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ISSN: 1037-1397 (Print) 1469-9338 (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cjst20

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To cite this article: Lucy Fraser (2018) Dogs, Gods, and Monsters: The Animal–Human Connection in Bakin's *Hakkenden*, Folktales and Legends, and Two Contemporary Retellings, Japanese Studies, 38:1, 103-123, DOI: 10.1080/10371397.2018.1448972

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/10371397.2018.1448972

JAPANESE STUDIES, 2018
VOL. 38, NO. 1, 103–123
https://doi.org/10.1080/10371397.2018.1448972

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ARTICLE

Dogs, Gods, and Monsters: The Animal–Human Connection in Bakin's *Hakkenden*, Folktales and Legends, and Two Contemporary Retellings

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ABSTRACT

Kyokutei Bakin's epic novel *Nansō Satomi Hakkenden* (Chronicle of the Eight Dogs of the Satomi Clan of Nansō; 106 volumes, 1814–42) tells of the adventures of eight human warriors who inherit the spirit of a mysterious dog. Popular during its own day, it has enjoyed countless retellings on the stage, screen, and page. This article compares the shifting representations of dog–human interactions in Bakin's text with its antecedents in Chinese legend and Japanese folktales, and with two recent retellings: Sakuraba Kazuki's novel *Fuse: Gansaku Satomi Hakkenden* (Fuse: A Counterfeit Chronicle of the Eight Dogs of the Satomi Clan, 2010) and its animated-film adaptation, *Fuse: Teppō musume no torimonochō* (Fuse: A Tale of a Girl with a Hunting Gun, dir. Miyaji Masayuki, 2012). Contemporary retellings confirm the cultural staying power of the strange tradition of stories about marriages between humans and dogs. In the film adaptation, some of Sakuraba's more imaginative twists on animal–human relationships have been supplanted by global young-adult-fiction conventions such as 'beastly' boys and girls who save them. This is a return to the holy bride of Bakin's novel and the self-sacrificing animal wives of other folktales.

Towards the end of Sakuraba Kazuki's historical-fantasy novel *Fuse: Gansaku Satomi Hakkenden* (Fuse: A Counterfeit Chronicle of the Eight Dogs of the Satomi Clan, 2010), a girl human hunter and her prey, a young male dog–human hybrid, tumble into a tunnel that cuts beneath the city of Edo. Unable to climb out and incapable of attacking each other underground, they are forced to walk the tunnel together:

> The whole way, the two walked the underground road side-by-side, leaving a gap between them of about the width of another person. If they grew too near to each other, the blood of the beast and the blood of the hunter would each sing out in protest, but if they grew too far from each other, they would be swallowed by the darkness and one would soon lose sight of the other.[1]

The characters' names might render this image of intimate hostility especially striking for some readers. The girl hunter, Hamaji, and the dog–human hybrid, Shino, are adapted from characters in Kyokutei Bakin's famous Edo period novel *Nansō Satomi Hakkenden* (Chronicle of the Eight Dogs of the Satomi Clan of Nansō, 1814–42).[2] Hamaji and Shino star in one of its best-known romantic scenes. The warrior Shino is forced to abandon his betrothal to the maiden Hamaji to set out on a quest driven by a promise to his father. Hamaji, heartbroken, sneaks to Shino's room to beg him to stay

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[1] Sakuraba, *Fuse*, 402. Translations are by the author unless otherwise noted.

[2] Kyokutei Bakin is a pen name; the author is also sometimes referred to as Takizawa Bakin. His birth name was Takizawa Okikuni.

with her, but he cannot.[3] Sakuraba's contemporary reimagining cited above places the famous pair in a radically new dynamic, that of hunter and prey. Sakuraba's contemporary transformative appropriations of Bakin's historical work provide an opportunity to analyse and compare depictions of animal–human connections across cultural and temporal gaps within Japanese literary and folk traditions.

My aim here is to examine transformations and repetitions of ideas about animal–human relationships through a focus on stories of the dog-husband. Sakuraba's novel is one of the latest in a long list of retellings of Bakin's epic, and Bakin himself drew on innumerable different sources. As we will see, Bakin's episode in *Hakkenden* explaining the origins of the eponymous dog-warrior heroes drew from the legend of the human woman who has children with her dog-husband Pán Hù, found in several classical Chinese works. I then compare these with Japanese folktales of dog-husbands that have since intermingled with these storytelling traditions. Stories exploring the startling notion of animal–human marriages have long been used to construct and negotiate the borders between the natural and human worlds. While tales of human–animal marriages abound in Japanese folklore, other animal wives, such as female birds and foxes, are much more common. 'Dog-husband' stories, then, are exceptions to the norm both in their choice of animal and in the gender of the animal spouse. It is therefore worthwhile considering what the dog in particular signifies in creative conceptualizations of human–animal and culture–nature boundaries.

Next, I analyse how Sakuraba's contemporary novel complicates the conventions of gender and spirituality in traditional dog-husband stories. Finally, I examine how these motifs are transformed again in the 2012 animated film adaption of Sakuraba's novel, *Fuse: Teppō musume no torimonochō* (Fuse: A Tale of a Girl with a Hunting Gun, dir. Miyaji Masayuki). All the stories depict the impulse to eject unnatural animal–human couples from civilization into the wilderness. However, there are some especially striking differences between the novel and the animation. In Sakuraba's novel, wild animality is never fully erased, but the film adaptation seems to work to maintain and repair the imagined walls between human and animal realms, relying on gender patterns of both traditional folktales and contemporary youth genres. Comparing these tales of dog–human interactions shows how innovative storytelling has invigorated traditional tales, while highlighting the staying power of particular elements of the older narratives.

The Animal–Human Connection in Bakin's *Hakkenden*

Kyokutei Bakin's highly successful novel *Nansō Satomi Hakkenden* was published in installments between 1814 and 1842. Usually shortened to *Hakkenden*, the novel is a *yomihon* (reading book), a genre centred on text, as opposed to other image-centred formats of the time. Set in the fifteenth century, the historical epic tells of the adventures of eight warriors who eventually help to restore the Satomi clan to power.

[3]Kyokutei, *Hakkenden*; III.III.IIXV. 2, 117–28. Trans. Drake, 904–9; trans. Keene, 423–28. I cite Bakin's volume, book, then chapter number in Roman numerals, followed by volume and page number from Hamada's edition in Arabic numerals, then pages of English translation/s.

