi 藤原彰子 (988-1074) during her debut at court in these terms:

[81] For a description of the organisation of the palace's Women's Quarters, ranks, titles and duties of different imperial consorts and ladies-in-waiting, see McCullough, 1980: 818-822, and Yoshikawa: 1999.

> Her attendants had been selected most carefully. Their [superior] appearance and disposition goes without saying; even for a daughter of a fourth or fifth-ranker, there was no hope if she was socially inept or lacking in the niceties of deportment, for only the most immaculate were accepted. [82]

It was not only rank that guaranteed a court position for these women, therefore, but performance and self-presentation. Their position was not one of anonymity, but their role granted them an air of apparent political unobtrusiveness. Their presence within the circles of power was constant, but their contribution was considered that of a social lubricant, rather than that of an agent, even though they enjoyed direct access to the emperor and his consorts, and—for those of a higher status close relationships with them (Yoshikawa: 1999, 287). In some senses, they played a similar role to the one I have described Michitsuna's Mother playing for Kaneie; both serving as sounding-boards and partners for poetic composition, and as chroniclers of these exchanges. Their importance as informal keepers of the cultural life in the different salons they adorned should not be disregarded. *Murasaki Shikibu nikki*, for instance, captures the birth of Empress Shōshi's son, and the *Eiga monogatari*, the historical tale about the rise of the Fujiwara, is said to have been compiled, at least in part, by the lady-in-waiting Akazome Emon (McCullough: 1980, 43). Sei Shōnagon's *Makura no sōshi* served to reframe Teishi's salon as a cultural bastion of refinement and elegance, even after the Consort's position of centrality at court had been supplanted by her niece and she had died in childbirth (Fukumori: 1997, 5).

[82] いみじう選りととのへさせたまへるに、かたち、心をばさらにもいはず、四位、五位の女といへど、ことに交らひわろく、成出きよげならぬをば、あへて仕かうまつらせたまふべきにもあらず、ものきよらかに、成出よきをと選らせたまへり(SNKZ: 300). See also McCullough: 1980, 218. McCullough translates *kiyoraka* "きよらか"—my "immaculate"—as "polished and elegant," a choice that excludes the possible moral implications imbedded in the word. However, I believe a lack of separation between the moral and social graces of ladies-in-waiting to be relevant to this discussion.

The role of the palace attendant, therefore, is a twofold one; firstly, adding elegance to the lives of the great; secondly, the historical preservation of the wonders of different official and unofficial occasions. Their portrayal in texts like those discussed here makes their role to be the illustration of more important people's characters and the brilliance of particular scenes. They fully realised the role of *ficelle*; as presented in the previous chapter, a living literary device meant for the development of the main character's story (Horton: 1997, 98). In *Eiga monogatari,* much of Izumi Shikibu and her colleagues' characterization follows this pattern. As an example, in 1019, when Michinaga has taken the tonsure after a long illness, he sends his daughter Shōshi a poem attached to the summer robes that she has to receive on the last day of the Third month for the traditional seasonal Change of Dress.

> [Michinaga] attached this poem to the Chinese robes for Her Highness [Shōshi]:
> *Change into the flowered sleeves of this Chinese robe. For me the spring colours have left and gone.*
> The Empress saw it, and cried abundantly. Her august reply,
> *In this spring season when Chinese robes are replaced, how is one to look at the colour of the flowers?*
> When she heard the Lord's poem, Izumi Shikibu presented [the following one] to the Empress,
> *When thinking it, disrobing and changing is truly sad, spring colours our lord has ceased to wear*[83]

[83] 大宮に唐の御衣に添へさせたなへる、
唐衣花のたもとに脱ぎかへよわれこそ春の色はたちつれ
大宮御覧じて、いみじう泣かせたまひて、御返し、
唐衣たちかはりぬる春の世にいかでか花の色も見るべき
殿の歌を聞きて、和泉式部が大宮にまゐらせたる
脱ぎかへんことぞ悲しき春の色を君がたちける衣と思へば(SNKZ: 181). See also McCullough: 1980, 498.

Izumi's poem laments that Michinaga will not participate in the change in colours anymore, keeping to his dark monastic robes. Three more poems follow showing sympathy—two by named ladies-in-waiting, the middle one by an unidentified author. Interestingly, the poem by another lady-in-waiting, right after Izumi's composition, is described in the text as an "answer" (*kaeshi* 返し), even though Izumi's poem is, of course, dedicated to her mistress and her father. This indicates that the poem is meant not only for their empress, but for the group to respond to. This exchange echoes Shōshi's pain through her attendants, reflecting the model of "vassal harmonising" with the sentiments of their higher-ranking liege, as inherited from Chinese understandings of the eusocial role of poetry (Webb: 2005, 168) that I mentioned in chapter one.

In a way, this public positioning seems to have placed ladies-in-waiting outside of what at the time would have been considered proper feminine behaviour, by removing them from the purely *ke* sphere. Aristocratic women not serving at court would project their social role through a domestic context, with no direct engagement with public life. As has been shown in the Michitsuna's Mother chapter, this apparent isolation does not necessarily indicate a disconnection to the outside world, but rather a particular manner of framing social dynamics. However, just as scandal corresponds with an act being made public, as opposed to merely an act of transgression that takes place with or without the knowledge of the group—as I will discuss in more detail further down—it is the overtness of behaviour, rather than the behaviour itself that has the potential to render it somehow indecent. Whereas in tales we are often exposed to the act of visually uncovering a woman as deeply intimate and quasi-sexual—as the voyeuristic trope of *kaimami* 垣間見, "peeping through

the fence," so common in Heian tales, illustrates (Bargen: 2015, 53)—palace attendants were visually much more accessible to courtiers of both sexes. This in itself seems to place them in a different category from normal, household-based women, and might explain in part why some of them, as is the case of Izumi Shikibu, became *yūjo* 遊女, courtesans, in the medieval collective consciousness (Pandey: 2004, 61). At the same time, the visibility of the lady-in-waiting goes both ways; the palace attendants see while they are seen, as they fulfil the role of witnesses and recorders (Miyazaki: 1996, 25). It has been said that works of *nyōbō bungaku*, such as *Genji monogatari,* possess a distinctive female gaze (Miller: 2000, 192); this is, however, very specifically the gaze of the gentlewoman. That is, a productive gaze, capable of making public by the very nature of its observation.

Heldt talks about poets compiling anthologies for their imperial patrons as circulating their poetry as a surrogate for their "visible bodies," giving them the opportunity to be perceived by their superiors (Heldt: 2008, 216). These palace attendant, however, counted with the advantage of both visual and textual interactions with influential members of the court. In this vein, we find several references to complaints about this apparently excessive accessibility of the lady-in-waiting in texts like *Makura no sōshi* or *Eiga monogatari*.[84] However, it is Fujiwara no Michinaga's interactions with palace attendants that serve as

[84] *Eiga monogatari* lamented the normalisation of the visibility of ladies of good birth who went to serve at court thusly; "It seems it even would be said 'it has come to the point that daughters and wives of respectable people are going out [to court]. If one stays shut at home, she probably has some kind of illness, or deformity'. Well, what abject circumstances! Even the honourable daughters of Great Ministers of State [*Daijōdaijin*] are mingling freely with the world in this way. How extreme."
「さべき人の妻子みな宮仕に出ではてぬ。籠りゐたるは、おぼろげの疵、片端づきたらん」とぞ言ふめる。さてもあさましき世なりや。太政大臣の御女もかく出でまじらひたまふ、いみじきことなり (SNKZ: 34-35). See also McCullough: 1980, 355.

the best illustration of this conception of ambiguous social censorship. If diaries and poetry collections are to be believed, the regent seems to have been fond of mockingly flirting with *nyōbō* by referring to their sexual availability. Murasaki Shikibu describes in her diary one such occasion in these terms:

> When His Lordship saw [the *Genji monogatari*], with his usual whimsy, he attached to a sheet of paper spread under a plum [the following poem]:
>
> *Because its fame for tastiness has thrived, I think, of those who see it, no one could pass by without plucking it*
>
> And when he proffered this,
>
> "*Not having been plucked by anyone, whose mouth could have gotten used to its taste?*
>
> How shocking!" I said.[85]

The pun in the original poem refers to both the tastiness of the plum and Murasaki's carnality, by jokingly calling both of them a *sukimono*; meaning both "tasty" and "amorous." It is interesting to note this exchange took place as Michinaga was made aware of the copy of Murasaki's tale the imperial Consort was presumably reading. Seen in this light, the joke seems to be that it is not due to her role as an author that the lady-in-waiting has reached widespread fame, but due to her amorousness; or rather that there is no distinction between the wide availability of her *monogatari* and her own. The "public" circulation of a

[85]殿の御覧じて、例のすずるごとも出できたるついでに、梅のしたに敷かれたる紙にかかせたまへる。
すきものと名にし立てれば見える人の折らで過ぐるはあらじとぞ思ふ
たまはせたれば、
「人にまだ折られぬものをたれかこのすきものぞとは口ならしけむめざましう」と聞こゆ(SNKZ: 26, 214). See also Bowring: 1996, 61.

text, particularly a poetic one, outside of the official channels seems to be seen by Michinaga as exhibitionist, and indistinct from personal bodily "circulation."

The regent shares a similar exchange with Izumi Shikibu, recorded in poem 225 of the *seishū*[86] of her personal anthology. In this one, he does not compose a poem, but instead writes "this is the fan of a licentious woman"—an "*ukareme* 浮かれ女"—on one belonging to the poet, to which Izumi replies with this:

> Noticing someone was holding my fan, when he looked at it, the Great Lord inquired "whose is it?," and when he heard "it's hers," taking it he wrote 'an *ukareme*'s fan' on it. I wrote next to it,
>
> *Whether I intend to cross, whether I do not intend to cross, man who is not the keeper of Meeting Hill Barrier, don't chastise me!*[87]

That is, "you, who are not concerned with my love life, have no reason to censor me, regardless of my actions." Each of the two ladies has a very different response to the regent's slightly demeaning flirtatiousness; one of them doubles down on her supposed amorousness, almost taunting Michinaga, whereas the other one defends her modesty.

[86] There are seven kinds of collections that receive the name *Izumi Shikibu shū*, compiled in the several centuries after Izumi's death, including both duplicated poems and some of dubious attribution. However, here this title refers to the larger and closer to her time, divided into a *Seishū* 正集 (Greater Collection), counting 893 poems, and a *Zokushū* 続集 (Sequel Collection), with 647. These two are also considered amalgamations of smaller *shū* (NKBT: 131).

[87] ある人の、扇をとりて持たまへりけるを御らんじて、大殿、「たがぞ」と問はせたまひければ、「それが」と聞えたまひければ、取りて、「浮かれ女の扇」と書きつけさせたまへる、かたはらに

越えもせむ越さずもあらむ逢坂の関守ならぬ人な咎めそ(Saeki et al.: 2012, 231). See also Cranston: 1969, 11. Ōsaka no Seki, "Meeting Hill Barrier," was a mountain pass in the road from the Capital to the Eastern Provinces that became commonplace in poetry about amorous encounters due to its name.

These two vignettes offer very contrastive depictions of these women's characters, but not of the environment they both faced. It is impossible to know if the joking perception of these exchanges was shared by either of the ladies involved; due to the regent's prominent position it is unlikely their recipients could answer it in any other tone than an appreciative one. Both the poem and the writing on the fan, in any case, place the ladies-in-waiting in a position that gives Michinaga a comfortable degree of control. These two encounters, as they are described by the poets, revolve around an object that in a way belongs to the attendants; Izumi's fan and Murasaki's tale. Michinaga casually dismisses their ownership by stating that their approachability, and in a way, their closeness to power, is not due to their role as subordinates or textual producers, but it is tied to their sexual (and visual) availability.[88]

This charge of impropriety or unfeminine behaviour might have been what Sei Shōnagon had in mind when she compared the lifestyle of women at court with that of *kita no kata* 北の方—principal wives living in established houses—in what can be understood as rather defensive tones; championing the benefits of going out into the world for respectable women. She, however, to some extent, also justifies these criticisms:

> I really hated when men thought or said that those serving at court are despicable and superficial. In truth, I understand why they might think so. Starting from the August Monarch, formidable to the

[88] If we consider Murasaki's apparent visibility as derived from the public circulation of her *Genji monogatari,* it is possible the same could be said of Izumi's, meaning her diary/tale would be already known at the court by the time this exchange took place. Of course, this can only be speculation.

> point words fail, it could not be said that of the high nobility, courtiers, and particularly fifth and fourth rankers there were few not seen by them.[89]

Edith Sarra understands the phrase "there were few not seen by them"—見ぬ人すくなくこそあらめ—as being interpretable both as "there are few people who do not see her/she does not see" (Sarra: 1999, 223). In spite of the ambiguity of the sentence, the SNKZ gloss follows the second interpretation, probably because no honorific is being used for a subject that may include "senior nobles." However, as I will discuss later in this chapter, the *nyōbō*'s position of negotiation between "seeing" and "being seen" is fundamental to the moral and social considerations of their role.

There is one more section in the *Makura no sōshi* worth bringing up in this discussion that does not directly concern the visibility of court ladies, but rather the identification of the *nyōbō* and their texts. Sei Shōnagon complains about her lack of control over the circulation of earlier drafts of her work in these terms:

> At a time when the Middle Capitan of the Left [Minamoto no Tsunefusa 源経房 (969-1023)] was still called the Governor of Ise, he deigned come to my home, and this booklet was placed on the mat put out for him near the corner. Even though I tried to retrieve it and get it back, in the end he took it away with him, and kept it for a long time before actually returning it. That seems to have been the moment when this book first became known. So it is written.[90]

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[89]宮仕へする人を、あはあはしうわるき事に言ひ思ひたる男などこそ、いとにくけれ。げに、そもまださる事ぞかし。かけまくもかしこき御前をはじめたてまつりて、上達部、殿上人、五位、四位はさらにもいはず、見ぬ人はすくなくこそあらめ(…) (SNKZ: 56-57). See also Morris: 1971, 39, and McKinney: 2006, 22.

[90] 左中将まだ伊勢守と聞えし時、里におはしたりしに、端の方なりし畳をさし出でしものは、この草子載りて出でにけり。まどひ取り入れしかど、やがて持ておはして、いと久しくありてぞ返

A similar description of textual circulation can be found in Sei Shōnagon's colleague's diary, *Murasaki Shikibu nikki.* As has been mentioned before regarding this very text, circulation of the *monogatari* could be understood as part of the reason behind its author's presumed "accessibility." However, in her memoir Murasaki both remarks on her own connection to the text and the praise it garners her, and her lack of control over the physical copies of the tale.

> In my room, there were some copies of the tale I had had brought [from home], and kept secret there, and while I was out with Her Highness, [Michinaga] surreptitiously got into the room, searched for them, and took them to the palace to the Head Handmaid [Fujiwara no Kenshi 藤原妍子 (994-1027)]. The corrected copy I had given away and lost, and this one, I bet, gave me a shamefully bad name![91]

In both of these cases, expressions of fear of the authors' talent being doubted due to an unfinished piece of work being circulated may be considered as a justification before potential criticism. In this second example, as it is precisely Michinaga and his daughter who have gotten their hands on her work, there is nothing Murasaki Shikibu can do to stop the powerful from reading her *Genji,* unfinished or not. Both of these women present their inability to deny access to their physical space not as a violation of their bodies, but as an explanation for potentially perceived literary faults.

りたりし。それよりありきそめたるなめる、とぞはんに (SNKZ: 468). See also McKinney: 2006, 256 and Morris: 1971, 263. The SNKZ gloss understands the last two sentences are an addition by a copyist, however Morris renders them in the first person.

[91] 局に、物語の本どもとりにやりて隠しおきたるを、御前にあるほどに、やをらおはしまいて、あさらせたまひて、みな内侍の督の殿に、奉りたまひてけり。よろしう書きかへたりしは、みなひきうしなひて、心もとなき名をぞとりはべりけむかし (SNKZ: 168). See also Bowring: 1996, 33. Fujiwara no Kenshi was Michinaga's second daughter.

If the *hare/ke* dichotomy was understood as the norm, regardless of what actual practices the court might have followed, it makes sense that ladies-in-waiting would be seen as mildly subversive in terms of gender and class performance, as the distinction between both spaces became diffused both in their interaction with other courtiers and in their textual production. However, *nyōbō's* public presence could be considered as the type of irregularity that is assumed into the fabric of society, rather than being denounced. This apparent invisibility may be due precisely to the acceptance of both the existence of the palace attendant as a public figure and the rejection of the model of femininity they represented. That is, pretending to ignore them would be, in a sense, the polite thing to do.

Izumi Shikibu:

The figure of Izumi Shikibu is well represented in imperial anthologies; 247 of her poems are collected in several *chokusenshū* starting with the *Shūi wakashū.* She is mentioned as well in *Eiga monogatari* and *Ōkagami*, the two historical tales produced under the patronage of the Fujiwara family, as a lady-in-waiting to the Imperial Consort Fujiwara no Shōshi. However, it is not only her poetic proficiency that became the basis of her fame through medieval times; she would become a popular figure in tales, nō theatre, and other cultural manifestations, where she would be defined by her sexual appetite and her religious powers. For example, in a story compiled in the 13th century collections *Uji Shūi Monogatari* 宇治拾遺物語 (ca. 1221) and *Shasekishū* 沙石集 (1283), Initiate Dōmyō 道命

(974-1020) is able to preach the word of the Buddha to a minor deity after his purity has been diminished by having sex with the poet, allowing the god to approach him. Dōmyō is also presented in later Muromachi narratives not only as her lover, but also her abandoned son, being the discovery of the incest the cause behind the heroine's eventual enlightenment.[92] In a *kanazōshi* 仮名草子 entitled *Jōruri* 浄瑠璃 we are told about the fulfilment of her vow to sleep with a thousand men in order to help them find enlightenment, including a bodhisattva disguised in the shape of a leper. And although *Shasekishū* does include four anecdotes where she composes poetry, the essence of her character is clearly that of an *irogonominaru onna* 色好みなる女—a "love-loving woman"—of dubious, albeit contradictory morality, aligning herself with other medieval Buddhist re-contextualisations of Heian poets like Ariwara no Narihira 在原業平 (825-880) or Ono no Komachi 小野小町 (dates unknown) (Kimbrough: 2008, 29; Pandey: 2004, 68).

The developments Izumi's legendary figure underwent in medieval times, no doubt, have come to retrospectively colour the character of the historical Izumi. At first glance, it would seem one of the reasons why this fame adhered itself to our author so easily is that even in her own time, as well as in medieval poetic commentary, she already seemed to have a reputation for improper behaviour. Of course, the terms in which this is expressed are much tamer and more ambiguous than those Kamakura and Muromachi narratives use, and the reasons behind them were certainly less titillating than incest and sacred

[92] Sometimes it is her daughter Koshikibu whom she abandons and later reencounters, as in the late Muromachi *otogizōshi Koshikibu.* For a more in-depth description of Izumi Shikibu's portrayals in medieval sources see Kimbrough: 2008, 28-51.

prostitution. Even so, it is not hard for scholars to be reminded of Izumi Shikibu the courtesan, when the lady-in-waiting is described by contemporary sources as having "unseemly" qualities—けしからぬかたこそあれ (SNKZ: 201). Her diary itself, which I will discuss in more detail later on, has been understood as a defence against gossip and condemnations of the supposedly lewd behaviour of its author (Wallace: 2005, 107). The original intent behind its composition, however, is at best nebulous and difficult to determine. However, a good start can be made by examining back to back the very different accounts of Izumi Shikibu's character found in her *nikki* and in those other later texts, like *Eiga monogatari* and *Ōkagami*, where she is presented mainly as a public figure in the retinue of Empress Shōshi.

The way in which Izumi Shikibu's "questionable behaviour" redefines the corpus of her poetic composition and the publicity of her figure should not be ignored, as it can serve as a window into the way the poet was forced to negotiate her own usefulness to her patrons in the eyes of court society, already during her lifetime, and the way in which the poetico-social role of the author was considered in both artistic and moral terms after her work escaped her control, through scandal, and post-mortem reinterpretations of her circumstances. In any case, the position of moral censorship this figure seems to have suffered even in her own time period must have been more subdued than what we are led to believe or based on different reasons. After all, even though we tend to consider her affairs with the two imperial princes as the defining event behind her characterization in contemporaneous texts, they both took place before Izumi started serving under Shōshi. Her notoriety was clearly not an obstacle for her career at court. If anything, it may be

worth wondering if, in some sense, it might have been an asset. Seeing *Izumi Shikibu nikki* as an attempt at managing both the publicity of textual material relating to the liaisons and her own position within them, would show the lack of control Izumi had over the circulation of the story in the public sphere; however, it would also lay bare the mechanisms through which she would try to control the significance of her compositions, when she knew she would have no hand in their later contextualisation.

Izumi Shikibu nikki:

Two initial problems: Authorship and Classification of the Text:

Izumi Shikibu nikki covers the events of the years 1003-1004, when the poet—referred to as "the Woman" (*onna* 女) in its pages—carried out an affair with the fourth son of Emperor Reizei 冷泉天皇 (950-1011), Atsumichi Shinnō—"the Director Prince" (Sochi no Miya 帥の宮) in the text—brother of her deceased former lover the also Imperial Prince Tametaka 為尊親王 (977-1002), culminating with the prince moving her into his palace, which precipitated the departure of his principal wife, Fujiwara no Naritoki's Daughter 藤原済時女 (dates unknown). Its date of composition is not clear, and the very authorship of the text has been contested (Miyazaki: 2003, 171). In this sense, *Kagerō nikki* is a much simpler text to place in terms of the relationship between the author and the centres of power around her—both domestic and imperial. However, lack of information regarding Izumi's intent renders her work into a more mysterious animal; whether she wrote the diary before she started her court service under Shōshi, as a sort of an entertainment for

her superiors and colleagues at court, or if it was a way to memorialise her affair with the deceased prince (Endō: 1963, 387-388), it is impossible to know.

Due to the underlying uncertainties inherent to *Izumi Shikibu nikki*, the historical information derived from the different ways in which the text has been classified has become an invaluable insight into the issues surrounding the publicity and circulation of its content; an issue that ties inextricably to the reception of the text as either a diary or a tale. The third person narrator of the text, the use of *monogatari*-typical tropes, and a romantic plot, where a woman of middle-rank is (literally) swept off her feet by an imperial prince who carries her into his palace place *Izumi Shikibu nikki/monogatari* in line with other fictional tales of old such as *Ochikubo monogatari* 落窪物語 (late 10th century) or *Utsuho monogatari* 宇津保/うつほ物語 (ca. 1011). The content of the text does follow in many ways trends and tropes found in Heian fictional *monogatari* and poetic collections. The development of Izumi Shikibu and Atsumichi's affair has also been described as following the pattern found in the *Kokinshū* and other poetic *shū* where two lovers yearn for each other, gradually overcome doubts and mistrust, overcoming the tension of courtship, to finally see their liaison languish after their wishes are fulfilled (Walker: 1977). I do not agree with this article's reading of the text as an idealised representation of Heian love ideology trying to reconcile historical fact with a pre-established model, but rather, I believe the text presents a—relatively—factual account that supports itself on the emotional language available to its author and her correspondent.

How should we refer to this work, then? In quite a similar way to the fine distinction to be found sometimes between the category of *nikki* and *shū* I described in the previous chapter,[93] the distinction between the categories of *nikki* and *monogatari* emerges as a blurry, but a relevant one, and it can be articulated in several ways. A fairly clear-cut one is delineated by Konishi Jin'ichi, who defines the first as "a prose composition, written in the present tense, that is concerned with the life of a historical person," and the second as a work in the past tense pertaining to either historical or fictitious characters (Konishi: 1986, 256). These definitions, again, may serve as a general rule of thumb, but become problematic both when discussing the reception and the content of actual extant manuscripts. As stated in the previous chapter, the *Kagerō nikki*, for instance, jumps between non-past and past tense in order to distance or bring the narrator closer from the facts that are being presented (Wallace: 2005, 85-86) and uses structures typical of fiction works (Yokoi: 1999, 398); while *Tōnomine Shōshō monogatari*/*Takamitsu nikki* has historically been referred to as either a *nikki* or a *monogatari* (Gatten: 1998, 193). Previously, I discussed the difficulty of separating diary and poetry collection in terms of their content, as opposed to particular matters of circulation, presentation and performance. In a similar way, as I pointed out in my introduction, what often distinguishes *nikki* from *monogatari* is not the factuality of their content *per se*—which Tamai Kōsuke considers the defining characteristic of *nikki* as genre (Tamai: 1982, 257)—but rather their performance of factuality in terms of their content, circulation, and reception. Before addressing this issue, however, I would like to first focus on the textual history of this particular diary and its position in the *nikki*/*monogatari* question. This examination will

[93] See chapter 1, page 50.

become relevant later, when I tackle *Izumi Shikibu*'s particular deployment of *monogatari*-ness as a response to public scrutiny.

The Question of Authorship, the Question of *monogatari*-ness:

The female authorship of this text, if not Izumi's, is an integral part of my argument; therefore, it would be remiss to disregard the fact that several scholars have proposed throughout the years that the text may not be Izumi's creation, or even that its author could not have been a woman. Arguments used to deny her attribution include the third person of the text, and the lack of significant female characters, supposedly indicating a male hand behind it (Miyazaki: 2003, 173). An example of this view can be found in the straightforwardly entitled "Fujiwara no Shunzei wrote *Izumi Shikibu nikki*," where Kawase Kazuma (1953) presents a colophon by the late Heian scholar Fujiwara no Teika (1162-1241), found in some of the extant manuscripts, as proof that the diary's author was his father, Fujiwara no Shunzei (1114-1204):

> The manuscript says:
>
> I did not see this notebook in his/her lifetime, I came to see it after his/her death. Some crazy words composed after being ill of old age? The adopted child, the zen nun, was made to write it. The quality is uncommon, so even though it would be embarrassing if it were to be exposed, I will not destroy it. Copied thus by the personal brush of the previous Minister of the Revenue [Fujiwara no Teika].
>
> Copied on the twelfth of the Fifth Month of Kangen 4 as ordered by Dairi Tenji.[94]

[94] 書本云
存生之時不見此草子沒後所見及也老病之後狂事歟以養子之禪尼令書云云丈章詞躰不尋常雖恥披露暫不破前却戸部術書自筆如此所被書也
寛元第四五月＋二依大理典侍御命書寫了(Kawase: 1953, 21).

Under this interpretation, this explanation would refer to the scholar as the author, making the "zen nun" the poet who would come to be known as Fujiwara no Shunzei's Daughter (Fujiwara no Shunzei no musume 藤原俊成女 ca. 1171-ca. 1254), and turning *Izumi Shikibu nikki* a much later work of fiction. However, Cranston offers strong arguments against the identification of either of them as the author of the text. An almost identical colophon can be found on the posthumous papers of Teika's sister, Kenju Gozen 健寿御前 (d. before 1226). Shunzei's adoptive daughter did not take vows until nine years after his death, which would make the appellation of "nun," out of place here, whereas Kenju Gozen's adoptive daughter took the habit years before her mother passed (Cranston: 1969, 67-68). As it will be shown further down, there are also other proofs of the text having been read as historical in the centuries after its composition.

The claims against female authorship based on its grammatical person and its lack of female characters are also of dubious strength. The use of a third person narrator can be taken merely as a confirmation of the consciousness of an audience, much like the first and last lines in Michitsuna's Mother's first scroll. Other similar poetic narrations such as *Tosa nikki*, *Hon'in no Jijū shū*, or *Tōnomine Shōshō monogatari* are also in the third person, without this bringing their authorship into question.[95] A comparison with *Kagerō nikki* also dispels the second argument; the first half of Michitsuna's Mother's first scroll also had a stronger focus on male courtiers, and the only female characters were either family members of the author—her mother, her sister—or observed through the lens of their

[95] Admittedly Matsubara Kazuyoshi argues that *Tonomine Shōshō monogatari* could have been written by Michitsuna's Mother, but this is not commonly accepted by other scholars (Mostow: 2004, 47).

relationship to Kaneie—Kaneie's sister and wives.[96] It was only when the diary moved away from being a sort of *Kaneieshū* that female characters started appearing in direct connection to the narrator's emotions. In the same way, Atsumichi's wet nurse and his wife are the only relevant women we hear of in Izumi Shikibu's *nikki,* and are very clearly seen through Atsumichi's perception.

