

# Spectacular Tentacular: Transmedial Tentacles and Their Hegemonic Struggles in Cthulhu and Godzilla

---

Yorimitsu Hashimoto

## Abstract

Tentacular cephalopods appear regularly in film. Inspired by Hugo and Hokusai, stories of ferocious octopus attacking primates were invented. This fantasy of the Kraken was incorporated into monster movies in the 1950s with the cult of Cthulhu. Lovecraft describes a vision of the resurrection of prehistoric cephalopod monsters and reinterprets fragments from worldwide mythology. With the film *King Kong* (1933) as their distant origin, *Godzilla* (1954) and *It Came from Beneath the Sea* (1955) describe returns of monsters as recorded in ancient times. The Japanese film *King Kong vs. Godzilla* (1962) is interesting to consider in this context. Here, in a scenario possibly inspired by Japanese folklore, a huge octopus attacks King Kong, in a struggle that can be interpreted as a battle for initiative in the world of Cthulhu. Cthulhan pseudo-mythology is widely appropriated in later monster movies, although the racism is a stumbling block. In the movie *Kong: Skull Island* (2017), the monkey god returns like Cthulhu, but bites off the attacking cephalopod's tentacles. This evokes impressive scenes from both *King Kong vs. Godzilla* and *Oldboy* (2003). Here, Kong, seeming to extract Cthulhan racism, incorporates the powers of Cthulhu's intense tentacles and pseudo-mythological method.

## Keywords

Movie, Adaptation, Natural History, Folklore

*Between*, vol. X, n. 20 (Novembre/November 2020)

ISSN 2039-6597

DOI: 10.13125/2039-6597/4228



# Spectacular Tentacular: Transmedial Tentacles and their Hegemonic Struggles in Cthulhu and Godzilla

Yorimitsu Hashimoto

## **Introduction**

Octopuses often appear in films. Every time filming technology advances, from the birth of silent film, to the advent of talkies, stop motion animation and special effects, up to computer graphics, a tentacle-slinging monster arises from the deep sea or outer space to be filmed. This ongoing panorama can be called the spectacular tentacular. These tentacles, as they grope around, react instantly to their enemy or prey by attacking or withdrawing, as if driven by a will of their own. The octopus is often used as a symbol of greed, exhibiting a movement in which multiplication and expansion become their own objects. In particular, the octopus often appears in caricatures as a symbol of capitalism and imperialism. In these drawings, the face of the octopus in these caricatures expresses the entity that is accused of responsibility for the acts represented, such as a certain country or a large corporation, depicted as the source of all kinds of evil. The faces given to these enemies are generally forms of alter ego and represent unconscious anxiety or desire. Likewise, in monster movies, a huge tentacled entity lies at the bottom of the deep sea or emerges from out of dark skies and comes and toys with tiny people on land and on board ships. This formulaic narrative about the octopus can be interpreted to represent a counterattack by the unconscious (Hackett 2018).

In films and film posters, unlike the aforementioned drawings, the tentacles, with their unpredictable movements, have more importance than the face, which may not appear in a wide shot. The eyes or mouth may be seen in close-up, but in movies, which literally feature movement, the emphasis falls on the stirring tentacles. It is striking that unlike the caricatures of the octopus that peaked in the early 20th century, in late 20th century cinema, the tentacles receive the most attention. This may be related to the realisation that capitalism is not governed by any single individual or group, and no one is ultimately in charge of it. Study of the octopus tells us that although its tentacles obey top-down commands from the brain, their abundance of neurons allows them to move around freely (Godfrey-Smith 2016). The octopus thus resembles a modern corporation, and it is not surprising that the image of the octopus and its tentacles spread around the world just when modernity was covering the globe.

The global transmedial process through which the octopus became an icon is brilliantly described by Roger Caillois (1973)<sup>1</sup>. He reports that although many representations of octopuses show them neither as fierce nor as dangerous, much less as vampires, the octopus nevertheless became synonymous with sensuality and greed according to representations in Europe throughout the 19th century. The same development took place in Japan, where the octopus was anthropomorphised and loved as a foodstuff and as a goofy character. The transformation of the octopus was nothing short of a 'triumph of myth' as Caillois puts it. He concludes that the European-originated imagination 'has rallied stubborn Japan and seems to have aligned its daydreams with world mythology' (translation mine) (Caillois 1973, 148). This standardisation was not a unilateral European action, however, but rather the product of the cultural exchange with the East and Japan in particular. The representation of the octopus that spread

---

<sup>1</sup> As for the representation of the octopus, interesting cultural history books were written in English by Williams and Schweid. However, any study comparable with that of Caillois has not been published yet, probably because no English translation is available.

from Europe undeniably influenced the traditional Japanese representation. At the same time, however, European representations of the octopus were also somewhat transformed by contact with the East Asian images. Incidentally, this transformation occurred simultaneously with the critical reception and revision of the Cthulhu Mythos.

## 1. Transmedial Tentacles from Cthulhu to Nuclear Monster Movies

The classic movie *It Came from Beneath the Sea* (1955) tells the story of a giant octopus that attacks a coastal megacity. A hydrogen bomb test awakens this monster from the bottom of Mindanao. (It is no coincidence that this was the site of a fierce battle between the United States and Japan in World War II.) The monster first attacks a ship and then, after destroying the Golden Gate Bridge, enters the San Francisco harbour. As in *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* (1953), Ray Harryhausen filmed a model octopus in stop motion. To save time and labour, the octopus was given six legs, not eight. For the same reason, only a single tentacle is depicted protruding from the water to kidnap a person. Interestingly, Caillois cites an article from the *San Francisco Chronicle* (9 November 1954) to describe a scenario for the upcoming production of *Le Monstre Sous la Mer*. Although probably without having seen the film, Caillois describes it as nothing but a 'new *King Kong*', saying that a Japanese version of the film 'could have or may have had' depicted the devastation of Tokyo (Caillois 1973: 144–145). In fact, *It Came from Beneath the Sea* is quite closely related to *King Kong*, as well as to *Godzilla*.

The idea of a hydrogen bomb test that awakens a prehistoric monster is inherited from *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms*. There, giant creatures that once roamed the ancient earth form territories in the concrete jungle, asserting their dominance of the eco-system. This conception appears in Conan Doyle's *The Lost World* (1912) and its films down to *King Kong* (1933). In this group of stories, the tower, often seen as a symbol of human order, is destroyed like the Tower of Babel. *King Kong* scales the Empire State Building, and the *Rhedosaurus* destroys

the lighthouse. The giant octopus also brings down the Golden Gate Bridge and the clock tower of the Ferry Building, which symbolises the ordering of space and time according to the human scale.

It is well known that *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* influenced *Godzilla* (1954). Interestingly, Eiji Tsuburaya, the director of special effects for *Godzilla*, had been planning a movie where an octopus attacked a whale ship and a city after he had heard about a giant octopus living in the South Seas (Hanada 2006: 75). However, producer Tomoyuki Tanaka wisely chose the dinosaur-like *Godzilla* instead of an octopus.

