LEAPING MONSTERS AND REALMS OF PLAY: GAME PLAY MECHANICS IN *OLD MONSTER YARNS SUGOROKU*

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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Taking Utagawa Yoshikazu's woodblock printed game board *Monster Yarns* as my case study, I will analyze how existing imagery and game play work together to create an interesting and engaging game. I will analyze the visual aspect of this work in great detail, discussing how the work is created from complex and disparate parts. I will then present a mechanical analysis of game play and player interaction with the print to fully address how this work functions as a game. While some elements of game play are problematic, I propose that the highly visual nature of *Monster Yarns* counteracts these issues to create an enjoyable game.

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INTRODUCTION

Gathered together to celebrate the New Year, a group of children dressed in their holiday best huddle in the center of the room. Muffling giggles and nervous whispers, they all watch as a single brave soul ventures across the room to a lit oil lamp. With one quick movement, this boy will extinguish the flame and unleash a host of beasts and phantasms on the group.

Some of these beings will be harmless tricksters who are out for nothing more than food, sorry goblins who are often silly rather than ominous. Others will be more overtly sinister, inescapable demons who want nothing more than to destroy those who cross their paths in a grisly manner. They number one hundred in total, and each has been described in detail, explained in a series of stories that describe each monster's appearance and habits, and as the room falls into darkness they will breathlessly wait to see if they have been successful in summoning the creatures into physical existence from the tales.

This is a game known as *hyaku monogatari* 百物語 ("one hundred tales") a pastime that became popular during the Edo period (1615-1868). A group would gather after nightfall and take turns telling stories about ghosts, monsters or macabre events, lighting a single candle (or in this case a lamp) as each participant begins their tale. At the end of each story, the flame is extinguished and the candle is passed on to the next child. If one hundred stories are completed before the sun begins to rise, all of the

ghoulish creatures will appear.[1] The group would undoubtedly be in a state of deliciously terrified anticipation, knowing the host of ghouls becomes larger with the completion of each story.

Hyaku monogatari serves as the theme for a woodblock printed game board titled *Old Monster Yarns Backgammon* (*Mukashi banashi bakemono sugoroku* 百種怪談妖物雙六; hereafter to be referred to as *Monster Yarns*) designed by Utagawa Yoshikazu 歌川芳員 (active 1848-1868) in the 8th month of 1858 for the Edo publisher Izumiya Ichibei 和泉屋市兵衛 (Figure 1, listed along with all other figures in the Appendix). *Hyaku monogatari* is depicted on the starting square, while the rest of board is made up of brightly colored images of different monsters, the fiends the children are attempting to summon with their storytelling.

Monster Yarns is a work that raises a number of different issues that must be addressed in order to fully understand all of its complexities. First, the basic rules and history of the game must be addressed. Next, the complex visuality of the piece must be described and explained in detail. Finally, there is issue of the mechanical function of this print and how individuals interact with this work. But how do all these disparate elements come together to function as a coherent whole?

Monster Yarns is a specific *e-sugoroku* variant known as *tobi-sugoroku*. The beginning and end are clearly marked with identifying labels. Players are clearly aware at all times how the game is played and where the goal is located, but there is no clear

[1] Nakada Kōhei 中田幸平, *Edo no kodomo asobi jiten* 江戸の子供遊び事典 (Tokyo: Yasakashobō, 2009), 130-32.

path. Players could be left feeling as if they are leaping into the void, which could cause engagement to falter undermining the success of *tobi-sugoroku* as a game. [2]

I believe that the tension created by the dissonance between the goal-oriented nature of board games and the inconsistent path in *tobi-sugoroku* is lessened by the way thematic content interacts with the game's structure. In some cases the content supersedes the structure and the gridded structure that typifies most board games is dispensed with entirely.

The theme is what the player sees first when looking at *tobi-sugoroku*. It is the initial graphic appeal of these that grabs the player's attention. Once she or he engages in play the structure can be understood. The visual content and the game structure are perceived as inseparable.

Much of the interest lies in the new way the players can interact with this preexisting content, creating visual and narrative links that are more compelling because of their disparate relationships. By taking well-known stories and images, the games allow players to create new narratives each time the game is played.

Taking Utagawa Yoshikazu's *Monster Yarns* as my case study, I will analyze how existing imagery and game play work together to create an interesting and engaging game. I will analyze the visual aspect of this work in great detail, discussing how the work is created from complex and disparate parts. I will then present a mechanical analysis of game play and player interaction with the print to fully address how this work functions as a game. While some elements of game play are problematic, I propose that

[2] The roll of the dice directs players towards a further series of randomized options, rather than directly controlling movement on the board.

the highly visual nature of *Monster Yarns* specifically, but also *tobi-sugoroku* in general, counteracts these issues to create an enjoyable game.

CHAPTER II

DEFINING *E-SUGOROKU*

A board game like *Monster Yarns* is essentially a functional object, made to provide the viewer with some form of diversion through play. There is something seemingly innate about this urge to play. But what *is* play?

I will begin this chapter by looking at Johan Huizinga's theory of play, which provided the groundwork for Roger Caillois and his classification of game types. Caillois' classification is important for understanding what structures and rules are necessary for games to be functional, particularly how they apply to board games. I will then define board games using the writings of game theorist H.J.R. Murray in order to provide more specific delimitations for my discussion. This will include defining important terms related to this game and a general discussion of how it is played.

Moving from a discussion of the functional aspects of *e-sugoroku*, I will then provide a discussion of its history and drawn from my survey of *sugoroku* related research, including overviews of some of the most important publications related to this topic.

Game & Play Theory

Johan Huizinga began his exploration of the playful side of human behavior as just one part of a larger enquiry into the basis of different aspects of culture. He was mainly concerned with the relationship between various social institutions and play, but the definition he provided has become the basis of all major discussions of the subject. According to Huizinga, play is an innate impulse exhibited in the pursuit of behaviors

and actions that enact spaces outside the realm of normal reality.[3] This very broad conceptualization of play points to its universality because Huizinga saw in all human behavior a manifestation of the need to engage in some form of play activity. While its antithesis work is grounded in reality and motivated by the need to fulfill predetermined cultural requirements, play does not need to serve any purpose outside the free pursuit of itself.[4]

Writing some twenty years later, Roger Caillois also saw the importance of play to culture and society. Since Huizinga had established that play was spiritually removed from reality, Caillois became interested in the specific ways play manifested its difference from work. Turning away from universality, Caillois explored one specific iteration of play: the game. In *Man, Play and Games*, Caillois states that games are created when play is subjected to rules and other organizing features. [5] The specific appearance and structure of the game can vary widely, but rules must be present to provide a rational order that allows the impulse to play to be channeled into a stable, transmittable form.[6] It is not a game unless it can be understood by all those playing.

Caillois was primarily concerned with broadly categorizing games, so for a more specific definition of the board game, I will turn to H.J.R. Murray and his work *A History of Board-Games Other Than Chess*.[7] Murray states that all board games have

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[3] Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-element in Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1950), 2-3.

[4] Ibid., 6-7.

[5] Roger Caillois, *Man, Play and Games* (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1961), 3.

[6] Ibid., 5-6.

[7] H.J.R. Murray, *A History of Board-games Other than Chess* (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1978), 2-3.

two distinguishing features: a prefabricated surface on which the game is played and pieces to mark player movement.[8] This surface is a physical representation of Huizinga's play-space, an object that gives the abstracted realm of play a more permanent physical location. The board also works to enforce as well as record the rules that turn unfocused play into a game. It also helps perpetuate these rules across time; while some elements of game play associated with a particular board game can become lost, the board functions as a record of its key elements.

The theories of both Caillois and Huizinga set play apart from other human activities. For Huizinga, the difference is largely behavioral, though he does use geographical terminology. He believes that the mental states and activities that constitute play reside in their own realm that has a temporary existence. Caillois takes this temporal and locational separation even further by defining the game as a space where only play can occur. His basic guidelines were then taken a step further by Murray in his discussion of board games, which emphasized not only the importance of the board as the physical location of play, but its function as a record of the game itself. These basic definitions delimit the broad terms "play" and "game," providing specificity that is important for my discussion of *e-sugoroku*.

A clear goal is an integral part of any board game. There must be a purpose that justifies player engagement with the rules of the game. This goal must exist within the logic constructed by the rules and have a set location on the board. The goal-oriented nature of board games necessitates another feature -- a clearly marked path.

[8] Murray, *A History of Board-games Other than Chess*, 5-7.

For play to occur there must be a designated area that separates these actions from the everyday world.[9] In this case, this space is the game board. With many board games this space is configured in a visually linear form, and players move from the start along a single path made up of separate squares to a goal that can be continuously perceived throughout the game. Even in games where reverse movement is an integral part of the game, players are still acutely aware of the existence of a path even as they are moved away from the goal.

Another important feature of games is explained by Roger Callois. He states that in games of chance all players have to believe that everyone has an equal chance of winning otherwise playing the game would seem like a useless endeavor because there is no set goal available for all players.[10] On top of this, in racing games continuous perception of a path is necessary for all players to continue pursuing the final goal, as without this the game could become frustrating because it cannot be visually ascertained that winning is possible.

The History of *E-sugoroku*

Sugoroku 双六 (formerly written 雙六) literally translates as "double sixes" and is a blanket term used to refer to two distinct board games: *ban-sugoroku* and *e-sugoroku*. Both *sugoroku* variants are considered racing games, in that two or more players compete to reach a set goal on the board first. Racing games are classified as games of chance, which means that no strategy or specific skills are needed to play

[9] Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*, 4-9.

[10] Caillois, *Man, Play and Games*, 19.

them.[11] They are usually played using dice or some other device that provides numerical directions for the players.

The origins of the term *sugoroku* are unclear, but there are two main theories about its etymology.[12] One theory posits that this term refers to the two registers of spaces that make up the backgammon board, both of which must be traversed in order to win. The second suggests that it refers to the pair of six-sided dice used to play the game. A newer interpretation related to this second theory points out that this term could refer to a play variant that requires six to be subtracted from all rolls of the dice above six.

Ban-sugoroku 盤すごろく (board *sugoroku*) is a backgammon variant that has been played in East Asia from the second century CE onward, and remained widely played until the 19th century. The board consists of a rectangular wooden box with two facing rows of twelve alternating black and white spaces painted across the top. An empty bar is left between the two rows for throwing the dice cup without upsetting the pieces. Each player begins with fifteen pieces that move along the rows based on throws of the dice. The first player to move all fifteen pieces through his/her opponent's row wins. *Ban-sugoroku* was introduced into Japan by Korean emissaries in the 7th century, and was initially popular with the aristocracy.[13] During the Edo period, *ban-sugoroku* became popular with the general public, but because of its strong associations with gambling it had fallen out of favor by the early 20th century.

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[11] Murray, *A History of Board-games Other than Chess,* 20-21.

[12] Masukawa Kōichi 増川宏一, *Sugoroku* すごろく, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku Shuppankyoku, 1995), 15-22.

[13] Ibid., 13.

E-sugoroku 絵双六 (pictorial *sugoroku*) is a game for two or more players that uses a paper board that is either painted or printed with a series of squares that contain illustrations or texts based on a single unifying theme. Each player would use a pair of standard six-sided dice to move a single piece around the board.[14] These boards would have been portable and easy to store, which is why it is classified as a travel game.[15]

The origins of *e-sugoroku* are unclear, but there is some speculation that this game may have evolved from two-dimensional Buddhist mandala paintings that developed in East Asia around the 8th century CE.[16] These paintings are detailed plans for what is, in effect, a microcosmic map laying out the locations and characterisitcs of the various sacred figures, offering Buddhist practitioners a visual representation of the sacred location of enlightenment. These mandala paintings would have been used as the focus of veneration and meditation. As they contemplated these works, worshippers would recreate the unseen worlds represented in three dimensions, visualizing the holy realms.[17]

Educational tools developed in order to help aid in the memorization and comprehension of these complex images. Games like *e-sugoroku* based on the Buddhist cosmos would have created interactive versions of the mandala that would have helped to teach novice practitioners through play, providing a more accessible introduction to the

[14] Irving L. Finkel, "On Dice in Asia," *Orientations* 35 (2004), 56-60.

[15] Masukawa, *Sugoroku*, vol. 1, 6-7.

[16] See also: Masuda Suzuyo 増田すずよ, "E-sugoroku no kōzō ni miru mandarateki sekai - jyōdo sugoroku kara ippanteki na e-sugoroku made" 絵双六の構造に見る曼荼羅的世界—浄土双六から一般的な絵双六まで, *Baika Jidōbungaku* 梅花児童文学 17 (2009): 29-46. Yamamoto Masakatsu 山本正勝, *E-sugoroku: oitachi to miryoku* 絵すごろく：生いたちと魅力 (Tokyo: Unsōdō, 2004).

[17] Elizabeth Ten Grotenhuis, *Japanese Mandalas: Representations of Sacred Geography* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'I Press, 1999), 2-3.

content. The linear movement of a chance game was superimposed over the content of mandala paintings, leading the players step by step through the images. Labels and instructions that describe many elements are often present, with these exegetical texts placed directly on the mandala images.[18]

There is a precedent for this link between religious education and board games elsewhere in Asia. In ancient India *moksha pâtam*, a precursor to the paper board game snakes-and-ladders, was used to teach young Hindu practitioners about the concept of karma.[19] Squares labeled with good deeds would move the players up towards the final goal, which would represent freedom from the cycle of reincarnation. Squares containing bad deeds would move the player downwards through the levels of being.

There is no specific evidence pointing to how or when these earliest games would have traveled across Asia, but a backgammon-like board game known as *shuangliu* 雙六 ("double sixes") has been known to exist in China since the Tang dynasty (618-907 CE).[20] Around the 14th century CE evidence has been found of paper board game similar to *e-sugoroku* that is also referred to as *shuangliu*.[21] It is at this point that there is divergence from purely religious content. The earliest known example of this type of game in China is a *shuangliu* game that takes various auspicious flora and fauna as its theme. Large text-based paper boards were used to help teach young scholars about the

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[18] Iwaki Noriko, "'Manabaseru' asobi: bijuaru ejukeishon no shiten kara," 「学ばせる」遊び・ビジュアル・エデュケーションの視点から, *Bijutsu Forum* 美術フォラーム 21 (2008): 120-125.

[19] David Sidney Parlett, *The Oxford History of Board Games* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 92-94. See also: Finkel, Irving L, "A Raja's Diversions: Board Games at Mysore." *Asian Games: The Art of Contest* (New York: Asian Society, 2004).

[20] Parlett, *The Oxford History of Board Games*, 86-88.

[21] Yamamoto, *E-sugoroku: oitachi to miryoku*, 27.

complex system of scholarly ranks and other important concepts related to society. In most examples of Chinese *shuangliu* boards, the content and themes seem to point to their use in an educational context.

Buddhist games continued to be popular in China, particularly those related to the Pure Land sect of Buddhism. Examples of games that have been found in monastic settings are usually images of the Western Pureland of the Amida Buddha, the focus of Pure Land visualization practice. Often these images are extensively labeled with the names of each element and sometimes even have explanations written in simplified language for more complex terms.[22]

There is no historical evidence of *e-sugoroku* in Japan before the 15th century, so the exact date when this game was brought in, along with specifically how it was introduced, is still a contentious issue. The earliest recorded reference appears in *Tokikuni-kyō ki* 言国卿記, the diary of Major Councillor Yamashina Tokikuni 山科言国 (1452-1503) who was an official at the imperial court during the 15th century. In an entry dated 1474 (Bunmei 文明 6), Tokikuni mentions a painted *e-sugoroku* on a Pure Land Buddhist theme that was played by members of the court.[23] Beyond the subject matter, no specific details about the format or appearance of the game Tokikuni refers to are known.

Another link between early Japanese *e-sugoroku* and Buddhism is found in *Sukikaeshi* 還魂紙料, a collection of essays by Ryūtei Tanehiko 柳亭種彦 that was

[22] Yuhara Katsumi, "The Evolution of Sugoroku Boards." *Board Game Studies* 7 (2007): 30-45.

[23] Yamashina Tokikuni 山科言国, *Tokikuni kyōki*, in *Shiryō sanshū* 史料纂集, vol. 5, Toyoda Takeshi 豊田武; Tanuma Mutsumi 田沼睦, eds. (Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1969), 43.

published in 1826.[24] Tanehiko provided a short history of *e-sugoroku* and its relationship to Buddhism in Japan, particularly focusing on the visual teaching practices of the Kumano sect. Because of the simplicity of *e-sugoroku* game play, these Buddhist games were seen as ideal for the education of women and children. A number of Buddhist *e-sugoroku* have been found in the collections of female members of the imperial family and convents.[25] The use of *e-sugoroku* as educational tools continued into the 20th century, and they became particularly popular during the Meiji Period (1868-1912), when games were created to disseminate the secular ideals of *bunmei kaika* 文明開化 ("civilization and enlightenment").[26]

It is clear from *Tokikuni-kyō ki* that during the 15th and 16th centuries *e-sugoroku* was viewed primarily as a game for the elite classes, more portable than other board games but still luxuriously produced.[27] These works would have been well outside the means of most individuals. However, in the 18th century, there was a radical shift in the production of and audience for these game boards. Publishers of books and prints in Edo began creating affordable woodblock printed *e-sugoroku* on a wide variety of themes, from images of landscapes and travel to stories from the theater. Publishers would capitalize on the popularity of particular print designers or subjects by releasing new

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[24]Ryūtei Tanehiko 柳亭種彦, Kimura Miyogo 木村三四吾 ed., *Takizawa bunkobon Sukikaeshi* 瀧澤文庫本還魂紙 (Tokyo: Hatsubai Yagi Shoten, 1982), 224-234.

