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Ghosts in Intertextuality
Sarayashiki Between *wagei* and Local Tradition

Matilde Mastrangelo
La Sapienza Università di Roma, Italia

Abstract *Sarayashiki* (The Dish Mansion) is one of the four best-known Japanese ghost stories with a female character playing the leading role. The analysis will focus on intertextual elements shared by the many variations and adaptations in different genres and periods, looking particularly at the *wagei* theatrical repertory of the Edo period and some elements in local productions of the story. This paper does not seek to examine the origins or the narrative itinerary of the story, instead, it aims to detect some of the more interesting factors of intertextuality, which will allow some speculation on their meanings and literary results.

Keywords Sarayashiki. Baba Bunkō. Layers of narration in intertextuality. Katsura Bunji I. San'yūtei Enchō.

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1 The Origins of the Story

Sarayashiki 皿屋敷 (The Dish Mansion), together with *Yotsuya kaidan* 四ツ谷怪談 (The Yotsuya Ghost Story, 1825), *Kaidan Botandōrō* 怪談牡丹灯籠 (The Peony Lantern Ghost Story, ca. 1861-64) and *Shinkei Kasane-ga-fuchi* 真景累ヶ淵 (The True Vision of Kasane Swamp, 1859), is one of the four best-known Japanese ghost stories with a female character in the leading role.

The most popular part of the story, which tells of the mistreated Okiku お菊 appearing as a ghost from an old well, desperately counting dishes but never able to find and count the tenth dish, whose loss is one of the causes of her murder, is, of course, present in all the variations. The shifting elements of the story are the events narrated before and after the ghost's appearance, and it is in the two sections of narrative prologue and epilogue where the most interesting instances of intertextuality are located. Indeed, the prevalent use of Okiku's death and the scene where her ghost materialises, whether in theatre or *ukiyoe* 浮世絵 (woodblock print), can somehow dim the considerable creative process surrounding *Sarayashiki*.

Two main strands are shared in the several adaptations of the story: one produced in Kansai and the other in Kantō, both of which have distinct aspects. Starting with the first performance of the story, as a ningyō jōruri 人形浄瑠璃 (puppet theatre) entitled *Banshū sarayashiki* 播州皿屋敷 (The Dish Mansion at Banshū), played at the Ōsaka Toyotakeza in 1741, we can examine the nature of the plot that preludes the apparition of Okiku's ghost. The story is set in Banshū, in the Harima province, where the Akamatsu 赤松 family have built a castle in Himeji. After a period of decline, Lord Akamatsu's heir Akamatsu Masanori 赤松政範 regains control of the territory and hands the castle over to Lord Kotera Toyomoto 小寺豊職. After a while, Aoyama Tessan 青山鉄山, a man in service with the Kotera family, decides to join a conspiracy against them. Some of the loyal retainers of the Koteras ask a servant, Okiku, one of the orphan daughters of a retainer, to act as a spy, but Aoyama's conspiracy ultimately succeeds. Once Aoyama becomes lord of the castle, strange ghostly phenomena begin, such as the manifestation of Osakabe hime 刑部姫, a female divinity and guardian of the castle, a figure unique to this adaptation. Alarmed by these phenomena, Aoyama decides to live outside the castle in a residence, a *yashiki* 屋敷, taking Okiku with him, but once he discovers Okiku's role as a spy, he plots to kill her. His retainer, Chōnotsubo Danshirō 町坪弾四朗, however, asks to deal with the matter himself, although his true purpose is to force Okiku into marriage. The girl rejects him, and, in revenge, he steals one of the ten precious dishes that have been entrusted to Okiku. Aoyama asks Danshirō to punish Okiku, and once again, he tries to force the girl to yield to him, but after her firm refusal, he tortures and kills her

before throwing her into a well. Fear breaks out in the *yashiki* upon the apparition of Okiku's ghost, who is trying to count the dishes (*hitotsu* 一つ, *futatsu* 二つ, and so on), to the sound of broken crockery. In this adaptation, Okiku's sisters avenge her, killing Danshirō and bringing the box of dishes for the ghost to see, thus appeasing her.

