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## The Crypt in the City: Satō Haruo's Monument to E. A. Poe

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Satō Haruo, a prominent writer of the prewar period known for introspective fantasy in such Taishō classics as *Den'en no yūutsu*, experimented often at this time with the Western literature popular in his day as a tool to make sense of twentieth century Japan. In the 1919 short story “Aojiroi netsujō,” he demonstrates his close engagement with the work of Edgar Allan Poe. The close reading of the story offered here helps to connect Satō to several of the popular literary currents of that period. Satō's characters recite “Annabel Lee” in English, they act out Poe's poem, and Satō himself recreates Poe's mood and writing style. This act of commemoration also suggests the range and manner of Satō's appropriation of this most influential American writer.

**Keywords:** MODERN JAPANESE LITERATURE, SATŌ HARUO, E. A. POE, GOTHIC, “ANNABEL LEE”

### Introduction

Satō Haruo 佐藤春夫 (1892–1964) was one of the great literary minds of the twentieth century. His fifty years of literary activity span the late Meiji, Taishō, and Shōwa periods. Tanizaki Jun'ichiro 谷崎潤一郎 (1886–1965), Kobayashi Hideo 小林秀雄 (1902–1983), and others recognized the breadth of his artistic talent soon after his debut in the literary world. While his extensive artistic production includes such genres as fiction, oil painting, poetry, essays, film scenarios, and drama, he is perhaps best remembered today in Japan as a poet. Satō's work engaged with compelling social, literary, and artistic concerns of early twentieth century Japanese culture at the moment when urbanization and industrialization gave rise to mass culture. Satō appeared on the literary stage as the popularity of naturalist fiction by Shimazaki Tōson 島崎藤村 (1872–1943) and Tayama Katai 田山花袋 (1871–1930) was on the wane, when literary interest shifted from confession and realistic description to a more indulgent, more introspective, and anti naturalist sensibility. Satō reacted against the growing homogenization of mass culture by turning inward, using fantasy to project his individual sensibility on the outside world. Stephen Dodd suggests that Satō's introverted fantasies of the Taishō period

were a strategy to blend his imaginary creations with the reality of his regional identity. The fanciful description of homes in his work is a method for finding his place in the real national landscape. Satō “sought to reintegrate a nation of displaced individuals through a shared aesthetic sensibility.”<sup>1</sup>

Satō Haruo’s fiction from the early Taishō period is teeming with visionaries and art-obsessed adolescents, often with implausible and fantastic plots. These works, including the reverie-inspired “Supein inu no ie” 西班牙犬の家 (House of a Spanish Dog), which won him literary recognition in 1917, point to his extended interest in daydreaming and the imagination. Satō’s concern with the fantastic was a part of a broader literary fashion. Like other Taishō writers, Satō was fascinated by the capacity of art to blur distinctions between the real and the unreal, between hallucination and physical reality, and he found inspiration in Baudelaire, Wilde, and other fin de siècle European writers who engaged similar problems. Extensive reference to Western works dramatizes Satō’s own desire to translate that textual experience into his own fiction. This relationship is nowhere more apparent than with Edgar Allan Poe. The topics of tragedy, mental suffering, and illusion in Poe offer a dark alternative to the enlightened world of rational and scientific certainty. Who better to counter the basic principles of naturalist objectivity than Edgar Allan Poe? This essay examines Satō’s relationship to Poe by conducting a close reading of the short story “Aojiroi netsujō” 青白い熱情 (Pale Passion, 1919), a work remarkable for its illustration of Satō’s own reading, translation of, and admiration for Poe’s style.