I do believe this is not the only similarity between Izumi Shikibu's text and *Kagerō nikki*. It is likely the latter author may have had knowledge of the earlier text, and could even have modelled her own *nikki* on it, to a point. Both texts very much make use of pre-established *monogatari* conventions (Hijikata: 2007, 220-221). Both of them also use very similar language to introduce their initial section, referring to their main character's presence in a "transient world" (はかなき世の中) and to their narrator's misery lasting from "dawn till dusk" (明かし暮らす). If Michitsuna's Mother was attempting to write an autobiographical tale (*mimonogatari* 身物語)—as has been proposed (Noguchi: 1995, 88)—making use of the literary tools offered by "old *monogatari,*" it is not illogical to consider that Izumi Shikibu may have wanted to inscribe her own relationship to a man of superior status in similar stylistic terms. After all, this is very much the story of a woman of middle rank being swept away by a charismatic prince; the pattern suggested by Michitsuna's Mother repeats itself. Further down I will argue, however, that the effects of the use of this tale-like stylisation in *Izumi Shikibu nikki* stand in stark contrast to the ones in Michitsuna's Mother's text.

[96] This has been explored in detail in the previous chapter.

It is not only internal characteristics, but also matters of textual history that place this work in a liminal position between diary and tale. As has been mentioned before, the very division between these two "genres" is often unclear and dependent on circumstances of reception rather than on textual structure. Going back to the etymology of these terms, perhaps the simplest way to divide *nikki* and *monogatari* might be "things that are written down" and "things that are told" (Hyōdō: 1980, 25) respectively;[97] and yet, this distinction in itself carries assumptions about textual performance, and makes it impossible to draw a clear line between each of them from our limited perspective, since we can only count on the written transmission of both. The collaborative and performative nature of tale "reading" in the Heian court (Miyake: 2001, 25) only complicates matters further. In this sense, it is irrelevant which name we give to *Izumi Shikibu nikki*/*monogatari*, since we are cut off from its original modes of performance. However, the classification of Izumi's work at the different times of reading carries within itself the editors' perception concerning authorship, and places the text as either a historical source or a quasi-fictional collection of poems and tale.

Even though this same fluidity and play on forms between tale and diary can also be found in *Kagerō nikki*, which calls by name the tropes found in old *monogatari* and attempts to both imitate and subvert them, the appellation of Michitsuna's Mother's text as a "*nikki*"

[97] Hyōdō Hiromi refers to the act of *katari* as a "contingent creative act," that can truly happen but once, between an oral teller and a listener. Once the telling has been set down in a written texts, its transmission from the page will become an act of *yomi*, a recitation of a pre-existing text (1980, 20-21). This rigid dichotomy that presents the oral speech as inevitably pre-eminent over written text is contested by Ramirez-Christensen (1995, 188), and here I use the term without pretensions of chronological or causational primacy.

seems to have been consistent throughout history. Unlike Izumi Shikibu's, Michitsuna's Mother's authorship has never been seriously questioned either. The explanation for the first fact appears to be thankfully simple; the author herself calls it by this name in the famous introductory and finishing paragraphs of the first scroll, where she directly refers to it as something that may well be called a "*kagerō* diary;" something as transient or vain as a mayfly, or a shimmer.[98] In a way, she argues, her account opposes with its truthfulness the empty fiction of *monogatari*, denoting an understanding of the meaning of "*nikki*" based on content rather than form,[99] where the main characteristic of *monogatari* is its fallacious quality.[100] Izumi Shikibu's text lacks the declaration of intentions of the earlier work; it does not ask to be remembered under any particular epithet, and as such, her work must be contextualised by later editors.[101]

Genre and Textual History:

Maybe in part for this reason, Izumi's text's classification as *nikki* or *monogatari* has been tenuous since at least early Kamakura, or even late Heian. It appears referred to as *nikki* in *Kohon setsuwashū* 古本説話集, in the 13th century *Honchō shojaku mokuroku* 本朝書籍

[98] あるかなきかのここちするかげろふ日記といふべし (SNKZ: 167). See also Arntzen: 1997, 163. It has been argued, however, that the characters in the extant manuscript, *hiki* 日き—where the *ki* is a cursive version of the character 起, to wake up, as opposed to the character 記, to record—should not be read as "*nikki*," but as "*hiki*," and so, it would indicate more literally a "chronological record of days," rather than a diary in the sense in which it has been described here (Laffin: 1999, 7). For the manuscript, see *Kagerō no nikki* (*Miyabon*) in the *Kunaichō shoryōbu* Digital Database; kotenseki.nijl.ac.jp/biblio/100265458/viewer/4.

[99] Tamai Kōsuke speaks of an understanding of the act of setting down a *nikki* as distinctively and intentionally meant for factual written record (Tamai: 1982, 240-242).

[100] For a summary and translation of texts portraying different Heian and early Kamakura approaches to fiction's relation to morality in *monogatari* see Harper & Shirane: 2015, 11-38.

[101] As an example of consistent nomenclature based on the work's paratexts, we have *Sarashina nikki*, which does not use the term "diary" to describe itself, but where it appears in Fujiwara Teika's postface on the earliest extant manuscript (Arntzen: 2014, 15).

目録 and in a late 15th century entry in the *kanbun* diary *Sanetaka* Kōki 実隆公記 (SNKZ: 90). As for manuscripts of the actual work, there exist four textual families, out of which only one of them consistently uses the title *Izumi Shikibu nikki*. This is the *Sanjōnishibon* 三条西本, a group of manuscripts following a copy in Sanjōnishi Sanetaka 三条西実隆 (1455-1537)'s hand—author of the aforementioned *kanbun* diary—probably written around the late 15th century, and the authoritative version for most modern editions. All of the others with the exception of the *Gunsho ruijubon* 群書類従本, a copy collected in the 18th century anthology of classical texts, refer to it as *monogatari*, including a variant that completely scraps the "Izumi Shikibu" and calls it *A tale about herself* (*Waga mi no monogatari* 我が身の物語). All extant copies are post 15th century, but the texts in the *Kangenbon* line consist of 17th century copies of a manuscript dated by its colophon in 1246.[102]

The only extant copy of the *Sanjōnishibon* line includes a colophon with a short biographical note on the author, as well as a genealogy of Emperor Reizei's children,[103] that includes both of the princes involved with the poet:

> Izumi Shikibu
>
> Daughter of the Supernumerary Middle Grade Councillor [*Gonchūnagon*] Kanehira. Her mother was a daughter of Taira no Yasuhira 平保衡, Governor of Etchu 越中, wetnurse to Grand Empress

[102] For a list of the different extant manuscripts and textual lines, see Cranston: 1969, 30-44.
[103] Much like the biographical notes and genealogical trees on Kaneie's family found in some of the extant copies of *Kagerō nikki.*

> Dowager Shōshi 昌子 (950-1000),[104] and was styled Suke no Naishi. Tachibana no Michisada 橘道貞 (?-1016), Governor of Izumi[father of Koshikibu], made her his wife; hence she was styled Izumi. She was a lady-in-waiting to Jōtōmon'in 上東門院 [Fujiwara no Shōshi] and her child-name was Omotomaro. Perhaps she was the daughter of Ōe no Masamune, Governor of Echizen, instead. [105]

The inclusion of these explicative notes highlights the understanding of the text as a historical one, interesting not only for its poetry or the thoughts of its author, but because of her connection to different members of the imperial family; not just the princes, but also those she became associated with through more publicly acceptable channels.[106] However, historicity should not be considered the determining factor to decide on the *monogatari*-ness of a text; the appearance of veracity may be considered as a characteristic of the genre, but factuality is irrelevant.[107] There are, after all, both fictional and non-fictional tales. What could then be the justification behind either choice of appellation? And answer for this could be delineated in the 12th century poetic treatise *Fukurozōshi* 袋草紙 (1159), where referring to the text that has come to be known as *The Tales of Ise,* we are told "because there are illicit matters, in order to label them as false, it was called *Ise monogatari.*"[108] That is, it was not necessarily understood that the content of this text was

[104] Also known as Imperial Princess Shōshi, consort of Emperor Reizei. Do not mistake for Fujiwara no Shōshi (藤原彰子), Michinaga's daughter.

[105] 和泉式部/権中納言兼平女/母越中守平保衡女/太皇大后昌子御乳母号介内侍/和泉守[古式部内侍父]橘道貞為妻仍号和泉/上東門院女房童名御許丸也/或越前守大江雅政女也. Tokyo, Depository of the Bureau of Books of the Library of the Imperial Household Agency Archives and Mausolea Department, Tokyo, *Kunaichō shoryōbu toshoryō bunkozō* 宮内庁書陵部図書寮文庫蔵 (Sanjōnishibon: 59). The superscript reflects an explicatory note written over the other characters.

[106] The manuscript of *Sarashina nikki* preserved in the Imperial Household Agency also has attached a similar colophon penned by Fujiwara no Teika with biographies of several male personages mentioned in the diary. However, Takasue's Daughter's biographical note, unlike this one, is not written in *kanbun,* but in *kana.* See chapter 3, pages 179-180.

[107] In contrast to what Tamai Kōsuke considers to be the essential characteristic of "*nikki*;" something we call a record of factual matters ("日記とは事實の記録を呼ぶのである," Tamai: 1982, 257). See note 99.

[108] 僻事と称せんとするの由にて、伊勢物語と号す。諺に伊勢は僻と云ふ故なり (SNKT: 66).

fiction, but since it pertained to high-ranking members of the court, it was only polite to vaguely disguise this fact by not calling the work a "record," allowing for the possibility of it being dismissed as idle chatter.[109] As Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen puts it, "in effect, *monogatari* or "fiction" is alternative, even subversive, discourse, that which is excluded from legitimate, written history, and should therefore be read that way" (Ramirez-Christensen: 1995, 190).

Since, much like *Ise monogatari*, Izumi Shikibu's texts deals with matters pertaining to the imperial family, and not always in a positive light, the title may be understood in similar terms on the part of later editors. Once again—as it was the case for poets of lower rank composing *uta* that would be effectively owned by their superiors—publicity and common knowledge stand in clear contrast; it is a matter of framing, rather than the factuality of content that deems a conversation inappropriate or not to be included in the historical record. At the same time, we see that the understanding of what should and should not be regarded as appropriate to be seen in a historical light varies extremely depending on particular lines of copyists.

And so, the inclusion of a text under this textual classification can be equated with the practice of hiding compositions by different members of the court under the appellative "anonymous" (*yomibito shirazu* よみ人しらず) in poetic collections when the circumstances made it unadvisable to include their names, even when they were common

[109] *Ise monogatari* is referred to as *Zaigo ga nikki* in the 11th century *Sagoromo monogatari* (Newhard: 2013, 17), which indicates this trend was not absolute.

knowledge, or with the custom of recording poems by the sponsor or highest ranking person in poetry matches as composed by a "lady-in-waiting" (Tabuchi: 2002, 46). We do know that when it came to the issue of anonymity versus irrelevance in public composition, publicly recognised textual production—or its portrayal in *hare* records—was not necessarily a matter of pride; on the contrary, under improper circumstances, it could be a clear marker of social inferiority (Heldt: 2008, 266). This is surely one of the reasons why ladies-in-waiting's freedom of movement must have been looked down on by high-ranking members of society.

Regardless of the actual authorship of the diary, the way in which it contextualised the real life events of the affair between the poet and the imperial prince limit it to a love story, where the social implications are not derived from the lovers' actions themselves, but rather from an external force. Calling the work a *monogatari* does not make the story anonymous, but rather it makes it—or pretends to make it—unimportant to public discourse. If *Kagerō nikki* used *monogatari* tropes and verbal structures (Yokoi: 1999, 398) in order to oppose a real story to the idealised version of a relationship between a lower-class woman and a higher-ranking man of old tales, *Izumi Shikibu nikki/monogatari* uses the framing of the tale as a tool to render the relationship portrayed as harmless, and the events in which Izumi saw herself entangled as non-transgressive. That is, the diary is presented into public light as a device to manage, neutralise, and respond to scandal.

Public Domesticity and the Problem of Scandal in *Izumi Shikibu nikki:*

Scandal is in itself an interesting concept in terms of the *hare*/*ke* dichotomy, as it deals with matters that have occurred in the dark of privacy being brought to the forefront of public censorship and regulation. Common knowledge of a transgression may spread behind closed doors, but actual scandal requires publicity; again, it is merely a matter of performance and framing, which deems a particular type of behaviour as scandalous, much in the same way in which a text may be declared either *hare* or *ke*. As Ari Adut phrases it;

> It is crucial that the publicity of a real or alleged transgression be distinguished from extensive or even common knowledge about it. All or most members of a norm audience may know of a transgression. Members may be aware of each other's knowledge of it. Such communications however, often fall short of creating a scandal. Publicity is usually achieved only when the members of a public are exposed simultaneously to a transgression, either actually or discursively, from a single source of communication (Adut: 2005, 217).

It is then the public formulation of an event or circumstance as scandalous that disrupts the status quo. Authorised by the full force of moral outrage, but at the same time, excluded from public consideration as a legitimate source of influence, scandal is a normative tool with a power unattainable even by the sponsorship of Chinese poetry. But can we say that Izumi's transgressions were deemed scandalous? If scandal does not depend on the knowledge of the transgression, but rather it is provoked by information about it being communicated through an authoritative source (Adut: 2005, 218), it would seem Izumi's affair would only become so after her death. If we consider scandal as social drama (Jacobs: 2019, 169), however, the performative aspects of Izumi Shikibu response, both lived and textual, map a context in which to consider the loss of control and later negotiation of both the image of the author—particularly the author of a self-narrative like

Izumi Shikibu nikki—and the texts that deal with the relevant events already within her lifetime.

Michitsuna's Mother made an effort in her diary to frame herself as Fujiwara no Kaneie's wife, partly creating for him a public image that would showcase her talents as chronicler and poet, but also building her own image, as someone who produced for him and was tied to Kaneie indelibly, in the eyes of her readers. *Kagerō nikki* sets its author's domestic role as a fundamental part of both Michitsuna's Mother's and her husband's position within the greater court society. Izumi Shikibu, much like her foremother, composes in her memoir a work where the essential identity of her heroine is based on her relationship with a man, and around love exchanges and visitations within the domestic context. However, where Michitsuna's Mother focuses on aspects of this relation that define her role in Kaneie's household, and her anxiety about how this might change, Izumi does not position herself in particularly productive terms. There is no dyeing of clothes or rearing of children in *Izumi Shikibu nikki,* nor is there poem-writing intended for third parties on behalf of the man of higher rank. On the contrary, the text makes repeated note of the *ennui* (*tsuredure* つれづれ) the lady finds herself in, often linked to her need for support or lack thereof (Moritō: 1991, 252-253). Of course, the temporal line of the later text is a rather short one, by comparison, since the early death of Atsumichi not leaving much room for a decade long development like the one Michitsuna's Mother produced; in the short period of time her *nikki* portrays, there is a much greater focus on the negotiation of the establishment of a relationship, rather than on its preservation. There are also no attempts

to showcase Izumi's ability as a "professional poet," as both her poetry collection and other texts dealing with her role as lady-in-waiting do.

Izumi Shikibu nikki, like Michitsuna's Mother diary, starts with the first overtures of an amorous liaison. However, it is not the death of the prince that closes the diary; it is the publicity of their affair. All throughout this text, the framing of their relationship is clearly an intimate one, where both protagonists are separated, to some extent, from their public personas and connections. The main difference between *Kagerō nikki* and *Izumi Shikibu nikki*'s approach to domesticity lies in the latter's refusal to engage this domain with that of public life. Michitsuna's Mother chronicles her poetry exchanges with imperial consorts, her compositions for congratulatory screens, or her assistance in her husband's poetic dialogue with his superior; in contrast, Izumi, who had already acted as a *nyōbō* before the events of the diary, and has already composed poetry in a courtly context, disentangles herself from the role of a public poet.

And yet, it would be a lie to say there is no interaction whatsoever between the two main characters as a couple and the rest of society. This interaction, however, is defined by their own reactions and responses to either the fear of scandal, or to gossip directed at either their association or at the Woman herself. All throughout the diary, rumour appears time and again as a driving force behind the actions of the main characters and their framing of the situation, whether the actual content of the allegations is made known to the reader or not. When the Woman decides to respond to the enquiries of the Prince for the first time, she justifies herself precisely by reasoning that she has not heard negative criticisms

of his behaviour—"As making him hear some words would not be proper, she thought 'what is the issue? I have not yet heard anything unprincipled of him (*adaadashiku* あだあだしく). [I will write him] some inconsequential thing'."[110] It is particularly Sochi no Miya who is the most susceptible of the two to this external influence. And so, when he starts harbouring doubts and decides to interrupt his visits, it is because he remembers that his brother "the Late Prince was slandered until his very end precisely because of this [relationship] "—「故宮のはてまでそしられさせたまひしも、これによりてぞかし」(SNKZ: 23. See also Cranston: 1969, 136). This sudden cessation of the Prince's attentions due to misinformation is a reoccurring characteristic of their courtship, regardless of his closeness, physical and emotional to the lady;

> His Highness, as usual, went secretly [to her house]. As the Woman was thinking "no way [he is coming]," and was exhausted from the events of the day, she fell fast asleep, so when he knocked on the door, no one heard it. Because of things he had been told, thinking that perhaps there was someone else [with her], he swiftly returned home.[111]

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[110] ことばにて聞こえさせむもかたはらいたくて、「なにかは、あだあだしくもまだ聞こえたまはぬを、はかなきことをも」と思ひて(SNKZ: 18). See also Cranston: 1969, 131. Cranston (1969, 235-236) notes certain difficulties with the translation of these brief sentences. The initial "*kotoba"* is rendered in the SNKZ's 1994 edition as a verbal message (KNBZ: 18), and as a letter in the 1971 one (Fujioka: 1971, 86). Whereas both the French and Spanish translations and understand the "*hakanaki koto wo mo*" as an affirmative—"*elle se dit qu'un póeme banal ne tirerait pas à consequence*" (Sieffert: 1989, 40); "*se animó a contestarle con un poema insignificante*" (Imoto and Rubio: 2017, 80)—Cranston understands the final statement as forming just one sentence with the preceding question "*nani ka ha*"—my "what is the issue?"—and so, he renders is as "should she risk a trifling verse?" The SNKZ gloss, understands the question as a separate entity, both in its 1971 (Fujioka: 1971, 86) and in its 1994 editions. However, Nomura follows Cranston's interpretation on the connexion of both elements, but gives it a slightly different meaning; "どうして疎略にお返事できましょうか" (Nomura: 1981, 12).

[111] 宮、例の忍びておはしまいたり。女、さしもやはと思ふうちに、日ごろのおこなひに困じて、うちまどろみたるほどに、門をたくに聞きつくる人もなし。聞こしめすことどもあれば、人のあるにやとおぼしめして、やをら帰らせたまひて (SNKZ: 26-27). See also Cranston: 1969, 139. This other potential visitor must be understood as another lover.

The diary presents the influence of hearsay in the stunted development of their affair, but at the same time, it takes a stance against it, portraying it as insufficient justification for the male lover's choices; it is shown as an impediment to be overcome. The narrator shelters herself in the unreliability of rumour. In the framing of the diary, gossip presupposes an implicitly stated normative structure for amorous relations, expressed through particular accusations of failing to comply with it. Through it, a relation is established between each of the two lovers and the rest of society as much as it is established between each other. The very character of the Woman—in terms of both status and behaviour—is presented by the gossipers as the reason why this particular affair's publicity would be improper. In this way, the amorphous, unnamed group circulating this gossip, and supporting both this normative conception, and Izumi's exclusion from it serves as a foil for the character of Izumi Shikibu in this text.

The power of rumour to affect behaviour is not only expressed through the internal monologue of the two main character; we sometimes are also shown the Prince's entourage—his *nyōbō* and his wetnurse—directly engaging with him in spreading the rumours that guide his actions and opinions;

> From people around him [his ladies-in-waiting] he heard being said "lately the Minamoto General himself has been there. [He goes there] even during the day." And also, "the Lord of Civil

> Administration, too, was there!" and such, hearing all the babble, he thought her very fickle, and for a long time there were no letters from him.[112]

Up to the last stages of the diary, undefined hearsay hangs as a threatening cloud over their relationship, countered only by the narrator's plausible deniability. In either of these examples drawn from the texts, none of the doubts either of the lovers had felt, or the Prince's concern about other possible affairs could be in any way confirmed; the lack of visual corroboration made the actual incidence of these events irrelevant. This understanding of a technically acceptable framing, protecting the interests of the Woman in the face of her lover, however, also shields the relationship itself from direct censorship. The threat of scandal is presented, not so much as a tool for impeding antisocial behaviour, but rather to regulate its performance. The secret liaison between the two is socially acceptable as long as there is room to deny it, no matter how unbelievable this denial may be. The *nikki* ends, therefore, as the story is made known to the court in a way where this deniability is neutralised by visual availability, when the Woman has been moved to the Prince's residence. This is presented in a violent, almost violating way;

> The attendants of the exalted lady [Atsumichi's *kita no kata*] went and sat out to take a look at the spectacle, without giving a single glance at the courtiers, saying "let's take a look at this person," they loudly opened holes [on the paper wall], how improper![113]

[112] ある人々聞こゆるやう「このごろは、源少将なむいますなる。昼もいますなり」と言へば、また、「治部卿もおはすなるは」など、口々聞こゆれば、いとあはしうおぼされて、久しう御文もなし (SNKZ: 39). See also Cranston: 1969, 149.

[113] 上の御方の女房出でゐてもの見るに、まづそれをば見で、「この人を見む」と穴をあけ騒ぐぞ、いとさまあしきや (SNKZ: 85). See also Cranston: 1969, 189.

Here the attendants of Sochi no Miya's wife open holes to take a look at the Prince's new lover, while she is separated from them by some sort of physical barrier, presumably in order to convey her description to their mistress. Izumi is, in this way, stripped from the protection of the walls, and seems unable to do anything to stop them.

Ladies-in-waiting are, both in this and the preceding quotation, portrayed as important participants in the circulation of gossip and the creation of this normative framework. But, as we can see in this excerpt, they are also capable of defying a perceived sense of propriety based on the visual separation between the love affair as performed and the public space that has been built by the text until this point. In this short scene, they are shown to be indifferent to Izumi's sense of decorum and wishes for privacy and concealment. Unlike many *monogatari* heroes engaged in *kaimami*, they do not peep through a crack or a gap in the fence—a window into a room whose prior existence may allow the observed to somewhat negotiate their presentation, in the knowledge of the possibility of being observed (Bargen: 2015, 28). Instead, they open up for examination a previously concealed space, exposing the figure of the Woman, making her presence undeniable, and reinforcing the source of later rumour-mongering with direct, undeniable, visual information. This invasive act does not seem to have negative repercussions for them, but it serves to finally precipitate the departure of Atsumichi's wife from the house. The power dynamics between the *nyōbō* and the Woman are shown to be defined by a complete sense of helplessness on the part of the latter against their number, access to both the Prince and his wife, and their ruthlessness in the acquisition and of gossip.

It is, here, when the affair is pushed—quite literally—into the public eye, that Atsumichi's wife finally leaves the house, in the final scene of the diary:

> The Lady of the House's elder sister, who served as the Crown Prince's Consort, while back at home sent a letter: "What is this? Is true what people are saying now? Even to me this feels purely indecent. Though it is the middle of the night, why don't you move here?" When she received this, realising how people discuss even these worthless matters, with great sorrow, she answered (…).[114]

In which is perhaps the most *monogatari*-esque aspect of the work, the author has created a fictive layer of privacy between the exposed love affair and public discourse, framing the diary's subject matter as an issue divorced from the public sphere. Following Adut's model, the text portrayed a situation where there may exist a third-party knowledge of the events, but this knowledge expresses itself without disruption to the status quo; for most of the affair, there is no scandal. Even though the text portrays an external opposition to her relationship with the Prince, it is only voiced through members of his closest personal circle; his former wet nurse and his wife.

Where Michitsuna's Mother portrayed her relations with the rest of court society through her connection to Kaneie—writing poems to his sisters, or his superior in the Ministry of War—the Woman never comes into contact with any of these other figures. The very use

[114] 北の方の御姉、春宮の女御にてさぶらひたまふ、里にものしたまふほどにて、御文あり。「いかにぞ。このごろ人の言ふことはまことか。われさへ人げなくなむおぼゆる。夜のまにもわたらせたまへかし」とあるを、かからぬことだに人は言ふとおぼすに、いと心憂くて御返り、(…) SNKZ: 286. See also Cranston: 1969, 189-190. "Back at home" refers to the sisters' father's house.

of the word *onna* to designate the protagonist could be considered a marker of "anonymity," that is, as a way to seemingly separate the narration of the matter from public discourse (Pandey: 2016, 83). In a sense, if we are to read the text as a defence of it's author's engagement with the Prince, this defence is created by contrasting the proper, moral, and socially productive separation between *hare* and *ke* spaces—where this affair is irrelevant—and the alternative network of circulation and behaviour normativism represented through the figure of the *nyōbō.*

The diary's representation of the *hare*/*ke* dichotomy, however, is one where the *ke* aspects of poetic power dynamics between a woman of middle-rank and a socially superior lover do not naturally conflate with occurrences in the *hare* sphere, as it happened in the Fujiwara-depending Michitsuna's Mother's text. Rather than the actual development of the relationship, it is external factors that finally upset this balance and cause the affair to become publicly disruptive. This disruption does not take place within what could be described as a *hare* sphere of circulation, however, but instead is embodied through these liminal figures who break down the separation between what is described as a concealed, socially ineffectual affair, and the visually available—and therefore, subjectable to open moral judgment and social scrutiny.

This formulation of the powerlessness of the individual in the face of a group that punishes and rewards particular modes of self-presentation, while determining the way in which performance is viewed is not limited to *Izumi Shikibu nikki.* This is actually something we have seen before in this chapter, when referring to other *nyōbō*-authored text like

Murasaki Shikibu nikki and Makura no sōshi. Murasaki Shikibu and Sei Shōnagon already used their helplessness against high-ranking members of the court to excuse the circulation of perceived sub-standard literary work; both an inevitability, and a tool to negotiate potential issues in the perception of the writer and her text. Izumi Shikibu presents here the same vulnerability in the face of the circulation of personal information in the hands of palace attendants. Circulation of her image is not portrayed as outside of her control because of unequal power relations between patron and client or husband and wife, but rather, because of emergent group dynamics based on expectations of propriety, reinforced by the members of the community, upon themselves and others, regardless of rank.[115]

The power the diary claims for the figure of the *nyōbō* is clearly not framed in positive terms; ability to publicise and circulate information is depicted as breaking down the barrier of the proper, and is what ultimately turns the relation scandalous. This network and its social impact are recognised, but it stands in contrast to the proper public/private division that would be represented through the *hare*/*ke* dichotomy. Their role is also presented as not completely dissimilar to that of the servants that take messages between the lovers, or share the details of their affair with one another. Their classification alongside these lower class individuals serves to point to their lesser moral quality in a society where status is considered an indication of personal quality.[116] In spite of this hostile approach on

[115] Even though the lady-in-waiting works in this diary as the embodiment of these relations, it would be a mistake to describe this type of normativism as exclusively external. As the internal monologue of Sochi no Miya and the Woman illustrates, these expectations of propriety are also self-reinforced and, therefore, do not necessarily depend on overt criticism from others, but rather on an individual's perception of themselves within the group dynamics.

[116] See chapter three, pages 229-231.

the part of the author, these dynamics are portrayed as socially impactful, subversive, and distinct from the "proper" separation of domestic and extra-domestic spaces as demarcated in this diary and *Kagerō nikki* before it.

This attempt to portray the figure of the Woman as cut off from public discourse, and victimised by forced visualisation presents a clear contrast with depictions of Izumi Shikibu in other texts which all, in one way or another, refer to her publicity—as one of the perpetrators of an eyebrow-raising affair, as a *nyōbō*, and, particularly, as a poet. In spite of *Izumi Shikibu nikki*'s demonization of the lady-in-waiting, it is on her identity as an attendant that moral judgment will be passed over Izumi's character by latter texts. In other words, her positioning as a visually available character becomes essential to her literary figure, rather than a tragic development. Commenters bridge the gap between the author's presentation in private and courtly contexts, but she falls into the same categories she attempted to criticise in her diary. As we will see, the lack of a productive domestic space attached to her literary figure leaves her in a liminal, morally ambiguous place, where the type of semi-public circulation exemplified by the lady-in-waiting becomes antisocial.