The hidden influence of *Godzilla* on *It Came from Beneath the Sea* shows an appropriation of historical legend and myth. The Rhedosaurus in *the Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* is a prehistoric dinosaur that has survived in an unpopulated area and has no direct relationship to myth and legend. In this story, the Beast was sleeping in the Arctic ice, which matches H. P. Lovecraft's Cthulhu mythos, but the Beast is not given in detail. On the other hand, *Godzilla* is the subject of rumour before its appearance, as an old local fisherman says that this must be the legendary sea monster called *Godzilla*. (There was no tale of a dinosaur-like monster in Japan before the film.) Obviously appropriating the King Kong legend and assigning it to an island in the Pacific, folklore is fabricated to fit the film's purpose.

In *It Came from Beneath the Sea*, a scientist tells an audience that giant octopus attacks are not wild stories but historical facts. She tells of monsters, possibly based on the Kraken legend, that ravaged ships at sea and coastal towns of northern Europe over 30 years in the 13th century. An old picture that she shows half-believing soldiers and reporters shows, she says, a monster awakening and attacking a ship after the explosion of Vesuvius a resulting change in the flow of the ocean. The image is in fact called 'The Kraken Seen by the Eye of Imagination' and is taken from John Gibson's *Monsters of the Sea* (1887) (Fig. 1). Pliny, who records an octopus taking fish from a house, died at Vesuvius while trying to learn about the eruption. This episode might have inspired the screenwriter to give this explanation.

The American writer H. P. Lovecraft developed pseudo-historic horror entertainment featuring this type of monster. In his stories fragmentary and imaginary records appear to be pieced together to show that great monsters called Cthulhu, worshipped in myth and legend, could return to our world. The following epigram in the ur-text for this approach, 'Call of Cthulhu' (1928), summarises his methodology.

Of such great powers or beings there may be conceivably a survival... a survival of a hugely remote period when... consciousness was manifested, perhaps, in shapes and forms long since withdrawn before the tide of advancing humanity... forms of which poetry and legend alone have caught a flying memory and called them gods, monsters, mythical beings of all sorts and kinds... (Lovecraft 2002: 139)

This is a quotation from *The Centaur* by the British novelist Algernon Blackwood. Following Blackwood's method, this seminal Lovecraft story tells of a Cthulhu cult that believes in the future resurrection of an ancient 'pulpy, tentacled head surmounted by a grotesque and scaly body with rudimentary wings' (*ibid.*: 141). Needless to say, Lovecraft's mythology is a mere figment of his imagination, inspired by studies of folklore. However, he did seem to believe in and to have extracted a key element of previous scholarship, according to which myths and legends contain a small sliver of truth, handed down from prehistoric experiences. It is not surprising, therefore, that Lovecraft mentions J. G. Frazer's *Golden Bough* (1890), Margaret Murray's *Witch-Cult in Western Europe* (1921) and the more esoteric William Scott-Elliot's *The Story of Atlantis* (1896) and *The Lost Lemuria* (1904) in this work (*ibid.*: 142).

## 2. Intertwined Tentacles from the East and West

Just as Lovecraft's cephalopodic Cthulhu was inspired by the lore of the Kraken, the methodology of folklore studies originally derives

from natural history. It defines a geology of the imagination, without drawing a strict distinction between imaginary monsters and real animals, taken from a myriad of records and illustrations. This method has been carried over into modern representational research, including Caillois's study of the formation of myths on the octopus. He showed that false representations spread globally in spite of denials by scientific research and concludes that myth triumphs over science, following *la logique de l'imaginaire*, as indicated in the excellent subtitle of his book. There, Caillois explains that the Kraken of Norse lore was originally a huge island-like sea beast. It was not until the writings of Erik Pontoppidan, Bishop of Bergen, in the 18th century that the Kraken was created in the form we know today (Caillois 1973: 43). Pontoppidan's work was translated into English under the title *The Natural History of Norway* (1755), where a Leviathan-like Kraken was read as a cephalopod, attacking ships and pulling sailors to the bottom of the sea. However, it was not until the 19th century that this version became standard. As Caillois also notes, the modern myth of the greedy great octopus is based on the account in the French naturalist Pierre Denys de Montfort's *Histoire Naturelle Générale et Particulière des Mollusques* (1801–1802) (*ibid.*: 48). The famous iconography of the Kraken's attack on a sailing ship off of the coast of Angola in West Africa is derived from the illustrations in De Montfort's book. Illustrations based on De Montfort were published in volume 25 of the British popular book, *The Naturalist's Library*, (1860) (Fig. 2). The so-called ancient document that a scientist presents in the movie *It Came from Beneath the Sea* is nothing more than a by-product of this imaginary illustration.

In addition to the highly influential illustrations in his work, De Montfort includes testimonies of similar attacks occurring in oceans around the world. However, due to the development of biology as a science, eyewitness testimony was no longer considered evidence for the discovery of a new species discovery since the mid-19th century. The turning point here was a controversy regarding the mysterious sea monster. In 1848, the crew of HMS *Daedalus* testified to witnessing a great sea serpent off the coast of South Africa, creating a sensation due to the realistic illustration that was published in the *Illustrated London*

*News*, based on the crew's reports, but comparative anatomist Richard Owen bluntly rejected the witnesses, asserting that a creature like this was impossible from the anatomical viewpoint. This event may have cast a shadow on similar eyewitness accounts from the French corvette *Alecton*, which encountered a giant squid off of the Canary Islands in 1861. It became necessary to collect more than testimony, such as specimens or at least historical documents recording novel creatures. This transition in natural history can be seen in the work of Henry Lee, a naturalist of marine life who worked for the Brighton aquarium. Lee's *Octopus or, the 'Devil-fish' of Fiction and of Fact* (1875) is an encyclopaedic notebook incorporating an accumulation of historical and mythical records with sober scientific observations. With regard to the Kraken illustration in De Montfort's work, Lee made the careful statement that the existence of this creature was suggested by a part of a specimen that had been described and similar reports of giant cuttlefish from the East. One of his friend allegedly told him 'that he saw in a shop in China a picture of a cuttlefish embracing a junk, apparently of about 300 tons[sic] burthen, and helping itself to the sailors, as one picks gooseberries off a bush' (Lee 1875: 106). However, no such legend and/or drawings of an octopus of this nature were found in China. Even in Japan, illustrations of giant octopus-like creatures attacking ships are extremely rare. It is, therefore, highly likely that Lee's friend saw the illustration (Fig. 2) in the *Naturalist's Library* (1860) and misinterpreted the bellow-like-shaped sail of the ship as indicating a Chinese junk.