2 *Sarayashiki* in the *wagei* Repertory – *kōdan*, *rakugo*, San'yūtei Enchō

2.1 *Kōdan*

Some scholars have noted that Akamatsu, the name of the lord who builds the castle, is also the name of the first known *kōdan* 講談 (historical narration) performer, Akamatsu Hōin 赤松法院 (1688-1704) straddling legend and history. In 1758, *kōdanshi* 講談師 (master of *kōdan*) Baba Bunkō 馬場文耕 (1718-1759) adopted the genre of oral narrative to produce his own variation of the story, *Sarayashiki bengiroku* 皿屋敷辨疑録 (The Sad and Suspicious Chronicle of the Dish Mansion), which became the standard reference plot for many variations set in Edo from the eighteenth century onwards, most of which bore the title *Banchō sarayashiki* 番町皿屋敷 (The Dish Mansion at Banchō) (Konita 1987, 49). Baba Bunkō's *Sarayashiki bengiroku* is a *jitsuroku* 実録 (a documented story), a genre of *kōdan* that combines real and invented facts in a plot where two main storylines intersect. The story is organised into ten chapters, and Okiku appears from the fifth one onwards. *Sara* 皿 and *yashiki* 屋敷 are the pivotal words in Bunko's story since everything begins with the allocation of the territories around Edo castle under *shōgun* Tokugawa Ieyasu 徳川家康 (1543-1616). It is widely known that the most faithful *hatamoto* 旗本 (retainer of the *shogun*) were distributed in six circles, or *bangumi* 番組, located in districts (*banchō* 番町), and this may be one of the origins of the first part of the title *Banchō sarayashiki*. At the time of *shōgun* 将軍 Tokugawa Iemitsu 徳川家光 (1604-1651), the chief of the *shōgun*'s retainers, Yoshida Daizen no Nosuke 吉田大膳亮, was transferred elsewhere, and his estate became an empty land, *akichi* 空き地 or *sara-yashiki* 皿屋敷, a place (and a residence) that can be used 'once more', *sara ni* さらに, so here we have a wordplay based on the homophony of *sara*. The land was given to *shōgun* Iemitsu's sister Tenjuin 天樹院 (1597-1666), presented as follows:

> As was widely known, she would shower her attention on many men. Any young samurai, or any handsome young man even from the lower classes passing by the gate of her residence at Kōjimachi, would be invited in by seductive maids, and many a lustful guest accepted the invitation. This is why a children's rhyme of the time

> ran, 'If someone passes by the Yoshida residence, he will surely be invited in'. The song was already famous before then, and at that time became so popular that old people would memorise and sing it. Even in the kabuki repertory, I know that about forty years ago, the late lamented actor Yamanaka Heikurō 山中平九郎 (1642-1724) played the role of Yoshida's widow in the play *Ushi no gozen* 牛の御前 (Ushi no gozen) that tells of a gang invited into the residence. (Baba 1929, 4)[1]

Baba Bunkō adds several elements, quoting true and false sources about Tenjuin and the legend around her (Hirosaka's notes in Yokoyama et al. 2015, 18), using references to popular songs and kabuki 歌舞伎 to weave his intertextual web. Yamanaka Heikurō was actually a kabuki actor famous for his terrifying roles as ghosts and vengeful spirits. Baba Bunkō mentions him in his *Kinsei Edo chomonshū* 近世江都著聞集 (Early Modern Stories Heard in Edo, 1757), quoting the play *Tsuma goi Sumidagawa* 孀恋隅田川 (The Lovely Couple at Sumidagawa) in order to associate some other frightening images to Tenjuin (Hirosaka 2015) in an intriguing intertextual game.

Tenjuin certainly deserves her scary description. In a fit of jealousy, she tortures and kills her servant Takeo 竹尾, guilty of having an affair with her lover Hanai Iki 花井壱岐. She then kills Hanai and throws them both down the old Kojimachi well, which came to symbolise suspicious disappearance and death. From then on, she uses the same old well to eliminate any person or lover who opposes her, turning the house into a place of terror. After the death of Tenjuin, strange phenomena appear from the well:

> In the middle of a drizzly night, a blue, bright flame appeared and disappeared from the well many times. People passing by were amazed to see it, and after a while, everybody said it was a haunted house. (Baba 1929, 6)