Court Service: Izumi Shikibu in other texts:

On the one hand it is true that Izumi Shikibu seems to have been condemned by her peers for her behaviour, but it is precisely because of her perceived tiptoeing around the normative that her conduct seemed to merit mention in other texts of the period at all. Whenever the affair was recounted, it was precisely because of the scandalous nature of

her dealings with the prince, that her portrayal was in any way separated from the homogenous literary presence of her fellow poets and palace attendants. *Eiga monogatari*, for instance, only mentions Murasaki Shikibu by name as she composes *uta* to accompany the grief of her mistress or Michinaga. There is, in fact, a section in the historical chronicle that seems to be lifted verbatim from her *Murasaki Shikibu nikki* (McCullough: 1980, 58), conflating *Genji monogatari*'s author's voice with the tale's narrator, as the distinct identity of the court chronicler(s) proves unnecessary. Akazome Emon, the alleged author of this historical tale, is mentioned once, also composing a poem, and neither she nor Murasaki are mentioned in the latter *Ōkagami*. However, the fame of the extra-normative circumstances that have become conflated with the literary image of the historical Izumi was, at best, a note of added interest to a figure who appeared in contemporary texts mostly in the role of a lady-in-waiting. *Izumi Shikibu nikki* is in this sense the portrayal of an Izumi completely divorced from the function of palace attendant that *monogatari, nikki* and poetic treatises present her in.

Records of the presence of Izumi Shikibu at court portray her in a stark contrast with her persona in her diary—unrelated to courtly life, lonely, abandoned, and full of *ennui.* This description, of course, must be considered as a literary construction, since the lady had already served as a *nyōbō* before the events related in *Izumi Shikibu nikki*, and enjoyed a connection to imperial salons thanks to her mother, a former imperial wetnurse. The intersection between her image as a member of the empress' retinue and the intimate portrayal of her affair with Atsumichi can be found in several texts circulated at the court

during her lifetime and the decades following it, where she occupied a place in the plural voice of Shōshi's entourage and her worth was judged based on her contribution to it.

Probably the most well-known description of Izumi's character can be found in the diary of her fellow palace attendant Murasaki Shikibu, where she appears in a small section criticising the merits of the service and literary contributions of other ladies-in-waiting:

> This person called Izumi Shikibu did keep an interesting correspondence. Even though Izumi does have condemnable qualities, when she throws letters together, she has great talent for it, and it looks like she can make even empty words have a special flavour. Her poems are quite effective. Neither her knowledge of precedent nor her critical mind have attained the true shape of poetry, but simply relying on her wits, she will manage to produce something interesting and there surely will be a point that catches your eye in it. However, when she has to pass judgement on other people's compositions, then she is not equal to the task. Because she can just compose poems on the spot, she appears to be talented. [However,] I cannot believe she does not have anything to be ashamed of as a poet. [117]

The diary present here Izumi being analysed right by two other reputed court attendants and public writers; Akazome Emon and Sei Shōnagon, remembered for the already mentioned *Eiga monogatari* and *Makura no sōshi*, respectively. In a way, these three assessments on the three ladies offer us an indistinct mixture of literary criticism and moral judgement on both the character and the merits of the works of these court authors; it is hard to know if Murasaki is referring to Izumi's production or her faults as a human being.

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[117] 和泉式部といふ人こそ、おもしろう書きかはしける。されど、和泉はけしからぬかたこそあれ。うちとけて文はしり書きたるに、そのかたの才ある人、はかない言葉の、にほひも見えはべるめり。歌は、いとをかしきこと。ものおぼえ、うたのことわり、まことの歌詠みざまにこそはべらざめれ、口にまかせたることどもに、かならずをかしき一ふしの、目にとまる詠みそへはべり。それだに、人の詠みたらむ歌、難じことわりゐたらむは、いでやさまで心は得じ。口にいと歌の詠まるるなめりとぞ、見えたるすぢにはべるかし。恥づかしげの歌詠みやとはおぼえはべらず (SNKZ: 201). See also Bowring: 1996, 53.

[118] In Murasaki's view, there might not be a distinction as far as Izumi's value goes. As for her negative judgement on her colleague's inability to correctly criticise other people's compositions, one can see in it a clear example of the conception of poetry as a communal and dialogical endeavour typical to this context. For a lady-in-waiting, proper reception is as important as poetic production, and a poem is incomplete without the appreciation of the rest of the group; therefore, Izumi has no claim to a knowledge of "true poetry" based on her compositions alone. In this diary's eyes, artistic production is not limited to writing or reciting; it ought to include her interactions with the empress' retinue. Courtly behaviour is inseparable from artistic/literary production. And so, in Murasaki Shikibu's opinion, Izumi cannot claim to be a proper poet without fully mastering the art of reception.

This short paragraph is the closest we have to a character description of Izumi as she would have been seen by her peers. Every other circulated Heian text that mentions her shares with Murasaki the preoccupation for the public role of the lady, rather than her private actions. She is placed very clearly in a public, courtly context, even when her affairs with the two princes are brought up. *Ōkagami* mentions her in connection to them, in two sections focusing on these men; she is first mentioned in passing as the chronicle notes that Atsumichi's wife, Fujiwara no Naritoki's Daughter, left her husband when he "transferred his affections to Izumi Shikibu"—和泉式部に思しうつりにしかば (SNKZ: 123)—and as she composes a poem after contemplating in awe a carriage built by

[118] The SNKZ glosses both in its 1971 (201) and 1994 (137) editions the "けしからぬかた" (my "condemnable qualities") as referring to the "morally abhorrent behaviour" of Izumi, whereas Yamamoto declares that, even though this is a common reading, it makes more sense to consider it a reference to the quality of Izumi's letters, in view of the rest of the passage (Yamamoto: 1980, 89). Bowring translates this passage as "she does have a rather unsavoury side to her character" (Bowring: 1996, 53).

Kanetsuna for the Kamo festivities. Other than this illustration of the magnificence of one public occasion through her poetry, her portrayal tells us more about Atsumichi's disregard for conventions and propriety than about the lady herself.

In the longest of the three sections dealing with the poet in this chronicle, we learn that both of the *shinnō* were "a little flighty"— 御心の少し軽ゝにぞおはしましし(SNKZ: 247) —and we are privy to the circumstances in which Prince Atsumichi shared a carriage with her during the Kamo Festival:

> Sochi no Miya, on the [Kamo] Festival Return, rode together with the Lady Izumi Shikibu on a manner that was most interesting to see. The curtains of the carriage's entrance were cut in the middle, held high on his side, and lowered on the side where Shikibu was riding; her robe trailing out of it, with wide red purification paper sheets attached to her crimson *hakama*, and as they trailed widely all the way down to the ground, how about that? It seems people paid more attention to this here than to the spectacle.[119]

It is fitting that the presence of the lady beside the prince seems to present itself in a very similar manner to how the diary intends to frame the affair: by publicly showcasing the "un-publicity" of the poet. The palace attendant, characterised by her visual accessibility, acts in a shocking way not by letting herself be seen, but rather by allowing signs of her to be perceived while remaining herself visually inaccessible. Everyone in the audience is well aware of who the trousers covered in seclusion signs belong to, but the appearance of

[119] 帥宮の、祭のかへさ、和泉式部の君とあひ乗らせたまて御覧ぜしさまも、いと興ありきやな。御車のくちの簾を中より切らせたまひて、わが御方をば高う上げさせたまひ、式部が乗りたる方をば下ろして、衣ながう出ださせて、紅の袴に赤き色紙の物忌いとひろきつけて、地とひろしう下げられたりしかば、いかにぞ、物見よりは、それをこそ人見るめりしか (SNKZ: 247-248). See also McCullough: 1980, 165.

separation between Izumi and the public display seems to be pushed from within, regardless of its success—or, perhaps, unconcerned with it.

In *Eiga monogatari* we are shown her additions to courtly life after the death of Prince Atsumichi, when she had become an attendant for Shōshi, Fujiwara no Michinaga's daughter and empress to Emperor Ichijō 一条天皇 (980-1011). Here Izumi also almost exclusively appears linked to the expression of the personality and feelings of those above her station, as has already been illustrated with the poem exchange between Shōshi and her father, Michinaga. Another one of her poems is the only one written by a woman—that the *monogatari* author considered worth mentioning—in a series of compositions for screens to be used at the Regent's New Year's banquet. Her inclusion with the likes of Michinaga, Fujiwara no Suketada 藤原輔尹 (?-1021), Ōnakatomi no Sukechika 大中臣輔親 (954-1038), and Fujiwara no Kintō 藤原公任 (966-1041)—the regent and several respected men of *belles lettres*—speaks of her appreciation as a poet, in this little list where the most powerful man in the court mixes with others of lower rank, but recognised talent. In another example of the high esteem in which her compositions where held by the *Eiga monogatari* author, an *uta* by her is also the only one recorded from many presented when a miraculous ox is revealed to be a manifestation of a Buddha in 1025.

After her death, Izumi is still discussed in several poetic treatises and other pieces of literary medieval criticism, in spite of the more fantastical development she undergoes as a

character in anecdotal literature (*setsuwa* 説話). She appears recorded in the list of notable women of past and present in *Mumyōzōshi* 無名草子 (ca. 1202) right after her daughter Koshikibu no Naishi 小式部内侍 (?-1025). This text follows *Murasaki Shikibu nikki* in its mixture of literary and moral criticism, although it expands on *monogatari* and their contents much more. Its author—possibly the already mentioned Shunzei's Daughter—presents her notes on particular works of fiction apart from her opinion on several ladies and their qualities as members of the court, pointing to a certain loss of the identification between social mores and literary production.

The selection of Izumi Shikibu's poems here does not speak of her reputation as an *irugonominaru onna*, either. The text notes how surprising it is for a woman to have authored so many good poems, and presents more compositions by her than by any other of the ladies listed. Although the first composition selected to illustrate her character responds—according to the essay— to her longing after being forgotten by her husband Yasumasa—"保昌に忘られて," according to *Toshiyori zuinō* 俊頼髄脳 (ca. 1112)—it was composed during a hundred-night vigil in Kibune, and it elicited a reply by the god of the shrine himself, also presented in this text. Three poems follow composed in mourning after Koshikibu's death, and finally her famous *Kuraki yori /kuraki michi ni zo*, described as a deathbed poem:[120]

[120] Since her name on this poem is recorded as "Masamune's Daughter" in the *Shūishū*, modern scholarship has speculated it was actually composed in her teens, before taking her sobriquet from her eventual husband and governor of Izumi, Tachibana no Michisada (Klein, 2002, 32). The poem is also recorded in several personal and official anthologies, as well as in poetic treatises and commentaries. *Izumi Shikibu shū seishū*

From the darkness into a dark path I must enter. Shine on from afar, mountain ridge moon.

When she composed this, without giving any answer, [the holy man Shōkū] presented her with a stole. As she put it on, she passed away. Thanks to this, I have heard Izumi Shikibu, a person whose sinfulness must have been deep, obtained salvation in the next world.[121]

She is the only one of all the ladies described whose poetry is related to gods and Buddhist enlightenment in such direct terms, and the inclusion of her salvation is also unique in the list. This is not due to an attempt to skim over more erotic aspects of the women discussed, as Ono no Komachi's section does include a note of her knowledge of emotions and love, which was already part of her legend at this point; here, however there is not even a suggestion of this reputation in connection to the latter poet. Izumi is portrayed, if anything, in terms of the religious potency of her work; through it, she is capable of moving the gods and breaking the bonds of earthly attachment.[122] Marra (1993: 63) believes it is precisely because of the famous impurity of the figure of Izumi that she would become a popular example of enlightenment. He translates the line as "in spite of the depth of her sins,"

(150, 834), *Gengenshū* 玄々集 (after 1046), *Shinsenrōeishū* 新撰朗詠集 (after 1122), *Gorokurokusen* 後六々撰 (before 1165), *Toshiyori kuden* 俊頼口伝 (ca. 1113), *Korai Futeishō*, *Mumyōshō*, and *Mumyōzōshi* among others.

[121]暗きより暗き道にぞいりぬべきはるかに照らせ山の端の月

と詠みてやりたりければ、返しをばせで、袈裟をなむ遣はしける。さて、それを着てこそ失せはべりにけれ。そのけにや、和泉式部、罪深かりぬべき人、後の世助かりたるなど聞きは(SNKZ: 271).

[122] Her powers are often derived both from her sexuality and her poetry in medieval reinterpretations of her character. For Buddhist anecdotes where she uses her poetry to end draughts and floods, see Kimbrough: 2005, 11-18. Kawashima does see a reference to Izumi's eroticism in the inclusion of this poem here, as it is recited by an *asobi,* a pleasure woman, who seeks enlightenment by having sex with a monk in an anecdote in Kamo no Chōmei's 鴨長明 (1155?-1216) *Hosshinshū* 発心集 (before 1216) (Kawashima: 2001, 62). However, this poem is ubiquitous enough in other texts (see note 120) that an allusion may not be necessary. It also follows the opposite pattern of medieval stories that do refer to Izumi's sexuality, where it is the other party of the sexual relation that derives a reward from the experience.

however, this seems to refer to the inherently sinful nature of humans—women in particular—rather than to her erotic excesses, as it could be suggested.

Fukurozōshi mentions her and her poems several times. It includes a famous anecdote, taken from poem 550 in *Kin'yōwakashū* 金葉和歌集 (1127), where Koshikibu proves she does not need her mother's help to compose a poem—also letting us know that Shikibu had moved to Tango province with Fujiwara no Yasumasa 藤原 保昌 (958-1036) in her later years:

> Around the time Izumi Shikibu was in the province of Tango 丹後, having accompanied Yasumasa, when there was a poetry contest in the capital, Handmaid Koshikibu was chosen as one of the poets. Lord [Fujiwara no] Sadayori 藤原定頼 (995-1045) came to her room and teased her, saying things like "What will you do about the poem? Have you sent someone to Tango? Aren't they back yet?" and so she held him back and recited
>
> *Because Ōeyama and the road to Ikuno/that goes are far away, I have not seen yet steps/letters from the Heavenly Bridge/Ama no Hashidate.*[123]

This story not only reflects Koshikibu's ability as a poet, but it also establishes her mother's poetic reputation in no uncertain terms. At the same time, the treatise also includes a

[123] 和泉式部保昌に具して丹後に侍けるころ、都に歌合ありけるに、小式部内侍歌よみにとられて侍りけるを定頼卿局のかたに詣できて、歌はいかゞさせたまふ、丹後へ人は遣はしてけむや、使ひまで詣で来ずや、など戯れて立てりけるを控へてよめる
大江山生野の道の遠ければ踏みもまだ見ず天の橋立(Minamoto et al.: 2006,110). On top of the two puns, the poem includes three topographical landmarks of the Tango region in geographical order going from the Capital—Ōeyama, Ikuno, and Amanohashidate. The "bridge" (*hashi*) in this last one is linked to the steps (*fumi*) on the previous line (Mostow: 1996, 319). *Fukurozōshi* and *Mumyōzōshi* also include this poem. The first one presents it with a very similar explanation, whereas the second one merely implies the story is already known to its audience, as it refers to it as a "most suitable answer for that occasion"—折につけては、いとめでたかりけるとこそ推し量らるれ (SNKZ: 269).

conversation between Fujiwara no Kintō and his son Sadayori, reproduced from *Toshiyori Zuinō*, where they contrast the merits of Izumi and Akazome Emon. Izumi Shikibu is declared to be the inferior of the two; her *kuraki yori* poem is accused of not being clear enough, and of being too closely related to the its source of inspiration—the Lotus Sutra—to be noteworthy. It is also stated that, unlike Akazome Emon, she was not requested to contribute poems for screens or poetry matches, making her the clear loser of the pair.[124]

Poetico-moral criticism towards Izumi must not have been homogeneous, however, and definitely not enough to hinder the circulation of Izumi's extensive work into the most purely *hare* sphere. The *Goshūishū* itself includes 67 poems by the author, more than doubling the amount of those by the purportedly more respected Akazome Emon. It is true, however, that the first edition of this anthology was attacked for its "bizarre style," and an amended version was published, after it received the questionable honour of being the first imperial collection to merit a written response; that being *Nan Goshūishū* (Huey: 1990, 654). It is possible that, as Kamo no Chōmei's *Mumyōshō* 無名抄 (after 1211) speculates, Kintō's antipathy for the poetess might have been based on misgivings of a moral nature, rather than on the quality of her work, as this censure on her work clearly did not outlive

[124] Akazome composed congratulatory poems for a screen on the occasion of Rinshi's seventieth birthday and participated in at least three *uta awase*. For the screen poems Izumi wrote on the occasion of Michinaga's New Year Banquet see *Eiga monogatari*, where one of the other poems is attributed to Kintō. Izumi's personal collection also includes a series of poems (859-867) classified as "topic" (*dai*) for the "Retired Emperor Kazan's Poetry Match" (*Kazan'in Uta awase* 花山院歌合), presumed to have been celebrated around 990-998 (KT/5: 1114). However, her name does not appear in the extant record (KT/5: 67). A poem by her composed for this occasion is recorded in the personal collection *Shokushikawakashū* 続詞花和歌集 (12th century).

her. The *kuraki yori* poem is the only poem by the author collected in *Shūishū*, which Kintō edited, making this criticism attributed to the scholar somewhat suspect.

Izumi is presented in most of these texts I have mentioned as a contentious figure. Her greatest asset is her undeniable poetic prowess, while, at the same time, her quality as a poet is brought into question again and again, for social rather than literary reasons. *Fukurozōshi*'s critique comparing her with Akazome is perhaps the only one that deals directly with the effectiveness of her compositions, but ultimately she is found wanting as she is compared with the other poet, whose work was recognised—according to this text, at least—as more publicly engaged, through her participation in *uta awase* and screen poetry. Even though her social faults may have been moralised after her death, the accusation Izumi faced was principally not having complied properly with her social role as lady-in-waiting.

As I have discussed in the two previous sections, there is a significant disconnect between the portrayal of the domestic Izumi, as we see her in her diary, and the one working as a lady-in-waiting in all these court-centric texts. In order to better illustrate the effects of this separation, and present an alternative model to the house/court dichotomy, I will finish this chapter by discussing the treatment received by a similar figure, Akazome Emon, whose integration between the familial and courtly spheres followed a very different process than Izumi's, despite their similar background.

An Alternative Negotiation: Akazome Emon:

In the words of Rajyashree Pandey, "some women have been celebrated as proto-feminists and reclaimed as our fore-mothers. However, not all women fit these criteria as role models, and those who are excluded from these somewhat hagiographical accounts can often become the objects of pity or of blame (Pandey: 2018, 10)." This is perhaps why the figure of Akazome Emon has been relatively neglected by modern feminist literary scholarship, in favour of other female authors of the same time period like Izumi and Murasaki Shikibu, or Michitsuna's Mother. These are, after all, figures whose literary production or literary images may seem to be easier to frame as subversive, combative, and disputing power structures, as well as the product of the victims of oppression. Izumi Shikibu has, no doubt, been seen in this light, due to her fame as an amorous woman and the black legend developed after her death; however, as a lady-in waiting, the way in which Izumi interacted with the rest of the court, seems for the most part quite ordinary, if contemporary texts are to be believed, in spite of her quality as a poet, and her affairs with the imperial princes.

Ironically, when reading the texts that describe Izumi's activities at court, very quickly a parallel emerges between her depiction and that of her friend and colleague, the aforementioned Akazome Emon. The comparison between these two figures reveals an interesting divergence between the understanding of two ladies-in-waiting whose public role was almost identical in life, but whose literary persona after their death would be treated in vastly different ways. As I have advanced before, this similarity was already recognised in medieval commentaries, such as the poetic treatises *Toshiyori zuinō* and later

Fukurozōshi, where whom of these two women was the superior poet was debated. Regardless of the outcome of such discussions, the comparison in itself reveals that up to some point both authors were considered to belong to the same category. The resemblance between Izumi Shikibu and Akazome is not limited to the original context of their composition, however; as writers they have been treated in a similar manner in connection to their quintessential works. Neither *Izumi Shikibu nikki* nor *Eiga monogatari*'s authorship is completely uncontested, even though they both have been linked to them by scholars traditionally since at least the 14th century.

Akazome Emon was, like her contemporary, a prolific *uta* poet with a relatively extensive personal *shū,* and respected as a surrogate composer, both in personal and public contexts. She for instance composes a poem—number 166 in her personal anthology—in place of Fujiwara no Michinaga that also reflects the regent's connection with the distribution and preservation of fiction in the court:

> When someone sent a tale called *Cherry Blossoms* to His Lordship, I wrote on the wrapping paper [for him]:
>
> *I also have a heart that compiles up cherry blossoms, ah, that they will not be scattered in the wind and turn to nothing*[125]

In spite of her role at court, however, she is mostly discussed in medieval anecdotes in connection to her son Ōe no Takachika 大江挙周 (977-1046), and her husband Ōe no

[125] 殿に、花桜といふ物語を人のまゐらせたる、包み紙に書いたる
かきつむる心もあるを花桜あだなる風に散らさずも哉 (Takeda et al.: 2000, 99). "Compiles up" is my attempt at translating the pun in "*kakitsumuru*," "pile up and gather" and "write and gather."

Masahira 大江匡衡 (952-1012), as a devoted mother and wife. That said, these connections do not remove her from her courtly ties, as I will discuss below. It is possible that by the 12th century, due to changes in the family structure and social organization, compilers of anecdotes would understand her in more domestic terms, in a similar direction to the changes we saw to Michitsuna's Mother's depiction in *chokusenshū*. However, her identification with her husband must have already been strong while she was alive; so much so that in the *Murasaki Shikibu nikki* description of this author, her fellow lady-in waiting calls her by the name Masahira Emon 匡衡衛門, an attachment of one's identity to a romantic partner's name we do not see being granted to other ladies of the time:

> The Governor of Tanba's lady of the house (*kita no kata*) is known to those around her Majesty and His Lordship as Masahira Emon. Even though one cannot say she is out of the ordinary, she is truly refined. Regarding *uta* composition, although she does not throw poems around as soon as she sees a good opportunity for it, as far as I have heard, even her poems composed in trivial circumstances are enough to put one to shame.[126]

In spite of the name Masahira being used here and her identification as a principal wife, this fragment is one of the few texts where Akazome is judged as an individual, in terms that are extremely positive for a critique by the *Genji monogatari* author. Murasaki's brief notes are vague regarding what makes Emon ordinary, and this could be understood as referring to either her poetry, as the SNKZ gloss suggests, to her role as a lady-in-waiting,

[126] 丹波の守の北の方をば、宮、殿などのわたりには、匡衡衛門とぞいひはべる。ことにやむごどなきほどならねど、まことにゆゑしく、歌詠みとて、よろづのことにつけて詠みちらさねど、聞こえたるかぎりは、はかなきをりふしのことも、それこぞ恥づかしき口つきにはべれ (SNKZ: 201-202). See Bowring: 1996, 54.

or even just to her personal appearance. The fact that this fragment is followed by the phrase "regarding *uta* composition"—歌詠みとて—seems to cast some doubts on the SNKZ interpretation of the passage. It has been suggested the pattern of the description follows the same as Izumi Shikibu's in the same text, where her personal character preceded her quality as a poet (Saitō: 1999, 108). As the social aspects of poetic composition permeated the whole critique of Shikibu as a public figure, it is likely it is Akazome's social graces, which make up an important part of her value as a *nyōbō*, that are being referred to, rather than merely her literary finesse. However, this phrase is used frequently as referring to social position, rather than to personal attributes.[127] It is not only a moral and literary judgment that Murasaki is passing on her colleagues, but a critique on the whole range of their role as ladies-in-waiting; literary, moral, and socio-aesthetic.

She appears again tied to the figure of her husband, although under the name "Akazome" in the aforementioned *Fukurozōshi,* which records an anecdote where her advice helps her husband finish a preface for an official petition by Fujiwara no Kintō, when he does not understand why previous drafts presented by other scholars had been rejected in the past.

> When [Masahira] returned home, his spirits were dejected. At that time, he discussed this together with Akazome. "What in the world is there to do?," he said. She said in response, "I see how it is. Your colleagues are superbly talented and educated. Therefore, [to need] something that surpasses their [texts] and is written to satisfaction is truly deplorable. It is an unworkable affair. (…) That man [Kintō] is considerably proud. Did they not write of how he is a person whose circumstances have

[127] See this usage by Murasaki in the *Genji monogatari* chapters *Wakamurasaki* (SNKZ: 1994, 239), *Momiji no ga* (SNKZ: 1994, 328), and *Hana no en,* (SNKZ: 1994, 365) among others.

been ruined, not reaching the same heights as his ancestors, perhaps? Most of all, that point must be [in your preface]" and so on, she spoke.[128]

After she points out the haughty character of the scholar, and suggests an addition about his lineage, Masahira is able to complete his assignment in a satisfactory manner. Akazome Emons's connection to officiality is here traced through her husband, in a similar manner to Michitsuna's Mother. Hoewever, *Kagerō nikki* showcased its author's own subjective sense of negotiation with Kaneie through the different developments of the couple's relationship. In this short snippet, official action is taken by Masahira, while his wife shares her knowledge of the true character of a member of the court she would have come into contact with through her poetic practice; advancing her husband's prospects. Where Michitsuna's Mother struggled to be considered and represented as a fundamental asset to Kaneie, Akazome, in her literary afterimage, seemed to succeed without difficulty, even though she did play a more public role that did not require his mediation.

This same text also recounts an anecdote regarding her son, Ōe no Takachika, who had fallen ill after he had been posted to Izumi province, without his mother being able to come to his aid. This short blurb comes after three poems composed by Akazome;

After [Ō]e Takachika occupied his position [as governor of] Izumi, he fell gravely ill, because of a curse of the deity of Suminoe. Consequently, when they presented ceremonial paper strips to this shrine, each one of the three strips had written one of these poems. Then, in someone's dream, a

[128] 家に帰りて愁嘆の気色有り。時に赤染これを相尋ぬ。「何等のことぞや」と。答へて曰はく、「かくの如し。かの輩は才学優長なり。而して彼に勝れて書き開かん事、極めて有り嘆し。術なきことなり。（…）かの人はゆゆしく飾慢有るの人なり。吾身の先祖止む事なき者にて沈淪の由をもし書かざるか、如何。尤もその旨有るべし」と云々(SNKT: 125).

> venerable man with white hair came out from inside the shrine, took these paper strips and finally went in again. After that, it is said that the illness was finally mitigated, and so forth.[129]

The mother here dedicates three poems to the deity of Suminoe—in the *Konjaku monogatari shū* 今昔物語集 (after 1120) version of this anecdote discussed further down, it is just one—where she offers her life if she could give it for her son's. The god takes pity on her and restores Takachika's health. This anecdote somewhat brings to mind a poem composed by Izumi Shikibu for the deity of Kibune, when she has lost favour with her previous husband, to which she receives a divine poetic answer,[130] placing the poetic power of both women in connection to the divine. Izumi's poem also appears in *Fukurozōshi*, but not in the same section, described as "poems of divine and Buddhic sympathy" (*shinbutsu kan'ō* 神仏感応). Akazome's appeal to the *kami* is direct and does not go through her son, but it is not hard to see in the combination of these two stories the image of the woman of the house, defined by her connection to male direct relatives.

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[129] 江挙周和泉の任を去りての後、重病に悩みて住吉の御崇有るの由なり。仍りて、かの社に奉幣の時、三本の幣におのおの書く所の歌なり。その時、人の夢に、白髪の老翁社中より出で来てこの幣を取りて入り了んぬ。その後、病平愈すと云々(SNKT: 156).

[130] This poetic exchange is recorded in *Goshūishū*, poems 1162 and 1163; "At a time when she had been forgotten by a man, and humbly went to Kibune, she composed [this poem] when she saw the flight of the fireflies over the purifying font,
When I think about it, the fireflies on the stream. Is it my soul I see, drifting away from my body?
The August reply,
Do not be one whose soul falls like the torrential downpour of the Okuyama rapids, I think
This poem is the August reply from the Deity of Kibune. It is said Izumi Shikibu heard it in her ears as a man's voice."
男に忘られて、侍りける頃、貴布禰にまいりて、御手洗川に蛍の飛び侍りけるを見てよめる
もの思へば沢のほたるもわが見よりあくがれ出づるたまかとぞみる
御返し、
奥山にたぎりておつる滝つ瀬のたまちる許ものな思ひそ
この歌は貴舟の明神の御返しなり、男の声にて和泉式部が耳に聞こえけるとなんいひ伝えたる (SNKT: 378).

