

THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF
JAPANESE LITERATURE

The Cambridge History of Japanese Literature provides, for the first time, a history of Japanese literature with comprehensive coverage of the premodern and modern eras in a single volume. The book is arranged topically in a series of short, accessible chapters for easy access and reference, giving insight into both canonical texts and many lesser-known, popular genres, from centuries-old folk literature to the detective fiction of modern times. The various period introductions provide an overview of recurrent issues that span many decades, if not centuries. The book also places Japanese literature in a wider East Asian tradition of Sinitic writing and provides comprehensive coverage of women's literature as well as new popular literary forms, including manga (comic books). An extensive bibliography of works in English enables readers to continue to explore this rich tradition through translations and secondary reading.

HARUO SHIRANE, Shincho Professor of Japanese Literature at Columbia University, is a specialist in Japanese literature and culture, with interests in prose fiction, poetry, and drama; the interaction between popular and elite cultures; and issues of cultural memory. He is the author and editor of over twenty books. His most recent book, *Japan and the Culture of the Four Seasons* (2012), explores the cultural construction of nature across a wide spectrum of media and arts.

TOMI SUZUKI, Professor of Japanese Literature at Columbia University, is a specialist in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Japanese literature, with special interests in prose fiction and criticism; gender and genre; modernism and language reform; and history of reading and canon formation. Her publications include *Narrating the Self: Fictions of Japanese Modernity* (1996) and *Inventing the Classics: Modernity, National Identity, and Japanese Literature* (2000).

DAVID LURIE, Associate Professor of Japanese History and Literature at Columbia University, specializes in the literary, cultural, and intellectual history of premodern Japan. His research concerns the development of writing and literacy; the history of linguistic thought; and Japanese and comparative mythology. His first book, *Realms of Literacy: Early Japan and the History of Writing* (2011), treated the advent of Japanese inscription and the early development of literature and other modes of writing.

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★

Edited by
HARUO SHIRANE
and
TOMI SUZUKI
with
DAVID LURIE



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Contents

<i>List of illustrations</i>	xiii
<i>List of contributors</i>	xiv
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xvii
<i>A note on Romanization and conventions</i>	xviii
<i>Chronological table</i>	xix

General introduction	1
HARUO SHIRANE	

PART I

THE ANCIENT PERIOD (BEGINNINGS TO 794) 13

1 Introduction: writing, literacy, and the origins of Japanese literature	15
DAVID LURIE	
2 Myth and history in the <i>Kojiki</i> , <i>Nihon shoki</i> , and related works	22
DAVID LURIE	
3 Songs of the Records and Chronicles	40
TORQUIL DUTHIE	
4 Fudoki gazetteers	45
DAVID LURIE	
5 <i>Man'yōshū</i>	50
H. MACK HORTON	
6 Anthologization and Sino-Japanese literature: <i>Kaifūsō</i> and the three imperial anthologies	86
WIEBKE DENECKE	

PART II
THE HEIAN PERIOD (794–1185) 93

- 7 Introduction: court culture, women, and the rise of vernacular literature 95
HARUO SHIRANE
- 8 Sugawara no Michizane, a Heian literatus and statesman 102
ROBERT BORGES
- 9 *Kokinshū* and Heian court poetry 110
GUSTAV HELDT
- 10 Early Heian court tales 121
JOSHUA S. MOSTOW
- 11 *Genji monogatari* and its reception 129
SATOKO NAITO
- 12 Late courtly romance 140
JOSHUA S. MOSTOW
- 13 Premodern commentary on the classical literary canon 157
LEWIS COOK
- 14 *The Pillow Book* of Sei Shōnagon 161
HARUO SHIRANE
- 15 Heian literary diaries: from *Tosa nikki* to *Sarashina nikki* 165
SONJA ARNTZEN
- 16 The Heian Academy: literati culture from Minamoto no Shitagō to Ōe no Masafusa 176
BRIAN STEININGER
- 17 Heian canons of Chinese poetry: *Wakan rōeishū* and Bai Juyi 184
IVO SMITS
- 18 The Literary Essence of Our Court (*Honchō monzui*) 188
WIEBKE DENECKE

Contents

- 19 Vernacular histories: *Eiga monogatari*, *Ōkagami*, *Gukanshō* 193

ELIZABETH OYLER

- 20 Heian popular songs: *imayō* and *Ryōjin hishō* 206

IVO SMITS

PART III

THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD (1185–1600) 209

- 21 Introduction to medieval literature 211

HARUO SHIRANE

- 22 Japanese poetic thought, from earliest times to the thirteenth century 218

A. E. COMMONS

- 23 *Shinkokin wakashū*: The New Anthology of Ancient and Modern Japanese Poetry 230

PAUL S. ATKINS

- 24 Waka in the medieval period: patterns of practice and patronage 238

STEVEN D. CARTER

- 25 *Hyakunin isshu* and the popularization of classical poetry 256

TOMOMI YOSHINO

- 26 Medieval recluse literature: Saigyō, Chōmei, and Kenkō 259

JACK STONEMAN

- 27 Medieval women's diaries: from *Tamakiwaru* to *Takemukigaki* 268

CHRISTINA LAFFIN

- 28 Setsuwa (anecdotal) literature: *Nihon ryōiki* to *Kokon chomonjū* 280

HARUO SHIRANE

- 29 The rise of medieval warrior tales: *Hōgen monogatari* and *Heiji monogatari* 287

ELIZABETH OYLER

Contents

- 30 The Tales of the Heike 295
DAVID T. BIALOCK
- 31 The late medieval warrior tales: from *Soga monogatari* to *Taiheiki* 306
ELIZABETH OYLER
- 32 Literature of medieval Zen temples: Gozan (Five Mountains) and Ikkyū
Sōjun 311
SONJA ARNTZEN
- 33 Renga (linked verse) 317
STEVEN D. CARTER
- 34 Noh drama 328
NOEL PINNINGTON
- 35 Noh drama theory from Zeami to Zenchiku 340
ARTHUR H. THORNHILL III
- 36 Kyōgen: comic plays that turn medieval society upside down 347
LAURENCE KOMINZ
- 37 Late medieval popular fiction and narrated genres: otogizōshi,
kōwakamai, sekkyō, and ko-jōruri 355
R. KELLER KIMBROUGH
- PART IV
THE EDO PERIOD (1600–1867) 371
- 38 Introduction to early modern Japanese literature 373
HARUO SHIRANE
- 39 Publishing and the book in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries 382
P. F. KORNICKI
- 40 A forest of books: seventeenth-century Kamigata commercial prose 396
LAURA MORETTI
- 41 The rise of haikai: Matsuo Bashō, Yosa Buson, and Kobayashi Issa 403
HARUO SHIRANE

Contents

- 42 Ihara Saikaku and Ejima Kiseki: the literature of urban townspeople 415
PAUL SCHALOW
- 43 Representing theater: text and performance in kabuki and bunraku 424
C. ANDREW GERSTLE
- 44 Puppet theater: from early jōruri to the golden age 437
JANICE KANEMITSU
- 45 From the beginnings of kabuki to the playwrights Nanboku and
Mokuami 447
SATOKO SHIMAZAKI
- 46 Early to mid-Edo kanshi 457
JUDITH N. RABINOVITCH AND TIMOTHY R. BRADSTOCK
- 47 Kanshibun in the late Edo period 465
MATTHEW FRALEIGH
- 48 Waka practice and poetics in the Edo period 471
ROGER THOMAS
- 49 Literary thought in Confucian ancient learning and Kokugaku 479
PETER FLUECKIGER
- 50 Bunjin (literati) and early yomihon: Nankaku, Nankai, Buson, Gennai,
Teishō, Ayatari, and Akinari 488
LAWRENCE E. MARCEAU
- 51 Satiric poetry: Kyōshi, Kyōka, and Senryū 503
HARUO SHIRANE
- 52 Picture books: from akahon to kibyōshi and gōkan 510
MICHAEL EMMERICH
- 53 The birth of kokkeibon (comic novellas) 523
MASAHIRO TANAHASHI
- 54 Ninjōbon and romances for women 532
YASUSHI INOUE

Contents

- 55 Development of the late yomihon: Santō Kyōden and Kyokutei
Bakin 539
YŌJI ŌTAKA

PART V

THE MODERN PERIOD (1868 TO PRESENT) 551

- 56 Introduction: nation building, literary culture, and language 553
TOMI SUZUKI

- 57 Kanshibun in the Meiji period and beyond 572
MATTHEW FRALEIGH

- 58 Translated fiction, political fiction 578
DENNIS WASHBURN

- 59 Newspaper serials in the late nineteenth century 583
SATORU SAITO

- 60 Translation, vernacular style, and the Westernesque femme fatale in
modern Japanese literature 588
INDRA LEVY

- 61 The rise of modern women's literature 598
REBECCA COPELAND

- 62 Melodrama, family romance, and the novel at the turn of the
century 605
KEN K. ITO

- 63 Modern Japanese poetry to the 1910s 613
KŌJI KAWAMOTO

- 64 Between the Western and the traditional: Mori Ōgai, Nagai Kafū, and
Tanizaki Jun'ichirō 623
SHUNJI CHIBA

- 65 Natsume Sōseki and the theory and practice of literature 634
MICHAEL K. BOURDAGHS

Contents

- 66 A new era of women writers 641
JOAN E. ERICSON
- 67 Literary marketplace, politics, and history: 1900s–1940s 648
HIDEO KAMEI AND KYOKO KURITA
- 68 Canonization and popularization: anthologies and literary prizes 669
EDWARD MACK
- 69 Colonialism, translation, literature: Takahama Kyoshi's passage to
Korea 672
SERK-BAE SUH
- 70 Primitivism and imperial literature of Taiwan and the South Seas 677
ROBERT TIERNEY
- 71 From empire to nation: the spatial imaginary of the 1920s to early
1950s 682
SEIJI M. LIPPIT
- 72 Japanese literature and cinema from the 1910s to the 1950s 692
HIROKAZU TOEDA
- 73 Modern drama 702
M. CODY POULTON
- 74 Modern poetry: 1910s to the postwar period 711
TOSHIKO ELLIS
- 75 Trends in postwar literature, 1945–1970s 719
KENSUKE KŌNO AND ANN SHERIF
- 76 Women's fiction in the postwar era 737
SHARALYN ORBAUGH
- 77 The emergence of girls' manga and girls' culture 748
YUIKA KITAMURA
- 78 Modern Japanese literature from Okinawa 753
DAVINDER L. BHOWMIK

Contents

79 Postwar Zainichi writings: politics, language, and identity 756

MELISSA L. WENDER

80 Contemporary Japanese fiction 760

STEPHEN SNYDER

Bibliography of English secondary sources and translations 768

Index 821

Illustrations

- 1 From *Mazu yonde Mikuni Kojorō* (1811). Readers of illustrated fiction engaged in a discussion of “red books.” Waseda University Library Special Collections. 511
- 2 A spread from *Fūryū ittsumi otoko* (1758), with pictures in the Torii style. Typical is the abundance of curves, including those that divide the scenes. Tōyō Bunko. 521
- 3 Hagio Moto’s *The Heart of Thomas*, trans. Matt Thorn (Seattle, 2012). Juli talks to Erich about his feelings toward the deceased Thomas. Juli’s thoughts are represented outside the balloons. Fantagraphics Books. 751

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A note on Romanization and conventions

All Romanization of Japanese names and terms follows the Hepburn system. East Asian names are written in the traditional order (surname followed by given name), except in cases when a person publishes in English using their given name followed by surname. Romanization of Chinese names and terms follows the Pinyin system except in quotations of translations using the older Wade-Giles system, which have been left unchanged. Romanized titles are in lower case after the initial letter, unless they include proper nouns.

In order to reduce the number of references, all cited English-language sources on Japanese literature can be found in the bibliography, which covers major English-language publications and is organized by text, genre, and period in parallel to the chapters of the book. A handful of Japanese language references appear in footnotes, but such citations have been kept to a minimum.

Because the variety of approaches to rendering such Japanese words in English reflects debates within the field, we have avoided imposing an artificial unity on translations of titles and terms. Sometimes a genitive article “no” is added between the surname and given name of premodern individuals, as in Minamoto no Yoshitsune (Yoshitsune of the Minamoto family), but we have allowed authors to follow their own inclinations about whether to include this article.

Chronological table

Ancient period (beginnings to 794)

Jōmon	14,000–900 BCE
Yayoi	900 BCE–250 CE
Tomb	250–552
Asuka	552–710
Jinshin War	672
Nara	710–94

Heian period (794–1185)

Medieval period (1185–1600)

Kamakura	1185–1333
Fall of the Heike	1185
Jōkyū Rebellion	1221
Kenmu Restoration	1333–6
Northern and Southern Courts (Nanboku-chō)	1336–92
Muromachi	1392–1573
Ōnin War	1467–77
Warring States (Sengoku)	1467–1573
Azuchi-Momoyama	1573–98

Edo (Tokugawa, early modern) period (1600–1867)

Battle of Sekigahara	1600
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Modern period (1868 to present)

Meiji	1868–1912
Taishō	1912–26
Shōwa	1926–89
Heisei	1989–present

General introduction

HARUO SHIRANE

This book is organized according to the major periods of Japanese history – ancient (up to 794), Heian (794–1185), medieval (1185–1600), early modern or Edo (1600–1867), and modern (1868–present). Each part begins with a brief historical overview, followed by short essays on major genres, texts, and authors. A number of the traditional genres – such as *waka* (classical Japanese poetry), *kanshi* (classical Chinese poetry), *monogatari* (tale literature), *setsuwa* (anecdotal literature), and *gunki-mono* (warrior narratives) – span multiple periods, so some entries cover a time-span beyond the section in which they appear. As a literary history, this book attempts to cover the so-called masterpieces of Japanese literature – from *The Tale of Genji* and *The Tales of the Heike* to such major modern authors as Natsume Sōseki – and to provide a balanced view of key genres and themes. At the same time, it is also intended to shed light on many genres that have been overlooked in the modern conception of Japanese literature, examining them from a perspective not limited to European notions of literary history.

Japan has one of the richest and most complex literary traditions in the world, and defining and describing it is difficult. Indeed, it is only in recent decades, as popular genres and the enormous tradition of Literary Sinitic or Sino-Japanese (*kanbun*) writings have received renewed attention alongside better-studied materials, that the full complexity and variety of the Japanese literary heritage has come into view. The modern term for “Japanese literature” (*Nihon bungaku*) came to mean literature written in the “Japanese” language, using the native writing system based on *kana* (*hiragana* and *katakana*), a vernacular syllabary developed in the ancient period and in fairly common use by the ninth century. Such a definition, taken to its logical conclusion, extends beyond Japan’s present borders and would include writing in Japanese by Koreans or Taiwanese during the long periods of Japanese occupation in the twentieth century or by early Japanese immigrants to California or Brazil.

“Japanese literature” also can mean literature written by so-called ethnic Japanese, who were concentrated in the area from northern Kyushu along the Inland Sea to the Kinai region (the area of present-day Osaka, Kyoto, and Nara) and beyond to the Kantō region (centered on modern Tokyo), most of whom came under the rule of the Yamato clan (the ancestor of the imperial family), which came to dominate the rest of the archipelago (excluding Hokkaido and Okinawa) in the seventh and eighth centuries. This definition of “Japanese literature” includes writings in literary Chinese (Literary Sinitic or *kanbun*), the common written language of East Asia (the regions that are now China, the Koreas, Vietnam, and Japan) and the mainstay of literary, religious, and government writing in Japan for the premodern and early modern periods. One of the major characteristics of Japanese literary culture is that for most of its written history it has constantly used both the vernacular syllabary and Literary Sinitic, with classical Chinese (both its syntax and its graphic compounds) always influencing the native vernacular, and a mixture of the two merging in various styles, particularly the *wakan-konkō-bun* (mixed Japanese–Chinese style) that became dominant from the late Heian period. Basing a definition of Japanese literature on the notion of ethnic Japanese, however, is problematic since the borders of Japan gradually expanded to include areas inhabited by other ethnicities: north-eastern Honshū and the island of Hokkaido (the home of the Ainu), the Ryūkyū Islands (now Okinawa), and then, in the twentieth century (until 1945), Taiwan, Korea, and Manchuria. This history does not exclude either sense of “Japanese literature,” but employs both as organizing principles in order to present a more complete picture of Japanese literary traditions.

Another distinctive feature of this book is that modern works have been given far more space than in previous literary histories, due to their increased role in today’s curriculum and global influence on popular and contemporary culture. This modern section embraces both canonical writers (such as Sōseki, Ōgai, Tanizaki, and Kawabata) and the non-canonical, including such subgenres as detective fiction and girls’ manga. It is distinguished by its wide sociocultural scope (incorporating popular culture and contemporary literature, often not recognized in literary histories, and including ethnic Koreans writing in Japanese) and by its trans-national, trans-regional perspective, covering the colonial period literature of Okinawa and of occupied Korea and Taiwan. If, in the premodern and early modern periods, the metropole was China (both imagined and real), in the modern period it became Japan (specifically Tokyo), which stood at the center of a vast empire, mirroring those created by the British, the French, and other European

powers. In short, this literary history deliberately complicates the notions of Japanese as language and as ethnic identity and the relationship of both to various forms and genres of writing. The remainder of this introduction takes up major characteristics of premodern and early modern literature that set it apart from modern Japanese literature, which fuses with and shares in modern European literary genres and cultural discourse.

The notion of Japanese literature as a national literature (*kokubungaku*) based on a national language (*kokugo*) that precluded the use of languages other than kana-based Japanese vernacular emerged as part of modern nation-state building in the Meiji period (1868–1912), particularly after the Sino-Japanese War (1894–5), in which China was defeated by Japan and lost its preeminent place as the center of cultural and linguistic authority. But premodern notions of literature were very different. The *Genji ippon kyō* (The Genji One-Volume Sutra, 1176), a Buddhist text written by Priest Chōken in the late twelfth century, reveals that the genre hierarchy as it existed in the late Heian and early medieval periods was, roughly, from top to bottom: (1) Buddhist scriptures; (2) Confucian texts; (3) histories such as the *Shiji* (Records of the Grand Historian); (4) Chinese belles-lettres (*bun*) such as the *Wenxuan* (Anthology of Literature), a collection of Chinese poetry and literary prose; (5) Japanese classical poetry; and (6) vernacular tales and *sōshi*, that is, *nikki* (diaries) and related writings in kana. The genre hierarchy here follows the Chinese model, with religious/philosophical texts, histories, and poetry held in the highest regard and fiction relegated to the lowest rung. At the bottom stood the two genres in the Japanese syllabary, *waka* and *monogatari*, with poetry holding a much higher status than prose fiction in kana. Cultural authority also was a major element in this genre hierarchy. The top four categories, the most prestigious genres, were identified primarily with China (*Kara*) – the metropole of civilization at the time. The two bottom genres, by contrast, were identified with Japan (Yamato).

In the eighteenth century, scholars of *Kokugaku* (nativist learning), led by such figures as Kamo no Mabuchi (1697–1769) and Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801), attacked what they perceived to be foreign influences and constructed an alternative sphere of learning based on what they saw as purely Japanese texts. These scholars of nativist learning, whose influence was limited until the modern period, attempted to invert the genre hierarchy found in texts such as the *Genji ippon kyō*. They placed works in the Japanese syllabary, such as *waka* and *monogatari*, at the top, while attempting to de-canonicalize the top four categories, especially Buddhist and Confucian texts and Chinese poetry and histories. It was not until the mid-Meiji period, with the

rise of modern nationalism, the influence of Western phonocentrism, the emphasis on “national language” (*kokugo*) based on kana, and the defeat of China in the Sino-Japanese War, that this inversion became irreversible. Throughout the premodern period, *gakumon*, the Japanese word for learning, meant *Kangaku* (Chinese studies), which was the center of various premodern discourses, and it was not until the establishment of *kokubungaku* (national literature) in the mid-Meiji period that Japanese literature became largely, though not entirely, kana-based literature.

Equally importantly, the modern notion of Japanese literature was formulated in large part under the influence of European notions of literature, which had placed high value on such genres as the epic and drama, and that, from the nineteenth century, elevated the novel to the pinnacle of the genre hierarchy. But owing to both Confucian and Buddhist influences, fiction occupied a very low position in the premodern Japanese textual hierarchy, and the performance arts, including *noh*, *jōruri*, and *kabuki*, were not considered at all. Theater, while culturally important, had never been considered a form of literature until the modern period, when there was a desperate hunt for Japan’s Shakespeare, a role that Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653–1725), the puppet-theater playwright, was made to fulfill. Today, the Genroku era (1688–1704) is best known for the poetry, prose fiction, and drama of Matsuo Bashō (1644–94), Ihara Saikaku (1642–93), and Chikamatsu Monzaemon, respectively. But this view leaves out the two most prominent writers of the period, Arai Hakuseki (1657–1725) and Ogyū Sorai (1666–1728), both influential Confucian scholars who wrote essays and treatises in classical Chinese. Such emphases are driven in part by modern notions of literature. But in order to understand the significance of the premodern and early modern works, authors, and genres discussed in this book, it is necessary to expand the “literary” beyond the modern notion of literature as “imaginative” or “creative” writing to recover its earlier functions, which encompassed what are now the disciplinary fields of history, religion, philosophy, philology, and political science.

Due to the close association of literary activity with the imperial court and the upper aristocracy, which provided crucial patronage for literary production, much early literature had a dual private/public character, which is embodied in the function of classical Japanese poetry, the thirty-one-syllable *waka*, which became the central vernacular genre in the premodern period. Indeed, in Heian aristocratic society it was impossible to function without the ability to compose *waka*. At the imperial court, classical Japanese poetry had a public role, often in the

ritual affirmation of power and social hierarchy, as well as a private, social role, as an intimate form of dialogue and an indispensable vehicle for courtship. This duality is also evident in the *Kokinshū* (Anthology of Old and New Japanese Poetry, early tenth century), the most influential of the imperial poetry anthologies, which was commissioned by the emperor and served to enhance the cultural authority of the throne but which drew most of its poems from private exchanges and collections. Literary Chinese verse (*kanshi*) had a similar dual character, composed in prominent public gatherings like court banquets and poetry parties and collected in imperial anthologies that preceded the *Kokinshū*, but also serving as a medium for educated elite male courtiers like Sugawara no Michizane (845–903) to record personal emotions and experiences.

Early compilations, such as the *Nihon shoki* (Chronicles of Japan, 720), commissioned by the Yamato court in the early eighth century at a critical period in state building, and the *Man'yōshū* (Collection of Myriad Leaves, late eighth century), similarly affirmed the power and authority of the head of the Yamato clan (imperial family) even as they included poems and stories about commoners and non-court figures. By contrast, the vernacular monogatari (court tales) and collections of *setsuwa* (anecdotal literature) of the tenth through twelfth centuries, written and edited by middle- to lower-rank aristocrats or aristocratic priests, represent alternative voices, often those out of power. The function of much of the vernacular literary culture in the Heian period, particularly after the tenth and eleventh centuries, is thus very different from that of the ancient period. The center of political power had shifted from sovereigns to regents, from the throne to non-imperial clans (primarily the Fujiwara), who controlled the emperor through marriage politics. New power also devolved to the provincial governors (middle and lower levels of the aristocracy), over whom the state ministries had increasingly less control.

The Heian monogatari continued to deal with the lives of the nobility and the emperor, but in contrast to works like the *Man'yōshū*, which enforce the authority, power, and divinity of the sovereign and his or her surrogates, the monogatari violate the sociopolitical order and relativize the authority of the throne. The protagonists of *Ise monogatari* (The Tales of Ise, tenth century) and *Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Genji, early eleventh century) belong to clans (Ariwara and Genji/Minamoto) that were ousted. Instead of affirming the dominant clan (the northern branch of the Fujiwara), *The Tales of Ise*, for example, reveals deep sympathy for those who it had defeated or overshadowed.

Sympathy for political losers and expression of alternative social voices become major features of the monogatari genre and continue into the medieval period with, for example, *Heike monogatari* (The Tales of the Heike, initially compiled in the thirteenth century), a warrior tale that portrays the fall of the house of the Heike (Taira). In contrast to *The Tale of Genji*, *The Tales of the Heike* were sung by traveling minstrels (often to an uneducated populace) and had the ritualistic function of pacifying the spirits of the dead (the defeated warriors) depicted in the long tale. The *Masukagami* (Clear Mirror, fourteenth century), one of the four vernacular “mirrors” or chronicles of political leaders, looks back nostalgically to the exiled emperors GoToba and GoDaigo at a time when the power of the imperial court was in rapid decline. On the other hand, two mid-Heian period historical chronicles, *Eiga monogatari* (Tales of Flowering Fortunes, early twelfth century) and *Ōkagami* (Great Mirror, twelfth century), both also written in the vernacular, portray the life and political rise of Fujiwara no Michinaga, the most powerful regent in the Heian period. But even these vernacular texts give voice to those who were defeated (such as Sugawara no Michizane, who had been a powerful minister until he was exiled by the Fujiwara), thus providing an “unofficial” political and cultural history of the period.

Historically, the center of vernacular poetry shifted from the *chōka* (found in the early *Man'yōshū*), to the thirty-one-syllable *waka* (the central form of the *Kokinshū* and the Heian period), to linked verse in the medieval period, and finally in the early modern period to the seventeen-syllable *hokku* (developed as the first verse of popular linked verse, and only later called *haiku*). Such a gradual paring-down of form and expression occurs in a wide variety of contexts and media: poetry, *noh* drama, landscape gardening, bonsai, tea ceremony, and ink painting, to mention only the most obvious. One result is that many traditional Japanese literary forms stress brevity, condensation, and overtones. A parallel development in the *kanshi* tradition was an emphasis on exemplary couplets taken from longer poems, as seen in the highly influential eleventh-century anthology *Wakan rōeishū* (Collection of Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing), which assembled such short gems from Literary Sinitic compositions by Japanese and Chinese authors and paired them with *waka*.

As it evolved under Zeami (c. 1363–c. 1443), its greatest playwright, *noh* was a drama of elegance, restraint, and suggestion. Human actions were reduced to the bare essentials, to highly symbolic movements such as tilting the mask to express joy or sweeping the hand to represent weeping. In *Kakyō* (A Mirror Held to the Flower, 1424), Zeami writes that “if what the actor feels in the

heart is ten, what appears in movement should be seven.” He stresses that the point at which physical movement becomes minute and then finally stops is the point of greatest intensity. Physical and visual restrictions – the fixed mask, the slow body movement, the almost complete absence of props or scenery – create a drama that must occur as much in the mind of the audience as on the stage.

In *Tsurezuregusa* (Essays in Idleness, 1329–33), sometimes considered the ultimate compendium of Heian court aesthetics, the aristocrat-priest Kenkō argues that what is not stated, cannot be seen by the eyes, and is incomplete in expression is more moving, alluring, and memorable than what is directly presented. Since ancient times, Japanese aristocrats prized the social capacity for indirection and suggestion. Poetry was recognized for its overtones, connotations, and subtle allegory and metaphor more than for what it actually stated. In large part, this literary and social mode depends on a close bond between the composer and the reader, with a common body of cultural knowledge, which was absorbed through literary texts.

At the same time that noh drama reached its height and *Tsurezuregusa* was being written, another kind of gunki-mono (warrior narrative) emerged in the form of the *Taiheiki* (Chronicle of Great Peace, c. 1370), which was to have more impact on Japanese popular culture, including theater, than perhaps any other text from the medieval period. The *Taiheiki*, which depicts the bloody military conflicts that occurred during the era of the divided imperial courts (1336–92), has little interest in the aesthetics of overtones or the refined associations of classical poetry; instead, it depicts the dog-eat-dog world of the warriors, military trickery, brutal massacres, and rampant fear of vengeful spirits. At the same time, it functioned as a kind of an educational handbook for samurai, depicting the heroism, loyalty, wisdom, ingenuity, brutality, and betrayal of Japanese warriors in the context of famous incidents from Chinese history. The *Taiheiki*, which became the fundamental material for storytelling (called *Taiheiki-yomi*) in the Edo period, is a vivid reminder that premodern Japanese literature cannot be measured solely by the refined aesthetics (noh drama, tea ceremony, ink painting, linked verse, Zen kanshi poetry) that medieval culture is now famous for.

Confucianism and Buddhism were imported from the continent in the ancient period, and provided two major value systems that often came into dramatic conflict. Confucianism became the guide for ethical behavior and social and political relations, based largely on strong familial bonds and filial piety, which ideally mirrored the relationship of subjects to the ruler. Buddhism stressed individual salvation, suffering, detachment, and

protection from various dangers. Much of Japanese literature from the Nara through the medieval eras stands in a larger Buddhist context that regards excessive attachments – especially family bonds (of the sort emphasized by Confucianism) and the deep emotions of love – as a serious deterrent to individual salvation, particularly in a world in which all things are impermanent. Each individual is bound to a cycle of life and death, to a world of suffering and illusory attachment, until he or she achieves salvation.

By the mid-Heian period, it was believed that strong attachments, particularly at the point of death, would impede the soul's progress to the next world, which, it was hoped, would be the Pure Land, or Western Paradise. In a typical *noh* play by Zeami, the protagonist is caught in one of the lower realms – often as a wandering ghost or a person suffering in hell – as a result of some deep attachment or resentment. For the warrior, the attachment is often the bitterness or ignominy of defeat; for women, jealousy or the failure of love; and for old men, the impotence of age. In Zeami's "dream plays," such as the warrior play *Atsumori*, in which the protagonist (*shite*) appears in the dream of a traveling monk (the *waki* or secondary figure), the protagonist reenacts or recounts the source of his or attachment to the dreaming priest, who offers prayers for his salvation and spiritual release.

Except for didactic literature composed by Buddhist priests, Heian vernacular fiction such as *The Tale of Genji* and women's diaries such as *Sarashina nikki* (Sarashina Diary, eleventh century) usually take a highly ambivalent view of Buddhist ideals, focusing instead on the difficulty of attaining detachment in a world of passion and natural beauty. Indeed, at the heart of Japanese aristocratic literature, particularly from the mid-Heian period onward, lies the conflict between Buddhist aspirations of selflessness (which eventually merged with samurai ideals in the medieval period) and deep emotional attachment to nature and the human world. In *Hōjōki* (Account of my Ten-Foot-Square Hut, early thirteenth century), the waka poet Kamo no Chōmei (1153 or 1155–1216), confronted with a world of suffering and impermanence – natural disasters, famine, the destruction of the capital – retreats to a small hut outside the capital. In the process of preparing for rebirth in the Pure Land, however, he becomes attached to the tranquility and pleasures of his rustic retreat and fears that his attachment to nature and to writing will hinder his salvation.

Conflict tends to be internalized in much vernacular literature, often creating highly psychological or lyrical works. In Zeami's *noh* drama, for example, the characters usually have no substantial external conflict. Instead, the climax occurs when the protagonist is freed of internal attachment or is

reconciled to himself or herself. When the influence of Buddhism abated in the Tokugawa period (an age of urban growth, capitalism, and commerce, dominated by urban commoners), more secular plot paradigms became prominent, such as the conflict between human desire or love (*ninjō*) and social duty or obligation (*giri*), which lies at the heart of Chikamatsu Monzaemon's puppet plays (*jōruri*). Even so, the ultimate stress of the literature and drama tends to be on intense emotions generated by or in conflict with the pressures of society and social responsibility (supported by Confucian ethics).

Though sometimes possessing elaborate and complex plot structures, vernacular prose tends to be fragmentary and episodic, often focusing on the elaboration of a particular mood or emotion. For example, in vernacular fiction, the poetic diary, and theater (*noh*, *jōruri*), one of the most popular scenes is the parting: a poetic topos that can be traced back to the poetry of the *Man'yōshū*. *The Tale of Genji* is highlighted by a series of partings, which culminate in the climactic death of the heroine. The same can be said of *The Tales of the Heike*, a complex and detailed military epic that repeatedly focuses on the terrible partings that war forces on human beings. The closeness of traditional social ties – between parent and child, lord and retainer, husband and wife, individual and group – make this an emotionally explosive situation, which is often presented in highly poetic language.

Japanese vernacular literature was rooted in a semi-oral narrative tradition that either drew on imported texts from the continent or gathered locally transmitted stories. This storytelling tradition, which came to the fore in the late Heian and medieval periods when commoner culture began to surface, included a wide assortment of myths, legends, anecdotes (*setsuwa*), and folktales, often about strange, supernatural, or divine events. Buddhist priests collected and categorized these stories, which included anecdotes from both China and India, using them to preach to a largely illiterate audience. The *Konjaku monogatari shū* (Anthology of Tales from the Past), which was compiled in the late Heian period, is the most famous example of a collection of such anecdotes. This storytelling tradition also appears in the form of extended epic-like narratives like *The Tales of the Heike*, which was memorized and chanted to the accompaniment of the *biwa* (lute) by blind minstrel-priests, usually in short sessions that focused on one or two episodic sections.

One major consequence of this storytelling tradition is that Japanese vernacular fiction tends to have a strong voice: one or more narrators describe and comment on the action. The conventions of oral storytelling are evident in almost all Japanese prose fiction, including highly

sophisticated, stream-of-consciousness narratives like *The Tale of Genji*. In performance genres like *The Tales of the Heike*, noh drama, and *sekkyō-bushi* (sermon ballads), this narrational voice flows over the action, dialogue, and scenery, as first and third person narrations overlap. In noh, for example, dialogue alternates with descriptive passages narrated by both the chorus and the protagonist. The position of the narrator is most prominent in jōruri, in which the chanter (*gidayū*), on a dais separate from the puppet stage, performs both the dialogue of the puppets and the narration.

This double structure – action enveloped in descriptive narration – lends itself to powerful lyric tragedy, in which the tone is elegant, poetic, and uplifting even when the subject matter or situation is dark. The love suicide plays by Chikamatsu, the greatest jōruri playwright, are one example. The climactic travel scene (*michiyuki*) – a subcategory of the parting topos – is one of tragedy and pathos: the lovers, who are traveling to the place of their death, have resolved to be united in death rather than live under their present circumstances. The scene is chanted to music and interwoven with allusions to poetic places and classical poetry. The narration consequently elevates the characters even as they die. The same can be said of climactic scenes in *The Tale of Genji* or in the final chapter of *The Tales of the Heike*, when Kenreimon'in reflects on the destruction of her clan. In most of these scenes descriptions of nature and seasons, so central to Japanese vernacular poetry, suggest that death is not an end but a return to nature. Except for some types of folk literature (*setsuwa*), it is hard to find a work of premodern Japanese prose literature that does not include poetry. Often poems spoken by characters or allusions to classical verse (*kanshi* as well as *waka*) appear at such heightened moments, condensing and intensifying their emotional significance.

Since the Renaissance, European theater has generally been split into three basic forms – drama, opera, and ballet – whereas traditional Japanese theater has combined these elements (with particular stress on music, dance, and song) in each of the major dramatic forms: noh drama, jōruri (puppet theater), and kabuki. One of the central principles of noh and jōruri is the *jo-ha-kyū* (introduction, development, and finale), which regulates the tempo of the play, particularly in relationship to dance and song. Even as it creates a window onto another world, the work calls attention to itself as spectacle or ritual, as a medium in which dance, song, costume, and mask play major roles.

The history of Japanese literary genres tends to be accretionary. Every major historical era gave birth to new genres, but usually without the abandonment of the earlier forms. The thirty-one-syllable *waka* (classical poem) emerged in the Nara and Heian periods, classical linked verse in the

medieval period, haikai and hokku (later haiku) in the Edo period, and free verse in the modern period (under the influence of Western poetry). Alongside these vernacular forms the parallel kanshi tradition flourished throughout history, shifting and expanding its contexts from the court, to prominent Buddhist temples, to educated samurai and townspeople in the Edo period, to newspapers and other new media in the late nineteenth century. With the exception of linked verse and kanshi, all of these poetic genres continue to flourish in present-day Japan. The same is true of drama. Noh and its comic counterpart, *kyōgen*, emerged in the Muromachi period; jōruri (puppet theater) and kabuki were dominant in the Tokugawa period; and modern theater (*shingeki*) came to the fore in the twentieth century. Instead of each new form displacing the previous one, these dramatic genres continued to coexist, as they do even today.

Much of this remarkable continuity in poetry and drama as well as in the other traditional arts (such as tea ceremony and flower arrangement) can be attributed to the school or house system, with a family head and single-line inheritance, which came to the fore in the late Heian period and which resulted in a “living” tradition. From the Heian period onward, almost all literary genres, particularly poetry, were composed in groups, with a teacher or judge, who passed on the knowledge of the “way” (*michi*) of the genre or art form. Reading, up through the Meiji period, was largely an oral and social activity in which one person read the text aloud to others, who enjoyed the rhythms of the language, including that of kanshi, which was known for its sonorous qualities. Haiku remains popular today, with an estimated million practitioners, not only because of the accessibility and popularity of this short form but also because of the nature of the local social organizations that gather mainly amateur poets together on a regular basis under the tutelage of a professional teacher. As is clear from the final section of this book, even in the modern period, authors (both poets and novelists) stood in lineages of teacher to disciple, and formed literary circles that promoted the group and its leaders through coterie journals.

P A R T I

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THE ANCIENT PERIOD
(BEGINNINGS TO 794)

Introduction: writing, literacy, and the origins of Japanese literature

DAVID LURIE

Numerous problems of definition and scope confront any survey of the beginnings of Japanese literature. We obviously have no direct access to the stories and songs that circulated before the advent of writing. Some features of this preliterate world can be extrapolated from later sources, but this is difficult to do with any confidence because the writers of many early texts deliberately engineer an impression of orality. In poetry – both vernacular (*uta*) and Chinese-style (*shi*) – it is also difficult to separate the mid to late eighth-century anthologies (the *Kaifūsō* and the *Man'yōshū*) from the historical milieu in which the poetry they collect was first composed and appreciated. Scholars are interested in the unfolding of particular genres, motifs, and techniques, but these anthologies themselves were shaped to present their own selective and tendentious versions of such literary histories. Similar difficulties pertain to prose, but in that case there is also the larger problem of delineating the literary from other types of writing. Literate elites of the eighth century devoted as much or more time to studying, composing, and commenting on Confucian, Buddhist, technical, and legal writings as they did to appreciating the rather small subset of prose works that are now considered to be part of the canon of Nara period classics: the *Kojiki* (Record of Ancient Matters, 712), *Nihon shoki* (Chronicles of Japan, 720), and the *fudoki* gazetteers.

For all periods of premodern Japanese literature – and indeed, for all premodern literatures – what survives is only a portion of the writings that were produced, but this situation is more extreme for the Nara and early Heian periods than for any subsequent point in Japanese history. The circumstances of the *fudoki* make this abundantly clear. Five survive as integral texts, only one of which is complete (that for Izumo Province). The early eighth-century order that called for the production of these works was directed at all of the provinces, of which there were then about sixty, and quoted fragments survive from gazetteers for around forty of them.

If the lower figure reflects the number actually composed, only about 12 percent of the fudoki survive; actually it is probably closer to 10 percent. Such high attrition is connected to the uncanonized status of these texts in Heian and medieval Japan, but similar proportions of other genres met the same fate. The *Man'yōshū* (Collection of Myriad Leaves, c. 759) refers to older poetry collections as sources (citing a half dozen by name), but none survives; the prefaces to the *Kojiki* and the *Kaifūsō* (Florilegium of Cherished Airs, 751) mention lost works, as does the *Nihon shoki*; and the content of the *Nihon shoki* itself shows that it drew on various sources, none of which is extant. Considering the broader situation down through the end of the Heian period, approximately two thirds of the titles mentioned in the *Honchō shōjaku mokuroku* (a late thirteenth-century bibliography) no longer exist. Statistics like these remind us that there is ample reason to be skeptical of literary-historical generalizations based on extant works.

But such limitations, again, pertain to any premodern society, and comparatively the literature of early Japan is rather better known than that of many other ancient traditions. Extensive works like the *Nihon shoki* and *Man'yōshū* survive intact, and, to the best that we can ascertain, the extant sources are representative of the range and variety of early writings. One reason for the relative accessibility of ancient Japanese literature is the speed with which it emerged: only about three generations separate the advent of widespread literacy, in the mid seventh century, from the composition of the oldest extant works in the early eighth century.

The first appearance of writing in the Japanese archipelago was much earlier: inscriptions in Chinese characters on imported artifacts (mostly coins and mirrors) are found starting around the last century BCE, in the late Yayoi period. The first substantial inscriptions that were domestically produced date to the fifth century CE, in the Tomb period, but there is no evidence that significant numbers of people were able to read or write. Until the mid seventh century literacy remained the province of specialist scribes – migrants from the Korean peninsula and their descendants – who were employed by the Yamato Kings, rulers from the area of modern Nara and Osaka who presided over a loose federation of local potentates spanning the archipelago from Northern Kyushu to the Kantō region. The importation of Buddhism in the mid to late sixth century introduced new kinds of texts and new modes of literacy, but these too remained narrow, specialized pursuits. Writing had little meaning for a population to whom it was still just a talismanically powerful symbol, to the extent that it mattered at all. (Subsequent myth-making by eighth-century ideologues, most prominently

in the *Nihon shoki*, suggests an earlier and more vigorous adaptation of writing in general and Buddhist textuality in particular, but there is little archaeological support for this narrative, and doubt has been cast on the dating of most of the inscriptions traditionally associated with it.)

The change, when it came, was part of a much larger regional transformation of East Asia that followed the reunification of China under the Sui and Tang dynasties in the late sixth and early seventh centuries, which led to the emergence or expansion of states in peripheral regions. In 645, as conflict among the three kingdoms of the Korean peninsula heated up, the Yamato ruler later known as Tenji engineered a coup against the Soga lineage group, who had dominated the court for two generations. The following decades saw rapid construction of a Chinese-style state apparatus, complete with census-taking, more systematic taxation, and a better-organized military, especially after Yamato forces became involved in the final defeat of their ally Paekche in 663. The resulting crisis further spurred development of a bureaucracy, at the same time that literate refugees from the Korean peninsula were fleeing to the Japanese archipelago. The archaeological record shows that the widespread use of writing for everyday communication and record-keeping emerges in these decades, just as it became both necessary and possible to staff a government based on texts. Not coincidentally, works like the *Kaifūsō* and *Man'yōshū* also suggest that Tenji's court in his new capital in Ōmi (on Lake Biwa near modern Kyoto) was a center of literary composition in both Chinese and vernacular styles. In monumental inscriptions, poetry composed at court banquets, and other forms of writing, early Japanese ideology followed the classical Chinese linkage of a well-ordered state with well-ordered, aesthetically pleasing texts.

One reason for the rapidity of the seventh-century transformation of literacy was the flexible relationship between spoken languages and texts written in Chinese characters, then essentially the only form of writing in East Asia. As a primarily logographic script at this moment in their history, characters were associated with Chinese words and morphemes, but they could also be linked to Korean or Japanese words and morphemes of similar meanings. This meant that texts that had originally been written in Chinese could be read in Korean or Japanese, in a process called *kundoku* (literally, reading by gloss). Conversely, it was possible for someone who did not speak Chinese to write a text that could be read in that language, by following in reverse the *kundoku* procedure for rearranging the syntactical order of character-texts. Chinese-style writing thus provided a common medium for communication across linguistic and political boundaries; it was also a

powerful source of prestige and authority. But kundoku could be used to write logographic texts that departed from the orthodox Chinese style in their ordering and character usage, and it was also possible to use characters phonographically, spelling out syllables of non-Chinese languages without regard for the meaning of the words that had originally been associated with those graphs. In short, the system of writing that was adapted in mid seventh-century Japan involved multiple principles and styles of inscription, and was well suited to the various demands placed on it by an age of political transformation and literary innovation.

Already from the mid seventh century, archaeological discoveries of wooden tablets inscribed in ink (*mokkan*) show the range of available styles, from Chinese-style logography, to more localized logographic writing that could not be read in Chinese, to mixtures of logographic and phonographic characters, to entirely phonographic texts. The details remain unclear, but parallels with discoveries in Korean sites, and the well-documented contributions of scribes and refugees from the Korean peninsula, suggest that many of these techniques were imported. At any rate they were all being used to write texts in Old Japanese by the second half of the seventh century. A handful of these artifacts are belletristic works – mainly vernacular poems (*uta*) written phonographically – but we must rely on eighth-century sources for a fuller picture of the emergence of Japanese literature.

The political impetus for the creation of the earliest extant works was provided by the state-building activities of Tenji's successors. His death in 671 was followed by the Jinshin War, a brief conflict that pitted his brother, later known as Tenmu, against Tenji's son. The victorious Tenmu (r. 672–86), along with his consort and successor Jitō (r. 686–97), embarked on a far-reaching transformation of the nascent state. Among the developments of their reigns were the country name Japan (*Nihon* or *Nippon*), the title *tennō* (Heavenly Sovereign or Emperor), written law codes, new systems of court rank and title, an expanded and more powerful central bureaucracy, greater state control over religion, and eventually a new Chinese-style capital city (Fujiwara, established in 694). These new institutions were matched by literary innovations. The great poet Kakinomoto no Hitomaro and others wrote soaring elegies and paeans to Tenmu, Jitō, and their princes that form the core of the poetic canon established by the *Man'yōshū*. Sponsorship by Tenmu and Jitō and their successors was responsible for the compilation of the *Nihon shoki*, and, according to its preface, of the *Kojiki*. All of these works were dedicated in their own way to the glorification – and at times even the

deification – of the rulers who had established themselves as the first emperors of Japan in the aftermath of the Jinshin War of 672.

In the early eighth century complete penal and administrative laws were promulgated – the 701 Taihō code (revised in 757 as the Yōrō code) – and a new capital city was established to the north of Fujiwara: the Heijō capital in Nara, which with interruptions would remain the political center from 710 until 784. This was a period of great cultural dynamism, symbolized by the construction of the enormous Tōdaiji temple at Nara and the country-wide network of provincial temples (*kokubunji*) centered on it, and also by the lavish art works and luxury products, many imported from Korea, China, and the Silk Road, that are preserved in the Shōsōin depository. But the Nara period was also marked by great political turmoil, with rebellions, conspiracies, and purges; there were also natural disasters like the great smallpox epidemic of 735–7, which some scholars estimate killed as much as a third of the population. This combination of brilliance and upheaval underlay the literary production of the eighth century, including the composition of much of the poetry collected in the *Kaifūsō* and *Man'yōshū* and also the compilation of those anthologies themselves, the completion of the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki*, and the production of the fudoki gazetteers. All of these writings were produced for the court, with official or unofficial sanction. More so than for any subsequent era, the literature of ancient Japan is inseparably linked to its political history.

The legitimacy of imperial rule by Tenmu's and Jitō's successors (their line was supplanted in 770 with the accession of one of Tenji's grandsons, but the fundamental structures they established remained in place) was supported by a mélange of symbols and rituals with complex origins. Similarly, early Japanese poetry and prose drew on a wide range of sources, foreign and domestic. But, as elsewhere in East Asia, the armature of this emergent tradition was the literary Chinese canon. As reflected in the official university curriculum outlined in the eighth-century administrative codes, the fundamental framework of learning and knowledge was provided by the Five Classics and their commentaries: the Odes (*shi*), Documents (*shu*), Rites (*li*), Changes (*yi*), and the Spring and Autumn Annals (*chunqiu*).

Early Japanese readers were also exposed to a surprisingly expansive corpus of other works. The dynastic histories available in eighth-century Japan included classics like the *Shiji* and *Hanshu*, and extended to those compiled up to the early Tang. Allusions in works like the *Nihon shoki*, *Kaifūsō*, and *Man'yōshū*, and scraps of text in wooden and paper documents, show that poetry anthologies circulated widely. The most important was the *Wenxuan* (c.

526–30), but collections of individual authors and less well-known anthologies like the *Yutai xinyong* (c. 545) were also influential. It is also clear that early Japanese elites consulted a range of Taoist writings and technical manuals of medicine, warfare, architecture, engineering and so on, in addition to enormous quantities of Buddhist sutras, treatises, and commentaries. But the most important imported texts were the classified omnibus works, both textbooks and references, that served as the primary entry point into the world of literary Chinese writings. Many of the classical allusions (and borrowings) in works like the *Nihon shoki* were taken secondhand from such sources, which included classified encyclopedias (*leishu*) like the early Tang *Yiwen leiju* and *Chuxue ji*. Dictionaries like the *Shuowen jiezi* (c. 100 CE) and *Qieyun* (601) were also widely consulted; the most important of these seems to have been the extensive sixth-century *Yupian*, which served as both a dictionary and an encyclopedia.

By the eighth century it is clear that many domestic compositions had joined the foregoing imported texts. In addition to poetry anthologies like the *Man'yōshū* and *Kaifūsō* and prose works like the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, these included family histories and biographies, accounts of temples and shrines, dictionaries and glossaries, and commentaries on Buddhist texts. The legal codes that were compiled during the reigns of Tenmu and Jitō, and possibly as early as that of Tenji, were accompanied by substantial commentaries, even as they generated further legal material in the form of *kyaku* (ordinances) and *shiki* (statutory elaborations). Early commentary on the codes survives only in later collections, the *Ryō no gige* (833) and *Ryō no shūge* (late ninth/early tenth century). Government documents of the eighth century, often straightforwardly expressed ordinances and statutes, but sometimes of sufficient length and elaboration to be considered quasi-literary works, are collected in the 927 *Engi shiki* and in categorized references like the *Ruijū sandai kyaku* (eleventh century) and *Ruijū fusenshō* (late eleventh/early twelfth century).

We have only indirect evidence of what types of writing were considered most valuable in ancient Japan, but it is surely anachronistic to treat the prose of the *Kojiki* and *fudoki* along with the poetry of the *Man'yōshū* and *Kaifūsō* as literary while excluding royal proclamations and reports to the throne in elaborate Chinese-style parallel prose. Nonetheless, the writings surveyed in the following pages include some of the most brilliant and engaging in the Japanese tradition, establishing precedents for and anticipating features of later works of poetry and narrative prose in both Chinese and vernacular styles.

In a prewar lecture, the influential scholar Orikuchi Shinobu (1887–1953) raised a fundamental issue of early Japanese literature when he said the *Hitachi no kuni fudoki* was “a gazetteer of imported modishness [*haikara na*

fudoki]. That is, it gives the feeling of being thoroughly dominated by the authority of the court. One could say it is the sort of work that has no dreams at all – or rather, that if it does, they are dreams of China.” A subsequent lecture expanded on this formulation: “To put this in contemporary terms, the *Hitachi no kuni fudoki* was written by men of civilization [*bunmeijin*] looking back at the world of the past, and therefore incorporates a cold, indifferent attitude that is incapable of fully understanding that past.”¹ The use of words with Meiji resonances is deliberate, involving a parallel much invoked by late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century intellectuals. Just as the “civilization and enlightenment” discourse of the Meiji period strove to leave behind traditional early modern culture, Orikuchi implies, the Sinicized “civilization” of the eighth century was similarly opposed to a rich earlier native culture. But this is a flawed analogy. While remnants of Edo period culture were everywhere in evidence during the Meiji period, and indeed in Orikuchi’s own day, the only traces of early Japanese literature are from precisely this Sinicizing period. It is true that works like the *Hitachi no kuni fudoki* or *Nihon shoki*, which rely on Chinese rhetoric and imagery, contrast with “warmer,” apparently more “traditional” texts, such as the *Kojiki* or the *Izumo no kuni fudoki*. But works of the latter type were in their own time just as new-fangled and innovative as the more superficially Sinicized ones; perhaps even more so, as they did not conform to the preexisting trans-regional norm of Chinese-style writing.

Orikuchi limns a distinctive feature of the style and narratorial perspective of the *Hitachi no kuni fudoki*. But we can accept this insight without the baggage that has been loaded onto it. It seems unlikely that the authors and readers of ancient Japan would have felt the need to choose between more “modish” (if indeed that is what they were) Chinese-style writings and those that, like the *Kojiki*, engineered new forms of distinctive local significance. From the *Man’yōshū* to the *Nihon shoki* to the *fudoki*, eighth-century texts demonstrate a delight in multiple accounts: variant narratives, alternate attributions, differing local legends, and so on. The weighty authority of the *Nihon shoki*, or the totalizing ambitions of the *Kojiki*, are an essential feature of those works, but we should not allow the comparative scarcity of surviving writing from this era to blind us to the fact that contemporary readers would have experienced and appreciated them in the context of a much wider world of diverse alternate accounts.

¹ Orikuchi hakase kinen kodai kenkyūjo, eds., *Orikuchi Shinobu zenshū nōto-hen*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1970), 215 and 231–2.

Myth and history in the *Kojiki*, *Nihon shoki*, and related works

DAVID LURIE

The earliest extant works of the Japanese tradition date to the early eighth century, during the first decade of the Nara capital. The *Kojiki* (Record of Ancient Matters, 712) and *Nihon shoki* (Chronicles of Japan, 720) are important for their content – a mix of myth, legend, and history, interspersed with poetry – and for the very different styles in which they were written. Their influence and significance is apparent in the variety of other narratives written about Japanese incidents and institutions in the remainder of the Nara and the early Heian periods, and also in the long tradition of scholarship and commentary they generated (devoted almost exclusively to the *Nihon shoki* until the early modern period). Despite their overlaps, these works differ profoundly in content, editorial stance, and written style. Especially in their earlier sections they have often been treated as facets of a unified corpus of Japanese myths that awaits reconstruction by scholars able to strip away later accretions. Regardless of whether one endorses this project of reading *through* them (and contemporary scholars are critical of such general notions as “myths of Japan” [*Nihon shinwa*] or “[common] myths of the records and chronicles” [*kiki shinwa*]), the first step in approaching the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki* must be analysis of the meaning of given narrative sequences within each particular text.

It is true that similar stories about identical or related gods appear in these works; and, conversely, that they weave together (sometimes quite loosely) materials that must have originated in different contexts. Moreover, there are connections with actual cults and rituals, from periods before and after the eighth century as well as contemporaneously with the compilation of the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*. But oft-excerpted stories and scenes are deeply embedded within the texts that contain them. More importantly, the essential qualities of these works lie in the distinctive tone and structure that they impose on their sometimes shared materials, characteristics that are downplayed or ignored when they are simply treated as parts of a larger whole.

The *Kojiki*

The *Kojiki* is generally dated by its preface to 712 (Wadō 5), but independent internal evidence confirms the likelihood of its composition around that time. It is a collection of mythical, legendary, and quasi-historical material stretching from the appearance of the first gods in the High Heavenly Plain (*takama no hara*) to the reign of the female sovereign later known as Suiko (trad. r. 592–628 CE).¹ It is divided into three books, the first of which describes an early age of the gods, beginning with heaven and earth coming into existence, narrating the creation of the earthly realm that would come to be ruled by the sovereigns, and ending with accounts of the descent of Ninigi, the grandson of the sun-goddess, to this “land amid reed planes,” and of the exploits of his children and grandchildren. The second book portrays the origins of rule by legendary sovereigns, starting with Ninigi’s great-grandson (later known as Jinmu), and describes the expansion of their realm, following reign-by-reign until that of the fifteenth legendary ruler, Ōjin. The third book continues from the famously virtuous sixteenth ruler, Nintoku, to Suiko, whose reign, implicitly here and explicitly in the *Nihon shoki*, represented the beginning of a new era for eighth-century historians.

For contemporary students of Japanese literature, the *Kojiki* is the source of familiar narratives describing trips to other realms like the world of the dead or an undersea palace, journeys of conquest by early sovereigns and their relatives, and vivid tales of love and jealousy involving both gods and humans. Its three books contain 112 vernacular poems (*uta*) and numerous genealogical notes about the descent of the sovereigns and the backgrounds of prominent lineage groups and organizations. The genealogies tie the work to the political and social circumstances of the early eighth century, but they also animate much of the narrative material. As in other early prose works, narratives often serve to justify or explain a particular genealogical notation, and in many cases a given narrative cannot be understood without reference to the lineages that are involved.

The first of the three books is devoted to the origins of the realm of Japan and of the sovereigns who rule it: it links various localities, and the gods and influential lineages associated with them, to an overall narrative of creation in stages. Beginning with the first appearance of heaven and earth and the

¹ The familiar Sino-Japanese names of the sovereigns (Jinmu, Yūryaku, Suiko, etc.) were created in the mid eighth century, and originally appeared in neither the *Kojiki* nor the *Nihon shoki*, where rulers are identified either by vernacular names (e.g. Kamu Yamato Iwarebiko) or by the location of their palace.

spontaneous generation of a number of deities, single and in male/female pairs, it turns to the exploits of the last of these gods to appear: Izanaki (probably, “man who invites”) and Izanami (“woman who invites”).² As ordered by the elder heavenly deities, these two gods descend to earth and procreate, giving birth to the islands of the Japanese archipelago and to a series of deities associated with geographic features and natural phenomena. Izanami dies from burns incurred while delivering a fire deity, who is then killed by Izanaki, while other gods are born from her bodily fluids and from the spattered blood and corpse of the fire deity.

Izanaki travels to the land of Yomi (an afterworld) in search of his dead wife, but flees in horror after witnessing her rotting corpse; she angrily pursues him to the border of Yomi, where they sever their relations. Purifying himself after his return, Izanaki generates another slew of deities, the last three of which are Amaterasu (“shining in heaven”), Tsukuyomi (“moon-counter”), and Susano’o (“raging male”). They are ordered by their progenitor to rule, respectively, the heavens, the night, and the sea, but Susano’o is expelled by Izanaki after refusing to obey. When a farewell visit to his sister Amaterasu is met with suspicion, he attempts to prove his sincerity through a test in which they each generate offspring from articles obtained from the other. This results in another series of new deities, and after claiming victory Susano’o rages through heaven, driving Amaterasu to cast both heaven and earth into darkness by withdrawing into a rock chamber, from which she is induced to emerge by a committee of gods who arrange a spectacle including lewd dancing and laughter.

Punished and cast out of heaven, Susano’o alights in the land of Izumo, saves the daughter of a local deity by killing an enormous serpent with eight heads and tails, and settles down in a palace. His sixth-generation descendant, Ōkuninushi (“great lord of the land”), is twice killed by rivalrous brother deities and revived, and then travels to Susano’o’s realm, where he undergoes trials while wooing his daughter. Stealing magical articles from Susano’o, and ultimately gaining his blessing, he subdues his brothers and continues the creation of the land with other deities.

Amaterasu determines that the land is to be ruled by one of the gods that she produced during her contest with Susano’o, but the land is too chaotic for

² Deity names in the *Kojiki* and other early works seem to have originally been semantically transparent, but many of them have been obscured by linguistic change, by interference from the meanings of characters used phonographically, or simply by the passage of time. For many there is consensus about their significance, but others are subject to dispute, and some lack even a convincing proposed interpretation.

him to descend from heaven. After two failed attempts, an emissary deity travels to Izumo and convinces Ōkuninushi and his sons to yield the land to Amaterasu's offspring. Her grandson Ninigi ("fertile abundance") then descends to Hyūga (in eastern Kyushu), where he marries the daughter of a mountain god, and where his son and grandson marry daughters of the sea god. Ninigi's great-grandson Kamu Yamato Iwarebiko ("fine lad of Iware in divine Yamato"), later known as Jinmu, is the first of the human rulers followed by the rest of the work, and the beginning of a royal genealogy leading down to the present day of the *Kojiki*.

Jinmu is the starting point for the second and third books, which follow sovereigns chronologically from reign to reign, with occasional interpolations of (usually mythic) material that provides genealogical background. These accounts of the age of human rulers are loosely organized into sections for successive sovereigns, tied together by a generally consistent format: statements of parentage, consorts, and offspring at the outset, and of tomb location at the conclusion of the account of each reign. (Such statements are the sole content of the final portion of the third book.)

Book Two presents the expansion and solidification of the realm of the sovereigns through conquest and religious authority. It begins with an account of Jinmu's journey eastward from Kyushu, alternately fighting with and relying on local gods and various human and non-human creatures, until he successfully establishes his palace at Kashiwara (in the southern Nara basin). After a mysterious series of eight "sovereigns" with only genealogical information, Jinmu's descendant Sujin and Sujin's son Suinin are portrayed as expanding the religious role of the sovereigns, ending an epidemic through worship of the deity of Mount Miwa (Ōmononushi) and averting a curse by refurbishing the Izumo shrine. The Suinin section contains a particularly interesting cluster of narratives, including the tragedy of the consort Saobime and her incestuous relationship with her rebellious brother, the tale of a cursed prince who grows to manhood without speaking, and a journey to the world of eternal life in search of the mythic *tachibana* fruit. Perhaps the centerpiece of this entire book is the extended narrative of Yamato Takeru, a prince who journeys to Kyushu, Izumo, and northeastern Honshū on missions of conquest for his father. This vivid cycle of stories, which includes some of the best-known "songs" of the *Kojiki*, ends with the dead prince changed into a white bird that flies away, fruitlessly pursued by his bereaved wives and children. The second book concludes with the famous story of Jingū, consort to a sovereign destroyed by gods for ignoring their oracle, who in her husband's stead leads a mission of conquest to Korea, followed by the

reign of her son Ōjin, marked by the arrival of immigrant experts in such technologies as weaving, writing, and brewing. This complements Yamato Takeru's journeys of conquest by showing (fictitiously, of course) the expansion of royal authority to the Korean peninsula (the *Kojiki* makes only passing reference to Korea thereafter, and never mentions China at all).

Book Three contains considerably less narrative material. For the concluding nine sovereigns (who correspond roughly to the period from the end of the fifth through the beginning of the seventh century), only a skeletal account of genealogy, palaces, and tombs is provided, and the bulk of this book is devoted to accounts of only two sovereigns. Nintoku (Ōjin's son) is portrayed as a benevolent sage-king (in the most clearly Confucian portion of the work), but also as a romantic hero who struggles with his jealous consort Iwanohime, producing a vivid sequence of "songs." Yūryaku (Nintoku's grandson) is portrayed as brutally violent, but primarily through his actions before his enthronement; his reign is a series of largely auspicious episodes, several of which show him as a lover in pursuit of his female subjects. Between Nintoku and Yūryaku is a bloody interval of succession disputes, in which several occupants of and contenders for the throne are brutally murdered; after Yūryaku's reign is a final narrative sequence involving the accession of two royal princes, Ninken and Kenzō, who had fled the earlier violence.

The written style of the *Kojiki* has often been described, incorrectly, as a blend of Chinese and Japanese, a formulation that confuses orthographic variety with linguistic difference. Portions of the work are written in phonographs, or in a mixture of phonographs and logographs, or entirely in logographs (sometimes arranged consistently with literary Chinese usage) but the *kundoku* reading process ensures a degree of linguistic homogeneity inconsistent with the idea of a mixture of languages. In many respects this prose style is close to the everyday logographic writing used in paper and wooden documents from the late seventh and eighth centuries, but great pains have been taken to systematize its orthography to make it as clear as possible. In this process, orally transmitted myths functioned only as raw material, and cannot be recovered in an "original" form. The language of the *Kojiki* also is surely related to what was spoken before the advent of writing, but the work provides no direct access to that "original" language, even though its preface claims that it does.

Because the *Kojiki* makes no appearance in the official historical record of the *Shoku Nihongi* (Chronicles of Japan Continued, 797), some scholars have doubted the authenticity of that preface, which is signed by a middle-ranking

courtier named Ō no Yasumaro (?–723). A small minority have even argued that the entire text is a later forgery, but the language reflected by its phonograph orthography establishes it as an early eighth-century work, and the weight of the evidence suggests that the preface is also genuine. In style and worldview, though, it departs radically from the main text of the *Kojiki*. Yasumaro tells an elaborate tale of multigenerational sponsorship by Tenmu and his niece (Tenji's daughter) Genmei (r. 707–15), linked by a much-debated claim that a mysterious court attendant named Hieda no Are somehow underwrote the linguistic authenticity of the work through “reciting and learning” earlier historical records. Once this connection to ancient narratives has been made, the preface turns to a description of the style engineered for the prose of the main text:

In high antiquity words and meanings were both forthright; it is very hard to put them in writing by unfolding sentences and constructing phrases. If one compiles them completely in accordance with the readings of the characters, the words do not extend to the meaning; if one strings them together totally relying on the sounds of the characters, the impression of the passage becomes very long. Herewith, at present, I sometimes used both sounds and readings within a single phrase; I sometimes recorded only with readings inside a single passage. Thus, when the logic of the words was hard to see, I clarified it with notes; when the form of the meaning was easy to understand, I did not annotate at all.

A common interpretation of this passage, grounded in a misreading of its links between language and writing, is that Yasumaro had to avoid “writing in Chinese” to preserve the “native” Japanese language. But the kundoku reading process meant that Chinese-style texts were not necessarily “in” that language, and careful analysis of the wording here shows that the salient contrast is not between the Chinese and Japanese *languages*, but rather between the orthodox transregional mode of formal Chinese-style writing (employed in works like the *Nihon shoki*) and the vernacular style of the *Kojiki* with its purported connection to “ancient language.”

It is possible that the distinctive style of the main text was motivated not simply because recording “old language” necessitated avoiding the Chinese style, but also because, conversely, avoiding the associations of that style necessitated a new method of writing, which Yasumaro justifies by claiming it was both based on “recitations” and necessary to be faithful to them. The preface itself is evidence of the influences he wanted to avoid: written in elaborate Chinese-style parallel prose, with phrases of four and six characters, it is also packed with borrowings from and references to a range of classical

Chinese texts. Although it is contradicted by the preface, the main text envisions a form of rulership whose authority is presented in oral terms. This corresponds stylistically with the creation of a vernacular text minimally dependent on Chinese rhetoric and related visions of statecraft. Just as the actual relation of the early Japanese state and its ideology to Sinitic models is a separate matter from its self-presentation, so with the style of the *Kojiki* the important point is that it attempts to engineer a new vernacular mode of expression that does not visibly derive from the transregional formal standard. On the surface, the result is a lucid and effective style that is clearly not literary Chinese, but in actuality it is still dependent on the Chinese commentarial and lexicographical tradition to distinguish fine shades of meaning, and throughout it relies on Chinese grammatical markers to connect and separate phrases and clauses.

Contemporary readers – there do not seem to have been that many, at least as compared to the *Nihon shoki* – must have experienced the work that resulted from these strenuous efforts as a remarkably creative and entertaining *tour de force*. The *Kojiki* pulls together disparate traditional stories and a welter of genealogies, human and divine, melding them into a single unified narrative that runs, with considerable energy, from the origins of heaven and earth through to the final episodes of the enthronement of the refugee princes. The preface suggests the seriousness of this endeavor, claiming royal sponsorship and trumpeting an ambition to correct and preserve corrupted and vanishing traditions. The main body of the work can be seen as conforming to such a project, but it is also a highly entertaining collection of stories and songs that are made all the more meaningful by the care with which they have been incorporated into the larger narrative whole.

The *Nihon shoki*

Completed in 720, only eight years after the *Kojiki*, the *Nihon shoki* both overlaps with and departs from the earlier work (not least because it is clearly the product of a decades-long process involving multiple compilers, and probably multiple *teams* of compilers). It is about four times longer, and more forthright in its treatment of its sources, citing a number of them directly. It also covers a longer period, becoming more detailed just as the *Kojiki* peters out into a skeletal list of reigns, and devoting the largest proportion of its historical narrative to the decades following the end of that list (essentially, the seventh century). Most prominently, where the style of the *Kojiki* rejects overt Sinitic norms, the *Nihon shoki* explicitly adheres to

them: excepting the phonographic “songs,” it is written in a logographic style consistent with literary Chinese usage and orthography, and some passages are even cribbed directly from Chinese classics. The result is not as distinctive as the *Kojiki*, and there is no denying the dryness of many of the annals, especially in its latter half, but much of the *Nihon shoki* is of considerable literary interest. Many of the songs it contains do not overlap with those of the *Kojiki*, and those that do are sometimes given different meanings by their prose settings; there are set pieces of soaring Sinitic rhetoric, often put into the mouths of sovereigns, princes, and their courtiers; and independent narrative episodes from the court, the countryside, and abroad are frequently incorporated into the annals. Even passages in the more “historical” sections are often written with flair, such as the depiction of the assassination of Soga no Iruka in 645, which is a small masterpiece of suspense.

The *Nihon shoki* still provides historians, even today, with a fundamental chronology of events in early Japan, especially for the seventh century. Its authority over the nearly thirteen centuries since its composition stemmed in part from its use of the rhetorical devices and narrative structures of the Chinese official dynastic histories whose tradition began with the *Shiji* (Records of the Historian, c. 100 BCE) and solidified with the *Hanshu* (History of the Former Han, 111) and *Hou Hanshu* (History of the Later Han, c. fifth century). The title itself announces this affiliation, while simultaneously implying a departure from the Chinese model. Where the *Kojiki* is a comparatively neutral “Record of Ancient Matters,” the *Nihon shoki* is explicitly linked to the new state name “Japan” (*Nihon*) – less than half a century old in 720 – and also to the traditional format of the Chinese dynastic histories. By analogy, the title can be interpreted as “annals 紀 of the history 書 of Japan 日本.” This implies continuity with Chinese models of statecraft and official historiography, but also contrast with the rhythm of dynastic rise and fall that drove the compilation of Chinese histories and provided their moral and temporal armature, because the object here is not a particular dynasty but “Japan” itself, from the beginning of the cosmos to the abdication of Jitō in the eleventh year of her reign (697).

Whether *Nihon shoki* is the original title or a very early alternate is not clear: all manuscripts use that title, which appears in some eighth-century sources, but other early references (such as the entry on the work’s completion in the *Shoku Nihongi*) use the abbreviated title *Nihongi*. Regardless, the emulation of and departure from Chinese models embedded in these titles is replicated on multiple levels, so that, for example, legendary and quasi-legendary sovereigns are evaluated in Confucian terms even as the overall

chronology of reigns denies the interruptions of succession guaranteed by the notion of a “mandate of heaven.” (Nonetheless, historians reading between the lines argue for a number of such interruptions.)

The first two volumes of the *Nihon shoki*, commonly referred to as the “God Age Volumes” (*jindaikan* or *jindai no maki*), tell of the beginning of the cosmos, the appearance of gods, the creation of the islands of Japan, and the descent to them of Ninigi, who is here the grandson of the god Takamimusuhi (“Lofty Divine Creative Power”) as well as Amaterasu. This narrative is interrupted by fifty-eight variant accounts introduced by the formula “a certain book says” (一書曰), clustered so as to divide the main narrative into eleven sections. These variant accounts range from brief notations of alternate deity names to extended stories quite unlike those of the main narrative. The contradictions among these variants have provided a rich lode of material, not only for modern scholars, but for premodern commentators and authors. One of the keys to the continued development of Japanese mythology is the permeability of this portion of the *Nihon shoki*, which in its open structure seems amenable to endless expansion and transformation. Nonetheless, it is essential to note that the variants are clearly subordinated to the main narrative, which continues unbroken across the interruptions.

In addition to such clear differences of format, the first book of the *Kojiki* and the first two books of the *Nihon shoki* also diverge fundamentally in their content and cosmology. This is immediately apparent from their respective openings: where the *Kojiki* begins with the first appearance of heaven and earth, with no explanation of their origins, the *Nihon shoki* cribs from a series of Chinese sources to present an elaborate *yin-yang*-based origin narrative for the universe. (Similarly, the subsequent appearance of early gods in the *Kojiki* is presented as a kind of spontaneous generation, where the *Nihon shoki* continues to explain their emergence in terms of the interaction of specific cosmic forces.) In the subsequent myths, perhaps the most striking difference is that the long *Kojiki* sequence devoted to the Ōkuninushi saga (and strongly associated with Izumo) is entirely absent from the *Nihon shoki*, where he appears only to yield the land before Ninigi’s descent. Another prominent divergence is that in the main narrative of the *Nihon shoki* Izanami does not die and Izanaki does not journey to Yomi (although there is a variant version of this story). Unlike the *Kojiki* portrayal of Izanaki generating gods on his own after returning from Yomi, in the *Nihon shoki* he and Izanami give birth to Susano’o and Amaterasu together, in keeping with the governing *yin-yang* cosmology. A catalog of such differences could continue at length, but here it

will suffice to note, finally, how the fundamental divide between the mythology of these two works is symbolized by the fact that the *Kojiki* does not use the term “Japan” (*Nihon*) anywhere, whereas the main narrative of the *Nihon shoki* omits the *Kojiki*’s fundamental term for the heavenly realm (*taka-ama no hara*).

From its third volume, which concerns the reign of the sovereign later known as Jinmu, the format of the *Nihon shoki* changes into temporally ordered annals organized by year of reign (keyed to the Chinese sixty-year cycle of stems and branches, and thus tied down to an absolute, trans-regional chronology), and including entries for given months and days. Brief variant accounts still appear occasionally, but not with the frequency and amplitude that are hallmarks of the God Age volumes. Each sovereign between Jinmu and Jitō (the fortieth by the *Nihon shoki*’s count) has his or her own annal, with a standard format beginning with a description of the sovereign’s character and genealogy, a narrative of circumstances preceding enthronement, and a list of consorts and offspring. After the subsequent year-, month-, and day-ordered annal of the sovereign’s reign, there is a concluding notation of the location of the royal tomb.

Here as well the contrast with the *Kojiki* is striking. Although the two share the same fundamental royal genealogy, they emphasize different aspects of the reigns of these human rulers. As its annals enter the sixth century, the *Nihon shoki* becomes progressively more concerned with relations between the Yamato court (anachronistically portrayed) and Korean and Chinese rulers. Increasingly detailed entries narrate exchanges with Silla, Paekche, and Koguryō (including a description of what the compilers portray as a Japanese sphere of influence, “Mimana,” in the south of the peninsula), the arrival of Buddhism, embassies to the Sui court, the rise of the powerful Soga lineage group, the enlightened reign of Suiko and her nephew Prince Shōtoku (trad. 574–622), and so on. This culminates in the dynamic and immensely detailed depiction of the rise of the ruler later known as Tenji and the late seventh-century reign of his brother Tenmu (succeeded by Tenmu’s consort Jitō). All of this material needs to be evaluated critically, as even the seventh-century portions contain much elaboration and exaggeration. Nonetheless, the eighth-century reader of the *Nihon shoki* would have sensed its annals reaching almost to the present day as it concluded with Jitō’s abdication in 697, a mere generation before the work’s completion.

The *Kojiki*, on the other hand, concludes its narrative portion with the story of the rulers later known as Ninken and Kenzō (traditionally taken to have reigned in the late fifth century). It does continue on to Suiko (whose

reign clearly marked an epoch for Yasumaro and other eighth-century historians), but these sections are skeletal royal genealogies without narrative content. Where the *Nihon shoki* presents “Japan” as historically unfolding in a continual process implicitly extending from the age of the gods up to the present, the *Kojiki* portrays antiquity as discontinuous with the time of the work’s composition (in its main text; the worldview of the preface is in many respects closer to that of the *Nihon shoki*).

Where the *Kojiki* has a preface but lacks any references in the official history, the *Nihon shoki* lacks a preface but has a clear, though not unproblematic, description of its completion in the *Shoku Nihongi*, the later eighth-century work that covers the years 697–791. The annal for 720 (Yōrō 4/5/21) includes the following entry:

Earlier, Prince Toneri (first royal rank) had received a royal order to compile the *Nihongi* [Annals of Japan]. Now, he had achieved success, and submitted it to the throne. There were thirty volumes of annals and one volume of genealogical tables.³

This entry refers to the final stage of what must have been a long compilation process, involving several groups of scholars (some of Chinese or Korean origin) and originating with history-editing initiatives ordered by Tenmu that are referred to in the *Kojiki* preface and the *Nihon shoki* itself. In the absence of a preface, it provides the most immediate framework for situating the *Nihon shoki* – a framework that is part of the continued state enterprise of compiling the *Shoku Nihongi* and the four other works that, along with the *Nihon shoki*, are collectively termed the Six National Histories (*Rikkokushi*).⁴ These works, the promulgation of which spans the nearly two centuries between 720 and the beginning of the tenth century, implicitly endorse the *Nihon shoki*’s project to link antiquity to the present realm by continuing its annalistic record, unbroken all the way back to Jinmu.

Until the eighteenth century, the *Nihon shoki* overshadowed the *Kojiki* almost completely. Along with other texts, the *Kojiki* was simply an adjunct to the work of reading and interpreting the *Nihon shoki*, especially the initial “God Age” volumes, as it quickly became the object of veneration and intense scholarly interest. Official lectures on it were held at the Heian court on multiple occasions from the early ninth through the mid tenth

³ Prince Toneri, an elder statesman who was almost certainly a figurehead rather than an active compiler, was one of the most influential sons of Tenmu and a prominent figure in early Nara period politics.

⁴ The four histories that follow the 797 *Shoku Nihongi* are the 840 *Nihon kōki*, the 866 *Shoku Nihon kōki*, the 879 *Nihon Montoku tennō jitsuroku*, and the 901 *Nihon sandai jitsuroku*.

centuries, and there is some evidence of scholarly discussion already in the eighth century. (There are several extant “personal records” [*shiki*] of these lectures, which include notes on readings of key terms and dialogues on questions of interpretation.) The most important resource for the study of the Heian engagement with the *Nihon shoki* is the *Shaku Nihongi*, compiled by Urabe Kanekata (fl. late thirteenth century). Based on lectures given in 1274 and 1275 by his father Kanefumi (fl. mid thirteenth century), this is a giant compilation of earlier scholarship and commentary. At the center of this enterprise was the establishment of correct kundoku readings for the entire work, a continuation of the basic approach sketched out by reading notes in the text of the *Nihon shoki* itself.

Simultaneous with this official scholarly engagement was the emergence of a ramifying discourse that has in recent years come to be known as the “medieval Chronicles of Japan” (*chūsei Nihongi*). From the late Heian period onward, Buddhist and Indian deities and abstract concepts merged with new political and religious institutions and local and popular cults to create a complex network of narrative material associated with, but not included in, the *Nihon shoki*, and incorporated into commentaries, story collections, treatises, and origin narratives for shrines and temples. This is perhaps the most important component of the reception of early Japanese prose works before the nativist philology (*Kokugaku*) of the early modern period.

Literature of report and proclamation

Two corpuses of material from the late eighth and early tenth century form the core of what some mid twentieth-century scholars termed a “literature of report and proclamation” (*sōsen no bungaku*).⁵ This refers primarily to the vernacular proclamations (*senmyō*) of the 797 *Shoku Nihongi* and the prayers or liturgies (*norito*) collected in the 927 *Engi shiki* (a collection of official protocols for governance and ritual), although other texts contain additional examples of these genres. Despite the long interval between these two works, there are remarkable similarities in the language and rhetoric of the *senmyō* and *norito* – and, notably, in their orthography: both are inscribed in a mix of logographs and phonographs, similar in principle to modern Japanese inscription, that modern scholars often call “proclamation style” (*senmyō-gaki*).

⁵ The term was coined by Andō Masatsugu (1878–1952) and adopted by Kurano Kenji (1902–91).

The *Shoku Nihongi* contains sixty-two senmyō in the standard division, spanning the ninety-two years between 697 and 789. These were vernacular proclamations read out loud at court by designated officials, in the voice of the sovereign, on such occasions as New Year's celebrations, enthronements, and promulgation of new era names. (Numerous other edicts are quoted in the *Shoku Nihongi*, but they are in the formal literary Chinese style, as are all of the edicts of the *Nihon shoki*.) Despite the careful notation of the senmyō, which is connected to their public vocal performance, their language and rhetoric are far from primeval orality, as they employ many structures and locutions derived from literary Chinese writings mediated through kundoku. Much like the prose of the *Kojiki*, these vernacular proclamations aim for a text that can be convincingly vocalized rather than for the reproduction of preexisting orality in writing. They are attempts to assert royal authority through the voice – that is, through the projection of the body or presence of the sovereign, delegated by means of the text itself to an official reader-surrogate.

The eighth book (out of fifty) of the *Engi shiki* contains twenty-seven norito texts, which form both the oldest extant examples of the genre and its classical core. These liturgies are traditionally divided into those that were intoned, from on high, to worshipers, which like the senmyō are associated with the verb *noru* (“proclaim”); and those that were offered up as a kind of report or supplication to the gods, which use the verb *mōsu* (“state humbly”). These norito seem to have taken form in the context of mostly state-sponsored rituals from the late seventh century onward, although it is important to bear in mind the Heian period provenance of the *Engi shiki* texts themselves. With significant parallels with (and contrasts to) the different mythic accounts in the *Kojiki*, *Nihon shoki*, and other early works, and with vivid imagery and extended parallel phrasing, the norito are of more literary interest than the senmyō. Taken together these two genres provide an intriguing picture of an early tradition of text-based vocal performance that is likely to have influenced the style of other prose works of the period, in particular the *Kojiki*.

Clan histories

It is striking how firmly the surviving literary works of the eighth century are linked to political institutions and state ideology. This is clear from their structure and contents, but also from their paratexts: the preface to the *Kojiki* and the *Shoku Nihongi* entry on the promulgation of the *Nihon shoki*, and also

the 713 government order that called the fudoki gazetteers into being. At the time of their composition and initial circulation, these gazetteers were simply bureaucratic reports (*ge*) submitted to the central government by provincial governors' offices. Their original format thus foregrounded the relationship with the state for which they were composed, but a similar posture is apparent in the preface to the *Kojiki*, which is also labeled as a formal report to the throne: a memorial (*hyō*).

This hierarchical relationship with the state continues to be the context for a cluster of works on history and mythology, compiled from the late eighth century onward, which distinctively reworked the material of the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*. The traditional genre term for such works is *ujibumi*, "lineage group documents," or more loosely, "clan histories." The term appears in the title of the 789 *Takahashi ujibumi* (Account of the Takahashi Lineage Group), a no-longer-extant work known from extensive quoted passages in the mid-Heian *Honchō gatsuryō* and the eleventh-century *Seiji yōryaku*. These fragments include accounts of the origin of the Takahashi, their service as stewards at court, and their involvement in a long-running dispute over official prerogatives, which seems to have motivated the composition of the work. This is reminiscent of the best-known clan history, the *Kogo shūi* (Gleanings from Ancient Stories) of 807. Submitted to the court by Inbe no Hironari (fl. early ninth century), this fascinating work provides a history of the Inbe, traditional rivals of the Nakatomi as specialists in court ceremony and ritual, at a time when their fortunes were in decline. It includes a narrative of court ritual since the creation of heaven and earth, foregrounding the role of the Inbe, and ends with a list of contemporary practices that Hironari saw as shameful departures from tradition and a warning of dire consequences of improperly worshiping the gods. The *Kogo shūi* contains much mythical and quasi-historical material that supplements or contradicts accounts found in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, and can be seen as a sustained attempt to shape the diverse and contradictory "histories" those works narrate into a unified account for the benefit of a particular lineage.

Other major clan histories include the 830 *Shinsen kisōki* (Newly Selected Record of Scapulamancy), a treatise on the origins and techniques of turtle-shell divination and the history of the Urabe, who claimed scapulamancy as their traditional vocation; surviving incompletely, and argued by some to be a medieval forgery, it includes early quotations from the *Kojiki* and accounts of Urabe traditions. The *Sumiyoshi taisha jindaiki* (Record of the Age of the Gods of the Great Sumiyoshi Shrine) appears to be a 789 revision of a 731 report to the Council on Deity Affairs (*Jingikan*) but may actually date from

the Heian period. It explains the deities and origins of the Sumiyoshi shrine in Settsu province (modern Osaka) and lists its treasures, lands, and other possessions. Long quotations from the *Nihon shoki* and material resembling the *Kojiki* are included, while other parts of the text appear to be derived from *norito* and no-longer extant gazetteers. It also contains unique material in the form of stories (several noted for their literary distinction), genealogies, and geographical information, much of it stemming from traditions of lineages associated with the shrine.

A work that resembles a clan history in many respects, and which became an essential source for medieval mythic discourse, is the *Sendai kuji hongî* (Ancient Matters and Fundamental Records of Early Ages). It includes a preface that unconvincingly claims it was written by Soga no Umako (?–626) at the behest of Prince Shōtoku, but this attribution is no longer accepted. The work is generally thought to have been compiled in the mid ninth century by a member of the Mononobe lineage group, although some scholars have argued for an earlier provenance. Written to rework mythology much as the *Kogo shūi* does, it provides a history of Japan in eleven “fundamental records” (*hongî*). The former half includes myths of the “Age of the Gods” and the latter consists of annalistic accounts of reigns from Jinmu through Suiko, concluding with a list of the origins of provincial chieftains (*kuni no miyatsuko*), officially recognized local leaders of 144 districts. Much of this overlaps with, or incorporates material from, the *Kojiki*, *Nihon shoki*, and *Kogo shūi*, but some of the divine and human genealogical material and the information on provincial chieftains are original to this work, and in some cases seem to be derived from significantly earlier sources. There are signs that the *Sendai kuji hongî* was connected to the intellectual activity surrounding the early Heian lectures on the *Nihon shoki*.

The clan histories assert hereditary rights grounded in variant myths that depart in significant respects from the official version included in the *Nihon shoki*. They were produced at a time of early Heian emphasis on Chinese-style meritocracy, and, more importantly, of efforts by Kanmu (r. 781–806) and his immediate successors to exert more direct control over the state through sponsorship of outsider lineages and institutions. In terms of their specific mythic content, these works build on the accounts in the *Nihon shoki* (and to a lesser extent the *Kojiki*), adding new material to them, but they also share with the *Kojiki* and the *fudoki* a striking quality of enunciation and directionality: they are written performances addressed to the throne and often associated with particular authors. Despite the richly written quality of all of these works (which is distinct from the attempts of several of them to

reproduce an oral *effect*), they are modeled on the vocal performance of court officials making formal reports to the sovereign.

With its official status and Sinitic textual authority the *Nihon shoki* would seem to be an exception, but it is significant that the *Shoku Nihongi* description of its completion associates it with both a single author (Prince Toneri) and an act of formal submission to the throne. Moreover, the *Nihon shoki* court lectures, which may have begun already in the eighth century but which had their heyday at the height of the clan histories, incorporated it into a different kind of formal performative address at court, and also, eventually, associated it with the “private” prerogatives of particular lineages that became specialists on the work and its interpretation.

Buddhist writings

The influence of Buddhism on early Japanese literature can be considered in both explicit and implicit terms. A major distinction between the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki* is that the former envisions a non-Buddhist antiquity – its narrative material ends in the late fifth century in part because were it to continue beyond that it would become impossible to avoid the impact of the new religion on elite culture and politics – while the latter dwells extensively on the origins of Buddhism and its expansion (portrayed as a matter of royal sponsorship from the beginning). Thus the *Nihon shoki* makes extensive reference to Buddhist texts and ceremonies, and in places even adapts passages from sutras. But scholars have shown how extensively the *Kojiki* relies on stylistic precedents from Buddhist texts, both in the phonographs used for its “songs” and in the innovative logographic style used for its prose passages. In a pattern that would recur repeatedly in the history of Japanese religion, surface rejection of Buddhism coincides with deeper, more fundamental continuities.

Even if only in explicit terms, Buddhist writings play an enormous role in early prose literature. The bulk of surviving written material from ancient Japan is Buddhist – sutras, commentaries, treatises, and records related to their copying in official scriptoria – and even though allowances have to be made for differing rates of destruction of secular and sacred texts, there is no doubt that imported Buddhist writings circulated widely from the seventh century onward. The traditional assumption that Prince Shōtoku inaugurated extensive involvement with, and domestic composition of, Buddhist texts has been largely undermined by recent scholarship. It is clear that from the late seventh century he was strongly associated with writing and literacy,

but the texts that have traditionally been attributed to him are much more likely to have been imported from China or Korea or composed by later authors. Nonetheless, Shōtoku is an essential figure for literary history because of the number of early Japanese works that were devoted to his life, or anachronistically attributed to him.

A major early biography is the *Shichidaiki* (Record of Seven Lifetimes), an eighth-century account of Shōtoku's life known through quoted fragments in later biographies, and thought to be identical to an Edo period manuscript entitled *Jōgū taishi den* (Biography of the Upper Palace Prince [Shōtoku]). The thirteenth-century *Shōtoku taishiden shiki* (Private Annotation of the Biography of Prince Shōtoku) states that the *Shichidaiki* was written in 771 by a priest named Kyōmei. It discusses the six previous lives of Shōtoku, with particular attention to his putative incarnation as the Chinese Tiantai patriarch Huisi (515–77), and narrates his accomplishments after his final rebirth in Japan, relying heavily on the *Nihon shoki* account. Another early Shōtoku biography is the *Jōgū Shōtoku hō-ō teisetsu* (Imperial Explanation of the Dharma Prince Sagely Virtue [Shōtoku] of the Upper Palace), a haphazard collection of information about early Japanese Buddhism, the genealogy and accomplishments of Shōtoku and sovereigns associated with him, and inscriptions and poetry connected to the temple of Hōryūji. Some of this material seems to date back to the seventh century; the remainder is later, mainly from the eighth century, and the text as a whole is thought to have taken its current form in the tenth or early eleventh century. These biographies, and later works on the prince like the early Heian *Jōgū Shōtoku taishiden hoketsuki* (Record to Supplement the Biography of Prince Shōtoku), culminate in the tenth century *Shōtoku taishi denryaku* (Chronicle Biography of Prince Shōtoku), a compendious narrative of miraculous incidents that was widely read and exerted much influence on visual culture and on later writings, including collections of tale literature (*setsuwa*).⁶

Another important category of Buddhist writing is the record of temple origins, or *engi*, a long-lived genre that would come to be a major source of narrative material in the Heian and medieval periods. Like many other early prose texts, *engi* have a complex relationship to the *Nihon shoki*, the later sections of which were clearly based in part on such temple records, although influence could also flow in the other

⁶ Other early biographies include the mid eighth-century *Tōshi kaden*, which collects accounts of three prominent Fujiwara, and the *Tō daiwajō tōseiden* (779), a narrative of the life of Ganjin (Ch. Jianzhen), the blind Chinese founder of the Tōshōdaiji temple in Nara.

direction. A number of *engi* survive, complete or in part, from the eighth century, including one for Hōryūji, but perhaps the most prominent is the origin narrative for the Soga temple Asukadera: the *Gangōji garan engi narabi ni ruki shizaichō* (Origins of Gangōji, along with a Catalogue of its Possessions), which is excerpted in a late Heian compendium of temple histories. This contains a history of early Buddhism that parallels, and in significant ways departs from, that found in the *Nihon shoki*; it also collects the texts of inscriptions associated with the temple and an abridged list of its land holdings and other possessions.

Although the *Nihon shoki* and the *Gangōji engi* contain much vivid narrative material, perhaps the most important – and certainly the most entertaining – early Japanese work of Buddhist literature is the *Nihon ryōiki* (Miraculous Tales of Japan), a collection of 116 tales compiled in three volumes (each with a preface) by a priest named Kyōkai (also Keikai) around the turn of the ninth century. Many of the stories are derived from material adapted from Chinese sources, such as the Tang period collection *Mingbaoji*, but the work also includes narratives that appear to have been collected in Japan. Morals for stories and interpretive comments refer to a range of secular and, especially, scriptural sources, most prominently the Lotus Sutra, although in many cases these appear to be drawn not from the original texts but from compilations of excerpts. The concerns of the work are suggested by its full title: *Nihonkoku genpō zen'aku ryōiki* (Record of Miraculous Recompense for Good and Evil in the Present Life in the Country of Japan). Most of the stories concern the karmic consequences of good and evil acts (not just in the present life), but the prominence of the “country of Japan” in the title is not incidental. The stories are organized chronologically and usually linked to specific locations in the provinces or the capital. They start with the reign of Yūryaku (who, as historians point out, was seen in early Japan as inaugurating a new epoch), but the majority of tales take place during reigns of Nara sovereigns, with only the last two making reference to post-Nara period events. With its focus on reign, place, and genealogy, the *Ryōiki* is in a sense a Buddhist counterpart to the *Kojiki*. As the earliest extant Japanese collection of the short narratives modern scholars would come to call *setsuwa*, it is a clear precursor of later works such as the *Konjaku monogatari shū* and the *Uji shūi monogatari*, but it reflects material that must have been circulating earlier than its compilation, and thus formed an important part of the cultural background for other surviving early narrative works.

Songs of the Records and Chronicles

TORQUIL DUTHIE

“Songs of the Records and Chronicles,” or *kiki kayō*, is the name by which modern scholars refer to the poems or songs that are included in the two mytho-histories produced by the eighth-century Yamato state. The *Kojiki* contains 112 songs, and the *Nihon shoki*, 128.¹ About half of these appear in both texts, sometimes verbatim and with the same attribution, and other times in a slightly variant form and a different context. In contrast to the prose narratives of the texts, which are written in logographic styles consistent with (in the case of the *Nihon shoki*) and departing from (in the case of the *Kojiki*) Literary Sinitic, the songs are written in phonographic styles using Chinese characters for their sound values. Although there has never been a clear set of criteria for determining how old the songs actually are, it has been generally assumed that they are the oldest extant Japanese poetry, older than the poetry of the *Man'yōshū*.

The term *kayō* (literally, “recited song”) does not appear in the *Kojiki* or *Nihon shoki*, both of which simply use the term *uta* (songs/poems). *Kayō* first appeared as a literary category in the early twentieth century and was used to describe the songs of the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki* in order to emphasize the view that they were oral songs dating from a period prior to the use of Chinese writing. A highly influential theory that developed in the 1920s was that many *kayō* were originally popular “folk songs” (*min'yō*, a term popularized as a translation of the German term *Volkslied*) that had been later adopted by the aristocracy. This idea was the basis of scholarly attempts to reimagine the original folk or ritual contexts of the songs as they might have existed prior to their inclusion in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*. More recent scholarship has argued that the songs probably originated during the late seventh century in the literate context of a court tradition of *kayō monogatari* (song-tales) about

¹ As counted in Yamaguchi Yoshinori and Kōnoshi Takamitsu, eds. *Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū* (SNKBZ), vol. 1, *Kojiki* (Tokyo: Shōgakusan, 1997), and Kojima Noriyuki, ed. SNKBZ, vols. 2–4, *Nihon shoki* (1994–8).

the sovereigns of the past, and has emphasized their function and significance in the context of the written texts in which they appear.²

The *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, each in different ways, legitimize the early eighth-century political order ruled over by the Yamato “Heavenly Sovereigns” by tracing their genealogy to a primordial age of the gods and narrating the history of their conquests and the establishment of an imperial realm of “all under heaven.” In each text, the songs are presented in the context of events (journeys, conflicts, marriages, festive occasions) that take place within that imperial narrative. Given that the *Nihon shoki* is at least four times longer than the *Kojiki*, the songs occupy far more space and play a much larger role in the latter. Whereas the *Nihon shoki* is made up mostly of prose narration, and songs appear only occasionally, in the *Kojiki* the song-tales themselves often constitute the bulk of the narrative. In both texts, the songs appear mostly in the legendary reigns before the sixth century, and are particularly concentrated in the reigns of certain exemplary sovereigns. The *Kojiki* in fact has no songs at all after the sixth century (its last ten reigns contain only genealogical material) and 88 songs out of its total of 112 appear in only six reigns, those of Jinmu (13), Yamato Takeru’s father Keikō (15), Ōjin (11), Nintoku (23), Ingyō (12), and Yūryaku (14). In the *Nihon shoki*, 86 songs out of a total of 128 are from before the sixth century, and in the sixth-century reigns there are almost no songs at all. The distribution among the reigns of legendary sovereigns is a little more even, but rulers such as Nintoku and Yūryaku still stand out. This focus on the sovereigns of the fifth century and earlier suggests an attempt by the late seventh- and early eighth-century court to trace certain aspects of their political and cultural authority back to legendary times rather than to the recent past.

The most common poetic theme in both the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki* is that of the ruler’s marriage, which accounts for half of the songs in the *Kojiki* and one third of the songs in the *Nihon shoki*. In both texts the vast majority of songs are attributed to the ruler (a little less than half in the *Kojiki*, a little more than half in the *Nihon shoki*), to the wives of rulers (ranging from main consorts, to daughters of lineage chiefs from the provinces, to low-ranking *uneme* tribute maidens), or to the political subjects of rulers (ranging from high-ranking ministers to nameless palace guards). In the *Kojiki*, over twenty songs are sung by wives of sovereigns, and over ten by ministers or subjects, whereas in the *Nihon shoki* this ratio is reversed, with ten songs by sovereign

² See Kōnosshi Takamitsu, “Kayō monogatariiron joshō,” *Nihon bungaku* (June 1978), and “Kayō monogatari,” in *Kojiki no tassei* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1983).

wives, and over twenty-five by ministers or other subjects. The larger number of songs by rulers' wives in the *Kojiki* is a result of the greater emphasis placed on genealogical connections, whereas the higher proportion of songs by the sovereign's subjects in the *Nihon shoki* is due to its greater emphasis on administration and government. Following the example of the Chinese dynastic histories on which it is modeled, the *Nihon shoki* also contains in its later chapters several so-called *wazauta* (children's songs) and songs attributed to "the people of the time" (*toki no hito*) with cryptic omens concerning changes in succession.

A key problem with the songs of the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki* is that many of them do not seem to fit their narrative context very well. One early theory about this disjunction was that some of them had been composed independently and later inserted into the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki*, while others were composed from the outset as part of a narrative.³ However, the standards for determining which songs were originally "independent" tended to be somewhat arbitrary and varied greatly from one scholar to another. More recently, close literary analysis of the songs has revealed that some of them both make close reference to their narrative context *and* seem curiously disconnected from it. This suggests that the question is one not of originally "independent songs" versus "song-tales" that were created as such, but of songs deliberately being both set within and at the same time set apart from the prose narrative in order to open up a different kind of discursive space within the text in which the protagonists of imperial history speak in their own voices.⁴ In this reading, the explicit presentation of the songs as being sung or spoken aloud, typically with the formula "... sung, saying" (*utaite iwaku*), and the naming of various song-types which seem to describe methods of singing or recitation, such as *shitsu uta* ("quiet songs") or *ageuta* ("raised songs"), is not a description of a live performance, but the narrative evoking of one. The songs are written in phonographs not as an attempt to record an oral performance that existed before and/or beyond writing, but as a textual performance of the reciting of a song.

A typical example of this disjunction between content and context is the following song from the reign of Sovereign Nintoku in the *Kojiki* (KJK 53), which is recited by Nintoku on a journey to find his consort Kurohime, who has fled back to her home province of Kibi due to the jealousy of Nintoku's main consort:

³ See Tsuchihashi Yutaka, *Kodai kayō to girei no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1965).

⁴ See Shinada Yoshikazu, "Kayō monogatari – hyōgen no hōhō to suijun," *Kokubungaku* (Jan. 1991).

Whereupon the Heavenly Sovereign, longing for Kurohime, deceived the Great Consort saying “I want to see the Island of Awaji,” and when he arrived at Awaji Island, he looked afar and sang, saying:

Oshiteru ya Naniwa no saki yo	From the cape of bright shining Naniwa
Idetachite waga kuni mireba	I set out and when I look upon my land,
Awashima Onogoroshima	I can see the Self-Congealing Island,
Ajimasa no shima mo miyu	and Foam Island, and Palm Tree Island too
saketsu shima miyu	I can see the islands afar.

The sovereign then departed from that island and arrived in the land of Kibi. Then Kurohime led the sovereign to a place towards the mountains and presented him with a meal.

This episode is followed by a series of songs in which Nintoku and Kurohime pledge their love to each other before Nintoku returns to the capital and Kurohime, still fearful of the empress’s jealousy, remains in Kibi. The islands that Nintoku “can see” in the song – Foam Island (*Awashima*) and Self-Congealing Island (*Onogoro shima*) – are in fact the first mythical islands created by the gods Izanaki and Izanami at the start of the *Kojiki* narrative. As is the case with other “land-viewing” songs, “looking upon” (*miru*) and “seeing” (*miyu*) are expressions of the scope of the emperor’s power. The song suggests that Nintoku can see (and therefore rules) not only the visible lands in this world but also the invisible “islands afar” in the world of the gods, that his vision extends not only to “my land” (*waga kuni*) on earth, but also to the mythical islands that were created by his divine ancestors in the first volume of the *Kojiki*.

While at first glance the song may appear to be somewhat out of context within the story of Nintoku’s love affair with Kurohime, a closer reading reveals that this disjunction makes sense in other ways. Within the prose account of Nintoku’s ploy to deceive his empress so he can meet Kurohime, the song stops the linear chronology of the narrative and momentarily opens up another space of narration in which Nintoku speaks in his own voice of his mythical vision. The song fits into the allegorical logic of both the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki* in which the sovereign’s looking upon/ruling of the land often functions as a preface for his sexual conquests, as it also fits within the context of the larger *Kojiki* narrative, in which Nintoku is an eminently virtuous “Heavenly Sovereign” with divine ancestors. The song suggests that, in spite of his consort Iwanohime’s jealousy, nothing can escape the mythically legitimized authority of Nintoku’s gaze and desire. At the same time, by concluding with Kurohime’s decision to stay in Kibi, the episode

reaffirms the status of Nintoku's main consort Iwanohime and the preeminence of her lineage, the Kazuraki.

The *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki* are mytho-historical narratives of the formation of the imperial realm of Yamato, told from an impersonal perspective that is located outside the world of the text. In both works, the songs, formally distinguished from the prose narrative by their phonographic notation, open up a space where the protagonists of imperial history speak in the first person in the temporal present of the world of the narration. Within the main narrative, the "Heavenly Sovereigns" of Yamato/Nihon are mythically legitimized as the descendants of heavenly gods who have conquered and expanded a universal realm of "all under heaven." Within the performative space evoked within the written text by the songs, the authority of the "great lords" of Yamato/Nihon is articulated "live" in their own voices, and by their subjects' statements of praise and pledges of submission. For the eighth-century court, reading or listening to the songs in the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki* mytho-histories was a way to play at experiencing the past as present, and to celebrate their affinity with the sovereigns and political subjects of ancient times.

Fudoki gazetteers

DAVID LURIE

The *fudoki* are gazetteers: written accounts of the nature and spatial organization of geographical features (the title literally means “records of lands and climates,” but could alternately be rendered as “records of lands and their customs”). These works are a treasure-house of compelling, often fragmentary narratives: heroes struggle to clear horned snake deities from farmland; deer discuss their dreams; gods and siblings vie for rights to water and land; the exploits of sovereigns and princes yield a flurry of place names; with divine assistance a man avenges himself on a shark that has devoured his daughter; two gods in an endurance contest pit bearing a load of clay against resisting the urge to defecate.

While titles like *Kojiki* or *Nihon shoki* denote single relatively stable works, “fudoki” is a generic label rather than a title. In discussions of early Japanese literature the term usually refers to the five “old gazetteers” (*ko-fudoki*), which are the only substantial survivors of dozens of such works compiled in response to a central government order in 713. Confusingly, these early gazetteers were not originally labeled as “fudoki.” The term derives from Chinese usage beginning in the Later Han, and seems to have been strongly associated with the title of a now-lost third-century work; its use to refer to gazetteers of Japanese provinces cannot be confirmed until the early tenth century. A venerable Chinese tradition of geographical writing includes classics like the *Shanhaijing* (completed by the Later Han), but more direct precedent for the Japanese gazetteers commissioned in 713 was provided by official compilations of maps and reports on local products and customs produced during the Sui and Tang dynasties.

The early Japanese works now known as “fudoki” seem to have been initially titled along the lines of the one for Hitachi province (modern Ibaraki prefecture), which is headed: “A Report from the Hitachi Provincial Governor’s Office on the Ancient Sayings Transmitted by the Elders.” To complicate matters, a second government order of 925 (preserved in the

eleventh-century *Ruiju fusenshō*) required provincial governors to submit gazetteers that were explicitly referred to as fudoki. Latter-day commentaries such as the 1269 *Man'yōshū chūshaku* and the late thirteenth-century *Shaku Nihongi* contain numerous quotations from no-longer-extant gazetteers of various provinces. Although some of these may stem from texts written or revised after the 925 order, other such quotations undoubtedly represent fragments of the original eighth-century reports. This chapter focuses on the five relatively intact “old fudoki,” but it is important to remember that these surviving fragments are essential to understanding the scope and content of the genre; they also contain some of the most interesting and oft-cited stories from the fudoki corpus.¹

An entry from the *Shoku Nihongi* (Chronicles of Japan Continued, 797) for 713 (Wadō 6/5/2; a year and several months after the date of the *Kojiki* preface) quotes the executive order that required the production of the original fudoki:

Apply auspicious characters to the names of the towns and districts of the provinces of the seven circuits and the capital region. Record in detail the types of products of those districts: silver, copper, pigments, grasses, trees, birds, beasts, fish, insects, and so on. Include in records the fertility of the soils, the origins of the names of mountains, rivers, plains, and fields, and the ancient sayings and unusual events transmitted by the elders, and report them to the court.

Scholars typically divide this order into five categories of information: (1) auspicious orthography for place names; (2) lists of local products; (3) evaluation of soil quality; (4) place name origins; (5) local myths and legends. The five extant fudoki are often evaluated for their contrasting emphases on these elements: for example, the *Hitachi no kuni fudoki* pays almost no attention to auspicious orthography and contains extensive accounts of local legends, while the *Harima no kuni fudoki* consistently notes the soil quality of localities and firmly roots most of its narrative material in the origins of place names.

The motivations for the five elements of the order are not identical, but all are clearly linked to the interests of the central government and its local representatives. Indications of soil quality and local products are of obvious relevance to the tax system, and the establishment of auspicious place names projects the power of the central state (and its Sinitic values) and also

¹ Scholars since the Edo period have assiduously collected fudoki fragments, which are included in modern editions and commentaries along with the five comparatively intact “old fudoki.”

potentially confers actual good fortune on those localities. The value of local lore is not as apparent on the face of the order, but in practice it is clear that the officials compiling the fudoki used this element of the reports to link local places to legendary sovereigns said to have sojourned there, with congenial implications for the political center (and also for their own authority as its representatives). The fudoki contain much material of local origin, but it is filtered through the outlook of the central elite, either directly because provincial officials from the capital worked as compilers, or indirectly because editors with peripheral origins catered to metropolitan concerns.

Only one gazetteer survives in a complete manuscript: that for the province of Izumo (modern Shimane prefecture). The remaining four old fudoki include one that is missing its introduction and at least one district (Harima province, the southwestern part of modern Hyōgo prefecture]) and three abridgements: Hitachi province and two from Kyushu, Bungo (Ōita prefecture) and Hizen (portions of Nagasaki and Saga prefectures). It is only by chance that these were not lost like dozens of other original gazetteers, but luckily something of the variety of that corpus is apparent even from this relatively small sample. They seem to have been compiled over the few decades following the 713 order: of the extant five, those for Harima and Hitachi are generally taken to date to the years immediately after the order, with the Bungo and Hizen fudoki over a dozen years later, in the 730s. Alone among these, the *Izumo no kuni fudoki* is explicitly dated, to the fifth year of the Tenpyō era (733).

It is unlikely that all of the eighth-century fudoki were compiled in the same way, but in most provinces local officials presumably sent reports on their districts to the governor's offices, after which the overall report was centrally compiled and edited (the subsections of the *Izumo no kuni fudoki* are signed by district heads [*gunji*], and the opening of the *Hitachi no kuni fudoki* proclaims it to be a report of the provincial governor [*kokushi*]). As might be expected from this complex provenance, and also from their fundamental role mediating between provincial circumstances and metropolitan ideals, the extant fudoki are multilayered, polyphonous works, marked by internal tensions and inconsistencies and by dramatic departures from the content of other gazetteers, and of other early works such as the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki*.

In keeping with the specifications of the 713 order, the fudoki include information about place names and their derivations, local products (especially plants and animals), geographical features (including soil quality), and customs and legends. Following an initial section describing the province as

a whole, they are divided into sub-sections for each district (*gun*), which is then further subdivided into entries for townships (*gō*), and also in some cases for mountains, rivers, and so on. Within this broad structural framework, each of the five extant old fudoki has distinctive emphases and tendencies. All of them are filled with discussions of place name origins and local legends, but, for example, as mentioned earlier the *Harima no kuni fudoki* contains extensive notation of soil quality with comparatively little attention to local products, while the reverse is the case for the *Izumo no kuni fudoki*.

In some cases the prose of the gazetteers is workmanlike at best (some scholars consider the *Harima no kuni fudoki* to be a draft rather than a finished product), but others are written with elegance and flair. All of them reflect the familiarity of their compilers with the vocabulary and usage of formal literary Chinese-style writings, with extensive borrowing of terms and patterns of expressions from Confucian classics and belletristic anthologies like the *Wenxuan*. The *Hitachi no kuni fudoki* in particular is known for the Sinified rhetoric of many of its accounts of legends and depictions of local customs. Like several other fudoki it also incorporates a few vernacular poems, as in the two irregular *tanka* (written phonographically) included in a famous portrayal of the *utagaki* or *kagai*, a carnivalesque ritual of song and frolicking youth convened on Mount Tsukuba. The entry for this district of Hitachi province traces the approachability of the mountain to an encounter between the deities of Mount Fuji and Mount Tsukuba and their parent, who responded to a lack of hospitality by making Fuji isolated and snow-covered, and rewarded Tsukuba for a generous reception by ensuring that for generations people would climb the mountain and make offerings. The resulting ritual is described as follows:

Now, Mount Tsukuba towers above the clouds. The western peak is high and steep; they call it the male god and do not let anyone climb it. However, though the eastern peak is covered with boulders there is no end to the people who ascend it. There is a spring flowing at its side that never runs dry, regardless of the season. All of the men and women of the eastern provinces come hand in hand, when the flowers bloom in the spring, when the leaves turn in the fall, bringing food and drink. On horseback and afoot they climb up to enjoy the most pleasant recreation. Among their songs are:

Whose invitation
Did she accept,
That girl who said she'd meet me
On Tsukuba's peak,
That she would not meet me there after all?

Oh that dawn
Would come soon,
On this night that I sleep
Without a partner
In a grass hut on the peak of Tsukuba.

They sing so many songs that they cannot all be recorded. It is a local saying that one unable to obtain a courting prize at the Tsukuba gathering is neither man nor maid.²

Characteristically, in addition to the story about the mountain deities and the preceding passage, this entry also includes information about surrounding territories, recounts a cryptic etymology of the district name, and specifies the area of a prominent lake.

The fudoki are not unified literary works, but miscellaneous collections of data and narrative fragments incorporated into a spatial framework. The importance of this mass of material for the study of early Japanese language, history, culture, and religion cannot be overstated, but it is understandably more common for non-specialist readers to approach them in excerpted form, as discrete myths or legends, or as passages of fine or interesting writing. Nonetheless an undeniable pleasure of these heterogeneous works is how often their plodding catalogues of toponyms, local products, and soil qualities suddenly open out onto vivid narratives and memorable vignettes.

² The traditional orthography for the toponym is Tsukuha; in the eighth century the final syllable would have been pronounced “pa.”

Man'yōshū

H. MACK HORTON

Man'yōshū (Collection of Myriad Leaves) is Japan's oldest extant anthology of vernacular verse and the most revered repository of its classical poetic tradition. Though its last dated poem was composed more than 1,250 years ago, it has through the centuries been repeatedly characterized as the fountainhead of the Japanese poetic spirit. Its more than 4,500 verses evoke visions both of ancient Japanese life and of eternal human concerns. The anthology is notable for its breadth in terms of years covered, poets included, and verse forms, topics, and themes represented. *Man'yōshū* includes approximately 530 named poets, although half the verses in the collection are of anonymous authorship. The bulk of its poems were composed over a dozen decades, from the mid seventh century (though a small number of works may be earlier) to 759, the year of the last dateable poem (20: 4516).¹ Although the vast majority of poems are *tanka* of (generally) thirty-one syllables, several other forms are included, some of them already obsolescent at the time of its compilation. Unlike later imperial anthologies, there is no preface detailing its provenance. But internal evidence indicates that it likely began as a kernel collection of fifty-three verses, compiled in about 700. This ur-*Man'yōshū* would have taken shape before the completion of *Kojiki* (Record of Ancient Matters, 712) and *Nihon shoki* (Chronicles of Japan, 720), but the anthology reached its final majestic twenty-book size through a series of expansions that spanned about a century.

Man'yōshū is structured according to a variety of organizational principles, and a number of different compilers were involved. It is widely believed, however, that the creation of the final twenty-book anthology was overseen by Ōtomo no Yakamochi (718?–85), and the last four books are mostly drawn from his personal poetry collection. Much of *Man'yōshū* was compiled during

¹ This is also the final poem in the work. Poems are numbered and cited according to the text in Kojima Noriyuki, Kinoshita Masatoshi, and Tōno Haruyuki, eds. *Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū*, vols. 6–9, *Man'yōshū* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1994–6).

the periods of retirement of several female sovereigns who likely had motivating roles in its formation, foreshadowing the prominence of female poets, diarists, and fiction authors in Heian and Kamakura literature.

Just as *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* were compiled with the aid of earlier histories that do not survive, *Man'yōshū* drew material from numerous other lost Japanese anthologies that are cited in its pages (e.g. the personal poetry collection of Kakinomoto no Hitomaro). The final version was also preceded by Japan's oldest extant anthology of verse, *Kaifūsō* (Florilegium of Cherished Airs, 751), the preface of which states that many works of literature were destroyed long before, in a bibliocaust accompanying the Jinshin succession war of 672. The final twenty-book version of *Man'yōshū*, therefore, contains some of the earliest poetry in the vernacular tradition, but it took shape through a dialogue with a variety of other Japanese models as well as with anthologies imported from China.

This dialogue is demonstrated most obviously by the fact that the prose annotations of the anthology are in literary Chinese. The vernacular Japanese poetry it collects is written in a variety of complex early systems that use Chinese characters to represent sometimes words (logographs) and sometimes sounds (phonographs). The latter type, now referred to as *man'yōgana* due to its prominence here, is also used to transcribe vernacular poetry in other early works such as *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*. These systems became obsolete and eventually partially unintelligible after the development of the simpler *hiragana* and *katakana* phonetic systems in the early Heian period, and much subsequent scholarship on the anthology has been devoted to recovering its ancient and obscure readings.²

Despite the enormous number and variety of poems, certain overriding characteristics can be identified. Versification figured in banquets, love affairs, partings, imperial progresses and other forms of travel, epistolary correspondence, funerals, and other events of heightened significance. There was in addition a strong performative element to these verses, which were sometimes accompanied by music and dance. Verses were often appreciated in groups and collectively composed; poetic exchanges are common. Several poets often contribute to a corporate sequence, or to a group of poems later sequenced or augmented by an editor.

Man'yōshū poems are, with exceptions, more emotional than intellectual, and sadness is for the most part found more worthy of poetic expression than

² Another complicating factor is the fact that the language of the Nara capital in the eighth century employed eight vowels, rather than the modern five, which added more color to the phonological palette of the verses.

happiness. Love poetry, for example, sings more of longing than consummation, absence rather than presence. So too does travel poetry concentrate more on homesickness than the diversions of the road, though scenic description remains essential.

The anthology was compiled during the greatest period of social change in premodern Japanese history. The years covered by the collection witnessed the implementation of a wide range of Chinese governmental policies and cultural practices intended to centralize Japanese imperial power, including new capitals, new policies of land tenure, and new legal codes. Chinese historiographical examples spurred the composition of Japanese analogues in *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, and Chinese views of poetry and poetic anthologization gave rise to new Japanese versions, at the pinnacle of which stood *Man'yōshū*. Its verses bear testimony to the monumental transitions from a preliterate world of song to one of writing and from poetry as communal ritual to personal lyric expression.

Title and format

In that the anthology contains poetry composed over many decades, the term *man'yō* 萬葉, literally “myriad leaves,” is often interpreted to mean “myriad ages,” a common metaphor found in earlier Chinese texts. Others take “leaves” instead to be a metaphor for “words” or “poems.” It has even been suggested that “leaves” means, as in English, “pages,” which were connected to form scrolls (Yakamochi himself used the character “leaf” this way). But in view of its prevalence elsewhere at least one meaning of the title was surely “collection of a myriad ages,” and perhaps also “for a myriad ages.”

Copies of the original text would have been physically massive, as each of twenty books consisted of one entire scroll. The length of these varied by the number of poems they contained, but they would have averaged about fifty feet and weighed about a pound each. Each scroll eventually had a table of contents (*mokuroku*), but there were no indexes, so finding a particular poem was time-consuming, and repetitions inevitably crept in during compilation. Many of the poems contain textual variants that were inserted interlinearly, a practice that bears witness to a developing sense of textual criticism. Codex versions of the anthology appeared in the mid-Heian period, and printed editions began in the early seventeenth century, culminating in the widely disseminated Kan'ei *hanpon* woodblock printing of 1643. The oldest surviving fragment is the Katsura manuscript from the mid-Heian period, and the earliest complete version is the Nishi Honganji manuscript from 1266, the base text for

most modern editions, which generally include indexes, transliterations of the original writing system, translations into modern Japanese, and copious notes.

Constituent typologies

The 4,500 or so poems in *Man'yōshū* include a number of different poetic forms, all except the few works in Chinese being known by the general term *uta*, which means either “song” or “poem.” Ninety percent of the total, 4,200 or so, are in the tanka form, the thirty-one syllables of which are distributed in five units of five, seven, five, seven, and seven. Those units or measures, called *ku*, are often translated as “lines”; they constitute discrete syntactical sub-units, although poems were not usually represented on the page in groups of five and seven syllables. The earliest poems are sometimes irregular in meter, and in certain phonological environments hypermetric (*jiamari*) segments appear, though they may have been chanted metrically through elision (*synaloepha*); hypometric (*jitarazu*) segments occasionally appear as well. *Man'yōshū* tanka often exhibit stronger pauses after segments two and four, a division which is termed “five-seven meter” (*goshichichō*), as opposed to the tanka of later ages that often favor stronger pauses after the first and third segments, hence “seven-five meter” (*shichigochō*). In at least one case (8: 1635) a tanka was composed by two poets, one providing the opening three units and the other the last two. Such corporate compositions came to be known in later ages as *tanrenga* (short linked verse), precursors of the linked sequences that became a major poetic form in the medieval period.

The *chōka* (“long poem”), of which there are 260 or so, comprises an indeterminate number of alternating units of five and seven syllables and ends (in its mature form) in a seven-syllable couplet. The longest in the anthology (2: 199) contains 149 segments. *Chōka* are usually followed by one or more tanka (usually called *hanka* or “envoys” in that environment), which either restate thematic elements of the longer poem or develop new but related material. The origin of these short codas is unclear, though influence from the Korean *hugu* “following verse” has been suggested. Unlike the tanka, the *chōka* did not survive *Man'yōshū* as a dominant poetic type, though it continued to be occasionally employed in later ages. The narrative element that the *chōka* contributes to *Man'yōshū* distinguishes the anthology from the twenty-one imperial anthologies that followed, in which the form survives only vestigially.

Other poetic forms in the anthology essentially disappeared after the *Man'yōshū* age. One is the *sedōka* or “head-repeating poem,” represented by

sixty-one examples. It consists of thirty-eight syllables in a distribution of five, seven, seven, five, seven, and seven syllables. Another form is the *bussokusekika* or “Buddha’s footstone poem” of five, seven, five, seven, seven, and seven, which takes its name from a group of such poems incised on a stone, together with a representation of the footprints of the Buddha on a second stone, in the grounds of Yakushiji temple in Nara. There is only one example (16: 3885), though other tanka may have been adapted from *bussokusekika* prototypes.

Poetic form is one way in which the collection is organized. Book Thirteen, for example, includes only *chōka* and *hanka*, and its companion, Book Fourteen, only *tanka*. But a more conspicuous organizing principle was by generic type, of which three are basic. These are *zōka* (“miscellaneous poems,” originally by and large of a public character), *sōmon* (poems conveying feelings to another, mostly about love between men and women), and *banka* (“[coffin-]pulling poems,” i.e. elegies or dirges). All three genres appear in all three basic poetic forms (*tanka*, *chōka*, *sedōka*), and all three terms are taken from the Chinese anthology *Wenxuan* (Selections of Refined Literature, c. 520–6), though only *zōka* and *banka* are used therein as poetic categories. Of the three genres, *sōmon* focus most on quotidian, personal expressions of emotion, made either declaratively or through metaphor, those two approaches being identified in the anthology under the rubrics “expressing feelings directly” (*seijutsu shinsho*) and “expressing thoughts by means of things” (*kibutsu chinshi*). About half the poems in *Man’yōshū* include love elements. Other organizational principles are the chronological, the geographical, and the seasonal. Travel is another main topic; fully a quarter of the poems either directly or indirectly deal with journeys, and many of those involve parting or longing for home, thus adding a love element. Despite the variety of organizational principles, the constituent parts of the anthology evince close attention to structure and internal cohesion.

Prehistory

Literary histories of *Man’yōshū* poetry typically divide it into four periods, starting in the mid seventh century and ending with the last dated poem (of 759). This leaves a handful of works, mostly prominently placed in the early books of the anthology, which are attributed to earlier, largely legendary poets. Though attributions of poems to figures from antiquity are problematic, several dozen of the poems in the collection are indeed quite old, dating back well into the seventh and perhaps as early as the sixth century.

Most are in Books One and Two, which both open with legendary figures from the distant past, doubtless positioned there to symbolize the antiquity of the courtly poetic tradition. *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* are both associated with attempts by Emperor Tenmu to demonstrate the legitimacy and indeed the divinity of his lineage and to provide his realm with written histories analogous to those of China. *Man'yōshū* appears to have been undertaken in part with similar motives, to depict in verse the divine lineage of the ruling house and to manufacture a poetic "tradition" for native verse like that already long established in China.

The earliest figure to whom verse is attributed (however apocryphally) is Iwanohime, consort of Emperor Nintoku (thought to correspond to an early fifth-century ruler). The group of poems under her name (2: 85–8) that opens Book Two of the anthology expresses the worry and frustration of a woman who waits for her spouse, a theme that would go on to animate much of the female writing of the Heian period. The verses form a series, in which she agonizes about whether to continue to wait or to search for him in the hills, but finally becomes resigned to her vigil. The final form of the sequence was surely the contribution of a later compiler, who reworked older poems and added new material.

Man'yōshū begins with a courting verse for a maiden gathering herbs on a hillside; it was purported to have been composed by Emperor Yūryaku (thought to correspond to a late fifth-century ruler), who was remembered as an exemplar both of martial and of cultural endeavors.

ko mo yo	With your basket,	
miko mochi	your lovely basket;	
fukushi mo yo	with your trowel,	
mibukushi mochi	your lovely trowel,	
kono oka ni	maiden, gathering herbs	
na tsumasu ko	on this hillside,	
ie norase	tell me your house;	
na norasane	tell me your name!	
sora mitsu	Over the sky-seen	
yamato no kuni wa	land of Yamato,	
oshinabete	it is I	
ware koso ore	who rule over all;	
shikinabete	it is I	
ware koso imase	who reign over all.	
ware koso ba	Shall I	
norame	tell you	
ie o mo na o mo	my house and my name?	(1: 1)

In this opening verse, the ruler at the beginning of spring encounters a maiden while viewing the land (*kunimi*), a ritual in which he ascends a promontory and gazes over his realm to promote fecundity and prosperity. Presumably the daughter of a powerful local family, she is collecting herbs, another spring ritual that would later become a courtly New Year rite associated with regeneration. Asking for her hand also demonstrates the ruler's intent to establish an alliance with her family, augmenting his own authority and consolidating his realm. That realm, Yamato, is modified by the epithet "sora mitsu," the first example in the anthology of a *makurakotoba* (lit., "pillow word," a later coinage). Such epithets, each of which conventionally modifies a specific noun or set of nouns, may have originally functioned to draw forth the entelechy of the word that followed. Many are so ancient that their meanings are no longer clear, but their presence as modifiers adds a venerability and grandeur evocative of their original magical intent. The most common interpretation of "sora mitsu" is "sky-seen," relating to a legend in which a god sailed the sky in a rock boat, but another interpretation is "sky-filling." In form, the poem is as primeval as its content: it is a *chōka* composed of segments of an increasing number of syllables rather than of the alternating fives and sevens that became the norm. It is also characteristic of early song in its simple parallelism, a formal aspect that was strengthened by the introduction in later ages of complex Chinese parallel structures.

In addition to these verses attributed to Yūryaku and Iwanohime, the small group of poems from the prehistory of the anthology includes some said to have been by Prince Karu (13: 3263–4) and Princess Karu (2: 90), who were later punished for their incestuous love affair. Another early verse (3: 415) is attributed to Prince Shōtoku (trad. 574–622), an apotropaic composition made upon encountering a corpse by the roadside (a common occurrence in early Japanese journeys and the subject of one of Hitomaro's most famous poems).

Period One (629–672)

From the accession in 629 of the ruler later known as Emperor Jomei (?–641), attributions of authorship gain historical plausibility; the number of poems also markedly increases. Jomei ascended the throne after the death of the female sovereign Suiko (554–628), the last ruler represented in the *Kojiki*. Literary historians customarily begin Period One of *Man'yōshū* poetry with this reign, the verses with earlier attributions constituting a kind of prelude.

Most of this poetry is by members of the imperial house or figures close to it, demonstrating the cultural attainment of the court. Like earlier verses, poems from Period One are represented through the mediation of eighth-century editors, who introduced anachronistic elements of transcription and commentary.

Despite the dramatic political changes of the time, the poetry from Period One begins with a traditional land-viewing composition attributed to Jomei:

yamato ni wa	In Yamato
murayama aredo	there are many mountains,
toriyorou	but when I ascend
ame no kaguyama	the most divine of all,
noboritachi	heavenly Mount Kagu,
kunimi o sureba	and view the lands around,
kunihara wa	smoke is rising here and there
keburu tachitatsu	from the plains,
unahara wa	and birds are rising here and there
kamame tachitatsu	from the waters.
umashi kuni so	Lovely it is,
akizushima	Dragonfly Isle,
yamato no kuni wa	this land of Yamato! (1: 2)

This is a paean to natural beauty, but it also contains less apparent ritual qualities promoting prosperity and averting misfortune. By pronouncing the land to be “lovely” (*umashi*), the sovereign hopes the word will act and reinforce the observation. Land-viewing here, probably accompanied by music and dance, becomes ritual theater, a state spectacle intended to placate the gods and reinforce the paramountcy of the ruler. In form, the verse expands from details to encompass the entire realm, just as Jomei’s imperial sway radiates from his person throughout the land at large. While the poem reflects attention to word choice and parallel structure in the depiction of a lyrical moment, to interpret it merely as a belletristic composition is reductive and anachronistic.

The impact of Chinese models becomes stronger as Period One progresses. Part of the richness of *Man'yōshū* resides in the dialectic of Japanese and Chinese and the ways in which poets expressed themselves both through native prototypes and through appropriations from abroad, often via the Korean peninsula and immigrants therefrom. Chinese influence is implied in the basic motivation to assemble poetry into an anthology and in the even more basic tool of writing that facilitated it. Though *Man'yōshū* retains traces of preliterate song, all such songs stood to be

influenced or reconstituted in the very act of writing them down, and some that appear as *tanka* with regularized meter were probably less regular originally.

Chinese works as early as *Shijing* (Book of Poems) and *Chu ci* (The Songs of the South) were influential in Japan, and the *fu* (rhapsody, or rhyme-prose) of the Han encouraged in a general way the development of the fictional persona and banquet improvisation. But more important was the literature of the Six Dynasties, a period approximately covering the third through the sixth centuries, and that of the early Tang. The main sources were the two sixth-century Chinese anthologies, *Wenxuan* and *Yutai xinyong* (New Songs from a Jade Terrace, c. 545), together with the classified literary encyclopedia *Yiwen leiju* (Belles-Lettres Classified, c. 620). Such texts demonstrated which poetic topics could be introduced in a courtly setting and which images and rhetoric were to be used to express them. Also important were the Confucian classics, collectanea of Buddhist scripture, Taoist texts such as *Bao pu zi* (The Master Embracing Simplicity, by Ge Hong, c. fourth century), and even the mildly erotic work of narrative fiction *You xianku* (A Dalliance in the Immortals' Den, by Zhang Zhou [c. 657–730]). The verses of such Six Dynasties poets as Cao Zhi (192–232), Lu Ji (261–303), Tao Qian (365–427), and Xie Lingyun (385–443) provided powerful models for *Man'yōshū* poets. It has been argued that a Chinese tendency to treat the topic of the poem obliquely (the *yipang* style) was of particular importance. This drew attention to the reasoning process of the viewer as much as to the scene being viewed, an intellectual approach reflected in locutions involving perception or realization. Such oblique approaches would go on to become a hallmark of the *Kokinshū* style.

The dialectic between native and foreign animates the work of the first major poet of the anthology, Princess Nukata (or Nukada, c. 627–after 690). A wife of Prince Ōama (later Tenmu), she bore him a daughter and later entered palace service in the time of his elder brother Tenji. Her most famous poem, now known as “The Spring and Autumn Debate” (1: 16), begins with a headnote in which Tenji orders his minister Fujiwara no Kamatari to adjudicate the merits of spring flowers and autumn leaves, presumably in a Chinese-style poem. Here, Tenji is depicted presiding over a cultured court whose members attend not only to matters of state but also to artistic pursuits, which in keeping with venerable Chinese principles were inextricably related. But this literary command was evidently beyond Kamatari, at which point Princess Nukata responded in his stead, but in the vernacular. Such proxy composition would be a basic function of palace poets, of whom

Nukata was an early example. In the end she decides in favor of autumn, having maintained suspense until the very last syllables of her poem. No longer a ritual verse to praise deities, provide protection, or promote fertility and prosperity, the verse is instead a belletristic exercise with a literary problem and a dramatic solution, one which also has the political effect of showcasing Tenji's enlightened court.

Nukata also composed poems of a more ancient, ritual type. Two were made after Tenji's death and later appeared in a set of verses created by members of the late emperor's female entourage (2: 147–55). A palace poet, she also figures as a shamaness, and the three *chōka* and nine *tanka* that are attributed to her in the anthology (not all universally accepted) make her the most distinguished poetic figure of this early *Man'yōshū* era. Other notable works from the period include Naka tsu Sumeramikoto's *chōka* and *hanka* in praise of Jomei (1: 3–4), a *chōka* and *hanka* attributed to Prince Konikishi expressing homesickness while on an imperial journey (1: 5–6), and Prince Yuge's love songs for Princess Ki (2: 119–22). There is also a *chōka* set (1: 13–15) attributed to Tenji about a love triangle between the three mountains surrounding what would become the Fujiwara capital. The work of this period shows a persistence of poetry as oral ritual, even as certain of its poets begin to assay the more individual forms of expression characteristic of Chinese verse. This interaction between native ritual song and belletristic creativity reaches its apotheosis in the next period, in the work of Kakinomoto no Hitomaro.

Period Two (672–710)

After Tenji's death in 671 his son Prince Ōtomo (648–72) was defeated by his uncle, Tenji's brother Tenmu (Prince Ōama), in the brief Jinshin War the following year. Tenmu's absolute monarchy was legitimized by his own purportedly divine origins, a pedigree first celebrated in song (19: 4260) by Ōtomo no Miyuki, who fought alongside his liege in the war. The court at this time began to conceive itself as its own cosmos, rather than as a satellite of China, even as it progressively adopted aspects of Chinese culture. After Tenmu's death in 686, his wife Empress-Consort Uno (Jitō) herself acceded, reigning until Prince Karu (later Emperor Monmu, 683–707), her grandson by her prematurely deceased son by Tenmu, was old enough to succeed her. It was during Jitō's reign that Fujiwara, Japan's first Chinese-style capital city, was constructed; it would remain the capital during the reigns of her two

successors, Monmu and her half-sister Genmei (661–721), until the move north to Nara in 710.

Literary historians take the Jinshin War and the move to Nara as the temporal boundaries of the second period of *Man'yōshū* poetry. Jitō's premier poet so dominates this period that it is sometimes simply referred to as "the age of Hitomaro." He is also the first important poet in the collection not of the imperial family, though his clan title (*kabane*) indicates that he was peripherally related. A forebear appears to have been connected to the Wani, a once powerful house that served the court, but nothing is known of Hitomaro's own life, the details in his own verses being tantalizing but unverifiable. During the eleven years covered by his dateable poetry (687–707), he composed at least eighteen *chōka* and sixty-four *tanka*, thirty-six of the latter being *hanka* envoys to *chōka* poems, meaning that the bulk of his work was in the *chōka-hanka* form; 364 poems either composed or collected by him are labeled as being from the eponymous *Kakinomoto no Asomi Hitomaro kashū* (Hitomaro Poetry Collection), which no longer exists, but served as one of the main sources for Books Seven through Twelve. As Jito's principal "palace poet," Hitomaro produced ceremonial eulogies on the deaths of princes and princesses and encomia for the court that contributed to the grandeur of the imperial house and the deification of the sovereign. But he also composed more personal works on parting, travel, and death, which remain some of the most moving works in the language.

Hitomaro's oldest dateable verse set (2: 167–9) was written on a theme of central importance to Jitō, the death in 689 of Prince Kusakabe, her son by Emperor Tenmu and his presumptive heir. In these earliest of Hitomaro's extant poems, his genius is already apparent. The first half of the *chōka* recapitulates the founding myth of the dynasty, in which "the eight million deities, the ten million deities" meet by the riverside in the Plain of High Heaven and decide that the Sun Goddess Amaterasu should rule the celestial realm and that her grandson Ninigi should be sent down to rule the Japanese islands. This venerable history is conveyed in a single, syntactically complex sentence in which the ends of certain segments are repeated at the beginning of the ones that follow, an ancient technique also found in Songs of the Records and Chronicles (*kiki*) and early liturgies (*norito*). Thereafter, through syntactic elision, Ninigi is conflated with Kusakabe's late father Tenmu, who likewise rules "as a god." Mythic time then transitions to the historical present, wherein the loss of Tenmu's intended successor in the divine lineage, Kusakabe, "Peer of the Sun," is mourned. His death is depicted as his own ineffable decision, and he causes his own mausoleum to be raised. The

primordial sweep of the first part of the *chōka* narrows in the end to the courtiers, inexplicably bereft of the young sovereign who, had he lived, would have ruled radiant as “spring blossoms” and “the full moon.” In this public verse, Hitomaro speaks for the entire court, his lines at once perpetuating imperial divinity even as they lament the break in the imperial succession.

The death in 696 of another of Tenmu’s sons, Prince Takechi (b. 654), occasioned the composition by Hitomaro of the longest poem in *Man'yōshū* (2: 199–202). Takechi had fought with distinction in the Jinshin War and later served as great minister of state in the court of his mother Jitō. Hitomaro sets the stage for Takechi’s accomplishments by describing the background of the Jinshin conflict, once again speaking of Tenmu in divine terms. Then follows the only description of a battle in *Man'yōshū*, in which the young prince leads his troops to the thunder of drums and the shrill of flutes, loosing a blizzard of arrows and then charging an enemy that is finally routed with the aid of a “divine wind” (*kamukaze*), leaving no doubt as to whose cause is favored by the gods. The divine wind was an invention of the poet’s, but elements of the battle scene are drawn from Chinese sources. Hitomaro then turns to Tenmu’s subsequent reign, in which Takechi serves the sovereign, again characterized as divine. But just at the height of his glory, Takechi vanishes from the earth, and his palace becomes a godly shrine. Like Kusakabe’s retainers, Takechi’s know not what to do in his incomprehensible absence; they “look back at the great palace,” then “with humility they bury him, bury him as a god” by heavenly Mount Kagu. The *chōka* builds and builds, *makurakotoba* upon *makurakotoba*, parallel phrase echoing parallel phrase, matching in sublime and lofty language the enormity of the event that has occurred.

The verse treads a fine line, glorifying – indeed, deifying – Emperor Tenmu while avoiding any direct condemnation of his brother and predecessor Tenji, who had turned from Tenmu but who was, after all, the father of Tenmu’s consort and Hitomaro’s sovereign, Jitō. The same care is taken in one of the best known of all Hitomaro’s elegies, “Passing the Ruined Capital of Ōmi” (1: 29–31). The verse functions in part as a meditation on evanescence, but it was doubtless meant as well for spirit pacification (*tamashizume*). From the head-note, which has Chinese analogues in its use of the construction “passing [place name],” it may be that the poet was a traveler. While not condemning Tenji’s Ōmi court, the verse cordons it off from the new imperium of Tenmu and Jitō, who moved back from the “hinterlands” to the Yamato heartland.

sumeroki no	Though I understand it was here,
kami no mikoto no	the great palace
oomiya wa	of that divine
koko to kikedo mo	sovereign,
ootono wa	though they say it was here,
koko to iedo mo	his great hall,
harukusa no	when I see the great palace
shigeku oitaru	of serried stones
kasumi tachi	overgrown
haruhi no kireru	with spring grasses
momoshiki no	in the rising haze
oomiyadokoro	that obscures the spring sun,
miredo kanashi mo	I am filled with grief

The poet, a spokesman for the court, cannot use the ruined capital as an example of the inevitable eclipse of those who rule, as could the author of the preface to *The Tales of the Heike* centuries later. And yet the sadness of ruined magnificence is palpable.

Together with elegies for a distanced past, Hitomaro's public poetry also includes works of praise for the current reign, like the pair of *chōka-hanka* sets that bear the headnote, "Verses composed by Kakinomoto no Asomi Hitomaro on the occasion of an imperial progress to the palace in Yoshino" (1: 36–9). Jitō's thirty-one journeys to Yoshino, south of the site of Tenmu's palace at Asuka, were made perhaps in part to enjoy the natural scenery, but probably more to commune with the past and to benefit from the mana of that locale. It was in Yoshino, after all, that Jitō had taken refuge years earlier with her husband at the time of the Jinshin War that had determined their fate. The characterization of the area as "pristine" (*kiyoki*) is thought to indicate a holy purity, divorced from the mundane. There, the courtiers compete to serve at the sovereign's side, with no mention of the trials of the journey. Indeed, the company travels through an earthly paradise, in imperial peace and harmony. Hitomaro's verse has overtones of land-viewing, and the poet speaks not of his personal emotions, but of the godly sovereign and her generalized retinue of courtiers.

Hitomaro is also renowned for his verses on personal themes, many of which likewise involve parting, either from someone left behind or from someone gone ahead in death. But despite their personal nature, these too would probably have been presented in public. One of the most famous is the group of poems (2: 207–16) that, the headnote tells us, the poet "composed in grief and suffering, weeping tears of blood, after the death of his

wife.” As with the Yoshino examples above, Hitomaro composed a pair of *chōka* on his loss, each followed by *hanka*. In the first poem it seems initially that the poet is still looking forward to another meeting with his beloved; the fact of her death is not apparent until halfway through the verse. When it is finally unveiled, the preterite is used for the first time, making the shock to the listener or reader all the more wrenching. We then accompany the bereaved husband to the market that his departed spouse used to frequent, but which is now barren. The poem thus divides into preparation and conclusion, the details of the speaker’s love expressed in the beginning heightening his loss at the end. The two *hanka* that follow are an essential part of the whole, deepening the pathos of the husband’s desire to do anything possible to assuage his longing, and then depicting a later time when the immediate pain seems dulled, only to stab at the heart again.

Another particularly renowned pair of *chōka-hanka* sets depicts the speaker’s parting from a woman in Iwami province (western Shimane prefecture) to journey back to the Fujiwara capital. The first of this group (2: 131–7) is again constructed in two parts; the preparatory half of the verse describes the natural surroundings, a distant seacoast that may seem to the outsider to have no redeeming value. But the speaker knows better, for it is here that his spouse lives, she who curls beside him like the sea-plant that floats on the waves. As in so much of Hitomaro’s work, nature is not so much a backdrop as a participant in the poem, and it sets the tone and provides the metaphors for what is to come. Again the verse begins in the present, the landscape of Iwami being the same now as it was in the past. Then the past tense is used to great effect for the first time with “the girl would come and lie beside me, like gem-plant,” at which point we know the man has already parted from her. Here too we do not see the moment of parting but only the aftermath; Hitomaro’s speaker looks back “ten thousand times” down the twisting road, but as in Karu, he can do nothing more in the end than make a futile gesture, here commanding the mountains themselves to bow down so that he might have a last view of where his spouse lives.

The verse also demonstrates the interrelationships between *Man'yōshū* genres; these verses are *sōmon*, because the speaker is thinking of another, though they do not actually exchange poems. But the only difference between this set of verses and *banka* are that the person has not died. The parting is as final, though, given the fragility of human life in premodern society. Travel too overlaps with the *sōmon* genre, as parting, travel, and distance are often what bring about thoughts of an absent other. And in its hardship and danger, travel may also require *banka* for strangers who met

their ends on lonely roads, as in another of Hitomaro's great *chōka*, composed "upon seeing a dead man among the rocks on the island of Samine in Sanuki" (2: 220–2). In the seventh century, attention was paid to improving the country's network of roads, but travel was still travail, and all travel was foreign travel; once beyond the confines of his native heath, the traveler was cut off from his own spoken dialect and, worse, from his native gods. Unknown deities in unknown places might take umbrage at his incursion, and mortal illness might result. Thus poems "encountering a corpse on the roadside" constitute an established sub-genre of travel verse, with Chinese analogues. It is sad but fitting to note that Hitomaro himself is reputed to have perished on a journey, like another great travel poet of almost exactly a thousand years later, Matsuo Bashō. The legend springs from a verse (2: 223) whose headnote tells us Hitomaro composed it "in grief at the point of death in Iwami province." The irony is multiplied by the assertion that he died in Iwami, the place in which he had earlier taken leave of a woman he loved, although many question the provenance of this verse.

Hitomaro's poetry is often characterized as demonstrating the intersection of ancient oral formulae from the primordial past with the new art of writing and more advanced rhetoric, some of it inspired by Chinese examples. Certainly this is true, though that intersection can already be seen in the work of, for example, Princess Nukata before him. Hitomaro's accomplishment lies in the genius with which he accomplished the concatenation. He has also been characterized as having developed an original lyric voice out of the old, ritually charged words. This too is true; Hitomaro's *chōka* in particular can be mistaken for no one else's. But his poetry, on either public or personal themes, never lost its close connection to ritual, and in his public verse, at least, self-expression was not his primary purpose. Such verse was intended to aggrandize and indeed deify his patrons, the ruling members of the imperial house. But for this public poetry, politically motivated and ritually charged, to be successful, it also had to move its listeners, and this Hitomaro accomplished through skillful manipulation of lofty, ritual vocabulary set within the inexorable rising tide of his extended parallel structures. His verses on personal themes also may have had a political effect (exploited by later editors) in that they too showed that a culturally enlightened imperial house had fostered such a poetic efflorescence. As the leading court poet of his generation Hitomaro's genius was immediately recognized. Ōtomo no Yakamochi speaks of his debt to Hitomaro in a headnote to one of his own *chōka* sets (17: 3969–72), and the bard later came to be considered a patron saint of the Japanese poetic way.

Though Hitomaro utterly overshadows his contemporaries of Period Two, some of them are nevertheless memorable in their own right. One is Takechi no Kurohito (fl. end of the seventh and beginning of the eighth century), whose nineteen extant tanka are entirely about travel. The verses are typical of the developing travel mythos in their depiction of melancholy on the journey, rather than of exciting discovery. Though Kurohito shared much with Hitomaro, particularly his penchant for travel, his own poetic approach to passing the ruined capital of Ōmi (3: 305) is quite different, with a focus more on himself than on the scene.

Period Three (710–733)

The formidable female sovereign Jitō died in 703, her passing bringing a temporary end to imperial journeys to Yoshino and causing a hiatus in the sponsorship of palace poetry that some cite as a reason for ending Period Two in that year. Others set the final year even in 701, the end of Hitomaro's known span of activity. But the more common line of demarcation for Period Three is drawn at 710, when the capital of Heijō (Tranquil Citadel) was proclaimed in Nara to the north of Fujiwara. A new breadth of style and approach characterizes this period of *Man'yōshū* poetry, together with a developing sense of individuality and experimentation. While the *chōka* never again reached the heights of sublimity it had with Hitomaro, it remained a vibrant art form in the hands of "palace poets" like Yamabe no Akahito (fl. 724–36), Kasa no Kanamura (fl. 715–33), and Kurumamochi no Chitose (or perhaps Chine, fl. 720s–730s). It was also productively incorporated into new types of poetic sequences with long prefaces or afterwords in Chinese prose by the two leaders of the "Kyushu (or Tsukushi) poetic circle" (both modern terms), Ōtomo no Tabito (665–731) and Yamanoue (or Yamanoe) no Okura (660–c. 733). Takahashi no Mushimaro (fl. 720s–c. 737) crafted narrative poems of material from Japanese legend, and Lady Ōtomo no Sakanoue (c. 695–fl. until 750) maintained the poetic prominence of the Ōtomo after Tabito's death, even as she became the *de facto* head of the house until Tabito's son Yakamochi reached maturity.

From the point of view of poetic composition, the early years of the Nara capital were not particularly productive. There are no poems from imperial progresses from the sixteen years of the reigns of empresses Genmei and Genshō, and of the major poets of the era there is only a single set by Kasa no Kanamura (2: 230–2). But in 723, the year before the accession of Jitō's grandson Emperor Shōmu (701–56), imperial progresses to Yoshino

recommenced, and with them, *chōka* in praise of the imperium. Shōmu's reign was a brilliant period of courtly, Buddhist, and international flavor. A peripatetic sovereign, he made journeys to Kii, Yoshino, Naniwa, and Inano, which are memorialized in the verses of Kanamura and his fellow palace poet Yamabe no Akahito. While those poets continued to compose poetry in the service of the court as had Hitomaro before them, discourse on rulership in the new capital was shifting emphasis from divinity and charisma to the *ritsuryō* legal codes. Akahito and Kanamura perpetuate Hitomaro's approaches to imperial praise, but their poetry in certain ways departs from his model and explores new avenues of expression.