In the *Octopus*, Henry Lee quotes a passage from Laurence Oliphant's *Narrative of the Earl of Elgin's Mission to China and Japan, in the Years 1857, '58, '59* (1860) as an example of a similarly exaggerated giant octopus believed to have been seen in Japan (*ibid.*). Here, Oliphant, in the capital of Japan, went to a play where a large octopus attacked a woman swimming by the shore. However, Lee did not recognise its authenticity. Following Owen, the great sea serpent debunker, he regarded this Japanese drama to be the product of a fantasy, as along with the testimony of European divers who reported wrestling with octopuses in deep water. Owen acknowledged the existence of a hitherto unknown giant squid that washed up on shore and reported in the 1870s

but explicitly denied the existence of Kraken. Interestingly, Owen also described a case from Japan. He published a small carved figure made in Japan of a half-naked woman wrestling with a giant octopus and holding its tentacles and mouth (Owen 1881: 166–7) (Fig. 3). Owen dismissed this as an entirely invented tale, along with the story of a ferocious blood-sucking octopus that attacked fishermen on the rocks in Victor Hugo's *Les Travailleurs de la Mer* (1866). It is clear that Owen was right: this lustrous octopus was the product of human, or more precisely, male, erotic imagination.

The Japanese play, the carving and Hokusai's well-known image of the 'Octopuses and the Shell Diver' (1814) are based on the same folk tale of a brave male samurai diving to the depths to retrieve a treasure of jewels that were stolen from the king of the sea. Around the 18th century, an erotic parody version was developed that featured a female diver instead of a samurai, and Hokusai made this story into a seminal work that had such a strong impact that previous works were nearly forgotten (Suzuki 2008). Hokusai's octopus, like his Great Wave, had a wide and profound impact on writers and artists<sup>2</sup>. Since Hokusai, erotic tentacles have been seen in representations of the Kraken and giant octopuses, perhaps because such representations were free from film censorship. For example, in Ray Harryhausen's last special effects work, seen in *Clash of the Titans* (1981), the Kraken appears, even though the movie is set in ancient Greece. This huge Kraken, like a merman with four tentacle-like supple arms, tries to devour Andromeda as she is sacrificed.

Hokusai's depiction of tentacles has stimulated the imagination of countless artists, but no later eyewitnesses have given a similar account. On the other hand, after Hugo's novel *Les Travailleurs de la Mer* (1866) and Gustave Doré's illustration of a huge octopus clinging to a fisherman on the rocky shores of Brittany, many hard-hat divers have reported stories of violent tentacles that attacked them, although this type of diving had been common since the 1830s. The earliest reliable

---

<sup>2</sup> See Carbone 2013. I am grateful to Massimo Fusillo for teaching this interesting book. See also Bru 2014.

record of an octopus assault is in the diary (1839) of the British surgeon Thomas Beale. Interestingly, Beale was attacked by a giant octopus near one of the Ogasawara Islands, south of Japan, also known as a habitat of the giant squid (Hashimoto 2017: 38). Beale's prosaic anecdote, however, did not gain the influence of those of Hugo and Doré.

Like Doré, Hokusai also drew a huge belligerent octopus attacking a fisherman in his *Hokusai Gakyo* (1818). However, it was not until after Hugo's influential novel that this painting began to be replicated, in Gould's *Mythical Monsters* (1886) and elsewhere. It should be mentioned here that among the Japanese representations of the octopus are *netsuke*, a type of miniature sculpture that Owen and Lee mentioned in their works. *Netsuke* have been enthusiastically collected and exhibited all across Europe and America since the late 19th century. A central motif in *netsuke* is a monkey fighting with an octopus. *Netsuke* of this type, purchased during the latter half of the 19th century, is still held in the British Museum (Museum number: F.289, Acquisition date, 1897) (Fig. 4) and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Accession Number: 91.1.962, Bequest of Edward C. Moore, 1891) (Fig. 5). The figures may be based on a legend of Dragon King of the Sea, who sends a jellyfish to retrieve the liver of a monkey as a specific medicine for his illness (Tsuchiya 2014: 159)<sup>3</sup>. In the story, originally drawn from the story of 'The Monkey and the Crocodile' in the ancient Indian epic *Panchatantra*, the jellyfish was deceived by the wit of the monkey and failed. This jellyfish was described as having lost his bones as part of a punishment. However, this would not explain why the octopus was preferred to the jellyfish in *netsuke*. One plausible reason for this is the folk tale known as the monkey's octopus fishing, one of the earliest versions of which can be found in Kokodo's *Shinsetsu Hyaku Monogatari* [New One Hundred Supernatural Tales] (1767). According to an acquaintance of the author, a monkey was used as a bait to lure an octopus onto the rocks of the shore of a small island off the coast of Hiroshima. When a huge octopus

---

<sup>3</sup> Caillois misunderstands the story as being about an octopus (Caillois 1973: 135). As far as my research was concerned, an octopus version has not been found.

appeared and tried to capture the monkey with its tentacles, a large group of monkeys suddenly appeared and pulled the octopus to shore like fishermen and ate it. This strange story spread all across Japan like a folk tale, and a variation appeared where a man who helps a drowning monkey from an octopus receives a reward for this. Many *netsuke* combining an octopus and a monkey seem to have been inspired by this story in the late 19th century.

The growing number of accounts from many sources about violent octopuses or squid is likely related to the fear evoked by this *netsuke* and Hugo's novel. Owen considered these reports to be artists' falsifications, but Lee, following Owen's work, held that the octopus could be dangerous for bathers and divers. In *Sea Monsters Unmasked* (1883), Lee reported two cases: 'an Indian woman' who was caught by an octopus and drowned in Oregon and a story he heard from a friend in 1875 that a native man, with an octopus clamped to his face, was drowned in the Hervey Islands in the South Pacific (Lee 1883: 25–6). The tales of the hard-hat divers, however, could mostly be sourced to only two divers' experiences, those of Isaac Smale, working at the bottom of the Moyne River in Australia in 1879, and H. Palmer, who dove near Cape Town, South Africa, in 1905 (Pitt-Kethley 1905: 59–61). True or not, their reports and related stories, accompanied with realistic illustrations, circulated across the world to such an extent that some of the articles were translated into Japanese, and other divers reported similar experiences.

Less well-founded descriptions from natural history have given rise to experiences that spread and reinforced the myth. This process can be seen in an adventure story by Louis de Rougemont, which became a sensation in 1898, with even Hemingway admitting its broadly appealing adventure traits in 'Weird, Wild Adventures of Some of Our Modern Amateur Impostors' (1923). De Rougemont contributed his experiences to *Wide World Magazine*, which was full of illustrations. In his memoir, he reported having been a castaway on an island in the South Sea and having long reigned as king before returning to London. As could have been predicted, all of these episodes, including one of a local swimmer who was drowned by a huge octopus (De Rougemont 1898: 455) (Fig. 6), were fiction, cut-and-paste work from travelogues

and magazines. Since its publication, disputes had been prevalent regarding its authenticity, especially in the *Daily Chronicle*. Some criticised the octopus incident as being 'almost identical with one current in the old Penny Magazine', whereas others cited, of all things, the Kraken in De Montfort and said that this creature was the size of an infant by comparison (Burton 2000: 22). Interestingly, De Rougemont's adventure story was known in Japan, where the self-proclaimed adventurer Otomatsu Kodama, whether inspired by De Rougemont or not, claimed that he had wrestled with an octopus as tall as himself on the rocky shores of Celebes Island (Kodama 1910: 80–83) (Fig. 7).