Popular in its own time, Bakin's novel has been subject to hundreds of adaptations and retellings, including kabuki plays, literary and visual parodies, novels, a Takarazuka Revue adaptation, television and film versions, children's books, manga, and video games.[4] Critical opinion, however, has not been so consistently positive. The novel fell somewhat out of academic favour following a stringent critique by author and academic Tsubouchi Shōyō in *Shōsetsu shinzui* (The Essence of the Novel, first published in 1885). Tsubouchi criticized the work's division of characters into a moral–immoral binary, its assignment of the heroes' personalities each according to a particular moral attribute, and its non-realist *kanzen chōaku* approach (this term means 'rewarding virtue and punishing evil' and is used to describe moralizing stories from Japan and elsewhere).[5] However, Takada Mamoru, in his introduction to *Fukkō suru Hakkenden* (*Chronicle of the Eight Dogs* Revives), observes a renewed critical interest in the 1990s and 2000s, driven by the need to acknowledge Bakin's considerable influence on nineteenth-century Japan, as well as a new demand for accurate scholarly editions and fresh interpretations of this multifaceted novel.[6]

Though *Hakkenden* is still known by general readers through a few famous scenes and characters, it seems unlikely that many people now read all 106 volumes of this gigantic literary work. Yokoyama Yasuko, writing on film adaptations, notes that Bakin's work is long and difficult to read,[7] citing accounts from novelist and critic Chikamatsu Shūkō (1876–1944) that indicate that even in the Meiji years 'most readers (and celebrated authors were no exception) got fed up and threw it aside midway through'.[8] Yokoyama goes on to add – as Chikamatsu had also pointed out – that *Hakkenden* is nevertheless actually very enjoyable. She notes that it was adapted for the stage before the novel was completed, and that simplified, digest versions contributed to its transmission from early on. In a similar way, as Yokoyama observes, today we might assume that most audiences mainly consume the 'enjoyable' parts of the novel through its numerous retellings and adaptations.[9]

This phenomenon of consumption of *Hakkenden* through retellings has meant that particular episodes and characters of the tale have become especially well known. Sakuraba's novel demonstrates this tendency: the two key components she transforms from *Hakkenden* that I analyse here are indeed among the most famous, often retold, and frequently translated. The first is the relationship between Shino and Hamaji, as exemplified in the aforementioned emotional scene of their parting (translated into English by both Chris Drake and Donald Keene).[10] Another famous episode that has remained current is the story of the supernatural origins of the eponymous dog-warrior heroes; namely, a spiritual

[4]Lists of retellings are found in Katō Yasuko's 'Edo jidai no besuto serā', Obitsu Yōtarō's 'Jidō bungaku ni okeru Hakkenden', and Yokoyama Yasuko's 'Hakkenden eiga to koten no saisei'.
[5]For discussions of waves of criticism of *Hakkenden*, see Obitsu, 'Jidō bungaku ni okeru Hakkenden' and Walley, 'I Would Rather…', 16–20, 68–9.
[6]Takada, '*Nansō Satomi hakkenden* no aratanaru hyōka o mezashite', 1–3.
[7]Yokoyama, 'Hakkenden eiga to koten no saisei', 216.
[8]Chikamatsu cited in Yokoyama, 'Hakkenden eiga to koten no saisei', 217.
[9]Yokoyama, 'Hakkenden eiga to koten no saisei', 217.
[10]Trans. Drake, 'Hamaji and Shino', 904–9; trans. Keene, 'Shino and Hamaji', 423–28. Thomas Glynne Walley's translation of the first 14 chapters, cited in this paper, is available as an appendix to his dissertation, 'I Would Rather…'.

union between a human princess and a dog (translated by Chris Drake).[11] Here, I examine Sakuraba's adaptation of these key components from Bakin's novel in order to gain insight into shifting ideas about connections between the human and animal world. To this end, I first consider Bakin's human–dog marriage story in the context of the cycles of legend and folktale that surround it.

The first volumes of Bakin's novel set the scene and establish the special history of its eight heroes. The leader of the Satomi clan, Yoshizane, had adopted a special puppy, named Yatsufusa (literally, eight spots) for the eight black spots on its white coat. We learn later that the dog is, in fact, the reincarnation of Tamazusa, a woman who cursed Yoshizane before he executed her. When the dog is grown, Yoshizane, besieged by enemy forces, jokes that if Yatsufusa brings him the enemy general's head, the dog can have the hand of his daughter in marriage. To his shock, the dog succeeds. Though Yoshizane struggles against his own word, his faithful daughter Fusehime leaves with the dog to keep her father's promise, retreating to Toyama cave deep in the mountains. Here, Fusehime refuses to consummate the marriage, telling the dog 'if you approach my body with lascivious intent… I shall run you through with my sword'.[12] For more than 100 days, Fusehime piously recites Buddhist sutras, which works to free her dog companion from lust, exorcize the vengeful spirit of Tamazusa, and bring him to enlightenment.

A year into her chaste isolation, Fusehime's belly swells and a supernatural messenger informs her she has been mystically impregnated through her spiritual communion with Yatsufusa. Men come searching for her and one of them, Kanamari Daisuke, who had been favoured to marry Fusehime, shoots and kills Yatsufusa. Fusehime is also accidentally shot, then revived. But, ashamed of her condition, she cuts open her own belly to prove she is not carrying dog-children, whereupon her rosary lifts from her neck, and eight of its shining beads, each inscribed with a character for a virtue, rise into the air and scatter in eight directions. Fusehime, relieved, then perishes. Later, eight boys are born to human parents who come into possession of one of the beads. Each boy has a surname with the character for 'dog' in it, (for example, Inuzuka Shino) and becomes one of the *hakkenshi* (eight dog warriors). The warriors, embodying the virtue on the bead picked up by their parents, embark on trials and adventures towards the ultimate revival of the Satomi clan. The ill-fated Fusehime and Yatsufusa become deities, sometimes appearing to help these other characters.

Bakin's *yomihon* draws on a multitude of other texts and tales. The most prominent is the Chinese classic *Water Margin* (*Shuǐ hǔ zhuàn*, or *Suikoden* in Japanese), which Bakin critiqued, translated, and adapted in a number of works.[13] However, more obvious sources for the episode explaining the dog-warriors' origins are Chinese texts that relate the legend of the dog named Pán Hù (*Banko* in Japanese). Bakin mentions Pán Hù in his foreword to the first instalment of the novel;[14] he then has Yoshizane explicitly relate the tale in the novel;[15] and he briefly outlines all of the Pán Hù story in

[11]Trans. Drake, 'Fusehime at Toyama Cave' and 'Fusehime's Decision', 889–900.
[12]Kyokutei, *Hakkenden*, II.I.XII; 1, 288. Trans. Walley, 643.
[13]See Takada, *Hakkenden no sekai*, 54–85 and Walley, 'I Would Rather…', (105–15) for discussions of Bakin's engagement with *Water Margin*, as well as the many sources for the episode of Fusehime and Yatsufusa.
[14]Kyokutei, *Hakkenden*, I.I. preface; 1, 12. Trans. Walley, 409.
[15]Kyokutei, *Hakkenden*, I.I.IX; 1, 231-32. Trans. Walley, 596–97.

an illustration caption.[16] Early written versions of this legend are found in Gàn Bǎo's text, which can be traced to the fourth-century book *Search of the Supernatural: the Written Record* (*Sōu shén jì*, or *Sōjinki* in Japanese) and in Fàn Yè's fifth century *History of the Latter Han* (*Hòu hàn shū*, or *Gokanjo* in Japanese).[17] A very similar tale is also found in Fán Chuò's ninth century *Book of the Southern Barbarians* (*Mán shū*, or *Bansho* in Japanese).