However, as an attendant of first Minamoto no Rinshi 源倫子 (964-1053)— Michinaga's principal wife—and later to her daughter Imperial Consort Shōshi, she also enjoyed a direct connection to the centres of power at court, where Akazome played an important role as what we could call a "professional poet," much like Michitsuna's Mother before her. Her degree of engagement with public poetry was, however, more extensive than the one the *Kagerō nikki* author enjoyed, and would be recorded more frequently than similar compositions by Izumi Shikibu. Akazome participated in at least two *uta awase—Kayo no in suikaku uta awase* 賀陽院水閣歌合 (1035) (KT/5: 1417), and *Kokiden nyōgo onuta awase* 弘徽殿女御歌合(1041)—(KT/5: 1418), composed screen poetry for the seventieth birthday of Rinshi, and possibly some of her poems with Buddhist themes were meant for the occasion of the funeral for one of Michinaga's sisters (Watanabe: 2013, 6). She frequently acted as a surrogate poet, in many occasions for her own son Takachika, but also for other figures including Fujiwara no Michinaga. At least a tenth of the poems in her personal collection were composed under these circumstances (Watanabe: 2005, 40), and are preceded by phrases like "written in place of" (かはりて or, when humble language is employed, たてまつりにしかはり). Just as with Michitsuna's Mother, the role of Akazome as a public poet is unmistakable. However, unlike Izumi's, this role would become seamlessly integrated with her domestic persona, both in her personal writing and later texts.

Her poem dedicated to the Suminoe deity appears collected in the *setsuwa* collection *Konjaku monogatari shū* story "On the Wife of Ōe Masahira Writing Poetry," along with two other poems. The first of these refers to a petition for an office in favour of Takachika that is described in the poet's own personal *shū* (poem 327) in these terms:

> On the First Month, on the night when offices start being assigned, as snow was falling frightfully I went to the same [the Consort's] Pavilion, I respectfully presented Takachika's matter and left, adding this
>
> *With a hurried heart, before this disappears, brushing off the excessive snow from my face*[131]

Here, the short *kotobagaki* does not mention if this attempt was successful or not, but *Konjaku monogatari shū* tells us that Michinaga was much impressed, and made Takachika governor of Izumi after seeing this poem.[132] This speaks to the political relevance of ladies-in-waiting in helping their children and husbands attain better positions at court (Fukutō: 2017, 58). As Akazome Emon's account shows, their proximity and their very role as emotional echo chambers for their superiors could easily be turned to their own benefit. It is also worth mentioning the third poem the collection of anecdotes presents, which brings us back to Akazome's relationship with Masahira, although in very stereotypical terms.

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[131]正月に司召し始まる夜、同じ院に、雪いみじう降りしにまゐりて、たかきかが事啓して罷でてまゐらせし

思へたゞかたのの雪をは払ひつゝ消えぬさきにと急ぐ心を(Takeda et al.: 2000, 133)

The *Akazome Emon Shū Zenshaku* (Sekine et al.: 1986), following a different version, reads "ただかしらの" instead; "clearing the snow off of my head." Snow on one's head references white hair, and therefore old age (Takeda et al.: 2000, 133).

[132] In the *Konjaku monogatari shū* story, the appeal is not elevated to Shōshi, but to her mother Rinshi. This story, and the one regarding Takachika's miraculous healing, appear as well in the 1252 *Jikkunshō* in two sections entitled "Wise Wife, Akazome Emon" (*Kensai Akazome Emon* 賢妻、赤染衛門, SNKZ: 296) and "Akazome Emon begs to sacrifice herself for her son" (*Ko no mikawari wo negau Akazome Emon* 子の身代わりを願う赤染衛門, SNKZ: 402). The later one is also collected in *Shasekishū* under the title "Ōe no Takachika" (大江挙周, SNKZ:261).

> Again this Akazome, when her husband Masahira was talking to the daughter of a priest of Inari and thought to love her, as he had not come back to Akazome's side in a while, Akazome composed thus and sent it to the priest's house when Masahira was there,
>
> *For the pine/wait of my house, not a single sign. If it was a cedar grove no doubt it would be enquired upon*
>
> And so, Masahira read this, thought "shame on me," returned to Akazome's side and stopped visiting the priest's house.[133]

We are shown here an example of the very established trope of the "poem that keeps the man," as seen in *Ise monogatari* 23, *Yamato monogatari* 149, *Kagerō* and *Izumi Shikibu nikki* (Mostow: 1992, 306-307), when the husband starts visiting another woman, whom he abandons when his first wife's poem puts his behaviour to shame.

The circumstances presented for the composition of the poems in the *Konjaku monogatari shū* anecdote are not chosen at random; her son's illness, Takachika's need for a new position, and finally Masahira briefly visiting another woman, with her poem bringing him back to her. These three poems very neatly encapsulate three of the main dialogical aspects of Yamato verse as it is described in Tsurayuki's preface to the *Kokinshū;* the first

---

[133] 亦、此ノ赤染、夫ノ匡衡ガ稲荷ノ禰宜ガ娘ヲ語ヒテ愛シ思ヒケル間、赤染ガ許二久ク不来リケレバ、赤染此ナム読テ、稲荷ノ禰宜ガ家二匡衡ガ有ケル時二遣ケル、
ワガヤドノ松ハシルシモナカリケリスギムラナラバタシネキナマシ
ト．匡衡此レヲ見テ、「恥カシ」トヤ思ヒケム、赤染ガ許二返テナム棲みテ、稲荷ノ禰宜ガ許二ハ不通ハ成二ケリ (SNKZ: 368-369). Matsu is a pun on *matsu* 待つ, "waiting," and 松, "pine." "Sign" here has the connotation of divine or Buddhic favour, and the cedar tree is a reference to Inari, to whom this tree is sacred, and so, to the parentage of Masahira's love interest. On *Akazome Emonshū*, the first two lines go "*Waga yado wa matsu ni shirushi mo*;" "not even in my house's pine a sign" (KT/3: 314). However, this poem is also recorded in the contemporaneous *Gengenshū* and other latter poetic texts with the same characters as the *Konjaku monogatari shū* version (KT/2: 273, KT/5: 70). A variant appears in the 12th century *Ōgishō* 奥儀抄 that changes the *naraba* in the fourth line, "if it was," to *bakari*, "to the extent of being" (KT/2: 994).

one moves the heart of the very *kami*, giving her son back his health; the second one serves a lord—a lady, in this case—as a window to her subordinate's heart, resulting, if the poetry collection is to be believed, in real life advancement for the person on whose behalf it had been composed; and finally we are given an illustration of the power of poetry to mediate between the hearts of men and women. In this sense, the later text does not only define Akazome as wife and mother, but also makes her actions the very embodiment of what poetry supposes socially; not a pure expression of personal feelings, but a tool for communication and effect. Her own feelings and words are very much understood in this sense.

Akazome's posthumous character is clearly defined by her role as a wife and mother. An interesting comparison can be drawn here with the way this same role is applied to Izumi Shikibu, who is also portrayed in connection to her daughter both in historico-poetic accounts and medieval tales. The reader will remember that *setsuwa* and *kanazōshi* often showed her perverting this role, through acts of child abandonment or incest, proof that her maternal characterization would also become a defining trait of this particular lady-in-waiting in popular imagination. However, contemporaneous texts already establish a connection between Izumi and her daughter Koshikibu; *Eiga monogatari,* for instance, collects Izumi's reaction to her daughter's death:

> I heard around this time, a person called Handmaid Koshikibu, who served her Highness [Shōshi], and had mothered a child by the Lord Great Minister of the Interior [Fujiwara no Norimichi], after some years with the Shigenoi Head Lieutenant [Fujiwara no Kinnari], had passed away while giving birth to his child. Even though she had not been a person of standing, in the form of her death she resembled that of those great ones [Michinaga's daughter and daughter-in-law]. (…) Koshikibu's mother, Izumi Shikibu, looking at the child [composed],

Leaving us behind, who will she grieve for? My child that was. Her child that would have been[134]

This characterization of Izumi as a grieving mother is the closest point in *Eiga monogatari* to a portrait of the poet's personal feelings. The death here is recorded, however, in connection to two similar deaths involving two high-ranking ladies; Fujiwara no Nagaie's Wife 藤原長家室 (?-1025)—Michinaga's daughter-in-law—and Fujiwara no Kishi 藤原嬉子 (1007-1025)—Sōshi's sister and mother to future Emperor Go-Reizei 後冷泉天皇 (1025-1068)—whose deaths in childbirth and subsequent funeral rites precede this section. We are told it is precisely because her death resembled these two that it was noteworthy as an event at all. It is, therefore, one of those scenes in the tale that serve to reflect and amplify the feelings of the members of the Fujiwara family with the help of those of their retinue, depicting the harmony of the emotions between lord and vassal. Nonetheless, it serves to establish Izumi as a grieving mother, an image of her also quite present in her poetic collection, where several poems were composed in response to this loss. The anecdote recorded in *Toshiyori zuinō* and *Fukurozōshi* on Koshikibu's own value as a poet, proving she had enough talent for Izumi not to serve as a surrogate poet for her, has already been discussed.

[134] このごろ聞けば、大宮にさぶらひつる小式部内侍といふ人、内大臣殿の御子など持たるが、この年ごろ、滋野井の頭中将の子生みてうせにけり。人のいとやむごとなからぬ方こそあれ、死にざまの御事ににたり。（…） 小式部の母和泉式部、子どもを見て、
とどめおきて誰をあわれと思ふらん子はまさりけり子はまさるらん(SNKZ: 38-39). See also McCullough: 1980, 702-703. A variation of this poem appears in *Izumi Shikibu Shū Seishū* 476 and *Goshūishū* 568, exchanging the last two lines. It is also recorded in the aforementioned poetic treatise *Korai Futeishō* and *Mumyōshō.*

This would appear initially as a point of similarity between Akazome and Izumi's portrayals in poetic sources, as well as in the moralistic stories of the medieval anecdotes; both are to an extent the mother, the wife, and the public poet. And yet where Akazome's is integrated in completely positive terms, in a more or less straightforward manner, Izumi's is eventually perverted showing her as an incestuous or neglectful parent, and a promiscuous courtesan; an example of the salvific power of Buddhism, rather than of proper Buddhist practice. Even in contemporary texts, Akazome portrays her connection to her son as one of identification and resonance, where she works for his social and professional development. Izumi, on the other hand, is somewhat separated from her daughter. First, when Koshikibu defends her own value detached from her mother's, denying a need for her; then, when she has already died and is grieved and unreachable, serving primarily as an extension of the court's mourning for others of higher rank. Akazome's motherhood is presented as socially and politically valuable, precisely because there is a rank difference between mother and child, and her son has a chance of using it to further his career; Izumi's and Koshikibu's positions are too similar for Izumi's role to be recorded as useful for her daughter.

Akazome Emon appears as showcasing both the marks of a Fujiwara subordinate at court and as a woman of the house; someone who "composes up" both for her husband and son, and for her patrons in the imperial family. Representations of Akazome, in this way, focus on her role as a surrogate poet first and foremost, an identity that is easily circumscribed to either a familial or public context. Akazome's ability to be represented as a prototypically domestic woman saves her from the liminal state in which her counterpart Izumi,

represented without support from husband or patron in her dealings with the court, finds herself in. This allows her portrayal to include expressions of public composition, where her moral character is not compromised by the suspicion of an existing individual agenda.

Conclusion:

Both textually and socially, ladies-in-waiting were required to negotiate their presence at court in the limit between official *hare* spaces and *ke* exchanges. The visual availability of their own bodies and that of their poetic production facilitated social relations and served as a driving force for literary and cultural creation for both their peers and their superiors, but left them in an ambiguous moral position that often compelled them to present justification of their social roles and their own identity. In this vein, defences were offered for *nyōbō* as a figure—as Sei Shōnagon presents in her work—or merely for particular individuals—as both Murasaki Shikibu and Izumi Shikibu provide for themselves. At the same time, the dependency on the good graces of those they served and their lack of control on their work played a fundamental role in their organisation at court. Their access to those of high-rank and their ability to influence their actions through gossip, however, are presented in *Izumi Shikibu nikki* as powerful tools, capable of drawing other figures—in this case the very Izumi—to the same space of visual availability they occupy, both literally and metaphorically, making them subjectable to the same scrutiny ladies-in-waiting undergo. Ladies-in-waiting possess, therefore, an ability to apply the same moral considerations that render them as potentially subversive figures to others around them.

Understood in these terms, the role of the *nyōbō* is not a liminal one, but rather one that stands at the centre of a sense of publicity based on communal knowledge and the disclosure of acceptable and unacceptable relations and behaviours. The individuals belonging to the social networks where hearsay is circulated are not limited to these attendants; the information they acquire about interpersonal interactions is often derived from servants—in a concealed or unobserved part of the domestic space—and is eventually relied onto the higher-ranking members of society. The ladies-in-waiting serve, therefore, as a bridge between these different levels of the social sphere. A division of domestic and non-domestic spaces emerges here, distinct from the *hare*/*ke* dichotomy; the domestic space is concealed from public scrutiny, but it is not impenetrable; once it is made visually available, much like the figure of the *nyōbō*, social performance taking place in it is subjected to the normative gaze of society.

Izumi Shikibu's diary expresses a clear conception of this public space's social effectiveness, and attempts to neutralise it by declaring its existence immoral and improper, in the face of an "official" system of circulation. This leads to the deployment of a literary strategy in her memoir meant to present the affair as tale-like; to contextualise it within a domestic setting that would not interfere with the public sphere, and where she is victimised by malicious gossipers. This portrayal stands in contrast with her depiction in other texts where her presence at court not only portrays her exclusively in lieu of her abilities as a public composer, but also as participating in the same social network. The representation of this relationship as a non-transgressive event may be used to prevent or deny the threat of scandal, but it leaves its protagonist without a domesticity capable of engaging her with

the rest of Heian society in positive terms; and so, in later texts, she will be judged solely by the socially and sexually ambiguous category of lady-in-waiting. In spite of the existence of other "lawful" partners in her life, she is not tied to them in these works. Izumi appears almost exclusively defined by her dealings in the *hare* sphere where, officially, she is occupying a tenuous position.

By contrasting the figures of Izumi Shikibu and her colleague Akazome Emon, we are able to examine the attitudes formed around the figure of the *nyōbō* and the way in which their visual availability, relation to textual production, and social roles are depicted in contemporaneous and latter works. More importantly, we observe that integration—or lack thereof—of the domestic roles into the most public parts of ladies-in-waiting lives served as a moral measuring rule, determining both the socio-literary standing of women poets at the Heian court. In this way, performance in *ke* and *hare* contexts becomes intertwined, as part of one continuum, where literature—considered as a tool for harmonious interactions between individuals of equal or differing rank alike—is turned into the sum of acceptable behaviours and acceptable self-framing. And so, a different possibility for textual and social circulation of knowledge arises from the concealed/visually available organisation constructed around the figure of the lady-in-waiting.

3. The *Sarashina nikki*: Queering *Kana* Memoirs:

The last of the figures this thesis will be centred on is known to history by the name of Sugawara no Takasue's Daughter (菅原孝標女, ca.1008-after 1059). In poetic terms, she boasts a much humbler presence than her literary foremothers in imperial anthologies. Belonging to a family of scholars—descended from the famed exiled literatus turned god Sugawara no Michizane 菅原道真—and married to a man of the *zuryō* 受領 class, her connections to the different centres of power at court seem at best tangential. Her diary, *Sarashina nikki* (ca. 1059), seems to present her life as an incomplete unfulfilled one; her career at court never seemed to amount to anything, and her personal life was marked by several losses. All through her text, she portrays herself as not fully belonging to the same world as her aristocratic peers; presenting herself as an "other" to the courtly centre (Itō: 1988, 47), much like commoners, itinerant female entertainers, or nuns. However, I will not so much discuss the ways in which the memoir seems to fail to fulfil the expected model of wifely or courtly tale, but rather, how Takasue's Daughter subverts this model, and opens the possibility to express alternative sources of social, emotional, and literary support for herself. It is in this sense, contemplated both as continuation and response to the literary trend exemplified by *Kagerō nikki* and *Izumi Shikibu nikki*, in which this chapter presents *Sarashina nikki* as a "queering" of *kana* memoirs.

Even though her memoir very clearly draws on the same textual tradition as those we have seen so far, and is the most concerned with questions of *monogatari*-ness and literariness, Takasue's Daughter chooses to downplay the social relations that ground most women-

authored *kana nikki*. The hierarchical structures of the court and marital life discussed in previous chapters are present in the work, but the author is anxious to use *monogatari* as a way to prevent herself from being completely defined by them. At the same time, in this diary, more than any other discussed in previous chapters, we see a great preoccupation with personal social advancement. Even though both Michitsuna's Mother and Akazome Emon recorded and voiced their hopes for their sons' careers, Takasue's Daughter's refers overtly to her own position and the disappointment at the end of her life for not having been able to see develop her own potential, as promised in several prophetic visions granted to her and others around her. She was a mother, too, but her children are barely mentioned in her text.

It is true this dissemination of texts is not necessarily completely divorced from the imperial seat of power; the court's presence is felt throughout the text, as is the need to negotiate the producer of texts' relationship with it. In some ways, Takasue's Daughter may be trying to extricate herself from the imperial grip, but her work is as much the product of a middle-ranking aristocratic woman as those I have discussed before. Patrons and lovers do appear in *Sarashina nikki*. As it will be discussed later, Ramirez-Christensen considers the relation between Takasue's Daughter and her father is the most durable emotional bond presented in the text (Ramirez-Christensen: 2001, 75), and argues he is presented as a figure incapable or unwilling to support his daughter's development, either as a court lady, or by procuring her an advantageous match. And yet, there is no anxiety in this memoir to be framed socially through this type of relation, nor an attempt to integrate them as defining elements of position or identity. Other more salon-centric texts such as *Makura no sōshi*

and *Murasaki Shikibu nikki* keep their empresses and their direct family members in a dominant position, whereas neither Yūshi 祐子(1038–1105), the infant princess of the blood Takasue's Daughter served, nor her adoptive father, the Fujiwara regent Yorimichi 藤原頼通 (992–1074) ever appear as characters in the diary. And so, unmediated by the presence of either husbands or patrons, the reader is struck in the diary by a much more prominent emphasis on relations between women. As will be remembered, neither *Kagerō nikki* nor *Izumi Shikibu nikki* include much of an interaction between their protagonists and other female characters, other than those brought into play by their connection to their lovers.[135]

The *Sarashina nikki* author has very little interest in discussing her relations of subservience and dependence.[136] As we will see later on, this extends to the point of reframing certain relations as divinely ordained and justified by prophetic dreams, as opposed to being based on human connections. In this sense, this text also supposes a departure from the contemporary view that entering imperial service signified entrance into a divine realm "above the clouds;" more importantly it identifies non-hierarchical structures as playing a significant role in socio-literary dynamics and textual exchange. In contrast to the marital, or patronal relationships mediating the poetry exchanges for previous *nikki* writers, in *Sarashina nikki* there is a space for circulation apart from courtly hierarchy. Michitsuna's

[135]However, *Kagerō nikki* does include poetic exchanges with an aunt and a friend turned nun on occasions of grief; a model we will see repeated in *Sarashina nikki*, although following a different approach.

[136] It is worth underscoring the fact that I am not referring solely to a rejection of relations of subservience defined by gender, but to a question of social relations that also extends to imperial patronage in the way it is usually portrayed by *nyōbō* authors. Takasue's Daughter is very much presented according to her position within a network of tale consumption and circulation that does not stem from a central authority; unlike the two diaries previously discussed—as well as *Murasaki Shikibu nikki* and *Makura no sōshi.*

Mother is a wife and domestic producer of texts and textiles, first; Izumi Shikibu's *Woman* is the female part of a couple of lovers, but Takasue's Daughter is first and foremost, a consumer of tales. Where the focus in *Kagerō nikki* and *Izumi Shikibu nikki* is placed in full in their author's relationship with Kaneie and Prince Atsumichi respectively, it is the reading of *monogatari* that comprises the emotional core of Takasue's Daughter's life, and in turn, of her description of it. For this reason, it will be helpful to begin this examination of her diary by considering the place of *Sarashina nikki* within the broader trends of *monogatari* circulation and reception she shared with her literary foremothers and peers.

Sarashina nikki, Circulation, and Tales in Diaries:

Takasue's Daughter utilises the tools of *monogatari* and *nikki* literary modes in a subversive manner, by abandoning the usual concerns of this type of text; however, she is still recognised within the tradition of female *nikki* authors. In a colophon in Fujiwara no Teika's hand to his own copy of the *Sarashina nikki* manuscript, it reads;

> This is the diary of the daughter of the governor of Hitachi, Sugawara no Takasue. Her mother was the daughter of Tomoyasu Ason. She is the niece of the Mother of the Imperial Preceptor [Fujiwara no Michitsuna]. It is said the person in this diary wrote *Yowa no nezame, Mitsu no Hamamatsu, Mizukara kuyuru, Asakura* and such things.[137]

It is not known if this description was penned by Teika himself or if it is just a copy of a pre-existing postscript. This second possibility seems like the most probable, as Teika's

[137] ひたちのかみすかはらのたかすゑのむすめの日記也母倫寧朝臣女博のとのゝはゝうへのめひ也よはのねさめみつのはまゝつみつからくゆるあさくらなとはこの日記の人のつくられたるとそ. Tokyo, *Kunaichō shoryōbu toshoryō bunkozō* (*Teikabon*: 96).

biographical notes on other figures mentioned in the diary after this one, are written using *kanbun* whereas this one is in *kana* (*Teikabon*: 96-100). This manuscript is the oldest extant version of the *nikki* that has been preserved, but according to a final colophon added to the text, it is a copy of a copy made by someone else—probably at some point between 1210 and 1215—out of a previous manuscript that got lost in the process of being borrowed from Teika (SNKT: 437).

Once again, as was the case with *Izumi Shikibu nikki,* some uncertainty exists in regards to the historical figure of Takasue's Daughter, in contrast to her as a part of the collective imaginary of her contemporary and later peers and readers. Even though Teika clearly names her as the hand beyond this list of tales, the actual authorship of these *monogatari* is disputed and virtually impossible to prove (Ikeda: 1989). *Mizukara kuyuru* 自らくゆる and *Asakura* あさくら have both been lost, and the other two titles have only arrived to the present day in incomplete form (Rohlich: 1983, 9). Some arguments have also been presented against claims of Takasue's Daughter's authorship; based on the date of composition of a particular poem found in *Hamamamatsu Chūnagon monogatari* 浜松中納言物語, she would have been over the age of seventy by the time this tale was written, which strikes many scholars as unlikely—our ignorance of the date of her death only complicates matters in this respect—(Rohlich: 1983, 11). In spite of some stylistic similarities between *Hamamatsu* and *Sarashina nikki* (Wallace: 2005, 189)[138] some

[138] In the only article to date explicitly exploring Queer approaches to Heian and Kamakura *monogatari*, Kimura Saeko mentions *Hamamatsu Chūnagon monogatari*'s use of emotional and romantic attachment transcending male and female reincarnations, as presenting a break with gendered conceptions of desire

(Vulpitta: 1970, 108) also consider the style of this *monogatari* and *Yowa no nezame*'s 夜半の寝覚 too different to have been composed by the same hand. And if she is not the author of one of these, can we trust Teika's attribution of her authorship regarding the other titles?

However, we cannot consider these, in any way, definite arguments. Seventy might be an advanced age for a Heian lady, but we know Fujiwara no Shunzei was poetically active at the time of his death, when he was ninety-one, and the Heian diarist known as Jōjin's Mother started compiling her *Jōjin Ajari no haha shū* 成尋阿闍梨母集 way past her eighties (Dix: 2014, 111). More relevantly for the concerns of this chapter, it is safe to say that by the Kamakura period, it was an accepted fact that Takasue's Daughter was the writer behind these tales, at least by the Mikohidari 御子左, the branch of the Fujiwara family Teika belonged to. When Fujiwara no Tameie 藤原 為家 (1198-1275), Teika's son, compiled the *Shoku Kokinwakashū* 続古今和歌集 in 1265*,* he included a love poem and a grief poem taken from this *monogatari*, with the heading "topic unknown, Sugawara Takasue Ason's Daughter" (SNKZ: 463).

(Saeko: 2014, 37). In light of my argument of this diary as a Queer *nikki*, I believe this is a relevant connection, as it further illustrates a type of emotional and social engagement not ultimately defined by hierarchical relations; further aligning with my discussion of Takasue's Daughter portrayal of textual circulation in pages 198-203.

Other than her parentage, only two elements are used to describe Takasue's Daughter's life in the diary's colophon; her relationship to Michitsuna's Mother, and her authorship of works of fiction. In this sense, Teika's postscript signals an awareness of a line of *nikki* textual producers.[139] As has been often observed, and as I have pointed out in the previous chapters, both Michitsuna's Mother and Izumi Shikibu wrote themselves with tools acquired from *monogatari*, and responded to their social function by both contrasting or comparing their own experiences to those of tale characters, and by attempting to utilise contemporary modes of tale reception to their own purposes. In doing so, they inevitably ran into several issues to tackle; to what extent can these tools be used detached from the worldview of the texts they are derived from? In which way can a socio-literary critique of *monogatari* be developed while still maintaining a text created in the same narrative context? These women do not set down theoretically minded texts dealing with such questions, rather, their particular deployment of *monogatari*-ness is, in itself, the practical answer to their problems. In a way, for these women, the best possible reading of a text can only be found in writing. As they approach the subtle social dynamics behind these questions from differing angles—remember here Izumi Shikibu and Michitsuna's Mother's contrary use of domestic and public spaces—they do not only produce criticism of tales themselves, but also of each other's understandings of tale-writing and consumption. *Sarashina nikki*'s much more explicit usage of *monogatari*, in this sense, culminated a trend of "practical criticism" of tales, in which *Kagerō* and *Izumi Shikibu nikki* also participate, by

[139] The idea of a Heian feminine literary tradition conscious of itself is not new. Tabuchi talks of an awareness of female poetic lines (Tabuchi: 2003) throughout the Heian period. However, Watanabe indicates the use of "*onna no uta*" 女の歌 or "woman's poem" as a literary critical term is not formulated distinctly until Kamakura—in spite of its early presence in the *Kokinshū* preface (Watanabe: 2003, 21)—when the notion of an essential difference between male and female poet's work seems to have been developed. Therefore, this intergenerational categorisation did not necessarily equate with a distinctly "feminine" poetic style, but rather a genealogy of transmission.

defining the extent of tales' usefulness as a means for moral guidance, social modelling and record of events.

Takasue's Daughter's place within this trend is one of honour, as she was not only a consumer, but also, if we are to believe Teika and his contemporaries, a producer of tales (Wallace: 2005, 189). Where the other two authors use tales to create literary identities that are related, but do not depend on tale consumption, the Takasue's Daughter in *Sarashina nikki*'s very identity is cemented in the acquisition, discussion, and lived experience as reinterpretation of *monogatari*. The consumption of text in Heian society was marked by the participation of an extremely interactive audience (Miyake: 2001, 24) that judged, critiqued and created in turn. And if we can find an element of response and resonance between almost any *monogatari*-adjacent work—like these diaries—and the poetry and tales that precede it, we should not consider it a stretch to view this resonance as productive, both as literature and criticism.

Understanding Takasue's Daughter´s characterisation as a writer framed by these female networks of circulation and critique of tales makes sense in the context of later interpretations of gendered roles in literary production and legacy. I have already discussed the physical production of tales in relation to literary salons and ladies-in-waiting in a previous chapter, but in that same chapter we have seen courtiers of both genders engage with their distribution. It will be remembered that Fujiwara no Michinaga was more than happy to participate in *monogatari* patronage. Medieval understandings of tale reception, however, would emphasise the role of women in both production and enjoyment of

monogatari, as increasingly gendered views on the social significance of textual classification emerged; it is in this later view of *monogatari*-ness that the colophon likely framed the *Sarashina* author. The *Mumyōzōshi,* a critical work on fiction and other related subjects by a female author belonging to the Mikohidari family[140] states:

> "Now, there is nothing as regrettable as being a woman. Even though, since ancient times, there have been many of us who loved love, and studied the way [of poetry], as so far no woman has compiled an anthology and all that, it is very regrettable." When she said this, "surely, it must not be that admirable to compile an anthology. Murasaki Shikibu wrote *Genji* [*monogatari*]*,* Sei Shōnagon wrote and put together *Makura no sōshi*, and of the tales we were discussing before, are there many of them not the work of women? And so, we are hardly people to be disregarded.[141]

In this treatise composed roughly a hundred years after Takasue's Daughter's death, there lies a strictly dualistic division between the association of tale and poetry production with women and men that does not correspond with the one existing during the diarist's time.[142] This short fragment showcases an understanding of *monogatari* as a type of text firstly attached to women's writing, and secondly, whose authors occupy a social function distinct and contrasting from the male compiling of anthologies. Women may not have been removed completely from the composition of *uta* themselves, but it is the ability to contextualise scattered verses to create a whole that is their only possible claim to fame,

[140]Taken by most scholars to be the poet known as Shunzei's Daughter, actually his adopted granddaughter (Marra: 1984, 116).