### Emulating Poe

It is very likely that no other foreign author has been read for so long and so widely in Japan as Edgar Allan Poe.<sup>2</sup> Since Aeba Kōson 饗庭篁村 (1855–1922) first published “Seiyō kaidan kuro neko” 西洋怪談黒猫 (The Black Cat, a Western Horror Tale, 1887) in the middle of the Meiji period for a supplement to the *Yomiuri shinbun* 読売新聞, essays, translations, and appreciations of Poe proliferated. The reception of Poe in the twentieth century in Japan picks up notably in Taishō, featuring translations of “A Descent into the Maelstrom” (Uzushio うづしほ, in *Bungei kurabu* 文芸倶楽部, 1910) “Devil in the Belfry” (Jūsanji 十三時, in *Shumi* 趣味, 1912) and “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” (Byōin yokochō no satsujin han 病院横町の殺人犯, in *Shinshōsetsu* 新小説, 1913) made by literary giant Mori Ōgai 森鷗外 (1862–1922). Ōgai included these works in his 1915 *Shokoku monogatari* 諸国物語 (Tales of Various Countries), a collection of translations which puts Poe alongside Rilke, Tolstoy, and Dostoevsky. This work introduced aspiring literary youths to works of various Western countries, and Satō recalled in later years that collections like *Shokoku monogatari* were seen as an important practical demonstration of the use of diverse styles and themes.<sup>3</sup> By the time Satō prepared his own renditions of Poe’s style in the early years of the Taishō period, Poe’s classic tale “The Black Cat” and the poem “Annabel Lee” had both been translated eight different times.<sup>4</sup>

The broad diffusion of Poe’s work in the Taishō period was due in part to the efforts of Tanizaki Seiji 谷崎精二 (1890–1971), younger brother of Tanizaki Jun’ichirō. As a student at Waseda University 早稲田大学 in the Department of English Literature, he participated with Hirotsu Kazuo 広津和郎 in the coterie journal *Kiseki* 奇跡 and published his first collection of thirteen Poe short stories in 1913, including such favorites as “Fall of the House of Usher” (Asshā kan no metsuraku アツシャー館の滅落) and “William Wilson” (ウイリアム・ウイルスン). He devoted most of his scholarly career to the translation of this single author, and he completed translations of all Poe’s short stories in 1941.<sup>5</sup>

Satō's familiarity with Poe was part of a literary fashion evident even in contemporary news reports. The poet Noguchi Yonejirō 野口米次郎 (1875–1947) reported to the *Yomiuri shinbun* in 1916 on his experiences abroad visiting Poe's house in Fordham, and he lamented the irony that Poe's reputation extended around the world only after his death while he had struggled to make money as a writer in his lifetime.<sup>6</sup> Taishō intellectuals shared Noguchi's sentiments, which were not very distant from the interpretation of Charles Baudelaire in the introduction to his own translations of Poe:

A lamentable tragedy this Life of Edgar Poe! His death a horrible unraveling of the drama, where horror is besmirched with trivialities! All the documents I have studied strengthen me in the conviction that the United States was for Poe only a vast prison through which he ran, hither and thither, with the feverish agitation of a being created to breathe in a purer world—only a wild barbarous country—barbarous and gas-lit—and that his interior life, spiritual as a poet, spiritual even as a drunkard, was but one perpetual effort to escape the influence of this antipathetical atmosphere.<sup>7</sup>

But the specific appeal of Poe for Satō was the result of a confluence of dark poetic sensibility, critical acumen, and a love of mysterious atmosphere. The appearance of the *Pō zenshū* 波才全集 (Complete Works of Poe) in Japanese at the end of Satō's career prompted him to reflect on Poe's significance for the Taishō period and offer his own interpretation of the writer. Poe was first and foremost a poet of depth. "I do not believe that Poe was simply a mystery writer. His true nature (*honshitsu* 本質), his true talents (*honryō* 本領), included being a poet of mysterious depth (*yūgen* 幽玄), a critic, and at the same time an excellent journalist."<sup>8</sup> His poetic stance was informed by his tragic life: "In world literary history, it is certainly not uncommon for a poet to suffer so much mentally, but there's no question that Poe and Baudelaire were those who suffered most."<sup>9</sup> Satō suggests that this combination of depth, darkness, and poetic sentiment was novel to literary youths of the Taishō period.<sup>10</sup> His choice of the word *yūgen* to describe Poe alludes to medieval Japanese poetry and theater focused on projecting mystery and depth through murky images of autumn at dusk, so for Satō Poe's ability lay in the manipulation of ominous subject matter and the power of poetic overtone. In place of the religious pessimism animating the medieval Japanese poet, however, Satō suggests that Poe's imagery is the result of his tragic life and the time in which he lived. The psychological states of mind he describes are due rather to the overstimulation of modern life. The cellar-like atelier in "Aojiroi netsujō" is designed to shut out light, and the outside world, in order to explore such states of mind in the shadows. Satō's examination of light and shadow also recalls the popular contemporary space of the movie theater in which viewers revel in the free play of the imagination and desire stimulated by the projected image while sitting in darkness.