In the written Chinese sources, a dog belonging to a general or a king successfully fetches the enemy leader's head, and his dutiful daughter convinces him that he must keep his promise and offer her as a bride. The pair retreat into impenetrable mountains; the location is described as so remote that, for example, 'the heavens would always rain, the mountain peaks would shake, and the clouds would so darken the sky that [the father's] men could not reach her'.[18] The princess gives birth to six boys and six girls by her dog-husband; unlike Bakin, the authors of the Chinese classics did not insist upon a spiritual process of conception. These children grow up to marry one another and beget a particular 'race' of people; in this way, many of the Chinese texts designate the story of Pán Hù as a founding legend of so-called 'southern barbarians', who are described with seemingly animal-like habits and a preference for the mountains. In *Search of the Supernatural*, for instance, the tale is titled 'Origins of the Man Barbarians'. The story does seem to figure as a founding story for the Man (now Manchu) and some others. According to folklorist Fukuda Akira, the tale is centred on the mountains of South China and told by the She, the Hmong, and the Yao peoples.[19] Variants of the founding dog-husband tale are also told by the Li people of Hainan Island, the Seediq Taiwanese aboriginal people, the Moken nomadic sea people of the west coast of Thailand and Myanmar, and the Kalang people of Java, Indonesia.[20]

Dog–human marriages are also mentioned in classical Japanese literature. In a book on dog folklore, Ōki Taku notes an interdiction on sexual relationships with dogs in the eighth century *Kojiki* (Record of Ancient Matters)[21] and a tale of a woman co-habiting with a large white dog found in the late Heian period, twelfth-century collection *Konjaku monogatarishû* (Anthology of Tales from Times Now Past), among others.[22] The fourteenth century *Chronicle of the Great Peace* (*Taiheiki*, attributed to Kojima Hōshi) also recounts a Chinese tale in the Pán Hù tradition. As Takada observes, the *Taiheiki* version reveals certain fictionalizations and alterations were necessary for the Japanese sensibility: the story is introduced as a 'strange tale', where the daughter marries the dog reluctantly;[23] we see similar adjustments to the Pán Hù folktale in Japan. The *Taiheiki* version of the story, Takada adds, was well received in kabuki form in the Edo period. In fact, during the Edo period, another *yomihon* that also included a dog-husband story, *Inu neko kaiwa Shippeitarō* (Shippeitarō, A Supernatural Tale of Cats and Dogs), by Ritsujōtei Kiran, was published in 1810, just prior to the first

[16]Kyokutei, *Hakkenden*, I.I.IX; 1, 226–27. Trans. Walley, 599. As Walley (108) notes, Bakin does not cite the story's source but adheres closely to the *History of the Latter Han* version.
[17]English translations of this Pán Hù story are available in Chungshee Hsien Liu's 'The Dog-Ancestor Story of the Aboriginal Tribes of Southern China', 361–62, and David Gordon White's *Myths of the Dog-Man*, 141–42.
[18]Kan Pao [Gàn B ă o], *Search of the Supernatural*. Trans. DeWoskin and Crump, 162.
[19]Fukuda, 'Inu mukoiri', 73.
[20]Fukuda, 'Inu mukoiri', 73.
[21]Ōki, *Inu no fōkuroa*, 26.
[22]Tale 31–15; Ôki, *Inu no fôkuroa*, 27.
[23]Takada, *Hakkenden no sekai*, 57–8.

volume of *Hakkenden*.[24] Stories of dog-husbands, then, were already circulating in Japan when Bakin began publishing his novel.

One of the notable adjustments Bakin made was to overlay samurai principles and Confucian and Buddhist morality on the Chinese legends. This is demonstrated in the character of Fusehime, whose filial piety motivates her to keep her father's promise and whose Buddhist devotion saves the soul of the dog. Whereas the Chinese myths matter-of-factly skip from dog–human couple retreating to the wilderness straight to the princess bearing children, Bakin is especially careful to specify that the marriage between the dog and the human is not physical. Yet Bakin dwells more on the threat of bestiality than his source texts do, vividly imagining the animal lust of Yatsufusa, who 'gazed at the princess adoringly, as he now lay down, now stood, with lolling tongue and dripping spittle – licked now his fur, now his nose, panting all the while. He spent the night watching her in this manner'.[25] He also describes Fusehime's evident fear of the dog, as well as her later repeated insistence that 'we never shared bed-chamber'[26] and 'I never was defiled, was never violated'.[27] Yatsufusa's animal desire for Fusehime is a source of titillating narrative tension, but when vanquished it highlights the Buddhist-inspired lesson that even 'animals can achieve enlightenment'.[28]

In the Chinese legends, the dog Pán Hù is frequently attributed extraordinary origins.[29] In Bakin's version, as well as being fostered by a *tanuki* (a Japanese raccoon dog) possessed by a human spirit, Yatsufusa evokes the supernatural through the white colouring of his coat. It signifies a godly connection within Shintō imagery, in which messengers of the gods (*shinshi*, or *kami no tsukai*) are often depicted as white animals. Yokoyama Kuniharu demonstrates that in writings from the eighth century, such as the *Nihon shoki* (The Chronicles of Japan), through to the time Bakin was writing, white dogs are often depicted as having a virtuous and at times sacred quality,[30] and Ōki cites beliefs that white dogs will be reborn as humans or were humans in previous lives.[31] *Yōkai* (monsters and supernatural creatures) can also take the form of white dogs.[32] In Bakin's *Hakkenden*, these mystical associations feed into the complex ties between human and animal worlds. Animals are closely associated with gods and the supernatural, and there are many episodes of animal *yōkai* and animal messengers throughout this multi-volume novel. Bakin's inclusion of mystical animal figures could be one reason for its continued appeal as inspiration for contemporary popular culture forms such as manga and anime, which use folklore and other supernatural foundations to build new fantastical worlds. Some examples of this are the white *yōkai* dogs featured in Takahashi Rumiko's manga series *Inuyasha* (1997–2008), and white wolf-gods, who

[24]See Yokoyama Kuniharu's three articles taking up *Shippeitarō* and *Hakkenden* (as outlined in Walley, 'I Would Rather…', 111–15).
[25]Kyokutei, *Hakkenden*, II.I.XII; 1, 288. Trans. Walley, 643.
[26]Kyokutei, *Hakkenden*, II.II.XIII; 1, 303. Trans. Walley, 656.
[27]Kyokutei, *Hakkenden*, II.II.XIII; 1, 329. Trans. Walley, 679.
[28]Kyokutei, *Hakkenden*, I.V.X; 1, 236. Trans. Shirane, 892. Or: 'Even thus can a beast conceive a heart to know truth'. Trans. Walley, 603.
[29]For example, in *Search of the Supernatural* he is born from a silkworm cocoon an elderly woman finds in her ear (Kan Pao [Gàn Bǎo], trans. DeWoskin and Crump, 160).
[30]Yokoyama, 'Hakku gensō', 15.
[31]Ōki, *Inu no fōkuroa*, 151–52.
[32]Ibid, 152.

play an important role in Studio Ghibli's Shintō-inspired animated classic, *Mononokehime* (Princess Mononoke, 1997).

Animals, gods, and humans mingle in *Hakkenden*. Indeed, contesting a scholarly perception of the novel's didactic resolution as neat and ordered, Walley argues that

> the world of *Hakkenden* is one in which many of the dualities that early modern Japanese society held to be most inviolable – gender, species, and social status, to name the three that will most concern us hereafter – are shown to be unstable, the borders that separate them susceptible to crossing and blurring.[33]

Walley stresses that this ongoing ambiguity serves to underscore what Bakin presents as the one border that is unambiguous: that between good and evil. *Hakkenden* features many characters that shift between or combine animality and humanity, but also, Walley demonstrates, the work repeatedly challenges conventional assumptions that animals are morally inferior to people. Other stories of dog-husbands also complicate connections and distinctions between (non-human) animals and humans; and versions of the Pán Hù legend told in China and other parts of Asia have found new forms in Japan, where tropes from legends, *yomihon*, and folktales intermingle in today's creative imagination. Examining the connections between these dog-husband folktales will thus provide a richer picture and a deeper comparison of Bakin's work with Sakuraba's retelling of the Fuse story and its animated film adaptation.