Though almost nothing is known of the life of Yamabe no Akahito, he eventually came to be paired with Hitomaro (whose background is just as vague) as one of the two great poets of the *Man'yōshū* age, with Ki no Tsurayuki asserting in the preface to *Kokinshū* that "it was impossible for Hitomaro to excel Akahito, or for Akahito to rank below Hitomaro" (trans. Helen Craig McCullough). His extant oeuvre is smaller than Hitomaro's, with only thirteen *chōka* and thirty-six *tanka*, and the *chōka* are shorter. His adoption of the Hitomaro idiom is clearly seen in such verses as 6: 923–5, a set on the Yoshino palace. The two *hanka*, both masterpieces, pursue *topoi* introduced in the *chōka*. Doubtless the set was meant to evoke the vitality and life-force inherent in the locale. But a personal element is also interjected there in a reference to the call of plovers, which implies homesickness or sad thoughts of the past, as in Hitomaro's earlier verse (3: 266) about hearing them at Ōmi.

As opposed to his brilliant treatment of the *hanka*, Akahito's approach to the *chōka* has been described as perfunctory. But it has also been argued that he exploits Hitomaro's earlier work to establish a connection between the present monarch and the earlier sovereigns who viewed the Yoshino region as a spiritual center. Like his palace-poet predecessor, Akahito describes Yoshino in terms of its confluence of river, mountains, and blossoms, where "the courtiers of the great palace of serried stones" pay eternal homage. And like Hitomaro, Akahito evokes that perpetuity in parallel phrases. And yet unlike Hitomaro, who explicitly involves Empress Jitō in his composition, Emperor Shōmu remains an abstraction for Akahito, who prefers to imply the sovereign's glory through the sublimity of the space he inhabits.

Akahito gives new emphasis to the beauty of nature for its own sake. Scenic description, which in Hitomaro's public poetry is a means to express imperial glory, is for Akahito becoming an end in itself (though overtones of

ancient land-viewing persist). This is true for many of the tanka in his oeuvre, with the result that he is remembered primarily as a master of the shorter tanka form and as a pioneering proponent of Japanese nature poetry. The centrality of nature is also characteristic of his verses composed in a personal capacity. Perhaps the most famous of these is a *chōka*-*hanka* set composed “on viewing Mount Fuji” (3: 317–18). Imbued with the dignity of ancient land-viewing songs, the *chōka* employs ritual vocabulary. It is anachronistic to conflate such verses with what is now referred to as “landscape poetry,” but in the *hanka*, Akahito is clearly giving new prominence to natural description as an end in itself:

tago no ura yu	Passing Tago Bay,
uchiidete mireba	I come into the open and look:
mashiro ni so	pure white,
fuji no takane ni	on Fuji's lofty peak,
yuki wa furikeru	snow has fallen!

Such scenic description assumes central importance in the seasonal books of subsequent imperial poetic anthologies.

On his journey with the sovereign to Yoshino in 725, Akahito was accompanied by his fellow palace poet Kasa no Kanamura, who likewise commemorated the event (6: 920–2). The Kasa were an ancient house lately fallen to middling rank in the court hierarchy. Kanamura has forty-three poems remaining, eleven of which are *chōka*. Again like Akahito, he bases his Yoshino verses on those of Hitomaro, but he too places increasing emphasis on the scene that the emperor beholds. Kanamura also composed verses about a woman awaiting her spouse (4: 543–5), a proxy set on behalf of a lady whose lover was traveling in the imperial train to Kii Province (Wakayama and southern Mie prefectures). Even though the speaker acknowledges that travel has its pleasures, it is the hardship of the journey, shared by the one who leaves and the one left behind, that will become central to the developing poetic travel mythos. There are parallels to works like the last of the “Nineteen Old Poems” (c. second century) collected in *Wenxuan*, a famous Chinese example of the traveling man and the waiting woman that also contrasts pleasure and misery.

But the impact of Chinese examples is best seen in the context of the creativity of the Kyushu poetic circle, most notably Ōtomo no Tabito and Yamanoue no Okura. Their compositions, which include some of the best-remembered verses in the anthology, are poles apart from early *Man'yōshū* poetry or from the work of Hitomaro. The project of Tabito and Okura was

nothing less than the creation of a new literary corpus born of the fusion of vernacular verse and Chinese literary forms and themes, to produce an amalgam meant to be appreciated less as oral than as written literature. In the process, they generated new kinds of sequences with learned Chinese prose forewords or afterwords, accretive compositions with multiple authorship, and flights of fictional versiprosas, variously informed by elements of Confucian, Buddhist, and Taoist philosophy.

The innovation of the Kyushu circle, active from 728 to 730, resulted not only from the brilliance of Tabito and Okura, but from the fact that they were not “palace poets,” who were required to compose (at least in their official capacities) on topics of imperial concern. The circle had its beginnings when Tabito made the month-long journey to northern Kyushu to take up his post as governor-general of the Dazaifu commandery. Built originally to defend against invasion by Silla, Dazaifu also served as the gateway from the continent, which made its residents well placed to learn of Chinese literary developments.

Despite the vast difference in poetic approach between Tabito and Hitomaro, they were of the same generation, which shows how *Man'yōshū* poetry simultaneously developed along numerous trajectories in a short period of time. Tabito's main period of activity, however, occurred in his late years, which is why he is assigned to Period Three of *Man'yōshū* history. And while almost nothing is known of Hitomaro's biography, Tabito is the first of the major *Man'yōshū* poets whose life can be traced in detail. He became head of the Ōtomo, an ancient military house that had long served the throne, in 714, and five years later was promoted to the office of middle counselor. He then continued the military traditions of his forebears by containing a rebellion in southern Kyushu in 720, which may have been the reason he was made governor-general in 728, when he was already 64 years old. There, he developed friendships with such literati as Tajihi no Agatamori (?–737), Ki no Ohito (682–738), Manzei (fl. 704–31), and most importantly, Yamanoue no Okura. Also adept at poetry in Chinese, Tabito was a member of the salon of Prince Nagaya (684 [or 676]–729), and had Chinese-style verses included in *Kaifūsō*. Such accomplishments informed his literary approach during his Dazaifu years.

Yamanoue no Okura was appointed governor of Chikuzen province (where Dazaifu was located) in late 725 or early 726. The two men evidently had only limited contact at first, but their interaction increased dramatically after the death of Tabito's wife. Okura also had risen to high office and to literary prominence late in life. Though his origins are still debated, it is likely

that he was born in Paekche and taken to Japan as a child by his father, a physician, after Paekche was overcome by Silla in 663. It was his foreign heritage, and probably his skill at Chinese, that led to his inclusion as a low-level emissary with the Japanese mission to the Tang in 702. During his stay in China, perhaps for as long as six years, he composed a verse (1: 63) that is thought to be the only one in *Man'yōshū* made abroad. When he finally returned to Japan he was appointed governor of Hōki province (western Tottori prefecture, on the Japan Sea) in 716. His scholarship received public recognition in 721 when he was made tutor to the crown prince, the future Emperor Shōmu, and it may have been at this time that he compiled a now-lost personal anthology of poetry that later became a source of material for *Man'yōshū*: *Ruijū karin* (Classified Forest of Verses). It was likely organised on principles borrowed from Chinese literary encyclopedias like *Yiwen leiju*.

The bulk of the work of Tabito, Okura, and other affiliates of the Kyushu poetic circle is recorded in Book Five of *Man'yōshū*, which together with 104 tanka and ten *chōka* includes two poems in Chinese, ten Chinese prefaces to sequences of Japanese verse, five letters in Chinese, and one extended Chinese essay. This heavy Chinese presence gives Book Five a different character from the rest of the anthology and demonstrates the commitment of Tabito and Okura to constructing an amalgam in which Japanese and Chinese are posited as equal.

Book Five opens with a tanka “by Lord Ōtomo, governor-general of Daizaifu, in response to doleful tidings,” prefaced by a short letter in Chinese parallel prose (5: 793). It is unknown to whose death or deaths the title refers, but in view of the first line of the letter, which speaks of doleful tidings mounting up, it seems that several are involved. This initial poem is followed by another versiprosia group (5: 794–9) by Okura, which begins with two Chinese works – a prose essay expatiating on evanescence in terms of Buddhist philosophy and a four-line poem – and ends with a vernacular *chōka*, with hanka, entitled “Japanese Elegy.” The title establishes parity between the two writing systems involved in the set. Again, the identity of the deceased is unclear; probably Tabito’s wife, but perhaps Okura’s.

The combination of Chinese-style preface and Japanese poetry is nowhere better demonstrated than in a thirty-two-verse sequence composed for a plum-blossom viewing banquet at Tabito’s mansion in 730 (5: 815–46). The event and its literary manifestation were based on one held in China in 353, immortalized by the “Preface to the Orchid Pavilion Collection” by Wang Xizhi (321–79, or perhaps 307–65), which served as an important model when such prefaces became popular in the Tang. Plums had been imported to

Japan from China, where they were associated with the image of the scholar, which gave Tabito's banquet a pronounced Chinese aspect. Like the first two poetic sets in Book Five, the composition opens with Chinese-style prose, variously attributed to Tabito or Okura, whose literary relationship was clearly symbiotic. The form in which the gathering is recorded suggests that guests composed verse extemporaneously, with one poet responding to the next in a manner premonitory of medieval Japanese linked verse. But it is also possible that only some of the poems were composed on the spot, with others (most likely the final twelve) having been sent in later by poets unable to attend. Still another theory brands the entire event an idealized fiction. The thirty-two verses are followed by later additions, the last of which depicts plum blossoms that address the poet in a dream.

Immediately following the plum-blossom series is a completely fictional creation, "An excursion to Matsura River" (5: 853–63). Like the preceding group, it begins with a Chinese preface in which a fictional speaker describes an encounter with beautiful maidens fishing. They assert that they are lowly seafolk, but their speech, full of learned Sinitic references, indicates otherwise; they then invite the traveler to grow old along with them, and he agrees. Eleven poems follow: three groups of exchanges between the traveler and the beauties, and then three appended verses attributed to "the venerable governor-general." The preface borrows from *You xianku*, in which a traveler encounters elegant women living in obscurity, a plot that anticipates later Japanese tale literature, notably *Ise monogatari* and *Genji monogatari*. (It may also include echoes of "Rhapsody on the Luo River Goddess" by Cao Zhi, from *Wenxuan*.) It is unclear who composed the set, but "venerable governor-general" sounds like Tabito. It seems to have been he, furthermore, who sent the Matsura River and plum-blossom sequences to a friend in the capital, who sent back verses "harmonizing" with the plum-blossom sequence, prefaced by a euphuistic letter in Chinese. (Such responses from the capital show that amalgams of poetry and prose in Chinese and Japanese were not limited to the Kyushu poetic circle.) These two sequences demonstrate the degree to which Chinese literature had become the stock-in-trade of Nara literati, and also the way that original works could be augmented and reshaped by later hands into corporate creations.

Tabito endured many trials in his last years. He was a member of the salon of Prince Nagaya and suffered by association when the prince was charged with treason and forced to commit suicide in 729. Then he was appointed in his mid-sixties to the distant post in Kyushu, where he soon lost his wife. These hardships have been adduced as the motivation behind his

composition of another memorable sequence, “Thirteen Verses in Praise of Wine” (3: 338–50). While there is no need to give these poems a biographical reading, their overriding Taoist mentality is clear. Nor are they as simple as they may seem; they contain, for example, allusions to the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove and to Zheng Quan, who wished to be buried next to a kiln, and, after he had turned to earth, to be remade into a sake jug. The syncretistic outlook of the Nara aristocrat is also in evidence here, as one verse is based on Buddhist notions of karma and rebirth.

Tabito also composed in more traditional vernacular modalities. One example is a set of five tanka elegies (3: 446–50) purporting to depict his journey back to the capital in 730, when as a widower he returned past places he had seen on his way to Kyushu with his wife years before. Also in a more traditional idiom is a set on Yoshino (3: 315–16). To judge from the headnote, Tabito evidently assumed that he might be commanded by the sovereign to compose, and so he prepared the verses for that eventuality, which did not materialize. The set cannot be read today without recalling the Hitomaro poems about Yoshino (1: 36–7) and perhaps Samine (2: 220–2) that evidently informed it. The verses show that Tabito was a poet of rare versatility, capable of original Chinese–Japanese amalgams, but also, when the situation warranted, of works that drew on venerable convention.

But the member of the Kyushu poetic circle who made the greatest contribution to Japanese letters was Yamanoue no Okura, the poet with the most distinctive voice in all of *Man'yōshū*. Although it is hard to tell in some cases which parts of a sequence were composed by Okura and which by Tabito, it appears that Okura was responsible for twelve or so *chōka*, sixty-nine tanka (of which twenty-eight are *hanka*), two Chinese poems, and twelve works of Chinese prose in *Man'yōshū*. He first appears in Book Five in the above-mentioned “Japanese Elegy,” the first truly philosophical poem group in the anthology. There, he sets forth the Buddhist principle of the evanescence of all things, then applies it to the inevitability of human aging and then, in a Confucian spirit, to husbands and wives and their bond, gradually narrowing his focus to address the death of a spouse, which is then reexpressed in the vernacular *chōka* that follows.

Okura presented “Japanese Elegy” to Tabito along with three other *chōka-hanka* sets, a sequence of three sequences: “To a Deluded Heart” (5: 800–1), “Thinking of his Children” (5: 802–3), and “On the Impermanence of Life” (5: 804–5). All three address the anxiety of existence, encapsulated in the phrase “human life” (*yo no naka* or *seken*) which appears in each. “To a Deluded Heart” admonishes “Master Spurn-the-World” (recalling similar

forms of address in Taoist works), who on the pretext of philosophical detachment ignores the brevity of life and his Confucian obligation to support and protect his family. Some suggest that Okura wrote the poem as a didactic piece in his capacity as provincial governor. But it may be that “Master Spurn-the-World” is none other than Okura himself, who is trying to solve his own internal conflict between love and renunciation, duty and escape. The same struggle between philosophy and feeling is seen in Okura’s next set, “Thinking of his Children.” As in the previous poem, the intellectual argument is presented in the Chinese-style preface, and the emotional one in the Japanese poem. Here Okura begins by stating that even the Buddha loved his son Rahula despite his recognition of the pain that such attachment entails. In the vernacular verses that follow he writes of melons and chestnuts, small yet moving images from daily life that evoke the conflict between parental love and the cares it brings. Perhaps they were treats his children particularly liked. But scholars have pointed to a possible connection between those images and the “pears and chestnuts” that the Six Dynasties poet Tao Qian mentions in a poem about his nine-year-old son, and melons and chestnuts also figured in celebrations of conception and birth, thus bringing children to mind even more strongly. The last of the three sets, “On the Impermanence of Life,” again begins with a Chinese preface that introduces its theme in philosophical terms, contrasting the ease with which trials accumulate and the difficulty with which they are dispelled. The speaker then switches from the “telling” to the “showing” mode in the *chōka*, lamenting how soon frost comes to the black tresses of pretty young women and how soon the young men who spend nights in their embrace must exchange their hunting bows for old men’s canes.

Okura’s love of children, a comfort in an old age plagued with pain, is nowhere more excruciatingly demonstrated than in the *chōka* and two *hanka* that follow these, entitled “Three Poems Longing for a Boy named Furuhi” (5: 904–6), which end Book Five of *Man’yōshū*. Readers partial to biographical interpretation have taken the child in question to be Okura’s own; others, in view of the Kyushu circle tendency toward fictionalization and proxy poetry, have suggested that the boy was imaginary. Okura begins with a short, *de facto* preface that appears to be a Buddhist denial of the “seven treasures,” until it transpires that the boy is for him even more precious, indeed “a pearl.” He then exploits a traditional two-part *chōka* structure to show dramatically why the little boy was so loved, thus strengthening the effect of his death. This was Hitomaro’s technique in his poem on the death of his wife in Karu, and here, as there, the awful fact of death comes just as the poet has tempted

fate, secure “as in a great ship” of the boy’s future. And here too, the present tense is employed to give the entire narrative a dramatic sense of immediacy, accentuated by occasional irregular syllabification, which seems to reflect in formal terms the disorder in the speaker’s heart.

In contrast to Hitomaro, who like poets of later generations gives in his personal poetry his most vital expression to love for a spouse, Okura is most moved by the bonds between parents and children. Even in his unique depiction of social injustice, “Dialogue on Poverty and Destitution” (5: 892–3), which again relies on details from daily life expressed in the vernacular, the climax occurs when the destitute man describes his failure to provide for his family:

fuseio no	on the straw-strewn
mage io no uchi ni	earthen floor
hitatsuchi ni	of my hovel
wara tokishikite	with its canted roof,
chichi haha wa	my father and mother
makura no kata ni	at my pillow
mekodomo wa	and my wife and children
ato no kata ni	at my feet
kakumiite	surround me
uree samayoi	with their wailing;
kamado ni wa	the stove
hoke fukitatezu	sends up no smoke,
koshiki ni wa	and in the rice kettle
kumo no su kakite	a spider spins its web,
ii kashiku	for we have forgotten
koto mo wasurete	what it is to cook rice,
nuedori no	and they moan
nodoyoi oru ni	like the mountain thrush

Such poems on social concerns constitute an important theme in Chinese poetry (indeed, Okura borrows Chinese imagery in this *chōka*) but are rare in the Japanese tradition. Their first-person point of view makes them particularly dramatic and affecting.

Okura is a poet of dialectic: between love and loss, parent and child, youth and old age, health and sickness, wealth and poverty, mind and heart, expressed with a concomitant formal contrast of Chinese and Japanese, prose and poetry. Like Tabito, he is not primarily a poet of nature but of the human condition, yet while Tabito sometimes uses verse as cultured escape, Okura confronts the pathos of life. With their structural innovations, probing philosophical enquiry, and plentiful references to Confucian texts, Buddhist tracts, and Chinese poetry, Okura’s works are very different from

the simpler verses of only a few decades before, but they likewise conclude in emotion; their disciplined recognition of the inevitability of age and death and their perception of the futility of attachment to the self and to others coexist with an utterly human desire for life, family, and peace.

The poetry of this period also includes the work of Takahashi no Mushimaro, who though not a member of the Kyushu circle possessed a voice likewise original, particularly in his interest in legends and folkways. He appears to have been a contemporary of Yamabe no Akahito, to whom he is often compared. Like Akahito, he was a “professional” poet, having served Fujiwara no Umakai and also perhaps a prince. Mushimaro’s travels appear to have taken him to the eastland, since he wrote verse about Mount Tsukuba (9: 1757–8). It suggests that for him travel was changing from the journeys made by necessity in the earlier years of the collection to ones made to refresh the spirit with inspiring vistas. Climbing to the summit, he enjoys the view of fields of pampas grass, geese, and waves on Toba Lake, and concludes, “Seeing how good is the peak of Tsukuba, the sadness that grew over the long days of travel vanishes from my thoughts.” There may still be some element of earlier praise of the land, but the focus is now on the speaker and his own state of mind. The land now serves the poet, rather than vice-versa. Here is another manifestation of the stronger sense of the individual that will become even more marked in the last period of *Man’yōshū* and thereafter. Mount Tsukuba is also the setting for a *chōka-hanka* set (9: 1759–60) by Mushimaro that portrays an earthy folk event called a *kagai* or *utagaki* (also described in *Hitachi no kuni fudoki*), in which young men and women were given license to exchange courting songs and couple, perhaps originally to promote the fecundity of the land. Like Akahito, Mushimaro also appears to have written a poem about Mount Fuji (3: 319–21), though not all commentators attribute it to him. Though both poets are overwhelmed by Mount Fuji’s divine power and majesty, Akahito wants more to paint a picture of the mountain, while Mushimaro (if it was he) is more interested in telling its story.

Mushimaro (9: 1807–8) and Akahito (3: 431–3) also wrote verses about the legend of the maiden Tegona, of Mama in Katsushika in the eastland, who suffered not from an absent lover but from suitors all too persistent. Mushimaro recounts the story of this young woman of such beauty that she attracts young men “like summer insects drawn to a flame.” Overcome by attention she does not seek, she lies down to die. Though likewise taken by this tale, Akahito, by contrast, again avoids elaborating on a story he evidently assumes the reader already knows. As in Hitomaro’s verse on passing the ruined capital of Ōmi, he reflects on how the passage of time

has erased all evidence of Tegona's grave, but not her memory. Just as in many *noh* plays of later centuries, Akahito's composition is "all end," the events having occurred long ago, leaving only poignant reminiscence. Another young woman in a similar predicament is depicted in Mushimaro's "A Poem (with Tanka) on Seeing the Grave of the Maiden of Unai" (9: 1813–15). Here the girl grows to womanhood and attracts the attentions of two young rivals; they take up weapons ready to compete for her, and the maiden forestalls their mortal combat by taking her own life. But the two youths follow her in death and are buried to either side of her grave. The legend was later retold in *Yamato monogatari* (Tales of Yamato) and then in the *noh* play *Motomezuka*.

Mushimaro's longest and best-known work is "A Verse on Uranoshimako of Mizunoe, with a Tanka" (9: 1740–1), which recounts the legend of a man known in later centuries as Urashima Tarō. While out fishing one day, he encounters the daughter of the sea god, and they become man and wife, living in her father's palace at the bottom of the sea. But inevitably he misses his home, asks leave to visit, and when he does, he finds that all has changed beyond recognition. He carries a magic comb box given to him by his wife that will allow him to return to her if he does not open it, but open it he does, and he immediately ages and dies. This Rip van Winkle story approaches the theme of evanescence from the opposite side, wherein a man has eternal life and happiness assured him, but gives it all away.

Period Four (733–759)

Most scholars begin the last of the periods into which *Man'yōshū* is divided in 733, with the death of Yamanoue no Okura and the first extant dateable poem by Tabito's son Yakamochi, the dominant poet of the late *Man'yōshū* age (6: 994). The decade of the 730s was one of transition; Tabito died in 731, and Kasa no Kanamura disappeared from the literary scene two years later. And yet Yamabe no Akahito left works that can be dated to 734 and 736, and Takahashi no Mushimaro too may have remained active until about the same time, with the result that some prefer to continue Period Three to 736. In any case, many important poets died or disappeared from the records in the early and middle years of the decade. The years 735–7 witnessed the greatest epidemic in recorded Japanese history, with catastrophic economic and political consequences. The deaths of the leaders of the four branches of the Fujiwara house left the political field open for their rival Tachibana no Moroe (684–757, the patron of Ōtomo no Yakamochi) and for other anti-Fujiwara

factions. (The poets Akahito, Kanamura, and Mushimaro may also have perished in the epidemic.)

Ensuing political instability led Emperor Shōmu, who had come to the throne in 724, to abandon the Nara capital in 740 for a period of shortlived attempts to found new capitals elsewhere in central Japan. He did not return to Nara until 745. These years of travel were memorialised by Tanabe no Sakimaro (fl. 740s), who wrote official poetry in praise of the nascent capital at Kuni (north of Nara) and also of the later move to Naniwa (in modern Osaka). Remembered as the last of the *Man'yōshū* palace poets, Sakimaro resuscitates Hitomaro's vocabulary of imperial encomia in such compositions as "Two Poems in Praise of the New Capital at Kuni, with Tanka" (6: 1050–8). His expression of sadness on the abandonment of the Nara capital (6: 1047–9) also recalls the earlier poet's description of the ruined capital of Ōmi. One of the most important poets in the last period of *Man'yōshū* not of Ōtomo descent, Sakimaro left a collection (now lost) that supplied verses on a variety of familiar themes, including, for example, the discovery of a corpse while on a journey (9: 1800). The collection also included verses on the legend of the Maiden of Unai (9: 1801–3) and a *banka* on the death of the poet's younger brother, in which he includes such affecting expressions as "my younger brother and I, born of the same father and mother and close as a pair of chopsticks" (9: 1804–6). As in Hitomaro's *banka*, initial homey details heighten the effect of the subsequent death, which once again is described as being willed by the gods.

After Shōmu's return to Nara in 745, the Heijō capital flourished. The sovereign was himself a poet, and a *chōka* and ten *tanka* of his are preserved in *Man'yōshū*. He abdicated in 749 in favor of his daughter Kōken (718–70). This was a period of great cosmopolitanism, with the influence of Chinese and Silk Road culture apparent in developments such as the construction of Tōdaiji (Great Eastern Temple) to serve as the center of a network of state-sponsored provincial temples (*kokubunji*). Added to the culture in these years were Chinese pastimes like *kemari* (a genteel kickball game), *sugoroku* (resembling backgammon), and *go*; various musical instruments; and foods like glutinous rice and tea. The Shōsōin Imperial Repository, still standing at Tōdaiji, reflects the elegance of the court at the time; many items in its collection belonged to Emperor Shōmu and his consort Kōmyō. Their daughter Kōken abdicated in 758 in favor of Junnin (733–65), who was dominated by the Fujiwara, now led by Fujiwara no Nakamaro (706–64), who in 764 rose in revolt against the power of the former empress. He was suppressed and executed, and Kōken returned to the throne as Shōtoku,

stronger than before. Such political upheaval underlay the brilliance of mid eighth-century culture, including the deceptively pacific poetry of *Man'yōshū*.

Tabito's half-sister Lady Ōtomo no Sakanoue (c. 695–active until 750) managed the Ōtomo house after her brother's death, until his son Yakamochi came of age. She had gone to Kyushu to aid Tabito after the death of his wife and served as foster mother to Yakamochi, who would eventually marry her eldest daughter. She is the best-represented female poet in *Man'yōshū*, and third overall, with eighty-four poems. She was married three times and many of her verses deal with love. Her longest poem (3: 460–1, also the longest by any female poet in *Man'yōshū*) is a *banka* for a Korean woman who had lived for decades with the Ōtomo. It employs the old *chōka* manner, but it also reflects the diglossic versiprosia of the Kyushu poetic circle of Okura and Tabito in its extended Chinese-style afterword, thought to have been added by another hand. Lady Ōtomo no Sakanoue also shares with Okura recognition of the parent–child bond, specifically between herself and her two daughters. The elder of these, Yakamochi's cousin and eventual wife Ōtomo no Sakanoue no Ōiratsume (Elder Lady), left a significant body of poetry herself, entirely devoted to love.

While the poems of the Kyushu poetic circle were the products of an elite displaced into the western periphery, *Man'yōshū* also includes voices from the opposite end of the country and the opposite end of the social scale, the “songs of the eastland” (*azuma-uta*). They are collected in Book Fourteen and grouped by province of origin; this is the only book in *Man'yōshū* in which geography constitutes an organizing principle, though the standard genres of *zōka*, *banka*, *sōmon*, and “metaphorical poems” (*hiyuka*) form the primary armature. The book includes 230 verses (and eight complete variants), ninety of whose geographical provenance within the eastland is known. Most are love poems. The verses are all anonymous and tend to be declarative in form and frank in expression, leading some scholars to assume the majority were originally oral and to classify them as folk songs. But the *azuma-uta* are all *tanka* and may therefore be the result of early cross-fertilization with courtly poetry. Though these poems generally employ the same topics and rhetorical approaches found in courtly *tanka*, they retain elements of local dialect. The degree to which they were selected by a courtly editor from a wider sampling is unknown, as is the extent to which they may have been revised to conform to courtly norms. Their presence in *Man'yōshū* adds an exotic note to the collection while at the same time demonstrating the ongoing centralization of the country and the length of the imperial reach.

Unusual though they are in many respects, the “songs of the eastland” serve as a reminder of an important characteristic of *Man’yōshū*: nearly half of its verse is anonymous. Its many hundreds of unattributed poems are concentrated in books in the middle of the anthology: Book Seven and Books Ten through Fourteen. With a variety of organizational principles, including the standard genres, topics (ordered in the manner of a Chinese classified encyclopedia), the seasons, and (now-lost) source collections, and containing mainly tanka (except for Book Thirteen, which collects *chōka*), this portion of the *Man’yōshū* serves as a kind of nascent poetic encyclopedia, and as such is a forerunner of compendious later works like the Heian period *Kokin waka rokujō*.

Book Fourteen is followed by two other distinctive books. It appears that before the addition of Yakamochi’s personal poetry collection, *Man’yōshū* ended with Book Fifteen, with a version of what is now Book Sixteen added as an appendix. Book Fifteen comprises two long poem-tales, one attributed to Japanese envoys to the Korean kingdom of Silla, and the other to the exiled Nakatomi no Yakamori and his lover in the capital, Sano no Otagami (or Chigami). Both are based on travel poetry in the context of love, composed by men on compulsory journeys and by spouses who await their return.

The 145 Silla verses (15: 3578–3722) are represented as having been composed or chanted in the context of an embassy that set out from the port of Naniwa in 736 for the Silla capital and returned the following year. The poetic account is devoted to travel sentiments of longing and homesickness. In that it contains all the important *Man’yōshū* poetic forms (*chōka*, tanka, and *sedōka*) and genres (*sōmon*, *banka*, and *zōka*), it constitutes a microcosm of late *Man’yōshū* approaches to travel (except for pleasure). The sequence begins with a number of parting exchanges in which the goal of a return to home and wife by the end of autumn is set forth. As the subsequent journey progresses, images of deepening autumn become objective correlatives, as it were, for increasing frustration and longing for home. Like most later travel literature, this is an account of the journey away; there is only a five-verse coda that anticipates the arrival home. More than a dozen poets are identified by name, and some of them are corroborated in other sources, a fact which strongly suggests that some of the verses were indeed composed by members of the mission. Much of the poetry is conventional, with analogues found in other parts of the anthology, exhibiting the sense of communal creative expression that was essential to the poetic life of this period. The organization of the sequence also suggests that a later editor put it into its final form and very likely added poems to improve its cohesion. But the practice of banquet

composition, wherein several poets, often apparently in groups of four, composed verses responding to and developing each other's themes, would also have naturally contributed interrelationships to the individual segments.

The second account of travel and longing in Book Fifteen (verses 3723–85), attributed to the exiled courtier Nakatomi no Yakamori and his lover Sano no Otagami, comprises sixty-three tanka, arranged in four pairs of multiverse exchanges between the man and the woman, plus a seven-verse coda. Like the Silla sequence, it appears to have been based on historical realities; there was an actual Nakatomi no Yakamori who was exiled to Echizen in early 739 for an unknown transgression and who was pardoned in 741. The Nakatomi-Sano set constitutes a compendium of the conventions of courtly longing. Here too the constituent parts of the sequence trace a temporal and spatial progression, beginning with parting poetry exchanged between the lovers, with the woman speaking first. The constituent verses often share imagery, while exhibiting a larger temporal and spatial trajectory, anticipating the principles of association and progression typical of later poetic anthologies. Again the journey is away, though here most of the poetry is composed while Yakamori is in exile in Echizen, rather than on the road.

Book Sixteen is the most anomalous in *Man'yōshū*, apparently having been something of a catch-all appendix to the earlier fifteen-book version of the anthology. Entitled “Poems with a Story and Miscellaneous Poems,” it includes mostly anonymous verses that are notable for their popular, light, or atypical qualities, thus anticipating, in a sense, the unorthodox *haikai* poetry collected at the end of the later anthology *Kokinshū*. Here appear, for example, the only extant “Buddha's Footstone Poem” (16: 3885) in the anthology and poems on the legend of the bamboo-cutter (16: 3791–3802), familiar from an alternate version from the Heian period entitled *Taketori monogatari*. Book Sixteen also includes examples of earlier poems placed into new prose contexts (e.g. 16: 3804–5), a practice anticipating that of “poem-tales” (*utamonogatari*) like *Ise monogatari*. Found in Book Sixteen as well are a few songs by “beggar-minstrels” (*hokaibito*), who sang for their suppers. This type of poem, the *azuma-uta* of Book Fourteen, and the verses by border guards (*sakimori*) in Book Twenty (see below) are brief, unusual vignettes of the non-courtly world, though subject to a considerable degree of later editing.

The last four books of *Man'yōshū* come almost entirely from the personal poetry collection of Ōtomo no Yakamochi, whose 479 extant verses make him the best-represented *Man'yōshū* poet. The work of his youth is dominated by exchanges with a variety of women, including not only his aunt's

daughter, whom he would later marry, but also Lady Kasa, who sent him twenty-nine poems. The last four books of the anthology provide a detailed view of courtly poetic life in the mid eighth century through his verse and that of his associates. This was an age of continuing poetic experimentation, of new themes and new techniques. But it was also a great age of banquet verse, making up fully one third of these books. Here experimental creativity and isolated melancholy could give way to communal poetic activity. By this time basic poetic literacy was coming to be considered a defining characteristic of the courtier. In such environments, originality coexisted with formula.

Yakamochi also turned his hand on occasion to public themes, such as a paean to Yoshino (18: 4098–100) that again invokes the divine sovereign and the courtiers who flock to his service at the palace there amid waters and mountains. That set too was prepared in advance. Another was “On the Discovery of Gold in Michinoku” (18: 4094–7), in which he quotes a traditional song of his house that a millennium and more later would be revived as an encomium to patriotism and sacrifice in the Second World War.

But despite the importance of communal poetic presentation and apprehension to eighth-century poetic life, it is also true that by then Japanese poets had developed a stronger sense of the individual poetic self, and that the divisions between the gods, nature, and humankind were more clearly sensed. The growth of literacy and written culture itself encouraged this division. Another major factor was, of course, the assimilation of Chinese prototypes. The best-known exemplar of this new sense of the individual was Yakamochi, some of whose verses depict solitary reflection and a separation from the older communal solidarity given bardic voice by Hitomaro scant decades before. Yakamochi’s “three verses on springtime melancholy” (19: 4290–2) are often adduced as examples of this new spirit, which was likely influenced by Six Dynasties examples. The third is particularly well known:

uraura ni	On this spring day,
tereru haruhi ni	beneath the mild sun,
hibari agari	a lark starts up;
kokoroganashi mo	how my heart aches,
hitori shi omoeba	as I muse in solitude!

This was an age both of testing new poetic directions and of groping toward universal poetic conventions, of communal stereotypicity in some cases, but in others of inspired solitary creativity. In their sense of introspection and bittersweet pathos (*aware*), such poems by Yakamochi are much closer to

those of *Kokinshū* and the later imperial poetry collections than they are to those of earlier *Man'yōshū* periods.

So too were poetic representations of nature and travel changing in the late *Man'yōshū* years. Though there are some precursors in the early books of *Man'yōshū* (e.g. Princess Nukata's spring and autumn debate), poetry that addresses seasonal beauty in itself and personal reactions to it are by and large a characteristic of later *Man'yōshū* poets, notably Akahito, Yakamochi's father Tabito, and particularly Yakamochi himself. Nearly half of his oeuvre includes seasonal elements. The new attitude to nature coincided with the increasing weight of Chinese models and also with the rising popularity of poetic banquets in the late *Man'yōshū* period, in which poets might "compose on things" and treat a seasonal element not necessarily as something experienced at the moment, but rather as an aestheticized ideal.

This new sense of nature as aesthetic vista rather than as ineffable divine mystery, seen earlier in Mushimaro's poems on Mount Tsukuba, is expressed particularly well in verses exchanged by Yakamochi and his kinsman Ōtomo no Ikenushi about an excursion to a lake in the province where Yakamochi was currently serving as governor. Yakamochi sent an opening *chōka*, which he called a *fu* in the Chinese manner, and Ikenushi harmonized with his own (17: 3993–4), responding to Yakamochi's chinoiserie by referring to the *hanka* of his *chōka* as a *jueju*, the four-line regulated Chinese verse form. The poem is carefully organized into two parts, a forty-eight-*ku* main section and a nine-*ku* conclusion. The main section is subdivided with precision into three sixteen-*ku* parts of two eight-*ku* portions each (perhaps reflecting the eight lines of Chinese *lǔshi* regulated verse), consisting of introduction, narrative en route, and narrative at the lake. The last three eight-*ku* segments are all marked by place names at or near where they begin, but *makurakotoba* are deemphasized. While there may be lingering elements of praise here for local deities, the main purpose is to describe with literary sophistication a journey undertaken to enjoy the landscape. It has been suggested that in such exchanges Yakamochi and Ikenushi were attempting to inject new creative life into the flagging *chōka* genre. Clearly not all travel in *Man'yōshū* was melancholy and coerced.

And yet Yakamochi also preserved in his personal poetry collection examples of travel that was unquestionably involuntary and sad; these are the verses by border guards (*sakimori*), men aged twenty through fifty-nine who were conscripted for three-year tours to guard north Kyushu and the islands of Oki and Tsushima. Originally instituted to defend Japan from counterattack after the defeat of Paekche and its ally Japan by the united armies of Silla and the

Tang in 663, in its heyday the system included two to three thousand guards, mostly from the eastern provinces. Book Twenty (20: 4321–4436) includes 116 border-guard verses (there are a handful in other books). Taking advantage of his office as assistant vice minister for war, Yakamochi collected eighty-four of these verses (eighty-three tanka and one *chōka*) from 755 together with nine tanka from previous years, adding one by another imperial official. As was typical of the practice of his father's Kyushu circle, he added twenty-two verses on border-guard themes he had written himself, some even in a guard's persona. The original poems constitute the largest group in the entire anthology by named members of the periphery. But their inclusion again reflects the growing influence of the imperial center, and Yakamochi was selective, rejecting what he considered "inferior" attempts. While the metrical regularity of five, seven, five, seven, and seven syllables in these poems strongly suggests courtly influence and editorial reworking, some border-guard poems retain elements of eastern dialect, like the *azuma-uta*. Twenty-four of the border-guard poems mention parents and children, and thirteen others, home and family. Yakamochi's inclusion of the *sakimori* verses, along with his own imitations, suggests an affinity with the fictive invention, social consciousness, and family concerns of his father's colleague Yamanoue no Okura.

Yakamochi's poetic activity is emblematic of this formative and volatile period of Japanese letters. On the one hand, it exemplifies the increasing emphasis on the inner life of the individual poet and on new and original ways of expressing it in verse; on the other, it demonstrates a simultaneous awareness of a growing alienation of the individual from human community and separation from the natural environment. And yet such poems were often presented in communal banquets. While assimilating lessons from Chinese verse forms, Yakamochi simultaneously lamented the decline of the native *chōka* and became its last important practitioner.

Ontogeny and reception

Yakamochi is central to the history of *Man'yōshū* not only for the unparalleled number of his poems that it includes and the new directions they adumbrate, but also for his probable role in overseeing work on the anthology as it survives today. The largest division in the final version of *Man'yōshū* is between the first sixteen books (the "old collection"), which contain poetry through 744, and the last four books (the "new collection"), largely Yakamochi's personal poetry collection and mostly dating from 746–59. As noted above, the anthology is believed to have originally consisted only of

the first fifty-three verses of Book One, which include the imperial reign of Yūryaku and then the six reigns of Jomei and successors. That kernel collection may have been compiled in about 695–703, a period that overlaps with the Fujiwara capital and the retirement of the female sovereign Jitō. The introductory fifty-three poems have also been referred to for this reason as the “Fujiwara Palace *Man'yōshū*” or as the “Jitō *Man'yōshū*.” In that Hitomaro was the premier poet of that age, he could have been involved in that project. The rest of Book One was probably added in about 712–20, just after the move to Nara. It was evidently intended early on to be augmented by a second book, as it includes only *zōka*, leaving the *sōmon* and *banka* for Book Two. Like Book One, Book Two begins with a figure from the distant past (Iwanohime) then jumps to the time of Tenji. Itō Haku, the most influential modern theorizer about the anthology's origins, believed that while the *ur-Man'yōshū* was probably undertaken with the support of Retired Empress Jitō, the two-book expansion was likely sponsored by her half-sister, Retired Empress Genmei.³ This second phase of the collection is therefore sometimes called the “Genmei *Man'yōshū*.” Books Three and Four are also a companion set, the former including *zōka*, *banka*, and *hiyuka*, and the latter *sōmon*. Again, they both begin with figures from the distant past, then jump to more contemporary poetry, and they were probably originally compiled in about 724, the year Genshō retired and Shōmu succeeded. They were later expanded, perhaps by Shōmu's court poets Kasa no Kanamura and Yamabe no Akahito.

In the hands of Yakamochi and his colleagues, Books Three and Four became a collection of old and new, and the poetry in Books One and Two, which when first compiled was seen as relatively recent and in part even modern, was now viewed as old and almost classical, worthy of reverence if not emulation. Books Five and Six then followed with poetry from the mid-Nara period. (Book Five may have been based on a late poetic collection of Yamanoue no Okura.) As mentioned above, Books Seven through Twelve prominently feature excerpts from another earlier collection now lost, *Kakinomoto no Asomi Hitomaro kashū*, a work perhaps compiled by Hitomaro of poetry by himself and others, with later additions. Those books were then augmented by Books Thirteen through Fifteen together with the prototype of an appendix in about 745, a half-century or so after the *ur-Man'yōshū* was begun.

³ Itō Haku, “*Man'yōshū no oitachi* (1),” in *Man'yōshū*, vol. 1, ed. Itō et al. (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1976), 389.

Though Yakamochi was probably the central figure in the later anthologization process, others, such as Prince Ichihara and Lady Ōtomo no Sakanoue, may also have been involved. The fifteen-book *Man'yōshū* is sometimes referred to as the “Genshō *Man'yōshū*” to reflect the surmised role of the retired sovereign Genshō in fostering its compilation. Yakamochi's patron Tachibana no Moroe may at some point have been involved as well, for *Eiga monogatari* (A Tale of Flowering Fortunes), written in the mid-Heian period, holds that Moroe and others were ordered to undertake the task by yet another female sovereign, Shōmu's daughter Kōken. The appendix may have been completed in about 767–80 and then turned into Book Sixteen when the twenty-book *Man'yōshū* was compiled. The four-book “new collection,” containing more than six hundred verses from 730 to 759, was, as already pointed out, largely constructed from Yakamochi's personal poetry collection from 746–59. The first thirty-two poems, though, date from 730–44 and may have come from the collection of his late brother Fumimochi. The early Heian period Emperor Heizei (774–824) afforded the work official recognition, and it was perhaps in his reign, c. 806–10, that a few more poems were added and the whole was fair-copied. This is the source of another legend that *Man'yōshū* was Emperor Heizei's creation. In view of Heizei's involvement and the presumed support provided by various previous monarchs, it has even been argued that *Man'yōshū*, and not *Kokinshū*, was the first imperially sponsored waka anthology.

The tables of contents (*mokuroku*) of the final books may not have been completed until the mid tenth century, when some of the work had already become difficult to read, due to sweeping simplifications in the vernacular writing system. Those last tables of contents may have been added in about 951–67 by the “Five Gentlemen of the Pear Chamber” (*Nashitsubo no Gonin*), who also provided readings for about four thousand of the tanka in the collection. Their readings are referred to today as the “old annotations” (*koten*). This renewed interest in the anthology inspired further scholarship, the “next annotations” (*jiten*), by subsequent generations of poets, who established about three hundred more readings. *Man'yōshū* was also studied by the members of the major poetic houses that began to develop in the latter part of the Heian period, though they disagreed about how it should be used in new poetic composition. The scholar monk Sengaku (b. 1203) collated and edited the text, supplying readings for the last 150 hitherto undeciphered poems (the “new annotations” or *shinten*); his *Man'yōshū chūshaku* (*Man'yōshū* Commentary, 1269) marked a new era in *Man'yōshū* studies. Sengaku's contribution provided the foundation for subsequent commentaries by

medieval monks, courtiers, and linked verse poets, and then for the epochal study by Keichū (1640–1701) entitled *Man'yō daishōki* (A Substitute's Notes on *Man'yōshū*), which achieved its final form in 1690, during the Genroku efflorescence of Edo culture. Keichū's teachings became the bedrock of subsequent studies by nativist scholars who returned to *Man'yōshū* as a basic text for exploring the roots of vernacular literature and the essence of native Japanese culture. But due to the vagaries of the various writing systems used in the anthology, a few of its verses still resist definitive readings today.

Man'yōshū was born of the intersection between, on the one hand, native song and ritual and, on the other, Chinese script, poetry, and ideas about the political role of literature. Some *Man'yōshū* verses are simple lyric declarations, and others are paeans to the sovereign. But the anthology reveals a complex developmental process that also generated works of fictive imagination, philosophical exegesis, and subtle interiority, through an extended dialogue with Chinese models. It contains a wider social cross-section than seen in later imperial collections (however much its verses from the periphery were reshaped by later editors). But despite the appearance here and there of such popular voices, *Man'yōshū* took initial shape as a showcase of imperial literary culture, and the vast majority of its poetry is of courtly origin. After its completion, it remained the preserve of courtiers and the educated elite; though printing increased its circulation and it began to be taught in Edo academies, it was only in the twentieth century that the general population became aware of it. The characterization of *Man'yōshū* as a text that was widely read through the centuries is a modern myth.

Anthologization and Sino-Japanese literature: *Kaifūsō* and the three imperial anthologies

WIEBKE DENECKE

In contrast to Western antiquity, poetry anthologies have been a prominent form of literary production in East Asia. They were a fitting format to accommodate relatively short poetic genres, give space to a variety of voices, and thus represent courts, eras, and the state of the literary art. The *Shijing* (600 BCE), which unlike all later poetry collections is considered a “Classic,” embodies crucial elements of the ideology of anthology-making: a compiler figure related to a center of power; the assumption of an implicit political, ethical, or aesthetic agenda embodied in the anthology’s arrangement scheme; and the presentation of a “literary map,” which commemorated and exemplified particular traditions, and thematized societal values.

This ideology of anthologization fit the needs of the early Japanese state. Claiming a nexus between literary production and virtuous rule allowed the elites to highlight their power in the form of courtly anthologies for moral and political edification, and for refined entertainment. In China courts were the central sites of poetic production until the eighth century, when many poets began to write from other vantage points. But in Japan the tradition of imperial anthologies, prefigured by the eighth-century *Kaifūsō*, was pioneered by the three ninth-century *kanshi* anthologies and continued in the line of twenty-one imperial *waka* anthologies from the *Kokinwakashū* into the fifteenth century.

Kaifūsō (751) is a collection of 120 predominantly pentasyllabic poems by sixty-four authors, including imperial family members, court officials, and monks. Most poems come from poetry banquets or outings, such as seasonal festivals, banquets for Silla embassies, excursions to Yoshino, or the Rites for Confucius (*sekiten*). The title, “Florilegium of Cherished Airs” is programmatic: *kaifū* (“cherished airs”) looks to preserve the poetic production since Tenji’s court at Ōmi (661–72), and *sō*, a waterplant associated with elegant

writing, lays bold claim to literary sophistication. With its chronological arrangement and its inclusion of biographies for the imperial family (and monks), *Kaifūsō* is a kind of poetic chronicle of eight decades of state building, from Tenji's first poetry banquets, through the destructive Jinshin War during which his son Prince Ōtomo was ousted by Tenji's brother Tenmu in 672, up until the reign of the strong-willed Empress Kōken, whose lineage combined descent from Tenji, Tenmu, and the Fujiwara ancestor Nakatomi no Kamatari. Several influential court officials, most notably Fujiwara no Fuhito, feature in the anthology. Because the compiler shows unmistakable sympathy for the historical losers, Prince Ōtomo and the Ōmi court, scholars since the Edo period have believed that one of Ōtomo's descendants, Ōmi no Mifune, compiled the anthology. Yet the abundance of poetry from the literary salon of Tenmu's grandson Prince Nagaya has inspired a host of alternative speculations.

Although it is questionable how widely the anthology circulated in its first centuries (all extant copies stem from a 1041 manuscript), *Kaifūsō* is of premier significance for understanding the beginnings of literature in Japan. As the first poetry anthology in a secondary literary culture, which eagerly strove to emulate its reference culture, China, it shows a keen historical consciousness. The preface plots the rise of kanshi onto a broad timeline of civilization (*bun*) from the Age of the Gods and legendary beginnings under Emperor Jimmu, through the arrival of diplomatic writing and Confucian books from Korea and the establishment of ranks under Prince Shōtoku, climaxing with Emperor Tenji's founding of an academy and hosting of poetry banquets. Though modeled on the preface to *Wenxuan* (J. *Monzen*), Japan's earliest account of literary history tells a story staked on Japanese ground.

Just as medieval Chinese models of literary history, enhanced by Japan's early chronicles, allowed the *Kaifūsō* compiler to design a history of kanshi, medieval Chinese poetry provided a rich treasury of sophisticated diction. No early Chinese ruler could have written the couplet Emperor Monmu (r. 697–707) crafted on “moon”:

Its liquid luster shines on the terrace
as its departing wheel sinks into the wine cup. (*Kaifūsō* 15)

Only the practiced observation and poetic obsession with surfaces in Six Dynasties poetry allowed the Japanese emperor to set the vastness of moonlight on the smooth surface of a large terrace against the glimmering speck of moon reflected in the poet's wine cup.

Because of their temporal overlap *Kaifūsō* and *Man'yōshū* constitute an extraordinary testing ground for the emergence of Japan's biliterate literary culture. Despite much valuable research tracing the mutual influence of particular imagery and tropes or comparing poems by authors anthologized in both, a broader understanding of how and to which effect Japan, of all East Asian cultures, developed from the outset such a robustly biliterate tradition is needed. If anything, *Kaifūsō* has been the *Man'yōshū*'s neglected twin, disparaged as a novice collection; its historical value is conceded but its literary worth denigrated, and what in *Man'yōshū* appears primeval and vigorous is considered primitive and imitative in *Kaifūsō*. Most scholars criticize its egregious disregard for the tonal rules of Chinese "regulated poetry," rather than appreciating the poets' passionate practice of parallel couplets; or they detect cases of "plagiarism" rather than understanding the lifting of lines from Chinese "originals" as in principle little different from the extensive borrowing of Chinese diction that characterizes early Sino-Japanese literature as a whole.

Sixty years after *Kaifūsō*, Emperor Saga and his successor Junna, both sons of Emperor Kanmu, the founder of the Heian capital, commissioned three imperial anthologies in a short period of thirteen years: *Ryōunshū* (Cloud-Topping Collection, 814), *Bunka shūreishū* (Collection of Exquisite Literary Flourish, 818), and *Keikokushū* (Collection for Ordering the State, 827). Saga vigorously promoted literature. His policies enabled an unprecedented flourishing of the State Academy; he increased the occasions for public poetry composition by reviving or establishing annual festivals such as the "Flower Banquet" (*hana no en*), the "Palace Banquet" (*naïen*), and the "Double-Ninth" Chrysanthemum Festival; in addition to the anthologies he commissioned a new family register, a ritual code, and an official history. His own poetry fills a fifth of the anthologies, and he gathered an impressive salon of poet-officials, a number of whom helped compile the anthologies. His enthusiasm for kanshi is also evident in the support for his daughter Princess Uchiko, the first Kamo priestess and one of the rare female Heian kanshi poets, who features in *Keikokushū*.

The first two anthologies have a narrower scope: *Ryōunshū* includes kanshi from the past three decades, while *Bunka shūreishū* only has poetry from the four years since *Ryōunshū*. *Keikokushū*, unfortunately only partially preserved, gives a panorama of more than a century of literary production and is most ambitious in its sheer volume and its unprecedented inclusion of prose genres such as rhapsodies, poetry prefaces, and examination essays. Unlike existing Tang anthologies, which mostly go by authors, Saga's compilers eagerly

experimented with arrangement schemes: by official rank (*Ryōunshū*), topic category (*Bunka shūreishū*), or genre (*Keikokushū*).

Although there is much implicit continuity with *Kaifūsō* the Saga anthologies constituted a groundbreaking step in literary history. They were the first imperial anthologies, and the nostalgia for the tragic Ōmi court that hovered over *Kaifūsō* gave way to a proud exaltation of the present era's splendors. They propagate the ideology that "Literature (*bunshō*) is the great affair in ordering the state," in the words of Cao Pi's (Emperor Wen of Wei's) "Treatise on Literature," which open the *Ryōunshū* preface and gave name to the *Keikokushū*; Saga received private lectures on *Wenxuan*, which contained the treatise and poetry from the Cao family salon and might explain the manifold references to the Cao court. Just as Cao Pi's treatise pioneered literature as a personal, immortal achievement and a realm distinct from politics, while also heralding the traditional nexus between politics and literature, the Saga anthologies evoked that courtly theme but claimed a new, "modern" (*kindai*) aesthetic autonomy. This enhanced historical awareness applied also to Chinese literature, whose history was for the first time sketched in the *Keikokushū* preface. This resonated with literature's spatial expansion during the Saga period. Poetry was increasingly composed beyond the confines of the palace, at the Shinsen'en Garden or southwest of the capital at Kaya, a detached palace for hunting excursions named after Heyang, a pleasure spot outside of Luoyang associated with the poet Pan Yue. Instead of entering the realm of the immortals, as *Kaifūsō* poets had done on excursions to Yoshino, Saga and his courtiers discovered rustic charms at Kaya: the babble of simple folk, noisy monkeys, and a sometimes inconvenient, but palpable, nature.

The early Sino-Japanese anthologies represent the foundations of court poetry in Japan and show the importance of kanshi both as a domestic and cross-cultural medium of communication and entertainment. Court poetry is not just poetry produced at court. It had its characteristic sites and occasions, topics and themes, and typical set of participants; it was supported by socio-political institutions and an ideology that gave literature a prominent place in the political realm; and it produced an anti-court rhetoric that counterbalanced its social strictures and could mediate a poet's career-related disappointments.

As in medieval China up to the eighth century, court banquets were a generative site of poetry in early Japan. They were mostly held in the palace, at mansions of the aristocracy or at detached palaces beyond the capital on the occasion of excursions, seasonal festivals or Academy-related events.

They produced collective poetry on set topics, which, increasingly in the Saga anthologies, included rhyme-matching. This engendered a rich vocabulary of sophisticated judgment of the natural world and human emotions. Typically banquets included various “subjects” and the emperor, who had a dual role as sovereign worthy of panegyric praise for his civil virtues and erudition, and also as imaginary equal to his poet-courtiers. This role-play was pronounced in Saga’s salon and might have encouraged the popularity of certain fictional scenarios that bore little relation to Heian realities: the Chinese “border poem” lamenting bleak frontier wars, “boudoir laments,” and the “pining wife poem” allowing male poets to write in a female voice about the pains of separation.

The main institutions that shaped early kanshi production were the court bureaucracy and the State Academy. Many poets remained middle-ranking officials, but the ideology of literature articulated in the prefaces to the Sino-Japanese anthologies gave their poetry a central place in the “ordering of the state.” This disjunction between cultural and political capital experienced by scholar-officials became ever more prominent in the following centuries, as is evident in *Honchō monzui* (*The Literary Essence of Our Court*).

The rhetoric of imperial praise also engendered a poetic embracing of escape and reclusion. True, we occasionally find genuine anti-court poems by poets who were indeed exiled (e.g. Isonokami no Otomaro). But the pose of reclusion was overwhelmingly more common than its reality. It came in several guises: in the *Kaifūsō* the exuberant rejection of society in Taoist guise, inspired by the unrestrained world of the third-century Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove, is popular. The Saga anthologies repeatedly invoke the trope of Confucian recluses, whom the ruler finds in the wilderness and draws as brilliant officials to his court. The rhetoric of reclusion was paradoxical because the world of recluses and immortals could be portrayed as opposed to but also superposed with the court. This function of the reclusion topic becomes most obvious in lines by Kuwahara no Haraka:

We’ve climbed high, yet are not beyond the human world:
both officials and recluses at once. (*Ryōunshū* 90)

Reclusion tropes could even turn erotic, as when Ono no Minemori describes a Double-Ninth Festival bringing together beautiful women and recluses (*Ryōunshū* 49).

Despite a strongly emulative relation to Chinese poetry, Japanese poets adapted the medium to their own needs. They coined expressions that are not attested in contemporary Chinese sources. The distinctive connections

between the court, reclusion, the world of immortals, and romantic love in early Sino-Japanese anthologies are still little explored. If Chinese boudoir laments were usually written by male poets in the female voice, in early Japan, where vernacular poetry allowed communication between the sexes, a man could write a “boudoir lament” about himself (*Kaifūsō* 118) and a woman could write one for herself (*Bunka shūreishū* 50, 55).

The early Sino-Japanese anthologies also highlight kanshi as a transnational skill and a medium of cross-cultural communication. Many of the poet-officials in the *Kaifūsō* who were associated with the State Academy came from Korean immigrant lineages. The anthologies feature poetry written by Japanese on embassies to China, by Japanese when hosting Silla envoys, or even by a Parhae envoy visiting Japan. However, such poems are few: eighth- and ninth-century kanshi composition was not a sporadic transnational skill but a solid practice predominantly put to domestic purposes.

The early Sino-Japanese anthologies have a long history of neglect. Unlike vernacular collections that explicitly harked back to the *Man'yōshū*, the Saga anthologies make no explicit reference to *Kaifūsō*; in the Edo period Emura Hokkai's kanshi history (*Nihon shishi*, 1770) skims over both; and modern scholarship has been scarce, because they had become “foreign literature” outside of the mainstream national literature paradigm. In general, the *Kaifūsō*, as a product of the “Man'yō Age,” fares a bit better. The Saga anthologies suffer as products of what has been called in the wake of Kojima Noriyuki, ironically their most passionate scholar, the “Dark Age of National Poetry,” when kanshibun thrived amid a relative scarcity of waka.¹ But the fact that explicit tradition building is so weak in the Sino-Japanese tradition, which is episodic and eclectic rather than continuous and self-conscious, should not overshadow the fundamental importance of the early Sino-Japanese anthologies for Japanese literary culture.

¹ *Kokufū ankoku jidai no bungaku*, 8 vols. (Tokyo: Hanawa Shobō, 1968–98).

PART II

★

THE HEIAN PERIOD (794–1185)

Introduction: court culture, women, and the rise of vernacular literature

HARUO SHIRANE

In the four hundred years from the end of the eighth century to the end of the twelfth century, the center of political power was located in the Heian capital (today known as Kyoto), from which the period takes its name. The political origin of the Heian period can be traced to 781, when Emperor Kanmu (r. 781–806) ascended the throne. Three years later (in 784), he moved the capital from Heijō (Nara) about thirty kilometers northwest, to Nagaoka, and then in 794 to Heian, nearby to the northeast of Nagaoka. The end of the Heian period is usually considered to be 1185, when the Taira (Heike), a military clan, was demolished and Minamoto Yoritomo (1147–99), the leader of the Minamoto (Genji) military clan, established the Kamakura *bakufu* (military government) in eastern Japan.

At the end of the eighth century, the aristocratic clans that had controlled the *ritsuryō* state during the Nara period were gradually supplanted. By the mid ninth century the ranks of the nobility (*kugyō*) were dominated by the Fujiwara and Minamoto (Genji). Among them, the northern branch of the Fujiwara eventually prevailed, and in the mid-Heian period, beginning in the latter half of the tenth century, controlled the throne through the *sekkon* (regent) system. By marrying their daughters to emperors, the Fujiwara became the grandfathers of future emperors, placing them in the position to be regents who ruled in place of the child emperor. A parallel office gave them similar privileges during the reigns of adult emperors.

During the late ninth century, Emperor Uda (r. 887–97), with the aid of Sugawara no Michizane (845–903), managed to hold off the Fujiwara. Uda's son Emperor Daigo (r. 897–930), with the assistance of Michizane and the minister of the left, Fujiwara no Tokihira, similarly attempted to restore direct imperial rule. To enhance the authority of the imperial family, Emperor Daigo ordered the compilation of the *Kokin wakashū* (or *Kokinshū*; Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems, c. 905–14), the first imperial anthology of native poetry (the thirty-one-syllable *waka*). Although

the attempt at imperial restoration by Uda and Daigo ultimately failed, the Uda/Daigo reigns – often referred to as the Engi (901–23) era – were subsequently considered to be a golden age of imperial rule and cultural efflorescence.

Emperor Daigo and his son, Murakami (r. 946–67), managed to avoid Fujiwara regents, but their imperial successors were not so successful. In 967, with the accession of Emperor Reizei, Fujiwara no Saneyori became regent, leading to the institutionalization of the Fujiwara regency, which peaked between 995 and 1027, when Fujiwara no Michinaga (966–1027), the most powerful and successful regent, held sway. Michinaga's eldest daughter, Shōshi, became the empress and consort of Emperor Ichijō (r. 986–1011) and gave birth to two subsequent emperors, GoIchijō and GoSuzaku. Murasaki Shikibu probably wrote much of the *Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Genji) while serving as a lady-in-waiting to Empress Shōshi, while Sei Shōnagon, the author of *Makura no sōshi* (The Pillow Book), was a lady-in-waiting to Empress Teishi, another consort of Emperor Ichijō and Shōshi's rival.

In the second half of the eleventh century, with the accession of Emperor GoSanjō (r. 1068–72) – who, for the first time in the 170 years since Emperor Uda's reign, did not have Fujiwara maternal relatives – the power of the Fujiwara regency suddenly declined. The retired emperor, Shirakawa (1053–1129, r. 1072–86), who relinquished the throne in 1086, established the *insei* system, in which the retired/cloistered emperor controlled the emperor (usually a child) and held political power from behind the throne. Retired Emperor Shirakawa, who took holy vows in 1096, thus held control for forty-three years through three imperial reigns.

The eighth-century ritsuryō state system – with its system of ranks, ministries, and university – continued to operate, at least in name, throughout the Heian period and provided the framework for a court-based state system, which emerged at the beginning of the tenth century. One of the major characteristics of this court-based state was gradual concentration of power outside the capital in the provincial governors (*zuryō*), drawn from middle-rank aristocrats, who were the fathers of women writers of this period. Consequently, the central government in the capital, while making official appointments to and receiving tributes from the periphery, gradually lost direct administrative control of the provinces. The result was increasing disorder. In 939 two rebellions took place – one led by Taira no Masakado (d. 940) and another by Fujiwara no Sumitomo – both of which were subdued. Meanwhile, the provincial governors, exploiting their positions as state appointees, gathered more and more wealth and power.

By the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the ritsuryō state system had been largely replaced by a system of private estates (*shōen*), which became the foundation for a new, village-based provincial society. The samurai, who played new roles of coercion and defense in this system, gained military strength, and by the latter half of the twelfth century the Taira (Heike), a military clan, came into conflict with the retired emperors, who until then had controlled the throne. The Taira clan took over the reins of the court government until they were in turn toppled by the Minamoto (Genji), a military clan based in the east, in Kamakura, thereby bringing an end to the Heian period and ushering in the medieval period.

The early Heian period was marked by the continued prominence of Chinese-based literature and culture and the gradual introduction of vernacular cultural forms, particularly the court-based vernacular literature written in *kana*, a new syllabary, which flourished from the tenth century onward. An example of Chinese-based literature is *Nihon ryōiki* (Record of Miraculous Events in Japan, c. 787–824) by the priest Kyōkai (also Keikai), which was written in Literary Sinitic but which gives both a Buddhist and a commoner's view of the world. The most famous writer in this period was Sugawara no Michizane (845–903), a statesman known for his writings in both *kanshi* (Chinese poetry) and *kanbun* (Chinese prose). Michizane, who rose to the pinnacle of power before abruptly falling, wrote on topics (student days, professional career, intellectual world, exile) that differed significantly from those found in the later *kana* writing by women. Chinese poetry and Chinese prose (*belles lettres*), written almost entirely by male aristocrats, continued to be important throughout the Heian period, and culminated in the *Honchō monzui* (Literary Essence of Our Court, compiled by Fujiwara no Akihira, c. 989–1066), a repository of model pieces featuring genres that an educated Heian man needed to master to participate in court life, perform duties within the court bureaucracy, or draft texts for patrons of religious ceremonies.

The rise in popularity of *kana* writing in the late ninth century, particularly in the form of *waka*, the thirty-one-syllable classical poem (written by aristocrats in an urban environment), gave birth to a variety of vernacular literature in the tenth century. *Waka* became integral to the everyday life of the aristocracy, functioning as a form of elevated dialogue and a major means of communication between the sexes. These poems also became an important part of public life, particularly at banquets where composition of poetry in Japanese or Chinese was required. The first three imperial *waka* anthologies, particularly the first one, the *Kokinshū*, became the foundation (in both

diction and thematic content) for subsequent court literature. The close relationship between Chinese poetry (kanshi) and Japanese classical poetry (waka), which became the twin pillars of high literature, is apparent in the *Wakan rōeishū* (Collection of Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing, early eleventh century), edited by Fujiwara Kintō (966–1041), the leading man of letters of his day and a contemporary of Murasaki Shikibu, in which excerpts of Chinese poetry are followed by Japanese poetry on the same topic.

Private waka collections, which included exchanges between the poet and his or her acquaintances, also led to a variety of new genres: (1) poetic travel diaries, such as the *Tosa nikki* (Tosa Diary) by Ki no Tsurayuki; (2) confessional, semi-autobiographical poetic diaries by women, like the *Kagerō nikki* (Kagerō Diary) by the mother of Fujiwara no Michitsuna and the *Sarashina nikki* (Sarashina Diary) by the daughter of Sugawara no Takasue; and (3) poem-tales (*uta-monogatari*) centering on the poetry of a particular poet, of which the most famous example is the *Ise monogatari* (The Tales of Ise), initially based on the poetry of Ariwara no Narihira (825–80), the implicit protagonist. Poetry also became a key part of vernacular fiction, which is generally thought to begin with *Taketori monogatari* (The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter, c. 909) and *The Tales of Ise*.

The second major period of Heian kana literature, from the latter half of the tenth century through the first half of the eleventh century, can be said to start with the *Kagerō Diary*, by the mother of Michitsuna, written in the 970s and marking the beginning of major vernacular prose writings by women. The peak of this period comes with the reign of Emperor Ichijō (986–1011), during which Sei Shōnagon's *The Pillow Book*, *The Tale of Genji*, and the *Izumi Shikibu nikki* (Izumi Shikibu Diary) were written. Although there were important women writers in the ancient period such as Princess Nukata, Lady Sakanoue, and Lady Kasa, all poets represented in the *Man'yōshū*, they did not have the concentration and influence of those in the mid-Heian period.

One of the striking characteristics of the emergence of Japanese vernacular literature was the central role played by women writers who were closely associated with the imperial court in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries, such as Murasaki Shikibu, Sei Shōnagon, the mother of Michitsuna, Izumi Shikibu, and the daughter of Takasue. Kana, the vernacular syllabary, became prominent in the early tenth century, enabling the Japanese to write more easily in their own language. Until then, writing had been in Literary Sinitic (as in the *Nihon shoki*) or had used Chinese characters to transcribe the native Japanese language (as in parts of the *Man'yōshū*). Despite the emergence of a native syllabary, the male nobility continued to

rely on Literary Sinitic, which remained the more prestigious language and the language of government, scholarship, and religion. By contrast, aristocratic women, who were generally relegated to a more private sphere, adopted the native syllabary and used it to write diaries, memoirs, poetry, and fiction.

The second reason for the development of women's writing was the political, social, and cultural importance of the ladies-in-waiting at the imperial court. The leading Fujiwara families poured their resources into the residences and entourages of their daughters, who competed for the attention of the emperor. Indeed, ladies-in-waiting to Fujiwara daughters wrote much of the vernacular literature of the mid-Heian period. These ladies-in-waiting were the daughters of provincial governors, mid-level aristocrats who were frequently in unstable political and economic positions. Having failed to rise in the court hierarchy, many of these provincial governors went to the provinces to make a living and so had an outsider's perspective on court life. One consequence was that the literature written by women at court paid homage to powerful Fujiwara patrons (as in the *Pillow Book* and the *Murasaki Shikibu Diary*) while also expressing deep disillusionment with court life (as in the *Sarashina Diary*) and with the marital customs that supported this sociopolitical system (as in the *Kagerō Diary*). Part of the complexity of *The Tale of Genji*, in fact, comes from this conflicting view of court culture and power.

The thirty-one-syllable classical poem (*waka*) emerged as the most important vernacular (*kana*) genre. Subjects of these poems ranged from the seasons to love to miscellaneous topics such as celebration, mourning, separation, and travel, which form separate books in the *Kokinshū*. Poems were composed for public functions, at poetry matches (*uta-awase*) and parties, and for illustrated screens (*byōbu uta*), which were commissioned by royalty and powerful Fujiwara families. *Waka* functioned privately as a social medium for greetings, courtship, and farewells, as well as a means of self-reflection. Poets also edited private collections, of either their own poetry or that of other poets like Ariwara no Narihira or Ono no Komachi. These private poetry collections could take the form of a travel diary, as in the *Tosa Diary*, one of the first diaries written in *kana*, or the beginning of the *Sarashina Diary*. Poetry collections could also lead to confessional autobiographies like the *Kagerō Diary*, which probably began as a private collection of poems by Michitsuna's mother. Private collections of poetry also gave rise to the poem-tale, which contained anecdotes about poems that were compiled to create a biographical narrative in works like *The Tales of Ise*, itself based on the poems and legends surrounding Ariwara Narihira.

In Murasaki Shikibu's day, as in previous centuries, men wrote prose in Literary Sinitic, the official language of religion, scholarship, and government. In the tenth century, therefore, vernacular prose, particularly literary diaries, was associated with women to the extent that, in the *Tosa Diary*, the leading male poet of the day, Ki no Tsurayuki, assumed the persona of a woman in writing a literary diary in Japanese. Male scholars, however, were the first to write vernacular tales, or *monogatari*, although they did so anonymously, for such writing was considered a lowly activity. These early vernacular tales, which began with *The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter* (early tenth century), tend to be highly romantic and fantastical. Women, by contrast, tended to write personal, confessional literature based on their private lives and centered on their own poetry. The author of the *Kagerō Diary*, the first major literary diary by a woman, wrote out of a profound dissatisfaction with contemporary *monogatari*, which, in her view, were "little more than gross fabrications." Murasaki Shikibu was able to combine both traditions. *The Tale of Genji* carries on the earlier *monogatari* tradition in its larger plot and in its amorous hero, who echoes the earlier Narihira of *The Tales of Ise*. But in its style, details, psychological insight, and portrayal of the dilemmas faced by women in aristocratic society, *The Tale of Genji* remains firmly rooted in the women's writing tradition.

With the decline of the northern branch of the Fujiwara clan and the Fujiwara regency in the late eleventh century, women's literature (produced by ladies-in-waiting at court) began to wane. Instead, a nostalgic literature emerged that looked back to the glory of the past. The first major example is *Eiga monogatari* (Tales of Flowering Fortunes, c. early twelfth century), a historical tale attributed to a woman, which looks back at Fujiwara no Michinaga (966–1027), who brought the regency to its peak. *Tales of Flowering Fortunes* was quickly followed by the "mirror pieces" (*kagami-mono*), a series of historical chronicles written in Japanese, beginning with *Ōkagami* (The Great Mirror, c. twelfth century), which also recounted Michinaga's achievements.

The late Heian period was also marked by the emergence of *setsuwa* (anecdote) collections, the first of which was the massive *Konjaku monogatari shū* (Tales of Times Now Past, c. 1120), which reflected the heavy influence of Pure Land Buddhism, incorporated stories of rebirth in the Pure Land, and depicted the life of commoners in the provinces. *Tales of Times Now Past*, which continues the tradition of the *Nihon ryōiki*, looks forward to the many *setsuwa* collections of the medieval period and reveals the widening social and religious interests of the aristocracy and priesthood. In contrast to the *Nihon*

ryōiki, which was written in Literary Sinitic, *Tales of Times Now Past* was written in a mixed style that merged kana with the *kanbun kundoku* (a Japanese style of reading Chinese prose) style. This new *wakan* (Japanese–Chinese) mixed style eventually produced *gunki-mono* (military narratives) like *The Tales of the Heike*, which became a hallmark of early medieval literature. The late Heian period was also when the *Ryōjin hishō*, a collection of *kayō* (folk songs), was compiled. This work might be considered the song equivalent of *Tales of Times Now Past* in reflecting Pure Land Buddhism and commoner life.

Court literature based on *waka* and the *monogatari* continued to flourish among the aristocracy and royalty in the late Heian period. Six *chokusenshū*, or imperial *waka* collections, authorized by the emperor, were compiled between the *Kokinshū*, in the early tenth century, and the *Shinkokinshū*, the poetry of which was often marked by allusive variation on earlier *waka* (such as those found in the *Kokinshū*). One of the most important of the late Heian imperial *waka* anthologies was the *Senzaishū*, compiled in 1188 by Fujiwara no Shunzei, a prominent judge at *uta-awase*, which became a dominant genre. Shunzei and his son Fujiwara no Teika, perhaps the most important poet in the medieval period, also contributed to a growing body of *karon*, or poetic treatises, which first emerged in the mid-Heian period and flourished in the late Heian and early medieval period.

The *monogatari*, or vernacular prose fiction depicting aristocratic life, continued to be written in significant numbers. The most famous are the *Sagoromo monogatari* (The Tale of Sagoromo) and the *Tsutsumi chūnagon monogatari* (The Stories of the Riverside Middle Counselor), both of which were heavily influenced by *The Tale of Genji*. Some of these later *monogatari* can in fact be seen as allusive variations on *The Tale of Genji*, in much the same way that many poems in the *Shinkokinshū* were often allusive variations on the earlier poetry of the *Kokinshū*.

Historically, *The Tale of Genji* takes on particular importance because it became canonical by the time of the *Shinkokinshū*, by the early thirteenth century, as a result of the influence of *waka* poets such as Shunzei and Teika, who saw it as central to the diction of *waka*; and in subsequent centuries the Heian kana writings (rather than the writing of the ancient or medieval period) would continue to be the model for writing in the high vernacular (*wabun*). The ancient period would not emerge as the other “classical period” until the eighteenth century, with the full development of *Kokugaku* (nativist studies), which canonized the major texts of the Nara period: the *Man’yōshū*, *Nihon shoki*, and *Kojiki*.

Sugawara no Michizane, a Heian literatus and statesman

ROBERT BORGÉN

Sugawara no Michizane (845–903) ranks among the best-known poets of the Heian period, although he must also be among the least often read. He is a familiar figure because he was posthumously deified and shrines dedicated to him remain popular today. He has come to be regarded as a sort of patron saint of examinees and so students flock to his shrines to pray for his help in gaining admission to the schools of their choice. Although they probably know he was a famous poet, they are not likely to have read much of his poetry since his most important works were written in difficult classical Chinese.

Even in his own day, Michizane's preference for composition in Chinese already was slightly anachronistic. Familiar clichés characterize the previous Nara period as the age of great enthusiasm for Chinese culture, in contrast to the later centuries of the Heian, when Japan looked inward and assimilated elements previously borrowed from China to develop its native, indigenous culture. Although these clichés do not hold up to close scrutiny, neither are they totally misleading. In their Nara capital, Japanese aristocrats administered the land through a bureaucratic government based on Tang models and many elements of their culture, both material and literary, looked very Chinese. In the mid ninth century, around the time of Michizane's birth, some aspects of the culture that had been imported in the Nara period, or even earlier, began to be displaced by new cultural forms, colored by the borrowings but distinctively Japanese. Michizane would witness many of these changes and even contribute to them, but, on the whole, both his career and his literary achievements might be seen as representing the culmination of earlier patterns; and his eventual failure as a court official as symbolic of their decline.

Through the Nara period, Michizane's ancestors had served as minor officials at court. The move of the capital to Heian marked a change in the family's fortunes. When a new emperor, Kanmu (737–806, r. 781–806), sought

to revitalize the Chinese-style system of government as a means of enhancing imperial authority, his plan included the creation of a new capital. Coincidentally, Michizane's grandfather Kiyokimi (770–842) had been admitted as a student of literature at the court university (*Daigakuryō*), just five years before the Heian capital was established in 794. The university taught Confucian classics to young men who might qualify for a civil service examination and careers at court. Although most students were from court families, success in the examinations allowed those from lesser families to improve their status. Kiyokimi was one such example. He probably could have enjoyed a modest career at court even without his Sinological skills, but the new emperor and his immediate successors sought to promote a Chinese-style state and so Kiyokimi, after passing the examination, was promoted to high office, far exceeding anything previously held by members of his family. Among his achievements was service as an officer on the penultimate diplomatic mission to the Tang, which visited the Chinese capital of Chang'an in 804–5. Later, between 814 and 827, Sinophile emperors sponsored the compilation of three anthologies of literature written in Chinese by Japanese authors. Kiyokimi served on the editorial boards of all three. His son Koreyoshi (812–80), Michizane's father, continued the tradition. He too proved to be a talented Sinologist who served as a professor of literature and eventually rose to high office, although he was less involved in governing than his father had been.

By the time of Michizane's birth, the Sugawara were known as a family of court scholars. Michizane's achievements, both as a writer and as an official, would far exceed those of his father and grandfather. Like them, he studied Chinese literature at the university and entered the government after passing the civil service examination. Eventually he followed in the footsteps of both his grandfather and his father by being named professor of literature. In the ancient Japanese bureaucracy, a professor was simply an official who happened to have specialized skills and, as an official, Michizane also held other government posts. Most of them were at court, but in 886, after nine years as professor, he was named governor of Sanuki province, the modern Kagawa prefecture. Such provincial appointments were commonplace among court literati, and so, reluctantly, Michizane served his four-year term in the provinces. While he was there, a new emperor, Uda (867–931, r. 887–97), had come to the throne. By this time, the powerful Fujiwara were beginning to dominate high office at court.

The Fujiwara, long among the most influential aristocratic families, began to consolidate their position in the mid ninth century. The key event

occurred in 858, when the enthronement of a child emperor allowed Fujiwara no Yoshifusa (804–72) to take the post of regent, the first from outside the imperial family. Although eventually that office or its equivalent would become all but hereditary among Yoshifusa's descendants, when Uda became emperor in 887 the status of the Fujiwara was not yet secure. Although Uda was already an adult, Yoshifusa's adopted son Mototsune (836–91) was offered a title comparable to regent. This precipitated a seemingly esoteric quarrel over terminology. The scholar who drafted the document naming Mototsune to his new post borrowed an elegant title from Chinese antiquity to describe it. A rival scholar from the Fujiwara family, however, claimed that the alternate title was purely honorary, with no powers attached. Mototsune was not amused. The whole court was dragged into the ensuing debate. In the end, Uda gave in, punished the scholar who had drafted the document, and awarded Mototsune the title he had sought.

Although Michizane was safely in the provinces during the quarrel, he felt obliged to offer his opinion. The scholarly victim was a former student of his father's and moreover Michizane believed the whole affair threatened his vocation. In Michizane's world, scholarship meant a form of Sinology that combined mastery of the Chinese classics with the ability to make practical use of such knowledge by composing elegant Chinese. Compositions included both prose and poetry, both official documents and personal expressions. All such writings might be regarded as literature if they were written in elevated, allusive language that often followed metric rules similar to those that in English would be found only in poetry. Thus the distinction between literary and non-literary writing was not what modern readers might expect and even government documents, such as one appointing a high official, might be both scholarly and literary, as demonstrated by the appearance of such documents in literary anthologies. As a man whose family had risen in the world because of its "literary" skills, Michizane wrote a long and strongly worded letter to Mototsune defending both his colleague and the practice of literary composition, which required use of elegant synonyms.

Michizane's letter had no effect on the debate at court, but it did demonstrate his willingness to challenge those in power and his letter – or at least the attitude expressed in it – caught the emperor's attention. Uda sought to rule on his own, and so, following Mototsune's death in 891, he began appointing to high office men with few ties to the Fujiwara regents, Michizane being the most prominent among them. At the time, Michizane was forty-seven years old; Mototsune's heir Tokihira (871–909) was an inexperienced young man of twenty-one. Despite his youth, at first

Tokihira held considerably higher office, but that did not last. In 897, they were given roughly equivalent offices and a month later Uda abdicated in favor of his son, who then became Emperor Daigo (885–930, r. 897–930). Uda left his son a testament that, along with other advice, encouraged him to rely on two ministers, Tokihira and Michizane. As Daigo had already celebrated his coming of age, they were not named regents, but Uda appears to have hoped they would serve in something approximating that capacity. Although he named both, his testament strongly suggests that he had greater confidence in Michizane. In 899, they were given the two highest regular offices at court: Tokihira, minister of the left, and Michizane, minister of the right. Protocol gave the minister of the left priority, but the posts had identical responsibilities. Tokihira's title may have been slightly superior, but surviving records suggest Michizane was more active in administrative affairs.

During his years in high office, Michizane made one proposal that would have a lasting influence on Japan's relations with China. Although the Heian period is apt to be seen as an age when Japan turned its back to continental Asia, in fact Japan was in regular, if not frequent, contact with neighboring lands, and Michizane had long been involved in diplomatic activities. Whereas his grandfather – and later an uncle too – had served as envoys to the Tang, Michizane remained at home, but he did help receive missions from the kingdom of Parhae (J. Bokkai, Ch. Bohai) three times, starting in 872. Although today largely forgotten, Parhae flourished in what is now northeast China and served as a valuable conduit that helped bring elements of Chinese culture to Japan. In 894, just after the arrival of the third mission from Parhae that Michizane would receive, he was named Ambassador to the Tang. Less than a month later, however, he responded with a petition that the mission to China be abandoned because of reports that China was suffering from persistent civil disorder. His proposal was soon accepted. The reports were in fact accurate and the Tang dynasty would fall thirteen years later. More than five centuries would pass before Japan resumed diplomatic ties with China. With the collapse of Parhae in 926, Japan all but abandoned diplomatic activity for the remainder of the Heian period. According to one interpretation, Michizane's proposal demonstrated that Japan had lost interest in the cultures of continental Asia, and the government indeed may have turned its back on diplomacy, but Japanese courtiers continued to crave the exotic luxury goods that Chinese merchants brought to Japan and composition in Chinese remained a component of court literary activity.

Michizane's career seemed to flourish under the new Emperor Daigo. Annually, on the ninth day of the ninth lunar month, when the court

celebrated its chrysanthemum festival, the emperor would summon literati to compose poems in Chinese on a topic he proposed. In 900, before the break of dawn the day after the festival, Michizane wrote:

Your minister, through the years, has had his cheerful thoughts,
 but this night, everything arouses only sadness:
 the voice of the cold cricket in the blowing wind,
 leaves falling from the paulownia tree, beaten by the rain.
 You, my lord, are at your peak, while gradually I grow old.
 Your generosity has been boundless, my repayment always slow.
 Not knowing how to assuage this feeling,
 I drink wine, listen to the *koto*, and recite poems. (*Kanke kōshū* 473)

Daigo, then only sixteen, was so touched he presented the fifty-six-year-old Michizane a robe. Three months later, the new year began on an auspicious note as both Michizane and Tokihira were promoted to the junior second rank, the highest of anyone then at court. But, only eighteen days later, Michizane was accused of plotting to manipulate the imperial succession and banished to Dazaifu, the government headquarters in Kyushu. He was given a nominal government post there, but in fact he was kept under house arrest.

Ironically, his downfall inspired his two best-known poems. Before leaving his mansion in the capital, he addressed a poem in Japanese, a *waka*, to his favorite plum tree:

kochi fukaba	When the east wind blows,	
nioi okoseyo	send me your fragrance,	
ume no hana	plum blossoms:	
aruji nashi tote	although your master is gone,	
haru o wasuruna	do not forget the spring.	(<i>Shūishū</i> 1006)

According to legend, the tree was so touched that it flew to Kyushu to join him in exile. There, when the ninth month came, Michizane took out the robe presented him by the emperor just a year before and wrote (with his own interlinear notes):

Last year on this night, attending at Seiryō
 (The name of the imperial residence)
 My poem, “Autumn Thoughts,” expressed my lonely grief.
 (By imperial command, we composed poems on “Autumn
 Thoughts.” Mine expressed much frustration.)

Generously bestowed, that imperial robe is now beside me here.
 I lift it every day to revere its lingering scent.

(I write this because, after the banquet had ended that night, the emperor gave me a robe that I keep with me in a box).

(*Kanke kōshū* 482)

This poem, Michizane's most familiar one in Chinese, appeals in particular to Japanese nationalists who are impressed by Michizane's expression of loyalty to an emperor who had exiled him. Just over two years later, Michizane died and was buried in the outskirts of Dazaifu.

The years that followed were marked by untimely deaths among Michizane's former rivals, most conspicuously in 930, when lightning struck the palace and killed four. Michizane was posthumously pardoned, promoted, and deified as Tenjin, the Heavenly Deity. Shrines were established to worship him, the oldest at the site of his grave in Kyushu, and another at Kitano, just north of the capital, founded in 947. Although people originally had feared the wrath of Tenjin, already in 986 court literati were presenting poems to Kitano Shrine and describing him as "the progenitor of literature, the lord of poetry." Reverence for Tenjin spread until, today, shrines dedicated to the deity are among the most numerous in Japan. Through most of their history, these shrines were apt to be centers of literary activity.

Michizane took care to preserve his writings in Chinese. Shortly before he was exiled, he compiled what he had written up till then into a collection that he presented to the emperor. It began with six chapters of poetry, followed by another six of prose. In Kyushu, as his health declined, he gathered thirty-eight poems he had written and sent them to a friend in the capital. These two collections are extant, apparently as he compiled them, along with a few other of his compositions in Chinese. Michizane also wrote waka and associated with some of the major waka poets of his day. A few of his waka are still admired, although the most familiar example, the one quoted above, is probably remembered more for the legend that goes with it than for its literary qualities. Michizane himself seems not to have valued his waka as highly as he did his works in Chinese, for he did not bother to assemble them into a collection.

Most of Michizane's prose consists of official documents and religious writings, often drafted for others less skilled at composition in Chinese. In general, his most interesting work is found among his poems in Chinese. They may be roughly divided into two categories. Some appear to be literary exercises intended to show off Sinological knowledge. To cite one particularly pedantic example, the poem "Rejoicing over the Rain" manages to include the name of a good minister from the Han dynasty in each

of its sixteen lines. Since the characters for the names are used in their basic meanings, not as proper nouns, only knowledgeable readers would recognize the allusions. Modern readers are apt to prefer Michizane's less "learned" poems. Such poems are less allusive, and hence easier to read without the aid of footnotes. Moreover, they treat topics that would have been difficult to address in Japanese poetry because, by Michizane's day, poets writing in Japanese had come to restrict themselves largely to the thirty-one-syllable *waka* and a limited number of topics (such as love, the four seasons, and parting).

A linguistically able poet such as Michizane could do things in Chinese that were avoided in Japanese. Chinese poetry too had its rules and conventions, but poems were longer and the range of acceptable topics greater. For example, whereas romantic love was a standard theme in Japanese-language literature, it was avoided in Chinese. On the other hand, in Japanese, one rarely wrote of love for one's children. In Chinese, Michizane wrote very affecting poems on that subject. Official duties, another topic absent from *waka*, come up in Michizane's poetry in Chinese:

Professorial Difficulties

My family is not one of generals.
 As Confucian scholars we earn our keep.
 My revered grandfather attained the third rank.
 My kind father's office was High Court Noble.
 Well they knew the power of learning
 And wished to bequeath it for their descendants' glory.
 The day I was promoted to graduate student,¹
 I resolved to master the craft of my forefathers.
 The year I became a professor,
 Happily, the lecture hall was rebuilt.
 When everyone rushed to congratulate me,
 My father alone expressed concern.
 Why did he express concern?
 "Alas that you are an only child," he said;
 "The office of professor is not mean,
 The salary of a professor is not small.
 Once I too held this post
 And learned to fear people's feelings."
 Having heard this kind admonition,

¹ *Shūsai* or *tokugōshō*, sometimes translated as "advanced students of literature," were specially selected students who prepared for the civil service examination. Michizane was given this title at the unusually young age of twenty-three.

Sugawara no Michizane, a Heian literatus and statesman

I proceeded with care as if walking on ice.
In the fourth year,² the Council met
And ordered me to lecture the students.
But after teaching only three days,
My ears heard slanderous voices.
This year evaluating students for advancement,
The decisions were absolutely clear.
But the first student dropped for lack of talent
Denounced me and begged unearned promotion.
In my teaching, I did not make mistakes.
My selections for advancement were fair.
How true was my father's advice
When he warned me before all this occurred. (*Kanke bunsō* 87)

And finally, his Confucian training led him to write on social problems. When he was provincial governor, he wrote:

Early Cold
Who feels the cold air first?
First cold is the man who fled but was sent back.
I search the registers but nowhere is a new returnee.
Asking his name, I determine his former status.
The land in his native village is barren,
His fate always to be poor.
If men are not treated compassionately,
Surely many will continue to flee. (*Kanke bunsō* 200)

The government registered peasants to assign them land to be cultivated – and taxed. In the ninth century, the system was collapsing. One reason was that peasants would flee to avoid taxes, but flight did not always solve their problem, as Michizane notes. This was the first in a series of ten poems, each describing the suffering of local people, an elderly widower, an orphan, and so forth. If poems such as these had not been written in classical Chinese, they might find a wider audience in modern Japan, allowing Michizane to become as widely read as his spirit is worshiped. But they are in Chinese and so Michizane is more admired than read.

² The fourth year of the *Gangyō* era, i.e. 880, three years after Michizane had been named professor of literature.

Kokinshū and Heian court poetry

GUSTAV HELDT

Kokin wakashū (Anthology of Old and New Waka, c. 905–14) – customarily shortened to *Kokinshū* – represents the next major phase in the evolution of Japanese poetry after the late eighth-century *Man'yōshū* (Collection of Myriad Leaves), one whose articulation of self and world would influence Japanese culture for a millennium. Broadly speaking, the vernacular poetry of the ninth and tenth centuries shifted interest away from epithet-laden numinous landscapes, focusing instead on the more generic scenes presented by gardens and paintings in aristocratic mansions. A greater proportion of individual poems and a more diverse vocabulary were devoted to describing human emotions, sensations, reasoning, and actions through verbs and adjectives whose inflections further indicated degrees of certitude. This overall turn toward the human subject in Heian poetry also fostered new interest in contextualizing poetry through prose.

Indicative of this shift in the balance between scene and subject was a change in the verbs used to describe how the subject apprehended the scene. Whereas *Man'yōshū* poetry favored the intransitive *miyu* (to appear), which marked landscapes as active embodiments of spiritual power manifesting themselves to mortals, this word is entirely replaced in the *Kokinshū* by the transitive *miru* (to perceive), which often entailed an imaginative reconstruction of the scene by its viewer. Such re-visions frequently involved discovering resemblances between one object and another separated from it in time or space. Known as *mitate*, this trope informed many other characteristics of the period's poetic culture, which was fascinated by written poetry's capacity to create similitudes. One example was a marked increase in the use of *kake-kotoba* (pivot-words) in which the same syllables or letters held two separate meanings. When written in the *ashi-de* ("reed hand") style of calligraphy, words could also illustrate a natural scene.

The authority of the *Kokinshū* and its poetics was already unquestioned in the two imperial anthologies that followed it. The first of these, *Gosen*

wakashū (Anthology of Later Selections of Waka, 951) – customarily shortened to *Gosenshū* – was chiefly concerned with memorializing the poems of the first anthology’s editor, Ki no Tsurayuki (d. c. 945), and his peers. The third anthology, *Shūi wakashū* (Anthology of Gleanings of Waka, c. 1005–7) – customarily shortened to *Shūishū* – also drew extensively on *uta* poems from the same period. Together with the *Kokinshū*, they became known as the *sandaishū* (“anthologies of three reigns”) in the twilight of the Heian period at the end of the twelfth century, referring to their compilation under Daigo (884–930, r. 897–930), Murakami (926–67, r. 946–67), and Kazan (967–1008, r. 984–6) respectively. The roughly two-thousand-word vocabulary they encompassed would subsequently define orthodox poetic diction for centuries.

Early Heian poetry

While the period between the *Man’yōshū* and the *Kokinshū* has often been described as a dark age for native verse due to the paucity of surviving materials, this more likely reflects the vagaries of the historical record than the reality of the times. Official court histories show poems were still being composed on formal occasions after Kanmu (737–806, r. 781–806) moved the capital from Nara to Heian-kyō in 794. Over the course of the ninth century such occasions included banquets for hunting expeditions, imperial processions, and lectures on the *Nihon shoki* (Chronicles of Japan, 720). In many of these settings the word *waka* refers to *uta* composed in response to one by the sovereign. This dialogic dimension was as integral to the later history of *waka* as its vernacular character, and was enhanced in the Heian period by a new appreciation of the ways in which written poems could interact with paintings, prose, or other poems in sequences. Both meanings of *waka* – as a poem responding to imperial command and as a harmonious arrangement with other poems – help explain its appearance in the title of all twenty-one imperial anthologies of *uta*.

Interest in preserving earlier forms of verse at this time also provided continuity with the preceding tradition. Called *furugoto* (ancient words), these included ritual songs such as *kagura uta* (shrine songs), *azuma uta* (eastland songs), and *fuzoku uta* (regional songs). The *Kinkafu*, a collection of twenty-two songs from the early Heian period accompanied by musical scores set to zither music, replicates many verses from the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*. A more extensive indication of early song’s continuing importance is provided by the late tenth-century *Kokin waka rokujō* (Old

and New Waka in Six Quires), a topically organized anthology of verse which includes over a thousand poems resembling ones in the *Man'yōshū*. *Man'yōshū* poetry was also being reproduced or reinterpreted in numerous anthologies that variously defined the corpus of Hitomaro at the time. Banquet songs known as *saibara* were yet another genre with ties to tradition. Versions appear in the *Kokinshū* as anonymous verse, and they are also alluded to in such vernacular Heian prose works as the *Genji monogatari* and *Yamato monogatari*.

Drawing on the *Kokinshū* prefaces, modern literary histories often posit a tripartite scheme for poetry of the period in which a middle era from roughly 850 to 880, known as the *rokkasen jidai* (Age of Six Poetic Immortals), stands between the anonymous songs of antiquity and the age of the anthology's editors. In the historical chronicles, these three decades coincide with the establishment of the first Fujiwara regency under Yoshifusa (804–72), who was frequently involved in the ritual presentation of *uta* at court. Famous examples include the recitation of a *chōka* by Buddhist priests from his clan temple on the fortieth birthday of emperor Ninmyō (808–50, r. 833–50) in 849, and *waka* composed along with *kanshi* at a memorial service for the same emperor in 851. In his capacity as regent, Yoshifusa also oversaw cherry-blossom banquets where poems were presented at his Somedono mansion in 864 and 866 while his grandson Emperor Seiwa (850–80, r. 858–76) was still in his infancy. Blossom banquets were governed by seasonal time and took place in aristocratic mansions, creating a parallel ritual cycle in which the composition of *waka* served the same role as that of *kanshi* in ensuring cosmological and social harmony. One result was that the cherry tree first gained poetic prominence as a symbol of the Fujiwara regency before becoming the paradigmatic flower of Japanese culture.

Poetry matches and screen poems

Much of the unprecedented nature of Heian *waka* – in particular its heightened interest in the visual and material properties of written poetry – can be traced back to Uda (867–931, r. 887–97), whose entourage first developed *uta-awase* (poetry matches) and *byōbu uta* (screen poems), both staples of later court poetry. A sovereign without relatives in Yoshifusa's line, Uda drew on native tradition to create new rituals for himself, and showed a heightened awareness of the importance of language in establishing his authority. As part of this overall strategy, he co-opted Yoshifusa's practice of composing *waka* on seasonal topics in his personal mansion, and adapted it to buttress his own

standing, both within the palace while he reigned, and at his consorts' villas after his abdication.

By fostering the composition of *uta* that harmonized with topics (*dai*) provided at royal command – a practice that had previously been associated with *kanshi* – Uda helped make *waka* a courtly form of poetry whose communal compositions echoed the sovereign's words in an affirmation and enactment of his place at the center of society and the cosmos. The development of poetic topics coincided with an overall interest in classifying words in Uda's reign, during which the earliest extant Heian dictionary *Shinsen jikyō* (Newly Selected Mirror of Characters, 893) was produced, and is also evident in two hybrid anthologies from the period: *Kudai waka* (Lines of Shi as Topics for Waka, c. 894) and *Shinsen man'yōshū* (New Selections of Myriad Leaves, c. 893–913). Whereas the former places the *kanshi* before the *waka*, the opposite occurs in the latter anthology, which adapts vernacular verses from a poetry match into heptasyllabic quatrains.

Kana records of such poetry matches emphasize the pageantry surrounding the presentation of the poems rather than the sort of critical judgments that would dominate in later centuries. Like the roots or shells matched in precursor events, poetry matches highlighted the materiality of the objects being compared. Poems were inscribed on slips of paper by lower-ranking courtiers for the team members in advance and, after being presented to Uda, were attached to landscape dioramas known as *suhamas*. Uda was thus staged as the pivot between heaven and the human realm, the latter consisting of teams whose members came from competing sub-lineages within the imperial family. In acknowledgment of the pivotal role court women played in determining the succession, several matches prominently featured the topic of the “maiden-flower” (*ominaeshi*). Overall, Uda's matches favored summer and autumn, thereby associating the retired sovereign with the full-fledged fruition of royal authority.

Screen poetry was another innovation of the period that first appears among Uda's consorts and courtiers. While poems describing paintings date back to the Nara period, it was not until the end of the ninth century that unambiguous examples of *uta* being inscribed on folding screens first appear. The earliest instances involve the salon of Uda's Fujiwara consort Atsuko (872–907), where they made up fictional narratives in which the poem voiced the words or thoughts of figures depicted on the screens. In addition to these pleasurable pursuits, screen poems also came to serve ritual purposes over the course of the tenth century. Chief among these were their presentation as part of decennial celebrations, coming-of-age ceremonies, enthronement rites, and appointments

to official posts. Like poetry matches, screen poems may also have contributed to the structure of the *Kokinshū*, which frequently arranges poems in narrative sequences organized around seasonal or spatial associations. In fact, screen poem sequences grew markedly more lengthy after the anthology's appearance, as did the number of panels making up the folding screens, which expanded from four to as many as six, eight, or even twelve at this time.

Often, the content of the painting was relatively generic until the affixed poem assigned the scene to a particular place or occasion. Screen poems also often deployed *mitate*, pivot words, and reflective surfaces to supplement the painted scene with additional layers of imagery or meaning, blurring distinctions between real and imaginary spaces in the process, as well as locating the viewpoint expressed in the poem both outside and within the painted scene. Like much of the period's poetry, screen poems often favored complex expressions of qualification and negation to modulate their assertions of similitude. This preference for nuanced language that was indirect, witty, or oblique in orientation was eminently suited to a poet with multiple potential audiences that included not only the patron but that person's peers as well. Ambiguity was also encouraged by the economy of thirty-one syllables, which favored the omission of the honorifics used in speech and prose, thereby making *uta* a uniquely flexible form of communication within an otherwise intensely hierarchical society.

The *Kokinshū* prefaces

Much of what we know about the historical circumstances surrounding the compilation of the *Kokinshū* is taken from its prefaces, according to which it originated in a command by Uda's successor Daigo. After the editors had selected and compiled material taken from older songs not in the *Man'yōshū* and the household collections of their peers, completion of the anthology was marked by a banquet and its official presentation for royal perusal in 905. Internal evidence, however, indicates that the anthology's content evolved over nearly a decade past that point. Other materials suggest it originated as an attempt to revive Yoshifusa's springtime poetic regime under his adoptive grandson Tokihira (871–909), who effectively ruled as regent in the first decade of the tenth century. Having already celebrated his sister's entry to the palace with *waka* on the topic of wisteria at a banquet in 902, this seasoned politician quite probably inspired the young emperor's command to compile the *Kokinshū*.

Of the anthology's two prefaces, the more commented-on is the Kana Preface, named after the syllabic kana script used to write it, and composed by the anthology's chief editor Ki no Tsurayuki (d. c. 945). On the other hand, the Mana Preface, which is named after the literary Chinese it was written in by Tsurayuki's scholarly clan-mate Ki no Yoshimochi (d. 919), was intended for the sovereign. Together, the prefaces not only define the *uta*, but also describe its history, purpose, and stylistic features, making them as ambitious in scope as the hallowed Great Preface to the *Shijing* (Classic of Poetry).

Both *Kokinshū* prefaces borrow the Great Preface's literary historical model of decline and revival, claiming the current sovereign is renewing poetry's former glory as public performance after it had retreated to private residences in the recent past. Both also list the same six exemplary poets from this time, among whom Ono no Komachi and Ariwara no Narihira (825–80) are particularly well represented in the anthology, ensuring their canonical standing in the later literary tradition as paragons of the amorous poet. At the same time, however, the Mana Preface attributes a wide array of metrical structures to *waka*, whereas the Kana Preface focuses exclusively on the thirty-one-syllable form it calls *yamato uta* ("Yamato verse").

The Kana Preface would become a touchstone for later accounts of court poetry, particularly its opening description of the act of composition: "Yamato verse has people's hearts for its seed, manifesting in a myriad leaves of words. Since people in this world grow thick with events and deeds, they attach things seen and heard in the world to what they feel in their heart, putting this into words." The primacy of people's hearts is often taken to mean that the preface views poetry as the lyrical expression of universal human emotions. In keeping with this interest in *kokoro* (heart), the Kana Preface presents the world as something perceived by the mind through "things seen and heard" (*miru mono kiku mono*) by it. This division between human and natural elements also informs Tsurayuki's ensuing account of six poetic "styles" (*sama*), which is perhaps the Kana Preface's most innovative contribution to Japanese poetics. Whereas the Mana Preface gives a perfunctory list of the *Shijing*'s six principles, the Kana Preface's six styles give examples. Each such poem provides a different configuration of human and natural elements, ranging from archaic forms of juxtaposition and repetition to more streamlined versions enabled by pivot words and acrostics. The latter two are often dependant on orthographic manipulation, recalling the emphasis placed on written "leaves of words" (*koto no ha*) in the preface's opening passage.

The structure of the *Kokinshū*

The categories of poetry in the *Kokinshū* and the arrangement of poems within them are the anthology's most distinctive contribution to the later poetic tradition. Scholars from medieval to modern times have read individual poems through a fine-grained taxonomy of poetic topics and sequencing techniques that include shared vocabulary, temporal or spatial progressions, and shared occasions. The *Kokinshū* also drew on the structural principle of complementary pairs that underlay conceptions of society and the cosmos throughout traditional East Asia. At the macro-level, for example, the anthology's final scroll of ritual verse from the Bureau of Grand Songs (*Ō-uta-dokoro*) forms a complement with all of the preceding nineteen scrolls, reflecting the state bureaucracy's division into religious and secular branches.

Within the first nineteen scrolls, a further pairing of heavenly and human spheres is made by the two largest multiscroll categories, Four Seasons (*shiki*) and Love (*koi*), which together formed the backbone of later waka anthologies. While the former described the subject's relationship to heaven's cycles, the relationship with others in the latter are linear, moving inexorably from impatient anticipation for a lover's show of interest to disappointment at its loss. This twofold temporality followed that of earlier poem matches, in which a formal contest involving seasonal topics was concluded with an informal banquet at which amorous *saibara* songs were recited and composed. Many such songs populate Love in the *Kokinshū*, whose opening verse is an anonymous poem set in the sultry summertime.

The first Seasons scroll opens with a spring scene whose snowy imagery also invokes the sequence of rites observed over the first days of the court's calendar year. The plum now becomes chiefly recognized for its scent, as visual interest shifts (in the course of the two Spring scrolls) to the cherry tree which, like the wisteria that end Spring, marked Fujiwara glory. Summer is devoted to lush growth and bush warblers (*hototogisu*) bearing tidings from the deceased. Like the *Man'yōshū*, autumn is the best-represented season in the *Kokinshū*, where its visual splendor is heightened by replacing the former's yellow foliage with the brilliant scarlet of maple leaves. Winter was devoted to poems on the felicitous topic of snow.

Blessings (*ga*) and Laments (*aishō*) provide another complementary temporal pairing as poems demarcating the individual human lifespan, between prayers for long life in the former and dirges for the deceased in the latter. Blessings follows the seasons, and condenses its cyclical time into a historical genealogy tracing the descent of Daigo's heir from both

men and women in the imperial and Fujiwara clans. Laments, which follows Love and thus comments on the ultimate end to all desire, progresses from poems mourning the departed to ones by an individual on the verge of death. Both it and Blessings thus have an implicitly cyclical structure in which the births and deaths at their ends inaugurate a future round of birthdays and funerals.

Another pair is formed between Partings (*ribetsu*) and Travel (*kiryo*), both of which map out the rites and routes associated with imperial outings and official postings. Travel was an entirely new category, and the most tightly symmetrical section of the entire anthology. By contrast with these scrolls, the two making up Miscellaneous Verse (*zō no uta*) focus on life in the capital and its environs. Like Love, the relationships of the courtier in this section are doomed to decline as the banquet poems of the first scroll that celebrate social harmony are replaced in the second scroll by ones that describe religious retreat, retirement from government, and pleas for promotion.

The remaining categories of Names of Things (*mono no na*) and Miscellaneous Forms (*zattei*) share a heightened awareness of language. The first consists of poems whose letters hide the name of a natural object or place. These are organized along the lines of the topical encyclopedias used by the otherwise unknown scholars who wrote them. Miscellaneous Forms transgress the metrical and pragmatic norms of poetic language either by exceeding the thirty-one syllables mandated for court waka, or by conveying humor in *haikai* (irregular) verse that drew on an earlier tradition of cursing. The placement of *haikai* poems just before the final scroll of ritual songs in the *Kokinshū* reflects their incantatory potential to disrupt social harmony, something that could be marginalized but not dispensed with entirely.

Though they followed the *Kokinshū*'s twenty-scroll structure, the two subsequent imperial waka anthologies omitted some categories and re-arranged or redefined others. Both replaced the celebratory hymns that end their predecessor with the dirges of Laments, thus substituting the linear time of human life for the cyclical time of communal ritual. *Gosenshū* dispensed with the officialdom represented in Travel and Names of Things entirely, while expanding Love and Miscellaneous Verse. Its ending condensed the chronologies represented by other pairs of *Kokinshū* categories by combining Partings with Travel and Blessings with Laments. *Shūishū* introduced a new category in the form of *kagura uta*, while dividing its Miscellaneous section into the subcategories of Spring, Autumn, Blessings, and Love.

Gosenshū and narrative uta

After languishing under Daigo's successor Suzaku (922–52, r. 930–46), poetic culture revived with the accession of Murakami to the throne. Various accounts describe his interest in such communal activities as kanshi matches and musical concerts, making his reign a high point of tenth-century court culture comparable to those of Uda and Daigo. The elaborate pageantry of poetry matches reached new heights at this time with the famous *Tentoku dairi uta-awase* (Palace Poetry Match of the Tentoku Era, 960) that helped to inspire the famous depiction of a picture contest in *The Tale of Genji*. According to his diary, Murakami was responding to a request from his women attendants, who had wanted to match a kanshi contest held by their male colleagues at the palace in the previous autumn.

During this period, uta increasingly informed the everyday discourse of aristocrats, who are frequently seen dropping poetic allusions into their written and spoken exchanges with one another. This trend is epitomized by the second waka anthology *Gosenshū*, which was completed a few years after Tsurayuki's death. Unlike *Kokinshū*, the *Gosenshū* lacks a preface, possesses redundant poems, and omits any mention of its editors. Although these features have led some scholars to wonder if the surviving version is a draft, the project did begin with a royal decree by Murakami in 951 establishing a bureau for editing waka in the quarters of his consort Anshi (927–64). Staffed by five officials known to posterity as "The Pear Court Five" (*Nashitsubo no Gonin*) after the courtyard by Anshi's rooms, these men embarked on the twofold task of compiling a new imperial anthology and providing glosses for the *Man'yōshū*.

In keeping with the place where it was compiled, the *Gosenshū* has a more pronounced female presence than any other imperial waka anthology. The majority of these women are court officials, lady attendants, and young girls, with princesses and empresses from Suzaku's court being particularly well represented. Many appear in the Love section exchanging poems with noble-men. Exchanges characterize the anthology overall, as exemplified by its best-represented poet, Tsurayuki, who is now seen corresponding in verse with his patrons. These exchanges are further fleshed out by the detail and length of the prose that frames their poems, making the *Gosenshū* similar to the poem-tales of its time.

A plethora of anthologies from this period share the *Gosenshū*'s interest in creating tales from poem sequences. One of the earliest examples, the *Tsurayuki-shū* (Tsurayuki Collection), ends in a third-person account of its eponymous protagonist's death, thereby illustrating how household

anthologies could develop from a poet's personal collection into a biographical tale through the accretion of later readers' contributions. The most famous example of a biographical poetry anthology is the *Ise-shū* (Lady Ise Collection), which portrays the best-represented female poet of the tenth century. Other collections were flagrantly fictional, such as the *Ichijō sesshō gyōshū* (His Highness the First Avenue Regent's Collection), whose high-ranking protagonist Fujiwara no Koretada (924–72) assumes the guise of a lowly official. Still others developed entirely new organizational schemes, such as the *Maigetsushū* (Monthly Collection, c. 960) by the famously iconoclastic Sone no Yoshitada, which groups poems into sequences of one hundred verses (*hyakushu*), a form of mini-anthology integral to later waka textual culture.

Shūishū and Fujiwara no Kintō

The third imperial waka anthology was compiled under Kazan, who was an avid sponsor of poetry matches and other poetic gatherings throughout his life. As with Uda, the purpose behind these events was often to negotiate familial relations. Because Kazan had already abdicated when *Shūishū* was compiled, however, its imperial status is ambiguous. In fact, a collection of 571 poems shared with Kazan's anthology – known as *Shūishō* (Notes on Gleanings, c. 997) – was traditionally more revered on account of being authored by the foremost poet of the time, Fujiwara no Kintō (966–1041). While scholars up through the Edo period assumed Kintō's collection was the seed for the imperial anthology, however, it is just as plausible that its contents were selected from the *Shūishū*.

In place of exchanges, the *Shūishū* relies on poetry matches and screen poems for its selections, with the latter being particularly prevalent in the anthology's seasonal section. It is also the first imperial waka anthology to include examples of *renga* (linked verse), which appear in its Miscellaneous Blessings section, as well as the entirely new subcategory of Buddhist Verse (*shakkyō-ka*) in Laments. In addition to poets appearing in the previous two anthologies, it includes many who were active from the late tenth and early eleventh centuries.

In the decade after Kazan's retirement, Kintō became the premier arbiter of poetic taste under the patronage of Fujiwara no Michinaga (966–1027), who encouraged the composition of waka as part of banquets, birthday celebrations, and official appointments. The most commented-on and controversial instance was a command issued by Michinaga in 999 to the uppermost nobility, including Kazan, ordering them to submit poems for screens he

had commissioned to mark his daughter's entry into the palace as a consort. By having high-ranking aristocrats play a role usually reserved for lower-ranking courtiers, the event also marked the extent to which poetic composition had now become associated with the latter group.

As heir to the learned but politically waning Ononomiya branch of the Fujiwara clan, Kintō exemplifies the ascendance at this time of the aristocratic scholar-poet who would define court poetic culture in medieval times. He was particularly broad in his learning, having mastered the study of music, kanshi, and court ritual. Kintō was also a prolific writer who not only compiled three personal anthologies, but also the first collection organized around a canon of *sanjūrokkasen* (thirty-six poet-sages), a popular genre in later centuries. Another influential anthology of his was the *Wakan rōeishū* (Collection of Japanese and Chinese Lines for Chanting), which became a veritable encyclopedia of quotations for medieval writers.

Kintō also wrote two poetics treatises: the *Waka kuhon* (Nine Grades of Waka) and *Shinsen zuinō* (Newly Selected Essentials). The former ranks pairs of poems according to the Tendai sect's nine grades of eligibility for rebirth in the Pure Land, with superior ones relying on "implied meaning" (*amari no kokoro*). *Shinsen zuinō*, on the other hand, includes more extensive criticism. It opens by declaring that poetry overall should exhibit deep feelings and charming points with a clean form. The treatise also argued that repetitions of sound and sense should be avoided (a view unchallenged for centuries afterwards). Using the language of Buddhist meditation, Kintō advocates a focused vision in lieu of a random string of images, before concluding by urging would-be poets to study the corpus of Tsurayuki, early songs, and *utamakura* consisting of the place names and epithets that lay at the heart of old songs.

The importance Kintō placed on *Kokinshū*-period poetry would inform court uta in the eleventh century and beyond. In one famous anecdote from the contemporaneous *Pillow Book*, for example, Murakami is depicted testing his consort's knowledge of individual *Kokinshū* poems after providing her with the poet's name and the circumstances in which it was written. *The Tale of Genji*'s author (who received the sobriquet of Murasaki from Kintō himself) frequently alluded to *Kokinshū* poetry, even drawing on its categories of Partings and Laments to help organize her "Suma" and "Maboroshi" chapters respectively. Insofar as Murasaki Shikibu's masterpiece would become an embodiment of courtly culture and a template for later literature, the ubiquity of *Kokinshū* poetry within it helped guarantee the anthology's prominence well beyond the Heian period, as well as the enduring influence of its poetry on Japanese culture for centuries afterward.

Early Heian court tales

JOSHUA S. MOSTOW

In modern parlance, the term *monogatari* (variously translated in English as tale, romance, novel) refers to relatively long prose narratives, chiefly concerning relations between aristocratic men and women, told in the equivalent of the third person, and produced among the nobility from the early tenth century until some time in the Kamakura period (1185–1333). This chapter traces the emergence of this genre up until the appearance of *The Tale of Genji* in the early eleventh century, which marks its pinnacle.

The earliest extant *monogatari* is traditionally taken to be *Taketori monogatari* (The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter, c. 909), called in *Genji* “the parent of literary romances first to come out” (*monogatari no ideki-hajime no oya*). Some scholars believe the present work to be a rewriting of an earlier version; the present text is believed to have come into existence between 810 and 910.

Elements of the *Taketori* resemble some of the tales or myths found in the *Nihon shoki* (or *Nihongi*; Chronicles of Japan, 720), and the *fudoki*, or local gazetteers, originally ordered from each province by Empress Genmei in 713. Each province was to provide accounts of its topographical and other natural features, along with legends concerning local sites of significance. *Tango fudoki* includes the legend of Nagu Shrine, which is similar to the basic *Taketori* story, being a version of the “swan-maiden” tale that is found throughout East Asia, in which a heavenly maiden is robbed of her feather-robe and married to a mortal or raised by a mortal couple.

In addition to folklore, however, Heian Japan was obviously aware of the short fiction that circulated in Tang China. The most influential was perhaps *You xianku* (J. *Yūsenkutsu*), or *A Dalliance in the Immortals’ Den*. Probably written by Zhang Zhou (c. 657–730), it is a first-person account in which the protagonist happens upon the dwelling of a widow and woos her with poetry and humor, facilitated by another woman, who serves as a kind of go-between. The piece ends with a fairly explicit description of the principals

making love, followed by a variety of poems concerning the sadness of parting.

Influence from the *You xianku* can be seen as early as the eighth-century *Man'yōshū*, in such pieces as the “Excursion to Matsura River” (5: 857–63), which was also influenced by the narrative poem *Luo-shen fu* (Rhyme-Prose on the Goddess of the Lo River). *Man'yōshū* also includes several other narrative tales, especially in Book Sixteen, including a version with an old bamboo cutter and nine “heavenly maidens.” In all these stories, the basic theme is the meeting of a man with heavenly maidens who, often by means of some kind of magical food or drink, are capable of offering immortality.

Taketori monogatari (The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter)

Elixirs of immortality also underlie *The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter*. An old man discovers a radiant girl, three inches high, in the bamboo he gathers. After taking her home to raise, the old man starts finding gold in the bamboo he collects, and becomes rich. The girl continues to shine, and the mere sight of her lifts the old man's spirits.

Eventually, having grown to full size in a matter of months, the girl becomes the object of romantic interest for five aristocratic suitors. Scholars since the Edo period have attempted to match the names of the five suitors with specific historical individuals, especially Prince Kuramochi with Fujiwara no Fuhito (659–720), the second son of the founder of the Fujiwara clan, Fujiwara (formerly Nakatomi) no Kamatari (614–69). Given the parodic treatment of the suitors, such identifications can lead to a political reading of the *Taketori*: that it is a criticism of the Fujiwara *sekkon-ke*, or “Regents' House,” and their clients, and especially their control of the imperial family through intermarriage.

The heroine of *Taketori*, The Shining Princess (Kaguya-hime), sets five individual and seemingly impossible tasks for her suitors to test their devotion. Regardless of any political implications, the objects sought are all magical: the stone begging-bowl of the Buddha, a jeweled branch from Mount Penglai (J. Hōrai), a robe made of fire-rat skin, impervious to flames, a jewel from the neck of a dragon, and an easy-birthing charm.

The five suitors fail, much to Kaguya-hime's delight. With each she exchanges poems at the moment of their defeat, and each of the suitors' episodes ends with a facetious etymology for some expression; for example,

Prince Kuramochi throws away the stone bowl (*hachi o sutsu*) after it is discovered to be a fraud, and is said to also discard his shame (*haji o sutsu*).

The emperor then learns of Kaguya-hime and attempts to win her. She refuses him as well, but does engage in a regular romantic correspondence that is said to comfort them both (*tagai ni nagusamu*). Increasingly depressed, Kaguya-hime reveals to her adopted parents that she is in fact from the moon – as a result of committing some sin she was exiled to earth for a period of time. But her sentence is coming to an end, and the moon-people will soon be coming to bring her back. The old bamboo cutter alerts the emperor, who dispatches two thousand warriors to repulse the moon-people, but when the celestial troupe arrives the soldiers are unable to resist, the doors to the dwelling open of their own accord, and Kaguya-hime floats into the sky to rejoin her people. We are told that once she dons her feathered robe, she will forget all about the earth and the people on it, once more free from any kind of pain or suffering. But beforehand she writes letters of farewell and regret to both her parents and the emperor, accompanied by containers of the elixir of immortality. Both the parents and the emperor refuse the elixir, the emperor going so far as to have it, and a final poem to her, taken to the top of the mountain “closest to heaven” – Mount Fuji (which itself is said to mean “no death”) – and burned, accounting for the smoke that at the time still rose from the peak.

In the Tang dynasty, many stories and poems circulated about the meetings of the emperors Mu (343–61) and Wu (236–90) with the Queen Mother of the West (Xi Wang Mu). In these texts, the emperors approach the queen mother to be taught the secrets of Taoist alchemy and to obtain an elixir of immortality, though they ultimately fail or are refused. Significantly, in *Taketori*, it is the emperor who refuses the elixir he is given by the female immortal, choosing instead to live in sorrow, remembering his love. Such a conclusion seems a powerful rejection of the Taoist search to transcend life and mortality, and a strong affirmation of the value of human sentiment. The tale also marks the first appearance of several durable motifs, including the exile of a young noble (*kishu ryūri*), and the woman who will not marry (repeated as Ōigimi and Ukifune in *Genji*).

Ise monogatari and other poem-tales

The influence of Tang literature continued in Japanese vernacular fiction and poetry after *Taketori*. *The Ise Stories* is a collection of 125 anecdotes, centered around exchanges of poetry, typically between a man and a woman. The

work is attributed to Ariwara no Narihira (825–80), but was added to and adapted by many hands, not reaching its “definitive” state until the 1234 *Tenpuku-bon* edited by Fujiwara no Teika (1162–1241). Nonetheless, at the core of the collection lies a number of stories and poems composed by Narihira. The most important of these is the tale that gives the collection its name, where the unnamed protagonist visits Ise Shrine as an imperial envoy and spends a night making love to the Ise Priestess. Elements of the story seem to have been drawn from the Tang short vernacular tale *Ying-ying zhuan* (The Story of Ying-ying). There are also several exchanges of poems that resemble the seemingly passionate homosocial verse of poets such as Bo Juyi. On the other hand, many of the episodes are reminiscent of similar narrativized exchanges of poems between spouses collected in Book Sixteen of the *Man'yōshū*. Finally, the anecdotes seem to be given as exemplars of courtly behavior (*miyabi*), much as many of the anecdotes of the fifth-century *Shishuo xinyu* (New Tales of the World, J. *Sesetsu shingo*) exemplify the principle of *ziran* (J. *shizen*; “naturalness”) and its associated concept of *fengliu* (J. *fūryū*), which was itself sometimes translated as *miyabi*, or “courtliness.”

Ise also picks up on the motif of exile that was present in *Taketori*, this time with an undeniably political context: the protagonist has relations with a woman promised to the crown prince. Upon discovery, he decides that a tactical removal to the hinterlands is in order. The political interpretation can also be taken further, seeing Narihira's interference with Fujiwara marriage politics as an overtly political attempt to break that clan's monopoly on providing consorts to the imperial house. Regardless, it is no doubt significant that the locus of “courtliness” (*miyabi*) as depicted is centered not on the Fujiwara-controlled imperial court, but among the salons of the politically disenfranchised.

Ise has many poems, and narrative sections, in common with the first imperially commissioned anthology of Japanese poetry, *Kokin wakashū*, or Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems (c. 905–14); it is believed that both *Ise* and *Kokinshū* derived these episodes from a common source. The narrative impulse is even more pronounced in the second imperial anthology, *Gosenshū* (Collection of Later Gleanings, 951) compiled by the “The Pear Court Five” (*Nashitsubo no Gonin*), who included Kiyowara no Motosuke (908–90) and Minamoto no Shitagō (911–83). Many of the headnotes to poems in *Gosenshū* are relatively extended narratives, as in *Ise*, which also underwent expansion at this time.

Starting with *Ise* and *Gosenshū*, the second half of the tenth century sees an explosion in vernacular fiction. *Yamato monogatari* (Tales of Yamato) centers

around the court and salon of Retired Emperor Uda (867–931, r. 887–97). Uda attempted to escape Fujiwara control by abdicating in favor of his young son, Daigo (885–930, r. 897–930), and balancing Fujiwara no Tokihira (871–909), Minister of the Left, with Sugawara no Michizane (845–903) as Minister of the Right. By 901, however, Tokihira had engineered Michizane's banishment and Daigo remained thoroughly under Fujiwara control. In *Yamato*, though, the Fujiwara are conspicuous by their absence, and some have suggested that it was compiled in reaction to the inclusion of so many Fujiwara in *Gosenshū*.

Heichū monogatari was produced some time before 965. It too can be read as a manifestation of anti-Fujiwara discontent. The protagonist is Taira no Sadafun (d. 923), someone known principally as a poet from the *Kokinshū* period (he has nine poems included in that anthology). *Heichū* (a nickname for Sadafun of partially obscure origin) is a collection of thirty-nine episodes, focusing, much like *Ise*, on his pursuit of various women. Unlike Narihira, however, Heichū is comically unsuccessful. It is this very lack of success that can be seen as a critique of the Fujiwara-dominated court; as Susan Videen writes: “The author of *Tales of Heichū* takes a man of noble birth, who has a reputation as a sensitive poet and lover; of all men, he seems to be saying, this one should be a success in life and love. And yet by painting Heichū as a failure, he conveys the ironic truth that, in his day and age, talent and depth of feelings are not what really matter” (28–9). The sekkan-ke responded to the challenge of both *Ise* and *Heichū*, in Fujiwara no Koremasa (also read Koretada, 924–72) and his “Tale of Toyokage” (970–71), a fictional persona who is of low rank like Heichū and Narihira, but, unlike them, does not pursue politically inappropriate women, and yet does succeed with the ladies, despite his status. Koremasa was the steward (*bettō*) of the Poetry Bureau (*waka-dokoro*) during the compilation of *Gosenshū*, which may account for his interest in new narrative forms.

Some of the poems and events in *Toyokage* appeared earlier in *Gosenshū* under Koremasa's name, and all the events are thought to be drawn from his life. The poems are meant to be understood as being sent as, or with, letters, so it is not surprising to see the appearance around this time of what may be thought of as an epistolary novel, the *Tōnomine Shōshō monogatari* (see chapter 15 below, “Heian literary diaries”). The figure of an aristocratic male, longing to renounce the world despite attachments to family, will recur throughout the monogatari corpus.

Tsukuri-monogatari

As can be seen from the above, genre boundaries were very fluid in this period, and the same work might be labeled a “tale” (*monogatari*) or a

“diary/journal” (*nikki*), or even “poetry collection” (*shū*). Modern scholars identify most of these works, from *Ise monogatari* to *Tōnomine Shōshō monogatari*, as *uta-monogatari*, or “poem-tales” – essentially collections of poems with brief, contextualizing prose. It is not until the proportion of prose to poems becomes significantly greater that a new genre is recognized by modern scholars, namely *tsukuri-monogatari*, or “made-up tales.” The earliest extant example, after *Taketori*, is *Utsuho monogatari*, a work that seems to combine all the elements discussed so far. The first of twenty books is a fantastic tale, along the lines of *Taketori*, of one Kiyohara no Toshikage becoming shipwrecked on his way to China and meeting various magical beings – including the Buddha! – and finally being given thirty *koto* (a kind of floor harp) and mystical instruction in their playing, before eventually making his way back to Japan. The remaining nineteen chapters, however, mostly eschew the supernatural and focus on the many suitors of a young woman, Atemiya, including one of her full brothers, Nakazumi; and then on political matters after she is given to the crown prince and bears him several princes, but is unsure whether her eldest son will be designated crown prince when her husband becomes emperor. The narrative then turns back to focus on Nakatada, the grandson of the now-deceased Toshikage, who passes on the musical secrets of his mother and himself to his young daughter. The novel comes to an end with a grand concert at Nakatada’s Kyōgoku residence, where his mother, his daughter, and he himself perform for two retired emperors and many high-ranking courtiers, their music causing thunder, lightning, and other celestial disturbances. All present are moved to tears and the work concludes with a round of promotions for Nakatada’s family.

The manuscripts of *Utsuho* include a large number of irregularly positioned captions (around 130) for illustrations that are no longer extant, suggesting they may represent some draft stage. Tamagami Takuya argued that *monogatari* were always illustrated and that, until the *Genji*, the pictures were in fact more important than the text. *Utsuho* is traditionally attributed to Minamoto no Shitagō, one of the compilers of *Gosenshū*, though there is no conclusive evidence. The work appears to have been written over a number of years, commencing perhaps in the year 969 and concluding around 982. The text includes a great number of poetry exchanges, including those at formal events, when a string of some twenty verses will be “recorded.” In fact, Marie J. Mueller has suggested that some of the sense of “realism” that *Utsuho* seems to manifest may be due to the author’s use of the style of recording diaries, which were made for occasions such as poetry contests

(p. 164). Poems are also exchanged through letters, but there is now a greater degree of dialogue between characters than seen in earlier works. But what is most remarkable about *Utsuho* in comparison to earlier works is its length: a modern edition runs three book-length volumes. The vernacular had now proven itself capable of truly sustained narrative.

Somewhat shorter is *Ochikubo monogatari*, the final extant monogatari dating from before *The Tale of Genji*. This is a very traditional tale of the Cinderella type, the origins of which have been traced back to ninth-century China. Chūnagon (Middle Counselor) has once been married to an imperial princess, who has given him one beautiful daughter. The mother has died, however, and he is now married to another woman, with whom he has several daughters and sons. The first daughter lives with her father, step-mother, and half-siblings. She is, however, mistreated by her stepmother, who fears her superior looks and character will be detrimental to the marriage prospects of her own daughters. She therefore treats her stepdaughter like a servant, relegating her to a kind of basement suite, or *ochikubo*, and the girl becomes known as Lady Ochikubo. Ochikubo has one devoted servant, who becomes involved with the retainer of a Lesser Captain, Michiyori. Michiyori is in fact the son of Sadaishō (General of the Left), and his sister is the emperor's favorite consort. Michiyori is not yet married, and his retainer, Korenari, one day tells him of Ochikubo's plight. Michiyori and Ochikubo start a relationship that is eventually discovered by the wicked stepmother. Michiyori is at last able to steal the girl away, and installs her in his residence as his principal wife.

The remainder of the tale divides into two halves: in the first, Michiyori takes revenge on Ochikubo's family for all the indignities it inflicted on her – for example, stealing their room at Kiyomizu Temple during a pilgrimage, and so forcing them to sleep in their carriages, which are said to be more cramped than the basement room Ochikubo had been confined to. In the second half, he compensates them for all the mischief he has done, reuniting Ochikubo with her father, and providing promotions and good marriages to all her half-siblings. True to the imperial bride-stealing motif, Michiyori's daughter eventually gives birth to a crown prince.

Like *Taketori* and *Utsuho*, the author of *Ochikubo* is believed to have been a man, writing for a presumably female readership. The appeal of a rags-to-riches story of a mistreated stepdaughter is apparent, and *Ochikubo* also includes a number of pronouncements against polygyny. The tale proceeds as if it is due to Ochikubo's good fortune that the captain's family succeeds politically, finally placing Ochikubo's daughters as chief consorts to both the

emperor and the crown prince, though in fact this success is actually due to typical marriage politics. Ochikubo's good fortune is due to her imperial blood, and she is the first of a number of misplaced imperial progeny whose return to their "proper" social level will be the focus of later romances, such as *The Tale of Genji*.

Genji monogatari and its reception

SATOKO NAITO

Genji monogatari (The Tale of Genji) was composed by Murasaki Shikibu (d. c. 1014) around the first decade of the eleventh century. The tale's fifty-four chapters span three quarters of a century, intimately painting the intricacies of Heian court culture. *The Tale of Genji* largely comprises episodic stories, but there are clear overarching narratives and themes in the extensive romance, which follows a fairly straightforward chronology. The book is divided into two major sections: chapters 1 to 41, the story of Genji and the women in his life, and chapters 42 to 54, which focus on Genji's progeny. The primary section can be further subdivided in two: chapters 1 to 33, telling the rise, fall, and rise again of the young Genji, and chapters 34 to 41, which show him, at the height of political power and social status, becoming increasingly contemplative and introspective. Much of the story is narrated in the voice of a highly observant and (perhaps overly) curious attendant lady, and thus honorifics are used for high-ranking characters, though they are at times omitted to underscore the intimacy of a scene. The tale is not a strict third-person narrative, as private thoughts and emotions are depicted as if in the first person.

The story begins with a love affair between the emperor and Kiritsubo, a *kōi* (junior consort) of "no great consequence." Tormented by the vicious jealousy of other consorts, she dies shortly after giving birth to a boy. The emperor makes this son a commoner in order to remove him from the unfavorable position of a prince with no maternal backing. He does so by giving him the surname of Minamoto (the character for which is also read as *Gen*, as in *Genji*). Hikaru Genji (Shining Genji), as readers have come to know him, is the core of the story to come.

Captivated by her close resemblance to the late Kiritsubo, Genji's father takes in a new consort, known to us as Fujitsubo. This substitution of one woman for another is only the first of many instances of surrogacy and repetition. Genji is told of Fujitsubo's likeness to his late mother, and begins to pine for her. Meanwhile, despite his disinterest in

the matter, immediately after his coming-of-age ceremony Genji is wed to Aoi, daughter of the Minister of the Left, thus forming a favorable political alliance.

Rainy-night discussion and social rank

In the beginning of chapter 2 (“Hahakigi”) in a conversation traditionally designated the *amayo no shinasadame* (rainy-night ranking of women), Genji, now a young adult, has a lengthy debate about women with his lifelong friend (and oftentimes rival) Tō no Chūjō, and two other men, both in abstract terms and with specific anecdotes. They ultimately reach the conclusion that there can be no single perfect lady. However, of the three aristocratic ranks – royal and ministerial families; *zuryō* (provincial governor family) and similarly classed women; and the rest – it is the women of the middle rank who fare best. In particular, the most desirable prize is deemed to be a young woman who is hidden away like a secret treasure. Genji seems to take this conclusion to heart. Though Fujitsubo remains in his thoughts, the following day he is already in pursuit of Utsusemi, a woman whose husband is an elderly provincial governor of the middle rank. Genji has another opportunity for adventure when he chances upon Yūgao (Evening Faces). He finds her shabby dwelling in a neglected part of the city, hidden away as if waiting to be discovered. Genji soon realizes that she may be a former lover of Tō no Chūjō. She is fragile, however, and dies while she is with Genji, apparently possessed by the spirit of a woman. The spirit seems to be that of the Rokujō Lady, an older woman of high rank with whom Genji has had several trysts.

The two chapters “Utsusemi” and “Yūgao” (chapters 3 and 4), designated by medieval scholars to be *narabi* (parallel) chapters, build upon the base chapter of “Hahakigi” by playing out two distinct scenarios of a high-ranking man pursuing women of the middle and lower ranks. Though the chapters can be read autonomously, they function as supplements to the base chapter, and the three together create a unified sequence. Other notable sequences include the Wakamurasaki sequence (“Wakamurasaki” and “Suetsumuhana”, chapters 5 and 6) and the more lengthy Tamakazura sequence that begins with “Tamakazura” (chapters 22–31).

Murasaki, Fujitsubo, and Genji’s rise

The tragic ending to Genji’s affair with Yūgao does not deter him from pursuing women of the middle and lower ranks. In fact, she and Utsusemi are

only two of several significant female characters who have intimate relationships with men of considerably higher rank. Murasaki, whom Genji surreptitiously discovers while on a short respite outside of the capital (chapter 5 “Wakamurasaki”), is one such example. He is able to see, by peering through a gap in the fence to her abode (in a convention of *kaimami*, or “viewing through the gap”), that she bears a certain likeness to Fujitsubo – and he later finds out that she is her niece. After the death of her grandmother, Genji takes her in and eventually marries the young girl (chapter 9 “Aoi”).

During the Heian period and especially by the eleventh century, marriage between a man of Genji’s high rank and a woman of Murasaki’s inferior station would have been nearly impossible. With a deceased low-ranking mother and a father who did not publically recognize her, Murasaki has no political backing of her own and has to depend entirely on Genji for social and economic support. And yet he spares no effort in her education and cultivation, raising her as if she were his prized pupil. Murasaki’s gradual rise to the position of principal wife is thus a social romance that would not have happened in reality.

When Genji first takes her in, however, the young Murasaki is clearly a consolation prize, a doll that he can take home in place of Fujitsubo. In fact, in the same chapter in which Genji discovers Murasaki (“Wakamurasaki”), he and his father’s consort have an illicit affair. This ultimately results in the birth of a boy (chapter 7 “Momiji no ga”), presented to the world as the emperor’s son. Horrified by their transgression Fujitsubo retreats even further out of Genji’s grasp, but she remains his political ally for life. Their son eventually succeeds to the throne as the Reizei emperor (chapter 14 “Miotsukushi”).

Genji and his principal wife Aoi also have a boy. However, immediately after giving birth she dies, apparently having succumbed to the same mysterious apparition that killed Yūgao (chapter 9 “Aoi”). Genji is shocked to realize that it is a living spirit of the Rokujō Lady. As the widow of a late crown prince, Rokujō is of considerable status and suitable to be an official wife of Genji – and yet, he continues to favor women of the middle and lower ranks. Try as she might to contain her resentment, it is as if she cannot stop her wandering spirit from protesting Genji’s lack of consistent attention. In “Aoi,” Genji’s half-brother also ascends the throne to become Emperor Suzaku, putting Suzaku’s mother, the Kokiden Lady, who has always despised Genji and his mother, in a position of great influence.

Genji’s love affairs continue, but it is a specific dalliance with Oborozukiyo – a sister to Kokiden and a woman slated to become consort to Suzaku – that gets him into trouble (chapter 10 “Sakaki”). Genji goes into a

voluntary exile, and in the “Suma” chapter (chapter 12) leaves the capital. Genji’s banishment is reminiscent of several historical and legendary exiles, including those of Ariwara no Yukihiro (818–93) and Minamoto no Taka’akira (914–82). It has also been identified as a narrative convention of *kishu ryūri tan* (story of the young noble in exile), a phrase coined by modern scholar Orikuchi Shinobu (1887–1953). In such stories the hero is forced to leave his home and, after facing tribulations and experiencing personal growth, returns to fanfare and triumph. Genji is aided greatly by supernatural forces; his late father appears in a dream, instructing him to obey the god of Sumiyoshi and leave Suma. He relocates to Akashi, where he is presented to the daughter of an eccentric novice. Meanwhile his political enemies experience illness and death. Genji is soon pardoned by the Suzaku emperor and returns to the capital (chapter 13 “Akashi”).

Chapter 14 (“Miotsukushi”) lays the foundation of Genji’s astronomic rise to dominance of the court. Political power is back in his favor; the Suzaku emperor abdicates in favor of Reizei, Genji’s secret son, while Genji himself is made a *naidaijin* (palace minister). The Fujitsubo Lady is the mother of the new emperor, and thus takes power back from the Kokiden Lady’s faction. The Akashi Lady bears Genji’s first and only daughter, who will grow up to marry the crown prince and bear her own son (chapter 34 “Wakana jō”), securing Genji’s eventual position as grandfather to an emperor. In “Miotsukushi” Genji also heeds Rokujō’s dying wishes and vows to look after her child as his own. He is instrumental in making this daughter, Akikonomu, the future *chūgū* (empress) to Reizei. In “Otome” (chapter 21) Genji rises still further to *daijō daijin* (chancellor) and completes a massive residence covering four city blocks on the estate left to him by the Rokujō Lady, where he brings together all of the significant women in his life, including Murasaki, the Akashi Lady, and Akikonomu.

It is to this complex residence that Genji brings Tamakazura, daughter of the late Yūgao. Though she is Tō no Chūjō’s biological daughter, he secretly takes her in as his own. And just as he did with Murasaki, he attempts to seduce her – though this time he is unsuccessful. The Tamakazura sequence (chapters 22–31, “Tamakazura” through “Makibashira”) is also highly reminiscent of Genji’s numerous other pursuits of women of the middle and lower ranks, most specifically of Yūgao.

One passage has gained much attention for its discussion of *monogatari* (tales), history, and gender. In “Hotaru” (chapter 25), Genji debates the value of *monogatari* with Tamakazura, who looks to the tales for consolation, searching for a heroine that she can relate to. She rejects his mocking

comment that tales are simply full of lies, whereupon Genji concedes that there may in fact be more truth in them than in official histories. This so-called *monogatari-ron* (discussion of the tale) has at times been taken for author Murasaki Shikibu's own defense of fiction, though we cannot forget that Genji makes these statements while trying to seduce Tamakazura.

Meanwhile Genji's political power only grows, until finally in chapter 33 ("Fuji no uraba") he is given the fictional position of *jun daijō tennō* (honorary retired emperor). This position, the only one in *Genji* with no historical precedence, is significant particularly in light of the politics of Murasaki Shikibu's age. The tale is set roughly one century prior to her time, beginning with the reign of Emperor Daigo (885–930, r. 897–930). This was an age before the ascendancy of the *sekkō* (regency) system, when those of imperial blood did not bow to ministers who wielded their power as maternal relatives of the sitting emperor or heir apparent. *The Tale of Genji* shows, in the figure of Genji, a commoner of imperial blood rising to a status above both the emperor and the prime minister, thus capturing an impossible glory.

Genji's life is now at its zenith, and what follows is a slow but steady decline. What deteriorates is not his political fortunes, but rather his personal life, and we find its seeds in chapter 34, part I of "Wakana." In it the retired Suzaku emperor, worried about his favorite daughter, requests that Genji take her as a wife. He acquiesces and weds the Third Princess, but soon finds her infinitely inferior to Murasaki. Though Murasaki has seen other women come and go, she is overwhelmed by the lofty position of the Third Princess. Her health deteriorates and she never recovers. The Third Princess, meanwhile, is pursued by the young courtier Kashiwagi, and bears a son to him named Kaoru (chapter 35 "Wakana ge"). Genji, having discovered the truth of the baby Kaoru's parentage, wonders whether his own father too could have known of his own duplicity years ago. Soon after, Murasaki dies, in "Minori" (chapter 40), leaving Genji with little to live for. One full year passes after her death (chapter 41 "Maboroshi"), after which we are met with a chapter title with no content – "Kumogakure," or "Vanished in the Clouds," symbolizing Genji's death.

Uji chapters as sequel

"Niou no miya" (chapter 42) begins with the note that Genji has died. The story now focuses on the lives of Kaoru and Genji's grandson Niou, and moves southeast from the capital to Uji and its reclusive residents: the Eighth Prince and his two daughters. On a quest for spiritual illumination Kaoru

seeks out the prince who, along with his daughters, has moved to Uji in search of salvation (chapter 45 “Hashihime”). Already weary of the world, Kaoru initially has no interest in the two women, but eventually comes to know the elder sister Ōigimi. At this point the story begins once again to replicate the paradigm of the hidden treasure, as the sisters are women who, though of high birth, have been pushed to the periphery. Niou in turn courts the younger sister Nakanokimi and marries her, but when their relationship seems to stagnate, Ōigimi cannot but suspect that Kaoru’s pursuit too will only end in disaster. Distraught at her belief that she has brought on their ruin, Ōigimi stops eating and dies (chapter 47 “Agemaki”). Kaoru and Niou then pursue Ukifune, a half-sister who shares the same father as Ōigimi and Nakanokimi. Unable to stop their advances or decide between the two men, the young woman attempts suicide by throwing herself in a river (chapter 51 “Ukifune”). Still alive, she is taken in by a nun, and later, with her identity still unknown to the world, takes the tonsure (chapter 53 “Tenarai”). The tale ends with Kaoru’s unsuccessful attempt to find her and take her back. Though it may have been intentional, this ending is puzzling for its abruptness and lack of conclusiveness. Scholars have speculated that Murasaki may have died before finishing her work.

Murasaki Shikibu the author

The woman now known as Murasaki Shikibu was born in the 970s into a mid-ranking aristocratic family of the provincial governor class, one part of the illustrious northern branch of the Fujiwara clan that held political dominance for much of the mid-Heian period (794–1185). Her immediate family, however, possessed little political clout; her father Fujiwara no Tametoki (d. 1029) held positions at the Shikibu shō (Bureau of Ceremonial) and served as governor of Echizen and Echigo but was not a particularly successful bureaucrat. He was better known as a poet and scholar of Chinese classics. Murasaki Shikibu herself, while not as widely celebrated a poet as her contemporary Izumi Shikibu (fl. c. 1000), composed *waka* later selected for imperial anthologies like the *Shinkokinshū* (New Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems, c. 1205–21).

Murasaki Shikibu wed Fujiwara no Nobutaka (d. 1001), another mid-level aristocrat, and gave birth to her daughter Kenshi (or Kataiko) around 999. She likely began writing *The Tale of Genji* shortly after her husband’s death, and it was probably the partially completed tale that brought her to the notice of regent Fujiwara no Michinaga (966–1027). He hired her to serve as a *nyōbō*

(lady-in-waiting) in the salon of his eldest daughter Shōshi (or Akiko, 988–1074), consort to Emperor Ichijō (980–1011, r. 986–1011). Around this time the *Genji* author came to be called by the sobriquet Murasaki Shikibu, the second part of which designates the office once held by her father. (Though the origin of “Murasaki” is less certain, most likely it derives from Lady Murasaki, one of the major female characters in the tale, or is a tribute to the color of *fuji* (wisteria) of her clan name.) She was one of many attendants in Shōshi’s reputable salon, which helped bring cultural clout to the empress and, in turn, to Michinaga. Other notable ladies-in-waiting were Izumi Shikibu and Akazome Emon, author of *Eiga monogatari* (Tale of Flowering Fortunes).

Aside from *The Tale of Genji* and a collection of poetry (*Murasaki Shikibu shū*, likely compiled shortly after her death), the author also left behind *Murasaki Shikibu nikki* (Murasaki Shikibu Diary, c. 1010), which celebrates the Kankō 5 (1008) birth of Shōshi’s son Atsuhira, the future Emperor GoIchijō (r. 1016–36). The birth of this imperial prince secured Michinaga’s political authority as the grandfather of a future emperor. The diary also includes musings about herself and fellow attendants. She notes, for example, that her father lamented that she was not born male, for she had formed a better understanding of the Chinese classics than her own brother. She also declares displeasure at the nickname *Nihongi no mitsubone* (Lady of the Chronicles of Japan), instigated by a compliment by the emperor that the author of *Genji* must be familiar with *Nihon shoki* (or *Nihongi*, Chronicles of Japan, 720).

There have been persistent, if not always heated, debates about the authorship of *Genji*. Scholars have pointed to the last third of the tale as diverging enough in tone and language to indicate a different author. The final chapters of the tale, so-called *Uji jūjō* (ten Uji books), have been attributed to Murasaki’s daughter Kenshi (also known as Daini no Sanmi). There is, however, no external proof to substantiate claims of alternate or multiple authorship.

Commentaries and reception

The earliest documented evidence of *Genji* reading is found in the diary of the author herself, which claims that figures like the renowned poet Fujiwara no Kintō (966–1041), Michinaga, and the Ichijō Emperor read at least parts of *The Tale of Genji*. Other references to *sōshi* (books) and *monogatari* suggest that by 1008 at least parts of *The Tale of Genji* were circulating at court. A more extended depiction of *Genji* reception is found in the *Sarashina nikki*

(*Sarashina Diary* by Takasue's daughter, c. 1059), in which the narrator describes her obsession with the tale as a girl. In the early years of reception and production, the *Genji* was consumed largely, though not exclusively, by women of the aristocracy.

As the *Sarashina Diary* suggests, *The Tale of Genji* probably started as a cluster of chapters and gradually expanded, with sequels and additions written as the author went along. The developing author's maturity as a writer is evident in later chapters. Themes are often repeated but at a deeper and more profound level. The older *Genji*, for example, repudiates many values celebrated in the first part.

The oldest surviving partial manuscript of the tale dates from the late twelfth century and is found as accompaniment to the illustrations in *Genji monogatari emaki* (Tale of Genji Picture Scroll). The first reliable manuscripts are from later in the Kamakura period, of which two major lines have been identified. The *Kawachi-bon* (Kawachi-text), named for the governor of Kawachi Minamoto no Mitsuyuki (1163–1244) and his son Chikayuki (d. 1277), was completed in 1255. Though initially more widely used, this line has been largely overshadowed by the so-called *Aobyōshi-bon* (blue-cover text) by Fujiwara no Teika (1162–1241). Teika's text has been used by scholars from Ichijō Kanera (or Kaneyoshi, 1402–81) to Kitamura Kigin (1624–1705) and continues to be preferred by modern scholars. There is also a set of alternate manuscripts, usually designated “other texts” (*beppon*).

In the late twelfth century Teika's father Fujiwara no Shunzei (1114–1204) claimed that “a poet without knowledge of *The Tale of Genji* is regrettable” in judging a poetry contest (*Roppyakuban uta awase*, The Six-Hundred-Round Poetry Contest, 1193–4). Shunzei and Teika were both seminal in establishing *Genji* as a sourcebook for waka, considered the most prestigious of native literary genres and positioned far above the monogatari. Fujiwara no Teika also composed a commentary on the *Genji*, titled *Okuiiri* (Endnotes, c. 1233). This was only one in an extensive tradition of *Genji* exegesis that began with the 1160 composition of *Genji shaku* (*Genji Explicated*, by Sesonji Koreyuki [d. 1175]), which focused largely on *Genji*'s poetic precedents.

