

Yuriwaka and Ulysses

The Homeric Epics at the Court of Ōuchi Yoshitaka

by JAMES T. ARAKI

I. *The Problem*

THE medieval Japanese narrative *Yuriwaka Daijin* ('The Great Lord Yuriwaka') is a fictional elaboration of the historical account of the Mongol invasion of Japan in the thirteenth century. The hero of the story is a young nobleman by the name of Yuriwaka—or Yurikusawaka, the probable original pronunciation.¹

Yuriwaka is selected by the gods of Japan to command the Japanese forces in the war against the Mongols. He sets sail with a mighty fleet and, after a three-year stalemate at sea midway between Japan and the Asian continent, destroys the Mongol fleet in a sudden battle in which Shinto and Buddhist deities come to his aid. On the return voyage, Yuriwaka stops at a bleak, uninhabited island far off the coast of Japan. While he is in a death-like sleep his deputy, Beppu, sails away with the fleet, abandoning him there to die of starvation. But Yuriwaka survives, and three years later the gods intercede and enable him to return to Japan. He is so changed in appearance that not even his most devoted servants recognize him. Beppu meanwhile not only has usurped the position of lord of the province but also has been insinuating his affections on Yuriwaka's wife, a woman of great beauty. But he is informed that she may not remarry until she fulfills her vow to transcribe a sacred Buddhist text one thousand times. Yuriwaka, who has

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Calendric conversions are based on Naimu-shō Chirikyoku 内務省地理局, ed., *Sansei Sōran* 三正綜覽, Geirinsha, Kamakura, 1973. Dates cited are from the Julian Calendar.

¹ In the oldest extant texts the name is rendered in Chinese graphs as 百合草若大臣, which ordinarily would be read *yurikusa-waka daijin*. The shorter 百合若大臣, read *yuri-waka daijin*, has gained currency.

been serving as a menial in Beppu's mansion, eventually establishes his identity by stringing a remarkably stiff iron bow, his own, and then punishes the faithless deputy.

Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859–1935),² Japan's first scholar of English fiction and drama, noticed the similarity between the story of Yuriwaka and that of Ulysses. In 1906, he published an article in which he described a number of parallels, and in conclusion stated: 'Without a doubt the story of Yuriwaka is essentially an adaptation of the general plot of the *Odyssey*, and we may only wonder from what country, and by whom and when, the latter story was transmitted to our country.'³

What Tsubouchi considered a certainty has been viewed with skepticism by four of Japan's most illustrious scholars, each preeminent in his field—Tsuda Sōkichi (1873–1961) in Japanese history, Yanagita Kunio (1875–1962) in folklore, Takano Tatsuyuki (1876–1947) in Japanese drama, and Watsuji Tetsurō (1889–1960) in philology and ethics.⁴ Their objections, detailed in Section IV below, have gained considerable currency collectively as almost magisterial repudiation of Tsubouchi's proposed Yuriwaka-Ulysses equation.

A survey of standard references on Japanese folklore is revealing. In the article 'Yuriwaka' in the *Minzokugaku Jiten* ('Dictionary of Folklore Studies') we read: 'Tsubouchi Shōyō asserted that the legend of Yuriwaka was based on the imported story of Ulysses in Greek mythology [sic]; he was wrong.'⁵ The thirteen-volume *Nihon Minzokugaku Taikei* ('Compendium of Japanese Folklore Studies') contains only this passing reference to the topic: 'Tsubouchi Shōyō asserted that the story of Yuriwaka was based on the imported story of Ulysses, and his thesis has gained some acceptance; Kanaseki Takeo, however, has published several essays on this, and asserted that the story was brought to Japan from India (see his *Mokuba to Sekigyū*).'⁶ The article on Yuriwaka in a more recent dictionary of Japanese folklore, *Nihon Minzoku Jiten*, does not even mention Tsubouchi or Ulysses.⁷

Tsubouchi might have been convincing had he been methodical in both his investigation and his presentation of parallels between the two stories. In citing motifs in the story of Yuriwaka, regrettably he made no distinction between those in an early textual version of *Yuriwaka Daijin* and those in later fanciful accretions.⁸

² 坪内逍遙

³ Tsubouchi Shōyō, 'Yuriwaka Densetsu no Hongen' 百合若伝説の本源, in *Waseda Bungaku* 早稲田文学, ser. III, No. 1 (Jan. 1906), 134–43. The quotation is from pp. 140–1.

⁴ 津田左右吉, 柳田国男, 高野辰之, 和辻哲郎

⁵ Minzokugaku Kenkyūjo 民俗学研究所, ed., *Minzokugaku Jiten* 民俗学辞典, Tōkyōdō, 1951, p. 653.

⁶ *Nihon Minzokugaku Taikei* 日本民俗学大系, Heibonsha, 1959, x, p. 91. The views of Kanaseki Takeo 金関丈夫 are expressed in his *Mokuba to Sekigyū* 木馬と石牛, enlarged ed., Kadokawa Shoten, 1975, pp. 47–63; his views are discussed in sections III and IV below.

⁷ Ōtsuka Minzokugaku-kai 大塚民俗学会, ed., *Nihon Minzoku Jiten* 日本民俗事典, Kōbunkan, 1972, p. 777.

⁸ Tsubouchi relied mainly on the text of *Yuriwaka Daijin* included in the *Mai no Hon* 舞の本, a collection compiled perhaps as early as 1593 but no later than 1609. That particular text, dated the 6th day, sixth month, 1593, by the copyist, was inspected by Sasano Ken 笹野堅, author of *Kōwaka-bukyoku Shū* 幸若舞曲集, 2 vols., Daiichi Shobō, 1943 (see I, p. 327); it may have been lost during World War II, and I have not been able to locate it. The oldest manuscript copy of *Yuriwaka Daijin* is part of the Daigashira Sahei 大頭左兵衛

Although he might have sought parallels in the full story of Ulysses, he restricted himself to that portion presented in the *Odyssey*. Still, Tsubouchi managed to present seven parallels in motifs, and this might have convinced his readers if only he could have demonstrated a parallel also in the sequence in which the motifs occur.

A well-ordered comparison of the stories of Yuriwaka and Ulysses demonstrates clearly—I would say beyond a doubt—that Tsubouchi was indeed right. If we are to dispel the prevalent, contrary scholarly consensus, we must first concern ourselves with detecting all significant parallels, of which there are about twenty, and citing them sequentially. The comparison will be between the earliest known version of *Yuriwaka Daijin* (the Daigashira Sahei text) and the well-known story of Ulysses that incorporates material from both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, as well as the background material originally covered by the Epic Cycle and elaborated by later Greek and Roman poets and playwrights.

Several observations included in my commentaries are based on the presumption, discussed fully in subsequent sections of this paper, that the story of Ulysses may have been introduced to Japan sometime around 1550 by the Jesuits, and that the narrative *Yuriwaka Daijin* was written shortly thereafter. The text of *Yuriwaka Daijin* is one of the fifty in the repertory of the *kōwakamai*, a performing art that flourished in the late sixteenth century, at which time it was competitive with the noh drama.⁹

II. *The Parallels: Yuriwaka and Ulysses*

Parallel 1

Yuriwaka

Kimmitsu, Senior Minister of Japan, prays fervently to the bodhisattva Kannon that he may be blessed with an heir, and his prayers are answered. His wife, barren until then, gives birth to a boy child.

Ulysses

Before the infant was named Ulysses, his nurse had suggested a name meaning ‘much-prayed for’ to Autolycus, who had prayed often to the gods that his daughter might present him with a grandson. [*Odyssey*: xix, 404.]

Commentary. The motif of being thus blessed by a deity is a universal one and is seen frequently in traditional Japanese literature and drama. This parallel might, therefore, be considered fortuitous.

collection of *kōwakamai* texts, which Sasano dated ‘late Muromachi’ (the 1540s through the 1560s) on the basis of the thorough examination of all extant texts (see Sasano, I, pp. 306–9 & 505–7); it is reprinted in its entirety in

Sasano, II, pp. 51–72.

⁹ For a historical and textual study of the *kōwakamai* 幸若舞 see James T. Araki, *The Ballad-Drama of Medieval Japan*, University of California Press, 1964.

Parallel 2

Yuriwaka

The boy is named Yurikusa-waka ('Lily-Grass Youth'). 'Waka' was a common suffix in Japanese names of boys and adult male entertainers, but 'Yurikusa' was unique and has remained unique. It might have been considered outlandish, for the aesthetically agreeable Yuri-waka ('Lily Youth') seems to have acquired immediate currency.¹⁰

Ulysses

Urukusesu is the likeliest Japanese transliteration of Ulixes (probably pronounced *ulikses* by Europeans who spoke Latin), the name by which the Greek Odysseus was known in Latin. Some Portuguese may have pronounced it *ulissas*, the closest Japanese phonetic approximation of which would have been *urishasu*; but more on this in Sections III and V.

Parallel 3

Yuriwaka

The gods who dwell in Takamagahara ('High Plain of Heaven') gather in council to discuss the war with the Mongols and select Yuriwaka to command the Japanese forces. Their decision is revealed through a medium (*miko*).

Ulysses

The gods on Mt Olympus hold council regularly to discuss the affairs of mortals. [*Iliad, Odyssey: passim.*] The thoughts of Apollo are revealed to the Greeks through Chalchas, reader of dreams. [*Iliad: 1, 68-100.*]

Commentary. This episode of Japanese gods holding council to deliberate the affairs of mortals is a unique occurrence in Japanese history and literature. The passage reads: 'All the gods beneath the heavens assembled on the High Plain of Heaven and often held council to discuss the war.'¹¹ We read in the *Kojiki* (712) of the Sun Goddess interceding in the affairs of such imperial figures as Jimmu, Chūai, and Empress Jingū,¹² but never of gods gathered in council in the manner of the Olympian gods.

There is an enigmatic poem by Kakinomoto no Hitomaro (fl. 680-710) that contains a phrase (graphs 8-10 of Poem No. 2033 in the *Man'yōshū*) to which scholars have assigned various readings including *kami tsu tsudohi wa* ('the course of gods is . . .').¹³ Allowing this unusual interpretation, the gods in this

¹⁰ Yuriwaka, rather than Yurikusawaka, is the choice of Yamashina Tokitsugu 山科言繼 (1507-79), whose diary, the *Tokitsugu-kyō Ki* 言繼卿記, contains the first notice of a recitation of this narrative; see the entry for the 5th day, first month, 1551, cited in Sasano, 1, p. 75.

¹¹ Sasano, II, p. 53.

¹² 古事記, 神武, 仲哀, 神功

¹³ 柿本人磨, 万葉集, 神饒者. See Kamo no Mabuchi 賀茂真淵, *Man'yō Kō* 万葉考, in Kokugakuin Henshūbu 国学院編輯部, ed., *Kamo no Mabuchi Zenshū*, Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 6 vols., 1903-6, III, p. 2482. The variant reading in *Kokka Taikan* 国歌大観, p. 750, is *kamu tsu tsudohi wa*. I am grateful to Professor Earl Miner for having directed my attention to this unusual poem.

instance would be seen disporting themselves rather than holding serious council, for the poem is on the theme of *tanabata*, or the celebration of the yearly meeting of separated lovers symbolized by two stars on opposite sides of the Milky Way.

Unique, too, in the Japanese tradition is the motif of a mortal being given the right of leadership directly by the gods. Such would not be considered exceptional in the Greek instance; the *Iliad* informs us on several occasions that the great King Agamemnon, leader of the Greeks, obtains his right from the Olympian gods.

Parallel 4

Yuriwaka

The Japanese fleet of eighty thousand ships sets sail for the Asian continent to chastise the Mongols, whose chieftain's arrow had struck a sacred horse.

Ulysses

The Greeks on a thousand ships sail across the Aegean Sea intent on destroying the city of Troy to avenge themselves against Paris, abductor of Helen.

Commentary. The Mongols were encamped in Tsukushi (Kyushu) as they actually had been in the thirteenth century, but the gods again held council and sent forth a wind that forced them to sail away. The Japanese in early history had fought to retain hegemony over the southern tip of Korea. But the motif of sailing across the sea to pursue a war between nations is unique in Japanese fiction.

Parallel 5

Yuriwaka

Yuriwaka leaves his wife in Tsukushi even though she begs to be taken along.

Ulysses

Ulysses leaves Penelope in Ithaca; the Greeks in the *Iliad* abstain from sexual relations with women.¹⁴

Commentary. Neither the Japanese nor the Greeks took their women along with them on overseas campaigns, and so this parallel might be considered fortuitous if taken singly. But it is interesting to note the analogy between the motifs of refusal and abstention.

Parallel 6

Yuriwaka

The Japanese and the Mongols are stalemated at sea for three years.

Ulysses

The Greeks and Trojans are stalemated on land for nine years.

Commentary. The *Iliad* begins as the war is entering its tenth year. Because archaeological excavations have shown that Troy at the time of the Trojan War (site of

¹⁴ See Gilbert Murray, *The Rise of the Greek Epic*, Oxford U.P., 3rd ed., 1924, pp. 132-3.