[25] Murase Naoko 村瀬尚子, *Ukiyo kagami: karakuri asobi ehon* 浮世鏡：からくり遊び絵本 (Tokyo: Paroresha, 2003).

[26] Ann Herring, "The Hidden Heritage: Books, Prints, Printed Toys and Other Publications for Young People in Tokugawa Japan," Susanne Formanek ed., *Written Texts – Visual Texts* (Amsterdam: Hotei Publishing, 2005).

[27] Tsukuda Mitsuo 佃光雄, *Gangu no rekishi to tenbō* 玩具の歴史と展望 (Tokyo: Nihon Gangu Shiryōkan, 1986), 34-36.

games featuring the most up-to-date topics in the trendiest styles for sale around the New Year. It seems that because new games appeared at the same time every year, *e-sugoroku* were strongly associated with seasonal gift giving.[28]

E-sugoroku gained enough popularity with members of the general public that they are mentioned in an essay that appears in the collection *Kiyū shōran* 嬉遊笑覧 by Kitamura Nobuyo 喜多村信節 (1784-1856) about the pastimes of Edo.[29] Kitamura notes that *e-sugoroku* boards were so in vogue in Edo that adults would collect and play them despite the fact that it was seen as a game for children. Looking again at Tanehiko's essay from *Sukikaeshi*, it appears that in the 19th century *e-sugoroku* were accepted as collectible objects, and considered to be works worthy of aesthetic appreciation.[30]

E-sugoroku continued to be popular into the Meiji period, but its main function shifted from entertainment back to education. During this period the audience for these games was assumed to be comprised of women and children so the contexts for their use shifted from the world of collections and aesthetic appreciation to the home and more functional applications. These games were widely used in the home or classroom settings in the place of more expensive printed books.[31] They were used to teach a wide variety

[28] Masukawa, Kōichi 増川宏一, *Sugoroku* すごろく, vol. 2. (Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku Shuppan Kyoku, 1995), 87-92.

[29] Kitamura Nobuyo 喜多村信節, Kondō Kenzo 近藤圭造 ed., *Kiyū Shōran* 嬉遊笑覧 (Tokyo: Kondō Shuppanbu, 1916), 422-441.

[30] Ryūtei, *Takizawa bunkobon Sukikaeshi*, 230-234.

[31] Iwaki Noriko, "'*Manabaseru' asobi: bijuaru education no shiten kara*," 120-125.

of subjects, from the basics of reading to newly introduced ideas about society, part of the larger campaign of modernization.[32]

During this period, *e-sugoroku* were seen as a particularly effective tool for educating girls through play in the home, their proper place in society. In general, these games rely heavily on the "advancement" structure that was seen in many Buddhist games. The use of *e-sugoroku* in the social education of women is addressed by Masuda Suzuyo in her 2009 article.[33] She discusses how a game illustrates different types of women and their comportment, becoming a visual model for the consequences of good and bad behaivior so that girls learn to conform to societal expectations at the end of the Edo period. In her article "The 'Spectacle of Womanhood" Susanne Formanek also disucsses how *e-sugoroku* could serve as a visual model for proper female behaivior.[34] Formanek studies a game that takes girls through the different stages of life, illustrating different "types" of women, with the eventual goal of becoming the elderly matriarch of a large family.

From the Taishō period onward, *e-sugoroku*, along with other toys and games, were viewed as objects meant only for play. The use of these games in an educational context diminished, and they were seen only as playthings for the young. *E-sugoroku* continue to be produced, included as inserts in children's magazines or for sale in toy

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[32] Hayakawa Monta 早川聞多, *Ukiyo-e no naka no kodomotachi* 浮世絵の中の子どもたち (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 2000).

[33] Masuda Suzuyo 増田すずよ, "E-sugorokukō 'Shinpan onna teikin furiwake sugoroku' Bakumatsuki josei tayō ikikata" 絵双六考「信販女庭訓振分け双六」幕末期女性多様生き方, *Die Forschung der Geschichte der Spiele* 21 (2009): 17-46.

[34] Susanne Formanek, "The 'Spectacle' of Womanhood: New Types in Texts and Pictures on Pictorial *Sugoroku* Games of the Late Edo Period," Formanek, Susanne ed. *Written Texts – Visual Texts* (Amsterdam: Hotei Publishing, 2005), 73-108.

shops. These games are often simplified versions of *mawari-sugoroku* intended for the very young.[35]

Historiography

Beginning in the 1980s, there was a surge of critical and historical interest in toys and play in Japanese culture. In 1984 Moriya Takeshi published a short essay on play in Japanese culture *Nihonjin no asobi gokoro*.[36] While at times somewhat fanciful in its language and view of the national specificity of play, Moriya raised some important questions about the then current view of toys and games. He echoed Huizinga's view of play as an innate impulse, positing that the more playful elements of Japanese culture warranted a place in scholarly discourse. This work remains one of the few focused discussions of the philosophy of play in Japanese.[37]

These early discussions of play objects in Japanese culture tended to focus on traditional toys and folk-craft. Tsukuda Mitsuo's 1986 publication *Gangu no rekishi to tenbō* details different types of folk toys and their origins, focusing on objects native to Japan and their unique artistic traditions.[38] Games were generally excluded from these discussions.

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[35]Tada Toshikatsu 多田敏捷, *Omocha hakubutsukan* おもちゃ博物館, vol. 7 (Kyoto: Kyoto Shoin, 1992).

[36] Moriya Takeshi 守屋毅, *Nihonjin no asobi gokoro* 日本人の遊びごころ (Kyoto: PHP Kenkyūjo, 1984).

[37] See also: Christine Guth, *Asobi: Play in the Arts of Japan* (Katohnah, NY: Katohnah Museum of Art, 1992).

[38]Tsukuda Mitsuo 佃光雄, *Gangu no rekishi to tenbō* 玩具の歴史と展望, 35.

The first major publication dedicated to *sugoroku* appeared in 1988.[39] Yamamoto Masakatsu's *Sugoroku asobi* provided a brief history of the game and a discussion of different types of *sugoroku.* His definitions and nomenclature are still widely used in *e-sugoroku* scholarship today.[40] Yamamoto also addressed the contemporaneous *e-sugoroku* collecting boom in his discussion of different collections and their contents. Yamamoto published a work dedicated solely to *e-sugoroku* in 2004, *E-sugoroku: oitachi to miryoku*.[41] A popular history of the game, Yamamoto presents a simplified narrative of the history and transmission of *e-sugoroku* across Asia. The main focus of this work is a chronologically ordered discussion of different themes on which *e-sugoroku* are based. This is an effective way to treat *e-sugoroku* as whole, to organize the large and diverse body of prints into smaller sample groups. It is also effective for the comparison of different treatments of the same subject. However, Yamamoto does not go into much detail about the mechanical function of any particular game board.

Publications that appeared in the early 1990s tended to be very general in scope, addressing the breadth of the material rather than specific discussion of content or history. Takahashi Junji published *Nihon e-sugoroku shūsei* in 1994, a book that discussed the general typologies and subject matter seen in *e-sugoroku*.[42] This work focuses on Meiji and Taishō works, but Takahashi does mention the importance of Buddhist themes in the

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[39] Yamamoto Masakatsu 山本正勝, *Sugoroku asobi* 双六遊美 (Tokyo: Unsōdō, 1988).

[40] There is still a conflation of *sugoroku* and *e-sugoroku* that is caused by Yamamoto's interest in linking *sugoroku* to backgammon-type games that have longer and more well-established history that existed in Ancient Egypt and the Middle East. This issue is still echoed in his later works, including his 2004 book *E-sugoroku*. See also Namiki Seishi 並木誠士, *Edo no yūgi: kaiawase, karuta, sugoroku* 江戸の遊戯: 貝合せ・かるた・すごろく (Kyoto: Seigensha, 2007).

[41] Yamamoto, *E-sugoroku: oitachi to miryoku*.

[42] Takahashi Junji 高橋順二, *Nihon e-sugoroku shūsei* 日本絵双六集成 (Tokyo: Kashiwa Bijutsu Shuppan, 1994).

development of the game. It is also important for its discussion of *e-sugoroku* as art objects.

Masukawa Kōichi published *Sugoroku* in 1995, one of the most complete treatments of the game to date.[43] As part of the *Mono to ningen no bunkashi* series this work was written for a more general audience, but Masukawa does present a thorough and thoughtful history of the game. He also addresses the issue of differentiating between *sugoroku* and *e-sugoroku* rather effectively by splitting his work into two volumes. Volume I deals with *sugoroku* and its history while Volume II exclusively deals with *e-sugoroku*. Masukawa discusses the major themes and subject matter of *e-sugoroku* in great detail, looking closely at specific examples and discussing their content. Masukawa ties *e-sugoroku* to the larger world of prints through this specific object driven approach, something that is not seen in earlier scholarship.

Outside Japan, interesting in board games was growing during the 1990s. A number of publications and conferences dedicated to studying board games in an interdisciplinary way began to gain interest in the scholarly community. Alexander De Voogt's *New Approaches to Board Games Research*, published in 1995 was of particular importance.[44] De Voogt discusses the need to broaden the scope of discourse in the study of board games beyond Europe and begin to include the history of board games in Asia. He discusses the historical transmission of board games across Asia, and how they came

[43] Masukawa, Kōichi, *Sugoroku*, vol. 2.

[44] Alexander J. De Voogt, *New Approaches to Board Games Research: Asian Origins and Future Perspectives*, (Leiden: International Institute for Asian Studies, 1995).

to influence the west. De Voogt also champions a more socio-cultural approach to game study.[45]

Irving L. Finkel has also been influential in championing this trans-national study of board games, helping to create a more complete picture of the human history of play. Of particular note is his role as editor of *Asian Games: The Art of Contest*, a book that presents a series of articles on various games across Asia, including an article by Masukawa on *e-sugoroku*, one of the few resources on the topic available in English.[46] This work also helps to place lesser known games like *e-sugoroku* in an international context without erroneous attempt to tie them to the canonical conceptualization of game development.

In the past fifteen years there has been an increase in the amount of research dedicated to the topic of *e-sugoroku*. Because research on *e-sugoroku* is still in its infancy, most of the publications are focused on documenting and quantifying *e-sugoroku* in order to set down basic parameters to guide later study rather than in-depth critical discourse. The majority of these researchers are from the field of literature, and they approach *e-sugoroku* as illustrated texts.

The first of these publications was a catalog created by Iwaki Noriko and Kanda Tatsumi that detailed their full scale survey of the Konishi Shirō collection of *e-sugoroku* that was held by The Gakushūin University Archive.[47] This is one of the largest

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[45] See also: Rosita Hadded-Zubel; Jean Retschitzki, eds., *Step by Step: Proceedings of the 4th Colloquium on Board Games in Academia* (Fribourg: Editions Universitaires, 2002).
[46] Masukawa Kōichi, "Scenic Views: *E-sugoroku*," Irving L. Finkel, ed., *Asian Games: The Art of Contest* (New York: Asian Society, 2004), 24-30.

[47] Kanda Tatsumi 神田龍身, Iwaki Noriko 岩崎紀子, *Gakushūin Daigaku Shiryōkan mokuroku: dai 20 gō: Konishi Shirō shūshū shiryō e-sugoroku* 学習院大学史料館目録：第二十号：小西四郎収集史料-絵双六 (Tokyo: Gakushūin Daigaku Shiryōkan, 1997).

collections of *e-sugoroku* in the world, put together by Konishi, a former professor of Art and Graphic Design at Gakushūin, over the course of his life. The catalog consists of photographs of each *e-sugoroku*, along with basic identification information and condition reporting. Meant to stand as a detailed record of the collection, there is no further analysis provided with the catalog.[48]

Iwaki has gone on to engage in research on *e-sugoroku*. Her first article on the topic titled "Bakemono to asobu: *Nanken keredomo bakemono sugoroku*" was published in 2000.[49] Iwaki discusses in great detail a late 18th century example of monster-themed *e-sugoroku* titled *Nanken keredomo bakemono sugoroku*. She discusses a possible model of *e-sugoroku* creation based on previously existing artworks using comparative analysis with popular illustrated hand scrolls depicting *hyakki yagyō* 百鬼夜行 ("Night Parade of One Hundred Monsters") scenes.[50] This is one of the first articles to discuss issues like adaptation of source material and in-depth analysis of a specific *e-sugoroku* board.[51]

The growth of research related to *e-sugoroku* can be tied to a growing interest in what have been called "playful prints." This term refers to any prints outside the traditional *ukiyo-e* genres of landscape, beauty prints and actor prints. Prints made to be

[48] In 1998 The Edo Tokyo Museum published a catalog in conjunction with the city of Tokyo that is dedicated to their sizeable collection of *e-sugoroku*. The catalog consists of high quality photographs of the prints along with short descriptions, but it does not contain any critical response to the works. See: Edo Tokyo Hakubutsukan, ed., *E-sugoroku: asobi no naka no akogare* 絵すごろく:遊びの中のあこがれ (Tokyo: Edo Tokyo Hakubutsukan, 1998).

[49] Iwaki Noriko 岩崎紀子, "Bakemono to asobu: nanken keredomo bakemono sugoroku" 化物と遊ぶ「なんけんけれどもばけ物双六」, *Edo-Tokyo kenkyū hōkoku* 江戸東京研究報告 5 (2000): 39-62.

[50] One of the earliest forms of secular monster imagery, these scrolls depict scenes of monsters escaping into the realm of humans and wandering through the night. This event was thought to take place on certain auspicious days.

[51] For Iwaki's discussion of monsters images in Pure Land *e-sugoroku* see: Iwaki Noriko, "Yōkai jōdo sugorokukō" 妖怪浄土双六考, in *Nihon yōkaigaku taizen* 日本妖怪学大全, Komatsu Kazuhiko 小松和彦, ed. (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2003), 65-101.

played with, like paper dolls or board games, are included along with prints that depict images with more earthy themes, works that have been, for the most part, overlooked by scholars of Japanese prints. In his essay in *Nihon yōkaigaku taizen*,[52] Kagawa Masanobu includes *e-sugoroku* along with a number of other types of playful prints in his discussion of the lighter side of Edo period monster images.[53]

In 2006 Rebecca Salter published *Japanese Popular Prints*, the most extensive English language work on the subject of playful prints to date.[54] Salter addresses the cultural context of these prints, focusing mainly on popular culture during the Edo and Meiji periods. She includes cultural contextualization for these works, including how they were used by the individuals who made them. In *Japanese Popular Prints*, Salter discusses *e-sugoroku* in some detail. Rather than discussing *e-sugoroku* in conjunction with other board games or in terms of its adaptation of literary or religious works, Salter approaches them as prints: inexpensive, functional objects made to appeal to a broad audience. She also effectively covers a wide range of subject matter, from the Pure Land to the *Tōkaidō* to a peek backstage during a Kabuki performance.

Masuda Suzuyo, a student of Iwaki, has published several articles related to Pure Land *sugoroku*. The first of these, "*E-sugoroku no kōzō ni miru mandara-teki sekai: jōdo sugoroku kara ippanteki na e-sugoroku made*," discusses the adaptation of Buddhist mandala into *e-sugoroku* and the evolution of these games made for religious education

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[52] Kagawa Masanobu 香川雅信, "Asobi no naka no yōkai-tachi – kinsei kōki ni okeru yōkaikan no tenkan" 遊びの中の妖怪たち近世後期における妖怪観の転換, in *Nihon yōkaigaku taizen*, 31-64.

[53] For an in-depth discussion of *e-sugoroku* adaptations of Edo period literature see: Kan Jihyon 賢志康, "Hizakurigemono no e-sugoroku" 膝栗毛物の絵双六 *Ukiyo-e Geijutsu* 浮世絵芸術 159 (2010): 48-61.

[54] Rebecca Salter, *Japanese Popular Prints: From Votive Slips to Playing Cards*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006).

into the secular games of the Edo period.[55] She continues her discussion of adaptation in more detail in her 2010 article "*E-sugorokukō: sono hyōgen to kōzō o mandarateki sekai ni miru jyōdo sugoroku kara*."[56] The focus of her work is to create a more cogent theory of the evolution of *e-sugoroku* after its introduction to Japan.[57]

Academic interest in playful prints is a relatively recent phenomenon. Critical writing on games in general tends to focus on the task of creating general definitions for game types, placing the games in a historical context. With the study of *e-sugoroku*, this historicizing approach is coupled with textual analysis, looking at the games as texts or narrative adaptations rather than objects in their own right.

This technique is helpful for providing some context for these works by drawing parallels to the world of literature. However, the specific function of *e-sugoroku* is not the transmission of a text through conventional reading. It is meant to be played as a game. Most studies, including the extensive works of Yamamoto and Masukawa do an admirable job of addressing a basic definition *e-sugoroku*.

The parameters of what these games are along with the basics of how they work is always provided in these studies, but this functional analysis is entirely divorced from any discussion of specific examples. While the typological identities of the games in question are clear, how specific examples function as games is not discussed. Mechanical function is in many cases completely divorced from an analysis of the

[55] Masuda, "E-sugoroku no kōzō ni miru mandarateki sekai," 29-46.

[56] Masuda Suzuyo, "E-sugorokukō: sono hyōgen to kōzō wo mandarateki sekai ni miru - jyōdo sugoroku kara ippanteki na e-sugoroku made," 21-88.

[57] See also: Yuhara Katsumi, "The Evolution of Sugoroku Boards," *Board Game Studies* 7 (2007): 30-45.

content and subject matter of the game. It is often not clear how the game is played and how the effects the theme of the work.