It may be necessary to add that illustrations based on a Japanese naturalist's poorly grounded description also strengthened the Kraken myth in Europe. In *Sea Monsters Unmasked* (1883), Henry Lee denied the existence of a great sea serpent but thought that a Kraken-like monster was probably only an embellishment of the giant squid, based on sightings or specimens. To support this, Lee referred to two drawings taken from a Japanese book of natural history. One presented a fisherman on a boat cutting off the stretching tentacle of a giant octopus. The other depicted an extremely long and thick tentacle hanging from the eaves of a fish shop and reaching to the ground. Lee admitted that the drawings might not be exaggerated but concluded that it was uncertain whether the fisherman was telling the truth, and the existence of the tentacle would not rule out the possibility of a longer length of the appendage of a giant squid (Lee 1883: 28–9). However, these pictures also strengthened the Kraken myth, and the illustrator John Tenniel for instance, adapted them for use in a caricature published in *Punch* (Hashimoto 2017: 41–2).

Interestingly, Kimura's natural history played a similar role in Japan to that of his contemporary De Montfort's book. In *Nihon Sankai Meisan Zue* [Land and Sea Products in Japan] (1799), Kokyo Kimura described a huge, fierce octopus that not only fed on cattle and horses but also fishermen, capturing them by overturning their boats<sup>4</sup>. Its

---

<sup>4</sup> Subsequent natural history works, such as Ranzan Ono's *Honzo Komoku Keimo* [Dictated Compendium of Materia Medica] (1803) described the giant

tentacles supposedly sucked blood out of a person so quickly that losing consciousness would be instantaneous. According to Kimura, fishermen would pretend to sleep lying in a boat until the octopus would stretch its tentacles and drag him into the deep, and he would cut it off at that moment. This method is far from realistic and may be founded on the strange story of the monkeys who goes octopus fishing using a decoy. The iconography and discourse of the greedy giant octopus, which had never been previously seen in Japan, began with Kimura. The impact of this was, however, limited compared with that of De Montfort. One of the few examples is *Syunkan Sozu Shima Monotogatari* [The Story of Priest Shunkan's Banishment to an Island] (1808), written by Bakin, a popular writer, and illustrated by Toyohiro (Fig. 8). There are very few such cases, and it is extremely unlikely that the aforementioned friend of Oliphant would have seen it in China.

One reason for this is that the Japanese government prohibited civilian voyages on the open sea, and few novels depicted oceangoing at that time. The one exception to this is Bakin. He also wrote the novel *Chinsetsu Yumiharizuki* [Tales of the Crescent Moon] (1811), in which the castaway hero builds a kingdom in the South Seas after being rescued from a shipwrecked ship by a sea monster (Fig. 9). Hokusai, who did the illustrations, seems to have drawn images from books imported from the Netherlands, the only European country then permitted to trade with Japan. According to the art historian Tsuji, the main source was likely a pike-perch illustration in Francis Willughby's *Historia Piscium* (1686) (Fig. 10), and the pattern of the monster was adapted from an image of a rhinoceros in John Jonston's *Historiae Naturalis de Insectis* (1653) (Tsuji 2005: 13–4). Possibly because of its popular seafood tradition, images of sea monsters are rarely seen in Japanese isles.

---

ferocious octopus in light of Kimura's description. As Caillois points out, Alcide D'Orbigny requested Stanis Julian to translate Ono's article. In *Histoire Naturelle, Générale et Particulière des Céphalopodes Acétabuifères Viants, et Fossiles* (1839), D'Orbigny cited the article and pointed out the similarities with ancient Greek and Roman anecdotes although Ono's article seems to have received little attention. See Caillois 1973: 131.

Hokusai, therefore, may have sought out foreign images of the uncanny for inspiration. Kimura's description of the greedy octopus could have been influenced by cultural exchange with Europe, although no plausible book or image has yet been found so far. In any case, the image in Kimura's book is likely one of the earliest images of a colossal vampire octopus in Japan. Kimura's description and illustration were passed down and appeared in a series called 'Dainippon Bussan Zue' [Illustration of Land and Sea Products in Japan] (1877) (Fig. 11). This indirectly indicates that there were no other expressions of an octopus attacking a ship at that time in Japan.

### **3. Self-eating Tentacles After the Hegemonic Struggle**

In Europe, mock documentary-like novels using a dramatic monologue style and describing the assault of a giant cephalopod became more widespread in the latter half of the 19th century, although or even because Owen and Lee dismissed the personal testimonies that had been published as biologically invalid. In popular literature, such as Lovecraft's Cthulhu mythos, there is a very high affinity to natural history and folklore. The testimony of a giant cephalopod witnessed by the crew of the French corvette *Alecton* in 1861 was, for instance, mentioned in Jules Verne's *Vingt Mille Lieues sous les Mers* (1870), in which a giant sea monster's assault and the accompanying illustrations spread and strengthened the myth of the Kraken. Interestingly, the fictional submarine *Nautilus* is used to explain reports of marine accidents that are suspected of having been the result of the attack of a monster: its searchlights could be mistaken for a monster's eyes. Although science denies the existence of a marine monster that assaults ships, the accomplishments of science are themselves attacked by Kraken-like cephalopods. The scientific refutation of the Kraken's existence gave birth to a new Kraken fantasy, with H. G. Wells's *War of the Worlds* (1898) being a perfect example. The octopus-shaped Martians are described as vampires who, without wasting energy on digestion, inject fresh blood into their veins, living in a giant tripod spacecraft made by their higher intelligence, undoubtedly machine versions of the

Kraken. Thus, it is no wonder that the tripods are depicted as attacking a ferry with multiple tentacle-like arms protruding from the sea and seizing the passengers in the movie *War of the Worlds* (2005) even though Wells did not have a corresponding scene in his original novel.

Similarly, past reports, such as the mystery of the *Mary Celeste*, were reinterpreted. At the beginning of the 20th century, it was recalled that this ship was drifting in 1872 with no one on board, due to a huge carnivorous cephalopod such as the Kraken. In 1904, the British author J. L. Hornibrook first connected the Kraken fantasy with the abandoned ship mystery and imagined that the following might have occurred (Begg 2014: 102).

Suddenly a huge octopus rises from the deep and rearing one of its terrible arms aloft encircles the helmsman. His yells bring every soul on board rushing on deck. One by one they are caught by the waving, wriggling arms and swept overboard. Then, freighted with its living load, the monster slowly sinks into the deep again, leaving no traces of its attack. (Hornibrook 1904: 672).

