

(NY: Columbia University Press, 1917)

pp 264-65

322. *The House Had a Spacious Courtyard*

The house had a spacious courtyard and was shaded by tall pine trees. To the south and east the lattice-windows were all wide open. It gave a cool feeling when one looked inside. In the main room was a four-foot curtain of state and in front of it a round hassock on which a priest was kneeling. He was in his early thirties and quite handsome. Over his grey habit he wore a fine silk stole—altogether the effect was magnificent. Cooling himself with a clove-scented fan, he recited the Magic Incantation of the Thousand Hands.

(1140) I gathered that someone in the house was seriously ill, for
(1141) now a heavily built girl with a splendid head of hair edged her way into the room. Clearly this was the medium to whom the evil spirit was going to be transferred. She was wearing an unlined robe of stiff silk and long, light-coloured trousers.

(1142) When the girl had sat down next to the priest in front of a small three-foot curtain of state, he turned round and handed her a thin, highly polished wand. Then with his eyes tightly shut he began to read the mystic incantations, his voice coming out in staccato bursts as he uttered the sacred syllables. It was an impressive sight, and many of the ladies of the house came out from behind the screens and curtains and sat watching in a group.

After a short time the medium began to tremble and fell into a trance. It was awesome indeed to see how the priest's incantations were steadily taking effect. The medium's brother, a slender young man in a long robe who had only recently celebrated his coming of age, stood behind the girl, fanning her.

Everyone who witnessed the scene was overcome with respect. It occurred to me how embarrassed the girl herself would feel to be exposed like this if she were in her normal state of mind. She lay there groaning and wailing in the most terrible way, and,

though one realized that she was in no actual pain, one could not help sympathizing with her. Indeed, one of the patient's friends, feeling sorry for the girl, went up to her curtain of state and helped to rearrange her disordered clothing. (1143)

Meanwhile it was announced that the patient was a little better. Some young attendants were sent to the kitchen to fetch hot water and other requisites. Even while they were carrying their trays they kept darting uneasy glances at the exorcist. They wore pretty unlined robes and formal skirts whose light mauve colour was as fresh as on the day they were dyed—it made a most charming effect.

By the Hour of the Monkey the priest had brought the spirit under control and, having forced it to beg for mercy, he now dismissed it. 'Oh!' exclaimed the medium. 'I thought I was behind the curtains and here I am in front. What on earth has happened?' Overcome with embarrassment, she hid her face in her long hair and was about to glide out of the room when the priest stopped her and, after murmuring a few incantations, said, 'Well, my dear, how do you feel? You should be quite yourself by now.' He smiled at the girl, but this only added to her confusion. (1144)

'I should have liked to stay a little longer,' said the priest, as he prepared to leave the house, 'but I am afraid it is almost time for my evening prayers.' The people of the house tried to stop him. 'Please wait a moment,' they said. 'We should like to make an offering.' But the priest was obviously in a great hurry and would not stay. At this point a lady of noble rank, evidently a member of the family, edged her way up to the priest's curtain of state and said, 'We are most grateful for your visit, Your Reverence. Our patient looked as if she might well succumb to the evil spirit, but now she is well on the way to recovery. I cannot tell you how delighted we are. If Your Reverence has any free time tomorrow, would you please call again?'

'I fear we are dealing with a very obstinate spirit,' the priest replied briefly, 'and we must not be off our guard. I am pleased that what I did today has helped the patient.' So saying, he took his leave with an air of such dignity that everyone felt the Buddha himself had appeared on earth. (1145)

It is this allusion that explains the enigmatic statement about fans that follows: *Ogi domo mo okashiki o sono koro wa hitobito motaru*. Why should Murasaki suddenly shift to talk of fans when there is no indication that any fans were involved? The answer is that the *Rango utanawase* of 974 was particularly famous for the exquisite fans that had been given as prizes on that occasion; as soon as Murasaki saw the poem on the tray, the association of fans came immediately to mind. To what, then, does *sono koro wa refer*? If, as we must assume, this sentence was written some months after the event, it could refer to the time of the banquet, but one would have to assume that fans were actually used when Murasaki gives no other sign of them. It is far more likely, in view of the allusion, that *sono koro wa refers*, not to the autumn of 1008, but to 974, and that Murasaki is contrasting present fans unfavorably with those of the past by inference. The strained syntax of the sentence, created by an oddly placed *sono koro wa* and the use of *ogi domo mo* instead of *ogi domo no* is perhaps an extra clue. This comment is in fact the crux of the whole section, the first time that Murasaki shows us just how erudite she can be, and the allusion is a direct example of what she has told us at the end of the preceding section; memory moves in an unpredictable way and can surprise as well as disappoint. What might appear at first sight to be a section with little justification or relevance to the surrounding prose turns out to be a carefully integrated piece of writing.