Satō's reflections, moreover, suggest that his attraction to Poe was motivated by both personal and popular reasons:

Although I had little reading ability and did not read much, I suppose that comparatively speaking I did read a good deal of Oscar Wilde and Edgar Poe among others. Rather than being influenced as a result of reading extensively, I enjoyed reading Poe because I felt a similarity in personality or constitution, and I felt as if there were something to be learned from that similarity, but I also believe that Wilde and Poe were both popular novelists [*ryūkōteki sakka* 流行的作家] at the time my writing was developing.<sup>11</sup>

Satō thus took a personal interest in Poe due to a perceived similarity in constitution, and

his translations of Poe reveal his close study of style and mood. Satō published two translations of Poe stories in August of 1919, “Amonchiryadō no taru” アモンチリヤドウの樽 (The Cask of Amontillado) and “Kage: gūwa” 影：寓話 (Shadow: A Parable).<sup>12</sup> The translations themselves are partial, experimental pieces intended less as Japanese remakes of the original and more for their potential to suggest new ways of writing. This no doubt explains why Satō deliberately kept his rendition of “The Cask of Amontillado” out of one of his later collected works. Satō made an effort to understand Poe’s style: “I wanted to get to know Poe’s style by translating it once myself.”<sup>13</sup> One Satō scholar argues suggestively that the stylistic discoveries Satō made early in his prose career were the result of reading Poe.<sup>14</sup>

Satō’s specific interest in Poe’s style is perhaps most apparent when his translation of “Kage: gūwa” is contrasted with Hiratsuka Raichō’s 平塚らいてう (1886–1971) translation of the same work in the inaugural issue of her literary journal *Seitō* 青鞥 (Blue Stockings) in 1911. Poe’s tale features a first person narrator named Oinos who recounts a strange event in which the other guests seated around a large table in an enclosed room are visited by an apparition. Somber in mood, the story features a number of trademark Poe motifs including a corpse, a crypt like chamber, and a dialogue with the shadow of death. Poe’s story begins:

Yea! though I walk through the valley of the Shadow.  
 . . . Psalm of David.

Ye who read are still among the living; but I who write shall have long since gone my way into the region of shadows. For indeed strange things shall happen, and secret things be known, and many centuries shall pass away, ere these memorials be seen of men. And, when seen, there will be some to disbelieve and some to doubt, and yet a few who will find much to ponder upon in the characters here graven with a stylus of iron.<sup>15</sup>

Hiratsuka Raichō’s translation commences:

たとひ我れ死の影の谷を歩むとも  
 …ダビデの聖詩

読者は常に生の国に住むが作者の私はずっと以前に影の国と歩んで居る筈だ。それは実に不思議な事が起こり神秘的なことが知られやうとも、これ等の記念が人間に見られる先に幾世紀も幾世紀も経てねばならぬので。<sup>16</sup>

Here is Satō’s version of the opening of the story:

「げに、われ影なる谷間を歩むとも」…ダビデの詩編

読む人たる爾は尚生きてゐる者のなかにある、しかし誌す人たる余は永い以前に影の領域へ余が道を辿り入ってゐることであらう。何となればまことに、奇異なる事どもが起こり、秘密なる事どもが知られ、また幾多の世紀が過ぎ去ってゐることであらう。これらの記録が人に見られるに到るまでには。<sup>17</sup>