An aspect of the function of *e-sugoroku* that is entirely ignored is the role of the players. These works are meant to be interacted with in very specific ways beyond being admired for aesthetic qualities or read as texts and as game boards, these works strictly control this interaction. They contain the rules as well as instructions that describe this image allowing are to understand how the games were played. Through close analysis of the visual content of *Monster Yarns*, along with a discussion of board structures and game mechanics, I plan on addressing the specific function of game play and create a model of how the viewer interacts with the print as a game.

E-sugoroku, As It Is Played

There are three main structural components found in all *e-sugoroku*: the *furidashi* 振り出し, the *agari* 上がり and the spaces that make up the main body of the board. The *furidashi* is the starting space that provides the setting and logic for the game. It provides the bulk of the information about the theme of the game, usually in the form of some type of visual representation and a short text. Continuing onward, there are the spaces that form the pathway through the game and provide supporting information about the theme. The *agari* is the final destination, the winning square that is the ultimate goal of play. Once the *agari* is reached, a winner is declared and game play technically ends.

Most *e-sugoroku* fit into one of two categories: *mawari-sugoroku* 回り双六 (spiral *sugoroku*) or *tobi-sugorok*u 飛び双六 (leaping *sugorku*). Originally defined by

Masukawa Kōichi, these two groupings are based on game-board structure.[58] Other types have been identified, but at this time there is no consensus on this issue because of the relatively limited number of examples.[59]

Mawari-sugoroku consists of a series of rectangular spaces arranged in concentric rows from the *furidashi,* generally located in the lower right corner of the board, to the *agari* in the center of the board. The squares are usually individually illustrated, forming a discrete series of events in an illustrated narrative rather than made part of a comprehensive image. It shares some similarities with the game of goose, a single track racing board game that was widely played in the West during the 18th and 19th centuries.[60] Play progresses in turns with each player rolling the dice and moving forward the number of spaces shown until one of the players reaches the *agari*. The boards can also contain spaces that cause a player to lose a turn, move backwards or return to the *furidashi*. The exact nature of these squares varies from game to game, and they are often tailored with specific details to fit within the logic of the board's theme.

Tobi-sugoroku has no parallel in the West. A typical *tobi-sugoroku* board consists of a grid of rectangular spaces arranged in registers, with a larger *furidashi* located in the center of the bottom row. Each square contains numbered instructions for movement. The players roll the dice and follow the instructions that coincide with the number that is shown. Rather than move from space to space along a path of squares, the players "leap" to a destination that could be located anywhere on the board. The game is won by the first player who enters the *agari*. *Tobi-sugoroku* contain dedicated lose-a-

[58] Masukawa, *Sugoroku Vol. 1*, 3-4.

[59] Yamamoto, *E-sugoroku: oitachi to miryoku*. See also Namiki, *Edo no yūgi*.
[60] Parlett, *The Oxford History of Board Games*, 115-118.

turn spaces which serve to increase the complexity of game play, but players can also lose a turn if they roll a number that does not correspond to any of the instructions provided on a particular space.

E-sugoroku is an easy to play game with a complex history. The board is a location for the act of play, a point where the player steps outside reality to recreate the experience of the game. With the basic structure and history of the *e-sugoroku* game board described, I will now turn to the specific visual features of *Monster Yarns.*

CHAPTER III

VISUAL ANALYSIS

Overview

Monster Yarns is constructed using twenty six individual images arranged in an outlined grid (Figure 2). A wide margin of blank paper surrounds the printed image, with the title and artist's name on the left side in large, clearly written characters and the publication information provided on the right in slightly smaller writing. The date seal appears just below the center of the right margin.

The board is printed on four standard *ō-ban* sized papers joined together to create a print with overall dimensions of 20 ½ by 32 inches. Limited to a palette of six inks, (red, yellow, blue, green and orange and black), the printer relied on overprinting to achieve more complex coloristic effects. For the keyblock lines the black ink was applied lightly resulting in a deep charcoal gray, with a deeper black tone used as an accent color. The condition of the print is good, but there are some areas of damage and discoloration, most notably in the lower right hand corner, an issue likely caused by handling or exposure. Dark blotches of ink from an unknown source also dot the print in the center of the upper register. There are also areas of pigment loss along creases due to refolding or pressure while the print was being stored. This problem is particularly visible in the dark gray grid outlines.

At some point the print was conserved by applying a thin backing paper and hand-coloring areas of loss. For the most part this conservation is not obvious, but there were limited attempts made to replicate areas of text or pattern. The clearest example of this

can be seen in the lower right corner of the instruction box in the *furidashi*, where a section of text has been destroyed by a sizeable worm hole. One example of text restoration can be seen on the larger characters used to print the title on the right margin, including the left stroke of *mono* 物 and the lower stroke of the character *sugo* 雙. Areas where attempts were made to replicate colors that would blend well with the original inks, but restored red and orange inks appear slightly brighter than the areas of original pigment.

The key block carving is strongest in its depiction of regimented geometric forms, such as depictions of interior architecture. The lines used to render the more rounded forms of drapery show an adept calligraphic bent, but tiny details that require curving lines or rounded shapes such as detailed foliage are rendered with dense, angular hatching that become illegible at a distance.

Clarity of line is further compromised by color block misalignment. Green, blue and black inks spill over the keyblock lines into areas of lighter color giving many of the figures a degree of fuzziness around their edges. Areas of white highlights suffer from this problem of inaccuracy as well, most noticeably on the faces of several figures in the square sixteen. These issues would not be so apparent if the keyblock had been printed in a deeper shade of black. The final keyblock line appears to be a color closer to deep gray, rather than a solid black. In areas where the deepest black is used, like the skin of the creature in square twelve or the umbrella's stripes in square seventeen, it is apparent that the key block line is several shades lighter than this deep black. In several places the fine lines the separate the individual spaces seem to stutter and give out entirely, possibly

caused by careless printing or an impression made late in the run after the block had become worn.

Content and Structure

Each square contains the same basic content: a title, rolling instructions and an image of a monstrous creature. The title is contained in a box in the upper right corner that contains the creature's name written in large characters with a gloss in small *kana* running along the right side. The boxes alternate red and orange on the spaces, and are colored red with a green border for the *furidashi* and *agari*. These titles are written in a clear and even hand, but for some of the longer names the strokes appear either slightly truncated or bunched too closely together.

A separate yellow colored box contains the rolling instructions for each square. Each instruction starts with a number and is followed a monster's name that represents a destination square. The names do not exactly correspond with the title that appears on each square, but it is not difficult to figure out the intended meaning given the limited number of options. Each name is written in a cursive *kana* script, although some *kanji* are used in cases where space is limited. The *furidashi* contains a larger box because six instructions are required to start the game. This box is decorated with a special pattern of closely grouped patches of yellow and pale red dots on white.

Aside from the *furidashi* and *agari*, which will be discussed in more detail below, the monsters are depicted using two main techniques. On most of the squares is a full length portrait of the creature against a background that contains a few details about the particular setting or habits of each creature. The second is a three-quarter length portrait of the beast.

Furidashi

Title:

ふり出し

Furidashi

Start

Instructions:

1 雪女郎 (ゆきぢよらう) (Yuki Jorō)

2 山童 (やまをとこ) (Yamaotoko)

3 犬神 (いぬがミ) (Inugami)

4 三目大僧 (ミつめだいそう) (Mitsume daisō)

5 河童 (かっぱ) (Kappa)

6 海坊主 (うミぼうず) (Umibōzu)

This starting space is located in the center of the board's bottom register (Figure 3). The larger size of this space allows for a much more detailed image than the other squares contain. The scene of a *hyaku monogatari*[61] game in this square sets the theme for the rest of the board.

[61] Inagaki Shin'ichi 稲垣進一, *Edo no asobi-e* 江戸の遊び絵 (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 1988), 44.

Set in the interior of a home, the strict geometric forms of the wood and paper sliding doors add visual interest with their gridded forms. The floor of the room, printed in green, is lined with a thin yellow line of baseboard. Vertical stripes of yellow run from floor to ceiling, adding a sense of height to the strict horizontality of the room. To the rear of the scene a wall is decorated with white rectangular panes that alternate with bands of dark gray. An adjoining wall contains a large central window that repeats the grids that pattern the sliding doors. Along the left side, floor to ceiling sliding doors are lined with a light orange band along its base. They stand open to reveal an adjoining room with a small window and alcove.

The focal point of the scene is the group of eight children to the right side of the space. Their rounded, apple cheeks are shaded in light pink, with their cheerful faces rendered with minimal but expressive lines. All of the children are dressed in lined winter kimonos each decorated with a bright pattern, tied with the knotted sashes with trailing streamers of silk.

The children in this group look towards the left at two other figures. The first is a boy standing near the center of the space in a blue and gray striped kimono. He is walking towards the group, looking over his shoulder at the second figure in the scene, a young boy in a green floral kimono who has entered the adjoining room. He stands before a large black oil lamp, reaching out to extinguish the flame, his face turned away from the viewer. All of the gazes are directed towards this single figure, highlighting his importance in the scene as he ends the game.

Square One: *Naka no Kawachi no Yuki Jorō*

Title:

なかのかわち　ゆきぢょらう
中河内の雪女郎

Naka no Kawachi no Yuki Jorō

The Snow Lady of Naka no Kawachi

Instructions:

1 ふな船ゆうれい (Funayūrei)

2 うミ海ぼうず (Umibōzu)

3 山びこ (Yamabiko)

4 ねこまた (Nekomata)

Yuki Jorō is a female specter that first appeared in written sources during the Muromachi Period.[62] She is thought to be a form of mountain spirit or animated snow brought to life by a grudge.[63] There are numerous versions of the *Yuki Jorō* legend, but all the stories involve a mysterious beautiful woman who appears on a snowy evening to either a childless couple who adopt her or single man who takes her as his wife. All the stories end with her eventual disappearance back in to the snowy woods. In some versions her true identity is revealed to her new family but it must be kept a secret or else

[62] Yumoto Kōichi 湯本豪一, *Meiji yōkai shinbun* 明治妖怪新聞 (Tokyo: Kashiwa Shobō, 1999), 87-90.

[63] Toriyama, *Gazu hyakki yagyō*, 67.

she will leave.[64] In other versions her true nature is entirely secret, only to be revealed when she melts while cooking or after taking a hot bath.[65]

This square is located on the far right of the bottom register (Figure 4). A single female figure of shown, her body rising to form a gentle curve from the base of the frame to the upper portion of the square as she turns away from the viewer. Her white robe is outlined in blue, to stand out from the snowy background. The long folded sleeves seem to be moving in the wind, bunched over her hands. Her long black hair is pulled back with a tie, each strand of hair rendered using single lines with gray overprinting that blends into the deep gray of the sky.

She is turned towards a hut, its snow-covered thatched roof and tiny window barely visible in the lower right corner. It is surrounded by a small bamboo fence, printed in an application of red ink so thinly applied that it appears pink. Behind her a forest is rendered in sketchy strokes, surrounding the large, open clearing in which the figure stands. The heavy use of white gives the appearance of block misalignment. Black lines are used on the left of the forest to emphasize the tree trunks, while individual patches of greenery and bare tree branches can be seen from under a thick layer of snow. A large curving form surmounts the individual trunks representing either the conglomerated greenery of the forest or a large hill behind the forest. Falling snow is shown in a white speckling pattern in the sky above the forest, but the falling snow stops at the tree tops.

Square Two: *Mitsume Daisō*

Title:

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[64] Tanaka Kōtarō 田中貢太郎, *Shina kaidan zenshū* 支那怪談全集 (Tokyo: Tōgensha, 1975), 72.

[65] Yamaguchi Takeshi 山口剛, *Kaidan meisakushū* 怪談名作集 (Tokyo: Nihon Meicho Zenshū Kankōkai , 1927), 89.

あさひなきりどをし　ミ　めだいそう
朝北奈切道の三つ目大僧

Asahina Kiridōshi no Mitsume Daisō

Three Eyed Priest of the Asahina Kiridōshi

Instructions:

2 しっとの怨念(をんねん) (Shitto no onnen)

4 あかなめ (Akaname)

5 いぬ神(がミ) (Inugami)

6 海(うミ)ぼうず (Umibōzu)

Mitsume daisō is a creature that appears to travelers, who often come upon him at night.[66] He is often seen in forest clearings on mountain paths or along the side of isolated roads. He appears to be an entirely ordinary human being the size of an average man dressed as a monk with a shaved head. In a trope that is repeated in many tales of encounters with humanoid monsters, when the travelers approach the monk, he turns and reveals that he has three eyes, terrifying the travelers who run away before he can attack.[67]

Moving along the bottom register to the left from square one, there is another square depicting a humanoid figure (Figure 5). Reaching out a hand towards the right, the figure is only visible above the waist, wearing a simple light yellow robe. The three

[66] Yumoto Kōichi 湯本豪一, *Chihōhatsu Meiji yōkai nyūsu* 地方発明治妖怪ニュース (Tokyo: Kashiwa Shobō, 2006), 42-46.

[67] Adam Kabat, *Edo kokkei bakemono zukushi* 江戸滑稽化物尽くし (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2003), 138.

bulging eyes in the center of his malformed head immediately draw the viewer's focus, with their strange crescent shaped pupils and heavy shading. Framed by dark, curving eyebrows, the sockets appear to stand out from the face.

There is a strange sense of plasticity in the way the flesh of this creature is rendered, as if the solid substance of its skin is melting away. A line snaking up the side of its head could be a prominent throbbing vein, perhaps representing a state of agitation, but when coupled with the unevenness of the top of the skull and the strange musculature of the arm it seems to resemble puddled droplets of loose skin more than flesh and bone. Similar dripping flesh pools around a curled snarling mouth that reveals both rows of uneven teeth.

Behind the figure, a landscape is sketched out in black and green, shades that contrast against the solid gray sky. A rolling hill is dotted with distant trees, abstracted into single lines for trunks and branches, the foliage represented by small triangular strokes. A large pine with a single branch forms the right margin of the image, its bark rendered with the same light pink used for the monk's flesh. Large painterly strokes of black are applied over this pink, but there is very little variation in tone. Instead of creating a sense of rounded form, this texture makes the tree trunks appear more flat. The pine greenery is depicted using a series of thin, feathery layers of black ink applied over a broad swatch of green.

Square Three: *Gōshū no Inugami, Shirachigo*

Title:

ごうしう　いぬがミしらちご
江州の狗神白児

Gōshū no Inugami, Shirachigo

The Dog God and White Puppy

Instructions:

1 山をとこ (Yamaotoko)

4 せうけら (Shōkera)

6 しっとの怨(をん)ねん (Shitto no onnen)

Tales that describe the *inugami* are quite ancient, with written sources describing the creature dating back to the Heian period.[68] Originally, the *inugami* was not an autonomous entity, but rather the result of a summoning ritual. A dog is ritualistically murdered and a black magic rite is performed to convince the spirit of the god to take up residence in the dog. Depending on the skill with which the ritual is executed, *inugami* will either bestow great wealth or kill the summoner. By the Edo period, the *inugami* seems to have become a singular entity that was depicted as being in full possession of a corporeal form, rather than a deity that must be summoned into a physical form.[69]

Moving left along the bottom register past the *furidashi* we find the next square (Figure 6). In the center stands an anthropomorphized dog dressed like a Shinto priest. Its four-toed paws are barely visible, peeking out from a pair of voluminous trousers, and its paws are hidden in the long sleeves of its blue robe. A black ceremonial cap is tied firmly to its head with decorative tassels, mashing down a pair of furry ears. The creature carries a ceremonial wand, decorated with braided paper streamers.

[68] Yumoto, *Chihōhatsu Meiji yōkai nyūsu*, 82-84.
[69] Toriyama Sekien, *Gazu hyakki yagyō*, 34.

Its red furred face is marked with white, with round blues eyes and a small pink nose that is surrounded by whiskers. It appears to be snarling at its small attendant, the mouth pulled back revealing pointed teeth and a curled tongue. Though the expression is fierce, the juxtaposition of the dog's face with the priest's clothing is somewhat humorous.

The attendant has white fur shaded with a light red tint, but its snout is more rounded with a closed, upturned mouth and small almond shaped eyes. Due to a sizeable wormhole on this print, its ears are missing. It is dressed in a short blue robe with red jacket. It appears to walk towards its master, stepping forward with its left leg and reaching out with its left arm.

Behind these two creatures the ground slopes sharply upwards from left from right, tipping the foreground forward and shortening the depth of field compressing the entire image into a cramped space. The foreground is edged in tufts of grass and thin pine trees, with vegetation represented by large blotches of green printed over thin black lines representing individual leaves or needles. Plants appear to pop out from the ground line, rather than growing out from the earth itself. The background rises from this ground line in deep black blotches that surround the trees and grasses, fading into a final tone of solid gray.

Square Four: *Myōkōzan no Yamaotoko*

Title:

めうかうざん　やまをとこ
妙 高 山 の 山　童

Myōkōzan no Yamaotoko

The Mountain Man of Myōkōzan

Instructions:

2 あかなめ (Akaname)

3 一本あし (Ippon'ashi)

4 砂村(すなむら)のをん霊(れう) (Sunamura no onryō)

5 かつぱ (Kappa)

Yamaotoko is a wild man who roams the mountains and forests of Japan. He is often shown partially nude, with long wild hair and coarse facial features. [70] He is capable of communication and generally humanoid in form, but is still not considered human.[71] In many stories he is associated with violent behavior, killing anyone who comes across his path.[72]

This square is located at the extreme left side of the bottom register (Figure 7). A hunched figure with pink flesh, clad only in a full skirt made of green leaves tied with string. Its body is rendered using the muscular forms of the physically fit. Unkempt hair surrounds *yamaotoko*'s oval face, hanging down to its shoulder revealing a pair of pointed ears and shoulders. Its snubbed nose is rounded, with the tip highlighted in white, and the mouth is set in a grimace revealing a single row of white teeth.