For a while, the land remained uninhabited, also due to the need for accessible spaces for the construction of mansions in Edo; it would be used again in the future as it was still a *sara-yashiki*. The estate was divided between three lords, and the Kojimachi well was buried. The *kanji* 漢字 for *sara* 皿 in Baba Bunkō's title *Sarayashiki bengiroku* is, of course, the one referring to 'dish', but the underlying meaning of 'once more' is characteristic of the Kantō variation of the story. A land that is divided and reused with newly constructed houses is a place that can somehow be 'deconstructed' and 're-written'. In this sense, I think we can actually consider *sarayashiki* an 'intertextuali-

1 All translations of the proposed passages are by the author of the contribution.

ty *yashiki*', a highly explanatory model of intertextuality where many layers of memory and meanings overlap time after time, like the numerous lovers thrown into the well by Tenjuin. It is split into several 'fields' of literary inspiration, spawning new literary phenomena and adaptations in a process typical of intertextuality.

The *sara-yashiki* we are discussing, one of the three estates formed by Tenjuin's property division with a new well, becomes the official residence of Aoyama Shuzen 青山主膳, the classic villain of *jitsuroku* stories. This character is not based on a historical figure, but the name is another example of intertextuality; in *Banshū sarayashiki* too, as we saw, the role of villain is ascribed to a man named Aoyama. In *Sarayashiki bengiroku*, he is actually a *machibugyō* 町奉行 (magistrate), but his approach to the administration of justice is inappropriate as he is aggressive towards the weak. He arrests Mukōzaki Jinnai 向崎甚内, a famous swordsman and a famous thief and gambler, which leads him to fall prey to Aoyama, who jails him and puts him to death. His daughter Okiku becomes the Aoyama family's slave, and – with no rights or possibility of defending herself from Aoyama's insolence and his wife's jealousy – every moment of her pitiful life is lived in fear.

> Naturally, Aoyama Shuzen's wife imitated her husband's violent behaviour. […] She was cruel to her servants and was also very jealous. Since the recently hired maid Kiku was so beautiful, and suspecting that her husband was fond of her, she nurtured constant hatred for the maid, punishing her harshly for nothing, making her suffer awfully. […] There was not a day Kiku lived without soaking her sleeves with her tears, suffering as if she had been exiled to Kikaigashima. (Baba 1929, 13)

Kikaigashima is a highly cultured reference to the traditional Japanese theatrical world, with famous plays such as the nō *Shunkan* 俊寛 (Shunkan) or the *jōruri* 浄瑠璃 *Heike nyogo no shima* 平家女護島 (The Heike and the Island of women), which shows the breadth of the *kōdan* audiences' literary knowledge.

One day, Okiku breaks one of the dishes from the precious family collection and is tortured; interestingly, the dish is not stolen or broken by others, as in other variations. Her middle finger is cut off; as Shuzen's wife says: "Wretched woman! You carelessly broke one of my precious dishes, and now my collection is incomplete, so I'm going to cut one off one of your fingers, and your ten fingers will be incomplete" (Baba 1929, 15). Before throwing herself to her death in the old well, she curses the baby that Aoyama's wife is about to bear, and the child is, in fact, born missing a middle finger. From that moment, as in all the other variations, Okiku's tearful voice counting the dishes, "*hitotsu, futatsu*…", counting also her *fingers* in this ver-

sion, scares all the servants or visitors in the night, and they all decide to leave the house.

> From that moment on, every night, from the hour of the rat until morning, a light would rise from the bottom of the well together with a woman's sorrowful voice counting "one, two, three, four", and then "eight, nine", sadly and as though grief-stricken, bemoaning the absence of one dish. It was terrifying. No one dared doubt that it was Kiku's ghost, and all the people living at the Aoyama residence were quite afraid, with their hair standing on end […] In the end, none, neither maids nor retainers, remained in service there. (Baba 1929, 18)

Thanks to Okiku's revenge, Aoyama's bad reputation finally became known to the *bakufu* 幕府 (the shogunate government), causing the downfall of his family. The authorities asked the famous monk, Mikazuki Ryōyo Shōnin 三日月了誉上人, a character who recalls the famous fourteenth-century monk Ryōyo Shōgei 了誉聖冏 (1341-1420), to placate the ghost, and – we might add – to allow a precious piece of land in Edo, now no more than a wasteland, *nohara* 野原, to be used once more, *sara ni*. Narrating some of the cases in which Ryōyo goes to emancipate the vengeful soul of a ghost, reference is also made to the story of Kasane, a female ghost who widely inspired the *wagei* 話芸 repertory until the famous San'yūtei Enchō's 三遊亭圓朝 (1839-1900) *kaidanbanashi* 怪談話 *Shinkei Kasane ga fuchi* 真景累ヶ淵 (Mastrangelo 2012). In a final scene shared with other works, the monk listens to Okiku's voice, but in the end, he says the number ten out loud, and the ghost finally finds relief and disappears.