[141] いでや、いみじけれども、女ばかり口惜しきものなし。昔より色を好み、道を習ふ輩多かれども、女の、いまふだ集など撰ぶことなきこそ、いと口惜しけれ」と言へば、「必ず、集を撰ぶことのいみじかるべきにもあらず。紫式部が、『源氏』を作り、清少納言が『枕草子』をかき集めたるより、さきに申しつる物語ども、多くは女のしわざにはべらずや。されば、なほすてがたきものにて我ながらはべり」(SNKZ: 263). See also Marra: 1984, 422.

[142] Of course, in turn, with Fujiwara no Shunzei and Teika tales like *Genji monogatari* were taken as models for poetic practice (Harper and Shirane: 2015, 160). Maybe this is itself an attempt to "re-feminise" tale writing, after these academic poets tried to extricate tale poems from their narrative context. After all, Sei Shōnagon, a clearly "non-fiction" type appears explicitly mentioned as an example of famous *monogatari.*

this text seems to say; poetry must be rendered public—or rather *hare*—before it is literature, as women have become increasingly estranged from the possibility of performing this role (Tanaka: 1999, 120).

This development is not a surprising one; the genre of "public poetry" had become increasingly gendered in the interim between the 10th and 11th century, as social change reflected into the perception of *uta*'s role as interpersonal mediator. It is at the end of the Heian period and the beginning of Kamakura when "proper poetry" becomes the prerogative of rival houses of poets-academics (Huey: 1990, 652). Tales are not in any way unconcerned with courtly affairs, as it is surely evident, and are hardly separated from other texts dealing with them—as the inclusion of *Makura no sōshi* in the previous excerpt might indicate. Here, however, they appear to indicate that by being classified into a separate category from the imperially sponsored—that is, from the *hare* realm—they are ultimately removed from the claim to historicity and public glory one may derive from this sort of patronage. At the same time, they are considered to take part in an alternative lineage of literary, historical, and moral usefulness. And so, how, as *Mumyōzōshi* contends, do tales make women authors difficult to "be disregarded"?—すてがたき—And more importantly, how far removed is this image of tale-writing from the ones held by Takasue's Daughter and her contemporaries?

Texts distributed through the official sphere are clearly not the only ones with a claim to a sort of historicity and didacticism. If we remember Murasaki Shikibu's criticism of her

fellow ladies-in-waiting, Izumi Shikibu and Akazome Emon, her judgment of their poetry was based on a clear non-separation between social performance and literary merits. In this model, reception is ultimately a judgment on moral character and courtliness, and the ability on the side of the receptor to make this judgement known.[143] While remaining in a structure that requires imperial power and courtly mores as the centre of moral, cultural, and literary production, imperial mediation is, ultimately, unnecessary to produce a claim on someone else's literariness or the courtliness of their actions; this one is based on immediate reception and judgement. The moral and social value of a text, lies in its function to mediate harmonic behaviour and promote propriety in content and form;[144] in its preservation and distribution, there still must remain an example to emulate, and its production contains an implicit defence of one's own suitability for one's circumstances in the social order.

I believe this understanding of literary creation is not foreign to the authors of our *kana nikki*, and it very much defines the social function of *Kagerō* and *Izumi Shikibu nikki.* Takasue's Daughter does also, at a first glance, mimic many of the same techniques used by these other two memoirs to place their authors in one particular social position in regards to their patrons. However, *Sarashina nikki*'s framing of its writer offers us a clear contrast with the clear-cut definition of Michitsuna's Mother and Izumi's Woman as performers of distinct social roles within their texts. On the contrary, whenever these

[143] See chapter 2, pages 152-153.
[144] This brings to mind Marra's understanding of *miyabi*, courtliness, as expressed in *Ise monogatari* as an utopian ideal that both longed for a depoliticised realm of aesthetics and was based on a sense of discontent with the Fujiwara's control of government, criticising precisely their lack of this essential quality (Marra: 1991, 53).

techniques are brought up, it is only in preparation to have them be dropped or subverted; showcasing their inability to fully frame the network of social relations the author chooses to describe her own position with.

Sarashina nikki and the Subversion of Patronage:

In previous chapters, I have examined the way in which the integration or segregation of non-official and the official's spaces was negotiated by authors whose relation to a lover/patron defined an understanding of how one could be placed on—or excluded from—public discourse. My analysis of the deployment of tales and poetry has taken into account how literature functioned as part of this effort. And yet, in this case, in spite of my claims about *Sarashina nikki*'s utmost *monogatari*-ness, it becomes nigh impossible to try to define Takasue's Daughter's literary self-positioning solely in these terms; ultimately the negotiation between these two spheres does not concern her in the same way as it might have concerned Michitsuna's Mother and Izumi Shikibu. More than any other of the *nikki* discussed in previous chapters, Takasue's Daughter's engagement with tales is overt and constitutes a defining factor of the identity of its author, beyond her social connection to her husband, father, or patron. When I speak of a socio-literary critique of *monogatari* being effected, the "social" aspect I refer to is partly expressed through commentary on the ability of tales to accurately embody and serve as a guide for real interpersonal relations—which is what Michitsuna's Mother accused them of not being able to do. Takasue's Daughter's own attempt at this sort of "practical tale criticism," not only explores, but subverts the extent of this ability.

In this sense, *Sarashina nikki* is, in the full meaning of the word, the queerest of these three diaries. Regardless of the sexuality of its author—meaningless as our modern classification of sexual orientation may be to someone like Takasue's Daughter[145]—the great subversion of her text is the employment of literary and stylistic tools traditionally utilised to describe a Heian middle-ranking woman's customary marital and patronal relations, while actually disregarding their social significance. This *nikki* highlights the socio-literary value of *monogatari*, both for their own sake as texts and as interpersonal connectors, unrelated to the desirability of the hierarchical and amorous relations they portray as a final goal. At the same time, it creates a cultural, spatial, and personal sense of self-othering that is constant throughout its pages; despite her middle-ranking background, the author often frames herself as a marginal figure. Many of the criticisms people have voiced against Takasue's Daughter often come from a framing that expects her to define herself in terms of the figure of the wife, or rather, the woman who desires to engage in marital relations with a man. In this, she undoubtedly fails. But why must we attribute a failure that exists merely in our interpretations to a diary explicitly looking to find an identity outside of the hierarchical relations of court and marriage?

It is not my intention to make assertions specifically about Takasue's Daughter's sexuality, rather I approach this diary with the mentality that Queer Theory "conveys a double emphasis—on the conceptual and speculative work involved in discourse production, and on the necessary critical work of deconstructing our own discourses and their constructed silences" (De Lauretis: 1991, IV). It is my belief the understanding of the memoir as

[145] See note 3.

necessarily participating in the interplay of social and personal desires of marital and patronal support as a method of self-framing—as has been attributed to Michitsuna's Mother and other contemporary authors—does a disservice to a text that actively attempts to separate its writer from such a delineation. I do intend, therefore, to destabilise the traditional reading of Takasue's Daughter as a "failure," as a wife or lady-in-waiting. After all,

> Queer was a term that challenged the normalizing mechanisms of state power to name its sexual subjects: male or female, married or single, heterosexual or homosexual, natural or perverse. Given its commitment to interrogating the social processes that not only produced and recognized but also normalized and sustained identity, the political promise of the term resided specifically in its broad critique of multiple social antagonisms, including race, gender, class, nationality, and religion, in addition to sexuality (Eng, Halberstam, and Muñoz: 2005, 1).

Charo Beatrice D'Etcheverry discusses Takasue's Daughter reinterpretation of *Genji monogatari*'s Ukifune 浮舟 "from a marginal figure" into one "important to the elite men but sheltered from female jealousy" (D'Etcheverry: 2007, 122), explaining in this way her wish to model herself after the character. Although, this reading somewhat follows the author's self-description in the diary as a shy, socially incapable shut-in, moved around only by her desire to read and the favour of the Buddhas (Sarra: 1999, 93-95), I see no reason to indicate "jealousy" as the threat she wishes to be protected from by an imaginary male lover. Unlike Michitsuna's Mother and Izumi Shikibu, *Sarashina nikki* never discusses the fear of being abandoned or replaced by another woman; her husband, when brought up, is never mentioned in relation to other potential partners, and the closest incident to a romantic liaison presented in the text—the exchanges with the gallant Minamoto no Sukemichi 源資通 (?-1060)—is described in terms of its literariness and poetic value, not

as a possible source of emotional or financial support, as it will be discussed in detail further down. Women are often depicted in the diary not as competitors, but as members of the overlapping literary, social, and religious networks that defined Takasue's Daughter's life experience. These relations can be placed into three levels, at the non-official sphere, court service and public advancement, and ultimately, Buddhist salvation. In all three, however, we also find an element of supernatural agency, as prophetic dreams mediate the narrator's response to these domains.

Although it was my intention to discuss the space of tale and poetry circulation developed among women of similar—or irrelevant to the text—rank in *Sarashina nikki* as the "domestic space," I fear this nomenclature will bring to mind the identification of women's writing and private life that I am striving to avoid. As up to this point I have discussed relatively discreet spaces—the house with Michitsuna's Mother and its interpretation through court salon literature—the greater sense of spatial mobility explored by this author may seem to over-extend these limits. For this reason, this may be a good place to remember that when I talk of the domestic here, this term refers to a space roughly coinciding with the *ke* realm, as described in previous chapters; a space not merely including relationships within and between households, but formed by networks of circulation existing at several levels outside the control of the imperial sphere. However, up to this point, these extra-imperial networks have remained primarily court and house centric. Takasue's Daughter still shows great preoccupation with her family members, her role within the house, and the way in which this role affects her relation to the court, but she is very concerned with establishing herself as an isolated figure from her peers (Itō:

1988, 46); someone who does not fully belong to the structure of the court. As we will see further down, the diary shows a greater interest in extra-Capitaline, extra-courtly individuals than other similar texts; however, her "otherness" is still very much defined in terms of courtliness.

The Role of Takasue:

Before I engage with the ways in which the diary explores how Takasue's Daughter retracts from an identification with expected social desires, I will discuss the personal connections—familial and literary—described in the text, that seem to fit more neatly the form of the hierarchical relations that have been my focus for Izumi Shikibu and Michitsuna's Mother. Takasue's Daughter's work is inhabited by mothers and step-mothers, nurses, aunts, sisters, and other feminine figures not necessarily tied to the author by family bonds. The linking factor between all of these figures is not so much a top-down dependence, the subservience to a common "master," or the sharing of the same physical space; rather, from the very beginning of the text, the presence of women of the author's family is tied to the circulation of *monogatari* (An: 1995, 305). However, if we look in this text for figures who would fulfil a role of patronage and emotional control—as it has been described in previous chapters—the burden would inevitably fall on Takasue himself. Let us examine the extent to which this figure falls within this traditional metric.

In *The Father-Daughter Plot,* Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen argues that *Sarashina nikki* presents Fujiwara no Takasue as an "ineffectual patriarch" (Ramirez-Christensen: 2001, 74) who failed to attain for his daughter either an advantageous marriage or a secure position

at court. It is true that the narrator tells us her parents seemed reticent to let her serve at court, since her father wanted her to take over the household—“おとなにし据ゑて” (SNKZ: 324)—after her mother became a nun. It is also true that after her marriage, the father, who has lovingly been mentioned often up to this point disappears completely from the narrative, a circumstance that could be understood as a silent complaint about her lost prospects (Ramirez-Christensen: 2001, 74). Much like *Izumi Shikibu nikki* when phrasing the heroine’s abduction to the Prince’s palace, Takasue’s Daughter makes sure to describe herself in passive terms, merely acquiescing to the desires of others, both when she is allowed to serve, and when she is “shut away at home”—“こめ据ゑつ” (SNKZ: 328)—by her parents. However, her parents reticence does not actually prevent her from initially becoming an attendant, nor does her marriage stop her when she comes back to serve at court a second time as her niece’s chaperone, even if she does not need to “rely completely on this occupation alone”—“ひとえにそなたひとつを頼むべきならねば” (SNKZ: 330), presumably due to her marriage. In this sense, she seems to be remarkably free to act in one way or the other. Her husband also appears to be supportive of her pilgrimages, and leaves them to her own discretion. Because of this, I believe it would be a mistake to contemplate the framing of Takasue in the diary solely in terms of social frustration. It is clear the author’s father occupies in this work a similar role as a potential patron and literary partner than Fujiwara no Kaneie and Michitsuna do in the *Kagerō nikki*—even up to the final lack of the presumed dependability Michitsuna’s Mother struggled to find on her husband. However, Takasue is but one of the many centres that anchor the narration of his daughter’s life. As the protagonist of the diary grows up, her focus shifts several times

throughout the text, and Takasue is soon completely dropped from the story once he has served his primary parental function.

The parallels between *Sarashina* and *Kagerō nikki* surrounding the portrayal of the father figure are quite transparent, even though the older text expressed a sense of obligation between the author and Tomoyasu throughout all three scrolls of her work. The scene in both memoirs where we see the daughters take their farewell from the two men, as they leave for their posts in the provinces, are quite illustrative both of the similarities and the dissimilarities between the approaches of each *nikki*. The most evident difference being that in the older diary, the departing parent addresses his poem to Kaneie, his daughter's husband, asking him to remain reliable in his absence, whereas Takasue leaves his child behind with this:

> Even more, the day [of the departure] it was all busyness, when the actual moment came, he put up my blind, and intently met my eye, tears pouring down silently. Finally, when he had left, as my eyes followed him in my heart, I lied down, blinded by tears. The servants who were staying behind came back from seeing him off, on folded paper [he had written],
>
> *If my circumstances fulfilled the things I long for in my heart, I would have deeply felt this autumn parting.*[146]

The similar scene in *Kagerō nikki* goes as follows;

[146] まいて、その日は立ち騒ぎて、時なりぬれば、今はとて簾を引き上げて、うち見あはせて涙をほろほろと落して、やがて出でぬるを見送る心地、目もくれまどひてやがて臥されぬるに、とまるをのこの、送りして帰るに、懐紙に、
思ふ事心にかなふ身なりせば秋のわかれをふかく知らまし (SNKZ: 316). See also Arntzen: 2014, 145-146. The poem alludes to the intrinsically poetic nature of autumn partings; something Takasue cannot enjoy due to his lack of political success (SNKZ: 316).

> Even though someone says to him, "time is passing us by," he does not leave. He rolled a letter, and put it inside an inkstone besides him, again crying silently. For a while I do not have the heart to look. When I have watched him go until he was out of sight, wavering, I approach it. When I look at what it is, [I see]
>
> *Only on you I depend in this journeying heart, thinking on the long way to go ahead!*[147]

Takasue's Daughter might well have had her aunt and grandfather's exchange in mind when she described her own parting, as we do know it is very likely she had access to the older of the two *nikki* (Arntzen and Itō: 2014, 10). As both depictions of parental parting are quite similar, it would not be much of a stretch to consider the second one as a repetition of the same model, which would highlight, without having to explicitly mention it, the lack of a husband figure. The grief of daughters and fathers is narrated following the same structure in both diaries; both men are crying—both texts use the same adverb, ほろほろと, "to cry softly"[148]—and seem unable to speak their goodbyes to their daughters; both fragments highlight their visit in spite of the urgings of the servants or the busyness of the day; the two of them ultimately use verse as the way to express their feelings. Finally, both women read the goodbye poems alone, away from their composers, after they had

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[147] 「時たがひぬる」と言ふまでも、え出でやらず, かたへなる硯に、文をおし巻きてうち入れて、またほろほろとうち泣きて出でぬ。 しばしは見む心もなし。見出ではてぬるに、ためらひて、寄りて、なにごとぞとみれば、
君をのみ頼むたびなる心にはゆくすゑ遠く思ほゆるかな (SNKZ, 97). See also Arntzen: 1997, 67. There is a double meaning in "*yukusue* 行く末," which refers to Tomoyasu's and his daughter's final destination in a literal and metaphorical way. "The long way to go" also refers to Michitsuna's Mother's life with Kaneie, on whom Tomoyasu is relying to take care of her, now that he is gone.

[148] "*horohoro to naku* ほろほろと泣く," "*namida horohoro* 涙ほろほろ," and other variations thereof do appear sparsely in tales like *Genji monogatari*, *Hamamatsu Chūnagon monogatari*, *Sagoromo monogatari* 狭衣物語 (ca. 1060) and others, *Kagerō nikki* and *Sarashina nikki* seem to be the only major *kana nikki* to contain them.

watched them[149] disappear in the distance—Michitsuna's Mother is unable to bring herself to read it immediately and Takasue's Daughter must wait until the servants that see her father off return. Tomoyasu's poem is an appeal to Kaneie to take good care of his daughter (SNKZ: 97); Takasue's poem about not being able to enjoy the autumn parting can be understood as a lament for not having attained a desired position (Arntzen and Itō: 2014, 147), that would have allowed him to comfortably provide for his daughter.

And so, both fathers leave their daughters behind, lamenting not being able to tend to their well-being anymore. Takasue's Daughter's dependence on her father, and the loneliness she is reduced to when he leaves are here as poignant as Michitsuna's Mother's was. At the same time, the latter writer has a chance to reply to the father's grievances with her own, and is presented as worthy of poetic correspondence, rather than as a mere witness. Michitsuna's Mother's farewells were equally emotive, but her father's feelings of regret are directed to Kaneie; begging him for the support his daughter needs. The exchange in the earlier of these two *nikki* is centred on the almost transactional nature of the communication between the two men, who have passed on the woman's dependence unto one another. The author's connection to Kaneie is established through a poetic dialogue in which she herself takes no part, as she is entrusted to him.

However, it must be remembered that the marriage between Kaneie and Michitsuna's Mother forms the backbone of the diary; just as Izumi Shikibu's relationship to the prince

[149] Takasue's Daughter's whole section on her father's departure is strongly focused on language denoting their mutual visibility and its eventual lack thereof.

forms that of hers. Takasue's Daughter instead portrays her role as the daughter of the house—and potential household manager, as she is perceived by her parents—as merely one element of her identity, which does not necessarily come to define her relation to other individuals. The farewells between father and daughter in the first diary transfer one child from paternal care to that of her husband, in a way, justifying and supporting Michitsuna's Mother's claim of "belonging" to Kaneie's household. The goodbye in *Sarashina nikki* also removes Takasue's Daughter's prior dependency, but no dependency on a new figure is there to replace it. The abandonment of the figure of Takasue serves in this way to portray, if anything, the loss or the irrelevance of the reliance on a father, and, by extension, a husband, understood as a socially similar figure.

A Community of Readers and the Acquisition of Texts:

As Takasue's Daughter herself stops using her father as the pivotal point of her sense of identity in the text, emphasising the lack of a replacement, it would seem improper to look for one particular figure in the diary to occupy that role. The text does present other individuals, however, with which the author enjoys clear association. For instance, maternal figures are mentioned frequently, and mourned as they disappear, personified in the author's sister, wetnurse, and step-mother. However, rather than focusing particularly on the immediate members of Takasue's Daughter's family circle based on their familial connection, I would like to introduce here the importance of *monogatari* in this diary as a form of social bond. *Sarashina nikki* has been described as a "tale writer's diary" (An: 1995, 275), and it is undoubtable that *monogatari* play a fundamental part in the portrayal of both her internal and external existence. Tales in *Sarashina nikki* are tied to a very

particular network of circulation that differentiates the text from the other memoirs studied so far; in the place of a patron or husband, the constant throughout the diary's pages is the presence of tales and religion as mediators both of social interaction and the chronological flow within the author's retelling of her life's progression. After all, the author chose to begin her life story not with her relationship to a man, like Michitsuna's Mother or Izumi Shikibu, but with her discovery of the existence of *monogatari*; the place tales occupy in her own life is the fundamental backbone of the diary (Sarra: 1999,126). And yet, she never mentions the act of writing; instead, it is the identity of reader and commentator that cements the relations between the narrator, the other members of her family, and society at large.

It is the desire to consume tales that permeates the famous first lines of this work, when Takasue's Daughter prays for a way to travel to the Capital, with the hopes of finding all the *monogatari* she wishes to read. Although hearing about tales or being told stories is obviously a shared activity—it is the author's step-mother and sister who first introduce Takasue's Daughter to the concept of *monogatari* according to the *nikki*—the text at times describes the act of consuming tales as a solitary, solipsistic activity (Sarra: 1999, 81). Famously, the young girl described in the *nikki* would lie inside her curtains, reading and would not have changed her place with that of an **imperial consort**—几帳のうちにうち臥して引き出でつつ見る心地、后の位もなににかはせむ (SNKZ: 298).[150] However, in

[150] Even though this may be but hyperbole, it is interesting to note this early assertion of the enjoyment of tales trumping the expected desire for social primacy, which aligns with the rest of the diary's rejection of courtly hierarchies. The phrase "to exchange even for the rank of a consort" does not seem to be a common idiom for a general description of the utmost desirable female social status or happiness. It also appears with

spite of this declaration about solitary reading, much in contrast to what is considered Heian common practice,[151] the actual consumption of the tale, or their contents hardly take any space either in the diary's pages; it is the act of acquiring, circulating, and sharing knowledge about fiction that underlies an important amount of the exchanges—poetic and otherwise—in the *nikki.*

The use of tales to mediate social engagement is deployed by the text in several ways. Firstly, the expression of the acquisition of tales serves as a marker of social connectedness. Secondly, the content of tales, too, is used by the author to provide a common background and as a tool for expression, either when focusing on the circulation of actual texts, or in occasions of grief and loss. It is then, not only the vocabulary and layers of reference to put words to feelings that *monogatari* provide for the author; the physical circulation of the texts is overtly a main element behind the poetic dialogues presented in the text. As an example of this, we have this poetic exchange between the author and an unknown addressee:

> When I heard someone had a *monogatari* version of that text known out in the world as *The Song of Everlasting Sorrow* [*Chōgonka* 長恨歌 (806)], even though I was extremely eager, because I could not just go and ask, I enquired for an appropriate messenger, and on the Seventh Day of the Seventh Month, I said,
>
> *Yearning today for those vows seemingly made long ago, the waves of the Heavenly River reach out!*
>
> The answer,

the exact same collocation in *Hamamatsu Chūnagon monogatari* (SNKZ: 258)—a text attributed to Takasue's Daughter.

[151]The "reading out loud theory" (*ondokuron* 音読論), the seminal hypothesis proposed by Tamagami Takuya, argues *monogatari* were originally developed by ladies-in-waiting charged with the reading out loud of tales who eventually would be inspired to write down their own stories in *kana*. The ultimate nature of *monogatari* reading would, therefore, be communal and oral (Tamagami: 1950, 1-12). Also on oral storytelling versus reading (out loud), see note 97 in the second chapter.

With the yearning of the Heavenly Riverbank rising up, even the usual misery is forgotten[152]

If this person is not available to the author because of their superior rank or merely because there is no previous familial or friendship relationship with them, we do not know. However, this social boundary is overcome by a mutual appreciation of tales and a call for empathy on the part of Takasue's Daughter. There is no mention of any message accompanying this text or of how it was set to paper. All that the author considers relevant to the exchange is the feelings expressed by the *uta*, where she makes clear her desire to read the tale; a feeling she can count on her correspondent understanding. She does not indicate that she received this tale, but we are to believe her petition was successful, as the second poem clearly responds to her composition's structure and choice of words in a very harmonic way. It is also followed not much later in the diary by a second occasion when a tale came to her hands through this network of poetic request. As we are told in the following pages, when the author's sister passes, her death is punctuated by an anonymous female voice referring to a copy of a tale the departed was trying to procure.

> Saying "since I had a note from that person of old [the sister], saying 'Please do everything in your power to find this tale and deliver it to me,' I tried to find it for her but was unsuccessful on that occasion. Now someone has sent it to me, a heart-rendingly sad affair." The message was

[152] 世の中に長恨歌といふふみ、物語に書きてあるところあんなりと聞くに、いみじくゆかしければ、えいひよらぬに、さるべきたよりを尋ねて、七月七日いひやる。
契りけむ昔の今日のゆかしさにあまの川渡うち出でつるかな
返し、
たちいづる天の川辺のゆかしさにつねはゆゆしきことも忘れぬ (SNKZ, 303). According to tradition, the Seventh Day of the Seventh Month would allow the star-crossed lovers stars Vega and Altair to cross the Milky Way and see each other. The *uchiidetsuru* in the first poem is a play on words between two possible *uchiidu* "appearing" or "going away," and "to put into words." "Reach out" is my compromise.

> accompanied by a copy of the tale entitled *His Highness in Search of a Corpse*. In truth, how devastating is that?[153]

The non-extant *monogatari* mentioned here deals with a prince looking for the burial place of a woman who drowned herself in the river, after he hides her away—a plot very similar to Ukifune's story in *Genji monogatari*. In this way, the author not only showcases the tragedy of her loss, but the connection between two sisters drawn to the same type of characters (Itō: 1995, 286). And so we encounter here not only the sad circumstances that led to Takasue's Daughter possession of the volume, but also to a record of how she comes to have both this *monogatari* and the tale version of *The Song of Everlasting Sorrow* in her hands. Similarly, she also tells us about the way in which all scrolls of *Genji monogatari* are gifted to her, but I will discuss this later in relation to a different characteristic of her text. In any case, here it can be seen without any doubt how the acquisition of tales very clearly mediates the author's communication with other women, and how the physical circulation of the texts is supported and procured by oral performance and mutual appreciation of tales' importance.

There is one mention, however, of a collection of booklets being passed down to her from an imperial source, almost immediately after the family settles in Heian-kyō, once they have returned from the provinces.

[153]「昔の人の、かならずもとめておこせよ、とありしかばもとめしに、そのをりはえ見出でずなりにしを、今しも人のおこせたるが、あはれにかなしきこと」とて、かばねたづぬる宮といふ物語をこせたり。もことにぞあはれなるや (NKBT, 306). See also Arntzen: 2014, 126.

> When I pestered my mother saying "Find me tales to read! Find me tales to read!," she enquired and sent a letter to a relative who served the princess of the Third Avenue [Princess Shūshi 綏子内親王 (997–1049)] known as Emon no Myōbu 衛門の命婦, and then she was overjoyed to hear from us, so she gave us some splendid booklets she said her highness had been kind enough to pass down, contained inside the lid of an inkstone.[154]

In this little fragment we encounter similar circumstances to the ones preceding her acquisition of the *Chōgonka* tale; Takasue's wife, exhorted by her daughter asks someone with access to tales who would be kind enough to send them over. The connection in this case is a familial one and we do not have an insight into the content of the letter or the *monogatari* that is received. In spite of the courtly origin of the texts received by the young lady, its circulation, once it has left the salon of Emon no Myōbu's patron, is rendered non-hierarchical. The court still stands as a producer of texts; however, the distribution of the physical objects does not stop within its walls and is ultimately dependant on informal networks of family connections, friendship, and mutual appreciation of literature.

I referred before to the circulation of tales and their content as the basis for this creation of community. A commonly cited example, in this regard, can be found in the two closing poems of the diary. With this exchange, the text ends with a melancholy note, as Takasue's Daughter and a tonsured friend discuss the possibility of enlightenment as a consolation to her dire position:

[154] 「物語もとめて見せよ、物語ともとめて見せよ」と、母をせむれば、三条の宮に、親族なる人の、衛門の命婦とてさぶらひける、尋ねて、文遣りたれば、めづらしがりてよろこびて、御前のをろしたるとて、わざとめでたき冊子ども、硯の蓋にいれておこせたり (SNKZ: 294-295). See also Arntzen: 2014, 108.

