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Who Tells the Tale?

‘Ukifune’: A Study in Narrative Voice

by AMANDA MAYER STINCHECUM

‘The one *who speaks* (in the narrative) is not the one *who writes* (in real life) and the one *who writes* is not the one who is.’ ROLAND BARTHES.¹

Narrative, Narrator, Speaker of the Text

WHO tells the tale? Who narrates the narrative? Does narrative by definition require a narrator² or are these cognates accidental? Does every text have a narrator, either explicit or implied, or is there a mode of discourse which ‘speaks itself’? These questions arise as a matter of course in reading the fiction of James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, William Faulkner, and other twentieth-century novelists, as well as earlier writers such as Jane Austen and Gustave Flaubert. Here the narrator’s presence often seems to be replaced, overshadowed by that of the characters themselves. But what about the *Genji Monogatari*? The word *monogatari* literally means ‘a telling or recounting of something’; it strongly implies the cognate verb *monogataru* (‘to recount something, to tell a tale’), in which the teller, or narrator (*katari-te*) exists a priori. Perhaps we can say that ‘narrator’ is more clearly contained within the concept of *monogatari* than in the English word ‘narrative’.

In early Heian-period narrative tales (*monogatari*) such as the *Ochikubo Monogatari*, the narrator places himself (or herself) between the narrative and us, the readers, guiding our understanding by means of comments about the characters and the story, and by descriptive narration. In the first two-thirds of the *Genji*, the reader has a strong sense of the narrator’s presence, to the extent that the leading scholar in the field, Tamagami Takuya, has interpreted this narrator quite concretely as a lady-in-waiting who records the story as if she were giving an interpretative recital of a text which is itself a record of the telling of the tale by other, earlier ladies-in-waiting who either witnessed the events directly or heard

¹ Roland Barthes, ‘An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative’, in *New Literary History*, vi: 2 (Winter 1975), p. 261.

² Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg make

this assumption the starting point for their discussion of point of view in *The Nature of Narrative*, Galaxy Books, Oxford U.P., 1968, p. 240.

about them from yet other ladies-in-waiting who witnessed them directly.³ But even within the part of the work dealing with the life of Hikaru Genji, there are many passages in which we seem to see directly into the hearts of the characters, without the intervention of a narrator. These include lines conveying the innermost thoughts of a character which we cannot interpret as the report of a lady-in-waiting who witnessed the situation.⁴

But it is in the last third of the work, in which the events take place mainly in Uji, that we feel the characters' inner world open to us. Particularly in those chapters in which Ukifune's plight reaches a crisis we find the flow of her thoughts (and those of others about her) rendered apparently without any mediation by a narrator. Often the form of this narration is that of direct quotation, concluding with the quotative particles *to*, *tote*, or *nado*, and sometimes a verb such as *omou* ('she thinks'). It also frequently contains exclamatory particles such as *namu*, *zo*, and *ka shi*, which one would expect to find in a direct quotation, expressing the emotion of the speaker. For example, *sonata ni nabiku-beki ni wa arazu ka shi to omou*. . . (VI, 135–136, 'I certainly must not yield to him, she thinks. . .'). Thus direct interior monologue is a kind of direct discourse in Japanese and contains a quotative particle.

In other passages the characters' thoughts or feelings do not appear as direct quotation but in a form corresponding to indirect speech. They are marked not by a phrase of direct quotation such as *to omou* but by expressions such as *o omoi-yaru* ('she wonders about'), as in the sentence, *mata kono hito ni mie-tatematsuramu o omoi-yaru namu, imijū kokoro-uki* (VI, 134. 4–5, 'and even wondering how could she meet this one is terrible wretchedness'). A variation of *o omou* is *ni omou*; for example, *ito me-yasuku ureshikaru-beki koto ni omoite* (VI, 148. 10–11, 'she feels it to be a highly proper and pleasing thing'). Long adjectival modifiers form another type of indirect quotation: *kono hito ni ushi to omowarete, wasure-tainamu kokoro-bososa wa, ito fukō shiminikereba* (VI, 135. 4–5, 'the misery of being thought odious and being rejected by this person sinks into her very deeply'). Here, Ukifune's misery (*kokoro-bososa*) is amplified by the long modifying clause that

³ Tamagami Takuya 玉上琢彌, 'Genji Monogatari no Dokusha: Monogatari Ondoku-ron' 源氏物語の読者: 物語音読論, in *Genji Monogatari Hyōshaku* 源氏物語評釈, Kadokawa Shoten, 1964–6, *Bekkan* 1, *Genji Monogatari Kenkyū*, 1966, pp. 247–65.

⁴ All quotations from the text are from Abe Akio 阿部秋生 *et al.*, ed., *Genji Monogatari (Nihon Koten Bungaku Zenshū)* 日本古典文学全集, Shōgakusan, 1970–76. Unless noted otherwise, all references are to the 'Ukifune' chapter. For the general reader, corresponding chapter titles in English have been included, from Edward G. Seidensticker, tr., *The Tale of Genji*, Alfred Knopf, New

York, 1976, 2 vols.

Nakano Kōichi 中野幸一 cites II, 'Usugumo' ('A Rack of Cloud'), 438. 8–14, as evidence against the viability of Tamagami's theory ('Genji Monogatari no Sōshiji to Monogatari Ondoku-ron' 源氏物語の草子地と物語音読論, in *Genji Monogatari*, 1 (*Nihon Bungaku Kenkyū Shiryō Sōsho*), Yūseidō, 1969, pp. 206–7).

In this case the narrator cannot in any way be interpreted as a lady-in-waiting who either witnessed the event or heard it from another lady who was a direct witness, but, according to Nakano, must be more transcendental and omniscient than any of the three narrators Tamagami proposes.

precedes it. There are elements that identify the voice as Ukifune's (*kono*, 'this', indicates Ukifune's point of view), while other aspects, for example, the causal construction *shiminikereba* ('because it sank into her'), can only be the result of the narrator's reasoning. I shall hereafter refer to this type of narration as 'indirect interior monologue'. In general, one can say that the conclusive form + 'thinks' (*shūshikei* + *to omou*), or some equivalent thereof, corresponds to direct interior monologue, while the continuative form + 'thinks' (*ren'yōkei* + *omou*), or some equivalent, corresponds to indirect interior monologue.⁵

In Japanese, however, the distinction between direct and indirect discourse is not so clear as it is in English. The narrator's voice frequently intrudes into a character's discourse (usually interior monologue), shading the character's thoughts with the narrator's intonations. Thus the entire narration tends to become reported speech.⁶ This is similar to a third type of discourse in English, which Dorrit Cohn has termed 'narrated monologue'.⁷ She describes this kind of narration, which is similar to the German *erlebte Rede* and the French *style indirect libre*, as 'the rendering of a character's thoughts in his own idiom, while maintaining the third-person form of narration'.⁸ Cohn illustrates these three modes of discourse as follows:

DIRECT STATEMENT: He said: 'I did not come here yesterday.'

INDIRECT STATEMENT: He said that he had not gone there the day before.

NARRATED MONOLOGUE: He had not come here yesterday.⁹

Note the changes in spatial and temporal loci: from *come* to *gone*, from *here* to *there*, from *yesterday* to *the day before*. Cohn points out that narrated monologue is a grammatically distinct mode peculiar to written narration; this is further demonstrated by Ann Banfield in her analysis of the 'free indirect style' (*style indirect libre*).¹⁰ Both Banfield and Cohn remark that narrated monologue, or free indirect style, contains demonstratives and adverbs associated with the present tense and the character's own spatial locus, thus clearly distinguishing it from indirect discourse.¹¹ The modal complexity of Japanese is reflected by the lack of such clear categories of discourse. The grammar of reported speech does

⁵ Although Saeki Umetomo only draws this conclusion in relation to adjectives, we can expand it to refer to reported discourse in general and particularly to interior monologue. See Saeki Umetomo 佐伯梅友, 'Chokusetsu Wahō to Kansetsu Wahō' 直接話法と間接話法, in *Jōdai Kokugo-hō Kenkyū* 上代国語法研究, Daitōbunka Daigaku Tōyō Kenkyū-jo Sōsho, #3, 1966, pp. 42-3.

⁶ This is the reverse of Russian narrative, in which the tone of the reported speech casts a shadow on the embedding narrative and influences even the narrator's tone. See V. N. Volosinov, 'Reported Speech', in Ladislav

Matejka & Krystyna Pomorska, ed., *Readings in Russian Poetics: Formalist and Structuralist Views*, MIT Press, 1971, pp. 167 ff.

⁷ Dorrit Cohn, 'Narrated Monologue: Definition of a Fictional Style', in *Comparative Literature*, xviii: 2 (Spring 1966), pp. 97-112.

⁸ Cohn, pp. 97-8.

⁹ Cohn, p. 104.

¹⁰ Ann Banfield, 'Narrative Style and the Grammar of Direct and Indirect Speech', in *Foundations of Language*, x (1973), pp. 1-39, esp. pp. 10 ff.

¹¹ Cohn, p. 105; Banfield, p. 10.

not require agreement of verbal tense, and spatial and temporal referents may be ambiguous. An example of modern Japanese will demonstrate this (a corresponding construction in classical Japanese could be postulated, but an actual sentence of classical Japanese would be much less likely to include a stated subject, which would compound the ambiguity).

Kare wa kyō mata koko ni konai to itta.

He said, 'I won't come here again today.'

Removed from any context, it is not clear whether *koko* ('here') refers to the location of *kare* ('he') or that of the reporting speaker who is telling us, 'He said . . .', although the latter would be the more usual interpretation. The same is true of the verb *konai* ('won't come'), which signifies motion toward the speaker—but which speaker? The adverb of time, *kyō* ('today'), may refer to the temporal locus of *kare* or of the reporting speaker. There is a further ambiguity in the Japanese which is not present in English: the subject of the verb *konai* may or may not agree with the subject of *itta* ('said'). This ambiguity may be removed by inserting *jibun* ('himself') as the subject of *konai*, but then the expression no longer renders his words directly and so no longer corresponds to direct discourse. Of course in English reported speech, these two subjects do not necessarily agree, but the ambiguity as to whether they do or not is limited. (In the last example below, the two pronouns 'he' may or may not refer to the same person.) The following possible meanings and more are all contained in the single Japanese example:

He said, 'I won't come here again today.'