'Dog-husband' Folktales

Japanese dog-husband folktales intersect with *Hakkenden* and the Chinese legends in several ways that inform the current telling of these stories. Folklorist Inada Kōji identifies two '*Inu mukoiri*' (dog-husband) tale types (narrative patterns) in Japan. His first label concerns the rarer 'founding legend type', in the vein of the Pán Hù legend, which is found only in the northern and southern extremes, told by Ainu[34] and Okinawan peoples. In it, a dog wins the general's daughter as a prize for his battle efforts; when the bride becomes pregnant, her parents banish the couple on a boat. They reach land, where the dog transforms partially to become human but keeps his tail (similarly, in some versions Pán Hù becomes a human with a dog's head). The pair 'found' a new settlement with their descendants, as per Inada's 'founding type'.

The more widespread Japanese *Inu mukoiri* tale type is what Inada calls the 'revenge type', which is found from Aomori through to Kyushu and Okinawa,[35] and it omits the founding or ancestral element. In this earthy version, a girl's parents promise their dog the daughter's hand in marriage if he will dispose of her excrement (though sometimes the girl is promised as a reward for some other feat). When the parents begin to talk of the daughter's marriage to another, either the girl insists on keeping the promise to the

[33]'I Would Rather…', 8. In 'Gender and Virtue in *Nansō Satomi Hakkenden*', Walley reiterates that 'boundary effacement and category confounding are central to Bakin's project' (339), here underlining the ways that '*Hakkenden* works to decouple gender from virtue' (337).

[34]Inada refers to both Ainu and Okinawan legends. Another Ainu dog-ancestry legend has a goddess arrive in what is now Hokkaido by boat. A dog appears to guide and aid her; she eventually bears the dog's children, who are the ancestors of Ainu people (Ōki, *Inu no fōkuroa*, 47).

[35]See Inada's distribution map (Inada and Inada, *Nihon mukashibanashi handobukku*, 59). Fukuda identifies four different 'revenge types' within this distribution – see Fukuda, 'Inu mukoiri', 72.

dog, or the dog refuses to release her. In both scenarios, the girl and dog go deep into the mountains and live together as a couple. However, a passing hunter kills the dog without the girl's knowledge to marry her himself. The human couple have seven children together and, years later, thinking he will be forgiven, the hunter confesses his murder of the dog. The wife immediately kills the man to avenge her dog-husband, and often the story appends a moral that a woman cannot be trusted, even when one has seven children with her. Both Inada and Fukuda see these folktales as transmissions of the Asian Pán Hù legend. Inada speculates that the dog-ancestry element was unassimilable in the Japanese mainland due to the Buddhist-influenced view of animals that developed in this region. In the 'revenge type', no children are born of the human–dog coupling.[36]

As Inada notes, Bakin's dog-husband story in *Hakkenden* mirrors elements from both Japanese tale types: we have the 'founding' (Pán Hù-derived) motif – the marriage between Yatsufusa and Fusehime produces the dog-warriors – and the 'revenge' motif, as Fusehime's intended fiancé (Kanamari Daisuke) kills Yatsufusa. Another element common in *Hakkenden* and other legend and folktale versions is the daughter's insistence on keeping her father's word; for Bakin, this seems to have presented a neat opportunity for the exploration of the Confucian ethic of filial piety. In *Hakkenden*, this is the virtue inscribed on the magical bead that is passed on to and embodied by the dog-warrior Shino, but Shino and Fusehime are not the only characters in the novel who struggle with this duty. As Fuminobu Murakami shows, across the whole series this virtue forms the basis for many plot and character conflicts that would have evoked great sympathy from contemporary readers.

Bakin's version also reflects the necessity for the dog-husband and human woman to leave human society in order to marry; indeed, in *Hakkenden*, both human mother and dog father are killed even before their children are born. This retreat from human civilization is seen in the Chinese written versions as well as both Japanese folktale types: in the 'founding type', the couple are pushed away on a boat by the parents; in the 'revenge type', they retreat into the mountain wilderness. The 'marriage' cannot, then, occur within the normal human world but must take place in isolation, in the uncivilized realm associated with animals and nature and sometimes gods. This is regardless of whether or not a physical relationship between dog and human exists and the spiritual value of their connection.

Stories of animal–human marriage have long been a means for their tellers to navigate or at times even construct the tricky borders between the human and natural worlds. In Japanese folklore studies, the dog-husband stories are classified as *iruiko-n'intan* (or '*iruikon*'), meaning stories of marriage to another kind. This definition includes tales of human marriage to animals or supernatural creatures, including gods – groups which, as we have begun to see, can often overlap. In accordance with their superhuman origins, children born of these unions often become heroes or important rulers.

Iruikon are prolific in Japanese folk narratives, and the dog-husband stories do fit in with certain broad patterns in Japanese stories of cross-species marriage, as folklorists Ozawa Toshio and Kobayashi Fumihiko identified; and Jungian psychoanalyst Kawai

[36]Inada, *Nihon mukashibanashi handobukku*, 58.

Hayao later took up Ozawa's work. For one, animal spouses in Japanese tales tend to be real animals visiting the human world. Some take human form – in tales such as the 'The Crane Wife' or of snake husbands – but they are animals, not humans magically cursed into animal form as seen in European fairy tales such as 'Beauty and the Beast'.[37] Another characteristic of Japanese animal-spouse stories is that 'animals transformed into human figures (or remaining as animals) try to marry humans and cannot achieve a happy union'; in fact, rather than ending happily, in *iruikon* 'many non-human bridegrooms are killed, whereas non-human wives never are. They just leave their homes'.[38] While citing Chinese legend, Bakin's literary episode fits in with both these folktale traditions. Yatsufusa begins and ends as a dog (albeit influenced by the vengeful spirit of a human woman), and his 'marriage' with Fusehime is brought to an end when he is shot.

However, the dog-husband folktale is also unusual for several reasons. Firstly, as noted by Kobayashi, its use of an animal husband is remarkable in the Japanese folktale genre, because tales of non-human wives are far more common than tales of non-human husbands and have more variants .[39] The second factor that makes dog-husband tales notable is the choice of animal: dogs are rarely found in either animal-wife or animal-husband tales, and are not even common in Japanese folktales overall. This may be connected with animal spouses representing a natural world far distant from the human realm.

Whereas wolves usually represent frightening, alien wildness, dogs – even before they marry humans – slip between nature and human society. Dogs signify both a long history of comfortable, domesticated existence alongside humans and the base animal instincts that dictate their behaviour and movements. David Gordon White, in *Myths of the Dog-Man*, attributes an abundance of dog stories and traditions to their 'share in human evolution';[40] he points to their closeness with people, viewing dogs as 'the animal pivot of the human universe, lurking at the threshold between wildness and domestication'.[41] It may be this very closeness, however, that prevents dogs from featuring more widely in Japanese folklore; perhaps they are too mundane to engage storytellers and audiences.