Raichō’s Japanese translation renders Poe’s loquacious and dramatic narrator in an efficient, economical style. She makes quick work of Poe’s ambulatory phrases in the first sentence by setting up concise parallels between reader and writer (*dokusha* 読者 and *sakusha no watashi* 作者の私), location (*sei no kuni* 生の国 and *kage no kuni* 影の国), and predicate (*sumu* 住

む and *ayunde iru* 歩んで居る). The content of the paragraph is clear, clearer perhaps than the original. Satō's version of the same passage, in contrast, reproduces different qualities of the original. Inspired likely by the Biblical discursive context established in the epigraph, Satō uses more archaic pronouns (“ye” *nanji* 爾, “I” *yo* 余) reminiscent of Meiji translations of the *King James Bible*.<sup>18</sup> Raichō fits Poe's circuitous phrasing into more conventional, and comprehensible, expressions (“for indeed” becomes *sore wa jitsu ni* それは実に; “strange things” becomes *shinpi na koto* 神秘な事); Satō aims to reproduce more of Poe's lengthy formulations using lofty, literary turns of phrase. He renders “Ye who read” and “I who write” with the elevated *yomu hito taru nanji* 読む人たる爾 and *shirusu hito taru yo* 誌す人たる余. “For indeed” in Poe becomes the circuitous *nantonareba makoto ni* 何となればまことに, more elevated and elongated than Raichō's version. Satō further aims to translate for meaning and also for effect, as when “strange things shall happen” becomes *kii naru kotodomo ga okori* 奇異なる事どもが起こり and “secret things be known” becomes *himitsu naru kotodomo ga shirare* 秘密なる事どもが知られ. Satō's use of *kotodomo* 事ども for “things,” for example, aims in a very literal manner to preserve the plural marking Raichō was comfortable leaving behind. He also aims to maintain the syntax of Poe's original. Satō abandons the overly literal attempt to recreate Poe's word order and the lofty literary manner of expression illustrated here in “Aojiroi netsujō” and in subsequent works. These renditions of Poe reveal his ongoing effort to reproduce Poe's performative style, his capacity to suggest rather than describe, and his poetic ability to connote mood rather than denote objective reality. Like translators of Western fiction of the Meiji period, including his mentor Mori Ōgai, Satō attempted to recreate Poe's style into Japanese to render a new poetic sentiment adequate to the experience of being modern in 1910s Japan. Satō's literary confidants Tanizaki Jun'ichirō and Akutagawa Ryūnosuke 芥川龍之介 (1892–1927) were also avid readers of Poe.<sup>19</sup> In addition to their popular appeal, Western writers suggested new modes of expression that had very timely consequences. “Aestheticists like Wilde and masters of the bizarre (*kaiki ha* 怪奇派) like Poe (let's call him that for the time being) were possibly chosen because naturalist literature had reached its conclusion, as samples of anti naturalist authors.”<sup>20</sup> The image of a dark, tragic, even brooding Poe was an ideal counter discourse to the prevailing naturalist interest in realistic description.

### Appropriating Poe

“Aojiroi netsujō” appeared in *Chūō kōron* 中央公論 in 1919, the year in which Satō was working at translations of other Poe stories.<sup>21</sup> Appended to the end of the story were a date, December 1918, and a note: “Unfinished manuscript.” The work is narrated in the first person. The narrator, a poet, recounts the unusual events that have taken place with regard to his painter friend, known only by his initials A. F. The simple two part structure documents two days of activity. On the first night, the narrator visits his painter friend to report the completion of a romantic epic poem, and the two share a supernatural experience. In the painter's crypt-like studio, with thick curtains drawn to keep out exterior light and noise, A. F. recites Poe's poem “Annabel Lee” in English to amuse an apparition that he pretends is his wife. The painter also shows the narrator a painting he has just completed with this wife as model.