6. **Commander of the Military Guard.** *Hybe no Kami*. This could be either Minamoto no Noritsada, Commander of the Right, or Fujiwara no Yasuhira, Commander of the Left. Yasuhira, however,

was of a higher rank than Adviser of the Left Tsunefusa and so would be out of correct order in this list. He was also the younger brother of Fujiwara no Sanenuke, who was a strong critic of Michinaga; it is doubtful whether he would have been particularly close to the others present on this occasion.

7. **Blending of the incense balls.** The incense was carefully mixed and put into containers which were then buried in the ground for a number of days, preferably in a sunny area near water. In this particular case they were stored for twelve days and were tested on the ninth of the ninth month. The mention of incense provides part of the link between this section and the next.

A series of robes. See Appendix 1.4, for more details of women's apparel. She awoke with a start. Reading *mitsuzi. Migez* ("she looked up") would also be possible.

8. **Chrysanthemum-scented material.** *Kiku no uchi*. The ninth of the ninth month was the day of the Chrysanthemum Festival. There was a belief that to wash one's face with material that had been left on chrysanthemum leaves overnight to soak in the dew would bring rejuvenation.

Kiku no tsuyu. Usual pun on *tsuyu* "just a little" and "dew." This poem appears in the *Shinshokushu*, 475. It may well be an allusion to a poem by Murasaki's grandfather Masatada, written in response to a similar gift: *Tsuyu domi no nadeshiko yado nohishi narabakana no aruji yobitayo naruramu* ("If it is a chrysanthemum from your dwelling where even the dew is famed, then its owner will indeed have many years to come") (*Gaenshi*, 395 and *1st shū*, 18489). Although Murasaki's poem might seem innocuous at first sight, there can be little doubt that it is meant to be a vi-

Murasaki Shikibu

Her Diary and Poetic Memoirs

A Translation and Study

by

RICHARD BOWRING

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS

Princeton, New Jersey

1962

8. On the ninth of the ninth month Lady Hyōbu brought me some chrysanthemum-scented material.

"Here," she said. "Her Excellency sent it especially for you 'to wipe away old age once and for all!'"

I was in half a mind to send it back with the poem:

Kiku no tsuyu	Brushing my sleeve
Wakayu bakari ni	With chrysanthemum dew
Sode furete	To gain a little youth,
Hana no aruji ni	I restore it to the owner
Chiyō wa yuzuramu	To work its wonders.

But then I heard that she had already returned to her apartments; it would serve no purpose, I told myself, and let the matter drop.

That evening I was in attendance on Her Majesty. It was a beautiful moonlit night. Lady Koshōshō and Lady Dainagon were sitting at their respective places near the veranda, the hems of their long trains cascading out from beneath the blinds. The incense was brought out and placed on a burner for Her Majesty to test. We discussed

cionus reply, a fitting response to Her Excellency's own barbed remark. It gives us a glimpse of the jealousy that lay just beneath the surface at court. It also, of course, suggests that Michinaga had indeed been showing some interest in Murasaki. Note how she never actually sends the poem and yet preserves it for special mention in the diary, as if thereby exacting final revenge.

A scene of great bustle and noise. It is in this section that we have a skillful transition from scattered but interconnected reminiscences to a more factual, chronologically ordered account of the birth. The dais become more specific and Murasaki deliberately injects a note of urgency into the narration. The *Midō Kaphukai* records that the birth began in the middle of the night.

9. **White-curtained dais.** See ground-plan 3, p. 302, for the precise layout at this point. Apparently, as one can tell from section 11, the usual dais was not dismantled but just pushed farther back into the room. The dais itself was about a foot high, covered with mats and cushions, and surrounded by a series of curtains hung from a frame.

