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| Izumi Kyōka (1873-1939) |
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| Izumi Kyōka was a novelist and shimpa playwright whose plays provided the heart of the shimpa repertory and demonstrated a new model for dramatic literature. Izumi’s work tended towards anti-naturalism, with supernatural elements, romanticism, and a yearning for the pre-modern past. His plays represent a transitional form from traditional to modern Japanese theatre.  Izumi emerged in the 1890s as a novelist and short story author. Other writers adapted Izumi’s novels for the shimpa stage, evoking the Tokugawa era while also embracing the mood and modes of Meiji and Taisho Japan. Most notably, Kawakami Otojiro adapted Izumi’s 1894 novel *Giketsu kyōketsu* (Loyal Blood, Valiant Blood) as *Taki no shiraito*, the first full-fledged shimpa adaptation of a popular novel. It remains shinpa’s and Izumi’s most successful drama. The floodgates opened on a series of stage adaptations of popular literature. A dozen plays adapted from Izumi’s fiction, including *Tatsumi kōdan* (A Tale of the Southwest Quarter, 1900), *Tsuya monogatari* (The Virgin’s Tale, 1906), *Shirasagi* (The White Heron, 1910) and *Keiko ōgi* (The Practice Fan, 1912). Izumi’s novels tended towards stories of young men in tragic relationships with female entertainers. Strong maternal figures in these stories can be traced back to his mother dying when he was ten. Izumi received no royalties from these adaptations, but they brought him fame and public interest, which revived his career. |
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| Further reading:  (Keene)  (Poulton) |