Tame, loyal dogs featured more heavily in stories of the last century. Folktale dogs are now more likely to appear in the familiar guise of the faithful or heroic helper, such as the fairy-tale hero Momotarō's canine companion or the benevolent white dog in 'Hanasaka-jīsan'. These prepare the ground for sentimental celebrations of dogs such as the real-life native Akita breed, 'Chūken' (loyal dog) Hachikō. Actually, affectionate attitudes to dogs are also seen in the early modern *Hakkenden*, which depicts characters, such as Shino's parents, as enamoured of their pets.[42] Famous Edo-period cover illustrations also depict what can only be described as cuddly puppies.[43] In folktales,

[37]Ozawa, *Mukashibanashi no kosumorojī*, 86–8.
[38]Kawai, *The Japanese Psyche*, 117.
[39]In his book on Japanese animal-wife tales, Kobayashi uses tale-type classification indexes from Inada Kōji and Seki Keigo to identify three animal-husband-tale types: Snake Husband, Monkey Husband, and Dog Husband. This contrasts with eight animal-wife-tale types (Kobayashi, *Japanese Animal-Wife Tales*, 24; 24 n. 12; Appendices I & II).
[40]White, *Myths of the Dog-Man*, 13.
[41]White, *Myths of the Dog-Man*, 15.
[42]Kyokutei, II.III.XVI; 1, 395–99.
[43]See covers via *Nansō Satomi hakkenden hyōshishū*.

dog-husbands similarly begin as loyal family pets (who take on the dirty work of disposing of human waste) until their forbidden desires pull them towards the wilderness, dragging wayward human daughters with them. In *Hakkenden* and its antecedents, affectionate human–animal relationships of care and pet keeping are envisioned alongside other tangled interactions such as cross-species marriage.

Apart from *Hakkenden*, dog-husband stories are not widely known today, and the most frequently told tales of cross-species marriage tend to represent the animal–human connection with quite different and very gendered imagery. The surviving *iruikon* fairy tales are most famously represented by 'The Crane Wife', in which a crane, with its spindly feminine elegance, takes the form of a woman to marry a human man. Like other animal-spouse tales, 'The Crane Wife' ends with the separation of the married couple. Scholars such as Ozawa, Kobayashi, and Mayako Murai have deliberated on the popularity and meanings of this particular tale and *iruikon* more generally. In *From Dog Bridegroom to Wolf Girl: Contemporary Japanese Fairy-Tale Adaptations in Conversation with the West*, Murai notes that Ozawa, for example, argues that female animals are no longer viewed as threatening when returned to their natural world, but male animals continue to be seen as dangerous enough for it to be necessary to kill them.[44] However, Murai herself sees the tale expressing a more traditional assignation of femininity to the natural world, which is treated as 'an "undefined" sphere to be kept at bay in order to maintain the order of human – that is, masculine – society'. This, she argues, speaks to the appeal of 'The Crane Wife' story, with its focus on a self-sacrificing female animal during the 'period of Japan's postwar rapid economic growth, largely driven by a masculine desire for progress and self-aggrandization'.[45] Kobayashi stresses that both literary and dramatic adaptations of and academic research on 'The Crane Wife' have romanticized and mythologized the figure of the 'animal woman as a pathetic female character (at the mercy of her human spouse's will)'.[46] He argues that this representation ignores or misconstrues the actual folktales, in which the crane woman actually 'behaves quite assertively'.[47]

In this way, Murai and Kobayashi both critique the gender stereotyping of the crane-wife figure. Likewise, the dog-husband narrative seemingly poses a problem for this entrenched gendered imagery of animal–human relations. The destabilizing potential of the dog-husband tale is seen in the contemporary text Murai analyses, Tawada Yōko's novella *Inu mukoiri* (1993; translated as *The Bridegroom Was a Dog* by Margaret Mitsutani, 1998). Tawada's novella, which was inspired by research by Fukuda Akira on southeast Asian dog-husband folktales,[48] is a surprising and somewhat surreal modern-day take on the these stories. Without the concrete resolution and closure that folktales and fairy tales traditionally offer, Murai finds that Tawada's novella leaves the characters in a state of flux and possibility, and 'the otherness of nonhuman characters remains unresolved throughout the story; rather, it is multiplied through the juxtaposition of different narrative and linguistic conventions'.[49] Sakuraba Kazuki's

[44]Ozawa, *Mukashibanashi no kosumorojī*, 242–43.
[45]Murai, *From Dog Bridegroom*, 46.
[46]Kobayashi, *Japanese Animal-Wife Tales*, 20.
[47]Ibid, 107.
[48]Murai, *From Dog Bridegroom*, 49.
[49]Murai, *From Dog Bridegroom*, 60.

Fuse book, which is popular fiction rather than a 'literary' work like Tawada's, both retains and rearranges the traditional components of animal-husband tales. Though it does not enact the same radical reformulation as Tawada's novella, Sakuraba's story does pose a troubling gender dynamic within the animal–human connection, resisting a complete resolution. Moreover, Walley argues that in Bakin's *Hakkenden* there is much unresolved border-crossing, but that ongoing species and gender transgressions ultimately serve to emphasize the distinction between 'good' and 'evil';[50] this good–evil distinction is another binary that Sakuraba disrupts in her transformation of Bakin's novel.

Sakuraba Kazuki's 'Counterfeit' Chronicle

Sakuraba Kazuki's 2010 novel *Fuse: Gansaku Satomi Hakkenden* (Fuse: A Counterfeit Chronicle of the Eight Dogs of the Satomi Clan) began, like Bakin's work, as a series. It was published in short instalments between 2009 and 2010, in the weekly news and general interest tabloid *Shūkan bunshun*. A modified and expanded version was then published as a stand-alone novel in 2010. Both the magazine series and the novel included eerie and surreal illustrations by fairy-tale artist Konoike Tomoko.[51] The novel is another of Sakuraba's entertaining, popular-fiction works. After the success of her young adult light-novel series *GOSICK* (2003–11), she attracted a wider readership through stand-alone general novels, winning the Naoki Prize for popular literature with *Watashi no otoko* (My Man, 2007), which was later adapted into a film.

Sakuraba's novel is one of a long line of popular genre works which, as Katō Yasuko puts it, 'inherit the entertaining quality of *Hakkenden*'.[52] Though originally published in a magazine for adults, Sakuraba's *Fuse* targets a wider readership. As such, it succeeds a 'fantasy boom' in the 1990s and early 2000s, which featured manga and children's literature retellings; Katō believes this trend increased the appeal of *Hakkenden*.[53] As in many of these retellings, the changes Sakuraba makes in her 'counterfeit' version of Bakin's novel are too complex to enumerate in detail, but a few merit our attention. She liberally revises the cast of *Hakkenden*, introducing female dog-warriors, redistributing names, and reorganizing networks of familial and other relations. Nearly all the members of Sakuraba's cast seem to be named after Bakin's characters, and while some play similar parts to their *Hakkenden* counterparts, others have very different roles, traits, and relationships. For example, the character of Dōsetsu is Hamaji's brother in Bakin's work as well as in Sakuraba's, but rather than being one of the eight dog warriors as per the original, Sakuraba makes him a would-be hunter of the dog-hybrids.

The novel version of *Fuse* has a layered structure, modified from the serialized version. The bulk of Sakuraba's novel is set around 1841, when the original author, Takizawa Bakin – who appears as one of the characters – is writing the final instalment of his *Eight Dogs* novel. The protagonist of this part of the narrative is Hamaji, a 14-

[50]Walley, 'I Would Rather…'; 'Gender and Virtue'.
[51]Konoike's fairy-tale artwork has been analysed by Murai in *From Dog Bridegroom* and 'Re-envisioning of Fairy Tales in Contemporary Japanese Art'.
[52]Obitsu, 'Jidō bungaku', 90.
[53]Katô, 'Edo jidai no besuto serā', 14.

year-old girl hunter from the mountains. Seeking government reward money, Hamaji becomes embroiled in the hunt for *fuse*, the name given to hybrid beings who plague the city with their aggressive dog-like behaviour and abilities. One of the *fuse* that Hamaji hunts is named Shino; through these two characters Sakuraba recreates one of the famous pairings from Bakin's tale. The other main episode Sakuraba adopts from Bakin's novel that will be examined is the 'marriage' of Fusehime and the dog Yatsufusa. This episode appears in the middle of Sakuraba's book, occupying about one third of the entire novel.