In the eastern gallery. Because there were two daises in the chamber, the women sitting on the east side had to sit in the gallery. These women from the Palace were not Shōshi's own ladies-in-waiting, and so they sat somewhat apart. The term gallery is used throughout as a translation for *hisashi*. *Hisashi* originally meant "eaves," which in Heian architecture referred to the whole area under the large eaves that started above the main support pillars of the central structure or chamber

(*noya*). It was therefore a large area running right around the building. It was put to a variety of uses, either entirely open, as in this case, or partitioned off into separate rooms (*subowu*), as was the case with the back corridors over to the east wing, where Murasaki was sleeping. It may seem strange that people should sleep in a "gallery," but this was its original function, to which it often reverted. (Morris (1967:11, 8-9) has "ante-room.")

The very manifestation of Fudo. Fudo was of particularly ferocious mien. One of the five guardian deities mentioned earlier, he was equipped with a rope in the left hand, a devil-quelling sword in the right, two large fangs, and fire on his back.

No space could be found. *Iwa sato yori mawari Mitohito nakamataki shometsuzen.* This has traditionally been a difficult passage subject to numerous interpretations. It is doubtful whether *nakamataki* can be a simple negative intensifier, as Nakano would have it, because this is a much later usage of the word; it must have an adversative sense here (mod. J. *Asatō*), *Sozawa/Morishige see shometsuzen* as meaning "sit still" and so have the somewhat strained translation: "Those who had come from home (just to watch the proceedings) could not, on the contrary, sit still, because they became so concerned," but *shometsuzen* is far more likely to be the negative passive of the transitive verb *shimau* ("to let in"). Hagitani paraphrases: "Because it was so crowded with the women already in attendance, those who had just come were, on the contrary, treated as being a nuisance and were not allowed in."

how beautiful the garden looked and how unreasonably long it was taking the vines to show their autumn colors, but Her Majesty seemed more than usually distressed, and as we went in for prayers I had a premonition. Someone called me away. I returned to my own room, intending to rest for a while, but must have fallen asleep. About midnight I was awakened to a scene of great bustle and noise. As dawn approached on the morning of the tenth, they changed all the furnishings and Her Majesty moved to a white-curtained dais. His Excellency was in charge, and his sons, with other courtiers of Fourth and Fifth Rank, were milling about hanging up curtains and bringing in mats and cushions. Confusion reigned supreme. Her Majesty was restless all day, obviously in great discomfort.

Evil influences were ward off with the ceaseless chanting of loud spells. In addition to the priests who had been at the mansion for the last few months, every temple in the land had been requested to send anyone worthy of the name exorcist, and as they crowded in I could just imagine all the Buddhas in the universe flying down in response. Those known for their divining skills had also been ordered to attend; surely not a spirit in Japan could have failed to prick up his ears. The noise of messengers leaving to request the reading of sutras carried on throughout the night.

In the eastern gallery sat the ladies-in-waiting from the Palace. The women acting as mediums sat in isolation to the west of the dais, each surrounded by a wall of screens. An exorcist assigned to each sat in front of the curtains that were placed at the entrance to these small enclosures, praying loudly. To the south, the bishops and archbishops of greatest importance sat in rows; it was quite terrifying to hear them, their voices hoarse with such a praying and wailing as to call up the very manifestation of Fudō. As I thought about it later, there must have been forty or more people crammed into the narrow space between the sliding screens to the north and the dais itself. Hardly able to move an inch, they were in a trance, quite carried away by it all, and no space could be found for those who had just arrived from home. Everyone lost the hems of their trains and

Older women with duties to perform. *Sarubiki otona nado no*. Sozawa/Morishige take a different view, translating: "Those older women, whom one would expect to cry, did their best to hide their tears." Either interpretation is, of course, possible.

10. Into the back gallery. Shōshi was moved back as far to the north as possible because the best place for giving birth during the ninth month was facing south. There was no veranda at the back of the main building. See ground-plan 3, p. 202. This particular move is not recorded in any other source except *Fudoki B*, which has: "the north gallery of the central chamber was chosen as the place of birth." (See Appendix 3.)

Archbishop. The text has *Sōjō* only, so it is possible that this is not Shōsan but the other Archbishop, Gakyō (924-1012).

Bishop Jōjō. All texts read *Kyōchō*, but no one of this name has been identified and it is attributed to a copyist's error.

