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Mami Fujiwara

Masses of bodies are saturated here and there, throughout Lafcadio Hearn's literary world. Most of them are cut into fragments-----an ear emerging from the dark, a chopped head clinging to a stone, a burned brain, a head which has no face. These elements, a body and a fragment, are surely some of the most prominent characteristics of his works. However, little attention has been given to this side. So, I would like to analyse one of his works, "Ingwa-Banashi", from this viewpoint, hoping to make these untouched features explicit.

"Ingwa-Banashi" is a piece of work which is included in *In Ghostly Japan* (1889). The original Japanese version is regarded as " The story no.14" in *Hyakumonogatari*. Hearn cuts most of the original, which is considerably long, and places emphasis on the topic of the relationship between two women.

First of all I would like to tell the story briefly.

In spring, when the cherry trees were in full bloom, the daimyō's honourable wife was dying. The daimyō told her that he would pray for her so that she 'would not have to wander in the Black Space, but could quickly enter Paradise, and attain Buddha-hood.' But, still, she had something yet to be realized. So, Yukiko, one of the daimyō's wives, whose rank was lower, was summoned. With her eyes opened wide, which were closed when she spoke to her husband, the wife said to Yukiko, "I want you to take my place when I am gone." She continued to say,

> " You know that in the garden there is a *yaë-zakura**, which was brought here, the year before last, from Mount Yoshino in Yamato. (...) I must see that tree before I die. Now I wish you to carry me into the garden----at once, Yukiko, ---- so that I can see it.....Yes, upon <u>your back</u>, Yukiko;----take me upon <u>your back</u>....."
>
> **Yaë-zakura, yaë-no-sakura*, a variety of Japanese cherry-tree that bears double-blossoms.(p.347) [i]

In the act of asking thus, her feeble state was strangely and dramatically changed into something tremendously vigorous. And on clinging to Yukiko's shoulders,

> (...) she quickly slipped <u>her thin hands</u> down over <u>the shoulders</u>, under the robe, and clutched <u>the breasts</u> of the girl, and burst into a wicked laugh. (p.348)

Then she exclaimed, "I have my wish for the cherry-bloom,----but not the cherry-bloom of the garden !" and " she fell forward upon the crouching girl, and died." In addition,

> the cold hands had attached themselves in some unaccountable way to the breasts of the girl,----appeared to have grown into the quick flesh.(p.349)

It was impossible to detach the dead hands from Yukiko's breasts in any way.

> This was not because the fingers held: it was because the flesh of the palms had united itself in some inexplicable manner to the flesh of the breasts!(p.349)

Finally, the most skilful physician was called. Following the physician's advice, " the hands were amputated at the wrists." But the hands still clung to the breasts. "Withered and bloodless though they seemed, those hands were not dead." And, always at the Hour of the Ox, the special hour of ghosts in ancient Japanese times, " they would clutch and compress and torture." After that, "Yukiko cut off her hair, and became a mendicant-nun." Although she carried an *ihai* (mortuary tablet) of the wife in all her wandering and performed Buddhist services for the wife, "the hands never failed to torture her, during more than seventeen years."

It seems obvious to state that special emphasis was placed on things on the body, at least in two phases in Hearn's "Ingwa-Banashi", when his version is compared to the original. One is about structure. As I have mentioned earlier, Hearn shortens the long original version so that the episode on the body of the wife and Yukiko's may clearly be focused on. Another is about rhetoric. Hearn often uses words relating to body so as to highlight them.

1 <hands=the wife>

"Ingwa-Banashi" is filled with diverse (expressions of) bodies. Among them, I am interested above all in the eyes of the wife. The eyes are not so much a receptor as an organ to address. When the wife speaks to her husband or Yukiko, it is her eyes that express what she wants to say eloquently.

> 1,Then, with eyelids closed, she answered him in a voice thin as the voice of an insect (p.346)

> 2,The daimyō 's wife opened her eyes, and looked at Yukiko, and spoke (p.346)

3,: then she suddenly burst into tears.(p.348)

In the story the wife addressed other characters three times. The first person the wife spoke to was her husband, then she related her wish to Yukiko, and after she had listened to Yukiko's answer, she expressed what she wanted by saying that " this is not a time for words of ceremony." Gradually the wife's speech changed from the superficial, which was a reaction against her husband's shallow words, to the faithful, which reflected the addresser's inner thoughts. As the wife's speech was changing, the state of her eyes was also changing. During her first speech, her eyelids were closed, then her eyes were opened wide, and finally great tears streamed from her eyes, as if her hidden inner thoughts had erupted and revealed themselves. 1& 3 that I cited before are statements that Hearn added in the original. This device makes it clear to see that the transition from the superficial speech to the eruptive speech, in other words, the emergence of the covered thoughts by speech act, is synchronised with the movement, from the inner to the surface, on her body.