Ascertaining the source of poetic and literary allusions remained a significant component of the *Genji* exegetical tradition into the Muromachi period. Yotsutsuji Yoshinari's (1326–1402) *Kakaishō* (The River and Sea Commentary, c. 1387) focused on identifying both poetic and historical precedents, and declared that the *Genji* was based on the reigns of the emperors Daigo (r. 897–930), Suzaku (r. 930–46), and Murakami (r. 946–67). It was also one of the earliest studies to assert that, though *Genji* may seem to be full of

amorous and immoral behavior, the author's intention was to guide the reader to Buddhist and Confucian truths.

The *Kakaishō* also popularized the story that Murasaki Shikibu wrote the tale at Ishiyama Temple in present-day Shiga prefecture. This legend states that the *Daisai'in* (Great Priestess of Kamo Shrine) Senshi (964–1035) wished for a tale that departed from the likes of *Taketori monogatari* (The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter, c. 909) and *Utsuho monogatari* (The Tale of the Cavern, late tenth century). Entrusted with the composition of this work, Murasaki Shikibu sought inspiration from Bodhisattva Kannon at the Ishiyama Temple. Her prayers met, she successfully composed *The Tale of Genji*. An early version of this story is found in the *Mumyōzōshi* (Nameless Book, c. 1200–1), the oldest extant monogatari criticism, which favorably assesses *Genji* and other tales. The Ishiyama legend, which became popular in the medieval period, gives a Buddhist legitimacy to the tale while underscoring its imperial associations and declaring it to be felicitously composed.

This insistence on a felicitous origin to *Genji* was in response to a prevailing notion, especially popular during the medieval period, that *Genji* in particular and monogatari in general were a violation of the Buddhist precept forbidding fictitious speech and ornate language (*kyōgen kigo*). In another legend that appeared as early as the twelfth century, Murasaki Shikibu is said to have fallen to hell for her sins of writing the tale. Ceremonies were dedicated to bring salvation to the *Genji* author in stories of *Genji kuyō* (*Genji Offerings*). From early on in its life the *Genji* was celebrated for its poetry and poetics, but there was a pervasive anxiety regarding its fictionality.

By the mid-Muromachi period, political and financial power had shifted from the aristocracy to the warrior class. The newly empowered sought to assert their legitimacy by appropriating Heian aristocratic culture, as exemplified by *The Tale of Genji*. The tale became a sourcebook not only for waka but also for *renga* (linked verse), the emerging dominant poetic genre of the period. (See Lewis Cook's chapter 13 below on medieval commentaries for more on *Genji* commentaries.) In addition we find the first *Genji* digests, like *Genji kokagami* (A Small Mirror of Genji, fourteenth century), which culled representative poems and provided simplified plot synopses. Beginning in the mid-seventeenth century, these *Genji* Mirrors included illustrations depicting selected scenes and characters, as found in *Eiri Genji monogatari* (Illustrated Tale of Genji, 1650). Such intermediary media greatly assisted in disseminating *Genji* to a wider audience. A significant body of *noh* plays based on *Genji* characters (almost entirely female) also emerged in the late medieval period,

with the playwrights drawing heavily on *Genji* lexical associations found in renga handbooks.

The early Edo period witnessed the first major *Genji* boom, with the production of annotated texts and digests, illustrated texts with abridged stories, and new commentaries including the *Kogetsushō* (The Moon on the Lake Commentary, 1673) by Kitamura Kigin (1624–1705). The *Kogetsushō* contained extensive annotation and headnotes including citations from the major medieval commentaries, but it was most notable in providing the entirety of the *Genji* text in print. It became the most influential *Genji* commentary of the Edo period and was still widely used into the modern era.

There were also numerous treatises written by Confucian scholars, including Kumazawa Banzan (1619–91), who declared that *Genji* taught Confucian virtues (*Genji gaiden*, c. 1673). One incident in particular was of great concern both to Confucians and later to *Kokugaku* scholars: the affair between Genji and Fujitsubo and the eventual ascension of their son to the imperial throne, often referred to simply as *mono no magire* (the disturbance). This was a source of major contention for scholars who deemed that this aberration was blasphemous in its denial of an unbroken imperial line. Andō Tameakira (1659–1716) countered in *Shika shichiron* (Seven Essays of Murasaki, 1703) that, rather than being an unspeakable fault within the tale, the “incident” of Reizei’s birth and enthronement were a “lesson” meant to forewarn the court from any future disruptions of this type. Furthermore, as the grandson of an emperor, Reizei is still of imperial blood, indicating the imperial line has not been tainted.

The priest Keichū (1640–1701), later celebrated as a founding *Kokugaku* scholar, argued that the tale was not simply a didactic one (*Genchū shūi*, Addenda to *Genji*, 1696). His critical reading of older scholarship was identified later as the beginning of the *shinchū* (new commentaries). Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801) further challenged the notion that *Genji* should be valued as moral instruction (in a Confucian or Buddhist framework), arguing that the amorous affairs and transgressions depicted in *Genji* were meant to show and elicit profound human emotion, what he calls the understanding of *mono no aware* (pathos of things), particularly empathy for others. Norinaga’s view allowed for an understanding of the tale that did not value it based on upholding Confucian morals or Buddhist ideals.

Two texts stand out in scope of dissemination and longevity of popularity: Ihara Saikaku’s (1642–93) *Kōshoku ichidai otoko* (Life of an Amorous Man, 1682), an *ukiyo zōshi* (books of the floating world) that tells in fifty-four chapters of an urban commoner and his multitude of lovers, and Nise

Murasaki Inaka Genji (Fake Murasaki's Bumpkin Genji, 1829–42, by Ryūtei Tanehiko [1783–1842]), a long-running and extremely popular *gōkan* (combined booklet) read far into the Meiji period (1868–1912).

The modern period saw new translations, studies, and theatrical depictions of *The Tale of Genji*. Consumption and various re-imaginings of the *Genji* are very much alive today. There have been numerous adaptations and retellings on live-action and animated television, musical and dramatic theater, novels, short stories, and *manga*. None of these modern renderings would have been possible without the long history of *Genji* commentary and translation. The first translation into modern Japanese was completed by Yosano Akiko (1878–1942) with *Shin'yaku Genji monogatari* (New Translation of Tale of Genji, 1912–13), followed by many more translations, most notably by Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886–1965) and Enchi Fumiko (1905–86). In English, Suematsu Kenchō (1855–1920) published the first partial translation in 1882, succeeded by a more complete and extremely influential translation by Arthur Waley (1925–33). Edward Seidensticker (1976), Royall Tyler (2001), and most recently Dennis Washburn (2015) have produced full English translations of *The Tale of Genji*.

Late courtly romance

JOSHUA S. MOSTOW

Post-Tale of Genji tales

No evidence of new monogatari survives for the half century after the completion of *Genji*. In 1055, however, Imperial Princess Baishi (1039–96), daughter of Emperor GoSuzaku, and priestess of the Kamo Shrine from 1046 until 1058, sponsored a *monogatari-awase*, or contest between literary romances. Eighteen short tales were written by ladies-in-waiting, only one of which has survived: *Ōsaka koenu Gon Chūnagon* (The Provisional Middle Counselor Who Did Not Cross over the Hill of Meeting), attributed to one Lady Koshikibu. “The Provisional Middle Counselor” is today included in a collection of short fiction, *Tsutsumi Chūnagon monogatari* (The Riverside Counselor’s Stories), assembled at an unknown date. The eight tales conjectured to be written by women in this collection are the only evidence remaining of what may have been a significant number of shorter court romances produced during the late Heian and Kamakura periods.

Sagoromo monogatari

Much longer fiction survives from Baishi’s day as well, and one of her attendants, Senji (d. 1092), is credited with *Sagoromo monogatari*, dated to sometime between 1069 and 1086. Throughout the premodern period *Sagoromo* appears to have been read and appreciated, enjoying a reputation second only to the *Genji* and being particularly valued for its poetry. The tale exists in some seventy different texts in as many as 120 manuscripts; one version was printed in the Edo period.

The influence of *Genji* is discernible on the very first page of *Sagoromo*, as the eponymous hero alludes to a poem by Genji himself. The main conflict of the entire tale, however, is a vast elaboration of Episode 49 of *The Ise Stories*, where the man reveals his erotic interest to his younger sister. This episode had already been used in *Genji*, between Prince Niou and his half-sister the

First Princess, and indeed the object of Sagoromo's infatuation, Genji no Miya, is explicitly likened to the First Princess of *Genji*. Sagoromo's incestuous predicament, however, is of an unusual kind, as Genji no Miya is not in fact related to him by blood, but is simply a foster-sibling.

Again we have one more young noble pining for a seemingly unattainable woman, much like Genji for Asagao or Kaoru for the First Princess. Readers seem to have been far more interested, however, in the major sub-plot, when Sagoromo rescues a young female orphan, Asukai, from a lecherous priest and then falls in love with her. The character is clearly modeled on that of *Genji's* Yūgao, which dictates that she is destined for an early death, after giving birth to a daughter. What is interesting about this rewriting of *Genji* motifs, however, is how much it differs from the earlier tale. There is, for example, a mixing of social ranks that never happens in *Genji*: ladies of *Genji* take no exception to their men sleeping with the servants, confident in the knowledge that those women's lower social status precludes them from being a threat to the principal wives. In *Sagoromo*, however, the "hero" loses Asukai and ruins the life of an imperial princess because he is unwilling for Genji no Miya to learn that he has been with anyone else, whatever her social status.

Extant monogatari following *Genji* all seem to be influenced most by the tale's last chapters, the so-called "Ten Uji Chapters" (*Uji jūjō*). And those chapters depict a somewhat different and harder world than that of the Shining Prince: men's affairs with the serving women are candidly revealed; the mechanics of sexual coercion are more fully shown; and the relationship between the principal ladies and their female attendants becomes more fraught, edging toward the adversarial. It is this last characteristic that is most apparent in the Asukai sub-plot, as the girl's sole support, her wet-nurse, actively works against her relationship with Sagoromo and ends up succeeding in having her kidnapped by another man. Middle-ranking characters are also explicitly critical of their social betters in a way not found in *The Tale of Genji*.

Not only does *Sagoromo* reprise the Nakazumi motif from *Utsuho*, but it also has magical *koto*-playing: Sagoromo is so skilled that his parents prevent him from playing, but one night the emperor insists; as Sagoromo plays, a celestial child descends and attempts to lead him away to the heavens. Sagoromo declines, and in reward the emperor bestows on him his beloved Second Princess. Sagoromo's parents are delighted with the match, but Sagoromo passively resists. Finally, however, he steals in on her one night and makes love to her. But again, because of his fear of Genji no Miya, he

does not reveal himself. The princess immediately becomes pregnant and, shortly after giving birth, takes the tonsure.

Sagoromo now has two children: the daughter by Asukai, whereabouts unknown, and a son by the Second Princess; he still, however, has no wife, longing only for Genji no Miya. She, however, is made the Kamo Priestess, further removing her from his grasp. Book Three ends with a long description of Genji no Miya's removal to the Kamo Shrine, written obviously by someone who was an eye-witness to such an event. We are told that in his depression Sagoromo has resolved to become a monk.

The final book was the least appreciated by later readers. Sagoromo's father manages to stop him from taking the tonsure. Sagoromo's depression continues, until he meets a woman who looks exactly like Genji no Miya, resurrecting the *yukari* or *katashiro* (substitute) motif from *Genji*. The reigning emperor wants to abdicate, but has no heir (imperial succession problems are conspicuous in later monogatari). As various possibilities are being considered, the Ise Priestess receives an oracle that the throne should be passed to Sagoromo. He is enthroned, and makes the Genji no Miya look-alike his consort. The last episode shows Sagoromo visiting retired emperor Saga, where the Second Princess is living, and forcing an interview on her where in tears he begs her forgiveness. Sagoromo's devotion to Genji no Miya is the engine that seems responsible for destroying a number of women's lives, and one can only wonder whether his apparent remorse at the end, despite his exalted status, was fully satisfying for female readers.

Yoru no Nezame

In the postscript to his copy of the *Sarashina nikki* (Sarashina Diary), the famous poet and scholar Fujiwara no Teika (1162–1241) records the attribution of four monogatari to the diary's author, known as Sugawara no Takasue's Daughter (b. 1008), two of which are still extant: *Yoru no Nezame* (also read as *Yowa no Nezame*) and *Hamamatsu Chūnagon monogatari*. While postwar scholars tended to discount this attribution, twenty-first-century scholarship seems to be more accepting of it.

Yoru no Nezame (Wakefulness/Nezame at Night), dated to the end of the eleventh century, appears to take its title from the last line of the last extant volume: *yoru no nezame tayuru yo naku to zo* ("it is said that there was no end to her nights of anguished wakefulness"), which also gives the name to the chief protagonist, Nezame, the daughter of a former imperial prince, now the chancellor (*daijō daijin*). No complete copy of *Nezame* exists among the eight extant manuscripts, all dating from the Edo period.

The theme of the tale is announced in its opening words: “Of all the stories about relations between men and women, rarely has one brought with it such sleepless nights for its lovers as that which I am about to tell. Although their bond was deep, it brought much pain.” It is not until well into Book One that the reader will understand that the couple referred to in this opening are Nezame and the son of the Regent (*kanpaku*), the Provisional Middle Counselor (*Gon-chūnagon*, hereafter referred to as Chūnagon), when we first meet him. Nezame is the youngest daughter of the Chancellor and so musically talented that in her dreams a celestial being teaches her secret pieces (echoing themes from both *Utsuho* and *Sagoromo*).

In Nezame’s sixteenth year, her father is in search of a husband for her older sister, Ōigimi, concluding that the only man worthy of the honor is the Chūnagon. It being considered an unlucky year for Nezame, she is sent off with an older cousin, Tai no Kimi (in fact, the unwilling bed-partner of Nezame’s father), to a villa in the southern Ninth Ward. Borrowing more than one page from *Genji*, Chūnagon is visiting his old nurse next door and, drawn by the sounds of Nezame’s *koto*, he sees her, and makes love to her, not revealing his own identity and believing her to be the daughter of the lesser-ranking Governor of Tajima. He shortly learns that the woman he made love to is the younger sister of the woman he has just married and into whose father’s house he has just moved. Nezame herself has become pregnant from her night with Chūnagon. Nezame stays bed-ridden to hide her pregnancy and is at last taken to Ishiyama Temple where she gives birth to a girl. Chūnagon takes the girl to be raised by his own parents, and Nezame returns to her father’s house, apparently cured. Her father now retires from court and lives with Nezame in Hirosawa as a lay priest (*Genji Nyūdō*).

The middle part of the tale is missing. In the third part, the emperor continues his attempts to get Nezame to join him at court. She instead presents him with her youngest stepdaughter, Kan no Kimi, whom she unwisely accompanies. At court she experiences the hostility of the empress dowager, the mother-in-law of Chūnagon, whom the empress dowager detests for neglecting her daughter due to his infatuation with Nezame. To try to force a divide between Nezame and her daughter’s husband, the empress dowager engineers that the emperor spend a night with Nezame, though she successfully resists him. This move, in fact, only succeeds in driving Nezame to Chūnagon for help in escaping from court. In apparent compensation, the emperor summons Nezame’s young son, Masako, and keeps him constantly by his side. Chūnagon assumes that Nezame’s acceptance of his protection will allow them to make their relationship public, but

Nezame's "childishness" makes her still fear her father's disapproval, along with the continued animosity of the empress dowager.

Chūnagon's wife falls ill and rumors spread that her illness is due to possession by Nezame's angry spirit. Chūnagon views the matter as a hoax, but Nezame too hears of the rumors and wonders what he thinks of them. She retires to her father's house in Hirosawa, falls ill, and finally convinces him to allow her to become a nun. Alerted, Chūnagon rushes to Hirosawa with their two children and reveals their long on-again, off-again relationship to her father, who is so delighted with his new grandchildren – especially the girl – that he more or less abandons his religious devotions: it is apparent that he is now consumed with plans for the girl to achieve what her mother could not, the position of empress. Nezame realizes that now her father will never let her become a nun. She must return to the capital and assume the role of a secondary wife in relation to Ichi no Miya. And indeed, for the sake of propriety, Chūnagon spends twice as many nights with the princess as with Nezame. The final, lost part of the tale can only be partially reconstructed.

Nezame is distinctive in that it is named for a female protagonist, rather than centered on a male hero, such as *Genji* or *Sagoromo*. The text is also much closer to the introspective diary (*nikki*) genre than any other extant romance. We are privy to all the characters' thoughts as they interpret and conjecture as to the intentions of others – usually incorrectly. Matters are little helped by the fact that internal monologue reveals that almost every utterance by any character to be in truth contrary to what they are actually thinking or feeling. And we are provided with far more of their verbatim thoughts or speeches than in other works: whereas in *Genji* the narrator will simply say that Genji convinced the woman with a persuasive speech, in *Nezame* the man's blandishments are given word-for-word, as are the tortuous inner monologues of all the characters. Despite Nezame's repeated pregnancies with her lover, there is less explicit description than in *Sagoromo*, though there are discussions of pregnant bodies and wizened newborns. The malevolent empress dowager is in a line of characters starting with Kokiden in *Genji* and the empress-mother of the Second Princess in *Sagoromo*. Nezame herself can be seen as descendant of the passionate women-poets Ono no Komachi and Izumi Shikibu, whose poems are often alluded to. Although men still pursue women, there is much less of the explicit threatening seen in *Sagoromo* or *Uji jūjō*. While other monogatari (such as *Ise* and *Genji*) are able to convey the experiences of women despite – or through – their focus on a male protagonist, *Nezame* in some ways seems to represent the extreme feminization of the genre.

Hamamatsu Chūnagon monogatari

Hamamatsu Chūnagon monogatari (after 1058) provides a conspicuously different approach to character than *Nezame*, displaying a refreshing outspokenness among the characters. This is made possible by the setting of the first part of the tale, remarkably, in China. As the protagonist remarks: “It seems it is the custom in this country to speak one’s mind directly.” The narration encompasses only six years, and there is an almost complete disregard for the issue of advancement of rank for the male characters; indeed, the protagonist, the son of an imperial prince, now a Minamoto, remains a middle counselor throughout the entire tale (*hamamatsu*, or “pine on the beach” comes from one of his poems early on). In fact, the action of the tale takes places almost entirely outside of court, with very few appearances by the emperor or other members of the imperial family, save one.

The first book of *Hamamatsu* has been lost. From other sources the basic plot action can be reconstructed: the hero Chūnagon learns that his father has been reborn as the Third Prince of China. After he leaves for China, Ōigimi, his step-sister, discovers she is pregnant by Chūnagon, even though she has been promised in marriage to Prince Shikibukuyō, a philanderer tipped to become the next heir apparent in the tradition of the *Genji*’s Prince Niou. She cuts off her hair and renounces the world, while her younger sister, Naka no Kimi, is married to the prince in her stead.

The extant text opens with Chūnagon arriving in China. Women in the Heian period were largely excluded from Chinese literature, which was seen as the preserve of government and men. Moreover, with the last embassy to the mainland in the early ninth century, Japanese culture is often thought to have entered a period of “Japanification,” turning away from continental culture and developing an individual indigenous culture, of which *monogatari*, written in Japanese by women, was a conspicuous component. However, many aristocratic women were literate in Chinese and knowledge of a fair-sized corpus of Chinese poems and stories was essential for any aristocratic woman’s cultural literacy. The author’s descriptions of China are all drawn from such a literary cache. Contact with China was also not negligible, sustained through trade and the dispatching of monks for training. Most intriguingly, considering the plot of *Hamamatsu*, in 1026 a trader named Zhou Liangshi was patronized by Michinaga’s son, Yorimichi (992–1074). Zhou claimed to have been born of a Chinese father and a Japanese mother and requested recognition as a Japanese subject (Verschuer, 41).

In China, Chūnagon meets the Third Prince and the two immediately recognize each other as former father and son. The prince is the son of the Hoyang Consort, a Lady Kiritsubo-like figure who, though loved best by the emperor, is forced from court by the jealousy of the prime minister's daughter – chief consort and mother of the crown prince. The Hoyang Consort is in fact the daughter of a Japanese princess by a Chinese ambassador in Japan, who brought her back to China when his mission was over. She and all her ladies-in-waiting consequently seem thoroughly Japanese in behavior – not a few Chinese are shown to be capable of writing *waka* in the tale! One night, drawn by the sound of a *biwa*, Chūnagon discovers a beautiful woman and makes love to her, without discovering who she is. Eventually he learns that it was the Consort and that she has become pregnant by him. The first book ends with their brief reunion, where the Consort gives Chūnagon their infant son to take back with him to Japan. The consort also gives him a letter to take back to her mother in Japan.

In chapter 2 Chūnagon is back in Japan and is shocked to learn of Ōigimi's fate and immediately establishes one of the most conspicuous aspects of the tale, a kind of sexless companionate marriage: "At night they set their bedding together and talked of the past and present, weeping, laughing, and forever vowing to each other that in the next world they would be born again on the same lotus leaf" (126).

In chapter 3 Chūnagon tracks down the Consort's mother deep in the mountains of Yoshino. There he also finds that the Consort has a half-sister, Yoshino-hime. Chūnagon looks to mother's and daughter's physical needs but, in a no doubt deliberate antithesis to Genji, Chūnagon evinces no sexual interest in Yoshino-hime, despite her presumed resemblance to her half-sister the Consort. At the end of the chapter Chūnagon's happy state of affairs with Ōigimi is threatened by the emperor's offer of one of his daughters in marriage. Unlike Genji, Chūnagon finds no pleasure in the offer.

In the following chapter Chūnagon delays his marriage and, after the death of her mother, moves Yoshino-hime to the capital where he cares for her like a daughter, but, as with Genji and Tamakazura, finds himself falling in love with her. Yoshino-hime suddenly falls ill and is taken to Kiyomizu Temple, giving Prince Shikibukyo the chance to abduct her. However, her continued illness forces him, on the girl's insistence, to call for Chūnagon, who takes her to his home, where she is now believed to be Chūnagon's half-sister. He finds himself increasingly attracted to her – the sibling-incest motif. Although Yoshino-hime yields to Chūnagon in all other things, she rejects his sexual advances and Chūnagon resorts to no degree of coercion. The book ends

with Chūnagon yet again in tears as a letter confirms the Hoyang Consort's death. He has also learned in a dream that a woman he has impregnated is carrying the reincarnation of the Consort.

For the author, Chūnagon is clearly the ideal man, superior even to the *Genji*'s Kaoru, most particularly for his devotion to Ōigimi despite no possibility of sexual consummation. As noted, we see none of the threats and coercion exercised by Kaoru in his relationship with his own Ōigimi. There is also a conscious working away from the *katashiro* trope, set off by the explicit use of reincarnation.

Torikaebaya monogatari

The final monogatari extant from the Heian period is a bellwether of things to come. *Torikaebaya monogatari* (The Story of "Oh, if I could only exchange them!") tells of a Minister of the Left (*sadaijin*) with a son and a daughter by different wives. The boy, however, acts like a girl, while his sister behaves like a boy. Sadaijin therefore has them switch roles. As a boy, the girl is phenomenally successful in court society and it is this character that is the main focus of the story. The "boy" is the most superior of courtiers and eventually reaches the rank of chūnagon. The emperor soon abdicates to the crown prince but the latter, having no son, appoints his own daughter as heir apparent. Sadaijin now suggests that his "daughter" serve the crown princess and "she" enters the all-female court as Naishi no Kami. In the meantime, Sadaijin has agreed to Chūnagon's marriage to Yon (or Shi) no Kimi, the daughter of the Minister of the Right (*udaijin*). We are presented with a reprise of the sexless but companionate marriage depicted in *Hamamatsu* and, knowing no better, Yon no Kimi makes no complaint and learns to love Chūnagon. At court, Chūnagon becomes friends with Saishō, the son of the emperor's uncle, establishing a relationship similar to that between Kaoru and Niou. Like Niou, Saishō is the incorrigible *irogonomi* of the tale and soon forces himself on Yon no Kimi, making her pregnant. To maintain appearances, Chūnagon must pretend the child is his.

A figure very much like *Genji*'s Eighth Prince is then introduced. He had traveled to China, where he married a woman who gave him two daughters. She died, however, and he returned to Japan with his children where he was shortly accused of having designs on the throne, forcing him to take the tonsure and retire to the mountains of Yoshino. Like the nun in *Hamamatsu*, he is now waiting for the appearance of a man who will take on the care of his daughters so that the prince can devote himself to his prayers. Enter the dissatisfied Chūnagon, looking for a means of renouncing the world. The

prince, however, dissuades Chūnagon from abandoning society, insisting that “he” is destined for high position. On the other hand, the prince (unlike *Genji*’s Akashi Priest) has no ambitions for his daughters, but is grateful when Chūnagon agrees to be responsible for them. Chūnagon becomes “intimate” with them, insisting that they think of “him” as another sister. Again, an ideal (sexless) companionate marriage is portrayed between Chūnagon and the eldest princess.

As in *Genji*, there are several instances when a man looks at Chūnagon and is struck by “his” beauty, wishing there were a woman like him. One summer day Saishō calls on Chūnagon at home, continuing to insist that he be introduced to Chūnagon’s “sister,” Naishi no Kami. Chūnagon is largely unclothed due to the heat and in clutching “him” to himself in the midst of his protestations of love for his “sister,” Saishō discovers Chūnagon’s true sex and rapes her.

Book Two opens with a pregnant Chūnagon preparing to disappear, putting herself in Saishō’s hands to be hidden away at Uji. Once there, she starts dressing as a woman. Chūnagon’s father confronts Yon no Kimi’s father with her adultery – she is once again pregnant by Saishō – and disowns her. This puts Saishō in a position reminiscent of *Genji* between the pregnant Third Princess and the ill Murasaki, rushing back and forth between Uji and the capital, comforting both pregnant women. In the end, Chūnagon gives birth to a boy, and Saishō’s repeated absences due to Yon no Kimi’s difficult pregnancy allow Chūnagon to abandon her baby at Uji and flee to the prince in Yoshino. Chūnagon’s disappearance galvanizes Naishi no Kami, who leaves the palace in male clothing to search for his sibling, despite the fact that “she” has made the crown princess pregnant. Once the siblings meet, they decide to exchange each other’s place in society and tutor each other in their new gender roles.

At the beginning of Book Three the new Naishi no Kami returns to the palace. She gives her brother access to the princess. In a historically unprecedented move, the princess gives birth in the imperial palace (an act thought to be ritually defiling), and the resulting son is spirited away for keeping by the siblings’ mother. Shortly thereafter the emperor introduces himself into Naishi no Kami’s bedchamber. Despite discovering that she is not a virgin, the emperor is completely smitten and she soon becomes his favorite consort.

Chūnagon brings the Yoshino princesses to the capital in grand style, making the elder his principal wife. He installs her in his new residence, with another wing for Yon no Kimi, and a third for the crown princess. Nashi

no Kami gives birth to a son, who is soon named crown prince, cementing Chūnagon's family's control over the throne. In the final pages the narrative focuses on "the Uji boy" who still does not know who his mother was (a reversal of Kaoru's problem about his father). The empress hints to him that it is she herself, which, overhearing, relieves the emperor, who had feared that her deflowerer was someone of low status! The tale ends with the younger generation succeeding to various important offices, the final words relating Saishō's unrelieved "sorrow, pain, and longing" for the forever-lost "Chūnagon."

Torikaebaya has as one of its main themes the punishment of the irogonomi playboy, who, through his profligacy, ends up essentially alone. In addition to apparently demonstrating the socially constructed nature of gender, it also provides clear cases of homogender, if not homosexual, desire: when Saishō attacks Chūnagon, he is under the mistaken belief that the latter is a man. While it is not clear in *Genji* what the frequent comparison of the hero's looks to those of a woman means, in *Torikaebaya* there is a clear homoerotic element that is rather implausibly "heteroized." This trend is further developed in the following period.

Monogatari in the Kamakura period (1185–1333)

In the Heian period, monogatari as a genre had been generally denigrated as worthless fabrications written to help women pass the time. Starting in the 1190s, however, its status began to rise dramatically, due to poets, especially of the Mikohidari house, starting to participate in their composition and, most importantly, insisting that a knowledge of *Genji* was mandatory for the writing of waka. This championing seems to be due at least in part to the rivalry between the Mikohidari and Rokujō schools, the latter founding their expertise on their knowledge of the archaic *Man'yōshū*. This competition led to some of the men associated with the Mikohidari creating new monogatari in the 1190s, and Teika – on the request of the powerful regent Yoshitsune (1169–1206) – compiled two one-hundred-poem contests (*uta-awase*), one matching one hundred poems from *Genji* against an equal number from *Sagoromo*; and another matching another hundred poems from *Genji* against those of ten other monogatari, including *Nezame* and *Torikaebaya*.

Critical consideration of the genre reached one peak around 1201 with the writing of the *Mumyōzōshi*, or "Untitled Book." This work is attributed to Shunzei's Daughter (in fact, his granddaughter, whom he adopted; c. 1171–after 1252). It is comprised of a fictional conversation between an elderly nun and

several ladies-in-waiting. The discussion proceeds to consider many of *Genji*'s characters and events, which then leads to assessments of other monogatari, both old and recent. As suggested by Teika's uta-awase, *Sagoromo* is ranked second only to *Genji*. Specific poems come in for praise, while specific events – such as Sagoromo becoming emperor – receive sharp criticism as excessively unrealistic. *Nezame* engenders more disagreement among the ladies in terms of assessing the heroine's behavior, but seventeen poems are quoted from the tale, far more than the five from *Sagoromo*. The faults listed come from the now-lost last chapter.

While *Hamamatsu* is admitted to be inferior to both *Nezame* and *Sagoromo*, its hero is praised as ideal: "He's a wonderful man, the same type as Captain Kaoru." After various touching scenes involving each of the chief female characters are mentioned, this tale is briefly criticized for such matters as having the Hoyang Consort reborn so soon, when her life in the Trāyastriṃśa heaven should last eons.

From *Mumyōzōshi* we learn that there seems to have been the practice of rewriting, or updating, older monogatari (*kaisaku monogatari*). The case they discuss is *Torikaebaya* which, in its original version, contained many scenes that the ladies found distasteful, such as the female Chūnagon giving birth while still dressed as a man – as we have seen, in the "New" *Torikaebaya* (*Ima torikaebaya*), she has already changed to women's wear when she delivers. The new version is declared superior, Kami no Naishi praised, and Yon no Kimi and Saishō thoroughly criticized.

Another monogatari that exists only in its later rewriting, not discussed in *Mumyōzōshi*, is *Sumiyoshi monogatari*, thought to date from the Kamakura period. Mention of the tale in both *Genji* and the *Pillow Book* indicates that some version existed in the mid-Heian period, but the extant text clearly dates from a later period. It is a wicked stepmother tale (*mamako ijime-tan*) along the lines of *Ochikubo*. Again, a girl with a dead imperial mother is placed with her hostile stepmother and siblings. When the princess (*himegimi*) attracts the attention of a well-placed young man, the stepmother tricks him into marrying one of her daughters instead (a reversal of a plot device in *Ochikubo*). In fact, the mother frustrates the marriage of the heroine and hero three times, until the girl flees to Sumiyoshi, thinking of becoming a nun. But her lover is guided to her by a dream and brings her back to the capital as his wife. The tale shows its medieval character most in its ending, which explicitly frames the story as a morality tale.

Of the twenty-four monogatari discussed in *Mumyōzōshi*, only ten are extant, giving one a measure of the amount of material lost. On the other

hand, four of those extant are among the most highly prized by the ladies, suggesting that the cream of the crop has perhaps been preserved.

The ladies distinguish between older works and those contemporary with them, in which context they mention *Ukinami* (not extant) by the poet and painter Fujiwara no Takanobu (1142–1205), suggesting that the new monogatari too may well have been illustrated. They also credit Teika with “many” (*amata*) monogatari, mentioning the extant *Matsura no miya monogatari* by name.

Matsura no miya monogatari

Matsura no miya monogatari is remarkable in many ways. It is set not in the Heian court, but when the court was at Fujiwara (694–710), before the establishment of the capital in Nara. The first part of the tale imitates *Utsuho* and alludes to many poems from the *Man'yōshū* – as if Teika were contesting the Rokujō's exclusive mastery of this text. Moreover, despite the Mikohidari house's championing of *Genji*, *Matsura* attempts to distance itself from this classic as much as possible.

The story opens by introducing the protagonist, Tachibana no Ujitada. Like all monogatari heroes, he excels in beauty and skill. At sixteen he falls in love with Princess Kannabi, but she is sent to serve at court, nipping any romance in the bud. Shortly thereafter, Ujitada is assigned to the embassy to China. He is enthusiastically received by the thirty-year-old Chinese emperor, who makes Ujitada something of a favorite, keeping him constantly at his side. Once the setting changes to China, many passages appear to be drawn from Chinese historical works, such as the *Han shu* (History of the Former Han Dynasty, completed 111) – a work that would be beyond the education of most court women.

Ujitada begins to secretly study the seven-stringed *kin* with Princess Hua-yang, who is in retreat on Mount Shang. Then the emperor falls ill. Foretelling his own death, he implores Ujitada to stay in China, loyal to the infant crown prince and empress, to guide the country through its impending crisis. Ujitada returns to Mount Shang, where Princess Hua-yang gives him his final lesson. She then gives him a jewel that he is to keep in his constant possession, and makes love to him, knowing that this will result in her death, but will allow her to reappear in Japan when Ujitada returns home. Book One ends with the emperor, too, dying; an insurrection instigated by the King of Yen; and the court fleeing the capital with the infant emperor, the empress dowager, and Ujitada, in a scene reminiscent of the Taira flight from the Heian capital with the infant emperor Antoku in 1185.

Book Two opens with significant borrowings from Bo Juyi's *Changhen-ge* (Song of Never-Ending Sorrow, J. *Chōgonka*, 806) and its description of the An Lushan Rebellion (755–63). The emperor's army is pursued by the rebel army. It is the empress who devises an ambush and Ujitada who leads the imperial army. In the midst of battle he is suddenly aided by nine identical magical warriors and together they rout the enemy – we discover later that the warriors have been sent by the deity of Sumiyoshi.

With the emperor reestablished, Ujitada still has to wait out the mandatory three-year duration of the embassy. Again following the sound of music, he is led to a beautiful and mysterious woman. He approaches her and she yields willingly to his embraces, making love without uttering a word, a device taken from the episode with the Ise Priestess in *The Ise Stories*. Like Narihira in Episode 4, Ujitada returns the following night, but the woman is not to be seen. So begins a series of encounters, heavily indebted to *Hamamatsu*, with Ujitada very much in the traditional role of the waiting woman, sleeplessly wondering when his mysterious lover will next visit him, and her departing each time by literally disappearing (modeled on the goddess of Mount Wu making love to a king, as described in the *Gao Tang fu*), leaving behind only her unique scent. In the final book, the empress dowager reveals to Ujitada that she is his mystery lover, giving him a magic mirror. Ujitada returns to Japan and, performing a ritual at Hatsuse Temple taught to him by Princess Hua-yang, causes her to appear. He takes her home as his wife, with no one apparently asking about her origins. Life seems happily settled, until Ujitada, missing the empress dowager, looks in the mirror she gave him; this allows him to see her as she goes about her business in China and, while they cannot communicate, her unique perfume does come through the mirror and scent Ujitada's clothes. When he returns home, Princess Hua-yang smells the perfume on his clothes and concludes that he is seeing another woman.

At this point, the text has: "The manuscript states: 'Here, too, the binding is damaged and the remaining pages have been lost.'" This is followed by four fictive colophons, one of which claims that the copying of the text was completed on the eighteenth day of the fourth month of Jōgan 3 (861). *Matsura* is, then, the first true *giko monogatari*, that is, "pseudo-classical romance." It seems not, however, to have been a complete success. The *Utsuho* and especially *Man'yōshū* sub-texts peter out toward the end of Book One. Teika himself was obviously aware of this, as the first fictional colophon states in part: "This tale is about events that took place long ago, and indeed, both the poetry and the language are pleasantly old-fashioned. Beginning

with the flight to Mount Shu, however, the text appears to have been revised by some clever fellow of our own age and contains many unsightly passages” (Lammers, 162). The recourse to “lost” pages at the end indicates that the story was abandoned rather than concluded. The image of a mysterious woman, met on a hazy, moonlit spring night, remembered in tears, is central to the young Teika’s poetic concept of *yōen*, or “ethereal beauty,” and it has been suggested that in *Matsura* he is trying to apply *yōen* to an extended narrative. Here, too, however, he falls somewhat short, one of the reasons being that until the very end of the tale there is little overlap or conflict between Ujitada’s three objects of desire: he spends no time thinking about Princess Kannabi while he is in China, and more or less forgets about the empress dowager once he is back with Princess Hua-yang in Japan. As the *Mumyōzōshi* ladies complain: “Contemporary tales are all set in the time of the emperors of old . . . They give the impression of having been written hastily, and they also possess many unrealistic and exaggerated features” (Marra 1984, 418).

Ariake no wakare (Partings at Dawn)

More successful, at least for modern readers, is *Ariake no wakare*. It is mentioned very briefly in *Mumyōzōshi* and must have been written before 1201, again probably in the 1190s. The action of Book One centers on a character reminiscent of *Torikaebaya*, but with important differences. Sadaijin and his wife have long been without a son and worry about the continuance of their family line. After various prayers are offered, his wife gives birth – but to a girl. The parents, however, raise the child as a boy, and “he” has a successful career at court much along the lines of the *Torikaebaya* protagonist. In his sixteenth year he is promoted to the position of *udaishō* (major captain of the right). *Udaishō* has a unique ability that allows him to make himself invisible. With this, he secretly visits the houses of others, spying on their activities. Through these nocturnal investigations, *Udaishō* discovers that “his” uncle, *Sadaishō*, is sexually abusing his own stepdaughter. *Udaishō* also spies on *Sadaishō*’s son, *Sanmi no Chūjō*, who, as if manifesting an inherited trait, is having an affair with the young wife of the aged Prince *Nakatsukasa*. The stepdaughter, *Tai no Ue*, soon finds herself pregnant, and the invisible *Udaishō* spirits her away to the safety of his home. Here she bears a son, whom *Udaishō* publicly recognizes as his son, thus putting an end to his family’s concerns about an heir.

At a banquet, Udaishō's flute-playing causes lightning and thunder and the appearance of a heavenly scent. Tai no Ue is, as in earlier tales, happy in her sexless marriage with Udaishō. The latter disappears from home for about a week every month (due to menstruation) and during one absence Tai no Ue becomes the victim of Sanji no Chūjō. This results in another pregnancy, but, unlike Chūnagon in *Torikaebaya*, Udaishō feels no alienation from her.

One night the emperor molests Udaishō, discovering her true sex, leading her family to soon announce her "death" and the presentation of a "sister" to the emperor. Tai no Ue bears a daughter and takes religious vows, while the former Udaishō, now junior imperial consort, soon conceives, and gives birth to a boy who is named crown prince, elevating her to the position of empress.

While, unlike the children in *Torikaebaya*, Udaishō did not undertake a gender-reversal due to her own, innate, inclinations, after aligning her gender with her sex she often experiences what Robert Khan has called "gender nostalgia," missing the days when she had more freedom of movement and could participate in male-coded activities, such as writing Chinese poetry and playing the flute.

Books Two and Three, like the latter half of *Genji*, focus on "Udaishō's children," that is, the girl and especially the boy fathered on Tai no Ue by Sanmi no Chūjō and Sadaishō, respectively. The differing fate of these two men is somewhat puzzling: Sanmi no Chūjō suffers the full chastisement of the irogonomi – not only does he continue to mourn the loss of Tai no Ue, but while his daughter eventually rises to empress she is only made aware of her true parentage shortly before his death, so he gets none of the benefits of her position. Sadaishō, on the other hand, despite raping his stepdaughter, is eventually made master (*daibu*) of his illegitimate granddaughter's court and regent, all without ever knowing her true parentage.

Ironically, "Udaishō's son" is named the new Sanmi no Chūjō, and his sexual appetite matches that of his father, Sadaijin; in fact, like his half-brother (the first Sanmi no Chūjō), he sleeps with Prince Nakatsukasa's wife – a woman old enough to be his mother. Eventually he finds himself married to two women: Ōigimi, the eldest daughter of Saemon no Suke; and Shijō no Ue, one of his half-brother's acknowledged children.

As in *Torikaebaya*, both women become pregnant, but in *Ariake* each is tormented by a *mono no ke* (evil spirit), who turns out to be Prince Nakatsukasa's wife. Unlike Lady Rokujō in *Genji*, Prince Nakatsukasa's wife actively hates her rivals and hopes for their deaths. Instead, it is she who dies, relieving the women of their affliction.

The new Sanmi no Chūjō remembers little of his “father,” Udaishō, but finds himself romantically drawn to the former empress, taking the pseudo-incest motif of Genji and Fujitsubo and making it literal. The incest motif is also played out through the new Sanmi no Chūjō’s infatuation with the consort of the crown prince who is, unbeknown to him, actually his half-sister. The crown prince, for his part, bears a striking resemblance to the former Udaishō (in fact, his grandmother), and when he plays Udaishō’s flute on the occasion of the former emperor’s fortieth birthday, heavenly maidens descend and dance above the gathering. One of the maidens begs the former empress to come to heaven with them – presumably her true home – but she declines. The tale ends with Jijū, the lady-in-waiting who served both Tai no Ue and the former empress, on her death-bed and about to reveal to Sanmi no Chūjō who his real father was.

Stylistically, *Ariake* can be considered a giko monogatari (pseudo-classical tale) in the sense that its language is very close to that of *Genji*, avoiding some of the changes Japanese underwent in the Kamakura period, such as an excessive use of honorifics. It also seems to provide a more unified narrator, in the person of Jijū, making the text somewhat *nikki*-like. In terms of plot, as Khan has written, “Few preceding texts other than *Genji* provide such a summa of the main themes and motifs of the court tale type of monogatari” (1998, 32).

Fūyō wakashū

Critical consideration of the monogatari genre reached its second peak in 1271 with the completion of the *Fūyō wakashū* (Collection of Wind-Tossed Leaves), an imperial anthology-like collection of over two hundred poems drawn exclusively from monogatari, in twenty books (only eighteen are extant). Again, this event shows interestingly gendered aspects. The collection was commissioned by the consort of retired emperor GoSoga (1220–72, r. 1242–6), Ōmiya In Saionji Kisshi, using books in her collection. The ladies in *Mumyōzōshi* had complained that a woman had never been called upon to edit an imperial anthology (*chokusenshū*), and poems from monogatari were never included in such anthologies. The *Fūyōshū*, then, marks the increased esteem of this narrative genre strongly associated with women. On the other hand, the editor of the anthology is thought not to have been a woman, but rather Fujiwara no Tameie (1198–1275), Teika’s son.

The collection provides evidence that it was in fact in the Kamakura period that most monogatari were produced. As Khan has written, “Whereas the *Mumyōzōshi* deals with twenty-nine monogatari, of which ten are extant, the

1420 waka in the extant eighteen books of *Fūyōwakashū* are culled from no fewer than 198 monogatari, and the complete text probably contained 1563 waka from 220 monogatari” (1998, 10). Konishi Jin’ichi argues that the increased production is likely due to increased readership, and quotes a passage from *Waga mi ni tadoru himegimi* in which a government minister is praised not only for having memorized the entire contents of the first three imperial anthologies, but also “all the monogatari that were ever written” (285). In other words, men now too were consumers of fiction.

Of the 198 monogatari listed in the *Fūyōshū*, only twenty-three are extant: all of those discussed above and fourteen others. Of the last group, none has been translated into a Western language, and several of them have had no critical edition in Japanese.

Premodern commentary on the classical literary canon

LEWIS COOK

The three most frequently and exhaustively commented texts of the classical literary canon are *Kokin wakashū* (Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems, hereafter KKS), *Ise monogatari* (The Tales of Ise), and *Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Genji). The “Kana Preface” to KKS in particular received more intensive exegetical attention, per word, than any other secular text in Japan. Apart from the fact that KKS was the first *waka* anthology compiled by imperial commission, such exceptional attention was likely encouraged by a tradition that the Kana Preface, the founding statement of *waka* poetics, was in part analogous and allusively indebted to the Mao Preface (aka Great Preface) to the *Shijing*, the first relatively systematic statement, among those that survive, of Chinese classical poetics. By freely adapting the typology of poetic rhetoric from the Mao Preface, Tsurayuki was tacitly exploiting the prestige of the *Shijing* as the first and only properly “literary” text in the court-sponsored Western Han canon, and in turn drawing on the exemplary status of the Mao Preface as the earliest extant commentary on a poetic monument in the sphere of literary Chinese.

It is noteworthy that both *The Tales of Ise* and *The Tale of Genji* were widely received by early generations of literati readers as resources for the study of *waka*. Thus the earliest commentaries on *Genji*, Koreyuki’s *Genji shaku* and Teika’s *Okuiiri*, were largely concerned with identifying poetic allusions and their sources. The prestige of courtly *waka* as the defining genre of “high literature” in the Heian capital from the end of the ninth century became an impetus to the canonization of *Ise* and *Genji* and a rationale for scholastic commentary on works which, albeit acknowledged as fictionalized autobiography in the case of *Ise* and more or less unalloyed fiction in that of *Genji*, could also be seen as beneficiaries of the analogy of KKS to the *Shijing* as a properly literary text that was hospitable, within the Han canon, to scholarly commentary.

The webs of intertextuality binding these three texts are another factor in their being singled out as objects of scholarly commentary. By contrast, for example, imperial waka anthologies for the three centuries after *KKS* were largely ignored by commentators until the eighteenth century; the same is true for *The Tale of Sagoromo*, a narrative fiction the waka of which were widely considered comparable to those of *Genji* in late Heian and Kamakura times. And there is virtually no tradition of early or medieval commentary on any collection of poem-tales that might have been compared to *Ise*. By contrast, the 1989 *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* edition of *KKS* identifies 196 distinct works consisting in part or whole of commentary on it from the late Heian through the end of the Edo periods. On a rough count, extant pre-Meiji commentaries on *The Tales of Ise* number over a hundred titles. For *The Tale of Genji* quantification is more difficult given the variety of texts which may be considered partially exegetical, yet it is clear that a disproportionate volume of commentary on each of these three works was produced over the centuries from the late Heian through the late Edo periods. The waka impetus noted above does not fully answer the inevitable question of why these three texts among many others of an ostensibly literary character should have occasioned such intensive exegetical labors, an activity more often associated by modern conventional wisdom with scholarly texts of Confucian and Buddhist traditions.

One factor must be that *KKS* and *Tales of Ise* themselves incorporate distinctive forms of commentary. *KKS* can be defined in fact as a corpus of cited poems framed by two kinds of editorial comments and two “prefaces.” (1) The superscriptions or head-notes (*kotogaki*, *kotobagaki*), literally words in prose (as opposed to the language of the poems), that include the specification of generic topics, statements of the occasion of a given poem, or a concise narrative account of the circumstances under which the poem was composed. To this category might be added the titles assigned to each of the twenty books making up the collection. These were in accord with well-established conventions in Chinese poetics, in the eighth-century collection *Man’yōshū*, and in the set topics of poetry matches and other formal or informal social occasions, and they were carefully emplaced by the compilers to generate structures of variety, temporal seriation, and perspective that give the anthology a remarkable degree of integrity. (2) Opposite to these are footnotes (*sachū*, literally “notes inscribed to the left” of the poem) which provide speculative commentary in the form of legends on the authorship of certain poems. In addition to these must be counted the apparatus of the “prefaces” which offer contextual accounts of the circumstances under which

the anthology was compiled, a brief history of the development of waka, an illustrated typology of its rhetorical forms, aesthetic or critical comments on the style of exemplary poets, and in the Kana Preface the so-called “old” or “minuscule” notes, interlinear comments often critical of the text proper. These last are of interest because there is no evidence for deciding whether they are editorial comments added after publication, or ironic editorial commentary by Ki no Tsurayuki, presumed author of the Kana Preface.

Similar questions are posed in *The Tales of Ise* by the frequent appearance of editorial comments, many of them critical of the episodes to which they are appended, others purporting to offer retrospective historical correctives by witnesses to or informants on the events narrated. Others still are evaluative of the poems or characters in various episodes and a few of them address the reader with seemingly ironic or skeptical questions about specific poems or the comportment of the hero or other characters. Although such comments may well have been added by editors or commentators during the centuries in which the work was being remolded toward the more or less definitive version of the Teika recension, there is no basis for deciding whether they are to be taken literally or ironically, or belong inside or outside of the text proper, and there is no tenable distinction between such comments and the interlinear format that commentary on canonical texts often took.

Although it is categorically different from the above forms of comments interpolated by compilers or possibly by editors, *Genji* is permeated by a mode of fictional commentary, undoubtedly the work of the historical author but taking the form of an implied author who interrupts the telling of the story to comment on events of the story or its recitation in the mode of direct address to the reader, a technique similar to an aside or soliloquy in drama. Striking examples are the opening words of the second chapter or the concluding passage of chapter 4. These are functionally equivalent to those editorial or quasi-editorial comments in *The Tales of Ise* that serve as marks of ironic or self-reflexive narration. This technique was singled out by fifteenth-century commentators on *Genji* who created the term *sōshiji* (or *sōshi no ji*, literally, “the ground [as opposed to the pattern or design] of the book”) to describe it.

If these are the primordial modes of premodern commentary on these three texts, they can also be seen as precedents for the earliest mode of scholastic exegesis, interlinear or marginal notations inscribed in a manuscript of the text (a practice which continued at least through the nineteenth century). This mode anticipated the next, consisting of *shō*, which literally means a culling of passages from an antecedent work, in practice representing

the result of aggregating interlinear comments into a separate work which cites only enough of the text commented to specify the object of commentary, in effect the reverse of a manuscript with interlinear comments, different only in the proportion of canonical text to commentary. The word *shō* is often translated as “book,” but a crucial distinction is lost. The manuscript of a canonical text itself was usually referred to as *hon* (the word for “book” in modern usage, but originally meaning a root, origin, or foundation), and *shō* became a generic term, in medieval usage, for a commentary in the sense of an aggregate of citations of a book with interposed comments.

Traditions of commentary on this tripartite canon were closely interrelated and typically transmitted through competing family or school lineages. The earliest commentaries on *KKS* were glossographical and philological, eventually fostering an emphasis on esoteric oral traditions regarding the referents and pronunciation of words which had become obscure by the twelfth century and after. Such esoteric traditions culminated in closely guarded but largely spurious secrets such as the identities of the “Three Birds” and the “Three Trees,” but there were also resilient traditions based on scholarly exegesis rather than esoterica, notably those of Ichijō Kanera, Tō no Tsuneyori, Sōgi, and others in the fifteenth century, who did not take the secret teachings seriously except as a lucrative form of pedagogical currency.

The earliest extant commentaries on *The Tales of Ise* inclined toward extravagant allegoresis incorporating strains of Esoteric and Tantric Buddhism and Shintō that flourished in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, often intertwined with heterodox *KKS* commentaries of a similar bent. These were in striking contrast with traditions of medieval commentary on *Genji*, which were notably less secretive, and with marginal and perfunctory exceptions tended to abstain from esoterism and allegoresis. There were indeed secret teachings on various mysteries in the interpretation of obscure words or phrases in *Genji*, but they never attained the prestige of those on *KKS* or *Ise*. The most plausible explanation for this is that, while there are varying but numerous obscurities and lacunae in the language, manuscript traditions and historical contexts of *KKS* and *Ise*, the fictional world of *Genji* is altogether too cohesive to be susceptible to sustained allegorization or esoteric interpretation. In the words of Hosokawa Yūsai, a seventeenth-century scholar and exegete, *The Tale of Genji* took fiction and turned it into fact, while *The Tales of Ise* took facts and turned them into fiction. Presumably this contrast does not apply well to *KKS* insofar as poetry is neither fact nor fiction.

The *Pillow Book* of Sei Shōnagon

HARUO SHIRANE

Sei Shōnagon (d. early eleventh century) was the daughter of Kiyohara Motosuke, a noted *waka* poet and one of the editors of the *Gosenshū* (Collection of Later Gleanings), the second imperial *waka* anthology. (The Sei in Sei Shōnagon's name comes from the Sino-Japanese reading for the Kiyo in Kiyohara.) Around 981, Sei Shōnagon married Tachibana no Norimitsu, the first son of the noted Tachibana family, but they separated after she bore him a child the next year. In 990 Fujiwara Kaneie, the husband of the author of the *Kagerō Diary*, stepped down from his position as regent (*kanpaku*) and gave it to his son Fujiwara Michitaka, referred to as middle regent (*naka no kanpaku*). Michitaka married his daughter Teishi to Emperor Ichijō (r. 986–1011) in 990, and she soon became a high consort (*nyōgo*) and then empress (*chūgū*). Sei Shōnagon became a lady-in-waiting to Teishi in 993, the year that Michitaka became prime minister (*daijō daijin*). In 994, Korechika, Michitaka's eldest son and the apparent heir to the regency, became palace minister (*naidaijin*). In 995 Michitaka died in an epidemic, and in the following year Korechika was exiled in a move engineered by Michitaka's younger brother and rival Michinaga, after which Teishi was forced to leave the imperial palace. Sei Shōnagon continued to serve her until Teishi's death in childbirth in 1000. In the meantime, in 999, Shōshi, Michinaga's daughter and Murasaki Shikibu's mistress, became the chief consort to Emperor Ichijō, marking Michinaga's ascent to the pinnacle of power.

The *Pillow Book*, which was finished around 1005, after the demise of Teishi's salon, focuses on the years 993 and 994, when the Michitaka family and Teishi were at the height of their glory, leaving unmentioned the subsequent political tragedy. Almost all the major works by women of this time were written by women in Empress Shōshi's salon: Murasaki Shikibu, Izumi Shikibu, and Akazome Emon. Only Sei Shōnagon's *Pillow Book* represents the rival salon of Empress Teishi. Like many of the other diaries by court women, the *Pillow Book* can be seen as a memorial to the author's

patron, specifically a homage to the Naka no Kanpaku family and a literary prayer to the spirit of the deceased empress Teishi. One of the few indirect references to the sad circumstances that befell Teishi's family is "The Cat Who Lived in the Palace," about the cruel punishment, sudden exile, and ignominious return of the dog Okinamaro, who, like Korechika, secretly returned to the capital and later was pardoned.

With roughly three hundred discrete prose sections, the *Pillow Book* defies genre definition. In the modern period, it was treated as an exemplar of the *zuihitsu* (meanderings of the brush) or miscellany genre, centered on personal observations and musings. Using this guideline, modern literary histories treat the *Pillow Book* as the generic predecessor of *Hōjōki* (Account of My Ten-Foot-Square Hut, 1212) and *Tsurezuregusa* (Essays in Idleness, 1331?).

The roughly three hundred discrete sections of the *Pillow Book* can be divided into three different types – list, essay, and diary – which sometimes overlap. The lists consist of noun sections (*mono wa*), which describe particular categories of things like "Flowering Trees," "Birds," "Insects," and tend to focus on nature or poetic topics; and adjectival sections (*monozukushi*), which contain interesting lists associated with a particular state, such as "Depressing Things," cited below, and are often humorous and witty (particularly in the case of derogatory adjectives).

Depressing Things

A dog howling in the daytime. A wickerwork fishnet in spring. A red plum-blossom dress in the Third or Fourth Months. A lying-in room when the baby has died. A cold, empty brazier. An ox driver who hates his oxen. A scholar whose wife has one girl child after another.

The wickerwork fishnet (at least in classical poetry) was a sign of autumn but is incongruously combined here with spring, creating aesthetic dissonance, and the red plum-blossom dress should be worn at the beginning of spring (in the First Month) instead of, as found here, in the late spring (Third Month) or early summer (Fourth Month). What depresses the author, in other words, are things that are out of sync with seasonal associations, or with the phase of the season, which Heian aristocrats, particularly those at court, were highly attuned to and had a deep aesthetic awareness of, as made evident in the famous opening section of the work.

In spring it is the dawn that is most beautiful. As the light creeps over the hills, their outlines are dyed a faint red, and wisps of purplish cloud trail over them.

In summer the nights. Not only when the moon shines but on dark nights, too, as the fireflies flit to and fro, and even when it rains, how beautiful it is!

In autumn the evenings, when the glittering sun sinks close to the edge of the hills and the crows fly back to their nests in threes and fours and twos; more charming still is a file of wild geese, like specks in the distant sky. When the sun has set, one's heart is moved by the sound of the wind and the hum of the insects.

In winter the early mornings . . .

Here Sei Shōnagon takes a classical poetic association (such as autumn and evening) and then expands it in unorthodox ways; in autumn, she incorporates the silhouette of crows, which were not a standard waka topic.

The diary sections, such as "The Sliding Screen in the Back of the Hall," describe specific events and figures in history, particularly those related to Empress Teishi and her immediate family. The essay sections may focus on a specific season or month, but, unlike the diary sections, they sometimes bear no historical dates. The textual variants of the *Pillow Book* arrange these three section types differently. The Maeda and Sakai variants separate them into three large groups. By contrast, the Nōin variant and the Sankan variant, which has become the canonical version, mix the different types of sections. The end result is that the *Pillow Book*, at least in the Sankan version, appears ahistorical; events are not presented in chronological order but instead move back and forth in time, with no particular development or climax, creating a sense of a world suspended in time, a mode perhaps suitable for a paean to Teishi's heyday.

Another category, which overlaps with the others and resembles anecdotal literature, is the "stories heard" (*kikigaki*), that is, stories heard from one's master or mistress, which provided knowledge and models of cultivation. Indeed, much of the *Pillow Book* is about aristocratic women's education, especially the need for aesthetic awareness as well as erudition, allusiveness, and extreme refinement in communication. Sei Shōnagon shows a particular concern for delicacy and harmony, for the proper combination of object, sense, and circumstance, usually a fusion of human and natural worlds. Incongruity and disharmony, by contrast, become the butt of humor and of Sei Shōnagon's sharp wit. The *Pillow Book* is often read as a personal record of accomplishments, with a number of the sections about incidents that display the author's talent. Indeed, much of the interest of *Pillow Book* has been in the strong character and personality of Sei Shōnagon.

The *Pillow Book* is noted for its distinctive prose style: its rhythmic, quick-moving, compressed, and varied sentences, often set up in alternating

couplets. Although the typical Japanese sentence ends with the predicate, the phrases and sentences in the *Pillow Book* often end with nouns or eliminate the exclamatory and connective particles so characteristic of Heian women's literature. The compact, forceful, bright, witty style stands in contrast to the gentle, elongated style found in *The Tale of Genji* and other works by Heian women. Indeed, the adjectival sections in particular have a *haikai*-esque (comic linked verse) quality, marked by witty, unexpected juxtaposition.

The *Pillow Book* is now considered one of the pillars of Heian vernacular court literature, but unlike the *Kokinshū*, *The Tales of Ise*, and *The Tale of Genji*, which had been canonized by the thirteenth century, the *Pillow Book* was not a required text for waka poets (perhaps because it contained relatively little poetry) and was relatively neglected in the Heian and medieval periods. But it became popular with the new commoner audience in the Tokugawa (Edo) period, and ever since, it has been widely read for its style, humor, and interesting lists.

Heian literary diaries: from *Tosa nikki* to *Sarashina nikki*

SONJA ARNTZEN

This chapter focuses on five major diaries of the Heian period, *Tosa nikki* (Tosa Diary), *Kagerō nikki* (Kagerō Diary), *Izumi shikibu nikki* (Izumi Shikibu Diary), *Murasaki shikibu nikki* (Murasaki Shikibu Diary), and *Sarashina nikki* (Sarashina Diary). Together they form a remarkable body of autobiographical texts that is unparalleled at such an early date. A conscious effort at aesthetic shaping for the eyes of others is apparent in all of them, which results in a sophisticated literary quality. As a consequence, when the canon of classical Japanese literature was established in the early twentieth century, the diary form was designated as an important category. This is in marked contrast to English literary history in which the diary is conceived of primarily as the forerunner of journalism. These diaries curiously share “modern-seeming” features such as a secular focus, acuity in psychological description, and, most important of all, an awareness that telling the “story” of one’s life inevitably entails a kind of fictionalization. The final unusual feature is the strong presence of women writers. Four of the five major diaries were authored by women, and the male progenitor of the genre Ki no Tsurayuki (d. c. 945) assumed a female persona to write his diary.

The Japanese term for the genre, *nikki* (daily record or diary), originally referred to the official and personal diaries of daily events kept in *kanbun* (literary Chinese) by male court officials. Kanbun diaries were chronologically organized with dated entries and were generally confined to recording facts. Diaries written in vernacular Japanese with *kana* (Japanese script), by contrast, have a looser chronological organization, tend to focus on emotional states occasioned by events rather than the events themselves, and usually contain a large number of *waka* poems. In fact, a more direct precursor for the kana diary than the kanbun diary is the *shikashū* (personal waka poetry collection). Since the composition of waka had become an important social skill for courtiers from at least the ninth century on, most aristocrats kept a collection of their own compositions. These collections

often had extended headnotes recording the circumstances of composition and the social interactions that occasioned the exchanging of poems. This often resulted in a kind of personal diary. The *Ise-shū* (Collected Poems of Lady Ise) is sometimes regarded as the first kana diary. The consensus of recent scholarship on that text, however, asserts the *Ise-shū* to be a fictionalized account of the life of Lady Ise (c. 877–c. 940) done significantly after her death on the basis of her collected poems.

This notion of a “fictionalized” biography brings up the other literary genre of the Heian period with which the diary developed in dialogue, the *monogatari* (vernacular tale). Some of the diaries of the Heian period were known by alternate titles that designated them as *monogatari* rather than *nikki*. The *Takamitsu nikki* (Takamitsu Diary, c. 962), alternatively known as the *Tōnomine Shōshō monogatari* (The Tale of the Lesser Captain of Tōnomine), is a case in point. Based on a historical event, the abrupt taking of the tonsure by the twenty-three-old Takamitsu (c. 939–c. 985), a prominent member of the most powerful branch of the Fujiwara family, the text consists of a collection of poems and letters exchanged by Takamitsu, his wife, and other family members. The prominence of exchanged letters in the account means that Takamitsu’s own voice is only one among many voices, which is perhaps why the text came to be known as a “tale” as well as a diary. This multivoiced character is apparent in all diary texts. Nonetheless the five major diaries analyzed below present a more unified point of view than is found in the *Takamitsu Diary*.

Tosa Diary (c. 935)

The *Tosa Diary* chronicles a fifty-five-day journey taken by the author Ki no Tsurayuki, his family and entourage back to the capital in 934 after his period of service as provincial governor in Tosa province. Although his official career was not distinguished, Ki no Tsurayuki had the distinction of being one of the compilers of the *Kokinshū* (c. 905–14), and he composed the Japanese preface to that anthology, which was the first attempt to write discursively in vernacular Japanese. At the comparatively advanced age of sixty-six, he added to this list of “firsts” by composing the first diary in the vernacular language.

The journey itself provides a unity to the text. All the entries are dated, making this diary the closest to the usual conception of a diary in the Western or Chinese context. The conscientious use of dates betrays the writing habits of the male author who is used to keeping daily records in Chinese. The

account is balanced between expressions of wonder at the beauty of the scenery through which the party travels and depiction of the difficulties and dangers of the journey.

Nearly all the episodes have poems as their focal point. A strong modern current of interpretation regarding the *Tosa Diary* is that Ki no Tsurayuki's purpose in writing this text was to put forth his mature view on the essence of Japanese poetry. The poems in the diary are attributed to various members of the party, including a young girl, an old woman, the "leader" of the group (presumably Tsurayuki), and the mother of a child who had died. Many of the poems are ascribed vaguely to "someone in the party." Nonetheless it is generally assumed that Tsurayuki authored all of the poems.

In addition to the journey and poetry, a third strand unifying the *Tosa Diary* is the theme of grief for a lost child. Throughout the text, poems by the grieving mother and others recall the young girl who had accompanied the family to Tosa but died there. The general assumption is that the child was Tsurayuki's and that another purpose of the diary was to eulogize his and the family's loss.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the *Tosa Diary* is the author's choice of a female narrator. The first sentence introduces her: "I wrote this wondering what it would be like for a woman to try her hand at one of those diaries that men are said to keep" (Heldt trans., 204). The "diaries that men are said to keep" refers to kanbun diaries, and the simplest explanation for the choice of a woman narrator is that it allowed Tsurayuki to write in Japanese. The text has always been read as Tsurayuki's own and the woman narrator is not given a distinct personality. She is an "I" that enables the author to describe himself from the outside, yet often narrator and author are indistinguishable. This is made possible by the particular nature of Japanese grammar, in which subjects are not required for every verb, and pronouns even when they are used are not as expressive of personal identity and agency as they are in English. Accordingly a narrative voice can easily slide in and out of various positions in classical Japanese prose. While this is difficult to convey in English translation, consider the following example from the latter part of the diary:

Several of my fellow travelers were accompanied by children they had not had when they went down this same river, children born during their stay in the province of Tosa. Whenever the boat stopped, they would carry their children with them as they went ashore. Seeing this, the mother whose child had died was unable to contain her grief and sobbed as she composed this:

nakarashi mo	Those who had none
aritsutsu kaeru	now return with theirs:
hito no ko o	other's children
arishi mo nakute	bring sorrow to one who
kuru ga kanashisa	has lost her own.

What must the father have felt as he heard this? (Held trans., 211)

The narrator describes the scene and then evokes the first-person perspective of the mother with the citation of the poem, whereupon the narrator asks readers to imagine the father's feelings, but at least in the original we also hear Tsurayuki himself saying, "Please imagine my grief as the father." This is particularly true because what immediately follows in the text is a comment on the poetics of emotional expression in China and Japan that can only be understood as in Tsurayuki's own voice.

In the *Tosa Diary*, then, we have a partially fictionalized account of a life experience that has always been received as authentic personal expression. The diary is not referenced directly in the other diaries by women authors that followed in the succeeding generation, but it is assumed that knowledge of it, even if only as a precedent for composing diaries in the vernacular language, did inspire them.

Kagerō Diary (c. 974)

The *Kagerō Diary* covers the years 954 to 974 in the life of Fujiwara Michitsuna's Mother (935?–94?). She was a member of a mid-ranking branch of the Fujiwara family, and became the second wife of Fujiwara Kaneie (929–90), scion of the most powerful branch of that large extended clan. The text focuses on the author's relationship with her husband. Her marriage was begun, sustained, and several times saved by the exchange of poetry. Therefore, poetry exchanges between wife and husband form the core of the work. The prose contexts for the poems as well as the poems themselves chronicle the author's shifting state of mind. The result is an intimate psychological portrait of a woman troubled by insecurity and dissatisfaction but achieving at the end of her marriage, and of the book, some measure of calm and emotional independence.

The opening of the *Kagerō Diary* gives a well-wrought declaration of her purpose for writing. She begins by speaking of herself in the third person, "Thus the time has passed and there is one in the world who has lived such a vain existence" (Arntzen trans., 57). She goes on to castigate the "old tales" for

their romantic fantasies, coming to the realization that “if she were to make a record of a life like her own, being really nobody, it might actually be novel, and could serve to answer, should anyone ask, what is it like, the life of a woman married to a highly placed man” (ibid.). She ends her prologue with a caveat about the unreliability of memory, which excuses her from any inaccuracy in advance. Although, as with the *Tosa Diary*, it seems that the author finds it more comfortable to begin speaking about herself from the outside, she immediately drops the third-person narration and the rest of the diary is quite firmly in the first person, almost obsessively so for the taste of at least one prominent Japanese scholar, who saw self-absorption embedded in her writing style.¹ In her narration, she not only describes her actions and emotions but also gives verbatim renderings of her internal thoughts, a technique that was later exploited to excellent effect by Murasaki Shikibu in *The Tale of Genji*. The following example is from early in the work when she and her husband have just managed to overcome an estrangement. They have slept together but still feel on edge as they gaze out together at the autumn flowers. They exchange poems in which he accuses her of feeling cold toward him and she retorts by complaining of his neglect:

Saying such things, it was painful between us as always.

As the late rising moon was just about to emerge from behind the mountain ridge, he makes as though to depart. Then, perhaps seeing the expression on my face as I think *surely, tonight at least he doesn't have to go*, he says, “Well, if you really think I ought to stay . . .?” But I didn’t feel that desperate, so I say:

ikaga semu	What is there to do?
yama no ha ni dani	Since your heart is like the moon
todomarade	that does not linger
kokoro mo sora ni	at the edge of the mountain
idemu tsuki o ba	but would emerge into the sky.

He replies:

hisakata no	You say this heart-moon
sora ni kokoro no	emerges into the o’er-spread sky,
izu to ieba	yet it will leave
kage wa soko ni mo	its reflection
tomarubeki kana	behind in this pond.

and so he stayed.

(Arntzen trans., 85)

¹ See Watanabe Minoru, *Heianchō bunshōshi* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1981) 90–112, and “Style and Point of View in Kagerō nikki,” trans. Richard Bowring, *Journal of Japanese Studies* 10, no. 2 (1984).

The immediacy of the *Kagerō Diary*'s narration style is also demonstrated in the translation above. A retrospective view exemplified by the opening of the diary alternates with one which approaches a historical present, especially in the entries centered on poem exchanges.

A significant portion of the diary is given over to accounts of the author's pilgrimages. The travel passages in the *Kagerō Diary* are often overlooked because of the intensity of the story around the marriage, but they have an interest of their own because of the liberating effect travel appears to have on the author's consciousness. Her relationship with her only son is also given considerable attention in the text and that relationship takes on an intriguingly ironic aspect when he reaches maturity and she ends up composing love poems for him to use in his own courtship adventures. The *Kagerō Diary* is the only woman's diary from the Heian period that gives the perspective of a woman who spent her entire life "within the home." The authors of the next three diaries all experienced service at court.

Izumi Shikibu Diary (c. 1008)

The *Izumi Shikibu Diary* gives an account of ten months in a love affair between Izumi Shikibu (fl. c. 1000) and Prince Atsumichi (981–1007). Izumi Shikibu had already been involved with Atsumichi's elder brother who had died in 1002. Both affairs were noted as scandals in contemporary histories. The first affair resulted in Izumi Shikibu's divorce from her first husband and disownment by her father. The diary records that, in the year following the elder brother's death, Atsumichi and Izumi Shikibu were initially brought together due to their shared grief. At the end of the diary, the prince installs Izumi Shikibu in his household, ostensibly as a personal servant but more like a secret wife, at which the prince's official consort takes offense and returns to her family home. The diary ends with this somewhat uncomfortable but "happy" ending. The course of the relationship in real life came to a sad ending when the prince died four years later, leaving Izumi Shikibu alone, still estranged from her family, and the butt of gossip. Nonetheless, the next year in 1008, she was invited by the most powerful of all the Fujiwara regents, Fujiwara Michinaga, to serve as a lady-in-waiting in the entourage of his daughter Shōshi, which had already grown into an important literary salon with members such as Murasaki Shikibu and Akazome Emon.

Of the five diaries discussed here, the *Izumi Shikibu Diary* is most like a work of fiction. A passionate love affair develops between a man and a woman who are separated by social standing yet drawn irresistibly to one

another. She distrusts his reliability; he doubts her fidelity, and only after a series of contretemps do they end up firmly together. The account is narrated as securely in the third person as classical Japanese grammar allows, with the main female protagonist referred to as “the woman” throughout. Moreover, the diary contains verbatim records of communications that Izumi Shikibu could not have witnessed herself, such as a scolding delivered to the prince at home by his old nurse, or, at the end of the text, an exchange of letters between the prince’s official consort and her relatives. In fact, the text of the diary ends with a scribe’s note to the effect that the letter of the consort and the words of her ladies-in-waiting “appear to have been invented” (*kakinashi nameri*). Certainly, this mode of narration is more like a tale than a diary.

Only one manuscript line gives the title as *nikki*, the rest call it a *monogatari*. Some modern scholars maintain that, like the *Ise nikki*, it must be a fictionalized biography. Nonetheless, the current consensus is that Izumi Shikibu’s authorship of the text should be sustained, and since the Meiji period the preference has been to call it a diary. Despite the fictional aspects of the text, its overall feeling is as intimate and personal as a first-person narration. Since all the long passages of introspection are by the woman, her consciousness dominates the narrative.

Izumi Shikibu might have been invited into Shōshi’s court to write up an account of her love affair with the prince that would serve to eulogize him and provide the “inside” story for one of the most talked-about affairs of the generation. Prince Atsumichi was part of Michinaga’s protected circle of imperial family members and Michinaga might have wished to exercise some control over how the prince was remembered. Joshua Mostow has advanced the thesis that Heian women’s diaries performed a political purpose by raising the cultural profile of the Fujiwara regents, displaying them as skilled poets and amorous men. A corollary of his thesis is that the women authors found ways to authentically represent themselves in the interstices of the public purpose of their compositions (*At the House of Gathered Leaves*, 1–38). If a scenario similar to this might be true of Izumi Shikibu, then one can imagine the difficulty of the task, and how vulnerable she was to becoming a figure of derision. Writing in the third person was at least one way to distance herself from her own story.

The exchange of poetry between Izumi Shikibu and the prince is more central to this text than even that between husband and wife in the *Kagerō Diary*. Through her poems, we are drawn into the intensity of her passion. The poems are moments that stop the action in the text and draw readers into empathy with the poet. Although this is generally true of the role of

poetry in all Heian diaries, this phenomenon is especially powerful in the *Izumi Shikibu Diary*. The overarching message of this text could be summarized as follows, “I may not have loved wisely, but oh, how I loved and was loved. Let this poetry stand as my testament.”

Murasaki Shikibu Diary (c. 1010)

Murasaki Shikibu (d. c. 1014) is best known as the author of *The Tale of Genji*. Given the influence that colossus of creative achievement had on the entire course of Japanese literature, enduring interest in her diary is no surprise. Her composition of *The Tale of Genji* is assumed to have prompted her invitation to join Shōshi’s court. The diary does contain precious information on the early circulation of *The Tale of Genji*, but it begins as a sort of official journal recording the politically significant birth of a male child to Shōshi. There is speculation that Michinaga commissioned Murasaki Shikibu to produce a vernacular record of his daughter’s court somewhat in the style of a Chinese diary. Nonetheless, the narrative quickly moves to a more autobiographical mode in which the narrator muses on the kind of person she has become and the disjunction she feels between how others view her and how she views herself. Famous among these passages is one that records her early education in Chinese texts that was gained from observation of her father’s lessons to her brother. She reports that she was so much swifter at this academic learning than her brother that her father was moved to exclaim, “What a pity she was not born a man” (Bowring trans., 139). Overall, the portrait she constructs of herself is that of a sensitive intellectual woman who feels out of step with her society and is always at pains to conceal the depth of her mind and learning from others.

The diary is also known for its vivid “backstage” vignettes of court life. She gives brief but penetrating assessments of court colleagues. The descriptions of Sei Shōnagon and Izumi Shikibu in particular have been closely scrutinized for the rare contemporary information they contain about those writers. Poetry exchanges with other ladies-in-waiting offer insight regarding the intimate friendships between working women at court.

The diary is a patchwork of different textual styles which include journalistic reportage, miscellaneous reflections, and written exchanges with others. The longest retrospective account of her life is actually written as a letter addressed to an unspecified person. Some suggest it was meant for her only daughter because it is interspersed with advice as to how to behave in society. Of all the Heian diaries, the *Murasaki Shikibu Diary* feels the least finished. It is

as though she never had time to go back and shape the text into an aesthetic whole, yet every passage has an interest of its own and all provide insight into this woman who has come to be regarded as the greatest writer of her time.

Sarashina Diary (c. 1060)

The *Sarashina Diary* spans forty years in the life of Sugawara Takasue's Daughter (1008 –?). Her father was a direct descendant of the famous poet and scholar Sugawara Michizane (845–903). At the age of ten, Takasue's Daughter accompanied her father to his posting as the deputy provincial governor in the province of Kazusa in eastern Japan, and she returned when she was thirteen. Her account of the two-month trip back to the capital occupies about a fifth of the diary and provides a rare view of travel through the fresh eyes of a child. The family suffered a number of setbacks during the author's adolescence and youth, including a fire that destroyed their residence, the death of the eldest daughter in childbirth, and a long period with no new appointment for the father. After her father finally obtained and completed a governorship of the province of Hitachi, Takasue's Daughter began service as a lady-in-waiting in the household of the infant Princess Yūshi (1038–1105) and was married to a middle-ranking courtier, Tachibana Toshimichi (1002–58), all in her thirty-second year. She managed to bear at least two children to her husband and keep up sporadic court attendance through her middle years, and also appears to have enjoyed economic security. When her husband died suddenly in 1058 her fortunes changed for the worse, and the last pages of the diary record the loneliness and sadness of old age. Takasue's Daughter barely mentions her family life in the diary; rather it is her travels, her reading, her dreams, and her poetry that occupy most of it.

Exhibiting a limpid clarity on the surface, the *Sarashina Diary* has a complex structure. The narration begins with a skillful evocation of a child's point of view, which is reprised throughout the work, particularly in passages that record travel and those centered around poems written in response to natural phenomenon. The opening also introduces the major theme of the diary, the author's fascination with tale literature. She records how her first Buddhist prayers were directed toward returning to the capital so that she could get to read all the tales that existed. Standing at the apex of her desire for fiction was *The Tale of Genji*, of which she had only been given partial oral renditions by her stepmother and elder sister. Takasue's Daughter lived one generation after the completion of *The Tale of Genji* and her diary bears

witness to the powerful effect a great work of fiction can have on the consciousness of its readers. When at the age of fourteen she finally obtained a complete copy of *The Tale of Genji* and closeted herself away to read it day and night until she found she had naturally come to memorize portions of it, she declared that reading made her happier than if she had had the “chance to become Empress.” On the other hand, right after this, she records a dream in which a monk tells her to memorize the *Lotus Sutra*. This introduces a counter-theme into the diary of the dangers of an addiction to fiction. In retrospective passages throughout the work, she admonishes herself for her frivolous pursuit of fiction and poetry. On the one hand, she claims that she ignored warnings, such as the ones delivered in dreams, but her careful recording of these dreams and their placement in juxtaposition with her excesses of infatuation show that she was keenly aware at an early age of a conflict between an absorption in literature and the need for salvation.

On the surface of her work, Takasue's Daughter displays only the simplistic understanding of Buddhism that was typical of her time, in which Buddhist practice was primarily regarded as a means to obtain good fortune in this life. Yet, the superficial message, “I was unsuccessful in life because my fascination with fiction and poetry distracted me from Buddhist practice,” is undercut by most of the content, which bears witness to the consoling power of literature. In much the same way, Takasue's Daughter portrays herself as only a naïve reader of *The Tale of Genji*, a smitten fan. Yet again, careful attention to subtle allusions to *The Tale of Genji* embedded in the text reveal the author to have been a very sophisticated reader. It is as though Takasue's Daughter took seriously Murasaki Shikibu's advice for women to never openly display their depth.

Intertextual allusions in the *Sarashina Diary* reveal that Takasue's Daughter had assiduously read not only the *Murasaki Shikibu Diary* but also the *Kagerō Diary* and Sei Shōnagon's *Pillow Book*. A picture emerges of a society of women writers who were an engaged audience for each other's works. The complex construction of the *Sarashina Diary* presupposes an audience capable of reading between the lines. For example, Takasue's Daughter makes no mention of her fiction writing in her diary, even though she is credited by Fujiwara Teika, the Kamakura period redactor of her text, with the authorship of four tales (two of which, the *Hamamatsu Chūnagon monogatari* and *Yoru no nezame*, are partially extant); yet this was something of which her contemporary readers would have been aware. The *Sarashina Diary* is a multifaceted text that defies easy definition, but one of the ways it can be summarized is as a portrait of the writer as reader.

Later developments

This survey of diaries from the Heian period reveals a fluid genre that encompasses texts that blend such Western categories as travel journal, memoir, autobiography, and fictionalized autobiography. The great variety among the texts themselves shows that *nikki* were not bound by conformance to strict norms as in the case of *waka* poetry. In fact, the last of diaries to be produced in the Heian period, the *Sanuki no Suke nikki* (Sanuki no Suke Diary, c. 1109) opened up new ground again. Written by Fujiwara Nagako (1079?–?), a personal attendant to Emperor Horikawa (1079–1107), it provides an intimate portrait of Emperor Horikawa during his final illness. In fact, so much is the diary focused on the emperor that it has been alternately known as the *Horikawa-in nikki* (Emperor Horikawa Diary). Nonetheless, an equal purpose of the diary is to memorialize Nagako's own service at court and portray her passionate devotion to her sovereign. The political, professional, and personal are inextricably intertwined in this text. Moreover, poetry is no longer central to the narrative. The *Sanuki no Suke Diary* presages diaries written by women in the Kamakura period, which share similar characteristics.

The major diaries of the Heian period were all reproduced in woodblock editions during the Tokugawa period, making them available to a general audience. As mentioned above, these diaries were given an important place in the modern canon of Japanese literature. They were first hailed as early forerunners of the “I-Novel,” a form of autobiographical fiction that dominated Japanese literary production in the Meiji and Taisho periods. When the “I-Novel” fell into disfavor after the Second World War, the diaries were recuperated by critics who recast them as “the epitome of the national tradition, prefiguring ‘true modernity’” (Suzuki, 73). The presence of so many women among these early diary authors recommends their study to anyone interested in questions of gender in literary production.

The Heian Academy: literati culture from Minamoto no Shitagō to Ōe no Masafusa

BRIAN STEININGER

Established in the late seventh century to support the state's growing need for literate bureaucrats, the State Academy (*Daigakuryō*, literally "Bureau of Higher Education") was modeled closely on the Chinese civil service examination and accompanying educational apparatus. However, whereas imperial China later developed a powerful class of "examination elite," Japan's literati were concentrated in the lower nobility, largely alienated from political influence. The status of the Academy was bolstered during the reign and retirement of Emperor Saga (r. 809–23, d. 842), but the tenth century brought a sharp decline in Academy enrollment by children of the highest-ranked households, as well as the number of Academy graduates on the Council of State. In subsequent centuries, the lasting image of Heian literati has been the "clownish, wretched, unkempt" professors of Yūgiri's school entrance ceremony in *The Tale of Genji*, puffed-up and pathetic amid the smirks of their social betters.

At the same time that the upper nobility was losing interest in academic education, changes within the Academy were concentrating those opportunities left to graduates in the hands of a few established scholarly lineages. The Academy's temporary rise in status in the ninth century seems to have encouraged a tendency toward familial privilege, and the displacement of examination-based promotion by various forms of nomination eventually led to a system of officially sanctioned nepotism within the Academy.

In 935, Letters Professor Ōe no Koretoki petitioned the throne to allow his student Tachibana no Naomoto to take the *taisaku* examination (the highest-level test for Letters students at the Academy), arguing that, "before [877], many [examinees] were men who established their family's name. But after [889], there have only been sons and grandsons of scholars who carry on their parent's occupation. No more than four or five have [advanced] without relying on family influence" (*Ruijū fusenshō* 9.249). The child of a professor

had several advantages over other students, particularly access to a large library – a vital prerequisite to scholarly authority in the absence of widespread printing. Professors also controlled the scholarships that determined test eligibility, and they naturally favored their children and disciples over other students. The result was a concentration of power in the hands of familial lineages including the Sugawara, the Ōe, the Kiyohara, and the Nakahara. Prominent scholars from these households conducted private tutorial circles (the most famous being the Sugawara school begun by Michizane's father Koreyoshi), which effectively supplanted the official curriculum of the Academy in importance.

Parallel to this privatization of the public functions of the Academy was the rise of family-sponsored dormitory-colleges, which gradually took on an official role within the Academy's administration. The most powerful was the Kangakuin, established in 821 to provide room, board, and tutoring to Fujiwara youths attending the Academy. By the eleventh century, this institution successfully added several Fujiwara sub-branches to the short list of privileged scholarly lineages. Apart from this addition, however, the overall tendency in the Academy was toward increased inheritance of posts and decreased potential for social mobility.

Inheritance of scholarly occupations was the rule by the end of the tenth century. Already by the mid tenth century, men who were not born into an established scholarly lineage were effectively precluded from the highest level of scholarly posts. There are a few instances of such "unaffiliated" students receiving permission to sit for examinations through a direct appeal to the throne, but by the mid eleventh century even this ceases. Just as the highest examinations were limited to the children of certain lineages, a growing system of nominations (primarily controlled by the professors and the heads of dormitory-colleges) took the place of testing as a means of distributing offices to scholars. Thus the (ostensibly) merit-based testing system itself became increasingly irrelevant over the course of the tenth century. Especially talented men might seek adoption into a scholarly lineage in order to have the opportunity for advancement.

A typical student who completed one of the four central curricula and entered court service from the Academy could thereby receive a relatively low-level (sixth to eighth rank) secretarial post in either the provinces or the capital ministries and bureaux. These men mostly came from lower officialdom, and even the most successful rarely rose above the fifth rank. Those students with the family background to be nominated for scholarships and higher examinations, on the other hand, could usually count on advancing

into a fifth-rank administrative post, oftentimes serving directly under the Council of State. In the early Heian, talented scholars were sometimes able to rise to posts on the Council itself, but the hegemony of the Fujiwara Regents' House effectively ended literati political influence. From the tenth century onward, the fundamental prerequisite to political influence was the acquisition of *tenjōbito* (privy courtier) status, and by itself an Academy education could not provide this. A hereditary scholar who received the appropriate nominations might hope to eventually rise to fourth rank, confined to offices traditionally held by his lineage.

Thus, when discussing the literati of the mid to late Heian, we need to make a distinction between the broad mass of Academy graduates who worked as clerks in the bureaucracy, and those specialist "Confucians" (*jusha*) who derived from established scholarly lineages and monopolized instructor posts in the Academy. The collection *Gōdanshō* (discussed below) contains numerous anecdotes illustrating the friction between hereditary scholars and unaffiliated students, as in this conversation about Sugawara no Fumitoki (899–981), scion of the Sugawara lineage, and Minamoto no Shitagō (911–83), a less prestigious student from the same Letters curriculum:

He said, "Do you understand Fumitoki's work, 'Song of an Old Man's Retirement'?" I replied no, but I had heard about the format . . . It begins with a couplet of one-character lines, and increases to twelve characters per line. He said, "Yes. It's like a fan's edge [spreading outward]. Fumitoki made this song with careful thought over a period of three years. When he finished, he first showed it to Shitagō. Shitagō read it, and in the space of a night composed a response in the same format and sent it to Fumitoki. Fumitoki was very upset at [Sitagō's] thoughtlessness. Other people of the time also criticized him. It's not that the composition was mediocre, but he showed no consideration or tact . . ."

(5:73)

Shitagō's mastery of Chinese-style composition was recognized, such that Fumitoki might send him a draft of his new work (and he would be repeatedly anthologized in the eleventh-century works *Wakan rōeishū* and *Honchō monzui*). However, the aesthetic sensibility of the Heian court was intimately bound up with a rigid class structure, and Fumitoki's parentage, office, and rank all gave him a cultural authority Shitagō could not possibly match (in *Gōdanshō*, it is Fumitoki who is held up as a literary exemplar to be studied and imitated). This distinction between hereditary and unaffiliated scholars was well established by the end of the tenth century. The parody of Academy professors in *The Tale of Genji*, mentioned earlier, might well be taken as a shot fired by the disadvantaged at those favored by institutionalized nepotism: Murasaki Shikibu's father,

Fujiwara no Tametoki, was an unaffiliated scholar who languished without a post for ten years after the abdication of Emperor Kazan.¹

From the mid-Heian onward, scholars from both groups adapted to the changing social environment by seeking advancement through forms of clientage, performing services for more powerful nobles. Just as in their bureaucratic occupations, which often involved drafting Council decrees and other official documents, these forms of patronage were primarily dependent on a graduate's training in formal composition. Academy students and graduates were often called upon to compose poetry to provide entertainment for banquets, both at court (including ritual celebrations such as the Chrysanthemum Festival and unofficial poetry gatherings in the Imperial Library or other palace offices) and at private parties. Banquet poetry was almost without exception composed in the *kudaishi* (topic-line poetry) genre, a form of Chinese-style regulated verse (*lǔshi*) with a shared, set topic appropriate to the occasion (e.g. "Chrysanthemums bloom and the riverbank is fragrant" at a Chrysanthemum Banquet held in the riverside Reizei Mansion) and a complex set of rules governing rhyme, prosody, and rhetorical technique. Sometimes in private communications and excursions outside the capital, poets broke with these rigid formal requirements to compose what were labeled *mudaishi* (topic-less poems).

Graduates were also frequently commissioned to draft formal documents such as *hyō* (memorials to the throne) and *mōshibumi* (petitions for promotion), customarily written in an ornate, Chinese-style parallel prose (*benreibun*, Chinese *pianwen*). Perhaps the most important form of unofficial employment for Heian literati was the composition of formal religious dedications called *ganmon*. These were presented by the sponsor of a Buddhist mass or offering to detail his or her motivation and explain the desired benefit. The most common variety was the funerary dedication, presented as part of a service (*hōe*) to pray for the rebirth of the deceased in paradise. The sponsors of such services frequently commissioned Academy graduates to draft the accompanying *ganmon* (often with quite specific instructions and demands for revisions).

Though eulogy and prayer are important components of these texts, the content tends to focus particularly on the bereavement of the living, and they served to bring an emotional climax to rituals of communal grief (described vividly in *Eiga monogatari*). Typical of the genre is this portion of a piece

¹ Saeki Masako, "Fujiwara no Tametoki no bungaku sekai to Genji monogatari," in *Genji monogatari to kanbungaku*, Wa-Kan hikaku bungaku sōsho 12 (Tokyo: Kyūko Shoin, 1994), 163–82.

commissioned from the academic Fujiwara no Akihira (d. 1066) by Fujiwara no Sanenari, following the death of his son Kinnari in 1043:

I tried to chase his wandering ghost, but am lost among the living;
 Unless he visits me in my dreams, I have no hope of reunion.
 Grown accustomed to the clatter of his cart arriving,
 My start at the thunder's rumble turns to despair;
 Remembering the curve of his drawn bow,
 I gaze on the crescent moon and cannot sleep.
 (*Honchō zoku monzui* 13.233)

Incorporating structure and language from both Buddhist liturgy and secular Chinese belles-lettres, the grandiose aesthetic of ganmon was oriented toward the public recitation of the text in Japanese (the stilted “translationese” of *kundoku*) by a “Lecturer” appointed from among the attendant monks. In this way, ganmon served as the most important link between the classical Chinese literary tradition and a growing body of *shōdō* (Buddhist “sermon”) literature that would profoundly influence vernacular narrative in the middle ages.

Though ganmon composition and other such scribal work were generally privately contracted, unofficial employments of this sort were nevertheless predicated on the same sorts of status and lineage distinctions as official post assignments. If we consider the examples of Shitagō and Fumitoki mentioned earlier, the unaffiliated scholar Shitagō's writings are overwhelmingly associated with private, informal entertainments like poetry gatherings. His few formal commissions were all written on behalf of female aristocrats; for example, when the wife of Shitagō's most important patron, Minamoto no Takaakira, died in 947, Shitagō was commissioned to write a ganmon on behalf of the woman's nurse (*Chōya gunsai* 2.30–1). By contrast, when Takaakira presented a ganmon under his own name after the death of his half-sister Kōshi in 957, it was written by Fumitoki, then Professor of Letters at the Academy (*Dai Nihon shiryō* 1:10:346–7). Shitagō's role was limited to the domestic sphere rather than the publicly oriented composition that was the mainstay of hereditary scholars like Fumitoki.

In addition to their various scribal occupations, many literati worked as household tutors, delivering a classical education to elite families who had no incentive to send their children to the Academy itself. In a diary entry of 1094, Fujiwara no Munetada records a conversation with the statesman Fujiwara no Michitoshi concerning the Chinese history *Shiji* (Records of the Grand Historian). Michitoshi answers Munetada by reference to a “secret,” “oral

teaching” he had received from his teacher, Ōe no Sukekuni, a hereditary scholar.² The *Shiji* was one of the central texts of the Academy’s Letters curriculum, and we can see here how this curriculum was being repackaged for the use of the upper nobility. As in the Academy, such education was centered on imported Chinese texts, but this new context encouraged the invention of local adaptations as well: both Shitagō and his student Minamoto no Tamenori (d. 1011) produced encyclopedias of elementary knowledge for their aristocratic patrons.

These tenth-century encyclopedias represent the beginning of a sea-change in the literary output of Academy graduates. Lacking the prestigious, court-sponsored compilation projects that were their *raison d’être* in the early Heian, literati began producing new forms of practically oriented scholarship. In the mid eleventh century, Fujiwara no Akihira produced the first *ōrai-mono*, a form of textbook containing model letters for various occasions that would become central to Japanese primary education over the course of the medieval period. These epistolary models abandoned the ornate parallel prose of formal Chinese-style writing for a utilitarian idiom closer to Japanese syntax. In the twelfth century, Professor of Mathematics Miyoshi no Tameyasu (1049–1139) produced the encyclopedia *Shōchūreki* (Palm of the Hand Almanac) as well as *Chōya gunsai* (Collected Documents of the Court and Country), a thirty-volume anthology of model compositions in nearly every genre of Chinese-style writing, both administrative and literary. Such anthologies (including, to some extent, Akihira’s *Honchō monzui* and its sequel *Honchō zoku monzui*) were aimed at practical utility, focusing on the genres of writing most useful to literati as they sought official employment or private patronage. They were accompanied by an increasing number of reference works for composition, including instruction manuals, encyclopedias of Chinese rhetoric, and rhyming dictionaries.³

Such efforts at adaptation, however, were not adequate to the fundamental changes overtaking aristocratic society by the eleventh century, and the social position, educational standards, and financial stability of the Academy all declined drastically in the second half of the Heian period. The last burst of glory for the traditional scholarly families was Ōe no Masafusa (1041–1111), a

² Satō Michio, “Kyūtei bungaku to kyōiku,” in *Ōchō bungaku to higashi Ajia no kyūtei bungaku* (Tokyo: Chikurinsha 2008), 490–508.

³ Examples of these latter three categories include *Sakumon daitai* (Essentials of Composition, late tenth century, expanded late eleventh century), Sugawara no Tamenaga’s *Bunpōshō* (Notes of the Decorated Phoenix, c. 1200), and Tameyasu’s *Dōmō shōin* (Beginner’s Rhymery, 1109).

child prodigy who tutored and advised three emperors, and was the first of his lineage to sit on the Council of State in over a century. With the benefit of an established position, Masafusa had no need to produce the kind of tutorial or encyclopedic works described above, but he too seems to have tried to adapt to the changing requirements of the court, best seen in his *Gōke shidai* (Proceedings of the Ōe House), a compendium of court ritual. Over the course of the Heian period, public ceremonies increasingly expanded beyond the scope of codified law, which created a vital role for knowledge of court precedent and ritual (*yūsoku kojitsu*). Members of the imperial family and Regents' House had responded to this need by keeping diaries and detailed records of important ceremonies, but *Gōke shidai* shows the literati attempting to establish authority over this body of practical knowledge.

Near the end of his life, Masafusa's student Fujiwara no Sanekane (1085–1112) began keeping a record of his conversations with his teacher, *Gōdanshō* (Ōe Conversations, c. 1108), an important influence on later *setsuwa* literature. In one passage, Masafusa laments the decline of his household and the wider Academy tradition:

I do not have any concerns before society. My only regrets are that I was never Head Chamberlain, and that none of my sons have come to anything. If I had a son like you there would be nothing to worry about. Instead, all the books and secrets of my household will vanish – particularly our secret teachings on the [Chinese] histories and classics will all come to nothing, for I have no one to pass them on to. (5:73)

Underlying Masafusa's complaint is the premise that the traditions of academic knowledge were now entirely a private, familial inheritance, rather than deriving any sort of shared institutional continuity from the Academy itself. The Academy was an early victim of the erosion of the central government's finances. From the mid eleventh century onward, there are records of bureaucrats buying posts by making donations for the upkeep of Academy buildings, and other suggestions that the grounds were falling into disrepair. After the Academy was destroyed by fire in 1177, there was little impetus to rebuild it – it had probably long since ceased being a site for education.

From this point on, the classical scholarly tradition in Japan would be dependent on a fragile network of secret and fiercely guarded transmissions among a few households. The new Kamakura government still had use for the administrative skills of hereditary scholars such as Ōe no Hiromoto and Miyoshi no Yasunobu, and there remained a deep respect for the Chinese

political-philosophical tradition – immediately following the Jōkyū War of 1221, Hōjō Masako commissioned Sugawara no Tamenaga to produce a Japanese translation of *Zhenguan zhengyao* (Essentials of Government in the Zhenguan Period), an eighth-century anecdotal guide to enlightened rule. Nevertheless, the scholarly households' cultural importance as synthesizers and purveyors of continental learning was rapidly being eclipsed by the emerging Zen monasteries, from which would spring the efflorescence of Gozan literature in the fourteenth century.

Heian canons of Chinese poetry: *Wakan* *rōeishū* and Bai Juyi

I V O S M I T S

One classic that was especially dominant in the Heian period is *Baishi wenji* (Collected Works of Bai Juyi, J. *Hakushi monjū* or *Hakushi bunshū*, 839). If the anthology *Wenxuan* (Selections of Refined Literature, J. *Monzen*, early sixth century) was an illustrious classic used in academic education, then the works of the Chinese poet Bai (Bo) Juyi (J. Haku Kyoi, 772–846) were truly popular. The Japanese discovery in 838 of poems by Bai, who would become better known as Haku Rakuten (the Japanese reading of his “art name” Letian), resulted in a poetic frenzy. The demand for a complete set of Bai’s works grew rapidly and Japanese monks visiting Tang China, such as Ennin (794–864) and Egaku (active 835–64), brought back copies of his collected works. Bai was himself aware of his success abroad. At home Japanese literati decorated their houses with his portrait. Women at court, too, enjoyed reading and reciting his poetry. Sei Shōnagon in her *Pillow Book* occasionally drops casual references to his lines, and Empress Shōshi (var. Akiko, 988–1074) is known to have actively studied his poetry under the tutelage of her lady-in-waiting Murasaki Shikibu.

The degree to which Bai’s poetry outshone that of his Tang contemporaries in the Japanese constellation of the poetic universe is quite remarkable and is not merely a reflection of the contemporary Chinese canon. Nevertheless, one important reason for this Japanese success of Bai Juyi most likely was his huge popularity in China. Heian monks travelling through that country could not fail to see that every Chinese seemed to be reading him. The simplicity of Bai’s language and the ease with which his poems could be read undoubtedly contributed to this phenomenal success as well.

Heian readers genuinely enjoyed Bai Juyi’s poetry, but they did not necessarily pick up on all dimensions of his work. One intriguing example of this is the Heian love for his *xinyuefu* (J. *shingafu*) or “new ballads.” The

“new ballads” promoted by Bai were a genre of rather long poems in a relatively free form, criticizing in a simple tone social and political wrongs. The Heian fondness for Bai’s often explicitly political ballads is somewhat odd, given that whatever the Japanese nobility liked about Chinese culture, their political ideas were diametrically opposed to the ballads’ implications. Heian courtiers showed little compassion for the lowest classes of society, nor did they believe that administration should be a matter of proven competence rather than birth, as was the professed case in China, let alone that a government official’s duty should be to call the monarch’s attention to injustices in the realm. Nevertheless, Bai’s ballads certainly were popular. Heian courtiers did not care much for their message, but prized their descriptive passages and imitated them in their own poetry. When Murasaki Shikibu studied with her empress, it was the ballads that served as their reading material. When excerpts of Bai Juyi’s poetry were singled out for copying, as a present for instance, it was usually his “ballads” that were chosen. Japanese courtiers organized study sessions to discuss these poems. In short, when Heian nobles mentioned “ballads” they invariably meant Bai Juyi’s new ballads.

Wakan rōeishū (Collection of Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing, early eleventh century)

The incorporation of Bai Juyi’s poetry, and by extension other literary texts from China, into the Heian literary worldview is reflected by *Wakan rōeishū*, edited by Fujiwara no Kintō (966–1041). This important yet slightly enigmatic anthology was followed by a number of very similar compilations, not all of which are extant. The first and best-known emulation is *Shinsen rōeishū* (New Selection of Poems to Sing, c. 1116–22, alt. 1122–33).

Wakan rōeishū is an anthology of poetry in Chinese or Sino-Japanese (*kanshi*) and Japanese (*waka*) organized in thematic rubrics. Compiler Fujiwara no Kintō juxtaposed *waka* with over eighth hundred couplets by Japanese and Chinese *kanshi* poets. The anthology is one of the first occurrences of the term “*wakan*” to denote the variety of encounters between “Japanese” (*wa*) and “Chinese” (*kan*) cultural entities, but in at least two respects it belies assumptions about equality between *kanshi* and *waka*. Not only is Bai Juyi the best-represented poet, with 138 couplets, but subsequent use of and commentary on the anthology has from the start focused almost exclusively on its *kanshi* couplets. Also, standard arrangement of poetry

within the rubrics follows a suggestive hierarchy: first couplets by poets from China, then kanshi by Japanese poets, and finally waka.

Wakan rōeishū is divided into two books, or volumes, which in turn are divided into a variety of sections, many of which are reminiscent of collections from China or Japanese anthologies inspired by such Chinese categorizations. The first book covers the four seasons, in gradual procession from early spring to the end of winter and the end of the year. The second book is a miscellaneous arrangement of often intriguing categories, from monkeys and recluses to courtesans and the color white. These categories can be grouped into nine larger groups: heavenly phenomena, animals and plants, song and literature (tellingly including the category “Wine”), mountains and rivers, dwellings, Buddhist matters, human affairs, people, and emotions.

Wakan rōeishū’s categorical organization of themes was wedded to an intense interest in isolated or “extracted” couplets (*tekku*), which in turn reflected kanshi composition practices of the period. Two typical poetic forms were *kudaishi* (verse-topic poetry) and *ku* (isolated couplets). These two forms are very much related and may be best understood by considering couplets as poetic entities on their own that might be fragments on their way toward a completed poem. Throughout the tenth and eleventh centuries the dominant form for kanshi in Japan was the “verse topic poem.” These were eight-line *lǔshi* (regulated poems, J. *risshi*) composed to set topics consisting of a five-character line of verse, the so-called *kudai* (verse topic). The “regulated poem” was a genre that established itself in Tang China and strongly valued skilled composition of couplets in the “parallel” style, but the “verse topic” variety was typical for Heian Japan. Consequently, poetry handbooks used examples by Japanese poets when they discussed the handling of such topics. The Heian fondness for isolating “fine couplets” (*jiaju*, J. *kaku*) of Chinese poetry and parallel prose finds its culmination in *Wakan rōeishū*.

The title suggests that the poems were intended as a repertoire for chanting (*rōei*). The habit of singing lines of Chinese poetry was an old one; the narrator of *Tosa nikki* (Tosa Journal, c. 935) writes how “[the men] raised their voices and chanted Chinese poems (*karauta*).” The term “*rōei*” referred specifically to the chanting of poetry in Chinese; waka were also “sung”, but for that act a different verb was used. There is no doubt that couplets were chanted a lot; that much we can tell from medieval diaries, tales, and anecdote collections. In fact, Heian Japan sometimes appears to be singing all the time. However, *rōei* chanting for all practical purposes had no need to rely on Kintō’s anthology and the vast majority of his

selection never made it to the *rōei* repertoire. If indeed the poems in Kintō's collection were meant to be sung, the irony of history is that, rather than a textbook of songs, it quickly became a primer for learning Chinese and a calligraphy model book for the practice of *mana* (kanji graphs) and *kana* writing styles.

The Literary Essence of Our Court (*Honchō monzui*)

WIEBKE DENECKE

In the history of *kanshibun* (Sino-Japanese literature) it is hard to find another anthology that was so receptive to the practical needs of its times, yet stayed so influential into the early modern period. Compiled by Fujiwara no Akihira (c. 989–1066), *Honchō monzui* (Literary Essence of Our Court) is a repository of model pieces featuring genres that an educated Heian man needed to master in order to participate in court life, perform duties within the court bureaucracy, or draft texts for patrons of religious ceremonies. That Akihira had a complicated relationship to the scholarly world of his time and included pieces that fit his wits – from regretful and reclusive to parodic and graphic – makes for a colorful model anthology. With it he established the fame of the scholarly Fujiwara Ceremonial Branch. He seems to side with, but also to lament and, at times, to parody the contemporary scholarly world, where success was hard to earn, and political and financial reward was meager.

Although a descendant of the *Kaifūsō* poet-official Umakai, Akihira did not come from an established scholar family, such as the Ōe or Sugawara, who feature richly in his anthology. He passed the examinations only in his early forties. His involvement in two examination scandals, where he helped candidates and encouraged a failed candidate to have his examination reassessed, certainly did not advance his career. Only in his late sixties did he receive a significant post in the Ministry of Ceremonial, advancing to fourth rank in the years before his death, when he was appointed Professor of Letters, Tutor of the Crown Prince, and Director of the State Academy in quick succession. Akihira was a talented *kanshi* poet and also composed *waka*. But his fame rests on three model collections that captured the trends and served the needs of his time: *Literary Essence* showcases scholarly genres; *Meigō ōrai* (Akihira's Letters) features models for personal correspondence; and *Shinsarugakuki* (Account of New Monkey Music), on the surface an account of a right palace guard's and his vast family's visit to a carnivalesque

night of popular entertainment, parades portrayals of types and professions, ranging from provincial governors, students, Yin-Yang masters, and monks to sumo wrestlers, prostitutes, gluttons, and gamblers.

Akihira compiled *Literary Essence* toward the end of his life, when his scholarly posts gave him access to many documents. Canvassing about two centuries of kanshibun from the Saga through the Golchijō courts (c. 810–1037), he selected 427 pieces by seventy authors (excluding lower-ranking officials, monks, and women) for a vast panorama in fourteen volumes, arranged by thirty-nine genres, with a special focus on the Engi, Tenryaku, and Kankō eras, high points for courtly kanshibun. Genres composed at court banquets – *fu* (rhapsodies) and *shi* (poetry) – make up the first volume, followed by five volumes featuring clerical genres of the imperial bureaucracy, either communicating orders down the imperial hierarchy, such as *shō* (edicts), *chokutō* (imperial responses) or *kanpu* (State Council decrees), or communicating information or requests upwards, such as *taisakubun* (civil service examination essays), *hyō* (memorials to the throne), or *sōjō* (petitions). Volume Seven contains largely samples of *shōjō* (private correspondence), followed by four voluminous books of *shijo* (poetry prefaces), an increasingly prestigious genre written to accompany the poetry composed during banquets or outings. Volume Twelve is a medley of genres from *mei* (inscriptions) and *ki* (accounts), to *san* (encomia) and *den* (biographies); and the last two books provide model texts for religious events, most notably the popular *ganmon* (wishes), detailing the motivation and hopes of sponsors, or also *saimon* (prayers) addressed to deities.

Though it was the first anthology to feature a vast panorama of Sino-Japanese genres, *Literary Essence* took cues from previous collections. Inspired by the central importance of the *Wenxuan*, the sixth-century Chinese anthology of ornamental prose and poetry that was a major textbook for students in the “History and Literature track” (*kidendō*) at the Heian Academy, Akihira may have tried to create a *Wenxuan* for Japan. Ōsone Shōsuke argues that Akihira produced a fourteen-volume “complement” to the sixteen-volume *Fusōshū* – a voluminous collection of predominantly *rishshi* (regulated poetry) compiled by Ki no Tadana and offered to Emperor Ichijō – to match the thirty volumes of the *Wenxuan*; that this mainstream genre of Heian kanshi is conspicuously absent from *Literary Essence* supports this hypothesis. By featuring thirty-nine genres, just as in his Chinese model, Akihira paid homage to the *Wenxuan*, but his own collection was clearly geared toward the exigencies of mid-Heian Japan. He adopted not even a third of the *Wenxuan*’s categories and filled the roster with genres relevant to Heian reality, such as bureaucratic genres like *iki* (“appointment documents”) or

wakajo (waka prefaces) written in kanbun prose for the waka produced at poetry events and contests. Except for “prayers” all the genres in the last two books are of Japanese origin.

But even genres with the same name could be two different things: the majority of the nine “prefaces” in the *Wenxuan* are for literary collections and thus not comparable to the 150 “poetry prefaces” in *Literary Essence*, which were testimony to the distinctively Japanese genre of *kudaishi* (“topic poetry”), regulated poems composed on five-character topic lines according to a strict rhetorical template; they provided a prime occasion for Heian courtiers to attract the attention of patrons with their sophisticated parallel prose and their erudite command of Chinese reference anecdotes. Similarly, *sōjō* (petitions) were typically pieces remonstrating against policies; absent from the *Wenxuan*, they appear in *Tang wencui* (Tang Literary Essence, 1011), another model for Akihira’s collection, which also inspired its title; but Akihira focused on scholars’ petitions for advancement of rank or post, highlighting their unfortunate situation as their career prospects deteriorated with the decline of the *ritsuryō* system since the tenth century. Such a difference in political practices is also visible in *hyō* (“memorials”), which cover various topics in the *Wenxuan*, but are mostly “resignation memorials” from top-level officials in Akihira’s collection. Although the custom of repeatedly submitting resignation requests existed in China, it is not documented in *Wenxuan* or *Tang wencui*, while *Literary Essence* includes many memorials of multiple resignations, of up to four times.

Another less conspicuous model for Akihira’s anthology that was at least equally important to its success was Fujiwara Kintō’s *Wakan rōeishū*, a collection of poetry couplets, parallel prose lines, and waka for chanting; Akihira included the integral texts of 90 percent of its 106 Sino-Japanese prose excerpts in *Literary Essence*. Akihira was an avid collector of exquisite lines, which was popular during his time, but his couplet anthology is lost. With more than a fifth of *Literary Essence* he contextualized favorite lines of his day and thus created, in part, a “deselected” couplet anthology.

In contrast to its Chinese models, dissent, criticism, and parody of court life has a prominent place in *Literary Essence*. Akihira was certainly critical of the scholarly world, but he also disapproved of the low impact scholars had on political affairs. This resonated with disappointment among mid-Heian literati, who were even less likely to make a good government career with the ascendancy of the regency system and the Fujiwara. Most of the leading authors included in *Literary Essence* are evidence of this situation. For example, Sugawara no Michizane died in exile precipitated by Fujiwara intrigues,

and his grandson Fumitoki had a late start to his career, reaching third rank only in the year of his death. Ōe no Masahira, the central figure of the other major scholarly lineage, harbored misgivings throughout his life for not having reached beyond a mid-ranking career. But even royal family members could be victims of Fujiwara power politics: Minamoto no Kaneakira, son of Emperor Daigo, was forced out of his position as Minister of the Left by Regent Fujiwara no Kanemichi and bitterly lamented this fate in the “Rhapsody on Tuqiu,” with ominous reference to the assassination of Duke Yin of Lu, who, according to the *Zuozhuan*, built a residence at Tuqiu to retire in old age, but was killed when about to abdicate. He aligns himself with Chinese scholar-officials who suffered grand injustice, such as the Han dynasty minister Jia Yi.

Pieces by Yoshishige no Yasutane and Minamoto no Shitagō show the broad spectrum of tones of dissent Akihira included: Yasutane, scion of a Yin-Yang family turned scholar and later monk, represents a contemplative take on the problem. In “Account of my Pond Pavilion” he envisions a reclusive life guided by moral self-cultivation and learning at his retreat, away from the evils of court politics. Yasutane’s account formulates much that Kamo no Chōmei voiced two centuries later in *Hōjōki* (Account of my Ten-Square-Foot Hut), also a confession of reclusion and social disgust, but he is still more ambivalently caught between dreams of political significance (demanded by his Confucian values as well as his personal ambition) and an alternative life, allowing him “a body at court and a mind’s ambition set on reclusion.” Minamoto no Shitagō, the scintillating scholar-poet and never more than mid-ranking official, illustrates the sting of bitter social satire that also appears in *Literary Essence*. In *Song of a Tailless Cow* he extols the invisible virtues of his seemingly handicapped treasure: it doesn’t dirty its behind with a tail when pooping, is not put to hard work, and is never stolen because uniquely recognizable by the authorities, etc. His closing promise to repay his cow once he himself gets promoted is a barely veiled way to say that Shitagō treats his beast better than the emperor treats his loyal scholar-officials.

But parody and satire also appear in less somber tones in *Literary Essence* and show Akihira’s interest in playful modes and liminal topics. Structurally, we see this in his idiosyncratic choices for the “poetry” section: even if we accept the argument that Akihira excluded regulated poetry because of other existing collections, he indulges in literary games: acrostic poetry, palindromes, and the only Heian example of *kyōka* (“crazy song”), a kanshi genre that became popular in the Edo period. Stylistically, we see this interest in Akihira’s selection of plain prose (in contrast to the officially dominant

ornate parallel prose), which shows the impact of mid-Tang “Returning to Antiquity” movements. Thematically, Akihira included pieces treating supernatural and non-courtly worlds. The sexually explicit pieces are hard to pin down: Ōe no Asatsuna’s “Rhapsody on Marriage” articulates not just courtship, as vernacular diaries and tales were doing during this time, but includes a yin-yang physiology of sexual fluids; an anonymous biography of an “iron hammer” (possibly authored by Akihira under the pseudonym “Organ Extraordinary”) traces the career of a penis in court service. Did Akihira, who was interested in educational model books, take the opportunity to teach people sex vocabulary while having some academic fun? Or did he include these pieces to mock the repressed literary decorum at court and ridicule bureaucratic structures by viewing them through the career course of a male organ? Such literature must have existed for fun and entertainment (erotic pieces by Bai Juyi’s brother Bai Xingjian may have inspired the Japanese poets), but why did Akihira choose them for his model anthology? Without doubt, “Japan’s *Wenxuan*” would have alienated Xiao Tong, Crown Prince Zhaoming of the Liang, the compiler of the original *Wenxuan*.

The great number of surviving manuscripts from late Heian on – with favorite books often circulating independently of the entire anthology – and printings in 1629 and 1648 show that *Literary Essence* was a continuous success. It set the tone for subsequent anthologies: The compilers of *Honchō zoku monzui*, the sequel to *Literary Essence*, and the administrative anthology *Chōya gunsai* (Compendium of Texts for Court and Provinces) adapted much of Akihira’s framework. Lines from *Literary Essence* are often mentioned in medieval war tales, travel accounts, epistolary collections, and even kana prose, and despite the turn away from ornate parallel prose to Song-dynasty-style Old Prose in the Edo period it still retained its model value for certain genres and occasions. For a collection that propagated the personal concerns and peculiar tastes of a pleasure-loving, if disillusioned, mid-Heian scholar-official, this was a highly successful career.

Vernacular histories: *Eiga monogatari*, *Ōkagami*, *Gukanshō*

ELIZABETH OYLER

Historical writing in Japan was infused with new life and meaning with the appearance of two significant works casting the life and times of Fujiwara no Michinaga (966–1027) against a backdrop of dynastic history: *Eiga monogatari* (A Tale of Flowering Fortunes, completed c. early twelfth century) and *Ōkagami* (The Great Mirror, c. twelfth century). The most powerful of the Fujiwara chancellors and regents, Michinaga was also famously the patron of Murasaki Shikibu, who wrote at least some of *Genji monogatari* during her service in the salon of Michinaga's daughter, Empress Shōshi. Thought to have been written by a court lady known as Akazome Emon, *Eiga monogatari* is the earliest narrative account of the splendor of Michinaga's age. *Ōkagami* has not been convincingly attributed to a specific author, though scholars generally believe he was a high-ranking aristocratic male.

Eiga monogatari is often cited as the inaugural work of *rekishi monogatari* (historical tales). It is considered a history primarily because of its structure: it traces the arc of Michinaga's rise against history measured in the reigns of sovereigns, starting from Uda. Comprised of a thirty-chapter text followed by a ten-chapter continuation, *Eiga monogatari*'s main body documents the history of the central court, and particularly the Fujiwara family, from Uda's time through the rites following the death of Michinaga in 1027. The second part begins three years later and continues through 1092. Although presented as a dynastic history, the work is written in *kana*, a departure from the tradition of official historical writing found in the *Rikkokushi* (Six National Histories), the primary historical records preceding *Eiga monogatari*. Akazome Emon, who served as a lady-in-waiting to Michinaga's primary wife, Rinshi, seems the most likely author for the first thirty chapters. Arguments for single authorship of the entire work have been made, but scholars generally agree that the final ten chapters were written by someone else, also a woman, who may or may not have had close ties to Akazome

Emon, perhaps Iwade no Ben. It is likely that the first thirty were written before 1045 and that the others may have been completed by the early twelfth century. The oldest dated manuscript was transcribed in the early seventeenth century, but twelfth-century records refer to something called *Eiga monogatari*, suggesting that some relative of the present text was circulating at that time.

The work opens where the *National Histories* leave off. The *eiga* (flowering fortunes) of the title refers to the life of Michinaga, the most conspicuous Fujiwara scion. The main body of the text focuses on his life and those of his immediate family members, particularly their unparalleled political and social successes: two of Michinaga's daughters gave birth to sovereigns and attained the status of retired empress, and his sons rose to the highest political positions in the realm. One argument supporting Akazome's authorship of the work is that she would have had access to Michinaga's family through her service to his wife; the narrator's point of view suggests the vantage of a lady-in-waiting within the household. This interpretation is buttressed by her marriage to Ōe Masahira (952–1012), a member of the long-standing and recognized family of scholars responsible for, among other things, the compilation of the fifth of the *National Histories*, the *Montoku jitsuroku*.

Nevertheless, *Eiga monogatari* departs radically from the histories that preceded it. The *National Histories* consciously imitated continental annals, including the *Zuo-chuan*, *Shiji*, *Hanshu*, and *Hou Hanshu*, but only partially. Where continental histories included analysis of events and separate biographies, their Japanese descendants did not. Compiled between c. 720 and 905, the *National Histories* all consist of carefully dated entries recording events of public significance, with few modifications and additions.

By the lifetime of *Eiga monogatari*'s author, the annalistic history was an established genre with a long tradition, complemented by the practice of holding lectures on the *Nihon shoki* on several occasions during the eighth through tenth centuries; the goal of these "oral recitation[s] and explication[s] of the inaugural history" was to "reaffirm the bonds between the tennō [sovereign] and the court" (Bialock 2007, 151). This points to an ongoing dialogue between modes of presentation that would continue to mark historical discourse in generations to come: the orally performed "text" and the written, documentary one.

Although *Eiga monogatari* follows a chronology marked by important events in the lives of sovereigns, it differs dramatically from the *National Histories* in form, narrative focus, style, and language. Organized into chapters rather than under dated entries, it is a narrative, as implied by the

“monogatari” of its title. It opens with a brief account of the rise in fortunes of Michinaga’s forebears, framed by the successive reigns of sovereigns. Anecdotes about each ruler illustrate both his character and the times, in the tradition of continental histories. At no point, however, is the narrator overtly censorious – *Eiga monogatari* was clearly also operating in the context of Japanese histories, which existed to praise the unbroken lineage of rulers. Thus both historical circumstances and narrative exigency demanded foregrounding the role of the ministers and regents. Good rule is portrayed as reliant on an exceptional succession of powerful advisors to ensure peace and stability.

An even greater departure from the *National Histories* is *Eiga monogatari*’s emphasis on interpersonal relationships, particularly the marriage politics surrounding powerful men. *Eiga monogatari* is a view from the inner quarters, intensely interested in the daily lives of wives and consorts, their blood relatives, and their offspring, rather than a record of the court’s official business. How sovereigns and ministers navigated potentially volatile disappointments regarding the marriages and promotions of royal consorts and princes demonstrated their strengths and weaknesses in the face of adversity. Women also are judged, based on their resourcefulness, fecundity, and dignity under duress.

Politically important events are presented from the vantage point of a narrator whose access to the kinds of information found in the *National Histories* is mediated but whose knowledge of the home lives of her protagonists is first-hand. In these respects, *Eiga monogatari* reveals its deeper debt to another important predecessor, *Genji monogatari*, Murasaki Shikibu’s opus that foregrounds point of view, provides behind-the-screens perspective on events, and privileges the emotional and interpersonal. The reliance of *Eiga monogatari*’s author on the *Murasaki Shikibu nikki* (Murasaki Shikibu Diary) for accounts of events has also been noted (McCullough and McCullough, vol. 1, 52–63).

Eiga monogatari’s narrative voice is a vitally important departure from official histories. The narrator is chatty and intimate, speaking to the reader in the first person. She obviously favors some of her subjects more than others, often commenting on the elegance, joy, or pathos of a given situation in colloquial, albeit formulaic style. Her judgments are usually brief and elliptical, but they occur often enough to remind us of her presence and her individual voice. Her observations often are formulated as descriptive passages punctuated by a brief personal remark or conjecture that reminds the reader of her presence, in a form reminiscent of *Genji monogatari*. Also like

Genji, such personal, telling moments are nested within depictions of public pageantry, as in her portrayal of the procession that was part of the Purification Rituals on the twenty-third day of the Tenth Month, Kanna 2 (986), when Michinaga's father, Kaneie, was serving as regent:

The Regent [Kaneie] appeared toward the end of the procession, accompanied by impressively correct Escorts and a select retinue of well-bred, handsome outriders and other attendants. As the party passed, Prince Atsumichi [Kaneie's young grandson and ward] pushed open a blind at the Higashisanjō stand and leaned out . . .

"Hello, Grandpa!" he shouted to Kaneie.

"Behave yourself," the Regent scolded, but he smiled with affection as he gazed on him. The onlookers must have been amused too.

(McCullough and McCullough, vol. 1, 139–40)

Michinaga's own paternal devotion appears at another public moment, during the bathing ceremony for his new grandson, the future sovereign GoReizei. Having taken the tonsure, Michinaga watches the proceedings from behind a folding screen, but cannot resist the urge to peek over the top from time to time, much to the amusement of other onlookers.

Such passages reveal an author drawing a telling, personal portrait within a public context. Official events thus become the framework for recounting a particular family's history, which is in large part the story of the personal lives of its members. *Eiga monogatari* presents a more overt version of what *Genji* accomplishes so subtly yet forcefully in its fictionalized world: a blurring of the presumed boundary between "public" and "private," the oft-cited "filling in the details" version of history at the heart of *Genji* and Tamakazura's debate about *monogatari* in the "Hotaru" chapter of *Genji monogatari*.

The presumption of modern critics, derived in large part from literary vignettes such as the *Genji's monogatari* debate, is that Heian writing indeed recognized a border between public and private storytelling, one most often marked in texts by gender and language. Kana is for private, "feminine" discourse, and *kanji* for public, "masculine" writing. And perceptible to Heian aristocrats as the compartmentalization of discourse probably was, *Eiga monogatari*, like *Genji monogatari* before it, questions the normative status of such categories; indeed, the malleability of the *monogatari* form from very early on represented a means for complicating this paradigm, as Bialock notes. *Eiga monogatari* is a history, yet it is written in kana and from what we think of as a feminine perspective. It is a *monogatari* that weaves a public history of what the hero of *Genji monogatari* describes as the "truly rewarding

particulars,” judging both past and present through great figures of the times, but basing its critiques on their behavior as spouses and parents, friends and rivals in everyday life, in poetry exchanges, and at celebrations. The context serves to draw attention to the intense public importance of the events described in the work, both “public” and “private,” underscoring the dual nature of births, deaths, comings-of-age, marriages, and promotions, thereby problematizing the very idea of separate spheres.

Ōkagami (The Great Mirror)

Ōkagami was probably written sometime after *Eiga monogatari*, and most likely with that work in mind (McCullough, 65). The work has been variously attributed to Fujiwara Tamenari, to Fujiwara Yoshinobu (one of Michinaga’s sons), and, in the Tokugawa period, to various members of the Minamoto family. Like *Eiga monogatari*, *Ōkagami* is framed as a dynastic history written in kana, but the two differ markedly in form and narrative voice. In imitation of continental models, *Ōkagami* opens with an annalistic account of the reigns of the sovereigns from Montoku (r. 850–8) to Goichijō (r. 1016–36). This section, which comprises only about one-ninth of the text, is followed by a much longer collection of twenty biographies of important men, all members of Michinaga’s Fujiwara lineage. Michinaga’s is the last, longest, and most complete. *Ōkagami* concludes with a short final section of “monogatari” about the Fujiwara (*Fujiwara-shi monogatari*), the past (*Mukashi monogatari*), and later days (*Gojitsu monogatari*) that includes anecdotes about both the Fujiwara and their contemporaries – sovereigns, ministers, poets of note. Scholars note the influence of *setsuwa* (anecdotes) in this section, and indeed the era of *Ōkagami*’s composition roughly coincided with the compilation of the great compendium of *setsuwa*, *Konjaku monogatari shū* (Tales of Times Now Past, c. 1120).

Unlike the single narrator of *Eiga monogatari* whose voice ranged between the first person and something approaching the third person so familiar in older monogatari, *Ōkagami* presents a number of speakers in conversation with each other, all described by a narrator who directly addresses the reader. The preface describes the setting for both the annals and the biographies to follow. While attending a sutra reading at the Urin’in, the narrator comes upon “three people of extraordinary and disturbing antiquity – two gray-beards and a crone, who had, it seemed, sat down in the same place by chance” (McCullough, 65). The three range in age from 150 to 190. The two old men then recount the historical period through which they or their

acquaintances have lived – from the reign of Montoku (the subject of the fifth of the *National Histories*, *Montoku jitsuroku*) through the “present” of 1025, roughly the same territory covered by the first thirty books of *Eiga monogatari*. The two old men identify themselves as Ōyake no Yotsugi and Natsuyama Shigeki, and, to pass the time while waiting for the preacher, Yotsugi suggests, “Well, since there’s nothing else to do, what do you say? Shall I give you a story about the old days to let these people know what things were like?” (McCullough, 67). Thus begins their account of the story of Michinaga’s rise.

Scholars have long remarked upon the symbolic elements in the two men’s identities. Both are *okina*, or “old men” figures, associated with a tradition in performing arts ranging from *Shiki-sanba* to the *noh* drama. Often, *okina* are manifestations of deities, and they are almost always uncannily knowledgeable; part of the authority of the narrative of *Ōkagami* derives from the evocation of this felicitous, superhuman character type. Yotsugi, whose name literally means “chronicle of a great house,” is the elder and consistently the leader; he recounts a generally felicitous tale of Michinaga’s grandeur. There is a clear trajectory to his story, from the reigns of emperors to the life of Michinaga, announced in the preface framing the chronicle. The traditional forms of the annal and the biography thus are emplotted within a narrative putatively aiming toward the full splendor of Michinaga’s domination of the court by the end of his life.

The experimentation with form here is amplified by an equally complex use of voice. Although Yotsugi is the primary storyteller, the context is the story-in-the-round. Yotsugi is always in dialogue with Shigeki, who both prompts him and, particularly in the records of Fujiwara scions, contradicts him. The two are joined in conversation by the old woman, who we learn is Shigeki’s wife, and a young samurai attendant. The attendant is a rapt audience, and, like Shigeki, interjects questions, corrections, and comments; the wife occasionally is asked to supply parts of stories. The rest of the auditors at the *Urin’in* provide an additional layer of audience, and the narrator of the work himself of course mediates between the scene of storytelling and the reader. As in *Eiga monogatari*, the interface between text and reader is conversational, but here it mirrors the storyteller–audience relationship found in the text. This context underlines the vitality of the spoken voice while simultaneously organizing it in written documentary form.

Yotsugi’s opening monologue chronicling generations of sovereigns is only occasionally punctuated by a comment from the narrator about the responses of the audience, the attendant, Shigeki, or himself. Yotsugi’s

narrative is brisk, with some descriptions including only several paragraphs describing a sovereign's parentage (with due attention given his mother, an issue of significance because of the vital role Fujiwara women played as the mothers of sovereigns) and outlining his career. The section concludes with the old men's ruminations on the analogy at the heart of the account, history-as-mirror. The title *Ōkagami* (Great Mirror) was probably established at a somewhat later date. It refers, first, to a passage from Sima Qian's *Shiji*: "One who lives in the present age and considers the ways of the past has a mirror wherein he can see that the two are not necessarily alike" (Watson, vol. 1, 493). Secondly, it refers to the scene from the "second preface" following the royal annals, when Shigeki remarks, "Your descriptions of all those emperors have been just like reflections in a mirror. Now that you are going to tell us about the ministers too, I feel like a man witnessing a glorious sunrise after years in the dark" (McCullough, 85). He goes on to compare the brightness of Yotsugi's "mirror" with the dull mirror his wife keeps at home, and the two end up composing poems comparing their narrative to a mirror revealing past, present, and future.

The felicitous poetry exchange and the men's exaggerated bluster about their great age in this segment underscore their identity as *okina* figures, but simultaneously are marked by playfulness and humor – the narrator notes in fact that Shigeki's enthusiasm "struck the rest of us as rather comical" (McCullough, 85). The men continue to compare their "historical" narrative mirror to women's ornamental ones, undermining the potential ceremoniousness of the moment by levity. Yotsugi then states: "Enough of trivialities . . . I am going to discuss serious matters now. Pay close attention, everyone. Just as you must look on today's exposition of holy writ as an aid to enlightenment, so you should think, as you listen to me, that you are hearing the *Chronicles of Japan* (*Nihongi*)" (McCullough, 87). Significantly, the metaphor of the history-as-mirror is drawn only after he has run through the royal chronologies, a rhetorical move undermining the importance of the royal annals in favor of the Fujiwara biographies. Further, casting the men's discourse as near comedy also calls into question the seriousness of the entire project.

When Yotsugi moves into the biographies of the Fujiwara, he becomes more loquacious, portraying his protagonists as memorable characters. Time runs ahead of itself and doubles back multiple times – biography grants the space for a more nuanced and less chronologically driven narrative, as well as a greater focus on thematic concerns. The theme of (*yamato*) *tamashii*, "spiritedness," or perhaps more precisely here "brashness" or "boldness," has been remarked upon often. Kaneie refuses to abandon his seemingly

haunted villa; Michinaga is undaunted when the sovereign challenges him to visit an eerie spot on the palace grounds. When his sister, consort to the crown prince, is accused of having an affair with another man, Michinaga confronts her by squeezing her nipple to prove that it is heavy with milk, the result of impregnation by her lover. Like *Eiga monogatari*, such portrayals are revealing of the personalities of individuals, but the explicit thematization of the Fujiwaras' competitiveness with their rivals is an important deviation from the earlier work.

Perhaps more noteworthy in creating equivocal portraits in *Ōkagami* is the presence of more than one narrator in the text. Shigeki and the attendant become active interlocutors later in the biographies of the Fujiwara, where they several times contradict or expand Yotsugi's story. For instance, following Yotsugi's account of Crown Prince Atsuakira's abdication – in which the prince's own desires for freedom motivate his refusal of the throne – the attendant interjects, "I have heard quite a different version of the affair. There are some facts I happen to know all about" (McCullough, 119). He then proceeds to recount a tale casting Michinaga as a bully who actively forced the young man into retirement, thereby clearing the way for his grandson, the future sovereign Golchijō, to be named crown prince.¹ Other corrections, many of them minor but jarring, are made by Shigeki, the attendant, or the audience, and serve as a constant reminder to the reader about the fallacies of memory and the capriciousness of storytelling. The context of the story-in-the-round also permits the listeners to elicit only tangentially related stories from the old men, taking them in directions that slow narrative progression and therefore dissipate the forcefulness implied in the climactic positioning of Michinaga's own biography.

It has been suggested that the ambiguous characterization of authority in the work represents a reassertion of the role of the ritual and is placatory in asserting authority and constructing history. The context of performance then becomes a site where narratives silenced by the constrictions imposed by the written history can be reclaimed. This resurfacing of the marginalized, the primacy of spoken voice, and a subsequent reorganizing of the way history is recorded and received all provide particularly promising entryways for exploring the development of historical narrative during the eleventh

¹ Memorial services for his mother, Seishi, were being held at the Urin'in during the same time that the enlightenment sermon at which the *Ōkagami* narrative is set. David Bialock sees this as indicative of the placatory function of the text – one role it fills is pacification of the dead who had been victimized by Michinaga (*Eccentric Spaces, Hidden Histories*, 158).

through fourteenth centuries. Increasingly, “histories” became more polyphonous and contentious, and they also became less explicitly chronological and more thematically (and cogently) structured as extended narratives. These tendencies seem antithetical: polyvocality leads to fragmentation and a breakdown of the coherent thematic structure we associate with narrative as it becomes less tied to a rigid chronology. Yet both seem to coexist in tension in *Ōkagami*’s simultaneous assertion and irreverent treatment of authoritative voices as the work weaves its “history.”

These late classical histories provided fertile soil for a variety of narrative works emerging during the medieval period, following the Hōgen and Heiji uprisings and the Genpei War of 1180–5, which resulted in the bifurcation of political authority after the victor of the war, Minamoto no Yoritomo, established a warrior government in Kamakura theoretically under, but in many ways in competition with, the imperial authorities in Kyoto.

The first histories to recount these conflicts were two *kagami-mono* (mirror histories), works imitative of *Ōkagami*’s form and voice: *Imakagami* (The New Mirror, c. 1174–5) and *Mizukagami* (The Water Mirror, c. 1185–90), which together comprise a dynastic history from the mythical past through the grandeur of Fujiwara Michinaga’s day, and beyond to the Hōgen and Heiji uprisings. Two medieval works pick up the same narrative thread: *Akitsuishima monogatari* (A Tale of Akitsuishima, 1218) and *Masukagami* (The Clear Mirror, post-1333). *Azumakagami*, a *kagami-mono* concerning the affairs of the Kamakura *bakufu*, departs from *Ōkagami*’s structure in reverting to an annalistic form, but nevertheless derives part of its stature from the association between *kagami-mono* and history writing.

As is already apparent, the very idea of the historical record has become fluid by this period: the borders between *kagami* and *monogatari*, murky from the time of *Eiga monogatari* and *Ōkagami*, continued to be unclear, as indeed was the very form of a *kagami*. Such blurring of categories is a hallmark of late classical and medieval historical narrative, and one indicating an evolving engagement with the roles and meanings of history for contemporary audiences. What should a history do, what should it look like, and what are the best means for conveying it?

Gukanshō

Numerous other works from the late classical period also address such questions, perhaps most interestingly *Gukanshō*, which explored the possibility of a Buddhist (and more broadly religious) framework for historical narrative. Written by the Tendai Abbot Jien (1155–1225) in 1220, *Gukanshō*

was penned just before the Jōkyū uprising shook relations between the court and the fledgling Kamakura shogunate in 1221. *Gukanshō* is presented as a history, divided into seven chapters. The first two trace the reigns from Jinmu through GoHorikawa, including lists of the ministers and Tendai abbots who presided during each reign. The chronology is followed by four chapters of narrative analysis of this history. The opening of this analytical portion situates the entire work within the context of history-writing as exemplified by *Eiga monogatari* and *Ōkagami*:

I hear that after the beginning of the age of man and the enthronement of Emperor Jimmu, Japan is to have only one hundred reigns. Now that we are in the eighty-fourth reign not many more are left. Meanwhile, no one has written succession tales (*yotsugi ga monogatari*) for the period after the outbreak of the Hōgen Rebellion (1156). (Brown and Ishida, 19–20)

The final chapter postulates events to come.

Jien's stated goal is to continue the tradition, which he does by prefacing his narrative with a tale of succeeding reigns and writing in *kana-majiribun*, a style reliant primarily on kana. However, his narrative analysis represents something new: *Gukanshō* is a history seeking causes and effects, reaching not only back in time but also forward, and suggesting ways that the general degeneration inherent in increasing temporal distance from the age of the historical Buddha can be at least temporarily staved off through wise governance.

Gukanshō is clearly influenced by the specific circumstances of its author and its composition (much as the *Hōjōki*, its contemporary, was). The times were tumultuous – the Genpei War rent the social order of the capital, and Yoritomo's establishment of his warrior government at Kamakura represented a new political and social group that needed to be addressed both as a historical development and as a new factor in daily life. More importantly, Jien himself was in a unique position vis-à-vis the new order. As a member of the Kujō branch of the Fujiwara, he was brother of Kujō Kanezane (1149–1207), who served as regent, chancellor, and head of the Fujiwara clan for the decade immediately following the Genpei War. The recommendation for Kanezane's chancellorship came from the shogun Minamoto Yoritomo, as did Jien's nomination for the position of Tendai Abbot. When *Gukanshō* was written, another Kujō, the child Yoritsune, had been adopted into the Minamoto clan in the anticipation of naming him shogun – Yoritomo's own heirs lasted but a generation. Jien and his Kujō kinsmen were thus connected to the central court, through Kanezane's position and their

hereditary role there, and to the new military government in Kamakura, through Yoritomo's endorsements and the young Yoritune. Relations between court and shogunate were shaky, which placed Jien in the equally tenuous position from which *Gukanshō* was written.

Jien analyzes past events and makes recommendations and predictions about the future. Speaking as the highest-ranking Buddhist cleric of his day, he sees his world as a manifestation of Buddhist truth: society moves further into chaos as the age of the historical Buddha recedes further into the past. Yet *Gukanshō* is fundamentally a record of the secular realm, the progression of generations of sovereigns whose governance relies heavily on the mandate of the ancestral deities (*kami*) of the royal house. It is, moreover, a justification for Fujiwara domination of the highest ministerial positions. Jien in fact rationalizes several acts of Fujiwara aggrandizement of power (including the assassination of Soga Iruka and the banishment of Sugawara Michizane) as meritorious acts enhancing the righteousness of the throne. Finally, it is an attempt to explain the emergence of the Minamoto and the establishment of the office of shogun.

Perhaps because of the divergent threads tied together in *Gukanshō*, Jien's work mobilizes an eclectic mix of modes and styles for conveying its argument. His assertions about the good embodied in the self-aggrandizing acts of his relatives and patrons seem immediately contradictory to the idea framing the work: *mappō* – the belief that the world had entered the latter days of Buddhist law. In a more orthodox Buddhist interpretation, the social and political upheaval of each ensuing age exposes the inexorable movement toward disintegration; the acts of men in power reveal rather than delay this progression. Jien's goal is to reconcile his personal situation and history with Buddhist conceptualizations of the passage of time, which he seeks to accomplish by restructuring the relationship between the key concepts of *buppō* (Buddhist law) and *ōhō* (royal law), and defining the role of his family as central to maintaining it.

Jien asserts that *buppō* and *ōhō* must be working harmoniously to ensure stability in the realm. Within this framework, he is concerned with "principles" (*dōri*) – early readers in fact referred to *Gukanshō* as a "Tale of Principles" (*dōri no monogatari*) – which consist of those which work toward deterioration, and those which ameliorate deterioration, if only temporarily. Buddhism and *kami* worship are woven together in this model. Jien outlines the decline of society in his seven periods of decay, but sees the Japanese state as a manifestation of the will of ancestral deities that can hinder the speed at which the world disintegrates. This can only be achieved through the efforts

of men of talent striking a balance between Buddhist and non-Buddhist principles working toward good.²

Gukanshō looks back to the succession tales in its intense interest in the Fujiwara scions who served former rulers as ministers. Its genealogies stress the role of the Fujiwara in assuring the health of the realm. But by ranking the Tendai Abbots alongside ministers, Jien simultaneously underscores the importance of the (Tendai) Buddhist establishment and the vital connection between secular and sacred law.

Jien's primary concern in the narrative section of *Gukanshō* is the future: what can be done to overcome the current state of affairs (including the appointment of a non-Kujō regent)? His conclusion is Fujiwara, and specifically Kujō, domination of politics. He bases his judgment on historical precedent – times of Fujiwara domination, by his reckoning, had a positive effect on governance. In his emphasis on a future witnessing the rejoining of state control by the Kujō, he aspires to the sort of closure we attribute to the "history." In contrast to other histories, *Gukanshō* perhaps most consciously and directly grapples with the question of how one records the past and what historical records should contain.

In form and content, *Gukanshō* reveals its deep concern with justifying the author's claims. While much of his interpretation relies on Buddhist thought, he also depends on other indicators, most prominently precedents. He cites both continental and domestic examples of good and bad past situations, and he looks to the *Nihon shoki* in particular as he searches for originary Japanese examples by which his times might be judged. As we see here, the first of the *National Histories* continued to be a vital source for thinking about the present throughout the medieval period.

Dream visions that can be interpreted as meaningful communications from the deities or other spirits represent another important authoritative source for Jien's analysis. His interpretation of both past events and prophetic dreams alludes to one of the work's deeper concerns: how should capable men interpret the world around them? Although such concerns are not absent in the works discussed earlier, in *Gukanshō* they take on more ominous meaning as political and social structures become less predictable.

The form of the *Gukanshō* reflects the author's engagement with this complex of concerns. It resembles continental histories in its critique of rulers and ministers, yet it is premised on the sanctity of the royal line. It is written

² Osumi, "Gukanshō," in *Nihon koten bungaku daijiten*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1984), 273.

in kana and thus comprehensible to a wide audience, yet it expects to be understood fully only by a small subset of its readership. The analytical section is episodic, and the episodes vary in style from short, expository narratives and interpretations of dream visions to dialogues and lists, characteristics associated with *zuihitsu* (essay-like writings). This kind of productive interaction among styles, forms, and thematic concerns is a hallmark of works of this period and proved profoundly influential in the creation of the hybrid narrative genres that would emerge in the following centuries.

Heian popular songs: *imayō* and *Ryōjin hishō*

I V O S M I T S

Partly because of the paucity of texts that speak directly with voices outside court circles, it is difficult to grasp what other literary traditions existed in Heian Japan, although it is clear that song (*kayō*) was everywhere. A glimpse of such literature was provided by the rediscovery in 1911 of a collection of songs long thought lost. All belong to a popular genre known as *imayō* (“modern-style” songs), which flourished throughout the eleventh to thirteenth centuries and encompasses a wide range of songs performed mostly by *miko* (shrine maidens), Heian courtesans working the waterfront known as *asobi* or *asobime*, itinerant female entertainers called *kugutsu* (puppeteers), and also the so-called *shirabyōshi* (“white beat” singers) of the Kamakura period. This incomplete collection, *Ryōjin hishō* (Secret Selections of [Songs to make] the Dust on the Rafters [Dance], 1179), is part of what must have been a truly substantial record in twenty books of these women’s repertoire and is accompanied by the *Ryōjin hishō kudenshū* (Collected Oral Transmissions), all compiled by the retired monarch GoShirakawa (1127–92, r. 1155–8), who not only collected songs performed by women on the margins of society, but even became a disciple of one of these performers. GoShirakawa was actually criticized considerably for what many viewed as an unseemly involvement in an art that was supposed to be miles removed from formal court culture. Nevertheless, he was not alone in his royal patronage: *imayō* were performed at court banquets, and his mother, empress Taikenmon’in Shōshi (var. Tamako, 1101–45), also seems to have been a patron of *imayō* singing. While he earned a reputation among his political opponents as a difficult and dull-witted man (“the biggest goblin [*tengū*] in Japan,” the warrior ruler Minamoto no Yoritomo [1147–99] reportedly called him), GoShirakawa emerges from the *Collected Oral Transmissions* as someone with genuinely wistful memories of his *asobi* teacher and a passionate dedication to *imayō*, intent on elevating its status to that of

respectable *waka*. It is no coincidence that as a model he invokes the influential *waka* treatise *Toshiyori zuinō* (Toshiyori's Poetics, c. 1115). The text also makes clear that a good number of lower-ranking courtiers, some with formidable reputations as *waka* poets, were involved in the monarch's pursuit of popular song.

Scholars writing on the subject tend to fall into two groups: those who argue that the female performers were marginalized and exploited, and those who maintain that they were fully integrated into society. Since the background of these performers varied in the extreme, from courtiers' daughters to anonymous prostitutes, it is difficult to arrive at conclusive statements about their position in late Heian and early Kamakura society.

The term "imayō" appears already at the end of the tenth century in *Makura no sōshi* (The Pillow Book), when Sei Shōnagon (d. early eleventh century) notes: "Imayō are long and have unusual melodies." The term denotes both a wide rubric of popular song, which could even include regular *waka*, and a specific type of song, only ten of which are extant in *Ryōjin hishō*. In the narrow sense, imayō proper knows a limited set of prosodic possibilities, often in the form of a quatrain, that follow an alternation of eight (or seven) and four (or five) syllables. The three main genres that survive in *Ryōjin hishō* are *hōmon uta* (Buddhist song), *shiku no kamiuta* (deity song quatrains), and *niku no kamiuta* (deity song couplets). *Hōmon uta* as a rule consist of four hemistichs (*ku*), each of which has a 7-5 or 8-5 syllabic count. The *niku no kamiuta* tend to adhere to a 7-5 syllabic structure. *Shiku no kamiuta* are more irregular and have unconventional meter schemes, such as the following:

kaze ni nabiku mono	Things that sway in the breeze:
matsu no kozuwe no takaki eda	high pine branches,
take no kozuwe to ka	and topmost bamboo leaves;
umi ni ho kakete hashiru fune	ships running on the seas with sails raised high;
sora ni ha ukigumo	in the sky, the drifting clouds;
nobe ni ha hanasusuki	in the fields, spiked pampass grass.
	(<i>Ryōjin hishō</i> 373, trans. Yung-Hee Kim)

Imayō were "modern" or "fashionable" (*imamekashi*) in contrast to the older forms of song, but especially so in their performance. In the broad sense, "imayō" was a tag name that could cover song categories that were actually quite old, such as *kagura* (deity music), *saibara* (horse-readying music), or *fuzoku* (folk songs), but performed in the "new style"; as such, imayō was distinctly different from performances of, for example, *saibara* in

the repertoire of *gagaku* court music. Diverse in form as well as content and tonality, and in fact also comprising regular court poems (*waka*), *imayō* as a song genre seem to have been sung to melodies and rhythms that clearly set them apart from *waka* declamation. Like *waka*, they could at times be sung without the accompaniment of instruments, but most likely had a faster tempo. Yet *imayō* most often seem to have been sung to the accompaniment of an instrument, usually a hand-drum, but occasionally also a lute (*biwa*), small flute (*hichiriki*), or even mouth organ (*shō*). It has been suggested that certain *imayō* had close links with *wasan*, Buddhist hymns that share several formal characteristics with them.