In its right hand it grips a long notched weapon, while grasping a dead goose in its left, inspecting the bird with its single eye. It is clear from the small patches of pale red

[70] Toriyama, *Gazu hyakki yagyō*, 32.
[71] Katsushika, *Hokusai yōkai hyakkei*, 126, 130.

[72] Takehara Shunsen 竹原春泉, *Ehon hyaku monogatari: Tōsanjin yawa* 絵本百物語－桃山人夜話 (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 2003), 102-103.

on the top of goose's belly that the goose's brown color was achieved by overprinting the deep gray with red. The creature's bare legs and feet are posed as if it is in motion, the image captured as the creature in the middle of a hunting trip.

The image is closely cropped around the figure making it difficult to decipher the setting. A curving rope bridge, identifiable by the hatched rendering of rope's fibers, is suspended between two objects beyond the frame of the image. It supports the weight of the *yamaotoko* and fills the lower portion of the square.

Behind the bridge, the tallest peak of a mountain range is visible to the lower left, colored deep bluish gray. To the right, a flock of geese, reduced to small black hook-like forms, fly in front of a full moon that has appeared in the dark blue night sky. The typical rounded cloud form has been reversed here, making the nature of space depicted unclear. The white is tempered by a gradation effect that ends in a deep black at the top of the image.

Square Five: *Yamabiko*

Title:

幽谷郷音
やまびこ

Yamabiko

Echoing Ravine Troll of the Village

Instructions:

3 あかなめ (Akaname)

4 のぶすま (Nobusuma)

5 ねこまた (Nekomata)

6 ゆき女郎 (Yuki Jorō)

This strange creature lives in the deep forests of mountainous regions and is rarely seen by humans.[73] *Yamabiko* attacks by disorienting those who venture into his territory with echoing their calls for help, luring them close enough to eat them or leading them off cliffs to their death. He is a particular danger for young acolytes studying at mountain temples.[74]

This square is located on the rightmost side of the second register (Figure 8). A bright green hillock rises up at an angle so sharp that it appears to tip the entire picture plane forward. Dotted with sparse trees, it appears isolated against a flat gray background. A twisted tree juts into the foreground from the right side, its pink bark textured with striated black and gray shadows, gnarled branches supporting strangely angular foliage colored in large blotches of green. Tiny, almost dot like strokes are used to imply short grasses on the hillside, while scraggly trees and the tops of bushes can be seen poking above the left hand side of the hill.

In the middle of this precariously steep landscape sits a blue monster. Its limbs appear strangely boneless, its right arm turning out at a physically impossible angle, leaving its stumpy digits flopping at the end of undefined arms. The bowed bones and rounded joints in its legs end in elongated paw-like feet that seem to make no connection to the ground it is shown squatting on.

Its full face, with rounded cheeks and a prominent chin, rises from sloping shoulders. It is impossible to tell if the creature is posed in a way that covers its neck, or

[73] Toriyama, *Gazu hyakki yagyō*, 31.

[74] Yumoto, *Meiji yōkai shinbun*, 56.

if it simply does not have one at all. Its mouth is closed, but it is curved in a smile, with two sets of fangs jutting out of both corners. Set in deeply shaded sockets, its eyes are colored in the same light red used elsewhere in this image, with small round pupils that appear to be looking upwards. A curving line near the brow ridge implies a frown, but it is lost in the gray overprinting that creates shadows around the eyes. The overprinting also partially obscures the rounded nose, covering the right side, but it does also effectively emphasize the stubby shape and short length of its snout. Long ears that are covered in hair or fur flop down from each side of the *yamabito*'s head reaching all the way to its shoulders.

Its body is short and pudgy with disproportionately long limbs. Colored in a shade of bright blue, its skin is covered in misshapen blotches of color. These patterns occur randomly all over its body, except for its pale red belly. The combination of splotchy coloration and the bloated potbelly makes the creature seem somewhat frog-like.

Square Six: *Sunamura no onryō*

Title:

すなむら　をんれう
砂村の怨灵

Sunamura no onryō

The Resentful Spirit of Sunamura

Instructions:

1 はらつづミ (Haratsuzumi)

2 も　じ
茂りん寺 (Morinji)

3 いぬ神 (Inugami)

4 せうけら (Shōkera)

5 ゆき女郎 (Yuki Jorō)

Sunamura was a small village located along the Arakawa River. The body of the murdered woman Oiwa washed up close to village, in an area where gourds were being grown. The gourds became possessed by the vengeful spirit of Oiwa and grew frightful faces.[75] In prints of the climactic scene from the play *Tōkaidō Yotsuya kaidan,* 東海道四谷怪談 where Oiwa appears to her husband, the lantern is shown surrounded by the frowning vegetables (Figure 9). This particular depiction of the gourds may have its origins in a similar creature known as the *furu tsubaki no rei* 古山茶の霊 (Old Camellia Specter) that comes to life when a camellia plant lives an extraordinarily long time (Figure 10). On moonlit nights, the tree will turn into an ambulatory monster.[76]

Continuing along the second register to the left, we find square six. A bright white moon shines down from a deep blue sky onto a pile of foliage. Twining, curling branches twist into a raveling form that closely resembles the curve of a human leg, creating ankles and thin feet that end in three skinny toes. The body of this strange beast is made up of the large scalloped leaves of a gourd vine, with delicate three pronged veining and shadowed folds. Behind these leaves, the vines can be seen weaving knots strong enough to support the weight and movement of this floral creature. The leaves form a triangular shape that is topped by a large yellow gourd blossom.

[75] Hirosue Tamotsu 廣末保, *Yotsuya kaidan* 四谷怪談, (Tokyo: Kage Shobō, 2000), 46-48.
[76] Toriyama, *Gazu hyakki yagyō*, 142.

Snaking out from this pile of leaves is a single vine attached to a sizeable orange vegetable that is divided into curving sections by thin lines leading to a small face near the widening bottom. With upturned crescent shaped eyes and a small downturned mouth, the gourd is carried by a pair of vines that emerge from the leafy body, supporting a head far too weighty for the tiny sinuous neck.

The creature walks along a blank gray surface, devoid of any detail. Rising behind the ground line is a row of thin grasses that are bent by the wind. Behind the monster to the left is a nod to its origins: a trellis made of widely spaced bamboo poles that now stand empty. Perhaps the structure had once supported the vines that now roam the night.

Square Seven: *Bandō Tarō no Kappa*

Title:

坂東太郎の河童
(ばんどうたろう　かっぱ)

Bandō Tarō no Kappa

The Kappa of the Tone River

Instructions:

2 うみぼうず (Umibōzu)

3 ろくろくび (Rokurokubi)

4 船ゆうれい (Funayūrei)

5 やまびこ (Yamabiko)

Poem:

さらの水(ミづ)ひあがりて一(ひ)トまわりやすミ

Sara no mizu hiagarite hitomawari yasumi

The dish's water has all dried up wait one turn to rest.

The *kappa* is a dangerous creature that lives in bodies of water near human habitations, including wells and outhouses.[77] It is an amphibious creature that spends most of its time in the water, venturing onto dry land with the aid of the water filled depression on the top of its skull.[78] *Kappa* are said to feed on the balls of energy that are in human bodies near the rectum,[79] so the creatures are often shown disemboweling their victims. [80]

The *kappa* that appears in *Monster Yarns* is a creature that was though to inhabit the Tone river (referred to here by its nickname *Bandō Tarō*), a river north of the city of Edo known for its erratic flow. Seasonal flooding was known to be severe enough to cause damage to local property and agricultural output, so supernatural beings were though to reside in the area, including the *kappa.* [81] The role of these creatures in the region varied over time, from evil beasts out to cause floods to more impish creatures that could at times be helpful to the local population.

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[77] Toriyama Sekien, *Gazu hyakki yagyō*, 36.

[78]Kabat, *Edo kokkei bakemono zukushi*, 183-191.

[79] Adam Kabat, *Oedo bakemono saiken* 大江戸化物細見, (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2000), 180-220.

[80] Katsushika, *Hokusai yōkai hyakkei*, 112-113, 118.

[81] Kokudo Kaihatsu Gijutsu Kenkyū Sentā 国土開発技術研究センター, *Tonegawa hyakunenshi: chisui to risui* 利根川百年史：治水と利水, (Tokyoto: Kansetsuhō Kantō Chihō Kenstsukyoku 1987), 100-102.

Moving left once again, we find square seven (Figure 12). Swirling blue water fills the entire background of this square, resolving into a white pattern of swirling rivulets towards the left. The lines used to depict the water's rivulets make it seem as if the picture plane is being viewed at a ninety degree angle, undercutting any sense that this scene occurs in a three dimensional space. Partitions made from stone and wood divide the space in half. The lower portion appears to be a grayish stone, criss-crossed with a woven lattice of thin green bamboo. This base is topped with thin stones or planks of wood, colored first in the same gray as the stones, overprinted with the pale red to create a brownish hue.

Central in this image is the *kappa*. It crouches with its back to the viewer, its back covered in a brown shell made up of horizontal plates. Its color is achieved by overprinting light gray over pale red, leaving red accents along the top of each plate. The *kappa*'s limbs are thick with large, rounded joints, ended in disproportionately large webbed claws. The skin is bright green with irregular patches of shading color that give the limbs an appearance of rounded bonelessness.

The *kappa*'s head emerges directly from its hunched shoulders, a long beaked mouth agape showing a pointed tongue and two rows of jagged teeth. It is shown in full profile, a tiny nose appearing in the center of the convex curve that stretches from lips to hairline with large, round eyes that are set in a heavy brow ridge, a bright spot in the heavy shadow that forms a broad stripe across the center of his face. A tiny ear is barely visible above its shoulder. The head is crowned with a thatch of thick black hair that forms a wild circle around its pate. The concave space in the *kappa*'s skull is used to

carry the water that allows this creature to live on dry land is depicted as a tiny semicircle in the center of its head.

This square contains the most overt depiction of violence in *Monster Yarns*. The *kappa*'s victim is a young child who is curled in a tight ball, with his hands and feet tucked tightly into his torso. His curled posture represents his emotional distress in this terrifying situation. His shoulder length black hair shows no sign of movement as the *kappa* holds him above the swirling water. The child is dwarfed by the monster that is able to hold him or her in a single webbed claw. With the other claw, the *kappa* pulls a long dark gray mass from between the child's legs. His shoulder length black hair shows no sign of movement as the *kappa* holds him above the swirling water. The expression of the child's face is largely illegible. The only discernible features are a single dot for the right eye and a tiny pair of dark lips with a small line for the nose.

Square Eight: *Namagusadera no Nekomata*

Title:

なまぐさでら　ねこまた
腥　寺 の猫 俣

Namagusadera no Nekomata

The Demon Cat of the Degenerate Temple

Instructions

1 ゆき女郎 (Yuki Jorō)

2 上がり (Agari)

4 れんぎ棒 (Rengibō)

5 おいわ (Oiwa)

Nekomata are a class of demon that takes possession of cats in order to cause harm to humans.[82] In early stories, there are closer to large wild cats in physical form, visiting villages and towns from the mountains to wreak havoc among the residents.[83] These creatures do have the ability to shape-shift, but most often they stay in their original cat-like form. By the mid-Edo period, they had shifted to a ferocious demon that transformed common house cats.[84] Often a family or individual will suffer from a series of serious misfortunes before the *nekomata* is found hiding in their house.[85] They can be recognized by their forked tails and human-like behavior. *Nekomata* will continue to cause trouble until they are killed.[86] The use of the term *namagusadera* 腥寺 in the title of this square locates the beast at a temple that has either been left to deteriorate physically or a religious establishment occupied by individuals that no longer properly adhere to the tenants of its faith.

Continuing to the left along the second register, we find square eight (Figure 13). A common housecat is the central figure in this image, shown standing on its hind legs in an acrobatic pose, the back bending upright in a long curve. The right hind leg is raised off the ground and its curled front paws are held up in a menacing gesture, pointed claws picked out in pale red. The cat's round face is offset by a large black and red spot, angular yellow eyes framed by furry brows. Its small pink nose appears at the end of a

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[82] Isao Toshihiko 悳俊彦, *Yōkai mandara: Bakumatsu Meiji no yōkai eshitachi* 妖怪曼陀羅－幕末明治の妖怪絵師たち, (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 2007).

[83] Hara Michio 原道生; Kigoshi Osamu 木越治; Takada Mamoru 高田衛, *Hyaku monogatari kaidan shūsai* 百物語怪談集成 (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1987), 343-344.

[84] Toriyama, *Gazu hyakki yagyō*, 35.

[85] Ichiyanagi Hirotaka 一柳廣孝; Kondō, Mizuki 近藤瑞木; Sansantei, Arindo 山々亭有人, *Bakumatsu Meiji hyakumonogatari* 幕末明治百物語 (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 2009), 106-107.

[86] Katsushika, *Hokusai yōkai hyakkei*, 64-65, 80.

short snout, with a prominent lower jaw. The *nekomata* holds its mouth slightly open, and sticks out a small reddish tongue. Its fur is mainly white, with light orange, black and yellow patches, its texture picked out with tiny lines.

This looks like a typical housecat, but there are a few signs that there is more to this creature. The most obvious is that this creature is standing on its hind legs, a clear sign that something foul is afoot. A second major clue is the white scarf patterned with a red starburst at the corners that is worn over the cat's left ear and shoulder. The surest sign that the cat has transformed into a demon is the tail that forks in two halfway down its length. This is the final mark of transformation into a monster.

The creature is shown dancing on the wooden verandah of a rundown temple, with the outer edge of the planks appearing just under its left foot. To the right of the cat is the wall of the building, with a broken lattice window printed in black appearing in the upper right corner. Hatched lines printed in gray over the brown walls are used to representing aging wood, while wild tufts of grass are shown poking through the boards at wild angles. The sky is printed in a deep gray that is very close in tonal intensity to the brown of the building.

Square Nine: *Kujiranami no Funayūrei*

Title:

くじらなみ　ふなゆうれい
鯨 波 の 舩 幽 霊

Kujiranami no Funayūrei

The Boat Ghost of Kujiranami

Instructions:

2 れんぎぼう (Rengibō)

3 あかなめ (Akaname)

4 おいわ (Oiwa)

5 しつとのねん (Shitto no nen)

Funayūrei is a type of vengeful ghost that manifests itself from the spirits of individuals who have died of drowning while traveling on ships. Rather than manifest itself as a single entity, *funayūrei* appears as a group of individuals dressed in white. They attack ships in a very peculiar manner, sinking boats by filling them with water using bamboo ladles.[87] Kujiranami refers to a specific location in Niigata prefecture.

Moving left again along the second register, we find square nine (Figure 14). Swirling blue waves surround the sail of a ship, barely visible above the lower margin of the square. Deeply shadowed, the strangely plastic forms are highlighted in white, representing the intensity of their movement. The razor thin lines of the rigging stretch from the mast that has been colored in light red as the waves reach almost to its topmost point, shown on the verge of engulfing the ship entirely. The sky is a deep gray, with foreboding black clouds appearing just above the deep blue waves.

A thin flame, colored in pale shades of orange and yellow, wavers just above the mast, the initial indicator of what is causing this storm. Hidden among the rounded waves are eleven figures dressed as monks and nuns, their facial features barely visible because of the tiny scale of this image. There are women dressed in the white robes edged with black, their heads covered in black cloth. The male figures all have shaved heads and wear gray jackets over white robes.

[87] Takehara, *Ehon hyaku monogatari*, 75-76.

Most prominent are the four female figures on the right side of the image that appear to be perched on top of the waves as they reach out towards the ship's mast. Each of these figures reaches towards the boat with a tiny round bamboo ladle set on a long handle.

Square Ten: *Shitto no onnen*

Title:

嫉妬(しっと)の怨念(をんねん)

Shitto no onnen

Grudge of Jealousy

Instructions

2 おいわ (Oiwa)

3 一ぽんあし (Ippon'ashi)

4 ゆき女郎 (Yuki Jorō)

6 砂村(すなむら)のをん霊(れう) (Sunamura no Onryō)

This square represents a more general type of ghastly story: the grudge of vengeance. These stories generally detail the strong emotion of an individual taking a separate spiritual or physical form in order to harm the object of the individual's hatred. There are two are two very interesting examples of specific stories that could be represented by this square that were extremely popular during the Edo period. The first is from *Yotsuya kaidan*, a popular Edo period ghost story compilation.[88] In the story, two

[88] Hirosue, *Yotsuya kaidan*, 76-78.

women compete for the same man. One woman dies but her jealousy was so intense at the time of her death that it takes on a life of its own.[89] The idea that strong emotions, particularly jealousy have supernatural powers is a concept seen in other instances in Japanese literature. Her spirit transforms itself into a snake that sneaks into the house of rival and kills her in her sleep.[90] The specter of her jealousy is indicated by the floating tongue of fire in this image.