He said, 'I won't go there again today.'

He said, 'I won't come here again tomorrow.'

He said, 'She won't come here again today.'

He said that he wouldn't come here again today.

Thus the possible renderings of one sentence of apparently direct quotation are manifold. This phenomenon is directly related to the concept of *ba* and *bamen*, 'linguistic situation'.

In English, direct speech, indirect speech, and narrated monologue are grammatically distinct. The lack of such clear differences in classical Japanese makes the transition from one to the other smoother and more easily accomplished, and hence a more natural feature of prose style. Saeki Umetomo demonstrates that even what appears to be direct quotation in classical Japanese prose, marked at the end of the quoted expression by *to*, *nado*, or *tote*, is often shaded to reflect the point of view of the reporting speaker.¹² Direct quotation is at least theoretically possible in modern Japanese, and parallel constructions could be made in classical Japanese as well, and might occur in Japanese translations of Western novels, for instance. But in practice, the speaker reporting someone else's words would nor-

¹² Saeki, p. 33.

mally adapt those words, relating them to his own spatial and temporal loci—that is, to the viewpoint of the reporting speaker.

The subtle fusion of descriptive narration (*ji no bun*) and interior monologue is indeed one of the most prominent characteristics of the prose style of the *Genji*.¹³ It is this indeterminacy in the Japanese language which makes possible the intensity with which we, as readers, see the fictional world of the narrative tale (*monogatari*) through the eyes of the characters within the work.

What is called *kansetsu wahō* ('indirect discourse') in Japanese, particularly in the case of interior monologue, does not correspond to indirect speech in English; it is much closer to the free indirect style or narrated monologue. Both Japanese indirect discourse and narrated monologue may contain a number of constructions that cannot appear in indirect speech in English but are characteristic of direct discourse: expressive elements and constructions, incomplete sentences, and different dialects or languages in introductory and quoted clauses (in Japanese, the latter corresponds to the use of honorific language),¹⁴ as well as expressions such as *ureshi* and *kanashi*, which normally occur only in first-person discourse. Furthermore, the demonstrative elements referring to the time or place of the reported speech act do not, in Japanese, necessarily belong to the locus of the reporting speaker.

Thus while there is not an exact grammatical correspondence between narrated monologue or free indirect style, as Cohn and Banfield define them, and what I term indirect interior monologue (*kansetsu-shiki shinnaigo*) in classical Japanese, the concepts are close enough in terms of literary function for us to be able to compare the use of this technique in literatures as widely separated as those of eleventh-century Japan and twentieth-century Europe. Cohn describes this function, stating that in narrated monologue, '... we move closer to the possibility of rendering . . . thoughts and feelings of a character . . . not explicitly formulated in his mind [i.e., as spoken expression]. [It reveals] that part of the psyche which is hidden from the world and half-hidden from the censoring self; it can also more readily show the mind as recipient of passing images and sensory impressions than the more rhetorical first-person monologue.'¹⁵ In addition to the function that Cohn ascribes to it, narrated monologue also allows the penetration of another voice—the voice of the narrator—into the text at the same time as that of the character whose thoughts are being recorded. This interpenetration of voices permits ironic distance to open up in a context where we least expect it, when we believe ourselves to be confronting directly the souls of the characters.

It is impossible to discuss narrative voice or point of view without encountering

¹³ See Suzuki Kazuo 鈴木一雄, 'Genji Monogatari no Hōhō, Buntai: Shinnaigo no Mondai' 源氏物語の方法、文体—心内語の問題, in *Genji Monogatari*, II (*Kōza Nihon Bungaku*), Kaishaku to Kanshō, Bessatsu (May 1978), pp. 163–84.

Throughout his essay, a re-examination of a survey of modes of discourses in the *Genji*,

Suzuki reiterates that this fusion is typical of the *Genji* (see pp. 167 ff). He also notes the use of direct interior monologue and indirect interior monologue and their frequency in other major Heian-period *monogatari* (pp. 174 ff).

¹⁴ Banfield, pp. 7–8.

¹⁵ Cohn, p. 110.

the problem of the narrator's identity. There should be no difficulty in accepting the premise that the narrator of a work of fiction is not the same as the historical personage who produced the work during some certain (although perhaps indeterminate) period. Until recently, Japanese scholars did not usually make this distinction. The narrator of the *Genji* is not the eleventh-century personage we know as Murasaki Shikibu. The work is a created entity, and if there is indeed a narrator within the work, that narrator is created by the author and thus is not the same as that author. The way or extent to which the narrator within a text may express the views of that historical personage whom we call the author can be determined only after we have examined that text and the workings of the narrator within the text. In regard to a work as far removed from us in time and conventions as the *Genji*, it is perhaps futile to try to determine the thoughts of the personage Murasaki Shikibu, based on the scattered facts we have about her life, and it would be a serious error in critical methodology to project these ideas back onto the text in attempting to interpret it.¹⁶ In order to avoid confusion in the discussion that follows, I shall call this historical personage (for example, Murasaki Shikibu) the 'historical author', and deal with him (or her) no further in this essay.

What do we mean by the term 'narrator'—one who narrates, recites, tells a tale? The word has concrete and personal overtones; the narrator is not simply a disembodied voice—the subject of a given utterance—but a voice that implies a certain rhetorical attitude toward the narration itself, and beyond that, a particular grammatical relation to the object of narration and to the recipient of the narrative. Hence the narrator speaks within the conditions of a certain linguistic situation (*ba* or *bamen*). This linguistic situation—the speech act or paradigm of linguistic performance—is defined as a triangular relationship: a speaker, a topic, and a situation or listener (recipient). That the speaker is saying something to the recipient, with the intention of influencing him with respect to the topic, is central to the concept of the narrator. The necessity of inventing an impersonal, declarative style of written Japanese attests to the particular importance of the linguistic situation in Japanese.

For centuries, the use of *kambun* (Japanese-style Chinese) filled this need; in the twentieth century, the *de-arū* verb form, which never appears in natural spoken Japanese, has replaced *kambun* for expository writing. Since the Heian period, the language of personal communication has been quite distinct from that of official exchanges and records. The strength of the linguistic situation (*bamen*) in Japanese has been discussed at length by the linguist Tokieda Motoki.¹⁷ The influence of the reporting speaker on what appears to be direct quotation (see p. 378, above) and the ease with which descriptive narration blends into interior monologue in classical Japanese prose indicate the force of the linguistic situation and the difficulty in speaking from a position outside of it in Japanese. Whereas in English the free

¹⁶ Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, University of Chicago Press, 1961, pp. 151 ff.

¹⁷ Tokieda Motoki 時枝誠記, *Kokugogaku*

Genron: Gengokateisetsu no Seiritsu 国語学原論—言語過程説の成立, Iwanami Shoten, 1941, pp. 38–56.

indirect style is a special characteristic of *written* narrative, grammatically distinct from the language of the speaker-recipient paradigm, in Japanese the influence of the narrating voice on the discourse of individual characters—whether in direct or indirect discourse—is a result of that very relationship. The linguistic situation asserts itself in Japanese in a context which in English specifically denies the speaker-addressee relationship—in passages where the voice of a character blends with and is shaded by that of the narrator.

As a result of this feature of Japanese, because an impersonal mode of narration rarely occurs in Heian-period prose, the narrator acquires an importance perhaps unique to classical Japanese literature—not only in *monogatari* ('narrative tales') but in modes which are usually thought of as essentially dramatic, such as *noh* and *jōruri* (puppet plays). The predominant voice of the narrator is heard well into the twentieth century in the *shi-shōsetsu* (the 'I-novel').

We can identify the narrator (*katari-te*) as the subject of expression in passages where the voice of a narrating persona is evident. In the classical *monogatari*, the most obvious examples are those passages traditionally referred to as *sōshiji* ('narrator's commentary'), in which the narrator addresses the reader directly, stepping away from the characters of the tale, interpreting that world, judging the characters and their actions, for the reader. Here the narrator is the speaker within the linguistic situation that is the tale. We recognize the voice of the narrator by both semantic and linguistic means. The following passage, the conclusion of the 'Yūgao' ('Evening Faces') chapter of the *Genji*, is one of the most frequently cited examples of narrator's commentary.

Kayō no kuda-kudashiki koto wa, anagachi ni kakuroe-shinobi-tamaishi mo itōshikute, mina morashi-todometaru o, nado mikado no mi-ko naramu kara ni, mimu hito sae katao-narazu, mono-homegachi naru to, tsukuri-gotomekite tori-nasu hito mo mono-shi-tamaikereba namu. Amari mono-iisa ga naki tsumi, sari-dokoro naku. . . .
[I, 'Yūgao', 269. 11–15]

His efforts to conceal this kind of troublesome thing were pathetic and so I had not let them come out, but precisely because there are even people who think the whole thing is a fiction, wondering, Just because he is the emperor's son, why do even people who know him tend to praise him and think he has no faults? [I have written like this.] There is no way to avoid the sin of gossiping. . . .

If we look at the meaning of this passage, the subject of the expression *mina morashi-todometaru o* ('and so I had not let them come out') cannot be one of the characters who is the topic of the narrative, for the words refer to the very making of the narrative.¹⁸ The expression *amari mono iisa ga naki tsumi, sari-dokoro naku*

¹⁸ It is possible to consider the subject of this expression different from that of the causal construction and the comment at the close of the passage, but for the purposes of our discussion it does not make any difference

whether there is one or more narrators in this sense.

For remarks on the possibility of multiple narrators in this passage and that at the beginning of the 'Hahakigi' ('The Broom

(‘there is no way to avoid the sin of gossiping’) can refer only to a persona who sees herself as the maker of the narrative and declares herself to be such, that is, the narrator.