11. Bishop of the Ninnaji and the Palace Priest from the Miidera. Both these men seem to have been allowed in because they were close relatives. Bishop Saishin of the Ninnaji was Shōshi's uncle, and Eien, the Palace Priest, was her cousin. He was in the relatively low position of Palace Priest (*Naijin*) because he was only 29.

In the remaining section of the back

gallery. Sozawa/Morishige believe that Murasaki was one of those women moved away by Michinaga, but this is doubtful. In section 42, when they return to the Palace, she lists herself in between Miya no Naishi and Ben no Naishi, and so it is fairly certain that she is sitting with these women close by Her Majesty.

His Excellency's envoy, you know. *Oshibu no omoto, tonu no senji yo*. *Omoto* is a general term applied to ladies-in-waiting; how it differs from *atsu* is not clear. It appears to be used to single out *Oshikibu* from the other women, suggesting that she was probably in the service of Michinaga rather than of Shōshi. It is not known whether she actually worked as an envoy or whether this was merely a defunct title, but she may have been entrusted with messages between Michinaga and Her Majesty's Household. The little interjection *tonu no senji yo* is not only explanatory; it gives a strong feeling that the passage is being addressed to a particular person who is, moreover, quite close to Murasaki. It may well have been inserted later. For an explanation of the women's names in this list see Appendix 1.5.

His Excellency's second, third and youngest daughters. *Naishi no Kami* was Kenshi, 15 yrs. old, *Himayumi* was Ishi, 10 yrs. old, and *Iobinegimi* was Kishi, 2 yrs. old.

their sleeves in the crush, while the older women with duties to perform did what they could to hide their tears.

10. At dawn on the eleventh, two sets of sliding screens on the north side were taken away and Her Majesty was moved into the back gallery. As it was not possible to hang up blinds, she was surrounded by a series of overlapping curtains. The Archbishop, Bishop Jōjō, and the Bishop for General Affairs were present, chanting prayers. Bishop Ingen, adding further portentous phrases to an invocation composed by His Excellency the day before, read it out slowly in solemn and moving tones. Nothing could have been more impressive, and when His Excellency himself joined in the prayers, it seemed unthinkable that anything could go wrong. And yet it was all so very distressing that tears flowed freely. No matter how often we kept telling ourselves how unlucky it was to cry like this on such an occasion, it was just too overwhelming.

11. His Excellency, worrying lest Her Majesty be adversely affected by having so many people crowding round, moved the ladies-in-waiting away to the south and east; only those whose presence was essential were allowed to stay with her. Her Excellency, Lady Saishō, and Kura no Myōbu were asked inside the curtains, as were the Bishop of the Ninnaji and the Palace Priest from the Miidera. His Excellency was shouting orders to all and sundry in such a loud voice that the priests were almost drowned out and could hardly be heard. In the remaining section of the back gallery sat Lady Dainagon, Lady Koshōshō, Miya no Naishi, Ben no Naishi, Lady Nakatsukasa, Tayū no Myōbu, and Lady Ōshikibu, His Excellency's envoy, you know. They had all been in service for many years and were naturally distraught, but even I, who had not been in service with Her Majesty for very long, knew instinctively that I was experiencing an event of unparalleled significance.

A group of women, among whom were Nakatsukasa, Shōnagon, and Koshikibu, nurses to His Excellency's second, third, and youngest daughters respectively, squeezed their way in front of the curtains that hung as a divider behind us, with the result that people could barely pass along the narrow corridor at the back of the two daises,

Rice falling on our heads. The rice is being thrown as part of the attempt to keep away evil influences. Note how the men are pictured as taking advantage of the situation to indulge in a little foolery rather than being seriously concerned about the outcome of the birth.

12. Started to shave Her Majesty's head. *Onitadaki no wigushi oroshimasetari.* This slight shaving of the head and taking of temporary religious vows was a mere formality just in case anything happened to go wrong with the birth and Shōshi died. Her rival Teishi, it will be remembered, had died in childbirth in 1000.

The afterbirth. The appearance of the afterbirth (*sechi no koto*) was, of course, vital to ensure that Shōshi did not die later from puerperal fever, and everyone was urged to renew their prayers on her behalf.

A source of amusement. One suspects a scandal here, but there is no other information. The diary is full of such tantalizing references to which we have very few clues.