> There was a reason why the monk made up for the missing number ten. In fact, it is written in the *sūtra* that if the body has some physical defect, one cannot become a Buddha, and this was no doubt why Kiku mourned her severed tenth finger. There was a missing finger as well as a missing dish, but luckily, by saying the number ten aloud, the monk used his gift to placate her soul. (Baba 1929, 21)

Another interesting point in this variant is the inclusion of a character who is also the main character of another *kōdan*. Okiku's father, named Kōsaka Jinnai 高坂甚内, is, in fact, a protagonist in another *kōdan* belonging to the thief-story repertory (Takarai 1971, 135, 148-50), but it has a different title depending on the period and storytellers. Bunkō was famous for being sentenced to death for his narration, which perhaps sought to underline the complex social makeup within which corruption is present at all levels of society and harshly prevails over morals. He seems to suggest a doubt as to where the difference between a thief and the authority who gains advantage from

his position might lie or whether the moral strength of a thief is not greater than that of a corrupt official.[2] The *kōdan* engages with political issues through history, calling into question the *shōgun* family and overbearing, bullying public officials. Being a *jitsuroku*, he remains attached to reality and political situations. In Bunkō's case, intertextuality can be found in his narrative works and *wagei* repertory but also in the number of quotations related to the world of theatre. The numerous *kōdan* variations bearing the title *Banchō sarayashiki* that sprang up under Bunkō's influence and developed basically along the same plot lines are often very long. They offer much greater opportunities to enrich the text with intertextual references, providing a most fascinating investigation of external references, even if the part of the story featuring Okiku appears only from the second half onwards, although her portrait is well detailed (among many Baba 1955; Kyokudō 2006).

2.2 *Rakugo*

Returning to the Kamigata area, *Sarayashiki* also became an inspiring plot in the *rakugo* 落語 (comical stories) repertory. The storyteller attributed with the creation of this variation is Katsura Bunji 桂文治 I (1773-1815), who, with his master Matsuda Yasuke 松田弥助 (1781-1801), started performances in their little theatre, making their art a form of pure entertainment (Hida 1971, 101-2). Katsura was also one of the first *rakugo* storytellers to collect and print the stories he told on stage. An important collection is *Otoshi banashi Katsura no hana* 落とし噺桂花 (Katsura's Best Comic Stories), in two volumes and containing 600 titles, reprinted in *Kamigata hanashibon shū* 上方話本集 (Kamigata Comic Stories Collection). The plot of *Sarayashiki Okiku ga yūrei* 皿屋敷お菊が幽霊 (The Ghost of Okiku at Sarayashiki), as it was originally known – in today's repertory often referred to as *Okiku no sara* お菊の皿 (Okiku's dish) or *Sarayashiki* –, takes place in Banshū where the maid with a leading family broke one of ten dishes making up a collection, in an opening similar to other narratives. However, in *rakugo* the sad voice of the girl that counts dishes "*ichi mai, ni mai*" does not scare people away, and the well from which the voice comes out becomes a tourist attraction, like the haunted house in a modern amusement park. Many people gather in front of the residence, stands are built, an entrance fee is fixed – turning the place into the setting for a show – and *bentō* and drinks are sold.

2 Farge (2016, 56-9) argues that another reason why Bunkō describes Mukōzaki Jinnai as 'a holy sage' is to present him as a Christian martyr in order to be offensive towards civil authorities and Buddhist establishment.

What makes the 'performance' exciting is that it is said that anyone who hears the ghost count until the end will die; this is why people listen to the ghostly voice get ready to escape before the ninth dish.