There are also linguistic (grammatical) signs that point to the narrator persona. The use of the honorific verb *tamau* (applied to Genji’s actions in the phrase *kakuroe-shinobi-tamaishi mo*—‘his efforts to conceal’—and to some unidentified ‘people’ in the phrase *hito mo mono-shitamaikereba*—‘because there are people’) reflects the linguistic situation, in which the speaker’s social relation to both the addressee and the topic is expressed. Furthermore, the causal construction in this phrase can be attributed only to a subject who comments about, forms conclusions about, the people who are criticizing Genji, and about the making of the narrative; the causal construction points to the reason for making the narrative the way it is. The emphatic particle *namu* following this construction (which I have translated as ‘precisely’) also derives from spoken discourse and is a further indication of the presence of a speaking subject explaining something or affirming his view to the addressee, that is, a narrator.¹⁹ Finally, the verbal suffix *-keri* in *tamaikereba* implies a certain degree of objectification, of drawing away from the topic, or interpreting or explaining to the addressee on the part of the speaker or subject of the expression.²⁰

These signs of the speaking subject or narrator occur not only in extended passages of commentary, or *sōshiji* (‘narrator’s commentary’, in which the narrator expresses an opinion about a given topic or about the process of making the tale, for example, comments that explain that the narrator has omitted certain details), like that at the end of ‘Yūgao’, but also in passages considered by many contemporary Japanese scholars as simple description (*ji no bun*).²¹ Here the narrating voice often makes conjectures about a character’s thoughts or about the causes or results of a certain situation. These conjectures cannot be attributed to any character within the story itself and must be ascribed to the narrator. They are indicated, usually at the end of the sentence, by verbal suffixes such as *-kemu*, *-beshi*, and *-meri*. Rather than constituting a comment in themselves, they express a tone or mode in the narration which we recognize as belonging to the narrating voice. Honorific language (*keigo*) used in relation to the characters and their actions also reflects an attitude on the part of the narrator toward the characters. This attitude reflects the linguistic situation (*bamen*), in which a subject (the narrator) addresses a recipient (the reader or listener) about an object (the character whose action is being reported).²² Thus the voice in such passages is necessarily

Tree’) chapter, see Mitani Kuniaki 三谷邦明, ‘Genji Monogatari ni Okeru “Katari” no Kōzō: “Washa” to “Katari-te” aruiwa “Sōshiji” Ron Hihan no tame no Joshō’ 源氏物語における「語り」の構造: 「話者」と「語り手」あるいは「草子地」論批判のための序章, in *Nihon Bungaku* 日本文学, xxvii:11 (November 1978), p. 46.

¹⁹ For a discussion of the significance of the

particle *namu*, particularly in combination with the verbal suffix *-keri*, see Sakura Atsuyoshi 阪倉篤義, *Bunshō to Hyōgen* 文章と表現, Kadokawa Shoten, 1975, pp. 24–41.

²⁰ Sakakura, p. 18.

²¹ Mitani, p. 43.

²² See above, p. 378.

personified. The attempts to define *sōshiji* as an independent and fixed entity have contributed to the obscurity of the problem of narrative voice in the *Genji*.²³ In fact, the concept of *sōshiji* may not be a useful one for such a discussion. In passages usually thought of as *sōshiji*, as well as those in which *-kemu*, *-beshi*, *-meri*, *-keri*, etc., appear, we can identify the voice as that of the narrator. If their functions are different, and it is not at all clear that they are, the voice is fundamentally that of a personified narrator. Within one passage we may find a number of different narrators, one commenting on the activities of another, but the voices remain on a level different from that of the characters within the world of the narrative, as well as from that of the reader and the author.

In reading the *Genji*, however, it is evident that this persona we have called the narrator is not only inconsistent in point of view, but is neither omniscient nor omnipresent. It is not the narrator who ultimately controls the narrative. We can either accept the position that there is no such transcendental being that unifies the text as a whole, or take the view that there is such an entity, the essence of which is not expressed in the text.²⁴ For example, we may consider every narrative a discourse: 'a speech-act supposing a speaker and a listener, and in the speaker an intention to influence the listener in some way.'²⁵ This is the view voiced by Tzvetan Todorov, one that is literary rather than linguistic. He remarks, '*l'oeuvre est en même temps discours: il existe un narrateur qui relate l'histoire; et il y a en face de lui un lecteur qui la perçoit.*' He further specifies that by 'oeuvre' he means every work of fiction.²⁶

In passages or narratives where there are no linguistic signs of the narrator in the text, the narrator (the subject of the discourse that is the text itself) may be said to be effaced.²⁷ It is this subject of the discourse (narrative text) which Mitani Kuniaki terms the *washa* (literally, 'the one who speaks', or 'the speaker of the text') in order to distinguish the narrator (*katari-te*), who appears as a persona in the text, from the giver of the narrative, whose existence is wholly functional and underlies the entire text.²⁸ The *washa* refers to that by which we see the text as one,

²³ Some of these attempts to define *sōshiji* from the earliest sources to the present are discussed in Takahashi Tōru 高橋亨, "'Katari'" *no Hyōgen Kōzō: iwayuru Sōshiji ni tsuite* '語り'の表現構造いわゆる草子地について, in *Genji Monogatari*, II (*Kōza Nihon Bungaku*) *Kaishaku to Kanshō, Bessatsu* (May 1978), pp. 119–38.

²⁴ The former is the position of Banfield, pp. 25 ff., who argues on grounds of transformational grammar that in the free indirect style there can be no other subject of expression than the subject named in the given expression.

S. -Y. Kuroda, in his essay, 'Where Epistemology, Style, and Grammar Meet: A Case Study from the Japanese', in S. Anderson & P. Kiparsky, ed., *A Festschrift for Morris*

Halle, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, New York, 1973, also argues that there can be no omniscient narrator who speaks directly to the reader because the free indirect style has a unique grammar which is 'essentially different from the paradigmatic linguistic performance' (p. 387).

²⁵ Emile Benveniste, *Problèmes de linguistique générale*, Gallimard, Paris, 1966, p. 241. Benveniste does not hold that every narrative is a discourse, however.

²⁶ Tzvetan Todorov, '*Les catégories du récit littéraire*', in *Communications*, 8 (1966), pp. 126 & 147.

²⁷ Tzvetan Todorov, *The Poetics of Prose*, Cornell U.P., 1977, pp. 27–8.

²⁸ Mitani, pp. 39 ff.

that which underlies the structure and makes it a whole. In a sense this highly abstract concept of an invisible speaker of the text has much in common with what Wayne Booth calls the 'implied author', the image the author creates of himself as he writes, not the historical author but the author as the one who controls the narrative.²⁹ But Booth's idea is basically that of a persona, while Mitani's remains an abstract, even metaphysical, function, and Todorov's concept is fundamentally closer to linguistics.

What is particularly valuable about Mitani's study is that he has drawn a clear distinction between the narrator whose voice is heard in the text, and the speaker of the text which is the subject of expression of the narrative as a whole. Furthermore, according to Mitani, the presence of the narrator (or narrators) in the *Genji* is a way of dealing with the opposition between the Japanese language itself, in which the linguistic situation is so strong a feature, and the nature of narrative, which has a subject of expression that is essentially transparent and neutral. The narrator expresses that aspect of the language which is controlled by the linguistic situation.³⁰

The speaker of the text plays no direct role in our interpretation of the text as a work, but as the subject of the text, the point of view of the *washa* is that of the text as a whole. We can say that the point of view (and the voice) of the speaker of the text coincides with that of certain characters in certain passages. However, the *washa* as an abstract function has no voice in the sense of personal expression. Thus while we may speak of the voice or point of view of the speaker of the text, this must be understood to mean that in a particular passage the *washa* is the only subject of expression, but does not have a personified voice like that of the narrator or characters. For example, in passages of descriptive narration we might say that the voice is that of the speaker of the text.

Functions of Narrative Voice in 'Ukifune' and To the Lighthouse

THE 'Ukifune' chapter depicts the events preceding Ukifune's attempted suicide. Rather than 'events', perhaps we should say the conflicting emotions leading up to her decision and action—not only Ukifune's responses to her situation and reflections on it, but also those of her mother, of Niou, Kaoru, Ukon, Jijū, and others. Precisely because the crisis is impending, it is her inner life and that of those around her that are of importance to us. This chapter represents the characters' thoughts and emotions, their *kokoro*, in the form of interior monologue to a greater extent than almost any other chapter in the whole *Genji*.³¹ It is characterized by frequent shifts in point of view, the view of the speaker of the text coinciding first with that of one character, then another. As a result, although these features are

²⁹ Booth, pp. 70–71 & 151.

³⁰ Mitani, pp. 43 & 44.

³¹ According to Suzuki's analysis, pp. 170–72, the average percentage of interior

monologue per chapter is 11.2%; that in 'Ukifune', 17.6%. In the *Genji*, this is exceeded only by 'Kagerō' ('The Drake Fly'), 22.1%.

not peculiar to 'Ukifune', they play a conspicuous role here, and we can thus easily grasp the irony that these techniques create. The observations that I have made and the conclusions that I have tentatively drawn are not intended to be applied to 'Ukifune' as opposed to other chapters in the *Genji*, but I hope that they may illustrate some aspects of that chapter which are characteristic of the Uji chapters in general and, to a certain extent, of the *Genji* as a whole.

In many cases, the characters' hearts are revealed through direct discourse (direct interior monologue) and the voice heard is entirely that of the characters thus depicted. However, sometimes this voice blends in with that of the narrator, whose presence in these monologues appears, for example, in the form of honorific language applied to the subject of the monologue, in syntactic constructions that require reasoning about the situation or thoughts revealed, by exclamations that could be attributed to either the character or the narrator. There are also occasions when the voice of the character fuses with a passage of descriptive narration that precedes or follows it. In the latter case the interior monologue becomes indirect, ending not in the quotative particle *to* but with some other syntactic construction that makes the monologue a subordinate part of the passage as a whole.³²

The importance of these distinctions lies in the recognition of different degrees of aesthetic distance between the reader and the world of the tale; they constitute the irony of the work, as Konishi Jin'ichi has pointed out.³³ Not only does the intrusion of the narrator's voice distance us from the characters, but even in passages of direct interior monologue, where we are confronted with their thoughts unmediated by the narrator's voice, the distance between the characters themselves shows us the irony of their situation. The creation of this aesthetic distance is certainly one of the functions of the shifting point of view in the Uji chapters and in the *Genji* as a whole. The narration is not controlled by a single point of view through which we see the events and characters of the narrative, nor by a single narrator who consistently tells us how to interpret those events and characters. Although the voice of a narrator is often heard, the identity of that persona and her relation to the characters within the work are ambiguous, sometimes appearing on one level of the narrative, sometimes on another. However, when the narrator does speak out, her words often take the form of a conjecture about a character or his actions.