The second possibility is that this square depicts a monster known as *teioihebi* 手負蛇.[91] This is a snake that has been partially killed, either partially crushed or cut. Its rage gives it supernatural strength, and it seeks vengeance against the family of those who caused it harm. Generally, the creature attacks using poison. It will either sneak into the home while the family is sleeping or by hiding in their food. The family will then be mysteriously found dead.[92]

Moving to the left along the second register once again we come to square ten (Figure 15). It depicts the interior of a well-decorated house, with a few pieces of furniture visible. These objects are set against a gray background. In the upper right corner is a folding screen, with the bottom left corner visible revealing a landscape, with trees and rocks colored in a shade of gray identical to the background. It is mounted on blue paper patterned with a marbled effect and set in a pale orange frame. A red mattress decorated with a floral motif in a lighter shade of red covers the bottom portion of the

[89] Toita Yasuji 戸板康二, *Jōruri, Kabuki* 浄瑠璃・歌舞伎, (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1980), 309-375.

[90] Benneville, James S, *The Kwaidan of the Lady of Tamiya: Samurai Tales of the Tokugawa*, (New York: Kegan Paul, 2001).

[91] Takehara, *Ehon hyaku monogatari*, 79-82.
[92] Katsushika, *Hokusai yōkai hyakkei*, 24-25, 57.

image, along with a futon in green floral fabric and a black lined that lies in a heap just barely in the right side of the image.

In the center of a room sits a black octagonal headrest with a small rectangular pillow in red and white. A large snake slithers across the pillow, draping its body over the headrest with its tail trailing behind the screen. The snake's green body is covered in mottled gray markings with a bright blue belly that is visible as it holds it head upright and scents the air with its tongue. The snake is looking towards a tongue of flame, hovering above the ground just to its left. The flame is colored in shades of red, a baroque and sinuous form with minute line work expressing the movement of flame.

Square Eleven: *Sokokuradani no Akaname*

Title:

底闇谷(そこくらだに)の垢嘗(あかなめ)

Sokokuradani no Akaname

Filth Licker from the Bottom of the Darkest Ravine

Instructions

1 船ゆう霊(れい) (Funayūrei)

3 せうけら (Shōkera)

5 かつぱ (Kappa)

6 山をとこ (Yamaotoko)

Akaname is a creature that has a symbiotic relationship with humans. It is drawn to filthy baths, particularly those found in old houses. Once a bath has become dirty enough, the *akaname* will feed by licking the grime out of the bath with its long tongue.[93] It generally avoids human contact and is not considered to be particularly harmful.

This square is located to the left of square ten in the second register (Figure 16). A creature peeps around the corner of the bath's entrance, snaking its tongue out as it snatches an unattended wash bucket. A long pink tongue emerges from behind a row of white, rounded teeth. Its shaggy black hair is tucked behind its pointed ears, a detail that underscores the creature's unkempt nature. Its face is triangular in shape, with a short snubbed nose and wide, grinning mouth. Sunken eye sockets contain rounded yellow eyes that glance upwards, towards the right.

The washroom is rendered in some detail, with the wooden panels individually delineated along the far left wall. The floorboards are printed in two shades of orange, diagonally crossing the lower half of the image and drawing the eye towards the entrance to the bath. Decorated in a floral motif, the partially visible post and lintel structure of the lowered bath entrance divides the image in two. Below the entrance the interior is visible, with the step to access the bath highlighted in light orange.

The *akaname'*s skin is deep green, with its oddly bulbous musculature emphasized through blue overprinted shading that contrast sharply against the warms hues of the walls. A sense of overall griminess is added to its skin with small patches of dotted black. Roughly humanoid in form with short limbs that terminate in three toed claws, the creature is posed in a squatting position.

[93] Toriyama, *Gazu hyakki yagyō*, 38.

Square Twelve: *Genkainada no Umibōzu*

Title:

げんかいなだ　うミぼうず
玄海洋の海坊主

Genkainada no Umibōzu

Ocean Monk of Western Genkai Sea

Instructions

1 たこ入(にう)どう (Tako Nyūdō)

2 やまびこ (Yamabiko)

3 三つめ大僧(だいそう) (Mitsume Daisō)

4 かっぱ (Kappa)

5 山をとこ (Yamaotoko)

Umibōzu is a sea monster that only appears at night when the sea is calm. The beast will suddenly appear out of the ocean, looming over the oncoming ship and either physically attack the boat or cause it to sink in the rough sea its movements have caused.[94] It is a gigantic creature that takes the form of a man with a shaved head,[95] although it is usually depicted in night scenes as an entirely black form, devoid of any physical details. The title of this square locates the creature in the Genkai Sea, referring to the ocean off the coast of Saga prefecture.

[94] Ichiyanagi et al., *Bakumatsu Meiji hyakumonogatari*, 126-127.

[95] Toriyama, *Gazu hyakki yagyō*, 58.

Next we move to the final square in the second register (Figure 17). The black figure of the *umibōzu* is in the middle of the open ocean. Unlike other *umibōzu* images that show the phantom looming over a mountainous island or hapless ship, there are no landmarks among the waves to provide any sense of scale. A sense of depth is provided by the contrast between the flat indigo of the sky and the lighter blue of the undulating waves. A strong upward curve in the waves below the creature seems to imply a sense of movement upwards towards its grinning face, a motion emphasized by the surrounding baroque forms of foam topped waves that clutch at the figure.

The *umibōzu* has an entirely black face with a wide open and two round eyes set in an oddly elongated, lumpy head. A furrowed brow is represented by two thin gray lines above the close-set eyes that echo the peaked curve of the mouth. The barest outline of the right ear and chin are similarly depicted in thin gray lines. The open mouth is a crescent moon shape with a slightly peaked center set into the face. It appears just above waves, open wide enough to show a row of teeth as well as the red interior of *umibōzu*'s maw.

The eyes are somewhat anomalous. Most common depictions show a round-headed figure with a face that is entirely featureless save for two perfectly round eyes rendered in dark blue or black outlined in white. In this case, the eyes are two relatively large orbits placed closely together in the center of the creature's face. Black pupils dot the center of each eye at differing heights, giving the creature a somewhat cockeyed expression. Each eye is shaded on the lower margin with a relatively wide blue line lending the eyes dimensionality that contrasts effectively with the flat blackness of the monster's flesh.

Square Thirteen: *Tonpuhara no Haratsuzumi*

Title:

丁鳴原の腹鼓（とんぷはら　はらつづミ）

The Tanuki of Tonpu Field Drumming Its Belly

Instructions

2 九尾の狐（きうび　きつね） (Kyūbi no kitsune)

3 茂林寺（もりんじ） (Morinji)

4 やまびこ (Yamabiko)

5 見越入道（ミこしにうだう） (Mikoshi Nyūdō)

Poem

はらの皮（かは）そんじて一ト回（まハ）りやすミ

Hara no kawa sonjite hito mawari yasumi

His stomach skin is hurt, wait one turn to rest.

Tanuki are often found in isolated forests, but they do venture into cities and villages. This type of *tanuki* (raccoon dog) often appears as a trickster, out to fool people for their own gain rather than cause them harm. By the late Edo period, this creature had become so nonthreatening that one story details a rather prosaic account of a *tanuki* hunt. The protagonist and his guide easily kill a sleeping *tanuki* and make him into a delicious

stew. [96] This image depicts the pudgy *tanuki*, a creature with a large belly that can be played like a drum. The drum beats can be used to hypnotize humans into doing the creature's bidding, an action being performed by the creature in this square. *Tanuki* also have the ability to travel by either bouncing on their stomachs or inflated scrotum.[97]

Next, we move up the far right side of the board's third register (Figure 18). In this square, a perfectly round moon rises from the dissipating clouds into a deep blue sky. Across the moon, a short poem describing the events that led to the scene that provides additional instructions for the game has been written in cursive. Surrounded by gently swaying bell flowers and grasses, the *tanuki* sits upright. The tail is curled behind its body, while its distended scrotum lies before the *tanuki*.[98] The creature is black in color with a large white belly, its short limbs tipped with white. Its right paw is held upright, as the creature begins to strike its belly. The right paw is held to the side, slightly bent at the elbow as if it is holding its stomach. The massive scrotum that is the most telling feature of the *tanuki* is a lighter shade than the rest of its body, highlighted in a red to give a more volumetric appearance.

The face of this creature is decidedly canine, with small upright ears ending in points on the top of its head and a short snout with long whiskers. The creature appears to have its mouth slightly open with an expression of friendliness, but the overprinting in dark gray make it impossible to see any facial details that might have been present on the key block. The *tanuki*'s eyes are perfectly round, colored in a shade of light yellow with large round pupils. The proportion and placement of these eyes lend the creature an

[96] Ichiyanagi et al., *Bakumatsu Meiji hyakumonogatari*, 242-243.

[97] Yamaguchi, *Kaidan meisakushū*, 22-25.

[98] Katsushika, *Hokusai yōkai hyakkei*, 98.

expression of overall innocence and friendliness, shaded by gently curving eyelids rendered in gray.

Square Fourteen: *Chōchin Oiwa*

Title:

ちやうちん　いハ
挑 灯 お岩

Chōchin Oiwa

Chinese Paper Lantern Oiwa

Instructions:

1 一本あし (Ippon'ashi)

3 砂村のをんねん (Sunamura no onnen)

4 上がり (Agari)

Oiwa is a character in a ghost story that appears in *Yotsuya kaidan* that was later adapted for the stage in 1825 as *Tōkaidō Yotsuya kaidan*.[99] She is a woman who is the center of a scheme for vengeance, driven to suicide as part of a plot put together by husband and the family of her rival in love.[100] Disfigured by a rival in a complex revenge plot involving poisoned makeup, she comes back to haunt her husband as a ghastly

[99] Toita, *Jōruri, Kabuki*, 309-375.

[100] Tsuruya Nanboku IV, Paul B. Kennelly trans., *The Ghost Stories at Yotsuya on the Tōkaidō (Tōkaidō Yotsuya Kaidan)*, in *Darkness and Desire*, Kabuki on Stage, vol. 3, edited by James R. Brandon and Samuel L. Leiter (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), 134-163.

figure.[101] The climax of the play is the appearance of her face in a paper lantern that drives her husband to murder and eventually madness. [102]

Moving left along the third register, we reach square fourteen (Figure 19). A large paper lantern takes up three quarters of this square. The ribbed bamboo frame is covered in white paper with a small circular cover at the top and bottom that is colored in a very light shade of red. Thin yellow cords attached to the upper cover support its weight as it is suspended from something just outside the image. Long strips of paper cut into triangular points reach from the top and bottom of the lantern, reinforcing the lantern's structure.

In the center of this ordinary lantern, a horrific face appears, breaking through the body, making the bamboo ribs project out at odd angles that make them look more like a striped pattern of yellowed wrinkles on the ghastly face rather than wood protruding outward from the surface. The face itself is deep blue in color, speckled with black dots and highlighted in white. Flesh has begun to rot away from the mouth, revealing large teeth. Blind overprinting in red and blue has been used to approximate the look of partially desiccated flesh. The nose is upturned with visible nostrils, the nasal bone protruding out from the flesh. Puffed and deformed, the right eye is partially covered by a swollen forehead, while the left eye is set in the face at a strange angle. Both eyes have a bloodshot appearance with light red in the corners.

Behind the lantern, a dense growth of bamboo appears in a featureless gray void. More densely packed vegetation is implied by a solid patch of green to the right.

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[101] Hirosue, *Yotsuya kaidan*, 102-111.

[102] James S. Benneville, *The Kwaidan of the Lady of Tamiya*, 67.

Individual leaves and stalks of bamboo are picked out in free, quickly executed strokes. The black forms of the bamboo leaves were then emphasized with blind overprinting in green, with the green forms spilling over onto the gray background. It appears that this technique was intentional, and not an error due to block misalignment.

Square Fifteen: *Usugahara no Hitotsume*

Title:

うすがはら　ひとつめ
嗅ヶ原の獨目

Usugahara no Hitosume

The One Eye of Usugahara

Instructions:

1 たこの入道（にうだう） (Tako Nyūdō)

3 せうけら (Shōkera)

4 はらつづみ (Haratsuzumi)

6 山をとこ (Yamaotoko)

While referred to in the title of the square as *Hitotsume*, the image depicts a specific monster known as *Tōfukozō* 豆腐小僧 (Tōfu Boy). Both of these monsters are creatures that take the similar form of a mischievous little boy. *Tōfukozō* first appeared during the Edo period not as a monster but as a character in illustrated fiction and poetry. He was meant to be silly, just a normal child carrying tofu around the town with no particularly ill intent.[103] Over time, his nature changed and he had become a monster

[103] Adam Kabat, *Oedo bakemono saiken*, 32-56.

who appeared on rainy nights to tempt travelers with tofu that was quite possibly poisoned.[104]

This square is located to the left of square fourteen, near the center of the third register (Figure 20). In this image, rain falls in a heavy torrent over a large body of water on a dark night. The effect of rain achieved with thick diagonal lines drawn across the image. The ground and sky are printed in the same shade of deep gray, while the water is a uniform blue with small rippled lines representing water movement. It is difficult to make sense of the distant landscape because the sky and water meet in amorphous forms that could be either islands or misty clouds, patched with areas of white.

On a road nearby, a single figure stands holding a flat black dish containing an enormous white block of tofu. This central figure is a young boy with light pink skin, dressed in an elaborate green kimono with a white floral pattern tied with a red and yellow sash. A second, light red kimono worn under the first is visible at the sleeves and hem. His clothing is quite similar in color and pattern to the outfits that are worn by the children depicted in the *furidashi.* He wears a pair of wooden sandals with high lifts, used in inclement weather to stay above any puddles or mud. His large straw hat has a women texture approximated with a scalloped pattern superimposed over concentric horizontal lines. The hat is fixed to his head using a set of thick white straps that fit over the ears and a thin red strap running under his chin.

The face proves that he is anything but a normal little boy. In the center of his round face is an enormous blue eye placed in a protruding socket. He has two perfectly round nostrils that are placed directly in the center of his face without a protruding nose.

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[104] Adam Kabat, *Edo kokkei bakemono zukushi*, 49-54.

The mouth is lipless, curved back into a sneer as he sticks out a long pointed tongue, ready to lick the large block of tofu it holds.

Square Sixteen: *Furutsuzura no Rokurokubi*

Title:

ふるつずら　ろくろくび
古葛籠の飛頭獠

Furutsuzura no Rokurokubi

The Long-necked Monster of the Old Mulberry Basket

Instructions:

4 ねこまた (Nekomata)

5 はらつづミ (Haratsuzumi)

6 みこし入だう (Mikoshi Nyūdō)

Rokurokubi is humanoid monster with a long, curling neck.[105] In many stories, the creature, general the female of the species, passes in human society, only to have its identity revealed when it makes a predatory attack.[106] By the late Edo period, *rokurokubi* made regular appearances in comic literature. In particular the male *rokurokubi* appear in comedic roles, rather than creating violence.[107]

This specific image shows the *rokurokubi* and his monstrous entourage are shown emerging from an old *furutsuzura*, a type of large storage basket made from woven vines.

[105] Toriyama, *Gazu hyakki yagyō*, 64.

[106] Hara; Kigoshi; Takada, *Hyakumonogatari kaidan shūsai*, 334-335.

[107]Yokoyama Taiko 横山泰子, "Kinsei bunka no okeru rokurokubi no keijō ni tsuite" 近世文化のおける轆轤首の形状について, *Nihon yōkaigaku taizen*, 39-46.

In a number of images that depict *hakki yagyō* scenes, the monsters enter the human world through an old storage box of some kind.[108]

We now move left along the third register to square sixteen (Figure 21). A black box sits in the lower right corner of the square, decorated with a very light chevron pattern, a yellow rope lying on the ground nearby. This box is an old chest that appears in many *hyakki yagyō* images as the point of origin for the gaggle of spooks. Yoshitoshi's image of a similar *hyakki yagyō* scene includes the man unlucky enough to have opened the chest.[109] The blank green background gives no sense of setting or time. Strange goblins and beast are just beginning to emerge from the container, moving towards the left side of the image. There are four creatures in total, only partially visible, closely bunched together near the edge of the box.

The first monster, closest to the right margin of the square, is a humanoid creature with pink skin and a shaved head. This beast has large yellow eyes and a strange, bird-like beak set in an ordinary human face. The second creature stands with its mouth agape with a large pink tongue lolling out. A single yellow eye bugs out of its blue face with short hair fanning out wildly from its head. The next creature has an oblong skull with rounded eyes set into pronounced sockets. It has a long curving beak lined with sharp teeth and what appears to be a moustache, with the same hairstyle seen on its bug-eyed neighbor.

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[108] Foster, Michael Dylan, *Pandemonium and Parade: Japanese Culture and the Culture of Yōkai*, (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 2009), 35-37.

[109]Taiso Yoshitoshi 大蘇芳年, *Yoshitoshi yōkai hyakkei* 芳年妖怪百景 (Tokyo: Kokushi Kankōkai, 2001), 63.

The last creature seated in the box is the *rokurokubi*. His body is barely visible behind his compatriots. He can be seen clutching a large black staff, with a large orange and yellow flame emanating from his hand. He is wearing a gray robe with an open collar that reveals its long, twisting neck that curls in loops leading to his head. The *rokurokubi*'s face resembles Edo period depictions of foreigners, with a rounded balding head that has a ring of short hair surrounding a pointed crown and wide mouth is surrounded by a sizeable beard. Heavy brows dominate the face with deep furrows above a short, bulbous nose. A pair of deep set eyes are shaded in blue as they each peer off in different directions.