Sakuraba's reinterpretation of the marriage between the princess and the dog is framed within the novel as part of a manuscript that explains the 'true' origins of the *fuse* hybrids. In the historical part of the story, we learn that this manuscript was written by Bakin's (fictional) son Meido, who claims that he has researched and recorded the factual origins of the *fuse* behind his father's immensely popular fiction version. Meido reads the text aloud to Hamaji over the course of an evening. We later learn that some of the *fuse* themselves had snuck into Meido's home to read the manuscript and discovered their own ancestry through this written account.

The subheading of Sakuraba's novel is taken from the self-deprecating title of Meido's manuscript: *Gansaku Satomi Hakkenden* (A Counterfeit Chronicle of the Eight Dogs of the Satomi Clan). Sakuraba's play on gender roles of animal–human pairs is especially discernible in the character of Fusehime. The detailed narrative about Fusehime's birth and her early life explains her strange name. The character for *fuse* (伏) combines the radicals for 'human' and 'dog'; the word means to 'bow down', and is further associated with dogs as it is currently used as the command to 'lie down!'. In Bakin's version, Yoshizane names Fusehime after the period of her birthday,[54] then later laments this fateful use of the 'character for "human" followed by that for "dog"'.[55] However, in Sakuraba's telling, Yoshizane chooses this name for a daughter who he says will selflessly 'bow down' to her father, mother, her husband, and children, as well as the nation, their castle, and their people. Against her father's Confucian directive, though, Fusehime is fated to become a disobedient daughter and fearless tomboy, a disruptive force who will be relegated to the animal world.

In Sakuraba's manuscript-within-the-novel, when Fusehime is a child, the dog Yatsufusa is adopted as an enchantingly lovable puppy. Yoshizane's battle with neighbouring forces proceeds along a similar route to that in *Hakkenden*. When the dog dutifully brings him the head of the enemy general, Yoshizane refuses to give his daughter's hand in marriage as he had jokingly promised. Instead of explaining her filial duty and departing with Yatsufusa, as in Bakin's story, here the princess simply runs away from home with the dog to keep her father's word. Fusehime and Yatsufusa retreat into a mysterious forest close to the castle. Sakuraba (via the young writer Meido) paints this as a special fairy-tale space: it has strangely shaped trees and rare creatures, and animal marriages are the norm among its reclusive inhabitants (in a nod to folktale research, characters even use the word *iruikon*).[56] As in the preceding dog-marriage tales, when the relationship changes from pet-and-owner to husband-and-

[54]*Sanbuku no jisetsu* in Kyokutei, *Hakkenden*, I.IV.VIII; 1, 184: 'the season of the Three Concealments' (trans. Walley, 559; see 559–60 n2).
[55]Kyokutei, *Hakkenden*, I.V.IX; 1, 230. Trans. Walley, 595.
[56]Sakuraba, *Fuse*, 218.

wife, the cross-species couple must transfer into a liminal, wild space and can no longer operate in human society. While in Bakin's story the pure Fusehime elevates her dog companion, Sakuraba's princess is the one to be influenced: she loses human speech and her attractive looks and becomes a kind of wild, animal girl.

Eventually, Fusehime is found and taken home to the castle by her childhood admirer Daisuke, recalling Bakin's character Kanamari Daisuke. She is now one-eyed and wild, and it is too late to restore her humanity. Her pregnancy is discovered; Sakuraba's novel does not touch on its circumstances and does not make any claims for a spiritual conception or make any mention of Buddhist devotion. Upon discovery, the defiled princess is beheaded, but legend tells that her children somehow survived their mother's death and ran away. Appropriate to the 'counterfeit' claim in the manuscript and novel title, and contrary to Meido's assertion that this is a more factual account than his father's novel, the whole piece is narrated in fairy-tale style. For example, rather than anchoring the events in a particular historical period, it begins with the formula phrase *mukashi mukashi*[57] (once upon a time) and ends with *ima wa mukashi no ohanashi de aru*[58] (this is now a story of long ago). A number of comments on the impossibility of fully knowing history, and of knowing the minds of animals and other people, also cast ambiguity and even mystery over the entire account.

This tale, according to its fictional author Meido, explains the origins of the dog–human hybrids terrorizing Edo. Like Pán Hù's descendants in the Chinese stories, Sakuraba's *fuse*, named after their ancestor, are marked by their animal heritage. They appear as humans but with an irrepressible desire to perpetrate violence; they cannot help but kill, steal, and destroy. They are extremely agile and, as in Bakin's novel, can be identified by peony-shaped birthmarks which match the eight spots on Yatsufusa's coat. Due to their less mystical and more physical dog ancestry, Sakuraba's *fuse* are less human than Bakin's dog-warriors, who are always depicted in illustrations and text as people, and who each have two human parents. Bakin's warriors, associated with both 'animality (carnal desire) and virtue (fidelity, self-sacrifice)',[59] are ultimately the (male) heroes of the novel, whereas Sakuraba's male and female *fuse* are mostly its villains.

Following in the footsteps of Bakin, whose historical novel was set around 300 years prior to his time of writing, Sakuraba uses a fantastical Edo backdrop removed from today's reality to set off the dramatic, romantic elements of Bakin's story. Perhaps Sakuraba can depict dogs as more frightening and create a world in which supernatural beings roam freely by removing the modern context of pet ownership and the containment of animals in urban settings. Dogs have long been human companions and are sometimes depicted as both adored pets and semi-wild animals in *Hakkenden* and traditional legends and folktales, but the imagery of the human–canine relationship has changed greatly in contemporary Japan. In the current situation of domestication, companionship, and commodification (where dogs are used to mark status, belonging, and identity),[60] and given the fact they rarely roam wild in Japan, they cannot function as representatives of untamed wilderness.

[57]Ibid, 112.
[58]Ibid, 254.
[59]Shirane, *Early Modern Japanese Literature*, 888.
[60]See Skabelund, *Empire of Dogs*, 171–97.

Takahashi Rumiko's popular manga series *Inuyasha*, and its animated adaptations, is another work that utilizes a fantastical historical setting and shows discernible links to *Hakkenden*.[61] Takahashi's human girl protagonist, Kagome, lives in modern-day Japan but time travels to the Sengoku period (1467–1590) for adventures with the eponymous Inuyasha, a white-haired, half-human-half-dog *yōkai* (monster or supernatural creature). Inuyasha is humorously depicted with soft, stroke-able dogs' ears, and Kagome has the magical ability to command him to sit. The fantastical historical setting again allows an escape from the modern, middle-class notion of dogs as loyal pets, offering a wilder and more monstrous take on canine nature in a world teeming with gods and monsters.