The shifting narrative voice in 'Ukifune' and in the Uji chapters as a whole has its closest counterpart in Western literature in the novels of Virginia Woolf, particularly in *To the Lighthouse*.³⁴ The inner life of the characters plays a central

³² For a detailed discussion of the fusion of interior monologue with the embedding descriptive narration, see Akita Teiji 穂田定樹, 'Genji Monogatari no Naiwa' 源氏物語の内話, in *Shinwa Kokubun* 新和国文, 2 (December 1969), pp. 1–21.

³³ Konishi Jin'ichi 小西甚一, 'Genji Monogatari no Shinri Byōsha' 源氏物語の心理描写,

in Yamagishi Tokuhei 山岸徳平 & Oka Kazuo 岡一男, ed., *Genji Monogatari Kōza* 源氏物語講座, Yūseidō, vii, pp. 44 ff.

³⁴ Erich Auerbach's discussion of *To the Lighthouse* first suggested to me a possible analogy between Woolf's work and the Uji chapters of the *Genji* (and perhaps the entire work). He calls the technique found in Woolf

role in both works, an inner life revealed to the reader not by means of the so-called stream of consciousness technique (which depicts less organized levels of consciousness) but by means of a flowing prose style which often exhibits a high degree of literary self-awareness.³⁵ While the narrative voice shifts from character to character to narrator to a non-personal subject we have called the speaker of the text, both works possess a certain degree of stylistic unity, in part created by the use of narrated monologue, in which a character's voice blends into that of the narrator or into descriptive narration. The diction of monologue, dialogue, and descriptive narration is basically the same; while the content of different characters' thoughts may vary, the language in which that content is expressed displays few individual characteristics. This evenness of texture extends also to the use of nature imagery; in *To the Lighthouse* and Woolf's other novels (especially *The Waves*) an image is often associated not only with one particular character but appears in the thoughts of several and in descriptive passages as well. In 'Ukifune', and in all of the Heian narrative tales (*monogatari*), the unity of imagery is dictated to a great extent by the conventions of *waka*. Characters may respond differently to one image, but nevertheless the image is the same.

On the whole, in *To the Lighthouse* the point of view shifts more slowly than in 'Ukifune'; passages associated with one character's vision are longer. The following passage illustrates the type of ambiguity often found in Woolf. The entire incident is part of Mrs Ramsay's recollection of a walk to town with Charles Tansley, provoked by his irritating remark, 'There'll be no landing at the lighthouse tomorrow.'

. . . she made him feel better pleased with himself than he had done yet, and he would have liked, had they taken a cab for example, to have paid for it. As for her little bag, might he not carry that? No, no, she said, she always carried *that* herself.

and some other 20th-century novelists 'multi-personal representation of consciousness', noting that the most important difference between Woolf and earlier novelists who rendered inner views of their characters is that while the earlier writer, 'with his knowledge of an objective truth, never abdicated his position as the final and governing authority. . . . The essential characteristic of the technique represented by Virginia Woolf is that we are given not merely one person whose consciousness (that is, the impressions it receives) is rendered, but many persons, with frequent shifts from one to the other. . . . The design of a close approach to objective reality by means of numerous subjective impressions received by various individuals . . . is important in the modern technique. . . .'

Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, Doubleday, Anchor Books, Garden City, New York, 1957, p. 474.

I am greatly indebted in my discussion of Virginia Woolf's works to James Naremore's fine study, *The World Without a Self: Virginia Woolf and the Novel*, Yale U.P., 1973, esp. pp. 112-50. For further detailed analysis of changes in point of view in *To the Lighthouse*, see Mitchell Leaska, *Virginia Woolf's Lighthouse: A Study in Critical Method*, Columbia U.P., 1970, pp. 47-58.

³⁵ For a basic study of stream of consciousness, see Robert Humphrey, *Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel*, University of California Press, 1954, esp. pp. 2 ff. For a discussion of conflicting views on the subject, see Naremore, pp. 63-76.

She did too. Yes, he felt that in her. He felt many things, something in particular that excited him and disturbed him for reasons which he could not give. He would like her to see him, gowned and hooded, walking in a procession. A fellowship, a professorship, he felt capable of anything and saw himself—but what was she looking at? At a man pasting a bill. The vast flapping sheet flattened itself out, and each shove of the brush revealed fresh legs, hoops, horses, glistening reds and blues, beautifully smooth, until half the wall was covered with the advertisement of a circus; a hundred horsemen, twenty performing seals, lions, tigers. . . . Craning forwards, for she was short-sighted, she read it out . . . ‘will visit this town,’ she read. It was terribly dangerous work for a one-armed man, she exclaimed, to stand on top of a ladder like that—his left arm had been cut off in a reaping machine two years ago.

‘Let’s all go!’ she cried, moving on, as if all those riders and horses had filled her with childlike exultation and made her forget her pity.

‘Let’s go,’ he said, repeating her words, clicking them out, however, with a self-consciousness that made her wince. ‘Let us go to the circus.’ No. He could not say it right. He could not feel it right. But why not? she wondered. What was wrong with him then?³⁶

The section begins with a description of Tansley’s feelings, but the words, ‘had they taken a cab for example’, seem to render his thoughts more directly, while the following two sentences clearly represent dialogue. Again, ‘Yes, he felt that in her. He felt many things,’ must be a rendering of his thoughts, while the amplification of those thoughts seems to come from outside the scope of Tansley’s consciousness. The next sentence again represents his thoughts, as his fantasy about Mrs Ramsay admiring his future accomplishments is interrupted by her attention turning to the circus poster. The description of the poster might reflect Tansley’s point of view as he follows Mrs Ramsay’s gaze, or hers, or both, but the explanation, ‘for she was short-sighted’, seems to stem from the narrator rather than either of the characters. Mrs Ramsay’s words are followed by another explanation of her mood (‘as if . . .’) by the narrator, and then Tansley’s repetition of her exclamation. But ‘No. He could not say it right’ could be either Tansley’s own self-conscious thoughts, or Mrs Ramsay’s observation of him. ‘He could not feel it right’ seems to render his own discomfort at his inability to respond spontaneously, but with the following line we are clearly listening to Mrs Ramsay’s voice.

In this passage, almost entirely indirectly narrated, the ambiguity of the narrative voice is quite marked. By means of this kind of ambiguity Virginia Woolf suggests an absence of space between the characters, and between the characters and the narrator, implying an ultimate unity of human life within nature, or within the artist’s vision of it, as it is Lily Briscoe’s vision that finally rounds out the novel.

³⁶ Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, Harcourt, Bruce & World, Harvest Books, New York, 1955, pp. 15 & 20–21. Due acknowledgment is made to the Author’s

Literary Estate and The Hogarth Press for permission to quote this passage. This quotation and all further citations refer to the edition cited above.

While the similarities between Virginia Woolf's technique and that of 'Ukifune' are striking, there are of course important differences that are significant for our interpretation of the works themselves. Perhaps the primary point of contrast for the purposes of our discussion is the effect on the reader of the shifting narrative voice. Woolf's novels, particularly *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, and *The Waves*, use different perspectives to show the underlying communication between people. As old Augustus Carmichael and Mrs Ramsay both admire a dish of fruit, 'she saw that Augustus too feasted his eyes on the same plate of fruit, plunged in, broke off a bloom there, a tassel here, and returned, after feasting, to his hive. That was his way of looking, different from hers. But looking together united them' (p. 146). Again, as Mrs Ramsay contemplates the approaching marriage of two young people whom she has brought together, she feels a oneness with those around her (pp. 170–71).

In 'Ukifune', however, in spite of the fluidity of style and the flow, even within one sentence, of narrative voice from one persona to another, that very flow emphasizes the distance between characters by placing them in close juxtaposition and thus showing us the unbridgeable gaps that exist between them. While in Woolf's novel we see the continuity of thought and feeling between one character and another, in 'Ukifune' the uniformity of diction reveals disjunctions in thought, misunderstandings, and, even in dialogue, a lack of receptiveness, an active turning away from each other. This basic isolation of one human being from another in the Uji chapters of the *Genji* may reflect a Buddhist view of the universe that sees all human relationships as ultimately empty, salvation as a final rejection of such entanglements.

Thus Ukifune seeks salvation by turning her back on all former relationships. Onna San no Miya ('The Third Princess', Kaoru's mother), who loves neither Genji nor Kashiwagi and is even more isolated than Ukifune, also becomes a nun. Ukifune's father, Hachi no Miya ('The Eighth Prince'), wanders in purgatory, unable to enter paradise, because he cannot free himself from his attachment to his other two daughters, even though he abandons them before his death to enter a monastery.³⁷ Although Ukifune does indeed love, her conflict isolates her from those she loves. Can we believe that any of these characters is truly saved? Genji takes orders after Lady Murasaki's death, but the fact that the event is not part of the narrative de-emphasizes it and suggest a different kind of religious feeling, one that is fully realized only with the completion of a rich life of involvement in this world. Perhaps the *Genji Monogatari* is saying that salvation is meaningless if it is obtained only by rejecting all human ties.

This fundamental contrast between Virginia Woolf's works and the *Genji* is apparent in two other aspects. The use of narrated monologue, directly related to

³⁷ After his death, Hachi no Miya appears in dreams to both Naka no Kimi and Azari (v, 'Agemaki' ['Trefoil Knots'], 301.3 & 312.4).

shifts in voice, in Woolf helps to create that underlying unity discussed above by relating characters to each other through similarities in prose style and imagery. In 'Ukifune' it also provides a certain kind of unity of the text: the very fact that there is a narrator (even though not consistent, or even several narrators) avoids the complete fragmentation of the text by fulfilling the requirements of the linguistic situation through the persona of the narrator, thus supplying at least an apparent continuity. Through honorific language the prose of the *Genji* necessarily reflects a personal voice; the fusion of interior monologue and descriptive narration is a natural consequence of the Japanese language itself, but in English this is achieved only through the creation of a special grammar.