Square Seventeen: *Sagifuchi no Ippon'ashi*

Title:

鷺淵(さぎふち)の一本足(いつぽんあし)

Sagifuch no Ippon'ashi

One Leg of Sagifuchi

Instructions:

2 三目大僧(ミつめだいそう) (Mitsume Daisō)

3 ろくろくび (Rokurokubi)

5 野(の)ぶすま (Nobusuma)

The *Ippon'ashi* is an example of a *tsukumo-gami* 付喪神 (artifact spirit). This term refers to a Japanese folk belief that objects that are used for a long period of time

can become possessed by a god or spirit and become sentient.[110] These spirits can be good or bad, creating creatures that either cause mischief or bring the object's former owners good fortune.[111] The monster's name on *Monster Yarns* could be a play on the resemblance between a bird's leg and the bamboo handle of an umbrella, but this creature is more commonly called *karakasabake* 唐傘化. This type of monster is a *tsukumo-gami* created when an ordinary paper umbrella becomes old and turns into a mischievous creature that spends its time spooking people on rainy nights.[112]

Moving left again, we find square seventeen located in the third register (Figure 22). The focal point of this square is a simple black and yellow striped paper umbrella, an object that was discarded after it had become damaged. The bamboo ribs and jute wrapped handle are still clearly visible, but this everyday object has been transformed. A pair of stocky pink arms splotched with gray emerge from large ragged holes on either side of the umbrella, waving stumpy three fingered hands in the air. In the center of the yellow stripe there is a hole so large that the ribs on the other side are visible. An enormous round eye appears in the center of the umbrella, shaded by a patch of black. Below this a long pointed tongue that emerges from a mouth hidden by the black overprinting. The thin bamboo handle ends in a tiny bird-like foot that seems too small to keep the *karakasabake* upright.

The landscape that surrounds the *karakasabake* is virtually identical to the background scenery used behind Hitotsume in square fifteen. A gray road or bank

[110] Foster, *Pandemonium and Parade*, 78-82.

[111] Yumoto, *Meiji yōkai shinbun*, 92-96.

[112] Ichiyanagi et al., *Bakumatsu Meiji hyakumonogatari*, 45.

crosses the square at a low angle, edged in regularly spaced lines that indicate paving stones interspersed with small tufts of grass. Beyond this bank there is a gently rippling body of water that fades into a nebulous space of blue and white near the horizon before resolving into a solid gray sky. Sprinkled across the image at wide intervals are much lighter lines indicating rain.

Square Eighteen: *Morinji no kama*

Title:

茂林寺(もりんじ)の釜(かま)

Morinji no kama

The Teakettle of Morin Temple

Instructions:

1 九尾(きうび)の狐(きつね) (Nine-tailed Fox)

4 れんぎボう (Rengibō)

5 上がり (Agari)

6 いぬがミ (Inugami)

This square depicts a very specific tale. In *Morinji no kama* (The Kettle of Morinji) a *tanuki* (raccoon dog) with the ability to shape-shift transforms himself into the form of a large iron tea kettle in order to trick unsuspecting people into buying him. He escapes before they figure out the deal, pocketing the money. This grift continues for some time until a priest from Morin-ji buys the *tanuki*. He manages to put the kettle on

the fire before the *tanuki* can escape, but saves the creature from certain death. In return, the *tanuki* agrees to serve the priest as a kettle that can never run out of hot water.[113]

We move left once again to square eighteen (Figure 23). In the center of this image a large metal kettle hangs over an open fire from a large hook. Its rounded forms are somewhat roughly portrayed, with uneven forms used to construct the lid and handle. The use of solid color flattens the image in a way that seems to emphasize the crudeness of the image. There are two perspectival schemes used to depict different portions of the room. The anchor bar, hook and shelf that runs around the outer edge of the room are drawn from an aerial viewpoint, while the kettle is drawn from a frontal vantage point.

The top portion of the kettle is light yellow with orange accenting the outermost edge. This yellow gives way to a stripe of light gray before becoming a deep black that colors the bottom half of the object. Small, even strokes are used to represent the texture of the metal surface. The kettle ends in a pair of short feet above a mound of charred wood in pale red, white and black.

This monster is a *tanuki*, although it is entirely different from the other *tanuki* that appears on the board in square thirteen. This is a shape shifter, shown after it has transformed itself into a kettle. Poking out from the center of the kettle is the doglike head of the *tanuki*, with its small pointed ears and long snout. It appears to be looking out towards the viewer with its small black nose tipped downwards. The eyes are relatively small and set in the face at an angle, surrounded by long whiskers. A bushy red tail emerges from the other side of the kettle, an angular pattern of lines used to depict its furry texture.

[113] Toriyama, *Gazu hyakki yagyō*, 228.

Square Nineteen: *Hikimado no Shōkera*

Title:

ひきまど　せうけら
天窓の笑鞳

Hikimado no Shōkera

The Skylight Shōkera

Instructions:

2 たこにう道 (Tako Nyūdō)

3 はらつづミ (Haratsuzumi)

かっぱ
5 河童 (Kappa)

きつね
6 きうびの狐 (Kyūbi no Kitsune)

Shōkera is an interesting example of a monster specifically associated with the observation of a holiday in Japan. This creature is the sentinel of *Kōshinmachi*, a day that occurs on the fifty-seventh day of the sixty day cycle.[114] On this day the three worms that were thought to live in each person's heart could escape and report all of the evil deed they had seen. In order to keep this from happening, observers are forced to stay awake

[114] Toriyama, *Gazu hyakki yagyō*, 78.

all night.[115] *Shōkera* watches over them, and if anyone begins to nod off it will give them a swift bat with its claw to wake them up.

Moving along the left of the third register, we find square nineteen (Figure 24). In this square, a steeply angled roof stands out against a solid gray sky, the black tiles accented in shades of blue. A strange scaled beast lurches towards an open skylight, three-toed feet with long curving white claws grasping at the wooden frame. While the creature crouches as if it is ready to pounce, the interior window screen and hanging ties are visible in the opening. While the rooftop is rendered in three dimensions using one point perspective, the monster seems to betray no sense of depth, flatly superimposed on the background as if they are two images copied from separate sources. Because of this contrast between the somewhat naturalistic rendering of the setting and the flattened graphic quality of the creature, it appears to be merely floating above the architecture without actually interacting with it in any physical capacity.

The lamellar skin covering the limbs of the creature is colored using a deep green, each scale rendered using a thick gray outline and marked with a deep central divot. Its back is covered in brown and orange trefoil scales. Wild hanks of brown hair are swept back from the rounded, wrinkled facial features, with large yellow eyes framed by prominent brow bones that are dotted with black and brown specks of discoloration. Tiny pointed ears grow from behind the eye sockets, pressing back into the hair, with a thick fold of flesh rounding into the gaping jaw that opens to reveal pointed teeth and a long red tongue.

Square Twenty: *Surihachiyama no Rengibō*

[115] Yumoto Kōichi 湯本豪一, *Yōkai hyakumonogatari emaki* 妖怪百物語絵巻, (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 2003), 54-60.

Title:

すりはちやま　れんぎボう
摺鉢山の雷木棒

Surihachiyama no Rengibō

Wooden Thunder Pestle of Surihachi Moutain

Instructions:

2 すな村をんれう (Sunamura onryō)

3 ふなゆうれい (Funayūrei)

4 野(の)ぶすま (Nobusuma)

This square depicts a lesser known example of a *tsukumo-gami*. In this image, a pestle has come to life, taking the form of a dragon. The picture is a pun, showing the pestle in flight above the up-turned mortar that represents a flat topped conical mountain.

This is the final square in the third register (Figure 25). Set off from the deep green background, the oblong shape of the winged pestle flies diagonally from left to right. The pestle itself is printed in light orange, with a pair of white reptilian wings highlighted in yellow extending to either side. Along the topmost side, the pestle is mottled with a large patch of dark gray textured with dotted black. A misshapen orange lump resembling a malformed eye with a grayish pupil sits towards the end of the pestle, approximating a face. This jagged end has a pair of curling whiskers, bringing to mind the head of a dragon.

Below this strange flying creature is a solid grey triangular form, decorated with a hatched triangular design. It is a thick ceramic or stone mortar that has been upturned,

the flat-topped conical base echoing the shape a mountain. Both of these objects are isolated in space, shown against a background of solid gray.

Square Twenty-one: *Tosaumi no Tako no Nyūdō*

Title:

土佐海の蛸入道 (とさうみ　たこのにうだう)

Tosaumi no Tako no Nyūdō

The Giant Octopus of Tosami

Instructions:

2 茂林寺 (もりんじ) (Morinji)

3 ひとつ目 (め) (Hitotsume)

4 見越入道 (ミこしにうだう) (Mikoshi Nyūdō)

5 海坊主 (うミぼうず) (Umibōzu)

6 ろくろくび (Rokurokubi)

Now moving right into the board's final register, we find square twenty-one (Figure 26). Another monster from the open ocean, *tako no nyūdō* is a gigantic octopus creature. It attacks its victims while they visit the shore, but in some stories it attacks ships.[116] Many late Edo period images take a more comedic bent, showing the monster

[116] Ichiyanagi et al., *Bakumatsu Meiji hyakumonogatari*, 37-39.

dressed as a monk, a joke that is based on the resemblance between octopods and bald men.[117]

Curling waves appear below a gray sky that is striated with vertical lines created by uneven ink application. On the right, the waves curve upwards, with the rounded barrel wave defined with thin parallel lines. The tips of the waves are left white, while small areas of blue seem to have been applied in an almost unintentional manner that detracts from the overall structural effect of the waves.

Central to the image is the enormous oblong head of the octopus, colored in a solid red-orange, with arbitrary shading in lighter red around the outermost edge. This same pale color is also used to accent the eyelids and mouth, giving an impression of volumetric form. Large, bulging eyes protrude outward on either side of the creature's tiny face, with a large u-shaped brow creating an angry expression. The eyes are set in sockets with expressive lines emphasizing the monster's eyes, with large patches of blue shading and round, expressive pupils. The protruding mouth ends in a tiny grimacing smirk.

Scrabbling white capped waves are echoed in the squirming movements of the octopus' tentacles, executed in lines that alternate between smoothly executed curves and rippling lines. Flailing in all directions, they express frenetic movement as the octopus climbs out of the sea. These writhing red tentacles curl around a grouping of gray green rocks, each sucker abbreviated into a perfectly round solid red circle. Hatched marks in dark gray define the craggy faces of the stones, while the recessed depths are expressed through the light tones of the gray overprinting.

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[117] Yumoto, *Meiji yōkai shinbun*, 25-28.

Square Twenty-two: *Kinmō Kyūbi no Kitsune*

Title:

きんもうきうび　きつね
金毛九尾の 狐

Kinmō Kyūbi no Kitsune

Gold Furred Nine-Tailed Fox

Instructions:

4 ひとつめ (Hitotsume)

5 おいわ (Oiwa)

6 上がり (Agari)

We now move left along the top register to square twenty-two (Figure 27). The nine tailed fox is of particular significance, a powerful being that is associated with serious calamities. According to legend, Emperor Konoe (1139-1155 CE) was made seriously ill by a courtesan who was eventually found to be a nine tailed fox in disguise.[118] In another story an enormous army was engaged in battle with a single nine tailed fox that eventually changed itself into a stone rather than be destroyed. [119]

Masses of dark gray clouds gather in a deep blue sky that is crosshatched with striations caused by extreme pressure during the printing process. The creature's bony form crosses the rectangular space diagonally, with seven of its nine tails fanned out in a flame-like plume of golden fur. The pale yellow fur is shaded using light orange, with off-white used to color the face and underbelly of the fox. Strangely undulating forms

[118] Toriyama, *Gazu hyakki yagyō*, 120.

[119] Hara et al., *Hyaku monogatari kaidan shūsai*, 23-24.

are used to render the flesh, rounded protuberances that are simultaneously emaciated and fleshy, flaccid waves of furred skin and bone that seem to defy a sense of physical wholeness. The creature has a pair of thin forelimbs that end in tiny jagged claws that are held close to the body in a somewhat anthropomorphizing manner.

An elongated neck emerges from the strange musculature of the torso, turning to look to the right over a hunched shoulder. Hanks of fur are executed with thin, precise lines falling over the neck in patches of orange and yellow leading up to the pointed ears that are rendered using tiny parallel lines. The face is a malformed caricature of a dog's muzzle. The mouth is pulled back to reveal a row of tiny teeth, leading to a large protruding fang that juts out from the jawline. Rounded yellow cheeks are highlighted in pink that darkens to red around the rheumy eye, with thin curving lines moving from the eye to the edge of the brow creating a series of geometrically precise subdivisions. The large black pupil betrays no real expression; instead the eyes look out from the middle of the strangely formed skull with a dead stare.

Square Twenty-three: *Mikoshi Nyūdō*

Title:

ミこしにうだう
見越入道

Mikoshi Nyūdō

Transforming Giant Traveling Monk

Instructions:

1 上り (Agari)

2 ねこまた (Nekomata)

3 三目大僧 (Mitsume Daisō)

4 一本あし (Ippon'ashi)

Mikoshi nyūdo is another specter that haunted the roads and forests of rural Japan. He appears to be an ordinary wandering monk[120], but once he is seen by humans he transforms into a violent giant so large that he is described as carrying a folding screen as a fan.[121] Many of the stories are presented as descriptions of the creature, not accounts of actual meetings because he was thought to immediately kill any people who are unlucky enough to cross his path.

Skipping over the large *agari* located in the top register, we move left to square twenty-three (Figure 28). A giant face takes up a large portion of the image, leaning in from the left. The expression is inhuman, with a snarling mouth and frowning brows. The skin tone is a solid printing of light orange with off white contouring and highlights to give the figure a sense of volume. The bulging eyes are hatched with thin lines and shaded in blue with perfectly round black pupils. They are surrounded by folds of flesh that envelop the eye socket, the flaring lines adding to the pop-eyed effect. The nose is a strange bulbous mass rendered as a series of fleshy folds, its flaring nostrils adding a threatening effect to the figure's expression. The thin lipped mouth is open, revealing large white teeth, with the interior of the mouth and tongue represented by a series of successive red bands.

The figure is bearded with the hair rendered as a series of miniscule lines overprinted in brown. The beard and hair strangely frame the face strangely,

[120] Toriyama, *Gazu hyakki yagyō*, 77.

[121] Hara et al., *Hyaku monogatari kaidan shūsai*, 68-70.

emphasizing its misshapen ovoid shape. All of the hair begins in the center of the image and flies outward, making the figure seem wild and unkempt. A single ear pops out from the thatch of wild hair, created with a series of half-circles created with lines of various widths, making the forms unintelligible.

One shoulder and the figure's left hand are also visible, along with a knobby mass of pink flesh below the chin that may be the torso. These forms are defined with thick gray outlines that are spotted with patches of thin hair rendered in fine black lines. The hand is clenched tightly around a thin black rectangular object, a folding screen that has been dwarfed by the giant's massive size, that angles towards the upper margin of the image, disappearing behind the enormous head.

Square Twenty-four: *Furudera no Nobusuma*

Title:

ふるでら　のぶすま
廃寺の野伏魔

Furudera no Nobusuma

The Flying Squirrel Demon of the Abandoned Temple

1 たこの入道 (Tako no Nyūdō)

3 上り (Agari)

4 ひとつ目 (HitotsumeO

5 ろくろくび (Rokurokubi)

Now we move to the left-most square in the upper register. The *nobusuma* is a giant flying squirrel with magical powers that lives deep in the mountains, often in and

around abandoned temple complexes.[122] The creature is able to see in the dark, and it is also able to control lightning, making battling the creature quite dangerous. It was eventually killed by Miyamoto Musashi. In early Edo sources the creature resembles a typical flying squirrel, notable only for its enormous size.[123]

We see a thick miasma of black is surrounded by a gray aureole, set against a pale gray sky that is marked with the scratchy striations of the *baren* edge. A fork of orange lightning crosses the image from upper right to left with four separate forks edged in pale yellow angling out towards the lower margin. The setting of a dark and stormy night is made clear despite the relatively small size of the image.

A creature created from a strange mélange of various species flying in the middle of the squall. The head of the creature is rounded, with small pointed ears on either side. It is colored with light blue that is mottled with a darker tone and flecked with tiny dots of black giving the skin a somewhat pitted or dirty appearance. A pair of rounded yellow eyes with vertical pupils are set in protruding sockets above a small, cat-like muzzle. The broad orange-colored mouth is open to reveal rows of serrated teeth as it emits three thin yellow rays of lightning.

Below the rounded head is an ovoid body covered in fur, held aloft by a pair of bat wings divided into neat sections that end in fantastically curling points. A pair of yellow talons emerge from the fur and are held close to the body as the creature flies. Finally, a long serpentine tail trails beside the monster, colored in deep green.

<u>*Agari*</u>

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[122] Adam Kabat, *Momongaa tai Mikoshi nyūdō: Edo no bakemonotachi* ももんがあ対見越入道：江戸の化物たち (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2006), 77-80.

[123] Toriyama, *Gazu hyakki yagyō*, 159.

Title:

上り

Agari

Finish

古御所の妖猫
ふるごしょ　ばけねこ

Furugosho no Bakeneko

The Demon Cat of Furugosho

Finally, we reach the *agari*, the ultimate goal of *Monster Yarns* (Figure 30). It depicts a scene from the play *Hitoritabi gojū-san tsugi* 独道中五十三駅 that premiered in 1827. We see the villain, the spirit of the *nekoishi* 猫石 ("cat stone") in female form, who has been causing various illnesses other calamities.[124] This creature has just summoned an enormous demonic cat, the highlight of the scene. The hero Nippondaemon will arrive to save the day shortly after the giant cat is summoned. This image is based on a pint by Utagawa Kuniyoshi 歌川国芳 (1797-1862) published in 1847 (Figure 31). The rotting porch of the abandoned house that was the setting of this scene can be seen behind the main figure of the cat, cropped down from Kuniyoshi's original design.