Troy VII-A) was probably a fortress of modest size rather than a large city, it would seem that the time period as well as the scale of the war has been exaggerated for literary effect. In the Japanese tradition, a stalemate at sea, with opposing fleets fixed in position warfare for three years, would be an incredible exaggeration. The Japanese author in this instance may have been inclined to sustain the parallel with the story of the Trojan War.

Parallel 7

Yuriwaka

The climactic battle follows on a test of magical powers between the Mongols, who lay down a long-lasting fog, and the Japanese gods, who send forth a mighty wind to blow it clear. Yuriwaka, by his own design, leads a band of only eighteen men against the entire enemy fleet; the magical powers of Buddhist deities make them invincible. Then all the Japanese join in the attack and annihilate all but one-fourth of the Mongols, who are spared and allowed to return home.

Ulysses

Amidst much bickering among the Olympian gods, divided into supporters of the Greeks and of the Trojans, Zeus precipitates the final, climactic series of battles by sending a false dream to Agamemnon, promising him victory if he attacks. Ulysses designs the strategy of concealing himself and a small band of Greeks in the Wooden Horse. These men open the gates of Troy from within, allowing the Greek army to march in and take the sleeping Trojans by surprise and capture the city.

Commentary. Wars are usually ended by climactic battles. This episode in the story of Yuriwaka, however, contains unusual motifs that set it apart from comparable episodes in the usual Japanese tale of wars. The contention between opposing supernatural forces is a unique motif. Very unusual—even inexplicable unless we recognize the intent to sustain the parallel with the tale of Troy—is the motif of a band of only nineteen men challenging an enemy fleet of 40,000 vessels without tactical justification; they do so simply because Yuriwaka ‘said he had reasons to believe he should not attack with a massive force.’ Yuriwaka and Ulysses are both instigators of the plan to employ a small body of men to precipitate a grand, decisive battle. In both traditions survivors are mentioned.

Parallel 8

Yuriwaka

Yuriwaka sails homeward, bound for the Island of Tsukushi.

Ulysses

Ulysses sets sail for home, the Island of Ithaca.

Commentary. Once the warfare is over the generals would return home unless there are reasons that compel them either to remain or to travel elsewhere. This parallel may, if taken by itself, be considered fortuitous.

Parallel 9

Yuriwaka

Yuriwaka puts his fleet in at a small desolate island and there falls into a deep sleep for three days. Beppu decides to kill him and claim the rewards of victory for himself. Because his brother objects to killing, he instead abandons Yuriwaka and sails away. Yuriwaka awakes and finds himself deserted on strange, forsaken shores.

Ulysses

Ulysses, being escorted from Phaiacia back to Ithaca, falls into a deep death-like sleep aboard the ship. When the ship reaches land, the crew carries him ashore, and then sails away. When Ulysses awakes he finds himself deserted on strange, forsaken shores. He does not know that Athena has disguised the land. [*Odyssey*: xviii, 187–221.]

Commentary. Here we have a noticeable departure from the narrative line of the story of Ulysses' wandering. Although I have cited a parallel in Book xviii of the *Odyssey* because the similarity is striking, this episode in *Yuriwaka Daijin* probably represents a conflation of several like episodes in the *Odyssey*: upon landing on the island of Cyclops, Ulysses sleeps heavily until the dawn; on the way from the island of Aeolus and with Ithaca in close view, he falls into a deep sleep, and his men open the bag of Winds, preventing his return; on the Island of the Sun, he falls into a deep sleep while his men slaughter the sacred cattle; on the next sailing all his men are drowned, thus leaving him to languish alone on Calypso's isle; upon touching land at Phaiacia he immediately falls into a deep sleep; and he is in a death-like sleep when he is deposited on the island of Ithaca. Death-like sleep, a characteristic of Ulysses, in Japanese legend is associated with Yuriwaka. Moreover, deep sleep resulting in abandonment and delay of journey home is a prominent motif in both stories.

Parallel 10

Yuriwaka

The elder Beppu brother makes unwelcome amorous overtures to Yuriwaka's wife and persists in seeking her hand in marriage.

Ulysses

Many insensitive bachelors of Ithaca force their attention on the beautiful Penelope and vie for her hand in marriage.

Parallel 11

Yuriwaka

Beppu is informed that Yuriwaka's wife may not consider remarriage until she has fulfilled her vow, made to the bodhisattva Hachiman, to transcribe one thousand copies of a sutra

Ulysses

Penelope tells the suitors that she cannot remarry until she has completed the pious task of weaving a fine shroud for Ulysses' aged father against the day of his death; but at

as good work to insure victory by the Japanese.

night she unravels what she has woven in the daytime.

Commentary. Watsuji's principal reason for rejecting Tsubouchi's thesis was that the parallels are not sufficiently exact, as in this instance.¹⁵ Others, too, have wondered why the adapter—if, indeed, the story is an adaptation—did not have Yuriwaka's wife work at weaving, a common enough task for women in medieval Japan. We must realize, however, that there are many levels of adaptation, ranging from crude imitation to the artistic. A sensible adapter of moderate skill would not have had the wife of a courtier and governor of a province engaged in so humbling a task as weaving. Furthermore, we may note instances in earlier Japanese history of an emperor ordering acts of Buddhist piety, including the copying of sutras, as a means of averting natural disasters and illness.

Parallel 12

Yuriwaka

When Yuriwaka's pet hawk is set free, it flies straight to Yuriwaka and returns to Tsukushi carrying his written message, informing his wife that he is alive.

Ulysses

Athena flies down from Mt Olympus to Ithaca and informs Telemachus, the son of Ulysses, that his father is alive, held prisoner on an island far away.

Commentary. The significance of this parallel lies in the function of the winged messenger to advance the plot by bearing news of the survival of the hero, long lost and presumed to be dead. Tsubouchi as well as his critics were attentive to the hawk's pathetic faithfulness, which reminded them somewhat of Ulysses' faithful dog Argos. In their search for a correlative in the *Odyssey* they took notice only of the hawk's discovering Yuriwaka. The critics were reluctant to acknowledge a parallel in this instance, for they could equate the bird's action less than vaguely with Mercury, Apollo, or Athena on any one of their many missions as messengers dispatched from Mt Olympus. An exception was Yanagita Kunio, who commented on the role of hawk as bearer of the joyous news.¹⁶

In *Yuriwaka Daijin*, Yuriwaka's wife and her ladies-in-waiting are so overjoyed by the message inscribed in blood on a leaf that they burden the hawk not only with paper, brush, and inkstone for Yuriwaka to use, but also with letters from each of them and food. Before the hawk can complete the flight of three days and nights, it is dragged down into the sea by the weight of the ridiculous load.

¹⁵ Watsuji Tetsurō, '*Sekkyōbushi to sono Shōhon*' 説経節とその正本, first published in *Kokoro* 心 (issues of Feb.–Aug. 1954), reprinted in *Watsuji Tetsurō Zenshū* 和辻哲郎全集, Iwanami Shoten, 1963, xvi, pp. 257–391; see especially pp. 374 & 377–8.

¹⁶ Yanagita Kunio, '*Kainan Shōki*' 海南小記, first published in *Asahi Shimbun* in 1921, reprinted in *Teihon Yanagita Kunio Zenshū* 定本柳田国男全集, Chikuma Shōbō, 1963, i, pp. 217–379; see especially pp. 228–31.

Parallel 13

Yuriwaka

Yuriwaka has spent three solitary years on the island. The gods respond to his supplication and send forth a wind that causes a fishing boat to veer far north of its course to Yuriwaka's island so that he may be taken home.

Ulysses

For seven years Ulysses has been forced to stay on Calypso's isle, pining away from homesickness. The Olympian gods contrive a way for him to return. They order Calypso to allow Ulysses to cast off on a raft for Ithaca.

Commentary. If the narrative is to proceed, Yuriwaka must find passage home; and so this motif would naturally occur at this point in the story. We should note, however, that both Yuriwaka and Ulysses are released from captivity on a small island as a result of divine intervention.

Parallel 14

Yuriwaka

Overjoyed at seeing his countrymen, Yuriwaka is tempted to tell them what has actually happened, but he is cautious and falsifies his story in order to maintain the secret of his identity.

Ulysses

Safely back in Ithaca, Ulysses first meets a shepherd, actually Athena in disguise. But he is cautious and invents a tale about his past in order to keep his identity hidden. [*Odyssey*: Book XIII.]

Commentary. In the episode between parallels 14 and 15, the Japanese deities, both Shinto and Buddhist, join forces to quell the demonic spirits that make the sea tempestuous; the boat sails swiftly and, after a voyage of three days and nights, brings Yuriwaka back to Tsukushi. In the *Odyssey*, most of the gods are friendly to Ulysses; but Poseiden is not and, as a result, Ulysses must undergo many trials before returning to Ithaca.

Parallel 15

Yuriwaka

Yuriwaka is changed beyond recognition—shrunk in height, burned dark by the sun, emaciated, and his body overgrown with moss. No one in Tsukushi recognizes him.

Ulysses

Ulysses is so changed by Athena's magic—his flesh shriveled, face wrinkled, and body garbed in filthy, smelly rags—that no one in Ithaca recognizes him. [*Odyssey*: Book XIII.]

Commentary. Such a temporary physical transformation is unique in Japanese fiction. Even in the *Odyssey*, the transformation of a hero into a beggar is a unique motif.

Parallel 16

Yuriwaka

Yuriwaka is cared for by Kadowaki-no-okina ('Venerable Guardian of the Gate'), who is most charitable. Kadowaki confesses his longing for his master, Yuriwaka, whom he presumes is dead and will never return to Tsukushi.

Ulysses

Eumaeus, the swineherd, is most charitable to Ulysses, whom he entertains as he would any honored guest. He relates how he mourns for his lost master, Ulysses, even more so than for his own parents. [*Odyssey*: Book xiv.]

Parallel 17

Yuriwaka

Yuriwaka's wife is placed in extreme peril when Beppu, exasperated by her persistent obduracy, decides to have her put to death by drowning. Yuriwaka still does not disclose his presence to his wife.

Ulysses

Penelope can no longer fend off the the suitors. Her secret of unraveling has been let out, and she has had to finish weaving the shroud. Ulysses, though aware of her plight, holds back his identity. [*Odyssey*: Book xix.]

Commentary. The Japanese variation on the motif of imperiled chastity leads smoothly into the popular motif of *migawari*, or 'substitute-death', as an act of loyalty or compassion. The aged Kadowaki schemes to deceive Beppu and save Yuriwaka's wife by drowning his own daughter, who bears a close resemblance to his mistress. His daughter willingly sacrifices her life in order to save that of her mistress. The 'substitute-death' motif, which is prominent also in other *kōwakamai* narratives—*Manjū*, *Tsukishima*, and *Kagekiyo*¹⁷—came to be used extensively in plays of the puppet theater and the Kabuki in the Edo period. Here we have an instance of a modification by a skillful adapter who has woven in a traditional motif that seldom fails to strike a responsive note in a Japanese audience.

Parallel 18

Yuriwaka

Yuriwaka establishes his identity by flexing and stringing the iron bow, his own, with astonishing ease.

Ulysses

Ulysses with effortless ease strings his bow, which the suitors could not even flex. [*Odyssey*: Book xxi.]

Commentary. Skeptics have stated that the motif of flexing a powerful bow is such a universal one in folklore that it may occur in tales that are wholly unrelated. But it is the context in which it occurs, in similarly ordered sequences of motifs in a Japanese and a Greek story, that gives it correlative significance. Furthermore, this motif is unique in the Japanese tradition.

¹⁷ 満仲, 築島, 景清. For synopses of these pieces, see Araki, pp. 141–7.

Parallel 19

Yuriwaka

The traitorous Beppu brothers are overawed and submit promptly to Yuriwaka. The elder Beppu, the only truly malevolent character in the story, is trussed up, his arms twisted behind him, and bound to a pine tree. Yuriwaka 'put his own hand into Beppu's mouth, grasped his tongue, tore it out [*hikinuku* 'pull out'] and flung it away and, then, had his head sawed off over a period of seven days and nights.' The younger Beppu, who had been forced to become an accomplice, is exiled.

Ulysses

Ulysses, guided by Athena, carefully plans the execution of the arrogant suitors. He traps them inside the great hall and kills them all, swiftly. Only the goatherd Melanthius, the most malevolent of Ulysses' tormentors, meets an agonizing death. He is trussed up, his hands and feet behind him. His nose and ears are cut off, his genitals are torn off (*exerusan* 'pull out') and thrown to the dogs to feed on. Then his hands and feet are cut off. [*Odyssey*: Book xxii.]