Whereas in *To the Lighthouse* the indirectness of the technique allows us to see aspects of the characters which they themselves would not ordinarily verbalize, in 'Ukifune' these passages often end in remarks by the narrator that point out for us the ironic distance we have been shown through direct interior monologue. In the former, the images of nature serve to reinforce that all-embracing unity between man and nature, as also among men (for example, in the 'Time Passes' section of *To the Lighthouse* and the interchapters in *The Waves*); in the latter, however, while nature reflects the moods of individual characters and is subsumed by them, sometimes providing a link between them, at the same time such images also point to the insurmountable distances between one human being and another. Such is the scene when Kaoru and Ukifune are both gazing at the river: while he thinks of Oigimi, she is lost in thoughts of Niou (see pp. 396–97, below). A different kind of distance, one in a sense created within the dimension of the fictional world, one expressed by the characters themselves and not simply of the reader's perception, arises between Ukifune and Niou in their exchange of poems about the snow.

Niou: *Mine no yuki
migiwa no kōri
fumi-wakete
kimi ni zo madou
michi wa madowazu*

Treading the snow in the peaks, the
ice on the banks, I am lost in you,
though I didn't lose my way here.

Ukifune: *Furi-midare
migiwa ni kōru
yuki yori mo
naka-sora nite zo
ware wa kenu-beki
[vi, 146. 2–7]*

More than the snow which falls in
whirling flakes, freezing along the
banks, I am suspended in mid-air and
must vanish.

While Niou uses the image of snow to express his frustration at not being able to see her, Ukifune uses it to reflect her desire to dissolve into nothingness, her desire for death. Thus, although man may be a part of nature to the extent that it reflects his most subtle feelings, it provides no consolation, no sense of oneness. Nature is internalized, yet at the same time reflects man's isolation.

Textual Analysis: A Description of Narrative Voice

As a result of the following analysis of one section of 'Ukifune', I shall present a synthesis of the material associated with each point of view of the main characters (in the section that I have chosen, Ukifune and Kaoru). Every reader performs this synthesis and interpretation for himself in a work of fiction—particularly when there is no narrator consistently present, telling us throughout the work how to interpret it. But we cannot make any such interpretation without understanding the various levels and degrees of distance between the characters themselves, between the characters and the narrator, between the narrator and ourselves, and between the narrator and the speaker of the text. Although the narrative voice of the text coincides with that of Ukifune during her direct interior monologues, and for a moment we see things from her point of view, the intervention of the narrator, the shift to Kaoru's point of view, moving away from Ukifune as interior monologue blends into description, all distance us from her, and through this very subjective method of narration, enable us to make our own 'objective' view of the fictional world.

The aim of my analysis is twofold. It is first of all descriptive: to identify the shifting narrative voice within a selected passage and to see how such transitions are effected. Secondly, it is interpretative. However, the kind of interpretation I have outlined above can be accomplished only with a much broader foundation, on the basis of an analysis of the Uji chapters as a unit or perhaps the *Genji* as a whole. Hence my conclusions in this respect will be tentative and limited. I have selected this particular passage of 'Ukifune' because it is a unit of manageable length for this kind of analysis, because it contains clear shifts in point of view depicted in the interplay of successive interior monologues, and because even within a unit of this length irony is quite evident. I do not mean to suggest that the narrative techniques revealed by my analysis are peculiar to or characteristic of only the 'Ukifune' chapter, as opposed to the rest of the *Genji*; rather, my focusing on this passage may shed some light on the work as a whole. The following is not a polished literary translation but a literal rendering which I hope reflects the syntax of the original sufficiently to make the analysis intelligible.

I have attempted to retain the aspects of the verbs as they appear in the original text to the extent that this is possible, although it is contrary to usual practice. The use of a verbal aspect that roughly corresponds to the present indicative in English is usually explained as a 'historical present' and always translated into the past tense in English; however, changes in verb aspects in Japanese reflect changes in the speaker's relation to the content of the discourse, and thus are important for our study. These shifts in verbal aspect in Japanese narrative works are analogous to the effect of changes in tense in nineteenth-century Russian works pointed out by Boris Uspensky in his detailed examination of point of view, *A Poetics of Composition*. In his discussion of the alternation of verb tenses in Leskov's story, 'Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District', he notes,

. . . the present tense is used to fix the point of view from which the narration is carried out. Each time the present is used, the author's temporal position is synchronic—that is, it coincides with the temporal position of his characters. He is at that moment located in their time. The verbs in the past tense, however, provide a transition between these synchronic sections of the narrative. They describe the conditions which are necessary to the perception of the narrative from the synchronic position.³⁸

A full discussion of Japanese verbal aspects is beyond the scope of this article, but it should be noted that although Uspensky speaks of 'temporal position', this really points to aesthetic distance between narrator and character. Similarly, in the *Genji*, the use of verb aspects that may refer to past time—perfective suffixes such as *-ki*, *-tsu*, *-keri*, *-kemu*—seems to indicate an increase in distance between the narrative voice of the text (and hence the reader) and the characters, while the use of aspects that can be interpreted as referring to the present often appears to effect a decrease in that distance. However, in the *Genji* the correspondence is not nearly so exact as in Leskov's work.³⁹ I have followed the NKBT text.⁴⁰

(1) *Taishōdono, sukoshi nodoka ni narinuru koro, shinobite owashitari. Tera ni hotoke nado ogami-tamau. Mi-zukyō sesase-tamau sō ni, mono-tamai nado shite. . . .*

When things at court had settled down a bit, the major captain, as usual, slipped away inconspicuously and came to Uji. At the temple he worships the Buddhas; to the monk who chants sutras for him, he gives alms and so forth. . . .

The passage opens with an impersonal view of Kaoru; there is no emphatic or exclamatory particle, no verbal suffix, to indicate the narrator's presence.

(2) . . . *yūsugata, koko ni wa shinobitaredo, kore wa wari naku mo yatsushi-tamawazu, ebōshi nōshi no sugata, ito ara-mahoshiku kiyoge nite, ayumi-iri-tamau yori, hazukashige ni, yōi koto nari.*

. . . and toward evening he comes here secretly. However, he, for his part, has not taken great pains to conceal his rank. His figure in informal cap and robe is flawless and refined, and from the time he steps into the room, the care he takes with everything is so special that one feels overwhelmed by his presence.

³⁸ Boris Uspensky, *A Poetics of Composition: The Structure of the Artistic Text and Typology of a Compositional Form*, University of California Press, 1973, p. 71.

³⁹ To my knowledge, no one has discussed the literary significance in shifts from past or perfect aspects to what may be called present aspects of the verb in classical Japanese narrative. There are many linguistic studies of individual verb suffixes, and comparisons of *ki* and *keri*, for instance (see n. 19, above), but they do not deal with the changes in narrative

aspect that I have touched upon above.

⁴⁰ See n. 4, above. The section in question corresponds to vi, 133.7–137.15.

This passage corresponds to Tamagami Takuya, *Genji Monogatari Hyōshaku*, xii, pp. 89–94; Akiyama Ken 秋山虔, ed., *Genji Monogatari (Nihon Koten Zenshū)*, Shōgakukan, 1976, vi, 133.7–136.9; Yamagishi Tokubei 山岸徳平, ed., *Genji Monogatari (Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei 18)*, Iwanami Shoten, 1963, v, 230.12–233.15.

Yūsugata ('toward evening') constitutes a neutral transition, for with *koko ni* ('to here') we move into Ukifune's spatial locus. *Hazukashige* ('one feels overwhelmed') implies a perceiving sensibility; although there is no specific reference to Ukifune, we begin to wonder here who is the subject of this emotion.⁴¹ Moreover, *kore wa* ('he, for his part') is a comparison with Niou, a comparison made perhaps by a narrator but also of course reflecting Kaoru and Niou as seen through Ukifune's eyes. This is brought into sharp focus with the first word of the next sentence, *onna* ('the lady'). The transition from description narration (1), an impersonal view of Kaoru, to Ukifune's thoughts is effected by his spatial movement toward her, by references to her spatial and psychological locus (*koko*, *kore*), and by the adverb *hazukashige*, which strongly suggests a perceiving consciousness within the narrative world that is affected by Kaoru's appearance and behavior.

(3a) *Onna, ika de mie-tatematsuramu to suramu, to, sora sae hazukashiku osoroshiki ni, anagachi narishi hito no ōn-arisama, uchi-omoi-ideraruru ni. . . .*

The lady, wondering, How shall I ever be able to face him? is ashamed, terrified of the sky itself, but in spite of this, she recalls the presence of him who had been so impetuous. . . .

The shift to Ukifune's point of view is confirmed by a brief direct interior monologue, *ika de mie-tatematsuramu to suramu* ('How shall I ever be able to face him?'). Here the point of view of the text coincides with her and the distance between us and Ukifune is reduced to its minimum. We draw away from her a bit with the words, *sora sae hazukashiku osoroshiki ni* ('even the sky itself is terrifying, making her ashamed'), but we can also read it, 'even the sky itself is shame-making, terrifying', taking it as Ukifune's thoughts, so the distance is not great. Ukifune's point of view is maintained in the following passage, to (4), *kokoro-bososa* ('misery'), but the distance between us and her shrinks and stretches as the voice is sometimes clearly Ukifune's, in direct interior monologues, at times farther from her as her monologues become indirect narration.