The emergence of the inner, that is to say, ejaculating the lust suppressed deep in the inner, that is one of the causes which brings out *kwaidan*. One of Hearn's *kwaidan*, "Ingwa-Banashi" tells of the wife's hands clinging to Yukiko's breasts. This clinging of hands indicates not only her physical but also her hidden mental clinging to Yukiko('s body). "Ingwa-Banashi" expresses this coming together of the visible clinging and the invisible clinging by means of a radical resonance of body and spirit.

The verb, <to cling> is a word which we can use both in mental and physical contexts. To take a simple example, < She still *clings* to the belief that her son is alive. > <The little child *clings* to his mother. > <His wet shirt *clung* to his body.>. Hearn shows the wife's clinging by using this convenient word effectively. Let us consider the following quotations which include the word, <cling>. [Underlining which indicates subjects, italicising and ( ) are added by the writer.]

1, As a nurse turns her back to a child, that <u>the child</u> may *cling* to it, Yukiko offered her shoulders to the wife, (p.348)

2, ...<u>the dying woman</u>, lifting herself with an almost superhuman effort by *clinging* to Yukiko's shoulders. (p.348)

3, ...<u>they (the hands of the dead woman)</u> so *clung* that any effort to remove them brought blood. (p.349)

4, But they(the hands) remained *clinging* to the breasts; (p.350)

What has to be noticed is the clear contrast of the subjects brought by the repetition of the verb, cling, regardless of whether the subject is a living thing or not. Before turning to an examination of the subjects, a few remarks should be made concerning the plot. The wife died after citation no.2, before citation no.3, and her hands were amputated at the wrists just before citation no.4. That is to say, at the point of citation no. 3, the thing which <clung> to Yukiko's breasts, in a word, the subject of the action, to <cling> is the wife, although she had already passed by at the time. Yet, the subject in the sentence is a part of the wife, the hands. I would like to say that the wife became fragmented by words, before she actually turns into pieces by being amputated at the wrists. The hands in this context are no longer the part of the wife. They are independent fragments which are equal to the wife's whole body. In other words the hands are the wife.

2 <Yukiko=the wife>

Youko Makino pointed out that the wife's hands, which she slipped down over Yukiko's shoulders, remained clinging to Yukiko's breasts, which means that Yukiko kept carrying the dead body upon her back.[ii] It seems reasonable to suppose this, because it is true that Yukiko's life was dramatically altered under the influence of the dead body of the wife. From this point we may say that Yukiko continued to carry the wife. However, we also say that the dead body of the wife covered the body of Yukiko, because the wife " fell forward upon the crouching girl (= Yukiko), and died." I cannot resist stating, although I am deeply conscious that it may sound absurd to state such a thing, that the appearance of these two bodies looks like a *yaë-zakura*, to which the wife had a strong attachment and which Hearn highlights by adding a footnote saying that " a Japanese cherry-tree that bears double-blossoms. " (Underlining by the writer.)

In his class at Tokyo University Hearn explained to his students that *Clarimonde*, which was written by the French writer, Théophile Gautier, and which Hearn himself translated, was a story about a person with a dual personality. The main character of the story, Romuald lives a dual life being a priest in the daytime, but also being a connoisseur and lover of Clarimonde at night. As soon as Romuald puts on clothes brought by the tempter Clarimonde, his identity is changed. The transformation from a priest into a nobleman is caused by covering Romuald's body in clothes. In this sense, it may be said that clothes are skins. Romuald is a man who has two kinds of clothes. Seen from this point, he has two kinds of skin, that is to say that he has a dual personality.[iii]

In addition to this, "Furisodé", which is included in *In Ghostly Japan* as well as "Ingwa-Banashi", is also a work which expresses the equality between clothes and skins like Clarimonde. A brief summary of the plot is as follows; the furisodé of the girl who fell in love with a stranger of remarkable beauty and died without seeing him again, leads any girls who become owners of the furisodé and wear it, only to suffer the same destiny as her. Although the girls know nothing about the girl who was the first owner of the furisodé, they fall in love with the vision of the beautiful stranger and die. All they do is just cover themselves with the furisodé. It may be said that the girl who first owned the furisodé infects the girls with her clinging to the beautiful boy. They are robbed their identity by the furisodé. In the sense that being covered with clothes means being another person, "Furisodé" is a legitimate descendant of "Clarimonde".