> They have all gone to live somewhere else. Being alone in my old home, heavy-hearted and sad, despondent while staring blankly until dawn, [I sent] to someone who hadn't called on me in a long time:
>
> *Burgeoning wormwood watered and watered by the dew, un-enquired for, only this voice cries here*
>
> The nun.[155]
>
> *Wormwood on a house in the world of the ordinary, consider the grass in a garden done with renunciation*[156]

The discourse and understanding of Buddhist salvation is here expressed through a common terminology derived from the reading of *Genji monogatari*. The wormwood (*yomogi* 蓬) is a reference to the tale's 15th chapter, *The* Overgrown *Wormwood* [*Weeds*]—*Yomogiu* 蓬生—where the house of one of Genji's lovers, Suetsumuhana 末摘花, has fallen into disrepair. And so, Takasue's Daughter is equated to the figure of the destitute, lonely princess (Arntzen and Itō: 2014, 209), whose garden is described by Murasaki as overgrown with "thick weeds"—しげき蓬 (SNKT: 329)—using an almost identical expression to the one in the first of these two poems. The existence of a literary

[155] Satō Kazuyoshi (1993, 60) suggests the possibility that this last poem, which closes the narration, is actually a composition by the author, who would have received the tonsure, rather than a poetic exchange. I find this interpretation is derived from a wish to see the desire for Buddhist salvation as the main driving force of the text, rather than particular textual evidence. Even so, the wording of this passage is vague enough to allow for this reading.

[156] 人々はみなほかに住みあかれて、ふるさとに一人、いみじう心ほそく悲しくて、ながめ明かしわびて、久しうおとづれぬ人に、
しげりゆく蓬が露にそほちつつ人にとはれぬ音をのみぞ泣く
尼なる人なり。
世のつねの宿の蓬を思ひやれそむきはてたる庭の草むら(SNKZ, 360). There exist some uncertainty regarding proper interpretation of this poem. The "を" at the end of the second verse could be read either as a direct object marker or as a exclamatory particle. This is not so much based on the natural-seeming interpretation of the particle, but rather due to the prevalence of "思ひやれ" as a starting line in imperial collections (Satō: 1993, 60-61). Itō considers more natural to follow the most apparently grammatical reading, and render the particle as a direct object marker (Itō: 1995, 59).

background shared by both parts of the exchange, offers the author the possibility to create a sense of community; to express to others, and to understand others' experiences of religious practice and pain.

There is one other exchange recorded in the diary drawn from *Genji monogatari* where we will see the tales establishing a shared background for its participants that fits within this model; Takasue's Daughter conversation on seasons with the courtier Minamoto no Sukemichi. However, this anecdote is also contextualised by its tale-ness in a way that removes it from further social impact, and so I will discuss it in further detail in the second half of the next section. This scene functions in a similar way to *Izumi Shikibu nikki*'s *monogatari*-like framing of real life events; in the sense that it removes them from public consideration. This will link, therefore, to my concept of "practical literary criticism."

The (Un)courtly Court:

Before going back to the content of the diary itself, I will firstly contextualise relations of patronage and *monogatari* at the court, and Takasue's Daughter involvement with them. The social significance of tales is not often considered in terms of the subversion of hierarchical literary circulation.[157] Takasue's Daughter's framing, in this sense, stands in stark contrast to standard attitudes of the day. As I have pointed out before, in other texts

[157] This is not to say *monogatari* have not been considered potentially subversive in literary scholarship. I have in this thesis cited Marra's study on medieval expressions of discontent that includes a chapter on *Ise monogatari* being used as a tool to contest the cultural authority of the Fujiwara (Marra: 1991). However, this type of "subversion" is still completely reliant on the maintenance of the hierarchical structures in place, and merely disputes who should occupy the place of honour within them.

preceding *Sarashina nikki,* both circulation and content of *monogatari* were often used to underlie and support relations of patronage under the cultural centrality of the court.[158] This endorsement of patronal relations portrayed here is not dissimilar to how exchanges of poems between Michitsuna's Mother and Kaneie illustrated Michitsuna's Mother's social dependency on her husband. Both in their subject matters and in their availability, Heian tales were, unsurprisingly, usually court-centric texts; the very themes and stories of tales often revolve around interactions between lovers with unequal power dynamics, where the access to a higher-ranking man is understood as the most desirable outcome. This is, of course, very much the model of *monogatari* that both *Kagerō nikki* and *Izumi Shikibu nikki* follow and play with (Hijikata: 2007, 221). In this sense, tales very much propose a social model that reinforces the power-structures organised around the imperial family and their Fujiwara counterparts; as they present a gendered system of upward mobility in the courtly hierarchy, brought on by rank and social position based on amorous liaisons, both as an ideal and an inevitability.

From the point of view of circulation, the ties between *monogatari* and courtly literary patronage appear also fairly transparent in court-centric texts; particularly when it came to the involvement of *nyōbō* with the conceptual and physical creation of tales. *Eiga monogatari*, dealing with the fortunes of Fujiwara no Michinaga and his family—previously discussed in the second chapter—is perhaps the prototypical example of a tale patronised by the centres of power at the court, but it is not the only work that followed this trend. The already mentioned *Mumyōzōshi* describes the composition of *Genji monogatari* as

[158] See chapter 2, pages 138-139.

being a response to an imperial command by the author's patron. As it will be remembered, we can also ascribe Sei Shōnagon's *Pillow Book* origin to similar circumstances, according to its very text.[159]

As an example of the matter of compilation and circulation of tales at court, I mentioned on the previous chapter, one poem by Akazome Emon regarding Michinaga's gathering of tales "so that they would not scatter."[160] This may also be remembered here as an example of the Fujiwara's preoccupation with the preservation of *monogatari*, as well as with their composition. The process involved with this goal is described in *Murasaki Shikibu nikki* thusly:

> Everyone goes on without a second of peace of mind, since her Majesty is very immersed in booklet making, with the daybreak, first thing we must head towards her quarters, select an arrange papers of various colours, and attaching the texts of *monogatari* to these, write and distribute letters going here and there. Moreover, we spend from dawn till dusk binding, gathering and stacking them up.[161]

We count therefore with instances of recording, preserving, and circulating this type of text around the salons of the Fujiwara imperial consorts. The binding of the booklets and gathering of the tales in expensive paper, occupying the nights and days of the imperial ladies-in-waiting, no doubt, serves as a proof of the economic and cultural grandiosity of their patrons.

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[159] See chapter 1, pages 56-57.

[160] See chapter 2, page 162.

[161] 人々はうちつぎつつ心のどかならぬに、御前には、御冊子つくりいとなませたまふとて、明けたてば、まづむかひさぶらひて、いろいろの紙選りととのへて、物語の本どもそへつつ、ところどころにふみ書きくばる。かつは綴ぢあつめしたたむるを役にて、明かし暮らす (SNKZ: 167-168). See also Bowring: 1996, 32-33.

Takasue's Daughter was very much aware of the dominion of the courtly literary salon over the production of her reading material of choice; it is this knowledge of the court's role in the creation of *monogatari* she mentions as the reason behind her to wish to return to the Capital from the provinces, to be able to read them. Her beloved *Genji monogatari* itself has a chapter describing how the hero organises a match of illustrated tale scrolls in order to boost his protégée's desirability in the eyes of the emperor.[162] The *Sarashina nikki* author herself had been part of a courtly salon as a lady-in-waiting twice before the composition of her diary in her old age. As such, she would likely have encountered compilation and circulation scenes like the ones Murasaki Shikibu describes.

Even though Princess Yūshi was but an infant when Takasue's Daughter joined her retinue, her salon would not be devoid from literary production, as illustrated by several of the *nyōbo* connected to it. One of these attendants, Koben—also known as Yūshi Naishinnōke no Koben or Miya no Koben 祐子内親王家小弁/宮小弁 (dates unknown), presented one of the winner poems in the *Rokujō Sai'in monogatari uta awase* 六条西院物語歌合 (1053), a poetry match where compositions were made as the different characters of several tales (Dutcher: 2006, 144). This attendant's daughter—Yūshi Naishinnōke no Kii 祐子内親王家紀伊 (dates unknown)—would also play a similar role, and counts with a personal anthology and 31 poems compiled in the *Goshūishū* (Mostow: 1996, 354). There exists also

[162] In Scroll 17, *The Picture Match*, (*E awase* 絵合).

at least one poetry match linked to the household of the princess, *Yūshi Naishinnōke uta awase* 祐子内親王家歌合 (1050) (KT/5: 1420). The very presence of the *Sarashina nikki* author in it could be considered in this light, if she was, after all, known as a *monogatari* writer. It is true all of these examples do not coincide in time in time with Takasue's Daughter's service at court, but they are still worth keeping in mind.

In spite of her youthful declarations of longing for the *monogatari* in Heian-kyō and her own experience dealing with courtly production and dissemination of texts, the role of the court in the author's own acquisition of *monogatari* is practically non-existent in the diary. Previously in this chapter I have talked of a circulation that takes place within domestic feminine circles of the household in *Sarashina nikki*; but, in this text, the non-hierarchical circulation of tales and socio-literary exchanges is also depicted in interesting ways in the scenes that involve directly Takasue's Daughter relationship with the court. The most interesting aspect of the diary's framing of the courtly context may be its attempt at removing from the equation the system of patronage that would seem to be the inescapable element of its author's social positioning in relation to it. And so, in spite of the tale-like language of the events presented in this section, standard assumptions about *nyōbō* service, and social implications of courtly romance.

Previously, I stated that the figure of Takasue, her father, appears at a first glance to serve the role of the male family member in whose orbit the female writer may position herself, only to be discarded as such. In the same vein, it could be disputed there is one conversation in the diary that does follow the conventional beats of the amorous dialogue

between potential lovers—her dialogue with the aforementioned Minamoto no Sukemichi. However, much like in that first case, in this exchange, the literary conventions used traditionally to depict relations of dependence are also quickly dropped by the author. The contextualisation of this scene within the diary places it in a less orthodox light, very much illustrating Takasue's Daughter's inhabiting of an alternative framing of socio-literary relations.

Minamoto no Sukemichi: Socially Non-effective Romance:

Michitsuna's Mother's role within the greater society of the court—her relation to imperial consorts, princes, and high-ranking aristocrats—was expressed through her connection to Kaneie, and her ability to compose poetry, both for public contexts and one on one exchanges. In this way, the two worlds of the woman of the house and the public poet find a sort of bridge, where the same skills and textual production can be adapted to both spheres. It should be remembered, however, that both in the realm of the house and of the imperial hierarchy, this self-positioning passes through the reinforcing of the poet's inequality to the recipient of her composition; the social distance between author and receiver of the poem and the way in which it is negotiated defines the poet's identity, just like the exchange of textiles-turned-clothes defines the role of the wife. However, *Sarashina nikki* avoids applying these terms to its narrator/author; Takasue's Daughter does not attempt to place herself as a client or wife in any of her poetic exchanges. In spite of the literariness of this exchange, there is no relation of dependence to be created, and, therefore, no inequality to strive for.

It is precisely inequality that sits at the base of the whole Heian system of human relation and the very structure, social and literature, of the court. As we have seen in the previous section, *Sarashina nikki* very clearly does not extricate the courtly context from tales; I would say, however, that, in turn, it does extricate the tale from the courtly context.[163] This is what the "most tale-like scene in the whole diary" (Nagai: 2007, 346), her conversation with the courtier Minamoto no Sukemichi and a fellow palace attendant about which is the best season, seems to point at. This is an exchange taking place while Takasue's Daughter is employed at the palace as a lady-in-waiting for the second time, in the year 1039 (Nagai: 2007, 347), as she accompanies her niece in the salon of the aforementioned infant princess Yūshi. This detailed passage hits all the beats of the genteel, elegant lovers, with their poems full of references to previous works. Despite all the space dedicated to the conversation, their poetry exchanges come to nothing in the end, and the courtier will not be further mentioned in later sections. Let us turn our attention to an excerpt from this deliberation;

> The person who felt drawn to autumn [composed],
>
> *It seems everyone's heart is attracted to the spring. Ah, the autumn night moon, that I alone will watch*
>
> And to this, [Sukemichi said] looking like he had found it most interesting, "Even in China, from times of old, they were incapable of deciding between the merits of spring and autumn…"[164]

[163] By "courtly context" I mean here the hierarchical socio-literary relations that underlie and sustain the creation and performance of text at court, requiring a central figure whose cultural importance is determined by the imperially-sanctioned symbolic power structures. It could also be argue she creates an alternative understanding of what courtliness is.

[164] 秋に心寄せたる人、
人はみな春に心を寄せつめりわれのみや見む秋の夜の月
とあるに、いみじう興じ思ひわづらひたるけしきにて、「唐土などにも、昔より春秋のさだめはえしはべらざなるを、(…)」(SNKZ: 335-336). See also Arntzen: 2014, 175.

The lady's poem is a play on a verse found in chapter 44 of *Genji monogatari*,[165] and the gentleman's response is also a similar reference to Murasaki's work, directly quoting the tale's protagonist, expounding on the merits of the four seasons (Arntzen and Itō: 2014, 176).[166] This is a moment where Takasue's Daughter has not merely managed to feel comfortable within the strange and intimidating world of palace service where she feels like an outsider, but where she finds herself in a situation she has been prepared to tackle her whole life. Throughout this friendly debate, Takasue's Daughter's profound knowledge of *monogatari* is mirrored by her interlocutors', allowing the three of them to create a moment of pure refinement and mutual understanding. Their shared familiarity with *Genji monogatari* is the basis for an exchange nearing the type of elegant poetic conversations described in tales (Nagai: 2007, 359). It is undeniable that, in spite of the non-hierarchical female-led circulation of tales the diary describes, the author does not shy away from the description of her involvement in circumstances where this hierarchy does take precedence, such as the world of the court, between characters who relate through the tale-like model of the male-female lover pair.

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[165] "*It would seem everyone's heart prefers the flowers. The spring night's darkness, wandering lost, all alone*" 人はみな花に心をうつすらむひとりぞまどふ春の夜の闇 (SNKZ: 73), scroll 44, *Takekawa* 竹河. See also Tyler: 2001, 810.

[166] This takes place on chapter 19, *Usugumo* 薄雲. Genji says, "no one has ever shown on which [season] one should decide to truly draw their the heart to. In Ancient China, they seemed to have said that the brocade of spring flowers had no match; in the words of Yamato [*uta*], we set apart in our thoughts the atmosphere of autumn (…).そのころのげにと心寄るばかりあらはなる定めこそはべらざなれ。唐土には、春の花の錦にしくものなしと言ひはべめり、大和言の葉には、秋もあはれをとりたてて思へる(…) (SNKZ: 462). See also Tyler: 2001, 359.

It could be said, then, that Takasue's Daughter is here presenting to us a common denominator between individuals who occupy different positions in the domestic sphere and the world at large. In this exchange we perceive the literary background of the author, as she has acquired it through the network of her familial connections in her youth, being applied as an educating tool for her experience as a lady-in-waiting. It has been suggested that *monogatari* served as a tool to educate young aristocratic ladies in the subtleties of *waka* composition, letter exchange and proper behaviour (Sarra: 1999, 90) and that *Sarashina nikki* clearly presents here and example of this practice (Mostow: 2000, 46). However, there is one more aspect in this exchange that deserves attention, when brought into focus within the general structure of the diary. I would argue tales' usefulness as a source of social and personal betterment is not the main focus of this little scene, since this poetic exchange does not seem to have a further purpose other than its very *monogatari*-ness. The tale-like quality that informs it is very much an end in itself, and it is achieved merely by the act of noting the experience down. That is, it is the recording and retelling of this *Genji*-inspired conversation that makes it worthy of the category of tale, not its usefulness for social or romantic progress. The interaction between the three characters appears in an extremely idealised context, with a distinct lack of dependency between Takasue's Daughter and Minamoto no Sukemichi being ultimately achieved or desired.

Arntzen talks about this scene as the only moment in the author's life that lived up to expectations created by *Genji monogatari*, even if they remained unfulfilled (Arntzen and Itō: 2014, 72-73). But it is my believe her choice to put to paper this particular exchange, as opposed to the poems she must have composed for her husband or other potential

partners may not necessarily be so lyrically tragic. Just like Izumi Shikibu used *monogatari* tropes to separate her relationship to Atsumichi from public relevance, this diary's author makes sure to portray her not-quite-dalliance in a way in which it is precisely its tale-like qualities that are remarkable, not the possibility of a continued relationship or the establishment of any dependency on her counterpart. In this way, the diary retains courtly aspects as the natural environment of the *monogatari*-esque romance, while rejecting the expected amorous development that traditionally underlies this type of exchange. The *monogatari* in itself, and the possibility of life to imitate it is highlighted, as opposed to the ability of *monogatari* to further social advancement. As the narrator thinks to herself as Sukemichi leaves, "I hope he does not learn who I am"—たれと知られじ(SNKZ: 337. See also Arntzen and Itō: 2014, 177).

Dreams and Social Position:

Takasue's Daughter, as we have seen, uses a sphere removed from ordinary human relations to shift the focus from the interpersonal connections that shape her social position at different points. However, tales are not the only tool she uses, nor is love the only preoccupation of these shifts. If *monogatari* overrule the possibility of marital relations, prophetic dreams play a similar role regarding the court-centric social hierarchy of the Capital, by establishing a direct connection between Takasue's Daughter and a series of supernatural elements that ultimately consolidate the author's place in the courtly society and outside of it.

The use of dreams to indicate the possibility of future greatness for both the author and their family members is a common occurrence in other *nikki* of this period, both in *kana* and *kanbun* (Covaci: 2007, 138). *Kagerō nikki* contains several examples of this custom; however, Michitsuna's Mother record of promising dreams referred always to her son, not to her own person, and very much refer to Michitsuna's advancements in office. Takasue's Daughter's role as a mother, on the other hand, is never fully explored in this text, even when it is—as is her marriage—tangentially brought up at some points. It might not be a circumstance to hide, but it is not the focus of the text. This is very clear when it comes to the different prophecies presented in the text; the dreams in *Sarashina nikki*—both by the author and other people—relate to Takasue's Daughter's own possibilities to climb the social ladder, and her own destiny. At the same time, the presentation of these oneiric messages in the memoir, removes her time and again from the active pursuit of social betterment. They very much portray her as a passive receptacle of divine will.

Women-authored *Nikki*, Dreams and Agency:

It would be interesting to trace here again a comparison between Michitsuna's Mother's approach and Takasue's Daughter regarding this issue, as there is one aspect that both of their accounts share, in spite of the differences between the content and direction of their dream prophecies. As can be deduced from their record in *nikki* and the efforts aristocrats would go through in order to achieve them, prophetic dreams were clearly considered external to the dreamer, who was merely a recipient of visual and/or verbal information, and, as such, could be used to validate or justify particular courses of action or positions. However, it is also self-evident that it would be erroneous to understand dreamers as

completely passive vessels; intentionality, and action regarding the dream-event had an effective social power, by creating favourable conditions for the dreaming; by turning the dreamer into a mouthpiece of the divine will, and by choosing what dreams deserved to be recorded.

Both Takasue's Daughter and her aunt are very quick to show their disbelief, disregard, and contempt for the dreams that are presented to them. The *Sarashina nikki* tells us it was a mistake to have ignored the clear warnings and commands presented by divinities and buddhas, but all throughout the diary, her younger self is shown again, and again as doing precisely this. In this way, the presentation of dreams as naturally arising portrays the dream-haver as a passive mouth-piece for the divine message, removing their intentionality. And this does not apply only to dreams the author has had herself; when her mother requests of a monk in a pilgrimage to Hatsuse to dream a dream about her daughter's future, she not only has a mirror casted to be presented as an offering, but makes her daughter undergo purifying rituals for three days (SNKZ: 320). In spite of a clear involvement in the process on Takasue's Daughter's part, and even though she copies down the contents of the dream in detail as she writes the diary several years later, she claims not to have paid any attention to the monk's dream. This is clearly a facetious statement (Arntzen and Itō: 2014, 154), but in this disengagement, she is highlighting her own passivity in the dream-reception.

Kagerō nikki presents a similar strategy. As Michitsuna's Mother worries about the future of her relation with Kaneie, she has a monk deliver a prophecy for her in a similar fashion;

> I said, "then, have him pray for me," and from that monk I received word as such; "in a dream on the night of the fifteenth last, in your ladyship's sleeves you received the moon and the sun, you stepped on the moon with your foot; the sun you embraced against your chest. Please have this dream interpreted." What an exaggeration, I thought, and was suspicious in my heart."[167]

The trustworthiness of the monk is put into doubt by the author of this *nikki*, as the interpreter tells her this is a dream about someone who believes they can do what they will of the emperor. However, a series of other potentially prophetic visions emerges around her from unidentified sources, and she is led to believe the dream might not have been about her after all, but about her son's prospects at court. In this way, we are told the dream came to her because of her connection to her son, in spite of her initial intention to receive directions for her own personal predicament. Much like when she fulfils her role as a woman of the house by presenting her production of texts and textiles,[168] here she is presenting a production of dreams that serves the advancement of her son/potential patron in the public sphere.

Dreams in *Kagerō nikki* are, compared to those in *Sarashina nikki*, disjointed and full of surreal imagery; closer to what our understanding of a dream narrative may be today. As such, they appear to us more credible as actual nightly visions than the clearly structured and narratively complete vignettes presented by Takasue's Daughter. For this reason they

[167] 「さらば、祈りせよ」と語らひし法師のもとより、言ひおこせたるやう、「いぬる五日の夜の夢に、御袖に月と日とを受けたまひて、月をば足の下に踏み、日をば胸にあてて抱きたまふとなむ、みてはべる。これ夢解きに問はせたまへ」と言ひたり。いとうたておどろしと思ふに、疑ひそひて、をこなるここちすれば、 (…) (SNKZ: 277). See also Arntzen: 1997, 285.

[168] See chapter 1, pages 86-87.

could easily be considered meaningless, if not for their presence in the diary; it is their record that turns them into prophetic dreams. As Michitsuna's Mother says, she writes them down so "people who may hear or read about the result of my circumstances may decide if these dreams were sent by the Buddhas or not"—かかる身の果てを見聞くかむ人、夢をも仏をも用ゐるべしや、用ゐるまじやと、定めよとなり(SNKZ: 223. See also Arntzen: 1997, 229).

It is clear from the way in which these visions are portrayed—whether dreamt by the authors or others around them—that these texts go out of their way to accentuate the lack of intentionality that precedes dream reception as conductive to the legitimacy of dreams as sources of divine information. Even though both *Kagerō nikki* and *Sarashina nikki* present very clear senses of an identity defined by particular sets of social relations, both diaries are possessed of a tendency to externalise the proof of the fulfilment of their authors' social roles. The transformation of the writers into divine mouth-pieces serves as a perfect example of this. In dreaming for her son, it is not a matter of choice that makes Michitsuna's Mother a proper woman of the house; neither is the fact that Takasue's Daughter's visions overrule imperially-granted court rank. In this way, these diaries defend and reinforce these women's social positions by declaring them natural and preordained. It is assertions of instrumentality that justify the roles they have chosen to inhabit in their texts; and it is a renouncement of agency that is considered imperative by these women to be able to implement any type of socially-effective production of text, either at a domestic or a public level.

Rajyashree Pandey speaks of the limitations of approaches to the study of gender in Japanese literature that often limit themselves to assert the existence or lack of female agency. She calls for a less anthropocentric understanding of the concept of "actor" (Pandey: 2018, 11-12), following a more Latourian understanding.[169] According to this definition, an agency-exerting "actor" would be an element—human or not—who engages physically with a network of interrelated elements. For instance, in this case, not only the agency of the dreamer must be regarded as relevant, but also the agency of the dream or the divine intervention of Buddhas and *kami*. This understanding of agency as a framing of behaviour and action only goes so far when discussing social dynamics; however, it much better fits the way in which these diary authors reassert their identity in the world of Heian power structures. Their relevance is not derived from a sense of intentionality, but rather from the material interrelation between their textual, cultural (and oneiric) production. Of course, these women are not devoid of intent—or of an agency in the more traditional feminist sense, for that matter—but it would be a mistake to frame their choice to write their life experiences and the events around them as arising from the need to purport an individualistic, active mediation in the world.

[169] "A billiard ball hitting another one on the green felt of a billiard table might have exactly as much agency as a 'person' directing her 'gaze' to the 'rich human world' of another 'meaningful face' in the smoke- filled room of the pub where the tables have been set up. This is not what phenomenologists and sociologists of the social might say, but then listen to what the players themselves are saying about their own 'behaviors' and the unpredictable 'action' of their billiard balls. They seem to produce quite a lot of the very imbroglios which are strictly forbidden by the theory that states that a radical difference should be maintained between 'action' and 'behavior'" (Latour: 2005, 61).

Sarashina Nikki and its Dreams:

There is no doubt *Sarashina nikki* portrays a preoccupation with the fulfilment of a publicly relevant role for its author. At the end of the diary, she tells us,

> Even though the dreams I dreamt for years [saying] "pray to Amaterasu Onkami" had been revealed to mean I should become the wetnurse to a person of importance, serving in the palace, under the gaze of the emperor and the empress, none of that had happened.[170]

The position of wetnurse of an emperor would allow a woman and her next of kin a lifelong affective access to the sovereign (Conlan: 2005, 160). So this is not only a socially relevant role, but one invested with a great degree of influence over the highest-ranking member of the court. *Izumi Shikibu nikki*, for instance, shows us how Prince Atsumichi repeated word for word his nurse's opinions on his new lover as if they were his own. It would be, therefore, quite an influential position to be sought after by a woman who seems to often complain about her lack of relation with the rest of the world. It may seem there exists a sort of a disconnection between the promises made to the author by dreams sent by deities and Buddhas, and the prayers she describes as being answered throughout her life; the dreams tell of social mobility and prominence, whereas most of the petitions of the young Takasue's Daughter refer to the need for tales. However, when we consider how tales mediate many of the interpersonal relations shown in the text, this divide seems less jarring. These same supernatural figures that seem to care for the girl's court career, are the ones indulging her desire for more tales;

[170] 年ごろ「天照御神を念じたてまつれ」と見ゆる夢は、人の御乳母して、内裏わたりにあり、みかど、后の御かげにかくるべきさまをのみ、夢ときも合はせしかども、そのことは一つかなはでやみぬ(SNKZ: 357). See Also Arntzen: 2014, 205.

> "This *Genji monogatari*, let me be able to read it from the first scroll," I prayed inside my heart. Even when my parents made me go in retreat to Uzumasa, I asked for nothing else, and even though when I left [the temple], I thought I would surely come to read the tale, I didn't. I grieved with great pain, when I had to go visit the place of an aunt of mine, came up from the provinces. [She told me] "you've grown to be so beautiful," and things like that, and seemed to relate to me incredibly, so when I returned home, she said "What should I give you? It shouldn't be anything serious. I should give you something you really want to have," and she gave me the fifty scrolls of *Genji*, inside a box, *The Middle Captain*, *Tōgimi*, *Serikawa, Shirara, Asōzu*, and others in a bag. The happiness in my heart, when I took them with me and went home, was immense![171]

The dreams of the author do not only indicate the will and requests from different divinities; they also serve to broaden the socio-literary circle centred around the sharing of tales by women of her family and other unnamed correspondents. However, there is one fundamental difference between the claims for a socially relevant role and the need for tales to read. With the first of these two, there is again this preoccupation with denying an active wish or attempt to gain political or social prominence; she presents instead a self-framing as a malleable passive observant of her own life. In contrast, we are told she frequently requests and receives tales. This is hardly surprising, when we consider that the source of communal engagement she has presented to us as her chief motivation—the sharing, discussing, and interpreting of tales—has been framed as non-socially effective for the achievement of amorous and courtly patrons. And so, the appeals for divine mediation

[171] 「この源氏物語、一の巻よりしてみてな見せたまへ」と心のうちにいのる。親の太秦にこもりたまえるにも、ことごとなくこのことを申して、出でむままにこの物語見はてむと思へど見えず。いとくちをしく思ひ嘆かるるに、をばなる人の田舎より上りたる所にわたいたれば、「いとうつくしう生ひなりにけり」など、あはれがり、めづらしがりて、かへるに、「何をかたてまつらむ。まめまめしき物はまさなかりなむ。ゆかしくたまふなる物をたてまつらむ」とて、源氏の五十余巻、櫃に入りながら、在中将、とほぎみ、せり河、しらら、あさうづなどいふ物語ども、ふくろと入れて、得てかへる、心地のうれしさぞいみじきや(SNKZ, 297-298). See also Arntzen: 2014, 115.

of her younger self, must be represented in the same field, as something unrelated to the worldly desire for political or social advancement.