How was it that I was circling about the streets of Suda chō 須田町 as if I had lost my way? It was still light out, and the streets were filled with people. Walking in circles, I ended up getting lost in an area I should have known well. As I looked up at the illuminated

advertisement on a billboard, I traveled around from one side street to another. Each time I turned another corner, I saw that young woman looking down at my feet. The woman was there without fail at corner after corner. After that, I often saw her face in my dreams. She is my “Recurring Dream.” After that night, the apparition of that young woman gradually became real to me. Sometimes I sensed that she was sitting before me. I heard again that splendid voice. I felt as though my brush was gradually bringing to life what I saw before me in the world of art.<sup>22</sup>

A. F. discovers that his female illusion smiles when he recites passages from Poe’s “Annabel Lee,” and as he demonstrates this elaborate ritual for the benefit of the narrator, he suddenly clutches at his heart and falls dead.

The second part of the story continues the following day. The narrator awakes to find his wife and his friend E. O. looking over him. A. F. is collapsed on the floor, dead. The wife and friend do not believe the narrator’s account of what happened. A. F. has been taken to the hospital but is assumed to be dead, and there is no trace of the female apparition in the room. There are signs that the narrator is no longer treated as sane, and he thinks he is being followed. Despite the absence of evidence, the narrator is convinced that “A. F. had married the young woman he used as a model for his various *études* like ‘Recurring Dream.’”<sup>23</sup> The story concludes with the narrator speculating about his friend’s grave. If A. F. were dug up, he too might have a smile on his face. He then sees a dream in which A. F. is floating in the air together with his Annabel Lee, locked in an embrace in the ether suspended between the stars and the earth.<sup>24</sup>

Literary critic Nakamura Mitsuo 中村光夫 (1911–1988) considers “Aojiroi netsujō” to be a “cheap fabrication” (*yasude na kakō* 安手な加工).<sup>25</sup> The eternal woman made out of his own “illusion,” he remarks icily, is like a monster from a bad horror tale.<sup>26</sup> Nakamura’s assessment derives in part from the fact that he sees the work as a departure from the modern novel (*kindai shōsetsu* 近代小説), which to him should more closely resemble nineteenth century realist fiction. Further, Nakamura disparages the overt citation of Poe in the text, which he says is “connected to the authority that Western authors like Wilde and Poe held for contemporary Japanese writers and readers.”<sup>27</sup> “Aojiroi netsujō,” may not be the ideal modern story, as Nakamura suggests, but his assessment of this story does little to explain the widespread interest in Poe among writers of the Taishō period. Poe’s literary works are themselves deliberate examinations of the macabre and perverse; Nakamura’s criticism of Satō for invoking familiar Poe themes leaves the ends of this particular story in the dark.

What, then, does this story tell us about Satō’s literary experimentation? Satō makes use of Poe on many levels, beginning with the citation of the poem in question. “Aojiroi netsujō” uses the iteration of Poe’s poem “Annabel Lee,” presented in English, to emphasize the otherness of the painter’s incantation. According to the narrator, A. F. recites Poe’s “Annabel Lee” over ten times in the room: “This melody, that left one with a strong impression of being gloomy but also serene, that could not but call forth the essence of a passionate sigh hidden in space, was repeated from his lips some ten times.”<sup>28</sup> Leaving Poe’s lines untranslated calls the reader’s attention to the presence of the English text, reinforces the connection between Satō’s text and Poe’s, and slows down the development of the story. Satō also uses Poe’s “melody” from the outset of his story in order to set the “gloomy but also serene” mood for his own work; he invokes, in other words, the subject matter of Poe’s poem. Stylistically, this sentence uses multiple modifying clauses to convey different aspects of the melody in question. This technique is one among others that Satō recognized in Poe’s own hypotactic style.

The emphasis on Poe's text may indeed invoke the authority of the original, as Nakamura suggests, but it also serves the interests of the plot. The kernel of Satō's story—the appearance of the beautiful woman and the motif of star crossed lovers joined together beyond the grave—directly adapts Poe's poem. The speaker of Poe's poem falls intensely in love with a beautiful young maiden named Annabel Lee, but envious angels conspire to separate the starry eyed lovers, and the maiden dies. The speaker lies beside her grave each night convinced that their love is so strong that they are joined even beyond death. Satō creates a prose version of the original poem. In Poe's poem, although others “shut [Annabel Lee] up in a sepulcher,” she and the narrator continue to share a love beyond death. In Satō's adaptation, the painter and his illusory wife are separated, and the poet who has served as a witness to the relationship imagines his friend joined again beyond the grave with his ethereal female model. In Poe's poem, A. F. thus acts as a double for the speaker, who refers to Annabel Lee as “my life and my bride”: the painter literally claims to be married to his own Annabel Lee. By extension, Satō sets himself up as Poe's double, as he duplicates Poe's themes, his style, and his characters.