William Hope Hodgson, a writer adored by Lovecraft, described numerous similar maritime horror stories. One typical example is 'The Thing in the Weeds' (1912), which describes how a giant tentacled monster captures the crew of a ship, and the abandoned ship drifts in the Sargasso Sea. Lovecraft's 'Call of Cthulhu' adopted Hodgson's pseudo-memoir style, quoting supposed newspaper articles about a sailor attacked by Cthulhu. The name of the ship *Alert* might be a distant echo of the *Alecton*.

Ironically, this metaphor of the Kraken was occasionally used to describe Oriental masterminds embodying the yellow peril, although the carnivorous cephalopod fantasy was amplified by exchanges with

Japan. Sax Rohmer's first instalment of the Fu-Manchu series describes the British Isles threatened by a Kraken-like Chinese villain<sup>5</sup>.

[W]e who knew the reality of the danger knew that a veritable octopus had fastened upon England—a yellow octopus whose head was that of Dr Fu-Manchu, whose tentacles were dacoity, thuggee, modes of death, secret and swift, which in the darkness plucked men from life and left no clue behind. (Rohmer 1913: 250)

Probably due to an association with the stereotypical bald head wearing a queue, the image of the yellow peril as an oriental octopus was inherited by the moving pictures. In the American silent movie *The Trail of the Octopus* (1919), for instance, a Chinese secret society is depicted using an octopus, and an impressive allegorical scene appears: a huge cephalopod strangling a Caucasian man and woman with its tentacles. The prototype for this may be Phil May's 'Mongolian Octopus: His Grip on Australia' (1886), published in the *Bulletin*, the Australian counterpart of the *Punch*. In this anti-Chinese immigration cartoon, a Chinese-faced octopus is spreading its tentacles, labelled gambling and drugs, across Caucasian men and women. Following and strengthening this connotation, this archetypal oriental villain tries to sink his enemy into a pit with a ferocious, huge octopus in the American drama *The Drums of Fu-Manchu* (1940). This association culminated in Frank Capra's propaganda movie *Know Your Enemy: Japan* (1945), in which the Disney company provided an animated explanation of Japanese imperialism. Intelligently representing the Japanese slogan Hakko Ichiu [Eight Corners of the World under One Roof] by a giant, Japanese-faced, eight-armed octopus, Japan is depicted as using a knife in each tentacle to expand its territory. It is necessary to add that the image of the Oriental octopus was widely seen in yellow peril propaganda, but this was not as widespread as the many representations of the Kraken.

---

<sup>5</sup> In America, octopus as a symbol of monopoly was appropriated to intensify Anti-Asian xenophobia. As for the process on how class conflict was racialised and sexualised, see Tchen 2014: 1–5; 14–15; 349–353.

Drawing a devil fish as the enemy itself was not limited to Asia. Following Hokusai and Hugo, caricatures featuring tentacled monsters mushroomed and spread across the world, beginning at the turn of the 19th century to the 1940s, in which nearly all European powers, many American monopolies and immigrants of every nation were demonised without any reference to or connotation of Orientalism (Hashimoto 2015).

One movie about a giant squid won the Oscar for Best Visual Effects but had nothing to do with the Orient. This movie, *Reap the Wild Wind* (1942), is set in the Caribbean Sea around the 19th century, where two hard-hat divers are attacked by an octopus as they try to salvage gold nuggets from a sunken ship. This scene is a transmedial adaptation of old, worn-out stories published in Victorian popular illustrated magazines. The movie presents pirates who intentionally wreck and sink a ship. Working with an unscrupulous lawyer, the captain illegally receives an insurance pay-out but then suffers from the stings of conscience. In order to compensate for his sin, he dives to the bottom of the sea to take back the gold and helps his companion diver by sacrificing himself to the tentacles of a monster, possibly as a metaphor of his unconscious guilt or his reconciliation with life. Incidentally, at the beginning of the movie, one tentacle briefly appears and tries to drag a monkey into the deep, making the characters and the audience aware of the danger of the giant squid. Perhaps coincidentally, this repeats the monkey from Japanese folklore and *netsuke*. In 1948, *Wake of the Red Witch* was produced, a similar movie featuring another pirate suffering from guilt and finally following the fate of a sunken ship. This movie is set in the South Pacific, and in it, a cephalopod attacks local divers, although they are not hard-hat divers. In spite of its differences from *Reap the Wild Wind*, *Wake of the Red Witch* is also a transmedial adaptation of a prototype from elsewhere. The cephalopod stretching its tentacles out to reach local fishermen in the South Pacific is reminiscent of the anecdote reported by Henry Lee and a tale narrated by De Rougemont. It is not strange, therefore, to note that the shipping company's president in this movie rules the island as a king and witnesses a tentacle attack that is exactly like the one in De Rougemont's memoir.

The gigantic belligerent octopus that Eiji Tsuburaya wished to make into a movie is highly likely to be based on images that have been exchanged and exaggerated across the world since the 19th century and before. After the success of *Godzilla*, Tsuburaya finally obtained the opportunity to film a massive octopus rampage. That is *Kingu Kongu tai Gojira* [King Kong vs. *Godzilla*] (1962). Perhaps competing with the models of tentacles from the monster in the Academy award-winning *Reap the Wild Wind* (1942) and *It Came from Beneath the Sea*, Tsuburaya filmed not only a monster model but also a real octopus. Placing his myth on an isolated island that worshipped King Kong as a god, Tsuburaya also adopted two Japanese folk tales: one, where a monkey outwitted the eight-legged Mollusca and the other, where Shojo, an orangutan-like hairy monster appears in a fishing village and becomes heavily intoxicated by drinking alcohol. In this movie, a carnivorous giant octopus comes ashore on an island in the South Pacific, and its tentacles grasp a hut, searching for a young mother and child. Then King Kong, the god of the island, appears from the mountain and beats the octopus. Then, he finds a red liquid in the hut, gulps it down and falls asleep. Following previous transmedial representations of octopuses, such as those in Victorian magazines, Japanese *netsuke* and American movies, the foreign yet familiar scenes of King Kong's struggle with a gigantic octopus made a significant impression and acceptance outside of Japan. Trying to make another hit, the movie company Toho made a number of similar movies featuring cephalopods but had no success at first. *Furankenshutain tai Baragon* [Frankenstein Conquers the World] (1965) might be considered noteworthy because it repeated the fight of the same monkey with an octopus, although King Kong was replaced, possibly due to copyright issues, with Frankenstein. This giant furry Kong-like (contrary to its name) monster wanders by a lake in the mountains, and a huge octopus strikes out and drags him into the water. Although the octopus only lives in the sea, the movie makers might have considered it necessary to show it fighting even if it was in an improbable setting.

The simian struggle with a cephalopod, a variant of spectacular tentacular, was passed down to the makers of *Kong: Skull Island* (2017).