Commentary. Watsuji cited this episode as another example of a parallel that is much too inexact to indicate that a borrowing had taken place. He found it difficult to believe that an adapter, knowing well the story of Ulysses' carefully wrought killing of the suitors, would merely have Yuriwaka cow Beppu into submission.¹⁸ Watsuji assumed that an adaptation would have been based on a detailed knowledge of the *Odyssey*. No writer of *kōwakamai* narratives could possibly have had such knowledge before 1551, the year in which *Yuriwaka Daijin* was recited before an audience in Kyoto. More likely the Japanese of that time would have been familiar with only the bare outline of the story of Ulysses and a few details that were particularly attractive. Notwithstanding Watsuji's objection, the parallel seems surprisingly exact in some of the details. The motif of degradation by physical mutilation is exceptional in Homer, who generally expurgates such scenes.¹⁹

Parallel 20

Yuriwaka

Yuriwaka is reunited with his wife.

Ulysses

Ulysses is reunited with Penelope.
[*Odyssey*: Book xxiii.]

Commentary. This, of course, is a necessary consequence of the previous episodes. What lends significance to this parallel is the delaying of the reunion of Yuriwaka and his wife, and of Ulysses and Penelope, until the drawn-out acts of vengeance are fully completed. Until then there is no mutual recognition between husband and wife.

¹⁸ Watsuji, p. 378.

¹⁹ See Murray, pp. 126 ff.

Parallel 21

Yuriwaka

Yuriwaka travels from Tsukushi to the capital, and there he again meets his parents.

Ulysses

Ulysses leaves Ithaca to search for his father, and they are reunited. [*Odyssey*: Book xxiv.]

Commentary. This motif of travel and ultimate reunion of parent or parents and child has never been mentioned in any of the publications on the Yuriwaka-Ulysses correlative. This last episode of the *Odyssey* is hurried in pace and decidedly anticlimactic. The final episode of *Yuriwaka Daijin*, too, is decidedly anticlimactic. Thus we have a parallel in terms of structural characteristics, as well as in the fact that this episode is the ultimate in a closely ordered sequence of an impressive number of similar or identical motifs and episodes.

Summation. A salient consideration in assessing the significance of the parallels between the stories of Yuriwaka and Ulysses is a fact: the two stories are examples of two different types of literature. *Yuriwaka Daijin* is a brief story, a straightforward narrative that follows chronological order. The works of Homer, the *Odyssey* in particular, are archetypal examples of the epic narrative, in which major events of the past are interwoven throughout the context in the form of flashbacks, or retrospective recountings. In the foregoing examination of parallels, episodes in the story of Yuriwaka were cited in the sequence in which they occur in *Yuriwaka Daijin*. We notice that the story adheres very closely to the well-known narrative line of the story of Ulysses. Some of the parallels, although persuasive because of the context in which they occur, might not seem impressive if judged singly and may be labeled 'fortuitous'—just as every parallel between Homer and Joyce, if considered singly, may be adjudged fortuitous. The truly significant motifs and episodes are those that are unique, occurring for the first time in the Japanese tradition, for such motifs are especially likely to have had a single source—in this case, Homer. The number of such unique motifs, ten or more, is impressive.

III. *The Name: Yuri-waka or Yurikusa-waka?*

TSUBOUCHI was intrigued by the apparent phonetic similarity between 'Yuri' and 'Uly' respectively of the names Yuriwaka and Ulysses. (The 'waka' of Yuriwaka was commonplace as a suffix in the names of Japanese youths and may, therefore, be excluded from comparative consideration.) Having studied in England, Tsubouchi must have been accustomed to the pronunciation *yulisiz* for Ulysses. Because there is no distinction made between *r* and *l* in pronouncing English words in Japanese, 'Uly' would become *yuri*, phonetically identical with the *yuri* of Yuriwaka.

The Europeans who came to Japan first were the Portuguese. And the Portu-

guese of the sixteenth century would probably have pronounced ‘Uly’ not *yuli* but *uli*, which in Japanese pronunciation would become *uri*. So we must revise Tsubouchi’s observations on the name. *Uri* in Japanese denotes the fruits of the gourd family, primarily the cucumber and several varieties of the muskmelon. A name such as Uriwaka (‘Cucumber Youth’ or ‘Muskmelon Youth’) would have been ridiculous to give to a glorious hero. It would have taken but a short leap of the imagination to devise Yuriwaka (‘Lily Youth’), a phonetically similar and aesthetically agreeable alternative.

Tsubouchi was correct, however, in asserting that in the narrative *Yuriwaka Daijin* the word *yuri* with the meaning ‘lily’ occurs in a Japanese name for the very first time. Historically there is only one occurrence of Yuri, the surname of a branch of the Seiwa-Genji clan, but it is written with a Chinese digraph that has no semantic association with ‘lily’.²⁰ This surname is said to have been derived from the place name Yuri in the province of Ugo (today, Akita prefecture). We may note a passing reference to one Yuri no Tarō in the second chapter of the *Gikeiki*, a historical romance about the illustrious but ill-fated Genji general Yoshitsune.²¹ The earliest notice of this surname Yuri is in the *Shoku Nihongi* (797), in the entry for the eighth month of 780.²² The only other Yuri with which the Japanese might have been acquainted is the mythical Korean king of Koguryo, Yuri, a name written with two Chinese graphs denoting either ‘blue gemstone’ or ‘glass’.²³

Despite the uniqueness of the name Yuriwaka, there are those who will insist that such a name would not have been considered unusual, and that its similarity with Ulysses is coincidental. Kanaseki Takeo, for one, argues: ‘During the Tembun Era [1532–54] there were *kōwakamai* performers named Hanawaka [‘Cherry-blossom Youth’] and Fujiwaka [‘Wisteria Youth’], and so someone could quite conceivably have been named Yuriwaka [‘Lily Youth’].’²⁴ Be that as it may, the fact remains that no such name had been recorded. Although Kanaseki, from the vantage point of the twentieth century, might assert that the occurrence of *yuri* (‘lily’) in a Japanese name would not have been considered strange, we do not know if the Japanese of earlier times would have shared his opinion. Because the Japanese had used so many of the flora and fauna of Japan in combination with ‘waka’ in the names of boys, but never the lily, one might wonder whether they had, for a reason no longer known to us, carefully avoided the use of the word for lily in personal names. Quite probably the fictitious Yuriwaka set the precedent for the incorporation of *yuri* (‘lily’) in Japanese given names in subsequent eras.

Kimura Noriko shares Kanaseki’s opinion but for a different reason. The word *yuri* (‘lily’), she reminds us, occurs in poems in the *Man’yōshū* (compiled in 759) and was neither a new nor unusual word, and so a name such as Yuriwaka would

²⁰ 清和源氏 由利

²¹ 由利の太郎, 義経記

²² 続日本紀. The name, in this instance, is

rendered with the graphs 由理.

²³ 琉璃

²⁴ Kanaseki, p. 52.

have been contrived by the Japanese as a matter of course.²⁵ What then, we would ask, of *uri* ('melon'), *keshi* ('poppy'), and other words that occur in *Man'yōshū* poetry but not in Japanese personal names? Aesthetic appeal seems not to have been a criterion; the 'mushi' of Mushimaro, the famous *Man'yōshū* poet, means 'worm, bug'. Kimura's essay contains this interesting piece of information: villagers of Toyoura²⁶ in Yamaguchi prefecture today customarily name children born to forty-two-year-old parents either Yurio ('Lily Boy') or Yuriko ('Lily Girl'). We may assume forty-two to be the age of the father, not the mother, for forty-two (forty or forty-one by Western reckoning) has traditionally been considered an ill-omened year for Japanese males. Kimura did not investigate the origin of this unusual custom. Because Toyoura is within the area of southern Japan where folk legends associated with Yuriwaka are widely diffused, the custom was possibly inspired by post-Yuriwaka legends.

Coincidental occurrence might suffice as an explanation of the phonetic similarity between 'Yuri' and 'Uly'. The hero of the Japanese story, however, was known also as Yurikusa-waka. The striking similarity between *yurikusa* and *urikusesu*, as the Japanese would have pronounced Ulixes, may not be dismissed casually, particularly since the word *yurikusa* is a unique occurrence not only in a Japanese name but as a lexical item in the Japanese vocabulary.

Yurikusa-waka, rather than Yuri-waka, appears to have been the original name of the Japanese hero. In the Daigashira Sahei text, the oldest of several extant manuscripts, the name of the hero is rendered in four Chinese graphs which in Japanese constitute three easily distinguishable words: *yuri*, *kusa*, and *waka*, with semantic values, respectively, of 'lily', 'grass', and 'youth'.²⁷ The name must be read *yuri-kusa-waka* unless an aberrant reading is indicated by *furigana* (a notation in the Japanese syllabic script, inscribed beside the Chinese graphs, to indicate the desired reading). In another manuscript believed to have been transcribed in the early 1600s, now in the holdings of the Kokuritsu Kōbunshokan ('National Archives of Public Documents') in Tokyo, the name of the hero is Yurikusa-waka throughout the story; there is no *furigana* to indicate another reading.²⁸ An almost identical text has been reproduced in a modern printed edition of *Mai no Hon*, a collection of medieval narratives; but the editor, Ueda Kazutoshi, supplied *furigana* that indicate the reading *yuriwaka*.²⁹ The graph for *kusa* ('grass'), then, has zero phonetic and semantic value, and this phenomenon may not be explained

²⁵ Kimura Noriko 木村紀子, 'Kōwaka-bukyoku "Daijin" o Megutte—Yurishizu to no Kankei kara—' 幸若舞曲「大臣」をめぐって—ユリシイズとの関係から—, in *Ochanomizu Daigaku Kokubun* お茶の水大学国文, No. 22 (Dec. 1964), pp. 37–46.

²⁶ 豊浦

²⁷ 百合, 草, 若. See n. 8, above, regarding the Daigashira text.

²⁸ 国立公文書館. This text is part of the

Naikaku Bunko 内閣文庫, currently housed in the Kokuritsu Kōbunshokan; its title reads *Yurikusa-waka Daijin Ichidaiki* 百合草若大臣一代記 ('Chronicle of the Life of the Great Lord Yurikusa-waka'). The title of this text is cited in Sasano, I, p. 367, but with the graph for *kusa* unaccountably omitted.

²⁹ Ueda Kazutoshi 上田万年, ed., *Mai no Hon* 舞の本, Kinkōdō, 1900, pp. 380–426.

through linguistic logic. Ueda evidently wished to retain the original graphic rendering of the name and yet indicate the name by which the hero is commonly known.

Adding to the evidence in support of the name Yurikusa-waka is a little-known noh drama titled *Yurikusa-waka*, composed in the general style of the late sixteenth to early seventeenth century. Noh dramas usually treat brief episodes from longer works of literature. The play *Yurikusa-waka* centers on the encounter between the hero and the crew of the ship that has been forced by a violent storm to veer from its course and touch at the small island. The editor of the modern edition of this noh drama has, like Ueda, provided *furigana* to indicate the reading *yuriwaka*.³⁰

The Yurikusa-Ulyxes parallel was first cited by Esther Lowell Hibbard, who noticed the name Yurikusa-waka in two simplified folk versions of the story that had been recorded on Iki Island off the northwestern coast of Kyushu.³¹ Because Hibbard apparently could not consult texts and studies that would have enabled her to fully investigate this parallel in names, she could conclude only that the similarity, however curious, might be coincidental. Kanaseki, the only Japanese scholar who seems to have read Hibbard's study, consigned it to insignificance with this statement: 'The basis itself of the thesis of Professor Hibbard, who considers the possibility [of the Homeric Epics having been imported during the Muromachi period] a strong one, rests on the grave error of giving the first performance of *Yuriwaka Daijin* a more recent dating than the actual one.'³²

The name Yurikusa-waka was doubtless regarded as cumbersome, and the shorter, melodious Yuriwaka would naturally have been preferred. The ambiguity of the name is reflected in some manuscripts, in which the name of the hero is rendered both in Chinese graphs (*Yurikusa-waka*) and in the syllabic script (*yuriwaka*); the same ambiguity is reflected also in such derived forms as *Yuriwaka sekkyō* of Iki Island.³³ In more recent manuscripts the graph for *kusa* is deleted. In a woodblock edition of 1635, the name of the hero is written only in the syllabic script as Yuriwaka, and in the text is sometimes shortened even further to Yuri.³⁴

The *kōwakamai* text, like the Epics, was meant to be recited, not read; and

³⁰ See *Yurikusa-waka*, in Tanaka Makoto 田中充, ed., *Mikan Yōkyoku Shū* 未刊謡曲集, III (Vol. 112 of *Koten Bunko* 古典文庫), 1965, pp. 108-12.

³¹ Esther Lowell Hibbard, 'The Ulysses Motif in Japanese Literature', in *Journal of American Folklore*, LIX (July-Sep. 1946), pp. 221-46.

³² Kanaseki, p. 47. Kanaseki cites the Japanese translation of Hibbard's doctoral dissertation ('The Yuriwaka Tradition in Japanese Literature', University of Michigan, 1944): *Nihon Bungaku ni okeru Yuriwaka Densetsu* 日本文学における百合若伝説, in *Dōshisha Joshi Daigaku Gakujutsu Kenkyū Nempō* 同志社女子大学

学術研究年報, I (Nov. 1950), pp. 29-69.