The disappointment of seeing rank and positions escape her and her father is very present in more than one section; the reader knows she is not devoid of ambition. But it becomes clear that Takasue's Daughter's makes no concessions for an imagined literary community that must serve as an alternative network to the one that supports established social success; it cannot be actioned to achieve this purpose. In this sense, to become completely defined by tale-reading requires conventional social failure. Or at the very least, to cast away and disregard the connections that would allow for it.

This is shown by a particular dream that establishes a link between her and the daughter of Fujiwara no Yukinari 藤原行成 (972–1027), a famous calligrapher. Even though the young lady is dead even before Takasue's Daughter ever comes to receive a sample of her handwriting, their bond is established through supernatural means, overruling both status and temporal frame. Not long after the lady's death, a stray cat appears at Takasue's house and immediately becomes inseparable to his daughters. The animal's true nature is subsequently revealed, not to the author herself, but to her older sister; it is the reincarnated Councillor [Yukinari]'s Daughter who has recognised their karmic connection.[172]

[172] It has been argued that the focus on the supernatural element of the cat in the occasion of a fire can be taken as an attempt on Takasue's Daughter to create a more *monogatari* inclined text, focused not on reality, but on the potential fantastical elements of her life, and as such, the text should not be read as an autobiography (Hideyo: 2000, 244). However, it seems evident other impact from this incident just was not

> [The sister said]: "In my dream I came beside this cat, 'I am the daughter of the Lord Chamberlain Major Counsellor, turned into this. A faint connection was created between us, since I was brought to pity by the restlessness of the younger lady [Takasue's Daughter], I am here [with you] for a little while, but this time I have been put amongst the vulgar [low-ranking servants,] a dreadfully sad situation.'" (…) When I suddenly woke up, I heard the meowing of the cat, and I was incredibly moved.[173]

The connection between the Counsellor's Daughter and Takasue's Daughter is initially established through her father, who is involved with Yukinari; a relation between officials, interacting in the public spaces of court office, and then handed down to her, much like the booklets received from the relative court attendant after the family's arrival to the Capital. However, by focusing on the karmic bond between the dead calligrapher and herself, and equating the death of the cat with that of her sister, she brings this connection back to this trans-hierarchical sphere, diminishing the importance of the extra-domestic official connection established between her father and Yukinari. This dream highlights the importance of an alternative territory to the original source of interrelation between the two women; the supernatural. In this way, dreams serve as a connection not merely to Buddha and *kami*, but also to members of the court sharing in Takasue's Daughter imagined community.

relevant to the point of the *nikki,* It has been pointed out that the telling of the author's return to the Capital is riddled with factual inaccuracies, where the plants and sights described owe more to Takasue's Daughter's familiarity with tale literature than with the actual itinerary her party followed (Itō: 1995).

[173] 「夢にこの猫のかたはらに来て、『おのれは侍従の大納言殿の御むすめの、かくなりたるなり。さるべき縁のいささかありて、この中の君のすずろにあはれと思ひ出でたまへば、ただしばしここにあるを、このごろ下種の中にありて、いみじうわびしきこと』(…)うちおどろきたれば、この猫の声にてありつるが、いみじくあはれねるなり」(SNKZ, 302). See also Arntzen: 2014, 120.

A final example of this use of supernatural elements tied to prophetic dreams is deployed while Takasue's Daughter is serving at court as a lady-in-waiting. Twice the prophetic dreams described in the text, urge her to pray to the Shining Divinity Amaterasu—"天照御神を念じ申せ" (SNKZ: 321)—in reference to the patron *kami* of the Imperial family (NKT). These divine promises pay off when she finds herself in the proximity of the imperial regalia;

> The *kami* Amaterasu, whom I pray to, resides in this very palace. Thinking I would like to take this occasion to visit her and prostrate myself before her, in the brightness of the moon of the Fourth Month, I very secretly went to visit. Hakase no Myōbu 博士の命婦 [the Palace Lady of the Doctor of Letters], an acquaintance of mine who was there [to guide me], looked like an awe-inspiringly old divinity in the dimness of the lantern; sitting there discussing expected things and all that, she did not appeared human, and I thought "doesn't she have the appearance of the goddess?"[174]

Just like in temple foundational stories (*engi* 縁起) and *setsuwa*, where a monk or old man can present himself as stand-in for a deity (Covaci: 2007, 144), so does here Hakase no Myōbu, an old woman, play the part of the *kami*. This could be called the climax of the Amaterasu dream plotline. Much like in the case of the cat, here, the text follows up a connection created through the official channels of courtly interaction—her own service at court, attained through the presence of friendly unnamed figures—and overrides it with a supernatural confirmation of her own personal bond with the imperial regalia and the Sun Deity. This is not based on any action taken by Takasue's Daughter or on the needs of

[174] わが念じ申す天照御神は内裏にぞおはしますなるかし、かかるをりに参りて拝みたてまつらむと思ひて、四月ばかりの月の明きに、いとしのびて参りたれば、博士の命婦は知るたよりあれば、灯籠の火のいとほのかなるに、あさましく老い神さびて、さすがにいとようものなど言ひゐたまるが、人ともおぼえず、神のあらわれたまへるかとおぼゆ(SNKZ: 331). See also Arntzen: 2014, 166.

any particularly powerful human figure, but rather it confirms the dreams about her own potential and divine preordainment. Her service at the palace is the tool to get her nearer to her bond to the divinity, and the diary disregards the human element behind it.

Pilgrimage, People, and Spaces in *Sarashina nikki:*

The past sections have shown how this diary presents an idea of courtliness divorced from the social effectiveness of romantic engagement, while still retaining its tale-like qualities, shifting the focus from the concatenation of poetic exchange and amorous expectations to the layering of literary reception, commentary and social association. At the same time, the presence of prophetic inspired dreams in *Sarashina nikki* overwrite the assumed social hierarchies articulated by other texts of a similar background by centring the author's relation to the court not on interpersonal connections, but on preordained divine will. And so, through her relation to Takasue, Minamoto no Sukemichi, and other correspondents, we have seen how the representation of interpersonal connections following a top-down model is challenged and subverted. These points of enquiry presented on the dairy, however, do not limit themselves to concrete individuals in the life of the writer. As I will elaborate on in the following sections, Takasue's Daughter also investigates alternative networks of cultural circulation and self-representation that bring into question the traditional power structures of the familial, societal, and geographical centres of based around the household, the court, and the Capital.

Pilgrimage, Self-Removal and Protest:

An extensive portion of *Sarashina nikki* is devoted to showcasing the author's movement, first from the Eastern provinces to the Capital, when she is but a teenager, and later on, while recounting the different pilgrimages (*monomōde* 物詣) on which she embarks as a mature woman. The inclusion of the author's journeys to different temples is not particularly original to this text, nor the practice exclusive to Takasue's Daughter; pilgrimage was a common undertaking for women of all backgrounds during the Heian period. We often read about them in *kana* diaries like *Kagerō nikki, Sarashina nikki,* and *Izumi Shikibu nikki,* as well as tales like *Genji* and *Eiga monogatari.* Ambros emphasises the fact that, in spite of the preference of aristocratic female pilgrims for particular temples—usually near the Capital—we should not consider these trips as occasions to establish a sense of community with fellow Buddhist devotees, but rather, very much as a way of reinforcing a sense of class and social difference, both during their progress and at their final destination (Ambros: 1997, 325). Some scholars also highlight the usefulness of the pilgrimage for women as a tool for self-removal from stressful situations and an unsavoury marital life, rather than as religiously-driven experiences (Yoshikai: 1993, 66); although, of course, all these aspects must have overlapped as incentives for religious retreat.

This said, there are some notable differences between Takasue's Daughter's approach to the significance of the religious excursion and the one found in similar narratives. *Sarashina nikki* devotes much more space to the description of these journeys than *Kagerō nikki* does, even though Michitsuna's Mother undertakes several more pilgrimages in her *nikki*'s pages. The contrast between aunt and niece's relation to this practice is rendered evident when

one discounts the pilgrimages the older poet embarks on accompanying her husband, Kaneie, or invited by other people, as opposed to the ones explicitly stated to be a personal choice (Itō: 1995, 226). In this sense, *Sarashina* makes much more of an incidence on the personally motivated nature of her journeys to Buddhist temples. Presenting a clear distance between the pilgrimage understood as a social event and her own lonesome pursue, even when she still counts with a retinue that supports her travels and guarantees her safety. Unlike *Kagerō nikki* or latter autobiographical *kana* narratives like the Nun Abutsu's 阿仏尼 (ca. 1222-1283) *Utatane* うたたね (early 13th century), Takasue's Daughter's religious outings are never stated to be motivated by heartbreak; rather, her visits to several religious centres seem often to depend on an exclusively personal wish for engagement with the divine. In this sense, the diary has more in common with Lady Nijō's—also known as Go-Fukakusa'in no Nijō 後深草院二条 (1258-after 1307)—*Towazugatari* とはずがたり (ca. 1306-1313), where the author's failure at court is transformed into a travel narrative; framing social failure in terms of religious renunciation (Laffin: 2005, 8-9). However, even in this text there is a clear connection between its author's abandonment of the world, and amorous upheaval, as Nijō's relationship with Retired Emperor Go Fukakusa 後深草院 (1243-1304) motivated her choice.

Perhaps because of Takasue's Daughter's arguably antisocial motivations, the author's conventionally praise-worthy desire for pilgrimage is referred to as being criticised by those around her several times. Her mother initially discounts her wishes based on the possible dangers of travel, but the most outright rejection of her choices comes when she disregards

the trappings of proper due deference to the emperor, by choosing to leave for Hatsuse temple 初瀬寺 on the day of the procession of the Great Purification (*Gokei* 御禊) in 1046. Whereas forced mobility beyond the centre strengthens the influence of imperial structures—as Terry Kawashima argues "exile fundamentally contributes to the production of the capital defined by its courtliness" outside of the physical space of the Capital (Kawashima: 2016, 64)—the self-othering of Takasue's Daughter not only marginalises her vis a vis the rest of the courtiers; it also denies imperial influence over her. She does, however, not portray her choice as universally maligned or unjustified;

> The gates were open wide, and from the people standing came amongst laughter "that seems to be someone going on a pilgrimage! From all the days and months there are in the world!," someone [amongst them], thinking what?, I wonder, said "what is the worth of enriching one's eyes for a moment? Showing such great singlemindedness, this looks like a person who surely will see the favour of the buddhas. Perhaps it is no good. We should make up our mind to do precisely this, not see the sights." So there is one person who can speak seriously.[175]

The search for enlightenment, therefore, is considered to over-stage the power of imperial pageantry, and so those criticising her for this untimely trip are ultimately in the wrong. Again, just like *Towazugatari* turns a failed court career into a tale about religious awakening, *Sarashina nikki* separates its author from the need of imperial validation. At the same time, by describing the reaction of those around her in such a public occasion as the imperial procession, the author and ultimately her readers are directly privy to the reaction of members outside of the direct ambit of her household. Even though her

[175] 門広うおしあけて、人々立てるが「あれは物詣人なめりな。月日しもこそ世に多かれ」と笑ふ中に、いかなる心ある人にか、「一時が目をこやして何にかはせむ。いみじくおぼし立ちて、仏の恩徳かならず見たまふべき人にこそあめれ。よしなしかし。物見で、かうこそ思ひ立つべかりけれ」とまめやかにいふ人一人ぞある(SNKZ: 342). See also Arntzen: 2014, 184.

justification is Buddhist in nature, the ultimate confirmation of the righteousness of her choice does not come here from a sign in a dream, as we have seen in other points of the diary; rather, it comes from an anonymous public voice.

Of course, *Sarashina nikki* is not the first *kana* text that presents physical removal from the Capital as a way to contrasts its main character with the politico-cultural centre of the court. *Genji* and *Ise monogatari,* have been read as denunciations of the established order, as their protagonists' banishments are motivated by their engagement with Fujiwara women promised to an emperor, who would have been rendered taboo to them (Schalow: 2007, 38-39). *Ise monogatari* would have been compiled and circulated by politically dissatisfied members of the Ariwara, Ki, and Minamoto clans and would remain as a bastion of anti-Fujiwara sentiment for several centuries (Marra: 1991, 35). The *Genji monogatari E awase* chapter, depicts the Shining Prince's exile in Suma as following the same pattern as *Taketori monogatari*'s 竹取物語 Princess Kaguya's かぐや姫 expulsion from the moon, and *Ise monogatari*'s Ariwara no Narihira's flight to the Eastern Provinces; in this way it presented a critique of the power structure at the court through the popular trope of the nobleman's exile (Stockdale: 2015, 59-61). The transgressive sexual politics presented by both of these texts also received literary responses from elements within the political centre; *Ichijō sesshō gyoshū* answers these transgressions with tales of sexual escapades that follow a Fujiwara supported model, where high-ranking men engage only with women of—to them—negligible social position and ladies-in-waiting (Mostow: 2004, 19).

Sarashina nikki does—as we have seen—abundantly draws from these sources, and it would be inadequate to leave them completely out of consideration when discussing self-removal from the Capital and engagement with the periphery as a form of defiance. However, Takasue's Daughter's opposition to the political and cultural centre is quite different in nature to these examples. The diary does contain an element of aggravation caused by the lack of political and social progress of its author, but it does not present a sense of aesthetic superiority to the cultural centre; rather, it presents a wish for worldly renunciation. Her ostracism is debatably the result of an act of politico-sexual transgression, if we consider a disinterest in the fulfilment of the acceptable wife role as such. However, this would up to a point frame almost every Heian pilgrimage motivated by marital uncertainty in this same light, which seems a stretch. Perhaps the greatest difference between these texts centred around exile and *Sarashina nikki* is Takasue's Daughter's ambiguous relation to her self-imposed evasion from the Capital, and the absence of a state of grace from whence to fall. There is no lost position of superiority in this diary, merely the longing for one.

However, self-removal from the centre as a religious activity by itself, can only be framed as an act of sacrifice or penance. In this sense, it is ultimately undesirable and its acceptance must be considered a show of fortitude. And yet, Takasue's Daughter does not speak of what she leaves behind in particularly flattering terms. The Capital is mostly referred to in positive terms while the author, as a young girl longs for it. It will be remembered that it is in terms of greater availability of *monogatari* that the centrality of the Capital is first brought into focus by the young Takasue's Daughter, who wishes to go

"where there are so many tales." However, soon she realises, the court is not the only source of texts. In fact, her family is uncapable to get her the manuscripts of all *Tale of Genji* books she so wished to attain once she moved to Heian-kyō, as they are not familiar enough with the city yet—of course, proximity to a closed cultural centre is not enough when one is not granted access to it. It is her aunt "come down from the provinces"—おばなる人の田舎より上りたる所 (SNKZ: 298)—who will make her a gift of the more than 50 scrolls.

Sarashina nikki departs slightly from the other diaries discussed up to this point in this dissertation, where the centrality of Heian-kyō and the imperial palace are assumed to be so natural they do not need to be asserted in any way. The other *kana* works discussed so far remain throughout in a completely court-centric sphere, and they never put into question the place of the Capital as the source of all significant social relations. Takasue's Daughter is not the first *nikki* author to bring forth marginal elements in her text, but the way in which she presents them—as was her way of dealing with pilgrimage—does suppose a departure from the norm.

When I mention *Sarashina nikki*'s atypical way of referring to the periphery, I am not comparing it only to the other two *kana nikki* I have discussed in previous chapters. *Makura no sōshi*, also famously mentions people of the lower-classes at several points throughout its text, but it tends to do so in extremely disparaging terms, or always makes sure to emphasize the aesthetico-moral superiority of its author over them. It will be remembered

that in a previous chapter I mentioned the lack of distinction between "moral and social graces" of the ladies-in-waiting who could claim to serve a proper empress.[176] In the same vein, in the way Sei Shōnagon frames the lower classes, there does not seem to exist much of a difference between access to a proper understanding of aesthetic appreciation—which she herself possesses—and social and moral superiority. The language used to describe commoners in *Makura no sōshi*, even in the instances showing them in a positive light, is precisely intended to highlight this separation between its author, a courtly arbiter of elegance, and the non-courtly masses (Angles: 2001, 60-61). A similar approach can be perceived in an earlier work, *Tosa nikki*:

> In what the captain says, there is something like 'by black birds white waves approach.' These words are nothing special, but the way in which they are said catches the ear. Since these words do not match someone of his status, they seem jarring[177]

Even though a certain poetic tendency may arise naturally from the speech of people of every station, proper *waka* composition requires an education in diction and literacy, as well as the social status associated with them (Heldt: 2017, 459). When the ferryman seems to demonstrate a natural ability to put words together in an aesthetically pleasing way, we are reminded of the uncanniness of the situation. The apparently positive framing of the man only reinforces the essentialised aesthetico-moral superiority of the court.

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[176] See note 82, on page 116.

[177] 梶取のいふやう、「黒鳥のもとに、白き波を寄す」とぞいふ。このことば、何とにはなけれども、ものいふやうにぞ聞こえたる。人の程にあはねば、とがむるなり (SNKZ: 36). See also McCullough: 1985, 278. The literal expression used to describe the effect of the captain's words is "they do not match such a man."

Sarashina nikki, however, seems to lack these other texts' anxiety to establish its author above the inhabitants of the world "below the clouds," and consistently places the periphery and the non-aristocratic in a place of empathy. It is worth remembering that from the first lines of the text, she tries to portray herself as an outsider to the Heian-kyō world, a bumpkin raised beyond the edge of the Eastern Road (Itō: 1989, 47), essentially different even from her own family members. In actuality, she only spent a total of three years in Kazusa 上総—modern Chiba—(Ikeda: 1989, 71); a negligible time period in a presumably long life. And so, if an effort is made to depict outsiders to the court, it is not to highlight the author's courtliness, or the superiority of court culture. Rather, this inherent distinction is put to question, and a tone of empathy and, even longing, for the extra-Heian-kyō permeates her descriptions.

A particularly humorous example of her disregard for this supposed moral and social superiority can be found on her description of her return to the Capital from one of her pilgrimages. After expressing fear at her pass through the bandit infested Kurikoma 栗駒, the party decides to spend the night at a humble (*gesu* 下衆) hut, where the party's Capitaline origin seems to be little comfort for their hosts:

> That night too, I did not sleep at all. There was a man pacing around in and out, and when the women of the house asked "why are you walking around like that for?" thinking we were asleep, he said "we are lodging people whose intentions we don't know, they could do away with the cooking pot, and, what if they were to do this? I thought. So I'm walking around instead of sleeping." When we heard this, it was quite amusing, in a scary way.[178]

[178] その夜も寝も寝ず、このをのこ出で入りし歩くを、奥の方なる女ども、「などかくし歩かるるぞ」と問ふなれば、「いなや、心も知らぬ人を宿したてまつりて、釜はしもひきぬかれなば、い

In these lines, after presenting her own apprehensions about confronting the potentially dangerous world outside of the house and the court, Takasue's Daughter makes clear that this fear produced by strangers is not a prerogative of the supposedly more civilised inhabitants of the city, but rather, it is derived from an encounter with the unpredictable. Rather than portraying the commoners in a dehumanising way, the author records the way in which the worries of the man of the house mirror her own's. A difference exists between them, but rather than based on a hierarchical separation, it is rather horizontal in nature, with the provincial hut-dwellers mistrusting their guests as much as they are mistrusted by them. This short passage could be seen as another example of Takasue's Daughter's emphasis on the usefulness of empathy to establish meaningful connections with people, whether inside or outside one's own circle, much in the way in which *monogatari* create them.

As Aileen Gatten states, "the character type of the outsider is attractive to the reader because they get to remain safely within society while sampling beyond the boundary they cannot or will not cross" (Gatten: 1999, 109-110). Takasue's Daughter wants nothing more than to cross this boundary and frame herself in terms of her otherness, and partially she succeeds by removing herself from the geographical and cultural centre represented by Heian-kyō by prioritising pilgrimages over propriety. However, the temples she visits still stand very much within the hierarchical network built around the Capital. Maybe by

かにすべきぞと思ひて、え寝で、まはり歩くぞかし」と、寝たると思ひていふ、聞くに、いとむくむくしくをかし(SNKZ: 344). See also Arntzen: 2014, 187.

framing herself as a potential danger in the eyes of these lowly commoners, she hints to a more "essential" removal. By this, I want to refer here to a removal of her *mi* 身 in the sense of self defined "in terms of its location within the social and the public spheres" (Pandey: 2007, 112). There is no essence per se to be removed, but rather, a network of social relation capable of recontextualising the author. In a way, as placing her in the same category of the other, Takasue's Daughter would become for her readers this very outsider to sympathise with.

Embracing the Other:

As we have just seen, the diary shows a preoccupation with certain elements of the Capital's geographical periphery and those who inhabit it that presents them as positive and worthy. However Takasue's Daughter's defines herself through a sense, not only of alterity from the centre, but also, ultimately of liminality. For this reason, the diary is filled with figures whose liminal character is informed by questions of gender and social relevance, rather than matters of location; and so, these are groups that can be found at different points of intersection with the Heian-kyō socio-cultural centre. Some of these, as is the case of nuns, are arguably still occupying effective social and financial roles. After all, women—including lay ones—were the chief consumers of Buddhist culture outside of the monastery (Meeks: 2010, 5). However, the donning of monastic robes involved, in theory, at least, a marginalisation from the roles of wife, mother and administrator that were the options for a woman in the late Heian's increasingly patriarchal and household-oriented mode of familial organisation (Yoshie: 2005, 445).

In this final section, I will also discuss women whose other-ness is derived from a greater access to mobility than the normal aristocratic woman would have. Kawashima, in her analysis of *Yamato monogatari,* asserts the ability of aristocratic women to remain stationary as an empowering paradigm, whereas female mobility can only be read as a positive when the woman undertaking it still enjoys a status that would allow her not to be (Kawashima: 2016, 55). None of the women I will address in the final section can be truly said to enjoy this prerogative, but their position is not necessarily one of disempowerment; relocation, too, can offer possibilities denied to the static women of the Capital. I will include in this examination, not only the itinerary performers Takasue's Daughter seems to be so fond of, but also the fictitious female figures presented throughout her text; namely, Princess Takeshiba 竹芝姫, whose story she hears while returning to the Capital, and the two women in *Genji monogatari* she found the most impactful; Yūgao 夕顔 and Ukifune.

Takasue's Daughter's Nuns:

Heian women counted with one option for religiously-motivated removal from everyday public and domestic life, other than pilgrimage; nunhood. The taking of the tonsure could be performed in diverse ways, and involved an array of complex social signifiers. Courtiers of both sexes would normally take the tonsure in old age, regardless of their marital status, in hope of increasing their possibilities of attaining salvation, or to avoid death in case of a potentially fatal illness (Meeks: 2010, 7). Much in the same way I have described *nyōbō* as

performing a special type of womanhood, Heian and Kamakura period nuns (*ama* 尼) also present a clear deviation from standard modes of aristocratic feminine behaviour. Unlike the conflicting framings of ladies-in-waiting's ambiguous positionality, their denial of the typical trappings of femininity was perceived in generally positive terms, as it presupposed a retirement from worldly matters. The proper definition, duration, and definitiveness of the category of *nun* is a complicated one, as there are examples, like the latter Nun Abutsu, who would yet marry and have children, even after having taken the tonsure (Wallace: 1988, 392). Lay monks and nuns could very easily take the step by shaving their heads—or in the case of women, often just cutting their hair above their shoulders—and retire to prayer and sutra reading and copying in the comfort of their own houses. In this way, the distinction between laity and tonsure becomes somewhat diffuse, and not necessarily a permanent state.

That said, by shaving their heads and donning austere robes, women were able to "destabilize external markers of gender," becoming, in theory, undistinguishable from monks (Meeks: 2010, 31). And yet, if nuns at monasteries could hope to be seen in more equal terms to their male counterparts, and used more gender-neutral appellatives like *bō* 房—"cloistered"—aristocratic nuns who stayed at home seemed to retain greater marks of femininity (Meeks: 2010, 33). It is no wonder, as the way of occupying and performing space within a house was gendered enough that Buddhist reclusion for a woman had the potential of presenting very little difference with the type of reclusion expected of a proper lady. Like many other offices and social roles played by women, *ama* seem to steadily become separated from officiality as the Heian period progresses. Even though monks

were initially ordained under imperial authority, women were excluded from official religious services in the 8th century, and their tonsure became restricted (Kenji: 2001, 376-377). Changes in land division, marriage, and inheritance practices affected women's financial security, and the increasing limitations to their influence directed women towards nunhood, pilgrimages, and travel writing (Laffin: 2013, 7). Maybe *Towazugatari,* as has been stated before, is the best example of such a process. In many instances, the tonsure could be taken as a safeguard by women who found herself in an attempt to alleviate their physical or financial vulnerability (Gatten: 1999, 98).

As I mentioned a few pages back, Takasue intended for his daughter to administer their household after his wife became a nun, but the diary also tells us that the mother remained in the same house after taking vows. That is, she would still occupy the same space, but would symbolically strip herself from the ability to manage secular business. For this reason, it would be a mistake to consider nunhood necessarily as an act compelled by unworldly desires and removed from the trappings of lay society. It is true it was common to become a nun after a woman reached a certain age, but at the same time, an untimely performance of the tonsure, and by proxy the threat of the self-removal from familial duties and spousal connections had the potential to be powerfully disruptive. The reclusion in a temple preceding the abandonment of the secular world could oftentimes serve as a tool for negotiation with a neglectful husband or lover, or the ultimate response to such an abandonment (Laffin: 2013, 61). Famous examples of this practice are to be found in Michitsuna's Mother's response to the particularly tense marital crisis I described in my discussion of *Kagerō nikki*, or the entirety of Nun Abutsu's *Utatane.* In works like these two,

there is a sense of the gravity and oftentimes tragedy behind the decision to perform this act; the threat of nunhood may serve as an ultimatum, but actual self-removal may ultimately come across not so much as an exertion of power, as an acceptance of defeat. It is in this vein in which *Genji*'s second chapter, *The Broom Tree* (*Hahakigi* 帚木) discusses women who take this step, driven by amorous turmoil;

> When she takes her hand to her forelocks and is dispirited by their lack, how her brow furrows. Even though she hides them, as the tears flow conspicuously, time and again, she cannot bear her thoughts. And with all these many apparent grievances, even the Buddha will easily see the murk in her heart. I think even more than floating adrift [in the lay world,] tainted by impurity, [this kind of woman] in turn must wander down the path of evil [rebirth].[179]

In *Sarashina* nikki, however, the lack of a husband-like figure or a patron and the interchangeability of the term "nun" referring to all these women, leaves open a space for non-hierarchical social and literary circulation. This is very much the way in which the religious community is introduced in the diary; regardless of how much of the actual social practice, at the time or in the following centuries, it may reflect. Takasue's Daughter's attraction to nuns—represented by a similar number of exchanges than her descriptions of women entertainers—comes hand in hand with a disinterest and a rejection of familial roles. Although a clear-cut one per one equivalence cannot be made here—by any means other than speculation—the author's interest in *asobi* seems to relate to a rejection of the hierarchical emperor-centric court model in the same way in which her fascination for nuns

[179] みづから額髪をかきさぐりて、あへなく心細ければ、うちひそみぬかし。忍ぶれど涙こぼれそめぬれば、をりをいごとにえ念じえず、悔しきことも多かめるに、仏もなかなか心ぎたなしと見たまひつべし。濁りにしめるほどよりも、なま浮かびにては、かへりて悪しき道にも漂ひぬべくぞおぼゆる (SNKZ: 67). See also Tyler: 2001, 26.

shows a disinterest for the hierarchical structure and duties of the household. I will talk about her relationship with the figure of the female entertainer a bit further down.