Interestingly, this reboot has a greater affinity with the classic *Godzilla* than with the *King Kong* of 1933, portraying Kong as *Godzilla*-like malignant god and appropriating 'The Call of Cthulhu'. Piecing together murals and oral tradition in an indigenous village, this film presents a future resurrection of the gods and their hegemonic battles, a typical spectacular tentacular scene. One of the feuding enemies is a giant octopus, which sticks out its tentacles from the sea and drags Kong into the water. This scene neatly combines, inherits and updates the Kraken-like cephalopod of American movies and the *King Kong* of Japanese films. Just as the violent octopus fantasy was amplified as it passed between Japan and Europe, the tentacled monster movies were also made, which were inspired and appropriated in both Japan and the United States. This could indicate a battle for which movie could most impressively represent and employ the nerve-racking tentacles during the age defined by anxiety about the propagation of the nuclear bomb and modern capitalism. This battle for initiative might have been compromised by the skilful shooting presented in *Kong*. This reconciliation is suggested in the movie, where two World War II fighter pilots, one from America and one from Japan, who happen to land on Skull Island, fight first but then live peacefully, adoring the great Kong. The Japanese pilot dies quickly, and the American uses his sword to fight the monsters on the island, which, with the construction of an evacuation boat using a modified American P-51 Mustang and the engine of the Japanese Zero fighter, is a clear indication of Kong's hybrid nature.

Of particular note is the twist given to the apparent homage to the Japanese appropriation of *King Kong*. Unlike the 1962 movie, Kong here, after defeating the tentacled monster, eats the torn but still moving tentacles. In the Japanese folk lore, monkeys gather to battle the octopus to obtain food, but the actual scene of eating is generally not depicted. This scene should be compared with the South Korean movie *Oldboy* (2003), which features a man who is suddenly kidnapped and then released after 15 years' solitary imprisonment and learns a shocking truth. The movie was favourably received in America and was remade in 2013 by Spike Lee, although the octopus only appears in an aquarium

in a Chinese restaurant. The title and setting of the Korean *Oldboy* are based on a Japanese 1998 manga, but the movie changes the motive for the imprisonment and adds an inspiring scene where an octopus is eaten. Here, the man eats raw octopus at a sushi bar, thrusting its legs into his mouth after being released from confinement into the city. Whole raw octopus is not eaten in Japan or Korea, and this scene might be an exaggeration of the *san-nakji*, a smaller slice of raw octopus. The scene where Kong eats the octopus has been considered to be a distant echo of *san-nakji*<sup>6</sup>.

However, the importance of this scene is not in any reflection of the eating habits of Korea or Japan. In *Oldboy*, the main character orders something alive from a female cook. This woman is actually, unknown to him, his daughter, and this encounter eventually leads to incest between the two. The octopus's autophagy should be mentioned here. It is well known that the octopus eats its own legs when trapped or under stress. Autophagy and incest both cross taboos, and when the daughter offers raw octopus to her father, this may be a good indication of the upcoming incest. For this reason, the man, after he learns the truth, cuts out his tongue, in contrast to Oedipus's self-blinding, to prevent himself from tasting food. Kong's eating of the tentacles, therefore, could be interpreted from a mythological perspective. Here, Kong is resurrected like Cthulhu, and Cthulhu-like cephalopods may be seen as a kind of parenticide. As with the parricide or cannibalism imagined by Freud in *Totem and Taboo* (1913), Kong could acquire part of Cthulhu's strength by devouring their moving tentacles.

The Kraken continues to be represented in film, such as in *Pirates of the Caribbean*. However, as with Captain Jack Sparrow's pirate ship, which is represented as a multinational and multicultural society,

---

<sup>6</sup> I am grateful to Park Soo-jung for teaching me about information on Korean social networks and journalism.

racism is carefully removed from the recent Kraken or Cthulhu stories<sup>7</sup>. Two examples of this will suffice. One is *Hotel Transylvania 3: Summer Vacation* (2018). Here, Van Helsing, obsessed with the extermination of a monster, awakens the Kraken to attack monstrous passengers on cruise ships. After all the trouble he goes to, however, the Kraken is not awakened, and Van Helsing's great-granddaughter marries Dracula. In another example, *Aquaman* (2018) does not depict an authentic Atlantean royal descendant but instead a half-Atlantean and half-human that awakens and controls the Kraken.

Therefore, the Godzilla series also comes to represent Godzilla as a once and future god, as with the Cthulhu cult. In *Shin Godzilla* (2016), a new-born Godzilla appears with a long tail sticking out of the sea like a tentacle. Not only is this an homage but also suggests that Godzilla is part of the Cthulhu mythos. In the American movie *Godzilla: King of the Monsters* (2019), Godzilla and other monsters are shown as recorded in myths and murals around the world, as with the epigram to 'Call of Cthulhu'. Of course, the symbolism of Godzilla as a metaphor for the atom bomb or nuclear power cannot be ignored. In *Shin Godzilla*, the monster is filmed in a way that evokes a nuclear power plant in meltdown. In *Godzilla: King of the Monsters* (2019), by contrast, Dr Serizawa, who lost his father to the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima, sacrifices his own life to detonate a nuclear bomb to revive Godzilla. This suggests that for audiences to enjoy the new Godzilla, it is necessary to forget the old negative association that Godzilla has as a symbol of the atomic bomb. It should not be overlooked that highlighting Godzilla's divine power and existence as a version of the Cthulhu myth is in the interest of both America and Japan to remove this vexing question of nuclear power and the atom bomb and humanity's limits.

The presence of a Chinese female scientist in *Godzilla: King of the Monsters* is interesting in relation to the Cthulhu myth. This character

---

<sup>7</sup> It can be compared with American author Victor LaValle's novel *The Ballad of Black Tom* (2016), a brilliant adaptation of Lovecraft's other Cthulhu tale, 'The Horror at Red Hook' (1925) being infamous for its racism.

collects and identifies images from myths of monsters from across the globe. As the direct descendant of a female scientist in *It Came from Beneath the Sea*, she calls dragons sacred beings that represent wisdom and power and are not, as in the West, simply to be slain. One of the several images she shows at this point is Kunisada's Shirakikumar (1861) (Fig. 12). This wood block print should be compared with the illustration (Fig. 1) from *It Came from Beneath the Sea*. The island-like sea monster that carries the shipwrecked hero is, in fact, exactly the same as that in the original description of the Kraken that Olaus Magnus wrote down. This sea beast is nothing more than an appropriation of Hokusai's drawing, based on the pike-perch (Figs. 9 and 10). These two illustrations and movies are the most eloquent examples of the Kraken fantasy, as it has merged with the Cthulhu cult and has been part of a sophisticated exchange between East and West.

