

**On Cats, Journeys, and Homes. Feline Portraits in Two Japanese Novels:
Hiraide Takashi's *Neko no Kyaku* (*The Guest Cat*) and Arikawa Hiro's
Tabineko Ripōto (*The Travelling Cat Chronicles*)**

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Abstract: *The aim of the present study is that of analyzing the depictions of cats in two contemporary Japanese novels, namely Hiraide Takashi's (b. 1950) 『猫の客』 (Neko no Kyaku) (first published in 2001; English title: The Guest Cat) and Arikawa Hiro's (b. 1972) 『旅猫リポート』 (Tabineko Ripōto) (first published in 2012; English title: The Travelling Cat Chronicles). I will first present the place of cats in Japanese culture and refer to their various representations in Japanese literature. Then I will investigate how the cat – which, in the case of the above-mentioned two novels, appears as either being on the road to another place or in a specific location – was portrayed in the literary works of Hiraide and Arikawa. In addition, I will take into consideration the human-feline relationships that are illustrated in them, which develop into intimate, spiritual ones, and explore the feline behavior as depicted in the presence of human beings.*

Keywords: *Hiraide Takashi, Arikawa Hiro, Japanese literature, cat, human-feline relationship, intimacy.*