> – One dish, two dishes, three dishes.
> – She's got to three already! Let's clear away the food box!
> – Four.
> – She's got to four already! Clear away the cups!
> – Five.
> – Five already! Wrap everything up in the *furoshiki*!
> – Six, seven.
> – Gosh, just two more! Get the sandals ready!
> – Eight
> – Let's go, now or never!
> – Nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen… tomorrow night will be free time. (Hida 1982, 260-1)

The *rakugo* derives from *Banshu sarayashiki* but was partly influenced by kabuki productions too, and the novelty of this *rakugo* seems to be the new way the dishes are counted: "*ichi mai, ni mai*". The final punchline, *ochi* 落ち, of this *rakugo* makes the ghost similar to the audience, with human habits, smart enough to find a way to take free time next day, and the coexistence of a ghost in the human world gives the story a comic turn (Nagashima 2006, 106-7). In the modern *rakugo* repertory, the reason the ghost decides to take a day off is sometimes a cold or the need to have a rest.

I found the *rakugo* variation quite amusing, and I think we can call it a sort of 'reverse intertextuality': in the world of *rakugo*, where everything can be different and opposite, there is no need for a monk to free the ghost as the ghost manages to free herself by choosing to count the nine dishes twice, and at the same time, she can mock the way humans can even use fear for their own gain, affirming the right not only to take a rest but also to leave behind an old intertextual subject to suggest a hint for a new possible line of intertextuality.

2.3 San'yūtei Enchō

The famous storyteller San'yūtei Enchō, active in Kantō, who, as Katsura Bunji I, has the merit of having definitively and successfully introduced *wagei* into the written literary repertoire, offers intertextual links with the traditional repertory through his own variation *Kiku moyō Sarayama kidan* 菊模様皿山奇談 (The Suspicious Story of Sarayama and the Chrysanthemum Pattern). Enchō produced this story in 1860, and it was performed again years later and published

in 1871. At the beginning of the first *seki* 席 (episode or performance), the storyteller narrates that in a moment of creative crisis writing new episodes for newspapers, he had been repeatedly asked to produce a text: "Something old might be good too". He then wrote *Kiku moyō Sarayama kidan*, composed as a narration complete with stage sounds (*shibai narimono iri* 芝居鳴り物入り) at the age of twenty-two, when he was still "a good and beautiful young man" (San'yūtei 2014, 115). The story starts with the presentation of *sara*, part of a treasure collection made up of thirty dishes, of which only nine remain. They belong to the Higashiyama 東山 family, a powerful lineage descended from shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa 足利義政 (1436-1490). In this variation, the homophone *sara* さら is shared with the name of the place, Sarayama 皿山 (now the northern part of the Okayama Prefecture), where the story is set, and with which Enchō creates an original and interesting intertextual link. In fact, he quotes a *kyōka* 狂歌 (comic poem) without specifying whether it is his own creation, but it is quoted as if it were a well-known poem. It parodies a poem from *Kokinshū* 古今集 (Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern, ca. 905): *Mimasaka ya | Kume no Sarayama | sarasara ni | wa ga na wa tateji | yorozuyo made ni* 美作や久米の佐良山さらさらにわが名はたてじよろづ世までに (In Mimasaka | Sara Mountain of Kume | towers but never | in ten thousand long years will | I ever let my name rise) (Rodd, Henkenius 1984, 369, no. 1087). In the *Kokinshū* poem, the name of the place anticipates the sound of *sarasara ni* さらさらに (never ever).[3] The *kyōka* quoted by Enchō is: *Mimasaka ya | Kume no Sarayama | sarahodo no | manako de mitemo | minokoshita uta* 美作や粂の皿山皿ほどの眼で見ても見のこした歌 (In Mimasaka | Dish Mountain of Kume | although I open my eyes wide | to look round like a dish | I didn't notice that poem) (San'yūtei 2014, 115). The *uta* 歌 (poem) that the author of the *kyōka* overlooked might also be the *Kokinshū* one, in a reference thought to be easily understandable to an audience, who, despite their literary background, had to catch the joke quickly.

The narration goes on, introducing the actual dishes and the story around them before introducing the characters.