13. Gen no Kurōdo had been assigned Holy Teacher Shin'yo. There is a question as to whether or not these three women, plus Miya no Naishi and Lady Saishō, who appear later in the same section, actually became mediums (*yurimashi*) themselves. Most commentators, including Akiyama and Sozawa/Morishige, treat all five as such. Ikeda, however, draws a distinction between the first three kurōdo, who are acting as mediums, and the last two women who, as higher-ranking ladies-in-waiting, are responsible for the en-

closure but actually use substitutes. Certainly the phrase "in charge of Miya no Naishi's enclosure" gives credence to such a view. Both Miya no Naishi and Lady Saishō have just been described as serving close by Her Majesty, and it is doubtful whether they would have undertaken the grueling work of being a medium in any case. Hagiwara does not consider that the difference between the women's status is great enough to justify such a distinction, and he argues that all five had substitutes to whom various priests were assigned in their names. This would seem to be the most likely interpretation. In this instance Nakano agrees with Hagiwara.

Two of the names here are in doubt. For Myōko all texts read Soō, but identification has proved impossible and it is almost certainly a copyist's error. Hagiwara suggests Myōko as the best reading. For Chisan all texts read Chishō; I have again adopted Hagiwara's emendation.

He was thrown to the ground by evil spirits. *Mononaka ni akibikawareru to iwashikarareta.* Who is being thrown to the ground here? The text is somewhat opaque and commentators differ. Sozawa/Morishige believe it to be Miya no Naishi, whom, as explained above, they treat as being a medium herself. Akiyama believes it to be Holy Teacher Chisan (Chishō). Nakano believes it to be Miya no Naishi's medium. Hagiwara agrees with Akiyama here. The lack of honorific does not, unfortunately, help here because Murasaki is not in the habit of bestowing many honorifics upon the clergy.

and those who did push their way through could hardly tell whom they were jostling.

Whenever they felt like it, the men would look over the curtains. One somehow expected this kind of behavior from His Excellency's sons, Adviser of the Right Kanetaka, and Minor Captain of Fourth Rank Masamichi, but not from Adviser of the Left Tsunefusa, or the Master of Her Majesty's Household Tadanobu; they were usually so circumspect. We lost all sense of shame, letting them see us in such a state, our eyes swollen with weeping, rice falling on our heads like snow, and our clothes so dreadfully crumpled; it must have been a sorry sight. It had its amusing aspect, I suppose, but only in retrospect.

When they started to shave Her Majesty's head and made her take her vows, we were all thrown into utter despair and wondered what on earth was happening; but then she was safely delivered. The afterbirth took some time in coming, so everyone crowded into that huge area that stretched from the main room to the southern gallery and the balustrade, priests and laymen alike, broke once more into chanting and prostrated themselves in prayer.

The women in the east gallery, it seemed, got mixed up with the senior courtiers, and Lady Kochūjō came face to face with First Secretary of the Left Yorisada. They were both quite put out, something that later became a source of amusement. Always so elegant and very particular about the way she dressed, she had made herself up very carefully that morning, but now her eyes were swollen with weeping and the tears had made her powder run in patches; she was a dreadful sight and hardly seemed the same person. It was quite a shock to see how Lady Saishō's face had changed too, and I have to think of the picture I presented. What a relief that no one could actually recall how anyone else had looked on that occasion!

13. What awful wails of anguish came from the evil spirits at the moment of birth! Gen no Kurōdo had been assigned Holy Teacher Shin'yo, Hyōe no Kurōdo someone called Myōso, and Ukon no Kurōdo the Master of Discipline from the Hōjūji. Holy Teacher Chisan was in charge of Miya no Naishi's enclosure; he was thrown to the ground by evil

Lady Saishō's substitute. Reading *Saishō no ima no yoribito ni Eiko o soraru ni*, rather than *Saishō no kuni no ogibito*, justification for this change can be found in Kichijirama (1980:369-76). Hagitani has *ogibito* and translates: "The priest Eiko was brought in to help Lady Saishō's exorcist."

