

## Miyazaki in different world, without regret

Kyodo News

Serial killer Tsutomu Miyazaki went to the gallows Tuesday without ever apologizing or expressing regret for the murders of four small girls in 1988 and 1989.

He made bizarre remarks about his crimes in court and maintained his innocence to the few people he had contact with since being arrested 19 years ago.

Miyazaki abducted four girls aged 4 to 7 in Tokyo and Saitama Prefecture, strangled them and mutilated their corpses. He was arrested in 1989, and his death sentence was finalized by the Supreme Court in 2006 after a 16-year legal battle.

The top court said Miyazaki abducted and killed the four girls "to satisfy his sexual desire and appetite to own videotapes with footage of corpses."

"It feels like I did it in a dream from which I have not awakened," he told the Tokyo District Court when his trial opened in March 1990, denying an intent to kill.

Miyazaki is believed to have refused to meet most of the people who sought to visit him during his captivity, but he kept sending letters to a monthly magazine publisher, portions of which were later published.

Just before the Supreme Court ruling, he sent a letter to Kyodo News claiming he was "innocent" and thought he "did a good thing."

On the day of the Supreme Court decision, Miyazaki met with a clinical psychologist at the Tokyo Detention House. When he was told his sentence had been finalized, he reportedly said, "I will soon be found innocent."

In a book he wrote that was published one month later, Miyazaki criticized the Supreme Court decision as "ridiculous" and claimed the wide coverage of the ruling was proof "that I am popular."

Later, in a letter addressed to the editor of the monthly magazine, Miyazaki wrote that "execution by hanging is scary and cruel" and should be replaced by lethal injection — an indication that he was aware he was going to hang.

His mental competency was a key focus of the 16-year trial process.

He underwent two psychiatric examinations and three evaluation results were submitted — one finding him mentally competent although suffering a personality disorder, and the other two partly denying mental competence.

The Tokyo District Court in April 1997 adopted the evaluation finding him mentally competent and sentenced him to hang. This decision was upheld by the higher courts.

Hirokazu Hasegawa, a professor of clinical psychology at Tokai University who interviewed Miyazaki eight times in January 2006 at the detention house, recalled that he appeared indifferent toward the outside world and indulged in daydreaming.

Hasegawa said he did not know whether Miyazaki was mentally competent at the time of the crimes. "But at least when I met him, his ability to recognize reality was severely impaired," he added.

Hasegawa said he doubts Miyazaki realized what was happening when he was taken to the gallows Tuesday morning. "If he did not realize it, the execution may not have had any meaning," he said.

Past neighbors of Miyazaki said they still shudder in horror over the crimes he committed.

The Japan Times: Wednesday, June 18, 2008  
(C) All rights reserved

[Go back to The Japan Times Online](#)

[Close window](#)