(3b) . . . *mata kono hito ni mie-tatematsuramu o omoi-yaru namu imijū kokoro-uki. Ware wa toshigoro miru hito o mo, mina omoi-kawarinubeki kokochi namu suru, to notamaishi o, ge ni, sono nochi, mi-kokochi kurushi tote, izuku ni mo izuku ni mo, rei no ōn-arisama narade, mi-zuhō nado sawagu-naru o kiku ni, mata ika ni kikite obosamu. . . .*

. . . even just imagining how could she meet this one is terrible wretchedness. He did say, 'My feelings about all of the ladies I have been seeing for so long seem to be changing completely.' Hearing that, indeed, since that time, saying that he does not feel well, he does not treat any of them as usual, and that people are making a great deal of commotion, saying prayers for his recovery and so forth, I wonder what would he feel if he heard about this?

⁴¹ Tamagami, xii, p. 92, takes this whole clause, from *ayumi-iri-tamau yori* ('when he | steps into the room'), to be Ukifune's point of view.

We can read the above narration as one continuous passage of direct discourse depicting Ukifune's thoughts (. . . *o kiku ni* can also be read as 'when she hears', moving the point of view just outside of Ukifune's range). The words *o omoi-yaru namu imijū kokoro-uki* ('even imagining that is terribly painful') could be interpreted as the voice of the narrator. However, in the entire section I am analyzing, we almost never hear the narrator's voice clearly, so it seems more appropriate to say that in this passage Ukifune's point of view, the narrator's, and our own are so close that at times they are indistinguishable. This is even more effective in reducing the aesthetic distance than removing any such ambiguity. Niou's state after he returns to the capital could not be perceived directly by Ukifune; in order to retain Ukifune's voice here, it is represented as hearsay transmitted to her by some third party—presumably one of her serving women.

There is a brief bit of description, *to omou mo ito kurushi* ('even wondering about this is extremely painful'), and then the narrative voice again coincides with that of Ukifune in an extended passage which directly modifies *kokoro-bososa* ('misery'), a characterization of Ukifune's state not made by her but by the impersonal voice of the speaker of the text:

(3c) *Kono hito hata, ito kawai koto ni, kokoro-bukaku, namamekashiki sama shite, hisashikaritsuru hodo no okotari nado notamau mo, koto ōkazarazu, koishi kanashi to oritatanedo, tsune ni ai-minu koi no kurushisa o, sama yoki hodo ni uchi-notamaeru, imijiku iu ni wa masarite, ito aware, to hito no omoinu-beki sama o, shime-tamaeru hito-gara nari. En naru kata wa saru mono nite, yuku sue nagaku hito no tanominu-beki kokoro-bae nado, koyo naku masari-tamaeri. Omowazu naru sama no kokori-bae nado, mori-kikasetaramu toki nanome narazu imijiku koso abekere. Ayashū, utsushi-gokoro mo nō oboshi-iraruru hito o, aware to omou mo, sore wa ito aru-majiku karoki koto zo ka shi. Kono hito ni ushi to omowarete, wasure-tamainamu. . . .*

But this person, too, has a way with him that is quite out of the ordinary; he is deeply considerate and his figure is graceful, and when he apologizes for his long neglect, his words are few. Although he is not outspoken, exclaiming, 'How precious! How adorable!', his genteel way of speaking of the sorrows of a love in which the two do not often meet is superior to passionate exclamations; his character is such that anyone would certainly think, How moving!, of his figure. His charm is a matter of course. His character is one a woman could depend on for a long time, and is incomparably superior. If he should happen to hear of my own wild infatuation, it would surely be terrible indeed. Even to think longingly of the person who loves me so madly is truly a frivolous thing that must not be. . . .

The absence of emphatic and exclamatory particles in the first half of this section allows us to read it as either Ukifune's point of view or that of the text (and hence ours), as in section (3b). But these weighings of Kaoru's elegant reserve against Niou's effusiveness would seem to be taking place within Ukifune. This is supported

by the use of *kono hito* ('this person') in both (3b) and (3c) (in both cases it refers to Kaoru), which points to Ukifune's spatial and psychological locus. Furthermore, we may also see the lack of emotion in the narration itself (indicated by the sparsity of emphatic expressions) as reflecting the absence of passion in Ukifune's relation to Kaoru. The emphatic constructions toward the end of the passage, *nanome narazu imijiku koso abekere* ('it would surely be terrible indeed') and *ito aru-majiku karoki koto zo ka shi* ('truly a frivolous thing that must not be') stress the presence of the speaker of these expressions, whom I take to be Ukifune, since nothing opposes interpreting the voice as hers. These phrases could be read as expressions of the narrator, but the whole of section (3) is so clearly Ukifune's point of view that I see no reason to think that the narrator suddenly intrudes here.

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|--|--|
| (4) . . . <i>kokoro-bososa wa, ito fukō
shiminikereba, omoi-midaretaru keshi-
ki o . . .</i> | . . . because the misery of being
thought odious and being rejected by
this person sinks into her very deeply,
she is distraught; observing her state,
he thinks . . . |
|--|--|

With *kokoro-bososa* ('misery'), the description of Ukifune's state, we move away from her; it is not she who reasons about it, forming the causal construction, *shiminikereba* ('because it sinks into her'), but the narrator; this direct representation of the reasoning process must be attributed to a personified voice, and not simply to the speaker of the text, which has no persona and thus cannot be the source of a judgment—the formation of a cause-effect statement. The distance between Ukifune and us widens further with the word *keshiki* ('state', 'appearance')—the visible reflection of inner emotion. It is this reflection of Ukifune's inner state that Kaoru sees. The point of view has thus shifted from an internal to an external view of her, and that point of view becomes Kaoru's.⁴²

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|---|---|
| (5) . . . <i>tsuki-goro ni, koyo-nō mono
no kokoro shiri, nebi-masarinikeri,
tsure-zure naru sumika no hodo ni,
omoi-nokosu koto wa araji ka shi. . .</i> | . . . over the past few months, she has
come to understand the true nature of
things and has matured. Because of
the tedious place in which she lives,
her thoughts must certainly leave
nothing unexplored. . . . |
|---|---|

Here the voice is clearly his, as this section is immediately followed by *to mi-tamau* (the quotative particle *to* plus 'he thinks'). His monologue is straightforward and simple syntactically. The verbal suffix *-keri* and exclamatory particles *ka shi* emphasize the presence of a speaking subject.

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|--|---|
| (6) . . . <i>to mi-tamau mo kokoro kuru-
shikireba tsune yori mo kokoro-
todomete katarai-tamau.</i> | . . . , he thinks; since even to see this
is extremely painful, more attentively
than usual he speaks intimately
to her. |
|--|---|

⁴² For definitions of external and internal points of view and a discussion of their functions, see Uspensky, pp. 83–5.

In (6), the point of view shifts slightly from an internal to an external view of Kaoru. Again it can only be the narrator who forms the causal construction.

In the preceding silent exchange between Ukifune and Kaoru we see the pattern of their other, verbal, exchanges. Some external manifestation of Kaoru is the occasion for Ukifune's reflections about him and Niou. On the other hand, her mood, as it appears to Kaoru, is completely misunderstood. He interprets her distress as the result of his failure to visit her frequently enough, and immediately begins to talk about the new life he is planning for her. He blames her mood on the place, the desolation of Uji (*tsure-zure naru sumika no hodo ni*, 'because of the tedious place in which she lives'), and his solution to her problems is a new place. He tries to comfort her as one would a child. When Kaoru speaks to Ukifune directly, he speaks of external things only:

(7) *Tsukurasuru tokoro, yōyō yoroshū shi-nashitekeri. Hito-hi namu mi-shikaba, koko yori wa ke-jikaki mizu ni, hana mo mi-tamaitsu-beshi. Sanjō no miya mo chikaki hodo nari. Akekure obotsukanaki hedate mo, onozukara ara-majiki o, kono haru no hodo ni, sarinu-bekuba watashitemu to omoite-notamau mo . . .*

'The place I am having built for you is gradually taking shape. I saw it the other day, and the river is more agreeable than here and you will also be able to see the cherry blossoms. The Palace of the Third Ward is also near by. The separation between us which is so unsettling, day and night, will, of itself, cease to be. And so, some time this spring, if things go well, I will move you.' When he speaks his thoughts . . .

Although he says he is moved by her pain, he does not address himself directly to her feelings, nor indeed say anything about his own. His speech simply indicates his intentions, and attempts to make her feel more secure about the future. Kaoru's words, like Ukifune's air of distress, do not convey what is behind them; he does not succeed in communicating what he wishes, the stability in his plans for her future, gradually being realized in this building project. Instead, his words serve as an occasion for her recollection of Niou's words and his plans for her:

(8) . . . *kano hito no, nodoka naru-beki tokoro omoi-mōketari, to kinō mo notamaerishi o, kakaru koto mo shirade, sa obosuramu yo to, aware nagara mo, sonata ni nabiku-beki ni wa arazu ka shi, to omou kara ni, arishi ōn-sama no omokage ni oboyureba, ware nagara mo, utate kokoro-u no mi ya, to omoi-tsuzukete nakinu.*

. . . she thinks, That person was saying just yesterday, 'I've thought of a place where you should be able to feel at ease,' but he must be thinking that way without knowing about this situation, and although it is heart-rending, I certainly must not yield to him. While she thinks this, an image of the way he had looked rises up before her and she has to admit to herself, What a wretched lot!, and continuing to feel this way, she bursts into tears.

The contrast between Kaoru's words and Ukifune's thoughts about Niou is stressed by the syntactic connection between them: *notamau mo kano hito no . . . to kinō mo notamaerishi* ('when he says this, she thinks, That person was saying just yesterday. . .'). The transition from one voice to the other is provided by Kaoru's words. Direct speech does not function here in the expected way, as a means of conveying the thoughts of one person to another. That function is denied here by the juxtaposition of Kaoru's words and Ukifune's thoughts of Niou. She does not, however, totally ignore Kaoru's words; she takes something from them (the idea that he is planning to move her into the city) and her own feelings develop around that kernel. In a similar way she uses the imagery and diction of the poems addressed to her to reject what they say. With the word *nakinu* ('she bursts into tears') the distance widens once more between us and Ukifune, and we see what Kaoru sees and responds to: the visible manifestation of her inner state. But even though he sees the external signs, the real source of her outburst is not communicated to him—her despair at what she believes to be the necessity to reject Niou and at the same time her inability to do so. Again Kaoru misunderstands the expression of this despair and interprets it as unhappiness at his neglect.