> Among these dishes were some called white chrysanthemum (*shiragiku* 白菊) because of the chrysanthemum pattern on them; ten more were called wild chrysanthemum (*nogiku* 野菊) as they had the same charm as the flower. The dishes were a great treasure handed down by the ancestors of the Higashiyama family and had therefore been well looked after. Along with the dishes, the forebears had left a testament in which they wrote that anyone who

3 In the Italian translation, the interesting solution is "mai e poi mai" (never and ever) in order to keep the repetition of the sound *sarasara ni* (Sagiyama 2000, 647).

> damaged them should have their finger severed, even if he or she was a family member. A foolish idea, but a long time ago, there were many things like that. (San'yūtei 2014, 116)

The threat of a severed finger is a reference taken from Baba Bunkō's *Sarayashiki bengiroku* and thus from the same world of *wagei*. It has been noted that in some kabuki and jōruri plays there is also the threat of losing a finger as a punishment for damaging objects or trees (San'yūtei 2014, 438).

Chiyo 千代 is the female main character of the first part, and among the numerous characters there is also Okiku, but she has nothing to do with dishes or ghosts; she is a poor girl taking care of her sick mother. In order to buy medicines for her, she decides to work for Lord Higashiyama Sakuzaemon's 東山作左衛門 family, even if the conditions (broken dish/severed finger) are frightening. Chiyo's good behaviour causes no problems until Sakuzaemon's son Chōsuke 長助 tries to seduce her. Disappointed by her refusal, the young man waits until the *sekku* 節句 (seasonal festival) of the ninth month to take his revenge. This was the time his father used to proudly show the precious collection to his guests. On this occasion, Chōsuke accused Chiyo of breaking one of the dishes and asked his father to punish her not only by cutting off her finger but also by scarring her face, so it would become difficult for her to find a husband. The girl was desperate, but, unexpectedly, another attendant, Gonroku 権六, comes to her rescue, trying to convince Sakuzaemon through persuasive means. Firstly, he says that he was the one who had broken the dish; then he smashed all twenty dishes in the box with the following admonition:

> My Lord, what do you think these dishes are made of? From clay, I think. What a stupid testament your ancestor wrote, ordering the amputation of fingers or feet to injure human beings, who are so important, just for some careless breakage […] I felt so sorry for her having her finger cut off that I thought I would save twenty people with my death alone if I broke all twenty dishes. […] If it became known that the Higashiyama family are so cruel as to consider a lump of earth and human beings on the same level, this would also damage the reputation of *shōgun* 将軍 Yoshimasa, and I don't think you, my Lord, would be happy about that. I wanted to avoid it, and I could not think of anything else but to eliminate the root of the problem by breaking the dishes. (San'yūtei 2014, 147, 149, 150)

Appreciating Gonroku's courage and loyalty, Sakuzaemon forgives him. Chōsuke admits that he broke the dish out of revenge for Chiyo's refusal, and at the end of the first part, the Higashiyamas allow Gon-

roku and Chiyo to marry. The story is then set in Edo and continues amid family struggles, moving away from the usual *Sarayashiki* plot.

As always in intertextuality, some elements are taken from previous stories and transformed, such as the vulnerability of the frail female main character, but in Enchō's case, the intertextual references are also new, like the quotation from *Kokinshū* poem. The dish is present in many variations, but in Enchō's story, the wordplay on *sara* takes on new meanings, and the narrative trajectories move away from ghost stories to that of the *oiesōdō* お家騒動 (family trouble). What is also very interesting in *Kiku moyō Sarayama kidan* is Enchō's original interpretation, which takes the story away from the traditional narrative pattern: the girl he depicts is defended and protected without becoming a vengeful ghost.

3 Ghosts in Intertextuality: Local Productions and Some Further Elements

Of course, the kabuki or jōruri variations are very interesting, with many specificities, and we can observe that the Kansai and Kantō titles are particularly different in terms of the environments they narrate. In Kansai, the story very often tells of plots, *oiesōdō*, and power struggles, while Kantō tends to feature corrupt officials abusing their power over others. In Kansai, the ghost aims to show loyalty and fidelity and, perhaps, to take revenge. In Kantō, the ghost aims to avenge an ill-used woman who throws herself into a well and also to avenge the defenceless, under the thumb of crooked officials. Since the kabuki and jōruri variations have several characteristics related to the genre, I will not include them in this article.