"Ingwa-Banashi", as well as "Furisodé" and "Clarimonde", tells of a thing which covers a person and has a great influence on the person's inner state. It is the wife's body that has such a characteristic in "Ingwa-Banashi." The body of the wife is eager to cling to Yukiko's body. This is expressed repeatedly as " The cold hands had attached themselves in some unaccountable way to the breasts of the girl,—appeared to have grown into the quick flesh.", " This was not because the fingers held; it was because the flesh of the palms had united itself in some inexplicable manner to the flesh of the breasts !" The body of the wife seems to invade Yukiko's body like a virus, which is disguised as the body of the host. The strategy of the virus is to synchronize itself with the host's life cycle to maintain its identity. For Yukiko, invaded by (=covered with) the wife's dead body, the wife's body is nothing but her other self; in other words, her second skin.

3 <the wife = Yukiko> & <the wife VS Yukiko>

Gérard Genette defined the term "an amputation" as an ultimate excision in *Palimpsestes* (1982). Yet, this definition doesn't fit in relation to "Ingwa-Banashi."

> ...and the hands were amputated at the wrists. But they remained clinging to the breasts (p.349-350)

To amputate the wife's hands at the wrists is absolutely not to excise the wife's body from Yukiko's body. For Yukiko who was covered with the wife, the second skin, amputating the wife's hands represents the attachment of the fragment of the wife (= the hands) to herself(=her breasts). Rather it is a part of Yukiko's body, that is her breasts, that was excised from Yukiko's body. The reason is that after the incident Yukiko had to give up living as Yukiko, one of the daimyō's wives, and to start living with the wife(=the hands). In other words, for Yukiko, the amputation is not at all in order to get rid of the wife's body, but is a ritual motion in order to get a stigma, the wife. After the rite of passage, in other words, the transition from being covered with the wife to cutting the wife's hands at the wrists and having them attached to her breasts, Yukiko's body turned inexorably and infallibly into something that had a dual personality; that of Yukiko and the wife's.

The hands attached to Yukiko's breast are a < fragment> of the wife. They are definitely not < parts > which long for belonging to the <whole>; besides which, the whole had been lost by the amputation. In addition, although the hands were attached to Yukiko's body, the hands were not <parts> of Yukiko and remained to be <fragments> of the wife. The reason is that the uncontrollable movement of the hands had been declaring to Yukiko for more than 17 years that they were not her own self. The hands of the wife are independent fragments which would never become assimilated to Yukiko's body.

What is Yukiko's body? The< fragment> of the wife(=the hands) looks like a < part> of Yukiko, because the hands are attached to Yukiko's body, but at the same time the <fragments> do not fuse with Yukiko, the <whole>, because the hands stir themselves in order to torture Yukiko. Yukiko is the wife (= The wife is Yukiko), and Yukiko is not the wife (= The wife is not Yukiko). A chaos in which amputating and attaching fragments occurs continuously, that is a cosmos named Yukiko's body.

There is one further issue that we must not ignore. It is about the speaker. We may say

that the original is a confession by Yukiko. But in "Ingwa-Banashi" the speaker relates not only Yukiko's personal experience but also what the wife thought in the first part of the story. In short, the speaker is a person who can be both Yukiko and the wife. From this dual view the speaker relates the unfolding events like a reporter in a live broadcast. But the last part of the story is written like this.

> the hands never failed to torture her, during more than seventeen years,—according to the testimony of those persons to whom she told her story.(p.350)

I would like you to notice the dash in the quotation. The speaker's perspective changes after the dash. The speaker declares himself to be an interviewer, although he or she relates the story as a witness before the dash. The speaker is a person who tells the story and also a person who listened to the story, which is indicated by the dash. This dash makes explicit the existence of a fragment attached to the whole without assimilating to the whole. This is similar to Yukiko's body to which the wife's hands attached.

It may be said that " Ingwa-Banashi" is a thrilling example of bodies of characters, rhetoric, structure, where the existence of a fragment can be pointed out, and in which amputating and attaching battle on incessantly.

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[i] All reference to "Ingwa-Banashi" are to *The Writings of Lafcadio Hearn* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin 1923) Underlying in all quotations in this paper is done by the writer.

[ii] 牧野陽子「輪廻の夢—『むじな』と『因果話』分析の試み」『比較文学研究』第四十七号、小泉八雲特集　東大比較文学会　１８８５年 p.123

[iii] On this subject, see my paper 「夏目漱石『こころ』研究—「内部において、また皮膚において」—」『人文学研究』福岡女学院大学人文学研究所紀要　創刊第一輯

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