## Conclusions

The appearance of monsters with tentacles in movies inherits and develops the Kraken fantasy, which has been present since the 19th century. The story and iconography of giant cephalopods like the Kraken attacking ships and bathers developed throughout the 19th century, with versions of stories interacting with each other in Europe and Japan through the natural history records of De Montfort and Kimura. The eyewitness reports and strange stories of octopus attacks on primates spread under the influence of Hugo and Hokusai. Attacks on divers, a variation on this, were inherited by movies, for instance in the form of astronauts being attacked by unknown creatures in the darkness of space. It is an interesting coincidence that the Kraken fantasy flourished during the latter half of the 19th century, when the unconsciousness was being articulated and discovered.

The Kraken fantasy was strengthened and disseminated through Lovecraft's imagination of prehistoric cephalopod-like gods. The Kraken was favoured in horror literature as an explanation for drifting ships such as the *Mary Celeste*, and the story of these myths and reinterpretations of history were spread around the world thanks to

Lovecraft's 'Call of Cthulhu'. Inspired by folklore, Lovecraft sought to reconstruct prehistoric monsters from fragments of myths and legends scattered all over the world, taking them to suggest the return of these gods. His method was appropriated by monster movies made on both sides of the Pacific in the 1950s. In *Godzilla* and *It Came from Beneath the Sea*, monsters are not the primitive gods worshipped by primitive people, as in *King Kong* (1933). They are drawn from fictional lore and records and feared as unknown supernatural powers. Japan's *King Kong vs. Godzilla* is a remarkable movie, in that the Cthulhu-like gods meet and fight. In the movie, Eiji Tsuburaya, who had planned a Kraken-like monster movie before *Godzilla* was created, finally filmed his octopus idea. The scene where the octopus attacks King Kong is based on folklore of monkeys fishing for octopus, as presented in carved miniature.

These heterogeneous movies took versions of Lovecraft's 'Call of Cthulhu', which describes a half-supernatural and half-human hybrid as a squalid monster. In this movie, *Kong: Skull Island*, it is suggestive that the monkey god, attacked by a cephalopod, eats its own tentacles. This is not merely an homage to East Asian films like *King Kong vs. Godzilla* and *Oldboy*. Kong, resurrected like Cthulhu, takes the flesh and power of the cephalopod Cthulhu. This is parallel to a scene in *Godzilla: King of the Monsters* in which Godzilla defeats King Ghidorah with its tentacle-like snake heads. Incidentally, in 2020, the film *Godzilla vs. Kong* was produced in America. A circle of Kraken fantasies exchanged between East and West, where giant cephalopods attacked primates, and a monster movie based on the Cthulhu cult, was closed here. It is true that the octopus does not appear in *Godzilla vs. Kong*. However, the fantasy and images of Kraken-related monsters had already been deeply incorporated into monster movies since *King Kong*. As Caillois predicts, these representations have been accepted so widely via 'multiple, incessant and almost simultaneous communications' that it is nearly impossible to find 'the bland of the origin' (Caillois 1973: 148). The reception of the European-originated imagination, however, was not unanimous. It underwent a unique metamorphosis and hybridisation as

Yorimitsu Hashimoto, *Spectacular Tentacular*

it critically took on the controversial Cthulhu mythology from America and mingled it with representations of the Far East.