This link is suggested by the category *hōmon uta* in *Ryōjin hishō*. Since *Ryōjin hishō* is not intact, however, the heavy emphasis on religious song, be it Buddhist, Shinto, or of syncretist nature, in what remains of the anthology is not necessarily the complete picture. The extant table of contents for Book One of *Ryōjin hishō* gives categories of song quite close to those of formal *waka* anthologies. In fact, within the two extant categories of “deity songs,” many lyrics deal with the topic of love and yearning. Whatever the theme of an *imayō*, the majority of songs take their cues from the lives of the Heian lower classes.

The second half of the twelfth century saw the rise of a new type of female performer, the *shirabyōshi*. The term at first denoted only a type of song; later it came to refer also to its singers. As with the *kugutsu*, there seem to have been male *shirabyōshi* as well before the category became exclusively female. The chief novelty was that these women not only sung but also danced and did so dressed up in a courtier’s cap (*eboshi*) and trousers; hence their performance was known also as “male dance” (*otokomai*). This in no way prevented *shirabyōshi* from becoming increasingly popular at both the imperial court and especially among warriors’ circles throughout the thirteenth century. A famous case is that of Shizuka Gozen (“Lady” Shizuka), the beloved dancer and companion of warrior Minamoto no Yoshitsune (1159–89). The increasing idealization of *shirabyōshi* and other courtesans, many of them growing into legendary figures, resulted in a large body of medieval tales, ballads, and dance dramas (*kōwakamai*, *noh*) that centered on female entertainers.

PART III

★

THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD
(1185–1600)

Introduction to medieval literature

HARUO SHIRANE

The Kamakura period began in 1185 with the establishment of the *bakufu*, or military government, in Kamakura, near present-day Tokyo, by Minamoto Yoritomo, the leader of the Minamoto (Genji) clan that defeated the Taira (Heike) in 1185. As a result of the Hōgen and Heiji rebellions (1156–9), the Heike, a military clan, had displaced the Fujiwara, who had dominated the throne and the court for most of the Heian period. But the Heike elite emulated the Fujiwara regents, maintaining a deep interest in court culture and *waka*. Yoritomo's establishment of the bakufu created two political centers, a court government in Kyoto and a military government in the east, laying the foundation for west–east dual cultures. The Genpei War between the Genji and the Heike is vividly recounted in the *Heike monogatari* (The Tales of the Heike), a medieval literary landmark. After the end of the war, a struggle broke out between Yoritomo and his younger brother Yoshitsune, who was killed in 1189 by a general of the Northern Fujiwara clan in Ōshū (northeast Honshu). Yoritomo in turn destroyed the Fujiwara forces, ending major domestic armed conflict. In the late medieval and early modern period, legends surrounding the defeated Yoshitsune became the foundation for a massive cluster of narrative literature, theater, and dance-songs, including the *Gikeiki* (Tale of Yoshitsune).

After Yoritomo's death, control of the bakufu passed from the Minamoto to the Hōjō family, led by Hōjō Yoshitoki (1163–1224) and Hōjō Masako (1157–1225), the wife of Yoritomo and the mother of his successors, including Minamoto no Sanetomo (1192–1219), the third shogun (r. 1203–19) and a noted *waka* poet. A key political turning point in the Kamakura period was the Jōkyū rebellion in 1221, when the retired emperor GoToba (1180–1239, r. 1183–98) attempted to restore direct imperial rule from the military by attacking the Hōjō; he was defeated and exiled to the small and remote island of Ōki. The Jōkyū rebellion revealed the weakness of the nobility and the emperor and the growing strength of the samurai class, who had effectively

seized power in the late Heian period. GoToba's exile to Oki is nostalgically recounted in *Masukagami* (The Clear Mirror, 1333–76), a vernacular historical chronicle.

The Kamakura period ended in 1333 with the defeat of Hōjō Takatoki (1303–33) and the Hōjō clan by Emperor GoDaigo (1288–1339, r. 1318–39), who gained considerable power for two years, during the brief Kenmu restoration (1333–5), before being defeated by another military clan, the Ashikaga. GoDaigo retreated to Yoshino, south of the capital, and established a Southern Court, thus beginning the period of rival courts known as the era of Northern and Southern Courts (Nanbokuchō, 1336–92). The extended struggle during this period, when the imperial court was split, eventually ended these attempts and dispersed the nobility, with political power permanently shifting to the military. GoDaigo's political career and his failed attempt at imperial restoration is one of the focal points of the *Taiheiki* (Chronicle of Great Peace, c. 1370), the most influential chronicle of the late medieval period.

The Ashikaga clan was based in Kyoto, in a quarter that gave its name to the Muromachi period (1392–1573), which lasted until the defeat of the fifteenth shogun Ashikaga Yoshiaki (1537–97) by Oda Nobunaga (1534–82) in 1573. The latter half of the Muromachi period, referred to as the Sengoku (Warring States) period, extends from the beginning of the Ōnin War (1467–77) to 1573, when Nobunaga destroyed the Ashikaga bakufu and reunified the country. The Azuchi–Momoyama period (1573–98) refers to the short period during which two powerful generals, first Nobunaga and then Toyotomi Hideyoshi, gained national power before the victory of Tokugawa Ieyasu at the battle of Sekigahara in 1600, traditionally treated as the end of the medieval period.

During the early medieval period the samurai were drawn to aristocratic and court culture of the capital, as the Heike had been. Although there were very few samurai waka poets during the Heian period, their number steadily increased during the medieval period. The most prominent was Minamoto no Sanetomo, who took an interest in *Man'yōshū*-style poetry. In the late medieval period, scholars and poets of samurai origin such as Imagawa Ryōshun (1326–1420?), Tō no Tsuneyori (1401–84?), and Hosokawa Yūsai became prominent, and a number of *renga* (linked verse) masters were of samurai origin. More important, the warriors became the subject of literature and performance, particularly in *gunki-mono* (military narratives) such as *The Tales of the Heike*, which were organized chronologically (around battles and wars) and focused on the lives and families of samurai. Relatively few samurai

actually contributed to the production of these chronicles, however. More often, the military chronicles were the work of former aristocrats turned Buddhist priests, who gave narratives like *The Tales of the Heike* a heavily Buddhistic and aristocratic coloring. In the late medieval period, both *noh* drama and *kōwakamai* (ballad drama) were patronized by powerful samurai, but except for the founder of *kōwakamai*, Momonoi Naoaki (aka Kōwakamaru, 1393–1470), a scion of a warrior family whose presence gave this dramatic form a samurai flavor, warriors themselves were not the playwrights. Instead, they became the key audience and patrons.

One of the main characteristics of medieval literature is that much of it was produced by groups rather than by individuals, most obviously in military chronicles like *The Tales of the Heike* and the *Taiheiki*. The same is particularly true of popular medieval genres such as *kyōgen* (comic drama), *setsuwa* (anecdotal literature), *otogi-zōshi* (Muromachi tales), and *sekkyō-bushi*. Almost all these works were composed anonymously, or were transmitted semi-orally in various media, from picture scrolls to theater. This group tendency is found even in high genres such as *renga* (classical linked verse), which became popular from the fourteenth century and was composed by multiple poets working together. Whereas Heian court literature was a product of aristocrats working in the privacy of their homes or at court functions, military chronicles like *The Tales of the Heike* and later fictional narratives such as *otogi-zōshi* and *sekkyō-bushi* were often recited on the road, with storytellers traveling from place to place, attracting a wider and more plebeian audience.

In the medieval period the continuity of the house, or family (*ie*) – whether a warrior clan, *waka* lineage, or *kyōgen* actor's guild – became paramount. This is evident in the *nanori* (often elaborate recitations of the family lineage) of warriors on the battlefield. For poetry, scholarship, and performance arts, the preservation of the house and the transmission of learning from one generation to the next took precedence. This was the safest way to preserve learning and frequently led to family-based traditions of secret teachings (*denju*) and strong master–disciple relationships. The *Kokin denju*, secret teachings of the *Kokinshū*, in which knowledge and interpretations of the *Kokinshū* were passed from master to disciple, are emblematic of this distinctive aspect of medieval scholarship and learning.

Even while their political and economic status declined, the aristocracy retained prestige as the custodians of high culture, and the long tradition of court literature continued to flourish. Indeed, the first thirty or forty years of the Kamakura period, until the Jōkyū rebellion in 1221, represent one of the

peaks of aristocratic literature. Some of the greatest waka anthologies – beginning with the *Shinkokinshū* (New Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems, c. 1205–21), often considered the finest of the twenty-one imperial anthologies – were compiled at this time. A plethora of poetic treatises, such as Fujiwara Shunzei's *Korai fūteishō* (Collection of Poetic Styles from the Past, c. 1197–1201) and Fujiwara Teika's *Eiga no taigai* (Essentials of Poetic Composition, c. 1222), were written during the early decades of the Kamakura period. In fact, more *monogatari* (tales) were written during the early medieval period than in the Heian period, although many such works were imitative, drawing heavily on *The Tale of Genji*, which had become a model for literary and poetic composition. It was not until the Muromachi period that the *monogatari* received new stimulus from commoner and regional culture, taking the form of what are now called *otogi-zōshi*, or Muromachi tales, which combined the narrative structures of the classical tales with those of the more concise *setsuwa* (anecdotal literature) and often appeared in *emaki* (picture scroll) format, thereby appealing to wider audiences.

Aristocratic literature in the medieval period was characterized by strong nostalgia for the Heian past and an emphasis on preserving court traditions. Indeed, literary production was the only means for many aristocrats to make a living, and extensive attention was paid to collating, annotating, and commenting on earlier texts. Two great literary figures of the late Muromachi period were Shōtetsu (1381–1459), a prolific and innovative poet who is regarded as one of the last distinguished exponents of classical waka, and the renga master Sōgi (1421–1502), of uncertain origins, who wrote influential treatises on renga and numerous commentaries on the classics. Such scholarship tended to focus on Heian aristocratic texts like the *Kokinshū*, *The Tales of Ise*, and *The Tale of Genji*, which became the three most heavily annotated texts. Commentaries on such works were motivated by the fact that Japanese poetry, specifically waka and renga, the two most authoritative literary genres, required knowledge of the Heian classics. Commentary in fact was the primary form of secular and clerical scholarship in this period.

Buddhist writings in the Heian period, such as the *Nihon ryōiki* (Record of Miraculous Events in Japan) and the *Ōjōyōshū* (Essentials of Salvation, c. 984–5), were almost always written in Literary Sinitic. In the Kamakura period, however, the priest-intellectuals of the new Buddhist sects also wrote in kana, producing *hōgo*, or vernacular Buddhist literature, which could reach out to a broader audience. Buddhist leaders like Shinran and Ippen also wrote *wasan*, Buddhist hymns, which made their teachings easily available for wide

dissemination. Equally important was Zen Buddhism, introduced to Japan by Dōgen (1200–53) and others, which resulted in the so-called literature of the Five Mountains (*Gozan bungaku*), writings in Chinese by Zen priests from the late thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries, with which Ikkyū (1394–1481) was associated. The bakufu invited Zen leaders to Kamakura, and under its patronage Zen priests imported texts and utensils from Song and Yuan China. Zen Buddhism and Song culture influenced such art forms as dry stone gardens (*karesansui*), monochromatic ink painting, *kanshi* (Chinese poetry), and tea ceremony, creating a new culture distinct from that established by the Heian court aristocrats.

Setsuwa (anecdotal literature) were collected from as early as the Nara period and appeared in the late Heian period in the massive *Konjaku monogatari shū* (Tales of Times Now Past, c. 1120), but it was in the Kamakura period that most of the extant setsuwa collections were edited. A related genre, called the *engi-mono* (stories of divine origins), which describe the origins and miraculous benefits of the god or Buddha worshiped by a specific temple or shrine complex, also gradually came to the fore. Engi-mono were produced by priests or shrine officials to record, embellish, or reinvent the history of their temple or shrine. Many of them were presented as illustrated scrolls (*emaki-mono*) so that they could be seen as well as heard. A *sekkyō* (sermon-ballad) tradition emerged in which priests narrated or chanted Buddhist teachings or engi-mono to musical accompaniment. In the late medieval period this tradition was consolidated as *sekkyō-bushi* (ballads sung to the beat of the *sasara*, a percussive instrument), performed by commoner storytellers. This genre became the basis of *sekkyō jōruri* (ballads sung to shamisen accompaniment), which eventually evolved into *jōruri* (puppet theater) in the Tokugawa period. *Monogatari sō* (Buddhist priest-storytellers) also became specialists in narrating military chronicles like the *Taiheiki* (Chronicle of Great Peace).

Buddhist thought permeates almost all genres of medieval literature: from waka to renga, military chronicles, setsuwa, *zuihitsu* (essays), noh drama, otogi-zōshi, and *sekkyō-bushi*. The role of literature in Buddhism, however, was controversial. On the one hand, it was dismissed as *kyōgen kigyō* (later *kyōgen kigo*, wild words and decorated phrases); literature and its production were thought to be illusory and even an impediment to salvation, encouraging worldly attachments. At the same time, it could be rationalized as *hōben*, an expedient means of teaching the Buddhist law and leading readers (or listeners) to insight and, ultimately, enlightenment.

The Muromachi bakufu came of age with the third shogun, Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358–1408, r. 1368–94), who unified the Southern and Northern imperial courts. A cultural efflorescence under Yoshimitsu and his son Yoshimochi, the fourth shogun (r. 1394–1423), is referred to as Kitayama culture (named after the retreat that Yoshimitsu built north of the capital). In the Muromachi period both *noh* and *kyōgen* matured into major genres, particularly under the leadership of Zeami, whose patron was Yoshimitsu. Another notable period of cultural activity was the so-called Higashiyama period, in the later half of the fifteenth century, primarily during the rule of Ashikaga Yoshimasa (r. 1449–73, 1436–90), the eighth shogun. In 1483 he built a retreat at Higashiyama (the Ginkaku-ji, or Silver Pavilion), where he led an elegant life and supported *noh* drama, tea ceremony, flower arrangement, *renga*, and landscape gardening. Higashiyama culture is noted for its fusion of warrior, aristocratic, and Zen elements, particularly the notions of *wabi* and *sabi*, which found beauty and depth in minimalist, seemingly impoverished, material.

The origins of Muromachi *noh* drama were in *sarugaku* troupes associated with shrines and temples (such as the Kasuga Shrine) in Ōmi and Yamato provinces. The actors belonged to groups attached to *shōen* (private estate) owners of large temples and shrines in the Kinai region. During the Northern and Southern Courts period, when *noh* and *kyōgen* matured, Kan'ami and Zeami, the founders of *noh* drama as we know it today, were patronized by the Ashikaga shogunal family, situated in the capital. At this time, *noh*, which had popular roots in *dengaku* (music of the rice fields), began to reflect Heian court culture and developed the aesthetics of *yūgen* (mystery and depth), which included allusions and evocations of the classical past. Characteristic of this phase of *noh* were the *kazura-mono* (woman's plays), including plays about characters from *The Tales of Ise* and *The Tale of Genji*. *Noh* drama also established a major subgenre of "warrior" plays, commemorating in particular the heroes of the Genpei Wars.

As travel increased for both aristocrats and commoners, the "arts" of the roadside emerged. Various religious groups – such as *Kōya hijiri* (monks from Mount Kōya), *kanjin hijiri* (monks soliciting donations for temple building), and *bikuni* (nuns) – also traveled, as did *biwa hōshi* (lute-playing minstrels), *etoki* (picture-storytellers), *noh* actors, *kyōgen* players, and *tekugutsu* (puppeteers). *Renga* masters, who often were half layperson and half priest, also traveled to compose with different groups throughout the country and to give lessons on the Japanese classics. The culture of the capital was thus carried to the provinces while the culture of the provinces was brought to the

capital, giving new life to both. The spread of court culture outside the capital increased dramatically during the Warring States period (1467–1573). The Ōnin War (1467–77), which arose over an inheritance issue involving the Ashikaga shogun and which pitted *daimyō* (military lords) from the west against those in the east, took place mainly in Kyoto and destroyed the city, leading aristocrats and cultural figures to flee to the provinces and seek the patronage of wealthy provincial lords.

The interaction of oral and written, aristocratic and commoner, led, particularly in the late medieval period, to the juxtaposition of the serious and the comic, elite and popular – what in the Tokugawa period was called *ga* (elegant, high) and *zoku* (low). This dialectic is evident in the relationship of *noh* to *kyōgen* (comic drama, with commoner roots and characters), two very different genres that were performed side by side, and in the relationship of *renga* (classical linked verse) to *haikai* (popular linked verse), which found humor (as *kyōgen* did) in overturning and satirizing authoritative figures. Last but not least, the late Muromachi period was also an international era. In 1549 the Jesuit order (Societas Jesu, J. Yasokai), which was founded in 1540, sent missionaries to Japan, and they brought with them Western culture and produced Japanese versions of such works as *Aesop's Fables*.

Japanese poetic thought, from earliest times to the thirteenth century

A . E . C O M M O N S

Facility with the composition of *waka* (poetry in Japanese), the most prestigious premodern genre of writing in Japanese (as opposed to *kanbun*, Literary Sinitic), was an essential social skill to be mastered by the elite. *Waka* existed at the center of a system of practices and texts that included exchanges, meetings, competitions, rituals, portraiture, anthologies (both public and private), and treatises on poetic thought known as *karonsho*. However, *karon*, or poetic thought, generally defined as discourse on *waka*, is found not only in treatises but also in other poetry-related texts such as anthology prefaces and poetry contest judgments, and a treatise itself could take the form of an anthology or collection of poems.

During the Heian period (794–1185), practitioners of *waka* attempted to raise its profile as a literary genre by appropriating or emulating elements of the practice of the more prestigious *kanshi* (poetry in Literary Sinitic). These included poetry meetings, the compilation of *chokusenshū*, or imperially commissioned anthologies of poetry, and the composition of poetic treatises. The earliest expressions of *karon* are the most heavily dependent on Chinese models; later *karon* moves toward more distinctively Japanese concepts of poetry and poetics. Even as *karon* developed away from Chinese models, however, the effects of continental modes of thought remained, evident in the increasingly religious tone of poetic thought in the late twelfth century under the growing influence of Buddhist discourse.

Heian and early medieval *karon* generally has a writerly focus, a tendency to deal with the concrete over the abstract, with great attention paid to the intricacies of topic selection, diction, meter, and various rhetorical techniques. The advice given may be extremely precise, and the text may take the form of collections of exemplary poems to provide specific models for the readers' own compositions. The social practices surrounding *waka* contributed not only to the formation of *karon* but also to its preservation: the

twelfth century saw the beginnings of the privatization of poetic knowledge with the formation of poetic schools or houses (*kadōke*), each with its own body of exclusive poetic knowledge. These houses produced and carefully preserved their cultural capital in various forms, including anthologies, commentaries, and treatises that were passed down within the house over many centuries.

Waka, which by the Heian period consisted almost exclusively of the thirty-one-syllable poems also known as *tanka* (literally, “short poem”), are primarily lyrical in orientation, and a central concern of much *karon* is the need for poets to strike a balance between content and form, between an idealized directness of emotional expression and skilfully wrought poetic language intended to maximize the text’s expressive possibilities. The aesthetic preferences expressed in *karon* tend toward the elegant and understated, with an increasing emphasis being placed on the importance of suggestion and implication rather than explicit statement. The preferred style of waka grew increasingly intertextual during the Heian period, and by the twelfth century the words and images used in poetry were embedded in a dense web of connotative meanings based on their use in earlier waka. A thorough knowledge of the poetic canon was thus a prerequisite for successful composition, and *karon* from this time not only give examples of famous or admirable past poems but also explain in some detail how aspiring poets should make allusive reference to such earlier works in their own.

Kakyō hyōshiki (A Formulary for Verse Based on the Canons of Poetry, 772)

Dating from the late Nara period (710–94), Fujiwara no Hamanari’s (724–90) *Kakyō hyōshiki* is regarded as the oldest extant *karon*sho. Written in *kanbun*, it is heavily indebted to Chinese poetic theory, particularly that of the Six Dynasties period (222–589). The author attempts to adapt Chinese concepts such as “poetic illnesses,” largely concerned with issues of rhyme and tone, to Japanese poetry. Hamanari’s insistence on the importance of the aural qualities of waka was not something widely shared by later authors of *karon*. However, the opening passage of *Kakyō hyōshiki* is significant for its introduction into Japanese poetic discourse of two particular elements of Chinese poetic thought, namely the concept of poetry as being rooted in emotion and the paradigm of the “six modes” of poetry. Both of these are adapted from the so-called Great Preface to the *Shijing* (Classic of Poetry,

c. 600 BCE), and both would be more famously and influentially elaborated upon in the prefaces to the *Kokin wakashū* more than a century later.

Kokin wakashū (Collection of Ancient and Modern
Poems, c. 905–14)

The *Kokin wakashū*, also known as the *Kokinshū*, was the first anthology of Japanese poetry to be compiled by imperial commission. The ninth century, sometimes known today as a “dark age” of waka due to the overwhelming interest taken in kanshi during that time, had seen the compilation of three imperially commissioned kanshi anthologies, and when interest in Japanese poetry revived in the early tenth century the idea of the imperial anthology was applied to waka as well. Since an imperial anthology is, among other things, a public record of the poetic accomplishments of the reign of the emperor who commissioned it, the *Kokinshū* is particularly significant as the first official document to be written in the Japanese vernacular rather than kanbun. The *Kokinshū* contains approximately 1,100 poems in twenty volumes, but in terms of karon its primary importance lies in its two prefaces, one in kanbun and one in the vernacular. The Japanese Preface (*Kanaajo*), by the chief compiler of the *Kokinshū*, Ki no Tsurayuki (d. c. 945), is the first piece of extended prose writing in Japanese on the subject of waka. Its famous opening paragraph established what would become the orthodox view of the “affective-expressive” character of Japanese poetry:

The songs of Japan take the human heart as their seed and flourish as myriad leaves of words. As long as they are alive to this world, the cares and deeds of men and women are endless, so they speak of things they hear and see, giving words to the feelings in their hearts. Hearing the cries of the warbler among the blossoms or the calls of the frog that lives in the waters, how can we doubt that every living creature sings its song? Not using force, it moves heaven and earth, makes even the unseen spirits and gods feel pity, smoothes the bonds between man and woman, and consoles the hearts of fierce warriors – such a thing is poetry. (trans. L. Cook)¹

Tsurayuki stresses the emotional content of poetry (*uta*, poem/song) and its spontaneity and universality. The concept of poetry as originating in the poet’s feelings is drawn from the *Shijing*, and this idealized view of waka as spontaneous and authentic emotional expression was enormously influential,

¹ Haruo Shirane, *Traditional Japanese Literature* (New York, Columbia University Press, 2007), 148–9.

adhered to by waka poets as dogma even when belied by a poem's intricately crafted language or fictional setting. In his description of the pragmatic effects of poetry Tsurayuki draws on the same passage from the *Shijing* preface that Hamanari did earlier, but translates and adapts it into Japanese. The high regard in which later poets and writers held the *Kokinshū* Kanajo made it by far the most important and influential route by which these ideas from Chinese sources made their way into Japanese poetic discourse.

Tsurayuki goes on to describe the divine origins of waka, crediting the first thirty-one-syllable poem to the deity Susano-o, and discusses Japanese poetry in terms of the "six modes" (*rikugi*) of poetry derived from the *Shijing*. He then bemoans the current, degenerate state of waka and describes an idealized past when Japanese poetry flourished even at the highest levels of society. Tsurayuki then offers critiques of well-known recent (ninth-century) poets, in the course of which he employs the critical terms *kokoro* (heart/mind) and *kotoba* (words) to describe the (emotional) content and diction, respectively, of their poems, setting in place a critical paradigm that became the foundation of many later karon works. The next section of the preface describes the commissioning of the *Kokinshū*, whereby its editors were charged with the task of collecting poems from earlier and contemporary times – giving the anthology its title – and the preface finishes with an expression of the compilers' fervent hope that Japanese poetry endure henceforth. The *Kokinshū* was instrumental in bringing waka discourse back into the public sphere, and its Kanajo came to be canonized as the seminal text of Japanese poetic thought, so much so that it is almost impossible to overstate the extent of its influence on later karon.

Shinsen zuinō (Newly Selected Poetic Essentials,
c. 1001–2) and *Waka kuhon* (Nine Grades of Japanese
Poetry, c. 1009)

The next major karon text after Tsurayuki's *Kokinshū* preface is the *Shinsen zuinō* of Fujiwara no Kintō (966–1041), the leading waka poet of his age and a noted polymath whose talents extended to poetry in kanbun and court music. The son and grandson of regents, and brother to two imperial consorts, Kintō was a leading cultural figure at court and was active at poetry contests and other poetry-related events; so dreaded was his displeasure that an anecdote preserved in the later *Toshiyori zuinō* recounts the anxiety-driven death of one mortified poet whose work Kintō criticized in public. Kintō was a great admirer of Tsurayuki, and the central concern of *Shinsen zuinō* is the

relationship between poetic form and content, further developing the critical framework articulated by Tsurayuki in the *Kokinshū* Kanajo. Kintō begins *Shinsen zuinō* by discussing the structure of tanka; he then indicates that admirable poems are those that combine deep feeling and pure form, and that they should also have uncomplicated imagery. In a departure from Tsurayuki's approach, however, Kintō goes on to give concrete advice on poetic composition: he discusses the placement of the emotional content within the poem, warns against repetitive sounds in a manner reminiscent of earlier references to "poetic illnesses," discourages poets from using inelegant or archaic vocabulary, and advises against making excessive reference to earlier poems. Kintō also discusses, briefly, the archaic thirty-eight-syllable *sedōka* ("repeating-head poem"); the *Shinsen zuinō* then finishes, at least in its extant form, with some suggested reading for aspiring poets, recommending, among other things the *Nihongi* (Chronicles of Japan, 720) and the works of Tsurayuki. It is thought that the text may have originally included a now-lost section on the *chōka* (long poem), although scholarly opinion is divided on this point. Kintō helpfully illustrates his advice with concrete examples: *Shinsen zuinō* includes eighteen poems, chosen to either exemplify poetic excellence or demonstrate faults to be avoided. It is *Shinsen zuinō*'s combination of aesthetic theory and detailed compositional advice that sets it apart from preceding works on karon.

Kintō's other major karonsho, *Waka kuhon*, similarly features issues of aesthetics (again, couched in terms of form and content) and concrete examples of admirable poetry. The *Kuhon* part of the title refers to the nine grades of rebirth for believers in the Buddha Amida's Pure Land paradise; Kintō uses this hierarchy of merit to define nine different classes of poetry, from the exquisite (Upper Level, Upper) to the charmless (Lower Level, Lower). The description of each level in *Waka kuhon* consists of a one-sentence evaluation of the poems in that class and two example poems. Kintō's emphasis on the importance of feeling or content (*kokoro*) in poems, evident in *Shinsen zuinō*, is also clearly visible in *Waka kuhon*, in which the poems judged to be on the uppermost level are described, positively, as having an excess of feeling (*amari no kokoro*). With this ideal of ineffable poetic beauty produced by emotional content barely constrained by the poem's diction, Kintō anticipates the preference for overtones (*yōjō*) expressed by poetic theorists in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Kintō also pioneered the genre of the *shūkasen* (collection of exemplary poems that could serve as poetic models), and his works include two texts that can be considered part of that category, along with *Waka kuhon*:

Kingyokushū (Collection of Gold and Jewels, c. 1007) and *Sanjūrokuninsen* (Selected Thirty-Six People, c. 1009–12), an influential text listing thirty-six outstanding poets with representative poems. Kintō also compiled *Shūishō* (Notes on Gleanings, c. 997), thought to be the basis of the third *chokusenshū*, *Shūishū* (Collection of Gleanings, 1005–7), and the important anthology *Wakan rōeishū* (Collection of Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing; early eleventh century). He was greatly admired by later poets and theorists, both for his taste and for his efforts to explicitly and concretely define the qualities of excellent poetry.

Toshiyori zuinō (Toshiyori's Poetic Essentials, c. 1115)

The poet Minamoto no Toshiyori (c. 1055–c. 1129) is thought to have completed his lengthy treatise *Toshiyori zuinō* about a century after Kintō was at the height of his influence. Much had changed during that time, as poetic practice was starting to take on a form now considered characteristically medieval. The turning point had come with the fourth *chokusenshū*, the first to be produced during the *insei* (government by retired emperors) period (1086–1185): the *Goshūishū* (Later Collection of Gleanings) compiled by Fujiwara no Michitoshi (1047–99) in 1086. Although the poetry collected in the *Goshūishū* does reflect changes in taste since Kintō's time, the text's significance in terms of *karon* lies in the response it provoked, namely, the first public critique of a *chokusenshū*, in the form of the *Nan Goshūi shō* (In Critique of the *Goshūishū*, c. 1086) by Toshiyori's father Minamoto no Tsunenobu (1016–97). Content-wise, the *Nan Goshūi shō* consists of eighty-four poems from *Goshūishū* that Tsunenobu criticizes as being of poor quality and unsuitable for inclusion in a *chokusenshū*. It is the very existence of the *Nan Goshūi shō*, however, that can be taken as a sign of the development of the concept of *waka* as a serious literary form – in contrast to its role as a social phenomenon – about which such public debate could occur. This kind of poetic factionalization and public disagreement over poetry as an art form can be considered a distinguishing feature of what has been termed the “medievalization of poetic practice,” along with an increasing tendency toward the “privatization and exclusivity” of poetic knowledge (Huey, 652). This time also saw poets starting to regard *waka* as a “Way” (*michi*), a skilled and specialized practice with a spiritual component.

The *Toshiyori zuinō* is thought to have been written as a poetic primer for Fujiwara no Taishi (aka Kaya no in, 1095–1155), the daughter of the regent-chancellor Fujiwara no Tadazane (1078–1162) and later an imperial consort.

Considerably longer than any preceding karon, the *Toshiyori zuinō* begins with a preface in which Toshiyori describes the long history of waka and the universality of its composition, but then bemoans what he saw as the staleness of poetic ideas and diction and calls for the creation of a fresh and novel style (*mezurashiki sama*). He advertises his own abilities as a poetic specialist by claiming that he alone is working to preserve the Way of poetry. The *Toshiyori zuinō* then covers a broad range of poetry-related topics, including poetic forms, poetic illnesses, types of poets (from deities to outcasts), the pragmatic effects of poetry, poetic topics, poetic techniques, the origins of poetic vocabulary, expressions used in *renga* (linked verse), and poetry-related events of earlier times. Stylistically the text is distinguished by its pioneering use of *setsuwa* (anecdotes) to impart information, particularly in the sections on the origins and history of poetic vocabulary and on poetry-related past events; this use of *setsuwa* in karon would be emulated by members of the Rokujō house. The *Toshiyori zuinō* also includes a section listing over seventy exemplary poems, providing concrete models of poetic excellence. The influence of earlier karon is evident in a number of places in *Toshiyori zuinō*: for instance, Toshiyori's account of the history and affective nature of waka is reminiscent of Tsurayuki's Kanajo, and many of the exemplary poems in *Toshiyori zuinō* are drawn from Kintō's *Shūishō*. Toshiyori echoes Kintō in insisting on the primacy of content (*kokoro*) in poetic composition, but where Kintō insists on purity (*kiyoge*) of form, Toshiyori places more emphasis on issues of poetic diction, recommending that the form be fresh or novel (*mezurashiki*) and that the words be "decorative" (*kazari*). Through this approach Toshiyori sought dignified beauty in poetry, and, like Kintō, he valued overtones as an element of poetic quality. Toshiyori's innovative approach to poetry is also apparent in his own poetic compositions, and in the *chokusenshū* he edited, *Kin'yōshū* (Collection of Golden Leaves, 1127), the format of which differed significantly from that of earlier imperial anthologies.

Ōgishō (Poetic Profundities, c. 1144) and *Fukurozōshi*
(Book of Folded Pages, c. 1157)

The privatization of poetic knowledge eventually found social expression in the form of poetic houses, aristocratic families who devoted themselves to the production, preservation, and transmission from generation to generation of knowledge of poetic composition, criticism, and precedent. The first such house to emerge, in the early twelfth century, was the Rokujō house,

whose founder, Fujiwara no (Rokujō) Akisue (1055–1123), was an admirer of Kintō and of Toshiyori. The Rokujō house flourished for almost a century, and its members produced a number of poetic treatises, commentaries, anthologies, etc., the best known of which are the *Ōgishō* and *Fukurozōshi* of Fujiwara no (Rokujō) Kiyosuke (1104–77), grandson of Akisue and the foremost specialist poet of the mid twelfth century. *Ōgishō* consists of a preface followed by two volumes, covering such topics as the six modes of poetry, selected poems from earlier texts with commentary on problematic points, and explanations of items of poetic vocabulary. *Fukurozōshi* consists of two volumes and deals with procedures for organizing poetry meetings and compiling anthologies, anecdotes about poets, and anecdotes about poetry contests (*uta-awase*) and the judgments handed down therein. Their detailed treatment of individual poems and, in the case of *Fukurozōshi*, detailed accounts of the procedures for poetry-related events made both these texts valuable and influential sources for later poets. The other major Rokujō writer of poetic criticism was Kenshō (c. 1130–c. 1209), who had been adopted into the family and became its foremost poetic figure after Kiyosuke's death. One of Kenshō's best-known works is his *Ropyyakuban chinjō* (Complaint about the Poetry Contest in Six Hundred Rounds, c. 1193), a critique of the judgments rendered by Fujiwara no Shunzei (1114–1204) in the *Ropyyakuban uta-awase* (Poetry Contest in Six Hundred Rounds) of 1193. This is reminiscent of Tsunenobu's criticism of the *Goshūishū* over a century earlier, and is a reflection of the nature of twelfth-century *uta-awase*, which had become venues for the serious and minutely detailed – and sometimes acrimonious – critique of waka and a driving force behind the production of *karonshō*. The attention paid by Toshiyori, Kiyosuke, and Kenshō (and, to a lesser extent, Kintō) to matters of poetic vocabulary and precedent speaks to their concerns as both participants and judges, arbiters of poetic quality in the crucible of the *uta-awase* as waka developed into a literary field.

Korai fūteishō (Collection of Poetic Styles from the Past, c. 1197–1201)

The other poetic house to emerge in the twelfth century was the Mikohidari house, whose members attained and held for centuries dominant positions in the world of waka, their poetic preferences guiding the development of waka and *karon* for generation after generation. Some of their descendants – such as the Reizei house – still pursue waka as a vocation today, preserving the poetry-related practices of their forebears. The founding figures of the

Mikohidari house are Fujiwara no Shunzei and his son Teika (1162–1241), the latter being particularly instrumental in establishing the family as a poetic lineage. The poetic ideals espoused by Shunzei and Teika, while still concerned with issues of form and content, and while echoing earlier preferences for overtones, developed in distinctive directions and played a large role in forming the style of poetry found in the eighth chokusenshū, *Shinkokinshū* (New Collection of Old and New Poems, c. 1205) and regarded as characteristic of the medieval period.

An admirer of Toshiyori and rival of Kiyosuke and the Rokujō poets, Shunzei rose to become the most admired and influential waka poet, poetic theorist, and poetry contest judge of the twelfth century. He compiled the seventh imperial anthology, *Senzaishū* (Collection of One Thousand Years, 1188), but his most significant critical writing is the *Korai fūteishō*, thought to have been compiled by order of Princess Shokushi (d. 1201) and first presented to her in 1197 before being slightly revised in 1201. The text covers such topics as the history and changing styles of Japanese poetry, poetic forms, and poetic illnesses. *Korai fūteishō* also includes almost two hundred exemplary poems from the *Man'yōshū* (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves, c. 759) and almost four hundred from all chokusenshū extant at that time. Shunzei's most important points, however, are made in the preface to *Korai fūteishō*, and reflect the growing preference for intertextuality in waka at that time and the increasing influence of Buddhism on literary discourse.

The origins of Japanese poetry are distant, and the history of its transmission is long. Ever since the age of the powerful gods, when poetry became the art of this land, its expressions have encompassed the six modes, and its words have flourished for myriad generations. In the well-known words of the Kana Preface to the *Kokinshū*, the songs of Japan take the human heart as their seed and flourish as myriad leaves of words. As a result, whether we seek out the cherry blossoms of spring or view the tinted leaves of autumn, if we did not have what is called poetry, no one would know the color or the scent. What would we have for an original heart? (trans. Shirane, 588)

Shunzei's "original heart" (*moto no kokoro*) refers to the sensibilities of a person who has thoroughly internalized the aesthetic preferences of classical waka and as a result subconsciously sees the world only in terms of conventionalized poetic tropes; such absorption of poetic aesthetics, it was thought, would naturally enable skillful poetic composition. One developed an "original heart" through the study of outstanding poems, such as those included in the *Korai fūteishō* itself. Although Shunzei acknowledges the emotionally expressive nature of waka, he places the origin of poetic expression within the poetry

that has been internalized by and is shaping the perceptions of the poet, rather than presenting poetry as a spontaneous response by the poet to the world, as Tsurayuki does. This view of waka reflects the preference at the time for highly intertextual poetry, where skillful allusion to earlier poems was a crucial element of poetic composition. All acceptable poetic words brought conventional connotative meanings with them from their use in existing poems; these connotations gave rise to poetic overtones, which in turn produced the aesthetic quality most prized by Shunzei, *yūgen*, “mystery and depth.” An ideal now seen as characteristic of medieval literary genres, *yūgen* is notoriously difficult to define but may be thought of as a quality of richness and depth of content implied by elegant, understated diction.

In his notion of the “original heart,” Shunzei argues for the indivisibility of the human heart and the phenomenal world; his argument draws on fundamental Buddhist concepts of non-dualism, which he also employs in *Korai fūteishō* to suggest a similar equivalence between the Ways of Poetry and Buddhism. Shunzei also points out parallels between the transmission of the Buddhist Law and of Japanese poetry through history, theoretical parallels that were made concrete by his descendants as the poetic houses took Buddhist rites of transmission as a model for their own transmission of poetic knowledge from one generation to the next.

Kindai shūka (Superior Poems of Recent Times,
c. 1209), *Maigetsushō* (Monthly Notes, c. 1219), and *Eiga*
no taigai (Essentials of Poetic Composition, c. 1222)

Shunzei's son Teika occupies a uniquely influential position in the history of classical Japanese literature. The foremost poet of his time, he is the only person to have played a role in the compilation of two imperial anthologies, the *Shinkokinshū* and the *Shinchokusenshū* (New Imperially Commissioned Collection, 1235). His descendants dominated the world of waka for centuries, and his idolization by them and others ensured the ongoing influence of his ideas. This enduring reverence for Teika is clearly evident in texts such as the *Shōtetsu monogatari* (Conversations with Shōtetsu, c. 1448–50), a *karonsho* that begins by calling for the damnation of anyone criticizing Teika. Teika was also a collector and careful copyist of texts whose recensions have played a significant role in the preservation of a number of literary works today regarded as canonical.

Like his father, Teika honed his skills as an evaluator of poetic quality through judging poetry contests. He was a prolific poet and writer on poetry,

and his three major karonsho are *Kindai shūka*, *Maigetsushō*, and *Eiga no taigai*, all dating from the early thirteenth century. *Kindai shūka* consists of a brief preface and eighty-three exemplary poems intended to serve as models for composition. In the preface Teika decries the low standard of many contemporary poets, and offers advice for improvement, recommending the careful use of allusion to older poems, particularly from the ninth century, as a means to enrich one's waka. The exemplary poems, drawn mainly from collections from the *Kokinshū* onwards, are carefully arranged in an integrated sequence using the same categories as *chokusenshū*, demonstrating Teika's skill as an anthologizer of poetry. The text was sent to Minamoto no Sanetomo (1192–1219), third shōgun and Teika's poetry pupil.

The *Maigetsushō* is a letter to one of Teika's pupils (the identity of whom remains a subject of scholarly debate) providing Teika's suggestions for improvement as a response to the pupil's monthly submission of a one-hundred-poem sequence. The most substantial of Teika's works on karon, the *Maigetsushō* covers a broad range of topics, including poetic styles, the relationship between poetic content and form, composition on poetic topics (*dai*), poetic illnesses, and the development of critical judgment. The poetic style that Teika recommends most highly to his pupil is the style of "profound feeling" (*ushintei*). Like *yūgen*, *ushin* can be regarded as a fundamental ideal of medieval karon. As used by Teika, *ushin* refers to a deep, internalized understanding of a poem's topic, coupled with strong emotion. This bears some relationship to Shunzei's *moto no kokoro*; in both cases, the aim was to achieve a sublimely profound understanding of the poetic topic on which one was composing, and the result was the development of the poetic style rich in symbolism and suggestion that is considered characteristic of waka around the turn of the thirteenth century. In matters of poetic content and form, Teika insists on the primacy of content but acknowledges that good poetry strikes a balance between the two. He discusses these concepts in terms of *kokoro* and *kotoba*, but also uses "flowers" (*hana*) for the diction and "fruit" (*mi*) for the content; these terms were used in the Chinese preface to the *Kokinshū*, and echo the vegetal motif in the opening of the Japanese preface to that text.

Revered as a concise crystallization of Teika's guidelines for poetic composition, *Eiga no taigai* consists of a short preface in kanbun followed by 103 exemplary poems. The opening paragraph deals with the three poetic parameters of content (*kokoro*), diction (*kotoba*), and style (*fūtei*), and hints at the demands and challenges that poets faced in trying to find originality within an extremely intertextual and precedent-bound genre:

When it comes to the meaning [*kokoro*] of poetry, newness must come first. (One must seek a conception or approach that has yet to be used.) When it comes to diction [*kotoba*], one must use old words. (One must not use anything not found in the *Three Collections*. The poems of ancient poets collected in the *Shinkokinshū* can be used in the same way.) The style [*fūtei*] of poetry can be learned from the superior poems of superior poets of the past. (One should not be concerned about the period but just learn from appropriate poems.)
(trans. Shirane, 606)

The *Three Collections* are the first three imperial anthologies, namely *Kokinshū*, *Gosenshū* (Collection of Later Selections, 951), and *Shūishū*. Poets could make use of earlier poems by internalizing their conventionalized presentation of natural and human phenomena; they could also make explicit reference to earlier poems by quoting parts of them in their own works through the technique of *honkadori* (allusive variation). Teika offers concrete advice on allusive variation, regarding both the amount of material that should be quoted and the need to compose in a category different from that of the quoted poem. The final paragraph of the preface is a pithy encapsulation of Teika's view of the central roles of intertextuality and precedent in the neoclassical poetry of the early medieval period, asserting the absolute necessity for waka poets to also be expert readers of waka:

Poetry has no master. One simply makes the old poems one's teacher. If one dyes one's heart in the old style and learns from the words of one's predecessors, who would not be able to learn to compose poetry?
(trans. Shirane, 607)

Shinkokin wakashū: The New Anthology of Ancient and Modern Japanese Poetry

PAUL S. ATKINS

The *Shinkokin wakashū* (or *Shinkokinshū*, completed in 1221), commissioned by Retired Emperor GoToba (1180–1239; r. 1183–98) and compiled by a team including Fujiwara no Teika (also called Sadaie, 1162–1241) under the close supervision of GoToba, is the eighth imperial collection of waka and the most influential in the medieval period. An alternate translation of the title, the “New ‘*Kokinshū*’,” suggests that GoToba and the compilers of *Shinkokinshū* sought simultaneously to emulate the first imperial collection of waka, *Kokin wakashū* (*Kokinshū*, 905–14) and to go beyond what it had accomplished, potentially even surpassing it.

Shinkokinshū is a collection of nearly two thousand Japanese poems in the *tanka* form, thirty-one syllables arranged in syntactic units of 5/7/5/7/7 syllables. Some manuscripts contain 1,978 poems; others, 1,979. The poems are grouped by topic in twenty scrolls or books (*maki*), as follows: Spring I (*Haru jō*); Spring II (*Haru ge*); Summer (*Natsu*); Autumn I (*Aki jō*); Autumn II (*Aki ge*); Winter (*Fuyu*); Felicitations (*Ga*); Grief (*Shūshō*); Parting (*Ribetsu*); Travel (*Kiryo*); Love I (*Koi ichi*); Love II (*Koi ni*); Love III (*Koi san*); Love IV (*Koi yon*); Love V (*Koi go*); Miscellaneous I (*Zō jō*); Miscellaneous II (*Zō chū*); Miscellaneous III (*Zō ge*); Deities (*Jingi*); and Buddhism (*Shakkyō*).

Two prefaces are attached, one in classical Chinese (*Manajo*) and another in the vernacular (*Kanajo*). Both are written in the voice of GoToba, but it is known that the Chinese preface was drafted by Fujiwara no Chikatsune (1151–1210), and the Japanese preface prepared by Fujiwara no Yoshitsune (1169–1206), before they were edited by GoToba. They extol the Way of Japanese poetry, profess GoToba’s love for the art, acknowledge his shamelessness in including so many of his own poems (over thirty), name the compilers, and describe the process and policy of compilation.

At the time, GoToba was only twenty-one years old, having acceded to the throne in the middle of the Genpei War and abdicated at the age of eighteen. Like many of his predecessors, he established an Office of the Retired

Emperor and set about dominating court politics, which had not been possible during his reign due to his youth and ritual restrictions on the movements of sitting emperors. What made GoToba's experience distinctive was the presence of the Kamakura shogunate, established by Minamoto no Yoritomo in 1192, which accelerated the imperial family's loss of military, judicial, and economic power. The *Shinkokinshū* may be regarded as an early stage in GoToba's lifelong project of imperial restoration, later continuing in the construction of a "virtual Japan" through poems and painted screens at the Saishō Shitennōin chapel, and culminating in and terminating with his failed attempt to overthrow the shogunate in the Jōkyū rebellion of 1221.

The compilers took great pains not only in choosing which poems to include, but also in deciding the sequence in which they would appear within individual books. All of the imperial waka anthologies are organized by topic, so there is always some sense of pattern, but the degree of care expended on sequencing in *Shinkokinshū* is remarkable. In particular, the books of the four seasons and love respectively exhibit an overall pattern of movement, or progression, from spring through summer and autumn to winter, and from the first stirrings of love through stages of intense longing, consummation, abandonment, despair, and resentment of the former lover. The relationship, or association, between consecutive poems was also considered. One poem might follow another because of a shared phrase, or because of the identities of the authors who wrote them, or because both poems alluded to the same earlier poem. The elucidation of "association and progression" in the organization of *Shinkokinshū* is a major scholarly task that is still ongoing.

Because this collection contains such a large number of poems on diverse topics from a period that spanned from the eighth-century *Man'yōshū* to the time *Shinkokinshū* was compiled in the early thirteenth century, it is difficult to describe the content succinctly. Nonetheless, a few broad observations may be attempted. Previous anthologies included poems in various rarer forms, such as the *chōka* (long poem) and *sedōka* ("repeating-head poem"), but the poems in *Shinkokinshū* are metrically homogenous: all are in the thirty-one-syllable tanka form. In accordance with established precedent, the compilers scrupulously avoided including any poems that had already appeared in an imperial anthology of waka, but they allowed themselves the use of *Man'yōshū* as a source; although the latter was not an imperially commissioned anthology, compilers of previous imperial anthologies had eschewed including poems from it in their collections. Despite this broad chronological scope, a large proportion of the poems included in *Shinkokinshū* were written by the compilers, GoToba, their contemporaries, and poets of the generation that immediately preceded theirs.

The ten poets with the largest number of poems in the collection are as follows, with the number of poems included and their dates of birth and death (if known): Saigyō, 94 (1118–90); Jien, 92 (1155–1225); Fujiwara no Yoshitsune, 79 (1169–1206); Fujiwara no Shunzei, 72 (1114–1204); Princess Shokushi, 49 (d. 1201); Fujiwara no Teika, 46 (1162–1241); Fujiwara no Ietaka, 43 (1158–1237); Jakuren, 35 (c. 1139–1202); Retired Emperor GoToba, 33 (1180–1239); and Ki no Tsurayuki, 32 (d. c. 945).

With the exception of the last poet, Tsurayuki, all of these poets belonged to the contemporary period. All of the first nine poets were either compilers themselves or well known to the compilers as teachers, patrons, relatives, or friends. Their compositions account for more than a quarter of the entire anthology. Many of the contemporary poems were originally produced for large-scale poetic events, such as poetry gatherings or matches. Notable sources were two events sponsored by GoToba himself, *Sengohyakuban uta-awase* (The Poetry Match in Fifteen Hundred Rounds, 1201–3) and the *Shōji ninen shodo hyakushu* (First Set of Hundred-Poem Sequences in the Second Year of the Shōji Era, 1200). Other significant contemporary events were the *Ropyyakuban uta-awase* (The Poetry Match in Six Hundred Rounds, c. 1193–4), and *Omuro gojishshu* (Fifty-Poem Sequences at Omuro, 1198), sponsored by Fujiwara no Yoshitsune and Cloistered Prince Shukaku (1150–1202), respectively.

Therefore, most discussions of the contents of *Shinkokinshū* properly focus on the works of contemporary poets, especially those associated with a new and relatively innovative style. These poets were connected in various ways with two central figures: Fujiwara no Shunzei (also called Toshinari), who had compiled the previous imperial anthology of waka, *Senzai wakashū* (Collection of a Thousand Years; also *Senzaishū*, 1188), by himself, and Shunzei's son and heir, Teika, who served as one of the co-compilers of the *Shinkokinshū* and later as solo compiler of the next imperial waka anthology, *Shinchokusen wakashū* (New Imperial Waka Anthology; also *Shinchokusenshū*, 1235).

Circumscribed as they are by the precedent and decorum dictated by imperial anthology status, the poems contained in *Shinkokinshū* necessarily form part of a whole with the canon of waka. The major topics are love and nature. Sinified words are avoided. Violent or vulgar imagery does not appear. Poems were often written in response to assigned topics (*daiei*), and the topics were sometimes relatively complex. A topic or image typically bore a conventional association, or *hon'i*; cherry blossoms were associated with the ephemerality of life due to the brevity of their blooms; travel was inherently miserable, because it took one away from one's beloved in the capital.

Within these tight constraints, however, the new generation of poets found ways to innovate. Of the formal and technical characteristics associated with the *Shinkokin* style, four seem most worthy of mention: (1) allusion to earlier poems, or *honkadori*; (2) ending poems on a noun (nominal termination, *taigen-dome*), which is relatively rare in Japanese and produces a sentence fragment; (3) configuring the poem in two halves of 5/7/5 and 7/7, which produces a juncture after the third syntactical unit, or line (*sanku-gire*; often combined with nominal termination); and (4) a certain quality of obscurity, opacity, or ellipticality that frustrates quick comprehension and was called in its time by the pejorative term *Daruma-uta* (“Bodhidharma poems,” connoting “Zen gibberish.”)

The first quality, allusive variation, may be observed in a poem that alludes to this verse by the Heian court lady Izumi Shikibu (fl. c. 1000). The precise topic is unknown, but it is clearly a love poem and it appears among the Love chapters of the fourth imperial waka anthology, *Goshūi wakashū* (or *Goshūishū*, Later Collection of Gleanings, 1086):

Kurokami no	As soon as I lay down,
midare mo shirazu	oblivious to the tangles
Uchifuseba	of my black hair,
mazu kakiyarishi	I longed for the one
hito zo koishiki	who caressed it.

The speaker, a woman, lies down to rest, her hair disheveled by a night of lovemaking – this is the morning after. What first comes to her mind, prompted by lying in the bed where the two spent passionate hours together, is her male lover, and the way he tenderly ran her fingers through her hair. Having had to leave before sunup, he is absent now, and she misses him greatly.

Now here is a famous waka by Teika and included in *Shinkokinshū* that alludes to the earlier poem:

Kakiyarishi	Every single strand
sono kurokami no	of that black hair
sujigoto ni	I once caressed
uchifusu hodo wa	appears in my mind
omokage zo tatsu	whenever I lie down.

In this poem, the speaker is a man who, for some reason, cannot be with his beloved. Tired and dejected, he throws himself down on his bed and closes his eyes to rest, but cannot but see in his mind the image of his beloved, so clearly recollecting in painful solace the look and feel of her beautiful black

hair. “Black hair” (*kurokami*) is a common image in waka poetry, but the presence of the rarer phrases *uchifusu* (“lay down”) and especially *kakiyarishi* (“caressed”) signal that this is an act of conscious allusion on Teika’s part. By repeating Izumi’s phrasing, he is not only alluding to her poem, but it is as if he himself has become her lover, and is responding to her poem, enclosed in a love letter, with his own poem in his own letter. (It was common for poets exchanging poems for social purposes to echo each other’s phrasing.) In later ages, the rules of allusive variation would be fixed, and poets would be required to change the topic of a poem, limit the number of syllables borrowed, and avoid alluding to poems of the recent past. In this case, the topic has not been changed, but the other two rules have been obeyed.

Teika’s poem does not end on a noun, nor does it have a strong syntactical break. These next two qualities may be observed in a single poem by his father, Shunzei, which appears in the second Spring chapter of *Shinkokinshū*. Its preface says that it was one of five poems composed at the residence of the regent and prime minister (Yoshitsune).

Mata ya min	Will I ever see it again?
Katano no mino no	Hunting for cherry blossoms
Sakuragari	in the royal meadow at Katano –
hana no yuki chiru	dawn in springtime
haru no akebono	as flowers of snow fall.

This poem simply presents a vivid and memorable scene, filtered through a consciousness of impermanence and transience. The speaker, who must have some connection to the court in order to be present on land reserved for the use of the imperial family, is looking for especially lovely cherry blossoms in mid-spring at daybreak. Dawn was closely associated with spring due to the increasing brevity of the nights, and thereby carries a somewhat romantic connotation. He wonders whether he will ever visit this place again, and the identity of the poet lends some poignancy to its inclusion in the collection, as Shunzei died before *Shinkokinshū* was completed. The final trope of the falling blossoms resembling snow is a conventional one.

Due to grammatical differences between classical Japanese and modern English, it is impossible to completely recreate even the syntax of the original precisely in this translation, but some general features should be apparent. As the long dash suggests, there is a strong syntactical break after the third line (*sanku-gire*, no. 3 listed above). In fact, there is also a weaker break after the first line, because the first three lines are actually an inverted sentence, and the “original” sentence (*Katano no mino no sakuragari mata ya min*) would have

ended there. (Inversion and breaking the syntax after the first line are also conspicuous elements of *Shinkokin* prosody). The age of the *Shinkokinshū* overlapped with the early development of Japanese *renga* (linked verse), and there may be some connection between the breaking of waka into two syllabic units of 5/7/5 and 7/7 and the composition of linked verse, which is written in alternating units of 5/7/5 and 7/7 syllables.

It might also be clear that the last two lines are not a “complete” sentence per se, but a fragmentary phrase, a subject without an explicit predicate. The last line, *haru no akebono* (“dawn in springtime”) is actually modified by the fourth line, the relative clause *hana no yuki chiru*; a more literal translation of the last two lines might read, “spring dawn during which a flower-like snow falls.” Although the snow of blossoms is conventional, the configuration of the last two lines in this way – that is to say, the nominal termination (no. 2 above) – is not, and distinguishes this poem from the works of earlier centuries.

The toponym Katano leads us to an allusive context. It would have given a hint to readers that the poet may have been referring to section 82 of *Ise monogatari* (The Tales of Ise), a collection of poem-tales associated with the courtier and poet Ariwara no Narihira (825–80). In it, a prince takes a trip to his villa at Minase, south of Kyoto, with some members of his entourage, to hunt with hawks, but instead spends most of his time drinking, appreciating the cherry blossoms in full bloom, and exchanging poems with his companions, presumably including Narihira, as two of his poems are cited and he is mentioned by his office, but not by name. There is no specific poem in that section that Shunzei seems to be alluding to, so this is not an example of allusive variation per se, but the simple mention of Katano summons up the elegant, playful atmosphere of Heian court life that we glimpse in *Ise*, inviting us to imagine Shunzei’s speaker as a member of that fortunate entourage, and greatly expanding the connotative power of this brief verse.

The process by which *Shinkokinshū* was compiled is relatively well documented: we even have partial records of which poems were recommended by which compilers. Before, during, and after the formal compilation process, numerous poetry gatherings and contests were sponsored by GoToba, and many of the poems produced at them were incorporated into the anthology. As for the formal process, GoToba resurrected the *Wakadokoro* (Poetry Bureau) in 1201, and appointed eleven courtiers and Buddhist monks to its staff. This official agency had lay dormant since the mid tenth century, when it had served as an administrative base for the compilers of *Gosen wakashū* (Later Collection of Poems, 951), the second imperial waka anthology. By reviving the Poetry Bureau, GoToba was laying the groundwork for his own

imperial anthology, and indeed he issued the official commission a few months later, to five members of the Bureau: Minamoto no Michitomo (1171–1227), Fujiwara no Ariie (1155–1216), Teika, Ietaka, Fujiwara no Masatsune (1170–1221), and the monk Jakuren.

The privilege of serving as a compiler of an imperial waka anthology was a great honor for which poets vied fiercely. GoToba's team of compilers appears to have been assembled with various extraliterary considerations in mind. In order to be appointed, one's social status could not be too low (e.g. Kamo no Chōmei) or too high (e.g. Fujiwara no Yoshitsune). Women were never permitted to serve. Three of the compilers of the *Shinkokinshū* – Teika, Ietaka, and Jakuren – were members of Shunzei's Mikohidari faction of poets, which had competed against the rival Rokujō faction in the 1190s for patronage and prestige. In general, the Rokujō strongly emphasized literary precedent in their poetry, and even included archaic language from the pages of the *Man'yōshū*, while the Mikohidari favored conceptual innovation, and turned to more approachable narrative texts, such as *Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Genji), as an allusive resource. Only one member of the Rokujō faction, Ariie, was appointed as a compiler, which indicates their failure to win GoToba's patronage and meant that relatively few of their poems would be included. Of the remaining members, Masatsune had been active in poetic circles in Kamakura before being recalled to the capital by GoToba in 1197; he was also renowned as a master player of *kemari* (a footbag game). Michitomo was the son of a powerful courtier, Minamoto no Michichika (1149–1202), who had served not only GoToba but his father and grandfather as well. Michichika had supported the Rokujō poets; one source says that he sought to join the compilation team himself, but could not serve due to his high office, so his son was appointed instead. Jakuren, Shunzei's adopted son, died not long after the project began, but is named as a compiler.

In 1203, Teika presented GoToba with a list of the poems that the compilers proposed to include in the anthology. GoToba responded a year later with his revisions, and the process of arranging the poems according to topic commenced. In 1205, GoToba held a banquet to commemorate the completion of the *Shinkokinshū*, exactly three hundred years after the *Kokinshū* was presented. But changes continued to be made as more poetry contests and gatherings were held, and their results included in the new collection. It was more or less complete by 1208, but the earliest extant clean copy dates from 1216. After being exiled to the island of Oki in 1221, following his failed attempt to overthrow the Kamakura shogunate, GoToba re-edited *Shinkokinshū*

himself, deleting some 360 poems (including all of his own works) and producing what is now called the Oki version.

Shinkokinshū is a pillar of medieval Japanese aesthetics, and it was the single most important poetic text of medieval Japan. While building upon *Kokinshū*'s legacy of close attention to the four seasons and love, *Shinkokinshū* added a distinctively medieval layer of world-weariness that may be associated with the increased influence of Buddhist thought and practice in the centuries that separate it from the earlier anthology. With *Kokinshū*, *Genji monogatari*, *Ise monogatari*, and other earlier texts as common points of reference, and the assigned-topic method of composition, the *Shinkokinshū* poets were able to achieve an allusive depth that was not possible before their time.

In turn, *Shinkokinshū* became a touchstone in its own right, as Japanese readers committed its poems to memory and writers quoted and alluded to them in their own works. The anthology not only influenced later waka poets, it also became an important resource for *noh* playwrights, *renga* and *haikai* poets, and even tea masters. Evaluation of *Shinkokinshū* by readers from the early modern period to the present has been largely positive. It has also been highly regarded as a poetic resource by major modern Japanese poets, including Kitahara Hakushū (1885–1942), Tachihara Michizō (1914–39), and Yosano Akiko (1878–1942).

Waka in the medieval period: patterns of practice and patronage

STEVEN D. CARTER

The legacy of the *Shinkokinshū* era

During the *Shinkokinshū* era (completed in 1221), Japanese court poetry – *waka* or, more commonly in the parlance of the time, *uta* – emerged as a discrete literary field, with its own genres and sub-genres, institutions and practices, critical vocabulary and textual traditions, along with a sense of history and ideological purpose. This discourse was not, strictly speaking, independent, since it was almost exclusively the province of the elite and was inevitably linked to social rituals and practices, many of which required poetry. Yet it is clear that court poetry by the early thirteenth century was regarded as a serious form of artistic endeavor or a semi-religious Way (*michi*) and not simply an amusement or polite accomplishment. This Way can perhaps best be described in terms of three large rubrics – genres, technical and critical vocabulary, and social practices.

Genres

The basic genre of court poetry after the era of *Shinkokinshū* would continue to be the *uta*, the thirty-one-syllable poetic form that had held the central position in the literary hierarchy since at least the 800s and would retain its privileged position into the early modern period. Always a social as well as an aesthetic form, the *uta* in the medieval period was typically “aired” if not actually composed at social gatherings and in that sense was a kind of performance art. Moreover, most poems were composed on *dai* (fixed topics), response to which required a knowledge of precedent that became the basis of a social contract uniting participants in a discourse that extended back in time and out in space to all practitioners of the art.

Most uta came to public recognition through some kind of anthology or communal effort, typically supported by elite patrons. Chief among these were the *uta-awase* (poem contests), in which poems on the same topics were paired for judgment, sometimes in a communal setting, sometimes simply on paper; and the “numbered anthology” (of five, ten, one hundred, etc.) that brought poems on fixed topics together, often to be presented to a patron or a shrine as an offering or to the compiler of a larger anthology. Both uta-awase and poem sequences, in their organization and aesthetic preoccupations, revealed connections to larger social and discursive realities.

In addition to uta-awase and numbered anthologies, there were various kinds of anthologies, such as *uchigiki*, or “private anthologies,” compiled by the leaders of lineages or coteries after the model of imperial anthologies (for which they often aspired to provide resources), and *shikashū*, or collections of poems by individual poets, put together either by the poets themselves or by descendants or disciples. In almost all cases, these other kinds of anthologies mimicked more “public” works in favoring poems on fixed topics and in organizing their poems into books on the four seasons, love, and miscellaneous topics.

Technical and critical vocabulary

Most of the jargon used by medieval teachers to instruct their students and by critics to explicate and evaluate poetic texts came from earlier periods. Still, it can be argued that it was in the writings of Fujiwara no Shunzei (1114–1204) and his contemporaries that fundamental analytical terms like *sugata* (configuration, overall effect), *kokoro* (feeling, sentiment, idea), and *kotoba* (language, diction, rhetoric), as well as a host of more technical terms such as *honkadōri* (allusive variation) and *hon'i* (essence, ideal) achieved a firmness of definition and precision of reference that many of them had not had before.

Much the same can be said for terminology used by Shunzei and others to describe desired poetic effects – words like *aware* (moving, sadly beautiful), *yūgen* (mystery and depth, profundity), *en* (elegant, evocative), *yojō* (overtones), *yōen* (ethereal), *okashi* (amusing, attractive), *taketakashi* (lofty, grand), and *sabitaru* (forlorn, withered). Although often employed in rather offhand ways, usage examples in a variety of texts reveal what sorts of ideals each term was felt to gesture toward.

Practices

As noted above, court poetry was almost always produced in a social context and according to a highly codified set of practices, sometimes differing from house to house, which prescribed everything from dress and seating arrangements to methods of recording poems on paper, and so on. Men of the poetic houses were expected to serve as primary resources for such events, which required them to commit much of the poetic canon to memory and to learn ritual practices. Again, this was not entirely new: poetry as a field of knowledge and practice had existed since the earliest days of the Heian court. However, it was during the *Shinkokinshū* period that many precedents achieved a kind of sacral status that they would continue to enjoy into the Edo period. Part of being a poetic house, in fact, was being able to claim a tradition of such practices, along with a library of important poetic manuscripts and often secret teachings on matters involving those practices and other poetic matters.

One final comment rounds out this summary of the practice of poetry in medieval times, namely, that it was generally believed that good poetry came from the heart (*kokoro*), in other words, from an educated and “courtly” sensibility, rather than merely from the intellect. Learning (*sai* or *saigaku*) was still important, since the authority of the poetic houses in fact depended at least partly on accumulated knowledge. For the most part, however, Shunzei’s definition of poetry as a Way of devotion in which one gained excellence through dedication and training (*keiko*) under a master would prevail for the next four centuries and beyond.

The later Teika and the *ushin* ideal

As the *Shinkokinshū* period came to an end, the Mikohidari house of Fujiwara no Teika (1162–1241) – among competing noble lineages – was preeminent partly because it could claim long traditions of practice as well as scholarship in a world in which nothing was more important than affiliation with the legitimizing authority of ancient traditions. Even after the disastrous defeat of royal forces in the Jōkyū uprising of 1221, the imperial court retained its place in a robust cultural market, and in that market Teika established an unprecedented measure of authority for his lineage. Especially after the appearance of the ninth imperial collection, *Shinchokusenshū* (The New Imperial Anthology, 1235), for which he served as sole compiler, he dedicated himself to collecting and collating literary manuscripts that he felt to be essential to the Japanese poetic tradition, from *Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Genji) to imperial

collections and personal poetry anthologies. In the process, he amassed a library for descendants who would follow him as poetry masters to the court.

Although known in his youth as an iconoclast, Teika, in one of his later essays (*Maigetsushō*, Monthly Notes, c. 1219), lamented that *Shinkokinshū* had sometimes nurtured flowers (*hana*) at the expense of fruit (*mi*), i.e. rhetorical and tonal complexity at the expense of clearly articulated meaning and depth of feeling. His later commitment was to the overarching ideal of *ushin* – “deep feeling” or “sincerity” – which in practice seems to have meant poetry deriving from his father’s emphasis on “spiritual” concentration and training rather than mere book-learning and technique. As examples one can offer two poems by Teika himself, one from *Shinkokinshū* (no. 1206) and one from *Shinchokusenshū* (no. 261), which would be listed as models of *ushin* by his descendants:

Written as a Love poem

Kaerusa no	After his tryst,
mono to ya hito no	will he too be looking up –
nagamuramu	sad that he must leave?
matsu yo nagara no	For me the moon at dawn
ariake no tsuki	ends only a night of waiting.

Written for a fifty-poem sequence on “The Moon,” when the GoKyōgoku Regent was still serving as Captain of the Left

Akeba mata	Day will dawn,
aki no nakaba mo	and we will pass beyond
suginubeshi	the mid-point of fall.
katabuku tsuki no	But will the setting moon
oshiki nomi ka wa	be all that we lament?

Both these poems are rhetorically polished but by no means obscure, and both include clear markers of refined feeling: gentle frustration over a night spent waiting for someone who has spent the night with another woman and regret over ever-present signs of approaching old age. Neither in any way detracts from the basic ideal of courtly elegance, for which Teika wanted his own work and his imperial anthology to be known.

Continuing patterns of patronage and practice

Shinchokusenshū was solicited by Emperor GoHorikawa (1212–34, r. 1221–32), and it is undeniable that royals and the nobility were still acting as patrons to

poets and their institutions in the thirteenth century. But by the late 1200s poetry was also being produced among the middle classes of the literate, in the military families and expatriate courtiers of the shogunal capital at Kamakura, in coteries at the Ise, Kasuga, and Sumiyoshi shrines, and even in more remote places like the chief temple of the Time Sect in Fujisawa, Sagami province. The activities of elite poets at the imperial court, especially those of Teika's Mikohidari lineage, were therefore just part of the story, which to be complete would also have to include references to poets such as the shogun Minamoto no Sanetomo (1192–1219), who despite his study under Teika produced poems of a distinctly direct and realistic style not entirely reconcilable with his teacher's values. And even in Kyoto there were challengers to the Mikohidari authority.

To a remarkable degree, however, the lineages of Teika did retain hegemonic control over poetic discourse. Teika's son Tameie (1198–1275) married the daughter of a wealthy warrior of the Utsunomiya clan himself and thus had his own contacts in the East Country. To the military elite, rank mattered. Most aspiring poets of any social standing sought identification with the Mikohidari house first of all. In this way, many military clans became patrons, supporting contests, small anthologies, and poetry gatherings, just like their noble counterparts. They even sponsored anthologies, good examples being the *Tōsen waka rokujō* (The Waka Rokujō of the East Country) and the *Shin wakashū* (New Waka Collection) both of which were compiled by poets in the East Country. While showcasing the poets of the eastern seaboard, these collections were organized like imperial anthologies, followed courtly traditions in style, and were no doubt intended to become resources for future imperial projects.

Tameie was not as adventurous as Teika had been in his youth when it came to his own poetry and his teachings. While admitting his father's genius, he concentrated on the basics, inaugurating a tradition that would continue in poetic discourse throughout the medieval period. For this reason, his one critical essay, *Eiga no ittei* (The Foremost Style of Poetic Composition, c. 1264) reads less like a theoretical treatise than a handbook designed to introduce students to the fundamentals of composition, a task it accomplished so well that it became the most widely used of all primers, while his poems became even more important than those of his ancestors as models for instruction. Thus it was to poems such as the following by Tameie himself from the *Shokugosenshū* (no. 124), which Tameie presented as sole compiler in 1251, that later generations would look for inspiration:

On “Blossoms in the Garden,” from a fifty-poem
sequence composed at the home of the Reverend-
Prince Dōjō

Ato taete	The footprints are gone
towarenu niwa no	from my unvisited garden:
koke no iro mo	the color of the moss
wasuru bakari ni	all but forgotten now
niwa zo furishiku	beneath fallen blossoms.

Poetry in the late Kamakura period remained a kind of performance art, aired if not composed in communal gatherings where such understated scenes served as models of decorum, form, and subtle gradation of expression. Tameie’s critical statements accordingly concentrate on aural effects that would be appreciated when a poem was vocalized, and on such things as the treatment of fixed topics, matters of diction and decorum, the authority of precedent (as articulated in the technique of *honkadori* and other forms of intertextual reference), and the importance of constant training in preparation for public performance and scrutiny. All these features of practice would have a lasting impact on poetics throughout the rest of the late medieval period.

Internecine strife and its consequences

Tameie’s chief ambition was to gain for his descendants a secure place in the poetic culture of the imperial court. Late in life, however, his own situation was complicated by the support he offered to younger sons by women other than the mother of his heir, Tameuji (1222–86), which opened the way for lawsuits and countersuits that eventually would split his family into three competing lineages – called the Nijō, the Kyōgoku, and the Reizei after the streets on which they had residences in Kyoto. The resulting infighting would do much to structure poetic discourse for generations to come.

Tameuji, Tameie’s formal heir and the founder of the Nijō lineage, had an illustrious career in Kyoto, as did his brother Kyōgoku Tamenori (1227–79) and Tamenori’s son Tamekane (1254–1332), who found patrons to support their cause. However, the third son, Reizei Tamesuke (1263–1328), ended up following his mother, the Nun Abutsu (c. 1222–83), as she sought redress in the shogunal courts in Kamakura. In this he was not alone, other sons of Tameie having also settled in Kamakura, where they claimed authority in the literary field, dispensing “secret teachings” based on authentic knowledge

handed down from the patriarchs, and in some cases literally concocting new esoteric teachings and practices. In addition, men of the poetic houses could count upon being asked to do ritual work at gatherings, as *kōshi* (“lectors,” who read poems aloud before the assembled participants), *dokushi* (“marshals,” who collected poems from participants and acted as supervisor over the lector), and so on. Custom demanded that such tasks be performed only by those with specific authority, knowledge, and training, among whom the competing heirs of the Mikohidari house could claim high standing.

The standard narrative of Japanese court poetry for the rest of the medieval period is to a remarkable degree organized around the disputes among the three Mikohidari lineages: firstly, over property and seniority, which were complicated by affiliations with disputing imperial lineages, and later over style and poetics. Accounting for the latter is no easy matter. To a certain extent, the conflict presents a classic case of one side taking a contrary position simply in order to make a clear place for itself. While Tameuji remained a conservative in matters of diction, Tamekane and Tamesuke, who were natural allies against the senior house, were more liberal; while Tameuji favored the clear display of a “refined” sensibility through the use of traditional metaphor and syntax, his younger brothers reacted somewhat against such strictures. But it is also true that Tamekane was a student of both traditional aesthetics and Buddhism who deserves credit for developing an aesthetic of his own that would influence later poets, from Shōtetsu (1381–1459) to the *haikai* master Matsuo Bashō (1644–94).

Critics attacked Tamekane’s poetry for its prosaic diction, lack of traditional adornments, occasional use of vulgar or unprecedented vocabulary, and frequent deviations from standard poetic syntax. In his only fully articulated statement of his poetics, *Tamekane-kyō wakashō* (Lord Tamekane’s Notes on Poetry, 1287?), however, Tamekane cast his “deviations” as a positive agenda based, among other things, on the old idea of poetry as the expression of one’s heart, as formulated in the preface to *Kokinshū*. To him, pursuit of this ideal, which he saw as a way to achieve harmony with the universe (and the social order), allowed the poet some latitude in expression, while still mandating a commitment to fixed topics and the poet’s feelings. His ultimate goal was thus a fusion of the objects of perception and an individual’s feeling based very much on the Buddhist-inspired teachings of Shunzei and Teika, which emphasized “concentrating the mind.”

More than his poetic thought as such, what most offended the senior house was doubtless Tamekane’s evident resistance to their authority. But he had supporters, including most prominently Emperor Fushimi (1265–1317),

who issued a command to him to compile an imperial anthology. For several years the project was stymied by political conflicts that ended in Tamekane's temporary exile, but eventually it was completed. Containing 2,800 poems, it was titled *Gyokuyōshū* (Collection of Jeweled Leaves, 1313) and was the largest imperial anthology to date and a truly monumental work, including poems from the earliest times to the present but with a decided emphasis on the poems of Tamekane's own allies, students, and patrons. Attacks from the Nijō adherents were immediate, aimed at poems like the following (*Gyokuyōshū* nos. 2220 and 1502) by Tamekane himself:

Mountain Hut in the Wind

Yamakaze wa	Wind from the mountain
kakio no take ni	blows over my bamboo fence –
fukisutete	and goes on its way;
mine no matsu yori	then from the pines on the peak
mata hibiku nari	it echoes once again.

From among his Love poems

Toki no ma mo	"Take just a moment
ware ni kokoro no	to tell me if you feel for me
ikaga naru to	as I feel for you!"
tada tsune ni koso	– constantly, just this one thing
towamahoshikere	is all I want to ask.

The first poem presents Tamekane's poetics almost perfectly, presenting heightened consciousness in a brief span of time. But to Nijō critics such a scene displayed no specifically courtly consciousness, no reasoning process, no traditional adornment, and no allusion to an earlier poem to emphasize indebtedness to earlier eras. The second poem offended for the same reasons, and also because syntactically it was virtually indistinguishable from prose. To Tamekane, both poems represented attempts to become one with the topic and with minimal mediation, while to Nijō adherents they did not even qualify as poems.

Gyokuyōshū was a triumph for Tamekane, but he did not have long to celebrate before being sent into exile once again in 1316. This time he would never return to the capital, dying in Kawachi province in 1332. In the interim, Nijō poets continued to prevail at court, producing two imperial anthologies and stifling any attempt at response by their rivals. Fushimi's son Emperor Hanazono (1297–1348) managed to keep the alternative tradition alive, becoming one of the most intellectual of all emperors but spending virtually his entire career in the shadows.

Hanazono's political frustrations were largely a result of the rebellion of Emperor GoDaigo (1288–1339) against the Kamakura government in 1333–4, which eventually led to a protracted period of division and dissension called the era of the Southern and Northern Courts. The next fifty years were confusing ones for everyone in literate society, including poets. A few of the latter followed GoDaigo into the provinces, where they even compiled an imperial anthology, the *Shin'yōshū* (Collection of New Leaves, 1381). However, most stayed in Kyoto, always the hub of court culture, and pursued their art among the new military elite, beginning with the new shogun. Ashikaga Takauji (1305–58) had come in contact with poets of the noble houses in Kamakura and quickly became a patron of the courtly arts in general and poetry in particular. His patronage, and that of his successors and the warrior houses surrounding them, would be a major factor in all cultural affairs for as long as their regime lasted. Their commitment was less to any particular style of poetry than it was to poetry as one way of maintaining ideals of social order, but from the point of view of the poetic houses such a situation was not unwelcome because it amounted to tacit recognition of poetry as a discourse that was – on the surface, at least – above petty politics.

One proof that the new military leaders had no strong philosophical commitments in the area of poetry and poetics was that at midcentury one last imperial anthology was put together by the remnants of the Kyōgoku tradition, now represented by Emperor Hanazono, Emperor Kōgon (1313–64), and Eifukumon'in (1271–1342), consort of the late Fushimi – all of whom were both poets and patrons. The product of their labor was an imperial anthology called *Fūgashū* (Collection of Elegance, 1344–8). Like the first one, this second Kyōgoku-style anthology was large, containing over 2,200 poems, and partisan in its emphasis on poets of the Jimyō'in imperial line and its supporters. Scholars have tended to characterize it as a dark work, reflecting the diminished fortunes of the Kyōgoku school and of the aristocracy more generally. More than darkness, however, poems like the following by Hanazono (no. 878), the chief force behind the anthology, express a stark simplicity.

On the Feeling of Winter Dusk

Kureyaranu	As day fades away
niwa no hikari wa	there is light in my garden –
yuki ni shite	but only from snow;
oku kuraku naru	inside it is darker still,
uzumibi no moto	next to my small coal fire.

Later critics would dismiss *Fūgashū* as unorthodox (*ifu*), though without specifying what they meant by the term. What probably offended was poems like this one that seemed to present the world “as it is” (*ari no mama*), without traditional rhetorical devices, using imagery and vocabulary that was unusual if not completely unprecedented. For this and obvious political reasons, younger poets would soon be counseled by Nijō teachers not to read either of the Kyōgoku anthologies, damning them to marginal status for centuries.

Competing orthodoxies

The poetic world from around 1350 appears at first glance to have been dominated mostly by Nijō adherents, who did succeed in monopolizing compilation of imperial anthologies, supported by the patronage of the Ashikaga shoguns. Yet a close look at documents of the time shows that the situation was more complex. As we have seen, the late 1300s was a volatile time of ever-evolving power struggles among the political elite. And the same was true in the world of poetry. For one thing, the Nijō house itself had become factionalized by this time, producing rivalries that were sometimes as intense as those of earlier ages between the main branches of the Mikohidari house. Another complicating factor was the appearance in Kyoto of Reizei Tamehide (d. 1372), a descendant of Tamesuke, who was a superb poet who also claimed a treasure trove of manuscripts and teachings that was the envy of all. This was enough to impress Hanazono, who allowed him considerable involvement in the compilation of *Fūgashū* and entrusted him with the leadership of some poetry gatherings. After several decades, he achieved the rank of middle counselor at court, joining the ranks of the high aristocracy (*kugyō*) and placing one of his sons in a Nijō lineage as heir, thereby gaining access to additional manuscript holdings that could only enhance the reputation of the Reizei as heirs of the Mikohidari tradition.

During the latter half of the fourteenth century, then, power in poetic affairs was shared by a number of factions within the Nijō house, their traditional allies in other noble houses, and the Reizei and their supporters – each claiming lines of authority and all seeking favor from competing imperial lineages, the high court nobility, the Ashikaga shoguns, and scores of other military lineages. Even this does not tell the whole story, however, because it leaves out an entire class of poets who were also gaining in importance – namely, poets of commoner (*jige*) background, preeminent among whom was a monk known as Tonna (also Ton’a; 1289–1372).

A Buddhist monk of samurai lineage, Tonna could never hope to attain the highest social position in the literary hierarchy. But he studied under Nijō teachers and with their support was able to function as a poetry master for the rest of a long life. Like his mentors, he lived in Kyoto, but in a cottage (*iori*) in the precincts of a temple. In this it may seem that he followed the example of Kamo no Chōmei (1155?–1216) and Saigyō (1118–90), but he was unlike them in that he was never truly a recluse. His famous White Lotus Estate, located in the grounds of Ninnaji Temple, was a substantial structure surrounded by spacious gardens, where he hosted even high court aristocrats and daimyō. In this sense, Tonna was the first of a new class of professional poets who unlike earlier figures were primarily dependent on literary activities for their identity and financial support. A long line of jige poets would follow in his footsteps.

Almost all of Tonna's poems were composed for small anthologies or gatherings, often in the homes of elite patrons, and almost all are on standardized *dai* that had been so central to poetic composition since the 1100s. Legends tell that he was incredibly quick in extemporaneous composition and had the social skills required to maintain a viable literary practice dedicated to teaching, trading in manuscripts, officiating at gatherings, and of course the composition of poems. In his critical works, he followed the tradition of Tameie in stressing the importance of training (*keiko*) rather than just book-learning, in adhering to a conservative position in matters of vocabulary and rhetoric, and in stressing the central place of *ushin*, or “deep feeling,” in poetics. Other *Shinkokinshū* ideals such as *yūgen* and *yōen*, however, he embraced only as long as they did not lead to rhetorical excesses. In his own poetry we see no startlingly new conceptions, no unusual phrasing, no extravagant metaphor, but instead poems of smoothly flowing syntax, beautiful imagery, and restrained emotion – the latter often expressed by already established affective connotations, such as the forlorn sight of geese returning north in spring in the following example (no. 89) from his personal anthology, *Sōanshū* (The Grass Hut Collection, 1359):

Returning Geese, in the Haze

Nagamureba	Gazing far, I see
kasumihatete wa	haze spreading in the distance;
taedae ni	but in the gaps,
mata arawaruru	appearing here, then there –
kari no hitotsura	wild geese in one tattered line.

Tonna's success in creating such scenes would eventually make him a model for young poets in particular, surpassing even Tameie as a master of what would come to be called the "plain" (*heitan*) style. Some scholars have for this reason dismissed his work as lacking in creativity, but a careful reading of his poetry and critical writings reveals originality in his thinking. Nijō Yoshimoto in his *Kinrai fūteishō* (Notes on Poetic Styles of the Recent Past, 1387) reports that when responding to the suggestion of another poet that in writing on the topic "Village Snow" one should not think of places famous for snow such as Fushimi and Fukakusa, Tonna said that one should indeed think of such famous places, but still produce a conception that was new (*atarashiki kokoro*). It was this idea – that fixed topics represented a challenge to be met within the bounds of convention, yet still creatively – that was at the heart of Tonna's poetics.

After Tonna's death, it was this same Nijō Yoshimoto (scion of a regental lineage distinct from the Nijō of Teika's descendants), known in modern times for his role in the history of *renga* (linked verse), who carried the conservative banner. In his youth he had been a member of Emperor Hanazono's salon, but now he characterized the Kyōgoku style as a danger to order in an age he felt was in great need of stability. In particular, he criticized the work of Tamekane as unorthodox (*ifū*), while praising his friend Tonna for his mellifluous, smooth, and beautiful style.

Yoshimoto's efforts were not in vain, for the period from 1400 to the time of the Ōnin War was one of great poetic activity – and not only in the expected circles. Documents show, for instance, that members of the princely Fushimi house and their noble stewards held frequent poetic gatherings, which resulted in an anthology that they doubtless hoped would later become a resource for a future imperial collection. The anthology, known as *Kikuyōshū* (The Chrysanthemum Leaf Collection, 1400?), contained 1,485 poems, almost all of them by people of the Fushiminomiya circle, including a number of women, at a time when participation by court women in poetic culture had nearly faded away. Another feature is that many of the poems are in the Kyōgoku style, as is the case with a poem (no. 848) by a woman identified as the Mother of Imadegawa Sanetomi (precise dates uncertain):

On the topic "Fishing Weirs"

Fukeyukeba	As the hour grows late,
Uji no kawanami	the sound of waves on Uji River
oto saete	rings out cold and clear;
ajiro no tsuki no	down onto the fishing weirs
kage zo kakareru	comes light from the moon.

It should come as no surprise that in 1400 descendants of the Kyōgoku coteries were still producing poems that present the world “as it is.” Nijō warnings to the contrary, some people were still reading *Gyokuyōshū* and *Fūgashū* and claiming their own brand of “alternative” orthodoxy.

After *Kikuyōshū*, activity in the Fushiminomiya circle would continue. Prince Fushiminomiya Sadafusa (1372–1456), whose son would one day become emperor, left behind a personal anthology that shows broad participation in poetic affairs. And other houses, noble and military, were also very active at the time. Indeed, one outstanding feature of poetic culture at the turn of the century is a marked increase in references to *tsukinamikai*, or monthly meetings, being held in various houses in the capital and in the provinces. In contrast to formal poem contests or other kinds of gatherings, monthly meetings were more intimate affairs, often involving a set group of participants from among a high-ranking person’s followers, along with a poetry master – the latter usually coming from one of the poetic houses in the case of the cultural elite and from the ranks of the jige tradition in the case of lower-ranking houses. Among other things, this new development would provide an incentive toward the emergence of a cadre of truly “professional” jige masters in the years to come and an increased participation in poetic affairs by daimyō, who would be well represented when a new imperial anthology appeared in 1439, called the *Shinshokukokinshū* (New Later Collection of Ancient and Modern Times), a title that alluded back to *Kokinshū* and to one of the earliest Nijō collections, *Shokukokinshū* (Later Collection of Ancient and Modern Times, 1265).

It is a testament to the political conflicts of the time, however, that this collection of 1439 contained not a single poem by the poet who in modern times is considered the finest poet of the entire century, Shōtetsu. Of samurai background, Shōtetsu began life in a Zen monastery but even after ordination took poetry as his Way, which he studied under a Reizei master and the warrior poet Imagawa Ryōshun (1326–1420?). At the time of the imperial anthology – a distinctly Nijō project, in political terms – this became a liability. Yet he was able to persevere in his practice by relying on his patrons among the warrior class. Headnotes to Shōtetsu’s personal collection, *Sōkonshū* (Grass Roots Anthology) – which at over 11,000 poems is the single largest personal anthology in the medieval canon – show a calendar literally filled with poetry gatherings at the homes of patrons and friends.

Shōtetsu’s style was criticized by the Nijō camp, and to some of his closest disciples he revealed that he took *Shinkokinshū* and Teika as a model and not his own contemporaries. He could write descriptive poetry in the ushin mode

as well as anyone in his time, as is apparent from a poem (*Sōkonshū* no. 294) from a hundred-poem sequence dated 1420.

Living in Seclusion

Iwagane no	Beneath the cliff,
koke no shizuku mo	water drips down onto moss
kogakurete	hidden in the trees –
oto ni kokoro o	but still its sound clears the heart
sumasu yado kana	of one taking lodging there.

Yet other poems (*Sōkonshū* nos. 5999 and 8014), although adhering to their topics within the rhetoric of refined feeling, exhibit a stylistic flair, conceptual intricacy, and straightforward human interest that was beyond the range of more conventional poets.

A Man Walking through the Snow

Kuru hito no	Coming toward me
mukau fubuki ni	against a hard, driving wind,
mono iwade	the man says nothing;
yuki fumu oto no	but I hear him tread the snow
sayuru michinobe	going down the frozen road.

“Love, using the word ‘Bell,’” from a poem sequence at the home of the Bizen Lay-Monk Jōgan held at the end of the Third Month of 1453

Kiku kane mo	As I listen,
koegoe taete	bell sounds vanish, one by one,
Hatsusegawa	over Hatsuse River –
sode ni ochikuru	falling onto my sleeves,
miyako to zo naru	becoming the capital.

The first of these poems captures a moment of “real” experience as well as any poem by Tamekane; and the second presents a “surreal” conception that one could only find in Teika’s early Zen *daruma uta* (“nonsense poems”). Whether inspired by his own training in Zen or from his reading of earlier poems, Shōtetsu’s work went beyond the borders of the ushin style into realms of conceptual complexity and stylistic experiment that his colleagues of the Nijō school were bound to reject.

Yet it is important to note again that Shōtetsu remained successful in his literary practice and was by no means a recluse. Demand for poetry teachers in the mid 1400s was at an all time high. Indeed, after the assassination of Ashikaga Yoshinori in 1441, there was a resurgence of activity at court in which members

of the Reizei faction, with the support of the statesman-scholar Ichijō Kanera (or Kaneyoshi, 1402–181), were finally able to participate fully, according to Shōtetsu a stature similar in some ways to Tonna's in his final years.

Gekokujō – the world turned upside down

One sign of the healthy situation of poetry in the mid fifteenth century was planning for a new imperial anthology, sponsored by the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa (1436–90). In the event, however, the project was abandoned because of the Ōnin War (1467–77), a protracted conflict that signaled a general breakdown, for complex economic and social reasons, of the authority structure that had held society together since the beginning of Ashikaga rule more than a century before. In the phraseology of historians, the world had become a place where those at the bottom had gained power over those at the top – *gekokujō*.

The decades after the Ōnin War are not given much attention in histories of the *uta*, probably because – despite failed plans for one in the 1480s – they produced no imperial anthology. Nonetheless, records show continuing dedication to all aspects of poetic discourse among patrons and poets, and to preservation of the court tradition through the restocking of libraries. Moreover, it was during this period, largely through the efforts of the renga master Sōgi (1421–1502), that the so-called *Kokin denju* (secret teachings of the *Kokinshū*) were established, creating a mystique around the *uta* that added to its authority among the warrior elite. While he and his students were not the only claimants in the field of ancient poetic lore – others being the Reizei and other noble houses – it was the teachings of the Sōgi lineage that Emperor GoMizuno'ō (1596–1680) would make so important in the early Edo period. Less esoteric than those of earlier times, these transmissions often concentrated on exegetical matters, allegorical readings of certain privileged early texts, and practices connected to poetry meetings and so on – things that scholars of the *Kokugaku* (nativist studies) movement of the mid-Edo period would dismiss as mere trivia but which still carried weight with the old nobility and military families for whom such secret transmissions constituted a major category of learning.

The most prominent of Sōgi's courtier students was the courtier Sanjōnishi Sanetaka (1455–1537), whose voluminous diary displays a complex and broad-ranging literary practice: a man who composed eleven thousand poems (*uta*, *renga*, and also *kanshi*, poems in Chinese); lectured and wrote commentaries on poetry and court classics; taught students; engaged in

various kinds of literary commerce, including most prominently the copying and “sale” of manuscripts and writing out of samples of his famed calligraphy for clients; and indulged in other courtly pursuits, from incense blending to the tea ceremony. Ironically, however, the range of Sanetaka’s activities shows how much a courtier of his day had to trade on his literary knowledge and skill for his sustenance. Although a fine poet deserving of scholarly attention whose poems would rival Tonna’s in popularity among Edo period poets, Sanetaka’s name is nearly always raised in literary histories in connection with the decline of court culture. And it is also true that he was unusual in being able to stay in Kyoto when financial conditions forced many courtiers into the provinces. It is emblematic of the sorry state of Teika’s lineage, for instance, that the personal poetry collection of Reizei Tamekazu (1486–1549) would be called *Imagawa Tamekazu shū*, bearing not his noble surname but that of the military clan in whose domains he and his extended family made their home for much of his life.

One by-product of this development was the emergence of “little Kyotos” that welcomed displaced courtiers and their cultural skills. Over the last several decades, Japanese textual scholars have been busy searching out manuscripts that document these movements and their importance in the spread of poetic culture to the new provincial elite. The results of their labors already are making a more complete picture of literary culture during the Sengoku age, one that concentrates not just on the court aristocracy but also on high-ranking warrior figures – a fact hinted at by what we know of the life of Hosokawa Yūsai (1534–1610), who is usually considered the last important uta poet of the medieval age. The son of a shogun, Yūsai was raised as the heir of the Hosokawa house and moved in the highest circles of military society, fighting in numerous battles. In retirement, however, he lived in Kyoto, and records show that all his life he was dedicated not only to *bu* (arms) but also to *bun* (letters), receiving the secret teachings of the Nijō lineage from a descendant of Sanetaka and following familiar patterns of poetic practice. Indeed, his case shows that the economic struggles of the court elite and the rise of other classes into participation in the cultural sphere often resulted in retrenchment and not the reverse. The reasons for this situation demand further research and debate, but two factors seem obvious: first, the “communal” nature of poetic composition in the periods in question, which in some ways made every poetic event an instantiation of social hierarchies; and second, the strongly didactic foundations of medieval poetic criticism, which draws on Chinese, Buddhist, and early Japanese sources to explicitly connect work in the poetic realm to the maintenance of order, both

cosmological and social. Finally, there is the dominance of the ushin aesthetic itself, whose strong investment in ideas and habits of discipline and restraint – especially against the backdrop of an age of social upheaval – had a profound effect on all features of poetic discourse.

How aware Yūsai was of these factors as elements in his own poetic discourse we cannot know. One poem dated 1596 from his personal collection, *Shūmyōshū* (The Wonders of Natural Order, 1671, compiled posthumously), at least suggests a strong sense of connection with the past.

An extemporaneous poem written on “Spring Dawn”
for a monthly meeting on the 19th day of the
Second Month

Medetsuru	All that I praised –
hana mo momiji mo	cherry blossoms, crimson leaves,
tsuki yuki mo	the moon and the snow –
kasumi ni kiyuru	all fade off into the haze
haru no akebono	in the faint light of spring dawn.

Here Yūsai neatly summarizes a whole year of aesthetic experience, using the most precedented of images. Furthermore, the headnote to the poem references centuries-old practices: the monthly meeting, fixed topics, and extemporaneous composition. To complete the picture one need only add that the poem contains echoes of at least two earlier texts: the opening lines of the famous *Makura no sōshi* (Pillow Book, c. 1005) of Sei Shōnagon (*haru wa akebono*: “In spring – the dawn”), and a poem by Tamekane from *Gyokuyōshū* (no. 174):

From among his spring poems

Omoisomeki	My heart has chosen:
yotsu no toki ni wa	among the four seasons,
hana no haru	flowery spring –
haru no uchi ni	and within the spring itself,
akebono no sora	the sky faintly lit at dawn.

The discursive trajectories of this poem alone are enough to suggest Yūsai’s affiliations as a student of the entire tradition, including even marginalized texts like *Gyokuyōshū*. And it is this sense of continuing participation in a larger narrative, as much as any narrow concept of orthodoxy, that most characterizes his work and the poetic culture of the late sixteenth century in general. Given the context of increasing economic diversity, political upheaval, and artistic creativity, this is an ironic fact, to say the least; yet it is one that emerges clearly from the textual evidence. Even warlords like Toyotomi

Hideyoshi (1536–98) and Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542–1616), who are well known as devotees of relatively new arts such as noh drama, haikai, and the tea ceremony, continued the traditions of their warlord forebears by composing uta and renga and patronizing masters of poetry, whose Way was just as highly esteemed in 1600 as it had been four hundred years before.

Hyakunin isshu and the popularization of classical poetry

TOMOMI YOSHINO

Hyakunin isshu, a collection of one hundred poems by one hundred poets who lived from the seventh century to the thirteen century, was compiled by Fujiwara no Teika (1162–1241). Because Teika's collection initiated a new genre, resulting in several different versions, his original collection is referred to as the *Ogura hyakunin isshu*, after his villa on Mount Ogura, on the outskirts of Kyoto.

As the son of Fujiwara no Shunzei (1114–1204), Teika was the scion of a leading poetic family. Emperor GoToba (1180–1239), who became a young retired emperor (*in*) in 1198, recognized his potential as a *waka* poet and subsequently appointed him as one of the main editors of the *Shinkokinshū* (New Collection of Ancient and Modern Japanese Poetry, 1205), the eighth imperial *waka* anthology. In 1221, GoToba attempted to raise an army to combat the shift of power from the court to the military class, but failed and was sent into exile. Teika, who fell out of grace with GoToba before the retired emperor's defeat, grew in prominence as both a courtier and poet and was given the prestigious task of single-handedly editing the ninth imperial *waka* anthology, the *Shinchokusenshū* (New Imperial Japanese Poetry Collection, 1232). It was during this time, in his late years, that he decided to compile the *Hyakunin isshu* – not in response to an imperial command, but for personal reasons.

Teika selected all the poems in the *Hyakunin isshu* from imperial *waka* anthologies and arranged them, for the most part, in chronological order. Poems nos. 1 and 2 are by Emperor Tenji (626–71) and Empress Jitō (645–702) respectively, while poems nos. 99 and 100 are by GoToba-in and Juntoku-in (1197–1242). The first pair – Emperor Tenji and his daughter – laid the foundations for the future Heian court culture, while the last pair – GoToba-in and his son, Juntoku-in – attempted to overthrow the new military leaders who eventually brought an end to the flowering of the Heian court. Bracketed by two father-child pairs, the *Hyakunin isshu* thus represents both a collection of superior poems and a literary history of Heian court culture.

Hyakunin isshu is heavily colored by Teika's own aesthetic leanings. It contains forty-three love poems – nearly half of the collection and an extremely high percentage compared to that in imperial waka anthologies. There are also twice as many autumn poems as there are spring poems. (In imperial waka anthologies, the number of spring and autumn poems were about equal.) Teika also favored poets who were exiled, met with premature death, suffered from love affairs, or were unable to advance socially.

Hyakunin isshu became popular after its emergence largely due to its association with Teika. Waka poets had been accustomed to composing sequences of a hundred poems on set topics, and the *Hyakunin isshu* created an exciting new variation. After Teika's death, his children and grandchildren – many of whom rose to prominence in the world of waka poetry – regarded the *Hyakunin isshu* as a secret transmission containing the essence of Teika's poetics, which they guarded closely, preventing its wide circulation. By the fifteenth century, however, teachers of waka had come to see it as a fundamental guide to the practice of poetic composition and produced many commentaries, which they passed on to their pupils.

In the Edo period the *Hyakunin isshu* came to represent the entire tradition of court poetry, and it saw a sudden increase in readership, particularly due to the new print culture, which enabled people from all classes to educate themselves. *Hyakunin isshu* also became the foremost primer for those interested in poetic composition, and there was probably no literate person who was not familiar with the collection, which came to represent what it meant to be educated.

From the Edo period, the poem collection circulated not only in the form of printed books but as toys, games, illustrated texts, and parodies. The foremost example is *Hyakunin isshu karuta*, the card game, which emerged in the early Edo period (after the introduction of illustrated cards from Portugal) and which became one of its most popular formats. The following example (no. 97, by Teika himself) is divided into the top half (*kami no ku*), consisting of three lines of 5, 7, 5 syllables, and the bottom half (*shimo no ku*), made up of two seven-syllable lines.

Konu hito o	Like the salt sea-weed,
Matsuho no ura no	Burning in the evening calm,
yuunagi ni	On Matsuo's shore.
yaku ya moshio no	All my being is aflame,
mi mo kogaretsutsu	Awaiting one who does not come.

The top half describes a landscape, which becomes a metaphor for the frustrated love implied in the bottom half. In the card game as it is played now, when the beginning of the poem is read aloud, the players compete to snatch up the card containing the bottom half.

The *Hyakunin isshu* has taken many forms. During the Pacific War a collection called *Aikoku hyakunin isshu* (The Patriotic *Hyakunin isshu*) appeared, praising the emperor and encouraging loyalty to the nation and the throne. Recently, a girls' comic book series by Sugita Kei entitled *Chōyaku hyakunin isshu: uta koi* (Super Translation *Hyakunin isshu*: The Love of Poetry, 2010 onward) has become popular among students. This series takes certain episodes – especially those dealing with romantic encounters – from the lives of poets who appear in the *Hyakunin isshu*. Interestingly, the poets speak in modern Japanese and sport modern hairstyles. Today *Hyakunin isshu* is one of the most familiar pieces of classical literature in Japan and without a doubt will reappear in the future in many new forms.

Medieval recluse literature: Saigyō, Chōmei, and Kenkō

JACK STONEMAN

Inja bungaku, or “recluse literature,” and the related label *sōan bungaku* (“thatched hut literature”) are terms coined in the twentieth century to describe works in a variety of genres, such as *waka* (traditional Japanese poetry), *setsuwa* (anecdotes), and *zuihitsu* (essays), by a broad array of authors of the medieval period.¹ Saigyō (1118–90), Chōmei (1155–1216), and Kenkō (c. 1283–c. 1352) exemplify the recluse ideal while simultaneously problematizing the idea and practice of isolation. We will see that, though individual recluses practiced a variety of types of renunciation, these men all found solace and understanding in natural environments; discovered new ways of seeing and expressing the plight of seeking salvation in a world defined by impermanence and death; and carved out a discursive space within their writings where self-examination could lead to self-realization through artistic expression. Deeply felt religious and philosophical yearnings for a life better lived led medieval men and women, young and old, to retreat from society, though the catalyst for renunciation was often a worldly disappointment or tragedy. Most recluses were Buddhist monks or nuns, though adherence to Buddhism was certainly not a requirement. There was, in fact, a broad spectrum of modes of withdrawal from the secular world. Similarly, there are a number of terms in Japanese for hermits and the process of leaving the mundane behind. What drove many people, some of whom had every reason to remain (wealth, family, careers), to reject and escape from the world in favor of the eremitic life? For the samurai-turned-monk Saigyō, this question has never been fully answered. The following poem (*Sankashū*, Miscellaneous 723) was likely composed in the spring preceding his autumn

¹ “*Inja bungaku*” generally refers to recluse literature of the twelfth through fourteenth centuries, but recluse literature extends well before this period to include such authors, works, and figures as the poet/monk Henjō (816–90), Yoshishige no Yasutane’s *Chiteiki* (Record of the Pond Pavilion, 982), and the monk Gyōki (668–749) as depicted in the *setsuwa* collection *Nihon ryōiki* (Record of Miraculous Events in Japan, c. 787–824).

tonsuring, and states that he desired to leave the world without stating explicitly why.

Sora ni naru	The empty sky
kokoro wa haru no	of my heart this spring
kasumi nite	mist rising
yo ni araji to mo	to thoughts of
omoitatsu kana	leaving the world behind.

Saigyō was born Satō Norikiyo, the son of a wealthy aristocratic family who had served sovereigns for generations as bodyguards and constables. Norikiyo was a retainer to the powerful Tokudaiji family and served in Retired Emperor Toba's (1103–56) Northern Guard, a group of bodyguards and cultural companions. At the age of twenty-two he left his career and family (a wife and perhaps two or three children) to become a Buddhist monk. Saigyō lived sometimes in seclusion, sometimes residing and working at temples, and sometimes traveling. Throughout his fifty years as a Buddhist practitioner, Saigyō also composed waka, gaining the respect of other poets in his lifetime and the adulation of succeeding generations.

Saigyō inherited from the poetic tradition a set of words and images that defined a certain ideal of reclusion. By the end of the Heian period (twelfth century), the trope of reclusion in waka was dominated by nuns, many of whom had been imperial women or ladies-in-waiting at court. The hallmark image of the genteel reclusion expressed in their poems was the thatched hut. Thatched huts in poetry and prose of earlier centuries had been associated with travel, fields, and even ritual isolation due to pollution. But by Saigyō's time the hut had become a markedly religious space that, while lonely, was also desirable and even beautiful, with associated words such as moonlight, autumn leaves, garden, gate, cherry blossoms, and snow accruing to the topos. The huts of nuns were generally located in semi-rural areas just outside the capital – places already known for their gentle natural beauty. In addition to thatched huts, mountain homes (*yamazato*) became important images in recluse poetry of Saigyō's time as hermits retreated deeper into mountainous areas farther from the capital, such as Kōya and Yoshino in present-day Nara prefecture, where Saigyō spent many years. The following poem (*Sankashū*, Winter 513) exemplifies the solitary and decidedly remote aspects of Saigyō's reclusion poetry while highlighting the poet's positive assessment of such a space and lifestyle.

Sabishisa ni	I wish there were
taetaru hito no	another here
mata mo are na	who could bear this loneliness –
iori narabemu	we'd build our huts side by side
fuyu no yamazato	in this wintry mountain home.

To the loneliness of reclusion, Saigyō added stark and even eerie images, such as owls, windstorms, and monkeys, sometimes commenting upon the gap between what he perhaps expected of the recluse life as portrayed in the bucolic and elegant reclusion poetry that preceded him and what he actually experienced deep in the mountains. He is not disappointed, however, in the life of a hermit.

In the case of Kamo no Chōmei, we have a better idea of why he left society and became a monk. Chōmei was a member of a family of Shinto priests at the Shimogamo Shrine in the capital Kyoto. Nevertheless, he devoted himself not to religious duties, but to music and poetry, even after the death of his father in 1172 or 1173, when he might have been expected to take over his father's position. Chōmei studied with the venerable poet Shun'e (1113–91), participated in many poetry gatherings and contests in his twenties and thirties, and in 1201 was appointed a member of the court Bureau of Poetry. In 1204, he was passed over for appointment as head of the Tadasu Shrine in favor of his second cousin Sukeyori. Emperor GoToba (1180–1239) offered to grant Chōmei a comparable position at another shrine, but he refused and abruptly left the capital, settling for a time in Ōhara, an area north of the capital popular with Buddhist recluses. In 1208 he moved to Hino, south of the capital, where he built the very small hut immortalized in his most famous work, *Hōjōki* (Account of my Ten-Foot-Square Hut, 1212), and lived out the remainder of his life.²

Hōjōki begins: "The flow of the river is never ceasing, and yet the water is never the same. The bubbles that float in the still pools vanish then re-form, never staying for long. People and dwellings in the world, too, are much like this." Though Chōmei's reasons for leaving secular life could be considered worldly, his literary works are deeply dyed with the hue of impermanence (*mujiō*) and the disconsolate tone of the End of Days. For Saigyō and Chōmei, the world had recently entered the last stage of the Buddhist Dharma, or

² The fourteenth-century text *Bunkidan* (Conversations at a Writing Desk) tells a different story of Chōmei's exit from capital society. It asserts that Chōmei played a "secret musical piece" (*hikyoku*) on his *biwa* (lute) without the permission of his teacher, an unthinkable offense. The anger of his teacher, Fujiwara no Takamichi (1166–1237), drove Chōmei from the capital and into the priesthood.

mappō, the degenerate age in which devotees are unable to achieve salvation through the teachings of the Buddha Sakyamuni and society becomes increasingly corrupt and tumultuous. Such social changes were easily observed by Saigyō and Chōmei as the country crumpled into civil war in the 1180s, and again by Kenkō as court and warrior factions continued to struggle for power in the fourteenth century. In an effort to convince readers of the evanescence and futility of human life, Chōmei describes both man-made and natural disasters, such as the great whirlwind of 1180, the moving of the capital the same year, the famine of 1181–2, and the great earthquake of 1185. According to Chōmei, it is precisely in such an age that one must shun the depraved trappings of secular life and rely on the beneficence of savior figures such as Amida Buddha, who promised to save believers who chant his name in faith and are then reborn into his Western Pure Land Paradise.

The gloom of an apocalyptic world did not prevent these recluses from finding beauty and even consolation in their natural environments. Throughout his life as a monk and poet, Saigyō scrutinized his own spiritual state by examining nature. The following poem (*Sankashū*, Spring 76) is thought to have been composed shortly after he became a monk.

Hana ni somu	Why does this heart
kokoro no ika de	stained by blossoms
nokoriken	remain
sutehateteki to	in this body that I thought
omou waga mi ni	had tossed all that away?

Though his love for blossoms continued throughout his life, it seems that Saigyō was eventually able to master his heart and mind. Rather than blaming the blossoms that “stain,” as he states in a poem written late in his life, he gives thanks to the blossoms that brought him to an enlightened state.

Toward the end of *Hōjōki*, Chōmei describes his hermitage and the nature surrounding it in densely poetic and emotional language, several times alluding to Saigyō’s poetry.

The place is not inconvenient to contemplation. In spring I see waves of wisteria. They are like the purple clouds [of Amida’s Paradise], glowing in the West. In summer I hear the cuckoo. Each time we share our feelings, he promises to guide me along the mountain path to death. In autumn, I am surrounded by the cries of the evening cicadas. They sound as if they are lamenting the empty shell of this world.

Chōmei’s language reflects the trend in recluse literature to conflate the poetic diction of the four seasons with the language and concepts of Buddhism,

making nature not only the great mirror of human emotion but also a manifestation of the Buddhist Dharma, or Truth. Chōmei goes on to describe outings he takes with a young boy who lives at the base of his mountain.

As we return, depending on the season, we pluck twigs of cherry blossoms, or find brightly colored fall leaves, pick brackens, or gather nuts and berries, some of which we offer to the Buddha, and some of which we take home as mementos. When the night has grown still, I think of old friends as I gaze at the moon from my window . . . When I hear the pheasant's melancholic cry, I wonder if it is the voice of my father or mother perhaps, and when the deer from the mountain's peak draw near without fear, I realize how far from the world I've come.

The critical distance achieved through renunciation and hermit life far from civilization is expressed through Chōmei's and Saigyō's identification with their natural environment. For these writers, the hut becomes not only a space apart from the secular world but also a space absorbed by the world of nature and the Buddhist Dharma.

Despite Chōmei's compassionate relationship with his environs, he concludes that his fondness for his hut and the life of a hermit is in fact an attachment that hinders his spiritual progression. "Why," he asks, "do I waste my time recounting useless pleasures?" Perhaps Chōmei's self-deprecation is a literary device. However, in the final passages of his essay Chōmei earnestly questions his own spiritual state, arriving not at a confirmation, nor a commitment. He ends by writing, "I merely employ my unruly tongue, though only half-heartedly, to recite Amida Buddha's name two or three times, then quit."

Yoshida Kenkō begins his most prominent work, a collection of observations and anecdotes called *Tsurezuregusa* (Essays in Idleness, c. 1331), with similar self-deprecation: "How utterly maddening to think that I've spent all day, out of boredom, sitting here before my inkstone, jotting down at random whatever useless thoughts have crossed my mind!" This collection of seemingly random reflections and commentary reveals the leisured life of a recluse while stopping short of the penetrating self-examination found in the works of Chōmei and Saigyō. It is unclear whether Kenkō ever really left capital society completely – Michael Marra (1984, 313–50) has called him a "semi-recluse." And, as with Saigyō, it is unclear what drove him to become a Buddhist monk. Like Chōmei, Kenkō came from a Shinto family of priests and diviners, his father being a priest at the Yoshida Shrine in Kyoto. And, like Chōmei, he devoted himself to poetry and court matters, achieving lesser

fifth rank, lower grade, and a position in the Left Palace Guards. Around age thirty, for reasons unknown, Kenkō left court and took the Buddhist tonsure. Thereafter he lived near the capital, in Shūgakuin and Yokawa, spending some time in the Kamakura and Iga areas as well. During his reclusion, he continued to participate in poetic society and even continued to consult on matters of court protocol, and it is possible that, during his time in Kamakura, he acted as a tutor to warrior elites who wished to assimilate court culture.

Tsurezuregusa has much to say about the human world, but not from the pervasively Buddhist and pessimistic vantage point of Chōmei's *Hōjōki*. Kenkō's gaze is generally outward, and often confirming. Nevertheless, he finds occasion to lament and to criticize the state of the world around him, particularly as he compares it to a golden, courtly past. And, as did Chōmei and Saigyō before him, he finds in nature powerful metaphors for human life that both admonish and comfort. "If man were never to fade away like the dew of Adashino, never to vanish like the smoke over Toribeyama, but lingered on forever in the world, how things would lose their power to move us! The most precious thing in life is its uncertainty" (Keene, 7). He also writes, "The changing of the seasons is deeply moving in its every manifestation." And, "Are we to look at cherry blossoms only in full bloom, the moon only when it is cloudless? To long for the moon while looking on the rain, to lower the blinds and be unaware of the passing of the spring – these are even more deeply moving" (Keene, 18, 115).

Writing of the solitary life, Kenkō asserts:

Some say, "As long as your mind is set on enlightenment, it does not make much difference where you live. Even if you live with your family and mingle in society, why should that interfere with your prayers for happiness in the future life?" Men who speak in such terms know nothing whatsoever about the meaning of prayers for the future life. Indeed, once a man realizes how fleeting this life is and resolves to escape at all costs from the cycle of birth and death, what pleasure can he take in daily attendance on some lord or in schemes to benefit his family? A man's mind is influenced by his environment, and unless he has peaceful surroundings he will have difficulty in carrying out his religious duties. (Keene, 52)

Even while extolling the hermit life, Kenkō does not seem to have spent all his days praying for the life to come. In fact, he does not expect his choice of the hermit lifestyle alone to lead to salvation. He is as concerned with the problems of beauty, perception, and behavior as he is with doctrine, faith, or self-examination. The influence exerted by *Tsurezuregusa* on later generations

of Japanese is more because of the aesthetic canon it expresses than of its role as a record of Kenkō's retreat from the world. Kenkō successfully crystallized in his writings ideals such as *wabi* (subdued simplicity) and *sabi* (rustic elegance), so important to late medieval and early modern Japanese taste-makers (especially tea masters), which have now become cliché, and yet are as potent as ever in defining Japanese sensibilities.

Somebody once remarked that thin silk was not satisfactory as a scroll wrapping because it was so easily torn. Ton'a [1289–1372] replied, "It is only after the silk wrapper has frayed at top and bottom, and the mother-of-pearl has fallen from the roller that a scroll looks beautiful." . . . In everything, no matter what it may be, uniformity is undesirable. Leaving something incomplete makes it interesting, and gives one the feeling that there is room for growth. (Keene, 70)

The attention Kenkō devotes to taste, artistic sensibilities, and the mastery of various Ways (*michi*) is indicative of a trend within medieval eremitism to find in the very pursuit of the arts a form of personal salvation.

Suki was a term in use from the Heian period (794–1185) forward denoting utter devotion to a chosen pursuit, often an artistic avocation. *Sukimono* (or *sukisha*) were men whose devotion to an art, such as poetry, painting, music and the like, bordered on obsession. *Suki* also implies the relative freedom with which *sukimono* pursued their interests regardless of, or outside of, societal restraints. In his *Hosshinshū* (Collection of Awakenings, 1216), Chōmei defines *suki* in the following manner:

Not preferring interactions with people; not worrying about losing status; sorrowing over the scattering of cherry blossoms; contemplating the rising and setting of the moon, thereby always making one's heart clear; and not allowing oneself to be sullied by the filth of the world – these are the important points, and thus naturally lead one to a realization of the nature of life and death and the exhausting of attachments to fame and wealth. This is the way to enter the path of true emancipation.

In language echoing his own adoration of Saigyō, Chōmei asserts that the appreciation of nature (and by extension the literary expression of such) within the context of contemplative retreat from society leads one toward salvation. In more straightforward language, Kenkō declares, "Expert knowledge in any art is a noble thing" (Keene, 45). For Kenkō, any Way is a path toward self-betterment and enlightenment. For Chōmei and Saigyō, though they are at times uneasy with the attachment they feel to the lovely forms of nature and the pleasant settings of reclusion, devotion to poetry

and music are *hōben* (expedient means) that lead toward a more refined spiritual state.

Many readers and scholars have pointed out the contradictions to be found in the works of Saigyō, Chōmei, and Kenkō. The “dyed by cherry blossoms” poem of Saigyō cited above is one example. The conflicted experience of eremites in medieval Japan is also reflected in Chōmei’s abrupt about-face from an instructive, even condemning, voice from afar recounting the foibles and follies of his society in the greater part of *Hōjōki* to a self-remonstrating, questioning seeker at the end of the essay. Similarly, Kenkō’s apparent worldliness and enjoyment of secular pursuits while in retreat as a monk point to the complex and often contradictory lives medieval recluses led. Most of the writings of these three men are fragmentary, and not meant to be read as a cohesive whole. Perhaps the greatest enjoyment, and enlightenment, to be gained by reading their literary expressions will be found in embracing the contradictions, varying hues, and struggles found in the life of a religious recluse.

Medieval recluse literature chronicles the numerous forces that pulled hermits and travelers both toward and away from the poles of the mundane and the sacred. In their retreats and movements, these men traversed secular and religious spaces, centers and peripheries, throughout their lives as monks. Centers such as capital society, poetic exchange, and loved ones exerted a centripetal force on eremites, even if they had renounced such things. At the same time, Buddhist belief, longing for peace and release, and a desire to achieve salvation propelled men and women with centrifugal force toward peripheries. These peripheries were most often mountains, sometimes temples, where small huts provided shelter from both weather and the secular world, but only tenuously. Peripheries also included far-flung provincial locales, and travel itself became a form of renunciation in the late medieval and early modern periods, especially for poets who modeled their poetics and lives after medieval recluse writers.

The *renga* (linked verse) poet Sōgi (1421–1502) and the *haikai* (unorthodox verse) poet Matsuo Bashō (1644–94) both looked to Saigyō especially as an exemplar. Sōgi traveled all around Japan, composing *renga* and chronicling his travels in such works as *Shirakawa kikō* (Record of a Journey to Shirakawa, 1468) and *Tsukushi no michi no ki* (Record of the Road to Tsukushi, 1480). Bashō memorialized the 500th anniversary of Saigyō’s death by setting out on the path his hero had taken through northern Japan centuries earlier, eventually recording his journey as *Oku no hosomichi* (Narrow Road to the Deep North, 1694). The language of reclusion developed by Saigyō, Chōmei,

Kenkō and other medieval writers was adopted by later generations of writers who themselves traversed centers and peripheries, struggling with the question of how involved in the world a poet should be. When creating poetry that evoked the loneliness of travel, or the solitude of seclusion, Sōgi, Bashō, and others borrowed the language created in the early centuries of the medieval period, best represented in Saigyō's poetry – moonlight winnowing through the roof of a dilapidated hut, chestnuts gathered in the mountains, or a bird on a lone branch. Like their predecessors, poets of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries found themselves in spaces that were ambiguous, with forces pulling them toward and away from urban centers and worldliness.

Perhaps the most important reason to reside and travel in such tenuous in-between spaces was to somehow overcome the bifurcation of reality that forced the question of whether to remain in the world or shun it. William LaFleur wrote, "Saigyō's sensitivity to the irony in human affairs is related to his awareness of what goes off track when we dichotomize reality. He was forced to see that even his own attempts to 'leave the world' were, if naïvely misconstrued, attempts to find private peace in another such dichotomy" (LaFleur, 2003, 65). Chōmei and Kenkō must have come to the same realization. These writers achieved through reclusion a decentralized space in which they could gain a level of freedom of movement, involvement, and contemplation that allowed a broader spectrum of experience, a longer perspective on the human world, and the opportunity to express for later generations their struggles with the timeless dilemma of how to live more perfectly in an imperfect world.

Medieval women's diaries: from *Tamakiwaru* to *Takemukigaki*

CHRISTINA LAFFIN

Literary diaries by women in the medieval period share many attributes of Heian era diaries, from the *Tosa nikki* to *Sanuki no Suke nikki*, which have traditionally been categorized as “ancient” (*kodai* or *chūko*) works. Those that were written after the late twelfth century and before the mid fourteenth century are categorized by modern scholars as “medieval” (*chūsei*) works. Among the many literary diaries of the medieval period, eight stand out as works by women: *Tamakiwaru*, *Kenreimon-in Ukyō no Daibu shū*, *Ben no Naishi nikki*, *Utatane*, *Izayoi nikki*, *Nakatsukasa Naishi nikki*, *Towazugatari*, and *Takemukigaki*. These works were all written in the *kana* vernacular but they differ in scope and style. Some document service to a patron (*Tamakiwaru*, *Ben no Naishi nikki*, *Nakatsukasa Naishi nikki*, *Takemukigaki*), others echo classical tales of the past (*Utatane*, *Towazugatari*), some resemble travel diaries (*Izayoi nikki*, *Towazugatari*), another comprises a poetry collection bound by prose (*Kenreimon-in Ukyō no Daibu shū*), and most bridge various genres.

Like Heian works, medieval diaries continued to be closely linked to tale literature and to poetry. Even seemingly objective or “historical” diaries like the *Ben no Naishi nikki* (The Diary of Ben no Naishi) show the strong influence of *monogatari*. We see this when the author likens the sudden tonsure of Tsuchimikado Akichika (1149–1202) to something out of a tale, noting that “she felt as if she were hearing a story from the distant past” (Hulvey, 127). Similarly, for many women writers, *The Tale of Genji* acted as a lens through which to filter their own lives. Works like *Utatane* (Fitful Slumbers, c. 1265) weave expressions or tropes from the *Genji* into nearly every page. In *Towazugatari* (The Unrequested Tale, c. 1306), the author parallels her experiences with those of specific heroines in the *Genji* and describes reenactments of episodes from the tale at the court of her patron, the Retired Emperor GoFukakusa (1243–1304; r. 1246–59). *The Tale of Genji* thus functioned as a narrative model and an encyclopedic source for themes

and expressions in women's diaries as well as a precedent for events carried out at court.

Poetry also played a prominent role in women's works as a mode of a communication, a narrative strategy, and way of binding the author's life with those of other famous figures, whether historical or fictional. The rise of new forms and styles, such as *renga* (linked poetry), can be seen within medieval diaries. Lady Nijō (1258–?) describes her attendance at various social gatherings where linked verse was composed, and the poems in the *Ben no Naishi nikki* include *renga*. Some diaries, like *Izayoi nikki* (Diary of the Sixteenth Night Moon, c. 1283), consist largely of poetic sequences that chronicle the author's visit to famous locations or her correspondence with other court poets.

Poetic inspiration was one of the many motivations for medieval travel and the development of travel diaries was closely linked to the establishment of set literary routes and sites a writer was expected to visit. Each poetic toponym, known literally as a "poem pillow" (*utamakura*), was associated with an accretion of famous poems that determined appropriate literary images a traveler was expected to cite, including season, flora, mood, and past literary figures. Literary sojourners thus built on poetic tradition while contributing their own compositions.

Stylistically, medieval works by women show a greater tendency to incorporate language traditionally gendered "male," such as *kanbun* (classical Chinese) expressions. Medieval diaries also tend to document dates more clearly and frequently than earlier works. The focus on temporality seen in the *Ben no Naishi nikki* makes it similar to the *hi-nami nikki* (daily journals) written in classical Chinese by men. In terms of content, medieval diaries by women often describe public life and seem more concerned with documenting the major events of the era than with describing the author's personal life and relationships, as was common in Heian diaries – although *Towazugatari* offers a counterexample. Many of the medieval diaries are designed to justify the author's position by citing poetry, status at court, professional activities, and familial background. Diaries could thus be used to highlight the author's accomplishments and were one way in which women continued to contribute as writers and poets.

Outside the literary field, the lives of women were changing due to transformations in marriage and residential practices, inheritance patterns, and property rights. The uxorilocal wife-visiting (*tsumadoi-kon*) or groom-taking (*shōsei-kon*) marriages of the Heian period were gradually replaced with virilocal bride-taking (*yometori-kon*) marriages. Property was no longer inherited matrilineally, but instead passed to a single male heir, though it

could be transferred to a daughter for her lifetime before reverting to a male inheritor. As the financial and political power of the imperial court decreased, women's employment at court and opportunities for patronage became more limited. Perhaps due to fewer chances for professional success in the capital, half of the works below consist mostly of descriptions of life outside the court, including lengthy records of travel.

Journeys were of central interest in medieval diaries. Travel is such a common theme within these works that the genres of *nikki* (diaries) and *kikō bungaku* (travel literature) are understood as largely overlapping. Beyond the poetic impetus for travel, it was also a necessary activity from a political standpoint. The duopolity of the Kamakura period, with the courtier capital in Heian-kyō (present Kyoto) and the warrior center in Kamakura, in the east, required the movement of information and goods between two urban centers. Women and men often accompanied patrons and relatives on journeys between the capital and Kamakura or provincial sites. They also undertook frequent pilgrimages to shrines in and around the capital, including Kiyomizu, Kamo, Inari, Uzumasa, Hase, and Ishiyama. For some women, such as Lady Nijō, travel was a form of practice used to accrue religious merit that would counter past transgressions and lead to the salvation of their loved ones and themselves. These journeys by educated noblewomen contributed to the wider dispersal of court culture and the marketing of court women's specialized knowledge on poetry, painting, *The Tale of Genji*, design, interior decoration, and etiquette. Outside the capital, elite women were highly valued as mentors and their diaries record frequent interaction with local poets, warriors, entertainers, and clergy.

Medieval diaries by women have traditionally been represented as lesser examples of the court literature that flourished during the Heian era, but recent scholarship has moved away from this aesthetic approach and focused on the political transformation that impacted women's lives and the themes, styles, and engagements with past works that can be seen in these diaries. The brief summaries that follow show the diversity of female-authored works from the Kamakura (1185–1336) and Northern and Southern Court (1336–92) periods and highlight some of the many reasons these works deserve greater study.

Tamakiwaru (Fleeting Is Life, 1219)

Authored by the daughter of Bifukumon'in Kaga and the eminent poet Fujiwara no Shunzei (1114–1204), *Tamakiwaru* depicts the author's service to three imperial women: Retired Empress Kenshunmon'in (1142–76), Princess

Shunkamon'in (1195–1211), and Princess Hachijōin (1136–1211). The work consists of a diary and a section that was appended by Fujiwara no Teika (1162–1241). The diary may have functioned as both a record of Kengozen's employment and a reference guide for women serving at court, perhaps intended for the author's adopted daughter. It is written from the perspective of a tonsured woman reflecting on more than four decades of court service.

Currently divided into fifty-three sections covering the years 1168 to 1211, the diary opens with a poem on the fleeting nature of life (*tamakiwaru inochi*), noting that the author was motivated to write by her deep sorrow and lonely existence. Now in her sixties, she produces this record as a memento of her illustrious days serving Kenshunmon'in. "To what could I compare her?" she asks. "I search for something to which she might naturally be compared, but it is useless, for the lustrous beauties of today only pale in her radiance" (Wheeler, 276). The descriptions of her patron's court as a place of grandeur and beauty act as a tribute to Kenshunmon'in while depicting the lavish and glorious era of Taira dominance. The narrator represents herself as an observer reporting on court events and a woman who took great pride in her service to three patrons.

Kenreimon'in Ukyō no Daibu shū (The Collection of Lady Daibu, c. 1232)

Like *Tamakiwaru*, the *Ukyō no Daibu shū* offers a window into life at court during the tumultuous period when the Taira clan lost their hold over the imperial court and many were driven from the capital. Lady Daibu (c. 1157–after 1232) was daughter of the calligrapher, musician, and *Genji* scholar Fujiwara (Sesonji) Koreyuki (d. 1175). She served Empress Kenreimon'in (1155–1213), who was daughter to Taira no Kiyomori (1118–81), consort to Emperor Takakura (1161–81; r. 1168–80), and mother to Antoku (1178–85; r. 1180–5). Lady Daibu's work depicts numerous Taira warriors and often eulogizes their lives and character as she learns of their deaths in battle. Reflecting on her deceased Taira lover, Lady Daibu writes, "Sukemori's image appeared before my eyes, and once again they were dimmed with tears . . . The memories welled up in me, but to describe them would be more than I could bear" (Harries, 215). As a diary by a court woman it is unusual in containing numerous references to political events.

Lady Daibu's "collection" is structured as a set of 350 poems that have been contextualized by prose. It can be likened to a poetry collection with

headnotes explaining poems, but the prose sections are lengthier than those traditionally found in private collections and often provide content unrelated to the poems that follow. The work has been received traditionally as a diary, in part because the author provides an introduction in which she claims her writings are nothing like a personal poetry collection, and a conclusion in which she reflects on life, the years that have accrued, and how she has gradually recorded this and shared her writings.

The diary focuses on Lady Daibu's service to Kenreimon'in and her relationship with Taira no Kiyomori's grandson Sukemori (b. c. 1161), from 1177 until his death in 1185 at the Battle of Dannoura. After retiring from Kenreimon'in's court, Lady Daibu was later recruited to serve Emperor GoToba (1180–1239, r. 1183–98), and the latter half of the work focuses on her service to GoToba and her mourning of Sukemori. The *Ukyō no Daibu shū* can be read alongside works like *Tamakiwaru* and *Takimukigaki* that represent women's perspectives during a war-torn era. Lady Daibu's emphasis on the refinement of the Taira men functions as a tribute to the Taira and a sorrowful commentary on their decline.

Ben no Naishi nikki (The Diary of Ben no Naishi)

The *Ben no Naishi nikki* (date unknown) depicts the events of the court from the perspective of a woman who served Emperor GoFukakusa (1243–1304; r. 1246–59). Ben no Naishi (c. 1228–c. 1270) was an accomplished poet, known especially for her talent in composing renga. The diary documents poetry gatherings and contains more than three hundred poems, including both *waka* and renga, composed by the author and others. Ben no Naishi was recruited by Emperor GoSaga (1220–72; r. 1242–6) together with her younger sister Shōshō no Naishi (?–1265) to serve at the court of his son GoFukakusa. The diary that she produced may have been commissioned by GoSaga as a record of his son's rule; it fulfills this role by presenting a seemingly factual account of the years 1246 to 1252, the first half of GoFukakusa's rule. The original text likely documented GoFukakusa's entire reign, but the latter half was lost. Currently organized into 175 sections, the diary begins with GoFukakusa's enthronement and ends abruptly in 1252.

In compiling her diary, Ben no Naishi appears to have sometimes borrowed from her sister's recollections of events to provide descriptions at ceremonies she did not attend, or to augment her own memory. Her descriptions focus on official events, such as festivals, ceremonies, religious

rituals, banquets, poetry gatherings, and musical performances, as well as newsworthy happenings such as conflagrations and promotions in rank. She notes, for example, the sovereign's haircut: "His Lordship the regent came to announce a royal haircut and added that female courtiers should attend wearing ceremonial dress" (Hulvey, 109). The diary shows the observance of annual court events from the perspective of a female attendant, and the various duties involved. The work dwells on the happier events of the court and offers few glimpses into the author's private life, similar to the many male-authored kanbun diaries that depict events of the court calendar. The focus on court ceremonies can be understood as an extension of the role of female court attendants as scribes of court events who represent the emperor they serve. The diary thus highlights a new development in the medieval period in its focus on court proceedings and the role of female court attendants as recorders of imperial history. It can also be read alongside communally recorded official kana journals by women serving at court, such as the *Oyudono no ue no nikki* (Daily Records of the Honorable Ladies Serving beyond the Bath, 1477–1826). *Ben no Naishi nikki* thus blurs the lines between official history, personal diary, and court record.

Utatane (Fitful Slumbers, c. 1265) and *Izayoi nikki*
(Diary of the Sixteenth Night Moon, c. 1283)

These two diaries differ in terms of style, content, and narrator, but both are thought to have been authored by Nun Abutsu (c. 1225–83). *Utatane* describes the end of a relationship between a court woman and a higher-ranking man and the woman's flight to a nunnery as the relationship disintegrates. It is written in a style reminiscent of Heian kana diaries by women, like the *Kagerō nikki* (974) and the *Izumi Shikibu nikki* (c. 1008). It opens with the narrator lamenting her fate, "Blinded by love, I was unfortunately reckless, not knowing I would regret it so," a theme that is carried throughout the work.

Utatane draws heavily from *The Tale of Genji* by modeling the narrator on the heroines Ukifune and Yūgao and uses tropes and poetic phrases from the tale. *Utatane* contains descriptions of pilgrimages and a journey undertaken with the narrator's father to the eastern provinces, where she marvels at sites like Hamana Bay and Mount Fuji: "Mount Fuji looked as though it were right before me. The snow was very white and the smoke trailing on the wind was moving, like something out of a dream." At the diary's conclusion, the author has returned to the capital where she continues to reflect on the relationship

with her lover, feeling “My heart grow darker as I reconsidered when I might see him again.”

Utatane may have been based on Abutsu’s experiences at the court of Princess Ankamon’in (1209–83), but she likely completed the work when she had left the reclusion of a nunnery and was working for the poet Fujiwara no Tameie (1198–1275). She may have produced the diary to prove her literary talents as a poet and an expert of *The Tale of Genji* at a time when her employment as an assistant was shifting into a romantic relationship. Tameie eventually willed Abutsu’s sons much of his land and literary holdings. After his death, these were withheld by his elder son by a previous wife, leading Abutsu to travel to Kamakura and lodge a court case on her sons’ behalf. Having failed in the capital to secure the land rights for her sons she writes, “I forgot various reservations and abandoned thoughts of myself. Without foresight, I decided to set off, led by the moon of the sixteenth night.” Guided by the light of the waning moon, she endures a two-week journey to the warrior center of Kamakura.

Izayoi nikki is framed as a lament of her husband’s death, a record of her duties as a filial wife and devoted mother, and a travelogue that documents her journey to Kamakura and residence there. It is often read as an early example of travel writing by women. The structure of *Izayoi nikki* can be divided into four sections. The introduction explains the circumstances surrounding the land claim, describes the preparations for Abutsu’s departure to Kamakura, and includes a series of farewell poems. As she bids her family and friends goodbye, she reasserts her case and justifies her journey. Abutsu positions herself as a loyal wife and mother educating her sons in the Way of Poetry following the instructions of her husband.

Waka no ura ni	The briny seaweed
kaki todometaru	raked together
moshiogusa	at the Bay of Poetry,
kore o mukashi no	consider it a memento
katami to wa miyo	of the person of old.

The travel section records the journey from the capital to Kamakura. Abutsu stops at shrines, where she prays for the successful outcome of the legal case, and famous poetic sites such as Osaka Barrier, Hamana Bay, and Mount Fuji, where she composes poems often linked to those of her husband’s family. At Fuji River she emphasizes the sacrifice she has made for her children and her husband.

Waga kodomo	Were it not
kimi ni tsukaen	for the sake of
tame naraba	my children and my lord,
wataramashi ya wa	would I be crossing you
Seki no Fujikawa	Fuji River by the barrier?

The period of her residence in Kamakura is conveyed through a series of exchanges with those in the capital, including members of the Kyōgoku lineage and women serving at the court of Ankamon'in. Finally, some versions of the diary include a *chōka* (long poem) that has been appended to the text. This section justifies Abutsu's position and underlines her desperate state by restating her appeal in poetic form. Although the diary may not have influenced the outcome of her court case, Abutsu's descendants were eventually awarded the land holdings and literary texts that she contested.

Nakatsukasa Naishi nikki (The Diary of Nakatsukasa
Naishi, c. 1292)

The *Nakatsukasa Naishi nikki* was written from 1280 to 1292 by Fujiwara no Keishi (fl. c. 1252–c. 1292), a woman who served the Emperor Fushimi (1265–1317, r. 1287–98) from when he was crown prince through when he took the throne. It was likely composed as a memoir and tribute to her former patron after she retired from service. The impermanence of life and the gloomy state of present times are themes that wend their way through the diary and imbue it with a quiet elegance. “As snow scattered under the full moon of the fifteenth night, I was moved at the sight of the withered garden chilled by the wind, but there was no one like-minded with whom I could share this.” Compared with other autobiographical works of the medieval period, the *Nakatsukasa Naishi nikki* strikes a balance between personal account and tribute to the author's patron. It documents relationships between the emperor and key political and literary players who appear in other works, such as Lady Nijō's lover Saionji Sanekane (1249–1322) and members of the Kyōgoku lineage. Although the author notes events of the court along with the date and participating officials, she does not describe them with the same degree of detail seen in works like the *Ben no Naishi nikki*, perhaps because they were recorded retrospectively. Often an impressive event is recalled later in the work as the author reflects on her current state and how times have changed. Following the ascension of Emperor Fushimi, she notes a comment from Lady Dainagon: “The clear reflection of the flowers in the pond by the moonlight make me long for the past. As I tenderly recall times gone by and

remember the friends who pledged not to forget, some of them are already gone.” A sense of loss permeates the work, yet the author delights in the events of the court and the beauties of the palace.

Nakatsukasa Naishi nikki can also be read as travel literature and a work that contains the poetry of a new age. It describes trips undertaken to Amagasaki and Hatsuse and makes references to famous poems on these sites. The work includes 159 poems by the author, and others such as the Crown Prince Fushimi and Kyōgoku Tamekane (1254–1332). The author also draws from *Sagoromo monogatari* (The Tale of Sagoromo, late eleventh century), *Yamato monogatari* (Tales of Yamato, c. 951), and tragic legends such as the story of the Weaver Maiden (Vega) and her lover the Ox-herder (Altair) who are fated to meet in the Milky Way only once a year. The author’s own romantic relationships are elided, with the exception of various references to Minamoto no Tomoakira (c. 1260–87), which suggest that they may have been lovers.

Towazugatari (The Unrequested Tale, c. 1306)

After its rediscovery in 1938, *Towazugatari* came to be seen as the last great work of women’s autobiographical writing in the classical tradition. Its five books span thirty-five years, documenting the author’s life at court through Books One to Three and her travels in exile through Books Four and Five, from the age of fourteen to forty-nine. Written in a style reminiscent of Heian women’s diaries, it borrows heavily from themes and narrative tropes found in *The Tale of Genji*, positioning Lady Nijō, the author of the work, first as Murasaki and later as Genji himself.

Nijō was brought to the court of the Retired Emperor GoFukakusa as a child and later served the emperor as a favored attendant (*meshūdo*). Her status was ambivalent – neither consort nor simply a serving woman, she bore the retired emperor a son who died as an infant. Nijō was backed at court by her paternal and maternal families as well as her lover Saionji Sanekane, known in the diary as Yuki no Akebono. She had a daughter with Sanekane and later gave birth to two more children by GoFukakusa’s brother, the Ninnaji Abbot Shōjo (1247–82; known as Ariake no Tsuki), through a relationship seemingly condoned by her patron.

The first three books chronicle Nijō’s rise and eventual fall at court due to lack of support, jealousies, and perhaps her efforts to seek alternate sources of patronage from the regent Fujiwara (Takatsukasa) Kanehira (1228–94) and GoFukakusa’s rival, his younger brother Kameyama (1249–1305, r. 1259–74). The author echoes the style and content of romances, noting after her first

sexual encounter with GoFukakusa that it “seemed like an episode from an old tale” (Brazell, 10). While at court, she participates in archery contests and a musical performance modeled on *The Tale of Genji*, with palace women adopting specific roles as *Genji* heroines.

At the conclusion of the third book, Nijō has been sidelined by her rival at court. The work then suddenly shifts to her journeys as a nun for the final two books. The author writes of being influenced by famous travelers such as the writers Saigyō (1118–90), Ariwara no Narihira (825–80), and Semimaru (early Heian?), and the fictional hero Genji. Early in the diary, she notes, “I had envied Saigyō’s life . . . and although I could never endure a life of ascetic hardship, I wished that I could renounce this life and wander wherever my feet might lead me . . . I obeyed my father, then I served my Lord, but my life left something still to be desired” (52–3). In her exile from the palace, Nijō fulfills this desire, traveling widely within Japan and meeting monks, nuns, poets, priests, and prostitutes.

Knowledge of courtly culture made Nijō a valuable asset to elite warriors in Kamakura, but she continued her religious travels rather than work for a new patron. *Towazugatari* implies that her travels were motivated by political factors at court, a desire to emulate Buddhist ideals, and aspirations as a travel writer and a poet. She encounters GoFukakusa on two occasions during her itinerancy, and he accuses her of having been unfaithful on the road, to which she protests, “I swear to you that though I traveled eastward as far as the Sumida River in Musashino, I did not so much as make a single night’s pledge to any man” (222). Her past lover and patron remains in her thoughts and the diary closes with Nijō reflecting on his passing: “After GoFukakusa’s death I had felt as though there were no one with whom I could share my feelings” (264).

The work incorporates aspects of a tale, travel record, and diary. It offers a glimpse into the salons of the late thirteenth century and the influence of tale literature on writing and the events of court life, documents the pleasures and trials of travel, and shows the enduring qualities of classical women’s memoir writing.

Takemukigaki (Record of One Facing the Bamboo,
c. 1349)

Takemukigaki was written during the disturbances leading into the Nanbokuchō period (1336–92), when the Northern and Southern Courts vied for authority. Composed by Hino Meishi (1310–58), it is divided into

two volumes, the first covering the years 1329 to 1333 and the second 1337 to 1349. The diary focuses on Meishi's service in the Northern (Jimyōin) Court, her marriage to Saionji Kimmune (1310–35), the accomplishments of her son Sanetoshi, and her journeys to temples and shrines. A backdrop to the diary is the political instability that enveloped the court, the author's family, and her husband. Although we know from the *Taiheiki* (c. 1370s) that her husband was beheaded after being accused of plotting against Emperor GoDaigo (1288–1339, r. 1318–39), the diary elides overt references to the political machinations of the era and the mayhem that surrounded the author. In Book One, when Emperor Kōgon (1313–64, r. 1331–3) and retired emperors GoFushimi (1288–1336, r. 1298–1301) and Hanazono (1297–1348, r. 1308–18) flee to Rokuhara, she writes that those who remained “could only wander around in a daze” and adds, “to avoid falsehoods, I have not sought to record this further.”

The movement and shifts in residence by the emperors and by Meishi herself, and her concern over securing and guarding the imperial regalia, belie the calm exterior of the work. In addition to the unrest of the period, the diary depicts the change in marriage patterns from “wife-visiting” to “bride-taking” practices, the significance of motherhood as a source of authority for women, and a heightened awareness of lineage and familial traditions.

Takemukigaki is often cited as the work concluding the four-hundred-year tradition of women's memoirs beginning with the *Kagerō nikki*. Later diaries may have simply been lost, but the contexts for women's writing appear to have changed. Shifts in patronage, marriage, and inheritance practices, the development of the patriarchal household unit, and the general decline of court culture and influence resulted in fewer opportunities for women's writing. Women's cultural contributions carried on through other forms, including travel writing, a genre in which they would play an important role in the centuries that followed.

Many of the above works include extensive descriptions of journeys. Ben no Naishi and Nakatsukasa Naishi frequently accompany their patrons on excursions or take time off for their own pilgrimages. *Utatane* shows how travel was used as an escape from court life or as a means of demanding attention from a reticent lover. The toil of travel is indicated in the author's journey through the night to a nunnery: “The pouring rain mingled with the tears darkening my eyes and I could no longer see the way I had come nor my destination. There were no words for my feelings. Drenched to the bone, with my life soon to be over, I felt worse than the diver of Ise.” Lady Nijō notes her fatigue at being “weary and lonely from the days I had spent in

unaccustomed travel” (Brazell, 182). When she meets GoFukakusa he outlines the challenges faced by women on the road: “A man is more or less free to travel eastward or even to China, but there are so many hindrances for a traveling woman that I understand it to be impossible” (221). Despite the danger and discomfort of journeys, and the impediment of being female, noblewomen continued to record the drudgery and joys of travel. Their diaries show that excursions to religious sites or to retrace the footsteps of past poets offered a fresh perspective from court life and new fodder for writing.

Setsuwa (anecdotal) literature: *Nihon ryōiki* to *Kokon chomonjū*

HARUO SHIRANE

Setsuwa (anecdotes), a modern term that literally means “spoken story,” refers to stories that have been orally narrated and then written down. These recorded stories were often used for oral storytelling, resulting in new variations, which were again recorded. The result is that *setsuwa* frequently exist in multiple variants, with the story usually evolving over time or serving different purposes. In being told, written down, retold, and rewritten, these *setsuwa* presume a narrator and a listener, but not necessarily a specific author. *Setsuwa* in this sense began as early as the ancient period, with the *fudoki*, or local gazetteers, which gathered oral stories from the provinces and recorded them in *kanbun* (Literary Sinitic). *Setsuwa* as spoken-and-heard narration was stressed by Yanagita Kunio (1875–1962), the founder of *minzokugaku* or folklore studies in Japan, who sought out “literature before the written word” and who was influential in the modern reevaluation of the genre. However, premodern *setsuwa* survive only in written form, sometimes in *kanbun* prose, providing a glimpse of the story-telling process but never reproducing it.

The following *setsuwa*, titled “On Mercilessly Skinning a Live Rabbit and Receiving an Immediate Penalty” (1–16), appears in the *Nihon ryōiki* (Record of Miraculous Events in Japan, c. 787–824), a *setsuwa* collection in *kanbun*:

In Yamato province there lived a man whose name and native village are unknown. He was by nature merciless and loved to kill living creatures. He once caught a rabbit, skinned it live, and then turned it loose in the fields. But not long afterward, pestilent sores broke out all over his body, his whole body was covered with scabs, and these caused him unspeakable torment. In the end he never gained any relief, but died groaning and lamenting. Ah, how soon do such deeds receive an immediate penalty! We should consider others as we do ourselves, exercise benevolence, and never be without pity and compassion!

In a manner typical of the genre, the *setsuwa* is compactly written, plot-driven, turns on an element of surprise or wonder, and is didactic (teaching karmic retribution and benevolence). The *setsuwa* in the *Nihon ryōiki* were probably collected and edited as a sourcebook for sermons by Buddhist priests who preached to audiences that, for the most part, could not read kanbun and who were captivated by the “wondrous” (or miraculous) aspect of the narrative. Often the same *setsuwa* will appear with a different ending in another collection, reflecting its range of usage.