Instead, I think it would be more germane to analyse some elements of the local productions that have been formed orally, namely a narrative typology closer to *wagei*. The spread of local Okiku stories throughout various places in Japan is remarkable, but although Okiku is a vengeful ghost, people seem more inclined to commemorate her sad story than be frightened of her. Perhaps this might be related to the theory that the local popularity of the story may be explained by the presence of the Buddhist monk who, at the end of the story, is the only person able to placate the ghost; this simplified the narration of the story, whose aim, in particular in some genres like *kōdan*, was to highlight the greatness of Buddhism. Looking at the collection of thirty-five local variations compiled by Itō Atsushi (2002), the interesting point is the presence of the well in only ten legends, mainly in the Shimane Prefecture, although the voice counting dishes is always present, and the servant (going by different names) is always the victim of a bullying lord. Water, a very familiar element to ghosts, is never absent, as the main character throws herself, or

falls, into a river or a pond, and so on. Another element is that very often, the woman is neither killed nor tortured but commits suicide.

As we have seen, in a story like *Sarayashiki*, elements of intertextuality from previous stories may be found, as well as elements of the story that will become intertextual in later works. The elements which I find very often become the object of intertextuality in *Sarayashiki* are the dish, with an interesting use of homophony, as we have shown, and then the well and the monk, all of which can be seen as marking intertextuality with previous works, and, being inserted into *Sarayashiki*, became new sparks for future intertextuality. The well is full of meaning; as we know, it is very often found in ghost stories, and, of course, it is one of the places servants need to go to for their household tasks. From the numerous examples, I think that one of the most interesting intertextual links could be with the nō play *Izutsu* 井筒 (The Wooden Frame Around the Well), where the main character recalls her love for her husband, telling a monk how they used to play by the well as children; she then disappears, and the villagers tell the monk that the woman was, in fact, a ghost and ask him to pray for her soul. The role of the well is not related to ghostly apparitions in the same way as it is in the Edo ghost repertories, of course, but it is a way of bringing the past to light and connecting the human sphere with the other world. In a modern *kōdan* adaptation, it is a monk, and not Shōnin, who meets a woman who offers him a delicious meal and a place to stay for the night, but the following day he discovers that the lovely woman was Okiku's ghost (Kyokudō 2006, 162-5), following a pattern similar to the nō repertory.

Regarding the monk figure, Japanese ghost stories of the Edo period, for example, typically employ this figure essentially to protect the person tormented by the ghost, suggesting he or she should recite a sutra or hang a sutra strip at the windows; otherwise, they should use some powerful Buddhist talisman. In *Sarayashiki*, on the other hand, the monk's ultimate role is to help the ghost leave the human plane and all the rancour that still binds it to the worldly plane behind, as in the nō play; of course, the monk's action also brings relief to people who are frightened by the ghost or feel sorry for her – as in *Banshū sarayashiki* – but not to the one who caused her death: the aim is to free the ghost and perhaps also the land.

4 Conclusions

The adaptation of a story across numerous genres and media is, of course, not peculiar to *Sarayashiki*; indeed, it is a widespread cultural phenomenon in Japan. Starting from the eighteenth century, we can identify many titles and genres, ranging from theatre to *ukiyoe*, from narrative to film, including the famous *Ringu* リング (*Ring*, 1998 by

Nakata Hideo 中田秀雄), all of which can in some way be considered derivations of *Sarayashiki*. As I mentioned earlier, more than to detect changes in the story in the adaptations, I have aimed to find traces of intertextuality relating to *Sarayashiki*, especially in the world of *wagei*. This repertory can be considered the starting point of the Edo variations of *Sarayashiki*. Nevertheless, it is a repertory with different solutions, not only as narrative choices but one that offers fresh takes on the plot: the ghost makes fun of the living in *rakugo*; values are restored and human life is more important than a dish, however precious it may be, in Enchō's version. Of course, it is essential to consider that the fortune of the stories analysed also depends on the fame of the three storytellers Baba Bunkō, Katsura Bunji I, and San'yūtei Enchō. It would not be correct to affirm that the last two narrative choices have prevailed over later adaptations, perhaps also because the effects of ghost stories on stage are difficult to set aside, given their utility in engaging the public. Both seem to lead *Sarayashiki* towards modernity, with the two main female characters becoming freer and less vengeful than other Okiku stories. The *wagei* repertoire shows how intertextuality can provide a boost to creativity.

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