Doubling is itself a familiar theme in Taishō literature. Sato's mystery short story “Shimon” 指紋 (The Fingerprint, 1918) makes use of doubling when the protagonist believes he was witness to a murder committed by a film star named (in another direct nod to Poe) William Wilson. In *Den'en no yūutsu* 田園の憂鬱 (Melancholy in the Country, 1918), the neurasthenic protagonist struggles with worsening anxiety and paranoia, and his fear that his dogs answer to more than one master suggests that he has finally reached the breaking point. The prospect of a double helps to increase the protagonist's sense of disquiet. Akutagawa Ryūnosuke examines the phenomenon of the doppelgänger in his story “Futatsu no tegami” 二つの手紙 (Two Letters, 1917) from the same period.

The physical space described in “Aojiroi netsujō” is engineered to be conducive to flights of fancy. The description of the artist's studio is reminiscent of a crypt, circumscribed from the noise of the everyday outside by thick stone walls and louvered doors, and shielded from light by dark curtains. The room functions as what Elaine Gerbert calls a “circumscribed space,” which make possible “opportunities for discovery and experiencing new perceptions fed by foreign culture.”<sup>29</sup> An unusual skylight lends the artist access to the light of the stars, another feature probably inspired by Poe's evocation of the stars in his poem.

Moreover, the specific choice of citations from the poem evokes not just the plot of the poem but also its mood. Poe's last stanza is cited twice: once at the beginning of the first section and once at the end. In addition, “tomb by the sounding sea” and “the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes” of this stanza are repeated to pace the narration in Japanese. The reference to the stars in particular precedes the revelation that the “crypt” had a vaulted skylight through which stars were visible. One can find echoes of a similar skylight for stargazing in “Yume miru heya” 夢見る部屋 (The Dream Room, 1922) by Uno Kōji 宇野浩二 (1891–1961).

The narrative strategy, in addition, is familiar to readers of Poe. The narrative is presented as the testimony of the narrator and his encounter with his friend A. F. The framing of the story plays an essential role in the determination of the credibility of the narration. Part One operates as a story within a story: A. F.'s account of how he met his wife operates as a flashback within the narrator's account of the supernatural evening in which the painter recites Poe to make his “wife” smile. The flashback, moreover, helps to make the existence of the woman lying on the bed more credible, just as the narrator's frequent declarations of belief in his friend's statements lure the reader into sharing the same point of view: “As I listened to [his account of the woman],



strangely I didn't find what he was saying to be the slightest bit irrational or nonsensical."<sup>30</sup> But the reader begins to have doubts about the reliability of the evidence as the frame shifts in the second part of the story. The next day, as outsiders E. O. and the narrator's wife show up to assess the account of the supernatural experience, they see only the collapsed bodies of the two artists. The outsiders are "surprised" and "confused" at what they find. Without the supernatural experience they are unable to corroborate the story the narrator tells, and since A. F. has died, there are no witnesses. The reader is caught in the middle, then, with more evidence than E. O. and the wife, but the reliability of the account is based exclusively on first person, and for that matter complicity, testimony. This frame points to Satō's great interest in techniques of storytelling. The stories are not all gothic, either: similar skill in narration is illustrated in, for example, "Okinu to sono kyōdai" お絹とその兄弟 (Okinu and her Brother, 1918) where Satō weaves together threads of a local woman's difficult upbringing into an engaging story.