There was uproar, "Onmonomake ut-sur" to *mehidatari hitobito mo mina ut-surada saiwagateri*. Nakano, for reasons best known to himself, has *hitobito* referring to the priests and treats *saiwagateri* not as a passive but as an honorific, giving the translation: "None of the extra priests who had been brought in to effect the transfer were able to do so either, and so they made a great commotion." This is extremely unlikely on a number of counts, not the least being that *hitobito* in this work usually refers to the women. Hagitani prefers to restrict this to Lady Saishō ("when none of the women she asked"), following on from his interpretation of the previous passage. She was having particularly bad luck in her mediums and had called out a number of them, none of whom could successfully receive the spirits. Note how this section covers the same ground as 11 and 12, but from a different viewpoint. We already know that Her Majesty has been safely delivered and we have moved on, but Murasaki returns in this section to give special treatment to the mediums and exorcists.

14. Arrangements for the ceremony of the first bath. *Uchi ni wa on'yudono no gishiki nado kenite wakasetowawakashi*. This refers to the making of the bathub and other ceremonial objects. As we shall see in section 16, the ceremony was held in the Tsuchimikado mansion. Michinaga's diary has the following entry for this day: "The boy was safely delivered about noon. Presented gifts to the priests and diviners who had been present, each according to rank. At the same time the child had his first feed, the umbilical cord was

cut, and they began to make the bath tub." We know from this that the order for these objects to be made was not given until the baby had been safely delivered. Murasaki's supposition is therefore wrong on two counts: the objects were not in fact made prior (*made*) to the birth, nor were they made in the Palace. The first of these errors is understandable because there was so little time between the birth and the ceremony, which was held some six hours later. To explain the second error many commentators have taken *uchi ni* to mean not "at the Palace" but "privately" as opposed to the public affair of the gift. This is a somewhat strained interpretation, particularly because *waki* refers to the Palace throughout this work. It seems better to accept Murasaki's "presumably" (*oshoi*) at face value; she was unsure.

Everyone's jacket had been embroidered. *Karogoino no nishimon mo, hitomusubi, raden nishimon hakikeruru made shite*. A passage subject to numerous interpretations, depending on whether the *mo* is seen as a particle, or as the noun "trains." There may well be a lacuna at this point. Akiyama and Sozawa/Morishige both punctuate: *Karogoino no nishimon, mo hitomusubi, raden nishimon*, which would give: "the embroidery on the jackets and the hem-stitching on the trains had been inlaid with pearl to an absurd degree." It is, however, unusual for jackets and trains to be mentioned in this particular order, so Hagitani prefers *mo* as a particle.

15. Waiting by the side door. These doors were diagonally across the little garden from where Murasaki was sitting, i.e., in the southeast corner of the main building. See ground-plan 2, p. 202. It is from this point that many details can be cross-checked against the record of a number of *karahim* diaries which deal with the same events. See Appendix 3 for a translation of relevant passages.

spirits and was in such distress that Holy Teacher Nengaku had to come to his aid with loud prayers. It was not that his powers were on the wane but that the evil proved so very persistent. The priest Eiko was in charge of Lady Saishō's substitute and he became hoarse from chanting all night; when none of the women asked to accept the spirits were able to do so, there was uproar.

14. It was about midday, yet we all felt just as though the morning sun had risen into a cloudless sky. Our delight on finding that both mother and child were safe and well knew no bounds, and when we heard it was a boy how could we have been anything but ecstatic? Those ladies-in-waiting who had wilted yesterday and who this morning had been sunk in the misty sadness of autumn all took their leave and retired to their rooms. The older women, who were best fitted for such an occasion, stayed behind to attend to Her Majesty.

Their Excellencies moved through to another part of the mansion to distribute offerings both to the priests who had prayed and read sutras for months past, and to those who had come in response to more recent demands. Gifts were also presented to those doctors and diviners who had shown special skill in their respective arts. Arrangements for the ceremony of the first bath had presumably been made at the Palace in advance.

In the woman's apartments servants were bringing in enormous bundles and parcels of clothes. Everyone's jacket had been embroidered with hem-stitching and inlaid pearl to an absurd degree, but the women pretended not to notice, carrying on with their make-up instead and fussing about where their fans had got to.

15. Looking out as usual from my room at the end of the corridor, I saw the Master of Her Majesty's Household Tadanobu waiting by the side door. He was in the company of the Master of the Crown Prince's Household Yasuhira and various other nobles. His Excellency emerged and gave orders that the stream be cleared of the leaves that had been blocking it for some days now. Everyone looked on top of the world. Even those who must have had private worries forgot their troubles for the time being, and in the

The imperial messenger. A messenger was regularly dispatched to Ise on the eleventh of the ninth month. De-fined as he is from contact with the birth at the mansion, Yoritsada cannot enter the Palace. This was normal procedure but especially important in this case, owing to the sacred nature of the messenger's journey.