³³ For a partial text of *Yuriwaka sekkyō* 百合若説経, see *Yamaguchi Asatarō Chosaku Shū* 山口麻太郎著作集, 3 vols., Kōsei Shuppansha, 1963, I, pp. 75-95. The piece, titled *Yurikusa-waka Daijin Ki* 百合草若大臣記, is an imaginative Edo-period folk variation of *Yuriwaka Daijin*. For another version of the story of Yuriwaka in the genre called *sekkyōbushi*, see Yokoyama Shigeru 横山重, ed., *Sekkyōbushi Shōhon Shū* 説経節正本集, Kadokawa Shoten, 1967, II, pp. 211-26.

³⁴ See *Yuriwaka Daijin* ゆりわか大臣, in *Shin Gunsho Ruijū* 新群書類従, 1906, VIII, pp. 33-52.

many parts of it were recited melodically and rhythmically to the accompaniment of a drum. Important passages are often cast in a poetic meter of alternating seven- and five-mora phrases. This climactic passage of *Yuriwaka Daijin* would be an example of perfect metric regularity but for the deviant third line:

| | | |
|-----|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| [7] | <i>I-ni-shi-e shi-ma ni</i> | Long ago, on an island, |
| [5] | <i>su-te-ra-re-shi</i> | Abandoned, |
| [4] | <i>yu-ri-wa-ka</i> | Lily Youth, |
| [5] | <i>da-i-ji-n ga</i> | The great lord, |
| [7] | <i>i-ma ha-ru-ku-sa to</i> | Now, as spring grass, |
| [5] | <i>mo-e-i-zu-ru</i> | Sprouts forth. |

In addition to the internal evidence of the Chinese graphs, which ordinarily would be read *yurikusa-waka*, considerations of prosody and of metaphor and parallelism (lily grass and spring grass) suggest strongly that this passage may have been composed to be recited thus:

| | | |
|-----|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| [7] | <i>I-ni-shi-e shi-ma ni</i> | Long ago, on an island, |
| [5] | <i>su-te-ra-re-shi</i> | Abandoned, |
| [7] | <i>yu-ri-ku-sa-wa-ka [no]</i> | Lily-Grass Youth, |
| [5] | <i>da-i-ji-n ga</i> | The great lord, |
| [7] | <i>i-ma ha-ru-ku-sa to</i> | Now, as spring grass, |
| [5] | <i>mo-e-i-zu-ru</i> | Sprouts forth. ³⁵ |

We may also note that the image of *kusa* ('grass'), which recurs in an emotional context, assumes greater significance if it may be associated with the name *Yurikusa-waka*.

The *Yurikusa-Ulixes* comparison seems to be a convincing explanation for the origin of *Yurikusa-waka*, a highly improbable name for a Japanese. But a speaker of Portuguese would point out that the letter 'x' in Portuguese represents a voiceless palatal spirant, and ask whether *Ulixes* would have been pronounced *ulixəs*, not *ulixses*. It is interesting to note, if an irrelevancy may be permitted, that the 'x' in *Ulixes* might originally have been pronounced *ʃ* by the earliest settlers of Rome.³⁶ We do not know whether the transmitter of the *Ulysses* story was a Portuguese. Nevertheless, because the first Europeans to visit Japan were Portuguese, this question regarding phonetics is relevant and should be answered.

In modern Portuguese, the intervocalic 'x' is generally pronounced *ʃ*. In learned words, however, it is pronounced *ks*, and all examples of such 'learned words' are those of Latin origin—*afixo* ('affix'), *crucifixo* ('crucifix'), *sexo* ('sex'),

³⁵ Ironically, in this particular passage in the Daigashira Sahei text the name of the hero is rendered as *yu-ri-wa-ka* in the Japanese syllabic script; see Sasano, II, p. 70. In the manuscript of the Kokuritsu Kōbunshokan the

name is rendered in four Chinese graphs, to be read *yu-ri-ku-sa-wa-ka*.

³⁶ E. D. Phillips, 'Odysseus in Italy', *Journal of Hellenistic Studies*, LXXXIII (1953), p. 66.

sexagesimo ('sixtieth'), and so forth.³⁷ Ulysses, the legendary founder of the Portuguese nation, would have been known to every Portuguese in the sixteenth century. The influence of the *Odyssey* is quite obvious in *Os Lusíadas*, the national epic of Portugal composed by Luís de Camões (1524–80). Those Portuguese who knew Ulysses only as a legendary hero would probably have pronounced Ulixes *ulíšas*, whereas Europeans with learning who knew Ulixes as a hero in the Homeric Epics would probably have pronounced the name *ulikses*. The Jesuits who visited Japan during 1549–51 would have been among the latter. If the Japanese learned the story of Ulysses from these Jesuits, they doubtless would have pronounced the name of the hero *urikusesu*.

Another fact well worth considering is that Latin was spoken universally by educated European Catholic priests, using a somewhat unified pronunciation not fully consistent with the phonetic systems of their own native languages. A Jesuit familiar with Homer, whether in the Greek or the Latin version (more on this in Section V), would probably have used the Latin names of Greek gods and heroes in retelling the story. Portuguese had no general European currency and, therefore, little cultural prestige. A Jesuit would likely have preferred the 'learned' Latin form Ulixes (*ulikses*).

IV. *Tsubouchi and His Critics*

HOWEVER right Tsubouchi may have been, his impressionistic presentation was bound to inspire skepticism. He referred to only seven of the many possible parallels cited above; of those, however, three would tend to be regarded as fortuitous if considered singly because they might well occur in any imaginative account of a Japanese military campaign against a foreign country. They are parallels 4 (the fleet sailing away), 5 (the wife being left at home), and 8 (the fleet sailing for home). He cited Parallel 2 regarding the similarity in the names, but did not make a convincing case of it. Thus his argument rested principally on parallels 15 (the heroes being changed physically beyond recognition), 16 (the comparison between the loyal retainers Kadowaki and Eumaius), and 18 (the contest of the bow).

Tsubouchi suggested other possible parallels, but they were not fully appropriate and served to weaken his argument. He equated the Mongol workers of magic with the Odyssean creatures possessing supernatural powers, Athena's flight to Ulysses with the hawk's flight to Yuriwaka, and the devoted hawk to Ulysses' faithful dog Argos. The similarity in motifs is not insignificant but would not impress readers who are not fully acquainted with both stories. So it is not surprising that Takano Tatsuyuki, writing in 1907, stated that, although a relationship between the two stories is not wholly inconceivable in view of some points of similarity, he was almost certain that the story of Yuriwaka is an expan-

³⁷ See, for instance, Joseph Dunn, *A Grammar of the Portuguese Language*, National Capital Press, Washington, D.C., 1928, pp. 51–2.

sion of a legend about an extraordinary hero and great archer that had been known in the general area of Bungo in northern Kyushu.³⁸

Shimmura Izuru (1876–1967) in 1910 hinted at a possible answer to the question Tsubouchi had asked in 1906—from what country, and by whom and when, was the general plot of the *Odyssey* transmitted to Japan? He opined that Portuguese sailors may have identified themselves with Ulysses, the mythical founder of their nation, and have related the story of the *Odyssey* at their many ports of call. ‘If, indeed, the legend or Yuriwaka was derived from the story of Ulysses,’ he wrote, ‘that is how the story would have been transmitted.’ ‘And how fascinating it would be to speculate,’ he added, ‘that some Japanese had heard the story of Yuriwaka set in Greek antiquity narrated personally by Camões at Macao, Malacca, Goa, or some other “port of exile”.’³⁹

The first explicit assertion of the independent development of the story of Yuriwaka was made in 1917 by the historian Tsuda Sōkichi, who stated: ‘It seems there is insufficient evidence to substantiate the belief that *Yuriwaka Daijin* or *Tengu no Dairi* [a medieval fable] are infused with the influence of Greek or Roman literature. These works could have been written without knowledge imported from foreign lands.’⁴⁰ Tsuda believed that much of traditional Japanese literature and legend was invested with the influence of classical Indian literature. Because he seemed eager to speak of possible Indian influence on the basis of just one parallel in motif, we cannot be blamed if we suspect him of a tendentiousness that caused him to be receptive to suggestions of possible Japanese affinity to Indian and Buddhist literature, antagonistic to suggestions of early influence from Western literature.

Yanagita Kunio, in a newspaper article for the *Asahi Shimbun* in 1921, expressed much the same opinion: ‘Although Yuriwaka, according to Professor Tsubouchi’s thesis, is called an adaptation of Ulysses . . . it is a story of the sea, indigenous to our country and is, moreover, an expression of the deep sorrow of a seagoing people.’⁴¹ In responding to his critics, Tsubouchi in 1922 speculated variously on the possible influence of the *Odyssey* on several Japanese fables besides the story of Yuriwaka, thereby blurring rather than sharpening the focus of his initial thesis.⁴²

In 1930, a view vaguely supportive of Tsubouchi’s was published for the first time. Orikuchi Shinobu (1887–1953), noted poet and folklorist, remarked on what he considered a puzzling coincidence—the invention of the story of Yuriwaka and

³⁸ See ‘*Iki no Yuriwaka Densetsu*’ 嵯岐の百合若伝説, in *Waseda Bungaku*, ser. III, No. 14 (Feb. 1907), p. 51.

³⁹ Shimmura Izuru 新村出, *Nambanki* 南蛮記, Tōadō Shobō, 1915, pp. 1–42, esp. 32–33. The essay, first published in 1910, is titled ‘*Nampū (Kyōkutō Ryūso no Shijin Kamoensu o Omou)*’ 南風(極東流竄の詩人カモエンスを憶ふ).

⁴⁰ See his essay ‘*Bushi Bungaku no Jidai*’ 武士文学の時代, 1917, reprinted in *Tsuda*

Sōkichi Zenshū 津田左右吉全集, Iwanami Shoten, 1964, v, esp. pp. 230–3.

⁴¹ From *Kainan Shōki* (see n. 16, above), p. 230.

⁴² For a summary of Tsubouchi’s essay, which appeared in *Chūō Shidan* 中央史壇, issue of July 1922, see Ōto Tokihiko 大藤時彦, ‘*Minkan Densetsu Kenkyū no Ato*’ 民間伝説研究の跡, in *Seijō Bungei* 成城文芸, No. 22 (July 1960), pp. 8–23.

the transmission to Japan of the story of Ulysses, both around the same time in the Muromachi period—thereby acknowledging a similarity between the two stories.⁴³ Thereupon, and in quick succession, other folklorists published opinions in support of Tsubouchi's thesis—Fujisawa Morihiko in 1931, Ichiba Naojirō in 1932, and Nakayama Tarō in 1933. They arrived at their conclusions on the basis of having investigated the many folk legends associated with Yuriwaka found primarily throughout the southern part of Japan. Fujisawa stated, 'Without doubt the formulation of the story of Yuriwaka was made possibly by the diffusion in the Orient of Homer's famous story about Ulysses.' Ichiba concluded that the latter part of *Yuriwaka Daijin* was, as Tsubouchi had suggested, based on the story of Ulysses. And Nakayama stated that the entire lore of Yuriwaka represented the amalgamation of indigenous legends and the newly imported story of Ulysses.⁴⁴ The folklorists did not, however, contribute any new evidence that would strengthen Tsubouchi's original thesis.

Watsuji Tetsurō is the critic of Tsubouchi whose view on the Yuriwaka-Ulysses equation, published in 1954, has come to be regarded as authoritative. With his encyclopedic knowledge of Japanese narrative literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and his formidable knowledge of Homer, evidenced in his 215-page survey of Homeric criticism in Western Europe, he might easily have restated Tsubouchi's thesis in a systematic and convincing fashion. Why he did not and, instead, chose to discredit Tsubouchi is a mystery. Watsuji asserted that the following motifs could readily have been conceived by the Japanese: a vow made to transcribe a Buddhist sutra a thousand times as an excuse for refusing an offer of marriage; a hero being so transformed physically that he cannot be recognized; establishing one's identity by stringing a powerful bow; remarkable faithfulness shown by a pet hawk; abiding loyalty in an aged retainer. He concluded that a story like *Yuriwaka Daijin* would have occurred naturally to the Japanese of that time without influence from abroad. 'It would have been far simpler,' he added, 'for the author to draw his material directly from the lives of the Japanese than to rely on the influence of the story of Ulysses to stir his imagination.'⁴⁵

Watsuji, as noted earlier, expressed skepticism over the fact that the parallels cited by Tsubouchi were not exact enough in their detail. He seemed to imply that if *Yuriwaka Daijin* is to be considered an adaptation of Homer, it must be the

⁴³ From 'Tanabata-matsuri no Hanashi' 七夕祭の話, originally published in *Tabi to Densetsu* 旅と伝説, III: 7 (1930), reprinted in *Orikuchi Shinobu Zenshū* 折口信夫全集, Chūō Kōron Sha, 1955, VII, pp. 170-1.