"Aojiroi netsujō" hinges on the existence of the female illusion, as the two men describe her. The illusory wife in the story is referred to progressively as "that over there" (*are* あれ), "my pitiful wife" (*kawaisō na tsuma* かわいそうな妻), and "young woman" (*wakai onna* 若い女). A lengthy description of the woman's face by the narrator again suggests that she is alive. Subsequent references simply defer and confuse the question of whether she is alive or dead. In the final reference to her in Part One, she has assumed contradictory qualities: she is a shadow, both dead and alive, in a near-dead state (*kashi* 仮死). The woman is a contradiction that can only be explained with recourse to the fantastic: as illusion, the woman is just a product of the painter's imagination, and the reader does not believe his explanation of her existence. Taken as real, however, the reader believes A. F. and his unusual account of her existence. The narrative strategy, reminiscent of Poe's first person narrators who turn out to be murderers, is a trap. Inclined to believe the narrator at first, the reader is presented with reasons for finding the painter's situation credible. But by the time the narrator concludes that he shares A. F.'s explanation (that what began as an apparition became real), the reader no longer believes the narrator and is thus forced to try to explain the phenomenon for him/herself.

The designation of names in the story by initials only suggests that the characters too are insubstantial. While this naming convention is not unique to Satō's story, the character names of A. F. and E. O. appear to refer to real people whose names have been abbreviated, but the reader is left wondering at the end just how believable they really are. The use of single letter abbreviations to designate character names also appears to be closely associated with the Taishō period. The practice is well known in German Romantic literature of the nineteenth century, which suggests that there may be no single source of influence for Japanese writers. The convention nevertheless can be dated to as early as Heinrich von Kleist's *The Marquise of O* (1808), in which the name of the Marquise has been reduced to a letter in order to protect her identity. As a narrative tool, the practice suggests that the fictional character being described is actually based on a real person. Insofar as it creates an anonymous shadow character relying on the suggestion of reality rather than its direct description, abbreviation lends an additional air of verisimilitude to the narration generally. The earliest example in modern Japanese literature may be Watashi's friend K from *Kokoro* 心 (1914) by Natsume Sōseki 夏目漱石 (1867–1916). Satō makes frequent use of abbreviated character names in other short stories, including "*Usukushii machi*" 美しい町 (Beautiful Town, 1919) and the afore mentioned "Shimon."

As the reader becomes more suspicious of the veracity of the events in the story, the narrator's position serves to confirm his own artistic sensibility. By profession the narrator is a poet,

so his interaction with his painter friend can be considered a dialogue among like-minded artists. The shared experience of the illusory woman further underscores their close identification. After reciting the lines from Poe, A. F. falls silent, and the narrator maintains the silence with him, although he suggests that he is somehow “forced” to do so: “I wonder why I too maintained that unusual silence at that time.”<sup>31</sup> He refers to his friend as an “ill-fated musician,” as walking with the “steps of a somnambulist,” and as a hypnotist or magician, but the magical descriptions put him under a spell as well, and he too falls hypnotized: “Along with everything visible to me, the feeling that my body was being pulled gradually deeper grew more and more intense.”<sup>32</sup> In Part Two, while being questioned by his wife, he snaps at her, and the narrator explains that this so-called hostility was being taken as evidence of his insanity.<sup>33</sup> Others to whom he “explains” the story do not believe him, and people begin to treat him as if he were insane. His family refuses to let him hang the painting, which apparently does exist, on his study wall, but he asserts that he can remember it anytime he pleases. He secludes himself in his study because he feels he is being watched.<sup>34</sup> The growing mental unrest on the part of the narrator distances him from society and common sense as it accentuates his single minded focus on the world of art.