Whereas *Inuyasha* takes up the dog-marriage tradition in the affection that develops between Kagome and Inuyasha, Sakuraba's book widens the spectrum of animal–human and *yōkai*–human networks. In Sakuraba's version of Bakin's story, the human Hamaji is more amenable to a connection between animals and nature than are other characters. Raised in sparsely populated mountains by her grandfather to become a talented hunter, she is orphaned when her grandfather, in another type of violent animal–human interaction, is eaten by a bear. In a journey that reverses the usual movement of dog and wife from civilization into the wilderness, Hamaji goes from the isolated mountains to live in the bustling city of Edo. However, Hamaji's connection with animals is not sympathetic, romantic, or spiritual; instead, she has a hunter's instinct and a nose for wild beasts that enables her to hunt *fuse* where experienced Edo warriors and bounty hunters (including her own elder brother, aspiring samurai Dōsetsu) have failed. The depiction a young female human as a hunter of mostly male animal prey reverses the more usual gendered roles of male hunter and female prey, as well as the folktale roles of human husband and animal wife.

After several other successful and financially rewarding kills, one of Hamaji's last *fuse* targets is Shino. Shino, around 20 years old, is a male kabuki player of female roles, much admired for his sensitive beauty.[62] This male character who performs femininity must be a nod to Bakin's Shino, whose parents give him a female name and dress him as a girl in his early years.[63] Sakuraba draws on Bakin's original imaginings of cross-dressing and gender confusion in several places in her novel.[64] One example is the revision of Fusehime's brother into a sickly boy who, to the horror of their father Yoshizane, likes to play with dolls and dreams of being a courtesan when he grows up.[65]

In Bakin's story, the maiden Hamaji and the dog-warrior Shino are engaged but fated never to marry. In Sakuraba's novel, they are reconfigured as hunter and prey, and towards the end of the story Hamaji is trapped underground with Shino. There, the risk of ricocheting bullets stops her from firing her gun at him; at this point they deepen their strange connection. To pass the time, Shino tells his story of his experience as a *fuse*, including the loss of his friends whom Hamaji has killed. Nearly a fifth of the novel is occupied by his first-person account, which focuses on an ill-fated attempt by Shino and his fellow *fuse* to search for their origins by going to the mysterious forest where

[61]See also Shamoon, 'The Yōkai in the Database', 288 n6.
[62]Sakuraba, *Fuse*, 280.
[63]Kyokutei, II.IV.XVII; 1, 401–2.
[64]See Walley, 'I Would Rather…', 186–254; 'Gender and Virtue'.
[65]Sakuraba, *Fuse*, 127–29.

Fusehime and Yatsufusa dwelt. This section gives voice to an eloquent and handsome yet unrepentant villain. He bluntly narrates the murders and other terrible exploits committed by his *fuse* companions, and refers to *fuse* with the counter word for dogs rather than that for humans, conveying a clear-eyed understanding of his own animality.

A certain sympathy springs up between Shino and Hamaji as they get to know each other, but it does not derail them from their paths as natural enemies. As cited at the opening of this paper, they maintain a physical gap as they walk the tunnel, because their instincts to flee or kill respectively flare up when they grow close. Hamaji is moved by Shino's tragic story, but she remains determined to hunt and kill the dog–humans, motivated by the principles that Fusehime's father imposed on his unlucky daughter long ago. Hamaji is selflessly driven to maintain order for the sake of family and nation, despite her age and gender, and despite her closer connection to nature and strong instincts nurtured through her mountain upbringing. Thus, this reinvented dog–human connection in Sakuraba's version complicates images, cemented in modern canonized tales such as 'The Crane Wife', of feminine animal/nature in need of control by masculine human/culture.

Shino, for his part, continues his unremorseful attempts to dispose of his girl hunter and survive. At the end of the story, Shino lives to escape from the city while most of the other *fuse* are killed. While Edo seems to be safe for now, the *fuse*'s dangerous, border-crossing animal presence is not entirely eradicated from the world. Similarly, despite her belief in social order, the illiterate Hamaji ignores advice that she attend school, resisting being fully tamed by modern city values. Instead, the final pages see Hamaji and her brother leave the now re-civilized urban human realm for the countryside and wilderness, sent by the authorities on a mission to hunt any remaining *fuse*. Unlike the modern *iruikon* tales, the novel does not reinforce the borders between wilderness and human society but rather hints that they can never be entirely closed.

Though Sakuraba's version takes up Bakin's original in many ways, her instinct-driven animal–humans are more animalistic. Revising the Chinese classics with the trajectory of enlightenment for the dog and the non-physical impregnation, Bakin in *Hakkenden* makes the risqué animal-husband tale more morally acceptable. In Sakuraba's novel, however, the affiliation between humans and beasts is rendered more dangerous and less holy. As well as the belligerent, lost *fuse*, Sakuraba's novel finds an emblem of spiritual loss in in the mysterious forest where Fusehime and Yatsufusa dwelt. By the time the Edo-period *fuse* seek to find it, the forest has disappeared. This change recalls the argument that the sacred element was disappearing from folktales, made by the Japanese founder of modern folklore, Yanagita Kunio, in his work '*Momotarō no tanjō*' (The Birth of Momotarō). Specifically, Kobayashi writes that Yanagita saw this change as a 'devolution of the animal deity into a biological animal… signif[ying] the deterioration of reverence for the animal deity in Japanese society'.[66] This had already occurred in the Japanese dog-husband-tale cycle: in the 'revenge type', the dog's mythical origins were erased and it was reduced to simply an animal.

[66]Kobayashi, *Japanese Animal-Wife Tales*, 26.

Like Bakin's dog-warriors, however, Sakuraba's *fuse* are not wholly animal, even if their dog ancestors were. Rather, the *fuse* are wild, lonely, instinct-driven beings who are animal-*like*. Some, such as Shino, are not entirely unsympathetic, but certainly none embody virtue; indeed, unlike in Bakin's *Hakkenden*, good and evil are no longer recognizably distinct. Yet even the *fuse*'s mystical aspect is not completely rejected. At the climax of their journey out of Edo, the questing *fuse* see a vision of their ancestor Fusehime, 'half-human and half beast, neither male nor female, an androgynous god'.[67] In the final pages of Sakuraba's novel, Meido also speculates that these *fuse* themselves may be a kind of god. If Meido is correct, the gods themselves have become even less caring, less responsive to their human counterparts, and are less connected to the natural world than in Bakin's novel. As a result, border-crossing between the human and the super/natural world has been rendered even more fraught in Sakuraba's work and even more impossible to resolve. And, as the vision of Fusehime indicates, ideas about gender roles are entangled with these porous boundaries between species and between wilderness and civilization.

The Animated Adaptation of Sakuraba's 'Counterfeit' *Eight Dogs*

Sakuraba's *Fuse: A Counterfeit Chronicle of the Eight Dogs of the Satomi Clan* was adapted into an animated film, directed by Miyaji Masayuki, and released in cinemas in 2012 as *Fuse: teppō musume no torimonochō* (Fuse: A Tale of a Girl with a Hunting Gun). Animated in captivating colour and detail, the film makes numerous changes to Sakuraba's source text, which invite further thought. Many of these changes condense Sakuraba's complex interlacing of narrative frames and the two different time settings. The whole film is set in Edo, cleverly incorporating the flashback story of Fusehime and Yatsufusa within a kabuki performance that the characters attend. The focus, then, is turned to the relationship between the protagonists, Hamaji and Shino. Especially significant here is that the film does not assimilate Sakuraba's innovative dynamic between the female human hunter and male animal prey. Instead, this relationship is subsumed by *iruikon* story patterns that have become more common in both Japanese anime and globally in stories for young adult audiences. That is, the film returns this pair to the folktale tradition of imagining and attempting to resolve human and animal interactions through romantic attachment, while also relying on contemporary gendered patterns to tell the story.