⁴⁴ Fujisawa Morihiko 藤沢衛彦, 'Yuriwaka Daijin—Eiyū Densetsu' 百合若大臣—英雄伝説, in *Nihon Densetsu Kenkyū* 日本伝説研究, Rokubunkan, 1931, III, pp. 129-234; quotation from p. 215. Ichiba Naojirō 市場直次郎, 'Yuriwaka

Densetsu Shikō' 百合若伝説私考, in *Tabi to Densetsu*, v: 2 (Feb. 1932), pp. 8-18. Nakayama Tarō 中山太郎, 'Yuriwaka Densetsu Ikō' 百合若伝説異考, in his *Nihon Minzokugaku Ronkō* 日本民俗学論考, Isseisha, 1933, pp. 127-52, esp. p. 145.

⁴⁵ Watsuji, xvi, pp. 359-91; quotation from p. 377. For his study of Homer, see 'Homērosu Hihan' ホメーロス批判, in vi, pp. 41-255.

near equivalent of the full story of Ulysses as related in Homer's texts. We must remember, however, that *Yuriwaka Daijin* is not an epic, but rather a fictional chronicle and a brief one at that. We should find illuminating this succinct statement by Richard Lattimore on the distinction between the two genres: 'Delay, excursus, elaboration—whether by creative expansion or incorporation of by-material—is part of the technique of the epic, as opposed to chronicle.'⁴⁶ We do not know how the story of Ulysses would have been narrated by a European to the Japanese during the initial stage of Japan's contact with the West, but we may assume that the story would have been a simplified version, perhaps a plot summary with just a few flourishes of the kind that would appeal to the listener. Because Watsuji refrained from citing other significant parallels that must have been obvious to him and, moreover, brought forth as negative evidence the fact that such typically Japanese motifs as that of *migawari*, or 'substitute-death', cannot be related to Homer,⁴⁷ we are inclined to believe that he was, for reasons we may not fathom, predisposed to the notion that the two stories were unrelated. Watsuji's repudiation of Tsubouchi has not been seriously challenged.

Kimura Noriko in 1964 published a critique of Tsubouchi in which she re-examined five parallels noted by Tsubouchi and, like Watsuji earlier, concluded that each was a fortuitous occurrence. Her ultimate argument for refuting Tsubouchi was derived from an earlier study by Okada Mareo, who suggested that the text of *Yuriwaka Daijin* was available in 1537, or six years before the Europeans first arrived in Japan.⁴⁸ Her point, then, is that the story of *Yuriwaka* could not be an adaptation of Homer because it had been written before the arrival in Japan of the Portuguese. Kimura unfortunately was led astray by her uncritical acceptance of Okada's dating of a booklet titled *Tōshōji Nezumi Monogatari* ('The Tale of the Rat of Tōshōji Monastery'), in which *Yuriwaka Daijin* is mentioned along with the titles of other *kōwakamai* narratives.

The *Tōshōji Nezumi Monogatari* is of obscure origin. It was never printed, and the copy that Okada consulted was a manuscript of the latter part of the Edo period. Okada demonstrated that the setting of the story is probably a Buddhist temple in Mino province in the sixth year of Tembun, or 1537. He erred grievously, however, in stating that the story was written in 1537 and, also, that there was no reason to believe it was written years or decades later by someone who wished to give it an aura of an older work.⁴⁹ In equating the story time with the time of its writing, Okada disregarded the fact that narratives are retrospective accounts of past events. The work is essentially a handbook, addressed to the semi-literate, containing information of relevance primarily to readers of the Edo period, but it

⁴⁶ Richard Lattimore, trans., *The Iliad of Homer*, University of Chicago Press, 1951, p. 6.

⁴⁷ Watsuji, xvi, p. 378.

⁴⁸ For Kimura's article, see n. 25, above. Okada Mareo 岡田希雄, '*Tōshōji Nezumi*

Monogatari to Kōwakamai no Kyokumei' 東勝寺鼠物語と幸若舞の曲名, in *Kokugo Kokubun no Kenkyū* 国語国文の研究, No. 21 (June 1928), pp. 121–33, and No. 24 (Sep. 1928), pp. 121–31.

⁴⁹ Okada, No. 21, pp. 129–31.

is cast in the general format and style of medieval prose fiction. The author touches upon popular Buddhist customs that became widespread in the Edo period. Okada demonstrates that those customs were not entirely unknown before then, and also that the *Tōshōji Nezumi Monogatari* is the only handbook (*ruisho*)⁵⁰ of pre-Edo times which is not composed in the erudite literary style, that it is an exception. His arguments tend to convince us that the booklet was probably written in the Edo period, although the possibility exists that it might have been written earlier.

More recently, in 1975, Muroki Yatarō proposed ‘to determine if indeed the *kōwakamai* piece [Yuriwaka] *Daijin* may be called a wholly original work,’ but he was interested primarily in the contextual relationship between *Yuriwaka Daijin* and folk versions of Yuriwaka. Although he touched on the polemics over Tsubouchi’s hypothesis regarding the Yuriwaka-Ulysses relationship he did not himself address the question directly. But his statement, ‘The tale of Yuriwaka was being narrated in all parts of Japan before the era of the *mai* performed by Kōwaka and others, or in the same era,’⁵¹ means that the story of Yuriwaka was diffused throughout Japan more than a century before the arrival of Europeans; for the era to which Muroki refers is, by his reckoning, the early 1400s.⁵²

The possibility of tracing the source of the story of Yuriwaka to India is an intriguing one and merits investigation. Kanaseki Takeo stated that close parallels are to be found in the *Rāmāyāna* and the *Mahābhārata* and also in the Buddhist sutras.⁵³ The Hindu epics as such were generally unknown in Japan and, besides, motifs comparable to those in *Yuriwaka Daijin* do not occur in them in any meaningful series, only sporadically and in isolation. But Kanaseki’s observation on the influence of the Buddhist Scriptures added a new and significant dimension to the comparative study of the story of Yuriwaka.

Ichiba Naojirō had suggested that there must have been a native mold into which the story of Ulysses could have been accommodated for a successful adaptation.⁵⁴ There seems to have been such a mold, and this was demonstrated by Maeda Hajime, who elaborated Kanaseki’s statement into an analysis of a story in the sutra *Hōonkyō*, showing the resemblance between the two stories. The following is Maeda’s summary of thirteen points of similarity with the story of Yuriwaka:

- (1) the birth of Zen’yū, crown prince of Benares, was foretold by a deity in a dream;
- (2) after many hardships he obtains a miraculous gem from the sea;
- (3) when he is asleep, his mission accomplished, his younger [half-]brother Akuyū pierces his eyes with bamboo slivers and absconds with the gem,

⁵⁰ 類書

⁵¹ Muroki Yatarō 室木弥太郎, *Katarimono no Kenkyū* 語り物の研究, Kazama Shobō, 1975, pp. 179–93; quotations from pp. 180 & 183.

⁵² Muroki, pp. 55–87; this thesis was originally presented in his article ‘*Kōwaka to Maimai*’

幸若と舞々, in *Kokugo to Kokubungaku* 国語と国文学, xxxv: 8 (Aug. 1957), pp. 35–43. For a contrary view, see Araki, pp. 67–77.

⁵³ Kanaseki, pp. 47–9.

⁵⁴ Ichiba, p. 15.

leaving him stranded; (4) Akuyū informs Zen'yū's parents that their son and his companions perished at sea; (5) Zen'yū's parents do not believe this; (6) Zen'yū's pet bird, a white goose, delivers a letter to him in the country of Li-shih-pa; (7) the goose returns with a letter that proves he is alive; (8) after many tribulations in Li-shih-pa Zen'yū returns to Benares; (9) he is betrothed, later to become his wife, is solicitous and faithful to him during his wandering; (10) a cowherd removes the slivers from his eyes and rescues him; (11) without revealing his identity, he works as a gardener in the palace of his betrothed; (12) when he is restored to his former status, he rewards the cowherd generously; (13) he forgives Akuyū and lives happily thereafter with his wife and parents.⁵⁵

The resemblance with *Yuriwaka Daijin* is evident. Maeda altered the sequence of some of the episodes to match the sequence of episodes in the story of *Yuriwaka*, and the narrative lines of the two stories actually are not so similar as the above enumeration suggests. In the Buddhist tale, episodes 9 and 11 occur before the hero's return, while he is still in Li-shih-pa, and therefore do not find close parallels in *Yuriwaka Daijin*. What happens here is that Zen'yū, to all appearances a blind beggar, comes to the country of Li-shih-pa and is employed by the king to frighten away birds that attack the orchard in the palace grounds; the king's daughter sees him and falls deeply in love with him, not knowing that he is Prince Zen'yū, to whom she is betrothed but whom she has never met. Episode 10 is incorrectly summarized; it is the God of Cattle, not the cowherd, that licks Zen'yū's eyelids and removes the slivers. Zen'yū's quest for the miraculous gem that the Great Dragon King of the Deep (Daikairyū-ō) keeps hidden in his left ear is vaguely reminiscent of the adventures of Ulysses at sea, but finds no close parallel in *Yuriwaka Daijin*. It is far less exact than those parallels between *Yuriwaka* and Ulysses which Watsuji considered inexact and, hence, unacceptable. The last episode shows a difference and not a resemblance.

Episodes 4, 5, 6, and 7 cited by Maeda are quite similar to those in *Yuriwaka Daijin*: as Zen'yū's parents do not believe the treacherous Akuyū's story about his death, *Yuriwaka*'s wife does not believe Beppu's account of her husband's death at sea; as the goose flies to Zen'yū and returns with a written message from him, so does the hawk fly to *Yuriwaka* and return with a written message from him. Episode 12 is also significant: as Zen'yū summons the cowherd who had befriended him and confers many valuable gifts on him (before his return to Benares, however), *Yuriwaka* summons the fishermen who had rescued him and awards them the islands of Iki and Tsushima (he does this after his return). The Buddhist

⁵⁵ This story—about two Indian princes, one good and the other evil—appears in the 4th chapter of the *Hōonkyō* (full title: *Dai-hōbenbutsu-hōonkyō* 大方便仏報恩經), Item 156 in the *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經, 1914, iii, pp. 142–7. See Maeda Hajime

前田淑, 'Kōwaka-bukyoku "Yuriwaka Daijin" to Hōonkyō—Yuriwaka Bungaku Seiritsu ni kansuru Ichi-shiron—' 幸若舞曲「百合若大臣」と報恩經—百合若文学成立に関する一試論—, in *Kikan Bungaku Gogaku* 季刊文学語学, ix: 12 (Dec. 1959), pp. 94–100.

story contains many motifs not found in *Yuriwaka Daijin* or in the story of Ulysses; and *Yuriwaka Daijin* contains many motifs not found in either the Indian or the Greek story.

What are we to make of this? We may conclude that the Japanese, Indian, and Greek stories share common elements, that the narrative lines of the Japanese and Indian stories are vague approximations of each other, that the narrative lines of the Japanese and Greek stories parallel each other closely, and that *Yuriwaka Daijin* is essentially the story of Ulysses in a Japanese setting, but embellished with several motifs from an Indian story in the Buddhist Scriptures.

The fact that there should be a common denominator in an Indian story points to the possibility, first suggested by Tsuda among Japanese scholars, of a fusion in early times of Greco-Roman and Mahāyāna-Buddhist traditions that might have taken place in Gandhara. Elements of the ancient story of Ulysses might well have been woven into legends of South Asia. A major episode, here summarized, of a lengthy folk legend of Nepal might have been inspired by the story of Ulysses.⁵⁶ Khār Phakyē wants to gather honey from beehives located on a ledge part way down a sheer cliff, but once he has descended the rope ladder to the ledge, his nine sons cut the ladder and leave him stranded. For twelve years thereafter, Khār Phakyē manages to stay alive. His sons meanwhile are engaged in an archery contest, the winner of which will marry their stepmother; but in twelve years none has hit the target. Eventually a god takes pity on Khār Phakyē and sends a magical bird to carry him home to his wife. From a secret hiding place Khār Phakyē shoots an arrow that hits the target. His sons recognize their father's arrow and, fearing retribution, they leap into a gigantic bonfire. Khār Phakyē saves only the two sons who had been reluctant to abandon him. The last motif is reminiscent of Yuriwaka's sparing the younger Beppu, who had not wished him harm.

The Indian story of Prince Zen'yū was known in Japan through the Chinese translation of the sutras, and other similar Asian legends might have been transmitted to Japan in early times.⁵⁷ They probably served as the 'native mold' to which Ichiba referred.

A final consideration is the relationship between *Yuriwaka Daijin* and the many traditional legends about a hero named Yuriwaka, collected by folklorists from various parts of Japan, including Minnajima in the Ryukyu Islands.⁵⁸ Japanese folklorists tend to agree that these fragmentary local legends grew out of the story

⁵⁶ I am grateful to Professor Kawakita Jirō 川喜田二郎, who kindly provided me with a transcript of the story, which he had recorded in Nepal in 1963.

⁵⁷ An oral tale analogous to the Ulysses story, collected in Outer Mongolia by G. N. Potanin (1835-1920), was mentioned by Hiroko Ikeda in 'Ulysses in Japan', a paper read at the 1966 Meeting of the American

Folklore Society.