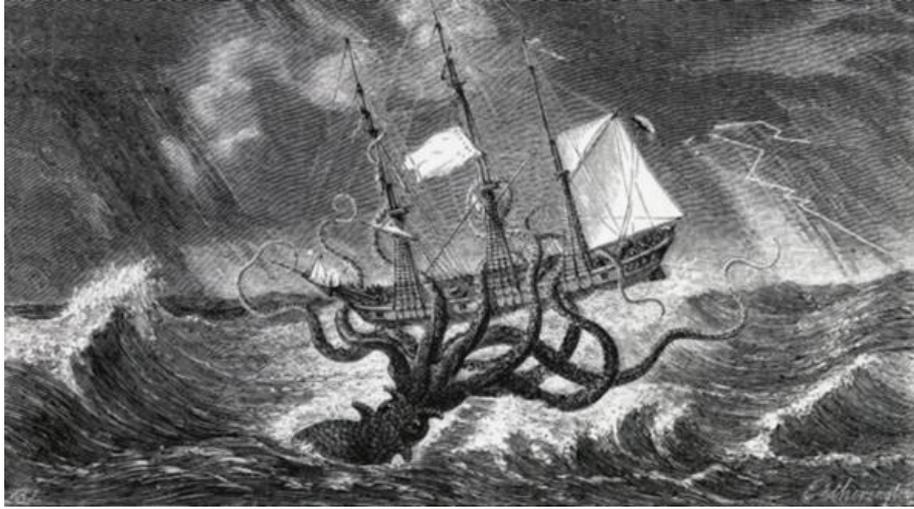


Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7

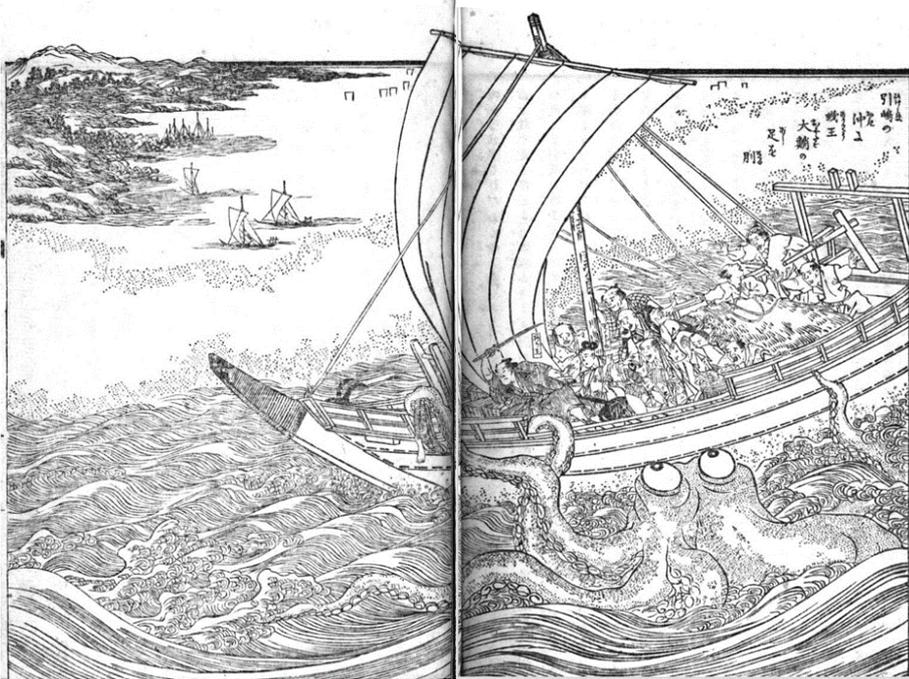


Fig. 8



Fig. 9

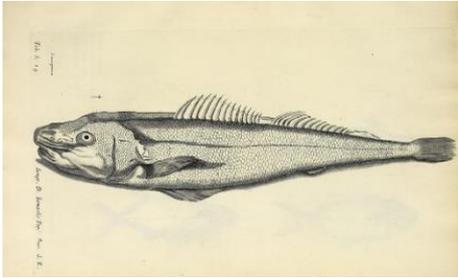


Fig. 10



Fig. 11



Fig. 12

## Works Cited

- Begg, Paul, *Mary Celeste: The Greatest Mystery of the Sea*, London, Routledge, 2014.
- Bru, Ricard, *Erotic Japonisme: The Influence of Japanese Sexual Imagery on Western Art*, Leiden, Hotei Publishing, 2014.
- Burton, Sarah, *Impostors: Six Kinds of Liar*, London, Viking, 2000.
- Caillois, Roger, *La Pieuvre: Essai sur la Logique de L'imaginaire*, Paris, La Table Ronde, 1973.
- Marco Benoît Carbone, *Tentacle Erotica: Orrore, Seduzione, Immaginari Pornografici*, Milano, Mimesis, 2013.
- Godfrey-Smith, Peter, *Other Minds: The Octopus, the Sea, and the Deep Origins of Consciousness*, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2016.
- Hackett, Jon – Harrington, Seán, *Beasts of the Deep: Sea Creatures and Popular Culture*, East Barnet, J. Libbey Pub., 2018.
- Hanada, Toshinori, *Okinawa ha Gojira ka [Is Okinawa Godzilla?]*, Tokyo, Hana Shoin, 2006.
- Hahsimoto, Yorimitsu, "Pirates, Piracy and Octopus: From Multi-Armed Monster to Model Minority?", *A Pirate's View of World History: A Reversed Perception of the Order of Things from a Global Perspective*, Ed. Shigemi Inaga, Kyoto, International Research Center for Japanese Studies, 2017.
- Hashimoto, Yorimitsu, "W. T. Stead as Global Circulator of the Caricatures", *Caricatures and Cartoons, 1890-1905. Vol 1*, Ed. Yorimitsu Hashimoto, Tokyo, Edition Synapse, 2015.
- Hornibrook, J. L., "The Case of the 'Mary Celeste': an Ocean Mystery", *Chamber's Journal*, 17 September, 1904.
- Kodama, Otomatsu, *Nanyo [South Seas]*, Tokyo, Kokado, 1910.
- Lee, Henry, *Octopus or, the 'Devil-fish' of Fiction and of Fact*, Chapman and Hall, 1875.
- Lee, Henry, *Sea Monsters Unmasked*, William Clowes and Sons, 1883.
- Lovecraft, H. P., *The Call of Cthulhu and Other Weird Stories*, London, Penguin Books, 2002.
- Owen, Richard, "Descriptions of Some New and Rare Cephalopoda. Part II", *Transactions of the Zoological Society of London*, 11.1, 1881.

- Pitt-Kethley, Victor, "The Diver and the Devil-Fish", *Wide World Magazine*, 15, 1905 May.
- Rohmer, Sax, *The Mystery of Dr. Fu-Manchu*, London, Methuen, 1913.
- De Rougemont, Louis, "The Adventures of Louis De Rougemont", *Wide World Magazine*, 1, September, 1898.
- Schweid, Richard, *Octopus*, London, Reaktion, 2014.
- Suzuki, Kenko, "Ama ni Karamitsuku Tako no Keihu to Gui" ["Image Genealogy and Allegory in the Pictures of the Octopus Entwining around a Female Diver"], *Japan Review: Bulletin of International Research Center for Japanese Studies*, 38, 2008:13-51.
- Tchen, John Kuo Wei - Yeats, Dylan, Ed. *Yellow Peril! An Archive of Anti-Asian Fear*, London, Verso, 2014
- Tsuchiya, Noriko, *Netsuke*, London, British Museum, 2014.
- Tsuji, Nobuo, *Kiso no Zuhu [Illustrations of Eccentricity]*, Tokyo, Chikuma, 2005.
- Williams, Wendy, *Kraken: The Curious, Exciting and Slightly Disturbing Science of Squid*, New York, Abrams Image, 2010

## Filmography

- The Trail of the Octopus*, Dir. Duke Worne, America, 1919.
- The Drums of Fu Manchu*, Dir. John English, William Witney, America, 1940.
- Reap the Wild Wind*, Dir. Cecil B. DeMille, America, 1942.
- Know Your Enemy: Japan*, Dir. Frank Capra, America, 1945.
- Wake of the Red Witch*, Dir. Edward Ludwig, America, 1948.
- The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms*, Dir. Eugène Lourié, America, 1953.
- Godzilla*, Dir. Ishiro Honda, Japan, 1954.
- It Came from beneath the Sea*, Dir. Robert Gordon, America, 1955.
- Kingu Kongu tai Gojira [King Kong vs. Godzilla]*, Dir. Ishiro Honda, Japan, 1962.
- Furankenshutain tai Baragon [Frankenstein Conquers the World]*, Dir. Ishiro Honda, Japan, 1965.
- Clash of the Titans*, Dir. Desmond Davis, Australia, America, 1981
- Oldboy*, Dir. Park Chan-wook, South Korea, 2003.

Yorimitsu Hashimoto, *Spectacular Tentacular*

*Shin Godzilla* [*Godzilla: Resurgence*], Dir. Hideaki Anno, Japan, 2016.  
*Godzilla: King of the Monsters*, Dir. Michael Dougherty, America, Japan,  
China, Mexico, 2019.

## The Author

### Yorimitsu Hashimoto

Professor (Comparative Literature and Culture), School of Letters,  
Osaka University, Japan. Major Publications in English: "An Irish  
Theosophist's Pan-Asianism or Fant-asia? James Cousins and  
Gurcharan Singh" in Hans Martin Krämer, Julian Strube (eds.),  
*Theosophy across Boundaries* (Albany: State University of New York Press,  
2020). *Caricatures and Cartoons, 1921–1930*, 3 volumes (Tokyo: Edition  
Synapse, 2018). *Yellow Peril: Collection of Historical Sources*, 4 volumes  
(Tokyo: Edition Synapse, 2012).

Email: [hsmt@let.osaka-u.ac.jp](mailto:hsmt@let.osaka-u.ac.jp)

## The Article

Date sent: 15/07/2020

Date accepted: 20/10/2020

Date published: 30/11/2020

## How to cite this article

Hashimoto, Yorimitsu, "Spectacular Tentacular: Transmedial Tentacles  
and Their Hegemonic Struggles in Cthulhu and Godzilla",  
*Transmediality / Intermediality / Crossmediality: Problems of Definition*, Eds.  
H.-J. Backe – M.Fusillo – M. Lino, with the focus section *Intermedial  
Dante: Reception, Appropriation, Metamorphosis*, Eds. C. Fischer – M.  
Petricola., *Between*, X.20 (2020).