Enumerating the many possibilities for adapting Sakuraba's multilayered novel for film, the screenwriter for the animated adaptation, Ōkouchi Ichirō, sees the romance as an obvious direction: he says that 'a growing attraction between these [the hunter and the hunted] would make a classic tale that brings audiences pleasure'.[68] This romance prompts a number of character changes that reverse some of the challenges Sakuraba's novel poses for gender and species norms in storytelling. Firstly, the film's Hamaji is rendered more stereotypically feminine through depictions of increased vulnerability. Nominally still a hunter from the mountains, on screen she does very little hunting and

[67]Sakuraba, *Fuse*, 384.
[68]Ōkouchi, Kaisetsu, 472. This quote appears in a commentary to the paperback edition of Sakuraba's work, published when the animation script was not completed.

a great deal more crying and falling over. Indeed, throughout the film, the boyish Hamaji learns femininity through becoming giggly girlfriends with Bakin's grandchild Meido, who is here a female character. Hamaji also eventually eschews her boyish garb for kimono and accessories gifted to her by Shino, though she retains her gun. Whereas at the end Sakuraba's Hamaji refuses schooling and leaves the city, the film closes on her settled in Edo, a peony in her loosened hair, reading a letter from Shino.

The film version of Shino is assigned a deeper, darker struggle than before: he has an urge to kill humans in order to consume their souls, or their life essence. His animal hunger and violent tendencies are represented by werewolf-like transformations, when his clenched fist morphs into a furred claw, and his human body casts a dog's shadow. The film makes much of Shino's profession as a kabuki actor; on stage he appears in feminine make-up and costume, but he also habitually roams Edo wearing a stylized kabuki mask of a dog. The mask both conceals and reveals his identity, and hints that he performs humanity as much as femininity. Indeed, in the final scenes, before undergoing a full (if involuntary) metamorphosis into dog form, Shino pulls off the mask and declares that he has finished performing, as though abandoning himself to his 'true' animal identity.

Where Shino seems to have reaped human souls without much conscience thus far, after meeting Hamaji he battles the temptation to devour her shining soul. Hamaji and Shino's connection in the animation thus falls into a kind of 'Beauty and the Beast' pattern that is widespread in contemporary stories for young adults in both Japanese and English: the monstrous male struggles to manage his violent desire for the human female, or struggles to prevent his inner 'beast' from hurting her, and struggles to turn from beast into human for her sake. Just as the good daughter and (future) wife Beauty breaks the Beast's curse, this monstrous male is often redeemed by the love of the human girl.

In recent English-language texts, this struggle is often depicted in vampire stories, with Stephenie Meyer's bestselling *Twilight* series and the film adaptations being representative examples. The vampire hero resists the urge to drink the blood of humans, particularly of the human heroine he loves; also, female werewolves are in constant danger of the males violently losing control. A Japanese example is Miyazaki Hayao's animation *Howl's Moving Castle*, set in a fairytale European land, where the eponymous wizard takes on a monstrous birdlike form to fight battles but finds it increasingly difficult transform back into a human. He is rescued from beastly monstrosity by the love of the heroine, who literally holds his heart/soul in her hands before restoring it to him. As these examples show, though they are tied to the animal world (for even vampires are associated with bats), these beastly alter egos are more closely associated with the supernatural, the monstrous, and the magical, rather than the wild or natural.

A Miyazaki film that is even more interested in animals and nature is *Mononokehime* (Princess Mononoke). This complex portrait of animal–human relationships finds a memorable focus in San, a girl raised by white wolf-gods, who is on a mission to punish humans for desecrating the land but forms a connection with the human prince Ashitaka. Like Sakuraba's Hamaji and Fusehime, the savage, predatory wolf-girl San is a female character who disrupts gendered nature–culture divides. This is another tale that uses a historical setting (fourteenth century, Muromachi period) to imagine the

intersections of the human, natural, and supernatural realms; but, in closing, San and Ashitaka each return to their own worlds, and the film implies that the mystical wilderness cannot be reconciled with the encroaching human civilization.

In the *Fuse* animation, clashes between human and animal worlds are dealt with almost entirely on the individual, personal level and conclude more definitively. The dramatic climax of the animation sees Shino undergo a painful, complete transformation into a white dog. He battles enemies with his powerful muscular shoulders and sharp claws and teeth, teetering on his hind legs and draped in the remains of his torn human clothing. In response to Shino's amplified, dangerous animality, Hamaji offers an appropriate sacrifice out of love: holding his claw to her heart, she gives Shino permission to devour her essence. Shino refuses, a noble act that redeems him and transforms him back into a human. In other words, like Bakin's Fusehime, through her own purity this Hamaji offers the white dog spiritual redemption from his carnal appetites. The ending of the film not only reverts to Bakin's narrative but also shifts from animal-husband to animal-*wife* patterns such as in the crane-wife tale, where the innocent female is called upon to sacrifice herself for her husband.

At that point, Shino leaves the city and the film, reappearing only in a letter he writes to Hamaji a year later. That is, though Shino is not killed, he is transformed and departs. Likewise, since Fusehime and Yatsufusa are all but erased, their life in the mysterious forest and the vision of Fusehime as a hybrid, androgynous god is left out of the film. The animation thus also falls into the general cross-species-marriage patterns which include the absenting of the animal spouse observed by Kawai (and others) and the 'resolution of otherness of nonhuman characters' observed by Murai. Unlike in Sakuraba's novel, the dangerous animal presence is tamed through romance and gendered acts of surrender.

Conclusion

Stories that explore animal–human relationships naturally reflect the realities and culture of their particular social contexts. Through comparing Bakin's Edo-period tale with Sakuraba's recent novel and its animated adaptation, in the context of the older dog-husband folktales and legends, we can trace shifts from stories of animals in wild environs, connected with gods and the spiritual realm, to the more beastly, even monstrous creatures that rampage through cultivated or urban settings in contemporary retellings.

Bakin's action-packed epic confronts its characters with conflict and temptation, rewarding virtue and punishing evil. Sakuraba's novel takes up many traditions of Bakin's work but rejects moral direction. Her novel introduces new possibilities, especially through rearranging gender patterns that shape traditions of animal–human interaction in the modern folktale canon. Miyaji's animated film adaptation, on the other hand, re-establishes some of these patterns: Hamaji, though she represents humanity as a foil to Shino's animality, takes on the sacrificial aspect of the animal wife in Japanese folktales. At the same time, the film returns her to the purifying role of the human wife in Bakin's *Hakkenden*. Bakin's unconventional Buddhist message that 'animals can achieve enlightenment' has also been modified in such recent films for young people so that now, with the love of the right girl, 'even monstrous (male) animals can achieve humanity'. Paradoxically, this more modern message seems to fit

most comfortably in a historical setting, where dogs are able to escape their current associations with urban domesticity and instead return to their wild and beastly symbolic roots.

Against these historical backdrops, however, the very animality that gives contemporary dog heroes their dangerous appeal is restrained and contained. This may be due to the staying power of some narratives and tropes of animal–human relationships, which resurface in many different times, genres, and media. The Japanese dog revenge type folktales are adamant that these unnatural girl–dog unions, despite the strong bonds they forge, cannot last. And in all of the stories, dogs may be animals that are especially aligned with the human world, but the people who become too close to these creatures cannot abide in human civilization. These tales continually invoke dangerous girl–animal liaisons only to send the human brides and their dog-husbands wandering into the wilderness, banished to outskirts of the beastly imagination.

Funding

This work was supported by the National Library of Australia [Japan Study Grant].

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