### Satō and Poe

In a final display of Satō's use of Poe, the female apparition in the story is not only a fabrication on the part of the two fervent men. She is a product of the Taishō urban landscape. The narrator forgets “the fact that the house was in the middle of Surugadai in Tokyo.”<sup>35</sup> A. F. explains that he was walking around his Tokyo neighborhood (Suda chō)<sup>36</sup> when he turned down a street he was unfamiliar with and got lost. The juxtaposition of the familiar neighborhood and the unfamiliar, supernatural encounter with the woman sets the scene for the fantastic events that follow, and it suggests a final sense in which Satō addresses Poe in the work. A. F.'s encounter is not just a recreation of Poe plots; it simultaneously connects Poe to the urban landscape. Wandering city streets in Suda chō like “someone who had lost his way,” he did in fact end up lost. In an uncanny correlation, the billboard called “Dreamland” ドリームランド in the story is reminiscent of the first billboard placed on a corner in Suda chō in 1908. The first sign of its kind in this area, also called “Dreamland,” stood eleven meters high advertising Lion toothpaste to potential consumers. Electric light bulbs accentuating the contours of an eponymous lion and a Genroku 元禄 period beauty flashed on in alternation to the amazement of passers by.<sup>37</sup> Satō's painter wandering the streets in early Taishō is similarly attracted to this insubstantial symbol of modernity. The female vision the painter encounters is a product of his own imagination of his ideal female form, but it is also conditioned by the embodied experience of modern Taishō urbanites. Satō's final gesture to Poe is to juxtapose Poe's world to his own.

Satō's works remind us that Taishō writers were engaged readers and translators of Western authors, including Edgar Allan Poe. More than sites of influence, these works are evidence of process, of experimentation with expression and style in ways that departed from the assumptions of Satō's predecessors. The implausibly gothic world evoked in “Aojiro netsujō,” also speaks to a shared ambivalence toward modern rationality and conventions of realistic depiction. Satō draws on Poe to create an ideal artistic haven appropriate to a new time, a mode of expression that attempts to approximate the ever evolving and multi layered transformation of literary sensibilities and the experience of being modern in Taishō Japan. It is nevertheless ap-

appropriate that a work buried in Satō's oeuvre and left long forgotten should appear beyond the grave as a monument to Poe's influence more than sixteen decades after his death.

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## NOTES

- 1 Dodd 2004, p.172.
- 2 Miyanaga 2000, p. 20.
- 3 Satō 1998, p. 203.
- 4 Miyanaga 2000, p. 597 ff.
- 5 Ibid., pp. 178–79.

- 6 Noguchi 1916.
- 7 Walker 1986, p. 406.
- 8 Satō 1969, p. 1.
- 9 Ibid., p. 2.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Miyanaga 2000, pp. 203–06.
- 13 Satō 1969, p. 1.
- 14 Ikeda 1980, p. 108.
- 15 Miyanaga 2000, pp. 168–169.
- 16 Ibid., pp. 169–170.
- 17 Ibid., pp. 205–206.
- 18 See, for example, the 1887 translation at <http://bible.50webs.org/meiji/>.
- 19 Satō 1969, p. 1.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Satō, 1998, pp. 147–57.
- 22 Ibid., p. 151.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 Ibid., pp. 156–57.
- 25 Nakamura 1962, p. 161.
- 26 Ibid., p. 163.
- 27 Ibid., p. 164.
- 28 Satō 1998, p. 147.
- 29 Gerbert 1998, p. 71.
- 30 Satō 1998, p. 152.
- 31 Ibid., p. 147.
- 32 Ibid., p. 150.
- 33 Ibid., p. 155.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Ibid., p. 147. Surugadai is located in modern day Chiyoda ward.
- 36 Also located in modern day Chiyoda ward.
- 37 Tani 1989, pp. 318–320; Uchikawa 1976, p. 137.

## 要旨

### 都市のクリプト：佐藤春夫がE・A・ポーへ捧げた記念碑

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チャールズ・エクスリー

佐藤春夫は『田園の憂鬱』にみられるような内省的な大正ファンタジーで知られる戦前でも卓越した作家であるが、西洋文学が流行していた当時において、それを二十世紀日本を意味づける方法として試行していた。佐藤春夫の短編作品「青白い情熱」は、大正8年に『中央公論』に掲載された際には未完成とされているが、大正作家によるポーの受容や流行を考える上で再検討に値するものである。佐藤はこの小説の中で、最も彼に影響を与えたアメリカの作家ポーの『アナベル・リー』の世界を再現することによって、近代の新感覚を表現している。