⁵⁸ 水納島. See the above-cited studies of Fujisawa, Nakayama, and Ichiba (n. 44); also Seki Keigo 関敬吾, *Nihon Mukashi-banashi Shūsei* 日本昔話集成, Kadokawa Shoten, 1958, II, pp. 766-71; and Nagazumi Yasuaki 永積安明, 'Okinawa no Yuriwaka Densetsu' 沖縄の百合若伝説, in *Bungaku* 文学, xxxviii: 2 (Feb. 1970), pp. 78-88.

of *Yuriwaka Daijin*. Clearly *Yuriwaka Daijin* is not a composite of isolated Japanese folk legends, for even a miracle could not have strung the motifs together in a narrative line that follows the narrative line of the story of Ulysses so closely. The longer, *sekkyōbushi* narratives of the *Yuriwaka* story are very clearly late-medieval or Edo-period modifications of the earlier *Yuriwaka Daijin*.⁵⁹

V. *The Jesuits and Homer*

If we may assume that the story of *Yuriwaka Daijin* is an adaptation of the Ulysses story as related primarily in Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, we must then assume that the Japanese had been informed of the story before 1551, the year in which the narrative *Yuriwaka Daijin* is first mentioned in a historical document. Surely, we would think, the Homeric Epics could have been transmitted from either the Greek or Byzantine empire to China and thence to Japan, but we find no traces of the Ulysses story in the Chinese literary tradition.

One might ask if Marco Polo (1254?–1324) could not have related this exciting story to the Mongols during his sojourn in Peking; the Mongols then may have transmitted the story to Japan. There are three reasons why this probably did not happen. First, the story of Ulysses seems to have been totally unknown in Japan during the Yüan period (1271–1368), when the Mongols controlled China. Second, there was virtually no cultural interchange between the Japanese and the Mongols. Finally, Marco Polo, or indeed any Italian of his time, would probably not have been familiar with the story of Ulysses' wandering and return to Ithaca. This third point requires amplification.

In the Dark Ages and the Middle Ages in Europe, the Greek Epics as such were by and large forgotten and Homer was little more than a name. Homer had been discredited many centuries before, and the account of the Trojan War known in

⁵⁹ See n. 33, above, for references. Yamaguchi's study of three variants of this story on Iki Island suggests rather strongly that they were derived from stories imported from Kyushu during the Edo period; the texts, at any rate, go back no further than the 18th century. The oldest *sekkyōbushi* version, a manuscript of 1662 edited by Yokoyama, clearly exhibits structural characteristics of six-act narratives that developed around the turn of the 17th century; for a description of these characteristics, see Tsunoda Ichirō 角田一郎, "Sate mo sono Nochi" *Hassei Kō* 「扱もそののち」発生考, in *Kinsei Bungei* 近世文芸, No. 5 (May 1960), pp. 1–10.

Watsuji is of the opinion that the genre *sekkyōbushi* may not have developed until the 17th century because the term is not mentioned in historical documents before then

and, moreover, there are no extant texts of any work in this genre that may be dated before 1631; see Watsuji, xvi, pp. 262–9. A close textual comparison of the earliest (Daigashira Sahei) manuscript of *Yuriwaka Daijin* with the 1662 manuscript of the *sekkyōbushi* version of the *Yuriwaka* story points to the same conclusion; see Nagazumi Yasuaki, "Yuriwaka to Sekkyō" *Joron* 「百合若と説経」序論, in *Bungaku*, xxxv: 10 (Oct. 1967), pp. 1–17. It would be indeed difficult to verify the view, expressed by Araki Shigeru 荒木繁, that *Yuriwaka sekkyō* may have been narrated as early as 1472, even before the creation of the *kōwakamai* narrative *Yuriwaka Daijin*; see his article, 'Kōwaka-bukyoku Ron Nōto' 幸若舞曲論ノ一ト, in *Bungaku*, xxxv: 10, pp. 28–36, especially p. 33.

Western Europe was essentially that related in two chronicles: *A Journal of the Trojan War* by Dictys of Crete, written sometime between A.D. 66 and 250, and *The Fall of Troy, A History*, by Dares the Phrygian, a Latin composition apparently of the early sixth century.⁶⁰

In the chronicle of Dictys, the account of Ulysses' wandering and return is sparse in the extreme, amounting to less than two pages in R. M. Frazer's English translation, and omits such important motifs as Penelope's ruse, the loyalty of Eumaius, and the contest of the bow.⁶¹ In Dares' account of the Trojan War the story of Ulysses is omitted altogether.

The *Metamorphoses* of Ovid (43 B.C.—A.D. ?17), a collection of enchanting stories of Greek and Roman antiquity, was widely known in Western Europe. Such was its popularity in the Middle Ages that it appealed 'to the serious student as well as to the dilettante, to the high dignitary of the church as well as to the wordly man on the street, to the ladies of the court as well as to the cloistered nun, to the writer on ethics as well as to the salacious-minded lover. . . .'⁶² Ovid, in Books XII to XIV, tells us much about Ulysses in connection with the Trojan War, but little else; like other writers of classical Latin he was more interested in Aeneas, scion of Trojan royalty and legendary founder of Rome. The writers and poets of Rome were inclined to favor the Trojans, to whom they wished to trace their lineage; and Virgil (70–19 B.C.) through his *Aeneid* sullied the image of Ulysses for some 1,500 years in the Western literary tradition.⁶³ In the era of Marco Polo, only Petrarch (1304–74) and possibly a very few others in Western Europe were familiar with the Homeric Epics. Petrarch in 1369 acquired the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* rendered into Latin by one Leontius Pilatus, and is believed to have been annotating the Latin translation of the *Odyssey* up to the time of his death.⁶⁴ The Greek literary tradition was, however, very much alive in the Byzantine Empire, and an educated Byzantine would have had no difficulty understanding the language of Homer.⁶⁵ It was a language which Marco Polo would not have known.

Latin had considerable currency in Marco Polo's time, but Latin-language sources of the Ulysses story were generally unavailable in Western Europe. We know of the *Oddysia Latina*, the *Odyssey* translated into Latin by Livius Andronicus around 250 B.C.,⁶⁶ but we see no references to this translation in studies of Homer in the Middle Ages or the Renaissance and may, therefore, assume that it had been relegated to oblivion. The *Ilias Latina*, a condensed Latin version of the *Iliad* in 1,070 hexameters (compared with the 15,693 hexameter lines of the Greek *Iliad*)

⁶⁰ R. M. Frazer, Jr., *The Trojan War: The Chronicle of Dictys of Crete and Dares the Phrygian*, Indiana U.P., 1966, pp. 10–13.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 122–3.

⁶² Dorothy M. Robathan, 'Ovid in the Middle Ages', Chap. VI of J. W. Binns, ed., *Ovid*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London & Boston, 1973; quotation from p. 198.

⁶³ W. B. Stanford, *The Ulysses Theme: A*

Study in the Adaptability of a Traditional Hero, Oxford U.P., 1954, p. 137.

⁶⁴ Sir John Edwin Sandys, *A History of Classical Scholarship*, 3 vols., new ed., Hafner Publishing Co., New York, 1958, quotation from II, pp. 8–9.

⁶⁵ Stanford, p. 158.

⁶⁶ Gilbert Highet, *The Classical Tradition*, Oxford U.P., 1949, pp. 104–5.

may have been well known, but in it Ulysses is mentioned in passing only seven times.⁶⁷ *The Library* by Apollodorus, a misty figure in history, possibly an Athenian who lived in the first century A.D., would have been an excellent source for the story of Ulysses. The 'Epitome', which is an appendix to *The Library*, is a concise narrative of the pre-Homeric account of events that led to the Trojan War and, also, of the major episodes of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.⁶⁸ But Apollodorus' book was long ignored, and the many manuscript copies of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries are incomplete. Moreover, the all-important 'Epitome' seems to have been unknown for many centuries until it was rediscovered in 1885 in the Vatican Library and published in 1894.⁶⁹

Would the early Jesuits have known the story of Ulysses? Renaissance specialists tell us that Homer's version of the story of Ulysses was well known among educated Western Europeans in the sixteenth century. Indeed the Humanists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are said to have studied Greek and Roman antiquity with even greater enthusiasm than they did the Biblical tradition. Knowledge of Greek and of the Homeric Epics spread throughout Western Europe even before the demise of the Byzantine Empire in 1453, when Constantinople fell before the Turkish attack. Greek was a language of scholars at the universities of Western Europe. Bilingualism was becoming prevalent in the Middle Ages. 'The Renaissance,' Highet informs us, 'was largely created by many interacting groups of men who spoke not only their own tongue but Latin too, and sometimes Greek.'⁷⁰

The Homeric Epics, initially available only in manuscript, became readily and widely accessible following the development of printing in Europe. The *British Museum Catalogue of Printed Books* lists many editions of the complete Homer published before the 1550s: the first edition, edited by Demetrius Chalcondyles (1424–1511), published in Florence in 1488; another, edited by Aldus Manutius (1449–1515), published in Venice in 1504, followed by a second edition in 1517 and a third edition in 1524; and other complete editions of Homer published in 1535, 1537, 1541, and 1542. In addition, several complete Latin translations were available in the 1500s. Among the holdings of the British Museum are the edition published possibly in Antwerp in 1528, and those published in Venice in 1537, in Paris in 1538, and in Lugdunum (today, Lyons) in 1541.

Latin was a necessary prerequisite to study in any university in Europe. When Ignatius Loyola (1491–1556), founder of the Society of Jesus, decided to study theology, he had to learn Latin before matriculating eventually in the University of Paris in 1528. The Basque noble Francis Xavier (1506–52) was among the men who gathered about Loyola and subsequently taught and preached in various parts of Italy. Xavier, the first learned European to visit Japan, was a scholar who had studied at the University of Paris and subsequently held a professorship in the affiliated college of Beauvais. The Jesuits, learned men, would surely have been

⁶⁷ Stanford, p. 150; also p. 269, n. 6.

⁶⁸ Sir James George Frazer, trans., *Apollodorus: The Library*, 2 vols., G. T. Putnam's

Sons, New York, 1921, II, pp. 127–307.

⁶⁹ Frazer, II, pp. xxxiii–xl.

⁷⁰ Highet, p. 105.

familiar with the general outline of the story of the Trojan War and of Ulysses' subsequent wandering, if not with the complete Epics in the original Greek or in Latin translation.

Would not the Jesuits have been reluctant to associate themselves with a story of pagan or heathen origin such as that of Ulysses? Most likely not, it seems. W. B. Stanford notes many instances of Ulysses being regarded as an image of Christ in allegorical interpretations of Homer and 'as a worthy example of natural virtue in the writings and sermons of Western as well as of Eastern clergy in every epoch of the Christian era.'⁷¹

VI. *The Ōuchi Lords of Yamaguchi*

THE city of Yamaguchi was founded in the 1360s in a terrain resembling that of Kyoto, and over the course of two centuries was developed by the Ōuchi family into the major metropolis of Western Japan. It became known as a city where the refined arts flourished amidst an atmosphere of courtly elegance at a time when the economic status of the aristocratic nobility was at a low ebb in the capital.

The Ōuchi of Suō Province in western Honshu receive their first notice in history as neutral bystanders, apparently sympathetic to the cause of the Genji, during the last phase of the Gempei War when the Genji under the leadership of Minamoto no Yoshitsune in 1185 annihilated the main force of the Heike in a sea battle in the coastal waters off Suō. The Ōuchi was one of many provincial warrior-gentry families that rose from relatively modest origin during the tumultuous Medieval Era to attain the status of *shugo* ('constable' appointed by the shogun as protector of a province).

The Ōuchi leaders who figure prominently in the story of the family's ascendance and dominance in Western Japan between 1336 and 1551 are Ōuchi Nagahiro (fl. in the 1330s), Ōuchi Hiroyo (d. 1379), his son Yoshihiro (1356–1400), his younger brother Moriharu (1376–1431), Moriharu's son Norihiro (1420–65), his son Masahiro (1446–95), his son Yoshioki (1477–1529), and his son Yoshitaka (1507–51), the last of the Ōuchi lords.⁷²

⁷¹ Stanford, p. 156.

⁷² 大内長弘, 弘世, 義弘, 盛見, 教弘, 政弘, 義興, 義隆. Most facts pertaining to the Ōuchi family are well known through standard history texts. I have relied primarily on Kondō Kiyoshi 近藤清石, *Ōuchi-shi Jitsuroku* 大内氏実録, 1885, new ed., Matsuno Shoten, Tokushima, 1974, for the sources of information are meticulously documented, and on Fukuo Takeichirō 福尾猛一郎, *Ōuchi Yoshitaka*, Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1959. I found very helpful Furukawa Kaoru 古川薫, *Ōuchi-shi no Kōbō* 大内氏の興亡, Sōgensha, 1974, although the conversion of dates to Western chronology is occasionally erroneous. Yonehara Masayoshi

米原正義, 'Ōuchi-shi no Bungei' 大内氏の文芸, in *Kokugakuin Zasshi* 国学院雑誌, LVII: 4 (1966), pp. 31–45, was invaluable for its information on the literary arts. H. Paul Varley, *The Ōnin War*, Columbia U.P., 1967, was consulted for the overview it provides of the political conditions of the era.