Four poetic exchanges with nuns appear throughout the text, almost as an indistinct presence blending into one another, somewhat punctuating the narration (An: 1995, 198); always initiated by the author. Although some other nuns appear in the text with a more defined identity—such as the author's mother, and her late sister's wetnurse, who is also referred to as "*ama*"—in becoming nuns, they turn within the text itself into vague figures, whose compositions appear somewhat unconnected to the rest of the secular preoccupations shown in the text. In this sense, the Buddhist concerns of the author seem to run parallel to her social ones, offering an alternative to an unwelcoming world. The framing of these women in the diary often appears neutral, but it is never negative; we do not see in *Sarashina nikki* this utilisation of the tonsure as a possible tool for negotiation or any other worldly aspects of it. At the same time, it would be mistaken to find the seed of these exchanges in a desire for Buddhist salvation, as three out of this poems do not seem very concerned with religious matters at all.[180]

As I mentioned in my first chapter, *Kagerō nikki* also includes a conversation with a nun; a friend of the author who has taken the tonsure after her husband has become a monk. No

[180] In Arntzen's view the exchanges with nuns "undercut the socially dominant view of religious practice that preoccupies the retrospective narrative passages," more fixated with social advancement than with actual renunciation and enlightenment (Arntzen: 2014, 25). While I do not disagree with this view, I do not believe the preoccupation with salvation is necessarily the main concern of the conversations with nuns in the diary, as her relation to the divine both as a source of comfort and of promises of social betterment seems to be engaged through the act of dreaming.

doubt the poems exchanged between the *Sarashina nikki* author and other women after the death of her sister very much bring to mind the grieving verses that Michitsuna's Mother shared with other ladies after the death of her mother. It is in this context, it will be remembered, that she commiserated with the newly-widowed consort Tōshi and this unnamed tonsured friend.[181] It is true the works of both niece and aunt present their share of sorrowful poems to and from women, but *Sarashina nikki*'s poems to nuns cannot be contextualised thematically in this same way. In contrast to the earlier diary, Takasue's Daughter never makes nunhood appear as a source of lamentation. Michitsuna's Mother expresses her sadness at this occasion, and her letter to her friend is ultimately a show of her solidarity with another woman who is also presupposed to be in a position of helplessness; for the younger woman, on the contrary, the state of nunhood appears either as neutral or as a source of solace. The commoner outside of the Capital has been presented as participating of the same type of feelings as Takasue's Daughter herself, denying the aesthetico-moral superiority other Heian texts granted to the members of the aristocracy. In a similar way, the otherness of the nun—that is, her removal from the household-sanctioned roles of mother/wife and administrator—is acknowledged, but presented as an equally desirable status. Clearly, for Takasue's Daughter, it is a form of being that is deserving of greater degree of observation and record than her own domestic roles.

[181] See chapter 1, pages 75-76.

Asobi, *Kami*, and Mobile Women:

My final example of Takasue's Daughter preoccupation with courtly "others" can be found in her three descriptions of encounters with *asobi* 遊女, female entertainers, presented throughout the diary. These women were providers of musical entertainment, dance, and sexual services; their social status by the 11th century is uncertain (Goodwin: 2000, 329), but we do know they led itinerant lives, around hubs of travel such as ports, roads, bridges, etc. (Pigeot: 1998, 67). Even though they are described as "beggars and thieves" in the 10th century *nikki* of a nobleman, it is worth remembering that elite attitudes towards itinerant quasi-religious figures may portray more of a desire to marginalise than an accurate representation of their social significance in other ambits (Meeks: 2011, 215-216). In this sense, it is no wonder the author feels drawn to creatures whose designated space not only seems to be liminal by nature, but which also finds a domain of action somehow uncontrolled by the structures of the court and the household; Itō goes as far as to say that her description of the three dancers described in the first part of the diary, as she returns to the Capital is not only the core of the travel section, but presents these women as the deuteragonist of the story, as a reflection of a protagonist who sees herself as completely separate from her fellow aristocrats (Itō: 1989, 50).

We can very easily contemplate these figures in light of the fictional women who so much preoccupy the author for the other sections of the work. *Asobi* are not the only type of women whose mobility and marginality are catalogued in the diary; An Jonsuku, includes in his description of the types of women portrayed by *Sarashina nikki* a category of "women who carry out their will" (An: 1995, 307-310). This one is comprised solely of the legendary

Princess Takeshiba, whose story the author is told during this same return to Heian-kyō were she faces *asobi* for the first time. In this legend, the princess, after hearing a servant man sing a song about his homeland, asks to be taken there with him, and in spite of her parents efforts to retrieve her, decides to remain in Musashi 武蔵, where her palace later becomes a temple.

This tale seems to follow a pattern common to a different legend about a *kami* who, according to *Genpei seisuiki* 源平盛衰記 (late 12th century), also left the Capital and later became a local goddess in the province of Mutsu, through a process that hits most of the same beats.[182] Terry Kawashima understands this foundational story as that of an exilic deity; a figure who functions within the Capital's cultural matrix, and whose exclusion merely reinforces the power of the court (Kawashima: 2016, 90). However, there is no indication either of these two women may not just had been local deities whose origin was aggrandised by giving it a Capitaline connection. In any case, there is an understanding of a power that either negates or works without relying the one legitimised by the emperor and the court. It is true this power is presented as working *in contrast* to the imperial centre—and so, it is not quite completely independent. In a similar way, the presence of the Takeshiba character in *Sarashina nikki* is very telling as an example of the creation of potential cultural and religious centres away from the Capital, by a figure who is supposed

[182] "This is the daughter of the Road God of Izumo Avenue (…) west of the Kamo River in the Capital. She was raised with great respect and care, with the intent that she would be matched with a good husband, but she married a merchant and was disowned by her parents and chased down to this province. The people here regarded her with awe and worship" (Kawashima: 2016, 89).

to have rejected her place in the Heian-kyō hierarchy, but whose origin very much plays a role in her newly-acquired power.

Two other figures are mentioned in the diary as the type of tale-like character the young author looks up to, following a very similar model. It has been pointed out repeatedly by different scholars how peculiar it is that Takasue's Daughter would choose to fantasise with becoming like the ladies Yūgao and Ukifune—two characters taken from her beloved *Genji monogatari*—and it has long been speculated what the meaning of this particular choice is for the author's self-framing.[183] Their similarity to princess Takeshiba is fairly evident, as all three are fictitious characters who make active choices and are more mobile than the average woman. Yūgao not only runs away from her lover Tō no Chūjo 頭中将, but she is the one to approach Genji, rather than wait for his advances. Ukifune, on her part, rejects the advances of both Kaoru 薫 and Niou 匂, and chooses to undisclosed her location and take the tonsure. Both of the circumstances surrounding these two ladies would also be taken as a model to describe another autobiographical author at a later time, the Nun Abutsu and her already mentioned *Utatane*; both due to her mobility and also probably due to their lower social rank among the other potential romantic partners in this *monogatari* (Laffin: 2013, 76).

[183] Noguchi considers her identification with both ladies is due to a lack of knowledge of the original text (Noguchi: 1985, 10), whereas Mostow sees it as a revisionary misreading (Mostow: 2000, 48). Sarra also notes Ukifune's mobility and a more extensive textual production than other female characters in the tale (Sarra: 1999, 138); Wallace points out to the sense of separation, lack of parental support and "childishness" shared by all three women (Wallace: 2005, 220-221); Arntzen understands the passage as a subtle declaration of youthful foolishness by the author as she looks back to her past self, while pointing to a critique of romantic tropes in *Genji monogatari* itself (Arntzen: 2014, 67-69).

In this sense, All these three fictitious characters align with Takasue's Daughter's interest in mobile female figures, which extends to the *asobi.* Haraoka argues for these reason that female entertainers in *Sarashina nikki* would play a role in between the author's everyday interactions with other members of normal society and her spiritual exchanges with the divine, as they are seen in her dreams and dream-like scenes, creating a bridge between the world of tales and that of spirituality and salvation (Haraoka: 1996, 183).[184] In contrast to Haraoka's argument, Pigeot (1998: 70-71) argues that, in spite of Takasue's Daughter's romantic notions, *asobi* and their charms were considered firmly part of the ordinary world by *Sarashina nikki* and other contemporary texts, and it is not until after the 12th century when they become a matter of concern for Buddhist theology.

I do believe such a link exists between tale-writing and these itinerant female performers, but I would argue it can be found in the integration of tales and poetics in the everyday world, rather than in the supernatural elements of the diary. If *waka* functions as a tool that maps the cultural landscape of the court—while at the same time symbolically asserting a politico-aesthetic geographical hierarchy with Heian-kyō at its centre (Kawashima: 2016, 60)—the mobile poet serves as its cartographer. In this way, even though rootlessness—as in the case of the *asobi*—or extraordinary mobility—as the examples of Ukifune or Princess Takeshiba—may deprive an individual from the performance of a role in the hierarchical structure of Heian-kyō, they also offer the writer

[184] I would argue, however, that if there is a liminal element bridging the realms of tales and salvation in the diary it is not just the presence of these tale-like women, but rather the author's engagement with death. After all, many of the defining events in the diary are the deaths of women related to Takasue's Daughter through emotional and literary bonds; her nurse, her sister, and finally Yukinari's Daughter.

the opportunity to shape both future poetic practice, and the reception of the previous *waka* mapping.[185] Of course, a connection with the performance of courtly networks must still be maintained, as the poet requires an audience and a way of transmission that is still integrated within the world of the Capital, but this normalisation does not need to take place during the poet's life. In a similar way, the *monogatari* writer, or the travel diarist, receives their legitimacy to authorise, by contextualising poems within an understanding of space and its possibilities for emotional charge.[186]

Even though her brief comment on her girlish fantasies about these fictitious women is ambiguous enough to be open to a thousand different interpretations, it is no less true that these are characters that break away from the control of high-ranking male figures, and reject the trope embodied by this relationship; Yūgao, by running away, and Ukifune, through attempted suicide and later nunhood.[187] There is in both of them, therefore, little interest being shown in the creation of a sense of identity through the constitution of a husband-wife pair, even while the narrator highlights once again the ubiquity of tales—including romantic stories—in her life. Whether if it is the endings of these storylines that

[185] This had long been in Heian times—and would continue to be—the prerogative of the exile; Lady Nijō in her pilgrimages in the Eastern provinces, followed the poetic map set out by the poet monk Saigyō 西行 (1118-1190), who was—as the latter lady also would—following in the steps of Ariwara no Narihira's Azuma *kudari* 東下り (Marra: 1991, 121-122), each of them adding a new layer of poetic reference to each location.

[186] Even though this section of the diary does not relate to *asobi*, the record of the author's stay in Higashiyama 東山, with its description of the environment and its potentially erotically charged poems (Arntzen: 2014, 31) with a lover or friend fits within this understanding of the literary (re)construction of both the emotional and physical landscape of a given place by an author, as the poems cover both the passing of the seasons and feelings of intimacy and nostalgia. On the *monogatari*-ness of this passage, see Itō: 1995, 66-102 and Arntzen: 2014, 26-31.

[187] It has been suggested suicide should be considered, much as nunhood, can often present the only possible expression of female agency for Heian women in circumstances of powerlessness (Laffin: 2013, 213). While not denying the personally negotiatory nature of these acts, considerations about them should not disregard the deployment and acceptance of *kami* and buddhas' intervention as an external agent being presented by women who seek them (Pandey: 2018, 18).

attracts our author, or the process to get to them, it is the ability to both be desirable and to escape from romantic engagement with men that link these stories together. In addition, perambulation potentially has the power to create new smaller cultural and literary centres, as the legend of Princess Takeshiba seems to refer to. It is in this sense in which a connection can be found between the roles of the itinerant performers and the tale figures Takasue's Daughter is so fond of that does not necessarily go through the lens of Buddhist enlightenment.

Conclusion:

Maybe for Takasue's Daughter there is no difference between the world of reality and that of *monogatari* in terms of actual events; rather, it is the framing of those events, and the way in which they are portrayed once penned down that turn them into worthy of being retold. The author uses tales to structure this description of her life, because that is the language she is the most comfortable in employing. It has often been said that the diary presents as a moral the need to reject these tales that have costed her the possibility for social mobility or the achievement of Buddhist salvation (Wallace: 2005, 191)—She says "long ago, if I had not dedicated my heart only to good-for-nothing tales and poems, and had practiced my devotions day and night, would I been spared this life, so much like a bad dream?"— [188] and yet, much of the diary is devoted to her acquisition of *monogatari* and her relationship to them. Tales create the sense of purpose of the Takasue's Daughter

[188] 昔より、よしなき物語、歌のことをのみこころにしめで、夜昼思ひて、おこなひをせましかば、いとかかる夢の世をば見ずもやあらまし (SNKZ:357). See also Arntzen: 2014, 205.

described in the pages of this *nikki* in the same way than marriage to Kaneie builds Michitsuna's Mother's circumstances in *Kagerō nikki.*

Both life and tales might have proved disappointing, but there is no rejection of their amalgamation in the text. Even when considering the elements that reflect the sorrowful end of the author's life, the narrator just seems to have been too narrow in her reading and her expectations of what a tale-like life involves. If we take the title, like Arntzen and Itō do, to have been chosen by Takasue's daughter in reference to the abandoned crone of Obasuteyama 姨捨山,[189] it is hard not to perceive an awareness of the ironic fulfilment of the author's youthful longings. The narrator did end her days isolated from the world, visited only rarely by a man, as she tells us she wished. But this was not as a second Ukifune or a Yūgao, taken away from her previous unsatisfactory life; it is as an old widow that she finds herself apart from society, unexpectedly visited by her nephew. The reproduction of tale character archetypes in the real world is the issue, not the use of tales to model relationships between humans.

At the same time, tales play a fundamental role in one of the main triumphs of the diary; the subsuming of hierarchical structures, both within the domestic and courtly sphere, into social, literary, and religious equalising networks; these being the circulation of *monogatari* outside of the context of the salons, the liminal female communities of nuns and *asobi*, the

[189]"We find it very difficult to imagine anyone other than the author coming up with such a subtle and allusive title. Moreover, the implication of the title, "here is the diary of an old widowed woman who was consoled only by the moon," is too self-deprecating and dark to have been invented by a later redactor" (Arntzen: 2014, 82-83).

moral equation of aristocrats and commoners, and the supernatural will of *kami* and Buddhas as expressed through prophetic dreams. While not completely extricating herself from the imperial and household-centric modes of self-expression granted to her by the possibilities of *nikki* and *monogatari* writing, Takasue's Daughter explores in this way different methods of destabilising the source of her legitimacy as a producer of texts. By introducing all these different foci in the type of work Michitsuna's Mother and Izumi Shikibu had produced before her time, for the first time in a *kana nikki*, we encounter a willingness to question how a Heian woman can (re)present herself outside of the established relations of patronage and marriage.

Final Thoughts:

In my first chapter I pointed out how the classification of a text—be it written or oral—in the Heian court as either official or unofficial was not so much decided through its content or style, but by how said text was performed, and how this performance was judged to be appropriate to certain circumstances. In this sense, *nikki* themselves are as much a re-contextualisation of previously performed text, as the reworkings of the narration presented in each of these memoirs in later anthologies, collections, and stories. *Nikki*, therefore, always take part in a double presentation; as, on the one hand, they are the record of a finite, temporally-limited artistic execution—poetic or otherwise—while acting, on the other hand, as a new, text-creating performance of a socio-literary role. These texts are in themselves an act of self-reception. Going back to Butler,

> I narrate, and I bind myself as I narrate, give an account of myself, offer an account to an other in the form of a story that might well work to summarize how and why I am. But my effort at self-summarization fails, and fails necessarily, when the "I" who is introduced in the opening line as a narrative voice cannot give an account of how it became an "I" who might narrate itself or this story in particular. And as I make a sequence and link one event with another, offering motivations to illuminate the bridge, making patterns clear, identifying certain events or moments of recognition as pivotal, even marking certain recurring patterns as fundamental, I do not merely communicate something about my past, though that is doubtless part of what I do. I also enact the self I am trying to describe; the narrative "I" is reconstituted at every moment it is invoked in the narrative itself. That invocation is, paradoxically, a performative and non-narrative act, even as it functions as the fulcrum for narrative itself. I am, in other words, doing something with that "I"—elaborating and positioning it in relation to a real or imagined audience—which is something other than telling a story about it, even though "telling" remains part of what I do (Butler: 2005, 65-66).

The diaries I have discussed do not only try to position their authors in relation to the rest of the world; they also very much formulate that world around them as an audience and a literary counterpart, and expose how they are articulated as such in the author's perception; through the process of self-justification and self-situation expressed in the

pages of their memoirs, social expectations, classifications, and mediations as envisioned by these middle-ranking female writers are revealed.

I have first presented a domestic-centric/court-centric dichotomy through Michitsuna's Mother's emphasis on her role as a woman of the house and the varied ways in which her poetry was framed—first in her diary, and later on in the imperial anthologies closer to her time. Through the re-contextualisation of her memoir, we observed two conflicting views on the role of the spaces related to the household—formulated as the unofficial *ke* sphere—in the public and semi-public realm of the *hare* court. *Kagerō nikki* offers us an integrated approach to domestic and extra-domestic roles, where different aspects of her interactions with members of her household and others outside of it support members of her family inside and outside the realm of the house and grant her a socially effective role. In this sense, she participates of the trends of texts focusing on high-ranking members of the Fujiwara family as instigators of cultural, social, and literary circulation and creation.

However, in the anthologies reproducing her oeuvre, this conceptualisation of productive domestic spaces, participatory of public presentation is rendered redundant, under a model where there is no space for negotiation or the claim to power wielded by the inferior part in a relation of social and literary dependence, other than merely the acquiescence of the powerful on the face of beautiful artistic expression. In other words, only as long as the inferior's ability to effect the world beyond—or through—the relationship with a superior reinforces the position of superiority of the higher-ranking member of the two correspondents. The grace shown by the patron/husband/lover establishes them as the

arbiter of elegance. So is here Kaneie, as the persona of Michitsuna's Mother is reduced to a simplistic definition of abandoned wife/lover. A sort of a pyrrhic victory may be recognised here; in contrast to the *Shūishū*'s portrait of the author as a courtly *hare* poet, the historical image of this self-defined domestic poet very much ended being tied to the figure of Kaneie in the *Goshūishū* and later *chokusenshū*. She appears depicted not as a political asset, however, but as a non-effective tragic figure. Here we see juxtaposed in the diary and the anthologies two articulations of domestic/non-domestic spaces, where the poetry tied to marital dynamics serves to reassert and defend the poet's role as a source of cultural capital, and one where this negotiation is found irrelevant to be preserved.

Hare and *ke,* as literary spaces are defined by cultural performance—literary or not—being placed in the appropriate physical and social space, dominated by the imperial sphere. In this sense, Michitsuna's Mother's poetic production as recorded in imperial collections can be easily used to illustrate such a distinction between a productive public realm that foregoes domestic spaces as socially effective, on the one hand, and the awareness of the set of domestic literary relations meant to support a high-ranking courtier's cultural capital, on the other one. However, as we have seen, the circulation of texts, and their definition as socially impactful for the Heian aristocratic society is not merely based on this dichotomy, as this is not the only possible division between networks of circulation understood by their participants. Considering solely the value of *ke*-centric and *hare*-centric textual circulation means disregarding other active socio-literary modes of organisation motivating behaviour, textual production, and classification. In the second chapter, therefore, I observe the intersection of the court salon as a literary platform with the issue of the portrayal and

negotiation of morality and normative behaviour; the emperor-centric sphere may have the prerogative to turn literary pieces socially effective in historical terms, but it is harder to define the outlines of the group that has a claim to control over the public framing and the literary representation of human behaviour when this one does not fall within the acceptable private-leaning, domestic-bound relations. As it has been shown in the Izumi Shikibu chapter, the face of normativity seems to be an amorphous, all-encompassing one; in a way, the court salon and the operations of ladies-in-waiting within it serve as a microcosm of public and semi-public interaction with these moral norms. Therefore, whereas *hare*/*ke* spaces open up judgments on what is proper and improper behaviour (and text), the informal network of circulation exemplified by the moral judgement and gossip of the *nyōbō* defines both morality and literariness in the eyes of the salon, and the rest of society.

Izumi Shikibu nikki and the figure of Izumi Shikibu in later texts and popular imagination, in a way seem to confirm Michitsuna's Mother's presentation of the domestic space as both the ultimate framework of the female aristocratic textual producer, and necessary to form for her suitable literary image. Domestic spaces in *Izumi Shikibu nikki* seem barren and non-productive; devoid of networks of family support, and only tied to literary creation inasmuch as idealised amorous relations require it. This separation of public and domestic roles works as an statement regarding social transgression, privacy, public presentation and (loss of) control of self-image; however, it also prevents its author from appropriating the elements of domesticity that would serve to defend her not from scandal, but from the literary consequences of the depictions of the excessively visually-available and active

social role she occupies in other texts, where she is framed through her semi-public performance as a *nyōbō.*

In spite of their liminal and precarious position, bordering what would be considering improper modes of gender and class expression; *nyōbō* were often able to find refuge in their perceived vulnerability—as we have seen in their justification of potential literary criticism on the accessibility of their texts by high-ranking members of the court. And yet, this declaration must come with a caveat, as this status does not mean they are any less vulnerable in social terms; helplessness may be framed as a resource, but it requires a position of social precarity in order to be deployed. The potentially transgressive nature of their role had to be carefully negotiated, and defended of claims of indecorousness through either political or marital support, or the presentation of socially significant literary talent. The clear differences between the moral perception of Izumi Shikibu and Akazome Emon's in their posthumous images, is very much founded on the existence of these extra-courtly networks of support based on marriage, and motherhood. However, Akazome Emon's proper domestic behaviour is not derived merely from her performance of either of these functions; rather, it is defined by her literary production in the guise of these characters. That is, her poetry's social underpinning must pass through the particular set of interpersonal, hierarchical relations expressed by upward composition from a subordinate to a superior; and, unlike Izumi Shikibu, Akazome Emon embodies this relation perfectly both within the court and the house. Whereas Michitsuna's Mother's expression of her own importance to Kaneie and Michitsuna required a negotiation that was ultimately erased, Akazome Emon's goals identify completely with her husband's and son's.

In spite of the different approaches to domesticity shown by *Kagerō nikki*, *Izumi Shikibu nikki*, and the other texts brought up for the purposes of comparison in the first two chapters, they all still very much function clearly within the structure centred around the court and the household, both as a definition of female social roles, and as organisation of the circulation of text and literary performance. Izumi Shikibu may have been turned into a courtly Other after her death by her literary portrayals, but Takasue's Daughter very much strives to highlight her separation from the rest of the Capital's society. In *Sarashina nikki,* we find an interrogation of the channels that create and legitimise these connection and movements between domestic and extra-domestic networks, through the lenses of *monogatari* circulation, personal religious experience, and alternative social networks.

Even though, Takasue's Daughter was likely a writer of tales, tales are never discussed by her as something that is *produced*. Rather, they appear as naturally occurring as prophetic dreams and visions, and, like them, they both direct both individual action and the dealings between different members of society, both vertically and horizontally.[190] At the same time, *Sarashina nikki* is enormously preoccupied with the depiction of the acquisition of *monogatari*, making clear that the hierarchical literary relations that are presented both implicitly and overtly become destabilised by her exploration of the different support and distribution networks allowed to her. Daughterhood, courtly patronage, and marital relations exist as inevitabilities of her personal experience, but, in the end, they cannot

[190] This perhaps followed larger trends within the Heian courtly literature of making literary skill seem spontaneous and without artifice.

cover or facilitate the extent of Takasue's Daughter's social relations. Even for these conventional associations alternative cores of significance are found in the diary; through religious visions, prophetic dreams, and karmic connections, the author finds cosmological justifications for Heian social organisation that is not directly based on the unequal power relations of individuals, be these itinerant performers or members of the imperial entourage.

Throughout my discussion of the texts in the present thesis, three themes have run parallel to my explicit examination of literary domesticity; emerging naturally from my conclusions, and offering the opportunity to problematise previous conceptualisations of socio-literary power dynamics, circulation and reception of texts: 1) an understanding of *monogatari* as being employed a tool for socio-literary commentary, 2) *kana nikki* as a product of literary criticism, and 3) socio-literary positioning as a way to formulate social relations as based on the courtly hierarchical model.

It is perhaps quite apparent how these memoirs serve as a comment on social position and power relations; other works (Uemura: 1995; Sarra: 1999; Wallace: 2005) have already approached this issue; however, I have stressed both in my second and third chapters that this commentary cannot be separated from literary criticism, under an understanding of literary creation that sees it as the performance of one's assumed social role vis a vis the rest of society. I have described *Sarashina nikki* as presenting a response to the modes of literary and social dynamics presented and upheld by texts like *Kagerō nikki* and *Izumi Shikibu nikki*; even though in Takasue's Daughter's work we can read a more structural

critique of the extent of the possibilities allowed by previously developed literary and textual conventions—as well as a more medieval perspective in its approach to religious and literary framings, in the vein of latter traveller poets such as Saigyō and Nijō—the evaluation and response of the limitations of previous diaries to circumscribe social status is not an exclusive feature of Takasue's Daughter's text. Every single one of these works participates of this approach to reception, actively perceiving literary production as an expression of courtliness, social aptness, and negotiation of one's cultural image in the eyes of the community. And so we do not find between these works a mere relation of literary influence; but a line of criticism and commentary on earlier, canon-forming, deeply significant texts on the part of the "influenced" work.[191]

In the introductory paragraph of Michitsuna's Mother's diary, she declares, famously, that "when one looks at the tattle of the many old tales found in our world, this world's equally numerous lies are found."[192] Just as much as *Kagerō nikki* presents a commentary on *monogatari*'s inaccurate representation of literary mediated, unequal love affairs as experienced by middle-ranking women, *Izumi Shikibu nikki*'s separation of its plot from public discourse functions as a comment on *Kagerō nikki*'s use of *monogatari* tropes to portray socially impactful relations. Rather than lamenting a distorted view of male/female relations, capable of creating false expectations for tale readers; *Izumi Shikibu nikki* deploys

[191] This reading of literature as criticism does not need be limited to works traditionally framed as *nikki*; the influences of the first two diaries here discussed on *Genji monogatari* have been largely acknowledged. Izumi Shikibu has been said to have impacted the character of Yūgao, and Michitsuna's Mother's diary echoes on the Aoi chapter. Even though there is no room here for in-depth discussion of either, their reinterpretation by Murasaki Shikibu could well be read as a similar act of literary criticism. After all, *Genji*'s considerations of tales' role and value within Heian society are well known.

[192] 世の中に多かる古物語のはしなどを見れば、世に多かるそらごとだにあり(SNKZ: 89). See also Arntzen: 1997, 57.

monogatari-ness as a neutralising factor, and it relishes tales' ability to frame human relations through an idealised, stylised model that foregoes the negotiation of social representation.

Sarashina nikki, finally, reproduces the same model of hierarchical relations present in Michitsuna's Mother's memoir; including their common domestic role as daughters. She also presents us with an ideal interaction with a courtly would-be lover based on a common appreciation of poetry and tales in the figure of Minamoto no Sukemichi. However, Takasue's Daughter shows us the limits of both of these approaches, and that of the general model of the top-down relations of patronage and marriage they rely on. Neither Takasue's presence in her text nor the tiered, ultimately disappointing ranking system of the social ladder are capable of accounting for her *monogatari*-based networks of human connection, the karmic justification of her self-perceived place in the world, and her identification with those who exist outside of polite society. In a similar way, Minamoto no Sukemichi can only appear as an ideal poetic partner as long as he does not actually impact the author's life—as I mentioned in the corresponding section, she hopes the conversation does not lead to him learning who she is. Michitsuna's Mother and Izumi Shikibu place themselves in a position of vulnerability that allows them to claim protection, social relevance, and a sense of agency steered by an externally determined set of relation. Takasue's Daughter's final lines in her diary speak of her loneliness and destitution, and this is no wonder, as the vulnerability expressed in her *nikki* is based almost entirely on her denial of her ability to fulfil socially advantageous helplessness. By not occupying the role tales, *nikki*, and social expectations require of her, she contrasts the literary-supported,

subordinate position of the harmonious, upward composing textual producer—both desirable in *monogatari* and real life hierarchical relations—with her perceived unliterary, antisocial powerlessness.

As these are diaries representing—albeit with debatable levels of truthfulness—real life human interactions, it is impossible to separate this reinterpretation of their literary merits from the way in which they impact public and domestic perception of their authors, and of other figures reflected in their pages. Even though this characteristic has not occupied the forefront of my discussion in my analysis of domesticity, power relations, and social status in these texts, it is my hope to examine these practical trends of literary commentary in more depth in a future project. In this way, I will attempt to explore understandings of Heian literary reception and commentary undefined by classical and medieval traditions of scholarly and poetic treatises; but rather considering more informal networks of literary engagement, inhabited by textual producers for whom literary interpretation and creation were intertwined as a necessary act both for the interpretation of other individual's social value and one's own (productive) sense of identity in the eyes of their contemporary and future community.

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