15. *Tachibana no Saemmi*. The act of breast-feeding (*onshizuki*) was a merely ceremonial gesture in this case. *Tachibana no Saemmi* was given this formal duty because she had been Emperor Ichijō's wet nurse.

The first bath must have taken place. *On'yūdono* was *tori no tate* to her. This use of *to be* is the first of a number of signs that *Murasaki* may not have been present at the bathing ceremony and in fact wrote about it from hearsay; later on in this description, for instance, she is unsure as to who read out which part of the classics. Harada (1971) links this with the numerous occurrences of remarks such as "but I did not actually see this going on" (see last line of section 15), and takes it as evidence that *Murasaki* somehow felt driven to record things correctly, even to the extent of pointing out when she felt unsure of her facts. The question is whether this was because of herself or because *Michinaga* had asked for the

record in the first place. See Introduction, p. 28.

Chikamasa, Chief of the Weaving Office. Reading *Oriki no kami* rather than *Omori no kami*. The latter was at this time Fujiwara no Nakakiyo. *Masuda* (1970), in line with his general thesis that many of the titles could refer not to the time of the actual event but to the time of rewriting, identifies a man who held the post of Governor of Owari in 997 and again in 1010 and whose name could have been read *Chikamasa*. If this were the case, it could be used as "proof" that this description was rewritten as late as 1010; the argument is, of course, circular. For more discussion on this point see Noguchi (1972). The man *Chikamasa*, Chief of the Weaving Office, appears in *Michinaga's diary* for Kan'ei 5(1008).10.17. The two women in charge of the water. Reading *misaki fushi* rather than *misaki fushō* ("two stands"). But there is still a problem here because *misaki* in this sense usually refers to kitchen menials who are certainly not involved in this instance. *Hagizane* can only suggest that the word is being used in a more general sense here. The blinds divided the eastern gallery from the veranda; see ground-plan 4, p. 203, and for a more detailed description Appendix 3.

general atmosphere of euphoria it was hardly surprising that *Tadanobu* found it difficult to hide the fact that he was twice as pleased as anyone else, although he tried not to show it too much. Adviser of the Right *Kanetaka* was sitting on the veranda of the east wing exchanging pleasantries with Provisional Middle Counselor *Takaie*.

First Secretary *Yoritsada*, who had brought the ceremonial sword from the Palace, was charged by His Excellency with reporting the safe birth to the Emperor on his return. Today being the day the imperial messenger usually left for Ise, *Yoritsada* was presumably obliged to stand outside, unable to enter the Palace itself. I understand that he received gifts from His Excellency, but those I did not see.

The ceremony of cutting the umbilical cord was performed by Her Excellency, and the first feed was given by *Tachibana no Saemmi*. *Lady Ōsaemon* was chosen to be the wet nurse, as she had been in service for some time and was known and liked by all. She is the daughter of *Michitoki*, Governor of *Bitchū*, and wife of Fifth Secretary *Hiromari*.

The first bath must have taken place at about six in the evening. The torches were lit and Her Majesty's servants carried in the hot water. They were wearing white vestments over their short green robes, and both the tubs and the stand were covered in white cloth. *Chikamitsu*, Chief of the Weaving Office, and Chief Attendant *Nakanobu* bore the tubs up to the blinds and passed them in to the two women in charge of the water, *Kiyoiko no Myōbu* and *Harima*, who in turn made sure it was only lukewarm. Then two other women, *Omoku* and *Muma*, poured it into sixteen pitchers and emptied what remained straight into the bath tub. They were all wearing gauze mantles, with trains and jackets of taffeta, and had their hair done up with hairpins and white ribbon; it looked most attractive.

Lady Saishō was in charge of the bathing and *Lady Dainagon* acted as her assistant; both were wearing aprons which were most unusual and very elegant.

His Excellency carried the baby Prince in his arms. *Lady Koshōshō* with the sword and *Miya no Naishi* with the tiger's head led the way. *Miya no Naishi's* jacket had a pine-cone pattern and her train had a wave design woven into