The program of performing arts presented in 1352 is described in Kōno Michitake 河野通毅, ed., *Ōuchi Sonshi* 大内村誌, Yamaguchi, 1958, pp. 214–8; reproduced in *Bōchō Shigaku* 防長史学, III: 1 (1932), pp. 36–43, is the complete program, as recorded in the *Nimpei-ji Hondō Kuyō Nikki* 仁平寺本堂供養日記.

When Ashikaga Takauji (1305–58) was defeated in battle in Kyoto and forced to flee westward, Ōuchi Nagahiro and Kotō Takezane of Suō and Nagato, the two westernmost provinces of Honshu, came to his rescue with five-hundred war vessels.⁷³ Takauji rewarded the two men by exercising the prerogative of the shogun, which he would soon become, and appointing them *shugo* respectively of Suō and Nagato. The Ōuchi evolved into a major political power in the 1360s under the leadership of Ōuchi Hiroyo, who conquered the neighboring provinces of Nagato and Iwami, consequently gaining control of the strategic landing of Akamagaseki (today, Shimonoseki), with the island of Kyushu in close view beyond the Kammon Strait.⁷⁴

The Ōuchi became extraordinarily wealthy as a result of protection it offered pirates based in its domain. Hiroyo astonished the residents of Kyoto with his ostentatious display of wealth during his sojourn there in 1364; the many rare foreign articles and the tens of thousands of *kan* of Chinese coins (the equivalent today of hundreds of thousands of dollars) which he distributed among the shogun's officials as well as entertainers and prostitutes—if we trust the account given in the *Taiheiki*—are believed to have been part of the tribute he extracted regularly from the *wakō*, the pirates who plundered coastal cities of Korea and China.⁷⁵ Upon returning from the capital, Hiroyo moved his family residence from the hamlet of Ōuchi to Yamaguchi with the intention of developing it into a metropolis that would mirror the many aspects of the culture of Kyoto, even the speech dialect.⁷⁶

The political fortune of the Ōuchi rose dramatically during the life of Hiroyo's son, Yoshihiro. In 1374 Yoshihiro, a mere youth of fifteen, led the Ōuchi army across the strait and conquered Buzen and Chikuzen, the northernmost provinces of Kyushu; thus he acquired full control of the great port of Hakata⁷⁷ and the narrow strait through which ships bound for the Asian mainland must pass. Subsequently, in 1391, as a reward for his role in suppressing the revolt of the Yamana family against the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358–1408), Yoshihiro was appointed *shugo* of the provinces of Kii and Izumi in central Japan; rule over the latter province, containing the major seaport of Sakai and situated within a few hours' march from Kyoto, gave Yoshihiro a vital strategic and commercial advantage.⁷⁸ In 1395 a thriving and profitable trade with Korea was begun by Yoshihiro, whom the Koreans favored because of his prominent role in suppressing the *wakō* raiders. The shogun in time realized that Ōuchi Yoshihiro, *shugo* of seven

⁷³ 足利尊氏, 厚東武実, 周防, 長門

⁷⁴ 石見, 赤間關, 下ノ關, 關門海峡。Hiroyo held the title of *shugo* of the provinces of Suō, Nagato, and Iwami. In the Muromachi period a *shugo* did not always have full political and economic control of his province. Hiroyo, for instance, controlled only a fraction of Iwami. For a description of such intricacies, see the articles on *shugo* by Kawai Masaharu and

Miyagawa Mitsuru (chapters 6 & 7) in John W. Hall & Toyoda Takeshi, ed., *Japan in the Muromachi Age*, University of California Press, 1977.

⁷⁵ See the first episode in Ch. 39 of the *Taiheiki* 太平記.

⁷⁶ Fukuo, p. 28.

⁷⁷ 豊前, 筑前, 博多

⁷⁸ 山名, 足利義満, 紀伊, 和泉, 堺

major provinces, must be considered a formidable rival for supremacy. The rivalry culminated in armed conflict in 1399, the defeat and death of Yoshihiro in Sakai, and the subsequent territorial containment of the Ōuchi in the two western provinces of Suō and Nagato.

Ōuchi Moriharu, the younger brother of Yoshihiro, not only frustrated the shogun's effort to further reduce the Ōuchi holdings but even succeeded in re-establishing his authority over the province of Buzen in Kyushu. When the shogun obtained permission from the Ming government in 1404 to send merchant ships to China, the Ōuchi family obtained the right to dispatch one of the three ships to be sent to China at ten-year intervals. The total value of Japanese goods taken to China on a sailing of the three ships, the largest of which had the capacity of a modern 250-ton ship, has been estimated at some 600 *kan*, in present currency approximately ¥60,000,000, or more than \$200,000. These goods were sold in China for as much as five times the original cost. The profit from the sale of Chinese commodities acquired in exchange was prodigious, for the imported paintings, calligraphies, silk, antiques, and so forth were sold in Japan for many times the purchase price in China.⁷⁹

After Moriharu died during a campaign directed at regaining Chikuzen province in 1431, the Ōuchi fortune declined temporarily as a result of an intra-family strife instigated from without. Under the leadership of Norihiro, believed to be the son of Moriharu, the Ōuchi eventually re-established control over the four provinces on both sides of the Kammon Strait and, furthermore, extended its hegemony eastward to include the provinces of Iwami and Aki, and westward beyond Chikuzen to Hizen.⁸⁰

Ōuchi Masahiro, who succeeded Norihiro, was a formidable political figure during the Ōnin War (1467–77), in which most of the prominent *shugo* and other provincial barons aligned themselves with either the 'Eastern' or 'Western' alliance of armies. The arrival in Kyoto of Masahiro in 1467, with a great corps of warriors recruited from the six provinces under his hegemony, had the immediate and decisive effect of restoring the offensive thrust to the beleaguered Western alliance in the early stage of the ten-year conflict. There were no victors in the Ōnin War. The capital was devastated and, the last vestige of a national administrative system having vanished, Japan was to enter a century-long period of political chaos in which lesser lords and upstarts would challenge and overthrow the established *shugo* in most parts of Japan. This redistribution of power had, in fact, already begun during Yoshihiro's sojourn of ten years in the Kyoto area. While Yoshihiro was acquiring aristocratic polish in the capital, he was losing his control over his territory in western Japan. He was to devote the remainder of his life to re-establishing the solidarity of his domain.

⁷⁹ Furukawa, pp. 109–13.

⁸⁰ Fukuo, p. 34. Norihiro became *shugo* of Suō, Nagato, Buzen, and Chikuzen; the *Ōuchi-shi Jitsuroku* is vague about his conquest of Aki,

Iwami, and Hizen, but these provinces are listed as Ōuchi territory (*bunkoku* 分國) in the *Ōuchi-shi Kabegaki* 大内氏壁書, dated 1459. See *Gunsho Ruijū* 群書類從, 1928, xxii, pp. 84–5.

The political and economic fortunes of the Ōuchi reached an apogee during the era of Masahiro's son, Yoshioki. A schism within the Ashikaga family had led to the deposing of the shogun Ashikaga Yoshitane (1466–1523).⁸¹ When in 1500 the deposed shogun sought refuge in Yamaguchi, Yoshioki took him into his protection. In 1508, Yoshioki led his army into Kyoto, banished the pretender, and reinstalled Ashikaga Yoshitane as shogun; his reward was the uncontested monopoly of the lucrative commerce with Ming China. Indeed, promise of wealth through the control of foreign commerce is thought to have been Yoshioki's primary motivation in leading his army into Kyoto. This monopoly, however, was short-lived, for the Ming government restricted commerce with Japan after the Japanese committed acts of violence in Ning-p'o in 1523. The Ōuchi thereafter sent only two trade missions to China, in 1539 and 1547, during the era of the last Ōuchi lord, Yoshitaka. Yoshioki remained in Kyoto for ten years, functioning in a capacity similar to that of regent to the shogun. He not only emulated the ways of the aristocratic courtiers but in 1512, having been awarded the Third Rank, Junior Grade, himself became a habitué of the imperial court. From 1518, upon returning from Kyoto, until his death ten years later, Yoshioki was to direct considerable effort toward regaining control over his vast domain.

Ōuchi Yoshitaka lived during the peak of the anarchic period that preceded the unification of Japan under a centralized government. He warred against neighboring lords who sought constantly to encroach on his domain, but he did not cherish the military aspect of his legacy as *shugo* of seven provinces. After witnessing the drowning of his adopted son during a campaign in 1543, he tended to delegate his military duties to his subordinates and to focus his attention almost exclusively on the cultural, artistic aspect of his legacy.

The cultural legacy of the Ōuchi may be traced through Yoshitaka's forebears to the founder of Yamaguchi City.⁸² Like many other provincial lords of his time, Ōuchi Hiroyo aspired to the aristocratic ways of the nobility of Kyoto. The fact that the aristocratic arts had taken root in Yamaguchi at an early time is well attested by the completeness and authenticity of the program of *bugaku* and *ennen* presented during a Buddhist memorial service conducted by Hiroyo in 1352.⁸³ Ōuchi Yoshihiro lived in the Kyoto area for ten years and achieved modest renown as a poet; he doubtless shared many of the cultivated tastes of the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, the aesthete who patronized performers of the *noh* and built Kinkaku-ji ('Golden Pavilion') and the magnificent garden surrounding it. Moriharu, who spent twenty years in Kyoto engaged in administration, encouraged the study of Buddhism in his domain, printing sacred texts and constructing temples. In the era of Masahiro, when most of Kyoto was reduced to ashes, Yamaguchi was a haven for many men of artistic accomplishment from the capital. The

⁸¹ Yoshitane 義種 is the name he adopted after his return to Kyoto. He was known earlier as Yoshiki 義材 and Yoshitada 義尹.

⁸² The description of the literary arts is

based largely on the article by Yonehara (see n. 72, above).

⁸³ 舞楽, 延年. See n. 72, above.

noted *renga* ('linked verse') poet Sōgi (1421–1502) was received hospitably by Masahiro in Yamaguchi in 1480, and the great painter Sesshū (1420–1506) lived out his last years in Yamaguchi.⁸⁴

The aristocratic arts, especially the literary, were much enhanced during the era of Yoshioki. Yamaguchi was a thriving metropolis, quite attractive to imperial aristocrats and other men of cultivation who preferred its peaceful, contrived classical setting to the desolation of Kyoto. Ashikaga Yoshitane's presence there, from 1500 to 1508, must have further promoted the cultivation of courtly tastes among the Ōuchi warriors. Ōuchi Yoshioki, who lived in Kyoto from 1508 to 1518, was decidedly a man of aristocratic refinement. A poem that he had composed inspired thirteen courtiers, including Sanjōnishi Sanetaka (1455–1537), the pre-eminent poet-scholar of the time, to respond with poems on the same theme; and he was honored in the extreme when Emperor Go-Kashiwabara (1464–1526), having heard about this poetic event, composed his own response to the poem.⁸⁵ The headnote to this poem states that Yoshioki composed it upon seeing Mt Hiei, which rises to the northeast of Kyoto, and comparing it to Mt Fuji, which he had never seen:

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>Kaku bakari</i> | I see it now, |
| <i>tōki azuma no</i> | Here in the capital amid |
| <i>Fuji no ne o</i> | Snow at dawn— |
| <i>ima zo miyako no</i> | The peak of Fuji, far off |
| <i>yuki no akebono.</i> | In the Eastern Land. |

The emperor in his poem is explicit in his praise of Yoshioki's ability as a poet ('above the clouds' is a euphemism for the imperial palace):

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>Yuki ni mishi</i> | The mountain seen, |
| <i>yama wa Fuji no ne</i> | Snow-covered, is the peak of Fuji— |
| <i>koto no ha no</i> | He who spoke these words |
| <i>yoyo no sono na mo</i> | Bears a name famed since eras past |
| <i>kumo no ue made.</i> | In the realm above the clouds. |

The *renga* poet Sōseki (1474–1533) favored Yoshioki with the *Kokin denju*, or teachings on the 'secret interpretations' of poems in the *Kokinshū*, the anthology of classical poetry (*waka*) that was compiled in 905;⁸⁶ these 'interpretations' were transmitted only to poets of exceptional distinction. Yoshioki was also fond of *renga* and *noh*. And he was an avid student of the details of traditional rites, dress, and etiquette of the imperial court.

Ōuchi Yoshitaka grew up amidst an aristocratic atmosphere that would have been suitable for the nobility of Kyoto. He became a devotee not only of classical Confucian scholarship and Neo-Confucianism but also of Zen, Shingon, and

⁸⁴ 連歌, 宗祇, 雪舟

⁸⁵ 三條西実隆, 御柏原. See Yonehara, pp. 32–3; also *Dai Nihon Shiryō* 大日本史料, Ser.

iv, Vol. III, entry for the 25th day, twelfth month, Eishō 8 (1510), pp. 657–60.