We have seen in sections (5) and (6) that Kaoru is saddened by what he considers her new-found maturity, her new understanding of human relations. He feels responsible for having left her alone so long in so inhospitable a place, but at the same time he seems to long for the old calm and compliant Ukifune:

(9) *Mi-kokoro-bae no, kakarade
oiraka narishi koso, nodoka ni ureshi-
kari-shika. Hito no ika ni kikoe-
shirasetaru koto ka aru. Sukoshi mo
oroka naramu kokorozashi nite wa,
kō made mairi-ku-beki, mi no hodo
michi no arisama ni mo aranu o
nado . . .*

'When your disposition was not like this and was calm, I was relaxed and happy. What have people been telling you? If my intentions were in the least bit frivolous, neither my own position nor the condition of the road is such that I could come here like this.'
Saying things like this . . .

Her earlier submissiveness is giving way to something that he can neither control nor understand. Perhaps he senses something contrary in her outburst (indeed it is her longing for Niou and deception of Kaoru that are the source of her agony). He frequently, if not always, thinks of her as a substitute for Oigimi, but when she asserts her own identity by not conforming to an expected pattern, he can no longer manipulate her for his own ends—that is, treat her as an image of Oigimi. Not only do his words fail to communicate reassurance to her, but as if to emphasize the distance between them, he seems not to expect a reply from her. He moves away from her and lies down by the veranda, directing his attention away from her:

(10) . . . *tsuitachi-goro no yūzūkuyo
ni, sukoshi hashi-chikaku fushite naga-
me-idashi-tamaeri. Otoko wa, sugi-
nishi kata no aware o mo oboshi-idete,*

. . . as it was a moonlight evening around the first of the month, he lay down near the edge of the veranda and was gazing out. The man recalls his

onna wa, ima yori soitaru mi no usa o nageki-kuwaete, katami ni mono-omowashi.

longing for the past, while the lady laments the new grief that has been added to her lot, and each is sunk in painful thoughts.

Kaoru's monologue (9) serves as a transition away from Ukifune's view, but in (10), rather than shifting the narrative voice to Kaoru, both he and Ukifune are described neutrally. The words *katami ni mono-omowashi* ('each is sunk in painful thoughts') crystallize the ironic distance between the two, and between them and us: we know that Ukifune is thinking of Niou and Kaoru of Oigimi, but neither of them has any idea of the other's thoughts (nor do they seem to care here). The neutral perspective provides a bridge to what appears to be a purely descriptive passage:

(11) *Yama no kata wa kasumi-hedatete, samuki susaki ni tateru kasa-sagi no sugata mo, tokoro-gara wa ito okashū miyuru ni, Uji-bashi no haru-baru to mi-watararuru ni, shiba-tsumi-bune no tokoro-dokoro ni yuki-chigaitaru nado, hoka nite me-narenu koto-domo nomi tori-atsumetaru tokoro nareba, mi-tamau tabigoto ni, nao, sono kami no koto no tadaima no kokochi shite, ito kakaranu hito o mi-kawashitaramu dani, mezurashiki naka no aware ōkaru-beki hodo nari. Maite koishiki hito ni yosoeraretaru mo, koyo nakarazu, yōyō mono no kokoro shiri, miyako-nareyuku ari-sama no okashiki mo, koyo naku mi-masarishitaru kokochi shi-tamau ni. . . .*

. . . the mountains are shrouded in mist, and the figure of a crested heron standing on a cold sandspit—because of the character of the place—seems especially lovely; Uji Bridge can be seen in the distance, and boats piled high with brushwood ply back and forth; because it is a place where only things like this are brought together, things he is used to seeing nowhere else, every time he looks at it those days past seem present to him; even if he were exchanging glances with someone who was not like this, the rare sympathy between them would surely be deep. But as she is the very image of someone dear to him, it is all the more special. Gradually she has come to understand the nature of things. He feels that the charm of her appearance, which has become more sophisticated, is now beyond compare. . . .

This depiction of the river scenery at Uji seems at the beginning to be pure description narration, but gradually the reader senses the presence of a perceiving subject which at last becomes focused on Kaoru. The clause *ito okashū miyuru* ('seems especially lovely') implies a subject to which it so seems; with the clause, *shiba-tsumi-bune no tokoro-dokoro ni yuki-chigaitaru nado, hoka nite me-narenu koto-domo nomi tori-atsumetaru tokoro nareba* ('because it is a place where only things he is used to seeing nowhere else, like boats piled high with brushwood plying back and forth, are brought together'), we know that it is Kaoru who is perceiving this scene. His feeling that the past is present is not only explained to

us in this passage but shown to us directly (if we are good readers): Kaoru gazes at a similar scene the first time he exchanges poems with Oigimi, when he watches small boats laden with firewood passing back and forth and reflects on the transience of human life.⁴³

The past and present exist simultaneously both for Kaoru and for us, but while this juxtaposition enhances his enjoyment of the present, for us the effect is quite different. We cannot help but sense his distance from Ukifune, a gulf created by his longing for the past. Although we, too, see the Uji River through his eyes, our point of view does not quite coincide with his. This ambiguity is present also in the text: while the point of view is clearly Kaoru's, the voice never becomes so. Verbs of seeing (*mi-wataruru*, 'can be seen in the distance', and *me-narenu*, 'not used to seeing'), which have no honorific suffixes attached to them, can be interpreted as general statements, while verbs that can refer only to Kaoru as the subject end in the honorific *tamau* (*mi-tamau tabigoto ni*, 'every time he looks', and *kokochi shi-tamau ni*, 'he feels'). These honorifics reflect the narrator's point of view and consciousness of Kaoru's rank—a narrator who speaks about Kaoru from a standpoint very close to him. But in another clause in which we would expect a similar honorific, there is none: *sono kami no koto no tadaima no kokochi shite* ('those days past seem present to him'), suggesting that the voice here is Kaoru's own (in which case we might read it, 'those days past seem present to me'), as do the following clauses. However, the usual signs of direct interior monologue are missing (exclamatory and emphatic particles, and verbal suffixes that point to the presence of a speaking subject), nor does the passage end with a quotative particle, but becomes an extended modifier for *kokochi shi-tamau* ('he feels'). Here, the honorific suffix indicates the narrator's voice. The transition from (10) to (11) is reflected from a neutral point of view, thus minimizing the syntactic break at *omowashi* ('lost in thought'). Although there is one conclusive form (*shūshikei*) within the passage describing Kaoru's feelings ('*hodo nari*'), there is no shift in point of view here; so again the syntactic break is de-emphasized. Syntactic units do not correspond closely here with shifts in perspective. Hence these shifts take place within the almost unbroken flow of words.

(12) . . . *onna wa, kaki-atsumetaru
kokoro no uchi ni moyōsaruru namida
to mo sureba ide-tatsu o. . . .*

. . . but on the lady's part, the tears
which have welled up because of her
accumulated feelings are about to
fall. . . .

Although Ukifune's feelings are described to us, we see barely more of her than Kaoru himself can see. The source of her pain is not stated here because it is not visible to him. Again he misinterprets her distress, thinking she is upset by his negligence.

Kaoru's poem characteristically includes no expression of emotion, no direct statement of his own feelings:

⁴³ v, 'Hashihime' ('The Lady at the Bridge'), 141.8–11.

- (13a) . . . *nagusame-kane-tamaitsumu*, . . . but being unable to comfort her,
Uji-bashi no he says, ‘The enduring vow of Uji
nagaki chigiri wa Bridge will not decay. Don’t let your
kuchiseji o heart be torn by what you fear. Now
ayabumu kata ni you will surely see—’
kokoro sawagu na.
Ima mi-tamaitemu to notamau.

In verse, as in prose, Kaoru’s speech is unadorned. This is evident if we compare Kaoru’s poem with that of Niou about the snow (see p. 389, above). The former is a straightforward request that she not hesitate to rely on him. In her answering poem, although she has not misunderstood, she rejects his attempt to comfort her.

- (13b) *Taema nomi* ‘There is nothing but gaps in this
yo ni wa ayōki world. Are you really telling me to
Uji-bashi o rely on that dangerous Uji Bridge as
kuchisenu mono to something that will not decay?’
nao tanome to ya

Ukifune deliberately misleads him by implying that she cannot depend on him, thus reinforcing his previous misinterpretation of her state. In this way, her poem also fails to communicate. We see the poem without an accompanying view of her thoughts; it is thus seen from Kaoru’s point of view. We have no access to her real reaction to his poem because he himself does not. Although there are subtle shifts in voice, the point of view remains with Kaoru.

He does not reply to Ukifune’s expression of insecurity. Although he finds it harder than ever to leave her, his concern over what people would say if he stayed longer overrides any sense of her feelings:

- (13c) *Sakizaki yori mo ito mi-* It is more difficult to leave her than
sutegataku, shibashi mo tachi-tomara- ever, and although he feels he would
mahoshiku obosaruredo, hito no like to stay even for a little while
mono-ii no yasukaranu ni, ima sara longer, since he is uneasy about what
nari, kokoro-yasuki sama nite koso, people might say, making an effort to
nado oboshi-sashite, akatsuki ni kaeri- think, It would be foolish now. When
tamainu. Ito yō mo otonabitaritsuru I can relax . . . , at dawn he returned
ka na, to, kokoro-gurushiku oboshi- to the capital. Recollecting, She
izuru koto, arishi ni masarikeri. certainly has grown up, was more
 painful than ever.