The *setsuwa-shū*, or collection of *setsuwa*, a written genre with its own structure and conventions, was inspired in part by Chinese encyclopedias (*leishu*). In contrast to the *setsuwa*, which had its roots in oral storytelling, the *setsuwa-shū* was a literary form that provided a structured worldview and that categorized that world into different spheres and topics. For example, *Konjaku monogatari shū* (Tales of Times Now Past, c. 1120), which contains close to a thousand stories, divides the world into India, China, and Japan, and separates Japan into Buddhist and secular spheres, with the latter being further divided into secular topics such as “warriors,” “poetry,” “thieves,” and “humor.” The first extant *setsuwa* collection is the aforementioned *Nihon ryōiki* (c. 787–824), a Buddhist collection edited and compiled in the early Heian period. Although we sometimes know the editors, such as Priest Mujū, the editor of *Shasekishū* (Tales of Sand and Pebbles), the *setsuwa* stories themselves are anonymous. In short, there are three key elements to understanding *setsuwa*: the act of narration (the storytelling), the act of writing (recording the story or rewriting an earlier *setsuwa*), and the editing of the collection, which brings together the stories in some order.

In late Heian and medieval aristocratic society, when hereditary family schools were established in fields such as *waka* and music, the secrets of the family school were passed from teacher to disciple or from family head to the successor via *kuden*, or “secret transmissions.” When the line of transmission faced the danger of extinction, the oral transmissions were often written down in the form of *setsuwa* in an attempt to preserve the knowledge of the school. In the late Heian period this resulted in the *Gōdanshō* (Ōe Conversations, c. 1108), a *setsuwa* collection that records stories narrated by Ōe no Masafusa (1041–1111), one of the leading scholars and poets of the time. In 1111, Masafusa, at the age of seventy, fearing that the Ōe lineage would disappear with his death, narrated the family secrets to his top disciple Fujiwara Sanekane (1085–1112), who took notes, referred to as *kikigaki* (literally, listen and write down) or lecture notes. The *Gōdanshō* takes the form of a dialogue between the narrator and the listener. This kind of *setsuwa*,

which emerged in the late Heian period, was the product of an age in which the transmission of knowledge of aristocratic culture and its historical precedents was held in high esteem but was quickly fading away as the aristocracy fell from power. In this regard, *setsuwa* can be regarded as a form of topical history, a history that is narrated before it is written down.

The systematic attempt to provide knowledge of the past, particularly of the aristocratic past, is evident in *Kokon chomonjū* (A Collection of Things Written and Heard in the Past and Present), which was edited around 1254 by Tachibana Narisue, a low-ranking aristocrat and literatus who received the secret transmission on playing the lute. In the preface, Narisue asserts that this collection begins where the now-lost *Uji daïnagon monogatari* (Tales by the Major Counselor of Uji), a premodern *setsuwa* collection, left off, and is intended to augment the official histories. The collection, whose structure shows the influence of Chinese encyclopedias, covers a variety of topics, beginning with such topics as Shinto, Buddhism, government, court matters, Chinese literature, classical poetry, and calligraphy, and ending with plants and trees (section 29) and fish, insects, and animals (section 30).

In contrast to the narrational setting of the *Gōdānshō*, which was based on a vertical teacher–disciple relationship, other *setsuwa* were born out of an open relationship among people from different backgrounds, from commoners to samurai to aristocrats, who gathered to tell or hear stories. This was probably the setting that resulted in *setsuwa* like the one called “How the Demon of Agi Bridge in Ōmi Province Eats Somebody” (27: 13), which appears in the twenty-seventh book of the *Konjaku monogatari shū*. These kinds of stories about demons probably had no particular value for a given family or profession, but they were of great interest to those who heard them, and the twenty-seventh book, which is devoted to “demon” or *oni* stories, provides a systematic glimpse into this aspect of the world.

Storytelling in the Heian and medieval periods took various forms. One type was the “round-table” format, referred to as *meguri-monogatari* or *jun-no-monogatari* (tales in order), in which participants would take turns telling stories, often with a listener who was an aristocrat who could write. In the preface to the *Uji shūi monogatari* (Collection of Tales from Uji), the Major Counselor of Uji, Minamoto Takakuni, resting near the Byōdō-in Temple at Uji, south of the capital (present-day Kyoto), calls out to passers-by and has them tell their stories. The *Uji shūi monogatari* can be said to be Takakuni’s *kikigaki* or lecture notes on what he had heard by the roadside. This format even pervades the court literature of the Heian period. The *Ōkagami* (The Great Mirror), a history written in vernacular Japanese that

describes the age of Fujiwara regents and the rise of Fujiwara Michinaga, similarly begins on a rainy evening when nobles gather before the retired emperor Kazan to tell their stories. Frequently the storytellers gather in the evening and tell stories into the morning in a pattern called *tsuya-monogatari* (all-night tales). This custom of round-table or all-night storytelling continues into the Edo period and results in such customs as the *hyaku monogatari* (hundred tales), in which each participant tells a ghost story and at the end the candle is blown out, allowing a “real” ghost to appear.

Since one of the objectives of setsuwa collections such as the late Heian period *Konjaku monogatari shū* or the Muromachi period *Sangoku denki* (Transmissions from Three Countries, early fifteenth century), edited by Gentō, was to provide an encyclopedic worldview, centered on India, China, and Japan, these collections included stories from these three countries. The *Kara monogatari* (Tales of China, c. 1165), a late-Heian period setsuwa anthology perhaps edited by Fujiwara Shigenori (1135–88), is a collection of poem-tale (*uta-monogatari*) style adaptations from Chinese texts such as *Shiji* (Historical Records, J. *Shiki*), *Hanshu* (History of the Han, J. *Hansho*), *Meng qiu* (J. *Mōgyū*), and *Baishi wenji* (Collected Works of Bo Juyi [or Bai Juyi], J. *Hakushi monjū* or *Hakushi bunshū*, 839). In *Sangoku denki*, a Buddhist priest from India, a Chinese layperson, and a person from Japan tell stories about their respective countries. The Chinese had already translated parts of Buddhist scriptures and stories from Sanskrit into Chinese, and these were then transmitted to Japan. These translations from the Chinese were in turn orally narrated and written down again. The tales of India and China in the *Konjaku monogatari shū* are stories that had already been circulated and narrated before being recorded and often differ significantly from their Chinese sources. Given the nature of setsuwa, which was not concerned with the notion of an authentic original text, these kinds of setsuwa are best called free adaptations. Japanese knowledge of Chinese historical figures and legends as they appear in medieval warrior tales such as *The Tales of the Heike* was often derived from such setsuwa rather than from the primary texts in Chinese.

The language and style of setsuwa are diverse. The first setsuwa collection, the *Nihon ryōiki*, was written in *hentai kanbun* (literally, unorthodox Chinese). The *Konjaku monogatari shū* was written in a compact, highly efficient Sino-Japanese style, called *wakan-konkōbun*, that mixes Chinese graphs with *katakana*, a native syllabary associated with Buddhist writing. The *Uji shūi monogatari* uses *hiragana*, in a more classical style that draws on the *monogatari* (court tale) tradition. The *Sangoku denki* is written in *kanbun*, or

Literary Sinitic. These texts, which reveal a wide range of written styles, cannot be said to be direct recordings of oral performances.

In the Heian period, setsuwa were regarded by Buddhist priests as a means of spreading Buddhism and making it accessible to an audience that could not read Buddhist scriptures. This partially accounts for the large number of Buddhist-centered setsuwa collections in the late Heian and early Kamakura periods. The editors of such collections as the *Konjaku monogatari shū* were interested in China and India not only because they wanted to present a world history but because Buddhism spread from India through China to Japan. With the rise of Zen Buddhism in the Kamakura period and the emergence of Buddhist leaders such as Eisai (1141–1215), the Rinzai Zen leader, and Dōgen (1200–53), the Sōtō Zen pioneer, who stressed enlightenment without words and beyond language, the Buddhist attitude toward setsuwa as a means of religious education changed, and setsuwa were sometimes banned as a means of teaching.

Setsuwa collections embraced a wide variety of topics, from poetry to violence to sex and humor, and their contents range from folktales about animals and plants to historical legends to myths about gods to accounts of everyday commoner life to stories of the supernatural. If there is a common denominator in this huge variety it is the attempt by the editor to provide a comprehensive vision of the world and a means of surviving in that world. The readers/listeners were expected to go away having learned a “lesson” about some aspect of life. This is apparent in the predilection for didactic endings, particularly prominent in the Buddhist collections, which were attempting to spread the Buddhist gospel or to stress the efficacy of the Lotus Sutra or the power of the Kannon bodhisattva. The setsuwa often end with what are now called *kotowaza*, aphorisms that provide guidance in navigating life. For example, a story from the *Nihon ryōiki* (3: 26) ends with the phrase “Those who fail to repay debts that they owe will atone for this by becoming a horse or an ox.” An example of a modern aphorism is *akuin akka* (bad cause, bad results), which means something like “you reap what you sow” and which derives from the Buddhist notion of karmic retribution. The use of stories that have been heard or circulated for pedagogical purposes also appears in medieval *zuihitsu*, or free-form essays, such as Priest Kenkō’s *Tsurezuregusa* (Essays in Idleness, c. 1331), some of which closely resemble a setsuwa collection.

Another major characteristic of setsuwa was that it was not confined to the world of the court and aristocracy in the way that contemporary Heian court tales and classical poetry tended to be. Setsuwa embraced a wide range of

social groups, ranging from commoners, warriors, and priests to aristocrats. The *Konjaku monogatari shū*, compiled in the twelfth century, provides one of the first collections of stories of warriors, who were emerging as a new social class. These setsuwa collections also explore the underworld of thieves, pirates, and social deviants. When compared to early chronicles such as the *Nihon shoki* (Chronicles of Japan, 720) or late Heian and Kamakura vernacular histories such as the *Ōkagami* or *Masukagami* (The Clear Mirror), which focused on the imperial line, the Fujiwara regency, or retired emperors, the setsuwa collections give a broader view of the underside of society.

Setsuwa also deal with the divine (gods), with the supernatural (ghosts, demons, long-nosed tengu, and other-worldly beings), and with the world of dreams, which were thought to provide access to the other world, to those not immediately or physically present, such as the spirits of the dead and gods. Significantly, the storytelling scene in setsuwa is often set near or at a temple or shrine, where the narrators have readier access to divine spirits. The setsuwa collections dealt with both foreign worlds and the worlds of the dead, the divine, and the supernatural. In a related fashion, they also provide access to worlds of the taboo or the erotic, often through dreams, visions, and supernatural encounters. In the *Konjaku monogatari shū*, for example, snakes, which had appeared earlier in the *Nihon shoki* as gods (for example, the god of Mount Miwa), appear as evil serpents and often as phallic symbols. However, in contrast to Heian period monogatari such as *The Tale of Genji*, which admit to their fictionality, setsuwa present the narration as history, as a faithful record of past events, even when these events are strange or miraculous. In the medieval and Tokugawa periods, setsuwa collections were often considered to be a kind of historical record or a type of *hōgo*, vernacular Buddhist writing.

Setsuwa differ from monogatari and military chronicles in their brevity, rarely extending beyond five or six pages. They tend to be action-oriented, plot-centered, externally descriptive, and compact, often focusing on a single event or limited chain of events. Setsuwa collections, by contrast, can be very large, such as *Konjaku monogatari shū*, with over a thousand tales; have complex thematic structures; and attempt to be comprehensive and historical in coverage. Like the poems in a poetry anthology, the individual setsuwa can thus be read both independently and as part of a thematic cluster within a book (*maki*), in which each story is a variation on a theme such as “Kannon,” “Humor,” or “Demons.” Furthermore, within each book successive tales are often linked by a shared topic or motif.

In the late medieval period, the setsuwa genre was overshadowed by a new genre, the *otogi-zōshi*, or Muromachi tale, which was a longer narrative form that incorporated elements of the Heian court tale and drew on many of the same sources as the setsuwa collections. The setsuwa collections, however, saw new life in the Edo period when they were printed for the first time, widely read, and compiled anew. Throughout its history, the setsuwa provided a constant and deep source of material for other genres, such as the *nikki* (literary diary), monogatari, *gunki-mono* (warrior tales), historical chronicles, *noh* drama, *kōwakamai* (ballad drama), *kyōgen* (comic theater), *otogi-zōshi*, and *sekkyō-bushi* (sermon ballads). A closely related genre is the warrior tale (such as *The Tales of the Heike*), which often integrates various shorter setsuwa into a longer chronological narrative that traces the arc of a particular war.

In contrast to Heian period *waka* and Heian monogatari, a number of which were canonized in the late Heian period, the setsuwa collections were not considered literature but a kind of secondary history for most of the premodern period and were not the object of commentary. The *Uji shūi monogatari* became popular in the Edo period, but the *Konjaku monogatari shū* appears to have been totally neglected until the modern period. It was not until the twentieth century, when the setsuwa collections drew the attention of modern novelists such as Akutagawa Ryūnosuke (1892–1927), who adapted and combined the setsuwa in such noted modern short stories as “Hana” (Nose) and “Rashōmon,” that works such as the *Konjaku monogatari shū* became part of the Japanese literary canon and were referred to as *setsuwa bungaku*, or anecdotal literature. Because of their interest in commoner life, *Uji shūi monogatari* and *Konjaku monogatari shū* became particularly popular after World War II period, when Japanese literature was “democratized” and curricular attention was shifted away from medieval war tales.

The rise of medieval warrior tales: *Hōgen monogatari* and *Heiji monogatari*

ELIZABETH OYLER

The twelfth century witnessed a series of remarkable events whose historical significance was only fully assimilated in later centuries. Although histories and diaries recorded them, they entered the historical memory most fully as the subjects of a group of narratives collectively known as *gunki monogatari* (war tales) or *ikusa monogatari* (tales of battle) today. The war tales represent a new development in narrative, bringing warriors to the fore as subjects and making events that occurred in the provinces politically relevant. They embraced forms that ranged from written record to recited requiem, often within one text, and their actual and fictional characters and situations became the stock from which the medieval cultural consciousness – one that celebrated and lamented warriors and warfare – was created.

In 1156, disputes within the royal house and the regental Fujiwara clan led to the brief Hōgen uprising in the capital. The incident split loyalties in both of these families, as well as in two mid-ranking clans that had served for generations in important military positions: the Minamoto (or Genji) and the Taira (or Heike).¹ The uprising was instigated by the retired sovereign Sutoku (1119–64), who had been forced to abdicate the throne by his father, retired sovereign Toba (1103–56), in favor of his half-brother Konoe (1139–55). Konoe died shortly after ascending the throne and was replaced by a much younger brother, GoShirakawa (1125–92); Sutoku believed that the throne should have returned to his line.

Following their father's death, Sutoku sought to reclaim the throne for himself or his son, and called on Fujiwara no Yorinaga (1120–56) and members

¹ *Genji* is the Sino-Japanese reading for the characters for “the Minamoto clan,” *Heike* for “the house of the Taira.” The two sets of terms are used interchangeably in works describing this period. Both clans descended originally from princes of the blood who were reduced to commoner status and given positions in the provinces, where their descendants gradually amassed wealth and/or the support of local landholders. Their relationship to the throne is therefore somewhat complex: they are at once closer than other clans and yet also more formally removed.

of the Taira and Minamoto clans to support him. The Minamoto scion, Tameyoshi (1096–1156), and all but one of his sons came to his aid: Tameyoshi's eldest son and heir, Yoshitomo (1123–60), sided against him. The Taira scion, Kiyomori (1118–81), joined Yoshitomo in supporting GoShirakawa. A night attack on Sutoku's Shirakawa mansion brought the conflict to a swift conclusion, despite the heroic efforts of, most notably, Tameyoshi's son Tametomo, an unruly but courageous warrior. Yorinaga was killed in battle, Sutoku was sent into exile, and their champions from the Minamoto and Taira clans were sentenced to execution by the winning generals. Being responsible for executing his brothers and father was a particularly harsh fate for Yoshitomo.

In the ensuing years, Kiyomori flourished, while Yoshitomo did not, and in 1159 the disgruntled Yoshitomo took up arms against Kiyomori in what is known as the Heiji uprising. Provoked by schisms in the regental house, this conflict pitted two sons of Fujiwara no Tadzane (1078–1162), Shinzei (1106–60) and his much younger brother Nobuyori (1133–60), against each other. Nobuyori rallied Yoshitomo to attack and kill Shinzei, while Kiyomori, who supported Shinzei, was away on pilgrimage. The Minamoto then moved to attack the Taira mansion at Rokuhara, but were roundly defeated. Yoshitomo and all his adult male children either died in battle or were executed. His five youngest sons – still children at the time – were sent to temples or into exile to effectively neuter the line.

Kiyomori parlayed this victory into higher and higher political positions, eventually being named chancellor and marrying a daughter to the reigning sovereign, Takakura (1168–80), in imitation of generations of Fujiwara men before him. Kiyomori's daughter gave birth to a son, who was immediately named crown prince and ascended the throne as the sovereign Antoku (1178–85) when he was two years old. Takakura died shortly thereafter.

The political instability in the capital that served as the backdrop to these uprisings continued to spread, and, in 1180, three of the youngest sons of Yoshitomo rose against the Taira with the tacit support of the retired sovereign, GoShirakawa (father of Takakura and grandfather of Antoku). For five years, the two sides fought off and on in what is known as the Genpei War, with the Minamoto forces accruing victories as the Taira were driven first out of the capital and eventually to the western edge of the realm. The final battle between the two was fought at sea, in the straits off Dan-no-Ura (present-day Shimonoseki, Yamaguchi prefecture). It was an overwhelming victory for the Minamoto and a devastating loss for the Taira: all Kiyomori's offspring died or were captured, and Kiyomori's eight-year-old grandson, the

sovereign Antoku whom the Taira had taken with them as they fled the capital, drowned in the arms of his grandmother, Kiyomori's widow, who also carried with her to the bottom of the sea the sword that was one of the three royal regalia.

Following the war, the Minamoto victor Yoritomo (1147–99) established a bureau of warrior affairs in the remote village of Kamakura (near present-day Tokyo), from which he and successive shoguns oversaw military affairs, including problems concerning deputies and land stewards placed as Kamakura's representatives in provincial offices and on estates around the realm. By the turn of the thirteenth century, the political and social landscape was decidedly altered in the eyes of aristocrats and the emergent military class.

Again in 1221, an armed conflict known to posterity as the Jōkyū uprising broke out between the retired sovereign GoToba (1180–1239) and the Kamakura shogunate. Although Yoritomo had solidly controlled the position of shogun while alive, within a generation his line was extinguished by the assassination of his son Sanetomo (1192–1219), the third shogun, in 1219. Following the death of Yoritomo, his wife Hōjō Masako's (1156–1225) father, Tokimasa (1138–1215, and then brother, Yoshitoki (1163–1224), served as regents to his sons Yoriie (1182–1204) and then Sanetomo, both of whom were killed while serving as shogun. With Sanetomo's death, Yoshitoki appointed a young son from the Fujiwara family, Kujō Yoritsune (1218–56), to serve as shogun. The Jōkyū uprising witnessed GoToba trying to wrest power from the Hōjō. His forces were roundly defeated, and he and two of his sons were sent into exile.

Fifty years later, the external threat of the Mongol invasions of 1274 and 1281 impelled the shogunate to extend itself both militarily and financially to protect the western reaches of the realm. Although the attackers were repelled, the shogunate was severely weakened, and it was toppled by the Ashikaga, a branch house of the Minamoto, in the Kenmu Restoration of 1333–6.

The medieval war tales narrate these conflicts and problems connected to them. The features defining a “war tale” are fairly amorphous, and it is impossible to consider the group of works that comprise the category as a single “genre.” In general, war tales describe historical warfare and the lives of warriors and the people close to them. The main characters are heroic and often take on the hyperbolic dimensions that served as the basis for early comparisons to Western epic traditions. Although they are presented as – and were through the early modern period considered to be – historical records, they are often episodic and stylistically owe a debt to both *setsuwa* and *monogatari* traditions.

Most war tales appear in a number of variant lines, some of which were intended to be read, and some of which bear strong markers of oral composition, transmission, and performance. It is impossible to easily identify an author for any of these works, and most are thought to be the product of accretion over decades or even centuries, as in the case of *Heike monogatari* (The Tales of the Heike), the most famous war tale (treated separately in this volume). Recitational variants of the *Heike* were performed by *biwa hōshi*, blind male reciters who accompanied themselves on the *biwa*, a four-stringed Japanese lute, and we believe this is the case for two other early medieval war tales as well: *Hōgen monogatari* (The Tale of the Disturbance in the Hōgen Era) and *Heiji monogatari* (The Tale of the Disturbance in the Heiji Era). Some variants of the later *Soga monogatari* seem to have been in the custodianship of itinerant female narrators known as *goze*.

The role of performers as creators of the war tales differentiates this corpus from earlier tales and the late Heian histories. As part of performance traditions, they were shaped by multiple artists addressing varied audience expectations and cultural contexts. Perhaps consequently, many war tales are framed by a fairly clear worldview, often Buddhist or Neo-Confucian, that is frequently articulated in a prologue or in the opening episode as well as the conclusion of the work. The language of the war tales usually involves a mixture of Chinese and Japanese vocabulary and diction and a hybrid form accommodating prose narrative, lyric, and the quotation of documents. Even in the works most clearly indebted to oral contexts for composition and performance, the written tradition and its role in recording historical events was always present: throughout the tales, their function as records is reflected in hints at stylistic markers of history, including significant use of Chinese vocabulary and syntax; a clear sense of chronology (and sometimes a clearly outlined chronological format); and naming practices linked to record keeping, including the use of *-ki* (record) in titles of many of the works from early on.

Although the most influential war tales took form and circulated after the Genpei War, antecedents can be found in late Heian works including *Shōmonki* (Record of Masakado's Uprising) and *Mutsuwaki* (Record of the Battles in the North). The first describes an attempt by Taira Masakado, a provincial member of the Taira clan, to aggrandize power in the eastern provinces during the middle decades of the tenth century. The latter describes Minamoto Yoriyoshi's subjugation of the Abe clan in what is now the Tohoku region during the mid eleventh century. Both works were written shortly after the conflicts they describe, and both concern events

that took place far from the capital. *Shōmonki* uses *hentai kanbun* (a writing style reliant primarily on Chinese characters and syntax) and is presented as a historical record, but its valorization of the protagonist – the doomed rebel Masakado, eventually subdued and killed in 940 – foreshadows the characterization of later heroes (particularly doomed ones) who populate many medieval war tales.

Mutsuwaki, also written in kanbun, is an important antecedent for the early medieval tales, as it glorifies ancestors whom early medieval war tales would venerate as appropriate forebears for the men who won the Genpei War and established the Kamakura shogunate. Although based on records of a prolonged conflict, the tale includes significant embellishment and interest in the personalities on both sides, a characteristic suggesting reliance on oral storytelling and *setsuwa* and reflecting a general trend in historical writing in the late Heian period toward hybridization of style and voice. These Heian period works helped open narrative terrain that would be mined in the *Heike* and beyond: warriors could be actors, and the provinces could represent a locale for significant political and cultural activity.

The earliest of the medieval war tales are the group describing the causes and effects of the Genpei War: *Hōgen monogatari*, *Heiji monogatari*, and *Heike monogatari*. Together with *Jōkyūki* (Record of the Jōkyū Rebellion), these tales concerning the formative years of the Kamakura period were sometimes considered as a four-part set that together narrates the consolidation of power under the Kamakura shogunate. Scholars often pair *Hōgen monogatari* and *Heiji monogatari* because of their connected storylines, characters, and shared compositional and reception histories. Both tales consist of three *maki* (chapters), and both seem to have been written after the Genpei War, as they open with statements pointing toward a shared endpoint and anticipate the events of the 1170s and 1180s as the destination of their narratives. Their authorship and dates of composition are unknown, although there are records of performances of *Hōgen*, *Heiji*, and *Heike monogatari* by biwa hōshi dating from the thirteenth century. It is impossible to tell how similar the versions performed at that time were to the texts extant today, but, like performed variants of the *Heike monogatari*, episodes within each chapter are given descriptive titles. In addition to tracing a history involving many of the same characters, *Hōgen* and *Heiji monogatari* also suggest their concomitant development stylistically and thematically. In each, one (doomed) Minamoto son becomes a central figure and object of sympathy. In *Hōgen*, it is the rebellious but brave Tametomo, Tameyoshi's ninth son, and in *Heiji* it is Yoshitomo's heir, Yoshihira. Taira Kiyomori is the historical character at the

heart of all three tales, which together narrate his rise and fall in terms of his antagonistic relationship with the Minamoto clan.

Hōgen and *Heiji monogatari* appear in numerous texts treated as representative of variant lines (approximately five for *Hōgen* and eleven for *Heiji*) whose dates of composition range from the early thirteenth through fifteenth centuries. The primary language used across these variants is the mixed Sino-Japanese style, *wakan-konkōbun*, employed in many medieval texts: *kana* is the primary script, but both Chinese and kanbun expressions and residues appear in varying degrees. The oldest text of *Hōgen monogatari*, referred to as the *Bunpo-bon* (Bunpo variant), dates to 1318, but only the second of its three chapters is extant. Scholars believe, however, that there may have been a version or versions that served as the basis for extant texts circulating as early as the early thirteenth century. The *Nakurai-bon* seems to reflect an early version similar to the *Bunpo-bon*, although no early texts exist. *Heiji monogatari* is thought to have been circulating in some form from about the same period, but the earliest texts are incomplete. It also exists in fragmentary form as an illustrated text (*emaki*) from the thirteenth century.

Although it is difficult to determine a genealogy for the variant lines of either tale, the texts thought to be the oldest tend to be less censorious of Kiyomori, while later variants reflect a characterization for him more in keeping with that in the *Heike*, suggesting a trend toward a cohesive narrative across the three tales. Whereas early variants of *Hōgen* tend to vilify Kiyomori less and stress the great wisdom of Shinzei, later variants stress Tametomo's heroics and include longer narratives about his exile to Ōshima after the conflict. Although early variants devote less narrative than later ones to ascribing historical significance to the events they describe, they tend to be more accurate in dating and description than later works. Not surprisingly, the later versions – with clearer characterizations and storylines probably shaped by the biwa hōshi – are those that became the basis for printed editions in the Edo period and seem to have been the best known, including the *Hōtoku-bon Hōgen monogatari*, of 1415, the oldest complete manuscript of that tale, and the *Kotohira-bon Heiji monogatari*.

The role of performers in forming these early gunki monogatari about late Heian conflicts marks a departure from earlier literary traditions and underlines the importance of oral narrative traditions including *setsuwa* and *shōdō* (preaching) in the creation of the tales as they were passed down through the generations. All three works include episodes found also in *setsuwa* collections and adopt at least sporadically a voice reminiscent of the narrator's in *setsuwa*. Additionally, however, these three war tales in performance also

incorporated musical accompaniment on the biwa lute, which added important ritual and musical dimensions.

The precise development of the performance tradition (with the *Heike monogatari* at the center) is a matter of scholarly debate, but it apparently grew out of *shōmyō* (liturgical chant) from Tendai and Shingon practice and itinerant performance of narratives about battles. The biwa had long been associated with ritual performance, and its use in recitation of the war tales is conventionally considered to reflect the ritual aspect of performance of the tales: to soothe the spirits of the restless dead killed on the battlefield. The importance of *chinkon* (pacification of spirits) in the tales – and particularly the *Hōgen*, *Heiji*, *Heike* cycle – is regularly emphasized in scholarship. Recitation of the tales, therefore, puts to rest the spirits of the dead by resurrecting them in narrative as larger-than-life characters.

The importance of textual variation and of different reception contexts for variant texts is an issue central to understanding the complex cultural meaning of *Heike monogatari*. Extant today in some eighty texts, its variants are generally divided into two broad categories, those intended to be read (the “read lineage,” or *yomihon-kei*) and those intended to be recited (the “recited lineage,” or *kataribon-kei*). Although it is apparent that *Hōgen* and *Heiji* were part of the repertoire of the biwa hōshi associated with the recitational line *Heike* texts, the performance history of extant texts of these two shorter works is harder to trace. And indeed although *Heike* texts are categorized broadly as “read” or “recited,” both groups were always circulating in contexts where their shared stories, amplifications, and contradictions were known to readers and audiences and together contributed to the historical consciousness of the period they described. All were, in other words, histories of the late Heian and early Kamakura periods, even as they were entertaining stories of epic heroes and requiems for the war dead.

Also developing during the thirteenth century was *Jōkyūki*, a work describing retired sovereign GoToba’s unsuccessful attempt to rein in the power of the Kamakura shogunate. Extant in four textual lines, it consists of two chapters. The oldest text, the *Maeda-bon*, dates from the late thirteenth century. The *Jikyōji-bon*, a later copy, seems to reflect an earlier version of the tale, perhaps with later embellishments to its beginning and end that help connect it to the works treated above. In *Jōkyūki* we find no named episodes within the chapters, a stylistic feature that separates it from other military tales.

Jōkyūki commemorates the losers of the brief Jōkyū conflict. Its heroes are GoToba’s champions, including Miura Taneyoshi and Yamada Sanesada. It is

often considered as the conclusion to the four-part cycle initiated with the events described in *Hōgen monogatari*. The shogunate's suppression of GoToba's uprising in 1221 is portrayed as an endpoint demonstrating the righteousness and the might of the Kamakura shogunate even as it laments the loss of brave partisans of the throne.

The Tales of the Heike

DAVID T. BIALOCK

The *Heike monogatari* (The Tales of the Heike) is a long medieval narrative, extant in multiple variants, about the rise and fall of Taira Kiyomori (1118–81) and the Heike warrior house in the course of the twelfth century. The events narrated span nearly seventy years, from 1131, the date of Taira Tadamori's unprecedented admission to the Courtiers Hall, to 1199, the year in which the last male Heike heir, Rokudai, was executed upon orders of Minamoto Yoritomo (1147–99), the leader of the rival Genji warrior house and founder of the Kamakura *bakufu*. If the *Heike* may be said to have one overarching theme, it is the Buddhist principle of impermanence (*mujo*) announced in the celebrated preface:

The sound of the bells of Gion Shōja echo the impermanence of all things; the color of the sala flowers reveals how all that flourishes must decline. The arrogant do not last long; they are like the dream of a spring night. The fierce, too, perish in the end; they are like dust before the wind.

Found with little variation in all versions of the *Heike*, this admonition threads through the entire work. Along with the doctrine of karmic retribution (*inga ohō*), or the principle that wrong actions are paid for in the future, it helps to give the narrative its distinctive Buddhist coloring.

If there is a plot to the *Heike*'s largely episodic narrative structure, it is in the story of the rise and fall of the Heike family that begins and ends the narrative. The first three scrolls narrate the rapid rise and consolidation of Kiyomori's power, alternating praise with censure. In scroll 1, for example, "Suzuki" (The Sea Bass) and "Waga mi no eiga" (Kiyomori's Flowering Fortunes) celebrate the Heike's miraculous successes, while "Giō," with its story of Kiyomori's cruel treatment of the famed *shirabyōshi* dancers Giō and Hotoke, already foreshadows his eventual destruction. When Kiyomori's daughter Kenreimon'in gives birth to the Taira emperor Antoku in the episode "Gosan" (The Imperial Lying-In) at the beginning

of scroll 3, Kiyomori's fortunes and political power are seemingly secured for years to come. But the cruel death of Shunkan in scroll 3, punished with exile for his plot against Kiyomori, followed immediately by an ominous whirlwind (*tsujikaze*) that destroys much of the capital, and next by the unexpected death of Kiyomori's eldest son, the virtuous Shigemori, already signal a change of fortune. In scrolls 4 through 6, the ominous signs now give way to the series of events that will quickly bring about Kiyomori's and the Heike's destruction. The first is Prince Mochihito's failed military rebellion to reclaim the imperial throne from the Taira that is narrated in "Hashi gassen" (The Battle at the Bridge) in scroll 4, followed by the burning of Miidera. In scroll 5, Kiyomori commits his most outrageous act by transferring the court from its four-hundred-year seat in the Heian capital to an unpropitious site at Fuku-hara. In the *Kakuichi-bon* (Kakuichi variant), the version of the *Heike* that has achieved canonical status in modern times, this action coincides with news of Yoritomo's military uprising against the Heike in the East. Echoing the fiery destruction of the Imperial Palace at the end of scroll 1, and of Miidera at the end of scroll 4, scroll 5 ends with the complete destruction of the Nara temples by Kiyomori's son Shigehira. Scroll 6 brings the arc of Kiyomori's rise to a violent end with the long description of his excruciatingly painful death, a vivid instance of karmic retribution.

The second half of the *Heike* narrates the defeat of the Heike by the Genji forces, first led by Kiso no Yoshinaka, who drives the Heike into flight and exile from the capital (scroll 7); and then by Minamoto no Yoshitsune (scroll 8), who defeats them in two famous battles, the first at Ichi no Tani (scroll 9), where he famously plunges down a cliff on horseback in "Rōba" (The Old Horse), and again in the final battle at Dan no Ura (scroll 11), where he annihilates the Heike forces, culminating in the death by drowning of the child emperor Antoku along with other high-ranking Heike remnants, who perish at sea with the sword of the three regalia. In most variants of the *Heike*, the narrative ends with a series of executions of Heike heirs, including Fukushō, Munemori, and Shigehira (scroll 11), culminating with the execution of the last surviving male Heike heir Rokudai in the last episode of scroll 12. In the *Kakuichi-bon*, however, the narrative concludes with a supplementary scroll called the *Kanjō no maki* (The Initiates Scroll), which recapitulates the entire narrative from the viewpoint of Kenreimon'in (1155–1213), who at one point envisions the experience of her family's rise and fall as a passage through the *Rokudō*, or the Six Levels of reincarnation. As the daughter of Kiyomori and the principal surviving member of the Taira house,

Kenreimon'in lived out her days as a Buddhist renunciant at Ōhara, praying for the salvation of her son Emperor Antoku and the other Heike dead.

The “Kanjō no maki” highlights the role of the *zatō* (guild reciters), familiarly known as *biwa hōshi* (biwa priest), as custodians and shapers of one textual line of *Heike* narrative. Although parts of the “Kanjō no maki” are found in the oldest variants of the *Heike* (arranged chronologically in scrolls 11 and 12 of the standard twelve-scroll versions), it was the reciters of the text transmitted by the *tōdō* (guild), most likely the *kengyō* (master reciter) Kakuichi himself, who are thought to have assembled and reshaped the various parts into the “Kanjō no maki” that we have today. The scroll also highlights the role of women in the *Heike*, including their likely contribution to its creation. Although long acknowledged in modern scholarship on the *Heike* (and in some premodern guild lore speculating about female authorship), the role of women in the *Heike* has been overshadowed by its classification as a work belonging to the predominantly male-dominated genre of the *gunki* (military chronicle). While battle narrative has a place in the *Kakuichi-bon*, its role there is less significant than in several lesser known *Heike* variants, whose titles actually draw attention to the military-chronicle-like aspect of the work. The *Genpei tōjōroku* (The Record of the Genpei Battles, 1337), for example, contains lengthy battle narratives that are highly sympathetic to Genji warriors in the Eastern provinces, which are not included in the more familiar *Kakuichi-bon*. The *Genpei jōsuiki* (The Record of the Rise and Fall of the Genji and Heike) also contains much lengthier and more detailed accounts of battle exploits, and in its overall form and structure emulates the style of official historical chronicle, which is one reason it became the basis for the official Tokugawa bakufu version of the *Heike* text.

For these and other reasons the *Heike monogatari* is not easily classified in terms of genre. As already noted, it has been typically assigned to the *gunki* genre, which is sometimes expanded to *gunki monogatari* (literally, military chronicle tale), hinting at the hybridized nature of a form that combines elements of the *ikusagatari* (battle tale), *ki* (chronicle), and *monogatari* (vernacular court tale). However, as this clumsy compound suggests, there are problems with attempting to slot the *Heike* into one or another genre. For example, if we compare the familiar *Kakuichi-bon* to earlier military chronicles, such as *Shōmonki* (The Record of Masakado, 935–40) and *Mutsuwaki* (An Account and Record of Mutsu, 1051–62), we note, on the one hand, little attempt to capture the viewpoints or feelings of women in either of these works, which differentiates them sharply from the *Heike* narratives. On the other hand, a major element of military chronicles such as *Shōmonki* and

Mutsuwaki is the *gunchū-jō* (report of a warrior's battle exploits) to the commander. Although hints of this are present in the *Kakuichi-bon*'s formulaic battle narratives that typically include the dressing, naming (*nanori*), and, occasionally, boasting of individual warriors, the raw battle report of exploits is much more fully developed in several of the lesser-known *Heike* variants, including the *Engyō-bon Heike monogatari*, the *Genpei tōjōroku*, and *Genpei jōsuiki*. In several of the most famous battle narratives in the *Kakuichi-bon*, the deaths of Tadanori and Atsumori in scroll 9, both Tadanori and Atsumori refuse to even identify themselves. In the *Engyō-bon*, on the other hand, Atsumori not only reveals his name, but the naming scene (*nanori*), as in many equivalent scenes in the *Engyō-bon*, revolves explicitly around the issue of warrior fame and rewards of property. To give one more example, in "Kawara gassen" (The Battle at the Riverbed) also in scroll 9 of the *Kakuichi-bon*, we are told that, "Following the defeat of Yoshinaka's allies, Yoshitsune had an account of the battle (*kassen no shidai*) recorded and sent by courier to Yoritomo in Kamakura." In the *Engyō-bon* version of this same battle at the Uji Bridge, the narrator reports how Yoshitsune had a viewing platform (*takayagura*) constructed close to the river's edge, mounted it, and announced his intention to record the name of the first to attack and report it to Yoritomo in Kamakura. Battle narrative in the strict sense, with its focus on rewards and victory, is more thoroughly subordinated in the *Kakuichi-bon* to the theme of impermanence and the beautification of the defeated.

Another genre that is sometimes mentioned in connection to the *Heike* is the *rekishi monogatari* (historical tale) for which the classical term was *yotsugi no monogatari* (succession tale). In an often cited passage in Jien's *Gukanshō* (1221), a Buddhist historical work that includes a nearly contemporaneous account of the Genpei War and its aftermath, Jien openly deplores the lack of a succession tale to fill in the historical record. By succession tale, he meant Heian period court narratives such as *Eiga monogatari* (Tales of Flowering Fortunes, c. early twelfth century), *Ōkagami* (The Great Mirror, c. twelfth century), and their successors. The *Heike*, which has been linked to Jien's own historical projects, may have been an attempt to fill in that gap. Episodes like "Waga mi no eiga" (Kiyomori's Flowering Fortunes), "Nidai no kisaki" (Twice an Imperial Consort), and "Tōgūdachi" (The Naming of the Crown Prince), all narrated in scroll 1, are very close to the world of refined courtly sentiments and intrigue that characterize these Heian vernacular court tales. But there are also striking departures from the *yotsugi* genre. In contrast to the *Heike*, the classical Heian succession tale showed little if any interest in battle narrative. And whereas the *Heike* narrative is built up of short

setsuwa-like episodes or anecdotes, which have a clear beginning and end and connect to a larger narrative arc, the Heian historical tales tended to meander without focus, leaving chronology or mere dating to hold the narrative together.

As a hybridizing text that includes vernacular court narrative in both its historical and fictional modes, as well as battle narrative and a dating style that emulates an official court chronicle, the *Heike* is rhetorically and stylistically diverse, though it might also be seen as a narrative of competing modes. At times, the chronological style can be extremely dense, as in “Tōgudachi” in scroll 1; at other times, this concern with chronology fades away entirely, yielding to long stretches of undated narrative in a fluid vernacular style that approximates oral narration. An example of the latter is the long sequence in scroll 7 that begins with “Shushō no miyako ochi” (The Emperor’s Flight from the Capital) and continues through “Fukuhara ochi” (The Flight from Fukuhara) at the end of the scroll. The content can vary as well, from the comic in “Nekoma” and “Tsuzumi Hōgan” (The Tsuzumi Police Lieutenant) in scroll 8 to the lyrical in such episodes as “Tsukimi” (Moon-Viewing) and “Kogō” in scrolls 5 and 6. In addition to the battle narrative already discussed, the *Heike* also includes a variety of documents – *ganmon* (petitions), *senji* (edicts), *chōjō* (formal letters) – and *uta monogatari* (poem-tales) and poetic forms such as *waka*, *imayō* (new-style songs), and *rōei* (Chinese-style couplets for chanting).

Stylistically, the *Kakuichi-bon* is often said to exemplify the mixed Chinese and vernacular style known as *wakan konkō bun*. It is best characterized, however, as a work of competing styles. The use of antithesis (*tsuiku*), or parallel phrases, gives weight and dignity to historical passages and can be followed by a more vernacular style of narration in the melancholy tone of a court romance. In passages of heightened emotional intensity, rhythmical language in alternating phrases of seven and five syllables may be employed. Examples are found in the preface, cited earlier, which begins with a *hyōbyaku*, an introductory address commonly employed at the beginning of a Buddhist mass (*hōe*), and in the *michiyuki* (travel scene) describing Shigehira’s journey to Kamakura in “Kaidō kudari” (The Journey down the Eastern Sea Road) in scroll 10. The style can thus range from the lofty register of Buddhist oratory performed at a mass to the emotional plangency conveyed in stock vernacular phrases like “koso aware nare” (how deeply moving) and colloquial onomatopoeia, as in “yoppite hyōdō hanatsu,” to convey the twang and thump of a bow releasing an arrow. We may also surmise that the various musical modes – *hiroi*, *kudoki*, *shirakoe*, and *sanjū* – which succeeded one another in

accordance with fixed patterns of pacing and narrative content, also had an influence in shaping the structure of the texts in the custody of the reciters, although notations for these were not written down with any regularity until the Edo period.

According to notations on a recopying of the original manuscript, Kakuichi dictated his version on two separate occasions, one ending with scroll 12 and dated to the twenty-ninth day of the eleventh month in Ōan 3, or 1370, and the second completing the dictation of the “*Kanjō no maki*” in the following year, 1371, on the fifteenth day of the third month in Ōan 4. These dates represent a *terminus ad quem* for a text whose origins are now thought to go back to the first half of the thirteenth century, or about 150 years before Kakuichi had his version recorded in writing. Based on an entry in Kujō Michie’s diary *Gyokuzui* for the year 1220 (Jōkyū 2; 4; 29), which references a “*Heike ki*,” scholars once conjectured a much earlier version of the *Heike*, with some dating it back to as early as the last decade of the twelfth century, and others to 1204 when the Buddhist priest Jien completed construction of a prayer hall (*dōjō*) at Daisenpōin for the purpose of placating the “vengeful spirits” (*ōnryō*) of the war dead going back to the Genpei battles and earlier. This pre-Jōkyū origin of the *Heike* was until quite recently a widely held view, supported by the authority of the founder of modern *Heike* textual studies, Yamada Yoshio (1875–1958). Today, however, these “*Heike ki*,” or *Heike* records, are thought to refer to private diaries kept by *Heike* nobles (*kuge*), which might have supplied material for the *Heike*, but were not the ur-*Heike* (*gen-Heike*) that had occupied scholars throughout much of the twentieth century.

The two decades that followed the Jōkyū rebellion, on the other hand, extending from the 1220s through 1230s right up through the death of the child Emperor Shijō in 1242, were a propitious period for the *Heike* to take shape as a narrative. Enough time had elapsed for perspectives on the events to form, and eye-witnesses, including women with ties to the *Heike* family, were still alive and closely connected to the new court. This was also a period of relative peace and cultural flowering, with something of a renewed *Heike* presence at the court. The mother of the new Emperor GoHorikawa (r. 1221–32), Kita-Shirakawa-in, was the grand-daughter of Taira Yorimori (1132–86). Entries for this period in the *Meigetsuki*, the diary of the poet Fujiwara Teika (1162–1241), even hint at something like a second flowering of the *Heike*. Teika himself went out of his way to solicit poems from Kenreimon’in’s former attendant, Ukyō no Daibu (1157–1232?), for inclusion in the *Shinchokusenshū* (New Imperial Poetry Collection, 1235), which he was editing for GoHorikawa. She had been the lover of Taira Sukemori, and her

poetry collection, *Kenreimon'in Ukyō no Daibu shū*, was filled with reminiscences of such Taira notables as Shigehira, Koremori, Tsunemori, Kozaishō, and others. Moreover, unlike his father Shunzei's *Senzaishū* (Collection of a Thousand Years, 1188), which famously listed several Heike poems as anonymous, Teika's collection names the Taira poets, signaling the new court's sympathy toward them. Traces of Ukyō no Daibu's language are preserved in *Heike* accounts of Koremori's death by suicide in scroll 10 and in other episodes as well.

If the *Heike monogatari* was beginning to coalesce as a narrative by the third and fourth decades of the thirteenth century, it was a fluid and open "text," unstable, without fixed title, and of undetermined length and scope. Two well-known documents allow us to gauge this formative period of *Heike* growth and fluidity. The first is a notation on the reverse of Teika's copy of *Hyōhanki* (the mid twelfth-century diary of Taira Nobunori), a document known as "Hyōhanki shihai monjo," which refers to the copying of a six-scroll *Jishō monogatari* (Tales of the Jishō Era) that was also known as *Heike*. This is regarded as the earliest known mention of what later became *Heike monogatari*. It was this document coupled with the 1220 *Gyokuzui* reference to "Heike ki," cited earlier, that led a previous generation of scholars to surmise the existence of a now lost primitive form of the *Heike monogatari*. The mention of a six-scroll *Jishō monogatari* that is also known as *Heike* now tends to suggest parallels to such titles as *Hōgen monogatari* (Tales of Hōgen), *Heiji monogatari* (Tales of Heiji), and *Jōkyūki* (Record of the Jōkyū Era) – all of which emerged in these same post-Jōkyū decades – and thus a period of narrower thematic focus, before the *Heike* narrative expanded its scope. Almost forty years later, a second document dated 1259 not only indicates an expansion of the text from six to eight scrolls or fascicles (*jō*), but also provides the first confirmation of a text with the now familiar title *Heike monogatari*. Discovered in 1974 by Yokoi Kiyoshi, the document known as *Jinken shojō* (Jinken's Letter) records the loan by Jinken, a priest of Daigoji Temple, of an eight-scroll text that consists of six main scrolls and two supplementary scrolls, these latter with writing "that is disconnected and not in a condition for people to view." We have here a glimpse at a text that is expanding but still in a fluid state, which is being loaned out among temple priests, further indicating that it has now passed beyond court circles, and those likely to be sympathetic to the Heike, into religious spheres with quite different aims and agendas. Moving forward to the early fourteenth century, a pair of codicils on a manuscript that is now known as the *Engyō-bon Heike monogatari* state that it was copied once over a two-year period in 1309–10 by a

priest of Negoroji, a temple under the control of Mount Kōya, and a second time at the same temple in 1419–20. By the latter period, *Heike* manuscripts had been circulating for nearly two centuries, first among diarists close to the court, and later, though perhaps contemporaneously in the earliest phase, at a distance from the court among Buddhist priests, moving from Tendai spheres at Enryakuji near the capital to Shingon spheres at Daigoji, Negoroji, and the Mount Kōya temple complex, where the texts would have gradually accreted the layers of Tendai, Shingon, and other Buddhist doctrinal content that characterize the *Engyō-bon*. Between the two *Engyō-bon* recopyings, separated by a century, there were no doubt numerous additions and corrections to the text.

But while the *Engyō-bon* is generally considered to be the oldest extant manuscript of the *Heike*, and in parts older in form than any other extant variant, it is not the primitive version whose creation had been mythologized in the famous anecdote – Section 226 – in the *Tsurezuregusa* (c. 1330), which explains the origin of the *Heike* as a collaboration between a disgraced court scholar, Yukinaga, learned in classical Chinese and court matters, and a reciter of war tales from Tōgoku, named Shōbutsu, whose style of recitation, according to the author Kenkō, was imitated by the biwa hōshi of the day. As Sakurai Yōko has cautioned, even the *Engyō-bon*, when recopied again in 1419–20, incorporated revisions based on the Kakuichi dictated text.¹ Thus, despite the rawness and immediacy of many *Engyō-bon* stories, conveyed by formulaic expressions about memory and transmission such as “mono kana to zo oboeru” and “nochi ni hito ni katarikeru,” the *Engyō-bon* – and one must infer the same for the formative phase of the Kakuichi dictated text of 1371 – is a text that has been repeatedly worked upon, accreting layers of revision and modifications in the process. The one definitive statement that we can make about the formation of the numerous *Heike* variants is that they were the product of a complex interaction between written and oral modes of transmission. Their classification by most scholars into two broad lineages of *kataribon-kei* (recited texts) and *yomihon-kei* (read texts) remains useful, but only as long as we keep in mind that the distinction was not absolute, and that texts of the recited lineage could also be read and vice-versa.

It is thus place and location rather than any one theory of specific authorship that are most likely to help us arrive at a fuller understanding of the variant *Heike* texts. If the *Kakuichi-bon* conveys the viewpoint of a capital

¹ Sakurai Yōko, “*Engyōbon Heike monogatari* Ōei shoshabon honbun saikō: ‘Kan’yōkyū’ byōsha kiji yori,” *Kokubun* 95 (2001): 47–57.

audience and reader, with its nostalgic and idealized look back to an earlier period of the court's glory, the more forward looking *Engyō-bon* frequently incorporates not only local battle narratives that have dropped out of the *Kakuichi-bon*, the most famous being the long prophetic narrative of the mustering of Yoritomo's forces, *Yoritomo no kyohei-tan* (which gets only a fleeting mention in scroll 5 of the *Kakuichi-bon*), but also doctrinal and ritual concerns that are linked to the authority of specific sacred sites at Enryakuji, Mount Kōya, and other temples in and outside the capital. In several variants of the *Heike*, notably the *Genpei tōjōroku*, touched on earlier, and the *Shibu kassenjō-bon* (The Four Part Battle Account), the local viewpoint of the text is so pervasive as to constitute regional *Heike* variants, suggesting a trafficking or exchange of manuscripts and cultural capital between the old centers of power in the capital and the growing base of military power in Kamakura and its satellite provinces.

As the *Heike* variants circulated throughout the fourteenth and into the fifteenth centuries, copied and recopied by multiple hands, the story continued to propagate and gain ever larger audiences across all classes of Japanese society, reaching a peak of popularity in the golden age of *Heike* performance in the fifteenth century. Throughout this period, the *Heike* was performed as entertainment, in ritual settings, and could straddle both ritual and secular spheres. Performances of *Heike* took place at banquet settings, prayer halls (where it may have served a placatory function), in the kitchen area (*daidokoro*), before Buddhist altars (*butsuzen*) and shrines (*shatō*), outside the gates of houses (*monzen*) and in the streets, and even on boats and in the reception halls (*kyakuden*) of the nobility.

The earliest reference to a biwa hōshi performing the *Heike* is in the *Futsū shōdō shū* (Collection of Ordinary Preaching, 1297), which singles out the biwa hōshi's fluent recitation from memory. The earliest mention of an actual performance of the *Heike* is by a blind (*mōmoku*) reciter named Daishinbō, who began a complete performance of the entire *Heike* (*ichibu-Heike*) at Kōfukuji in 1309, on the sixth day of the first month in the second year of Enkyō. This same Daishinbō, who may have belonged to a guild of blind reciters under the control of Kōfukuji, also appears as the partner of the master reciter Kakuichi in a duet performance (*tsure-Heike*) of a lost *Heike* piece "Ayame" that is recorded in an episode in scroll 21 of *Taiheiki* (Chronicle of Great Peace). By the year 1326, Kamakura documents were taking note of the existence of guild (*za*) reciters, and by at least 1340 aristocratic diaries such as *Naka-no-in ipponki* were distinguishing between reciters inside and outside the guild (*zachū* and *zagai*). The number of reciters increased dramatically

over the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. By the early fifteenth century, the diarist of *Noritoki gyoki* is recording large gatherings of eighty-one reciters that included kengyō and lower level zatō to conduct the guild ritual *suzumi* on the twenty-ninth day in the sixth month of Ōei 12 (1405). By the middle of the fifteenth century, in 1462, the *Hekizan nichiroku* (Blue Mountain Record), a diary kept by the Zen priest Unzen Taikyoku, lists five to six hundred *Heike* reciters active in the capital alone. Performed to the accompaniment of the biwa in both public and private spaces, read in manuscript form, and recreated at Enryakuji as *Heike* picture scrolls (*Heike ekotoba*), the *Heike* by this time had been adapted to all the available media of the day. Over the course of the fourteenth century, it had also acquired authority as a written text, cited and referenced by a variety of works. These included *Shōkū shōnin denki izoku shū* (The Collected Biographical Remains of Saint Shōkū, 1300), which cited a *ganmon* (signed petition) of Kiyomori from the *Heike*, and the historical narrative *Masukagami* (The Clear Mirror, c. 1333–76), together indicating *Heike*'s authority in both sacred and secular spheres. We also catch glimpses of the *Heike* as a text for reading. In entries from Sanjōnishi Sanetaka's journal *Sanetaka kōki* for the years spanning the 1470s up through 1509, Sanetaka on three separate occasions records reading one to two scrolls of the *Heike*, viewing *Heike* picture scrolls, and looking at partition screens (*byōbu*) decorated with scenes from the *Heike*. By the sixteenth century, there are even requests to correct copied texts of the *Heike*, further evidence of its authoritative aura.

As understanding of the variant *Heike* texts has increased and combined with a new interpretive openness that looks beyond the constraining category of warrior literature – largely a modern construct – a much different understanding of *Heike* narrative has come into view. The quest for a unifying theory of *Heike* formation and the dream of an ur-*Heike* that dominated twentieth-century discussions has receded. Like all quests, it had its heroic side, running the gamut from conjectures about individual authors to pressing the *Heike* into an epic mold that might better serve the need for nation building. But with the emphasis now on place and audience rather than nation to explain the numerous variants, the *Heike*'s genre-defying form begins to look like its peculiar strength. The state of the field can now be said to approximate medieval European literature studies, where the shift from an older practice of philology that focused on the construction of textual stemma and the pursuit of the best text has yielded to a synchronic view of the open and variable text. More than ever, it is a propitious time to rethink the *Heike*'s place in the growing field of world literature studies. If scholars of

the Meiji period (1868–1912) were bold enough to bring the *Heike* into comparison with Dante's *Commedia*, the Homeric epics, the Finnish *Kalevala*, the Indian *Ramayana* and other narrative traditions, it is time for students of the *Heike* to follow their lead and join again in discussions about the definitions and meanings of the epic, the novelistic, and other questions of form and reception that are relocating debates about national traditions in the broader landscape of world literature and translation studies. The *Heike* has a lot to offer in these debates.

The late medieval warrior tales: from *Soga monogatari* to *Taiheiki*

ELIZABETH OYLER

In the late medieval period, or the Muromachi period, a body of works developed that focused, not only on war and battles, but instead on the lives of specific warriors associated with the Genpei period (the Minamoto versus Taira wars in the late twelfth century). The two most representative are *Soga monogatari* (Tale of the Revenge of the Soga Brothers) and *Gikeiki* (Chronicle of Yoshitsune), two long war tales about events related to Minamoto Yoritomo's establishment of the Kamakura shogunate. The Muromachi period would also give birth to the *Taiheiki* (Chronicle of Great Peace, c. 1370), a war chronicle (about the Northern and Southern Courts period) whose impact on Japanese culture was to be as great as that of the *Heike monogatari* (Tales of the Heike).

Soga monogatari

Soga monogatari recounts a personal vendetta enacted in 1192, during the peace immediately following the war. The variants of *Soga monogatari*'s four main textual lineages consist of eight to twelve chapters and appear to have been compiled between the late Kamakura and the Muromachi periods. The oldest extant texts are from the mid sixteenth century. What is thought to be the oldest variant line, the *Mana-bon*, consists of ten chapters and is written in *hentai kanbun* (a writing style reliant primarily on Chinese characters and syntax); other variants are in *kana*. Episodes within chapters are titled, as in *Hōgen*, *Heiji*, and *Heike*. Scholars think the *Mana-bon* was edited and circulated by preachers of the Agui sect with ties to Hakone Shrine (near Kamakura, in the east). It has also been suggested that this version was derived from *shōdō* preaching and originally propagated by itinerant female narrator/minstrels known as *goze*, also associated with Hakone Shrine.

Soga monogatari is episodic and demonstrates a clearly Buddhist editorial hand. It focuses on the private vengeance taken by the Soga brothers, Jūrō and Gorō, who spend their childhood years planning the murder of the kinsman who killed their father in an ambush when the boys were small. The kinsman from whom the brothers exacted personal justice is Suketsune, and the feud that they inherited was internecine: two generations back, their grandfather, Sukechika, and his putative cousin, Suketsugu, had been embroiled in a dispute about inheritance rights. Suketsune was Suketsugu's son. The situation is further complicated by long-standing hostility between Minamoto Yoritomo and Sukechika. As a young man still in exile, Yoritomo had initiated a liaison with Sukechika's daughter, from which a son had been born. Fearing the wrath of Kiyomori, Sukechika ordered the infant to be killed; Yoritomo bore him enmity from that point forward. After much preparation and several failed attempts to kill Suketsune, the brothers finally enact their vendetta during a hunt hosted by Yoritomo, which necessitates their deaths – by violating the shogun's encampment, they have embraced a destiny with only one possible outcome.

Although the story it tells is on a much reduced scale than *Heike's*, in form *Soga monogatari* resembles the longer work: it is part of a narrative performance tradition, exists also in variants intended to be read, focuses on doomed heroes, and concludes with a chapter about women left behind who pray for the souls of the brothers. However, in its biographical focus and celebration of what amounts to private (rather than larger communal or clan) concerns, it moves one strand of historical narrative more definitively in a direction only suggested in the *Heike*: the romanticization of individual heroes and the de-emphasis, or perhaps masking, of what remained important political dimensions of the stories being told. Along with Minamoto Yoshitsune, discussed below, the Soga brothers are among the most important cultural icons and beloved heroes of this era, and they become the subjects of performance genres including *kōwakamai* (ballad-drama) and kabuki in the medieval and early modern periods.

Gikeiki

Gikeiki, the dating of which is uncertain, takes historical storytelling yet another step further in this direction. A fanciful biography of Minamoto Yoshitsune, the youngest of Yoritomo's brothers, *Gikeiki* is a compilation of shorter narratives about the life of the Genpei War's most beloved Minamoto hero. As with the other tales of warriors, it exists in several

variants and is the product of narrative aggregation in the hands of multiple compilers, though their ideological concerns are not consistently evident as they are in other works. *Gikeiki* reached its final form by approximately the fifteenth century. Most variants consist of eight chapters divided further into named episodes that are, in the main, longer than those found in the *Heike*. *Gikeiki* episodes may have been part of the repertoire of the *biwa hōshi*.

What renders Yoshitsune memorable in *Gikeiki* is not his battlefield heroics, however – these are described in one brief paragraph in the text. Rather, it is his tragic end that captures the imagination: following the war, he incurs the suspicion of Yoritomo, who eventually orders Yoshitsune's death. After four years as a fugitive, Yoshitsune is betrayed by the heirs of a long-standing supporter and forced to commit suicide. *Gikeiki* chronicles his youth at Kurama Temple (north of the capital), where he has been sent after Yoshitomo's defeat in the Heiji uprising, and his flight and death. The one episode dedicated to the Genpei War represents an important division in the narrative: as a youth, Yoshitsune is preternaturally talented, bold, and eager to avenge his father's death; during his flight, he is weak, refined, and almost entirely reliant on loyal retainers to coordinate his escape. The tendency toward favoring tragic heroes can be seen in all of the works discussed here, but the modern term for sympathy for the underdog, *hōgan biiki*, or "sympathy for the Lieutenant," refers specifically to the character of Yoshitsune, whose title was Lieutenant.

Gikeiki is but one salient example of an important trend both in historical narrative and in narrative arts broadly speaking during the fifteenth century. As the *Heike* circulated in multiple forms and reached a variety of audiences, the magnetism of its individual characters and episodes inspired retellings, amplifications, recastings, and sequels in evolving storytelling traditions as well as newly emergent arts like *kōwakamai*, *kojōruri*, and *noh*. This context for tales of the Genpei period is vital to understanding the cultural meaning of the historical narratives it engenders. For as much as audiences listened to the *Heike*, they also read, saw, or heard other versions of similar or related stories in other contexts. The effect of such a milieu was to create an underlying body of depictions of the Genpei period that exhibited many of the same productive tensions found in the various narratives considered above: multiple renditions of any given episode in textual or orally or dramatically performed versions all contributed to the creation of a multifaceted "text" immanent in any individual work or performance: Yoshitsune was and is always at once the fierce field commander and the reticent fugitive; many

Heike heroes are simultaneously men who die on the battlefield in the *Heike* and the ghosts of those men in the *noh*.

Taiheiki

The final major medieval war tale – arguably as important for medieval and early modern readers and audiences as *Heike* – is *Taiheiki*, which narrates the tumultuous events and aftermath of the Kenmu Restoration of 1333–6. Written in *wakan-konkōbun* (mixed Chinese–Japanese style), the forty chapters of *Taiheiki* trace events from 1318 to 1367, a period that witnessed the division of the royal line and simultaneous existence of Northern and Southern imperial courts, as well as the overthrow of the Kamakura shogunate, an event closely tied to the royal schism. The central figure, Emperor GoDaigo (1288–1339), started the Kenmu (imperial) restoration and then later established the Southern Court when his restoration failed.

As with the *Soga monogatari* and the *Gikeiki*, the authorship and date of composition for *Taiheiki* are unknown, and it is likely that numerous people had a hand in its composition. It exists in multiple textual lineages. The tale in forty chapters we have today is thought to have been circulating by the 1370s. An early reference is found in a 1374 entry in the diary of the courtier Tōin Kinsada, who credits its compilation to the Priest Kojima, an obscure figure. Imagawa Ryōshun recounts that corrections to a version presented to Ashikaga Tadayoshi by the Tendai Priest Enchin were ordered by Tadayoshi and undertaken by the Priest Gen'e. As Gen'e's death is recorded midway through the text, this probably was an early version. *Taiheiki* was, from early on, the subject of commentary: Ryōshun's *Nan Taiheiki* of 1402 was one early critique, written by a descendant of an Ashikaga partisan.

Taiheiki is generally considered to be divisible into three segments preceded by a prologue. The first spans chapters 1–11 (GoDaigo's ascension through the fall of the Kamakura bakufu), the second, chapters 12–21 (beginning of the Kenmu Restoration through GoDaigo's death), and the third, 23–40 (through the appearance of Ashikaga Yoshimitsu in 1367). The twenty-second chapter is missing from all early texts. The *Heike monogatari* is an obvious antecedent, and parts of the *Taiheiki* seem strongly modeled on it, although a Neo-Confucian worldview overlays the *Heike*'s Buddhist one, and it glorifies warfare less than many of its predecessors. Records from the Muromachi period indicate that *Taiheiki* was part of a performance tradition, and markings for *kyōkushetsu* (melodic patterns) reminiscent of those used in *Heike* recitation are extant from the fifteenth century. Unlike the musically

based *heikyoku* tradition of the *Tales of the Heike*, however, the *Taiheiki* became, in the Edo period, part of a larger story-telling, recitational genre in which parts of the text were read aloud and then expounded on.

In the shadow of the works chronicling the rise of the Minamoto in the Genpei War, *Taiheiki* shows a strong sense of the alternation of power between the Taira and the Minamoto and of the importance of placing the actions described in the work in the context of that larger history. *Taiheiki* devotes special attention to heroic defenders of the losing side (such as Nitta Sanesada and Kusunoki Masashige) and condemns their tormentors, in particular Kō Moronao. Like the heroes and villains of *Heike*, these men would become a vital part of Japan's cultural memory, appearing in later genres and commemorated at locations associated with their lives. Even more than *Heike*, the heroes of *Taiheiki* (for example the father-son pairing of Masashige and his son, Masayuki) would become paragons of filial virtue in later Neo-Confucian contexts.

As a group, the war tales represent important cultural trends that would shape the medieval and early modern worlds. Focused on the activities of the warriors, and often set in the provinces, they redefined the scope of historical action both socially and geographically. By incorporating a variety of voices, styles, linguistic registers, and forms, they represented the complexity of a society working to construct a coherent history out of moments of war and fragmentation. The liveliness of the narratives that emerged in this context, the retellings they inspired, and their power to function as cultural metaphors for centuries after their creation attest to the vitality and the weight of the stories the war tales told.

Literature of medieval Zen temples: Gozan (Five Mountains) and Ikkyū Sōjun

SONJA ARNTZEN

Gozan Bungaku (Literature of the Five Mountains) encompasses a vast corpus of texts in literary Chinese produced by Zen monks during the Kamakura and Muromachi periods. Gozan (“Five Mountains”) designates the top five ranks of the Rinzai Zen monastic system and also stands for the system as a whole, which at its height included hundreds of temples and sub-temples throughout Japan.

The monk Myōan Eisai (1141–1215) is credited with introducing Rinzai Zen to Japan from Song China. In his footsteps over the next century followed many other monks who were disillusioned with the older esoteric schools of Buddhism and went to China seeking inspiration. They found Zen (Ch. *Chan*) in ascendance at the Southern Song capital of Hangzhou. In Japan, the returning missionaries were fortunate to receive patronage from three generations of Hōjō regents. Thus, Zen monasteries proliferated first in Kamakura, where the Hōjō were based. For the Hōjō regents, Zen represented the newest manifestation of Chinese elite culture and provided an opportunity for the creation of a more tractable Buddhist institution to counterbalance the entrenched and militarized great monasteries of the capital (Kyoto). Moreover, at the time of the Mongol take-over of China, a significant number of talented and erudite Chinese Zen monks sought refuge in Japan. As cultural leaders, they attracted many converts. Interestingly, the attempted Mongol invasions of Japan stopped the flow of monks back and forth between the two countries only briefly. One of the Chinese masters who played a large role in Japanese Zen, Yishan Yining (1247–1317) actually came first to Japan as a Mongol emissary in 1299. He was put under house arrest as a possible spy but was later invited to become abbot of Kenchōji Temple in Kamakura. He taught many Japanese monks, including Musō Soseki (1275–1351). In the long history of cultural exchange between China and Japan, up until the modern period, there was never so much person-to-person contact between Chinese and Japanese intellectuals as during this period.

The Ashikaga *bakufu* leaders also generously patronized Rinzaï Zen. The Gozan system expanded rapidly in the Muromachi period and its major temples became closely connected with the Ashikaga administration. Gozan monks managed the Ashikaga bakufu's diplomatic relations with China, which came to be centered on the lucrative trade with Ming China in books and luxury goods. The reputation for good financial management in Gozan temples led to their prelates becoming financial advisors to the bakufu. Meanwhile, Gozan monasteries invested the profits they earned from the China trade into ventures one might not normally associate with temples, such as money-lending and sake-brewing.

Culturally, the Gozan centers enjoyed prestige from their monopoly on knowledge of the most recent intellectual developments in China. The monasteries functioned as universities where study included not only Zen Buddhism but Chinese letters in a broad sense including poetry, history, and secular philosophy such as Neo-Confucianism. It was not only higher learning that was handled at Gozan monasteries. Most of the biographies of Gozan monks show them enrolled in monasteries at the age of six or seven. One must imagine the monasteries full of young boys and adolescents. All learning within the monastery system was conducted on the basis of Chinese literary texts. From their childhood, Japanese Zen monks lived in a China of the mind.

Japanese scholars have divided the development of Gozan literature into four stages. Kageki Hideo's schema may be taken as representative. He sees a first period of "Growth" from 1279 to 1330, a second period of "Peak" from 1330 to 1386, a third period of "Full Maturity" from 1386 to 1467, and a fourth period of "Decline" from 1467 to 1615.¹ Kageki's periodization is based on the genre of poetry. Although Gozan literature includes a large number of genres – essays, sermons, commentary on classical Chinese texts, inscriptions on paintings, and so on – the poetry produced by Gozan monks is usually considered to have the greatest literary interest. For this reason, this essay too will focus on poetry.

Sesson Yūbai (1290–1346) may be taken as representative of the early period of Gozan poetry. Sesson started his Zen training in Japan under the Chinese master Yishan Yining and, at the young age of sixteen, pursued further studies in China. He lived in China for twenty-one years, which included a short period of imprisonment and thirteen years of exile, due to one Mongol emperor's desire to punish the Japanese. The following Mongol emperor,

¹ Kageki Hideo, *Gozan shishi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Kasama Shoin, 1977), 10–11.

however, honored Sesson in 1328 with the abbacy of a temple in Chang'an. Nonetheless, he returned to Japan the following year and later served as head of several Gozan temples. His poetry is plain-spoken and in the "Ancient" style," an older and freer form that did not require the rigorous tonal harmony of "Regulated Verse."

I take no joy in other people's praise,
Other people's slander doesn't scare me,
Just because my ties with the world are sparse
The heart in my bosom is unconstrained as water.
Bound in prison fetters, I survived,
And stayed on in Ch'ang-an three years –
When sometimes it suits my mood to sing
I speak out straight: why bother with fancy words? (Ury, 36)

The peak of Gozan poetry is represented by Gidō Shūshin (1325–88) and Zekkai Chūshin (1336–1405). Both wrote in regulated verse forms and had their poetry praised by Chinese readers. Both were disciples of Musō Soseki. Of the two, Gidō was more the scholar and lectured often on literature. His most distinguished student was the young Ashikaga Shogun Yoshimitsu (1358–1408). Gidō was unusual in his generation for not going to China; ill health in his youth thwarted his ambition to do so. Gidō wrote prolifically on both religious and secular topics, always with a rather light touch. Many of his poems were composed as inscriptions for paintings. Here is one composed for a painting on a fan:

Dim fringe of cloud and lustrous moon-disc:
The little boats have left for harbor; now is dusk.
Surely the fishers need not fear that their homes may be hard to find:
Village under plum blossoms radiant at river's edge. (Ury, 95)

Zekkai went to China in 1368, the year of the founding of the Ming dynasty, and stayed until 1376. Zekkai's poetry is considered weightier and more accomplished than Gidō's. Nonetheless, most of his poems are on secular topics. The following poem is on a visit to a ruined temple in China but the tone is more that of an antiquarian tourist than a monk.

Which way, deep in wisteria and ivy all around,
Does this ancient temple gate face?
Eaves have fallen like blossoms in the passing rains,
Wild birds caw right in one's face;
The image of the seated Buddha has sunk into the weeds,
The gold leaf of some wealthy donor peeled from its base:

No date remains on the fragment of stone inscription
 To tell whether the temple dates from T'ang or Sung. (Pollack, 104)

Kageki's third stage of Gozan literature coincides with the greatest extension of the Gozan monastic system, but it was also a time when many Gozan monks were more active as clerks, commercial agents, and fine arts consultants for the Ashikaga bakufu than they were as committed monks. Large quantities of poetry were produced out of the busy social life at Gozan temples that revolved around the importation and connoisseurship of Chinese painting, ceramics, and tea. Accordingly, the tendency toward secular topics increased. Kōzei Ryūha (1375–1446) is a representative poet of this era. Kōzei developed a more mannered style of poetry based on Late Tang poetry and the work of the Song poet Huang Tingjian.

Kageki's date for the decline of Gozan literature coincides with the beginning of the Ōnin War (1467–77). That war dealt a crippling blow to the Gozan's primary patron, the Ashikaga bakufu, and razed all the great temples in Kyoto to the ground. Gozan monks scattered through the country like dandelion seeds, and although this loss of a home base was not propitious for new literary developments, it helped to spread Gozan taste in poetry, painting, and garden design throughout the provinces.

Ikkyū Sōjun

Ironically, arguably the most famous Zen monk of the medieval era, Ikkyū Sōjun (1394–1481) was not a Gozan monk. As an adolescent, he chose study with monks of the Daitoku-ji lineage. Daitoku-ji Temple had been demoted from Gozan status by the Ashikaga bakufu for political reasons and eventually it opted out of the system. Ikkyū's fame is due to several factors. His strong and eccentric personality not only attracted notoriety in his own lifetime but also launched a legend that was elaborated in Edo period popular tales. The part of that legend that imagined Ikkyū's life as a clever child monk still lives in modern Japanese pop culture. Ikkyū's role as Zen teacher to major figures in *renga*, noh drama, and the tea ceremony secured him a place in history as a leader in the artistic movement that fused Zen philosophy with a distinctively medieval aesthetic style. Ikkyū's fame outside of Japan has been aided by the publication of three full-length studies in English on the man and his poetry, something linked in turn to a small "boom" in Ikkyū studies in Japan during the 1970s and 80s.

Ikkyū is an exception in more ways than one. His life and his poetry collected in the *Kyōunshū* are marked by an iconoclastic stance. In one sense, his work as a poet can be seen as reclaiming the earlier, more vigorous style of Zen poetry. He wrote in the freer “Ancient” style rather than regulated verse and most of his poems are on religious topics and engage in Zen debate. In another sense, Ikkyū’s poetry may be regarded as the leading edge of decline. Certainly his mastery of Chinese prosody was nowhere near that of poets such as Gidō and Zekkai. He never wrote to their “professional” standards. Chinese verse was his vehicle for self-expression; sometimes he bent and even broke the language to give vent to his passionate feelings. The following poem was addressed to Yōsō (1376–1458), the senior disciple in Ikkyū’s lineage, upon Ikkyū’s withdrawal from Daitoku-ji as a protest against Yōsō’s efforts to court donations from Sakai merchants.

Ten days as an abbot and my mind is churning.
Under my feet, the red thread of passion is long.
If you come another day and ask for me,
Try a fish shop, tavern, or else a brothel. (Arntzen, 1986, 25)

Breaking the precepts of vegetarianism, sobriety, and celibacy is thought to have been very widespread in Muromachi Zen temples, but no other monk poets wrote as openly about their own lapses as Ikkyū. Such assertions on Ikkyū’s part challenged the façade of the entire system. In fact, Ikkyū is the only Zen monk to have made sex a topic for poetry. What is more, in his seventies, he wrote some of the happiest love poems in Japanese literature, a tradition in which melancholy and despair have been the more constant muses. Ikkyū’s poems are dedicated to the blind singer Mori, with whom he had a relationship for a decade or so.

Blind Mori every night accompanies my singing;
Under the covers, mandarin ducks, intimate talk always new;
Promise anew to meet in the dawn of Maitreya.
Here at the home of the old Buddha, all things are in spring.
(Arntzen, 1986, 158)

Yet, in other poems, self-doubt is his theme, as in this one, “Written When Ill.”

A monk who has broken the precepts for eighty years,
Repenting a Zen that has ignored cause and effect.
When ill, one suffers the effect of past deeds:
Now how to atone for eons of bad karma? (Arntzen, 1986, 34)

These contradictions in Ikkyū's life and poetry have made him somehow more approachable than the other Zen monks of the period. Ikkyū's poems on Zen do not lend themselves to easy citation because they are dense with allusion and require extensive commentary for proper appreciation, but they do repay that effort.

Topics in Gozan literature

The tendency in modern Japanese literary scholarship to exclude works in Chinese by Japanese authors from consideration as "Japanese" literature has resulted in a neglect of Gozan literature within Japan and consequently in Western language studies of Japanese literature as well. Nonetheless, it presents many topics worthy of exploration. In the history of Sino-Japanese cultural exchange, the scale of personal relationships between Gozan monks and their Chinese counterparts stands out as remarkable. The Gozan poets' particular understanding of Chinese poetry also deserves attention. We know, for example, that Gidō gave lectures on the *Santi shi* (J. *Santaishi*). This Song Dynasty anthology of Tang poetry "in three forms," as the title indicates, experienced only a brief period of popularity in Song China as a manual for a general audience of would-be poets, yet it became the "bible" of Chinese poetry for kanshi poets within Japan throughout the medieval period and well into the Tokugawa period. The anthology's predilection for Late Tang style and the dazzling couplet had enormous influence on Gozan poetry. Was it just the chance circumstances of the book trade or was there a specific resonance with Japanese native taste that determined the selection of the *Santi shi*? The Zen monks' appreciation of Chinese poetry and art in turn shaped the medieval aesthetic in Japan which gave rise to new developments in garden design, sumi-e painting, drama, poetry, and the tea ceremony, developments which have been revered ever since as representing quintessential Japanese taste even though their inspiration welled from Chinese sources. Finally, there is an intriguing connection between Gozan poetry and modern Japanese literature. One of the founding fathers of the modern Japanese novel, Natsume Sōseki, had as firm a foundation in classical Chinese literature as he had in English literature. He himself wrote Chinese poetry his whole life, but with particular intensity during the last hundred days of his life. Sōseki took his major inspiration as a kanshi poet from the Gozan poets. What might that mean? Sōseki also had something in common with Ikkyū in that he fearlessly explored new topics in kanshi poetry, including his confrontations with his own body.

Renga (linked verse)

STEVEN D. CARTER

Renga (“linked verse”) refers to a communal form of poetry already current in the era of the *Shinkokinshū* (New Collection of Ancient and Modern Times, c. 1205–21) that would only gain in popularity and status over the next four centuries. Typically, *renga* was the creation not of one poet but of two or more people taking turns in the composition of stanzas of seventeen or fourteen syllables, any two of which would constitute a complete *waka*. While some *renga* sequences comprised only a few stanzas (*kusari renga*), in time the standard form became the *hyakuin*, or one-hundred-verse sequence, mimicking in some ways another sub-genre of *waka*, the one-hundred-verse anthology (*hyakushu-waka*).

In the Heian era *renga* was essentially a verse-capping game in which prizes were awarded to composers of winning links – the latter being a tradition that would persist for centuries. By the mid 1200s, however, *renga* was developing a strong affiliation with courtly aesthetics that – especially in elite circles – would become stronger with time. Documentary records of that era reveal that *renga* were often composed after more serious *waka* gatherings, according to sets of rules for composition that were developed by prominent court poets.

The increasing importance of *renga* in the 1300s is apparent from the fact that one of the personal *waka* anthologies of the commoner priest-poet Tonna (also Ton’a; 1289–1372) contains one hundred *tsukeku* (two-verse links). Other sources corroborate the emergence of linked verse as a fixture even at the highest social levels. Earlier on, *renga* had been an amusement, pure and simple; and we know that it had been appropriated by *jige* (commoner) *renga* masters who held boisterous linking parties “under the blossoms” at temples like Hōsshōji, Bishamondō, and Shōhōji. But one sure sign that the genre was finding a more significant place in elite culture was its increasing connection to ritual life, as in the case of a *hōraku senku*, a “dedicatory” sequence of one thousand verses sponsored by the shogun Ashikaga Yoshiakira (1330–67) at Kitano Shrine in the mid 1350s, again following common practice in *waka* circles.

Nijō Yoshimoto and the rise of courtly renga

The one figure most centrally involved in championing renga as a courtly genre was Tonna's student and patron – a not uncommon combination in the medieval period – Nijō Yoshimoto (1320–88). As the heir of the Nijō house (a regental lineage distinct from the Nijō poetic house), Yoshimoto was a man at the top of the social order who served as regent four times, experiencing at first hand the rebellion of Emperor GoDaigo (1288–1339), the collapse of the Kamakura shogunate, the split that created the Northern and Southern Courts, and all the political infighting and disruption that attended these seminal events.

Throughout his life, Yoshimoto was dedicated to reviving traditions of court ceremony that had been discontinued during the years of turmoil in the capital, and his commitment to poetry was of the same order. Like many other courtier poets, he saw renga – and waka – as central not only to court culture but to the practical maintenance of peace and propriety, as is evident in this statement from his *Tsukuba mondō* (Tsukuba Dialogues, 1372).

If the content of a verse is upright and its words subdued, then it will blend with the voices of an orderly world. This is what is meant by renga of courtly elegance.

The phrase “voices of an orderly world” alludes to the Great Preface to the Chinese *Shijing* (Book of Songs, 600 BCE), one of the most authoritative of all classical statements on poetry and the foundation for didactic claims about literary expression in much Japanese poetic discourse. To allude to such a text in support of what was a relatively new genre amounted in itself to a promotion in status.

Yoshimoto was a figure of importance in the waka world who even penned the preface to the twentieth imperial anthology of waka, *Shingoshūishū* (New Later Collection of Gleanings, 1383). Yet historically his most important contribution was to the development of renga as an art. His father had evidently been a participant in the linked verse parties held beneath the cherry blossoms alluded to above, which were popular among all classes, and Yoshimoto was thus to an extent following his father's lead. Interestingly, however, Yoshimoto turned for help to a commoner poet, a man named Gusai (also read Kyūsei; d. 1378) whose work he regarded as well above the standard of most *hana no moto* (under the blossoms) masters. Having studied waka under a member of the noble Reizei house, Gusai evidently had high ambitions himself and was a willing participant in Yoshimoto's project.

From 1345 to 1372 Yoshimoto produced four major treatises aimed at drawing attention to renga as a literary art, providing it with a historical narrative that connected it to the earliest times, and analyzing it in aesthetic terms taken directly from similar works in the waka tradition. At the same time, however, he extolled the genre's own particular qualities by focusing much of his attention on the art of linking and on the standard hyakuin as an aesthetic whole. Here again, the values he promulgated – subtlety, deep feeling (*ushin*), mystery and depth (*yūgen*), flowing syntax, and elegant diction – were those of the waka tradition; but they went beyond that tradition to form the foundation for a distinct but complementary form of verbal art that had at its core the communal experience of creating poetry spontaneously at a highly ritualized social gathering.

The specific principles of the genre that Yoshimoto and Gusai envisioned are readily apparent in a rulebook for the genre they produced in the late 1370s, incorporating material from a number of earlier such works. The first of their principles is that each verse in a hundred-verse sequence must do double duty, standing on its own as an independent statement but also linking with the verses that precede or follow it to constitute a complete link (*tsukeku*). Above and beyond this, the rules are designed with one primary idea in mind – constant change. Thus repetition of central thematic or topical categories (namely those of the waka tradition – the seasons, love, travel, etc.) is restricted, as are seriation and recurrence of those same and other lexical categories. Every sequence in this way would present the dominant imagery of the courtly poetic tradition, but always in a kind of random sequencing, making for a whole that in its parts represents endless variety while in its whole expressing the Buddhist idea of unity within change.

Yoshimoto and Gusai were of course less the originators of these ideas than their most ardent and successful articulators. Earlier poets from both courtly and commoner traditions had laid the foundation for their work. But in 1356–7 when Yoshimoto and Gusai put together an anthology of linked verse organized in every way like an imperial anthology of waka, entitled *Tsukubashū* (Tsukuba Collection), they were clearly elevating the art to a new level of social prestige. The anthology collected links and first verses (*hokku*) by courtiers from *Shinkokinshū* times and also by Nijō Tameuji (1222–86) and Reizei Tamesuke (1263–1328), as well as hana no moto masters, but pride of place was given to more recent poets who approached their art with high seriousness. Most conspicuous among them was Gusai himself, among whose links was this one (no. 631).

Buddhism. From a thousand-verse sequence
composed at the house of the Regent

Tsuki samushi	Ah, such a cold moon!
toburaikimasu	It makes me wish for a friend
tomo mogana	to come and visit.

Nodera no kane no	From a temple on the plain,
tōki aki no yo	a far bell in the autumn night.

Elegant in diction and imagery, and serious in theme, such poems conformed readily to the aesthetic of “deep feeling” (*ushin*) articulated by Fujiwara no Teika (1162–1241), as well as being fine examples of linking that relied less on word-play than on suggestion and reasoning.

Yoshimoto’s labors were so successful that the *Tsukubashū* was granted status as a junior-imperial anthology at the request of the shogun. Headnotes in the anthology and elsewhere show that renga was being composed all over the Home Provinces, in temples and shrines, at homes of the nobility and the military aristocracy. While eschewing the notion of a renga meeting as a drinking party, he still saw renga as a social art, albeit an elegant one dominated by aesthetic concerns – a proposition expressed clearly in his *Renri hishō* (Treasured Notes on the Principles of Linking, 1349):

If one chooses carefully the right time, gathers together only true connoisseurs of the Way, clears one’s mind of distractions, makes the site peaceful, and proceeds quietly – that is when people will compose superb verses.

Implicit in this statement is recognition of the social nature of renga as a genre, a trait that it shared with waka but to an even greater degree. Perhaps for this reason, even in Yoshimoto’s time most sequences were still not recorded, since renga sequences were considered fleeting moments of aesthetic and social experience: “events” that did not always attain to the status of “texts”. In general, though, members of the cultural elite were more likely than their counterparts among the *hana no moto* masters to record their creations, leading to a general increase in the number of preserved texts beginning in the late 1300s.

After Yoshimoto renga would remain a courtly form practiced even in the houses of the nobility, where records show us that nearly as many poets were meeting together for monthly renga meetings (*tsukinami-kai*) as for waka gatherings. Among the military elite, in fact, linked verse was if anything beginning to surpass the waka in popularity. Banquets and group activities that helped bond vassals together socially were staples in warrior society, and

on such occasions rounds of linking – many undertaken in a spirit not entirely in keeping with Yoshimoto's aesthetic preoccupations – fit in perfectly. This tension between elite aesthetic ideals and the spontaneity of the social moment would inform the history of linked verse forever after.

Reunion and revival

In 1392 the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358–1408) arranged a rapprochement that ended the era of the divided courts and inaugurated a period of relative peace and prosperity for both the court nobility and the military aristocracy. More important than this change for the world of renga, however, was the gradual increase in the prominence of the military families around the shogunate in the cultural affairs of the capital. Even before the turn of the century, many daimyō were holding their own poetry gatherings. And Yoshimitsu, while showing no great interest in poetry himself, sponsored a culture that continued to invest much in the arts. Beginning in 1391, for instance, the shogunate started sponsoring ten-thousand-verse renga festivals at Kitano Shrine, involving hundreds of courtiers, *daimyo*, and jige masters. Records document eight such large-scale undertakings between 1391 and 1441. Thus, by the middle of the fifteenth century, renga was rivaling waka in sheer popularity, especially in the provinces. Some of the finest poets in the form – such as Takayama Sōzei (d. 1455), Chiun (d. 1448), Gyōjo (1405–69), Senjun (1411–76), and Shinkei (1406–75) – are for that reason known now almost solely for their renga, although the truth is that they doubtless thought of themselves as competent in both forms.

The old *hana no moto* renga continued to be a staple of poetic culture even at midcentury – a feature of the historical record that is obscured by the fact that later poets actively excluded such works from anthologies. It is just as clear, however, that renga had by that time become a central preoccupation of elite society. The great waka poet Shōtetsu (1381–1459), who was a teacher to all the poets mentioned immediately above, played a role in this by encouraging his students to study the great waka anthologies of the past as well as court classics such as *Tales of Ise* and *The Tale of Genji*. The most outstanding result of his effort is perhaps Shinkei, who studied under Shōtetsu for thirty years. Like his teacher, Shinkei produced work in all styles, claiming the entire tradition for his own. But it was for links like this one from his *Renga hyakkutsuke* (A Hundred Tsukeku, 1468) that he would be remembered:

Omou kokoro zo
sora ni ukaruru

My troubled heart
floats up into the sky.

Karasu naku
shimoyo no tsuki ni
hitori nete

A crow caws –
as on a frosty, moonlit night,
I lie down alone.

In his *Sasamegoto* (Murmured Conversations, 1463), Shinkei showed himself to be one of the most sophisticated thinkers of the premodern Japanese tradition. It is in his *renga*, perhaps, that we see how an essentially neoclassical form was also inscribed with a sense of absence in its inevitably fragmented vision of the court heritage. Yet, however profound (and potentially subversive) the accomplishments of his finest work – which express his aesthetic of *hiesabi*, the “chill and spare,” as well as the theme of existential loneliness and Buddhist notions of non-duality and ephemerality – Shinkei’s art generally stayed within traditional boundaries in terms of diction, imagery, and conception. And his efforts did much to gain for linked verse what Shinkei said he wanted for it: legitimacy within the broader *waka* tradition.

One indication of the success of Shinkei and his colleagues was the institutional support *renga* began to receive from the shogunate – now the real power in Kyoto politics, where the old nobility were in dire financial straits – in the form of an official bureau of linked verse at Kitano Shrine, staffed by a laureate (*sōshō*) who was sustained by a grant of income-lands. Thus, the shogunal government, long an underwriter of *waka*, began to do the same for *renga*. Small wonder, then, that the textual record shows a notable increase in surviving *hyakuin* from this era, as well as our first personal anthologies of the genre.

The *renga* master Sōgi and the florescence of the genre

The warfare that overwhelmed Kyoto in the latter decades of the fifteenth century obviously affected poets and their institutions. By that time, meeting halls (*kaisho*) designed to facilitate communal art forms such as *renga*, tea tasting, and flower arrangement were becoming a staple of elite architecture; but the fires of war destroyed *kaisho* along with everything else, making many artists into refugees. Shinkei, for instance, was forced to leave the temple where he served as head priest and look to help from patrons in the East Country, and similar journeys were undertaken by many literati of the time. Ironically, however, this situation presented opportunities for practitioners of a genre that recommended itself rather readily to the communal

culture of warrior clans. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the life of the monk Sōgi (1421–1502), a Zen monk who, more than any commoner poet before, seems to have made an explicit decision to make a career for himself as a *rengashi* (renga master), first by gaining the education in Chinese classics and Buddhist texts that was available to priests and then moving on to seek out teachers who could lead him on the Way of Poetry.

Sōgi's origins are obscure. We know, however, that by around 1450 he was making a name for himself among recognized renga masters, warlords, and court aristocrats, the latter retaining status as holders of considerable cultural capital despite their political losses. At the time of the Ōnin War (1467–77), however, he left Kyoto for the East Country, where he stayed for nearly a decade. His first two instruction manuals were written about this time, both at the request of samurai students. Although he would eventually set up house in Kyoto, travel would remain a crucial part of his life, which was one way in which he differed from the masters of the previous generation, most of whom spent much less time on the road. One explanation for this is that the Ōnin War had had the effect of “dispersing” interest in Kyoto culture into the provinces, creating a market for artists of all sorts. Another is that, while the previous generation of renga masters had been supported by secular or religious positions that left them little need to seek out patrons outside the capital, Sōgi was from the beginning a professional who made his living from his art.

In addition to meeting provincial patrons during his first trip to the East Country, however, Sōgi also ended up meeting Shinkei there, as well as a warrior poet named Tō no Tsuneyori (1401–84). A somewhat obscure figure, Tsuneyori had been a member of Shōtetsu's circle. More importantly for Sōgi's purposes, he had also received the *kuden* (“secret oral teachings”) on *Kokinshū* and other early waka texts from Shōtetsu's rival, Gyōkō (1391–1455), the explicit heir of Tonna. Sōgi met with Tsuneyori over a period of some months in 1471–3, during which time he received the coveted secret teachings and eventually a certificate naming him as Tsuneyori's chief disciple. With those credentials in hand, Sōgi then opened up a literary practice in Kyoto in 1473. Soon he was involved in all levels of literary discourse, playing the role of renga master with a number of disciples, attending poetry gatherings at the noble houses, and even lecturing on the court classics. His ambition even extended to establishing a canon of linked verse by compiling an anthology to showcase his teachers, which he titled *Chikurinshō* (The Bamboo Grove Collection, 1476), claiming for those poets fame equal to that of a group of seven sages of the Three

Kingdoms period in Chinese history who had met together in a bamboo grove. The seven poets he included were his own teachers: Shinkei, Sōzei, and Senjun, along with four others of the same generation. Other poets – and there were others, especially those of the “hana no moto” tradition – he excluded without comment. The collection thus made a clear statement, both about Sōgi’s reading of the renga tradition and about his own growing sense of authority in the poetic field.

As if to justify his selections, in 1479 Sōgi wrote a critical commentary on selected links from *Chikurinshō*. Throughout the piece, called *Oi no susami* (An Old Man’s Diversions), he concentrated on elucidating linking technique while at the same time using terms of praise from the waka tradition, implicitly adopting Shinkei’s contention that at bottom renga and waka should be regarded as one and the same. Here and in his other critical writings, however, he stopped short of endorsing Shinkei’s starker, more cerebral aesthetic, adhering instead to the “gentler” ideals of the Nijō line: profundity of feeling, beauty of form, and rhetorical restraint. His most unreserved praise went to understated links like the following by Senjun (*Chikurinshō*, link no. 1280), which, he said, “appear straightforward on the surface but are full of profound meaning deep down.”

Mine kosu kaze ni	On wind from over the peak –
ko no ha chiru oto	the sound of leaves scattering.
Shiba no to o	If someone asks
towaba nani ka to	about life in my brush hut,
kotaemashi	what am I to say?

Sōgi was a careful student of his predecessors, but he also had an agenda of his own that went beyond them in some ways. This is particularly true in his teachings on the art of linking, which he invariably couched in terms related to actual experience in the *za*, or linking session, as he does in his *Azuma mondō* (East Country Dialogues, 1467):

The Way of linked verse is to ponder deeply, indeed, to brood over one’s links. Nevertheless there are times when, judging the needs of a whole sequence, one may produce a simple verse that surpasses a distinctive verse in total effect . . . One should understand that in this Way, one must balance one’s own talents against the circumstances of the *za*, and compose appropriately, without being overly modest or too forward.

Sōgi was not the first to stress the importance of cooperation in the production of a renga sequence, but no one before him had been so emphatic. However topsy-turvy the world outside, he stressed that a renga

gathering should be governed by standards of decorum whose tenor was not merely aesthetic but also religious and ethical.

Given his emphasis on maintaining the proper atmosphere in a renga gathering, it is no surprise that Sōgi is also regarded as the first renga master to realize the full potential of the *hyakuin*. As if to further elucidate this point, Sōgi wrote a complete running commentary on an example of the form (*Yodo no watari*, 1495). Furthermore, he was involved in two such sequences with his disciples Shōhaku and Sōchō that would become the most famous hundred-verse sequences in the renga canon – *Minase sangin hyakuin* (Three Poets at Minase, 1488) and *Yuyama sangin hyakuin* (Three Poets at Yuyama, 1491). Each would become the object of much later exegesis and commentary, and not by scholars seeking to elucidate the “meaning” of links so much as by poets interested in the texts as primers for practitioners of the art.

Sōgi was appointed Kitano Shrine renga laureate in 1488. More important to him personally, however, was his involvement in compilation of a new imperial renga anthology, called *Shinsen Tsukubashū* (The New Tsukuba Collection, 1495). Predictably, he used the opportunity to further enshrine the work of the seven sages, as well as that of himself and his own disciples. But also well represented were his patrons – royals, court nobles, and members of the military aristocracy – showing how socially prominent linked verse had truly become.

Sōgi died in the East Country in 1502 where he had gone to meet with patrons, but not before passing on his teachings (on renga and the “secrets” of the waka tradition) to scores of poets at all levels of literate society, who would staunchly follow his model of practice for the next half century or so. Taking over renga leadership in Kyoto was a younger disciple, Sōseki (1474–1533). It is a testament to Kyoto’s decline and to the emergence of numerous cultural centers in the provinces, however, that it was mostly in the latter that his foremost students pursued their art. Among these were Shōhaku (1443–1527), who lived in Settsu province; Sōchō (1448–1532), who lived most of his latter years in Suruga province; and Kenzai (1452–1510), a student of both Shinkei and Sōgi who left the capital to practice his art in the East Country. All of these poets left large renga anthologies, critical writings, and travel writings that attest to their devotion to the courtly ideals articulated by the Seven Sages and Sōgi.

Renga continued to rival the waka form in status and popularity for a century after Sōgi’s departure from the scene. Yet all types of poetry had by the mid 1500s become a form of commerce, and one in which even those at the very top of the old social structure were centrally involved. Biographies of

the Sōgi lineage of renga masters – including most prominently Sōseki, Soboku (d. 1545), and Sōyō (d. 1563) – read like the travelogues of thorough professionals working in an expanding literary market. And even renga poets such as Satomura Jōha (1524–1602), who stayed in the capital, were rather openly involved in activities that can easily be described as mercantile, entailing not just manuscript work and lecturing but even giving guided tours of the famous sites of the capital to visiting warlords.

It is no coincidence that encyclopedic reference works on the rules and conventions of linked verse such as *Mugonshō* (Silent Notes, 1603) also appeared at the end of this period, nor that Sōboku and others are credited with writing verse-by-verse commentaries for numerous hundred-verse sequences. New participants in elite culture were as anxious for such study aids as they were for commentaries on *The Tale of Genji*. While the divide between production and consumption of traditional poetry had not yet become as wide as it would be in the Edo period, the new prominence of exegetical activity in the 1500s is evidence that the texts of the past were often being read by people who thought of themselves more as observers than as full participants in poetic culture. It was at this time, too, that *haikai renga*, “comic” or “unorthodox” linked verse, emerged as a discourse of its own with the appearance of two anthologies, one called *Chikuba kyōginshū* (Crazy Verses on Bamboo Stilts) and the other *Inu tsukubashū* (Mongrel Tsukuba Collection). Such verses had been composed from the beginning, but it was not until around the turn of the sixteenth century that they were preserved. In time, mainstream renga masters were including supervision of haikai sessions among their duties, catering to growing interest in the form.

Yet many of the poets associated with early haikai – Yamazaki Sōkan, Arakida Moritake (1473–1549), and Matsunaga Teitoku (1571–1653), for instance – thought of themselves as renga masters and only came to be known as the “fathers” of haikai in later times. Furthermore, statements like the following by Teitoku from *Tensuishō* (Waters from Heaven, 1644) show that even after the beginning of the Edo period poets still connected haikai composition with values that could be traced back to Yoshimoto and Sōgi.

In the *za*, one who wants to be considered a fine poet should remain quiet, not desiring to compose a great number of verses. If he remains tranquil, the hearts of the rest of those in the group will naturally be at peace and there will be no competitiveness, no anger, but rather a spirit of propriety – each praising the other, leading toward the true spirit of haikai.

For Teitoku, haikai was a serious business that was still dominated by elegant ideals where it mattered most in social terms – in comportment in the za. This would also be true of the great haikai master Matsuo Bashō (1644–94), who likewise embraced the ideal of harmony in the za as a high priority. Haikai as it evolved in the 1600s would differ from orthodox linked verse in rhetorical matters, but in terms of its social role as conceived by Bashō and many of his disciples it was in its essence a differing articulation of very old ideals, social harmony being one of them.

Noh drama

NOEL PINNINGTON

About 2,500 different noh play scripts exist, of which some 240 are currently maintained in the performance repertoire. Most of these 240 plays are a subset of those performed by official noh schools in the mid seventeenth century, which in turn had been composed between the mid fourteenth and mid sixteenth centuries. The performance of these noh plays, along with about two hundred *kyōgen* comic plays, and the ritual piece known as *Okina* (Old Man), make up the current noh tradition.

Noh plays were composed as scripts, but their performance combines song, dance, instrumental accompaniment, costume, and mask. Thus while they can be treated as plays and read for literary purposes, they are generally appreciated by audiences for all the technical arts they employ, music and dance as well as the impersonation of the *dramatis personae*. In this chapter, the focus will be primarily on the scripted elements of the plays. It should be pointed out, however, that while the scripts more or less coalesced when they were written (with some exceptions), the current performance style became settled later. The noh performed today is largely a Muromachi art in Tokugawa dress.

Noh plays can be discerned in historical records as far back as the late thirteenth century, but scripts only survive from the early fifteenth century. From what is known of plays from the interim period, it seems that they were relatively free in organization, allowing multiple scenes in different locations, and featuring a variety of characters. The plays of the time of the noted playwright Zeami (1363?–1443?) and his pupils, however, were more constrained in structure. Three role types had become established: main roles, performed by master actors (*tōryō no shite*), secondary roles by side actors (*waki no shite*), and minor roles by comic actors (*kyōgen no yaku*). These correspond to the current performing traditions of *shite*, *waki*, and *ai-kyōgen*. In Zeami's plays, the main role, which was sometimes doubled (for example, into a pair of sisters), was greatly emphasized, and the other parts mainly

existed to support it. The climax generally consisted of a long sung monologue by the main role, followed by a dance. This form of play, in the hands of Zeami, his sons, and son-in-law, is generally regarded as the high point in the history of noh. In later generations, the structure again became more flexible, with many actors on stage, more dialogue between roles, and more dramatic action. The diction became less highly wrought and dance less significant. Most plays up to this point featured figures derived from earlier literature, myth, or legend. At the end of the medieval period, however, the warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi had plays written to stage his own exploits and he acted in them, sometimes as himself and sometimes not. Warrior leaders after him continued to enjoy both watching and performing in plays, but an ethos of conservation became dominant among actors, especially from the mid seventeenth century. Twenty lineages of performers, divided into shite, waki, flute players, small drum players, hip drum players, stick drum players, and kyōgen players, were chosen to receive regular stipends. In return they had to submit records of their teachings and repertoires, and were expected to preserve their inherited arts unchanged. The lists of plays offered up at that time are the basis of the current repertoire. Plays have been written in the modern era, but are regarded more in the way of experiments rather than as noh proper.

Okina and the mythic origins of noh

Zeami's account of events in his father's lifetime is relatively trustworthy, but his received lore of earlier times is not. A central idea in that lore is the derivation of noh plays from a tradition of sixty-six mimes (*monomane*) originating in the mythical age of the Japanese gods and used by the Buddha's followers in India. The sixty-six mimes were supposed to have been progressively reduced, first in the late Heian period to a group of three, known as *Shikisanban* (the three ritual pieces), each of which featured a masked old man, and then to an even shorter version, *Okina*, with two old men, which Zeami's father, Kan'ami, performed before the Shogun Yoshimitsu at Imagumano in the mid 1370s. *Shikisanban* was performed by troupes at festivals in Nara, and Kan'ami did perform a shortened version before the shogun, the basis of the current *Okina*.

Okina is widely performed nowadays in several versions: those belonging to noh traditions, similar versions found in kabuki and puppet theater, and also variant forms handed down in rural shrines. The piece as performed by noh actors today features three main roles: an old man called *Okina Omote*, a

youth called Senzai, and another old man called Sanbasō. It opens with the main actor singing, in alternation with a chorus, a rhythmical series of syllables “tō tō tarari tararira tarari agari rari tō . . .” Between some of these lines emerges a celebratory *imayō*, a late Heian song (“May our lord live for a thousand ages and we serve a thousand years . . .”). The younger Senzai then sings another older song and performs a rhythmical dance. The main actor dons an old man mask. As Okina Omote, he rises and addresses a third actor with a version of an early Heian erotic song (*saibara* – “the two youngsters sat out of each other’s reach . . .”). He intones a *waka* and some lines from a Chinese verse, praying for peace in the realm and divine protection. When finished, both actors leave the stage. At this point the third actor, having donned a large black hat, runs out and dances a wild and vigorous piece called the “Momi no dan.” He then dons an old man mask, and in the character of Sanbasō banters with the young actor who brought on the masks at the start of the performance. The younger actor hands over a bell-tree (*suzu*) and sits. Sanbasō performs a final stately dance, the “suzu no dan,” after which both actors withdraw.

This piece, believed to be similar to that performed before Yoshimitsu, binds together scraps of old popular songs, celebratory and erotic, with a variety of dances. Its function, and that of its earlier and longer forms, generically referred to as *okina sarugaku*, was to pacify disruptive forces. From the thirteenth century, as *Shikisanban*, it was offered to the Kasuga shrines during the Indian New Year Buddhist festival (*shūnie*) at the Kōfukuji Temple. There is an influential theory, originally proposed by Hattori Yukio, that in fact *okina sarugaku* originated in the Heian period as a propitiatory performance offered at the back of Tendai temples to avert the malevolent gaze of a Chinese deity called Matarashin.

The *Okina* performance tradition shares some elements with that of *noh* plays, but there are fundamental differences between the two, for example in the structure of their masks and conventions of costume and dance. *Noh* plays are generally thought actually to have had a different history, visible in a series of historical references from the late thirteenth century to pieces called *sarugaku* (or *sarugō*). On the one hand the term *sarugaku* (lit. “monkey entertainment”) indicates a particular type of performance troupe and the actors belonging to it. Thus there are *sarugaku* troupes and *dengaku* (lit. “field entertainment”) troupes, respectively made up of *sarugaku* and *dengaku* actors. On the other hand, *sarugaku* can also refer to a genre of performance piece, a play, which was put on by a variety of groups of performers, including both *sarugaku* troupes and *dengaku* troupes. The *sarugaku* troupes

established in Yamato province divided their actors into two groups. One consisted of elders who ran the troupe, and only performed *Shikisanban*. The other included adults and youths and performed sarugaku plays.

Two historical records describe the content of sarugaku plays in 1349. The first is a story in *Taiheiki* (Chronicle of Great Peace), where the focus of events is the disastrous collapse of viewing stands at a *kanjin* performance (a public performance before a paying audience) put on by dengaku troupes in Kyoto. Members of the higher classes were thrown into the midst of the lower orders, who took the opportunity to steal weapons, abduct women, and commit acts of violence. The play being performed at the time represented a miracle on Mount Hiei and featured a small boy in the guise of a sacred monkey from the Sannō Shrine.

The second record tells of a performance of sarugaku and dengaku programs put on at the Kasuga Shrine by priests and priestesses. The first play from the sarugaku side portrayed an event in the thirteenth-century poet Saigyō's life when he offered ten poems for an imperial visit before renouncing the world. The second enacted a visit by the Heian author Murasaki Shikibu to the sick bed of the poetess Izumi Shikibu. On the dengaku side, the first play told the legend of an imperial retainer who went to China and met a master musician from whom he obtained three lutes (*biwa*) and three secret melodies, only to be attacked by a dragon king on the return journey. The second play portrayed a Buddhist story about a wicked Indian king and his change of heart on hearing some Buddhist sermons.

The Ashikaga shoguns often saw dengaku performances, but they did not see sarugaku troupes putting on plays until the 1370s when Kan'ami (1333–84, also known as Kannami) performed before the third Ashikaga shogun, Yoshimitsu, at the Imagumano Shrine in Kyoto. This was the beginning of a new kind of patronage for favored sarugaku troupes. Warrior patronage tended to be personal, focused on individual actors, with erotic overtones. It is about this time troupes became known for their star actors, so Kan'ami's troupe became Kanze after the featured actor. Similarly, the names of the other Yamato troupes – Komparu, Kongō, and Hōshō – were called after the actors Komparu Gonnokami, Kongō Gonnokami, and Hōshō Dayū. Where they could, star actors composed their own plays to show off their talents.

Kan'ami and Saemon Gorō

Two plays by Kan'ami and one by Saemon Gorō of the Enami troupe (in Kyoto) may be taken as representative of this period. Kan'ami's *Sotoba*

Komachi (Komachi at the Stupa) consists of a series of scenes featuring the Heian poet Ono no Komachi in old age. In the opening scene, two priests remonstrate with an old woman leaning on an old wooden stupa, urging her to treat it with more respect. (A stupa is a wooden post symbolizing the Buddha, usually erected to mark a grave.) To their surprise, she refuses and uses Buddhist arguments to justify her behavior. She then admits to the priests her identity as the erstwhile Heian poet. In a second scene, the spirit of a former lover takes possession of her body and complains of his lust and bitterness. In a final scene, the old woman goes to a nearby shrine and prays that the spirit of her former lover might be exorcised.

This play is a vehicle for a series of complex impersonations – especially interesting would be that of an old woman possessed by a male ghost. The argumentative exchange in the first scene is a key section. There is a strong contrast between Komachi's and the priests' voices. Komachi's introductory words are a clever variation on a former poem, almost comic. A witty and polemical mood pervades her assertions. The priests are literal, pedestrian, and smug. Komachi constantly shifts her ground, citing Buddhist texts, indirectly attacking the priests' view of themselves, arguing about the nature of religious motivation.

Jinen Koji (The Lay-Priest Jinen) is another of Kan'ami's plays. Jinen was a Kamakura Zen priest who left the monastery and traveled the countryside preaching, singing, and dancing. In Kan'ami's play, a young girl offers a robe to Jinen in exchange for a Buddhist service for her dead parents. After child slavers lead her away, Jinen realizes that she has sold herself to them to pay for the robe. He follows the slavers down to the riverside and tries to persuade them to take back the robe and release the girl. In the end the slavers give way, but demand that Jinen perform various dances for them so that they get something out of the deal. This play also features argumentative exchanges, this time between Jinen and the slavers. Like Komachi, Jinen expresses his point of view through striking word plays based on double meanings and clever twists. The dances that Jinen performs are *kusemai*, a type of syncopated song and dance in which Kan'ami specialized. Kan'ami's plays are freer in form than those of his son Zeami, and dramatize conflicts of attitude with remarkable sustained dialogues. They are unique among *noh* plays in that they discuss critically the true nature of Buddhist morality and confront gritty social issues.

The play *Ukai* (The Cormorant Fisher) is important as a forerunner of later ghost plays. Its author was Saemon Gorō of the Enami troupe, active in Kyoto. As Zeami revised the version that survives, there are different

opinions as to what is original. The cormorant fisherman goes out on the river on a moonless night with a flaming torch to attract fish to the surface of the water. Small rings around the necks of the cormorants prevent them swallowing the fish they catch, which are regurgitated. *Ukai* is one of a number of plays concerned with the anxiety felt by those whose ways of life involved killing: fishermen, hunters, and of course warriors. Early Japanese Buddhist stories often mentioned the hells that await those who take life. In the medieval period, with the shift to a psychological conception of Buddhism, the primary issue had come to be the degree of mental attachment to killing rather than the killing itself.

The play opens with a pattern typical of later ghost plays: two traveling priests looking for a place to stay the night are directed to a haunted shrine overlooking the river. Once they are there, the main actor comes on in the guise of a cormorant fisher. His entrance song sets up the central image of the play: "The bright torches in the cormorant boats, but what about the dark paths that follow!" Eventually he admits he is the ghost of a fisherman drowned by locals to avoid evil karma associated with his trade. The priests ask him to enact his evil deeds as a form of confession after which they will pray for his soul. He mimes fishing while the chorus sings of the pleasure and dread involved in fishing. Throughout the play the ghost refers to the moment when the torches are extinguished. This image gathers a number of figurative meanings: excitement followed by anxiety in the act of sin; a life of pleasure followed by punishment in hell; finally the sinking back to hell of a ghost after temporary return to the world. The image is enriched by a contrast made between the torch and the moon. Those above the clouds of delusion love the moon, generally associated with enlightenment, whereas the deluded prefer ignorance, dark nights, when the false light, the torch, brings pleasure rather than joy.

Ukai and many other plays were written by performers, but it must be noted that once the shōgun became interested, people in his circle started to take an active hand in fostering the sarugaku arts. These literati and musical experts took names ending in the suffix -ami, and include Naami, Seiami (aka Iami, Jōami), and Rin'ami. In particular, Naami seems to have influenced musical chanting, Rin'ami set a pattern of highly allusive diction through songs he composed, and Seiami, apparently in service to Yoshimitsu's doctor, wrote plays that initiated future genres, including a warrior play called *Michimori*, based on a story in the *Heike monogatari* and a play about the emotional reunion of parents and child, known as *Tango monogatari*.

Zeami

The shogun Yoshimitsu was in his late teens when he first saw Kan'ami perform. He subsequently took the twelve-year-old Zeami as a companion, probably more for his beauty than for his skill as an actor. Yoshimitsu had a passion for attractive boys; noble families competed to send him good-looking companions. But at least by Kan'ami's death in 1384, Yoshimitsu had taken up a new favorite, Inuō of the Ōmi regional troupes. Inuō, on whom Yoshimitsu bestowed the name Dōami, had developed a refined performance style, atmospheric and smooth. It exemplified the quality known as *yūgen*, elegant and subtle, closely associated with medieval images of Heian aristocratic life. Zeami, too, adopted this *yūgen* style.

Zeami's importance in the tradition of *noh* plays derives not so much from his fame as an actor in his lifetime, but rather from the fact that his style of play came to dominate the later repertoire. Thirty-eight plays are definitely attributed to him (including, in addition to plays discussed below, *Hanjo*, *Kinuta*, *Saigyōzakura*, *Sekidera Komachi*, *Semimaru*, and *Yamamba*), and he is likely the author of many more. In Zeami's youth, actors from *dengaku*, Ōmi, and Yamato troupes all wrote plays. In his old age, however, Zeami reported that only Yamato troupes were still writing new plays. Zeami wrote a guide to his tradition of composing plays called *Sandō* (The Three Paths), which provided beginning authors with a formulaic method. Plays were classified by their primary role: an old person, a woman, or a warrior. A basic structure was first defined for the old person play. It consisted of three progressively faster *tempi* – called *jo*, *ha*, and *kyū* – distributed over five sections, defined in terms of a series of specific song patterns, with set syllable counts. The first section had the side actor enter, identify himself, and establish his location, the second had the main actor enter and sing a series of short passages, the third consisted of a dialogue between the main and side actor(s), the fourth had a long monologue, usually a *kusemai*, and in the fifth the old person, transformed into his or her real identity, usually some kind of deity, sang a series of songs, and performed a dance before quitting the stage. Having set up this basic pattern for “old person” plays, Zeami proposed variations to suit other types of roles.

This schematic approach to playwriting, which has been likened to the setting up of musical forms like the sonata, was probably developed for pedagogical purposes and not intended to limit creativity. Zeami's own plays modified these structures to suit a wide range of topics and moods. The content of his plays reflected the passion of Kyoto high society for the

classical literature of the Heian court and the *Heike monogatari*. In his diction, Zeami alluded to Heian poetry, but grammatically he exploited the unde-termined, open-ended possibilities of medieval *renga* (linked verse). Whereas Kan'ami's dialogues had represented the conflicting viewpoints of individuals, open disagreement was avoided in Zeami's works. Everything was refined, with smooth elegance valued and jarring notes avoided. What tension did exist was within the individual, in inner conflict or psychic instability. Zeami preferred ellipsis and emphasized unity, often by the use of a repeated image (*tōshō*).

Zeami wrote several god plays (*waki no noh*), commonly performed as opening pieces in a program to establish a sacred and positive atmosphere. (Several plays were generally performed in a program, interspersed with *kyōgen* comedies). The play *Takasago*, sections of which are now commonly sung at weddings, is perhaps the best known of these. The story derives from commentaries on a phrase in an introduction to the *Kokinshū* (Collection of Japanese Poems Old and New, c. 905–14): “The pines of Takasago and Suminoe should be felt to share the same birth.” The idea had developed that the phrase in question was recommending that the sacred trees at the Takasago and Sumiyoshi (once called Suminoe) shrines, despite being geographically separated, should be felt to spring from the same spot. In the play this is converted into a vision of an old man and his wife, aging together but living in separate places, who turn out to be the spirits of the pine trees of Takasago and Sumiyoshi. The language of the spirits throughout the play is richly poetic, using the techniques of *waka* (double meanings, allusion, association) to construct a layering of auspicious ideas linking happy marriage, a peaceful and blessed realm, the Japanese poetic tradition, the wisdom of trees, and long life.

The ultimate achievement of Zeami's style is generally taken to be the so-called two-part *mugen* (phantasmagoric) *noh*. In this type of play a disturbed person appears to a priest in the first scene, and then reappears in his or her true form as a ghost in the second. Often this second scene is understood as the priest's dream, evaporating when he wakes up at the end. *Izutsu*, considered by some the greatest of all *noh* plays, is a classic *mugen* play, closely matching Zeami's prescriptions in *Sandō*. It draws on commentaries on the *Ise monogatari* (The Tales of Ise) that read into certain sections of the work a story of a love affair between the ninth-century poet Ariwara no Narihira and an aristocratic woman, daughter of Ki no Arisune. An elegant mood is sustained throughout. The play deepens, however, from nostalgia and longing to despair at the impossibility of emotional satisfaction. There is a

moment of apparent fulfillment, when the central character, the ghost of Aritsune's daughter, has a vision of identity with her former lover (the play's climactic moment), but it is an illusion that fades away.

Another important group of plays by Zeami features the ghosts of warriors. He considered warrior roles generally unattractive, but, perhaps following the example of Seiami's *Michimori*, made an exception for the aristocratic warriors of the Genpei War, who could be conceived of as possessing courtly elegance. Zeami's *Yorimasa* and *Tadanori* both follow the basic *mugen* pattern in which a wandering priest meets a man who then reappears in his dream as a ghost to tell his story. In *Sanemori* the warrior's ghost appears to a Pure Land preacher who alone is able to see him. In *Kiyotsune*, a wife, receiving a lock of black hair as a keepsake, is visited by her husband's ghost to tell the story of his suicide. The most unusual of the warrior plays is *Atsumori*, because it is about the psychology of two warriors, the elder Kumagai, who has abandoned war and taken vows as the priest Renshō, and the boy he killed on the battlefield, the flute-playing Atsumori. At the start of the play, Renshō, the waki role, goes to the site of the battle to pray for the peace of Atsumori's soul. He hears a flute and finds a group of peasant youths coming toward him. Questioned by Renshō, their leader admits to being Atsumori's ghost and quits the stage. In the second half, he reappears in warrior costume, and there is an exchange in which the two men reenact their former enmity. In conclusion, however, they agree to become "friends in the (Buddhist) law." At the climax, Atsumori brandishes his sword to attack Renshō, but then recalling the priest's prayers on his behalf he calms down. The chorus sings that the two men will eventually be reborn on the same lotus seat in the Pure Land. Zeami wrote a large number and variety of plays. Generally, however, they reflect his stated ideals: they are based on court literature and its commentaries and are atmospheric, with a refined elegance and a single climax. His plays amount to progressive psychological uncoverings, exposing what lies beneath. Rather than tell stories directly, they explore inner worlds.

Sarugaku troupes after Zeami

When Zeami died, life in the capital was more unstable and fragmented than it had been in his youth. The well-organized polity of Yoshimitsu's time soon collapsed. The Ōnin civil war broke out in 1467 and lasted ten years. It was a disaster for Kyoto and aristocratic culture; much of the capital was laid waste. Shoguns, however, continued to patronize *noh*. Zeami's son Motomasa

(1400?–1432) (*Sumidagawa*, *Morihisa*, *Yoroboshi*) was to predecease him, but he and Zeami's son-in-law, Zenchiku (1405–70?) (*Teika*, *Bashō*, *Yōkihi*) of the Komparu troupe, wrote plays more or less in Zeami's style. Their works are highly poetic in diction, focused, and elegant.

Motomasa's plays include some concerned with the sadness of parents separated from their children by misfortune or death. The most well known is *Sumidagawa* (River Sumida), in which a cultured woman of Kyoto, driven to madness by the abduction of her young boy by slavers, searches for him in the Eastern provinces. In the first part, in an extraordinary argumentative exchange, the ferryman at River Sumida refuses to let her aboard the ferry unless she "raves" to entertain the other passengers. She in turn superimposes on her travels Ariwara Narihira's famous journey to the East as told in *Ise monogatari*, a vision the ferryman mocks and resists. There is a cruel and comic undertone to this part that only intensifies the pathos of the final scene where the mother is cured by the vision of the ghost of her son, who turns out to have died of illness at the same spot a year before.

Zenchiku's plays are marked by alliteration, exhaustive allusion, and a cyclic structure. One of them, *Bashō* (Plantain), is a member of a subgenre that features spirits of plants. In the first half of the play, the main character appears as a middle-aged woman who visits a hermit devoted to reading the Lotus Sutra. They discuss the Tendai doctrine that even inanimate objects can attain enlightenment. The woman quits the stage, but returns at night as the spirit of a plantain tree. She sings about the natural world, dances, and then fades away as dawn breaks. Zenchiku's treatment gathers a whole series of allusions to plantains from Chinese culture, where its fragility made it a symbol of transience, and layers them into a complex and evocative texture. This exhaustive use of allusion around specific tropes is typical of his plays.

A quite different series of dramatic plays were written, later attributed to a certain Miyamasu, and another style called *furyū* was also developed that emphasized visual spectacle. Prime examples of the Miyamasu plays are *Genbuku Soga* (Soga Comes of Age) and *Chōbuku Soga* (Soga Vengeance). It is unclear who Miyamasu was; the name could refer to various people from the 1430s to the end of the century. Among the stories these plays dramatized many were taken from popular accounts of the warriors of the Soga family or Minamoto Yoshitsune, or stories set in the provinces. The Miyamasu plays feature relations between parents and children, lords and retainers, or brothers, and have numerous dramatis personae, often including the use of child actors for noble characters. They have dramatic themes such as violent revenge or miraculous apparitions. Linguistically they are more straightforward than

Zeami's, and include comic or parodic elements. The stories proceed via dialogue, there are few songs and no dances. In these plays the shite (who specialized in song and dance) and the waki (who did not dance) were more equal in importance. Often they represented mutually opposed voices. Miyamasu's plays develop characteristics rejected by Zeami and Yoshimitsu, and, although they are sometimes regarded as second-rate or melodramatic, they were both popular and influential.

Another important playwright was Kanze Nobumitsu (*Funabenkei*, *Momijigari*, *Rashōmon*) (1435–1516), seventh son of Zeami's successor, Onnami. He was a drummer but skilled in chanting too, and also played an important role in the management of the Kanze troupe over several generations of short-lived main actors. He was prominent after the Ōnin War. The shogun's government and the Nara monasteries had lost wealth and influence, and actors could no longer solely rely on them for patronage; instead they had to appeal to the broader community, new religious institutions like the Honganji Temple, or provincial warrior leaders, who were keen to take lessons in noh chanting and dance. In this new environment, Nobumitsu, like Miyamasu, broadened the focus of plays beyond a single central role, and he also intensified their spectacular or visual aspects, with gorgeous costumes, dances, and songs, as well as elaborate props, characteristics of plays now referred to as *furyū* .

Nobumitsu left about thirty plays, thirteen of which are still performed. Hardly any of his works are mugen noh, rather they represent fantastic places from distant countries, ancient myths, or heroic stories, where dragons, tigers, gods, and demons might be seen, stolen treasures retrieved, secrets of martial arts learned, or ghosts of warriors threaten murder. These themes present opportunities for splendid costumes and dramatic poses. *Funabenkei* (Benkei at the Bridge) is still a popular piece with various novel aspects. It concerns Yoshitsune, who is in the provinces with his lover the dancing girl Shizuka Gozen, avoiding his suspicious brother, the warrior leader Yoshitomo. Benkei tries to persuade Shizuka to return to the capital. She agrees, gives a farewell dance, and leaves. Benkei and Yoshitsune then set out to sea with some retainers only to be attacked by the ghost of Taira no Tomonori who rises out of the water and tries to drag Yoshitsune into the sea. The same shite actor who plays the dancing girl in the first half appears as the ghost of the warrior Tomomori in the second, while Yoshitsune is played by a child. These dramatic plays clearly aim at different effects from Zeami's plays. Nobumitsu's heir Nagatoshi (1488–1541) (*Enoshima*, *Shōzon*, *Rinzō*) continued to write plays in the same style.

Zenchiku's grandson, Komparu Zenpō (1454–1532?) (*Arashiyama, Ikuta Atsumori, Ikkaku Sennin, Hatsuyuki*) was another playwright in the Sengoku period who wrote plays with intense visual effects. His plays are structurally utterly different from Zeami's. An example is his play *Hatsuyuki* (First Snow), which has no waki roles at all. The action takes place in real time, with a serving woman (kyōgen) discovering that her mistress's pet chicken has died, and reporting it to her mistress (shite), daughter of a priest at the Izumi Shrine. The mistress then calls other upper-class women to participate in a prayer session for her pet's rebirth in the Pure Land. After their prayers, a child actor in the role of the chicken appears to them in a vision and dances, celebrating its entrance into heaven. Apparently the theme of this play itself came to Zenpō in a dream. Others of his plays take up the old theme of ghosts appearing to the living. In *Ikuta Atsumori* (Atsumori in Ikuta), a young boy brought up by a priest discovers that his father is the dead warrior Atsumori, and is directed by the Kamo deity to a forest in Ikuta, a rural location, where he will be able to see his father's ghost. The boy travels to Ikuta and the dead Atsumori appears to him. Atsumori describes the battle in which he died, whereupon demons appear and drag him back to hell. In this play, the demons are described but not seen, but in another of Zenpō's plays, *Yakamochi*, concerning the poet of that name, the demons from hell actually appear with a burning cart and try to drag a girl off with them.

There are unattributed plays like *Adachigahara* which intersperses horrific scenes with comic ones. The plays of the middle period, by Zeami, Motomasa, and Zenchiku, are regarded as the true masterpieces of the theater, but, from another viewpoint, one can see them as exceptions standing outside a more dramatic tradition linking Enami Saemon Gorō, Kan'ami, Miyamasu, and Nobumitsu. Moreover, plays once written were not preserved unchanged. Actors modified their performances to suit audience tastes. Changes in the overall construction of plays were not uncommon up to the second half of the fifteenth century, and many alterations were made to phrasing in the subsequent century. Vocal music, dances, gestures, and the pace of plays have all radically changed from the time of Zeami.

Noh drama theory from Zeami to Zenchiku

ARTHUR H. THORNHILL III

Nōgakuron (noh drama treatises) is a modern term that refers to theoretical writings on the performance, composition, and aesthetics of *sarugaku* (literally, “monkey music”), the medieval stage art that evolved into noh drama. The first extant treatise, *Fūshi kaden* (*Transmission of the Flower through Style and Form*, 1400–18; popularly known as *Kadensho*), was written by the seminal figure in the history of noh, the performer and playwright Zeami Motokiyo (1363–1443?). Zeami’s collected theoretical writings, along with those of his son-in-law Komparu Zenchiku (or Ujinobu, 1405–70?), form the primary corpus of *nōgakuron*. As is typical of medieval artistic treatises, they present the process of an actor’s training as a quasi-spiritual discipline, a Way (*michi*). At the same time, *nōgakuron* were secret writings, intended to bestow upon one’s hereditary disciples a professional advantage over the performers of rival troupes. Prior to the twentieth century, these works were held privately, and only a spurious version of *Kadensho* circulated during the Edo period. Yoshida Tōgo published a collection of sixteen Zeami works in 1909; additional manuscripts were later discovered and published, and Zeami is now considered a major intellectual figure of the Muromachi period. The first authoritative collection of Zenchiku’s twenty-three treatises, edited by Ōto Masayoshi and Omote Akira, was published in 1969.

Zeami’s treatises

Zeami was the son of Kan’ami Kiyotsugu (1333–84), a talented *sarugaku* performer from Yamato province whose Yūzaki troupe was admired at a Kyoto performance in 1374 by the young shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358–1408, r. 1368–94). Smitten by Zeami, Yoshimitsu provided him with an education in the literary arts of *waka* (Japanese poetry) and *renga* (linked verse), under the tutelage of the eminent poet Nijō Yoshimoto (1320–88). As a result, Zeami was exposed to the tradition of artistic treatises, especially *karon*

(treatises on the composition of Japanese poetry). In order to develop the prestige of his art, and to codify his personal knowledge for his artistic successors, he composed approximately twenty theoretical works over a span of roughly thirty years.

Zeami's early treatises are driven by a tension between two contrasting ideals, *yūgen* and *monomane*. The specialty of Yamato sarugaku was the art of monomane (imitation) – the mimetic, compelling portrayal of dramatic roles. In contrast, the rival Ōmi sarugaku troupes featured the *yūgen* (literally, “faint and dark”) style of graceful lyricism – song and dance at the expense of dramatic action. In the world of medieval waka, *yūgen* is the style of “mystery and depth,” of surface simplicity that suggests emotional profundity, but in sarugaku the term had a simpler meaning of “graceful beauty.” Zeami's innovation was to merge the monomane and *yūgen* styles, in part by emphasizing early training in the *nikyoku* (Two Arts) of song and dance, in order to develop lyrical grace. Only later was role-playing emphasized, through the rigorous study of three foundational models (*santai*, Three Roles): the *rōtai* (Aged), the *nyotai* (Woman), and the *guntai* (Martial).

The most prominent aesthetic ideal in Zeami's writings is *hana*, the Flower. This is freshness and appeal on stage that is inherently ephemeral. *Hana* will appear at different times in a performer's career, in different forms; it is his responsibility to constantly grow and adapt to take advantage of this process, in order to maintain freshness. In *Fūshi kaden*, Zeami differentiates this transitory flower from a true flower; the latter does not fade. Inverting the famous botanical metaphor found in Ki no Tsurayuki's Kana Preface to the *Kokinshū* (“The poetry of Yamato takes as its seed (*tane*) the human heart (*kokoro*), and burgeons forth in a myriad leaves of words”), he writes, *hana wa kokoro, tane wa waza narubeshi* (“The Flower must be the mind, its seed artistic technique”). In other words, a performer's art matures when he understands how to create a sense of rarity on stage; after years of perfecting specific roles through physical training, he attains mental mastery of their effects. To illustrate Zeami quotes from *Liuzu Tanjing* (Platform Sutra, J. *Rokuso dankyō*), invoking a model of Buddhist self-cultivation that results in the attainment of wisdom. Once this mastery is attained, practice and realization are inseparable, in the logic of Sōtō Zen.

Zeami's insistence on the proper sequence of training is often articulated through elaborate numbered typologies. The most famous of these is found in the late treatise *Kyūi* (Nine Ranks, c. 1428). Zeami divides nine styles of performance into three groups: “Upper Three Flowers” (nos. 1–3), “Middle

Three Ranks” (nos. 4–6), and “Lower Three Ranks” (nos. 7–9).¹ However, Zeami’s initial ranking does not represent the proper pedagogical order. A student does not begin at the bottom and work his way to the top. Rather, it is best to begin by studying the middle three levels, then the upper three. Thus, the proper course is to progress from no. 6 through to no. 1, finally attaining the Wondrous Flower, “that level beyond words, where the actor’s inward design and outward appearance are wondrously indivisible.” The learning of these six levels is a centripetal process that results in a transcendent effect on stage when the highest rank is attained.

But the master actor need not stop here. He may proceed to indulge in the three lower styles, even though these lie outside the realm of *yūgen* and should be avoided earlier in one’s career, simply “to amuse himself.” He brings a special ability to the performance of these base roles, transforming them into highly expressive vehicles. In other works, this advanced stage is equated with the *kyakurai fū* (Style of Return), echoing the Zen ideal of the enlightened master who returns to the secular world, having transcended the duality of sacred and profane.

Zeami is also famous for his extensive treatment of *jo-ha-kyū*. Originally terms used in the court music of *gagaku*, *jo*, *ha*, and *kyū* are best known as principles of tempo, applied to a program of plays, sections of a play, and even individual lines of vocalization. *Jo* represents a slow, stately opening, *ha* is the development or quickening of pace, and *kyū* is the climax, the resolution that is always performed at a rapid tempo. This progression is considered important because it produces in the audience a sense of “fulfillment” (*jōju*). In fact, the forms of the natural world tend to follow this rhythm, and so a successful performance should mimic them. In *Shūgyoku tokka* (Gathering Jewels, Attaining the Flower, 1428), Zeami writes,

All forms of creation – good and bad, large and small, sentient and insentient – each and every one possesses its own *jo-ha-kyū*. Even within the chirping of birds and the cries of insects, each call has its own allotted pattern, which is *jo-ha-kyū*.

Again there are echoes of Tsurayuki’s Kana Preface, which proclaims that the sounds of birds in the field and frogs in the stream are no different than

¹ Upper Three Flowers: 1. The Wondrous Flower (*myōka fū*), 2. The Flower of Profundity (*chōshinka fū*), 3. The Flower of Tranquility (*kanka fū*). Middle Three Ranks: 4. The True Flower (*shōka fū*), 5. Versatility and Precision (*kōshō fū*), 6. Early Beauty (*senmon fū*). Lower Three Ranks: 7. Strength and Delicacy (*gōsai fū*), 8. Strength and Coarseness (*gōso fū*), 9. Coarseness and Dullness (*soen fū*).

human song, which has its own spontaneous, innate rhythm – the 5-7-5-7-7 cadence of Japanese poetry.

Surprisingly, Zeami wrote only one treatise on the art of playwriting, *Sandō* (The Three Paths). The three essential components are *shu* (seed, the selection of an appropriate protagonist role), *saku* (proper structure, based on *jo-ha-kyū*), and *sho* (writing, the fleshing out of the text with appropriate literary flourish). For woman plays, the ideal protagonist roles are Heian court ladies. These are the foundation of *yūgen*, and the highest flower of *yūgen* is found in the portrayal of court ladies possessed by human spirits – for example, Yūgao, Aoi, and Ukifune in *The Tale of Genji*. For warrior plays based on characters from the Genpei War, Zeami advocates presentation closely modeled on *The Tales of the Heike* narrative, presumably for the sake of audience familiarity, and also because the Kaku'ichi Heike text embraces the courtly, artistic accomplishments of the Taira, and thus is compatible with the *yūgen* style of performance. Throughout, his advice is to choose a *honzetsu* (original story) conducive to artistic display and to embellish the libretto with traditional poetic associations of the locale and season, even if these are not directly connected to the *honzetsu*. For example, the warrior play *Atsumori* is set at Suma Bay, evoking poetry associated with Ariwara Yukihiro and Genji, both exiled at Suma and celebrated in Heian court literature. This literary mindset is evidence of Zeami's transformation from popular entertainer to neoclassical playwright, fully at home in the aristocratic culture of his mentor Yoshimoto and his patron Yoshimitsu.

Komparu Zenchiku

Late in his career, Zeami found himself hard-pressed to designate a suitable artistic successor. Devastated by the sudden death of his talented son Motomasa and frustrated by a falling out with his nephew On'ami, the recipient of the shogun Ashikaga Yoshinori's patronage, Zeami turned to his son-in-law, Komparu Zenchiku. Zenchiku was head of the Komparu troupe – originally known as the Emai-za, the oldest of the Yamato sarugaku troupes – whose actors played the most prestigious roles at the annual performances in Nara before the Southern Great Gate of Kōfuku-ji and at the Wakamiya Festival of Kasuga Shrine. Zenchiku married Zeami's daughter while in his mid-twenties, but remained head of the Komparu troupe; it is possible that Zeami's wife was of Komparu lineage. After a period of intense misgiving about Zenchiku's abilities as a performer, Zeami relented and

entrusted him with his teachings, determined to preserve the art he inherited from his father Kan'ami.

In an early treatise, *Kabu zuinōki* (Record of the Essentials of Song and Dance, c. 1455), Zenchiku reveals his deep fascination with waka. While Zeami's plays are replete with poetic allusions and feature famous waka poets as protagonists, Zenchiku goes further, proclaiming that the art of poetry is the essence of song and dance. This may be the result of his personal fascination with the poetry and treatises of Fujiwara Teika (1162–1241), an attitude inherited from his acquaintance and likely mentor, the poet Shōtetsu (1381–1459). *Kabu zuinōki* contains notes on forty-seven plays, grouped into four categories: the Three Roles of Zeami and a miscellaneous group. One of Zeami's Nine Ranks and one of Teika's Ten Styles (*jittei*) are identified with each play, a few brief remarks are appended, and one or more waka (and occasionally a couplet from a Chinese poem) are recorded. The poems, taken from an apocryphal Teika treatise, seldom appear within the text of the play itself; rather, they are meant to express its poetic essence. This work opens with the rhetorical flourish typical of prefaces to waka anthologies, and the catalog of styles is reminiscent of *karon* (waka treatise). In contrast, Zeami's writings read more like a personal notebook.

Zenchiku is best known for his original theoretical construct *rokurin ichiro*, “six circles and one dewdrop.” The first of these symbolic categories, termed the Circle of Longevity (*jurin*), represents a state of visual and emotional tranquility on stage before motion begins. “Longevity” connotes the infinite life of constantly circulating breath, the foundation for both sound and movement. The symbol of the *jurin* is an empty circle, representing stasis and also infinite potential. The second stage is the Circle of Height (*shurin*), where movement begins, sound arises from a ground of tranquil formlessness, and emotional response is first experienced by the audience, emerging from the “vessel” of the first circle. The third Circle of Abiding (*jūrin*) symbolizes the mental ease of the performer as he smoothly generates a continuous flow of individually differentiated movements and sounds. The centrifugal sequence of these first three circles – associated with body, speech, and mind, respectively – is described as the foundation of *yūgen* that underlies all successful roles.

The next three circles shift to the realm of manifest style. In the fourth realm, the Circle of Forms (*zōrin*), the circle symbolizes a mirror in which the forms of monomane – specifically, the Three Roles – are reflected. Thus *yūgen* is the underlying essence of monomane, an implicit reversal of Zeami's early view that *yūgen* is a surface beauty supported by the underlying foundation of monomane skills. The next stage, the Circle of Breaking (*harin*), denotes a

more advanced stage in the actor's career when the vulgar roles represented by Zeami's lowest three ranks are performed, but in Zenchiku's words, "the tranquility of the upper three circles is not lost." The final Circle of Emptiness (*kūrin*) is a representation of "no-form": once the tranquil images reflected in the fourth circle are destroyed by the turbulence of the fifth, a beauty which has no discernible characteristic, the highest art of all, remains. This is the province of the aged actor, celebrated in language derived from Zeami: "Advancing further and further, song and dance wither: the appearance of a flower that remains on an old tree. The art becomes one of diminishing, and finally no style, as it returns to the original Circle of Longevity." The final One Dewdrop (*ichiro*) is described as the symbolic essence that links all six circles, but it has no significance as an artistic principle.

The first extant *rokurin ichiro* manuscript, *Rokurin ichiro no ki* (Record of Six Circles and One Dewdrop, 1455), contains two learned commentaries, composed by the Buddhist priest Shigyoku (1383–1463), abbot of the Kaidan-in at Tōdaiji in Nara, and Ichijō Kanera (or Kaneyoshi, 1402–81), the famous scholar and court official. Shigyoku presents Buddhist cognates: for example, the Circle of Longevity is proclaimed to represent the Kegon teaching of "one source of motion and stillness," and the middle four circles are aligned with the Four Characteristics (*shisō*) of existence (birth, abiding, change, and extinction). Kaneyoshi responds with a primarily Confucian analysis, equating the Four Qualities (Ch. *si-de*) of the Creative (Qian, the first hexagram of the Yi jing) with the middle four circles, and the Neo-Confucian principle of the Great Ultimate (Ch. *tai-ji*) with the Circle of Emptiness.

Shigyoku and Kaneyoshi provide little practical advice on the art of performance, but Zenchiku himself became increasingly absorbed in the intellectual and religious implications of their commentaries. In later *rokurin ichiro* treatises he incorporates their categorizations, and also assigns his own cognates drawn from the writings of Watarai Shinto and Yoshida Shinto. Forced into retreat by the political turmoil of the Ōnin War (1467–77), Zenchiku took solace in *sarugaku* as devotional act, as religious ritual performed before the gods, explicitly rejecting any desire for the worldly gain and prestige enjoyed by Zeami during the glorious reign of Yoshimitsu.

Among Zenchiku's later works, most noteworthy is *Shidō yōshō* (Notes on the Essentials of Attaining the Way, 1467). Here he distinguishes two modes of *yūgen*: a pleasurable style (*yūkyoku*), also found in Zeami, that represents "roles of playful disorder; murmuring softly, the willows and cherries flutter in the breeze," and *yūgen-on*, an essential *yūgen* style of profundity. For the first time in his writings, Zenchiku explicitly equates *yūgen* with Buddha Nature. Since

all things possess Buddha Nature, all roles – even fearsome demons, which Zeami had discouraged his disciples from performing – can exhibit *yūgen* when performed with the requisite lightness and “penetration.” This notion of universal *yūgen* is consistent with present-day *noh*, where the entire repertoire is performed with extreme concentration and graceful elegance.

The treatises of Zeami and Zenchiku provide invaluable insight into the formative years of *noh* drama. Zeami’s “performance notes” are fragmentary but intensely personal documents. We see him developing his family’s stage art in new directions, reacting to professional and personal vicissitudes. At the same time, his extensive circle of acquaintances – the shogun, Zen priests, Confucian scholars, poets, musicians – provide a rich intellectual and literary vocabulary to articulate his artistic vision. Zenchiku’s writings can be seen as an explicit blueprint of this creative environment, as the composite of his symbolic *rokurin ichiro* system and the two commentaries of Shigyoku and Kaneyoshi form a microcosm of the dominant intellectual and cultural creeds of the Muromachi period.

Nōgakuron emerge in the “high medieval” age, taking on many of the mature characteristics of treatises on *waka*, the most prestigious of the *michi* arts. For example, *Fūshi kaden* constructs an authoritative history of *sarugaku*, reaching back to the era of Shōtoku Taishi (574–622) and even the mythical Age of the Gods, in a manner reminiscent of Tsurayuki’s Kana Preface. At the same time, Zeami establishes his own family as hereditary protectors and transmitters of his art, just as the Rokujō and Mikohidari families did for *waka*. The key vehicle is the master/disciple relationship, derived from the scholarly tradition of Confucianism. As in *karon*, standardized styles are held up as models of the art, to be practiced in a prescribed order. *Nōgakuron* differ from *karon*, however, in their deep reliance on the Buddhist paradigm of religious training, which brings mental and spiritual aspects to the fore. In *noh*, the artist evolves to transcend the internalized models, to realize a universal, higher truth of unfettered creativity and artistic freedom, analogous to the attainment of the non-duality extolled in Mahayana Buddhism. Furthermore, the psychology of the audience is keenly analyzed, in marked contrast to *waka* treatises, which initially define only objective styles, and then later the correct pedagogical sequence. Zeami constantly strives to adjust his art to a level of refinement suitable for his audience. This is evidence of a typically medieval concern with the process of reception, with affective theory, due to the inherently social nature of the era’s dominant literary arts. In *renga*, a participant must act almost simultaneously as poet and creative reader, and *noh*, as a performing art, provides the actor with immediate evidence of audience response.

Kyōgen: comic plays that turn medieval society upside down

LAURENCE KOMINZ

Early kyōgen

A gambler, impersonating a Buddhist statue, tricks gullible worshipers into giving him alms (*Niō*); a lowly seaweed peddler disarms a samurai and forces him at sword-point to sell seaweed on the streets (*Kobu Uri*); the powerful thunder god wiggles in pain, under the ministrations of a quack acupuncture doctor (*Kaminari*). This is the world of *kyōgen* drama, which turns late medieval Japanese society and religion upside down, often stretching the consequences to absurd extremes.

Kyōgen is Japan's classical comic theater, and also Japan's oldest dialogue-based drama. The earliest precursors to kyōgen plays are thought to be irreverent skits performed along with court dances (*gigaku* and *bugaku*) in the Nara and Heian periods. One such skit featured a nun who breaks her vow of celibacy and secretly goes to the market to buy diapers. Heian and Kamakura era *sangaku* ("miscellaneous") performances included physical humor, acrobatics, and dance. Amateur and semi-professional storytellers flourished in the same time period. All of these performers contributed to a comic heritage that would come to be called kyōgen ("crazy words").

From the early 1400s Zeami (1363–1443) and other leaders of *noh* troupes brought kyōgen performers under their organizational umbrella, and kyōgen plays have been performed as comic interludes between *noh* plays from that time until today. The tasks of kyōgen actors in the *noh* troupes have been the same since Zeami's time: (1) to perform the lively and earthy ritual dance "Sambaso" (black-faced old man) as part of the *Okina* (old man-god) play; (2) to act or recite the interludes (*ai*) in the middle of *noh* plays, explaining the situation in non-poetic speech and giving the main *noh* actor (*shite*) time to change costume; (3) to present independent, comic kyōgen plays between

noh plays. It is these independent plays, or *hon-kyōgen* (“true kyōgen”), that are the focus of this chapter.

Kyōgen texts were not written down until the Edo period. No individuals took credit for or were recognized for devising the stories for kyōgen plays. Troupe leaders and the performers were responsible for performing plays on an impromptu basis. They probably kept records of play names, character lists, and rough outlines of play plots. On-stage movements were typical, repeatable gestures – called *kata* – similar to *lazzi* in commedia dell’arte, flexible tools for improvisation. Dialogue, not song, predominates, and actors spoke on-stage in recognizable vernacular language, improvising as necessary, adapting plots and characters to each performance venue and audience.

Few records from the 1400s and early 1500s even cite the names of kyōgen plays. Interestingly, the only diarist to mention their content is the nobleman Prince Sadafusa of Fushimi, who in 1424 listed three unusual cases in which kyōgen performers’ mockery of their patrons was so pointed that the angry patrons drove away the actors. In one case the performers presented a play about impoverished noblemen at a performance sponsored by noblemen, and in another case Enryakuji monks were angered by a play about monkeys (the monkey being a sacred messenger of their temple on Mount Hiei).

The development of the plays

The oldest surviving list of kyōgen plays is the *Tenshō kyōgen bon* (1578), a guidebook for actors that contains summaries, not scripts, for 103 plays. The plot summaries are about one paragraph long, with enough detailed information for experienced improvisational performers to flesh out the action. The only literary texts included in these entries are short songs, poems, and riddles that are embedded in some of the plays. Eighty-three of the titles in the *Tenshō kyōgen bon* are still performed today. These summaries give us our only real glimpse of pre-Edo period kyōgen, and allow us to see how plays developed between the 1570s and the mid 1600s when kyōgen troupes were founded and the troupes’ official play scripts were written down.

The earliest book of play texts is the *Ōkura Toraakira bon* (1642), written by the head (*iemoto*) of the Ōkura school for his actors to use. Much had taken place to change the art since the *Tenshō kyōgen bon* was written in 1578. The Tokugawa *bakufu*, which created a sociopolitical system that sought to maintain peace and order in every aspect of life, decreed that the ceremonial arts (*shikigaku*) of the ruling elite would be noh and kyōgen. The rulers disenfranchised all but five schools of noh, and required leading kyōgen

actors to be members of three schools: Ōkura, Izumi, and Sagi. All actors outside of these troupes were banned from kyōgen. The heads of the kyōgen schools were required to write down their plays, and record instructions for members of their troupes. Kyōgen plays, once the delight of farmers and noblemen alike, were now to be presented almost exclusively to elite samurai audiences. Not surprisingly, when we read the play texts written down in the 1640s–60s we see considerable change from the 1578 versions. However, the central motif of most plays, the temporary overturning of the social order through low-ranking characters who defeat high-ranking characters, was maintained.

What were the sources of inspiration for the unknown medieval performers who enacted the comic plots in the *Tenshō kyōgen bon*? Comparing the plays' stories with other surviving texts shows affinities with *setsuwa* (folk tales, anecdotes) collected in secular and religious anthologies. But no kyōgen play resembles a stage version of a known prose story. Kyōgen performers were aware that humorous stories need to be changed to succeed on the stage.

