

Ueda Akinari (1734-1809): “Bewitched”

•Real name: UEDA SENJIRO

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Ueda Akinari Biography

- Probably born in Osaka in 1734, in the Sonezaki pleasure quarter, to an unwed mother by the name of Matsuo Osaki.
- When Akinari was four years old he became the adopted son of Ueda Mosuke.
 - Shortly before death he said, "Born in Naniwa [Osaka] I have been a guest in the Capital for sixteen years. I had no father; I do not know the reason why. When I was four years old my mother also cast me away. Fortunately I was taken in by Mr. Ueda."
- 1776: *Tales of Moonlight and Rain* (629)
- Died August 8, 1809, age 76.

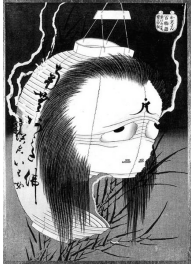
Some Literary Gothic Features

- Ancient prophecy, especially mysterious, obscure, or hard to understand.
- Mystery and suspense.
- High emotion, sentimentalism, but also pronounced anger, surprise, and especially terror.
- Supernatural events (e.g. a giant, a sighing portrait, ghosts or their apparent presence, a skeleton).
- Omens, portents, dream visions.
- Sex and Death: Fainting, frightened, screaming, near-naked women. Women threatened by powerful, impetuous male.
- Ancient spaces and places: castles, etc.
- The metonymy (part for the whole) of gloom and horror (wind, rain, doors grating on rusty hinges, howls in the distance, distant sighs, footsteps approaching, lights in abandoned rooms, gusts of wind blowing out lights or blowing suddenly, characters trapped in rooms or imprisoned).
- The vocabulary of the gothic (use of words indicating fear, mystery, etc.: apparition, devil, ghost, haunted, terror, fright).

Japanese Gothic Features

- The universe is governed by rules.
- The rules of the universe are beyond human understanding.
- Society offers no protection from spirits and ghosts.
- Perseverance in the face of utter destruction.
- Dank, confined spaces are most conducive to the appearance of ghostly spirits.
- *Yuurei*: ghosts or spirits stranded on this world because they have unfinished business or died in the throes of intense emotion.

Fear Depends on Cultural Belief Systems



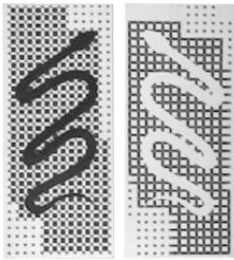
Obake

- Shinto is Kannagara (Kami no michi: "The way of the kami")
 - not a revealed religion with a divinely inspired scripture
 - Tradition and the family, physical cleanliness, Matsuri festivals to worship the kami.
 - Love of nature
 - Little emphasis on death or afterlife.
 - Obake: Obake undermine the certainties of life as we usually understand it.
- Afterlife
- Buddhism
 - Independent sense of self creates alienation & suffering
 - Six Realms of Existence: Skandhas, not soul, reincarnate
 - Ambivalence about immortality (not about reincarnation)
 - Concept of non-attachment
 - Characterization & Radical non-dualism
 - Uncanny Beings: not-natural

"Bewitched"

- Gothic Elements
 - Mythic / dreamlike qualities (632, 635)
 - Subversion of religious & social norms (637)
 - Ancient spaces (640)
 - Obsession with sex and death (634)
 - Presence of the supernatural or unknown (uncanny) (641)
 - Reflection of "unspeakable" social issues (638, 644)

What actions make Toyo-o a man?



Graham Keres: "Black Serpent
White Serpent"

- Original Title: "The Lust of the White Serpent."
- If Managa is desire incarnate (made physical), what is the (physical) nature of desire?
 - Significance of serpent? (646)
- How does Tomiko compare to Managa? (634, 642)
- What does the dead snake indicate about Toyo-o's conquest of desire? (647)