Here again, the point of view is Kaoru’s throughout, but the voice varies, sometimes coinciding with his, sometimes reflecting the narrator’s presence. The first two clauses (through *tachi-tomara-mahoshiku*, ‘wanting to stay’), which in the Japanese are parallel adverbial constructions, constitute an indirect monologue. Following *obosaruredo* (‘although he feels’), we see his thoughts directly. The last direct quotation of his thoughts, *ito yō mo otonabitaritsuru ka na* (‘she certainly has

grown up'), also re-emphasizes his lack of understanding of her. Thus even in passages in which we are linguistically closest to a character, when the narrative voice is wholly his, we are conscious of ironic distance. The distance between us and Kaoru is stressed by the closing of the whole section, marked by the verbal suffix *-keri*. Here, the narrator describes Kaoru's feelings, *to, kokoro-gurushiku oboshi-izuru koto arishi ni masarikeri* ('recollecting . . . was more painful than ever'), which we know to be based on a misunderstanding, and rounds off the sentence in a way that points both to the presence of the narrating voice and to the fact of narration. The section thus concludes in a way that is typical of many of the chapters of the *Genji*, where by various means the narrative points to itself.⁴⁴

From Analysis of the Text to Interpretation of the Work: First Steps

FROM the above analysis of narrative voice in a short section of 'Ukifune', it is possible to form a synthesis of the insight gained from it about each of the two characters, a synthesis which is at the same time an interpretation of the text. Obviously there are aspects of Kaoru and Ukifune that do not appear at all in this passage; thus my remarks are necessarily tentative. In order to interpret fully even this small part of the text, we must read it in light of the rest of the Uji chapters, if not the *Genji* as a whole. Although I have attempted to limit my analysis to the selected passage, the interdependent structure of the text has required that I refer to an earlier chapter in order to make a particular scene intelligible.⁴⁵ But we can gain a considerable degree of understanding of the mutual relationship of the two characters from an examination of this brief section.

The first glimpse we see of Ukifune shows us that she responds negatively to Kaoru. This is quite clear from her first interior monologue, and is also suggested by the preceding transitional passage that describes the impression he makes on some, as yet unnamed, observer. Her embarrassment and fear of Kaoru are contrasted with her passionate love for Niou, whose warmth is repeatedly reflected in Ukifune's thoughts about him. While she notes, one by one, the praiseworthy aspects of Kaoru's character, her frequent attempts to suppress her memories of Niou and her feelings for him leave no doubt that it is Niou that she loves.⁴⁶

But it is not only Ukifune who responds without passion to Kaoru's calmer virtues. We also see him as she does. The opening section (1) shows us his dispassionate nature; his situation is described as *nodoka nari* ('calm')—Kaoru himself is referred to by the same adjective at the beginning of the chapter (vi, 99.10). He

⁴⁴ Earl Miner, 'Narrative Units in the *Genji Monogatari*: "Ukifune" in its Context', unpublished manuscript.

⁴⁵ This very necessity to refer back to other parts of the text makes it clear that the *Genji* is essentially a *written* work. See the reference to Tamagami's theory of the work as performance, pp. 375–76, above.

⁴⁶ For a discussion of Ukifune as she appears throughout the Uji chapters, and in particular her relations to Kaoru and Niou, see Takahashi Tōru, '*Sonzai-kankaku no Shisō*: "Ukifune" ni tsuite' 存在感覚の思想: 「浮舟」について, in *Nihon Bungaku*, xxiv:11 (November 1975), pp. 79–80. Takahashi supports my reading of Ukifune's feelings.

presents a striking contrast to Niou, who, in the immediately preceding passage, thinks he will die of love (vi, 133. 5–6). Kaoru, on the other hand, is in no great hurry to see Ukifune. When business matters are not too pressing, he finds time to go to Uji; when he arrives, he does not rush immediately to her quarters but goes first to the temple, prays, spends some time with the priests, and, finally, when he has taken care of these other responsibilities, he stops in to see her. The very absence of interior monologue here suggests that he is not thinking of anything relevant to the story of Ukifune.

When his thoughts are exposed to us, two points emerge clearly: his repeated misunderstanding of Ukifune, and his preoccupation with Oigimi. We cannot censure Kaoru for not knowing the real source of Ukifune's unhappiness, but because we do know we cannot simply accept Kaoru's judgment that she has matured; that judgment is based on ignorance. Rather than being pleased by this change in her, he reproaches her for it, for she no longer responds in the way he expects, and he cannot control her. Kaoru is deceiving Ukifune in not telling her about his attachment to Oigimi, and deceiving himself in continuing to see Ukifune as an image of Oigimi. The ironic distance thus established between us and Kaoru prevents our identifying with him too closely, and in effect prevents our taking Kaoru as the hero of the Uji chapters. His longest interior monologue in the chapter, when he discovers the deception of Ukifune and Niou (vi, 165–167), reveals some of the most unattractive aspects of his character, reinforcing the irony.

It is not only Kaoru who practices deception. Ukifune's agitation provokes his poem, an attempt to console her. But her answering poem, far from revealing her real emotions as we have seen them through her interior monologues, conceals the conflicts within her. According to her poem, she doubts the endurance of Kaoru's vow; however, we know that it is not his unreliability that distresses her, but her own and Niou's. It is the very fact of Kaoru's dependability which makes him so clearly a better potential husband than Niou, that requires her to reject Niou and creates her conflict. Ukifune's words are opposed to her feelings. This contrast becomes vivid for us through the juxtaposition of two forms of direct utterance—direct speech (here in the form of a poem) and direct interior monologue, the latter supported by narrated dialogue. If descriptive narration had been our only source of information about her thoughts, we would not feel the contrast with the words so strongly as we do when we see her thoughts directly, from her own point of view. Because we see directly, we understand the irony of her poem. It is more difficult to understand Ukifune's role in the work than it is to evaluate our relation to Kaoru. At times we may identify with her, but, in the end, we stand apart from her. While we may view her with sympathy, it is mixed with censure toward her indecisiveness. However, the distance we thus experience is not of the same quality as the sharp irony with which we must regard Kaoru's protestations of fidelity and piety. Ultimately, our point of view and that of the work as a whole do not coincide with that of any of the characters in the Uji chapters. Through the use of multiple points of view, by placing in apposition the consciousnesses of Ukifune and Kaoru,

we are distanced from both of them. The irony of their words thus becomes vivid.

The narrative voice shifts, then, from character to character, to descriptive narration, to the voice of a narrator. While interior monologue brings us face to face with the characters, descriptive narration provides a background against which we see them as objects, on the one hand, and on the other confronts us with what the characters themselves see. The latter kind of description begins as narration in which the voice is not personified, but as the passage proceeds the point of view becomes that of one of the characters. Thus, to a certain extent, descriptive narration serves to move us away from the characters, insofar as their movements and thoughts are described in summary. But as this kind of description (particularly of nature) takes on the intonation and orientation of a certain character, we move closer to him, and when the narrative voice then blends with his in direct interior monologue, we face him directly.

However, when the voice is personified as a narrator, the distancing effect is stronger than in passages of description. The auxiliary verb *-keri* calls attention to the presence of a personified subject, that is, a narrating voice, particularly in conjunction with the emphatic particles *namu*, *zo*, and *koso*. In addition, there are auxiliary verbs such as *-beshi*, *-meri*, and *-kemu*, which indicate conjecture on the part of the narrating voice about the subject of the main verb (see p. 382, above). For example, in the expression *omoi-yoru nari-kemu ka shi* (vi, 177.3, 'it must be that she thought of it'), it is not the subject of the verb 'thinks' (here, Ukifune) that speculates, but the narrator who is explaining Ukifune's thinking. Causal constructions perform the same role. This kind of speculation about a character's motives or actions places the narrator within the same dimension as the character (that is, the narrator is not omniscient) and at the same time objectifies him, thus creating distance between us and him. The technique has close parallels in *To the Lighthouse*.⁴⁷ In Auerbach's words, Woolf is deliberately 'obscuring and even obliterating the impression of an objective reality completely known to the author' precisely in order to create a more real reality.⁴⁸ In the *Genji*, also, the very humanness of the narrator who wonders about Ukifune's motivations functions to establish the reality of the fictional world.

As the voice of the narrator becomes more insistent, unquestionably distinct from that of the character being described and obviously personified, the character is objectified and our distance from him is at its maximum.⁴⁹ We can see this in the sentence, *kano mimi todome-tamaishi hito-koto wa, motomai-idenu zo nikuki ya*

⁴⁷ See especially the famous passage beginning, 'Never did anybody look so sad': Woolf, p. 46.

⁴⁸ Auerbach, p. 472.

⁴⁹ Konishi, pp. 53 ff., discusses the creation of aesthetic distance in the *Genji* by means of the manipulation of point of view and the use of personified narrators. He states, however, that in general the point of view in the *Genji* is

omniscient, with which I cannot agree. There is a fundamental difference between omniscient narration, which implies a consistent point of view throughout a text and at the same time a *personified* subject of expression that freely makes judgments about the characters, and the kind of multiple-point-of-view narration that characterizes the *Genji* and the novels of Woolf, Faulkner, and Joyce.

(vi, 145. 7–8, ‘it is really hateful that he does not mention that word that caught his ear’), in which the narrator condemns Niou for not mentioning to Ukifune that he overheard Kaoru repeating a poem about his longing for the lady of Uji Bridge.⁵⁰ Both of these techniques of distancing—descriptive narration and narrator’s commentary—are relatively infrequent in ‘Ukifune’ in comparison to other chapters of the *Genji*; however, they do occur often enough to form a significant aspect of the narrative method in ‘Ukifune’.

Thus the shifting of narrative voice in ‘Ukifune’, in contrast to similar techniques in Virginia Woolf’s *To the Lighthouse*, while drawing us closer to the characters within their world also creates irony and controls the aesthetic distance among the characters themselves, and between the fictional world and us, the readers. A study of narrative voice in the *Genji* as a whole should indicate an increasing refinement in the uses of aesthetic distance and irony; even on the basis of a cursory reading, there seems to be a fundamental difference between the degree and consistency of the irony directed toward Hikaru Genji and the distance between us and the major characters in the Uji chapters, particularly Kaoru. However, such conclusions must be the result of a much broader critical examination of the *Genji*. I have confined myself in the present study to a selected passage from the ‘Ukifune’ chapter. Although my analysis is extremely limited, it has revealed important elements in the relationships of major characters within the fictional world as well as significant aspects of narrative method.

⁵⁰ Similar expressions by the narrator about the characters occur throughout the chapter. | See vi, 139.7–9; 149.12–13; 162.14–15; 169.12; 177.1–3.