The most popular play in the current repertory, *Busu* (Delicious Poison), is one of the few for which we can identify an original literary source: in the *Shasekishū* (Tales of Sand and Pebbles, 1279–83), a medieval collection of religious and secular tales. In the original story a Buddhist priest acquires a jar of valuable brown sugar – imported from foreign islands to the south. He has to leave the temple on business and tells his young acolyte that the sugar is a poison called “busu” (made by boiling *torikabuto* root) and that to remain safe the acolyte must not touch it. But the acolyte discovers his master's lie and eats up the sugar. In the *Tenshō kyōgen bon* version a second acolyte is added to the story, presumably to facilitate interaction on stage and dramatize the decision to eat the “poison” and then cover up the misdeed. The acolytes destroy two of the priest's treasures and later tell him that they ate the poison to kill themselves in atonement for their crimes. The relationship between the two acolytes seems to have been free for improvisational development by the actors. In the *Toraakira bon* the setting has changed to a secular household, and the two servants are the ubiquitous Tarō Kaja and Jirō Kaja who are involved in an amusing sub-plot in which Tarō tricks and teases Jirō. The two servants play the roles of what would become in the modern period a standard comic duo, *tsukkomi* and *boku* (“smart guy” and “dumb guy”) in contemporary *manzai*.

Standardization of kyōgen in the early Edo period also required the creation of a classification system for kyōgen plays, which largely follows *noh* in the use of main characters to create a typology: (1) celebratory god

plays (*waki*); (2) landlord plays (*daimyō*); (3) small landlord (*shomyō*) and servant plays; (4) husband/woman plays (*muko/onna*); (5) demon/mountain wizard plays (*oni/yamabushi*); (6) priest/blind man plays (*shukke/zatō*); and (7) miscellaneous plays (*atsume*) – many about thieves and shysters. Today the repertory of the Ōkura school includes about two hundred plays and the Izumi school 260. The Sagi school was disbanded in the late Edo period.

Kyōgen and noh

As in the noh drama, kyōgen developed many conventions of staging. Most kyōgen plays begin with stock self-introductions by the first character on stage, such as, “I am a person who lives in this area” (*Kono atari ni sumai itasu mono de gozaru*). These words create an intimacy between character and audience, in contrast to the distant gods, warrior ghosts, or court ladies the audience encountered in the immediately preceding noh play. The self-introduction is followed either by a summons to another character, or by traveling to meet another character. The traveler delivers a monologue throughout the travel sequence (*michiyuki*), explaining his situation, where he is going and why, and sometimes describing the landmarks he passes. The main body of the play features the development and resolution of a conflict. Most plays end with a chase: the victorious, usually lower-class characters are chased off by the defeated higher-class characters. Some plays end with formal felicitous laughter, with a sneeze, or other signifiers of felicitation, victory, or defeat.

Kyōgen functions in an intimate, yet oppositional relationship to noh. The carriage of the body, the slide-step walk, and musical modes are very similar. But the intentions and moods of noh and kyōgen plays are entirely different. Noh plays present famous individuals from history or literature as main characters. Kyōgen plays, by contrast, are populated by stock figures from contemporary commoner life. Noh drama presents the power, danger, or efficacy of gods (*kami*), Buddhas, ghosts, demons, and other supernatural beings, and usually requires the intercession of a priest, played by the *waki*, to help the audience understand and relate to the numinous. In kyōgen plays by contrast, commoners converse directly with deities and haggle with demons. Priests in kyōgen are not reverent figures, but the butt of mockery. Even the Buddhas and gods are playful – when a supplicant begs the god Ebisu to give him a wife, the deity tells him to go fishing for one in the ocean (*Tsuribari*)! In noh plays the suffering ghosts of famous men and women turn to the Buddha for salvation; in kyōgen unnamed commoners rely on their own

wits to solve very prosaic problems such as how to get out of a troublesome chore, how to avoid paying a debt, how to drink alcohol for free, how to acquire money quickly and easily, and how to get your husband to help out around the house.

Parody and satire

The kyōgen repertory stands as medieval Japan's secular and playful counterpart to the harsh, formal social values intended to govern the lives of Japanese. Although some characters harbor murderous intent, human beings are never killed in kyōgen plays, nor is there any suicide. Everyday life, not spiritual rebirth, is of the utmost concern to kyōgen characters. Kyōgen plays ridicule the elite and elevate the low. Conflicts between unequal rivals end with victory for the social inferior. This leveling extends up to the realm of the gods and down to animals. Gods have human frailties (*Kaminari*); noble sentiments are attributed to animals (*Tsurigitsune*).

The core of much kyōgen humor is in parody, which deconstructs and inverts specific texts or social types and norms. Some kyōgen plays have satiric intent and provide social critiques. Elite or exalted figures (secular and religious) are turned into comic characters. In *Futari daimyō* (Two Feudal Lords), for example, two foolish samurai try to force a lowly courier to serve them, but the commoner quickly disarms them, and at sword-point forces the incompetent warriors to perform humiliating children's songs and dances. He steals their clothes and weapons, and runs off.

Kyōgen's thunder god (*Kaminari*) is a hypochondriac who howls in pain when given acupuncture treatment. Everyone in the audience, in the medieval period and today, has experienced unpleasant medical treatment. We can all feel the victim's pain, so the thunder god becomes "one of us." And yet he remains the powerful thunder god, able to control the weather, and at the end of the play he guarantees eight hundred years of seasonable rains as his payment to the doctor.

Most kyōgen engages in character travesty, denigrating what is high, to comic effect. At the same time, however, socially low characters are elevated, which is a kind of burlesque. The eponymous burlesque hero of kyōgen, appearing in almost half of the plays, is the servant Tarō Kaja, a resourceful man of many appetites. Kyōgen's one-two punch of character travesty and burlesque creates a liminal, egalitarian world that existed in medieval Japan only on the kyōgen stage and in some festivals that mandated alternative social hierarchies.

Some kyōgen plays (called *noh-gakari* plays) are textual parodies of lofty *noh* plays. These plays copy the conventions of *noh*'s spirit plays but replace the exalted *noh* character with a lowly one. For example, the ghost of a warrior cruelly slain in battle becomes, in kyōgen, the suffering ghost of an octopus, caught by a fisherman, and cruelly chopped up on a kitchen cutting board, cooked, and eaten (*Tako*). His suffering is just as agonizing as the samurai's. The *noh*-style choral singing and stylized dancing are diminished somewhat for the kyōgen play, but the formal dignity and gravity of the language and presentational mode contrast with the shite's lowly status as a mollusk.

There are several kyōgen plays that pointedly satirize powerful elites. In *Konomi Arasoi* (The Battle of the Fruits and Nuts) a petty quarrel between a chestnut and a tangerine over cherry-blossom-viewing privileges spur the nut and the fruit to lead their clans to war against each other. A parody of a samurai battle ensues, but before either emerges victorious a strong wind blows both armies away. The play satirizes the samurai elite, depicting samurai honor as no more than petty pride and pique, and the samurai penchant for violent solutions as needless and self-destructive. The masterpiece *Utsuozaru* (Monkey Quiver) brings a feudal lord, a monkey trainer (a social outcast), and a monkey into intimate contact with each other. The lord initially intends to kill the monkey and use its pelt to decorate his quiver, but the lord is so moved by the trainer's grief, and so amused by the monkey's antics, that he capers about imitating the monkey, and he gives all his possessions to the trainer. The haughty samurai lord discovers humanity in an animal and an outcaste, and so discovers a hidden humanity in himself. This play strongly intimates that samurai would be better rulers if they were as compassionate and egalitarian as the feudal lord at the end of the drama. *Shūron* (A Religious Dispute) features self-righteous priests from the rival Pure Land and Lotus Sutra sects of Buddhism. Their arrogant bull-headedness takes the form of a chant competition. In the course of their shouting they unwittingly begin chanting sutras of the opposing sect – revealing the hollowness of their beliefs and the stupidity of sectarian strife.

Why didn't such parody and satire offend the elite patrons of kyōgen? Why didn't they punish actors or ban the art? The answer lies on the fine line between entertainment and social/political rebellion. While mass *furyū* dances (in the late medieval period) often blurred the distinction, turned into uprisings, and were therefore subject to numerous bans by local authorities, kyōgen remained a comic art confined to the stage. Kyōgen was born in an age of turmoil, of *gekokuujō*, when the lowborn often overthrew their masters, but the social topsy-turvy in kyōgen plays proved equally enjoyable to the Edo period

ruling elite in times of peace and stability. The stupidity and cowardice of kyōgen's samurai and priests, the gullibility of worshipers, the greedy conniving of the wealthy are so highly exaggerated that medieval, Edo period, and modern viewers see these onstage characters as significantly weaker and sillier than themselves.

Creating kyōgen humor

At the base of all humor is the perception of incongruity. Almost every kyōgen play is marked by the personification of natural or non-human phenomena, and onomatopoeia is one of the treasures of kyōgen. Actors use their human voices to represent any number of animal cries (crows: *kokaa-kokaa*; monkeys: *kyaa-kyaa*; falcons: *pee . . . yoro-yoro-yoro*) as well as heavy doors sliding (*gara-gara-gara*), sawing through wood (*zuka-zuka-zuka*), temple bells ringing and reverberating (*jan! . . . an-an-an-an*). Even more incongruous is the representation of natural phenomena using the body of the human actor. To represent mushrooms proliferating in a garden, actors of different sizes, from children to adults, wearing large conical hats, silently walk onto the stage and fill it with huge mushrooms. Thunder becomes a god, played by an actor. He flashes lightning by leaping, arms and legs akimbo, and shouting, “pikkari!” (“flash!”); and he rumbles by stamping his feet and shouting “garari, garari, garari!” (“rumble, rumble, rumble!”).

A frequently used comic device in kyōgen establishes a repeated pattern, and then suddenly ruptures the pattern. During the opening self-introduction and travel sequence in *Kaki yamabushi* (Persimmons) a mountain wizard boasts in a loud voice about his toughness and rigorous training – including sleeping in the wild. He claims great magical powers. Then suddenly, in a meek voice, he admits that he spent last night at an inn, and soon after, when put to an easy test, his magical powers prove non-existent. The audience laughs when the pattern of braggadocio and power is ruptured by the reality of lies, weakness, and incompetence. Many kyōgen plays delight viewers with hyperbolic leaps from the credible to the absurd. In *Hige yagura* (The Fortified Beard) a husband and wife argue about his long, black beard. It is his pride and joy. She wants it off – it's smelly and gets in his food. He beats her and laughs; she leaves, vowing payback. His friend helps him protect his beard using a miniature castle tower hanging from his shoulders, complete with flags and a gate. She returns with her lady friends all dressed like samurai, ready for battle. For weapons they carry over-sized scissors, tweezers, clippers, and other barbers' implements. In a sung and danced parody of

a noh-style military combat they break through the castle gate and clip and pull out the husband's beard.

Kyōgen after World War II

Kyōgen maintained its traditional repertory and functions through World War II. After the war kyōgen actors strove to create new audiences by performing for low pay at schools in the Tokyo and Kansai regions. Partly due to this, a population of kyōgen devotees arose that was not interested in watching slow-paced, hard-to-understand noh plays. Since the 1950s many all-kyōgen shows have been presented. Kyōgen actors began to experiment in the 1950s with resurrecting long-unperformed plays, adapting foreign plays to kyōgen-style presentation, and creating entirely new kyōgen plays. While these are a small percentage of plays in performance, several new works are produced every year. A few adaptations have been so successful that they have been performed repeatedly, such as the Shigeyama's (Ōkura school) adaptation of the French farce *Le Cuvier* ('The Washing Bucket, J. *Susugigawa*) and Nomura Mansai's adaptation of Shakespeare's *A Comedy of Errors* (*Machigai no kyōgen*).

Late medieval popular fiction and narrated genres: *otogizōshi*, *kōwakamai*, *sekkyō*, and *ko-jōruri*

R. KELLER KIMBROUGH

The late medieval period was characterized by a remarkable florescence of the literary, visual, and performing arts. In addition to the famous “high” culture of *renga* linked poetry, the Kanō and Tosa schools of painting, and the masked *noh* drama, the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries saw the rise of a vast new genre of anonymous short fiction (*otogizōshi*), nameless workshops producing colorful and relatively affordable bound books (*nara ehon*), and a wide variety of itinerant and temple-based performers and preacher-entertainers, including *miko* shrine maidens, *etoki* picture narrators, *shōmonji* street preachers, blind minstrel priests (*zatō* and *biwa hōshi*), temple fundraisers (*kanjin hijiri*), wandering holy men, *kōwakamai* ballad-dancers, and *sekkyō* sermon-balladeers. The cities bustled with merchants, monks, and samurai, and the highways and bridges pulsed with commerce and travelers of every sort.

The popular fiction and narrated genres of the time differed in many ways from what had come before. The golden age of *setsuwa* tales had petered out in the fourteenth century, replaced by longer, more developed stories such as those in the early fifteenth-century *Sangoku denki* (Tales of Three Countries), a work seemingly transitional between early medieval *setsuwa* and late medieval fiction. *Otogizōshi* – an anachronistic, catch-all designation for the many types of medieval short creative prose – were consumed by men and women of all ages and social classes. They were sometimes composed from preexisting *setsuwa* and *noh* plays, sometimes from scratch, and sometimes from transcriptions of contemporary oral performances by a variety of street-level preachers and raconteurs. Their authors are almost entirely unknown, but are believed to have included monks, courtiers, and *renga* masters, as well as some professional storytellers and lay preacher-entertainers.

Both *kōwakamai* and *sekkyō* (also *sekkyō-bushi*), two independent oral/performative genres with roots in early medieval preaching and storytelling, came to possess a recognizable repertoire of tales in the late medieval period. But in their transcribed and illustrated forms, most of which date from the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, these stories are also sometimes categorized as *otogizōshi*, and are thus occasionally included in major modern compendiums of all three narrative genres. There is likewise an overlap among *sekkyō*, *kōwakamai*, *otogizōshi*, and the seventeenth-century *ko-jōruri* (“old *jōruri*”) puppet theater, the early plays of which tended to be based on earlier *kōwakamai*, *sekkyō*, and other *katari-mono* (oral narrative) compositions. *Jōruri* eventually broke free of its medieval roots with the advent of *Kinpira jōruri* in the 1650s, but until that time it shared a fundamental affinity with *sekkyō*, *kōwakamai*, and other late medieval literary and performance genres. By around the late seventeenth century, *kōwakamai* was waning in the shadow of *noh*; likewise, *sekkyō* came to be increasingly influenced by *jōruri* until it finally disappeared in the early eighteenth century as an independent theatrical form. Although the present chapter is divided into three main parts – the first on mostly Muromachi period *otogizōshi*, the second on late Muromachi and early Edo period *kōwakamai*, and the third on largely Edo period *sekkyō* and *ko-jōruri* – these subjects overlap in fundamental ways, sharing an enduring medieval sensibility that transcends periodic divides.

Otogizōshi

Sometime between 1716 and 1729, the Osaka bookseller Shibukawa Seiemon published a box-set anthology of mostly short Muromachi period fiction titled *Otogi bunko* (The Companion Library), from which the term “*otogizōshi*” (companion books) was born. Alternately titled *Shūgen otogi bunko* (The Felicitous Companion Library), likely indicating its suitability as a wedding gift, Shibukawa’s woodblock-printed compendium contained twenty-three works of popular prose fiction with simple uncolored illustrations, including tales of merchants, maidens, martial heroes, anthropomorphic animals, Heian period poets, slandered stepchildren, a notorious demon, and an impecunious fishmonger. Shibukawa also included a single *kōwakamai* composition (*Hamaide*, or *Hamaide sōshi*), leading to that work’s unusual categorization by contemporary scholars as both a *kōwakamai* and an *otogizōshi*.

Rather than carving new blocks to produce the volumes in his anthology, Shibukawa seems to have recycled a set from around 1655–70, which an unknown Kyoto publisher had used in the seventeenth century to publish those same works in *tanrokubon* “red and green books” with simply and colorfully hand-daubed illustrations. In a 1769 *Catalog of Beneficial Books for Women*, Shibukawa’s publishing house, the Kashiwara-ya, advertised *The Companion Library* as “containing all of the interesting stories of the past,” and in a separate book list from c. 1764–72 the Kashiwara-ya advertised it as a “useful guide to women’s self-improvement.” Regardless of the actual suitability of his anthology for women, Shibukawa’s name stuck, and within a hundred years the related term *otogizōshi* had come to designate the wider corpus of short medieval fiction. In 1801 Ozaki Masayoshi used the word to refer specifically to the tales in Shibukawa’s collection, but in 1830 and 1847 Kitamura Nobuyo and Santō Kyōzan used it to refer to Muromachi tales in general.

Some four hundred different *otogizōshi* are known to exist today. (Efforts to count them have been complicated by an abundance of variant texts that may or may not constitute individual, disparate works.) In the last seventy or eighty years, scholars have called them *Muromachi jidai monogatari* (Muromachi period tales), *Muromachi monogatari* (Muromachi tales), *kinko shōsetsu* (Kamakura and Muromachi period novels), and *chūsei shōsetsu* (medieval novels), but the current consensus favors the term *otogizōshi*, written as 御伽草子 to refer to the twenty-three works in Shibukawa’s anthology, and as お伽草子 to refer to the medieval genre in general. Ichiko Teiji famously divided extant *otogizōshi* into six major categories based on the identities of the stories’ principal characters: courtier tales, religious tales, warrior tales, commoner tales, tales of other countries, and animal tales.¹ His system is useful insofar as it imposes a kind of rough order on the vast and diverse corpus of short medieval fiction, but it tends toward oversimplification; as Virginia Skord has observed, it “has the unfortunate effect of obscuring features held in common by disparate stories and of unduly emphasizing superficial resemblances between tales classified together” (Skord, 11). But Ichiko’s system – with its numerous sub-categories – continues to be the most widely employed.

It is a contemporary truism that commoner tales constitute the heart of *otogizōshi*, and, indeed, many of those stories remain the best-known works in the genre today. For Okami Masao in 1951, “commoner culture” embodied

¹ Ichiko Teiji, *Chūsei shōsetsu no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1955).

the spirit of the Muromachi age, and for Ichiko Teiji, likewise writing in the immediate postwar period, it was “the people” – that is, the non-aristocratic, extramonastic, and non-militaristic people – who inspired and sustained the genre.² Ichiko divided his corpus of commoner tales into four thematic sub-categories: humorous tales, stories of love and courtship, tales of worldly advancement, and felicitous tales. As examples, *Fukutomi sōshi* (The King of Farts) tells of a poor city dweller who seeks to emulate the success of his wealthy neighbour – a professional fart-entertainer – with disastrously diarrheal results; *Monokusa Tarō* (Lazy Tarō), *Issun bōshi* (Little One-Inch), and *Kotoko no sōshi* (The Little Man) tell of extraordinarily lazy or diminutive men who succeed in marrying women beyond their social and physical stature; *Bunshō sōshi* (Bunshō the Saltmaker), *Umezu Chōja monogatari* (The Millionaire of Umezu), and *Daikokumai* (The Dance of Daikoku) tell of lowly men who achieve stunning worldly success; and *Nanakusa sōshi* (The Seven Herbs) and *Tsuru kame matsu take monogatari* (The Tale of the Crane, Turtle, Pine, and Bamboo) recount the origins of auspicious things.

Although Ichiko did not see fit to grant them their own category, supernatural tales are among the most interesting and famous of all otogizōshi. Encounters with demons and ghosts, tours of hell and the afterworld, and battles with giant snakes, spiders, and centipedes were all fodder for medieval authors and artists, the latter of whom sometimes illustrated their stories in sumptuous *emaki* picture scrolls intended for wealthy townsmen, the nobility, and regional lords. For example, *Tengu no dairi* (The Palace of the Tengu), which dates from around the early sixteenth century and concerns the legendary life of the Genpei War hero Minamoto no Yoshitsune, survives in multiple exquisite handscrolls in museums and library collections around the world. Ichiko classifies it as a warrior tale, but it is a supernatural story of the thirteen-year-old Yoshitsune’s visit to the palace of the *tengu*, a mythical species of demon-bird-men known for their magical powers and mischievous inclinations. As the tale is told, Yoshitsune prays to the statue of Bishamonten at Kurama Temple for directions to the *tengu*’s palace, where he meets the so-called Great Tengu and his wife. The wife informs him that his late father, Yoshitomo, has been reborn as Dainichi Buddha in the Pure Land of Amida Buddha. The Great Tengu agrees to take Yoshitsune there for a visit, but he insists on first showing him the six planes of karmic transmigration, including the three evil realms of hell, hungry ghosts, and *ashura* (a place of constant,

² Okami first articulated his notion of the “Muromachi-gokoro,” or “spirit of Muromachi,” in an article of that title in *Kokugo kokubun* 20, no. 8 (November 1951).

never ending violence). Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century artists painted frightening depictions of Yoshitsune's harrowing journey, creating emaki assemblages of text and illustration that are neither exclusively literature nor art, but, like many of the finer illustrated otogizōshi manuscripts (both emaki and nara ehon), can only be appreciated as combinations of the two. *Tengu no dairi* shares major plot elements with the kōwakamai *Miraiki*, and, on the basis of the language of its three oldest texts, scholars agree that it circulated orally before it was transcribed.

Shuten Dōji (The Demon Shuten Dōji), which Ichiko classifies as a “monster-ridding tale” (a sub-category of warrior tales), survives in an especially large number of emaki, nara ehon, and woodblock-printed editions, demonstrating its broad popularity in the late medieval and early modern eras. The work is best known today for its inclusion in Shibukawa's *Companion Library*, but it actually dates from at least the late fourteenth century, when it was depicted in an anonymous emaki titled *Ōeyama ekotoba* (Mount Ōe in Pictures and Words). *Shuten Dōji* tells of how a Heian period emperor sent Minamoto no Raikō and his small band of warriors on a mission to slay the notorious demon Shuten Dōji, who had made a nuisance of himself by abducting and devouring young women from the capital. Disguised as *yamabushi* mountain ascetics, Raikō and his men seek an audience with the demon in his mountain-fortress home. Shuten Dōji invites them inside, where he tests them by offering “drinks” (a carafe of freshly squeezed human blood) and a “side dish” (a severed woman's leg). The men join Shuten Dōji at his grim repast, after which they poison him with magical saké and cut off his head. Most *Shuten Dōji* manuscripts contain a ghastly painted scene of Shuten Dōji and the men drinking a young woman's blood from a large shallow bowl and savoring slices of flesh from her raw, bloody leg, which is invariably laid out on a large cutting board like a fish or a shank of meat. Ironically, insofar as the men are obliged to cannibalize one of the women they had come to save, their participation in the meal causes them to be complicit in the crime they had come to avert.

Intertextuality is a characteristic of many otogizōshi, and *Shuten Dōji* is remarkable for the large number of related tales that it inspired, particularly concerning the demon in his youth. As one example, the otogizōshi *Ibuki Dōji* explores the reasons for Shuten Dōji's transformation from a human child into the saké-drinking, flesh-eating demon that he was to become. A *Shuten Dōji* prequel with plot elements drawn from the otogizōshi *Benkei monogatari* (The Tale of Benkei), *Ibuki Dōji* traces Shuten Dōji's predilections to his father, Ibuki no Yasaburō, who is said to have possessed an insatiable appetite

for meat and drink. An *Ibuki Dōji* emaki in the possession of the British Museum explains:

Yasaburō was a man of clean good looks and a strong, sturdy build, but he loved saké from his youth and drank a great deal. The older he grew, the more he drank, until he came to be perpetually drunk. His mind raving, he would spew the most unreasonable abuse and perpetrate the most horrible deeds. “Ah, if only I could drink my fill!” he would cry to his retainers. A provincial highway lay nearby, so he took to plundering the stocks of passing merchants and guzzling those.

An alternate *Ibuki Dōji* emaki in the possession of Tōyō University Library likewise reports that Yasaburō “loved saké and drank a great deal of it.” The narrator observes that

Yasaburō hunted animals in the mountains and fields and feasted on them constantly. On days when he could acquire no game, he would seize the peasants’ beloved horses, oxen, sheep, pigs, dogs, and chickens. Slaughtering and devouring firewood-bearing horses and plow-oxen, he was like a demon to behold. When word spread that he would soon be eating people, too, the locals abandoned their homes and fled in the four directions, until the area around Ibuki Village was reduced to uninhabited fields.

Yasaburō’s son Shuten Dōji, whose name means “saké-drinking boy,” immediately takes after his father. The British Museum text explains that, as a child, “Shuten Dōji was constantly drunk and deranged. His spirit was ferocious. He would abuse innocent people, and dashing through the mountains and fields, he would thrash the horses and oxen that he found there.” Shuten Dōji takes to eating all manner of birds and beasts, which are painstakingly depicted in a series of colorful illustrations in the British Museum scrolls. Before his father Yasaburō’s death, Yasaburō’s diet had been implicitly equated with evil ascetic Buddhist practices, the performance of which would endow him with strange, supernatural powers. In Shuten Dōji’s case the potential effects of a meaty, alcoholic diet are fully realized, and as the picture scrolls unroll, he gradually transforms before the reader’s eyes from a small human boy into a brawny, terrible monster.

As we can see in this and other Shuten Dōji stories, otogizōshi often allude to other otogizōshi; their authors also sometimes pass judgments on the characters and events in other works, lending them a critical, commentarial tone and providing avenues for reader-response-type analyses. The otogizōshi *Isozaki*, which seems to date from around the late sixteenth century, contains an interesting example. Although *Isozaki* is the story of a woman

who murders her husband's second wife in a fit of rage, it contains a setsuwa-like summary of a famous tale in the otogizōshi *Dōjōji engi* (A History of Dōjōji Temple; fourteenth or fifteenth century) and other Heian and medieval sources, including setsuwa and noh. A supernatural snake story classified by Ichiko as a "religious tale," *Dōjōji engi* tells of a handsome young monk who takes lodging at a single woman's house on his way to Kumano Shrine. The woman becomes infatuated with her guest, and crawling into bed with him in the dark, she nudges him awake. The monk refuses her advances, protesting that he must maintain ritual purity until after his visit to the shrine, but he falsely promises to visit her on his return. When he fails to come back, the enraged woman transforms into a giant serpent, pursues him to Dōjōji Temple, and incinerates him inside a large temple bell. *Dōjōji engi* and other sources castigate the woman for her wickedness – the narrator of a *Dōjōji engi* emaki in the possession of Dōjōji Temple explains that "all women, high and low, are plagued by a jealous heart" – but the *Isozaki* narrator, who advocates Zen meditational practices and identifies the monk as a yamabushi mountain ascetic, expresses a different opinion:

Both the yamabushi and the woman fell into hell because of the woman's single-hearted desire. But people also say that it was because of the yamabushi's stupidity. Nothing like this would have happened if she had been allowed to achieve her small aspiration. It would have been like drinking water when you are thirsty. The Buddha too was once a layman. Water may be muddled, but it will become pure again.

Writing against a host of earlier authors, the *Isozaki* narrator argues that the murdered monk himself was to blame for selfishly refusing the woman's lecherous request.

Otogizōshi are not known for their subtlety, but they are often entertaining. In many ways they constitute a literature of extremes. Their characters tend toward various kinds of socially proscribed behavior, whether killing themselves, murdering their rivals, abandoning their babies, burning temples, seducing monastics, slandering their stepchildren, or sleeping with their own siblings, parents, and children. But they are also capable of virtuous extremes, including extraordinary self-sacrifice, filial piety, and exceptional religious devotion. Characters are frequently made to embody their own intangible failings, transforming into ruddy demons and giant snakes, for example, as a result of their excessive drinking and their jealous rage. In such stories, internal psychological conditions and spiritual abstractions are manifested as external, concrete phenomena. In *Isozaki*, for example, the female

protagonist dons a demon mask before bludgeoning her husband's second wife to death; then, after the murder, she finds that she can no longer remove her disguise. Her physical transformation is vividly illustrated in several extant *Isozaki* emaki and nara ehon, suggesting a psychic change that has taken place within her as a result of her crime: she has become a demon, literally as well as figuratively. People are constantly and subtly changed by the things that they do, a point that is fantastically and flamboyantly made in *Isozaki*, *Ibuki Dōji*, *Dōjōji engi*, and other otogizōshi. As a generic category, otogizōshi are notoriously difficult to define, but they often function similarly, in some cases demonstrating depths of empathy and understanding that other, more "realistic" works of literature do not.

Kōwakamai

Unlike otogizōshi, which constitutes a purely textual genre, kōwakamai (also *kōwaka bukyoku*) refers to both a late medieval performance tradition and the tales in its repertoire. Kōwakamai, or "ballad-drama," to borrow James Araki's term, evolved out of *kusemai*, a popular style of singing and dancing performed in the early fifteenth century by shōmonji street preachers and other male and female entertainers. It seems to have emerged as a distinct performance genre in the latter half of that century when its oral narratives shifted from accounts of the origins of gods and buddhas to principally martial tales derived from earlier textual and oral traditions. The name kōwakamai, which literally means "Kōwaka dance," is derived from the name of the Kōwaka family of practitioners, one of two late medieval schools of the genre (the other being the Daigashira). The Kōwaka school traces its lineage to the fifteenth-century Momonoi Naoaki (or Naoakira, aka Kōwakamaru), who it says invented kōwakamai when he was an acolyte on Mount Hiei. However, the story of Naoaki's single-handed creation of the art is likely apocryphal, and the genre's origins remain obscure.

Likewise, almost nothing is known about how kōwakamai was enacted in the period of its greatest popularity, the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and to what degrees dialogue, mimicry, and dance were employed are all unclear. James Araki writes that while kōwakamai and noh "seem to have been equally prized by the samurai of the late sixteenth century," whether or not kōwakamai can be classified "as a form of staged drama," like noh, is difficult to say (Araki, 1981, 7–8). Moreover, insofar as none of the kōwakamai texts that survive today are written with musical or stage notation, they provide little insight into how they may have been actually

performed. In the years before his death in 1747, Dazai Shundai wrote about *kōwakamai*, explaining,

As for the *kōwaka* dancing of recent times, people say that it was started around the end of the Muromachi period by a certain *Kōwakamaru* – a descendent of Lord Momonoi [Naotsune] – when he was a child on Mount Hiei. In some parts it resembles the recitations of *biwa hōshi* (minstrel priests), and in some parts it resembles the chanting of *sarugaku* (noh). But in either case, no one employs a singing voice, and despite its being called “dancing” (*mai*), no one gets up and dances. The performers simply keep time by slapping their hands with a fan. There are a set number of ballads, all of which tell stories from the past. Nothing new is composed, and if a gentleman joins in with the masters, there is no danger that he will be urged to sing. Up until around the Kanbun and Enpō eras (1661–81), lords and nobles would drink and enjoy these performances at their banquets, but since around the Genroku period (1688–1704), *sarugaku* has flourished and everyone has abandoned *kōwaka* dancing.

Shundai’s observations are revealing, but their relevance to the *kōwakamai* of 150 or 200 years before is unclear.

With only roughly fifty extant works, the *kōwakamai* repertoire is relatively modest compared to that of *otogizōshi* (which, as we have seen, contains over 400). Its content is also less diverse. Whereas *otogizōshi* may concern any real or imagined aspect of this and other worlds, *kōwakamai* tend to speak of the samurai class and its struggles in the years surrounding the Genpei War (1180–5). The narratives are serious in tone, always dramatic, and in most cases lack the fantastic imagination and comic sensibility of many *otogizōshi*. As Araki explains,

Forty of the pieces are set in the brief historical period encompassing the years between 1160 and 1193, and the events described are generally related to members of the Heike and Genji clans. In addition to the twenty which treat the life of Yoshitsune, there are seven which concern the famed vendetta of the Soga brothers and thirteen which touch upon various aspects of the struggle between the Genji and the Heike. Of the remaining ten *kōwaka*, one is set in the mythological era, eight in various periods between the seventh and sixteenth centuries, and one in China of the third century B.C.

(Araki, 1964, 121)

Many *kōwakamai* are episodic, with one ballad beginning where another leaves off, and this is a further feature that distinguishes them from *otogizōshi* and other late medieval narratives.

Authorship of the *kōwakamai* corpus remains unknown, but the approximate date of its composition does not. The earliest recorded references to known *kōwakamai* are contained in diary entries from the years 1475, 1486, and 1498, which together mention or allude to the works *Shida*, *Fue no maki* (The Tale of the Flute), *Manjū*, and *Yashima*. In the 1498 entry, the intendant of Shōkokuji Rokuon'in Temple states that "two fine performers from Settsu province came and put on *Tada no Manjū* and the story of the Satō brothers from Michinoku province," referring in the latter case to what was likely the *kōwakamai* *Yashima* (also *Yashima no ikusa*, "The Battle of Yashima"). Moreover, considering that the otogizōshi *Tōshōji nezumi monogatari* (A Tale of Mice at Tōshōji Temple) was written in 1537 and contains a list of thirty *kōwakamai*, half of which are known from other records to have been performed at around that time, the preponderance of extant ballads is believed to date from the mid fifteenth through early sixteenth centuries. The *Tale of Mice* is additionally significant insofar as its list of *kōwakamai* is included in a larger list of temple books that were supposedly chewed up and destroyed by a mischievous mouse. Thus, despite being fictional (and despite the oldest extant collection of *kōwakamai* manuscripts dating to only 1593), the story demonstrates that by as early as 1537 *kōwakamai* were not only being performed, they were also being read.

The transformation of *kōwakamai* from a principally performative to a principally literary genre was accelerated in the early seventeenth century by the publication of several movable-type and woodblock-printed editions of *kōwakamai* ballads from the Daigashira lineage of texts. Broadly speaking, the term *mai no hon* (*kōwakamai* book) refers to any manuscript or printed edition of a *kōwakamai* narrative; more narrowly construed (and Romanized with a capital "M"), *Mai no hon* (Books of Dances) refers to an illustrated, multivolume set of woodblock-printed *kōwakamai* first published in thirty-six volumes in 1632. As *tanrokubon*, these works contain colorfully hand-daubed line illustrations, and they seem to have been sold both individually and as sets. Their textual portions were reproduced from an unillustrated series of some forty movable-type-printed *kōwakamai* published in the Keichō period (1596–1615), but unlike the works in that earlier collection, which were probably intended for a relatively small and well-educated audience, the 1632 *Books of Dances* was mass-produced for a broad reading public. The collection's immediate success is demonstrated by the fact that in 1635 it was re-released in a second, more "reader-friendly" edition comprised of the most popular thirteen of the original thirty-six works. *Books of Dances*

was republished throughout the seventeenth century in slightly different forms, and its influence on Edo period literature was profound.

Like otogizōshi, sekkyō, and even some ko-jōruri, kōwakamai were reproduced in colorful nara ehon and lavish emaki picture scrolls in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and in those forms they can be difficult to tell from related works in other genres. In addition, literary and dramatic variants and/or adaptations of kōwakamai are included in the corpuses of otogizōshi, sekkyō, and ko-jōruri, further blurring generic boundaries. The kōwakamai *Manjū*, for example, which tells of a loyal retainer's heartbreaking decision to execute his own son in lieu of his master's, was also performed as sekkyō, and *Yamanaka Tokiwa* (Lady Tokiwa at Yamanaka), which tells of Yoshitsune's mother Lady Tokiwa's brutal murder by a band of thieves, was performed as ko-jōruri in the earliest years of the theater. Furthermore, readerly versions of both works survive as otogizōshi.

Sekkyō and Ko-jōruri

The histories of sekkyō and ko-jōruri are intimately linked. Although the term sekkyō is written with characters meaning “sutra explanation,” it has little to do with the sutras; instead, it refers to both a pseudo-religious storytelling genre and its performers. In the Muromachi period, mendicant sekkyō entertainers told tales of the workings of karma and the miraculous origins of famous Buddhist icons to small groups of men, women, and children at bridges, crossroads, and the grounds of temples and shrines. Early seventeenth-century screen paintings of scenes around the Kyoto capital show them standing in the shade of tall umbrellas and reciting their stories to the rhythmic accompaniment of a *sasara*, a kind of notched bamboo scraper.

The term ko-jōruri (old jōruri) refers to the seventeenth-century jōruri puppet theater prior to the 1685 publication of Chikamatsu Monzaemon's seminal *Shusse Kagekiyo* (Kagekiyo Victorious). As a fully formed theatrical genre, including puppets, music, and narration, jōruri is believed to have emerged in the theaters of the dry Kamo riverbed in Kyoto around the first years of the seventeenth century, immediately following the introduction of the three-string shamisen from Okinawa. The name “jōruri” is derived from the otogizōshi *Jōruri jūnidan sōshi* (The Tale of Lady Jōruri in Twelve Parts), presumably one of the first and most popular works performed on the early seventeenth-century puppet stage. Although the first years of jōruri are shrouded in haze, by around 1614 full-blown plays were being performed in

makeshift venues at festivals, shrines, and deserted riverbeds throughout Japan. The plays *Amida no munewari* (Amida's Riven Breast) and *Goō-no-hime* (Goō-no-hime, named after its eponymous female protagonist) were performed in Kyoto, Kanazawa, and Kagoshima in 1614 and 1616. In addition, a pair of screen paintings of scenes around the Kyoto capital (the Funaki *Rakuchū rakugaizu*, painted in or around the Genna era, 1615–24) depict staged performances of *Amida no munewari* and *Yamanaka Tokiwa* at adjoining theaters at the Fourth Avenue Riverbed. Even retired emperor GoYōzei is said to have been entertained in the ninth month of 1614 with puppet performances of *Amida no munewari* and the noh plays *Kamo*, *Daibutsu kuyō*, and *Takasago*, although whether or not these latter works can be considered ko-jōruri (as opposed to some other kind of puppetry) is open to debate.

Sekkyō seems to have changed in the early decades of the seventeenth century when the sekkyō chanter Ōsaka Yoshichirō adapted puppets to his performances in the manner of the incipient jōruri theater, which employed a single chanter to declaim both the narrative and all of the characters' individual lines. Active around the 1620s and 1630s and believed to have performed in the grounds of Shitennōji Temple in Osaka, Yoshichirō's influence was profound, for all later sekkyō chanters (those of any historical standing, at least) followed him in embracing puppetry. Sekkyō was quickly transformed from a streetcorner storytelling art into a modern theatrical genre performed at dedicated urban venues. It would disappear in the early eighteenth century, absorbed into the flourishing and evolving jōruri theater, but for several decades of the mid to late 1600s sekkyō and jōruri competed in the city centers of Edo, Kyoto, and Osaka as rival puppet theaters with their own plays and distinctive linguistic and narrative conventions.

The early ko-jōruri repertoire was principally derived from existing narrative sources, including otogizōshi, kōwakamai, and noh. But sekkyō had its own corpus of tales, the most famous of which included *Sanshō Dayū*, *Karukaya*, *Oguri*, *Shintokumaru*, and *Aigo-no-waka*, all of which are named after a major character. Although the vast majority of extant sekkyō were transcribed or published in the seventeenth century, the stories themselves are far older, and neither their original authors nor the circumstances of their composition are known today. From around 1658, sekkyō came to be published in six acts and to incorporate grand battle scenes in the manner of ko-jōruri. For this reason, scholars generally turn to the earliest extant sekkyō – for example, *Karukaya* (1631), *Sanshō Dayū* (c. 1639), and *Shintokumaru* (1648) – to contemplate the essential features of the genre.

Like *kōwakamai*, *sekkyō* stories lack the diversity of *otogizōshi* and even *ko-jōruri*. Most tell of the powers of prayer and the once-human origins of Buddhist icons, including the Branded Jizō Bodhisattva of Tango Province (*Sanshō Dayū*), the Parent and Child Jizō Bodhisattva of Zenkōji Temple in Shinano Province (*Karukaya*), and the Shō Hachiman Bodhisattva of Sunomata Village in Mino Province (*Oguri emaki*). The stories tend to be brutal: they tell of the sufferings of small children and young adults who are variously murdered, branded, tortured, poisoned, sold, cursed, abandoned, and even fed to animals. *Sanshō Dayū*, for example, recounts the horrific tale of two small children who are abducted along with their mother and a female servant. The servant commits suicide, the mother has the tendons in her wrists and ankles slashed and cries herself blind, and the children are sold to a man who beats, brands, and starves them before torturing the sister to death in punishment for helping her brother to escape. But the story is a moving one, and when the brother comes back to wreak his final, harrowing revenge, it is hard not to cheer in spite of the barbarity of the scene.

The *sekkyō* *Karukaya* is not nearly so grim, but equally sad. Rooted in the storytelling traditions of a variety of male and female preacher-entertainers, including Kōya and Zenkōji *hijiri* (holy men of Mount Kōya and Zenkōji Temple), Kumano *bikuni* (Kumano nuns), and some Shikoku-based raconteurs, *Karukaya* describes how a wealthy warlord named Katōzaemon Shigeuji once abandoned his pregnant wife and three-year-old daughter to pursue the Buddhist path. Thirteen years later, his wife and son Ishidōmaru – a boy whom Shigeuji has never met – come looking for him on Mount Kōya. The wife dies at an inn at the foot of the mountain; the daughter dies at home; and Shigeuji, fearful of breaking a vow that he had made to give up all family ties, turns the pitiful Ishidōmaru away without revealing to him that he is his father. Similar stories are preserved in *otogizōshi*, the saddest of which may be the sixteenth-century *Tameyo no sōshi* (The Tale of Tameyo) and its variants, in which the renunciant father's two orphaned children choose to drown themselves in a river. Like the fathers they describe, the narrators of these works are often highly morally conflicted, torn between sympathy and loathing for the cruelty of their characters. By focusing on the renunciants' acute mental anguish, as well as the mortal desperation of the wives and children whom they leave behind, the authors and reciters of these didactic Buddhist tales explore the nature of domestic attachment while questioning the very meaning of monastic renunciation. As a result, their stories are fundamentally at odds with themselves, simultaneously upholding and undermining their own philosophical underpinnings.

Ko-jōruri plays can be equally distressing for the reader. For example, in *Kagekiyo*, which along with *Jōruri jūnidan sōshi*, *Amida no munewari*, *Goō-no-hime*, *Kamata*, and *Yamanaka Tokiwa* seems to be one of the earlier works in the repertoire, the protagonist Kagekiyo murders his own two children to punish his wife. Having already killed his first son, he sadly explains to his second that it is the boy's mother's fault that he will stab him through the heart. In *Goō-no-hime*, the beautiful and vivacious young heroine is likewise tortured to death over the course of nearly two full acts – a viscerally engaging scene and a ghastly example of medieval entertainment at its basest. *Amida no munewari*, a ko-jōruri play that was also performed as sekkyō by the celebrity Edo chanter Tenma Hachidayū in the second half of the seventeenth century, tells of two orphaned children – a boy and a girl, ten and twelve years old – who sell themselves into slavery in order to raise money to conduct memorial services for their late parents. The man who buys them needs to feed the sister's raw, "living liver" to his son in order to cure him of a curse. The sister agrees, but under the condition that she be paid in advance. She is eventually saved by the statue of Amida Buddha that she commissions with the money she receives.

The tale of the demon Shuten Dōji was also performed as ko-jōruri, and the ko-jōruri prequel *Shuten Dōji wakazakari* (Shuten Dōji in His Prime), chanted by Satsuma Dayū of Edo and published by Yamamoto Kuhei of Kyoto in the eighth month of 1660, was clearly inspired by it or its related works. Based in part on the ko-jōruri *Kagekiyo* (which was itself closely based on the *kōwakamai Kagekiyo*), *Shuten Dōji wakazakari* tells of Shuten Dōji's younger years as the child Akudōmaru, or "evil boy." The chanter explains that

The boy was named Akudōmaru, and by the time he was thirteen, he was unlike any ordinary person. He was exceptionally tall, and when he glared from between the strands of his wild, tangled mane, his eyes burned like fire. The hairs on his mighty arms sprouted like copper needles, and when he was enraged, he would smash mountains and pulverize boulders. If you were to ask me to speak at length about this boy, then this is the tale that I would tell.

The chanter recounts how the boy was born in response to his father's prayers to the Togakushi Deity in Shinano Province; how he slaughtered 160 monks at Kugami Temple and burned down their buildings when he was sent there to study; how he became the leader of a murderous band of ruffians and terrorized the land; how he was caught and imprisoned by the emperor's men, only to escape with the aid of the Togakushi Deity; and how he was abducted by a tengu and transformed into the demon Shuten Dōji by

Maheśvara (J. Makeishuraō), a Buddhist incarnation of Śiva. In the final act of the play, which echoes the ending of the otogizōshi *Ibuki Dōji*, Shuten Dōji is driven off of Mount Hiei by Saichō, the founder of the Tendai Buddhist sect in Japan. Although the work emphasizes (or even revels in) Shuten Dōji's depravity, it also celebrates Akudōmaru/Shuten Dōji for his extraordinary filial piety, helping to establish him as one of the great antiheroes of the seventeenth-century stage.

In their transcribed and published editions, particularly in illustrated *yomihon* (novelistic) adaptations, sekkyō and ko-jōruri can be hard to tell apart from otogizōshi and kōwakamai. The four genres share similar roots, themes, and characters, and they are united in their broad popular appeal. In *Shikidō ōkagami* (Great Mirror of the Way of Love, 1678) Fujimoto Kizan wrote that “jōruri is a vulgar art, so well-to-do people should avoid chanting it, even as amateurs.” The same might be said of sekkyō, and even the reading and composition of some otogizōshi. But compared to many of the more refined works of Japanese literature and drama, including the repertory of medieval noh plays and the early modern works of Chikamatsu and other later playwrights, sekkyō and ko-jōruri are remarkable for their energy, vitality, and startlingly visceral appeal. Like otogizōshi and kōwakamai, the plays have received short shrift in the modern period for their “rough edges” – a lack of nuance or lyricism, or mistakes in their manuscript and wood-block-printed editions – but they are exciting stories with a deeply affective power. And like much of Ihara Saikaku's fiction (composed between 1682 and 1693), which is in many ways indebted to these medieval literary and narrated genres, they display an especially vibrant side of Japanese popular culture that is indiscernible in some of the more highly regarded works of the premodern period.

PART IV

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THE EDO PERIOD (1600–1867)

Introduction to early modern Japanese literature

HARUO SHIRANE

One of the most dramatic transformations in Japanese literary history was the transition from the medieval period to the early modern era (1600–1867), which gave birth to a whole new body of vernacular and Sinitic literature. During the seventeenth century, the samurai became the peacetime ruling class while urban commoners (*chōnin*) gained economic and cultural power; access to education was expanded via domain (*han*) schools for samurai and elementary schools (*terakoya*) for commoners; and print culture came to the forefront – all of which led to the widespread production and consumption of literature.

Until the seventeenth century, literary texts had been shared through limited quantities of handwritten manuscripts, almost all of which belonged to an elite group of aristocrats, educated priests, and high-ranking samurai. In the medieval period, traveling minstrels (*biwa hōshi*) had recited military epics such as *The Tales of the Heike* to a populace that could neither read nor write. Even most samurai were illiterate, as were farmers and craftsmen. But in the seventeenth century, with the emergence of new socioeconomic structures, the government promotion of education, and the spread of print capitalism, this situation changed drastically. By midcentury, almost all samurai – now a bureaucratic elite – were able to read, as were the middle to upper levels of the farmer, artisan, and merchant classes.

Knowledge of literature in the late medieval period, as epitomized by the *Kokin denju*, the secret transmission of the *Kokinshū* (Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems), consisted of varied monopolies on esoteric learning of the Heian classical canon, transmitted as a rule to a select few through hereditary or contractual ties. In the seventeenth century, by contrast, anyone who could afford to pay for lessons could hire a “town teacher” (*machi shishō*) in one of many fields of learning. The transmission of knowledge was no longer dependent on the authority or patronage of the imperial court, the major Buddhist temples, or powerful military lords.

The Tokugawa shogunate (1603–1867), the third and last of three major warrior governments (the first two being the Kamakura and Muromachi shogunates), was founded by Tokugawa Ieyasu three years after he vanquished his rivals at the battle of Sekigahara in 1600. To control foreign trade and diplomacy, the shogunate restricted many foreign contacts under the seclusion (*sakoku*) edicts of 1633 to 1639; and to preserve social order at home, it established a four-class system in which samurai, farmer, artisan, and merchant (*shi-nō-kō-shō*) were subjugated to a strict hierarchy. Some territories, and the great cities, were controlled directly by the shogunate, but most of the country was divided into domains (*han*) controlled by feudal lords (*daimyō*). Some of these lords were Tokugawa offshoots; others were of independent lineages. Their power was hereditary and they had vassals of their own, but they held their domains at the pleasure of the shogunate, which went to great lengths to prevent allegiances or conspiracy among them. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, Japan's population had reached nearly 30 million. Of this number, roughly 10 percent were samurai, with ties of vassalage linking every man to his lord and ultimately to the shogun. With a few exceptions, such as Tokugawa Tsunayoshi (r. 1680–1709), Tokugawa Yoshimune (r. 1716–45), and Tokugawa Ienari (r. 1787–1837), who wielded nearly absolute power, the shogun was usually overshadowed by others in the administrative system, particularly the senior councilors, most often house *daimyō* who met in formal council and conducted national and foreign affairs. From time to time, powerful senior councilors such as Tanuma Okitsugu (1719–88), Matsudaira Sadanobu (1758–1829), and Mizuno Tadakuni (1794–1851) were able to dominate the council and control shogunal policy.

Politically and financially, the Tokugawa shogunate was at its peak in the seventeenth century. Thereafter, many of its *daimyō* controls lost their efficacy, and its revenues began to decline. Periodic attempts were made to restore both authority and solvency, first with the Kyōhō Reforms (1716–36), carried out by the eighth shogun, Tokugawa Yoshimune; then with the Kansei Reforms (1787–93), executed by the senior councilor Matsudaira Sadanobu; and finally with the Tenpō Reforms (1830–44), administered by the senior councilor Mizuno Tadakuni. Although the Kyōhō Reforms temporarily restabilized the finances of the Tokugawa shogunate, none of these measures had lasting success. Most of the high points of early modern literature – the Genroku era (1688–1704), the Hōreki-Tenmei era (1751–89), and the Bunka-Bunsei era (1804–29) – came before or after these major reforms, when writers were relatively free and uncensored.

The income for a samurai house was fixed according to hereditary criteria, leaving *rōnin* (masterless samurai) and second or third sons in a precarious financial situation. One result was that they often took up scholarship, literature, religion, or the arts, in which they could establish a house of their own. Many of the leading writers and scholars of the early modern period were samurai who had either lost or become disillusioned with their inherited positions and consequently sought alternative professions. Although some writers – such as Ihara Saikaku, Santō Kyōden, and Shikitei Sanba – were from artisan or merchant families, an overwhelming number came from samurai families. Asai Ryōi, Chikamatsu Monzaemon, Gion Nankai, Hattori Nankaku, Hiraga Gennai, Koikawa Harumachi, Jippensha Ikku, and Takizawa Bakin – to mention only the most prominent names – were from warrior families, usually ones in severe decline. Even those not normally associated with samurai, such as Matsuo Bashō, were descendants of warriors. A few writers had a peasant background, perhaps the best known being Issa, a *haikai* poet. Yosa Buson (the *haikai* poet and painter) was the son of a well-to-do farmer.

The policy of the Tokugawa *bakufu* to place the samurai in the regional castle towns and to force the daimyō to maintain permanent residences in the new capital of Edo, combined with new transportation networks and commercial infrastructure, resulted in the rapid development of cities. The local domain products and the rice that the daimyō collected as taxes were sent to and stored in the major cities, particularly Edo and Osaka, where they were exchanged for currency. These cities, whose population exploded in the Edo period, became the centers of literary production and consumption. In the first half of the Edo period, publishing and literary production was centered in the Kamigata area, specifically that of Kyoto (the old capital) and Osaka, the new merchant metropolis. By the 1770s and 1780s, however, the center of literary culture had gradually shifted to Edo, the political center, where the shogun was stationed and where the daimyō had to spend a significant part of their time.

Licensed quarters also played a major role in these major cities. In a deliberate effort to bring prostitution under control, the bakufu consolidated the existing brothels and placed them in designated licensed quarters (*yūkaku*), which were usually located on the peripheries of large cities, surrounded by a wall or moat. The bakufu eventually designated roughly twenty such areas throughout the country, of which the largest and most noteworthy were Shimabara in Kyoto, Yoshiwara in Edo, and Shinmachi in Osaka, followed by Maruyama in Nagasaki. The explosion of popular

literature in Edo in the late eighteenth century is exemplified by the *sharebon* (books of wit and fashion) such as *Yūshi hōgen* (Playboy Dialect, 1770), which described the ideal of *tsū*, or connoisseurship of the licensed quarters, specifically that of Yoshiwara. In contrast to the wealthy merchant and daimyō customers who supported the golden age of high courtesan culture in the Kamigata area (Kyoto, Osaka, Sakai) in the seventeenth century, in Edo these customers included petty merchants and middle- or lower-level samurai like the one found in *Playboy Dialect*. The licensed quarters and the theater districts, the two “bad places,” became closely linked. Kabuki drew much of its subject matter from the licensed quarters, and *ukiyo-e* (colored woodblock prints) depicted courtesans and kabuki actors. Even more importantly, the licensed quarters became gathering places for intellectuals, artists, and performers, whose work had a profound impact on contemporary literature, theater, music, and art as well as on the fashions and customs of the times.

In the 1630s, movable type, convenient for printing Chinese graphs but not for cursive *kana*, was replaced with multiple-use woodblocks, which were more suitable for reproducing Japanese vernacular texts, particularly those with complex annotations and illustrations. At about the same time, commercial publishing houses opened, mainly in Kyoto. By the 1660s, a wide variety of Japanese and Chinese texts were being published and sold in bookstores and publishing houses in the three largest cities. Publication was eventually based on an expected profit, of which the author was promised a certain amount, thus giving birth to the professional writer. Printed texts also became the target of government censorship in a way that handwritten texts never were. Works that touched on Tokugawa family matters or other politically sensitive topics were banned, and writers who violated these rules could be imprisoned.

Heian vernacular classics such as *Hyakunin isshu*, *Kokinshū*, *The Tales of Ise*, and *The Tale of Genji* became basic reading for educated women in the Edo period, but these works, particularly the longer ones, were generally read in digest form, often with pictures, such as *Osana Genji* (Child Genji, 1665), a popular *kana-zōshi* (kana booklet) by Nonoguchi Ryūho, or *Onna Genji kyōkun kagami* (Women’s Genji, Lessons for Life, 1713), which combined plot summaries of each chapter of *The Tale of Genji* with lessons from *Onna chōhōki* (Record of Treasures for Women), a woman’s guide to everyday life. Ethical handbooks such as *Onna daigaku* (Women’s Great Learning), which reinforced conservative Confucian values, were used in schools, while illustrated digests such as *Onna kyōkun shitsukekata* (Lessons and Good Manners for Women) combined didactic tales with commentary on classical stories.

The early modern period produced few women writers in the field of vernacular fiction. One exception was Arakida Reijo (1732–1806), who wrote historical tales (*monogatari*) and Heian-style court romances between 1772 and 1781. Women, however, continued to write poetry, particularly *waka* and *haikai*, as well as literary diaries and travel records, and they became a central audience for both theater (*kabuki* and *jōruri*) and fiction. Readership for *ukiyo-zōshi* (books of the floating world), which dominated vernacular fiction from the late seventeenth century until the middle of the eighteenth century, appear to have been overwhelmingly male. The late eighteenth-century *yomihon* (reading books) in the Kyoto-Osaka region were also targeted at male readers. But in the nineteenth century, when the audience for fiction expanded, two major genres of fiction, *gōkan* (bound picture books) and *ninjōbon* (books of sentiment and romance), catered to a largely female audience, and Tamenaga Shunsui, the principal writer of *ninjōbon*, had an assistant writer who was a woman.

In contrast to *kabuki*, scripts of which were constantly rewritten and meant for internal use, the libretti of the *jōruri* puppet theater were published at the time of the first performance and were sometimes followed by illustrated, easy-to-read digests, thereby making *jōruri* an important genre of popular literature. *Jōruri* chanting also became a popular practice among amateurs. Indeed, when the numbers of texts and performances, including *kabuki* performances of *jōruri* plays, are combined, *jōruri* may have had the widest audience of any artistic genre in the Edo period, and women accounted for a large portion of that audience.

Warrior attitudes were reinforced by Confucian ethics and tended to be highly moralistic, stressing self-sacrifice, honor, and obligation. The Confucian virtues of filial piety and loyalty afforded the bakufu a basis for reinforcing the rules of social hierarchy and the institutions of inheritance. But with the disappearance of war and the need for income beyond the monthly stipend, traditional warrior values began to collapse, and samurai became increasingly interested in the culture of the urban commoners (*chōnin*), such as pipe smoking, *jōruri*, *kabuki*, *kouta* (popular songs), and involvement with prostitutes in the licensed quarters. With their finances falling apart, the samurai turned to wealthy *chōnin* for support as adopted sons. Samurai values also deeply infiltrated *chōnin* life: the relationship between the employer and the employee in a merchant business, or between master and apprentice in an artisan house, became infused with the notion of obligation (*giri*) and service (*hōkō*). As urban commoners became wealthy,

they indulged in cultural activities that earlier had been the province of elite samurai, such as *noh*, tea, and *ikebana* (flower arranging).

Equally important, the ideals of the samurai, underpinned by Confucian values, were reflected in the popular literature and drama of the period. Almost from its beginnings, *jōruri* drama was centered on the notions of duty as they became entangled and conflicted with love and human passion (*ninjō*). Much of kabuki as well as popular fiction took the form of samurai narratives, succession disputes in samurai houses (*oiesōdō*), or vendettas (*kataki-uchi*), such as that found in *Kanadehon Chūshingura* (Treasury of Loyal Retainers) in which a group of masterless samurai remain faithful to a deceased master who had been, in their eyes, wrongly disgraced and executed. It was only in the nineteenth century that a more degenerate image of the samurai (as thieves and murderers), no doubt reflecting their deteriorating financial condition, appeared on stage in kabuki plays such as Tsuruya Nanboku's *Ghost Stories at Yotsuya* and Kawatake Mokuami's *Aoto zōshi hana no nishiki-e* (Story of Aoto and the Gorgeous Woodblock Print), also known as *Benten kozō* (Benten the Thief).

Ultimately, these two tendencies – the samurai emphasis on ethics, self-sacrifice, political stability, and social order, and urban commoner interest in money, social mobility, entertainment, and the play of human passions – interacted in dynamic ways. Genres such as *jōruri*, kabuki, and *yomihon* are usually divided into two basic formats, that of the *sewa-mono*, or contemporary-life drama, and that of the *jidai-mono*, or period drama, with the former reflecting urban commoner interests and the latter samurai values, at least on the surface. Even when *jōruri* and kabuki shifted to historical plays after the prohibition of love suicide plays (a type of *sewa-mono*) in the early eighteenth century, contemporary-life scenes were inserted into the larger historical drama so that “samurai” plays such as *Chūshingura* continued to revolve around *chōnin* themes of money and thwarted love.

A prominent feature of Edo literature is the complex interplay between two broad genealogies of literature and culture – the so-called refined (*ga*) and popular (*zoku*). The high literature consisted of *waka*, *kanshi* (Chinese poetry), *monogatari* (court tales), and related genres that had been developed and practiced by the aristocracy in previous eras. These elegant genres tended to stress courtly topics (such as nature, the four seasons, and love) in *waka* or such traditional topics as the woes of the scholar/official in *kanshi*. Popular literature, by contrast, was made up of new genres, often in the vernacular but also in *kanshi* and *kanbun*, focused on urban society, and reflected the ebullient, erotic, comic, and sometimes violent side of contemporary

culture. At the heart of popular poetry were haikai, *senryū* (satiric haiku), *kyōka* (wild poetry), and *kyōshi* (wild Chinese poetry), the latter three genres emerging in the second half of the eighteenth century. The popular theatrical genres were jōruri and kabuki, which stood in contrast to noh drama, patronized by the elite samurai and now a form of classical theater.

Perhaps the most important form of popular literature in the seventeenth century was haikai, or popular linked verse, permeated with what could be called a “haikai spirit” (*haii*) that animated other genres as well. Wit was generated by the transfusion of two opposing registers of style, seeking out the classical past in the commoner present (for example, projecting Ariwara no Narihira or the shining Genji onto an urban commoner, as Ihara Saikaku did in his prose fiction) and finding the high in the low or the sacred in the profane. As in Matsuo Bashō’s haikai, this kind of fusion could also elevate and legitimize low or popular genres. Writers of prose fiction, driven by such transgressive impulses, created a variety of genres: from kana-zōshi (kana booklets), ukiyo-zōshi (books of the floating world), *kibyōshi* (satiric and didactic picture books), sharebon (books of wit and fashion), gōkan (bound illustrated books), to yomihon (reading books) and *kokkeibon* (comic fiction).

Kangaku (Chinese studies) maintained its intellectual authority alongside *Kokugaku* (nativist studies), which came to the fore in the late seventeenth century and rose to prominence in the course of the eighteenth. These fields were an integral part of “high” literary studies and were closely associated with kanshi/kanbun and waka, respectively. Chinese studies in the seventeenth century initially concentrated on the study of Confucianism, particularly that branch influenced by the Song period philosopher Zhu Xi (1130–1200) and his followers. Later on Japanese Confucian scholars who opposed this school of Song Confucianism emerged. Two major figures were Itō Jinsai (1627–1705) and Ogyū Sorai (1666–1728), who tried to return directly to the Confucian classics through a systematic philological and historical study of ancient Chinese texts and who are today referred to as members of the Ancient Studies (*kogaku*) school. Kokugaku nativism was similar to Ancient Studies in its focus on systematic philological and historical study of ancient texts. The Kokugaku scholars, who did not reach their peak of influence until they were canonized in the modern period, examined and promoted ancient Japanese texts such as the *Man’yōshū* (Anthology of Ten Thousand Leaves) and the *Kojiki* (Record of Ancient Matters).

Ogyū Sorai’s school of Chinese studies centered on the literary composition of Chinese poetry and prose, thereby feeding into the *bunjin* (literatus) movement that began in the early eighteenth century, led by kanshi poet-

writers like Hattori Nankaku (1683–1759), one of Sorai’s disciples. Kokugaku likewise was led by scholars with literary talents, such as Kamo no Mabuchi (1697–1769), one of the best-known waka poets of the eighteenth century. Scholarship and commentary, in fact, were inseparable from the practice of such elite genres as kanshi and waka, which had been associated in the medieval period with nobility and priesthood but increasingly became the province of educated samurai and urban commoners such as Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801), a key leader of the Kokugaku movement.

From the middle of the eighteenth century the center of cultural production and consumption began to shift from the Kamigata (Kyoto-Osaka) region to Edo. Not surprisingly, writing by samurai intellectuals – such as the Chinese studies of Ogyū Sorai, who worked in Edo – also shifted to the east, the seat of political power. Until the mid eighteenth century, Edo townspeople waited anxiously for the sale of ukiyo-zōshi published by the Hachimonjiya and other Kyoto and Osaka publishers. In the seventeenth century, Edo had been a city of strangers coming from all parts of the country, mainly on the daimyō alternate attendance system. But by the mid-eighteenth century, a distinct Edo dialect had developed, and socio-economic growth created a cultural sphere that competed directly with the Kyoto-Osaka region. However, the center for jōruri and much of kabuki remained in Osaka, and eminent writers like Ueda Akinari and Yosa Buson continued to work in the Kamigata area. The result was the development of two very distinct sociolinguistic and cultural spheres.

In a society controlled by a hierarchical military organization, satire had its limits. The notion of *ugachi* (hole digging), or of satirically viewing and commenting on the “holes” or flaws in contemporary manners and mores, was central to the new popular literature and to the “gesaku” (playful writing) genres – senryū, kyōka, kyōshi, *dangibon*, sharebon, and kibyōshi – that came to the fore in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Since writers were subject to censorship or self-censorship, ideas had to be expressed in roundabout ways. One way was through satire, to point to various foibles and failings of the times that were normally hidden or covered over. The person who practiced *ugachi*, however, was not a social critic or reformer; instead, he pretended to be a casual bystander. It was often sufficient merely to expose “the hole.” With a kind of twisted or inverted pride, gesaku writers referred to their work deprecatingly as “useless” (*muda*).

Conventional literary histories consider the two high points of early modern culture to be the Genroku era (1688–1704) and the Bunka-Bunsei era (1804–29). The major figures in the first peak are thought to be Ihara

Saikaku (1642–93), Matsuo Bashō (1644–94), and Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653–1725), while the major figures in the second peak are considered to be Takizawa Bakin (1767–1848), Shikitei Sanba (1776–1822), and Jippensha Ikku (1765–1831). However, the century between the Genroku and the Bunka-Bunsei eras created a rich and deep body of literature that fused elite and popular as well as Chinese and Japanese cultural spheres. An unusual combination of humor, moral didacticism, and the fantastic inflects the work of writers as diverse as Hiraga Gennai (1728–80), Yosa Buson (1716–83), and Ueda Akinari (1734–1809), all of whom are also known as *bunjin*, or *literati*. A mark of the *bunjin* was that he imagined himself (both in writing and in painting) as inhabiting other worlds, those of China and of Japan in earlier times. In this regard, the world of the *bunjin* overlapped and merged with those of the Kokugaku scholars who turned their attention to an ancient (and often imaginary) Japanese past.

By contrast, the Bunka-Bunsei era (1804–29) is marked by the gradual loss of these imaginary other worlds, a sobering return to everyday reality and language, and the emergence of broad-based popular culture and literature populated by commoners and samurai of diverse social affinities. In *kanshi*, for example, poets moved away from the difficult neoclassical style of Ogyū Sorai's Ancient Rhetoric school, which had governed most of eighteenth-century *kanshi* poetics, into the relaxed, everyday style of the Fresh Spirit (*seishin*) movement, fostering the emergence of such down-to-earth *kanshi* poets as Ryōkan (1758–1831). A parallel to this can be seen in the trend away from the cerebral *sharebon*, driven by a tightly defined ideal of the connoisseur of the licensed quarters, to the more popular, everyday romances of the *ninjōbon*, which were widely read by women. If Buson's *haikai* represent a "departure from the common" (*rizoku*), Kobayashi Issa's (1763–1827) *haikai* marks a return to the quotidian. A notable exception here is late *yomihon*, such as Bakin's *Nansō satomi hakkenden* (The Chronicle of the Eight Dogs of the Nansō Satomi Clan, 1814–42), which was heavily influenced by the Ming vernacular novel (particularly *The Water Margin*) and represents an exploration of historical and fantastic worlds. But as a general trend, authors of the early nineteenth century moved away from the richly imaginative tendencies of the eighteenth century to refocus on the everyday world, as exemplified by the travels and escapades of two rambunctious commoners, Yaji and Kitahachi, in the most famous *kokkeibon* (comic novel), *Tōkaidōchū hizakurige* (Shank's Mare, 1802–14), by Jippensha Ikku (1765–1831).

Publishing and the book in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

P. F. KORNICKI

Printing technology was first developed in China in the seventh century if not earlier and written texts were printed on paper there earlier than in any other society in the world. From China the technology of printing using wooden blocks was transmitted to Korea and ultimately to Japan, where the first records of printing, and the first surviving printed texts, date from the eighth century. However, although printing was transmitted to Japan so early in its recorded history, printing has had a very different social trajectory there from that which it followed in Europe: it is striking, for example, that in Japan printing had only a limited impact upon the production of books and the circulation of texts until the seventeenth century. Before 1600 there was in effect a sharp divide between books in Japanese, which for centuries circulated only in the form of manuscripts, and books in Chinese, which were much more likely to be printed, especially if they were Buddhist texts.

There can be no doubt that the development of printing in Buddhist Asia is closely tied to the ritual reproduction of texts rather than to their production for reading. Ample evidence survives of the practice of ritual printing in Japan in the eighth century (of the printed invocations making up the Hyakumantō Dharani several thousand are still extant), while the printing of texts for reading or study can only be dated to the eleventh century, when commentaries on Buddhist sutras were first printed. Well before this time printing in China had already embraced the production of calendars and other secular works; in Japan, by contrast, up to the end of the sixteenth century printing was characterized by the dominance of Chinese texts, all but a few of which were Buddhist texts printed by monasteries. There was no sign of any commercial publishing of any kind, let alone publishing of Japanese texts. This imbalance defies easy explanation. After all, a sword-smith named Izumi-no-kami Kanesada published a copy of the *Kannongyō* (a section of the Lotus Sutra) in 1504, showing that monasteries did not enjoy a monopoly

on printing Buddhist texts and that individuals could sponsor printing if they so wished. A more telling example is the fact that, in the province of Suō, a number of secular books were printed by vassals of the Ōuchi *daimyō* in the closing years of the fifteenth century, including *Shūbun inryaku*, a dictionary for the composition of Chinese poetry compiled by Kokan Shiren (1278–1346). This was a secular work of Japanese authorship, albeit in Chinese. Why not go one step further and print a Japanese work? There were no technical or legal obstacles to doing so, and the explanation must rather lie in the extrinsic characteristics of Japanese literature: the hermetic courtly ambience in which most of it was transmitted, the oral and personal context in which works were interpreted and in which copies were made. It goes without saying that because Japanese literature remained locked in scribal traditions many works were lost before print gave them better chances of survival from the early seventeenth century onwards.

In the context of premodern Japan, “printing” of course means woodblock printing, or xylography, a technology that originated in China in the seventh century. It is in essence a technology for the reproduction of handwritten texts, for it involves pasting an inverted manuscript on to a wooden block, cutting out the white parts to a depth of a few millimetres to leave the text standing in relief, and finally applying ink and paper to transfer the text from the wooden block to the paper. This technology possessed some distinct advantages. It was a simple matter, for example, to include illustrations or other non-textual material (mathematical formulae, kimono designs, and the state of play in board games such as *go*), as well as *kunten* reading marks to enable Japanese readers to construe Chinese texts. Of perhaps equal importance was the fact that each text retained a calligraphic personality rather than the impersonality of a standard typeface: the text stared at each reader with the idiosyncrasies and quality (good or bad) of the calligraphy of the person who had copied out the text. A form of printing it indubitably was, but at the same time it retained close connections with scribal traditions.

Woodblock printing was the norm throughout the Edo period, but in the second half of the sixteenth century typography reached Japan from two very different sources and enjoyed several decades of success. One of those sources was Europe, for in 1590 the Jesuit Alessandro Valignano brought a movable-type printing press to Japan for use by the Jesuit missionaries. This was used to print works in Latin, in transliterated Japanese and in *kana* and characters, perhaps as many as a hundred titles in all, though copies of only forty survive. Most of the output was devotional but there were some secular works as well, including the speeches of Cicero and part of the *Heike*

monogatari (The Tales of the Heike): this last, printed in 1592 in transliterated Japanese, was the first work of Japanese literature ever to be printed. The Jesuits were, however, forced to abandon their printing activities once the suppression of Christianity became severe in the early seventeenth century.

The other source of typography was Korea, for the technology of printing with metallic movable type had been put to extensive use by Korean printers from the thirteenth century onwards, and most likely earlier. There is no record, however, of typographically printed books reaching Japan from Korea until the closing years of the sixteenth century, when Hideyoshi's troops brought back as booty not only cartloads of books but also a font of printing type, which was presented to Emperor GoYōzei and immediately used in 1593 to print a version of the *Xiao jing* (Classic of Filial Piety, J. *Kōkyō*). GoYōzei then had a font of wooden type cut, which was used to print various works in Chinese, including the *Sishu* (J. *Shisho*) – the *Four Books* of the Confucian tradition – and the first part of the *Nihon shoki*.

To which of these two typographic traditions did Japanese printers turn? Given that most of the Jesuit printing was concentrated in Kyushu, far from the centers of power, and was tainted by the association with Christianity once persecution got under way, it seems obvious that the Korean tradition would have been more influential. On the other hand, though, the Korean tradition was used exclusively for printing Chinese books, while it was the Jesuits who had pioneered the printing of Japanese texts and the use of kana in print. What is indisputable is that both traditions steered printing in Japan away from the monastic model, which had hitherto produced little more than sutras and devotional texts in Chinese; instead, the hallmarks of Japanese typography were secularization and vernacularization. Secularization ensured that many Chinese literary, philosophical, and historical works became easily available in print in Japan, and as the works of the Confucian tradition became the cornerstone of educational practice the demand for Japanese editions, with assorted reading aids to help readers construe the text, remained buoyant throughout the Edo period. To be sure, Buddhist sutras and devotional works continued to be printed in quantity, at least in the seventeenth century, but they no longer dominated market provision. Vernacularization, on the other hand, made Japanese a print language and brought Japanese writing onto the print market for the first time.

For the first forty years of the seventeenth century, typography flourished in Japanese soil, albeit not to the exclusion of woodblock printing. At first, typography took the form of editions sponsored by successive emperors, by Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu, by some Buddhist temples, and by private

individuals such as medical doctors. By far the most famous examples of typography in the first decade were the so-called *Sagabon*, books printed in Saga, to the west of Kyoto, by a wealthy merchant, Suminokura Soan, and the calligrapher and arbiter of taste Hon'ami Kōetsu. The *Sagabon* were the first manifestation of vernacularization, for almost all of them were Japanese texts, like the *Ise monogatari* (The Tales of Ise), *Tsurezuregusa* (Essays in Idleness), and *noh libretti*. But they also made the book a work of art: fine papers were used (colored or patterned), illustrations were adapted from the manuscript traditions, and the type was modeled on the hand of Kōetsu himself, complete with ligatures to reproduce the flow of his calligraphy. At this stage it is not clear if we are talking about publication or not, for we do not know if any of these works printed typographically were made available to the public. By the second decade of the seventeenth century, however, mercantile commercial publishers had begun to operate, at first in Kyoto and then in Edo, and some of them adopted typography.

By the 1640s, however, typography in Japan was in terminal decline and it was defunct by 1660. Why should such an apparent technological “regression” to woodblock printing have occurred? It is essential to note that at issue is not simply the practice of printing but commercial publishing. Typography was not an ideal solution to the requirements of the market in seventeenth-century Japan. Firstly, it required the maintenance of a very large font of characters and kana; given that wooden type was the norm and that it was given to warping and splitting, replacement was frequently necessary. Secondly, illustration had rapidly become an important element of the book, partly under the influence of imported Ming illustrated books, and this could only be provided using wood blocks; thus publishers who used typography had to retain woodblock technology for illustrations. And thirdly, vernacularization forced publishers to make difficult choices about register, that is, about kanji literacy, and the desire to add small *furigana* glosses alongside characters militated against typography. By contrast, woodblock printing rendered fonts unnecessary, coped with illustrations, and permitted the addition of all sorts of glosses and other aids to reading; what is more, it allowed publishers to respond to the slow markets of the seventeenth century by printing extra copies from existing blocks from time to time. There is, therefore, nothing extraordinary about the ascendancy of xylography in the Edo period.

For the remainder of the Edo period, publishing was exclusively based upon the woodblock-printed text. This had inescapable consequences for the generation and reproduction of literary works. One was the symbiosis of text

and image, which publishers drew attention to by making sure that the titles of their wares carried the word *eri* (illustrated) as a prefix. Indeed, it was illustrators such as Hishikawa Moronobu and Yoshida Hanbei in the seventeenth century whose names featured in books, when the texts they were illustrating were often published without indication of authorship. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the close relationship between fiction and illustration was maintained by prominent artists like Nishikawa Sukenobu and Katsushika Hokusai. Secondly, books were likely to remain in print for as long as the blocks could produce legible copies, which in some cases was more than a hundred years. The blocks represented a capital investment and so they could be, and often were, sold to other publishers who could either try to find new markets or, more unscrupulously, change a book's title and try to pass it off as a new publication; this was the common fate of many works of fiction produced in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. A third consequence was the limitation on the number of copies that could be produced, for after a couple of thousand copies the wear and tear on the blocks considerably reduced the quality of the printed impression. This was not a problem in the seventeenth century, when sales of several hundred copies were considered very satisfactory, but by the nineteenth century publishers were forced to consider having the printing blocks recarved to meet demand. On the other hand, the simplicity of xylography made it possible for groups of haikai enthusiasts to have their poems printed privately and thus the poems of many local groups in the provinces, and in particular of many women poets, have been preserved in print.

As the example of the haikai enthusiasts shows, private publication was a possibility in the Edo period, and was adopted by some Buddhist temples as well as by ikebana (flower arranging) circles. But such private publications represented a mere fraction of the total, and it was instead commercial publishing that furnished the mechanisms for the production and dissemination of most literary works. Unfortunately, any attempt to understand the finances of commercial publishing in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is beset by the lack of documentary material; apart from a few anecdotal references we know nothing of printing and binding costs, break-even points, sales figures, and so on. On the other hand, we do know how the book trade operated and how manufactured books reached their readers.

Commercial publishing began in Kyoto in the early years of the seventeenth century and was dominated at least until the end of the century by a group of ten booksellers of mercantile status; one of them, the firm of Murakami Kanbei (Heirakuji), is still in business. These "booksellers"

(known in Japanese by a variety of names including *mononohon'ya*, *hon'ya*, *shorin*, and *shoshi*) usually combined a number of operations: the printing and binding was carried out in-house, the shop-front offered new publications for sale, and the premises were also often used as the base for second-hand bookselling, book-lending, and distance-selling by itinerant salesmen.

By the 1660s the book trade had established itself in the three main cities of Kyoto, Osaka, and Edo, although for most of the seventeenth century many of the booksellers of Osaka and Edo were little more than branches or agents of Kyoto firms. Books printed in Kyoto rapidly enjoyed a wide, even national, circulation: the diaries and letters of Kaibara Ekiken and other intellectuals show that books were reaching northern Kyushu, Wakayama, Kanazawa, and other castle towns, presumably taking advantage of the coastal transportation network. By the end of the eighteenth century the cultural leadership of Kyoto in book production was under challenge from Edo, particularly with the development of new genres of fiction such as *kibyōshi*, *sharebon*, and later *yomihon*, *ninjōbon*, and *kokkeibon*. It was at that time that Edo publishers like Subaraya Mohei, who had the license to print *bukan* (samurai directories), and Tsutaya Jūzaburō, who started out by selling guides to the Yoshiwara brothel district, began to establish themselves as a presence on the national market as Edo genres of fiction came to dominate it. Nevertheless, Edo never dominated Japanese publishing in the way that Tokyo would in the twentieth century. Apart from the continuing activities of Kyoto publishers, who concentrated on Buddhist, Sinological and medical texts, art books, and other staples of the book trade, there were by the end of the eighteenth century publishers active in a number of the larger castle towns, especially Nagoya, Wakayama, Sendai, Kanazawa, and Hiroshima; among other things, they published the works of local intellectuals and the collections of local *haikai* poets, often in conjunction with metropolitan publishers to ensure a wide circulation. Thus, for example, many of the nativist study writings of Motoori Norinaga and his intellectual successors were published in Matsuzaka or Wakayama but achieved national circulation.

Well before the end of the seventeenth century the book trade had found itself dealing with a bewildering quantity of publications. To bring some order and to facilitate access to information about books in print the trade began to issue booksellers' catalogues (*shojaku mokuroku*) which listed books that were commercially available or were about to become so. The first of these was published c. 1666 and there were new or revised editions every few years up to 1729; thereafter there were fewer editions, presumably because the quantities had become unmanageably large and in any case publishers were by then

issuing individual catalogues of their own books in print. 'The booksellers' catalogues were never comprehensive – they excluded erotica, ephemera, private publications, and publications of the Bakufu Academy and domain schools – but the jump from the fewer than four thousand items listed in the 1670 catalogue to the eight thousand items listed in the 1696 catalogue indicates the vigour of the book trade and the capacity of the market. Some of these catalogues give prices, from which it is apparent, for example, that illustrated editions of *The Tales of Ise* could be had for less than two *momme* at a time when the daily wages of skilled labourers were three *momme*. But prices were not fixed: they depended on the quality of the paper and the covers, and supplements were sometimes charged to cover long-distance shipment.

By the end of the seventeenth century the book trade had become more commercially astute and had begun to organize itself. Booksellers' guilds (*hon'ya nakama*) were recognized by the bakufu in 1716 (Kyoto), in 1721 (Edo), and in 1723 (Osaka). In this way existing arrangements for the protection of the book trade were given official recognition. In return for a fixed annual payment, guild members enjoyed a monopoly of the right to publish and some protection from copyright infringements (copyright lay at this time with publishers rather than with authors), while the bakufu acquired a mechanism for controlling the alarmingly vigorous book trade: for the bakufu, the principal function of the guilds was to exercise the functions of censorship (see below). Meanwhile, the book trade had recognized the value of celebrity authorship: whereas few of Ihara Saikaku's works carry his name, the works of his successors as novelists in the early eighteenth century, Ejima Kiseki and Hachimonjiya Jishō, routinely appear at the head of the text. At around the same time it became common for books to contain at the back at least a page giving details of other publications by the same author or of the publisher's current list.

Although publishers recognized the commercial value of successful authors, they do not seem to have been unduly keen to pay them. It has often been supposed that Kyokutei Bakin in the early nineteenth century was the first writer in Japan to make a living from writing. Whether this is true or not, he was definitely not the first author to be paid for his work. An anecdote told of Saikaku by one of his contemporaries has him failing to produce a work for which he had already received an advance payment; at the very least this indicates that the notion of being paid for literary work, and the vocabulary to express it, was already current by the early eighteenth century. But it is not until the end of the century that we find incontrovertible evidence of authors such as Bakin and Santō Kyōden being routinely paid

for their writings. Thus while it is clear that there was a commercial nexus linking publishers to their products, it is not clear that authors had a strong commercial interest in their works until the 1790s.

The advent of commercial publishing thus not only made texts available to wider publics than before, it also packaged, marketed, and distributed even classic texts in ways that gave them new meanings as the book trade grew to maturity in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Whereas the Sagabon editions of *The Tales of Ise*, for example, had consisted of the unadorned text and nothing extra apart from the illustrations, which had in any case been integral to the scribal transmission of the text, later editions came packaged entirely differently. The subtitle on the cover might proclaim that this was a new edition (irrespective of whether it was or not) and fully illustrated; the preface by some distinguished figure would place it in an intellectual setting; and the names of the editors and/or illustrators would now figure prominently at the outset. And at the end the reader would find a list of other publications from the same bookseller. Thus the text was no longer enough in a market in which publishers were in competition and famous names were now being used to sell books.

What did the newly established commercial publishers of the early seventeenth century produce for the market? By the end of the century their range covered not only all genres of medieval Japan but also new forms of writing anchored more explicitly in the contemporary urban marketplace; their first and most important overall contribution, however, was undoubtedly the permanent secularization and vernacularization of the book. It is true, they did continue to print considerable quantities of Buddhist texts, and there was clearly a commercial demand for them, but their output was dominated instead by Japanese books of all sorts and by secular Chinese texts, including both the classics such as the *Classic of Filial Piety* and literary works such as the popular anthology of Tang verse *Tōshisen* (Ch. *Tangshi xuan*).

There has long been a tendency to disregard the printing and circulation of Chinese texts in Japan, as if, being in Chinese, they were not part of Japanese print culture. This is, however, to distort not only the history of the book in Japan but also the shape of Japanese culture in the Edo period. For most of the period intellectual discourse at the highest level was predicated on a knowledge of Chinese and familiarity with Chinese texts, and the key texts were just as much a part of education in private elementary schools (*terakoya*) as they were in the Bakufu Academy and the domain schools for high-ranking samurai. Not surprisingly, therefore, Chinese texts circulated in a bewildering variety of editions: there were imported Chinese and Korean imprints, which

were highly sought after but required a high level of Sinological literacy, like unglossed Japanese editions, and there were Japanese editions replete with notes, glosses, and other material provided by Japanese editors. *Tōshisen*, for example, was in the nineteenth century available in more than forty different editions published by Suwaraya Shinhei of Edo, each varying in size, illustrations, and exegetical material. These Sinological texts were an indispensable part of any intellectual's library, but they were also to be found in the modest collections of village elders, who were perhaps aspiring to elite culture in an attempt to underline the status differences between themselves and humble cultivators. It was, of course, print that made it possible for these texts to spread beyond the elite and to become the cornerstone of education. Given that the Chinese classics, and later on Ming fiction as well, were such an abiding point of reference in the literature of the Edo period and given that a number of women such as Ema Saikō became expert exponents of kanshi (Chinese poetry), the Sinological acculturation of non-elites and of women is of no small importance.

The Japanese books printed in the seventeenth century consisted in the first instance predominantly of the literature of past ages, texts that had circulated for centuries in manuscript. Thus in the first few decades of the seventeenth century innumerable different editions appeared of *The Tale of Genji*, *The Tales of Ise*, *Essays in Idleness*, *Taiheiki*, and other prose works in the canon. The earliest editions consisted of little more than the text, and some of these works, especially *The Tale of Genji*, were far from easy to read and required instruction or assistance that these editions did not furnish. However, publishers gradually sought to make these works accessible to a new market of readers by illustrating them lavishly, by appending glosses or full commentaries, and sometimes by producing simplified and abbreviated editions. Thus readers who might have found the bare text of the *Genji* without notes or glosses rather daunting could turn with relief to the definitive commentary in sixty-two volumes (*Kogetsushō*, 1673) prepared by the prominent poet and scholar Kitamura Kigin (1624–1705), and if that was too intimidating or costly, they could always have recourse to *Genji kokagami* (Little Mirror of the Genji) or *Jūjō Genji* (Genji in Ten Chapters), both of which appeared in countless different editions in the seventeenth century. There can be no doubt that the *Genji* and other classic works were now reaching new readers with different needs and requirements from those of earlier generations who had approached them in manuscript and with the help of a tutor. In the eighteenth century this process went further as Nishikawa Sukenobu began producing picture-book versions of the classics

published by Kikuya Kihei of Kyoto, such as *Ehon tsurezuregusa* (1740; based on *Essays in Idleness*) and *Ehon asahi-yama* (based on the *Pillow Book*).

Although new types of fiction, written mostly in kana, did emerge in the seventeenth century, it is likely that the more important literary genres from the point of view of the book trade were haikai poetry and playbooks. The first haikai collection was *Enokoshū* (1633), which was published by a monastic printer in Kyoto and contained the works of 178 poets from five different provinces; this was followed by *Gyokukaishū* in 1656, which contained verses by 658 people from thirty-seven provinces, thus showing the growth of the haikai-composing population. By the 1670s several booksellers had decided to specialize in the publication of haikai books, notably Izutsuya Shōhei of Kyoto; the founder was a follower of the celebrated poet Matsunaga Teitoku who published his first haikai book in 1652, and the firm lasted for five generations. Before long haikai books offered more than just texts as they began to partake increasingly in the arts of the book: the first illustrated example was *Inago* (1656), a collection of the verses of Kitamura Kigin, but by the second half of the eighteenth century haikai books were often accompanied by exquisite polychrome illustrations by prominent artists like Katsuma Ryūsui and Hanabusa Ippō.

Similarly, the rise of the kabuki and bunraku theaters created an opportunity and a demand that Osaka booksellers, in particular, were not slow to take advantage of. Unfortunately, many of these publications were ephemeral in nature and survival rates from the seventeenth century are poor. The oldest extant book of actor critiques, *Yarōmushi*, dates from 1660 but was surely not the first of its kind. Theater-related publications took many forms apart from actor critiques, theater programmes (*banzuke*), and actor prints, all of which were staples of the theater publishing industry. For example, the texts of plays or parts of plays were made available to the theater-going public in the form of *shōhon*, or authenticated playbooks, and as recitation became a popular leisure activity these were adapted for the use of amateurs with the addition of some marginal aids to recitation (*keikobon*, or practice books). In Osaka the texts of plays were transformed after the performances were over into a new form of book, the *eiri-nehon*, which was an illustrated version of the text for reading rather than recitation; in the 1790s these became lavish products with full color illustrations. This by no means exhausts the range of publications deriving from the kabuki theater, but in view of the close relationship between the kabuki theater and the fictional literature of Edo, and in particular the prominence of dialogue rather than narrative, the profusion

of theater-related publications was indubitably of importance in shaping literary sensibilities in the Edo period.

Who was reading all these books? It is incontrovertible that the new market of readers was predominantly urban, embraced both samurai and those of plebeian status (i.e. merchants and artisans), and included women as well as men. The concentration of readers in towns is evident from the urban setting of fictional works and from the proliferation of practical publications aimed at urban dwellers, such as detailed city maps. This is not to say that rural readers did not exist, for we know of Osaka booksellers who were hawking their books around the rural hinterland, but it was much truer now than it had been earlier that Japanese literature was being produced in the big cities primarily for the consumption of their large populations. The social composition of the intended and actual audience for books is more difficult to grasp, but the emergence of plebeian heroes in fictional works such as *Ukiyo monogatari* (Tales of the Floating World, 1661) and the publication of didactic books for merchants like *Chōninbukuro* (The Townsman's Bag, 1719) demonstrate that samurai did not monopolize the readership of printed books; given that samurai were notionally forbidden to attend kabuki performances, it may be hypothesized that most of the market for theater publications was plebeian as well. Women readers had hitherto been a neglected component of the market for books, but publishers were quick to recognize their commercial potential: by the end of the seventeenth century book catalogues included a section of *nyosho* (books for women) and publishers were already producing a range of books with titles identifying them as intended for women readers. These included works such as *Onnayō kinmō zui* (Encyclopedia for Women, 1687) and *Onna hyakunin isshu* (Women's Hundred Poems from a Hundred Poets, 1688), as well as numerous calligraphy guides, letter-writers, and conduct books for women. The most contentious issue, however, was that of the classic works of Japanese literature such as *The Tale of Genji*: although most of them had been written by women and had for centuries dominated the canon, male Sinologists like Hayashi Razan (1583–1657) and his followers had grave doubts about the suitability for women of such works dealing with emotional relationships between the sexes. In part their anxiety was fueled by the very fact that print had now made *The Tale of Genji* easily accessible and they sought to urge women to read more uplifting literature, but for all that *The Tale of Genji* remained indispensable as a source of knowledge about waka poetry, courtly etiquette, and courtly sensibilities, and for these reasons conduct books openly urged women to read it.

For would-be readers, what alternative was there to buying a book? For samurai there were the Bakufu Library and the libraries of the various domain schools, but access to these was restricted and in most cases the stock consisted overwhelmingly of Sinological texts and commentaries. Public libraries did not exist, so the only alternative was to borrow a book from an acquaintance or from a bookseller. Surviving diaries and letters show that particularly in rural settings where books were rare it was common practice to borrow and to lend, and some owners went to the trouble of writing in their books a plea for a speedy return. Commercial book-lending, on the other hand, probably became a standard practice at the end of the seventeenth century as a side-line for urban booksellers, but in the eighteenth century independent lending libraries (*kashihon'ya*) became the norm. Unlike circulating libraries in Europe, the proprietors customarily carried their wares around on their back, exchanging new books for old. They operated in all the castle towns and in various hot-spring resorts, post-towns on the major highways, and other settlements from one end of Japan to the other, and they thus contributed to the development of a national book culture whereby the books produced in Kyoto, Edo, and Osaka reached all corners of Japan. The mainstay of their stock was usually fictional literature, and the letters of Bakin show that his historical romances (*yomihon*) like *Nansō satomi hakken-den* (The Chronicle of the Eight Dogs of the Nansō Satomi Clan, 1814–42) were too expensive for most readers and that publication was dependent upon the willingness of *kashihon'ya* to purchase them for their customers.

Edo period readers were not in the habit of writing marginal notes in their books or of keeping reading diaries, so it is difficult to gauge how they read and what impact their reading had on them. However, the survival of inventories of books or of intact collections enables us to assess the reading tastes of intellectuals as well as of rural cultivators, and it is striking that rural book-owners often counted basic Sinological texts among their books and that at all levels the ownership of banned books was widespread. How effective, then, was censorship in this period?

Organized censorship in Japan was unknown before the Edo period, and even after 1600 there can be no doubt that the bakufu was slow to appreciate the potential dangers of commercial publishing. In the seventeenth century there were two subjects which printed books could not touch: one was Christianity, and in 1630 strict controls were placed on the importation of books from China at Nagasaki to make sure that no Chinese translations of works by Jesuit missionaries entered Japan; the other was Toyotomi Hideyoshi and the process whereby Tokugawa Ieyasu supplanted his heirs.

A number of books on these proscribed subjects were banned in the course of the seventeenth century, and from at least 1673 onwards the bakufu began issuing censorship edicts designed to exercise more control. These were vaguely worded but in practice excluded from the realm of commercial publishing sensational events and other kinds of news, all forms of erotica, and anything to do with the shogun, the bakufu, daimyō, and other high-ranking samurai. Thus the events connected with the revenge of the forty-six rōnin in 1702 were out of bounds on several counts, so an account of the sensational vendetta published in 1719 was immediately banned, although copies were available in bookshops and manuscript versions made good the shortage of printed copies.

It was the guilds that were responsible for exercising pre-publication censorship and their responsibilities were made more burdensome in new censorship legislation promulgated in 1721–2, which required, among other things, the names of the author and the publisher to be clearly displayed in the colophon. The vagueness of the definition of unacceptable subject matter made inspection of proposed books a tricky business, for the guild inspectors were also punished if a book that had been passed for publication was subsequently banned. This happened in the 1790s and the 1840s, two occasions when the bakufu cracked down on popular literature.

The impact of censorship on Japanese literature during the Edo period was somewhat haphazard but it was real enough to encourage writers and the guilds to engage in preventive self-censorship and to encourage writers to adopt spurious historical settings if they wished to write about contemporary matters, as was the case, for example, with *Chūshingura* and other versions of the revenge of the forty-six rōnin. There were two ways around censorship: one was to resort to underground publishing with no indication of the publisher, which was the preferred route for erotica, and the other was to resort to manuscript circulation instead, which is the subject of the following section.

Given the rapid rise of commercial publishing in the Edo period, it is inevitable that the history of Japanese literature in that period has always been written in terms of printed literature. However, this is to neglect the survival of manuscript traditions in the midst of print. Literary manuscripts were not necessarily produced only for private consumption but can be shown in some cases to have been sold and circulated in the same ways as printed books, and many booksellers' advertisements made it perfectly clear to their customers that they had manuscripts as well as printed books to offer.

There is one important area of literary production that bypassed print in the Edo period and rarely features in literary histories. It is the *jitsurokutai*

shōsetsu, a generic term for fictionalized accounts of recent scandalous or sensational events. It was not possible to print these works for the censorship legislation in the Edo period forbade the treatment of any such matters in commercial print, but that did not stop them from circulating widely, through booksellers and lending libraries. They were invariably anonymous, for the bakufu made even the circulation of such manuscripts an offense, even though the factual content was tempered with fictional elements. The balance between fiction and fact is in most cases difficult to establish, but the dialogue is obviously fictional while legal judgments and documents cited were often authentic; the accuracy of the narrative, however, is often impossible now to establish.

This was an extremely popular genre of fiction, albeit one routinely omitted from literary histories. One example out of many is *Keian taiheiki* (The Turmoil in the Keian Era), which is anonymous like most works in this genre. It treats of the failed insurrection against the bakufu plotted by Yui Shōsetsu (1605–51) in the fourth year of the Keian era (1651). Yui Shōsetsu was an expert on military tactics, and although the plot was betrayed and he committed suicide the threat to the bakufu had been real. *The Turmoil in the Keian Era* is thought to have been written in the early eighteenth century. In 1771 it was included in *Kinsho mokuroku* (Catalogue of Proscribed Books), which was printed by the booksellers' guild of Kyoto, ostensibly in order to alert the trade to books that should not be handled; an appendix contains a long list of proscribed books, including very many manuscripts on topics such as the Akō incident (the revenge of the forty-six rōnin), various scandals involving daimyō, and sensational vendettas. So by this time *The Turmoil in the Keian Era* was clearly known to Kyoto booksellers, and in all likelihood available there. When surviving copies are transposed onto a map of Japan (so far fifty manuscripts that give an indication of where they were copied or read are known), it is clear that the work had reached all parts of Japan from the southern tip of Hokkaido to Kyushu; what is more, the enormous Daisō lending library of Nagoya had no fewer than five copies to offer customers, a clear sign of its popularity.

What was true of *The Turmoil in the Keian Era* was true of numerous other illicit manuscripts, including not only fictionalized accounts of sensational events but also historical works questioning the legitimacy of the bakufu and studies of the threats to Japan's security. In this respect, manuscripts were being "published" and circulated in the Edo period alongside printed publications, which were the dominant, but not the only, form of literary production.

A forest of books: seventeenth-century Kamigata commercial prose

LAURA MORETTI

How might we construct a history of seventeenth-century prose literature that is respectful of its historical contours and development? What role should we assign to Ihara Saikaku in our account? Should we recognize a caesura at some point in the evolution of this prose literature? If so, where should we posit it? This chapter explores these issues by redefining the boundaries of seventeenth-century literature, by examining its contents and features, and by reflecting on its legacy throughout the early modern period.

To use a metaphor from the Edo period, by the end of the seventeenth century woodblock printing had given rise to a forest of books (*fumihayashi*) that was growing ever more luxuriant. This metaphor well describes the large number of books that were produced, their variety, and their power to address a vast public that was no longer restricted to the intelligentsia but potentially included peasants, artisans, and merchants. How can we disentangle the intricate branches that fill this forest?

Shojaku mokuroku, book-trade catalogues produced by Kyoto publishers/booksellers, provide a hint. The 1666–7 catalogue divides books into twenty-two categories, which can be divided into four main groups. Most of the titles listed are books in Chinese – mainly Buddhist scriptures and commentaries, Confucian texts, Shintō books, dictionaries, Chinese poetry anthologies, medical books, and military treatises. The second largest group consists of books devoted to Japanese poetry, namely *waka*, *renga*, and *haikai*, and Heian period *monogatari*. The third consists of books written in vernacular Japanese, organized into “Japanese books and items in the *kana* syllabary” (*washo narabi ni kanarui*), “dance performance manuscripts and booklets” (*mai narabi ni sōshi*), and “primers and copybooks” (*ōraimono narabi ni tehon*). The fourth group deals with visual matters of different kinds (*surimono narabi ni ezu*).

Whereas the texts included in the first group require a thorough knowledge of classical Chinese on the part of the reader/consumer/user, those in

the third group potentially address the semi-literate reader through the use of kana combined with *kanji* (Chinese characters) accompanied by their phonetic readings. It is the third group that is of primary interest to us here, and within it *washo* and *sōshi* in particular, as these are the first early modern commercially printed popular Japanese prose.¹ These works can be compared to some of the popular prose in early modern Europe such as English and Scottish chapbooks and the French *Bibliothèque bleue*, which share a similar textual variety.

As encountered in the 1670 book-trade catalogue, the category of *washo* (also named *kana washo*) comprises didactic literature that dispensed knowledge. Here “knowledge” might be compared with Peter Burke’s definition of knowledge in the field of Western social history as “what has been ‘cooked,’ processed or systematized by thought.”² These texts represent one response of learned culture to a growing need for the dissemination of knowledge throughout Japanese society, regardless of literacy skills. Of the eighty-eight titles included in this group in the 1670 catalogue, I shall briefly comment upon one, *Kashōki* (Notes to Amuse, 1636) by Nyoraishi (or Joraishi, 1603?–74). The title is glossed with the word *okashiki* – the meaning of which ranges from interesting to outstanding and entertaining – at the end of the fifth volume. The foreword explains that the title conveys the aim of the text in one word: to make readers smile and clap their hands. Despite the humorous posture suggested by the title, *Kashōki* is mainly a didactic work. It is divided into 280 independent passages, the majority of which begin with the set phrase “in the past a certain man said” (*mukashi saru hito no ieru wa*), thus reenacting in writing the conditions of an oral narration. Reflecting the author’s background, most of the passages deal with issues relating to samurai and *rōnin* (masterless samurai) and teach about aspects of the life of this specific class. For example, there is detailed description of the “four ill behaviors” of a samurai (vol. 1.31), how the fate of a samurai is dictated by his master (vol. 1.32), how houses for vassals should be built (vol. 2.8), and so forth. The remainder is a rich and variegated repository of miscellaneous

¹ It is also worth mentioning that seventeenth-century popular prose was not limited to the Kamigata region (the Kyoto-Osaka area), where the *washo*, *kanarui*, and *sōshi* discussed here were produced. In fact, there were two more parallel productions. First, in Edo around the 1670s we see the beginning of another form of popular prose, namely small-size booklets in five folios targeted at children and known as *akahon*. Second, both in the Kamigata and in the Kantō regions one-sheet ephemera comparable to Western early modern broadsheets were circulating as early as the second half of the seventeenth century.

² Peter Burke, *A Social History of Knowledge* (Cambridge: Polity, 2000), 11.

teachings thought to be helpful in everyday situations across social classes. The reader is reminded that, since human beings tend to become obsessed with one activity (e.g. drinking, eating, and smoking), focus should be put on learning (vol. 1.5); advice is offered about what kind of friends one should have (vol. 1.6); moral instructions are given on how to become rich and, in doing so, emphasis is once again on the role of education (vol. 1.9); mimicking the behavior of other social classes is admonished (vol. 1.17); and, in a similar fashion, features that need to be cherished by each class are identified (vol. 2.18). Nyoraishi conveys his message by making extensive intertextual use of Japanese classical works, Chinese texts, and contemporaneous Confucian works. He adapts these sources in such a way that they become accessible to seventeenth-century readers. Learned culture is filtered down to facilitate the education of a vast readership that, potentially, encompasses semi-literate readers as well. *Kashōki* was such a hit that a supplementary commentary was published in 1660 (Asai Ryōi's *Kashōki hyōban*) and various sequels were produced, including Ihara Saikaku's *Shin Kashōki* (1688).

The remaining texts in the category of washo also make the dissemination of knowledge their purpose, whether they relate to Buddhist teachings (e.g. *Daibutsu monogatari*), Confucian teachings (e.g. *Kōkō monogatari*), a mixture of Buddhist and Confucian teachings (e.g. *Kiyomizu monogatari*, *Gion monogatari*), or promulgation of the new *shingaku* philosophy. These texts in all their diversity allow us to map early modern Japanese knowledge and to understand how knowledge was produced, circulated, and acquired. Works of this category reveal a variety of “textures”: narrative passages are interrupted by non-narrative sections, which may be short or long essays written in an explanatory mode or in the form of dialogue or debate. These texts, whose common denominator is their didacticism, are an important part of the landscape of early modern Japanese prose.

In addition to the washo section of the 1670 book-trade catalogue we find books for dispensing information, namely, manuals of arithmetic and books for board games, tea ceremony, ikebana, etiquette, and recipes. We then find a group of texts intended for the edification of women, generally referred to as *nyosho*, which includes books of moral precepts, biographies of exemplar women, and guides to letter writing. These *nyosho* were promoted by publishers and booksellers as a specific “publishing genre.”

Another publishing genre that appears in 1670 is called *meisho michi no ki* (referred to today as *meishoki*, or records of famous places), which may be guidebooks and/or travelogues. The first mature example of this genre is *Kyō warabe*, composed by Nakagawa Kiun in 1658. The preface, which is written

in the first person, gives a fictional frame to the whole work, with an old man walking through the capital in the company of a ten-year-old boy. The narrative frame soon gives way to largely descriptive prose: a place name is followed by a description of topography, the origins of buildings, and an account of entertainment or economic activities. In some sections a short poem brings the descriptive passage to an end. Many similar examples were produced in the seventeenth century, including guidebooks to the main urban centers, to highways such as the Tōkaidō, and to distant regions such as Kawachi or Yamato. They vary in the balance between fictional and non-fictional elements and in narrative and non-narrative elements. Thus, we find texts with a marked narrative character, such as *Tōkaidō meishoki* (written by Asai Ryōi around 1661), as well as those that are not much more than a list of names, describing topographic peculiarities and commercial activities, such as *Kyō suzume* or *Edo suzume*. In the eighteenth century, the balance between narrative and non-narrative elements shifts decisively in favor of the latter, leading to *dōchūki* (travel guides) and to *meisho-zue* (illustrated guidebooks). It is worth noting that Saikaku contributed to this genre with his *Hitometamaboko* (1689).

Other categories created in the 1670 catalogue and developed through the remainder of the Edo period are *hanashibon* (collections of humorous anecdotes and jokes) and Japanese-language Buddhist texts known as *kana hōgo*. The main aim of *kana hōgo* is to popularize Buddhist knowledge. They can be likened to the religious pamphlets known as “penny godlinesses,” which were written to disseminate Protestant ideas in early modern Europe. *Kana hōgo* include a range of diverse material: medieval as well as newly composed collections of *setsuwa*, expositions of Buddhist doctrine via dialogue, either in a fictional or narrative structure, hagiographies of Buddhist priests like Hōnen, and treatises that explain Buddhist concepts and precepts. For example, the 1645 *Fushinseki sanze monogatari* is a guide to Pure Land Buddhism that could appeal to both literate and semi-literate readers not only by employing simple language – as if they were meant to be heard – but also by packaging didacticism within a narrative frame that drew upon fashionable literary motifs.

A final category that developed in the seventeenth century and was included in the 1685 catalogue for the first time is that of *kōshokubon* (books on love) and *rakuji*. The latter, *rakuji*, is a broad category that includes works that deal with the pleasure quarters, kabuki actors’ critiques (identified as a sub-category named *yarō hyōban*), and explicitly erotic works (referred to nowadays as *shunpon*). *Kōshokubon* were launched by Ihara Saikaku’s

Kōshoku ichidai otoko (The Man who Loved Love) and were embraced by other publishers in the Kamigata area such as Nishimura Ichirōemon.

There were categories in book-trade catalogues that did not group together books with similar features. There were also books that did not display the characteristics of one specific publishing genre; they appeared as a hotchpotch of different textual elements, motifs, themes, and techniques that were not necessarily associated with any existing genre. There are three main reasons behind this lack of a clear systematic genre consciousness. First, the seventeenth century was an age when publishing genres were still in the process of formation. Second, book production was a commercial enterprise. In many cases authors were simply writing the kind of books that represented the latest fads. Third, in many cases there was no “single author” but rather a sort of “collective author” producing a text often at the behest of a publisher.

A patchwork category that plays a central role in seventeenth-century Kamigata popular prose is that of the *sōshi*. In the 1670 catalogue, this contains a high percentage of tales composed in the Muromachi period (now known as *otogi-zōshi*) such as *Shuten dōji*, *Monokusa Tarō*, and *Saru Genji zōshi*. They were mixed with newly composed narratives, including *Usuyuki monogatari* and *Urami no suke*, which adapted traditional storylines to new narrative worlds. Muromachi tales were printed, marketed, and consumed as an integral part of seventeenth-century popular prose. In this sense, printing gave them a second life and a whole new audience.

Among the titles mentioned above, *Usuyuki monogatari* stands out as an example of epistolary prose. This marks the beginnings of a genre that was to expand steadily throughout the Edo period, produced by Saikaku and many others. *Nishikigi* (1661), Saikaku’s *Yorozu no fumi hōgu* (Myriad Scraps of Letters, 1696) as well as works published by other authors in the Genroku era and later – e.g. *Kōshokubun denju* (1688), *Shin Usuyuki monogatari* (1716), *Usu momiji* (1722) – represent developments of the same textual strand.

Sōshi, then, includes all sorts of texts newly produced in the seventeenth century for a wide readership. Some examples will suffice here. *Chōjakyō*, first published in movable type in 1627 and then reprinted with variants and additions right up to 1847, was a guide on how to become rich that was followed by similar works such as Saikaku’s *Nippon eitaigura* (Japan’s Eternal Storehouse, 1688). *Yakushi tsuya monogatari* (1643) is an account of the famine that struck the whole of Japan in 1642 and forms part of a vast literature on disasters that includes not only the seventeenth-century *Musashi abumi* (1661)

and *Kanameishi* (1662), but also works after Saikaku such as the renowned *Ansei kenmonshi* (1856).

How should Saikaku be seen in this context? No one can deny that he was an extremely gifted writer who was able to fully exploit the poetic potentialities of the language and, by doing so, to appropriate existing genres. It should also be noted that he was one of the very first writers to emerge as an author in his own right, one who wrote in a unique style and produced texts that were recognizably his own. One major innovation by Saikaku was the publication of the first example of a new genre, namely the *kōshokubon*.

In summary, what were the characteristics of seventeenth-century popular prose? First, we have noted the use of a variety of textures in a single text. Non-narrative and non-fictional elements can appear within fictional or non-fictional narration. A work like *Genroku Taiheiki* (1702) by Miyako no Nishiki, for example, offers lengthy non-narrative expositions about the contemporary book market in the same vein as the didactic literature of the previous century within a narrative of two booksellers traveling on a boat. Second, whether narrative or non-narrative, or a mixture of the two, these texts strive to appeal to a vast readership by addressing issues relevant to contemporary society.

Third, the same desire for wide appeal led to the adoption of a user-friendly layout that would attract semi-literate as well as more literate readers. Unlike later Edo-based *kusa-zōshi*, seventeenth-century Kamigata printed books did not share a common physical layout. Rather, they adapted themselves to the possibilities of woodblock printing. In this process, illustrations emerged as a prominent feature. Woodcut pictures attracted those on the fringes of literacy and their inclusion allowed the book to captivate the imagination of a large public. The book format also changed, moving from the large *ōhon* format to smaller, easier to handle, and cheaper formats (*hanshibon*, *kohon*, *yokobon*). The same is true of the writing styles. These texts were written in the vernacular language as opposed to learned classical Chinese. But written Japanese has never been restricted to the phonetic syllabary. On the contrary, many Chinese characters were used in seventeenth-century popular prose, but they were made accessible through the use of *furigana* glosses. This was employed by Saikaku in all his prose works and later on in the Hachimonjiya books.

Fourth, rewriting was a key textual strategy. This includes a vast range of intertextual strategies involving translation (extralingual and intralingual), parody, allusion, quotation, pastiche and travesty. As the Osaka bookseller

who appears in *Genroku taiheiki* reminds us, “to create the new out of the old is the behavior of all famous writers.”³ And, more than anything else, rewriting aimed to adapt and domesticate items that belonged to the learned culture. The minimal parody of *Ise monogatari* that we find in *Nise monogatari*, for example, exploits a powerful textual mechanism to appropriate courtly culture to the realm of the new *chōnin* culture.

³ *Genroku Taiheiki*, first volume, 17v–18r; facsimile edition, 446–7.

The rise of haikai: Matsuo Bashō, Yosa Buson, and Kobayashi Issa

HARUO SHIRANE

The genre of *haikai*, originally an abbreviation for the term *haikai no renga* (popular linked verse), can be traced as far back as the Heian period and even to the *Man'yōshū*, to a genre called *haikaika*, or haikai-esque (playful) *waka*, which usually created humor through verbal puns and unorthodox treatment of poetic topics within the classical thirty-one-syllable poetic form. Haikai as a new independent genre, a linked verse form beginning with the seventeen-syllable *hokku* (opening verse), emerged in the late medieval period as a counterpart to *renga* (orthodox or classical linked verse), which eventually superseded *waka* in popularity. Haikai linked verse grew popular in the late medieval age of *gekokuujō* (rising up from beneath), when established cultural icons, from poetic topics to Buddhas, became the butt of humor, parody, and satire. Haikai as a popular genre fully came into its own in the Edo period, moving from a state of anonymity (poets rarely put their names to haikai in the Muromachi period) to a multifaceted genre that had a broad impact on many other cultural forms.

Waka, the thirty-one-syllable classical poem, generally excluded all forms of language not found in the refined, aristocratic diction of the Heian classics. The same restrictions applied to *renga*, which continued the classical tradition into the late medieval period. By contrast, late medieval haikai freely used *haigon* (haikai words) – vernacular Japanese, Chinese, Buddhist terms, slang, common sayings – in compositions that challenged, inverted, or otherwise subverted classical poetry and often were scatological, bawdy, or corporeal. The *Inu tsukubashū* (Mongrel Tsukuba Collection, 1532), one of the earliest anthologies of haikai, begins with:

Kasumi no koromo	A robe of mist
suso wa nurekeri	soaked at the hem

The *tsukeku* (added verse) composed by Yamazaki Sōkan, one of the pioneers of haikai and thought to be the editor of the *Mongrel Tsukuba Collection*, is

Sahohime no	Princess Saho
haru tachinagara	with the coming of spring
shito o shite	stands pissing

It was a convention in classical poetry that Sahohime, the beautiful goddess of spring, stands in the midst of a spring mist, which becomes her robe. The added verse, which uses the colloquial phrase *shito o su* (to piss), parodies that classical convention by having the princess urinate while standing, as commoner women did in those days. *Tatsu* is a homonym that means both “to stand” and “to begin” (marking the coming of spring), thus fusing two sociocultural worlds.

Linked verses such as those found in the *Mongrel Tsukuba Collection* were considered light entertainment, usually composed by Muromachi period renga poets between more serious sessions of classical linked verse. By the first half of the seventeenth century, however, the production and function of haikai had radically changed, becoming one of the new popular genres accessible to a broad community of participants. Matsunaga Teitoku (1571–1653), the founder of the Teimon school of haikai, was a noted scholar, waka poet, and teacher of classical literature. Teitoku and his disciples wanted haikai to be accessible to a wide but not necessarily highly educated audience, and they wanted to make haikai a respectable part of the poetic tradition. Their solution was to concentrate on using “haikai words,” while rejecting or tempering the kind of ribald, irreverent humor and language found in earlier haikai, which they regarded as unseemly and vulgar. The Teimon school continued the lexical play and parody but restricted the haikai diction to Chinese words (*kango*) and acceptable vernacular words. The *Shinzō Inu tsukubashū* (New Mongrel Tsukuba Collection, 1643), a haikai anthology edited by Teitoku, presented Teitoku’s response to the “robe of mist” poem cited earlier:

Kasumi no koromo	A robe of mist
suso wa nurekeri	soaked at the hem
Tennin ya	Heavenly creatures
amakudaru rashi	descending it seems –
haru no umi	the sea of spring

Except for the haikai word *tennin* (heavenly creatures), a Chinese compound, the content of the added verse, which unexpectedly replaces the goddess of spring with the word *tennin*, has the kind of elegance found in classical renga.

The *Enokoshū* (Puppy Collection, 1633), edited by Teitoku's disciples, contains the following hokku by Teitoku under the topic of New Year's Day (*Ganjitsu*):

Kasumi sae	Even the spring mist
madara ni tatsu ya	rises in spots and patches –
tora no toshi	Year of the Tiger

Teitoku here links “spring mist” (*kasumi*), a classical word, to “tiger” (*tora*), a haikai word, through two puns: *madara ni* (in spots and patches), associated with both mist and tiger, and *tatsu* (to stand, rise, begin). In Teimon fashion, the gap between the elegant classical image (spring mist) and the contemporary vernacular is humorously bridged through lexical associations.

The Danrin school of haikai, which became popular in the 1670s and 1680s, used many of the techniques found in Teimon haikai: *engo* (word association), *kakekotoba* (homophonic wordplay), parody, and *mitate* (visual comparisons). However, unlike the haikai of the Teimon school, which was based in Kyoto, the center of aristocratic culture, and evoked the classical tradition, Danrin haikai developed in Osaka, the new center of commerce and Ihara Saikaku's home, where a society of increasingly wealthy and powerful urban commoners was generating its own culture. If Teitoku tried to impose order on linked verse, Nishiyama Sōin (1605–82), the founder of Danrin haikai and a resident of Osaka, stressed freedom of form and movement, linking verses without excessive concern for rules or precedent. Danrin's iconoclastic character included the occasional use of hypermetric syllables (*ji-amari*) – surpassing the formal limit of seventeen – which were usually added to the last five syllables of the hokku. In the process Danrin poets explored myriad aspects of contemporary culture, including the pleasure quarters and kabuki theater. Ihara Saikaku (1642–93), generally considered the first major prose fiction writer of the Edo period, began as a Danrin haikai poet and later transmuted his long solo compositions of linked verse into the poetic prose that was to become the hallmark of his early fiction.

Danrin poets deliberately heightened the tension between haikai words and classical diction, believing that the greater the collision, the greater the haikai effect. *Indōshū* (Teachings Collection, 1684), a Danrin haikai handbook edited by Nakamura Saikoku (1647–95), a merchant from

Bungo (in Kyushu) and a disciple of Saikaku, uses the following verse as an example of the Danrin method:

Mine no hana	Making sea lions and whales
no nami ni ashika	swim in the cherry blossom waves
kujira o oyogase	on the peak

This hokku links cherry blossoms – which were closely associated with waves and mountain peaks in classical poetry – with sea lions (*ashika*) and whales (*kujira*), two haikai words. The poem comically deconstructs a familiar classical convention, “the waves of cherry blossoms,” by using this figurative cliché in its literal meaning as the “waves of water” in which sea lions and whales swim. The resulting disjunction, in which two different socially inscribed languages inhabit the same word, produced not only haikai humor but what Itchū (1639–1711), a Danrin polemicist, referred to as *gūgen* (allegory), making possible what is not possible.

Matsuo Bashō (1644–94), who participated in both the Teimon and the Danrin schools, became the most influential haikai poet of the late seventeenth century. Although Bashō’s grandfather and great-grandfather had belonged to the samurai class, by Bashō’s time the family had fallen so low that they had become farmers with only tenuous ties to the samurai class. In the spring of 1672, at the age of twenty-eight, Bashō moved to Edo to establish himself as a haikai master who could charge fees for his services. There he came under the influence of Nishiyama Sōin, with whom he composed poetry in 1675. By the mid 1670s, Bashō had attracted the nucleus of his disciples and patrons – notably Kikaku, Ransetsu, Sanpū, and Ranran – who would play a major role in the formation of what later came to be known as the Bashō circle (*Shōmon*). In the winter of 1680, Bashō left Edo and retreated to Fukagawa, on the banks of the Sumida River. The move signaled that he had also left behind urban haikai, which by then had become highly commercialized, and over the next four years he wrote in the so-called “Chinese style,” creating the persona of a recluse poet who was opposed to the materialism and social ambitions of the new urban culture. One of Bashō’s literary achievements was fusing the earlier recluse poet tradition established by waka and *kanshi* poets like Saigyō, Sōgi, and Ishikawa Jōzan with the new commoner genre of haikai. He took his poetic name from the *bashō* plant, or Japanese plantain, whose large leaves sometimes tear in the wind, which represented the fragility of the recluse-sojourner’s life.

The following hokku by Bashō reflects the careful balance and tension between contemporary and traditional, vernacular and classical, that he achieved in his mature period.

Lodging for the Night at Akashi:

Takotsubo ya	Octopus traps –
hakanaki yume o	fleeting dreams
natsu no tsuki	under the summer moon

Bashō composed this poem, which appears in *Backpack Notes* (*Oi no kobumi*, 1709), in the Fourth Month of 1688. The octopus traps were lowered in the afternoon and raised the next morning, after the octopus had crawled inside. The octopuses trapped in the jars – and implicitly the troops of the Heike clan who were massacred on the shores of Akashi at the end of the twelfth century and whose ghosts appear before the traveler in *Backpack Notes* – have “fleeting dreams,” not knowing that they are about to be harvested. Bashō juxtaposes the “summer moon” (*natsu no tsuki*), which the classical tradition deemed to be as brief as the summer night and thus associated with ephemerality, and the “octopus traps” (*takotsubo*), a vernacular word, giving new life to the theme of impermanence. The poem deftly blends humor with pathos.

Linked verse sequences began with a seventeen-syllable (5/7/5) hokku (opening verse) to which was added a fourteen-syllable (7/7) second verse (*wakiku*), which was capped in turn by a seventeen-syllable (5/7/5) third verse (*daisanku*), and so forth, until a sequence of thirty-six, forty-four, fifty, one hundred, or a thousand verses was completed. Though linked verse could be composed by a single individual, as a solo composition (*dokugin*), it was usually a communal activity in which two or more participants took turns linking to create a sequence. Each added verse (*tsukeku*) was joined to the previous verse (*maeku*) to form a new poetic microcosm, while pushing off from the one created by the combination of the previous verse and the penultimate verse (*uchikoshi*). The following sequence (Nos. 22, 23, 24) appears in a *kasen* (thirty-six-verse sequence) called *Ko no moto ni* (Beneath the Cherry Trees) in *Hisago* (Gourd, 1690), a Bashō-school haikai anthology.

Kumano mitaki to	“I want to see Kumano,”
nakitamahikeri	she wept.

Bashō

Tatsukayumi	Bow in hand,
Ki no sekimori ga	the barrier guard at Ki
katakuna ni	unyielding

Chinseki

Sake de hagetaru
atama naruran

The bald head –
probably too much drinking

Kyokusui

The first verse uses an honorific verb to suggest the high status of the traveler (presumably a woman) who is weeping because she is anxious to visit Kumano, a popular site for pilgrimages in the Heian and medieval periods. The next verse by Chinseki merges with the previous verse by Bashō to reveal that the traveler is weeping because a guard with a hand-held bow is refusing to let her pass through the barrier at Ki province. The third verse, which pushes off from Bashō's verse and combines with Chinseki's verse, humorously transforms the barrier guard into a tippler, whose head has grown bald, or so it appears, from excessive drinking. Here the aristocratic, seemingly somber world of the first two verses is unexpectedly transformed into the casually cynical, commoner world of the last two verses. The interest of linked verse is in this ongoing process of decontextualizing and recontextualizing, in the competition to add a good verse to the sequence, and in the constant movement from one world to another.

Modern readers of lyric poetry tend to read monologically, either in an expressive, emotive mode, or in a descriptive, mimetic mode, as a reflection of the external world as perceived by the speaker. Such modes of reading cannot accommodate the crucial fact that much Japanese poetry, particularly in the premodern or early modern period, was composed dialogically to fulfill social or ritual functions such as complimenting a host, expressing gratitude, bidding farewell, making an offering to the land, or consoling the spirits of the dead. A good example is the following hokku by Bashō:

Shiragiku no
me ni tatete miru
chiri mo nashi

Gazing intently
at the white chrysanthemums –
not a speck of dust

The speaker is viewing white chrysanthemums and seeing that they are absolutely unsoiled. Bashō originally composed this poem after arriving as a guest at the house of Madame Sono, one of his disciples, and in this context the poem functions as a greeting and a compliment to the hostess. The poem employs the white chrysanthemums as metaphor for the hostess, implying "this is a beautiful house, with a beautiful host, just like an elegant white chrysanthemum, and there's not a speck of dust here. You and the house are perfect."

The hokku required a *kigo* (seasonal word), an encoded sign that indicated a specific season and had precise poetic associations (the autumn wind, for example, suggesting loneliness or desolation), and a *kireji* (cutting word), which divided the hokku into two parts, usually after the first or second line. The cutting word typically causes the two parts to resonate, forcing the reader to find some internal connection, as in this noted hokku by Bashō, which first appeared in *Azuma nikki* (Eastern Diary), a collection of haikai poetry in 1681.

Kareeda ni	On a withered branch
karasu no tomaritaru ya	crows come to rest –
aki no kure	evening in autumn

The two parts of the hokku – the withered branch and autumn evening – can be read both as a single scene, as in a *kokoro-zuke* (content link), which links two consecutive verses by content, with crows settling on a withered branch in autumn evening. The same hokku can be read as a *nioi-zuke* (fragrant link) in which the two parts are linked only by connotation. In *Azuma nikki*, this hokku is preceded by a headnote, “On Evening in Autumn,” a classical waka topic. In that context, the second part poses the question: “What represents the essence of evening in autumn?” The first half answers with “A crow or crows on a withered branch,” which was closely associated with a Chinese ink-painting topic.

The hokku was usually recited and recorded on a *kaishi*, or pocket paper. Then, if the poem was noteworthy, it was copied in proper calligraphic form on a *tanzaku* card or a more elaborate *shikishi* (colored, decorated paper). The hokku could also be expanded into a *haibun*, a short vignette that combined hokku and poetic prose, or presented calligraphically as part of a *haiga* text/painting combination. The medium of haiga painting, light ink wash with spare accents, afforded significant open space for the viewer’s imagination. The material form of the *tanzaku*, *haibun*, or *haiga* served important social functions. The poet as guest usually wrote something and gave it to the host as a present and token of appreciation. In fact, Bashō depended on the generosity of his hosts for a living, and he literally paid his patrons in the form of *kaishi*, *tanzaku*, *shikishi*, *haibun*, and *haiga*. In one case, Bashō even sent an elaborate picture scroll (*emaki*) of a journey to the main host of his trip to the Kansai-Nagoya region.

The hokku, haikai sequence, or the *haibun* could be reproduced as printed text in haikai collections or in various kinds of diaries or narratives. Bashō’s travel diaries were often created after the fact, weaving together individual

tanzaku and haibun composed during the journey. With the rise of printing in the mid seventeenth century, hokku collections, haikai anthologies, and travel diaries were often published for wider audiences. In the process, Bashō often revised his hokku, the headnotes, and the linked verse sequences themselves, sometimes even changing the names of the participants, either to improve the texts or to make them more comprehensible to someone who was not a participant or witness to the event.

One important objective of haikai collections was to commemorate and advertise the latest achievements of a particular poetic school or circle of poets. For example, *Nozarashi kikō* (Skeleton in the Fields, 1685–87), one of Bashō's early travel diaries, celebrates Bashō's encounter with the Owari (Aichi/Nagoya) group and the establishment of the Bashō style, especially the transition from the turgid Chinese style of the early 1680s to the relaxed, quasi-renga style of the mid to late 1680s. In a similar fashion, *Oku no hosomichi* (Narrow Road to the Deep North, 1694), Bashō's most noted literary travel diary, commemorates the emergence of a new configuration of disciples centered in Yamagata, Kaga, Ōmi, and Edo. Haikai were also composed, collected, and printed as *tsuizen-shū*, or memorial service collections, to honor a dead poet and serve as an offering to the spirit of the deceased on the anniversary of his or her death.

Haikai was to evolve significantly after the passing of Bashō and his school. One major successor was Yosa Buson (1716–83), a noted painter, literatus, and haikai poet, who was born in Settsu province in the farming village of Kema (in present-day Osaka). At around the age of twenty, Buson moved to Edo and became a disciple of Hayano Hajin (1676–1742), a haikai poet who had established the Yahantei circle in Nihonbashi. Hajin had been a student of Kikaku, a disciple of Bashō and the founder of the Edo-za school to which Buson later had close ties. In 1751 Buson moved to Kyoto and then shortly thereafter, in 1754, to Tango province (north of the city of Kyoto), where he spent the next three years practicing *bunjinga* (literati painting), also known as *nanga* (Southern-style painting), and produced both historical and landscape paintings. In 1757, he returned to Kyoto, married, and changed his family name from Taniguchi to Yosa, the area from which his mother had come. By the 1760s, his talent as a bunjin painter had gained recognition, and he eventually became, along with Ike Taiga, one of most famous bunjin painters of the Edo period.

The period in which Buson was active – from the 1750s to the 1780s – was the heyday of the bunjin ideal, and his contemporaries included Hiraga Gennai (1728–80), Takebe Ayatari (1719–74), Tsuga Teishō (1718?–94?), Ueda

Akinari (1734–1809), and Ōta Nanpo (1749–1823). Of these writer-intellectuals, only Buson was closely associated with the Bashō haikai revival, which took place in the latter half of the eighteenth century. The result, for Buson, was a significant cross-fertilization between the kanshi literati tradition and haikai – that is, between Chinese and Japanese artistic cultures. Unlike Bashō, who advocated “awakening to the high, returning to the low” (*kōga kizoku*) and sought “lightness” (*karumi*) or a poetics of everyday life, Buson advocated “departing from the common or everyday” (*rizoku*) in exploration of other worlds through Chinese literature and painting as well as Japanese classics, wandering freely in a world of elegance and imagination that he found superior to the mundane world of lived experience. The difference between Bashō’s “return” to the low, which implied an engagement with everyday life, and Buson’s “departure,” which implied an escape from contemporary society, reflects a fundamental difference between the culture of the Genroku era and the attitude of many late eighteenth-century intellectuals.

The highly intertextual nature of a number of Buson’s poems is demonstrated very clearly in the following hokku.

Yanagi chiri	Willow leaves fallen,
shimizu kare ishi	the clear stream gone –
tokorodokoro	stones here and there

This hokku was composed around 1743 when Buson visited Tōhoku, the northeast region of Honshū. It is both a description of a natural scene and a haikai variation on a famous classical poem by Saigyō (1118–90): “By the side of the road, alongside a stream of clear water, in the shade of a willow tree, I paused for what I thought would be just a moment” (*Shinkokinshū*, Summer, no. 262). Matsuo Bashō wrote about the same willow tree in his *Oku no hosomichi* (Narrow Road to the Deep North): “A whole field of rice seedlings planted – I part from the willow” (*ta ichimai uete tachisaru yanagi kana*). Having come to the place where Saigyō had written this poem, Bashō relives those emotions, and before he knows it, a whole field of rice has been planted. In contrast to Bashō’s poem, which recaptures the past, Buson’s poem is implicitly about loss and the passage of time, contrasting the situation now, in autumn, when the stream has dried up and the willow leaves have fallen, with the past, when the clear stream beckoned to Saigyō and the willow tree gave him, as it did Bashō, shelter from the hot summer sun.

The following is an example of Buson’s “historical” haikai, an important feature of his poetry. These are set in the distant past, either historical or literary, as in this hokku published in *Haikai shinsen* in 1773.

Komabune no	The Korean ship
yorade sugiyuku	not stopping, passing back
kusumi kana	into the mist

Komabune were the large Korean ships that sailed to Japan in the ancient period, bringing cargo and precious goods from the continent, a practice that had long been discontinued by Buson's time. Viewed from the land, the Korean ship appears to be heading for the port but then gradually disappears into the "mist" (*kasumi*), a seasonal word for spring. The mist covers the water, blurring the boundaries between the real and the unreal, the present and the past. The key middle line, "not stopping, passing back" (*yorade sugiyuku*), suggests a long passage of time, a sense of growing of anticipation, and then of disappointment.

In contrast to Bashō, whose poetry is solidly grounded in his everyday, contemporary world, Buson wrote not only historical *hokku* but a number of "fantastic" *hokku*, such as this example, composed in 1777.

Kindachi ni	The fox disguised
kitsune baketari	as a dashing prince –
yoi no haru	spring evening

Yoi no haru is a warm, hazy spring evening, evocative of romantic or mysterious things, a mood matched by the mysterious behavior of the fox. Buson was fascinated by the strange nocturnal movements of foxes and badgers, as evident in his many verses on this topic and in his stories in *New Flower Gathering* (*Shinhanatsumi*, Published 1797).

Last but not least, it should be noted that one of the most outstanding characteristics of Buson's *hokku* are their musical quality, as in this poem published in 1762.

Haru no umi	The spring sea –
hinemosu notari	all day long the waves
notari kana	rising and falling, rising and falling

The "spring sea" (*haru no umi*) suggests a relatively calm, open surface. The light waves gently rise and fall, either out at sea or against the shore. The onomatopoeic phrase *notari notari* suggests a gentle swelling and subsiding, whereas the phrase *hinemosu* (all day long) implies a sense of time stretching out forever.

In the early nineteenth century, after Buson and his successors had died, *haikai* continued to be popular. The most talented *haikai* poet of this age was Kobayashi Issa (1763–1827), whose main interest was in the contemporary and

quotidian, and who focused on the hokku rather than on linked verse. Issa, born Kobayashi Yatarō, was the first son of a middle-class farmer in Kashiwabara, at the northern tip of Shinano Province (Nagano), near the Japan Sea, a region referred to as the Snow Country (*yukiguni*). Unwelcomed by his stepmother, Issa left home in 1777 when he was fourteen and went to Edo, where he struggled as an apprentice-servant. Around 1787, he began studying haikai with Nirokuan Chikua (1710–90) and other poets of the haikai Katsushika group, which was part of a larger Bashō revival, and he adopted the haikai pen-name Issa (Cup of Tea). In 1792, he began a six-year journey through the Kyoto-Osaka region, Shikoku, and Kyūshū, after which he went back to Edo and took over Chikua's school.

Issa is considered a highly unorthodox haikai poet. He was exposed to the different currents of haikai prevailing at that time: first, the Bashō-revival style of the Katsushika school, then the comic style of the Danrin school in Osaka, and finally the “rural (*inaka*) style,” characterized by colloquial language and dialect. This style, which foregrounds the use of provincial topics, came into prominence in Edo in the first two decades of the nineteenth century. In contrast to the Edo haikai poets, for whom the provincial style was a matter of fashion, Issa wrote from experience and with striking individuality, reflecting both his roots in a provincial farming village and his uncertain life in the city. The “Issa style” that he developed is noted for its dynamic use of colloquial language and for its fresh perspective, that of someone looking at city life as an outsider. His poetry tends to straddle the border between the seventeen-syllable *senryū* (satiric haiku), with its earthy diction and social critique, and the emphasis on nature and the seasons of more conservative haikai. In this sense, Issa reacted strongly against the tendency of earlier haikai poets (such as Buson) to write on fixed topics. He is particularly well known for his sympathy for animals, insects, and small creatures; his use of personification; his humor; and the autobiographical character of his writing and poetry, especially with regard to his position as an oppressed stepson and as a person consumed by poverty and misfortune.

Issa created what one might call a “poetry of everyday life.” Recently, the autobiographical authenticity of his writings has been questioned, as some critics believe that they contain significant fictional elements, but there is no doubt that he created a gripping poetic persona.

Furusato ya	My old home –
yoru mo sawaru mo	wherever I turn, whatever I touch,
ibara no hana	thorned roses

The flower of the thorn bush (*ibara no hana*), a seasonal word for early summer, is associated with nostalgia, much like the “old home” (*furusato*), but instead of enjoying the fond memories of the past, Issa is wounded everywhere he turns by the thorns. According to his *Seventh Diary* (Shichiban nikki, 1810–18), which includes this poem, in the Fifth Month of 1810 Issa traveled from Edo to his hometown of Kashiwabara, where he unsuccessfully attempted to obtain from the mayor the will left by his deceased father. The cold reception given him by the mayor, his stepmother, stepbrother, and others in his hometown provides the backdrop for the poem.

Issa’s most famous poem reflects his poetic persona as the perpetual underdog as well as his sympathy for the weak and oppressed.

Yasegaeru	Skinny frog,
makeru na Issa ga	don’t give up the fight!
kore ni ari	Issa is here!

Issa is here witness to a frog battle. In the spring, during their mating season, male frogs gather to fight over a single female frog. “Don’t give up!” (*makeru na*) is a military phrase used by a commander to urge on his troops. In this context, the poet is calling out encouragement to a male frog who appears to be losing the battle. The poem has been interpreted as showing Issa’s sympathy for small, weak, and vulnerable creatures (much like himself). It also may mean that Issa, single and without a family for most of his life, is encouraging himself with regard to his marital prospects.

Ihara Saikaku and Ejima Kiseki: the literature of urban townspeople

PAUL SCHALOW

Ihara (or Ibara) Saikaku (1642–93) and Ejima Kiseki (1666–1735) were active on the literary scene during the decades-long first flowering of urban townsman (*chōnin*) culture in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, when Japan was ruled by the Tokugawa shoguns. They are widely acknowledged as masters of the so-called *ukiyo-zōshi* (books of the floating world) genre, which Saikaku pioneered and which Kiseki popularized for the next generation. Their books proved to be phenomenally popular with an emerging townsman readership for two main reasons: they allowed vicarious access to trend-setting courtesans, actors, and patrons of the demimonde in the urban theaters and pleasure quarters (*yūkaku*) of the day, and they simultaneously affirmed the economic power of the merchant class.

Both authors were born into wealthy merchant families. Saikaku was raised in Naniwa, the heart of the commercial city of Osaka; Kiseki came from an old family of confectioners in the capital of Kyoto. Under the Tokugawa shoguns, artisans and merchants who made up the townsman class occupied the bottom rung of the Confucian social hierarchy, after warriors and farmers, based on the perceived value of their contributions to society. But Saikaku's merchant-class consciousness transcended the official orthodoxy to an extent. He suggests the essential equality of all people in the introduction to *Buke giri monogatari* (Tales of Samurai Honor; Osaka, Kyoto, and Edo, 1688).

The heart of one man is the same heart found in all mankind; a long sword in his sash makes a man a warrior, a ceremonial cap on his head makes him a Shinto priest, wearing black robes makes him a monk, wielding a hoe makes him a farmer, using a carpenter's adze makes him a craftsman, calculating on an abacus makes him a merchant; but in no way do they differ from each other in their hearts.

Saikaku and Kiseki apparently received instruction in *haikai* poetry composition early in life. It was the fashion in the period for the wealthiest merchant households to educate themselves and their children in the literary arts, and *haikai* was the preferred subject of study. This was in part because linked-verse composition was an activity that strengthened social bonds among members of the merchant class and was useful in establishing and maintaining business relations.

Ihara Saikaku

Little is known about Saikaku's origins and early years. Some scholars have argued that he was descended from warriors in service to the Takeda clan, based on the "narrow circle and flower-diamond" (*hosowa ni hanabishi*) family crest that appears on his robes in a rare portrait painted by friend and fellow poet Haga Isshō (1643–1707). Others have suggested that Saikaku took the name Ihara (or Ibara) from his maternal side of the family, which likely traced its lineage to swordsmiths working in Ibara in the province of Bitchū, to the west of Osaka. This is supported by the fact that he was raised in the Yariyamachi (Spearsmith Block) of Osaka, in the shadow of the great Osaka castle, where metalworkers and merchants dealing in their wares dwelled.

One of the few reliable accounts about Saikaku is an entry in *Kenmon Dansō* (1738), a collection of essays written by Itō Baiu (1683–1745) in which he recorded various recollections of his father, the Confucian thinker and educator Itō Jinsai (1627–1705). Baiu is the only source that informs us of Saikaku's real name, Hirayama Tōgo. Baiu also states that Saikaku lost his wife when he was thirty-three years old and she was twenty-four, leaving him to raise a blind daughter alone. The death of his wife inspired him to create perhaps the most personal of his works, *Dokugin ichinichi senku* (A Thousand Verses Composed Alone in a Single Day; Osaka, 1675). The text reveals Saikaku using his poetic arts as a heartfelt prayer for the peaceful repose of his dead wife's soul, or even as a figurative vehicle to transport her soul to the afterlife. In fact, scholars have argued that the composition of this solo sequence marked the beginning of his life as a writer. With his wife's passing, he shaved his head in the style of a monk, an act that signified symbolic death, and turned over the day-to-day running of the family business to a steward. Thereafter, Baiu states, Saikaku devoted himself to travel and writing as the spirit moved him.

Saikaku was active as an amateur instructor ("marker," or *tenja*) of *haikai* from the age of twenty-one, using the moniker of Kakuei ("Crane Eternal"),

but he had not yet determined to pursue haikai professionally. The defining influence that spurred him to contemplate retiring from running the family business and launching a serious literary career was his encounter with the noted haikai master Nishiyama Sōin (1605–82), founder of the Danrin school. Kakuei was drawn to Sōin's iconoclastic style, which was more open to incorporating the diction and imagery of contemporary, urban life into linked verse than the Teimon school of Matsunaga Teitoku (1571–1653) in which he had been trained earlier. In 1673, he received permission to use the character *nishi* ("west") from his mentor Sōin's name to devise the new literary name, Saikaku ("Western Crane"), by which we know him today. After his wife's death two years later, Saikaku's way forward was clear: he would turn from business and devote himself instead to his literary craft.

For the next decade, Saikaku gradually cultivated a growing group of fellow poets and disciples who joined him in haikai composition. In these years, he edited at least five volumes of verses for publication, but his own verses appeared only sporadically in the haikai collections of other Danrin poets. In one example from *Haikai sanga no tsu* (1682), Saikaku's verse expresses the harsh realities of life for merchants, who must settle all of their accounts by the end of the year or risk insolvency: *Ōmisoka sadame naki yo no sadame kana* ("New Year's Eve; a certainty in an uncertain world").

In this period, Saikaku also began actively asserting his iconoclastic "Dutch school" (*Oranda ryū*) haikai style in progressively more strenuous feats of solo performance known as *yakazu* ("Arrow Counting") competitions, such as the 1,600-verse *Saikaku haikai ōkukazu* (1677) and the 1,000-verse *Tobiume senku* (1679). In the solo performance that was published as *Saikaku ōyakazu* (1681), he produced 4,000 verses in a single day and night, an unheard of number to that point, but this figure was soon surpassed by one of his Danrin rivals, Ōyodo Michikaze (1639–1707). Saikaku responded in 1684 with a solo performance at Sumiyoshi Shrine that resulted in an astonishing 23,500 verses composed in a single day and night, a pace of recitation too fast even to record. The record he established at Sumiyoshi Shrine proved Saikaku's complete dominance in the genre of *yakazu* haikai and effectively ended the "Arrow Counting" fad in the Danrin school.

It also marked the departure of Saikaku from active participation in haikai circles in favor of prose writing. Late in 1682, the year of Sōin's death, Saikaku had privately published what he seems to have thought of as a modest book, titled *Kōshoku ichidai otoko* (The Man who Loved Love). Contrary to his expectation, *The Man who Loved Love* sold briskly and went through a surprising three pressings. Another more established publisher, the Akitaya,

subsequently bought the rights to the book and produced a second and then third edition of it with continued brisk sales. Finally, in 1684, a publisher in Edo came out with a deluxe edition illustrated by none other than Hishikawa Moronobu (1618–94), the preeminent *ukiyo-e* artist of the day, which also went through three editions. The book would change both Saikaku's career and the history of Japanese literature.

What accounted for the phenomenal success of *The Man who Loved Love*? It was a collection of fifty-four stories, loosely modeled on the classic *Tale of Genji*'s fifty-four chapters, that described the coming of age and sexual escapades of its protagonist, Yonosuke ("man of the world"), filled with twists and turns of fate that were often hilarious. Readers identified with the financial travails of Yonosuke and discovered in the story of his love-life a *joie de vivre* that they found thoroughly appealing. The so-called *kana-zōshi* genre, which dominated the market in the seventeenth century, generally presented stories derived from the classics that were written in an easy to read vernacular. *The Man who Loved Love* represented a dramatic departure from previous *kana-zōshi* in terms of the contemporary immediacy of its content and the stylish flair of its haikai-inspired prose (*haibun*). As it turned out, the new style captured the popular imagination and dominated Saikaku's writings for the rest of his life.

Saikaku's oeuvre of *ukiyo-zōshi* is often divided into *kōshoku-mono* (books on love), *buke-mono* (books on warrior life), and finally *chōnin-mono* (books on merchant life). The books on love, a new genre that Saikaku developed, were inaugurated by the story of Yonosuke in *The Man who Loved Love* published in 1682. Saikaku capitalized on its success and within two years had produced a sequel consisting of stories about courtesans in pleasure quarters throughout the land and using the figure of Yonosuke's son, Yoden, as a framing device. It was titled *Shoen ōkagami* (The Great Mirror of Beauties, 1684), but it was popularly known by its subtitle *Kōshoku nidai otoko* (Another Man who Loved Love).

Saikaku's next book on love was *Wankyū isse no monogatari* (The Tale of Wankyū I; Osaka, 1685), detailing the legendary career of an Osaka merchant named Wanya Kyūzaemon. In two volumes of six stories each, Saikaku traced first the extravagant spending habits of his hero in pursuit of courtesans in the pleasure quarter (vol. 1), and then the ultimate cost of that extravagance, which resulted in the hero's bankruptcy and death by drowning (vol. 2). The sobering focus on financial and emotional consequences represented a departure from the rollicking, floating mood of Saikaku's first two books on love.

Saikaku then wrote *Kōshoku gonin onna* (Five Women who Loved Love; Osaka and Edo, 1686), consisting of five short stories that, similarly to *The Tale of Wankyū*, depicted harsh consequences for four of the five heroines, who paid with their lives for transgressing the law in order to be with the man they loved. The final heroine, however, is spared death (collections of stories needed to end felicitously); hers is a fantasy ending as she and her lover receive an inheritance that allows them to live out their days in luxury. In the same year, Saikaku published *Kōshoku ichidai onna* (The Woman who Loved Love; Osaka, 1686), which depicted the downward trajectory of the life of a beautiful woman, beginning in her youth as a top-ranked courtesan in the pleasure quarter and ending as a common street-walker in her old age. The book's theme suggested the influence of *zange-mono*, or Buddhist confessional discourses, in which believers described the personal tragedies that opened their eyes to the delusion of attachment and brought them to faith in the Buddha's teachings. The following year, *Nanshoku ōkagami* (The Great Mirror of Male Love; Osaka and Kyoto, 1687) was published. It was a pivotal work between books on love and books on warrior life, possessing aspects of both. As in *Five Women who Loved Love*, most of the stories concluded with the death of the male youth as he paid the ultimate price to show his honor, devotion, or passion for the man he loved.

A posthumous publication in the category of books on love, edited by Saikaku's disciple Hōjō Dansui (1663–1711), was titled *Saikaku okimiyage* (Saikaku's Parting Gift; Osaka, Kyoto, and Edo, 1693), and represented the last collection of stories on what might be termed Saikaku's favorite and defining subject, sexual love.

Compared to Saikaku's twelve titles on love, the books on warriors total only three: *Budō denrai ki* (Record of the Transmission of the Way of the Warrior; Osaka and Edo, 1687), *Buke giri monogatari*, and *Shin Kashōki* (The New *Kashōki*; Osaka and Edo, 1688). These texts may have appealed to Saikaku's merchant-class readership, who would likely have shown keen interest in stories that gave them insight into the thoughts and motives of their social superiors in the warrior class, but scholars speculate that Saikaku may have specifically targeted the Edo market when he wrote them, since Edo was the center of the Tokugawa bakufu and thus a city of warriors, and may have represented a relatively untapped market for his books.

Saikaku finally turned to the subject of commerce in his books on merchants. Here, for the first time, he could put on display his nuanced understanding of money-making. Saikaku had of course thought deeply about the subject all his life but produced only three titles about merchants, far fewer

than his books on love and the same number as his books on warriors. The first of them was *Nippon eitaigura* (Japan's Eternal Storehouse; Osaka, Kyoto, and Edo, 1688), in which he opened with this defense of the need for money among all classes of people.