⁸⁶ 宗祇, 古今伝授, 古今集

Tendai Buddhism. Many illustrious priests came from the capital at Yoshitaka's behest to teach and to conduct Buddhist ceremonies in the same splendid fashion as at the imperial court. Yoshitaka also studied the doctrines of Shinto. He was well versed in both classical Japanese poetry and *renga* and met regularly with visiting members of the Kyoto elite for sessions of poetic composition. He also studied classical court music under the tutelage of *gagaku* musicians from the monastery of Shitennōji in Osaka. And he was a patron of the *noh* and *kōwakamai*, performing arts that appealed to the samurai as well as the Kyoto nobility.

Yoshitaka was essentially an aesthete whose intense admiration of the aristocratic customs and manner of the Kyoto nobility led to an obsessive undertaking that further transformed Yamaguchi City in a small replica of the capital. The *Saikoku Taiheiki* (1663) provides this description:

After Ōuchi Yoshioki died in his old age, his son Lord Yoshitaka invited a maiden from Kyoto to become his wife. He built a mansion in Kō-no-mine in Yamaguchi. He had the rafters and pillars sculpted and painted, installed sliding doors of black-lacquered wood with gold overlay and decorated with gold, silver, and precious gems, and then had the Lady move into it. . . . The Lady was said to be the most beautiful of all in the imperial palace. The mansion was called the Tsukiyama Palace. Yet the Lady longed only for the capital. . . . The Lord consoled her by summoning performers of *sarugaku* [*noh*] from Kyoto and Nara, inviting courtiers and residents of the imperial palace whom she knew, and holding gatherings for poetry composition and performance of classical music. . . . Merchants from many provinces flocked to the city, which was just like the capital. The Lord had the Lady's father, Jimyōin Ichininken, come from the capital to visit her annually. He modeled the town of Yamaguchi on the capital, renaming its streets First Avenue, Second Avenue, and so on down to Ninth Avenue. . . .⁸⁷

VII. *The Transfer: A Hypothesis*

THE city of Yamaguchi was at the phase of full flowering when Francis Xavier arrived there at the beginning of November in 1550. The activities of Xavier during his sojourn of some six weeks in Yamaguchi, until he left for Kyoto on 17 December, are known to us through Western sources.⁸⁸

Xavier was accompanied by Juan Fernandez, whose knowledge of the Japanese language he esteemed highly. Fernandez was his interpreter during his audience

⁸⁷ 西国太平記. See *Kokushi Sōsho* 国史双書, 1915, xix, pp. 20-1.

⁸⁸ The authoritative study is Georg Schurhammer, S.I., *Franz Xaver: sein Leben und seine Zeit*, Zweiter Band, Asien (1541-1552), Dritter Teilband: *Japan und China, 1549-1552*, Freiburg, 1973, especially pp. 158-73. The

total lack of relevant Japanese documents in the archives of Yamaguchi is due either to their loss when the city was burned in 1551 or to their willful destruction in the 17th century, when Christianity was officially proscribed in Japan.

with Ōuchi Yoshitaka, and he delivered sermons on the street on Xavier's behalf. Although there are those who believe that Fernandez was barely acquainted with the Japanese language,⁸⁹ we have Xavier's testimony to the contrary: 'Father Cosme de Torres is kept busy preparing sermons in the [Spanish] language, and Juan Fernandez translates them into the language of Japan, because he knows it very well. . . .' And Fernandez evidently could narrate somewhat effectively in Japanese, for his listeners in Yamaguchi were deeply moved, some even to tears, by his account of the Passion of Christ.⁹⁰

Xavier, who knew virtually no Japanese, cannot be considered a reliable judge of Fernandez' skill; moreover, he might have tended to overpraise Fernandez as he wrote his enthusiastic report on the effectiveness of his mission in Japan. Yet Fernandez, presumably an intelligent and responsible man, and having assumed the task of interpreter, could not have remained in ignorance. University students from the West today often arrive in Japan with only a smattering of Japanese, and some of them achieve a remarkable degree of fluency in spoken Japanese in a year's time. When Fernandez arrived in Yamaguchi City, he had been in Japan more than a year, and we must assume that his ability to speak Japanese had improved considerably. Could he, however, have told a story as complex and grand as that of Ulysses? I think that the difficulty of narrating a synopsis of the Ulysses story has been much exaggerated. Even the most complex episode among the twenty-one cited above—that of Ulysses slaying the suitors and Melanthius (see Parallel 19)—may be retold thus, in quite simple Japanese, in much less than a minute:

Urikusesu wa warui otokotachi o shiro no naka ni tojikomete mina koroshite shimaimashita. Urikusesu ni toku ni ijiwaru de atta Meranshiusu dake wa zankoku na hōhō de korosare mashita. Meranshiusu wa ude to ashi o karada no ushiro ni mawasarete shibarigerare, hana to mimi o kiritorare, sore kara kintama o hikinukare, sono ato de ryōte to ryōashi o kiriotosarete shinimashita.

On the basis of historical information available now—and, also, the lack of contrary information—I believe we may tentatively conclude that Juan Fernandez very possibly was the first to narrate the story of Ulysses to the Japanese.

The transfer of the story of Ulysses from Fernandez to a composer of *kōwakamai* narratives might have taken place before the Jesuits came to Yamaguchi, for they had already spent more than a year in Kyushu; but professional *kōwakamai* performers were not to be known in Kyushu until more than thirty years later.⁹¹ Fernão Mendes Pinto, Jorge Alvarez, and men in their company visited Kyushu

⁸⁹ George Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, Harvard U.P., 1973, p. 34. Francisco Cabral (1528–1609), Luis Frois (1532–97) and other Jesuits who came to Japan later might have, in retrospect, considered Fernandez' Japanese inadequate.

⁹⁰ Georg Schurhammer, S.I., & Joseph Wicki, S.I., ed., *Epistolae S. Francisci Xaverii*, II (1549–1552), Rome, 1945, pp. 276 & 261.

⁹¹ A professional *kōwakamai* performer of Kyoto first went to Kyushu in 1582; see Araki (n. 9, above), p. 80 ff.

as early as 1544,⁹² but these adventurers probably would not have known well the Homeric story of Ulysses. Alvarez was well educated and may have known the story, but it is improbable that he told it in Japanese.

The likelihood of the transfer having taken place in Yamaguchi in 1550 seems by far the greatest, for Juan Fernandez was a member of an order of learned men and had greater facility in Japanese than any previous Western visitor to Japan. Moreover, the requisite condition for this transfer was provided by the presence of *kōwakamai* performers at that time in Yamaguchi. The *Intoku Taiheiki* by Kagawa Masanori (1658–1735) contains these passages:

Kōwaka-tayū from Echizen province came to Yamaguchi. Lord [Ōuchi] Yoshitaka acclaimed him and patronized him and, subsequently, requested a performance of the piece *Eboshi-ori*. The *tayū* performed it in the Eave-covered Room, clapping out a rhythm with his hands. Everyone in the audience, from the high-ranking on down to the lowly, was so moved by the performance as to shed tears.

On the twenty-sixth of that month [eighth month, 1551], [Ōuchi Yoshitaka] had the rarest of fishes and plants brought to the Tsukiyama Palace for a banquet, for present at his court were an envoy from the shogun [Ashikaga] Yoshiteru and an emissary from Ōtomo Yoshishige. The feasting continued through the day into the night, and Kodayū, who was skilled in the Kōwaka style of dance, performed such numbers as *Shida* and *Eboshi-ori*. Everyone, from the high-ranking on down to the lowly, was spellbound, and no one talked about the [forthcoming] battle.⁹³

The leading professional performers of *kōwakamai* were from Echizen (today, Fukui prefecture), were generally called Kōwaka-tayū, and performed primarily in the Kyoto area. The *kōwakamai* seems to have risen to prominence in Kyoto in the early 1540s, when the names of pieces performed begin to receive notice in the diaries of courtiers and high-ranking Buddhists. We may well imagine Yoshitaka, closely attuned to artistic trends in Kyoto, promptly cultivating a fondness for that which was in vogue among the aristocrats in the capital. The *Intoku Taiheiki*, however, is not considered to be a reliable book of history. Many of its elaborations are regarded as spurious, but there is little reason to believe that the author invented the accounts cited above. The *kōwakamai* was a near totally forgotten form of art by the time of the writing of the *Intoku Taiheiki*, and an author intent upon embellishing history would more likely have chosen to have Yoshitaka enjoy the *noh* instead. The author in this instance may well have written his description on the basis of historical documentation.

⁹² See C. R. Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan*, University of California Press, 1951, pp. 18–36.

⁹³ 陰徳太平記, 香川正矩. The passages cited are from *Tsūzoku Nihon Zenshi* 通俗日本全史,

Waseda U.P., 1915, xiii, pp. 316 & 296–7. Both *Shida* 信田 and *Eboshi-ori* 烏帽子折 are part of the standard *kōwakamai* repertory of texts.

Let us consider this hypothesis: Juan Fernandez narrated the story of Ulysses to an audience that included a *kōwakamai* performer, and the latter adapted the main story line, embellishing it with stock motifs in medieval Japanese narratives and folk literature, and turned it into the very unusual Japanese story *Yuriwaka Daijin*, which he took back with him to Kyoto.

One might object to this hypothesis on the grounds that a Japanese adaptation of the story of Ulysses could not possibly have been written so quickly. The time available was some three months—between early November of 1550, when Fernandez arrived in Yamaguchi, and 10 February (the fifth of the first lunar month) 1551, when the story of *Yuriwaka* was recited in Kyoto.⁹⁴ Specialists in folklore such as Ōto, Nakayama, and Kanaseki have found it difficult to believe that such an adaptation (assuming that the Ulysses story might have been told by the earliest Portuguese visitors, in 1543 or 1544) could have been written and transmitted from Kyushu to Kyoto ‘in a mere seven or eight years’.

Here we are faced with an imponderable: what is the amount of time required to create a work of art? Theoretically speaking, literature or music may be created as quickly as a writer or composer can write or notate. An experienced Japanese author today might write a story equivalent in length to *Yuriwaka Daijin* (some twenty modern printed pages) in a matter of days, especially if the plot is already firmly established in his mind. Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653–1725), Japan’s foremost playwright of the premodern era, wrote rapidly. Donald Keene comments: ‘Chikamatsu’s style is almost endlessly complex. We can only marvel that he could produce such astonishing textures of language in the few weeks that normally sufficed for writing an entire play.’⁹⁵ We may recall that the German dramatist August Friedrich von Kotzebue (1761–1819) was said to have required only three days to write a major five-act play.

Kōwakamai performers were professional entertainers and would have been eager for innovations that might give them a competitive advantage over others, especially the performers of *noh*. Had they been aware of the possibility of adding to their repertory a story as fascinating as *Yuriwaka Daijin*, they probably would not have allowed the opportunity to lie dormant for years, months, or even days. Innovators and adapters who are familiar with the repertory, language or idiom, themes, and motifs of their particular form of art often tend to work rapidly, and I find it difficult to believe that a relatively short and unified, though somewhat unrefined, story such as *Yuriwaka Daijin* would have required many months, much less years, to write. Irrespective of the foregoing hypothesis, I feel it is more reasonable to regard *Yuriwaka Daijin* as a product of a sustained effort over a period as brief possibly as several days, probably no more than a few weeks. The piece, if it had been composed in Yamaguchi, could have been transmitted to Kyoto in two

⁹⁴ See n. 10, above.

⁹⁵ 近松門左衛門. Donald Keene, tr., *Major*

| *Plays of Chikamatsu*, Columbia U.P., 1961, p. 27.

to three weeks, which is the time that was ordinarily required for travel between the domain of Ōuchi Yoshitaka and the capital.

AN epilogue seems appropriate. Xavier's trip to Kyoto ended in dismal failure.⁹⁶ Despite his efforts he could meet no one of consequence in the war-ravaged capital. The Jesuits had no opportunity to converse at length with residents of the capital, much less narrate stories such as that of Ulysses. Daunted, they left after a sojourn of less than two weeks and returned directly to Hirado in Kyushu. By then it was March. Xavier visited Yamaguchi again soon thereafter and obtained permission to proselytize from Ōuchi Yoshitaka, whom he had come to regard as the mightiest of all the feudal lords of Japan.

In early September 1551, Xavier left Yamaguchi to begin his travel to Goa in India. On the first day of the ninth month, or 30 September 1551, Ōuchi Yoshitaka died by his own hand following a rebellion by his subordinates. Yamaguchi—a city which Xavier had described as a most beautiful one with more than ten thousand households and many splendid mansions and numerous Shinto and Buddhist temples—was destroyed by a conflagration that raged on for a week; this last description was recorded by Juan Fernandez, who had stayed behind.

⁹⁶ For a description of Xavier's sojourn in the Kyoto area, see Matsuda Kiichi 松田毅一, *Kinsei Shoki Nihon Kankei Namban Shiryō no*

Kenkyū 近世初期日本関係南蛮史料の研究, Kazama Shobo, 1967, pp. 550–65.