In this square broken curtains made from yellow reeds appear to float in mist-like shapes, the patterned brocade ties hanging in tatters to reveal a solid gray. Thin grasses grow between the wooden floorboards, emphasizing the run-down nature of the room in which this scene takes place.

[124] Yokoyama Yasuko 横山泰子, *Edo kabuki no kaidan to bakemono* 江戸歌舞伎の怪談と化け物 (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2008), 60-86.

To the right side of the image, an enormous cat with a ferocious expression and pointed teeth appears in to have broken through the curtains. It is an entirely typical calico cat, with flashing green eyes, long whiskers and orange spotted fur. The mouth is wide open revealing jagged teeth that edged with a ring of pale red skin and flaring fur.

Next there is the central humanoid figure, looking over her shoulder back towards the enormous cat. Sitting before a basin with various implements, this female figure holds a small brush. With long white hair and a pair of small, cat-like ears, the woman has a pale red face highlighted with white and a set of furry brown claws in the place of hands. She wears a long pair of red *hakama* over two layers of white robes decorated with green and blue. The final outer robe trails out behind her, decorated in a complex pattern of floral and geometric shapes executed in shades of green, yellow, red and blue with small details executed using blind printing.

On either side of the central female figure is a pair of dancing cats, colored white with black, yellow and orange markings. Their small heads are set with yellow eyes, pink tongues and long curving whiskers. The cat on the right side wears a red and white patterned scarf draped over its head as it raises its left leg to dance. Its split tail trails on the ground behind it. The two forelimbs are raised and the somewhat anthropomorphized face is shown in profile turned towards the central female figure. The cat on the left is also draped with a scarf, but it turns to face the viewer, the right leg foreshortened as if it is moving in an elaborate dance. Its arms form a semicircle that points the viewer's gaze back towards the central figure. The pair add a somewhat comical element to a terrifying scene.

The Work as a Whole

There is no singular source behind the monsters that are depicted in the game. They do not represent a single origin, literary source or even story typology. Instead there is a huge variety of folkloric traditions represented by the chosen monsters. Beyond this variety in the monster stories and types, each square is a vignette, a scene that is entirely separate from all the other squares.

At first glance, these images seem similar: a rectangular space with a monster image. The grid structures and obvious content are easily understood. Close description of these images is necessary because this is an interactive work. The player interacts with each square in the same way, so each square must be different or else the game will become monotonous. Tiny details are included to give the player something interesting to look at while playing a simple game. The compositional complexity of the whole is created from the variation.

Tobi-sugoroku follow one of two formats. The first uses a grid to organize the game, creating a board from small, clearly demarcated squares. Game structures like the lists of instructions or space titles are not integrated into the images. The second format takes the individual structures of the board and combines them to form a single holistic image, hiding the more obvious organizational features like the grid, making the true purpose of the print much less obvious.

For example, the tiny flickering flame seen above a pillow in square ten is nearly the same size as the dark figure of the *umibōzu* in square twelve, a creature that is often shown towering over mountainous islands and fishing boats. This use of varying scales emphasizes to the viewer that not only are these squares isolated from one another by the

grid structure of the game board, but that each image it represents is an entirely separate event in a distant location.

Playing the game makes the viewer engage with the image for a longer period of time. These tiny images are packed with detail, from the patterns on the robes of the children in the *furidashi* to the individual hairs picked out on the *kitsune* in square twenty two. Each of these squares is an intricately rendered scene worth close visual exploration and consideration as images in their own right.

It is not visually a holistic work. The disjointed images are part of a system held together by the structures of the game. This work, its composition and content are only considered in relation to one another with the topical through line of the *hyaku monogatari* theme, not how the image looks as a whole. Each image is considered one by one as the player moves through the game. This is not a work made for contemplation as a whole.

The interactive element that is intrinsically intended by *Monster Yarns* changes the viewing experience. The viewer does more than merely looks at the piece, more than just move through the work with their gaze. The movement of their piece forces them to focus on very specific areas, focusing their visions and guiding them through the printed board. The fact that this work is a location for a specific activity other than merely apprehending the piece visually downplays contemplation of the work as a whole. Movement during gameplay constantly refocuses the gaze at the player moves, constantly reshaping the relationship between the constituent parts.

While someone might chose to linger over the larger image and view the board as a whole, I believe that the act of playing the game forces focus specifically on the images

in each square because the player interacts with it physically. *Monster Yarns* is a work that conveys an enormous amount of information in a relatively small space. Each image is a prompt that provides enough information included to remind the viewer of the associated story.

CHAPTER IV

MECHANICAL ANALYSIS

It is play that focuses the viewer on *Monster Yarns*. In this chapter I will discuss specifically how the viewer interacts with the game through the act of play. This will include an analysis of how the game controls player behavior by taking a step by step look at how *Monster Yarns* functions as a playable game. This is a work made with a specific intention to facilitate the act of play.

The *furidashi* is the only square that contains six instructions for movement. None of the other spaces on the board allow players re-enter this space or exit the board, so only forward movement is possible in the first move. There are six possible destinations in the first turn of play. This is necessary in order to give all the players the impression that there is an equal possibility that they might win the game. If one of the

possible dice throws was missing it would not change the functionality of the game, but it would break the illusion of fairness that is necessary in all games of chance.[125]

The mechanics of play remain the same for each player throughout the game, but because there is an indirect relationship between the number rolled and the destination to which the player moves, play is perceived by participants as random and only minimally controlled by the structure of the board. In a typical race game there is a one to one correlation between the number rolled and the distance moved on the board.[126] The dice are not any more controllable, but there is a sense that logic exists behind the system. For example, a player can quickly come to understand that higher numbers are preferable because they allow one to move through the board more quickly.[127]

This effect is largely cause by the fact that they player never has any knowledge of their true relationship to the *agari* until they land on a square that leads to the most important final square. Progress through the game is essential blind for much of play, and then this relationship with winning the game is only clear while one of the six squares that leads to the *agari* occupies the space. If the player fails to enter the *agari* and moves to another square, the path to victory is lost.

With *tobi-sugoroku* it is perceived by the players that the numbers associated with each instruction vary from square to square, and there is no readily apparent advantage in rolling one number over another. Though the rules of *tobi-sugoroku* control play just as

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[125]Caillois, *Man, Play and Games*, 5-7. Caillois argues in this chapter that a certain amount of illusion is necessary in order to ensure that players fully engage in playing the game. This extends to perceptions of fairness and equality that must both be seen as intrinsic parts of the game.

[126]Murray, *A History of Board-games Other than Chess*, 10.

[127] R.C. Bell, *Board and Table Games from Many Civilizations* (New York: Dover Publications, 1979), 14-18.

directly as any other race game, the disjunction between the number rolled and the number of spaces moved makes play appear to be more chaotic. Because the player is moving a set number of spaces that are directly controlled by the dice, movement during gameplay proceeds without any regard for the spatial relationship between the squares. Movement is direct, without an extended path.

This perceived chaos is caused by a disconnection between the expectations of the players and the rules of the game. This creates what one might call a double-chance structure. I use this term to refer to use of dice to select from a random selection of arbitrarily arranged options. The player uses a chance based mechanism to choose options that are also arranged by chance. In this type of game structure, the clearly defined limits on player actions in each move constantly emphasize the lack of autonomous player control. In a typical race game with visually successive progression, if a player rolls a six, they will move six spaces every time. With a double-chance structure game, even if a player rolls the same number in succession, the outcome will be different.

This is a helpful side effect of the double-chance structure for game designers because it helps to conceal the more repetitive aspects of the game. The game play of *tobi-sugoroku* is based on repetition. Players engage in the same actions, rolling the dice, following the corresponding rule and moving a single square every turn. The lose-a-turn square helps to break up this monotony, but the game can be played without landing on this space. It is the expectational disjunction that between the number rolled and the space that the player moves to that helps to distract from the lack of variation.

The visual regularities of the board's organization and the repetitive rule numberings are also clouded by this double-chance structure. All of the possible destinations for the first move are clumped in a very tight formation. There is a relatively high probability that most players will wind up on different spaces. This type of closely related arrangement occurs several times on the board, but it is not clear during play because each player will wind up moving through the board in a unique way. The board itself, with its seemingly random arrangement of rules and squares, thwarts any pattern recognition on the part of the players.

The organization of the rules is also susceptible to repetition. Of the twenty six squares, seventeen have instructions that are written in numerical order, with six of starting on the number one.[128] The numbers two and four have an extremely high frequency. It would seem that these repeated numbers would create not only obvious visual repetition, but would also create game play recurrences that would be striking to the players, but once again this is hidden by the indirect relationship between in-game movement and the dice rolls.

Despite the fact that they control the game, the numbers that are assigned to each rule are not intrinsically important. Any number can be assigned to any rule on any particular square. However there are two rules that must be obeyed: one number cannot lead to two locations, nor can two numbers lead to the same location. This single change would create an immediate awareness of game structure repetition. While playing the game, it is difficult to observe larger patterns of movement, but within the limited space of a single square, patterns like this would be immediately obvious. Simply by

[128] The *furidashi, yuki jorō* (square one), *Sunamura no onryō* (square seven), *umibōzu* (square twelve), *ippon'ashi* (square seventeen), and *mikoshi nyūdō* (square twenty three).

maintaining unique number distribution within the square itself, game play seems completely randomized.

All of these repetitions occur because creating a truly random game would be impossible. Limited to only six numerical options for each rule that cannot be repeated in a single square, simply following a logical organizational system is much easier for the designer of the game. Avoiding number repetition would be impossible if numbers were generated in a truly random system.

The rules and structure of *tobi-sugoroku* mean that the location of the squares on the board has no relationship to winning or losing the game. Whether or not a particular square is located in close proximity to the *agari* has no effect on the speed with which a player wins the game. This game does have a vertical plan that supports the leaping movements, perhaps partly because of the strong association between upward movement and success.[129] When a player is forced to move from an upper tier to a lower tier, it seems much more detrimental because they are traveling downward. Though movements that have a lateral or even reverse relationship to the finish should not have an adverse effect on a player's chance of winning, it feels disadvantageous. For example a player can reach the *agari* from square eight, *nekomata*, which is located in the second register of the board directly above the *furidashi*

In the first move, the players leave the *furidashi* but only venture a short distance away. Only one space, square twelve does not directly adjoin the *furidashi* itself.

[129] Early Pure Land *e-sugoroku* are arranged with the *furidashi* (usually the human realm) located in the middle of the board. Players can move downward through the lower levels of existence, or upwards towards the *agari* with a scene that represents nirvana.

Keeping player movement controlled in this way helps to continue the illusion that both fairness and equality have controlling influences on play.

The design of *Mukashi banashi* seems to be built around the association between upward movement and advancement. All of the six spaces that can be accessed from the *furidashi* are located in the first two registers of the board and all four of the spaces that comprise the first register can be reached in the first turn. The other two, square twelve, *umibōzu*, and square seven, *kappa*, are located in the second register. Keeping the movements possible in the first turn limited the lower half of the board imposes a clear rationalizing structure on the movements dictated by the dice. As play proceeds, the players are able to move upwards towards the *agari*. Vertical movement between the registers is thus visually aligned with advancement in the space, giving players a sense of physical progress towards the winning square.

The structures of chance games make variations in game play or the game board entirely unnecessary.[130] As the players move through the board, they interact with and interpret each square as an individual occurrence and locality, a space that is only linked to the rest of the board by leaping travel. They form a chain that is experienced by moving through them, a chain that constantly changes and cannot be easily recalled.

Because the winning path is not marked out in clear visual succession, game play guides players to focus on three locations: the square they currently occupy, their next move and the finish. Other games that include reverse movement as part of play would also include the starting square as an important point, but in *tobi-sugoroku* once the first

[130] Murray, *A History of Board-games Other than Chess*, 9-11.

move has occurred most players will discount any consideration of this location because it cannot be entered again.

Aside from the *furidashi*, *agari* and lose-a-turn spaces, there are three categories of squares that make up the board. The first are the squares listed in the *furidashi*. Then there are the squares that lead to the *agari,* and finally the squares that lead only to other squares. The larger size of the *agari* draws focus, keeping the player in constant visual engagement with the goal of the game.

All of the first six squares accessible from the *furidashi* have high roll frequency. Roll frequency is a term that refers to the number of times a square appears as a destination on any other square.[131] Three of these squares have a roll frequency of four, which is the most common roll frequency. Two-thirds of the squares have four possible access points. The other three have a roll frequency of five, including the lose-a-turn space square seven. The downside of having so many squares with high roll frequency occur in the first two registers of the board is that players can be caught in a loop, repeatedly landing in the same few squares until another player wins the game.

It is interesting to note that square seven, *kappa*, is a possible destination in a player's initial move. It is one of the two spaces that cause players to lose a turn. It is somewhat anomalous for a player to lose a turn so early in the game, but this may be an attempt to create greater complexity without enlarging the board. If this space occurred later in the game, there would be an increased possibility that all of the players would complete the game in the exact same number of moves, meaning that the first player to move would have a distinct advantage. This feature also speeds up game play by giving

[131] Bell, *Board and Table Games from Many Civilizations*, 20.

those players who are not caught in this space an advantageous extra turn early on in the game.

There are twelve squares in the board that serve as a middle ground. They are neither accessible from the *furidashi*, nor do they lead the players to the *agari*. These squares make up half of the central registers of the board and include square thirteen, *haratsuzumi*, the second lose-a-turn square. Four are located in the second register, physically occupying the center of the board, with two additional squares in the third register. Three-quarters of these squares have a roll frequency of four, while the remaining twenty five percent of the squares have a frequency of only three. The low frequency squares in this middle portion of the board are some of the least encountered spaces during play.

Finally, there are the spaces that allow the player to win the game. These six spaces are more widely distributed among the registers. Three appear with the *agari* in the topmost register, two appear in the third register and a final square appears in the center of the second register. This wide distribution means that the game can be won in as few as three moves.[132]

The spaces that allow players to win have a proportionally low roll frequency. Half can be reached from four other squares, while the other half can only be reached from three other squares. This gives them a certain sense of preciousness. These squares will not be encountered as often during the game, making it seem like more of an accomplishment when a player gains entry.

[132] The player can move from the *furidashi* to square one, *yuki jōrō*, then to square eight, *nekomata*. From square eight he or she can then reach the *agari*.

More important than rarity or location is that one of the instructions includes the word *agari*. While the player's relationship to the goal is only dimly perceived throughout the course of the game, when these squares are entered the player is immediately faced with the prospect of victory. The goal seems as if it can be achieved, though winning is still controlled by the dice.

Once a player wins the game, there are two options. Either play ceases or it can continue until all the other players also finish the game. This is entirely up to the discretion of the players. With the exception of those who win in only three moves, the path that was used to reach the winning square is no clearer from the end than it was from the beginning. It must be painstakingly retraced, with close attention paid to the content of the instruction box on each square. Unlike other race games, the *tobi-sugoroku* board is not a map to the goal but an experiential version of the journey from start to finish.

Variation in board content is important because of the simple structure of all racing games, but because of the affective repetition of *tobi-sugoroku*, this variation is even more imperative. Each square must be in some way different in order to disguise the fact that the player engages in the same repetitive actions each turn. Visual excitement is imperative for creating an interesting game, with themes and pictures that capture the imagination.

With its simple gameplay, it is easy to see why *e-sugoroku* became so popular during the Edo period. This simplicity also made it possible to adapt these games to all manner of themes without sacrificing functionality. Publishers were quick to commission *e-sugoroku* depicting popular plays and stories, creating images inspired by popular

trends.[133] A wide variety of subjects and slight variations in style would also encourage players to continue purchasing different versions of a what is essentially the same game, with no major variations in structure or play.

Since visually apprehensible succession is completely absent in *tobi-sugoroku*, the novel juxtaposition of images is more important than content driven relationships. Extended narratives that would work well in *mawari-sugoroku* are chopped and restructured in such a way that the players would need to be intimately familiar with the story in order to actually understand the content. Familiar stories, non-narrative topics and more general themes would be preferable because they would reach the broadest possible audience. With *tobi-sugoroku*, the subject matter and add an important level of visual interest. This visuality draws players into the game.

The subject matter of *Monster Yarns* represents a theme seen in the world of prints that became particularly popular during the late-Edo period: images of the gruesome or the macabre. The creatures depicted in this print belong to the same class of creatures known as *yōkai*: a term that covers all manner of phantasms, ghosts and otherwise nonhuman creatures.

This typological link is the main tie between these creatures. They do not represent a single unified literary or visual source. Instead they are drawn from a multiplicity of sources, an enormous body of stories and legends. The creatures depicted on this game board represent just a few of the hundreds of monsters that appear in Japanese *yōkai* literature. A number of these monsters were relatively recent literary

[133] Masukawa, *Sugoroku Vol. 2*, 126-133.

inventions, several of the monsters have made appearances in Japanese folk tales for hundreds of years.

Monsters have a long history of creeping at the peripheries of Japanese culture. In the earliest references to these creatures they are associated with negative, uncontrollable events like illness or death.[134] They only appear at night, linked to darkness and the unknown, part of a larger worldview and an attempt to ascribe logic to the more inexplicable aspects of the world.[135] These stories cropped up as part of an oral tradition, a response to the unknown that is seen in many societies. This need to explain the uncontrollable occurrences of nature manifests itself in a body of stories populated by fantastic creatures, beasts that reflect the strangeness of nature itself.