All life long we face the urgent problem of making a living. This is true for warriors, farmers, artisans, and merchants alike, not to speak of monks and Shinto priests. In the end, everyone should accumulate gold and silver as preordained by the gods. Two parents give us life, but gold and silver are the parents who sustain life.

This common-sense idea smacked of heresy under Tokugawa rule, for merchants and their money were often perceived as suspect, in large part because wealth undermined official ideology by placing rich merchants "above" their superiors, the warrior class, in the de facto economy.

Saikaku's next book on merchants was *Seken munezan'yō* (Mental Calculations for Surviving in the World; Osaka, Kyoto, and Edo, 1692), which focused on the settling of accounts on New Year's Eve that meant prosperity or bankruptcy for merchants, alluded to earlier in Saikaku's verse from *Haikai sanga no tsu*. In addition, stories on merchant life make up one of Saikaku's posthumous publications, *Saikaku oridome* (Saikaku's Final Weaving; Osaka, Kyoto, and Edo, 1694), again edited by Dansui.

Throughout the last decade of his life as a writer of ukiyo-zōshi, Saikaku also produced works on a range of topics that resist the three-part categorization of books on love, warriors, and merchants. These include books on travel, such as *Saikaku shokoku banashi* (Saikaku's Stories from the Provinces; Osaka, 1685) and *Futokoro suzuri* (Inkstone in the Breast Pocket, 1687); a parody, *Honchō nijū fukō* (Twenty Cases of Unfilial Piety in Our Land; Osaka and Edo, 1685), which spoofs the Confucian classic that describes twenty-four cases of filial behavior; and a collection of stories about crime and punishment, *Honchō ōin hiji* (Legal Judgments in the Shade of the Cherry Tree in Our Land; Osaka and Edo, 1689). Dansui edited three posthumous miscellanies, apparently from unpublished stories that may have been rejected for earlier publication, titled *Saikaku zoku tsurezure* (Saikaku's Common Man's Essays in Idleness; Osaka and Kyoto, 1695), *Saikaku nagori no tomo* (Saikaku's Farewell to Friends; Osaka, 1699), and Saikaku's only collection of epistolary writings, *Saikaku yorozu no fumi hōgu* (Saikaku's Myriad Scraps of Letters; Osaka, Kyoto, and Edo, 1696).

There is evidence that Saikaku had begun to be active again in haikai composition from about 1690. If this is so, then his literary life came full circle,

returning to the poetic form that started him off on his career when he produced the haikai sequence *A Thousand Verses Composed Alone in a Single Day* to mourn the death of his wife in 1675. When Saikaku died on the tenth day of the eighth month, 1693, at the age of fifty-two, he left behind a final verse, recorded in volume 1 of *Saikaku's Parting Gift*.

Fifty years, they say, is the span of a man's life; even so, I have surpassed it:
An extra two years spent gazing at the moon in this floating world.

(*Ukiyo no tsuki misugoshinikeri sue ninen*)

Ejima Kiseki

Compared to the absence of reliable information about Saikaku's early life, Ejima Kiseki's origins are well documented. His real name was Murase Gonnojō, and he was born heir to Daibutsu Mochiya, a successful confectionary business that had been manufacturing rice cakes (*mochi*) in Kyoto for three generations. In 1694 when Kiseki was twenty-eight, he took over the family business upon his father's death, and from this point his writing career took off. (Coincidentally, this was the year after Saikaku's death.)

Kiseki wrote his first play for the *jōruri* narrator Matsumoto Jidayū. Titled *Daigaran hōmotsu kagami* (Treasure Mirror of the Great Temple, 1696), its publication marked the beginning of Kiseki's collaboration with the Kyoto publisher Hachimonjiya Jishō (d. 1745), which was to prove most fruitful for his career. Jishō was a savvy judge of the market for books and himself a writer of *ukiyo-zōshi*, and he also had a knack for producing books in attractive and beautifully illustrated new formats that were appealing to readers. The combination of Kiseki's writing style and Jishō's business skills would make them both very rich.

One early Hachimonjiya publication of Kiseki's had an especially lasting impact on the genre of actor evaluation books. Titled *Yakusha kuchi samisen* (The Actor's Hummed Shamisen, 1699), it consisted of three volumes, one for actors performing in kabuki theaters in each of the three major cities, Kyoto, Edo, and Osaka. Previous books in the genre had focused almost exclusively on describing an actor's good looks, a vestige of the genre's origins in books evaluating courtesans in the pleasure quarters. Kiseki emphasized instead the quality of an actor's dramatic performance on stage and assigned actors a rank accordingly from high to low. This innovation proved to be very popular with kabuki theatergoers, whom Jishō must have perceived to be more serious than other publishers realized, and *The Actor's Hummed*

Shamisen thus came to set the standard for all future actor evaluation books for the rest of the Edo period. Scholars have even suggested that it ultimately laid the foundation for modern theater criticism in the Meiji and Taishō periods.

Kiseki's first foray into the genre of ukiyo-zōshi was a five-volume Hachimonjiya publication titled *Keisei iro samisen* (The Courtesan's Shamisen of Love, 1701), which appeared with Jishō listed as the author. The book provided readers with intimate stories of the most sought-after courtesans of the day in pleasure quarters throughout Japan. Kiseki imitated and even plagiarized Saikaku in the work, but he also introduced a new perspective to the material by paying special attention to subtle differences in regional and social status of the male patrons of the pleasure quarters. The success of *The Courtesan's Shamisen of Love* led him to produce more books on love over the next decade, culminating in Kiseki's masterpiece *Keisei kintanki* (Courtesans Forbidden to be Short-Tempered, 1711). It was a six-volume tour de force that opened with two volumes debating the relative merits of female courtesans versus male actors as lovers; as it turned out, those advocating the love of women won the debate. Volume 3 gave detailed tips for engaging prostitutes outside the officially sanctioned pleasure quarters; and Volumes 4 through 6 described courtesans in the official quarters: Yoshiwara in Edo, Shinmachi in Osaka, and finally Shimabara in Kyoto.

Since acclaim for these literary successes was going to Jishō as "author," Kiseki naturally objected and began demanding a greater share of the profits. In 1714, he finally split with the Hachimonjiya and established his own publishing firm for his books, which thereafter credited himself as author. It was in this period that Kiseki produced bestsellers such as the *katagi-mono* (character books) titled *Seken musuko katagi* (Characters of Sons in the World, 1715) and *Seken musume katagi* (Characters of Daughters in the World, 1717); and a *jidai-mono* (historical or "period" book) titled *Kokusen'ya minchō taiheiki* (Coxinga and the Ming Dynasty Chronicle of Great Peace, 1717). After these successes he was able to negotiate from a position of strength with Jishō and finally reconciled with him in 1718.

It is sometimes said that Kiseki lacked Saikaku's intellect but was master of the human heart. Kiseki's skillful use of sentimentality in his writings appealed to a broad readership in his day, and this quality allowed his works to exert an ongoing influence on Edo period letters. With the advent of the Meiji era in 1868, Kiseki's character books inspired first-generation Meiji writers such as Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859–1935) to create modern renditions of the genre such as *Tōsei shosei katagi* (Characters of Students in Our

Day, 1885). But it was second-generation Meiji writers in search of the literary sensibilities of realism and naturalism then emerging in the late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century European novel who found a kindred spirit in Saikaku, especially after the first modern print edition of his writings appeared in 1894. The human condition as conveyed so compellingly in Saikaku's writings from two centuries prior inspired Kōda Rohan (1867–1947), Higuchi Ichiyō (1872–96), and other literary experimenters to try to depict their contemporary world with a similar clarity and style.

Representing theater: text and performance in kabuki and bunraku

C . A N D R E W G E R S T L E

Since the fourteenth century, theater has been at the center of cultural life in Japan to an extent rare in the world. For a single nation the tradition is rich, and unparalleled in its diversity and continuity in the production of dramatic literature and in stage practice. However, the West's long tradition of dramatic literature – from classical Greece through Shakespeare and modern playwrights – colors our view of Japanese (and much other non-Western) theater in which the actor's performance, rather than the playwright's text, has remained central. Since several Japanese theatrical traditions – *noh*, *kyōgen*, *bunraku* (*jōruri*), and *kabuki* – continue to the present as living lineages of actors passing on their skills from generation to generation, actors have maintained control over the interpretations of (their) texts on the stage. As a consequence, scholars, Japanese or otherwise, are thrust into a complex relationship with the drama both as performance under the firm control of professional, highly trained actors, and as historical play texts, the physical objects of literary or historical research. Scholars or directors do not share the unfettered freedom to interpret the texts of their counterparts in the West, where actors long ago lost their monopoly over the tradition.

Performance of any kind, whether the recitation of a poem, the singing of a song, a dance, or a stage play, is by definition a social or communal event, and much of its magical pleasure comes from being an experience in common with others in a group. And yet a performance is ephemeral and dissipates into thin air at its conclusion, left only as a fleeting memory for the participants.

Although the stage production was the focus and although actors remained more powerful than playwrights within troupes, writers employed by the actors or the theaters nevertheless produced a massive amount of play texts, some of which were published (*noh*, *bunraku*) from as early as the seventeenth century and many others (*kabuki*) which mostly remained in

manuscript until the modern era. As many as 1,500 full-day play texts for the bunraku puppet theater (*shōhon*, also called *maruhon*; includes the chanter's notation) were published in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and even larger numbers of kabuki plays were composed until into the twentieth century, and large numbers survive as manuscripts. We now have a representative number of English translations of bunraku and kabuki plays.¹ Written play texts, however, were only one type of representation of performance.

Kabuki did not, as a rule, publish the plays it produced on stage, but commercial publication of other forms of theatrical representation flourished. The range of publication around kabuki, in particular, was (and is) vast. The most important Tokugawa era genres were:²

- *yakusha hyōbanki* (actor critiques published annually from 1659 through the nineteenth century)
- *eiri kyōgen-bon* (illustrated summary versions of kabuki with considerable text)
- *ezukushi-kyōgen-bon* (illustrated plot summaries of kabuki with little text)
- *yakusha ehon* (illustrated books on actors)
- *gekisho* (illustrated books on theater)
- *yakusha-e* (single-sheet or multiple-sheet actor prints)
- *yakusha nendaiki* (chronologies of actors' careers)
- *kao-mise banzuke* (opening season playbills, with a list of actors contracted for the coming year)
- *yakuwari banzuke* (playbills listing actors in their various roles in the play)
- *ehon* (or *ezukushi*) *banzuke* (illustrated pamphlets of all the scenes of the play with the actors and roles listed)
- *surimono* (single-sheet, privately produced prints of poetry and images)
- *eiri nehon* (illustrated playbooks in *yomihon* fiction format)
- *mitate banzuke* (single- or multiple-sheet, topical and fictional playbills).

How did a man or woman in 1800 interact with the theater? The answer to this question will, of course, include attendance at bi-monthly productions of kabuki and/or bunraku at commercial theaters, but it will also involve other

¹ Library searches under the authors listed here will lead to English translations of bunraku and kabuki in books and anthologies: James Brandon, Karen Brazell, C. Andrew Gerstle, Stanleigh Jones, Donald Keene, Samuel Leiter, and Haruo Shirane. *Asian Theatre Journal* and *Monumenta Nipponica* also contain translations.

² Akama Ryō has produced a thorough survey and analysis of these different genres in *Zusetsu: Edo engekisho* (Tokyo: Yagi Shoten, 2003).

kinds of interaction. They would be likely to buy playbills and illustrated summary pamphlets as well as actor prints of their favorites. Later they might borrow the annual actor critique book from a lending library to read about the performances they had seen, and might be part of a poetry salon, the meetings of which actors sometimes joined, or be a member of a fan club and join in its activities with actors. And importantly, they were likely to be amateur performers themselves, taking lessons regularly from professionals. If they could paint, they might take a turn at drawing an actor portrait, and if in Osaka, they might design an actor print. They (men or women) might even be bold enough to pay for a tryst with a young actor. Kabuki and bunraku theater was an integral part of culture and socializing. Interaction with the theater was not passive in the sense of only buying a ticket, attending the performance, and returning home. This is also true for poetry. One read poetry not only alone to contemplate its essence, but also primarily in order to learn how to compose verses to perform at poetry parties at the teacher's salon. Individuals contributed actively to various performance subcultures; cultural salons were the primary means through which Japanese socialized in the Tokugawa period.

We know that from as early as the sixteenth century it had become common for private individuals, including samurai leaders such as Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu, to learn noh chanting and dance as an amateur hobby. Noh had become so important to the ruling samurai class by 1600 that the Tokugawa regime made it their house art, a decision that would influence the entire samurai class throughout the nation. A remarkable situation developed in which noh chanting and dance became key educational attributes of samurai, along with training in the martial arts. The demand for practice texts from amateur performers spurred the publication of noh playbooks complete with "secret" musical notation from early in the seventeenth century. To "read" a noh play meant to learn to perform it from a professional actor. This custom of learning a theatrical art as a cultural hobby would come, in the Tokugawa era, to permeate all levels of Japanese society.

Wrenched from the public sphere at the beginning of the seventeenth century, noh (and its companion *kyōgen*) ceased to develop as it had throughout the sixteenth century and became a relatively fossilized and ritualistic drama, with a fixed repertoire. Two new forms – kabuki and bunraku (*jōruri*) puppet theater – filled the void left in the urban commercial performance space. Although today these two theaters share many plays in common, kabuki and bunraku differ fundamentally in their origins and

essence. Jōruri was the inheritor of the long oral storytelling tradition of blind musicians that flourished at least from the end of the twelfth century after the Heike/Genji civil war. From the point when these storytellers joined with the separate tradition of puppetry around 1600, the storytellers had eyesight although the accompanying shamisen musicians remained blind until the second half of the eighteenth century. In bunraku, the story is the most important element, and it is the chanter (*tayū*) who is the focus; the puppeteers gained status over the centuries, but until the second half of the twentieth century people went to bunraku to “listen” (*kiki ni iku*) rather than to “watch,” as people say today. It is no accident, therefore, that bunraku texts, like the *noh*, were published from the seventeenth century onwards, initially with only minimal notation for voice but from the 1680s onward with the full chanter’s notation, in response to demand from the market of amateur performers. There is a high likelihood that our theatergoer in the year 1800, male or female, in Kyoto, Osaka, or Edo, or in more rural areas, would have at some point in his or her life learned *gidayū* (bunraku) chanting. Bunraku chanters and shamisen players have always made part of their living from teaching, and a tradition of female *gidayū* teachers developed alongside the male line. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries these women-*gidayū* performers (*onna gidayū*, *musume gidayū*) performed commercially as well, although without puppets.

Vasili Golownin, a Russian sea captain captured and put in jail in Matsumae on the southern edge of Hokkaido Island in the years 1811–13, noted in his diary:

The Japanese are extremely fond of reading; even common soldiers when on duty are continually engaged with books. This passion for literature, however, proved somewhat inconvenient to us, as they always read aloud, in a tone of voice resembling singing; much in the same style in which the Psalms are read at funerals in Russia. Before we became accustomed to this, we were unable to enjoy a moment’s rest during the night. The history of their native country, the contests that have arisen among themselves, and the wars in which they have been engaged with neighbouring nations, form the subjects of their favorite books, which are all printed in Japan.³

This description makes it clear that the texts were bunraku plays. Even in the remote frontiers of Japan as far as Hokkaido amateur chanting was well established by early in the nineteenth century. Surviving records show that

³ Vasili Golownin, *Memoirs of a Captivity in Japan during the Years 1811, 1812, and 1813*, vol. 1 (London, 1824 [reprint 1973]), 303.

bunraku-style puppet performances were regularly held at nearly two hundred rural sites from the Edo through Meiji periods. We also know that amateur and semi-professional troupes of kabuki regularly performed around the country. Because of wide amateur interest, large numbers of bunraku books remained in print throughout the Edo period. The 1805 publication *Jōruri gedai mokuroku* lists several Osaka publishers and a total of 619 different titles; an Edo list of *keikobon* (practice texts of individual acts or scenes) from 1816 has 159 *shōhon*, 470 *keikobon*, and 68 *michiyuki* texts, a total of 697 titles.

Kabuki, in contrast to bunraku, developed from dance, with the actor's physical body as the focus. Women and men performers vied for prominence in the early seventeenth century, but, as is well known, kabuki performances were garish affairs and the association with both male and female prostitution was overt. From the mid seventeenth century the government restricted public performances to adult males in order to control prostitution. This worked to push kabuki to develop as drama, but actors continued to be worshiped as sex idols, and particularly in the early part of their careers, to serve as prostitutes (*iroko*) for men and women. Eroticism of the actor's body has been and continues to remain fundamental to kabuki. In contrast to *noh* and bunraku, however, kabuki actors have never taught acting to amateurs; they keep their histrionic skills secret within the guild-like troupe. This does not mean that the audience did not interact directly with kabuki actors outside the theater. Kabuki dance in the eighteenth century became a widely popular amateur activity, and many kabuki actors were and are dance teachers. Fans also took lessons in various forms of kabuki music, such as Kiyomoto, Nagauta, and Tomimoto. *Gidayū* chanting and kabuki dance and music were also the fundamental skills learned by professional actors and *geisha* in their training.

Another contrast with *noh* and bunraku is that kabuki, as a rule, did not allow the publication of its plays, although these did circulate as manuscripts and there was a period of publication of as many as seventy plays with illustrations (*eri nehon*) in Osaka from around 1800 till the Meiji era. Major theaters in the three main cities employed staff playwrights, but their work remained the property of the theater, and plays were regularly rewritten for each performance for the particular ensemble of actors.

Because both bunraku and kabuki were performer-centered, it was conventional that plays were written anew for each production by a team of in-house playwrights, for the particular ensemble of performers. Although the plays were composed and performed within a literate world, there was a conscious sense of keeping the orality of performance paramount. The actors

maintained control over the medium and patterns of composition preserved some elements of orality. This was the case for bunraku until the 1780s and for kabuki until the twentieth century.

During the time of the playwright Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653–1725), who wrote for both the bunraku and kabuki stages, it became standard to publish complete bunraku texts at the time of first performance with the name of the playwright as author, but the name of the senior chanter was also included on the final page of the book, authenticating the accuracy of the code of musical notation in the text. For the theatergoer or “reader,” the real “text” was a performance, and most readers learned from professionals how to perform plays as a hobby, a tradition that remained vibrant until World War II. We see, however, in Chikamatsu a distinctly different attitude toward past tales than that of Zeami Motokiyo (1363–1443?) in noh drama, who wrote that playwrights should stick closely to the source, even using exact phrases from the original. All of Chikamatsu’s seventy or so period plays (*jidai-mono*) are set in the context of a well-known story with a distinctive source, yet the works are very different from the source. Creativity in bunraku theater from the seventeenth to late eighteenth centuries was the production of variations of known stories for each new program. It was unusual to perform the same play again and again, with little or no change, until after the mid eighteenth century, when creativity came to mean innovation in performance of the repertoire.

Chikamatsu himself wrote many plays that were a variation on the same source, such as the vendetta of the Soga brothers or the adventures of Minamoto no Yorimitsu (Raikō). The professional playwright’s ethic, ideally for kabuki or bunraku, was to create a new play for each performance every two months or so. A distinctive aspect of this tradition was the refashioning of an old tale to bear relevance to the immediate present. The period plays are invariably set within the context of one of the major tales of the collective memory, but the crucial, climactic act three always brings the story to the present, and usually the tragic hero is a fictional character, most often not a high personage, but rather a figure similar to the audience of the time. The tales, usually about political intrigue, are set in the past, but in fact were about contemporary Tokugawa government and society. The overall structure of a five-act play is relatively formulaic with each act having a distinctive tone and atmosphere, and act five always ending with an auspicious conclusion, giving hope for prosperity and stability to the community. Originality in this context lay in creating a variation on the known tale, and in bringing it to bear relevance to the audience at the particular moment of the performance.

Mikhail Bakhtin describes the transition from the European medieval epic to post-Renaissance novelistic consciousness in terms that seem to describe bunraku and kabuki as well.

Both the singer and the listener, immanent in the epic as a genre, are located in the same time and on the same evaluative (hierarchical) plane, but the represented world of the heroes stands on an utterly different and inaccessible time-and-value place, separated by epic distance. To portray an event on the same time-and-value plane as oneself and one's contemporaries (and an event that is therefore based on personal experience and thought) is to undertake a radical revolution, and to step out of the world of the epic into the world of the novel.⁴

Japan did begin in the mid to late seventeenth century to produce commercial fiction, *ukiyo-zōshi*, depicting all aspects of contemporary society, but the “oral” or “performance” tradition remained predominant as the mindset for the creation and interaction with narrative. In bunraku from Chikamatsu's age onward, the plays are set in the past, but in the climactic sections the story and characters are brought to the present. In Edo kabuki we often see the opposite where the setting is clearly the present but underneath lies the world of the past memory, such as in the many variations of the *Sukeroku* play or in *Yotsuya kaidan* by Tsuruya Nanboku IV (1755–1829), where the contemporary characters such as Sukeroku and Iemon have connections with tales long in the past. Jōruri (bunraku) emerged out of the epic tradition, but soon developed an ethic of innovation, of altering the content, to produce a new version of the past stories and legends. Kabuki, on the other hand, begins in the present and looks back to the past with an eye to toy with it, to give new meaning to the present. Influence back and forth between these theaters, which sat side by side in entertainment districts, continued from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries but at the core this distinction remained intact.

Today we speak of kabuki as a single tradition but in fact the dramas composed in Kyoto/Osaka (Kamigata) and those in Edo were considerably different. The acting styles, as well, were distinct. In general, the plays and acting styles of Kyoto/Osaka were more realistic and delicate/refined (*wagoto*) as opposed to the more fantastic stories and exaggerated histrionics of Edo (*aragoto*). Bunraku's influence was greater in Kyoto/Osaka where playwrights tended to get their training in writing for bunraku first, because

⁴ Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, trans. Michael Holquist and Caryl Emerson (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 14.

the status of the playwright in bunraku was higher than in kabuki and the plays were published under the authors' names. Because today kabuki has come to be dominated by Tokyo, the view of kabuki's dual history is distorted. Edo kabuki was not predominant until well into the nineteenth century.

Late in the eighteenth century, Osaka kabuki playwrights, most likely Namiki Shōza (also read Shōzō, 1730–73) in particular, came to formulate a theory of composition based on the concept of *sekai*, meaning a “world,” the context of some known story from the past, and *shukō*, meaning innovation or twist. The word *shukō* is an old term used in the discussion of the arts including poetry from earliest times. The formal dichotomy of *sekai*/*shukō* only developed as a distinctive theory in the kabuki theater in the late eighteenth century, but it of course emerged out of the bunraku/kabuki tradition described above. This structure importantly also came to be a conventional aspect of popular fiction that flourished from the late eighteenth century particularly in Edo. A manuscript dating before 1791 entitled *Sekai kōmoku* (A Guide to Historical Settings) was an in-house guidebook for Edo kabuki playwrights, listing the range of *sekai* under various headings such as emperors, famous historical, legendary or literary figures, and book or play titles. Each heading, then, is followed by a list of possible roles (*yakumei*), jōruri texts (*gidayū*), and other (usually earlier) sources (*hikisho*). This source indicates a key framework for play construction.

Until Chikamatsu began writing in the 1680s, plays were considered to be the product of the chanters themselves, essentially something that they had inherited from their masters. Chikamatsu was hired to write for specific performers: first as an apprentice to Uji Kaganojō (1635–1711) and then for Takemoto Gidayū (1651–1714) and his successors, as well as in collaboration with kabuki actors. He had to write to suit the fully formed conventions and formulas of the performance traditions in which these two chanters worked. Although bunraku was part of a literate urban world and the plays were regularly published in full, the formulaic nature of oral performance was its heritage. Gidayū, in his first long preface to a collection of his best pieces (*Jōkyō yonen Gidayū danmonoshū*, 1687), gives us a clear idea of this archetypical formula for the five acts of a play, which is cyclical leading from an auspicious beginning, through crisis and tragedy, to salvation and a return to auspicious order at the end. Almost all of Chikamatsu's works and most of the later famous bunraku plays remained within this framework. The leap that Bakhtin suggests between the medieval epic and the urban novel is evident in Chikamatsu and the later playwrights. The heroes, such as Kansuke's old

mother in Chikamatsu's *Shinshū kawanakajima kassen* (Battles of Kawanakajima, 1721) and Gonta in *Yoshitsune senbon zakura* (Yoshitsune and the Thousand Cherry Trees, 1747) are invariably representatives of contemporary society, often characters with no political power such as women, or men who have fallen into disrepute.

Most of the more than one thousand five-act bunraku plays produced in the eighteenth century are variations of some kind on this formula, including Chikamatsu's best *jidai-mono*. The fundamental context that we need to remember is that the audience for these performances was participating in a collective venture. They knew the outline of the stories, and the main players; they came to the performance to experience a known tale in a distinctive re-creation that existed at two levels: the historical memory and the immediate present. The crucial difference from the pre-Tokugawa oral-narrative tradition is that the audiences came to want the stories to be about their own lives, to reflect contemporary life, not just tales of exalted personages long past.

Chikamatsu is justly famous for his development of the *sewa-mono* genre of plays set entirely in his contemporary times and focusing on ordinary heroes and heroines, many of whom were orphans or prostitutes of the commoner class. His twenty-four contemporary-life works are remarkable for their focus on real incidents of love suicide, murder, adultery, and other crimes involving ordinary men and women who face tragic endings. *Shinjū Ten-no-Amijima* (Love Suicides at Amijima, 1720) and *Onna koroshi abura no jigoku* (Woman-killer and the Hell of Oil, 1721) are two masterpieces of this sub-genre. Chikamatsu brings this experience to bear in his late period (historical) plays where the tragic heroes and heroines also tend to be figures without political power such as women or men who have fallen from their positions due to dereliction. The men and women who face the ultimate test of self-sacrifice for their own honor or for a greater cause were usually individuals low on the social scale or those without power or those who had lost their position in society. The plays, whether set in the present or far in the past, were understood straightforwardly to be about the contemporary life of the audience, and were often indirectly critical of contemporary politics. The *sekai* world is the collective memory; the *shukō* innovation brings this cultural and social memory to the present.

Even in ostensibly military contexts the tragic heroes are often women. The ultimate hero of *Kokusen'ya kassen* (The Battles of Coxinga, 1715) is not General Coxinga, the historic figure, but his Chinese half-sister, a fictional character, and his Japanese mother who both sacrifice themselves for the

greater cause. The play, as well, has been analysed as being covertly about the Tokugawa Bakufu's policies. The hero of *Battles of Kawanakajima* is not one of the famous generals of military history, Takeda Shingen, Uesugi Kenshin, or Yamamoto Kansuke, but the seventy-two-year-old mother of Kansuke. The male heroes, as well, are not figures of power, but are almost always those who have lost their position for some indiscretion, such as the child-murderer Sarushima no Sōta in *Futago sumidagawa* (Twins at the Sumida River, 1720) or the murderer Bunjibei in *Tsu no kuni meoto-ike* (Lovers Pond in Settsu Province, 1721). These figures were all depicted as the audiences' contemporaries even if the tales were set in times long past. Chikamatsu's works, then, came to be the model for later playwrights.

The late 1740s saw the composition of several works that became the most popular plays in both the bunraku and kabuki repertoires. The most famous are: *Sugawara denju tenarai kagami* (Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy, 1746); *Yoshitsune and the Thousand Cherry Trees* (1747); *Kanadehon Chūshingura* (Treasury of the 47 Loyal Retainers, 1748). These were all written cooperatively by Namiki Senryū (Sōsuke, 1695–1751), Takeda Izumo II (1691–1756), and Miyoshi Shōraku (1696–1772). In 1751, Namiki Sōsuke returned to the Toyotake theater and wrote his final play: *Ichinotani futaba gunki* (Chronicles of the Battle of Ichinotani, 1751). The tragic figures from these dramas – Sakuramaru, Gonta, Kanpei, and Kumagai – became the enduring image of the popular hero well into modern times. All of these are representations of shukō innovation in sekai worlds that were well known to the audience; they are all “fallen” men in the sense of having committed a transgression. These heroes are of low status and often weak characters, either entirely fictional or marginally historical. They tend to be reflections of contemporary Edo period commoners. It became conventional that high-status or historical figures did not fill the roles of tragic heroes in either sewa-mono or jidai-mono. In all cases the crux of the tragedy is the will of a character to sacrifice either himself or a loved one. All of the tragic-hero characters in period plays have committed some indiscretion prior to the action of the crucial scene. Even if they are of relatively low status, they fall further, and in act three face tragedy as a choice to prove their honor and virtue.

Can we analyse kabuki in the same way as bunraku? Although surrounded by an array of publications such as actor prints, critique books, illustrated summary books, and selections of famous speeches, throughout the Edo period kabuki did not allow the publication of complete texts. This is in stark contrast to bunraku, which from the early seventeenth century has almost

always published full, authorized editions of each play at the time of first performance. This was certainly a decision of the actors themselves, who could have made money through publishing. Hundreds of kabuki manuscripts have survived but these were part of the troupe's possession, kept from becoming fixed texts in print. The conventions of oral performance were consciously maintained in kabuki as well as bunraku. Each performance was to be a new version of a well-known story.

Play production in bunraku and kabuki flourished in Kyoto and Osaka until the end of the eighteenth century. From the late eighteenth century, however, Edo increasingly became a producer of popular literature. In the last half of the eighteenth century Edo writers, including Hiraga Gennai (1728–80), produced about fifty bunraku plays. One key incident in kabuki history reflects the rising economic power and cultural will of the city of Edo. Namiki Gohei, the foremost kabuki playwright of his age, was at the peak of his career in 1794. He wrote dramas for theaters and actors in Kyoto and Osaka. Sawamura Sōjūrō III (Tosshi, 1755–1801), an Edo-born actor who returned to Edo in 1794 after a tour in Osaka, had arranged for Gohei to return with him to Edo as a staff playwright to write plays for him and his troupe. Kabuki is driven by commercial imperatives. Sōjūrō and his financial backers had persuaded the star playwright of the age to move to Edo. Gohei, then, remained in Edo until his death in 1808 and was influential in bringing Osaka-style playwriting to Edo and influencing playwrights such as Tsuruya Nanboku IV, who would usher in a boom in Edo playwriting. Kawatake Mokuami (1816–93) was the final star in this lineage and was one of the few artists whose careers successfully bridged the Meiji Restoration.

From as early as the seventeenth century a vast amount of visual records of actors in books and single-sheet prints survive. While Kyoto/Osaka published books relating to kabuki, such as the actor critiques for all three cities, bunraku plays, and illustrated theater books such as *eiri kyōgen-bon* and *eiri jōruri-bon*, Edo took the lead in graphic representation, particularly of single-sheet prints. Throughout the history of *ukiyo-e*, actor prints were the mainstay of the industry, produced regularly for the bi-monthly kabuki programmes, and scholars have been able to document many of the works to a particular date and performance. From the late seventeenth century until the late nineteenth century, the amount of prints produced and still extant is enormous.

Visual interest was primarily for the exaggeratedly histrionic poses of the rough, bombastic style (*aragoto*) characteristic of Edo kabuki in general and the Ichikawa Danjūrō line in particular. The other interest, of course, was the

female-role specialists, the *onnagata*. The representation of the male, heroic lead was exaggerated in body movement and in facial expression, but the *onnagata* was represented almost always in a generic style that was little different from the representation of women in prints and paintings (*bijinga*). Mutō has suggested that this may have been a clever way for publishers to extend the shelf life of the print as a *bijinga* after the play had ended.⁵ *Onnagata* were early on represented as *wakashū*, young men in feminine poses, but from at least the 1730s they are almost always represented in Edo as if they were women, not men dressed as women. Osaka from the 1780s produced a separate tradition of actor prints that often depicted *onnagata* more realistically as male actors.

Actors were beyond the pale in their official social status beneath the four classes of warrior, farmer, artisan, and merchant, but, as with film or TV actors today, kabuki actors were fêted as sexual and cultural icons by their fans, including the samurai. The key means for actors to socialize with patrons was through poetry circles. A convention developed from at least the late seventeenth century for individuals to adopt a pen-name (*haigō*, *haimyō*) no matter what their social status or region in order to participate in *haiku* circles and other cultural activities. Within the cultural salon (*za*), it also became an accepted convention that this fictional space was egalitarian, and class or status did not matter. Within the temporarily constructed sphere of the salon, individuals took on an identity distinct from their home/work existence. While rarely politically active, these Japanese salons were, by their egalitarian ethic, inherently culturally and socially subversive within a national ideology based on strict and legal segregation by class, status, profession, and region. The role of the arts, therefore, was an essential catalyst for social intercourse and development. The theaters were important, highly active nodes in a national network of cultural salons. *Surimono*, privately published decorative prints with poems, are magnificent sources that show us how actors circulated in society.

In Osaka and Kyoto the system of fan clubs was well developed. There were more than five fan clubs that flourished during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Osaka alone. Each had its rituals to support actors and performances, especially the first performance of the season in the eleventh month. It is clear that many Osaka businessmen were involved in these clubs as part of their social life. In Edo, the focus of fan clubs was often on and

⁵ Mutō Junko, *Shoki ukiyoe to kabuki: yakusha-e ni chūmoku shite* (Tokyo: Kazama Shobō, 2005), 61.

around Ichikawa Danjūrō, whichever generation the actor. Danjūrō V (Hakuen, 1741–1806) was one of the more active of the lineage at a time of great cultural activity in Edo in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. He came to serve as an icon for Edo writers and poets such as Ōta Nanpo (1749–1823) and Utei Enba (1743–1822). Under his pen-name Hakuen, he was active in haiku and *kyōka* poetry groups, gaining fame not only as a star actor but also as a cultivated individual deserving great respect.

The theater, therefore, was not just the plays on stage. It was a vibrant aspect and stimulant of cultural life in the Edo period, one in which individuals from all walks of life participated through a wide variety of means.

Puppet theater: from early jōruri to the golden age

JANICE KANEMITSU

Jōruri refers to the vocal art of dramatic narration. A single reciter (the *tayū*) typically performs both the narration and the dialogue of multiple characters, together with a *samisen* player (*shamisen-biki*) who functions more like an additional voice – signaling such dramatic elements as the opening of a new scene or act, the shift to a different location, or non-verbal emotional cues – than a musical accompaniment. In *ningyō jōruri*, puppets represent this aural world created by the reciter and musician. *Ningyō jōruri* lay at the heart of Edo popular culture in multiple ways: as a dramatic genre based on a tradition of orally performed narratives; in its dramaturgical relationship with *kabuki* (involving mutual exchange of plots, conventions, and tropes); in its influence on both performance and printed scripts; and as a medium for disseminating information and news on social scandals and current events.

Early Jōruri

Jōruri takes its name from Lady Jōruri, the female protagonist of a late sixteenth-century narrative that was gradually adapted into a new style of recitation. Various works portraying the late twelfth-century tragic romance between Lady Jōruri and a young Minamoto no Yoshitsune suggest that female entertainers working at post stations along well-traveled thoroughfares played an instrumental role in the creation and early dissemination of the legend. Though Lady Jōruri is supposed to have been the daughter of an affluent lord, the portrayal of her and her residence shares much in common with popular female entertainers in well-equipped houses of pleasure. While itinerant male storytellers subsequently recited these tales to the accompaniment of the lute-like *biwa*, the *samisen* – a three-stringed instrument introduced to Japan via the Ryūkyū Islands in the late 1500s – later became the preferred instrument.

Since the Tokugawa period, jōruri works have been grouped into *ko-jōruri* (old jōruri) and *shin-* or *tōryū-jōruri* (new or contemporary jōruri), which begins in 1685 with *Shusse Kagekiyo* (Kagekiyo Victorious) by the playwright Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653–1725). Ko-jōruri shares several characteristics with early trends in woodblock printing. Just as medieval narratives supplied much of the early sources of Edo printed fiction, most ko-jōruri drew heavily on plots from *katari-mono* (orally recited narratives) – such as famous episodes from *Heike monogatari* (The Tales of the Heike) or from *Soga monogatari* (The Tale of the Revenge of the Soga Brothers) – or reworkings of narratives from other dramatic genres, such as *noh*, *sekkyō-bushi* (sermon ballads), and *kōwakamai* (*kōwaka-bukyoku*, ballad dramas). Ko-jōruri also adapted plots from illustrated Muromachi tales as well as favorite episodes from literary masterpieces such as *The Tale of Genji*. Despite the gradual shift from outdoor performances by itinerant storytellers to stationary theaters with professional performers, ko-jōruri often had plots that adapted performed narratives or other texts into the narrative style of jōruri. The stories, puppetry, and use of theatrical space at this time remained generally simplistic and two-dimensional.

Kinpira jōruri, an Edo-born subgenre of ko-jōruri, offered a breath of fresh air to theatergoers who yearned for something more than the retelling of earlier tales. Named after one of its fictional protagonists, Sakata Kinpira, this short-lived subgenre flourished for roughly a five-year period from 1657 to 1662. The first play *Kiyohara no Udaishō* (Kiyohara Right Major Captain), composed by Oka Seibei Kiyotoshi, introduced a familiar cast of characters: the Heian general Minamoto Yorimitsu (948–1021, also known as Raikō), his retired father Minamoto Mitsunaka (912–97, also known as Manjū), his younger brother Yorinobu, and his quartet of fiercely loyal retainers, nicknamed the Four Heavenly Guardians (*Shitennō*) – Watanabe Tsuna, Usui Sadamitsu, Urabe Suetake, and Sakata Kintoki – along with their fictional sons and grandsons. The series authored by Oka ends in 1662 with the death of Kintoki's son, Kinpira, in *Kinpira no saigo* (The Death of Kinpira).

In addition to its cast of original characters, *Kinpira jōruri* spun tales set in the Heian period that re-imagined the Minamoto generals in situations suggestive of Tokugawa shoguns. *Kinpira jōruri* thus modernized the Minamoto generals and their Four Heavenly Guardians into contemporary heroes of early modern Japan's political world – slayers not of demons, such as Shūtendōji and the Earth Spider, but of rebels and traitors who threatened the public order of the sovereign rule that granted the shogunate its legitimacy.

During the years from 1655 to 1673, Kinpira jōruri in its broadest sense (including plays in which any of the five generations of Minamoto generals and their Four Heavenly Guardians appeared) accounted for nearly half of all jōruri produced. Kinpira jōruri kick-started the printing of playbooks in Edo, a publishing genre that had previously been limited to the Kyoto-Osaka region. Moreover, the cross-generational sequels of Kinpira jōruri promoted the sharing of characters and familial narratives across regional and artistic lineages – playwrights and reciters, east and west, added prequels and new adventures to the lives of the Minamoto generals and their faithful sidekicks.

Chikamatsu Monzaemon

Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653–1725) composed over one hundred plays for the puppet theater stage over four decades, from *Yotsugi Soga* (The Soga Heir), in 1683, to *Kanhasshu tsunagi uma* (The Tethered Steed of the Eight Provinces), which was staged in the first lunar month of 1724. As mentioned earlier, the 1685 *Shusse Kagekiyo*, Chikamatsu's first play composed for the reciter Takemoto Gidayū (1651–1714), who had opened his own theater (on Osaka's Dotombori Avenue) in 1684, marks the boundary between “old jōruri” and “new jōruri.” The “new jōruri” signaled a new era in ningyō jōruri in terms not only of playwriting but also of performance and staging.

Today, Chikamatsu's reputation rests largely on his *sewa-mono* (contemporary-life plays), even though roughly three-fourths of his total jōruri production were *jidai-mono* (period or historical pieces). During his four decades as a playwright, Chikamatsu also devoted himself almost exclusively to writing kabuki plays for Kyoto's Miyako no Mandayū theater in the years 1693–1702, crafting roles to showcase the actor Sakata Tōjūrō I. Chikamatsu's jōruri plays that are most celebrated today all emerged after this kabuki period.

Changes in Chikamatsu's approach to the worlds depicted in his plays over the years provide an effective means of considering his creative productivity. That is, the fictional universes of his period plays are inherently linked to their themes of political rebellion, vengeance, and so forth. For example, his twelve plays based on *Soga monogatari* all revolve around a vendetta. On the other hand, his nine plays based on the Genpei War (between the Genji and Heike houses) and seven plays based on *Gikeiki* (Chronicle of Yoshitsune) tend to rework familiar plots found in their respective sources. His corpus also includes five plays based on *Taiheiki* (Chronicle of Great Peace), five on

Minamoto Raikō and his Four Guardian Kings, and three plays about the historical figure Coxinga (1624–62).

Chikamatsu's career can be roughly divided into three main phases. In the first decade, his jōruri corpus is similar to that of ko-jōruri; that is, his early plays also drew heavily on pre-Tokugawa narratives. However, he began experimenting with the strategy, embryonic but evident in Kinpira jōruri, of portraying current events within the guise of a period piece. For example, Chikamatsu wrote one of the first theatrical treatments of the 1703 vendetta by the Akō *rōnin*: the three-act period piece *Goban Taiheiki* (Chronicle of Great Peace, Played on a Go Board, 1710). To avoid the shogunal ban on literary or theatrical treatment of politically sensitive topics, Chikamatsu employed the fictional universe of the military romance *Taiheiki*, mapping each historical vendetta participant onto an existing *Taiheiki* character. Most subsequent jōruri – culminating in the most celebrated version, *Kanadehon Chūshingura* (Treasury of Loyal Retainers, 1748) – also set their plots in the same fictional universe. Predating the use of the word *sekai* (world) as a theatrical term, Chikamatsu played an instrumental role in establishing the conventions for the casting, settings, and tropes of later theatrical “worlds.”

The *shinjū-mono* (love suicide play), a contemporary-life play that recounted the recent tragedy of a double suicide, had been in vogue on kabuki stages since 1683. Chikamatsu wrote the first *shinjū-mono* for jōruri, *Sonezaki shinjū* (Love Suicides at Sonezaki), in 1703. Ningyō jōruri images from the 1600s typically portray only the puppets, each operated by a single puppeteer, above a shoulder-high curtain stretched across the stage's width, behind which all the performers – reciter, musician, and puppeteers – remained concealed from the audience. An illustration in the playbill for *Sonezaki shinjū*, printed in conjunction with the play's opening night, however, depicts the puppeteer's body revealed behind a rail as he operates a female puppet, with both the reciter and the musician seated on stage left. Chikamatsu's *Sonezaki shinjū* also transformed the puppet theater, which had previously only staged period pieces. Chikamatsu's exposure to kabuki dramaturgy profoundly affected his approach to playwriting and later greatly influenced his jōruri composition. In his post-kabuki years, Chikamatsu's period pieces are more likely to include an act or scene that is very obviously about the present. Around the same time, moreover, the Takemoto Theater began incorporating more visual spectacle into its stage productions. For these reasons, the 1703 *Sonezaki shinjū* can be considered as having triggered the playwright's middle phase, the years when he began writing plays about contemporary life that featured commoners and experimenting with the inclusion of contemporary elements in his period pieces.

Puppetry took on greater importance from 1705, when Takeda Izumo (d. 1747) took over management of the Takemoto Theater, freeing Takemoto Gidayū to focus on oral recitation and performance, and hired Chikamatsu as staff playwright. The new emphasis on visual spectacle gave jōruri access to a wider spectrum of the urban population – particularly those who could not assimilate the recitation of Chikamatsu’s dense literary prose. Previously, Takemoto Theater performances consisted solely of puppeteers each operating a single puppet, the reciter, and the samisen player. In late 1705, however, the first collaborative effort between puppeteer/manager, reciter, and playwright resulted in *Yōmei Tennō shokunin kagami* (Emperor Yōmei and the Mirror of Artisans). This five-act period piece profoundly changed the Takemoto Theater’s staging practices and widened its audience base by enhanced visual spectacle, exploiting the Takeda family’s forte of larger, more lifelike puppets, lavish use of stage props, and *karakuri* (mechanized puppets).

From 1710, the Takemoto Theater faced serious competition from another jōruri theater in Osaka for the first time when the reciter Toyotake Wakatayū (1681–1764), a former disciple of Gidayū, opened the Toyotake Theater, choosing the Osaka-born Ki no Kaion (1663–1742) as staff playwright. For the next thirteen years or so, the two rival puppet theaters and their staff playwrights introduced the Osaka theater scene to an artistic rivalry of unprecedented intensity. During this period, which represented the last thirteen years of Chikamatsu’s career but the entirety of Kaion’s active period as a jōruri playwright, Chikamatsu produced slightly over half of his entire jōruri corpus of 56 plays (14 sewa-mono and 42 jidai-mono), whereas the less experienced Kaion produced 45 plays (11 sewa-mono and 34 jidai-mono). When the shogunate banned the staging of shinjū-mono in 1723, Chikamatsu retired within the same year and Ki no Kaion soon followed suit. Their retirement created a void at their respective theaters that would eventually usher in a new age of collaborative authorship.

All of Chikamatsu’s most celebrated jōruri were composed after his return from the kabuki theater. Modern Japanese anthologies of his plays devote their annotation efforts almost exclusively to his late-period plays. Moreover, if you wished to view the performance of a Chikamatsu play today, you would similarly have to choose among his sewa-mono plays (1703 onward) and his period plays from roughly that same period. There seems to be little interest in reviving his earlier jōruri, whereas his plays that became hits in their own time continue to be popular today. For example, at least one act of *Komochi yamauba* (Motherly Mountain Witch, 1712) – a fictional interweaving

of legends about Minamoto Raikō and the mountain witch – has been performed at least every decade since its premier. *Kokusen'ya kassen* (The Battles of Coxinga, 1715) enjoyed an unprecedentedly long run of seventeen months after its debut and is still performed today. Among his sewa-mono, *Shinjū Ten-no-Amijima* (Love Suicides at Amijima, 1720) is considered his masterpiece. Another popular jōruri is *Meido no hikyaku* (Courier for Hell, 1711), which can sometimes be viewed during the same season as its later kabuki adaptation, *Koibikiyaku Yamato ōrai* (A Message of Love from Yamato, 1757). In addition to pitting social duty against individual sentiment, the contemporary-life plays demonstrate the powerful social impact exerted by money on the daily lives of the merchant class.

Nevertheless, the modern staging of a Chikamatsu jōruri requires certain adjustments. His prose tends to include or omit syllables to achieve rhythmic recitation, making his narratives harder to recite. Moreover, his plays were designed for staging by one-puppeteer puppets. The subsequent shift to three-puppeteer puppets subtly changed the balance between sound and spectacle. Chikamatsu's plays thus require some revision to accommodate the greater expressive range of the subsequent three-puppeteer puppets.

The golden age

The golden age of jōruri, spanning the years from 1715 until 1751, opened with the first performance of *Kokusen'ya kassen*, which enjoyed an unprecedented seventeen-month run at the Takemoto Theater. Takemoto Gidayū died in 1714, and *Kokusen'ya kassen* was Chikamatsu's first play composed for Gidayū's twenty-three-year-old artistic heir, in a bid to lure back audiences who had strayed to the Toyotake Theater's still youthful but more artistically mature Toyotake Wakatayū. The prolific production of the two staff playwrights of the Takemoto and Toyotake theaters between 1710 and 1723 contributed to jōruri's overwhelming popularity, which overshadowed that of kabuki during this period. Other factors contributing to the popularity of jōruri were the shogunal ban on erotic literature in 1722 and the ban on theatrical shinjū-mono in 1723, causing fiction and kabuki to lose ground to jōruri. Due to the growing prosperity of Osaka as the country's economic hub, jōruri attracted a more affluent audience. Kabuki theaters also relied on jōruri scripts in the absence of popular playwrights of their own. Another factor was the establishment of a system of collaborative jōruri authorship.

This golden age finds Chikamatsu at his artistic peak, taking greater risks as he creatively interwove existing fictional universes, classical and

contemporary prose and poetry, contemporary social events, and allusions to other theatrical performances. *Keisei Shimabara kairu kassen* (Shimabara Courtesans and the Toad War, 1719), for example, assumes the temporal setting and many of the characters of the fictional universe of *The Tale of the Soga Brothers*, the popular tale of two brothers' vendetta against their father's killer. This period piece, however, functioned as a thinly disguised narrative of the events leading up to and during the 1637–8 Shimabara Uprising.

The staging of the performers continued to evolve. A 1727 stage illustration of *Hōjō jirai ki* (The Chronicle of Hōjō Tokiyori), first performed at the Toyotake Theater in 1726, shows the reciter and the musician seated at the far edge of stage right (allowing more space on stage for puppets) and a railing that concealed only the lower half of the puppeteers' bodies, suggesting a shift from puppetry in which puppeteers remained entirely concealed below a railing on stage to a new form of puppetry in which both the puppets and the upper half of the puppeteers' bodies were visible above the railing.

In contrast to the larger puppets used in *Emperor Yōmei and the Mirror of Artisans* in 1705, small puppets used in *The Battles of Coxinga* from 1715 created a sense of faraway distance when juxtaposed with the normal-sized puppets in the foreground. Documents reveal that puppets with movable mouths, eyelids, and hand joints appeared in 1727, movable eyes in 1730, movable fingers in 1733, and movable eyebrows in 1736; by 1748–51, three-person puppetry (*sannin-zukai*) had become the mainstream. This new type of puppet achieved realistic movement through seamless coordination among the “main puppeteer” (*omozukai*), who operated the puppet's head and right arm, the “left puppeteer” (*hidarizukai*), who operated the left arm, and the “feet puppeteer” (*ashizukai*), the most junior of the trio.

The golden age ended with the death of Namiki Sōsuke (1695–1751). This influential jōruri playwright was initially affiliated with the Toyotake Theater, left Osaka for Edo in 1741, wrote for Osaka's kabuki scene from 1742 until 1744, and then ultimately joined the Takemoto Theater in 1745. Under the name of Namiki Senryū I, Namiki collaborated with fellow playwrights Miyoshi Shōraku and Takeda Izumo II (Koizumo I) to produce their first piece, the contemporary-life play *Natsu matsuri Naniwa kagami* (Summer Festival: Mirror of Osaka) that same year. As Namiki Sōsuke, he and the same two collaborators co-authored what are considered “the three jōruri masterpieces,” all performed today in both the ningyō jōruri and the kabuki theaters: *Sugawara denju tenarai kagami* (Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy, 1746), *Yoshitsune senbon zakura* (Yoshitsune and the Thousand Cherry Trees, 1747), and *Kanadehon Chūshingura* in 1748. By the mid 1700s,

ningyō jōruri had established most of the conventions of playwriting, staging, and puppetry in practice today.

The twelve-scene, nine-act period piece *Sugawara denju tenarai kagami* was set in the Heian period, and recounts the life of court aristocrat and scholar Sugawara no Michizane (845–903), beginning with his exile to Dazaifu in southern Japan due to unjust slander up to his deification at Kyoto's Kitano Shrine. The play combines fact and popular legend about the life of this illustrious figure whose son ultimately inherits his court position. The most popular scenes in the play, however, feature three brothers – sons of Michizane's trusted retainer but currently the loyal retainers of different political factions at court – and the profound sacrifices they make to uphold their fealty to the Sugawara and to atone for past transgressions.

Yoshitsune senbon zakura is a fifteen-scene, five-act period piece that takes place after the end of the Genpei War, when Yoshitsune and his small band of retainers are being hunted down by the troops of his brother Minamoto Yoritomo. Though primarily based on familiar legends surrounding Yoshitsune, his loyal vassals, and his lover Shizuka Gozen, the famous third act involves a minor thug and his father who runs a roadside sushi shop. Through a series of complicated plot twists and revealed identities, these men and their families coincidentally collaborate to save the life of the last living member of the Taira house.

Kanadehon Chūshingura is a theatrical account of the Akō vendetta in which forty-seven rōnin formerly affiliated with the Akō domain in western Japan planned for roughly two years to avenge the death of their lord, Asano Naganori. The Akō vendetta ranks alongside the 1193 vendetta of the Soga Brothers to avenge their father's death and the 1634 vendetta of Iga Pass as the three best-known in Japanese history. Chikamatsu Monzaemon was the first to stage a jōruri on the historical Akō incident in 1710, avoiding shogunal censorship by setting it in the fictional universe of *Taiheiki*, a temporal convention that would be adopted by subsequent treatments of the Akō vendetta. The only version still regularly performed today is the 1748 *Kanadehon Chūshingura*.

Two other plays also enjoyed tremendous popularity in the post-Chikamatsu years. The military romance *The Tales of the Heike* first gave form to the tale of the death of Taira Atsumori at the hands of Minamoto warrior Kumagai Jirō Naozane during the Taira–Minamoto war (1180–5). Since then, narrative sequels and variations of the short episode have been subsequently retold in fourteenth-century *noh*, late medieval Muromachi fiction, illustrated handscrolls, and sixteenth-century *kōwakamai*. The five-act period

piece *Ichinotani futaba gunki* (Chronicle of the Battle of Ichinotani, 1751) was co-authored by Asada Itchō, Namioka Geiji, Namiki Shōza I, Naniwa Sanzō, Toyotake Jinroku, and Namiki Sōsuke. This play adds the tragic twist of a substitution into the familiar tale of Atsumori's death: Kumagai's sadness over having being compelled to slay Atsumori is thus compounded by his revelation that he had, in fact, substituted his only son for Atsumori and beheaded him at Suma Bay.

Also a period piece, the ten-act *Iga-goe dōchū sugoroku* (Through Iga Pass with the Tōkaidō Board Game, 1783) was composed by Chikamatsu Hanji (1725–83) and Chikamatsu Kasaku. It reflects the theatergoers' interest in plays about incidents occurring closer to their own times. The vendetta of Iga Pass refers to the slaying of Watanabe Gentayū by fellow Okayama samurai Kawai Matagorō in 1630, followed by the subsequent vendetta against Matagorō in the vicinity of Iga Pass in 1634 by Gentayū's older brother Watanabe Kazuma and his brother-in-law, Araki Mataemon, who gained legendary status as a swordsman as a result of his part in the vendetta. To avoid censorship, the play was crafted as a period piece set in the early seventeenth century with slightly changed names. Today, the most frequently performed scenes are "Numazu" (Act VI) and "Okazaki" (Act VIII), both fictional additions to the actual historical incident but the focus of the greatest tragic intensity in their portrayal of the profound personal sacrifices that the vendetta ultimately demanded.

All five of the above jōruri were adapted for the kabuki stage soon after their debuts and have since become some of the most popular plays in the kabuki repertoire. All are period pieces but, perhaps unsurprisingly, the acts which have remained popular over the centuries are the fictionalized scenes, moments of high tragic intensity that highlight how duty can only be fulfilled at the cost of great personal sacrifice, such as the death of the fictional Kanpei in Act VI of *Kanadehon Chūshingura*. The popularity of jōruri declined after Namiki's death in 1751, which coincided with the deaths of other prominent jōruri artists, ushering in a kabuki revival during the 1760s. Perhaps not surprisingly, Namiki Shōza (also read Shōzō, 1730–73) – one of the leading playwrights during this kabuki revival – had earlier studied jōruri composition under Namiki Sōsuke.

The most popular jōruri drew inspiration from contemporary events, political incidents, and other topics that were simultaneously being explored through the performing arts of kabuki and oral storytelling (*kōdan*), texts such as block-printed illustrated fiction or "historical accounts" that circulated as handwritten manuscripts (*jitsuroku*), and visual media of polychrome *ukiyo-e*

prints. Jōruri performances interpreted recent events and familiar legends in a form that combined visual spectacle, lush literary prose, and the most contemporary slang, while leaving behind a wealth of theatrical texts: *jōruribon* that attempted to authentically capture all the musical nuances of the tayū's recitation, and also image-intensive illustrated digests, *jōruri ezukushi*, that relied on images and terse theatrical information to narrate a play's plot. In these ways, jōruri evolved into a theatrical form that produced cultural artifacts that were immersed in and shared characteristics with the literary and visual cultures of Tokugawa Japan.

From the beginnings of kabuki to the playwrights Nanboku and Mokuami

SATOKO SHIMAZAKI

The origin of kabuki is often traced to a woman named Okuni who called herself a “shrine priestess from Izumo” and presented performances in male dress in various locations in Kyoto, among them the imperial palace and the dry riverbed of the Kamo River, and eventually even at the shogun’s castle in Edo. While reliable documentation relating to Okuni is scarce, numerous fictionalized accounts circulated during the Tokugawa period. Roughly half a century after Okuni lived, the Kyoto writer Asai Ryōi wrote about the beginnings of the kabuki theater in his *Tōkaidō meishoki* (Famous Places of the Tōkaidō, c. 1660): “Once upon a time, kabuki began in Kyoto with the shrine priestess of Izumo called Okuni, who performed *yayako-odori* (a girl’s dance) at the edge of a bridge in eastern Gojō.” Books about kabuki published in the eighteenth century by the Kyoto publishing house Hachimonjiya, including Tada Nanrei’s *Shinsen kokon yakusha taizen* (New Accounts of Ancient and Modern Actors, 1750) and Tamenaga Itchō’s *Kabuki jishi* (The Origin and Basics of Kabuki, 1751), invariably open their accounts of kabuki history with references to Okuni’s dance. In *Kabuki jishi*, Okuni’s legendary stature is emphasized by the tears Yūki Hideyasu, Tokugawa Ieyasu’s son, is said to have shed when he saw her dance: “While there are tens of millions of women in Japan, this woman is the only one people call ‘the first woman in all the land’ (*tenka ni hitori no onna*).”

In the Tokugawa period, the legend of Okuni was featured most prominently in books published in the Kamigata region, which centered on Kyoto and Osaka. Kabuki developed along a very different trajectory in Edo, the administrative seat of the shogunate, and accounts of kabuki published there tried to present a distinctly local theatrical history by portraying Saruwaka (Nakamura) Kanzaburō (1598–1658) – an actor and founder of the Nakamura Theater, the most important venue for kabuki in Edo – as the progenitor of the form in that city. By the late eighteenth century, texts such as *Yakusha*

meibutsu sode nikki (The Notable Journal of Kabuki Actors, 1771), *Shibai noriaibanashi* (Writings on Gathering at the Theater, c. 1800), and *Sazareishi* (History and Records of the Three Theaters, 1803) crafted narratives of the origins of Edo kabuki that consciously departed from the established Kamigata-centric Hachimonjiya-based theater histories, through which the history of kabuki came to be understood in the modern period. Terakado Seiken's (1796–1868) *Edo hanjōki* (Prosperous Tales of Edo, 1832–6), published in Edo, also explains that kabuki began in Edo during the Kan'ei period (1624–36) when the actor Saruwaka Kanzaburō was ordered by the shogunate to open the first theater in Nakabashi-chō.

In considering the broader history of kabuki, it is best to contextualize Okuni's cross-dressing performance in the context of the urban practice of *furyū*, which was centered in Kyoto but spread around the country. *Furyū* refers to a kind of participatory, festival-like performance in which crowds of people decked themselves out in gorgeous costumes and went out to dance in the streets, accompanied by music; common in the late medieval period, it was associated with Buddhist rituals and festivals rooted in *goryō shinkō* – a belief that the angry spirits of the dead needed to be pacified and transformed into protective guardians of the community. In Kyoto during the Muromachi period (1392–1573), members of different classes competed to see who could dress up in the most extravagant costumes (including cross-dressing, the adoption by aristocrats of lower-class dress, and the wearing of lavish foreign clothes or animal costumes). Eventually, professional stage troupes with equally extravagant costumes began to emerge, and these troupes – which specialized in everything from male acrobatics to girls' and “kabuki” dances (here kabuki refers to the rough, eccentric outlaws known as *kabuki-mono* who wandered the streets, feeling out of place after the end of the long civil war) – began changing what was originally a participatory ritual into productions to be viewed. Okuni, who started out as just one of many performers, was elevated to the status of a legend because her dances, centered on the figure of the kabuki-mono, were so fresh and contemporary. Whether in Kamigata or in Edo, kabuki inherited the spirit of rituals and festivals: the licensed theaters in all three cities might be thought of as venues for a sort of routinized festival atmosphere outside of everyday experience.

During the first half of the seventeenth century, kabuki comprised a much broader range of performance arts than it does today: it consisted of dances and short skits by troupes featuring various types of performers, including women, professional courtesans, and boy acrobats. Around 1629, the shogunate began regulating courtesans' kabuki, detaching brothels and the

courtesans who worked in them from the theater business and confining them to the licensed pleasure quarters. Eventually, in 1652, the government issued restrictions on troupes of young boys, which had also been linked to prostitution. This restriction, enforced in Edo, posed a serious challenge to kabuki, but the form managed to survive by quickly shifting to *yarō kabuki* (men's kabuki), which featured actors whose pates had been shaven, as was the practice with men over fifteen years old, after the coming-of-age ceremony. This made it difficult for actors to attract audience members with their youthful appearance. The gradual transition to *yarō kabuki* in both regions resulted in a shift away from kabuki focused on dance to plot-driven plays, eventually leading to the emergence of playwrights, specialized role types and acting patterns, and the gradual formation of a cyclic annual calendar unique to kabuki. Kabuki as it is studied in classrooms today gradually began to take shape around the end of the sixteenth century, during what is known as the “long Genroku period,” which lasted roughly from 1684 to 1711.

Kabuki developed distinct styles and traditions in the three major cities: Edo, Kyoto, and Osaka. *Sakusha shikihō kezairoku* (Notes on Playmaking, 1801), a nineteenth-century text on kabuki playmaking by Nyūgatei Ganyū (probably the pen-name of the Osaka playwright Namiki Shōza II), offers a thumbnail sketch of the differences in styles:

People in Kyoto are mild by nature, and in accordance with their sensibilities, for a long time now, about 60 percent of their plays have been dedicated to love affairs; the plots are too mild and somewhat lacking in force. They are like beautiful women. If plays were people, they would be the skin.

People in Edo are rough by nature, and in accordance with their sensibilities, for a long time now, their plays have been focused on grand historical drama, 70 percent cutting down and throwing people – all very silly; the plots are rather stiff and do not appeal to women. They are like a samurai. If plays were people, they would be the bones.

People in Osaka are reasonable by nature, and in accordance with their sensibilities, for a long time now, about 80 percent of our plays have centered on *giri* (moral obligation); the plots are often too forced and sometimes bore the audience. Osaka plays are like chivalrous commoners (*otokodate*). If plays were people, they would be the flesh.¹

¹ Nyūgatei Ganyū (Namiki Shōza II?), *Sakusha shikihō kezairoku*, in *Kinsei geidōron*, ed. Nishiyama Matsunosuke, Watanabe Ichirō, and Gunji Masakatsu (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1972), 511. A translation of *Kezairoku* is included in Saltzman-Li, *Creating Kabuki Plays*.

Early kabuki in Edo and Kamigata shared common plot elements, as illustrated by one pattern characteristic of both regions, one that centered on the depiction of a man visiting a teahouse and having an affair with a courtesan (*keiseikai*). By the Genroku period, kabuki theaters in each of the three major cities were developing “sequential acts” (*tsuzuki kyōgen*) suited to the specific tastes of their local audiences. Edo was characterized by its large samurai population, especially during the first century of its existence; thus, Edo kabuki tended to be “rough” and “historical” and incorporated elements that made it feel “like a samurai.” Specifically, plays often drew on various historical plots derived from military chronicles such as the *Taiheiki* (Chronicle of Great Peace, c. 1370). During the last two decades of the seventeenth century, many star actors of Edo kabuki, including Nakamura Denkurō I (1662–1713) and Ichikawa Danjūrō I (1660–1704), played characters that allowed them to showcase the power and strength of young samurai. Danjūrō’s acting style eventually produced what is known as *aragoto* (the rough style). In Edo, these rough samurai characters such as Soga Gorō were characterized by bold red strokes of makeup on their faces, small strips of paper tied into their hair to indicate strength, and powerful stamping of their feet.

In contrast to plays in Edo, those in Kyoto and Osaka from the same period focused much more on tightly structured social dramas set in contemporary times, often in what is known as the *oie sōdō* (household disturbance) plot, in which a *daimyō* household faces a crisis that threatens to destroy it but that is eventually averted. The clear distinction between Osaka and Kyoto kabuki mentioned in *Kezairoku* is a phenomenon of the mid-eighteenth century. During the Genroku period, Osaka kabuki theaters frequently imported hit plays from Kyoto. A typical household disturbance plot would feature the young heir of a *daimyō* household who loses his status as a result of some intrigue or on account of his indulgences in the pleasure quarters, and thus goes into hiding, disguising himself as a commoner. The heir remains caught in a limbo for some time, perhaps torn between a courtesan and his fiancée, but is eventually able to reconcile his relationships and return to his position of power, thanks to the selfless efforts of his attendants. Such plots can be understood as an early modern version – both popularized and eroticized – of the “noble in exile” (*kishu ryūritan*) pattern so familiar from classical tales such as *Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Genji, eleventh century), and in terms of what Andrew Gerstle has described as the “cyclic imagination,” in which the ending of a narrative brings its audience back to the beginning. The acting style used to portray naïve, amorous youth in Kamigata kabuki was later given the name *wagoto* (the soft style), and the Genroku period star Sakata

Tōjūrō (1647–1709) came retrospectively to be known as its creator, yielding a history paralleling Danjūrō's creation of aragoto and thus highlighting the contrast between kabuki in Kamigata and Edo. Aragoto and wagoto were, however, only two of many acting patterns that arose from the Genroku kabuki plot structure.

As plots based in military history or on familiar household disturbances were repeatedly staged over time, they came to be known as *sekai*, or “worlds” – sets of characters and relationships that could be endlessly evoked, given tweaks known as *shukō* each time. In late seventeenth-century Kyoto, productions began including a *sewa kyōgen* (contemporary play) dealing with a sensational event such as a love suicide as a separate act within the overall drama. During the eighteenth century, kabuki plays in both Edo and Kamigata came to be made up of a historical part, *jidai kyōgen*, and a contemporary part. The division between the two categories was sharper in Kyoto and Osaka, where from the early eighteenth century onwards theaters started staging contemporary plays independently from the larger historical *sekai* that governed the production as a whole. Theaters in Edo continued to maintain the link between the contemporary acts and the larger historical *sekai* until well into the nineteenth century.

From the 1710s to the 1730s, all three cities saw the establishment of an annual kabuki calendar, an all-day production structure, and various laws relating to actors' contracts and the operation of the theaters. In the case of Edo, four theaters were licensed by the government by the middle of the seventeenth century, though the so-called Ejima Ikushima incident (1714), which revealed a long-standing sexual relationship between the head attendant in the shogun's inner chambers and a kabuki actor, resulted in the closure of the Yamamura Theater, leaving the Nakamura, Ichimura, and Morita theaters as the only licensed venues for kabuki. Only when one of these three main theaters found itself financially incapable of producing plays could its production rights be relegated to its designated backup theater (*hikae yagura*).

In comparison to its Kamigata counterparts, Edo kabuki left few textual traces – at least in the form of scripts. Productions were extremely fluid, and could either keep developing freely during a particular production or be abruptly terminated if a production's popularity waned. Playwriting was all about showcasing the actors and their specialties while creating new twists on established materials and following the conventions associated with a particular production. New casts that had contracted with each theater for the upcoming theatrical year would be announced in “face-showing

playbills” (*kaomise banzuke*) shortly before the “face-showing production” of the Eleventh Month, which inaugurated the theatrical year. The announcement of these new groupings of actors and of the *sekai* that would be used in their first productions was a big event that stirred up excitement throughout the city. Following the face-showing production was the second most important production of the year: the *hatsuharu kyōgen*, or the “first spring production,” which opened in the First Month and was expected to continue until the Fifth Month. This production consisted of a long string of acts based in the *sekai* of the Soga brothers’ revenge; it would open with a historical act to which contemporary acts, also based in the Soga *sekai*, would gradually be added. This technique of linking contemporary and historical was one of Edo kabuki’s basic mechanisms, and is known as *naimaze* (jumbling), referring to the fusion of past and present. The famous play *Sukeroku*, featuring the Edo dandy of the same name – actually the historical Soga Gorō in disguise – started out not as the scripted, self-contained text familiar today, but as one of the contemporary acts staged each year during cherry-blossom season as part of this long production.

There were a few months of the year when relatively fixed *tōshi kyōgen* (whole plays) could be created and staged, notably the *nagori kyōgen* (farewell production) of the Ninth Month, but apart from these exceptions, Edo productions continued to shift and evolve over time. It is not a surprise to find that the Edo playwright Nakamura Jūsuke II (1749–1803), reflecting on the history of kabuki in the early nineteenth century, commented that it was considered embarrassing to use preexisting plays that had been written for the puppet stage: these productions, known as *ichiya-zuke* (“overnight pickles”), indicated that a playwright had failed to keep his production rolling.

Playwrights in Kyoto and Osaka produced plays in a very different climate: in these two cities, multi-act plays were staged in their entirety, in fairly fixed form, rather than morph over time as in Edo. It is worth noting, in this connection, that many major eighteenth-century kabuki playwrights from Kyoto and Osaka were trained in both kabuki and puppet theater. Plays for the puppet theater tend to be much more linguistically sophisticated and structurally coherent than kabuki plays, and their scripts were printed and read widely throughout the Tokugawa period. Perhaps due to this difference in theatrical orientation, kabuki scripts from Kyoto and Osaka have survived in much larger quantities. The Kamigata kabuki calendar was similar to Edo’s, but here, too, the differences in the audiences’ tastes were evident. The Kamigata calendar also began with a festive face-showing production in the Eleventh Month, but, in contrast to Edo, it was the production that

opened in the First Month, called *ni no kawari* (the second production), that was the most important production of the year. The *ni no kawari* production was typically a household disturbance play and included a scene set in the pleasure quarters. The early part of the eighteenth century was a rocky time for Kamigata kabuki, and the licensed theaters continued to decrease in number until Kyoto and Osaka were operating for the most part with only two theaters each.

Many of the historical kabuki plays that remain famous today were adapted from puppet plays: examples include works from Chikamatsu Monzaemon's *Kokusen'ya kassen* (The Battles of Coxinga, 1715) to Takeda Izumo and Namiki Senryū's *Sugawara denju tenarai kagami* (Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy, 1746), *Yoshitsune senbon zakura* (Yoshitsune and the Thousand Cherry Trees, 1747), and the *Kanadehon chūshingura* (The Treasury of Loyal Retainers, 1748). But while the puppet theater's influence on kabuki was considerable in all three cities, it left an especially deep mark in Kamigata. *Jōrurifu* (The Puppet Play Score, c. 1801), a guide to the puppet theater published in Osaka, speaks of the popularity of the form in both Kyoto and Osaka during the mid eighteenth century: "the puppet theater increases its popularity and kabuki is almost non-existent."² Kabuki in Kamigata was indeed overshadowed by the puppet theater during this time, and only gradually regained its vigor through the adaptation of hit puppet plays.

By the latter half of the eighteenth century, Osaka kabuki began thriving again as a result of new innovations by talented playwrights trained in the puppet theater: Namiki Shōza (Shōzō), and his disciples Namiki Gohei (1747–1808) and Nagawa Kamesuke (active 1772–89). These Osaka playwrights created dynamic plays featuring spectacular displays of evil that would later influence plays by the famous Edo playwright Tsuruya Nanboku IV (1755–1829). While Kamigata kabuki continued to be rooted in household disturbances, the focus of the plays shifted. After the Genroku period focus on *wagoto*, Osaka kabuki began developing more heroic male leads (*tachiyaku*) during the eighteenth century. Toward the end of the century, Namiki Shōza began producing dynamic rebellion plays, *muhon-nin geki*, featuring the attempt of a villain to take over Japan and overturn its political structure. He also introduced innovations such as the rotating stage (*mawari butai*) and the trap lift (*seriage*), which could move up and down while carrying several actors. These new devices made it possible to stage spectacular rebellion

² Author unknown, *Jōrurifu*, in *Enseki jisshu* 3, ed. Iwamoto Kattōshi (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1979), 192.

plays such as *Tenjiku Tokubei kikigaki ōrai* (Records of Tokubei from India, 1757) and *Sanjikkoku yofune no hajimari* (Thirty Bushels of Rice and the Night Boat's Beginning, 1758). In addition to continuing in Shōza's footsteps in *Kinmon gosan no kiri* (The Golden Gate and the Paulownia Crest, 1778), the playwright Namiki Gohei introduced fresh contemporary plays featuring murder and the sensational partings of two lovers.

The history of kabuki is a history of actors. During the eighteenth century, Edo kabuki gave rise to a lineage of important stage names such as Ichikawa Danjūrō and Matsumoto Kōshirō; these names were inherited generation after generation, with each successive actor adding new twists to the acting tradition and the roles that became his with the name. The creation of these lineages of actors and the transmission of acting patterns through particular stage names was less prominent in Kamigata, where even important names such as Yoshizawa Ayame and Sakata Tōjūrō could be discontinued. In the early eighteenth century, Edo theaters lacked female-role actors with the sophistication of those active in Kyoto and often brought them to Edo to perform – a situation that changed when Segawa Kikunojō III (1751–1810) moved to Edo in the mid eighteenth century and with the establishment of the Iwai Hanshirō lineage. Such interactions and exchanges became prominent in the mid eighteenth century. Osaka rebellion plays also served as a fertile ground for the cultivation of specialists in villainous roles (*jitsuaku*) such as Nakayama Shinkurō I (1702–75), Nakamura Utaemon I (1714–91), and Arashi Hinasuke I (1741–96), whose techniques were later brought to Edo.

The nineteenth century is characterized by the breakdown of the conventional theater system that had been established during the eighteenth century, and by the emergence of new production styles. In the late eighteenth century, Kamigata theaters began collaborating with each other as Osaka actors participated in the face-showing production in Kyoto, then returned to Osaka to act in the *ni no kawari* production. The annual contracts that tied actors to theaters collapsed, and actors began working under two-month temporary contracts. This period also witnessed the emergence of numerous small theaters featuring child actors and relatively young actors (*kodomo shibai* and *chū shibai*); these came to serve as a training ground for young actors, bringing exciting new changes to the theatrical world, but at the same time it exposed theaters in Kamigata to increased competition.

Edo kabuki during the mid to late eighteenth century was characterized by the dynamic, witty historical plays of Sakurada Jisuke (1734–1806), which shared the spirit of contemporary popular literature centered on the pleasure quarters and represented by the early *kibyōshi* (yellow covers) genre. Playmaking

conventions underwent significant changes when Namiki Gohei, the star Kamigata playwright, was hired away to Edo. He brought with him the more tightly structured playmaking style and also began producing contemporary plays separate from the historical worlds to which Edo plays had conventionally been bound. Theaters suffered financial difficulties from the late eighteenth to the early nineteenth century, and in 1793 for the first time all three of Edo's theaters were unable to stage their face-showing productions; they had to close temporarily and entrust their production rights to their back-up theaters. Tsuruya Nanboku IV produced hits during this financially unstable period when the traditions of Edo kabuki were starting to collapse. His grotesque and humorous plays featured lower-class characters, murder, and ghosts, and incorporated special effects and motifs from side shows, most famously in *Tenjiku Tokubei ikokubanashi* (The Tale of Tokubei from India, 1804) and *Tōkaidō Yotsuya kaidan* (Tōkaidō, Ghost Stories at Yotsuya, 1825). These plays were the product of the early nineteenth century, when conventional plays were no longer feasible. The price for seats rose during the nineteenth century, but Nanboku found ways to stage cheap productions during the summer months when major actors were usually on vacation. These changes transformed the face of Edo kabuki, and writers, actors, and those involved in the theater became interested in producing histories of kabuki and began canonizing acting lines and their past repertoires, as is evident in Ichikawa Danjūrō VII's selection of the so-called *Kabuki jūhachiban* (Eighteen Classics of Kabuki, 1832).

During the Tenpō reforms (1841–3) the forced relocation of the theaters to the then rural area of Asakusa that came to be known as Saruwaka-machi had an even more profound effect on Edo kabuki. Kabuki in Saruwaka-machi was characterized by the production of plays that continued and expanded upon Nanboku's earlier experiments. The playwright Mimasuya Nisōji (1785–1856) notes the end of the once all-important ritual of selecting a sekai for the face-showing production in *Kabuki shūdan* (Collected Essays on Kabuki, 1851), where he writes that “for the past twenty years, there has been no sekai.”³ Writers who came after Nanboku such as Segawa Jokō III (1806–81) and Kawatake Mokuami (1816–93) moved away from the conventional sekai, drawing heavily on contemporary social drama taken from oral storytelling (*kōdan* and *rakugo*). In comparison with Nanboku's dynamic depictions of evil, which he had inherited from Osaka rebellion plays, kabuki in this age turned its attention

³ Mimasuya Nisōji, *Kabuki shūdan* (1851), manuscript at the Historiographical Institute of the University of Tokyo, 41873, last page [unpaginated].

to the plight of much smaller-scale, true-to-life human figures who found themselves living lives of crime or confronting inescapable situations. Segawa Jokō, for instance, brought the farmer martyr Sakura Sōgorō to stage in his *Higashiyama Sakura no sōshi* (The Book of the Martyr Sakura, 1851), one of a number of what were known as *momen shibai* (“cotton plays”) because of the bleak costumes used for peasants. Kawatake Mokuami (1816–93) produced a series of *shiranami-mono* (bandit plays) featuring contemporary, low-class criminals without any secret warrior lineage to connect them to the larger historical imaginary worlds that had dominated Edo kabuki for so long.

Narratives of nineteenth-century kabuki tend to center on Edo because, during the Meiji period, after Edo became Tokyo, what had once existed as a local form (particular to specific cities) came to be reinvented as a national theatrical tradition. The history of kabuki has also been shaped by the modern canonization of Tsuruya Nanboku and Kawatake Mokuami, whose celebrity gives the impression that the nineteenth century was a highpoint of early modern kabuki. Viewed in the larger trajectory of early modern theater history, however, the nineteenth century was a period of financial crisis when kabuki was starting to lose its privileged cultural place in the three main cities and had begun seeking completely new avenues of expression that might enable it to survive.

Early to mid-Edo kanshi

JUDITH N. RABINOVITCH
AND TIMOTHY R. BRADSTOCK

In the Edo period *kanshi* continued to be an important cultural activity, as it had been in previous eras. Continuities with the Gozan and even Heian period traditions are evident throughout: while new topoi and themes achieve prominence, kanshi on traditional topics continued to be written well into the Meiji era and beyond. In terms of the history of kanshi composition the Edo period is perhaps most appropriately divided into two parts, with the first ending around 1780, when kanshi poets start to show a significant level of concern with national affairs and with Japan's growing contacts with the outside world. At the same time, other relatively well-established trends begin to intensify, most notably an interest in writing about mundane matters and popular culture. Historically, the kanshi written during the final century of the Edo period have garnered the most critical attention, with proportionally less interest being directed toward verse from the earlier period, which will be the focus of this chapter.

The majority of kanshi from the seventeenth century were composed by Buddhist monks and Confucian scholar-officials, most of whom wrote verse as an intellectual sideline rather than as professional full-time poets. (A rare exception was Ishikawa Jōzan [1583–1672], who devoted most of his life to kanshi.) Some taught in private academies or in government schools and conducted scholarly research in Confucian studies, literature, or other fields. Overall, kanshi composition during this period was sharply limited by class and education, not yet having extended far among townsmen. A general decline had occurred in *Kangaku* (Chinese studies) during the civil strife of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; moreover, relatively few people possessed the kind of advanced literacy in Chinese that was obtained through education in the classics. This impeded the progress of kanshi writing at the beginning of the Edo period. Further, the shogunate at this time maintained a utilitarian view of literature, regarding it not as an aesthetic outlet but as an instrument for the promotion of

Confucian morality and social stability and to buttress the political order. Beyond this, literature had little *raison d'être*: as Fujiwara Seika (1561–1619), the earliest important Edo poet, stated, “There is no literature separate from the Way, and no Way separate from literature.” Yet even Seika and his Neo-Confucian contemporaries often composed verse that did not conform to this didactic model, an example being “Recited in a Drunken State,” by the *daimyō* Date Masamune (1567–1636), with its manifestly un-Confucian title and final line:

My youth has passed me by in a flash.
The world is at peace, but my hair has gone grey.
Heaven has granted me this old shell of a body:
Why go on living if I can't enjoy myself?¹

Despite the existence of many early Edo kanshi that are stylistically sophisticated and forward-looking in their choice of topoi, many scholars have given short shrift to poems from the seventeenth century except for the works of a select few poets, notably Ishikawa Jōzan, Priest Gensei (1623–68), and Itō Jinsai (1627–1705), which draw praise for their personalism, everyday subject matter, and plain diction. Emura Hokkai (1713–88), in his history of kanshi titled *Nihon shishi* (1771), singles out Jōzan and Gensei as the two greatest kanshi poets of the late seventeenth century; kanshi master Kan Chazan (also Sazan; 1748–1827), in his poem “Shisendō,” narrows the field even further, opining that (in the seventeenth century) “there was only Jōzan.” Jōzan’s “A Poem Written While Ill on a Summer Night” illustrates the charming local color and realism of his style:

My body is frail and my days are nearly done.
My heart's at ease, but tonight I cannot sleep.
The croaking of frogs and the songs of the cuckoo
Mingle with the rain, breaking my sickbed sleep.

But these qualities are by no means confined to the works of the three poets noted above, even though verse of a more conventional nature was predominant during this early part of the Edo age. Many worthy poets of this period have largely been overlooked, including a number of prolific writers belonging to the school established by Hayashi Razan (1583–1657). Razan’s own oeuvre comprises close to 4,700 verses and was praised by the Chinese

¹ This poem and most of the other translations in this chapter appear in Timothy R. Bradstock and Judith N. Rabinovitch, trans. and annot., *An Anthology of Kanshi (Chinese Verse) by Japanese Poets of the Edo Period (1603–1868)*, Japanese Studies 3 (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997). Several others have been translated for this chapter and have not been previously published.

philologist Yu Yue (1821–1907). A fourteen-line *pailü* (long regulated verse) by Razan titled “Sunpu” (1643), which deals with a massive fire in Shizuoka in 1635, ignited by accumulated pigeon droppings, illustrates the appealing domesticity present in many seventeenth-century kanshi. Razan’s son Gahō (1618–80) is said to have been the most prolific kanshi poet of the Edo period, having composed more than 7,700 poems; yet he remains understudied considering the size and quality of his corpus. Surrounding the Hayashi literati and other leading practitioners such as Tokugawa Mitsukuni (1628–1700) were various informal poetic coteries, forerunners of the well-known *shisha* (kanshi composition societies) that flourished in the second half of the eighteenth century. In much of their verse one can detect an authentic, down-to-earth flavor and native idiosyncracies in diction and syntax, which were often disparagingly described by Japanese commentators as possessing *washū*, i.e. a “Japanese taint.” Toriyama Shiken (1655–1715) was yet another of the more imaginative early poets, finding inspiration in low-brow topics such as servants, prostitutes, and the misery of illness. Even earlier, in the kanshi of Priest Bunshi Genshō (1555–1620), we are reminded that the Gozan tradition, with all its earthy vulgarity, had not completely vanished:

At the village assembly the men and women are wearing clothes
that are new.
Together they raise their cups of wine, drinking until sundown.
Their shoulders droop from their heavy loads: what could they
have brought?
They’re carrying home upon their backs the people who are drunk!

Among the first prominent scholars to break openly with the orthodox shogunal stance on literature and champion versification for its own sake were Ogyū Sorai (Ken’en, 1666–1728) and his numerous Kobunji-ha (Archaist) followers in the Ken’en school. The legacy of Tang pastoral verse is clearly evident in Sorai’s “Farmhouses on the River,” where the humble bucolic imagery exudes an undeniable appeal, notwithstanding the debt owed to the Chinese poets Wang Wei and Meng Haoran:

The lane follows the river’s twisting course.
Between the farmhouses fences are few.
By the low riverbank people wash their plowshares;
After the rain they dry their fishing clothes.
Calves bearing firewood drink from the river;
Farmers on skiffs return from harvesting wheat.
Children are playing upon the sand,
As sea gulls wheel about overhead.

Sorai promoted the *kakuchō* (formalist) approach to poetry-writing, advocating the emulation of the Chinese masters, the High Tang poets in particular, although only a limited selection among their numerous topoi were adopted. Whether Sorai's influence resulted in kanshi becoming markedly more imitative of Tang styles than before is open to question.

In any event, during Sorai's lifetime kanshi production increased steadily, partly through his school's efforts to promote and liberate the genre but also because of social and demographic changes occurring in Japanese society. Following population growth, the expansion of cities, and rising literacy rates, the social basis of kanshi composition gradually broadened to include people from landowning, mercantile, and professional backgrounds. Hattori Nankaku (1683–1759) was the son of a merchant and Itō Jinsai (1627–1705), the son of a lumber seller; the father of Naba Kassho (1595–1648) was a prosperous farmer. Kanshi versification was becoming deeply embedded in the fabric of public and private social life: throughout the Edo period and beyond, countless *tanzaku* poems, recorded on attractive paper and other media, were composed and exchanged among friends with a casualness rivaling the modern Western use of the picture postcard. In short, far from remaining a peripheral literary activity practiced by a narrow segment of the elite, kanshi writing filtered down to all classes with access to education, particularly after 1700.

Edo kanshi poets composed *shi* 詩 almost exclusively, seldom employing the other traditional Chinese poetic forms, such as the *ci* 詞 (lyric). The two principal varieties of regulated Chinese verse, *jueju* (four lines, J. *zekku*) and *lüshi* (eight lines, J. *risshi*), account for the vast majority of compositions. These by and large observe the rules for regulated verse, which include the use of verbal parallelism, the implementation of end rhyme in even-numbered lines, and alternating tonal sequences in fixed positions throughout the verse for variation. *Pailü* (regulated verse longer than eight lines, J. *hairitsu*) became more popular, especially from the late seventeenth century, two examples being Naba Kassho's "My Circumstances" (fifty lines) and Muro Kyūsō's (1658–1734) "Grapevine Song" (forty-eight lines). Some of the longer poems are *koshi* ("old style" poems), so called because they do not fully comply with the conventions of regulated verse. Five- and seven-character line lengths were favored almost equally, although longer poems are most often pentasyllabic; verse in irregular meter is relatively uncommon.

Private occasional poetry, typically composed in solitude, makes up a large segment of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century kanshi, remaining a staple well beyond the Edo period. Usually set in the countryside, this verse offers broad-brushed sketches of scenes viewed during travel or at a remote retreat.

The surroundings are usually depicted as spartan, yet offering endless simple pleasures. The spirit of Tao Yuanming (365–427) is often nearby, as illustrated by the following poem by Arai Hakuseki (1657–1725), compiler of the *Teiunshū* (Cloud-Stopping Anthology, 1718):

Dawn breaks above the blue mountains.
Sparrows leave the forest, chirping as they fly.
Young bamboos rise out of the haze,
A solitary flower glistens with dew.
I brew some tea, steam clouds swirling around my bed.
I brush my snowy hair, which droops like the ties on a cap.
I find myself sitting with no duties to perform,
Waiting for sunrise by the eastern window.

Unlike Tao, however, few kanshi poets withdrew to the countryside out of a desire to escape official life or make a political protest, nor were they propelled by a need to preserve their personal safety. Instead, pure aestheticism and the enjoyment of nature provided their main motivation. Many scenic poems are set at dusk or dawn, or perhaps late at night when the poet has been awakened by a shower of rain, a temple bell, or the sound of wind-blown leaves. Autumn is by far the favorite season. The descriptive imagery, typically utilizing the moon, mountains, wind, and rain, tends to be generalized and conventional, seldom displaying distinctive detail. One of Sorai's leading disciples was Hattori Nankaku, whose poem "Early Coolness" is typical of the low-key and soothing nature-centered verse popular throughout the Edo age:

After rain the setting sun shines faintly in the western hills.
Who'd imagine that the autumn chill would return so soon this night.
The white clouds never waited for the autumn winds to blow.
They've fled already, hither and yon, for the sake of this melancholy one!

Many of the quatrains display an even higher degree of lyrical restraint. Often the focus is upon juxtaposing natural images to create an elegant, rarified atmosphere, one rich in modal associations and, as likely as not, evoking the quality of *sabi*, a withered, melancholy beauty central to Japanese aesthetics. The tonal influence of vernacular waka upon such kanshi is often evident, as is demonstrated by Miyake Kanran's (1674–1718) vignette titled "A Small Gathering at a House in the Pines," which embodies the stasis and diminished human presence commonly associated with Wang Wei:

Peach trees bloom in silence by the bamboo hedge.
Twilight crows gather west of the misty wall.

Deep in the house, an unflickering silver candle; rain is falling outside.
Someone is reciting a tale from *Heike* to the strains of music from a lute.

Besides drawing poetic inspiration from the countryside and its landscapes, Edo poets soon developed an interest in depicting city life and the *chōnin* (townsmen) culture, in particular the “floating world” of courtesans and pleasure-seekers. *Chikushi* (bamboo branch) verse, as some of this is known, is mainly associated with the late eighteenth century and beyond, yet examples from the seventeenth century also exist, including the following quatrain by Toriyama Shiken, which could doubtless pass for a poem written around the 1820s:

A heavy drinker who calls herself “The Female Blue Willow”
Day after day keeps company with young gentlemen at their parties.
When drunk in spring sometimes she finds she cannot help herself:
Falling asleep among the flowers, with her *pipa* as a pillow.

In the late eighteenth century, the style of *seirei* (Ch. *xingling* 性靈, spiritualist or native sensibility) experienced a popular resurgence, having been sidelined (at least according to some accounts) by *kakuchō* verse in the late seventeenth century. *Seirei* was associated mainly with Yuan Hongdao (1568–1610) and later Yuan Mei (1716–98), but had roots in the mid-Tang. Writers of such verse strove to avoid imitation of earlier masters, instead describing everyday personal experiences in plain, non-dramatic language and using few textual allusions. Ishikawa Jōzan and Priest Gensei are the earliest well-known *seirei* poets of the Edo age. Although they are often characterized as anomalies, some of their contemporaries, including Yamazaki Ansai (1618–82), also wrote such verse, as the following Ansai poem illustrates:

From time to time I think about the wondrous principles of life.
All things produced by Heaven deserve our appreciation.
In summer, mosquitoes approach my ears, rousing me from sleep,
And making my body become acquainted with itchiness and pain.

Another relatively early *seirei* verse is Gion Nankai’s (1677–1751) elegy on the death of his cat. This was perhaps inspired by an earlier verse on a similar topic by the eleventh-century poet Mei Yaochen, an exponent of the so-called *pingdan* (low-key and bland) style, an antecedent of the *seirei* style. A further example of this style, a poem titled “Written Extemporaneously While Ill,” by Itō Tan’an (1623–1708), is unapologetically direct, even sharp, in its tone,

manifesting an eccentric personalism commonly seen in seirei verse. It begins with these lines:

With time on my hands I've not stopped writing verse.
In this weakened state, medicine can do me no good.
It's quite enough if my heart and body feel comfortable.
Why let myself be oppressed by etiquette and social niceties?

The humor glimpsed in Ansai's mosquito poem becomes increasingly prevalent in kanshi by mid-Edo, one example being the following quatrain by Murase Kōtei (1746–1818):

I can't make out these fly-speck characters, reading by the lamp.
Glasses perch on the bridge of my nose to help me see more clearly.
I lunge to wipe my gummy eyes but cannot get at them.
My little grandson claps his hands and laughs at my careless haste.

The early seirei versifiers seem to prefer shorter forms; it would be a challenge to find any composition from before the nineteenth century that resembles the rambling and intimate soliloquies of Han Yu, such as his poem on losing his teeth. Rai San'yō (1780–1832), particularly in his longer poems about traveling with his mother, seems to be the poet who mastered this discursive seirei style, with its abundance of vivid personal detail.

Overall, however, the mainstream in Edo kanshi down to the late eighteenth century is verse on traditional topoi: for every lyrical or eccentric poem there are perhaps seven that do little more than flatly describe a serene landscape. Unhappy sentiments are largely confined to bereavement verse, Gion Nankai's "Lament for My Younger Brother Shigetomo" being one example. The frustration caused by career failure, a common theme among Heian versifiers, is seldom present; similarly, declarations of personal mediocrity (and laments about failure to advance in the civil service) are also all but gone by this time. Living in relatively untroubled times, the early to mid-Edo poets seem generally content and self-sufficient, leaving the impression that their own company – and their natural surroundings – were enough to sustain them.

Although Edo kanshi poets employ Chinese historical and literary allusions in their verse, these are generally infrequent, inserted sometimes just as a nod to convention or as a convenient way of providing closure. Most allusions are fairly familiar ones; but even these become less common as seirei verse evolves. Textual allusions never entirely disappear, however; during the nineteenth century kanshi poets mined the historical and literary heritages of both China and Japan, seeking to draw parallels and contrasts. The rise in

consciousness of contemporary national issues after around 1800 led to the co-optation of kanshi as a medium for political discourse; prior to this time criticism of the shogunate and their handling of political affairs had been relatively rare. While it is hard to imagine that the early to mid-Edo poets saw nothing to criticize in their society, the burning intensity of the later *shishi* (men of high purpose) poets, with their strident patriotism and rage against both the shogunate and foreign nations, is largely a nineteenth-century phenomenon. Paradoxically, the principle of harnessing kanshi for political ends, espoused by the Tokugawa regime in the early seventeenth century but eventually eclipsed, had returned – this time in an irrevocably changing Japan bestrode by a new cast of actors intent on using kanshi to further an entirely different set of goals, ones that were unimaginable a generation before.

Kanshibun in the late Edo period

MATTHEW FRALEIGH

The nineteenth century witnessed the peak, certainly in quantity and arguably in quality, of *kanshi* (Sinitic poetry) and *kanbun* (Sinitic prose) production in Japan. While these two terms, along with the collective *kanshibun*, are now ubiquitous, it is worth bearing in mind a slight distinction between Anglophone and Japanese usage. When Anglophone scholars write of *kanshi* or *kanbun*, they often mean works by Japanese composers specifically, but in Japanese usage these terms in fact refer to Literary Sinitic poetry or prose as a whole, regardless of authorial nationality. Moreover, these *kan*-prefixed terms only became common in the mid-Meiji period, before which Japanese producers of Sinitic poetry and prose tended to call the works they wrote simply *shi* or *bun*; for these contemporaneous terms as well, the designated works were not limited to those produced in Japan but encompassed all poetry or prose in Literary Sinitic. There are various ways to narrate the development of Sinitic verse in the Edo period, but scholars often emphasize two key developments in the early and late eighteenth century that produce a roughly three-part periodization: the formative seventeenth century, when *kanshi* composition was largely the preserve of Confucian scholars; the first half of the eighteenth century, associated with the rise of Ogyū Sorai's *kobunjiha* (Ancient Phraseology school), when close imitation of High Tang models such as those gathered in the *Tōshisen* anthology was dominant (practiced even by those who disagreed with Sorai on Confucian doctrinal issues); and the final stage when new theories of personal expression focused on the individual poet's immediate experience helped not only to further popularize *kanshi* composition but also to localize the form.

Inasmuch as the emergence of this final stage was marked by a pointed rejection of the mid-Edo narrow valorization of High Tang aesthetics, the shift is clear in the work of those active during the transition. The change first became apparent in the Kamigata region: forerunners active there such as the Kyoto-based Abbot Rikunyo (1734–1801) and the Hiroshima-based scholar

Kan Chazan (or Kan Sazan, 1748–1827) both composed exclusively in the imitative Ancient Phraseology style in their youth, but consciously abandoned this approach as their attention turned toward poems from the Song dynasty and other periods. A representative poem from Kan Chazan's later work is the following, composed in 1811:

Reading Books on a Winter Night

Snow surrounds my mountain studio, the trees dark and deep;
 Nothing bestirs the bell on my eaves as night grows still.
 Calmly putting away scattered volumes, I consider their elusive meanings;
 In the kernel of the lamp's pale flame, the minds of the ancients.

A cognizance of the change is evident in the recollections of the scholar Hirose Tansō (1782–1856), whose Kangien academy in Kyushu trained thousands of disciples. He later recalled that the absolute supremacy of High Tang poets had been so thoroughly instilled in him from childhood that he was shocked at the age of eighteen to see a recently imported Qing edition entitled *Tang Song shi chun* (The Essence of Tang and Song Poetry, 1750) – for surely no one could seriously mention the poetry of the two dynasties in the same breath.

As these examples indicate, one shorthand way of describing the late eighteenth-century transformation of Japanese kanshi is to say that it amounted to a shift in models from Tang to Song. To some degree, Tansō's recollections bear this out, for having overcome his conviction that no poetry after the heights of the Tang poets Li Bo and Du Fu was worthy of consideration, he was delighted to explore the work of such Song giants as Lu You and Su Dongpo. Yet while this formulation of a late Edo Tang–Song shift has a certain explanatory power, it can also be misleading, since Song texts were not the sole source of late Edo poets' inspiration, not to mention confusing, since the mid-Edo rise of Sorai's Ancient Phraseology school several decades earlier is sometimes described conversely as a shift from Song to Tang models. In other words, it is important to recognize that the late Edo shift derived principally not from the discovery of hitherto unknown texts, but from new ways of approaching them and from an altered understanding of the larger enterprise of poetic expression. As Hino Tatsuo has argued, the Sorai school played a key role in temporarily liberating Sinitic poetic expression in Japan from its previous association with the austere restraint and rigorous moralism of Song Confucianism, enabling a more tolerant view of human affective experience. The romantic themes and exaggerated expressions common to High Tang poems, Sorai thought, were especially suited to these aims. Moreover, Sorai helped to affirm literary

composition as an enterprise with intrinsic worth, and by the mid eighteenth century professional poets, those who made their living writing and teaching Sinitic poetry rather than pursuing it as a supplementary accomplishment, began to appear.

It was in these transformed circumstances that late Edo poets made their departure from the High Tang models revered by Sorai and his disciples. The emergence of distinctly late Edo kanshi was driven in part by the expansion of permissible textual models beyond the tightly circumscribed High Tang canon, but it was given additional grounding by the dissemination of late Ming theories that placed value not so much on high tone, but on the poet's expression of *xingling* (J. *seirei* 性靈) or "innate sensibility." Rather than focusing on scrupulous faithfulness to the formal features of Tang models as earlier Ming classicists had, Chinese figures such as Yuan Hongdao (1568–1610) argued for expression true to the poet's distinct experience and unique individuality. Yamamoto Hokuzan (1752–1812) was one early Japanese proponent of the *xingling* theory, and his manifesto *Sakushi shikō* (The Aim of Poetic Composition, 1783) resoundingly rebuked the techniques of imitation advocated by Sorai and his disciples, forcefully declaring that genuine poetry originated only from the sensitive self.

The *xingling* theory's emphasis on individualistic expression meant that its exponents often turned their attention to their own everyday experiences rather than trying to project themselves into the poetic realms of their Tang predecessors. This development had particular significance for late Edo Japanese kanshi practitioners, for whom High Tang style poems about, for example, defending the frontier from northern barbarians, had little counterpart in their daily lives. Yet, more importantly, it enlarged the scope of their expressivity, spurring them to take up distinctly domestic subjects that had heretofore been dismissed as vulgar or local and thus incompatible with the refined realms that poets endeavored to create.

The transformative effect of the *xingling* theory is particularly evident in the career of Ichikawa Kansai (1749–1820), a scholar employed at the Shōheizaka Gakumonjo: a Confucian academy in Edo that enjoyed official sponsorship. Trained in the Ancient Phraseology school, Kansai had produced several important works of scholarship on Tang poetry while still a young man, but in 1786 he published *Hokurika* (Songs of the Northern Ward), a sequence of thirty kanshi composed about Edo's Yoshiwara licensed district, treating topics that would have been unthinkable local and inappropriately crass according to earlier standards. One poem from the series depicts a courtesan in late morning dishabille:

The sun is already high as the jade curtains rise;
 Last night's makeup and left-over powder, but still she is graceful.
 Her charming chignon has yet to acquire the look of morning clouds
 When a bell rings out to announce the noon hour.

That Kansai chose to publish *Hokurika* pseudonymously indicates his wariness of the disdain that such an effort might well meet, but the text was soon heralded as an emblem of the new approach's ascendance. Kansai's disciple Ōkubo Shibutsu (1767–1837) remarked a few years later that it “demonstrated that there was nothing that was beyond the expressive limits of xingling poems.”

Kansai resigned his post at the central academy shortly after publishing *Hokurika*, turning his attention to overseeing the Kōkosha, an Edo poetry group that produced several major kanshi poets of the late Edo period, including Kashiwagi Jotei (1763–1819) and Kikuchi Gozan (1769–1849), in addition to Shibutsu. The Kōkosha name itself was significant, for it explicitly situated the poetry group within “society at large,” rather than in the halls of officialdom, giving poetic expression a clear independence from the statesman's articulation of political aspiration.

Kansai's Kōkosha disciples enthusiastically took up domestic themes in their kanshi, turning their attention to the distinctive features of Japan's natural environment and urban culture. To take one illustrative example, as Niina Noriko has observed, the Kōkosha poets actively composed poems on cherry blossoms, a celebrated subject of vernacular Japanese poetry that nevertheless had little place in the compositions of mid-Edo kanshi poets, for the tree itself was not native to China and thus not part of its traditional verse. Because the Chinese graph used in Japan for the cherry tree referred in China to a different species, some mid-Edo kanshi poets argued that using it to indicate the Japanese cherry tree was *washū*, an awkward and tainted Japanese practice that should be avoided. While the Kōkosha poets remained firmly committed to upholding the prosodic rules and basic conventions of Sinitic poetry, their greater tolerance for such local variations helped to further naturalize kanshi composition in late Edo Japan. In a poem titled “Early Summer,” for example, the cuckoo's arrival signals the time of year, but so too does Jotei's depiction of the lengths to which Edo residents might go to partake of the first *katsuo* (skipjack tuna) catch of the season:

My money all spent on spring pleasures, the first cuckoo sings;
 The green of the trees grows deeper now, after a passing rain.
 I remove my new robe to pawn for a fresh taste;
 Outside my sunlit window, someone sells skipjack tuna.

During his extensive domestic travels, Jotei in this manner composed frequently on his connoisseurship of regional culinary delights and his appreciation of unique local cultural practices.

Like Jotei, other prominent Kōkosha poets such as Shibutsu and Gozan also traveled widely, interacting with local literati in regions outside of the major population centers, thereby facilitating the spread of kanshi composition to a wider array of geographical areas and social classes while also disseminating new approaches. Alongside such outreach, both Shibutsu and Gozan also played an important role in publishing influential *shiwa* or “talks on poetry,” texts that combined features of the poetic anthology, the technical manual, and the compositional treatise. While there were earlier isolated examples of Japanese *shiwa* as far back as the medieval period, it was in late Edo that the genre truly flourished. Highly developed commercial publishing, advanced networks bridging rural and urban areas, and the rise of kanshibun literacy had dramatically enlarged the audience for such texts, which bound their readers (many of whom were also contributors) together in new forms of collectivity. Ibi Takashi argues that Gozan’s *Gozandō shiwa* (Gozandō’s Talks on Poetry, 1807–32) marked the founding of journalistic criticism in Japan, for it targeted a non-specific plurality of readers, was published periodically, contained contemporaneous information and criticism, and provided its editor with his main source of livelihood.

In addition to these developments driven predominantly by poets in the private sector, official policies introduced by the Tokugawa shogunate helped to further expand and consolidate kanshibun literacy in late Edo. The Kansei Reforms of 1790 gave Zhu Xi Confucianism the stamp of orthodoxy while prohibiting other schools of thought from being taught at the Shōheizaka academy. Many domains followed this central policy change by giving official sanction to existing local academies or establishing new ones that modeled their curriculum on the central academy. Codification of the Confucian canon, the implementation of examinations and regularized curricula, and heightened coordination between peripheral and central educational sites made proficiency in Literary Sinitic an important attainment for a much broader range of individuals. Familiarity with Literary Sinitic discourse became in this way increasingly attainable to ever broader swaths of the populace as the end of the Edo period approached. Private academies offering instruction in reading Literary Sinitic appeared in both urban and peripheral areas, and by the first decades of the nineteenth century a variety of inexpensive annotated editions of primary texts made self-study of the Chinese classics accessible even to rural commoners.

One late Edo figure whose kanshi and kanbun alike enjoyed immense popularity among both samurai and commoner readers was poet and

historian Rai San'yō (1780–1832). Boldly treating Japanese historical topics and themes, his poems were memorized and recited by Meiji students, and even today remain among the best-known kanshi. Likewise, his *Nihon gaishi* (An Unofficial History of Japan, 1827), a multivolume survey of Japanese history from late Heian through mid-Edo, became a celebrated bestseller that captivated readers with its dramatic retellings of historical events and its stirring prose style. Organized around the rise and fall of successive military clans, the text was widely used as a textbook in educational institutions from late Edo into Meiji and was even reprinted in China.

San'yō's poetry also contains several works in which he directs his gaze to emerging concerns that would have increasing relevance to Japanese in the nineteenth century. An 1817 visit to Nagasaki led him to compose a substantial ballad on a Dutch ship he observed there, and during the same trip a conversation with a Dutch physician about the Napoleonic wars led San'yō to compose a lengthy and detailed poem on "The French King." San'yō's poem is one of the earliest kanshi on Napoleon, and many other late Edo kanshi poets, including Ōtsuki Bankei (1801–78), eagerly followed in his footsteps. The following poem is one of a series of "Twelve Songs on the French King" that Bankei composed in 1841, just two decades after Napoleon's death:

For half a lifetime, his military might spread across the West;
The annals of history shall long record his brilliant glory.
Ever since in deed and name he became the Great Emperor,
None speaks in envious admiration of Alexander the Great.

If one central element of Japanese literary modernity consists of creative engagement with the culture and texts of the Western world, Sugishita Motoaki has argued, then it is in such late Edo kanshi that the borderline between early modern and modern sensibilities can first be discerned.

In addition to the orthodox modes of kanshi and kanbun composition that flourished in late Edo, the era also saw the emergence of humorous genres that amused by willfully deviating from convention. *Kyōshi*, or "crazy poems," such as those by Ōta Nanpo (1749–1823), brazenly incorporated Japanese vernacular vocabulary into Literary Sinitic verse and became especially popular during the last century of the Edo period. Alongside prose analogues such as Terakado Seiken's *Edo hanjōki* (A Record of Flourishing Edo, 1832–6), these hybrid texts offered humorous depictions of contemporary manners and mores while also serving as vehicles of politically charged satire.

Waka practice and poetics in the Edo period

ROGER THOMAS

Although conventional wisdom tends not to regard *waka* (classical Japanese poetry) as a genre representative of the Edo period, in terms of sheer volume the age produced far more of that type of verse than any preceding era. The growth of its popularity was due in no small measure to the expansion of literacy, but a persistent yearning among the newly literate for refinement and for the belletristic glories of Japan's classical past was also an important factor. Waka practice of the period is sometimes dismissed as merely imitative – either of the canonical Heian style or of the eighth-century anthology *Man'yōshū* (Collection of Myriad Leaves) – but in the hands of many early modern poets it proved to be a worthy medium for artistic vigor and creativity. Furthermore, the waka poetics of the age is widely considered among the crowning intellectual achievements of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, one that is in every respect representative of the period.

In spite of the fact that the political hegemony of the samurai class had been vehemently reasserted early in the seventeenth century by the establishment of the Tokugawa shogunate, certain cultural institutions, including the teaching of waka composition, were more closely monopolized by the aristocracy than before. The relative social power of the warrior class and the courtiers is reflected in a set of laws promulgated by the new shogunate, *Kinchū narabi ni kuge shohatto* (Laws Pertaining to the Imperial Household and the Aristocracy, 1613); the first of these accords to the courtiers a special role as custodians of the traditional arts, including waka. The nobility shored up its monopoly on the teaching of poetry through jealous guardianship of various secret transmissions (*hiden*). What had been known generally as the *Kokin denju* (Secret Transmissions on the *Kokinshū*) came in the early seventeenth century to be divided into the *Gosho denju* (Palace Transmission) and various *jige denju* (commoner transmissions), the former restricted to courtiers while poets from the samurai and merchant classes received – sometimes purchased – the latter from their aristocratic teachers. Even the request

of the third Tokugawa shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu (1604–51) to be instructed in the *Gosho denju* was rebuffed. The poetry of Kinoshita Chōshōshi (1569–1649), the first commoner publicly to disregard and even criticize the monopoly of the nobles, met with scorn and brutal criticism.

The final two decades of the seventeenth century saw in the intellectual life of Japan two developments that would prove to have a decisive influence on waka poetry, first on its poetics but later also on its practice. These were *Kokugaku* (nativist study) and *Kogaku* (Confucian ancient learning). Though the former often professed hostility toward the latter, in reality much Kokugaku discourse was indebted to the methods of inquiry promoted by contemporaneous trends in Confucian scholarship that likewise sought to reestablish the primacy of ancient texts. In 1690, the Shingon monk Keichū (1640–1701) completed his magnum opus modestly titled *Man'yōdaishōki* (An Apprentice's Records on the *Man'yōshū*), the first comprehensive and heavily documented study of that ancient volume. Keichū's work set lofty methodological standards for later scholars, but also opened up a world of high literary culture over which the courtiers exercised no authority. While the seventeenth century began with aristocratic domination of the art, it ended with decided numerical supremacy of commoners, among whom was manifest a growing disregard of court prerogative.

It was not until the eighteenth century that Kokugaku came to be recognized as a formidable intellectual movement. In 1728, the hereditary priest at the Inari Shrine in Kyoto, Kada no Azumamaro (1669–1736), submitted to the shogun Tokugawa Yoshimune (1684–1751) a document titled *Sōgakkōkei* (Petition for the Establishment of a School) questioning exclusive government patronage of Neo-Confucianism and challenging the shogunate to support study of the national classics. Perhaps because of its adversarial rhetoric, Azumamaro's petition was not granted; it did, however, mark the emergence of Kokugaku as a self-conscious faction. It also linked Kokugaku with an emerging spirit of nationalism that would grow more pronounced over time and that would increasingly enlist waka as a means to its ends.

As Kokugaku developed a discrete intellectual identity, it not only assumed a more competitive stance toward the prestige Sinology had enjoyed among the samurai caste, but also came to bear unconcealed hostility toward continental culture in general, idealizing instead a pristine native society that allegedly prevailed prior to contact with China. Waka had traditionally eschewed all diction of foreign derivation, and its poetics came to occupy pride of place in Kokugaku writing. Both Kamo no Mabuchi (1697–1769) and his nominal disciple Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801) were poets of some repute,

but today they are remembered chiefly for their theories. Initially Mabuchi's ideal appears to have been situated in the early anonymous verse in the *Kokinshū* (Collection of Japanese Poems Old and New, c. 905–14), but shifted over the course of his career first to the *Man'yōshū*, and finally to the earliest songs appearing in the *Kojiki* (Record of Ancient Matters, 712) and the *Nihon shoki* (Chronicles of Japan, 720). He insisted on the importance of reclaiming the ancient mind and argued that this could best be accomplished through language and poetry, maintaining in his treatise *Niimanabi* (New Learning, 1765) that although “there are many phenomena in the world, there exists nothing outside of mind and words,” and that “only after knowing these two well can one also understand the ancients.” In the same work he also advanced the idea that “in ancient poems, rhythm (*shirabe*) was the main concern, because they were sung,” marking a shift in early modern poetics toward phonocentrism, a development that would become more pronounced in the following generation of theoreticians. Some of Mabuchi's most memorable verses are found in his sequences, an ancient practice that he revived to good effect. A couple of stanzas from a sequence on the ninth lunar month include:

The plain of heaven is clear and serene on this autumn night –
 wild geese cross the sky, crying, in the shining moonlight.
Aki no yo no hogarahogara to ama no hara teru tsukikage ni kari nakiwataru

This Long-Night Month for which the crickets have waited with eager
 delight –
 an evening with the purest moon, may it not wear on in vain!
Kōrogi no machiyorokoberu nagatsuki no kiyoki tsukiyo wa fukezu mo aranan

As it turned out, Mabuchi's legacy was diverse; there were disciples who adhered to the “orthodox” *Man'yōshū*-centered stylistic and critical ideal, while another nominal follower, Norinaga, paid scant attention to that volume as a model. Another faction claiming to represent Mabuchi's teachings, the so-called Edo school, is noted for its emphasis on genteel refinement of style and for its positive assessment of Chinese literary culture – both stances that would appear to be at odds with the teachings of their mentor's later years. This school, centered in Edo and reflecting the increasingly urban and urbane tastes that prevailed there, is represented most notably by Katō Chikage (1735–1808) and Murata Harumi (1746–1811). An example of Harumi's polished alliterative diction is this verse on the Chinese painting topic (*gadai*) “New-Fallen Snow on the Waterway”:

No more sound of dripping from the thatched roof of the moored boat –
the midnight drizzle changes to snow.

Tomaribune toma no shizuku no oto taete yowa no shigure zo yuki ni nariyuku

Though Norinaga's prodigious corpus of poetry draws scant attention now, his waka poetics proved to be a watershed for much succeeding theory, his disciples forming what came to be known as the Suzunoya School. In his *Ashiwake obune* (Small Boat Parting the Reeds, c. 1759) and *Isonokami sasamegoto* (Whisperings from Isonokami, published posthumously, 1816) he departs from his Kokugaku predecessors in rejecting a political role for waka, in viewing the purpose of native verse as sincere expression rather than as cultivation of the self, and in idealizing the style of the *Shinkokin wakashū* (New Collection of Japanese Poems Old and New, 1205). The term *mono no aware* (pathos of things) with which Norinaga's name is practically synonymous and which is generally associated with his criticism of *Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Genji) actually had its genesis in his waka poetics. In *Isonokamai sasamegoto*, a disciple asks how one is to know this quality. Norinaga begins his response by citing the preface to the *Kokinshū*, maintaining that "When anything moves the heart to deep feelings, whether of joy or sorrow . . . this is knowing *mono no aware*." Norinaga's poetics and analysis of *Genji monogatari* share this concept; in his *Shibun yōryō* (Essentials of Murasaki's Writings, 1763) he claims that "apart from this *Tale*, there is no Way of waka, and apart from the Way of waka, this *Tale* does not exist."

Waka poetry was also practiced by many *bunjin* (literati), polymaths often accomplished in several arts who tended to look askance at popular culture and who often remained aloof from coteries and schools. In many cases their compositions do not rise above dilettantism, but a few *bunjin* became noteworthy poets in their own right. One of these was Ueda Akinari (1734–1809), best known for his fiction, including *Ugetsu monogatari* (Tales of Moonlight and Rain, 1776). At first, Akinari wrote *haikai* (popular linked verse), but he later turned to waka. Though not formally aligned with any school, he had little patience with the proscriptions and rules of the classical style, and showed evidence of influence from Kokugaku. His verses often employ imagery that is both vivid and folksy, as in:

Oblivious to the pattering of rain, rice threshers' voices
enliven the night in the wintry mountain village.

Oto tatsuru shigure mo shirade inakoki no yogoe nigiwau fuyu no yamazato

Norinaga's and Akinari's generation of poets also witnessed the growth of a new movement allied neither to the court tradition nor to Kokugaku. This

new current of thought – which focused chiefly on the *Kokinshū* but which claimed to discover in that volume poetic values very different from those of the court masters – appears to have had its impetus in the writings of Ozawa Roan (1723–1801), a low-ranking samurai who in fact began his study under the tutelage of courtiers. Although he came to reject his masters’ claims to authority, he continued to share their high estimation of the *Kokinshū*, though radically reinterpreted. He held that one could attain the spirit of that anthology only by being true to one’s own poetic vision, that a good verse should contain both *dōjō* (shared sentiment) and *shinjō* (new sentiment), the former apparently referring to the fund of affect that binds people together across time, the latter based on the poet’s personal and discrete experience. Among his well-known verses is:

Awesome, the sound of the wind as it comes howling
 through Uzumasa’s dense woods – an evening in autumn.
Uzumasa no fukaki hayashi o hibikikuru kaze no to sugoki aki no yūgure

Here Uzumasa, a place rich in historical and poetic associations (*dōjō*), forms the backdrop for the poet’s unmediated experience of the present (*shinjō*).

Although never formally Roan’s disciple, Kagawa Kageki (1768–1843) was certainly the most worthy inheritor of his ideals. Likewise hailing from a low-ranking samurai family and initially receiving instruction in the court style, in his mid-thirties Kageki underwent a radical shift in style. That, combined with his public lectures on the *Kokinshū* – an activity his court instructors insisted was inappropriate for a commoner – resulted in formal severance of ties with his aristocratic mentors. He went on to become one of the best-known poets of the nineteenth century, his influence extending well into the Meiji period. Kageki attempted to take Mabuchi’s nascent phonocentrism in a decidedly new direction, elevating the idea of “rhythm” (*shirabe*) to the level of a universal constant. Advancing an argument recorded in his disciple’s *Kagaku teiyō* (A Summary of Waka Poetics, 1843), he contended that “a poem is not reasoned, it is given rhythm.” This concept of rhythm is ubiquitous throughout his various theoretical treatises, in some cases with auditory implications and in others suggesting an almost extrasensory ideal. Though the term is not always applied with consistency or precision, significantly the *Kokinshū* is presented as its finest expression. His elusive ideal is perhaps reflected in one of his most often cited verses, one that juxtaposes static and transitory images:

Its image mirrored in the ceaseless flow of the Ōi River –
 this year, too, it has blossomed: the same wild cherry tree.
Ōigawa kaeranu mizu ni kage miete kotoshi mo sakeru yamazakura kana

His collection also includes numerous *haikai*, or “comic” *waka*:

Time, it seems, for the lowly mountaineer to indulge in a sound nap –
 with no one to shoo them off, crows peck at the melons.
Yamagatsu mo umaki hirune no toki narashi uri hamu karasu ou hito mo nashi

Not all poets of the Edo period fit neatly into schools or movements. One who – in spite of some evident influence from Kokugaku – was a maverick in both practice and theory was the Zen poet-monk Ryōkan (1758–1831), the son of a hereditary village headman in what is now Niigata prefecture. He came under the tutelage of the abbot of a distant temple in present-day Okayama prefecture, where he showed sufficient promise to be designated as successor to the abbacy. Following his master’s death, however, he embarked on a five-year period of mendicant wandering, eventually returning to his hometown where he established a hermitage, sold calligraphy and begged for his living, played with the village children, and wrote poetry. Although his compositions in Japanese are generally not esteemed as highly as his Chinese verses, of all *waka* poets of the Edo period he maintains the greatest name-recognition in modern Japan and thus deserves mention. Ryōkan’s poetry never treats conventional “topics” (*daiei*) but is always closely tied to his immediate experiences, as in the verse from his itinerant years:

Winds from the mountains, spare your fury! This night when
 the traveler’s lonely bed is a single white robe.
Yamaoroshi yo itaku na fuki so shirotae no koromo katashiki tabine seshi yo wa

The final generation of Edo period *waka* poets may be represented by two whose works are still often cited and admired: Ōkuma Kotomichi (1798–1868) and Tachibana Akemi (1812–68), both of whose merchant-class origins bespeak the extent of liberation of the art from its aristocratic monopoly two centuries earlier.

In many respects, Kotomichi could be seen as an heir of the *Kokinshū* revival movement. Though he neither met nor corresponded with Kageki, he was familiar with the latter’s works, making numerous guardedly positive references to him. Kotomichi shared with his spiritual predecessor a high estimation of the *Kokinshū*, ascribing to that volume an unrivaled position as an example of *waka* ideals. But where Kageki had advocated a well-regulated rhythm as a universal constant, Kotomichi’s two treatises on poetics, *Kozo no*

chiri (Dust of Yesteryear, c. 1839) and *Hitorigochi* (Monologue, c. 1844), advance a more individualized ideal: *kokoro* (heart, mind). Many of his poems betray stylistic similarities to contemporaneous haikai, often focusing on children or minutiae. In his later years he traveled to the Kyoto-Osaka region in an unsuccessful attempt to spread his teachings and style beyond his native Kyushu. One of his best-known verses creates a touching vignette that is representative of his perennial fondness for the young:

A child fast asleep on the young mother's back –
 in its hand, grasped unconsciously, a pinwheel is spinning.
Imo ga se ni neburu warawa no utsutsu naki te ni sae meguru kazaguruma kana

Likewise a product of the countryside, Tachibana Akemi hailed from Fukui. By both training and temperament he was squarely in the Kokugaku camp, though his idealization of a life of honest poverty (*seihin*) – a frequent theme in his verse – was unusual for a nativist poet. The arrangement of his major collection, *Shinobunoya kashū* (Collection from the House of Fond Recollection, published posthumously, 1878), completely rejects traditional structure, ordering the verses chronologically rather than by category, employing headnotes of prodigious length, and including numerous sequences. Shinto thought is ubiquitous in his poetry, as well as strong xenophobic sentiment. His most famous sequence, *Dokurakugin* (Verses on Solitary Pleasures), runs to fifty-one stanzas, all beginning with *tanoshimi wa . . . toki* (It is a pleasure when . . .). An example from that sequence is:

It is a pleasure when, arising in the morning and going out,
 I see a flower in bloom that wasn't there yesterday.
Tanoshimi wa asa okiide te kinō made nakarishi hana no sakeru miru toki

Reflecting a growing regard for how verses sound, unusual auditory effects are also often encountered in Akemi's poetry:

Flitting to and fro the locusts hop annoyingly, reveling
 in this Indian summer day, peasants thresh beans.
Inagomaro urusaku idete tobu aki no hiyori yorokobi hito mame o utsu

Here the alternating “i” and “o” of *hiyori yorokobi* is an apt accompaniment to the image of the hopping insects.

As is evident in the fact that the period was dominated not only by revival movements – whether of the *Kokinshū* or of the *Man'yōshū* – but also by numerous celebrated debates drawing on ancient notions about the role of waka in the health of the national polity, the accusation that waka of the Edo period was backward-looking might appear justified. It is important to

remember, however, that such cultural “nostalgia” came to be balanced by an equal measure of innovation. In many respects, waka poetry and poetics of the Edo period paved the way for the Meiji period modernization of traditional verse forms undertaken by such figures as Ochiai Naobumi (1861–1903) and Masaoka Shiki (1867–1902), both of whom often cited early modern precedent.

Literary thought in Confucian ancient learning and Kokugaku

PETER FLUECKIGER

In the Tokugawa period, poetry played an important role in the ethical and political philosophies of many Confucians in the Ancient Learning (*Kogaku*) movement, such as Itō Jinsai (1627–1705) and Ogyū Sorai (1666–1728), who sought to recover the original meaning of Confucian texts, which they believed had been distorted by later commentaries. Poetry played a similar role for many scholars of *Kokugaku* (national learning, or nativism), such as Kamo no Mabuchi (1697–1769) and Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801), who advocated a purely native Japanese culture freed from Confucianism and other foreign influences. These figures were avid practitioners of traditional poetic forms in either Chinese or Japanese, but their interest in such forms extended beyond poetic composition to include theories about the contribution of poetry to a properly ordered society. They saw Tokugawa society as plagued by a fragmentation of community, and looked to poetry as one means for restoring wholeness and harmony to their world. They defined the essential core of human nature as emotional, but found emotional bonds lacking in their contemporary world; poetry, they believed, offered a solution through its ability to communicate emotions and inspire empathy. At the same time, they argued that cultural norms were necessary for giving structure and order to society, and located these norms in idealized societies of ancient China or Japan, which they sought to uncover through the philological analysis of ancient texts. Here, too, poetry played a role, as they saw it as having a unique capacity to transmit the language and values of ancient cultures.

Scholars of Ancient Learning and Kokugaku criticized the moral universalism of the Song dynasty Confucian Zhu Xi (1130–1200), who had found many adherents in Tokugawa Japan. Zhu Xi equated the Confucian Way with a universal “principle” (*li* 理, J. *ri*) that inheres in all things in the cosmos, uniting them in a single moral order. Principle itself is purely abstract, but is always accompanied by “material force” (*qi* 氣, J. *ki*), which allows things to

exist as physical realities. While principle is entirely virtuous, material force can be morally either good or bad, depending on whether it facilitates or obstructs the manifestation of principle. In the case of humans, principle is represented by a purely good “original nature” (*benran zhi xing* 本然之性, J. *honzen no sei*), while material force, or the “material nature” (*qizhi zhi xing* 氣質之性, J. *kishitsu no sei*), is represented by the emotions (*qing* 情, J. *jō*). The cultivation of humans as moral and social beings then involves correcting the emotions so as to recover the original nature that all people innately possess, but that can become obscured by immoral emotions. For Zhu Xi’s Tokugawa critics, though, this subordination of emotions to moral values amounted to a denial of the reality of human nature. Moreover, they saw his belief in each individual’s innate possession of the Way as leading to a dangerous subjectivism and solipsism, which they countered by turning to cultural norms that transcend the individual.

Zhu Xi’s philosophy allows for a variety of perspectives on literature, three of which have been described by Nakamura Yukihiko in a discussion of Zhu Xi’s impact on early Tokugawa literary thought.¹ The first is that literature “transmits the Way” (*saidō*) when principle is expressed in moral emotions; one figure who presented this view was Hayashi Razan (1583–1657). The second, the view that immoral emotions expressed in literature represent “toying with things and losing the will” (*ganbutsu sōshi*), is exemplified by Yamazaki Ansai’s (1618–82) condemnation of the corrupting force of such amorous works as the *Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Genji, eleventh century) and *Ise monogatari* (The Tales of Ise). The third holds that literature serves for “approving virtue and chastising vice” (*kanzen chōaku*), meaning that depictions of virtue in literature serve as a model, while depictions of vice warn against the consequences of wrongdoing. An example of this view is Andō Tameakira’s (1659–1716) description of how the reader of *The Tale of Genji* is meant to evaluate and respond to the virtue and vice displayed by its characters, even though the text itself does not offer explicit moral judgments. One feature of this theory is that it emphasizes the moral autonomy of the individual, whose virtuous original nature makes it possible to recognize vice and reject it, rather than being driven to imitate it.

Itō Jinsai, a Confucian scholar of merchant-class origins who operated a private academy in Kyoto, criticized Zhu Xi’s division between the original nature and the material nature, arguing that the material nature is all that

¹ Nakamura Yukihiko, “Bakusho sōgakushatachi no bungaku ron,” in *Kinsei bungei shichō kō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1975), 5–8.

people have, and that Zhu Xi's notion of an abstract, purely virtuous original nature ignores the essential role of emotionality in humans. Moreover, Jinsai saw the theory of the original nature as flawed for implying that moral perfection can be found by looking inward; he believed that humans innately possess a basic inclination toward goodness, but that fully formed virtues can only come about through interactions with others. The cultivation of empathy is an essential part of this process to Jinsai, for example in his interpretation of the term "considerateness" (*shu* 恕, J. *jo*) in Confucian texts, where he stressed how the term refers to encountering others as people with experiences and emotions different from our own, rather than merely viewing them as mirrors of ourselves or projections of our own prejudices. For Jinsai, poetry represented one means for cultivating such sensitivity toward the emotions of others. He saw this as a crucial role of the *Shijing* (Book of Odes), the collection of ancient Chinese poetry that was one of the canonical Confucian classics, describing it as providing an exhaustive account of the emotions of the different kinds of people in the world. He tied this view of the *Shijing* to an idea of social harmony by arguing that society will fail to function properly if the natural emotions of the people are not taken into account. His son and intellectual heir Itō Tōgai (1670–1736) expressed a similar idea, asserting that poetry gives us the familiarity with human emotions necessary to interact successfully with others.

Ogyū Sorai shared Jinsai's belief that Zhu Xi neglected the essential role of emotionality in human nature, and, like Jinsai, emphasized the role of empathy in a properly ordered Confucian society. He differed from Jinsai, though, in defining Confucianism as a philosophy of government to be studied specifically by the ruling class. He equated the Confucian Way with the ritual, music, political institutions, and other creations of the sage kings of ancient China, which he saw as products of human invention, in contrast to Zhu Xi's idea of the Way as natural principle. Also significant is how Sorai portrayed the Way as an external force that shapes human nature, as opposed to Zhu Xi's view of the Way as latent in the original nature of humans. Sorai's interest in the Way as a tool for government was related to his own status as a member of the samurai class. He had ties to a number of powerful political figures, initially rising to prominence while employed as a scholar by Yanagisawa Yoshiyasu (1658–1714), chamberlain to the shogun Tokugawa Tsunayoshi (1646–1709; r. 1680–1709), and later carrying out scholarly projects for the shogun Tokugawa Yoshimune (1684–1751; r. 1716–45), as well as submitting policy proposals meant to assist in Yoshimune's project of political reform.

Sorai's poetry in Chinese owed much to the Ancient Phraseology (*guwen*, J. *kobunji*) movement of the Ming dynasty, particularly the poets Li Panlong (1514–70) and Wang Shizhen (1526–90). Ancient Phraseology writers sought to internalize ancient language through the close imitation of a canon of exemplary prose and poetry from the past. In poetry they primarily took after the High Tang, with the *yuefu* ballads of the Han and Wei dynasties also serving as a model. Sorai inherited both the poetic canon of the Ancient Phraseology writers and their method of composition, but extended their theories by seeing the mastery of ancient language not only as the basis for proper literary composition, but also as a means for understanding the Confucian Way. He believed that the traces of the Way were to be found in ancient Chinese texts, making the acquisition of the ancient Chinese language an urgent task for those in later ages who sought to practice the Way. He gave an essential role to literary composition in this process, arguing that people can only achieve true mastery of ancient Chinese if they actually compose poetry and prose in the language themselves.

Sorai also valued the study of poetry because it brought people outside the confines of their own experience by exposing them to the emotions of others. He saw this as an important function of the poems of the *Shijing*, which he described as giving the reader access to the experiences of those different from themselves, such as by allowing the socially lofty to understand the lowly, and men to understand women. Based on this view of the role of the *Shijing* in Confucian learning, he faulted Zhu Xi's theory of "approving virtue and chastising vice" for leading readers to impose their own subjective judgments of right and wrong on poetry, keeping them from expanding their sensitivity to human emotions and their understanding of human nature.

Sorai linked empathy to a political ideal of decentralized feudalism, which he saw as characteristic of ancient China up until the Zhou dynasty, and contrasted with the centralized bureaucracies of the Qin dynasty and later. He describes these two forms of political organization as involving fundamentally different types of interpersonal relationships, depicting connections between rulers and ruled in feudalism as like those within a family, characterized by affection and a sense of inseparable bonds between people, as opposed to the impersonal legalism of centralized bureaucracies. He saw the Tokugawa *bakuh* system as analogous to ancient Chinese feudalism, but argued that the *bakuh* system had been corrupted by the displacement of the samurai into castle towns, where they lacked contact with the ruled, as well as being driven to financial ruin by the temptations of a merchant-

dominated currency economy and its accompanying culture of consumption. To reverse these trends he proposed that the samurai be returned to the land, where he believed they would recover the proper familial relationship to the ruled, as well as being reintegrated into the agricultural economy and instilled with habits of frugality.

Sorai's two most prominent disciples, Hattori Nankaku (1683–1759) and Dazai Shundai (1680–1747), each inherited and developed certain aspects of his literary thought, while rejecting others. Nankaku, who was the most famous poet among Sorai's students, followed the poetic style that Sorai had inherited from the Ming Ancient Phraseology school. Sorai had combined this adherence to canonical poetic models with the view that poetry reflects the truth of human nature and the full range of human experience. For Sorai these roles of poetry were complementary, not contradictory, a view that parallels his depiction of the Confucian Way as a nurturing force that, while demanding adherence to certain standards of behavior, does so without violating the distinct individual natures with which people are born. Nankaku, however, defined poetry as something fictional that expresses not natural emotions, but the culturally constructed emotions that belong to the world of poetry and poets. Moreover, he maintained that poetry and other forms of literary writing were the exclusive purview of the educated stratum of gentlemen (*kunshi*), and were not something that common people should be expected to engage with or understand. For Nankaku, poetry was not a means for fostering understanding between rulers and ruled, but was instead a tool for cultivating a culturally elite community that stands aloof from the common world, a notion characteristic of the *bunjin* (literati) culture that was gaining force in Japan in the eighteenth century.

Shundai, in contrast, who was the most influential inheritor of Sorai's ideas on political economy, shared Sorai's view that effective governance requires that rulers understand the emotions of the people, and that poetry is the best means for gaining such understanding. Shundai was sharply critical, however, of the poetry of the Ancient Phraseology movement and its followers, arguing that their approach to composition violated the essential nature of poetry, which is to be a spontaneous expression of genuinely felt emotions. He also objected to those who pursued poetry merely as an elegant hobby, asserting that the sole purpose of the Confucian Way is to govern the state, and that those who abandon government in favor of purely literary activities are turning their backs on the true purpose of Confucian scholarship. In Shundai's writings on poetry, he tied the loss of authenticity in poetry to the loss of its political role; when poetry becomes a self-enclosed aesthetic world

divorced from natural human sentiments, he argued, it no longer forges connections between people by exposing them to the genuine emotions of others.

While the Confucian scholars discussed above focused on poetry in Chinese, a similar discourse emerged at the time in relation to *waka*. The ethical and social functions of *waka* were at the center of the debate over *Kokka hachiron* (Eight Essays on Japanese Poetry, 1742), a work produced by Kada no Arimaro (1706–51), who was employed as a scholar of Japanese studies by Tayasu Munetake (1715–71), second son of the shogun Yoshimune. Arimaro's most controversial claim was that poetry has no ethical or political function at all. In a rebuttal, Munetake invoked Zhu Xi's theory of "approving virtue and chastising vice," asserting that immoral poems serve as admonitions against vice, and that the aim of Confucius in editing the *Shijing* was to guide people morally. In order to serve such a moral function, though, he argued that poetry must be genuine, a quality that he saw as present in the *Man'yōshū* (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves, c. 759), the earliest anthology of Japanese poetry, but absent in such later *waka* as the *Shinkokinshū* (New Collection of Japanese Poems Old and New, c. 1205–21), which Arimaro had praised precisely for how it exemplified poetry as a form of linguistic play. Munetake eventually requested an opinion on the debate from Kamo no Mabuchi, who was active as a scholar and teacher of the Japanese classics in Edo, after earlier spending time in Kyoto studying with Arimaro's uncle, Kada no Azumamaro (1669–1736), a scholar of Shinto and classical Japanese literature. Mabuchi agreed with Munetake that poetry has a valuable political role, and like Munetake idealized the poetry of the *Man'yōshū*. He criticized Munetake, though, for defining the political role of poetry in moral terms, arguing that poetry, as an expression of the truth of emotions just as they are, presents aspects of human experience that fall outside the narrow confines of the morally defined "principle" of Song Confucianism, aspects that are moreover essential to governing society. Poetry aids in the formation of community, Mabuchi explained, but does this on an emotional level, such as by moderating the unruly emotions that give rise to social chaos, and by allowing rulers to understand the emotions of the ruled.

In his later works Mabuchi put forth a philosophy of Japanese cultural superiority in which he claimed that Japan originally possessed a spontaneous social harmony and unity with nature that were lacking in China. He particularly challenged the Sorai school's view that normative standards for governing society were first created by the rulers of ancient China, and that

Japan had remained a barbaric country until it imported Confucian teachings. The lack of such teachings in ancient Japan, according to Mabuchi, was due to the fact that virtue was practiced spontaneously there, making explicit instruction unnecessary. What made this possible, he maintained, was that the ancient Japanese were “straightforward” (*naoshi*), a term he used to refer to a quality of perfect honesty and interpersonal transparency, which he claimed later fell victim to the artificiality and hypocrisy encouraged by the rigid rationalism of Chinese ways of thinking.

Mabuchi situated poetry within this view of Japan by depicting waka as the transparent vehicle through which the ancient Japanese expressed and communicated their emotions. He described the ordinary speech of ancient Japanese as naturally poetic, a quality he saw as having been lost in later times, when hearts and words had both grown distorted. He encouraged people of his own time to study the *Man'yōshū* in order to recover not only the purity of heart but also the forms of community that had existed in the Japanese past. He defined part of this task in philological terms, arguing that ancient poetry offered access to both the language and the mental experiences of ancient Japanese, thus offering a window onto the world of ancient times. Also important is the inner transformation that people achieve from studying and composing poetry in the style of the *Man'yōshū*, in which their hearts come to be identical with the pure hearts of the ancients, a process that Mabuchi depicted as a return to a fundamental nature that people of all times ultimately share. Ancient Japanese poetry, then, allows people to recover the “straightforward” heart that makes interpersonal transparency and social harmony possible.

Motoori Norinaga, like Mabuchi, charged Confucianism with leading Japan astray from its original virtue, claiming that ancient Japan was governed peacefully without any need for the kind of explicit instruction provided by Confucianism. Norinaga saw the native Way of Japan as a creation of the Japanese gods, as opposed to Mabuchi's equation of the Way with the spontaneous workings of nature, but otherwise many of their views were similar. They both saw China's history of dynastic change as a symptom of its political instability, contrasting this with the unbroken Japanese imperial line. In Confucian historiography, the overthrow of dynasties was considered justified when rulers no longer practiced virtue, but Mabuchi and Norinaga saw this as an imposition of narrow human reasoning on issues that are properly determined by forces that transcend such reasoning. Norinaga claimed that the authority of the Japanese emperors was rooted in their descent from the Sun Goddess Amaterasu, and that, as a consequence, the

emperor must be obeyed unconditionally, without making any judgments about whether he is good or bad. One might expect Norinaga to object to the weak position of the emperor within the Tokugawa political order, but he believed that everything that happens in the world is due to the actions of the gods, leading him to the somewhat paradoxical conclusion that even the position of the emperor in his time must be the will of the gods.

Much of Norinaga's career was devoted to the *Kojikiden* (Transmission of the *Record of Ancient Matters*, 1798), a massive commentary on the *Kojiki* (Record of Ancient Matters, 712), a mytho-history that describes how the gods created Japan and became the ancestors of the Japanese imperial line. His earlier works, however, focused on waka poetry and Heian period *monogatari* (tales), especially *The Tale of Genji*, interests that he never abandoned, even as they took a back seat to his *Kojiki* studies. He criticized attempts to read waka and monogatari according to standards of Confucian or Buddhist morality, arguing that such works should instead be judged according to their own distinctive value system, which is rooted in the emotional experience he referred to as *mono no aware*, a term that can be roughly translated as "pathos." He emphasized the need to communicate these emotions to others, portraying poetry not just as an act of isolated individuals, but as something in which the listener, who must understand the emotions expressed by the poet, plays an essential role. He described one benefit of such communication as the insight it gives rulers into the emotions of the ruled, but went on to extend the same idea to relationships among commoners themselves, noting that when people understand the emotions of others, they will treat them properly, thus bringing harmony to society. This interest in the broader social benefits of poetry, apart from the practice of rulership, reflects the merchant-class origins of Norinaga and many of his students, which precluded their participation in government.

For Norinaga, the need to effectively communicate emotions required that waka adhere to norms of language and feeling shared with the poet's community. Explaining why the language of poetry must be consciously crafted, he argued that the existence of "patterning" (*aya*) in poetic language, such as the 5/7 meter of waka and its traditional array of rhetorical techniques, comes specifically from the need to have others hear our poetry and empathize with us. He defined *mono no aware* not only as a form of deep emotional experience, but also as a form of emotional correctness and discernment, as reflected in his use of the phrase "knowing *mono no aware*," which he described as the ability to feel the emotions appropriate to each situation, emotional responses that he saw as shared by all properly sensitive people.

Norinaga reconciled this normative approach with his idealization of authentic emotions by distinguishing between two notions of emotional truth (*makoto*); one is merely spontaneous feeling, while the other refers to the underlying truth of human nature. In ancient times, he claimed, there was no gap between these, as people spontaneously felt the emotions appropriate to human nature and expressed these effortlessly in poetic language. In later times, though, people grew alienated from this nature, so that if they simply composed naturally, based on whatever they happened to feel, their poetry not only would be flawed from the standpoint of its linguistic form, but also would express the shallow emotions of a degraded age. The way to realign ourselves with our true nature, then, is to immerse ourselves in ancient poetry to the point that we become transformed by it, leading us to spontaneously feel the same emotions as those expressed by the ancients. By mediating their emotions through standards learned through waka, then, people can form a community of complete emotional authenticity and transparency, resulting in the natural morality that Norinaga described in his writings on the Way of the Japanese gods. Norinaga idealized the *Shinkokinshū* for its self-consciously mediated approach to the Japanese poetic past, an attitude that he saw as the necessary starting point for poets of later ages. He also composed in the style of the *Man'yōshū*, but valued this anthology less for its aesthetic qualities than for its benefits to philology, viewing it as offering training in the oldest forms of the Japanese language, essential for deciphering such texts as the *Kojiki*.

Tokugawa scholars of Ancient Learning and Kokugaku rejected earlier Confucian theories that had focused on the moral content of literature, instead presenting literature as distinctive for its ability to express emotions. This was not a simple liberation of emotionality, though, as it was tied to new ways of imagining the political role of poetry as a tool for inspiring empathy and for embodying normatively correct ancient cultures. Sorai saw emotional authenticity and cultural form as complementary aspects of poetry that both helped promote a well-governed society, while his disciples focused on the conflict between these two sides of poetry. Kokugaku scholars offered a resolution to this conflict by defining the cultural norms embodied in Japanese poetic traditions as themselves the very essence of human nature and the source of authentic emotions. In doing so, they used waka to imagine a distinctly Japanese form of harmonious community, a view that would resonate with many forms of Japanese nationalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Bunjin (literati) and early yomihon: Nankaku, Nankai, Buson, Gennai, Teishō, Ayatari, and Akinari

LAWRENCE E. MARCEAU

Drawing inspiration from Chinese role models of cultured intellectuals who refused or were otherwise unable to participate in political or philosophical activities due to dissatisfaction with the ruling elite, starting in the Kyōhō era (1716–35) a number of educated Japanese began devoting their energies exclusively to self-cultivation in the arts and literature. Such individuals have been referred to as *wenren* in Chinese, and this appellation has carried over into Japanese as *bunjin*, meaning “lettered/cultured persons,” most often rendered into English as “literati.”¹ Yoshikawa Kōjirō identifies the Chinese role models for Japanese *bunjin* as originating in circles of artists and poets such as that revolving around Yang Weizhen (1296–1370). These *wenren*, located in South China during the late Yuan and early Ming dynasties in the fourteenth century, were cut off from politics and thus focused their talents on literary and artistic matters to the exclusion of all else. John Timothy Wixted develops this argument further:

In the Northern Song, the ideal of the tripartite unity of literature, philosophy, and political affairs reached its zenith in figures like Ouyang Xiu (1007–72), Wang Anshi (1021–86), and Su Shi (1036–1101), who were outstanding in all three areas . . . Yang Weizhen and others, like the famous painter Ni Zan (1301–74), had no ties to philosophy or statecraft. Instead, they made their lives as artists supreme, divorced from politics and manifesting varying degrees of eccentricity or deviation from accepted norms. Society of the time accorded them respect. And their elevation of literature or art, which was new to Chinese society (where, if anything, literature had been viewed as *less important* than statecraft and philosophy), became a pattern. The *wenren*

¹ In China the term *shi* (士) and in Yi dynasty Korea the term *yangban* (兩班) communicated the sense of literati as referring to the educated elite classes. Tokugawa Japan, being controlled by a military elite, resorted to other terms, such as *bushi* (武士) and *buke* (武家).

ideal also carried the expectation of simultaneous proficiency, at least to some degree, in poetry-writing, painting, and calligraphy. (Wixted, 392)

This stance of distancing oneself from the political realm of governance and focusing instead on creative efforts, in particular the composition of prose and poetry, finds proponents in Japan during the first half of the eighteenth century.

After a century of spectacular economic growth that accompanied the political stability under Tokugawa military hegemony, stagnation set in and the structures that supported the regime began to show signs of strain. The eighth shogun, Tokugawa Yoshimune (1684–1751, r. 1716–45), instituted a series of political, economic, financial, and social programs known as the Kyōhō Reforms, and achieved remarkable success in some areas, arguably keeping the regime from collapsing altogether. These reforms included relaxation of restrictions on the importation of books from China and Europe, which allowed for increased access to recent developments in China and Europe regarding *materia medica* and other sources of knowledge that could yield practical applications. Along with such utilitarian books, essays by Chinese wenren, guides to painting in “Southern” styles that promoted cultivation of the amateur individual at the expense of adherence to “Northern” professional academic styles, and anthologies of fiction that explored worlds of the strange and bizarre also entered in great numbers the libraries of domain lords and wealthy merchants, not to mention the inventories of entrepreneurial booksellers.

The critical writings of Ogyū Sorai (1666–1728), one of the most original and influential early modern Japanese intellectuals, also helped set the stage for the emergence of a bunjin consciousness. While Sorai was profoundly concerned about making Confucian thought more authentically relevant as the foundation of interpersonal relations, social harmony, and effective governance, his stance regarding poetry (and, by extension, other literary and creative activity) served to liberate literary writing from the strictures of the moralistic Cheng-Zhu school of Song Confucian thought that was promoted by the Tokugawa regime. Sorai wrote that the *Shijing* or *Book of Odes*, one of the canonized Confucian Five Classics, “is simply something along the lines of the *waka* poetry of this country. It is not something for discoursing upon the principles of governing the heart or the self, nor is it something for discoursing upon the Way of Governing the provinces and the realm. The Odes . . . allow our hearts to reach out naturally and grasp human emotions” (Flueckiger, 100–1).