These monsters were represented in a number of different visual forms. Demons and other beasts associated with hell appear in Buddhist paintings at a relatively early date.[136] Some of the earliest images of monsters appeared in illustrated hand scrolls depicting *hyakki yagyō* scenes.[137] During the Edo period, monsters began popping up in woodblock prints, illustrated books and various other types of printed matter. They became a familiar part of the visual landscape of the period.[138]

These monsters took numerous forms and can be grouped into various subcategories based on appearance or nature of existence or location. In terms of nature of existence, *Monster Yarns* contains representative examples of a number of different

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[134] Hara et al., *Ukiyozōshi kaidanshū*, 10-11.

[135] Yumoto, *Chihōhatsu Meiji yōkai nyūsu*, 20.

[136] Isao, *Yōkai mandara, 103-109.*

[137] Iwaki, "Bakemono to asobu: nanken keredomo bakemono sugoroku," 44-46.

[138] Foster, *Pandemonium and Parade*, 75-77.

typologies. First, there are humanoid monsters: Mitsume Daisō (square two), Yamaotoko (square four), Umibōzū (square twelve), Hitotsume (square fifteen), Rokurokubi (square sixteen), Mikoshi Nūdō (square twenty-three) and the cat-demoness depicted in the *agari*.

This contains the subcategory of giants, seen in squares two, twelve and twenty-three, along with the category of feral humanoids represented by *Yamaotoko* in square four. Closely related to this category are ghosts, *yūrei* 幽霊, wandering spirits of deceased persons. This type is represented by Yuki jōrō (square one), Funayūrei (square nine) and Oiwa (square fourteen).

The *agari* represents a cat-sorceress, the spirit of an object that has either independently taken on a physical form or has possessed a person. In this category, one may include the class of monsters known as *tsukumo-gami*, represented by the Ippon'ashi (square seventeen) and Rengibō (square twenty). These formerly inanimate objects once belonged to the world of man but now that they have gained sentience and the ability to move they have now roamed further afield.

There are also monsters that are closer to animals. The distinction between humanoid and more animal monsters is not entirely clear, as we can see with the scene in the *agari*. The spirit that once resided in the *nekoishi* has manifested itself as an elderly woman with cat ears, claws and a cat's tail. The Inugami (square three) and the Nekomata (square eight) are also creatures associated with humans, but they have become monsters through demonic possession. They have the physical appearance of a common animal, but the spirit that now dwells in their physical form is closer to a human being. The same can be said for the *tanuki* that has become the *Morinji no kama* (square

eighteen), the rascally Kappa (square seven) and the nearly divine nine-tailed fox in *Kyūbi no Kitsune* (square 22). In addition to their non-human appearance, some monsters can be defined as animal-like in their passive engagement with humanity. Examples of this category includes the Yamabiko (square five), the Akaname (square eleven), Tako no Nyūdō (Square twenty-one), and the Nobusuma (square twenty-four), which have a more one dimensional engagement with people, which in many cases it appears to harm them if they happened to cross paths.

A last type of monster is the manifestation of a grudge or curse. It is created when a strong negative emotion that takes on a life of its own in order to exact revenge or cause some other type of harm. Square ten represents a monster of this type. The creature in square six has a similar source of origin, but it has manifested itself in a more corporeal form.

The monsters can also be categorized based on their favored habitat. One can first of all separate the monsters into two general categories: those living in close proximity to humans, and those who live in the wild. The majority of monsters in *Monster Yarns* seem to fall under the former category. For instance: Yuki jorō (square one), Mitsume Daisō (square two), Inugami (square three), Sunamura no onryō (square six) to Nekomata (square eight), Shitto no onnen (square ten), Akaname (square eleven), Haratsuzumi (square thirteen), Oiwa (square fourteen), Rokurokubi (squre sixteen), Ippon'ashi (square seventeen), Morinji no kama (square eighteen), Shōkera (square nineteen), Nobusuma (square twenty-four), and the *agari* are all creatures that can be found in or around more civilized contexts. The monsters that might be found in the forests or oceans include squares four, five, nine, twelve, and twenty-one.

Monster Yarns provides clues that help to further sub-categorize these creatures. For instance, Funayūrei (square nine), Umibōzū (square twelve), and Tako no Nyūdō (square twenty-one) are creatures that reside in the sea, while Sunamura no onryō (square six), Kappa (square seven), Hitotsume (square fifteen), and Ippon'ashi (square seventeen) are monsters that are shown living near fresh water, specifically near human settlements including ponds and wells. Beasts that reside deep in the forests and mountains are Mitsume Daisō (squares two), Yama otoko (square four), Yamabito (square five), Haratsuzumi (square thirteen) and Kyūbi no kitsune (square twenty-two). Inugami (squares three) and Nekomata (square eight), along with Morinji no kama (square eighteen) and Nobusuma (square twenty-four) are all monsters that are closely associated with temples and shrines.

In many of the late Edo stories these creatures exist in a location that is not entirely separate from the lives of human beings, but instead monsters have a parallel existence, dwelling at the physical boundaries of civilized society. Square five depicts the Yamabiko, a creature who resides deep in the mountains, an area associated with spirits and gods. He tricks those humans who enter this realm, marking the boundaries of the spaces humans can inhabit.

These creatures also exist at the edges of human consciousness. For example, the Rokurokubi in square sixteen (Figure 21) is shown emerging from a large wooden storage basket that would have been a common found in many households. This box could be interpreted as an gateway from the realm of monsters into the world of humans, an everyday object that facilitates interaction between these two worlds.[139] It would have

[139] Iwaki, "Bakemono to asobu: nanken keredomo bakemono sugoroku," 39-62.

no doubt struck a chord with those playing the game who saw such an object in their own homes on a daily basis, giving the strangeness of these monsters a paradoxical sense of familiarity. Monsters can be found anywhere, even in the home.

Not all objects and spaces that belong to humans can be a nexus point for the realm of monsters. Age is particularly associated with this ghastly realm of beasts. For instance, the Rokurokubi mentioned in the previous paragraph is specifically in an old basket. Much like the *tskumo-gami*, objects and places of a certain advanced age too can gain supernatural powers. The Nekomata (square eight), as well as the Nobusuma (square twenty-four) are both located at old or abandoned temples. These unused and derelict places carry certain spooky resonances that make them ideal for attracting monsters. Along with age, dinginess can also be a gateway to allow these beasts to enter the human realm, often when humans least suspect it. The Akaname (square eleven) is known to be specifically drawn to homes with filthy baths.[140]

However, a single monster might have been associated with many locations in a number of different stories over the years. A reference to any single place and its monster might not be familiar to the more general audience for which this print was created. It makes the game more appealing to this audience to attempt to make these creatures more general and therefore more relatable and understandable. The title text provides detail in some cases, but a more generalized representation of the monster is still effective.

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[140] Kagawa Masanobu 香川雅信. *Edo no yōkai kakumei* 江戸の妖怪革命 (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 2005), 220.

Some squares represent these more generic locations. The visual element plays a crucial role because clues for getting the general sense for a location are provided not through the written information in the cartouches, but in the background scenery. The title for Nobusuma (square twenty-four) tells the viewer that this creature resides in a ruined temple. This is not a precise place, but a locational typology. There are no visual details in the square that provide more specificity in terms of the appearance of this temple, so the player is asked to imagine a generic abandoned temple that serves as the unseen setting. However, what it does provide with the amorphous black and green pattern in the background that is combined with the lightning and the flying monster in the foreground is a general sense of a black night sky that is being viewed through surrounding of trees.

This nonspecific background seems to serve two purposes. First, it makes the scenes seem more familiar and relatable since these scenes could be taking place at locations the viewer has either seen in person or seen in other printed images. This makes these creatures seem much closer to everyday life, as if they could be lurking in the nearby drainage ditch or old house, making the viewer relate to these creatures in a much more personal way. At the same time, the generic representations of named locations with a minimal hint of specificity, such as the sharp monumental peak of Myōkōsan (square four), and the raging waves of the Sea of Tosa (square twelve), might have allow players to imagine the monumentality of faraway places, locations that ordinary Edoites would have most likely not seen in person.

Most of the squares have backgrounds in dark shades of gray or blue with dark gradation indicating that the scene occurs at night. There might be a slight change in two

of the squares: *yamaotoko* (square four) and *sunamura no onryō* (square six). In square six, the moon is barely above the horizon line indicating that is still early in the evening. The placement of the moon in square four the moon has risen above the visible mountains, indicating it is probably close to midnight. Most of the squares seem to follow a similar pattern, though they do not provide such a precise marker of time. They all have a dark blue or black background telling the players that most of these scenes occur at night. This provides a temporal specificity to the images that the title text does not provide.

Knowing that the game *hyaku monogatari* was meant to be played at night, the use of night scenery for images in *Monster Yarns* not only accurately represents the general consensus that monsters appear at night, but is also in accord with the original theme of the game. Regardless of when one plays the game, as soon as play starts the players are symbolically taken into the night world of the monsters to become an observer, an intruder, or a victim.

The variation in setting for each space makes the board more visually diverse, but these different settings add another level of complexity to the game. According to Huizinga, when two individuals engage in any form of play, a new temporal realm is created, governed by laws that are created by the rules of the particular game.[141] In the case of *Monster Yarns*, the board is subdivided into another series of locations in both space and time, adding a secondary level of movement specificity as players navigate the board.

[141] Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*, 20-23.

In fifteen of the twenty four squares (not including *furidashi* and *agari*), as players jump from square to square during the game, they are traveling to these different places and encountering the local beast. The game board enables these monsters to be presented simultaneously, giving the players a chance to see a juxtaposition of these fictitious creatures that their associated legends would not typically allow.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

One hundred stories were told and the flame was extinguished. The creatures came into the human world, squirming and wriggling around the edges of consciousness into the familiar spaces of the everyday world. Whether interacting with man for good or evil, they have entered the realm of the known, the realm of reality. In this realm, their habits and appearance can be described, recorded and communicated to others. *Monster Yarns* takes these familiar creatures and introduces to yet another world: the world of play.

The realm of play is an ordered world. Play is not without a purpose or a goal. Rules constrain and shape play activities into specific events, the repeatable and transmittable regulations that transform formless action into a structured game. These rules can then be explained to others, this communication that helps to continue the life of the game across time.

A physical record of the games is required to continue the transmission of play beyond the initial interpersonal contact. The board fulfills this function, encoding the parameters of play within its structures. It becomes the controlling force and location of play, an object that exists outside the theoretical enactment of play, something that has a life beyond the temporal limitations of the time that it takes to finish the game.

E-sugoroku fulfills this function. It is a more permanent record of the activity than an orally transmitted tradition, a location for play and a guidebook through the game. Not all of the rules are present on the board itself, but instead some are attached to the game as part of a larger cultural memory. Other records and traditions beyond these

physical objects must be consulted in order to fully understand the function of these works.

These general rules that exist beyond the game, like the use of dice or the very semantic category of *sugoroku*, can be misleading. Once the categorizing typology of *sugoroku* has been applied to these games, the specific mechanics of the game is often dispensed with entirely. Simple identifying the game is seen to be enough, since the function and use of these prints, the general cultural understanding of the game of *sugoroku* is thought to be sufficient in analyzing the work.

However, each iteration of this game is different. There is sufficient variation in each version that some attention must be paid to the specifics of how this work actual fulfills its intended function. It is not always the case that a blanket definition of the game typology is enough to full understand these works. Their visual complexity often hides the board structures, making their function less clear to the viewer.

The various monsters add to the visual complexity of *Monster Yarns*, making a simple game engaging and compelling through the added level of content provided by these creatures and their identities. The act of play then recombines these tales in an entirely new and different way. These beasts are captured by the gridded squares of the game board and made to follow the rules of the game. Each time the players are asked to consider and contemplate these fiends as they move though the game.

The complex visual qualities of these works along with their subject matter must not be discounted either. They are an important reason why these works were successful

during the Edo period.[142] These qualities must be considered equally with the structural features of the game, but these works must be considered games first.

With *tobi-sugoroku*, extremely detailed rules are an intrinsic part of the objects, a structure that is holistically integrated into the board itself. There can be no question how the game is to be played, and little room for variation in play. The rules are not the only important element of these boards; the other structural elements that create the game in these prints must be acknowledged as well.

E-sugoroku are more than just prints made to be enjoyed visually. They are more than a combination of text and image to be interpreted as just another form of illustrated narrative. They are an entirely different class of object and the specific characteristics that create this difference are worth addressing. In my mechanical analysis, I have attempted to address this difference in some detail, looking close at how *Monster Yarns* functions as a game, rather than merely interpret its visual qualities and narrative content. Looking at the mechanical function of this game along with the delightful subject matter, the holistic function of this work can be understood.

[142] Masukawa, *Sugoroku 1*, 16-22.

APPENDIX

FIGURES

Figure 1. Utagawa Yoshikazu, *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku* (*Mukashi banashi bakemono sugoroku*), 1858. *Ukiyo-e* woodblock-printed board game, ink and color on paper, 20 ½ x 32 in. Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, 1969:37.92.

Figure 2. Numerical reference diagram for *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku.*

Figure 3. Detail of *furidashi* (Start) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 4. Detail of Square One *Naka no Kawachi no Yuki Jorō* (The Snow Lady of Naka no Kawachi) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 5. Detail of Square Two *Asahina Kiridōshi no Mitsume Daisō* (Three Eyed Priest of Asahina Kiridōshi) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 6. Detail of Square Three *Kōshū no Inugami, Shirachigo* (The Dog God and Child Attedant of Gōshū) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 7. Detail of Square Four *Myōkōzan no Yamaotoko* (The Mountain Man of Myōkōzan) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 8. Detail of Square Five *Yamabiko* (Echoing Ravine Troll of the Village) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 9. Yōshū Chikanobu, *Ghost Story of the Yotsuya on the Tōkaidō*, 1884. *Ukiyo-e* woodblock print, ink and color on paper. From Rebecca Salter *Japanese Popular Prints*, 160.

Figure 10. *Furu tsubaki no rei* from Toriyama Sekien, *Gazu hyakki yagyō*, 142.

Figure 11. Detail of Square Six *Sunamura no onryō* (The Resentful Spirit of Sunamura) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 12. Detail of Square Seven *Bandō Tarō no Kappa* (The Kappa of the Tone River) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 13. Detail of Square Eight *Namagusadera no Nekomata* from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 14. Detail of Square Nine *Kujiranami no funayūrei* (The Boat Ghost of Kujiranami) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 15. Detail of Square Ten *Shitto no onnen* (Grudge of Jealousy) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 16. Detail of Square Eleven *Sokokuradani no Akaname* (Filth Licker from the Bottom of the Darkest Ravine) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 17. Detail of Square Twelve *Genkainada no Umibōzu* (Ocean Monk of the Western Genkai Sea) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 18. Detail of Square Thirteen *Tonpuhara no Haratsuzumi* (The Tanuki of Tonpu Field Drumming Its Belly) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 19. Detail of Square Fourteen *Chōchin Oiwa* (Chinese Paper Lantern Oiwa) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 20. Detail of Square Fifteen *Usugahara no Hitotsume* (The One Eye of Usugahara) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 21. Detail of Square Sixteen *Furutsuzura no Rokurokubi* (The Long-necked Monster of the Old Mulberry Basket) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 22. Detail of Square Seventeen *Sagifuchi ni Ippon'ashi* (One Leg of Sagifuchi) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

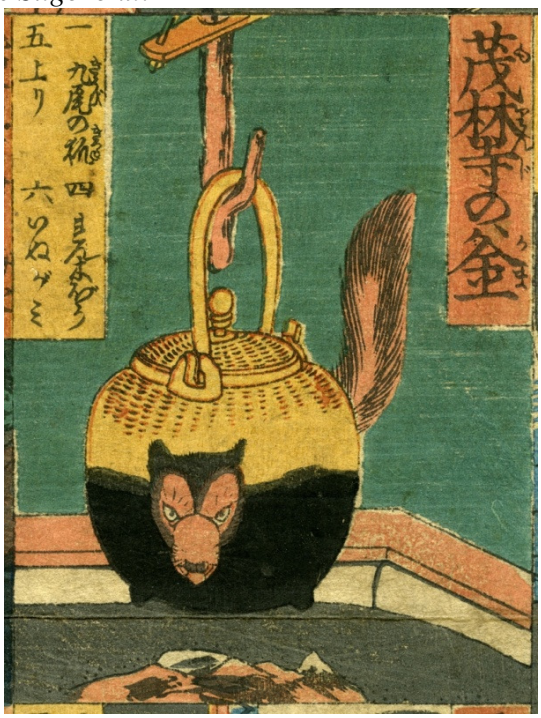

Figure 23. Detail of Square Eighteen *Morinji no kama* (The Teakettle of Morin Temple) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 24. Detail of Square Nineteen *Hikimado no Shōkera* (The Skylight Shōkera) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 25. Detail of Square Twenty *Surihachiyama no Rengibō* (Wooden Thunder Pestle of Surihachi Mountain) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 26. Detail of Square Twenty-one *Tosaumi no Tako no Nyūdō* (The Giant Octopus of Tosaumi) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 27. Detail of Square Twenty-two *Kinmō Kyūbi no Kitsune* (Gold Furred Nine-Tailed Fox) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 28. Detail of Square Twenty-three *Mikoshi Nyūdo* (Transforming Giant Traveling Monk) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 29. Detail of Square Twenty-four *Furudera no Nobusuma* (The Flying Squirrel Demon of the Abandoned Temple) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 30. Detail of *Agari* (Finish) from *Old Monster Yarns Sugoroku*.

Figure 31. Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1795-1861). *Parody of Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō: Cat-witch of Okabe*. *Ukiyo-e* woodblock print, ink and color on paper, 1847. *Utagawa Kuniyoshi ten: botsugo hyakugojūnen*, Iwakiri Yuriko; Ruth McCreery,eds., 86.

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