Here we find Sorai arguing against a didactic view of literary practice, a perspective held by followers of the Cheng-Zhu and other Confucian schools. While Sorai nevertheless emphatically supported a role for literature in the cultivation of a Confucian gentleman (J. *kunshi*), trained to support the ruler in ordering the realm, his release of literary practice from the strictures of exclusively didactic readings paved the way for other scholars and artists to pursue creative activities for their own purposes, regardless of whether or not their actions would be applied in support of the dominant power structure. Sorai's disciple Hattori Nankaku (1683–1759) took his teacher's thought a step further. After resigning from his post as an advisor to the regime in 1718, he constructed an identity as a Taoist recluse, while still living in the Edo metropolis. The following heptasyllabic regulated verse serves as an example of his poetry in Chinese, and has been identified as an exploration of a reclusive ideal, appropriating allusions from Tao Qian's (365–427) prose essay and poem on the "Peach Blossom Spring" (Ch. *Taohua yuan*):

Moving to the North of the City

For ten years my humble gate has stood west of the red river
 I have moved house, and still am within the secluded valley
 The nearby dogs and chickens know the shabby streets
 Swallows and sparrows follow along, yet roost in my former home
 I want to escape the dust of the world, but it is hard to avoid company
 I am chagrined that by planting peaches and damsons, the path has
 become easy to pass
 If the spring trees would just gradually block it off
 It would surely be like how the blossom spring confounded its visitor
(Flueckiger, 126)

The poem encourages the reader to join the poet in imagining an idealized Taoist utopia. It is important to note here that, while Japan has a long tradition of eremitic literature, Nankaku's generation was the first to turn their training in the Chinese and Japanese classics toward "private" pursuits, and to use their knowledge in favor of imaginary realms instead of applying their efforts in service of the Tokugawa regime and the structures that supported it.

Another early Confucian advisor who attempted to embody bunjin ideals of aloof refinement in his life and work is Gion Nankai (1676/7–1751). Nankai's experience differs from Nankaku's in that Nankai did not resign but was punished for a certain infraction and kept under house arrest for ten years. Although he returned to service after his pardon, Nankai seems to have maintained a strong sense of resistance to the whims of those in power

throughout the rest of his life. Identified today as one of the early pioneers of painting in the bunjin style, Nankai also composed poetry in the persona of someone living in rustic harmony with nature. The following heptasyllabic regulated verse, “The Fisherman” (*Gyofu*), is a good example:

The Fisherman

With only a straw hat, a cloak, and a fishing pole
 He never travels in a horse carriage, and no courtier hat rests on his head.
 He spends his entire life simply riding the misty waves,
 While in his cups he never feels the chill of wind and snow.
 Roosting herons, sleeping seagulls: these are his companions.
 White and red floating weeds – where are the rapids?
 But stop talking about the dangers of boating on rivers and lakes!
 Look! The journey through this world is far more difficult.²

Nankai is important as a bunjin, not only for his skill in painting and poetry following the ideals of the Chinese scholar-amateur, but also for his early promotion of eccentricity and deviation from social norms. One example of his promotion of “eccentricity” (奇, “out of kilter,” or the related character 畸, “out of the ordinary,” both read as Ch. *jī* or *qí*; J. *kī*) is found in his collection of random jottings entitled *Shōun sango* (Cupfuls of Words from the Clouds of the Xiang River). Here eccentricity is used to describe a quality people of distinction should develop in order to attain a higher degree of self-cultivation.

For Nankai, eccentricity was not an aim, but rather part of what it meant to be fully cultivated. Later we find, however, that eccentricity, or the attainment of *kijin* (畸人) status, became increasingly recognized as one of the prized attributes of being a bunjin. By the second half of the eighteenth century, opportunities for personal cultivation spread beyond the stratum of warrior-class elites and extended to lower-echelon *bushi*, well-to-do merchants, and members of religious institutions who were academically inclined.

Recognized as the first Japanese transmitter of the practice of drinking steeped leaf green tea known as *sencha*, which had entered from China in the seventeenth century, the Ōbaku (Ch. Huangbo) Zen monk Gekkai Genshō (1675–1763) refused to lead a sedentary life as a temple prelate, but instead brewed and sold tea on the street corners of Kyoto (in violation of official regulations), thereby gaining a reputation as an eccentric. Generally known

² Haruo Shirane, ed., *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology, 1600–1900* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 386.

by the townspeople of Kyoto as Baisa-ō, or “Old Tea Seller,” Genshō engaged in deep discussions with anyone who would stop by his tea stall and listen to him, along the way generating close relationships with prominent Kyoto cultural figures such as bunjin artist Ike no Taiga (1723–76), artist Itō Jakuchū (1716–1800), and poet and Buddhist abbot Daiten (Baisō Kenjō, 1719–1801).

The modern scholar Nakamura Yukihiro has identified four characteristics of bunjin:

1. Versatility. Bunjin were in many cases polymaths who excelled in multiple martial and civil arts.
2. Antagonism to *zoku* or the unrefined or vulgar, including the overtly commercial.
3. Eremitism. For many early modern bunjin, their withdrawal or seclusion from society tended to be more psychological than physical.
4. Aloof idealism. This self-righteous feature of the early modern bunjin tended to hurt their reputations, both among their peers and in their subsequent receptions. They stubbornly held to their individualistic values, however, often in the face of conflicting social norms. (Marceau, 5–6)

Among the dozens, if not hundreds, of individuals who decided (or were obligated) to step away from social engagement and follow a life devoted to literary and artistic endeavors, five stand out: Yosa Buson (1716–83), Tsuga Teishō (1718–after 1794), Takebe Ayatari (1719–74), Hiraga Gennai (1728–80), and Ueda Akinari (1734–1809). All five share Nakamura’s four bunjin attributes of versatile creativity, antagonism to *zoku*, eremitism (often in the city), and aloof idealism, and all created works that continue to attract readers and viewers today. Furthermore, all five created legacies in their various areas of pursuit that generated new genres or continued to inspire like-minded followers for generations to come, up to the present.

Yosa (Yoza) Buson (1716–84) – as a *haikai* poet, he usually employed his poetic name without a surname; as a painter, he is best known for signing his works with a Chinese-style two-character name, Sha In, or “Tiger of Yosa hamlet” – was born and raised in the Kamigata (Kyoto-Osaka) region of western Japan. Little is known of his family background or childhood, but in his twentieth year he traveled to Edo in order to study *haikai*, eventually becoming a disciple of Hayano Hajin (1676–1742), follower of the Bashō *haikai* lineage and leader of the Yahantei, or “Midnight Arbor,” school of *haikai* in Edo.

Buson returned to the Kamigata region in 1751, residing most of the rest of his life in Kyoto. There he developed his skills as a painter in the *bunjinga* or

literati painting style, and today he and his Kyoto contemporary Ike no Taiga (1723–76) are regarded as the greatest masters of this style, which is indebted to a range of influences from the Asian continent. While Buson made his living as a painter he continued to practice haikai, forming a haikai study group, the Sankasha, with painting clients and poetry disciples in 1766, and eventually reviving the Yahantei with himself as successor to Hajin's title in 1770.

One important element found in Buson's poetics as well as in his comments on painting is his notion of "transcending the ordinary." In the preface to a memorial anthology of verses by his disciple Kuroyanagi Shōha (1727–71), Buson writes as follows:

Haikai is that which has as its ideal the use of *zokugo* (ordinary language), yet transcends *zoku* (the ordinary world). To transcend *zoku* yet make use of *zoku*, the method of *rizoku* (離俗; transcending the ordinary) is the most difficult. It is the thing that So-and-So Zen master spoke of: "Listen to the sound of the Single Hand," in other words haikai Zen, the principle of *rizoku*.
(Crowley, 48)

For Buson, haikai poetry depends on using *haigon*, or vocabulary taken from everyday life or derived from Chinese words, as opposed to the insistence in conventional waka poetics on the exclusive use of words taken from the Japanese classics, such as the *Kokin wakashū* (Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems, c. 905–14) and the *Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Genji, eleventh century). The poet should be free to use a *zoku* lexicon, but still generate poems that express a heightened or transcendent spirit, one that avoids falling into vulgarity. In order to arrive at his conclusion, Buson draws from teachings found in his other area of expression, painting. He states in the same preface:

Painters have the theory of "Avoiding *zoku*:" "To avoid the *zoku* in painting, there is no other way but to read many texts, that is to say, both books and scrolls, which causes the *ki* (Ch. *qi*, 'material force') to rise, as commercialism and vulgarity cause *ki* to fall. The student should be careful about this." To avoid *zoku* in painting as well, they caused their students to put down the brush and read books.
(Crowley, 49)

Buson here is drawing from Wang Gai's (1645–1707) *Jieziyuan huazhuan* (Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting, J. *Kaishien gaden*), a heavily influential handbook for students of painting in the untrammelled bunjin or wenren styles, first published in China in the mid seventeenth century, and later reprinted in Japan. The *Manual* focuses on the importance for artists of

avoiding the banal or commonplace (especially activities related to the marketplace), and elevating their *qi* through reading and studying the texts of the past.

One celebrated *hokku* by Buson dates from the third lunar month of 1774:

Na no hana ya / Tsuki wa higashi ni / Hi wa nishi ni

Rapeseed blossoms – / The moon is in the east / The sun is in the west

This verse, with its depiction of a field of bright yellow rapeseed blossoms in late spring, combines the visual nature of a painting with an image of the poet looking to the east to find a waxing moon rising and then looking to the west to see the sun as it sets. Scholars have identified literary references to poems in Chinese by Tao Qian and in Japanese by Kakinomoto no Hitomaro (c. seventh century), and even to a folk song from Tango province, but the verse also succeeds without reference to earlier poems. The pastoral setting and the presence of not just one but two heavenly bodies provide the reader/listener with a sense of immediacy as well as with an opportunity to contemplate the human place in the cosmos.

Born and raised in Osaka, Tsuga Teishō (1718–after 1794) lived in Kyoto for several years in his youth, studying calligraphy and seal carving (*tenkoku*) from Niioke/Niō Mōsho (1687–1755), senna and incense appreciation from Ōeda Ryūhō (d. 1751), and Chinese medicine from Kagawa Shūan (1683–1755). Teishō was most active in four discrete but interrelated areas, Chinese medicine (the means by which he earned his living), calligraphy and seal carving, Chinese language scholarship, and literary production, in particular the adaptation of vernacular Chinese stories from the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368–1912) into Japanese settings. As a China scholar and linguist, Teishō published a compendium of Chinese seals found in imported texts called the *Zen Tōmei fu* (Complete Directory of Chinese Names, c. 1741), and an edition of the massive dictionary of Chinese characters, the *Kangxi zidian* (J. *Kōki jiten*, 1716; Teishō's edition was published in 1780), that corrects some nine hundred citation errors in the original.

Teishō's most enduring achievement from a literary perspective is his trilogy of *Kokon kidan* (Strange Tales, Past and Present), a collection of twenty-seven stories published under three titles in Osaka in 1749, 1766, and 1786, although a draft of all of the stories seems to have been completed and submitted to the publisher, the Shōkōdō, Kashiwaraya Seiemon, in 1744 or 1745. These three collections, *Hanabusa sōshi* (A Garland of Heroes), *Shigeshige yawa* (Flourishing in the Wilds), and *Hitsujigusa* (Bundled Weeds of Words) follow a process of *hon'an* or adaptation and naturalization, taking tales from

Chinese collections, such as the *San yan* (Three Words, J. *Sangen*, compiled in the late Ming by Feng Menglong, 1574–1645), and relocating them in a Japanese setting, often the world of the *Taiheiki* (Chronicle of Great Peace, c. 1370), a work inspired by the efforts of the emperor GoDaigo (1288–1339; r. 1318–39) to wrest political power from the Kamakura military regime, which resulted in the period of the Northern and Southern Courts in the fourteenth century.

Teishō's collections, particularly the first, were identified by later writers such as Ōta Nanpo (1749–1823) as the earliest examples of what has subsequently become known as the *yomihon*, a specific genre of narrative fiction. In Teishō's *yomihon* plot, characterization, and writing style were developed to a much higher degree than in publications that had heretofore been circulating, that is, the *ukiyo-zōshi*, in particular those of the Hachimonjiya firm of Kyoto. Teishō may not have intended his works to initiate a new genre, but his experimentation with adapting and naturalizing Chinese sources proved to change the practice of serious fiction writing in Japan.

While Teishō generally lived aloof from broader society and devoted himself to maintaining the company of close friends across a range of artistic and cultural pursuits, his fictional works did not follow a pattern of escapist entertainment. We can detect, in fact, a strong moral stance running through his stories. This moral position seems to stand in accord with Ogyū Sorai's writings on statecraft, and we can acknowledge Teishō's close relationship with the Sorai school in the fact that his first published text was the preface to an unauthorized collection of Sorai's essays on Japanese history, literature, and language, the *Sorai-sensei kasei dan* (Master Sorai's Discourses on What Should Be, 1736), a work he also edited. Teishō's stories recount historical events and critique them from perspectives consonant with those found in Sorai's writings. For example, in the first story included in his 1749 *Hanabusa sōshi*, "Emperor GoDaigo Thrice Rejects Fujifusa's Remonstrance," the emperor is depicted as being highly knowledgeable about textual details and skilled at rhetorical technique, but lacking in the wisdom required in order to rule the realm. His rejection of the various counsels offered by his loyal minister, Madenokōji Fujifusa, results in the imminent end of his reign, as well as Fujifusa's withdrawal from public life to take a high moral stance as a *bunjin* recluse. Perspectives such as this run through Teishō's stories, providing readers with plots, characterizations, and language that maintain their interest. At the same time, however, these works are also tempered with a moral and critical stance deriving from the author's detached position as an independent scholar-artist or *bunjin*.

Takebe Ayatari (1719–74) was born the second son to a line serving as hereditary “house elders” or chief retainers to the lord of the Hirosaki domain in the far northern province of Tsugaru. Known as Kitamura Kingo Hisamura, Ayatari came from a distinguished line of martial strategists and thinkers, counting as his paternal grandmother the daughter of the military theorist and Shinto scholar Yamaga Sokō (1622–85), and as his mother the daughter of Sokō’s prominent disciple and military strategist in his own right Daidōji Yūzan (1639–1730). Raised in a house that prided itself on both military and administrative strength, Ayatari as a youth is said to have excelled at spear-wielding as well as at the composition of poetry in Chinese. His life circumstances changed radically when in 1738 he left his family and traveled to Kyoto, eventually taking the tonsure as a Sōtō Zen monk, and living temporarily in Edo, the Chichibu region, Kyoto, and Kanazawa. Over the course of his travels Ayatari interacted with haikai poets from the Shōmon (Bashō), Mino, and Ise schools, eventually establishing himself in Asakusa, Edo, as an Ise school master, employing the studio name Kyūroan (“Dew-Inhaling Hermitage”) and sobriquet Ryōtai (“Cool Sack”). During this time Ayatari developed a close relationship with the innovative bunjin painter and haikai poet Sakaki Hyakusen (1697–1752), a friendship that propelled Ayatari in the direction of the Nagasaki style of Chinese painting, originally brought to Japan by the merchant/painter Shen Nanpin (J. Shin Nanpin, 1682–?). Ayatari traveled to Nagasaki twice, and received training in landscape as well as bird-and-flower painting from Nanpin’s Chinese and Japanese disciples. In 1763 Ayatari developed an interest in ancient Japan, enrolling in Kamo no Mabuchi’s (1697–1769) school of ancient Japanese scholarship, and rejecting contemporary haikai poetics in favor of a long-abandoned form of poetry called the *katauta* (half song). By the end of his life (1774), Ayatari had left a legacy of prodigious literary and artistic production in the genres of Chinese-style painting, haikai-informed *haiga* painting and book illustration, poetry in several forms, poetic travel accounts, essays, edited haikai collections, and narrative fiction, which would later serve to inspire writers such as Kyokutei (Takizawa) Bakin (1767–1848).

Ayatari’s major works include the *Kan’yōsai gafu* (Cold-Leaf Studio Painting Manual, 1762–4), the first painting manual in the Nagasaki-school Chinese style to include the artist’s own works; the haikai compilation *Kokon haikai meidai shū* (Collection of Haikai, Old and New, on Clear Topics, 1763–4); the collection of vignettes across the four seasons *Oriorigusa* (Tales from Now and Again, 1771); and the works of fiction *Nishiyama monogatari* (Tale of the Western Hills, 1768) and *Honchō Suikoden* (A Water Margin in this

Realm, part 1, 1773; part 2 incomplete, 1774). In a comparison with the works of Tsuga Teishō, *Nishiyama monogatari* has been described by Emanuel Pastreich as “not a rendering of a vernacular Chinese novel but a result of the experiments in language encouraged by the reception of vernacular Chinese novels . . . It can be seen as a continuation of the experiments associated with [Teishō and others] who composed in vernacular Chinese language. *Nishiyama monogatari* is more than a popular tale, it is a self-conscious literary work on a topic not previously considered literary” (Pastreich, 281).

In Ayatari’s final major work of fiction, *Honchō Suikoden*, about which the master of the yomihon genre of narrative fiction, Kyokutei Bakin, later wrote an extended critique, we can detect a sophisticated engagement with the issue of Sino-Japanese interaction: “Ayatari may not have articulated his ideas as to how to position texts in Japanese vis-à-vis those in Chinese. Yet in *Honchō Suikoden*, we . . . see a problematization of the [Sino-Japanese] binary in the unique setting of the transnational travel and relocation, which one might say anticipates the scholarly sophistication and ideological charging of the dichotomy that was yet to fully materialize” (Sakaki, 56). Here we discover the ramifications of Ayatari’s treatment regarding the fictional escape of the Tang emperor Xuanzong’s (J. Gensō, 685–762) consort, Yang Guifei (J. Yō Kihi, 719–56), from Tang China to Nara period Japan in the 770s. In the process she transforms from a monolingual Chinese, considered barbaric by the locals because they do not comprehend her language, to a bilingual who is accepted as “Japanese.” Ayatari’s work posits that “the bilingualism of the cultivated Japanese . . . is revealed to be superior to the monolingualism of the Chinese,” and furthermore that “a command of not only the literary language . . . but also the vernacular language . . . disturbs the whole binary of the native/foreign, the spoken/written, and the natural/cultural” (Sakaki, 63–4). Ayatari’s ability to transcend conventional notions of what prose, poetry, and painting should be derived directly from his bunjin consciousness, and served as strong forces for change in these forms of expression for those who followed.

Like Ayatari, Hiraga Gennai (1728–80) was born into the bushi or martial class, but, unlike his elder contemporary, his family ranked as foot soldiers, and his father held the minor post of keeper of the rice warehouses for the Takamatsu domain, in the province of Sanuki on Shikoku. While Teishō and Ayatari were trained in the Chinese and Japanese classics, and had some familiarity with vernacular Chinese as it appeared in recently imported Ming and Qing texts, Gennai was trained in *materia medica* or the study of medicinal herbs (J. *honzōgaku*), which was a field of study requiring knowledge not only

of Japanese and Chinese, but also of Dutch. He studied in Nagasaki, where he presumably received his first real introduction to European texts, scientific instruments, and other aspects of the culture. Gennai later left his domain for Edo, where he continued studying *materia medica* under the prominent scholar and physician Tamura Ransui (1718–76). In 1761 Gennai requested, and was granted, release from his position with the domain, a move that enabled him to engage in scientific and entrepreneurial activities unhindered by official duties. Gennai, Ransui, and others organized five events between 1757 and 1762 in which a variety of materials and products from all parts of Japan were placed on display and their potentials for medical and economic development discussed. Gennai's efforts in this regard resulted in the compilation and publication of one of the most important non-fiction works he was to produce, a compendium of 360 varieties of products, *Butsurui hinshitsu* (Classification of Various Materials, 1763).

Gennai also adapted the humorous sermon genre called *dangibon* that was popular at the time, and infused it with a level of social satire heretofore unseen, providing a completely uninhibited description of society that revolutionized the genre. His most successful *dangibon* are *Nenashigusa* (Rootless Grass, 1763, sequel 1769) and *Fūryū Shidōken den* (The Modern Life of Shidōken, 1763). The first work satirizes contemporary society by having Enma (Ch. Yama), the fearsome judge and king of the underworld, become infatuated with a prominent kabuki actor of female roles. Enma plots unsuccessfully to have the actor drown so he would be able to join him in the underworld. The second work follows the eponymous character on a series of fantastic journeys to other realms, each exposing a paradox or inconsistency found in contemporary society. The works together established Gennai's fame, not only as a scholar and entrepreneur, but also as a writer of wit with a keen sense of social consciousness.

Gennai engaged in groundbreaking work in other fields as well, experimenting with static electricity for medical purposes, developing fire retardant asbestos cloth from domestic sources, designing ceramics, making a thermometer, raising sheep for wool, writing plays for the puppet theater, promoting mining, painting in a European-inspired style, and otherwise attempting to develop a number of economic and cultural initiatives. Most of these eluded success, and Gennai's later works, including his tour-de-force *Hōhi-ron* ("On Farting" or "A Theory of Farting", 1774, sequel 1777), reveal an increasing sense of frustration with the sociopolitical order. As Sumie Jones explains, "(*Hōhi-ron*) stands out among all of Gennai's works for its bitterness of tone. His frustration about being blocked from opportunities to exercise his many

talents and to make a name for himself appears here in its barest form” (Jones, 392).

Gennai apparently became increasingly frustrated as time went on, and he eventually was involved in an incident in which one person was killed and another injured, for which he was arrested. About a month later he died in captivity. Gennai departed from the bunjin pattern of Sinophilia and keeping an aloof distance from the gritty issues of the day, instead exerting his time, effort, finances, and reputation in a number of attempts to strengthen the economy and social structure he found so deficient. However, we can detect in his openness to new ideas, his attempts to experiment with new techniques, and his prodigious talent in a range of literary and artistic pursuits a strong affinity with his bunjin contemporaries.

Ueda Akinari (1734–1809) was born in Osaka to a woman named Osaki who hailed from the Matsuo family, originally from Yamato province. We do not know the identity of his father, and neither, apparently, did he. In his fourth year Ueda Mosuke, a wealthy merchant of paper and vegetable oil in the Dōjima district of central Osaka, adopted Akinari and raised him in substantial comfort and with a good education, possibly at the Kaitokudō, a private academy for the merchant class that had been established in the city. While he survived a brush with death from having contracted smallpox in his fifth year of age, Akinari was left with some fingers stunted on both hands. He nevertheless went on to develop his skills in calligraphy, and his distinctive calligraphic style was prized even in his lifetime.

Akinari as a youth engaged in haikai, a socially oriented pastime he continued to enjoy over his entire life. He briefly studied the Japanese classics and antiquarian issues under Takebe Ayatari, but expressed dissatisfaction with Ayatari’s seeming lack of knowledge concerning Chinese characters, and through Ayatari’s efforts, in the mid 1760s, he was introduced to the scholar Katō Umaki (1721–77), one of the foremost disciples of Kamo no Mabuchi’s school of Japanese classical studies. Akinari had great respect for Umaki’s scholarship and character, and maintained direct contact and correspondence with him until his death about a decade later. (Incidentally, Ayatari and Hiraga Gennai had also joined the roster of Mabuchi’s disciples in the same ninth lunar month of 1763.)

After his adoptive father’s death in 1761, Akinari inherited the family business, maintaining it until a devastating fire in 1771 left him in search of a new livelihood. In the 1760s he had published a couple of works in the ukiyo-zōshi vein, *Shodō kikimimi seken zaru* (Worldly Monkeys Proficient in All Sorts of Ways, 1766), followed the next year by a second, *Seiken tekake*

katagi (Characters of Worldly Mistresses, 1767). In 1768 he had completed the first draft of and preface to his most well-known work, *Ugetsu monogatari* (Tales of Moonlight and Rain), but close examination of the woodblock-printed text reveals that the blocks for much of at least the first couple of stories in the collection had been carved away and that Akinari had conducted extensive revisions of the text. By the time the collection was published in 1776, Akinari had become deeply involved in matters Chinese, studying medicine (his new profession after having lost his business), and presumably learning techniques of *hon'an* or adaptation and naturalization of Chinese works into Japanese settings from Tsuga Teishō, who by that time had already published two of his trilogy of what would later become known as early *yomihon*.

Ugetsu monogatari successfully combines Chinese and Japanese classical (and more recent) sources and infuses them with an atmosphere that allows readers to appreciate the text as literary entertainment, while at the same time challenging them to reach beyond the tales themselves and reflect on how the narratives compare with the world of the here-and-now they encounter around them. In order to accomplish this, not only does Akinari go beyond what a reader might find in the “source” narratives in terms of plot elements or characterization, but he employs a particular writing style that combines both Japanese and Chinese elements, known as *wakan konkōbun*, or “hybrid Sino-Japanese prose.” This style infuses the text with a sense of richness and reverberation that had eluded the earlier *yomihon* by Teishō or Ayatari.

Akinari continued to engage in research on the Japanese classics, writing and often publishing studies of the *Man'yōshū* (late eighth century), the *Ise monogatari* (The Tales of Ise), and the *Genji monogatari*. He also compiled a treatise on the *kireji* or “cutting words” that generate a pause or caesura in *haikai* verses. Today the most prominent expression of Akinari’s scholarship is probably his celebrated debates with the foremost scholar of Japanese antiquities of his generation, Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801). Akinari took issue with two aspects of Norinaga’s scholarship: first, his belief that the archaic Japanese language of the distant past had been “pure” and not “corrupted” by imported pronunciations from continental Asia; and second, that the ancestral deity of the imperial line, Amaterasu, and the sun in the sky were one and the same. In this series of debates that seems to have been conducted through correspondence over the period 1785–7 Norinaga defends himself against Akinari’s attacks with the prodigious scale of textual exegesis that he had built up over the years since he had first begun a systematic

reading and annotation of the *Kojiki* (712) in 1764. Akinari unfortunately did not possess the analytical or linguistic tools to challenge Norinaga effectively concerning these two issues, but in terms of approaching Japan's ancient history he has been praised for his cultural relativism, his open mind, and his unbiased attitudes, in strong contrast to Norinaga's xenophobic ideology.

Akinari put his ideas about cultural relativism into practice. In 1764, he was able to engage in a discussion in written classical Chinese with members of the Korean Embassy to Japan that had arrived in Osaka. Late in life he wrote with a special type of stylus called an *adan* (screw pine, *Pandanus fascicularis*), which originated from the Ryūkyū Kingdom. In contrast, a portrait of Akinari said to date from 1808 survives with him seated informally and playing a *tonkori*, a five-stringed instrument used by the Ainu of the far north. Furthermore, Akinari is known for his research into *sencha*, the practice of preparing and serving brewed tea in the contemporary Chinese style, and his *Seifū sagan* (Miscellaneous Comments on the Way of Pure Elegance, 1794) is today considered one of the important texts that helped popularize *sencha* among bunjin and bunjin aspirants for the next century.

Late in life, Akinari suffered several setbacks, including the death of his wife and confidant of thirty-seven years, Koren (1740–98), as well as severe loss of sight in both eyes. He is often depicted as impoverished, bitter, and alone in the years before his death, but we can see that, in spite of his difficulties, those around him went to pains to take care of him, and in 1805 (with expanded editions in 1806 and 1807) his disciples and supporters published an anthology of his waka verses as well as his non-fiction Japanese prose, with the title *Tsuzurabumi* (A Basket of Books). In the last few years of his life, Akinari also completed a series of critical observations of those around him called *Tandai shōshin roku* (A Record of Audacity and Circumspection, c. 1808), which reveals Akinari's opinions on a variety of matters to a surprising degree.

Akinari had not given up fiction writing either. His collection of stories in a pseudo-classic style, *Harusame monogatari* (Tales of the Spring Rain, 1808, revised but incomplete, 1809), has eluded the nearly universal praise that his earlier *Ugetsu monogatari* has garnered, but many of its stories are considered to be quite good. A quote from Akinari's preface to *Harusame monogatari* can provide a sense, not only of his craft, but of the state of a bunjin mind in the middle decades of early modern Japan:

For some days the spring rain has been falling, quiet and delightful. Once again I have taken out my brush and inkstone, but as I ponder what to write I

realize that I have nothing to say. For the first time, I have chosen as models the tales of the past; but for me, whose life is that of a wretched mountain woodcutter, what sort of story is best to relate? Stories of the past and present that I have heard from others, and believed, I now in turn pass on, unaware that they are fabrications, and that I deceive those who read them. But it matters not. There will be those who accept as true accounts the made-up stories I continue to tell: so saying to myself I go on with this collection, and the spring rain still is falling, falling. (Chambers, 376)

Akinari's alter-ego narrator here suggests to the reader that the author lives in unfettered solitude, engaged in reading, pondering the passing of time, and putting tales and poems down on paper. The author should not be imposing issues of truth and falsehood on the reader; rather the reader must adjudicate the veracity of a tale and its contents. In this way, the author identifies with the spring rain as it falls in complete accord with nature. What we do with that rain is ultimately up to us. The bunjin lived in a world set if not physically then psychologically apart from society. Using the tools of self-expression across a range of creative activities, they fabricated an alternative existence that allowed them to fantasize an idealized society. The ground they broke allowed others to develop the genres of painting, poetry, and prose in future generations, even when those professional writers, poets, and painters could no longer live according to the ideal their bunjin predecessors were able to generate.

Satiric poetry: Kyōshi, Kyōka, and Senryū

HARUO SHIRANE

Three relatively new genres – *kyōshi* (comic Chinese poetry), *kyōka* (comic *waka*), and *senryū* (satiric *haiku*) – came to the fore in the latter half of the eighteenth century, at the same time as fictional forms such as *dangibon* (satiric sermons), *kokkeibon* (books of humor), *sharebon* (books of wit and fashion), and *kibyōshi* (yellow picture books). The simultaneous growth of “wild” (*kyō*) or comic literature in the An’ei-Tenmei era (1772–89) has been partially attributed to the lax rule of Senior Councilor Tanuma Okitsugu (r. 1772–86), who did not enforce the restraints placed on social customs during the Kyōhō Reforms of the first half of the eighteenth century. More importantly, these poetic genres were part of a broader rise of satirical literature.

Kyōshi

Pioneers of the early eighteenth-century bunjin movement, such as Gion Nankai (1677–1751) and Hattori Nankaku (1683–1759), turned away from a contemporary society that had disappointed them and entered the elegant and largely imaginary world of Chinese poetry and culture. These bunjin poets did not criticize the society around them so much as ignore it. Indeed, those following the Ogyū Sorai school, like Hattori Nankaku, had little opportunity to express their social or political dissatisfaction except through elegant Chinese poetry. It was in this context that an alternative mindset, that of the “mad person” (*kyōsha*), emerged. Not only did the “mad person” criticize and mock contemporary society, he also criticized and laughed at himself. This persona has a long history in Japan, with roots in Buddhist and Confucian traditions. In the latter half of the eighteenth century, samurai intellectuals who considered themselves “mad” turned not to the elegant forms of expression advocated by the Sorai school but to the comic genres of *kyōbun* (comic Chinese prose) and *kyōshi* (comic Chinese poetry), two genres that became an integral part of popular *gesaku* (playful) literature.

By the eighteenth century, Japanese literati had naturalized the medium of Chinese poetry (*kanshi*), adapting it to their own tastes and needs. In the process, *kyōshi*, which concentrated on social satire, wordplay, and vulgar topics such as fornication, farting, fleas, and itching, emerged as a counter-genre, standing in a similar relationship to orthodox *kanshi* as *kyōka* did to classical *waka*. *Kyōshi* had a long history, which can be traced to Chinese poetry and medieval Gozan (Five Mountains) Zen *kanshi*, such as the *kyōshi* of the medieval “mad” monk poet Ikkyū (1394–1481). *Kyōshi*, however, reached its high point in the twenty years between 1770 and 1790, especially in the Tenmei era (1781–8), precisely when *senryū*, *kyōka*, and *kibyōshi* blossomed. Like *senryū*, *kyōshi* humorously explored vulgar topics that lay outside the bounds of orthodox literature. *Kyōshi* also mixed classical and contemporary Chinese vocabulary and sometimes even contained vernacular interlineation (offering alternative *kana* readings).

Significantly, “mad” poet-intellectuals used these genres to express frustration and discontent with contemporary social conditions. Two pioneers were Dōmyaku Sensei (1752–1801, Master Artery) and Ōta Nanpo (1749–1823); the latter’s *kyōka* pen-name was Yomo no Akara and his *kyōshi* pen-name was Neboke Sensei (Master Groggy). Nanpo, from Edo, became famous for his humor and his literary parodies, while Dōmyaku Sensei, a noted *kibyōshi* and *kyōka* writer from Kyoto, became known for his social criticism and satire. The publication of Nanpo’s collection *Neboke sensei bunshū* (Master Groggy’s Literary Collection) in 1767 and Dōmyaku Sensei’s *Taihei gafu* (Ballads for the Age of Great Peace) in 1769 firmly established the reputations of both writers, who were then still in their teens, and made them masters of the new genre in the Edo and Kyoto regions, respectively.

The following two *kyōshi* are from Dōmyaku Sensei’s *Taihei gafu*, with the second addressed to Ōta Nanpo:

Kyoto Minor Retainer

Most of these minor samurai draw a stipend of three koku –
 So how come they act so big?
 From head to toe, they’re a mass of unmitigated gall.
 At the theater, they always get in for free. (Markus, 11–12)

To Master Groggy, from Afar

Priests make a brothel’s flushest clients;
 Among Buddhas, Zuigu is foremost.
 But I get a chilly reception at all the teahouses;
 My bills have piled into mountains.

Pleasures and reprimands jointly accumulate;
 Relatives hold solemn family council to debate my case.
 But I head straight for the brothels, make the long nights fly by –
 Even by breakfast, I'm still not home.
 The day I'm disowned, whenever that may be,
 I'll make my way to the East.
 Just as I reached the last word in looniness
 I happened to make the acquaintance of Master Groggy. (Markus, 26)

Dōmyaku Sensei was a low-ranking samurai from the Hatakenaka family, which served the Shōgoin temple residence in the imperial palace in Kyoto. The Hatakenaka were *sangoku-san* (Mr. Three Koku) – an ironic, derisive nickname for low-class retainers with minuscule stipends. In the first kyōshi, “Kyoto Minor Retainer,” Dōmyaku mocks members of his own class for being arrogant while hiding their extreme poverty. In the next kyōshi, “To Master Groggy, from Afar,” published in 1790 under the title “Elegant Compositions by Two Masters” (*Nitaika fūga*), Dōmyaku describes his social upbringing and the life of dissipation that caused him to be disowned. These examples show a self-mockery that implicates the writer in the very social ills he is critiquing.

Kyōka

Waka poets wrote kyōka, a parodic and popular form of the thirty-one-syllable waka, as a form of amusement or diversion, in much the same way that Japanese kanshi poets composed kyōshi. Kyōka relied heavily on complex and witty wordplay and incorporated socially diverse content that broke the bounds of classical waka. Such kyōka was composed from the medieval period, but it was not until the early Edo period that it was recognized as a new art form, like that of *haikai*, and was practiced by a wide social spectrum. This new genre of kyōka first emerged in Kyoto and then spread to Osaka, where it became extremely popular and was known as Naniwa (Osaka) kyōka. This early wave of kyōka reached Nagoya, Hiroshima, and other locales, but not the city of Edo.

However, in the late eighteenth century, kyōka suddenly blossomed in Edo, alongside satiric kyōshi and senryū, led by young *bakufu* retainer poets. In the 1770s a coterie of samurai in Edo – Yomo no Akara (1749–1823), Akera Kankō (1740–1800), Karagoromo Kisshū (1743–1802), and others – gathered for kyōka meetings and contests, and in the Tenmei era (1781–9) they began publishing their kyōka. The first and largest of these Edo kyōka anthologies was *Manzai kyōka shū* (Wild Poems of Ten Thousand Generations, 1783,

edited by Akara), which spurred what literary historians have called the Tenmei “kyōka boom” in Edo. This movement flourished in the atmosphere created by the bakufu administration of Senior Councilor Tanuma Okitsugu (r. 1772–86), whose pro-commerce policies generated a sense of liberation among Edo samurai and contributed to the flowering of new Edo genres such as senryū, sharebon, and kibyōshi.

Yomo no Akara (1749–1823), the kyōka pen-name of Ōta Nanpo, a noted writer of kyōshi, sharebon, and kibyōshi, published his noted collection of kyōshi and kyōbun, *Neboke sensei bunshū* (Master Groggy’s Literary Collection) in 1767. His strongest work, however, was in the genre of kyōka. In the early 1780s, Karagoromo Kisshū, a more conservative poet, stressed allusive variation and wordplay, whereas Akara (and his followers) saw kyōka as a means of describing everyday emotions, particularly those of the Edo townspeople. In 1783, when Akara edited *Manzai kyōka shū* (Wild Poems of Ten Thousand Generations), the most influential of the Tenmei kyōka anthologies, he attracted his own following. As a Tokugawa houseman (*gokenin*) in the Edo bakufu, Akara was careful not to write anything that would endanger his relatively high position as a samurai, and did not express subversive or critical thoughts in the way that someone like Hiraga Gennai did. In response to the Kansei Reforms (1787–1805), initiated by Matsudaira Sadanobu, which curtailed many of the liberties of the Tanuma era, Ōta Nanpo (Akara) was forced, at least temporarily, to leave the literary world and concentrate on his responsibilities as a bakufu official.

The following kyōka by Akara is from *Manzai kyōka shū*, which adopts the topical structure of imperial waka anthologies (the title echoes that of the *Senzai waka shū*, the seventh imperial waka anthology). This kyōka appears in the second volume of spring, where waka about the blossoming of the cherry trees were traditionally placed.

On the Blossoms of Yoshiwara

Yoshiwara no	In Yoshiwara
yomise o haru no	the women are displaying their wares
yūgure wa	as evening falls –
iriai no kane ni	blossoms glowing amidst the echoes
hana ya sakuran	of the vesper bells.

The first two lines describe the women of the pleasure quarters, using contemporary vernacular, while the bottom half is purely classical in diction and grammar, borrowing from the waka tradition and transforming the brothel into an elegant, seasonal landscape. As in many kyōka, the humorous effects hinge on placing something contemporary, vulgar, or quotidian in an elegant,

neoclassical context. Typically, a kyōka poet treated a classical topic using popular language or, conversely, approached a contemporary topic (such as the theater or the licensed quarters) using classical diction or a classical perspective. One fundamental form of kyōka is the *honkadori*, or allusive variation on a specific “foundation poem” (*honka*), in which the kyōka transforms the meaning of a well-known classical poem, thereby bringing the foundation text into the vulgar or popular world. Wordplay also is a central element of kyōka, particularly puns (*kakekotoba*) and word associations (*engo*). Both rhetorical devices make kyōka very difficult to translate.

The following example, from the winter volume of *Manzai kyōka shū*, is written by Akera Kankō (1740–1800), a low-ranking bakufu retainer and one of the leading kyōka poets during the Tenmei boom.

On the Year’s End

Shakkin mo
ima wa tsutsumu ni
tsutsumarezu
yaburekabure no
fundoshi no kure

Under a ragged loincloth
some things can’t be hid –
my debts, too,
protrude through
the frayed end of the year.

(Sato/Watson, 361)

The kyōka takes up a late winter topic that would never be found in classical waka: the Edo period custom of having to pay off all debts by the end of the year. The humor comes from the combination of phonic repetition (*tsutsumu/tsutsumarezu, yaburekabure*) and the embarrassing appearance of debt, likened to genitals protruding from a frayed loin cloth.

Kyōka often required knowledge of the classical poetic tradition, which made it difficult for popular audiences to assimilate. The more sophisticated kyōka were published in *kyōka ehon* (picture books with kyōka), elaborately illustrated books on topics ranging from insects to sea shells. At the same time, kyōka gradually became an integral part of popular culture. For example, Jippensha Ikku’s *Tōkaidō hizakurige* (Travels on the Eastern Seaboard, 1802–9), one of the most popular comic novellas (*kokkeibon*) of the early nineteenth century, includes numerous kyōka, many of which rely on homophonic play for their humor and serve as a kind of commoner’s waka.

Senryū

The seventeen-syllable senryū became popular in the 1750s. The senryū has the same 5–7–5 syllabic structure as the *hokku*, the opening verse of haikai

linked poetry, but unlike the *hokku* (renamed “*haiku*” in the modern period), which requires a seasonal word (*kigo*) and focuses primarily on the natural world, the *senryū* uses humor, satire, and wit to comment on contemporary society and the human condition. Historically, *senryū* derived from the practice of *maeku-zuke* (verse capping), which can be traced back to linked verse in the medieval period. In verse capping, the judge (*tenja*) presents an initial or “prior” verse (*maeku*) to which the participants respond with an “added” verse (*tsukeku*). These joined verses are then judged and assigned a score. As a rule, the initial verse is fourteen syllables while the joined verse is seventeen syllables.

The term *senryū* comes from the name of Karai *Senryū* (1718–90), a town official in the Asakusa district of Edo. He was a noted judge of verse capping and was known for his judgments on *manku awase* (ten-thousand-verse contests) in which a judge presented an initial verse for which the participants submitted joined verses. Prizes were awarded to those whose joined verses received high marks. In 1765 *Senryū*’s disciple published *Haifū yanagidaru* (Willow Barrel, commonly called *Yanagidaru*), a collection of 756 prize-winning verses from earlier *manku awase* (dating from 1757 to 1765). This was one of the first such collections to omit the initial verse (*maeku*) and treat the added verse (*tsukeku*) as an independent poem. In this way, a new genre was born, named after *Senryū* himself. *Willow Barrel* proved to be so popular that it was repeatedly expanded, and by the time it ceased publication, in 1838, it numbered 167 volumes.

Senryū covered a broad range of topics of interest to contemporary audiences, particularly in Edo, which had become a major metropolis by the mid eighteenth century. Topics included domestic life, various occupations (from doctor to laundryman to thief), recent incidents, noted historical events, literary figures, to name just a few. *Senryū* addressed topics (such as sex) that Edo period *haikai* from the Teimon school onward had avoided, and gave them a humorous twist. *Suetsumuhana* (Safflower, 1776–1801), an underground bestseller, is a *senryū* collection devoted exclusively to erotica.

The fundamental differences between modern *haiku* and *senryū* can be traced to their historical origins. *Haiku* was originally the opening verse (*hokku*) of a linked-verse sequence, and *senryū* was an offshoot of the added verse (*tsukeku*). Consequently, *senryū* does not require a seasonal word (*kigo*), which marks the occasion of the *hokku*’s composition and connects it to nature and to the larger poetic tradition. Unlike the *hokku*, *senryū* does not require a cutting word (*kireji*), which usually splits the verse into two syntactic parts. The *haiku* often ends in a noun or a sentence-ending

declension, which gives a sense of closure, whereas the senryū often closes with the continuative verb form (*renyōkei*), suggesting further action. Generally, the senryū abbreviates a key word or the main topic, creating a sense of surprise when the reader realizes what has been omitted.

The humor of senryū frequently stems from deflating objects or persons of high status, authority, or elegance. Senryū parodies figures and incidents in classical literature as well as famous poetic phrases and well-known aphorisms (*kotowaza*), and examines the world with a sharp and satirical eye.

Ohanage o	All he does at work:	
kazoete iru ga	count the number of hairs	
tsutome nari	in his lord's nostrils.	(Ueda, 56)

This senryū (from *Yanagidaru*, vol. 24) describes a town official whose main occupation is fawning on his superior. The lives of those on the lowest rungs of society are also described in senryū (such as this one from *Yanagidaru shūi*, vol. 10), usually in a comic and satiric fashion.

Yoku shimete	Off to work,	
nero to ii-ii	the burglar to his wife:	
nusumi ni de	"Lock up tight when you go to bed!"	(Sato/Watson, 364)

Kyōshi, kyōka, and senryū shared a sharp ironical and critical perspective on contemporary society. Of the three genres, kyōshi and kyōka were initially the purview of educated elites, while senryū enjoyed a wider social base.

The practice of composing kyōshi continued sporadically into the Meiji period (for example, in the form of political satire), but today it is gone, together with the composition of kyōka. About 200,000 senryū from the middle to the end of the Tokugawa period survive, almost all of them anonymous, in contrast to kyōka and kyōshi, which were signed and whose authors made a name for themselves. Even Karai Senryū, the founder of the genre, is known primarily as a judge rather than a poet. The practice of writing senryū remains popular today, perhaps because it has few formal restrictions and can deal with contemporary society. Many English haiku composed outside Japan, which do not require a seasonal word, are in fact senryū.

Picture books: from akahon to kibyōshi and gōkan

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In the tenth month of 1811, three relative newcomers to Edo's busy publishing world issued a book titled *Mazu yonde Mikuni Kojorō* (First of All just Give It a Read: Kojorō of Mikuni). The three men were Tsuruya Kinsuke, who had recently opened his own publishing house after working as head clerk for the famous publisher Tsuruya Kiemon; Santō Kyōzan, the younger brother of the celebrated writer Santō Kyōden; and Utagawa Kunisada, a young artist whose first triptych Tsuruya Kinsuke had issued in 1807, and who was already gaining a reputation as the second-best print artist in Edo after his mentor Utagawa Toyokuni. The book itself was also something fairly new: it was a *gōkan* (multibooklet), the last in a series of genres combining pictures and prose that were produced in Edo – and in Tokyo after the city's name was changed in 1868 – from the late seventeenth to the late nineteenth century. These genres, including *akahon* (red books), *kurohon/aohon* (black books, green books), *kibyōshi* (yellow covers), and *gōkan*, together fall under the general heading of *kusa-zōshi* (grass books). Each genre derives its name from its physical characteristics: *akahon* had red covers; *kurohon* had black covers; *aohon* had light green covers (“*aohon*” is sometimes mistranslated as “blue books” out of deference to the crayon-box equation of *ao* with blue); *kibyōshi* had yellow covers; and *gōkan* (literally “combined booklets”) were made by binding together multiple five-leaf booklets – five leaves being the length of a single booklet in earlier genres of *kusa-zōshi*. Works in these genres were also commonly referred to during the Edo period as *e-zōshi* (picture books) or *haishi* (unofficial histories); sometimes, confusingly, the words “*akahon*” and “*aohon*” were also used to refer to *kusa-zōshi* as a category, or to particular books that would not today be considered *akahon* or *aohon*. During the Meiji period *gōkan* were sometimes described as *eiri yomihon* (illustrated reading books), as if they were a subcategory of *yomihon* (reading books). Recently Adam Kern has translated “*kusa-zōshi*,” vividly if controversially, as “comic books.”



Figure 1. From Santō Kyōzan's *Mazū yonde Mikuni Kōjorō* (1811), with pictures by Utagawa Kunisada. Readers of illustrated fiction engaged in a discussion of "red books." Waseda University Library, Special Collections.

Mazu yonde Mikuni Kojorō opens with a preface by Kyōzan and a discussion among fictional readers of *gōkan* modeled on the *yakusha hyōbanki* (actor critique) – an annual publication that used a conversational format to evaluate kabuki actors’ performances during the preceding theatrical year. Together these opening sections offer a snapshot of the world of the *gōkan* and of the history of *kusa-zōshi* more broadly as they appeared at the time, soon after the *gōkan* came into being. First, Kyōzan’s preface:

Author’s Preface

Many of the so-called Four Great Literary Marvels were once-in-a-lifetime books, and they became so marvelous as a matter of course because their authors devoted such a long time to their revision. Even the great plays of Chikamatsu and Takeda Izumo and the masterful collections of Hachimonjiya Jishō and Ejima Kiseki were written at a pace of only two or three a year. There are so many publishers of these *akahon* and so on that we have today, and such a dearth of writers, that nowadays even a hack like me puts out more than ten works each year. When you produce a lot, you run out of seeds for stories. Run out of seeds, and you run out of money – and then you run out on your debtors, too. In weaving this work, buying time with the bookstore’s trusty “It’ll be in day after tomorrow, I promise!” while I toiled by lamplight, I made like a crow, digging up seeds Jishō and Kiseki had planted, and in this manner added this title to my total of ten-or-so.¹

“These *akahon* and so on that we have today” (*ima no akahon no gotoki*) refers, not to the genre now known by that name, which had flourished during the first half of the eighteenth century, but to the *gōkan* – a fact evident in the implicit distinction Kyōzan makes between “today’s *akahon*” and those of the past. Kyōzan’s invocation of the term “*akahon*” here is metonymic: he views *gōkan* not as a type of *akahon* in the narrow sense but as a descendant of the form, as the *akahon*’s current counterpart. This awareness of the historical development of *kusa-zōshi* was ubiquitous at the time, and points to a characteristic crucial to an accurate understanding of the category: the absence of sharp boundaries between the genres it comprises. Thinking in terms of separate genres is useful, but one must remember that each genre is like a color in the *kusa-zōshi* rainbow: red fades into black and green, which fade into yellow, which fades into the mix of colors on the covers of the *gōkan*.

¹ Santō Kyōzan (text) and Utagawa Kunisada (pictures), *Mazu yonde Mikuni Kojorō* (Edo: Tsuruya Kinsuke, 1811), 1 *omote*. In the original, “run out on your debtors” is literally “tell lies”; my translation sacrifices precision in an attempt to preserve the punning.

Kyōzan's preface hints at a few other traits of kusa-zōshi, particularly at the time at which he was writing. First and most obvious is their popularity. Over time the market for kusa-zōshi, and the number of publishers, had gradually expanded. Indeed, by 1811, as Kyōzan observes, there were hardly enough authors to meet demand – though efforts were certainly made to recruit new authors: Kyōzan himself published his first gōkan in 1807, the year before Kunisada started providing pictures for works in the genre. In 1803 nine publishers had been producing kusa-zōshi; the number rocketed to twenty-one by 1808 and twenty-three in 1810. That this rapid expansion coincided with the emergence of the gōkan indicates how excited publishers were about the genre's future, and gives a sense of the latent potential kusa-zōshi had acquired as literacy rose and printing technologies were refined over the century or so since the first akahon appeared. In contrast to yomihon and *ninjōbon* (sentimental fiction), which were too expensive for most individuals to purchase and tended to be rented from *kashihon'ya* (commercial lending libraries), kusa-zōshi were reasonably priced and well suited to private acquisition – they were popular both as a form of entertainment and as an object of consumption, even of collection. Indeed, Kyōzan's reference to the bookstore's evidently familiar put-off, "It'll be in day after tomorrow," conjures the image of an enthusiastic fan eager to buy some new work as soon as possible. A kibyōshi from 1802 includes a scene showing a bookstore mobbed by customers, one of whom responds to the clerk's protestation that the books haven't yet been bound by shouting out, "We'll bind them ourselves, just give 'em to us as they are!" (Jippensha Ikku, *Atariyashita jihon-doiya*, Edo: Murataya, 1802).

Other elements crucial to understanding kusa-zōshi emerge from Kyōzan's preface. His publishers paid him for his creative labor, for instance – a custom that seems to have become commonplace only during the age of the kibyōshi. One notes, too, that through his comparison of himself to the playwrights Chikamatsu Monzaemon and Takeda Izumo and to the writers Hachimonjiya Jishō and Ejima Kiseki – setting aside the "Four Great Literary Marvels" of the Chinese tradition – and especially through his mining of Jishō's and Kiseki's writings for "seeds for stories," he situates kusa-zōshi in a lineage of fictional production that includes both printed *jōruri* (puppet play) texts and what have conventionally been known as *ukiyo-zōshi* (books of the floating world). Tellingly, all four of the earlier writers Kyōzan cites were associated not with Edo, the home of kusa-zōshi, but rather with the Kamigata region, centered on Kyoto and Osaka. There is a sense here, perhaps, that while Kamigata used to lead the way in the production of

fiction, Edo has now assumed the lead; and implicit in this competitive perspective, in turn, is knowledge that the locally inflected nature of publishing did not preclude the circulation of books throughout the country. As it happens, the copy of *Mazu yonde Mikuni Kojorō* I am quoting is from a series of kusa-zōshi reprints published in the Owari domain, in what is now Nagoya, and issued, tellingly, with red covers. Finally, the mere fact that Kyōzan wrote a preface at all, as well as his description of himself “weaving this work,” indicates that he considered himself primarily responsible for the book, and that this view was shared by publishers and presumably also by readers, even though he and Kunisada were both credited on its cover and final page.

Many of these points are reinforced by the conversation that follows Kyōzan’s preface, which literally offers a collective portrait – in the *kuchie*, or “opening illustration” reproduced in figure 1 – of a readership with a good grasp of the history of kusa-zōshi, of how gōkan were produced, and of the pleasures they offered. The conversation begins with a comment from the “head of the group” (*tōdori*):

Well then, what I would like to talk with you all about this year, as in years previous, is a kusa-zōshi with text by Kyōzan and pictures by Kunisada. In Kamigata, they would call it an akahon, and they would be right to do so. Allow me to give you just a look. ○ Akahon aficionado: “Ah, yes, yes. It’s been ages since anyone called them kurohon. In the days of Kisanji and Harumachi people were more stylish and always called them green. Nowadays if you mention ‘combined booklets’ even children assume you must be talking about kusa-zōshi . . . ○ Akahon fan: “Sure, sure, I just want to see the kuchie! C’mon, hurry up! . . . ○ Akahon expert: “Actually, kuchie are a recent phenomenon. The reason you have kuchie in kusa-zōshi is that they let you figure out right away which are the good guys and which are the bad guys. They also show you the broad outlines of the plot in the rest of the book . . . ○ Know-it-all: “Actually, the way kusa-zōshi are made is that the author sketches the pictures in the manuscript and writes in the text, then the artist either copies it as it is or fixes it up as he copies it. The author is like the leading male-role actor and the artist is the female-role actor, and the book won’t be any good unless they’re both skilled at what they do. ○ Akahon fan: “I enjoy every one, so I buy them all, every year – there isn’t one I haven’t seen . . . ○ Gallant: “Both authors and artists are sons of Edo! We’re fans of ‘em all!” (Santō Kyōzan, text, and Utagawa Kunisada, pictures, *Mazu yonde Mikuni Kojorō*, Edo: Tsuruya Kinsuke, 1811).

This is a made-up conversation, of course, but Kyōzan does not appear to be presenting it as implausible. It is the sort of talk ordinary readers of kusa-zōshi

might have had, and it conveys a sense of how, in 1811, the category was perceived: as a lineage of books that could be split up into subcategories but, at the same time, were on some level just different versions of the same thing, called by different names; as a forum for constant innovation, as the introduction of kuchie (a feature pioneered in yomihon) to the gōkan indicates; as a form of entertainment enjoyed by both adults and children; and, as the gallant makes explicit, as a local Edo product of which Edoites could be proud. In fact, this local pride is implicit even in the head's initial observation that in Kamagita people call kusa-zōshi "akahon" – the same term Kyōzan uses in his preface, and to identify most participants in the talk. Edoites knew that people in other cities, even in the most far-flung domains, were avid readers of kusa-zōshi.

Now that we have, through considering a particular gōkan, acquired an understanding of how kusa-zōshi looked to readers at the time, we can step back and try to define the category, and the individual genres it comprises, as they are apprehended in current scholarship.

As we have seen, the category of kusa-zōshi comprises a series of genres of fiction that were produced in Edo, but circulated and were sometimes reprinted in other parts of the country, from the late seventeenth to the late nineteenth centuries. Akahon are thought to have existed by at least the first decade of the eighteenth century; the earliest definitively dateable kurohon is from 1744, though works in the genre were probably being published a decade or more earlier; aohon seem to have begun appearing shortly after kurohon. Kurohon and aohon are commonly grouped together today because works that have survived in multiple copies often exist as both kurohon and aohon, with covers in each color; by the 1750s, works originally issued as aohon were being sold with black covers, and at a discount price, when they were no longer current. The kibyōshi is said to have been invented in 1775 with the publication of Koikawa Harumachi's *Kinkin sensei eiga no yume* (Master Flashgold's Splendiferous Dream), though publishers had already abandoned the original light green covers of the aohon in favor of less expensive yellow ones, since the light green gradually faded to yellow anyway; the generic shift, in this case, was due primarily to the freshness of *Kinkin sensei eiga no yume*'s content, which was sophisticated enough that adults readers were clearly its main audience. Gōkan, by contrast, emerged first as a new format in 1804 and only began to move away in small steps, in terms of its content, from the kibyōshi that had immediately preceded it. New gōkan continued to appear through the 1870s. Then, as the newspaper serial and the novel gained in popularity,

and as movable type supplanted woodblock printing, new kusa-zōshi ceased to appear.

While each of the four genres of kusa-zōshi has its own characteristics – it is this that has made it possible to regard them as genres rather than simply as different formats, and in some cases to assign works issued in exactly the same format to different genres – all kusa-zōshi also share certain broad similarities. As a general rule, they were published as *chūhon* (mid-sized books, approximately 13 by 18 centimeters in size). They were printed from woodblocks, most often on repulped paper, and were bound in the *fukurotoji* (pouch binding) format. In order to produce a fukurotoji-bound book, sheets of paper were printed on one side, folded in half with the printed side out, stacked, sandwiched between flat covers, and sewn together along the edge opposite the folds. In the case of akahon, kurohon/aohon, and kibyōshi, one work would consist of between two and six booklets (*kan*) of five double-sided leaves each; to create a gōkan, two or more sets of five leaves would be bound together into longer fascicles (*satsu*), two or more of which could in turn be identified as parts of a single chapter (*hen*) in a multichapter work. The *gō* in “gōkan” means “to combine,” or in this case “to bind together,” and the word “gōkan” could originally have denoted any book formed by binding two or more volumes together – hence the akahon aficionado’s observation in *Mazu yonde Mikuni Kojorō* that, “Nowadays if you mention ‘combined booklets’ even children assume you must be talking about kusa-zōshi.” Interestingly, the history of kusa-zōshi was inscribed in the very materiality of the book, since the basic five-leaf booklet retained its importance even in the gōkan: booklets were still numbered when they were bound together, and pictures did not continue from the last page of one booklet to the first page of the booklet it was bound with, even though the two pages formed a single spread. As was conventional with premodern Japanese books, leaves rather than pages were numbered and counted: page one was “one *omote*” (obverse); page two was “one *ura*” (reverse); page three was “two *omote*”; page four was “two *ura*”; and so on.

The process by which kusa-zōshi were published evolved over time. In the case of akahon and kurohon/aohon, it seems likely that in some cases at least the same person may have been responsible for preparing both the pictures and the text; many are anonymous, and when a name does appear at the end of the book it is that more often of the artist than of an author. During the heyday of the kibyōshi, it became common for an author to take responsibility for preparing the text and sketches for the pictures; an artist would then finalize the pictures, while an amanuensis would make a clean copy of the

text. Some talented individuals still took on two or even all three of these roles: Santō Kyōden got his start as an artist, using the name Kitao Masanobu, and collaborated with himself for a time even after he embarked upon his career as an author, signing books with both names; Jippensha Ikku would serve as author, artist, and amanuensis. Once the clean copy of the manuscript was ready, it would be passed to a block carver, who would affix each thin sheet of paper face-down to a woodblock and carve away all the white space; a printer would then print the pages; others would fold and collate the leaves, trim the pages, put the covers on, and bind the booklets. Until the gōkan became established as a genre, title slips were affixed to the covers; gōkan were provided with lavish full-color, sometimes even embossed covers. Judging from *Atariyashita jihon-doiya* (It's a Hit! The Local Book Wholesaler, 1802), a kibyōshi that traces the production process of a kibyōshi from start to finish, all these tasks were performed by men, with the exception of the binding of the booklets. Kusa-zōshi authors and artists were also essentially all male; the only exceptions I know of are two authors: Kurotobi Shikibu, who, along with Kyōzan, was one of Santō Kyōden's younger siblings, and Gekkōtei Shōju, who collaborated with her husband, the artist Katsukawa Shunkō II. Until the middle of the nineteenth century, when publishers began issuing kusa-zōshi twice a year, new works went on sale, as a rule, around New Year, though in practice the season could start a good deal earlier. This imbued the books, both as objects and in terms of their content, with a festive, celebratory quality: akahon, whose red covers may originally have implied a power to ward off sickness and other evil, are said to have been given to children as New Year presents; kibyōshi and gōkan in particular often ended with repetitions of the exclamation *medetashi medetashi*, which perhaps might be rendered as "Happy day, happy day!"

Generally speaking, kusa-zōshi always combined pictures and text on the same page, with the text appearing either at the top of the page, in some early akahon, or in the negative space in the pictures. Gōkan occasionally included pictorial spreads with little or no writing on the one hand, or pages completely filled with writing on the other. The main texts in all forms of kusa-zōshi would usually be printed almost exclusively in hiragana, so that the writing was legible even to the minimally educated; titles and the prefaces that appeared in kibyōshi and gōkan were heavy on kanji, but they were usually glossed with hiragana readings. Right from the start, then, kusa-zōshi were aimed at a large and diverse audience. Though early kusa-zōshi are sometimes described as children's books, they contain elements likely to appeal as much to adults as to children, or more to adults than children –

notably material from recent theatrical productions; often the text in these early works is so fragmentary that it seems intentionally designed to be expanded upon, perhaps by adults looking at the books with children. By the same token, the authors of *kibyōshi* and *gōkan* often explicitly identified their target audience as “women and children” in prefaces and elsewhere, though in reality these works were read by men as well as women, adults as well as children. It has been suggested that the tendency to depict *kusa-zōshi* as mere playthings for women and children grew especially pronounced beginning in 1790, as authors reacted to governmental scrutiny during the Kansei Reforms.² That said, women and children probably did form an especially important part of the audience for *kusa-zōshi* throughout much of its history; this is evident in the case of *gōkan*, for instance, from an abundance of depictions of women and children as readers and collectors in fiction and prints; from the prevalence in *gōkan* of advertisements for products such as women’s cosmetics and cures for bedwetting; and from published accounts of childhood experiences with books in the genre. Meiji-born artist Kaburagi Kiyokata, for example, had fond memories of kneeling with one hand propped on the floor as a child, gazing down at a *gōkan* while his great-aunt, beside him, explained what was happening in each picture (*etoki o shite kikaseteiru*).³

Modern scholars sometimes refer to *kusa-zōshi* as a subset of *kinsei shōsetsu* (early modern *shōsetsu*). This makes sense so long as one interprets “*shōsetsu*” in a sufficiently vague manner as meaning something like “fiction.” The aficionado of popular fiction Kimura Mokurō used the word in more or less this way when he grouped both *kusa-zōshi* and *yomihon* together as *haishi shōsetsu* (unofficial-history fictions) in his historical and theoretical treatise *Kokuji shōsetsu tsū* (A Connoisseur of Fiction in the Native Script, 1849), for instance. One needs to be very careful, however, not to fall into the trap of thinking of *kusa-zōshi* as “*shōsetsu*” in the sense in which the word has most often been used in modern times, as a counterpart of “novel” – or, in the form of *tanpen shōsetsu*, of “short story.” This is crucial because *kusa-zōshi* were not *illustrated* texts; on the contrary, throughout the entire history of the category, the writing was always secondary to the pictures. Indeed, this might even be regarded as the defining feature of *kusa-zōshi*. The relationship between the writing and the pictures was nowhere clearer than in the term with which authors referred to the text on a given page: they

² Itasaka Noriko, “Kusazōshi no dokusha: hyōshō toshite no dokusho suru josei,” *Kokugo to kokubungaku* 83, no. 5 (2006): 2–3.

³ Kaburagi Kiyokata, “Kusazōshi,” in *Meiji no Tōkyō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1989), 41–4.

called it *etoki*, “the explanation of the picture.” Kaburagi explicitly states that “Looking at the pictures was always the main thing in kusa-zōshi; the writing was just there to explain the pictures (*etoki ni suginai*).” The writer and journalist Nozaki Sabun – a one-time disciple of Meiji period author Kanagaki Robun, whose works included gōkan – said he had been told that since authors planned the pictures in kusa-zōshi first, the pictures dictated the length of the text. Indeed, he suggested that the rather bizarre phrase *jiiri shōsetsu* (shōsetsu with writing inserted) accurately captured the nature of the form.⁴ A more palatable alternative, suggested by the pathbreaking scholar of prints and kusa-zōshi Suzuki Jūzō, is *etoki shōsetsu* (picture-explaining shōsetsu). It is telling that while the title *Mazu yonde Mikuni Kojorō* contains the verb *yomu* in the form *yondemi* (give it a read), the “akahon fan” who participates in the conversation that opens the book says, “I buy them all, every year – there isn’t one I haven’t *seen*.” The verb here is *miru* (to look at).

Unsurprisingly, the style of the pictures in kusa-zōshi evolved considerably over the nearly two-century-long history of the category, becoming both more sophisticated in their design and more technically accomplished as instances of woodblock printing. Akahon, of which only about fifty complete or nearly complete works survive, had minimal text and featured pictures by artists such as Okumura Masanobu, Kondō Kiyoharu, Nishimura Shigenaga, and Hanegawa Chinchō; kurohon and aohon had more text but were still dominated by their pictures, which were now largely provided by Torii-school artists including Torii Kiyomasu, Torii Kiyoshige, Torii Kiyomitsu, and Torii Kiyotsune, along with other artists such as Tomikawa Ginsetsu and Yamamoto Yoshinobu. Pictures in these early forms of kusa-zōshi are characterized by the relative thickness of their lines and a fondness for curves most evident in the dividing lines used to separate different scenes in a single spread, which resemble cartoon clouds, and in the roundness of characters’ bodies, most apparent in their bulging limbs. Figure 2 is a typical example from the kurohon *Fūryū ittsumi otoko* (A Stylish Pair of Men, 1758). Kibyōshi feature pictures by members of the Kitao school, founded by Kitao Shigemasa, and the Katsukawa school, as well as by artists such as Kitagawa Utamaro; gōkan were effectively dominated by the Utagawa school, above all by Utagawa Toyokuni and Utagawa Kunisada. The amount of text increased dramatically in the kibyōshi and then again in the gōkan, making it necessary to have more blank space in the compositions, which

⁴ Nozaki Sabun, “Kusazōshi to Meiji shoki no shinbun shōsetsu,” *Waseda bungaku* 261 (October 1927): 147–8, 145.

consequently became less busy as a rule; characters' bodies and faces also grew leaner, recalling the prints of beauties (*bijinga*) that were being created by the same artists. Landscapes, too, began to overlap with those in landscape prints. The shift from the Torii school artists, closely associated with the theater, to later artists active in the production of *ukiyo-e* prints led to a substantial change in the pictorial character of kusa-zōshi, as a comparison of figures 1 and 2 indicates.

One further characteristic of kusa-zōshi's pictures beginning with later kurohon/aohon is connected intimately with their content: the use of actors' likenesses (*yakusha nigaoe*). Akahon often represented familiar story types already in circulation during the medieval period such as "the sparrow who had its tongue cut out" (*shita-kiri suzume*), but they also incorporated scenes from the theater. Digests of plays and works otherwise inspired by the theater – above all by the basic plots and character sets known as *sekai* (worlds), which provided the framework for kabuki productions – continued to appear during the heydays of the kurohon/aohon, the kibyōshi, and the gōkan, sometimes with characters depicted using actor likenesses. The use of likenesses became particularly common in gōkan after Ryūtei Tanehiko published the first installments of *Shōhonjitate* (Taking the Prompt-Book as My Model, 1815–24).

The content of kusa-zōshi shifted and expanded over the course of its history. By the age of the kurohon/aohon, the familiar tales that formed the core of the akahon were supplanted to a large extent by stories drawn not only from kabuki and jōruri, but also from published fiction in other genres, such as the books conventionally known as *kana-zōshi* (kana books) and so-called early yomihon, as well as legends, tales of battles, and the life stories of famous figures. The often fantastic, dynamic plots gave way in turn to an entirely new type of fiction with the 1775 publication of *Kinkin sensei eiga no yume*, mentioned earlier as the first kibyōshi. Unlike kurohon/aohon, which had targeted both children and adults, kibyōshi appealed more to adults; inspired by a genre known as *sharebon* (books of wit and fashion), they exhibited a marked interest in everyday life and customs in Edo, which they explored with a witty, often satirical touch. Figures such as Koikawa Harumachi (an artist as well as an author), Hōseidō Kisanji, Tōrai Sanna, Shiba Zenkō, and Santō Kyōden continued to publish increasingly bold works, even – taking advantage of the fact that at the time kusa-zōshi were uncensored – some that poked fun at figures in the government and their policies. Matsudaira Sadanobu, senior councilor to the shogun, responded by inaugurating the Kansei Reforms, demanding, among other things, that kusa-



Figure 2. A spread from *Fūryū ittsumi otoko* (1758), with pictures in the Torii style. Typical is the abundance of curves, including those that divide the scenes. Tōyō Bunko.

zōshi must bear the names of their authors, artists, and publishers; that they refrain from depicting current events; and that the blocks be submitted to the censors in advance for approval. Beginning in 1789, Kisanji, Harumachi, and others were reprimanded; in 1790, Kyōden was fined, and in 1791, having authored three sharebon that were published without being submitted for approval, he was put in shackles under house arrest for fifty days. The chilling effect of all this turned the tide of kibyōshi, stripping it as a genre of its wit and satirical thrust, setting the stage for the rise of the revenge plot (*katakiuchi-mono*), notably in a number of works by Nansenshō Somahito. One such book, *Katakiuchi kōkōguruma* (Revenge: The Wheel of Filial Piety, 1804) was the first to be published as a “combined booklet.” Within a decade or so the multibooklet form became firmly established as a distinct genre, acquiring full-color covers rather than title slips and the opening illustrations known as *kuchie*, which depicted the main characters, attractively posed.

While at first gōkan plots remained focused on revenge, the range of content soon began to expand. Tanehiko sparked a boom in works related to kabuki with *Shōhonjitate*; Jippensha Ikku created a work called *Kane no waraji* (Straw Sandals of Gold, 1813–35) that followed the travels of two aficionados of “crazy poetry” (*kyōka*), first around Edo, then on to other scenic and sacred spots around Japan; Kyokutei Bakin adapted the Chinese vernacular classic *Shuihuzhuan* (The Water Margin) in a work called *Keisei suikoden* (A Courtesan’s Water Margin, 1825–35); and Tanehiko produced what quickly came to be regarded as the greatest gōkan ever created, *Nise Murasaki Inaka Genji* (Fake Murasaki’s Bumpkin Genji, 1829–42), which was based on the classic *Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Genji). After a brief lull in gōkan production prompted by the Tempō Reforms of 1841–3, which saw the confiscation and destruction of the blocks for *Nise Murasaki inaka Genji*, the genre came to be dominated by tremendously long works serialized over decades. The most famous of these is *Shiranui monogatari* (The Tale of Shiranui), which consists of no fewer than ninety chapters published between 1849 and 1885. In the late 1870s and the 1880s, publishers experimented with gōkan printed using movable type, but after initial successes the genre faded, and the history of kusa-zōshi dissolved into the history of their modern reception.

The birth of kokkeibon (comic novellas)

MASAHIRO TANAHASHI

The genre known as *kokkeibon* (comic novellas) emerged in the aftermath of the Kansei Reforms (1787–93). Before the reforms, the field of popular fiction had been dominated by two genres: the dialogue-based *sharebon* (witty booklets) and the illustrated *kibyōshi* (yellow booklets). Where the former focused on mocking the pretentious manners of male customers of the Edo pleasure quarters, the latter had gradually come to offer satirical depictions of contemporary events, including those that showed the shogunate in a negative light, and thus inevitably attracted the attention of the authorities. As a result, both genres were suppressed in light of the censorship policies of the reform administration: the *kibyōshi* abandoned political satire to embrace moral didacticism, while the *sharebon* became more melodramatic, focusing on the minute details of romance and human feeling (*ninjō*) in the interactions between courtesans and customers.

However, just as existing forms of humor seemed to be disappearing from popular fiction, other forms of laughter saw a gradual revival. In 1787, Manzōtei (Morishima Chūryō, 1756–1810) had released an unusual *sharebon* titled *Inaka shibai* (Country Theater) depicting a rural theatrical performance by a troupe of itinerant actors in Echigo province. The work found humor in the provincial manners of both actors and audience, and differed significantly from the sharp wit and social satire of the 1780s. In 1802, this work was reprinted in the larger *chūhon* (middle-sized) format, suggesting a new demand for humor in the vacuum left by the reforms.

At the same time, the comic oral arts saw booming popularity, further suggesting a demand for laughter among Edo's commoner population. This boom was initially sparked by Utei Enba's (1743–1822) "storytelling meetings" (*hanashi no kai*), in which amateur comic storytellers would gather to exchange jokes (*otoshi-banashi*, literally stories with a comic ending, now known as *rakugo* or oral comic storytelling). The first of these meetings was held in 1786, attended by such figures as Ōta Nanpo (1749–1823) and Manzōtei,

while the second, held in 1788, enlisted the help of the kabuki star Ichikawa Danjūrō V (1741–1806) to enhance the humorous tone of the gathering. The Kansei Reforms had imposed a strict regime of frugality and public moral order on Tokugawa society, but the economy continued to deteriorate, and it is no wonder that the populace craved humor all the more.

It was around the close of this period of reform that Jippensha Ikku (1765–1831), freshly arrived from Osaka in 1793, appeared on the Edo literary scene. While living in Osaka, Ikku had written a number of jōruri plays under the pseudonym Chikamatsu Yoshichi, and once in Edo he made his debut in popular fiction as a writer of kibyōshi under the patronage of the powerful publisher Tsutaya Jūzaburō (1750–97). Eventually Ikku tried his hand at composing *hanashibon* (literally “story books” or joke books) and met with great success as a prolific writer of popular fiction.

In 1801, Ikku left Edo for a tour of Kazusa province, sponsored by the publisher Murataya Jirobē. Murataya had organized an *otoshi-banashi* club in which Ikku had participated, collecting the comic tales presented at these meetings for publication in the form of *hanashibon* and *kibyōshi*. Perceiving the growing popularity of *kyōka* (comic *waka*), Murata asked Ikku to compose a collection of *kyōka* based on his travel experiences, and the result was *Tabi suzuri* (Portable Ink Stone, 1801), a collection of poems that Ikku had composed at poetry gatherings at various spots along the way. Murataya had in fact planned a follow-up collection of travel *kyōka* based on the famous sites of the Tōkaidō highway, a route that Ikku knew well. This work, tentatively titled *Mago no utabukuro* (A Horse-Driver’s Bag of Poems), had been advertised in earlier Murataya publications as early as 1800, but Ikku and Murataya seem to have come collectively to the conclusion that another anthology containing only poetry would no longer be novel enough to sell. Instead, they set about the more creative task of producing a *kyōka kikōshū*: a travel diary interspersed with comic poetry, rife with the kind of humorous content expected by *otoshi-banashi* audiences.

The viability of this plan may be attributed to the growing popularity of inter-regional travel as a form of popular leisure, a development underwritten by the growth of inter-regional trade and the consequent development of highways and roadside lodgings. *Tōkaidō meisho zue* (Illustrated Sights of the Tōkaidō, 1797) and *Kisoji meisho zue* (Illustrated Sights of the Kiso Road, 1805), both written by Akizato Ritō (?–1830), were among the first of the immensely popular genre now known as *chishi*, geographical guidebooks to famous sights throughout the country. It soon became commonplace for such guidebooks to weave *kyōka* verses into descriptions of local

sights, a factor that no doubt contributed to Murataya's initial proposal of a travel diary interspersed with *kyōka*.

The result of the collaboration between Ikku and Murataya was *Ukiyo dōchū hizakurige* (Traveling the Floating World by Shank's Mare, 1802), the work that inaugurated the genre of kokkeibon. In a fashion that recalls the use of a protagonist and companion in *kyōgen* comic drama, this work depicts the mishaps and humorous encounters of a pair of Edo locals as they travel from Edo to Kyoto on the Tōkaidō; it consists of otoshi-banashi-style narration and dialogue, intermingled with *kyōka* poetry about sights along the way. The dialogue between the protagonists that carries the story resembles the narrative technique found in sharebon, a genre in which Ikku had written extensively. But while the sharebon provided the narrative form, Ikku drew his humorous content from a wide variety of sources, including *kyōgen* plays, classic comic stories, humorous tales gleaned from Murataya's otoshi-banashi gatherings, and Ikku's own experience as a practitioner of sketch theater (*chaban*).

The preface to this work describes the journey of the two protagonists, Yajirobē (Yaji) and Kitahachi (Kita), as follows:

This work exposes the conditions of the populace, displayed for all to see. . . . We will focus on the more amusing aspects of the journey, like the fashions of inn girls and waitresses . . . The silly verses found throughout consist purely of nonsense and punning.

This preface serves to emphasize the empirical conceit of the text while imploring the reader to tolerate the more vulgar sides of its adult humor. In both characteristics, Ikku's work symbolized the birth of the kokkeibon as a new genre.

The first volume of *Hizakurige* depicts only the first leg of the journey, from Edo to Hakone, and it is unclear whether Ikku and his publisher anticipated following Yaji and Kita all the way to Kyoto. However, the work was a hit and continued to be serialized, along the way adopting the name by which it is now known: *Tōkaidōchū hizakurige* (Shank's Mare on Tōkaidō, 8 vols., 1802–9). After the journey's completion, Ikku followed up with a prequel depicting the events that prompted Yaji and Kita's trip ("Hottan," The Departure, 1814), a series of best-selling sequels under the title *Zoku hizakurige* (Shank's Mare Continued, 12 vols., 1810–22) depicting journeys to Konpira, Miyajima, the Kiso road, and the Zenkōji Temple (modern Nagano), and an unfinished second sequel called *Zoku zoku hizakurige* (Shank's Mare Continued Part 2, 2 vols., 1831) depicting a trip to Nikkō.

As noted above, many of the episodes in these works were based on Ikku's own travels. In one episode, while traveling by boat, Yajirobē mistakes a bamboo cylinder, the bottom of which was been cut out, for a bamboo urine bottle – the equivalent of a chamber pot – and proceeds to relieve himself. Predictably, the boat ends up being spattered with the man's urine. This scene appears in the fourth volume of *Tōkaidōchū hizakurige*:

BOATMAN : Now who in the world's gone and taken a piss? The spirit
of the boat'll be defiled! Quick – go on – wipe it up!
KITAHACHI : Ah, what an imbecile!
BOATMAN : Hey! Watch it! There's still some leaking from the
cylinder! Throw that damn thing away!
YAJIROBĒ : No, no. Here – it's for *you*. It'll make a fine fire-starter
[bamboo blowpipe].
KITAHACHI : Ah, who needs a fire-starter full of your piss? Hurry up
and wipe it up! Quit dallying, man.

This scene was adapted from an episode in *Tabi suzuri* wherein Ikku, desiring something like a gourd in which to pour his alcohol while traveling through Kyoto, had bought a bamboo cylinder. Only after he had been drinking out of this cylinder with his companions for some time did he realize this was in fact an old urine bottle, of the sort used by the elite during festivals. This same tale of mishap is again reproduced in the third volume of *Zoku hizakurige*. Similarly, in an episode in the fifth volume of *Zoku hizakurige*, Yajirobē, posing as Ikku himself in order to sneak into a fancy gathering of famous *kyōka* poets, is exposed by his ignorance in proper etiquette for eating the dishes served to him; this is based on Ikku's own experience at a banquet hosted by the Nagoya-based author Kinome Dengaku (Kamiya Gōho, fl. 1789–1830) and his fellow *kyōka* writers, all of whom appear in Ikku's text.

As *Hizakurige* was growing in popularity, Ikku released a flurry of *kokkei-bon*-style travel journals based on his trips around Edo's countryside, including *Enoshima miyage* (Souvenirs from Enoshima, 1809), *Roku Amida mōde* (Pilgrimage to the Six Amidas, 1812), and *Horinouchi mōde* (Pilgrimage to Horinouchi, 1816), as well as trips farther afield to Nagoya (*Ikku no kikō*, Ikku's Journey, 1815) and Ōshū (*Ōshū dōchū no ki*, Travels in Ōshū, 1817). At the same time, Ikku managed to adapt his travel writing to other genres, including epistolary writing primers (*ōraimono*) with *Ise sangū ōrai* (Correspondence for a Visit to Ise Shrine, 1822) and longer illustrated fiction (*gōkan*) with *Kane no waraji* (Metal Sandals, 25 vols., 1813–35).

The success of Ikku's *Hizakurige* series inspired other writers to produce similar works such as Shin Rotei's (aka Kantōbē and Akasukabē, ?–1816) *Naruko uri* (Noisemaker Melons, 1806), *Narita dōchū kogane no koma* (The Golden Pony's Journey to Narita, 1812), and *Ima Saigyō azuma no tabiji* (Saigyō's Present-Day Tour of the East, 1813), and Ryūtei Rijō's (?–1841) *Ōyama dōchū kurige no shiruma* (Hitching a Ride on a Mare through Ōyama, 1814). Near the end of the Edo period, Kanagaki Robun (1829–94) produced a number of similarly imitative works.

The other major kokkeibon author was Shikitei Sanba (1776–1822). Sanba's first work in the genre was a collaboration with Santō Kyōden (1761–1816) on a kokkeibon titled *Kyōgen kigo* (Wild Words and Ornate Phrases, 1804), consisting of a humorous collection of made-up advertising copy. Kyōden had used similar techniques of humorous juxtaposition (*mitate*) in a series of illustrated kokkeibon including *E-kyōdai* (Picture Brothers, 1794), *Kimyōzui* (Bizarre Encyclopedia, 1803), *Harasuji ōmuseki* (Hilarious Stage Notes, 1810), *Zashikigei Chūshingura* (Chūshingura Parlor Arts, 1810), and *Jūroku rikan ryaku engi* (Abbreviated Origins of the Sixteen Arhats of Profit, 1817). Ikku, likewise, produced several *mitate*-based works like *Kojitsuke anmon* (A Draft of Nonsense Etymologies, 1804), *Moji no chie* (The Wisdom of Words, 1806), and *Otsuriki* (Outrageous, 1810).

Kanwatei Onitake (1760–1818), a pupil of Kyōden's and friend of Ikku's, was inspired by the latter to write a kokkeibon titled *Kyūkanchō* (The Myna Bird), released in three volumes between 1805 and 1809; the second half of the second volume was written by Ikku himself. *Kyūkanchō* was an attempt to capture in writing the gestures and mannerisms of the otoshi-banashi performer Sanshōtei Karaku (1777–1833) and the oral mimicry (*ukiyo monomane*) of the entertainer Sakuragawa Jinkō. These efforts seem to have inspired Shikitei Sanba to publish a kokkeibon in 1806 titled *Namaei katagi* (Characters of Drunkards), consisting of twelve caricatured portraits of different types of drunks, and written as a manuscript for Jinkō. Coincidentally, in the same year, Jippensha Ikku produced a similar work in *Sokkyō atohiki jōgo* (Improvisations of a Wino); Sanba, himself a notorious imbibor, would go on to release a number of other works dealing with the various quirks exhibited by drunks, including *Nanakuse jōgo* (Seven Habits of Drunks, 1810) and *Ippai kigen* (Pleasantly Tipsy, 1813).

In 1809, after several years of relative creative inactivity, Sanba wrote a kokkeibon for his younger brother, the publisher Ishiwatari Heihachi, with the title *Odoke-banashi ukiyo-buro* (Humorous Tales of the Floating World Bathhouse, aka *Ukiyo-buro*; 4 vols., 1809–13). According to Sanba's preface, this

work was inspired by a performance given by Sanshōtei Karaku at the home of the *ukiyo-e* painter Utagawa Toyokuni (1769–1825); Sanba, inspired by the subtlety of Karaku’s storytelling, came up with the concept in consultation with an unnamed publisher (perhaps his brother Heihachi) who was also in attendance. Set in the public bathhouse (one of the centers of commoner social life), *Ukiyo-buro* depicts the various unique mannerisms and speech styles found among Edo’s commoner districts. Sanba’s technique of using dialogue to depict the unique characteristics of a wide range of social types – status groups, occupations, genders – had been perfected in earlier works like *Tatsumi fugen* (Women’s Words from the Southeast, 1798), in which he had succeeded in reviving the sharebon by shifting its focus from the licensed quarters to the lower-class commoner communities of the Fukagawa district. The topos of the bath, while on the one hand inspired by Karaku’s performance, also drew on earlier works like Itō Tanboku’s (1680–1758) *Sentō shinwa* (New Tales from the Bathhouse, 1754) and Santō Kyōden’s *Kengū irikomi sentō shinwa* (New Tales of the Wise and Dull from the Bathhouse, 1802).

In the first volume of *Ukiyo-buro*, we are presented with a chronological progression of scenes from the male bath (unisex baths had been nominally banned in the aftermath of the Kansei Reforms) as seen in the morning, noon, and evening, a narrative structure pioneered by Kyōden’s sharebon, *Nishiki no ura* (Behind the Brocade, 1791). The second volume contains a similar progression of scenes from morning to noon but this time in the women’s bath; the third volume depicts the women’s bath at the New Year, and the fourth depicts the men’s bath in autumn. In contrast to the bawdy humor of Ikku’s *Hizakurige* series and Sanba’s earlier “drunk” works, both of which were directed at male readers, *Ukiyo-buro* attempted to address a growing female readership. A pupil of Sanba relays the following words of advice from his master in the afterward of *Kyakusha hyōbanki* (A Review of the Audience, 1811).

Don’t say dirty things just to be funny. Make people laugh without teasing them. Don’t make a fool out of yourself for laughs. Look down on puns and other wordplay.

Sanba generally avoided vulgarity in his humor, and this contributed to his popularity among female readers. The second volume of *Ukiyo-buro* opens with a morning scene in which two twenty-year-old women, Tai and Sami, exchange some words regarding their freshly set hair:

TAI: Oh, I see you’ve already finished making yourself up.

SAMI: Yes. Okushi came first thing this morning. Who did you up?

TAI: A woman named Osuji.

SAMI: It looks absolutely lovely.

TAI: I don't know about that. The girl that came by this morning is not my usual hairdresser. My hair looks different – something's off.

SAMI: When it's not the person you're used to, even if they're quite skilled, things just don't seem right. Turn that way. My, but it *is* beautiful!

This reads like a perfectly ordinary, everyday conversation between two young women. However mundane this dialogue might appear, access to reading material was one of the very few pleasures available to women at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and *Ukiyo-buro* found an enthusiastic audience.

During this time, Shikitei Sanba not only was involved with Sanshōtei Karaku, but also, through his contact with Utei Enba, was able to socialize with other comic performers like Asanebō Muraku (1777–1831) and kabuki actors like Ichikawa Danjūrō V. The frontispiece to the second volume of *Ukiyo-doko* (The Floating World Barber, 2 vols., 1813–14), a spiritual sequel to *Ukiyo-buro* set in a barbershop, depicts the interior of the shop, the walls of which are posted with flyers promoting the oral performers Sanshōtei Karaku, Hayashiya Shōzō (1781–1842), Asanebō Muraku, and San'yūtei Enshō (1768–1838) – implying that their oral arts have been woven into Sanba's text. Incidentally, the topos of the barbershop would be carried on by Sanba's successors: Ryūtei Rijō would release a third volume to *Ukiyo-doko* in 1823, while Tamenaga Shunsui (1790–1844) would release *Aoyagi shinwa tamakushige* (Willow Locks: New Tales of the Comb Chest), set in a women's hairdresser, in 1824.

Until this point, Sanba had concentrated most of his literary energies on depicting the customs and mannerisms found throughout his beloved hometown of Edo, but he later produced numerous kokkeibon containing material gleaned from theatrical performances. Among these works are *Kyakusha hyōbanki*, *Kyōgen inaka ayatsuri* (Rural Puppet Theater, 1811), *Chūshingura henchikiron* (An Eccentric Interpretation of Chūshingura, 1812), *Inaka shibai chūshingura* (Chūshingura on the Country Stage, 2 vols., 1813–14), *Shirōto kyōgen monkirigata* (Forms for Amateur Theater, 1814), and *Daisen sekai gakuya sagashi* (Behind the Scenes on the Cosmic Stage, 1817).

At the same time, Sanba's interest was shifting toward the “character sketches” (*katagi-mono*) of the eighteenth-century Kyoto publisher

Hachimonjiya. In *Shijūhachi kuse* (Forty-Eight Quirks, 4 vols., 1812–18), Sanba combined this inspiration with techniques of oral caricature (*ukiyo monomane*) to produce neatly stylized character sketches, expressed as the “quirks” (*kuse*) of various occupations and status groups. Similarly, Jippensha Ikku’s *Yo no naka hinpukuron* (On Rags and Riches in the World, 1822), about people whose fates are manipulated by the gods of poverty and riches, likewise owes its inspiration to Hachiminjoya’s works. After the publication of *Shijūhachi kuse*, Sanba produced a number of similar works, including *Hayagawari mune no karakuri* (A Peep Show: Quick-Changes of Heart, 1826), *Ningen banji uso bakkari* (In the World of Men, Nothing but Lies, 1827), *Hitogokoro nozoki karakuri* (A Peep Show into the Heart of Man, 1828), and *Kokon hyaku baka* (One Hundred Fools Old and New, 1828), but amid this increasing attention to the minutiae of daily behavior, Sanba’s works gradually fell into repetitive patterns and declined in literary value.

Though the genre of *kokkeibon* was dominated by Ikku and Sanba, a few other authors are worthy of note. One was Hana Sanjin (aka Tōri Sanjin, 1791–1858), a pupil of Santō Kyōden. A *bushi* who served the shogunate as an assistant to the Edo city magistrates, he wrote popular fiction in a wide variety of genres, from *gōkan* to *ninjōbon* (romantic novellas), while publishing a number of writing primers on a par with Ikku. Among his more well-known works are *Ekiro no suzu* (Station Bell, 1811) and *Baka tawake awase-kagami* (Reverse Mirror for Fools and Goofs, 1815), but both follow the mold set by Ikku and Sanba.

Ryūtei Rijō, like Sanjin, was an author of samurai stock, and was brother-in-law to Sanba’s disciple Tamenaga Shunsui. Through the latter connection, Rijō was in a position to carry on Sanba’s work, writing the third volume of *Ukiyo-doko*, as well as a sequel to *Ningen banji uso bakkari* and a fourth volume for *Kyūkanchō*. After the publication of *Ōyama dōchū kurige no shiriuma*, Rijō’s *Hanagoyomi hasshōjin* (Eight Footloose Fools: A Flower Almanac, 5 vols., 1820–49), packed with material gleaned from sketch theater (*chaban*), won great acclaim, so much so that the *rakugo* routine known as *Hanami no adauchi* (Flower-Viewing Vendetta) is based on a *chaban* scenario found in the first volume of this work. With *Wagōjin* (Best Buddies, 3 vols., 1823–42, with a fourth volume released by Tamenaga Shunsui in 1844), Rijō moved away from *chaban* material to depict practical jokes and general mayhem in an everyday context, but the comedy here is more over-the-top and contrived than that of his earlier works.

Following in Rijō’s footsteps came Baitei Kinga (1821–93) with his *Shichi henjin* (Seven Oddballs, 5 vols., 1857–63), a work with a very low and

scatological sense of humor. Such was the direction kokkeibon followed as the Edo period came to a close: inferior in quality to Sanba's better works and more vulgar than the ribald humor of Ikku's fiction, this new comedic strain was sadly characteristic of the deteriorating state of popular literature.

Kanagaki Robun carried on the fading tradition left behind by *Hizakurige* with his *Narita dōchū hizakurige* (Shank's Mare: Journey to Narita, 1856), *Ōyama dōchū hizakurige* (Shank's Mare: Journey to Ōyama, 1857), and *Kokkei Fuji mōde* (A Humorous Pilgrimage to Fuji, 1860–1). Robun associated with such kabuki figures as Kawatake Mokuami (1816–93) and entertainers like San'yūtei Enchō (1839–1900), and would later rise to become the star of popular literature in the early Meiji period. His *Seiyō dōchū hizakurige* (Shank's Mare: Journey to the West, 1870–6), in which two grandchildren of Yajirobē and Kitahachi embark on a journey to see the London Exhibition, marks the historical end of kokkeibon, a fitting final act for the genre of popular literature first set in motion by *Tōkaidōchū hizakurige*.

(Translated by Kristopher L. Reeves)

Ninjōbon and romances for women

YASUSHI INOUE

Marriage conventions during the Edo period did not presuppose romantic love between two willing individuals. Rather, the wife was seen foremost as a *bride* – a preserver of the family (*ie*), a bearer of children, and a household accountant deftly managing family finances from behind the scenes. Marriage was an arrangement between two families; the sentiments of those to be married were scarcely considered. As evinced by the term *koi nyōbō*, “a wife married out of love,” explicit mention of the word “love” (*koi*) implies that romantic marriages were the exception. The sort of romantic relationships depicted in literature from the Edo period – moving tales of love and life sacrificed to familial pressure or social constraints, of secret liaisons and lovers’ suicides in adamant defiance of these constraints, or of fictional romantic spaces set within the pleasure quarters – were largely dramatized performances of love.

Regarding the last variety of romantic tales, namely, those staged within the pleasure quarters, it was Ihara Saikaku (1642–93), in the Kansai region, who was the first to create this world in his writings. Later, from the mid eighteenth until well into the nineteenth century, the Edo region, having achieved its own cultural flowering, produced a genre of literature known as *sharebon*. The term *share* refers to the desirable, refreshingly frank and unpretentious dress, hairstyles, diction, and bearing of those frequenting the pleasure quarters. Sharebon, therefore, is a genre of literature in which the outward appearances of these figures are minutely described in order to serve as a guide to dramatic performances of love. At the same time, *share* also carries humorous connotations. Descriptions of male protagonists whose efforts at romantic performance go haplessly awry, meant to instruct by means of admonition, also serve to regale their readers with laughter. Not only did these sharebon gather popularity as advertisements for the pleasure quarters, the appearance of authors from the samurai class alarmed the Edo *bakufu*, whose policies were at least ostensibly based on pristine military rule.

Sharebon were officially banned during the Kansei and Kyōwa eras (1789–1804), and writers were forced to substitute tales of the pleasure quarters with other less provocative material. This transformation ushered in a new genre of literature known as *ninjōbon*, or romantic novellas.

The first genre in the long history of Japanese literature to be published commercially for a readership consisting primarily of commoner women, *ninjōbon* became immensely popular. Tamenaga Shunsui (1790–1844) stands at the center of this genre with such representative works as *Shunshoku umegoyomi* (Plum Calendar of Spring Colors, 1832–3), *Shunshoku tatsumi no sono* (Spring-Color Southeast Garden, 1833–5), and *Harutsuge dori* (Spring-Harrowing Bird, 1836–7). The plum in *Plum Calendar of Spring Colors* signifies the arrival of spring, a sign of blissful love, while “plum calendar” is synonymous with days spent in the company of one’s lover. Plot-wise, the *ninjōbon* inevitably end on a happy note. Anticipation grows as we become anxious to see the protagonist hold hands with and, eventually, to wholeheartedly embrace his lover. Readers are inspired not only to sympathize with the heroine but to become wholly enraptured with the lover. Tears of pity for the heroine’s plight are assuaged by the final reassurance that, so long as one leads an upright life, happiness is sure to be close at hand.

MASTER : “Why are you crying, Yonehachi?”

YONEHACHI : “It’s just . . .”

MASTER : “It’s just what?”

YONEHACHI : “Why, oh why have you fallen into such a pitiable state?” she said as she pulled herself close by his side, weeping all the while.

MASTER : Gazing at her, the man took her hand in his; “Please forgive me.”

YONEHACHI : “Why are *you* apologizing?”

MASTER : “Because I’ve made you feel such sadness on account of me.”

YONEHACHI : “Never mind that. Do you harbour such deep concern for me?”

MASTER : “Poor girl,” he said as he embraced her.

YONEHACHI : Yonehachi, with an air of innocence, placed herself before the sick man’s knees and, looking up at his face, responded; “I’m so happy to . . . Why don’t you —”

MASTER : “Why don’t I *what*?”

YONEHACHI: "I want to stay here with you forever."

MASTER : Hearing this, the man sat staring at her intently, suddenly enamoured by her beauty. Pressing her tightly to his body, he exclaimed; "Ah, but I'm starting to feel excited!"

YONEHACHI : "Oh! That tickles!"

MASTER : "Come now. Forgive me for *that*, too." With that the two fell to the floor.

At just this moment a Kanzeon bell tolled the hour of the snake [around 10:00 p.m., signaling the end of the courtesans' working day].

This is the first love scene in *Shunshoku umegoyomi*. The character here referred to simply as the "Master" is Tanjirō, a man forced to conceal himself in a dilapidated old house. A gallant of eighteen or nineteen, burdened with a financial debt he does not recall incurring, this young man lives his life like a fugitive. The adopted son of the owner of a certain pleasure house located within the Yoshihara pleasure quarters, he was once in persistent pursuit of Yonehachi, a courtesan working at that very house. In the above scene, Yonehachi bemoans the horrible anxiety that Tanjirō's disappearance has put her through, as well as the trouble she went to in finding him. Once reunited with him, she not only exerts herself to look after him, but also procures ample sums of cash to overcome his immediate hardships. Having bashfully accepted her donation, Tanjirō asks whether she might not tarry a little longer. She begins to comb his hair, which has become dishevelled on account of his illness. Unexpectedly, she begins shedding tears at their tragic plight.

In the real world, practical interests generally prevail over matters of love. These romantic stories, while pointing at such dangers, satisfy the reader by describing a world in which love is not subjugated to such practical interests. The misfortunes that befall Tanjirō and Yonehachi prepare the reader for a more striking representation of their love. Their conversation, for all its passionate depth, never devolves into the explicitly sexual. The woman kneels in front of the man, only hinting at what she hopes will transpire. Hesitating to voice her sexual desires outright, she cuts herself short with a suggestive "I'm so happy to . . . Why don't you –". Unable to perceive her invitation, the man naively echoes her words with "Why don't I *what*?" bringing an unexpected degree of humour to the scene. At this moment, the woman once more hints at her desire with "I want to stay here with you forever," whereupon their eyes meet – her intentions at last understood. No

doubt the woman had much to say upon reuniting with Tanjirō, and yet the fullness of her heartrending love for him is conveyed ultimately in one emotionally condensed, unspoken plea. Their relationship, in which a single meeting of the eyes reveals such deep emotion, is the pinnacle of sophistication (*iki*) and eroticism. Avoiding explicitly sexual statements was the rule with ninjōbon. Though necessary in order to avoid censorship, these gestures that appealed to the reader's imagination accounted for the real charm of such tales.

If one wished to read the short episodes of these stories, the primary option was to rent a copy of the book. The book lending services of the time were different from modern libraries in that the books were carried upon the shoulders of ambulatory lenders who brought them directly to the customers. Book lenders not only acted as physical distributors of books, but, closely following the new tastes of their readers, also functioned as gatherers of information that worked its way back to the author. Publishing a long series of shorter stories brought in more profit than one lengthy volume. As a result, it became the fashion of writers in this serialized genre to conclude each story with an enticing mystery.

Women began entering the workforce, albeit in auxiliary roles, around the nineteenth century, implying a higher rate of literacy. Furthermore, as may be gathered from the growing popularity of kabuki, a new tendency prevailed whereby city women, endowed now with a surplus of both time and money, participated more actively in the various modes of public entertainment in these cities. Tamenaga Shunsui's bookshop, which included a book lending service, was established relatively late, but having perceived this wider female readership, Shunsui was able to outdo his competitors, thereby heralding a new literary genre.

Shunsui was different from a modern author. He inherited the professional name "Nansenshō Somahito II," an example of a professional name belonging to certain writers of popular fiction (*gesakusha*) during the Edo period. Such professional names for authors of popular fiction were the equivalent of brand names, the exploitation of which insured quick success. Until his bookshop was destroyed by fire, Shunsui oversaw a number of apprentice authors. The name "Somahito II" came to represent a workshop specializing in the production of ninjōbon. The relationship between Shunsui and his apprentice authors was similar to that between modern-day comic book artists and their assistants. Shunsui had simply to compile the drafts submitted by his assistants. When, near the beginning of the Tenpō era (1830–2), he lost his bookshop to fire and thereby lost a large number of his apprentices,

he had no choice but to begin creating literary works on his own. Such were the circumstances behind the commencement of his *Plum-Calendar* series. Only after he was deprived of his capacities as a publisher did Shunsui assume the role of something close to a modern-day author. The success of this first series may be attributed to his background as a seasoned compiler of popular fiction. His technique of focusing narrative around dialogues that carried the plot briskly along made his stories accessible even to those women whose level of literacy was relatively low.

Reading Shunsui's *ninjōbon*, we gain an understanding of just how different the concept of romance in Edo was in comparison to our own modern one. Consider the next scene in Shunsui's *Plum-Calendar*: after a dizzying outburst of passion making up for a lengthy hiatus, the Master Tanjirō brings up the topic of his fiancée, Ochō, who is still a girl. While Tanjirō was in hiding, running from the debt he had no recollection of incurring, the head clerk of his beloved pleasure house managed to take over the business, and is forcefully pursuing Ochō with less than noble intentions. Tanjirō, upon hearing this news from Yonehachi, lets out a sigh for Ochō, eliciting Yonehachi's jealousy.

TANJIRŌ: "You see, she [Ochō] and I were raised together like that since childhood. Such a pitiful girl . . ." he said in a slightly dejected tone.

YONEHACHI: "Naturally. Childhood companions are especially dear. It's only natural for you to feel this way," she said, visibly irritated.

TANJIRŌ: "Come now. I never said she was *cute*. It's just that, well, she's pitiable."

YONEHACHI: "For that very reason, I'm not saying it's unreasonable," she responded, lifting the corner of her eye in an adorable display of jealousy.

Yonehachi lashes out because Ochō, unlike herself, is in the privileged position of having been granted permission to marry Tanjirō. But that is not the only reason for her ire. For a woman, going beyond the initial courtesies of a relationship meant ascending to a more advanced stage of romance, which, though a source of joy, was simultaneously the cause of much anxiety, as she worried about the possibility of losing her hard-won love. Oblivious to her feelings, Tanjirō fills Yonehachi with anxiety by telling her of his deep sympathy for Ochō. In response to her complaints, Tanjirō neither

apologizes nor offers any resistance. Instead, in a gesture of complete indifference, he bids her to do as she pleases. Yonehachi, upon hearing this, regrets her forwardness.

YONEHACHI : “In that case . . . I was the one at fault. Please forgive me.”

TANJIRŌ : “Whatever you like.”

YONEHACHI : Hearing these words and seeing this man, who had up until now been so very fond of her, thus irritated, Yonehachi began to wonder if he would lose his feeling for her altogether, whereupon she began to weep desperately; “Please. I was at fault – it was me. Please forgive me. I beg you to put away this anger.”

Realizing her feverish attack upon Tanjirō could result in losing the very man she desires, Yonehachi turns suddenly from aggressor to weeping supplicant. It is Tanjirō’s feigning of anger that affects such a transformation.

Tanjirō let out a quick chuckle: “Since you put it that way, I’ll forgive you – but on one condition. It’s surely quite late by now. When you get back to your quarters, you mustn’t worry about me. Entertain your clients as best you can!” Yonehachi was overjoyed at these kind words. The smallest hint of discontent drove them to heartfelt sadness, while even the slightest tender remark made them fall in love all over again – such was their love for each other.

YONEHACHI : “My young patron, saying such kind words only makes it harder for me to leave you. From now on, no matter what happens, I beg you: do not turn your heart from me.”

This gift of words, delivered by Tanjirō at just the right moment, brings a glimmer of hope to Yonehachi’s eye. As one whose business revolves around performances of love, any real romantic attachment to Tanjirō could prove detrimental to Yonehachi’s career. Tanjirō, appreciating her situation, seems to say, “You’ve nothing to worry about on *my* end; it’s *you* who seems to be so worked up.” Tanjirō rightly perceives her act of jealousy for what it is – nothing more than an aggressive petition for proof of his love – for which reason he feigns anger toward her. Romantic performances formed an essential facet of any courtesan’s repertoire, so long as she wished to procure

money from her large male clientele. Shunsui succeeded in having his male characters participate in this same sort of performance, while transporting the setting to locations outside the pleasure quarters.

The attraction of *ninjōbon* lies primarily in the conversations between lovers. Yonehachi's character matures and develops as a result of suffering at the hands of Tanjirō's manipulative words. The dialogic interplay occurs somewhere beneath the surface, somewhere beyond words, in which space characters attempt to subtly plumb the depths of their interlocutor's heart. Moreover, this mutually provocative attitude plays a vital role in the eventual reconciliation and harmony among a bevy of woman eager to win the hand of their Adonis.

This kind of verbal interaction became synonymous with a particular aesthetic sense, complete with ethical connotations, known as *iki* (sophistication, stylishness). Historically, the term *ikisuji* (the path of sophistication) was used in relation to the demimonde or romantic affairs, while the related term *ikigoto* (sophisticated matters) referred generally to romantic encounters. Furthermore, the word *iki* was originally written with a homophonous combination of two Chinese characters meaning vigorous. This in turn came to be associated with the ebullient spirit and unfailingly dignified sense of pride (*ikiji*) that permeated the Edo pleasure quarters, especially the unlicensed Fukagawa district. More specifically, *iki* came to be associated with the dress and behavior of the Fukagawa courtesans, with the various geometric patterns and soberly elegant brown and dark-gray color schemes found on their clothing, and with their sophisticated, stylish appearance and mannerisms.

(Translated by Kristopher L. Reeves)

Development of the late yomihon: Santō Kyōden and Kyokutei Bakin

Y Ō J I Ō T A K A

Among the various materials published and read as entertainment in the latter half of the early modern period, roughly from 1750 to 1850, the genre known as the *yomihon* (reading book) most closely approaches the modern novel. Some eight hundred examples are known to have existed, comprising two broad categories: “early yomihon,” which first came into existence around 1750, after the heyday of the *ukiyo-zōshi* (books of the floating world), and typically consisted of collections of short fiction centered on strange incidents; and “late yomihon,” which appeared in the 1790s and consisted largely of longer historical fiction. Two authors can be singled out as representative of each category insofar as they pioneered the archetypical form of each: Tsuga Teishō and Ueda Akinari for early yomihon; Santō Kyōden and Kyokutei Bakin (aka Takizawa Bakin) for late yomihon. In the pages that follow, I will trace the formation and development of the late yomihon as a fictional form, focusing on Kyōden’s and Bakin’s innovations and the relationship between the two authors.

First, it will be helpful to survey the emergence of the late yomihon, drawing on Yokoyama Kuniharu’s now classic study *Yomihon no kenkyū: Edo to Kamigata* (Studies of the Yomihon: Edo and Kamigata, 1974). According to Yokoyama, late yomihon can be classified into four types: *haishi-mono* (unofficial histories), *chūhon-mono* (middle-sized books), *ehon-mono* (illustrated books), and *zue-mono* (pictorial books). *Haishi-mono* exhibited an awareness of the Chinese fictional genre whose name was written with the same graphs (*baishi*); they were based in history but had a strong fictional thrust, and were published in the *hanshi-bon* format (approximately 24 by 17 cm). *Chūhon-mono* were written in a somewhat simpler style than *haishi-mono*; their content resembled that of *kusa-zōshi* (grass books), and they were published in the same *chūhon* (mid-sized book) format (approximately 19 by 13 cm). *Ehon-mono* were generally based on famous incidents of

the early modern period (the Akō vendetta for example), or on relatively recent history (e.g. life of Toyotomi Hideyoshi); based on purportedly true works called *jitsuroku* (true accounts) or *kakihon* (manuscript books) that circulated in manuscript, they were repackaged as fiction and provided with numerous illustrations. Works of this type were issued in the hanishon format; as a rule the artist was identified but the author was not. Zue-mono had basically the same format as ehon-mono, but reached further back in history for their material (drawing on the Genpei War, for instance) and were distinguished by their inclusion of the author's name. They were published as *ōhon* (large books, approximately 27 by 19 cm).

Early in the yomihon's history, the genre was dominated by ehon-mono from Kamigata, a representative example of which is the Osaka edition of *Ehon taikōki* (Biography of Toyotomi Hideyoshi: An Illustrated Book, 1797–1802), written by Takeuchi Kakusai (1770–1826) and illustrated by Okada Gyokuzan (d. c. 1812).¹ Ehon-mono drew for the most part either on military chronicles or on jitsuroku derived from them, preserving the broad outlines of the history they recounted while giving it the form of a long, unified work of fiction, and taking care not to come in conflict with a law prohibiting the publication of materials that dealt recklessly with family lineages and ancestors other than one's own.² For a time, ehon-mono such as *Ehon sangoku yōfuden* (The Enchantress of the Three Kingdoms: An Illustrated Book, 1803–5), which was written by Takai Ranzan and illustrated by Teisai Hokuba, were the most prominent form of yomihon both in Kamigata and in Edo.

The haishi-mono (unofficial histories) style emerged in Edo in the wake of the Kansei Reforms (1787–93), carried out under the direction of Matsudaira Sadanobu. After Santō Kyōden's attention-getting punishment for three of his *sharebon* (books of wit and fashion), some early yomihon authors active in Edo incorporated discussions of the reforms in their work.³ This trend proved short-lived, however. Soon, the need for pleasure reading more wholesome than

¹ Ehon-mono incorporated elements of *meisho-zue* (illustrated gazetteers), which were already meeting with success. Akisato Ritō, who pioneered meisho-zue, tried to carve out a niche for himself by issuing his works in the *ōhon* format and including *zue* in their titles, even as he contributed to the popularity of ehon-mono. Since there is no essential difference between these two types of yomihon, from here on I will include *zue*-mono within ehon-mono.

² The publishers' guilds in all three cities adhered rigorously to the law after it was issued as a *machibure* (municipal decree) in each location: in Edo in the eleventh month of Kyōho 7 (1722) and in Osaka and Kyoto in the third and fourth months of the following year. *Ehon taikōki* was banned in the first year of the Bunka period (1804) for infringing the law.

³ One example is *Kogarashi zōshi* (Tales from the Withering Wind, 1792) with text by Shinrashi (aka Morishima Chūryō) and illustrations by Kitao Masayoshi.

sharebon brought new prominence to the chūhon form, which catered to broader tastes but had previously occupied a peripheral place in the genre. Haishi-mono yomihon inherited important characteristics from chūhon-mono while drawing more explicitly on the *kanzen chōaku* (reward the virtuous and punish the wicked) paradigm basic to most early modern works of prose fiction (*sōshi*) and testing out various new approaches to make the form more obviously fictional and creative than the Kamigata ehon-mono.

The first haishi-mono (unofficial history) yomihon was Santō Kyōden's *Chūshin suikoden* (The Loyal Retainer's Water Margin, 1799–1801), illustrated by Kitao Shigemasa. In this work, Kyōden fused *Kanadehon chūshingura* (The Treasury of Loyal Retainers, first performed in 1748), the most celebrated play of the early modern jōruri theater, with the major Ming dynasty vernacular novel *Shuihuzhuan* (The Water Margin, J. *Suikoden*), an understanding of which he acquired through two editions published in Japan: one of the vernacular Chinese text, printed with reading marks, and one translation (*tsūzokubon*) into mixed *kanji* and *katakana* Japanese prose. The two sources have been woven together with great care and attention to detail, particularly in the first part, but the chief interest of the final product lies in the prose, which blends the characteristic jōruri style with the particular variety of translationese that results from the rendering of Chinese into Japanese. Given the derivative nature of the plot, one would be hard pressed to describe it as a stand-alone work. In this, it remains similar to the ehon-mono.

Kyōden's second yomihon was *Asaka no numa* (Asaka Marsh, 1803). Like *Chūshin suikoden* it was illustrated by Shigemasa, and was the product of a combination of two prominent works from the Chinese and Japanese traditions. This time, however, Kyōden chose to abandon the quirky prose style of his first effort, presenting the adaptation in a flowing *wabun* (classical Japanese) style. If the work has a significant failing, it is that Kyōden was unable fully to integrate the two revenge plots at its core.

Kyōden made a significant advance in his third yomihon, *Udonge monogatari* (The Tale of the Udumbara Flower, 1804), which was illustrated by Kita Busei: in it, he structured the plot around a prophecy a high-ranking priest makes in book five of *Tsūzoku Kōshukuden* (A Popularized Life of Xiaosu, 1770), depicting its fulfillment in the story of a young man, who after numerous trials and tribulations finally kills the enemy he has been pursuing. The use of the prophecy enabled Kyōden to integrate various episodes so that none of them conflicted with any of the others, and thus to fashion a long, unified story. I use the concept of “the yomihon framework” to refer to the mechanism by which a person, thing, or word that crops up at the outset of a

yomihon creates a sense of an overarching trajectory, and have argued that this framework is an important characteristic of haishi-mono (unofficial histories).⁴ *Udonge monogatari* can be regarded as Kyōden's first successful implementation of the yomihon framework, and is particularly significant in this regard because it became a model for subsequent yomihon in the haishi-mono mold.

Before we can confidently place such weight on *Udonge monogatari*, however, we must first account for an odd fact: as it happens, Kyokutei Bakin's first haishi-mono yomihon, *Geppyō kien* (A Strange Affinity between Moon and Ice), published at almost the same time as Kyōden's work, in the first month of 1805, and bearing a preface by Bakin written an entire year earlier, in the third month of 1804, also makes use of a yomihon framework and contains a number of passages whose content and even phrasing closely resemble those in *Udonge monogatari*. Comparison of the two texts suggests an explanation: a small number of passages in *Geppyō kien* appear to have been rewritten after Bakin read *Udonge monogatari* in manuscript form. There may be no conclusive evidence to support this hypothesis, but it is worth noting that while one can clearly trace Kyōden's progression toward the establishment of the haishi-mono from *Chūshin suikoden* to *Asaka no numa* and finally *Udonge monogatari*, Bakin had written only three chūhon-mono prior to the publication of *Geppyō kien*, and none of these can be said to have sufficiently prepared the way for the appearance of the haishi-mono style in this work. Given that Bakin became Kyōden's disciple in 1790 (though Kyōden treated Bakin less as a student than as a friend), we might think of the two men, perhaps, as "brother authors," with Kyōden being the older and Bakin the younger brother.

Bakin's first chūhon-mono yomihon was *Takao senjimon* (The Ciphers of Takao, 1796). In it, he wove together *Tsūzoku chūgi suikoden* (A Popularized Loyal Water Margin), the jōruri play *Date kurabe okuni kabuki* (The Date Rivalry and Okuni Kabuki, first performed 1779), and the jitsuroku *Sendai hagi* (The Disputed Succession), clearly exploiting the same technique Kyōden would use four years later in *Chūshin suikoden*. The work remained unfinished, however, and its content is unremarkable. That said, its existence indicates that, from the time Bakin placed himself under Kyōden's tutelage, both men shared a strong interest in producing a complete "popularized version" (*tsūzokubon*) of *Shuihuzhuan* – indeed, they appear to have collaborated on a kusa-zōshi rewriting, though only the first ten installments, done

⁴ Ōtaka Yōji, *Kyōden to Bakin: Yomihon yōshiki no keisei* (Tokyo: Kanrin Shobō, 2010).

by Kyōden, were ever published. *Takao senjimon* seems to have been a preliminary effort on Bakin's part, undertaken with Kyōden's agreement, to give shape to an idea that originated with Kyōden and would come to fruition in *Chūshin suikoden*. The similarities between *Udonge monogatari* and *Geppyō kien*, too, would seem to be a reflection of the "brotherly" relationship between the two authors.

Like *Udonge monogatari*, *Geppyō kien* also became a model for later haishi-mono. Interestingly, while both Kyōden and Bakin were unquestionably Edo authors, an agreement with the work's publisher in Edo led *Geppyō kien* to be released with Bunkindō Kawachiya Tasuke, in Osaka, listed as its principal publisher. Arrangements of this nature were not limited to haishi-mono: yomihon of all types were produced collaboratively by publishers in the three major cities (Edo, Osaka, and Kyoto), and were the most important product for *kashihon'ya* (commercial lending libraries), which were then taking root across the entire country. After *Udonge monogatari* and *Geppyō kien* established the haishi-mono style, imitations of yomihon in this new mold – including the two works that first created it – began appearing in Kamigata, where ehon-mono had been central. More often than not, however, these Kamigata haishi-mono resembled their Edo counterparts only superficially, and retained a deep affinity with the ehon-mono in their reliance on jitsuroku and other such sources. Indeed, further investigation is required to clarify the extent to which the haishi-mono style Kyōden and Bakin pioneered was adopted by other authors even in Edo.

The basic characteristics of the haishi-mono yomihon, in terms of content and form, can be summed up in five points: 1. They are long works of fiction; 2. They are rooted in the ideology of *kanzen chōaku*; 3. They are written in a so-called mixed Chinese and Japanese style; 4. Much attention is lavished on their overall book design, their *kuchie* (opening illustrations), and their *sashie* (illustrations in the main body of the text).⁵ Hamada Keisuke has suggested that the material form of the haishi-mono was established around 1806 or 1807; in fact, the same can probably be said of its other elements as well.⁶

Kyōden wrote the core works in the haishi-mono yomihon oeuvre. These include *Sakurahime zenden akebono sōshi* (Book of the Dawn: The

⁵ Nakamura Yukihiro, "Yomihon tenkaishi no hitokoma," *Nakamura Yukihiro chojutsushū*, vol. 5 (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1985); Hamada Keisuke, "Yomihon ni okeru romansu no kōzō," *Bungaku* 6, nos. 4–6 (2005).

⁶ See Hamada Keisuke, "Kinsei shōsetsu no keitaiteki kansei ni tsuite," in *Kinsei bungaku dentatsu to yōshiki ni kansuru shiken* (Kyoto: Kyoto Daigaku Gakujutsu Shuppankai, 2010). First publication January 2002.

Unexpurgated Story of Sakurahime, issued in the twelfth month of 1805); *Mukashigatari inazuma byōshi* (The Straw Sandal, issued in the twelfth month of 1806); and *Utō Yasukata chūgiden* (The Loyalty of Utō Yasukata, issued in the twelfth month of 1806). *Sakurahime zenden akebono sōshi* in particular is notable for presenting the theme of a woman's Buddhist salvation from a perspective that surpasses an interest in good and evil, even as it draws on a wide range of Kamigata *chōhen kangebon* (long preaching books, which Nakamura Yukihiko has called *chōhen Bukkyō setsuwa*, "long Buddhist anecdotes"). In this work, Kyōden used the "life story," which is common in *kangebon* as well, as his framework: the entire tale is subsumed within the life of a man who takes religious vows, becoming a practitioner of Pure Land Buddhism. *Sakurahime zenden akebono sōshi* exerted a considerable influence on the writers around Kyōden, including Bakin, whose works from the same period betray its impact even in their details. Bakin himself produced a few haishi-mono in the "life story" mold, which are best represented by *Shin Kasane gedatsu monogatari* (A New Tale of Kasane's Enlightenment, 1807), also centering on the life of a high-ranking priest.

One characteristic of Kyōden's yomihon is their reliance on different frameworks: there is no overlap from one work to the next. *Mukashigatari inazuma byōshi* is structured as a household disturbance plot (*oie-mono*) like those in kabuki and jōruri; *Utō Yasukata chūgiden* is based on the military chronicle *Zen taiheiki* (Chronicle of the Pre-Taiheiki, earlier than 1692), and can be described as a historical piece (*shiden-mono*). Bakin, in contrast, continued to use the framework of *Geppyō kien* – of *Udonge monogatari*, that is to say – but, drawing upon familiar stories and legends, extended its scale to cover three or even more generations. In so doing, he brought the motif of karmic retribution to the fore, giving rise to a legendary style of yomihon (*densetsu-mono*) which he then experimented with in various ways, gradually perfecting his technique over time.

Beginning in 1805, Bakin continued for almost a decade to write and publish more than one yomihon a year. The most famous of these works is *Chinsetsu yumiharizuki* (The Marvelous Story of the Drawn-Bow Moon), which was illustrated by Katsushika Hokusai. An extensive work in twenty-nine volumes, published in five parts (*hen*) between 1807 and 1811, it recounts the story of Minamoto no Tametomo – a hero from the military chronicle *Hōgen monogatari* (The Tale of Hōgen). In it, Tametomo does not die on the island of Izu Ōshima after being defeated in battle and then exiled, as he does in *Hōgen monogatari*, but lives on and goes to the Ryūkyū Kingdom to assist in the suppression of a rebellion. At the time he wrote the first part, which was

published in 1807, Bakin planned for the work to consist of twelve volumes in two parts (*zenpen*, *kōhen*), and based its story on a brief introduction to the Ryūkyū Kingdom in the early eighteenth-century *Wakan sansai zue* (Sino-Japanese Illustrated Encyclopedia of the Three Realms), which states that Tametomo became the Kingdom's ruler, and on a noh play called "Ama" (The Woman Diver) about a woman who gives her life to retrieve a jewel stolen by the Dragon King. Thus, the idea for the book was not substantially different from that of Kyōden's *Utō Yasukata chūgiden*, which combined the noh play "Utō" with elements from *Zen taiheiki*. After Bakin finished the first part, however, he learned from *Chūzan denshin roku* (Records of Chūzan, Ch. *Zhongshan chuanxin lu*) – a book by a Qing bureaucrat detailing the history, geography, governance, and customs of the Ryūkyū Kingdom that had been reissued in Japan with reading notes in 1766 – that it was Tametomo's son rather than Tametomo himself who had ruled the Ryūkyū Kingdom. As a result, he completely changed his plan for *Yumiharizuki*. From the second part on, Bakin began including thorough analysis of his materials in his prefaces and afterwords, and the story came to be driven by the "historical facts" that he had found. This represented the birth of the long *shiden-mono* (historical work) – an especially important type even within the larger category of the haishi-mono yomihon.⁷

Even here, though, it should be noted that Kyōden preceded Bakin in incorporating the results of research into his works. In the second half of his life, Kyōden devoted a good deal of energy to exploring the cultural roots of Edo, the city where he lived and to which he owed his livelihood; the fruits of these labors were two *kōshō zuihitsu* (antiquarian miscellanies) called *Kinsei kiseki kō* (Thoughts on Marvels of Recent Times, 1804) and *Kottōshū* (Curios, 1814–15). He published the former, which centered on people and things from Edo in the early days of the early modern period, around the time he was developing the haishi-mono yomihon. The latter, which he wrote near the end of his life, traced the origins of common and everyday things back in time to the medieval period, and even beyond it to ancient times.

In all likelihood, Bakin's interest in research, too, was a result of Kyōden's influence. But there was a difference in the nature of Bakin's research: the emphasis he placed on "history." *Koji buruisho* (Ancient Matters Classified), a manuscript in five volumes in Bakin's own hand in which he organized excerpts from his store of historical texts under headings, makes it clear

⁷ Ōtaka Yōji, "Chinsetsu yumiharizuki-ron: kōsō to kōshō," *Yomihon kenkyū* 6 jō (1992); Ōtaka Yōji, "Chinsetsu yumiharizuki no kōsō to yōkyōku," *Kinsei bungei* 79 (January 2004).

that he had read almost all of Japan's official histories, along with similar non-official histories and military chronicles. According to Harimoto Shin'ichi, Bakin probably compiled *Koji buruisho* in 1808.⁸ Around the same time, Bakin recorded the results of an inventory of his personal library (*Kyokutei zōsho mokuroku*) and purchased *Hakuseki sōsho*, a collection of the writings of Arai Hakuseki, for whose profound erudition he expressed his admiration.

Around 1808, Bakin began repeatedly reiterating his thoughts about how *kanzen chōaku* ought to manifest itself in the *yomihon*. He was vociferous in his insistence that, when using figures who had long been familiar, one should never turn a good person into a bad person or vice versa. Playwrights with little regard for their audience did this kind of thing, he explained, and it resulted in a confusion of good and bad; no such thing ever occurred, he maintained, in fiction from China. This standpoint is profoundly at odds with the very different style of *kanzen chōaku* in Kyōden's works from *Akebono sōshi* onward, which allows for people to turn their hearts either to good or to bad. Bakin also took issue with Kyōden's stance, expressed in the prefaces and afterwords to his *yomihon*, that reading stories could still assist people toward an understanding of the principle of *kanzen chōaku* even though they were fictional, just as watching a play could.

Again in 1808, Bakin took to criticizing Kyōden at every opportunity that presented itself as a conservative author of "sōshi," incapable of doing anything more than ape the theater; he compares himself, meanwhile, to Chinese authors of fiction because he is able to present *kanzen chōaku* correctly, through historical vehicles. Bakin's expressions of admiration for Arai Hakuseki's writings, rather than Kyōden's, as a model to be followed clearly represented an effort to distance himself from the older writer, though presumably it was also related to Bakin's consciousness of his position at the head of the Takizawa family – a samurai family, although not a high-ranking one – and Kyōden's status as a townsman.⁹ Bakin's reworking of his idea for *Chinsetsu yumiharizuki* was part and parcel of the shift taking place around this time in his conception of himself: he was attempting to turn *haishi-mono yomihon* into a new kind of fiction that superseded what were traditionally known as "sōshi," making them suitable for adults – in particular, mature male readers.

⁸ Harimoto Shin'ichi, "*Koji buruishō ni tsuite: Nansō satomi hakkenden to no kanren o chūshin ni*," *Hakkenden, Bakin kenkyū* (Tokyo: Shintensha, 2010).

⁹ Takada Mamoru, *Takizawa Bakin* (Tokyo: Mineruva Shobō, 2006). See especially chapter 5.

Several years of trial and error were necessary before Bakin could complete his transition to the shiden-mono (historical work) style of yomihon. The traces of this transformation are most evident in his *kōdan-mono* (rumor works), based on romantic jōruri plays, and in his early shiden-mono, in which he seems to have felt compelled to include scenes reminiscent of the theater even when his characters and incidents were historical. Kyōden's *Baika hyōretsu* (Plum Flower and the Cracking of Ice, 1807) inaugurated the *kōdan-mono*; Bakin turned it into a genre of its own within the larger category of haishi-mono. In his representative *kōdan-mono*, *Sanshichi zenden nanka no yume* (The Story of Sankatsu and Hanshichi, Unexpurgated: A Dream of Nanka, 1808), Bakin turns the male and female townspeople who are the protagonists of the jōruri play on which the yomihon is based into samurai who demonstrate their loyalty to their master, and has the love suicide of the original be enacted by substitutes. Thus, in the end *giri* (obligation) or *kōdō* (justice) are given priority over *ninjō* (emotion). In early shiden-mono such as *Raigō ajari kaisoden* (The Story of the Priest Raigō and the Monster Rat, 1808–9), Bakin comments explicitly on the elements of theatricality, emphasizing that the *ninjō* being depicted are not, in fact, coming from the theater but are instead consistent with common sense among the people of the world.¹⁰

In 1813, at the other end of this transitional period, Bakin wrote a critique of Kyōden's yomihon *Sōchōki* (Record of Two Butterflies, 1813). Like his critiques of recent yomihon by Shikitei Sanba and Ryūtei Tanehiko – both followers of Kyōden – this work, written in his own hand, was not intended to be read by others, and thus offers much insight into Bakin's thinking about the yomihon. Predictably, Bakin considers the extent to which a work relies upon the theater a significant factor in appraising its merits. A scene in which a ruffian who has fallen in love with the female protagonist, now a courtesan, discovers that she is actually his long-lost sister and kills himself in penance is just the sort of thing that happens in kabuki all the time, he writes; a work of prose fiction ought, however, to be more realistic, and as such *Sōchōki* could hardly be expected to appeal to ordinary people's emotions.

Kyōden, too, embarked upon a period of exploration in 1808. During this time, he had difficulty balancing his materials with the themes and structures of his works, with the result that a number of works remained unfinished, inconveniencing his publishers. *Sōchōki* was not a commercial success,

¹⁰ Ōya Taeko, "Bakin no 'ninjō' to engeki no shūtanba," *Tōkyō Daigaku kokubungaku ronshū* 2 (May 2007).

though it was a fresh and humane work, depicting the reconciliation of enemies and the coming of peace to the land, which deployed its framework adroitly and with considerable subtlety.”¹¹ Kyōden published no new yomihon after *Sōchōki*; he died at the age of fifty-six on the seventh day of the ninth month, 1816.

Bakin, meanwhile, achieved new popularity with the publication, starting in 1814, of his shiden-mono *Nansō Satomi hakkenden* (The Chronicle of the Eight Dogs of the Nansō Satomi Clan, 1814–42), becoming far and away the most celebrated yomihon author. Roughly summarized, *Hakkenden* is the tale of eight dog warriors, all descended in a previous life from Fusehime, beloved daughter of Yoshizane, the founder of the Satomi clan; each of these warriors has his own story, but in the end they all join forces to aid the Satomi clan. The book is too long to consider in any detail, but for the purposes of this chapter it will be useful to look briefly at its opening, which recounts Fusehime’s story. It begins in the Kantō region toward the end of the Ashikaga period. In the process of conquering the province of Awa (in the south of present-day Chiba prefecture) Satomi Yoshizane puts an evil woman named Tamazusa to death, though he had initially promised to spare her. Outraged, the dying Tamazusa places a curse on Yoshizane: “I will lead your grandchildren down into the bestial path, making them dogs of the passions.” Her fury lives on after her death, taking possession of a dog named Yatsufusa who then saves the Satomi clan from extinction, eager to exploit a thoughtless comment Yoshizane had made to the effect that he would give the dog his daughter’s hand in marriage if he helped them. Fusehime valiantly insists that her father keep his word and goes off with Yatsufusa to live for two years in a cave in Toyama, within the domain. Yatsufusa is freed from the passions that possessed him by the merits of the Lotus Sutra, a copy of which Fusehime brought with her; the mountain god En no Gyōja then appears and reveals that the dog’s spirit has impregnated Fusehime, upon which she prepares to kill Yatsufusa and herself. En no Gyōja releases the cave from a spell that had kept others from approaching, and Tamazusa’s spirit achieves enlightenment. Yatsufusa is killed by a bullet fired by Kanamari Daisuke, whom Yoshizane hopes will marry Fusehime, and a second bullet strikes Fusehime herself. Daisuke, despairing, is preparing to die when Yoshizane appears. Returning briefly to life, Fusehime cuts open her stomach to demonstrate that her body is pure, and eight prayer beads that have been

¹¹ Ōtaka Yōji, “*Sōchōki* no meian,” *Yomihon kenkyū* 10 jō (November 1996); Ōtaka Yōji, “*Sōchōki* no rinkaku,” *Bungaku* (May–June 2012).

hanging around her neck – each representing one of the eight Confucian virtues – fly off into the sky. These beads will later reappear as the eight dog warriors. Daisuke takes religious vows, having been ordered to do so by Yoshizane, and sets off as the monk Chudai to hunt for the beads. Needless to say, the eight beads govern the structure of this massive 106-volume work as its “yomihon framework.”

The sources Bakin drew upon in fashioning the story of Fusehime and Yatsufusa have been discussed, but to date hardly anything has been written about the origins of Tamazusa and her vengeful spirit.¹² Most likely, the source was Kyōden’s *Sakurahime zenden akebono sōshi*, as is evident from three elements common to both plots. First, the vengeful spirit of a murdered woman brings suffering upon her enemy by possessing her own son – Tamazusa’s spirit initially possesses a *tanuki*, then moves to a puppy raised on its milk – and causing him to fall in love with her enemy’s daughter. Second, a person with mysterious powers derived from Buddhism, or the power of Buddhism itself, saves the characters, including the spirit. Third, a retainer of the cursed family takes Buddhist vows and plays a prominent role in the story. The chief discrepancy between the two works concerns the theme of jealousy, which stands at the core of *Akebono sōshi* but is not emphasized in *Hakkenden*, which stresses the “manly” character of Fusehime and her devotion to her parents instead. In addition, while the theme of Buddhist salvation does not figure in the central plot of *Akebono sōshi* until the very end, in *Hakkenden* it is present from the start through Fusehime’s faith and the assistance she is given by En no Gyōja, and the opening section of the story ends with both Fusehime and the evil Tamazusa’s vengeful spirit, now pacified, achieving enlightenment together.

In short, in creating the plotline relating to Tamazusa’s angry spirit, Bakin drew upon, but also reworked, the basic set of relationships in *Akebono sōshi*. His achievement might be viewed as an indication that he had to some extent succeeded, after much trial and error, in overcoming Kyōden’s yomihon. Nonetheless, we find in *Kinsei mono no hon Edo sakusha burui* (Modern Fiction: A Classification of Edo Authors, written from the seventh day of the twelfth month, 1833, to the fifth day of the first month, 1834) – a collection of sketches of other authors that Bakin wrote at the age of sixty-seven, in the twelfth

¹² Takada Mamoru has suggested that the story of Fusehime and Yatsufusa is a combination of the story of the divine dog Pan Hu in the Chinese *Wudaishi* (History of the Five Dynasties), of Kenjishi in *Taiheiki* (Chronicle of Great Peace), and of the folk tale “Inu mukoiri” (The Dog Bridegroom). See Takada Mamoru, *Kanpon hakkenden no sekai* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2005).

month of 1833 – that his attitude toward Kyōden remained as ambivalent as ever. Indeed, until his death at the age of eighty-two, on the sixth day of the eleventh month of 1848, Bakin would continue to be acutely conscious of Kyōden. While Bakin has come to be regarded as the preeminent yomihon author, a firm grasp of the role Kyōden played in the genre, and of Bakin's relationship to him, is essential to an accurate understanding of late yomihon.

(Translated by Michael Emmerich)

PART V

★

THE MODERN PERIOD
(1868 TO PRESENT)

Introduction: nation building, literary culture, and language

T O M I S U Z U K I

In 1868, a new political regime was established. Bearing the reign name Meiji (literally “enlightened reign”), it replaced the 260-year-old Tokugawa system in which the shogunate in Edo ruled over two hundred semi-autonomous domains. Since the opening of Japan in the 1850s, when the Tokugawa shogunate was forced to sign treaties with major Western powers, thereby conceding control over tariffs and rights of extraterritoriality, the shogunate and then later the Meiji government became increasingly aware of wider geopolitical conditions and actively adopted international law to preserve the country’s independence. From the early 1870s to the 1900s, Japan rapidly emerged as an industrial nation-state, transforming and centralizing its political, economic, and military systems and social structure. After major victories in the Sino-Japanese War (1894–5) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904–5), the long-sought revisions of the unequal treaties were realized: extraterritoriality was abolished in 1899, and tariff autonomy was regained in 1911. At the same time, Japan joined the Western imperial nations in territorial expansion, colonizing Taiwan in 1895 and Korea in 1910. This introduction focuses on these long three decades, from the early 1870s to the turn of the century, paying particular attention to major developments in media, journalism, the educational system, literacy, and practices of writing and reading in the larger sociopolitical context.

Following the “abolition of local domains and the establishment of prefectures” (*haihan chiken*) in 1871 and the “abolition of the four-class system” (*shimin byōdō*) in 1870–1, the Meiji government attempted to construct a new political structure through three new systems: compulsory primary education for all children (established in 1872, following French and American models), national conscription (ordered in 1872–3), and land tax reform (proclaimed in 1872). As they eliminated the privileges of the samurai class and attempted to transform the highly stratified Tokugawa social system into a more fluid, merit-based

order, the leaders of the Meiji regime made use of the Western Enlightenment ideal of an independent individual (free of the restraints imposed by traditional society) who could simultaneously serve the nation.

The new Meiji state also actively promoted the spread of new knowledge through newspapers, journals, printed books, and school textbooks. Such works as Samuel Smiles's *Self-Help* – translated in 1871 as *Saigoku risshi-hen* by the Confucian scholar Nakamura Masanao (1832–91) – and the progressive scholar and educator Fukuzawa Yukichi's (1834–1901) *Gakumon no susume* (Encouragement of Learning, 1872–6) were adopted as textbooks for elementary schools and had an enormous influence on the dissolution of the four-class system and the dissemination of new social ideals. Fukuzawa's book, which opens with the celebrated phrase "Heaven did not create man above another nor under another" (inspired by the US Declaration of Independence), emphasized the independence of the individual as the basis of the independence of a nation.

From the end of the 1860s, Fukuzawa actively introduced and popularized liberal political economy and Western Enlightenment notions of natural human rights, freedom, and individual equality through works such as *Seiyō jijō* (Affairs of the West, 1866–70) and *Gakumon no susume*, which were widely read. Fukuzawa continued to express strong concern about the "absence of the nation" in Japan, stating that Japan "has not reached the level of the West in scholarship, business, and law – the foundation of civilization and the basis of the country's independence" – primarily because the "government is as despotic as before and the people continue to be stupid, spiritless, and powerless" despite recent changes in government (*Encouragement*, 1874).

Toward the end of 1873, a group of leading scholars and intellectuals, who played important roles in Meiji nation building as government officials, advisors, or educators, and who shared similar concerns with Fukuzawa, formed a "society of science, technique, and literature" called Meirokusha, or the Meiji 6th Year (1873) Society, and established the journal *Meiroku zasshi* (1874–5) in order to "advance and popularize Enlightenment education."

Like Fukuzawa and Nakamura Masanao (who also translated John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* in 1872), many of the Meirokusha members, such as Nishi Amane (1829–97), Nishimura Shigeki (1828–1902), Tsuda Mamichi (1829–1903), and Katō Hiroyuki (1836–1916), had been sent abroad by the Tokugawa shogunate to investigate European and American systems and subsequently played central roles in introducing, translating, and teaching Western law, political thought, economics, science, and philosophy. Their

articles and translations, published in *Meiroku zasshi*, were arguably the most influential publications of the 1870s, addressing a wide range of topics from education to religion, science, government, foreign policy, finance, and the reform of writing. These Enlightenment intellectuals were all deeply influenced by the notions of civilization and social progress presented in François Guizot's *History of Civilization in Europe* (French original 1828; four English translations between 1837 and 1846) and Henry Buckle's *History of Civilization in England* (1856–61), and shared a strong awareness that Japan was at a “half-civilized” stage (the “universal stage of evolution” from uncivilized to the civilized). In particular, they were concerned with the “character of the people”; they called for the development of a nation (*kokumin*) as an essential precondition for Japan's independence among advanced Western countries, and emphasized the importance of adopting the “spirit of civilization” as practiced in the West.

Meanwhile, the oligarchic government aggressively promoted a policy of “developing national prosperity and military strength” after leading members of the early Meiji government – Ōkubo Toshimichi (1830–78), Kido Takayoshi (1833–77), Iwakura Tomomi (1825–83), and Itō Hirobumi (1841–1909) – came back from an eighteen-month embassy to the United States and Europe (the so-called Iwakura mission, 1871–3), where they witnessed first-hand the modern system of industrial capitalism and its infrastructure. As the oligarchic government proceeded to rapidly modernize and industrialize, from the mid 1870s through the 1880s, a popular rights movement called the “Freedom and People's Rights movement” (*jiyū minken undō*) spread widely, calling for a representative parliament, reduction of land tax, and the abolition of unequal treaties. Initially, the movement mainly attracted discontented former samurai (who had been deprived of their social privileges under the new Meiji regime), but in time it also drew in progressive intellectuals and middle- to large-propertied farmers who sought local representation. Despite increasing government hostility, the movement spread rapidly from the late 1870s, encompassing various classes and regions and reaching a peak in 1880, when over 240,000 people signed a petition calling for the establishment of a parliament.

Behind the rapid rise of the People's Rights movement was the fact that Western Enlightenment ideals and liberal political thought had been popularized by the Meirokusha scholars and spread widely by newspapers and textbooks. Publishing and print culture, based primarily on woodblock printing, had flourished in the Tokugawa period, but movable-type printing began to be used with increasing frequency, with a sharp turn to movable

type in 1883. From 1872–4, the so-called “large newspaper” (*ōshinbun*), centered on political discussions and written in *kanbun* (Literary Sinitic or classical Chinese) appeared. Their articles were read aloud in “newspaper explanation sessions.” From 1874–7, the so-called “small newspapers” (*koshinbun*) emerged, written in easier, colloquial styles, using the *kana* syllabary, and addressed to less educated readers. Many late Edo popular fiction writers and nativist studies scholars became reporters and writers for the small newspapers, which provided town news as well as serial fiction. A number of these newspapers, particularly the “large newspapers,” became key instruments for the political parties of the 1880s.

As the People’s Rights movement spread, the government shifted from the progressive, egalitarian educational policy of the 1870s to one that emphasized loyalty to the emperor and that reintroduced traditional ethics. In 1880, textbooks “interfering with national peace” were prohibited, and in 1880–1 Fukuzawa’s *Gakumon no susume* and Nakamura’s translation of Smiles’s *Self-Help* were excluded from the government list of textbooks. In the early 1880s, Fukuzawa’s views themselves changed, shifting from an emphasis on individual independence to a focus on national unity, which he considered necessary in the face of accelerated Western imperialism. Katō Hiroyuki, another Meirokusha member who had introduced the theory of natural human rights and became the first president of Tokyo University in 1877, moved his emphasis from natural rights to national competition and survival, evoking Spencer’s social Darwinism. This triggered fierce criticism in the media from the popular rights activists, who also based their political ideals on Spencer (Spencer’s *Social Statics*, fully translated and published in 1882, was called one of the “three must-read translations for popular rights,” along with those of Mill’s *On Liberty* and Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *The Social Contract*, translated in 1882).

Recognizing the inevitability of a national assembly, Itō Hirobumi, who later became the first prime minister under a cabinet system that he himself established (in 1885), went to Prussia from 1882 to 1883 to study the constitution, the parliamentary system, and government institutions. Placing severe limits on speech, publication, associations, and assembly, particularly after a series of violent incidents, the Meiji government attempted to absorb the People’s Rights movement into state nationalism, particularly as modeled after Hohenzollern Prussia-Germany, in which Bismarck established a modern dynastic nation-state in reaction to the popular national movements that proliferated in Europe in the 1820s. By 1885, the major political parties that had formed at the height of the Freedom and People’s Rights movement

were forced to dissolve, and by the late 1880s political energy was aggressively redirected toward a new stage of national consolidation, in anticipation of the opening of the national Diet in 1890.

The national constitution promulgated in 1889 legally defined all individuals as “equal subjects” of the emperor, whose “sacred” power was used to construct the centralized nation-state. The Diet opened in 1890 with little over 1 percent of the entire population given a right to vote for members of the House of Representatives: suffrage was limited to high-tax-paying males above the age of twenty-five. (Male universal suffrage was realized in 1925, and universal suffrage did not occur until 1945, during the Occupation period.) In 1890, the Imperial Rescript on Education was promulgated to create a collective sense of the nation through moral education based on filial piety and loyalty.

In the 1880s, the government simultaneously promoted radical westernization and modernization, accommodating the demands by the Western treaty powers that Japan adopt Western administrative, legal, and commercial practices. While popular rights activists were strongly opposed to the oligarchic government’s radical westernization policy, they believed that the people needed reform to achieve national independence. This tide led to parallel reform movements in writing, fiction, and women’s issues, all of which developed in close relationship to changes in education, literacy, print technology, and publishing culture.

Vernacularization, orthographic reform, and standardization of the written language emerged as interrelated concerns from the early 1870s, as part of a larger attempt to promote communication and circulation of information across class and regional boundaries. In the late 1860s, Maejima Hisoka (1835–1919), a scholar of Western learning who founded a national postal service in the 1870s, proposed to abolish the use of *kanji* (Chinese script) to facilitate literacy and education. Although Maejima’s proposal was mostly ignored at the time, observations about the efficiency of an alphabet led to the reevaluation of the kana phonetic script (Maejima himself established a newspaper written in kana in 1873). While the Enlightenment scholars of the Meirokusha group, most notably Fukuzawa Yukichi, attempted to employ easier-to-understand written styles that they developed through public speeches, the basis of written styles for authoritative genres, including translations from European languages, continued to be the *kanbun* style or the *kanbun-kundoku* style, based on reading conventions for classical Chinese using Japanese syntax. In fact, with the spread of education, *kanbun* and *Kangaku* (the study of classical Chinese writings) became an important pillar of primary

and secondary education in the 1880s, even more than during the Tokugawa period, at least in terms of population. In the early 1880s Kangaku private academies flourished, and as the government attempted to revive Confucian ethics in the face of the popular rights movement, reprinting of classical Chinese texts in movable type became popular due to the increase in kanbun literacy.

During the so-called Rokumeikan period of radical westernization, an orthographic reform movement emerged in the form of the Kana-no-kai (Society for the Promotion of the Kana Syllabary, est. 1883) and the Rōmaji-kai (Society for the Promotion of Romanization, est. 1885). Under the impact of the Western phonetic alphabet, both societies promoted the phonogram, considering it easier and more efficient to learn than numerous Chinese characters, and pushed for colloquialization and standardization of written styles. In a short book entitled *Genbun-itchi* (Unification of Spoken and Written Languages, 1886), Mozume Takami (1847–1928), a leading member of the Kana-no-kai and professor at the Imperial University, promoted the notion of *genbun-itchi*: “What emerges from one’s own heart (*hara*) is alive since it is natural, but copying others is dead since it is not genuine . . . I consequently believe that it is most desirable to abolish the parrot-like, non-functional, conventionalized written languages, and to directly transcribe the vigorous, living discourse that spontaneously and naturally flows from our mouths.” The newly introduced technology of stenography – which was referred to as “transcription of speech” – also contributed to the phonocentric conception of language. While promoting “writing as one speaks,” however, Mozume expressed concerns about the abundant use of honorifics in the Japanese spoken language and urged the creation of a concise expository written style free of the complex honorific system used in daily conversation.

The reform of written styles was also vigorously discussed and practiced by intellectuals who proposed a “reform of fiction.” From around 1880, the advocates of the Freedom and People’s Rights movement attempted to popularize their political ideals through the novel, calling for a new fiction to “free people from evil customs” and to “disseminate the ideals of freedom and equality.” This concern became urgent in 1883, when the government stiffened its restrictions on the publication of newspapers (“large newspapers” in particular) and on public gatherings. Inspired by politically influential European writers such as Victor Hugo and Benjamin Disraeli, ambitious young activists began writing “political novels,” freely adapting from late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century European historical romances by Walter Scott and Alexandre Dumas, using the late Edo *yomihon* narrative

style, and following the plot pattern of Ming and Qing period Chinese historical fiction like *The Water Margin* (*Shuihuzhuan*, c. fourteenth century).

In 1883–4, Yano Ryūkei (1851–1931), a major member of the political party Rikken Kaishintō and an executive journalist of the newspaper *Yūbin hōchi shinbun*, wrote one of the most enthusiastically received political novels of the time: *Keikoku bidan* (Commendable Anecdotes on Creating a Nation, 1883–4). In the preface to the second part, Ryūkei wrote that there were four major written styles currently in use: kanbun (classical Chinese), *wabun* (classical Japanese), *ōbun-chokuyaku* (“direct-translation-of-European-language,” a heavily Sinitic mixed style used from the 1870s to translate European languages, which incorporated features of Western languages), and *zokugo-rigen* styles, the “vernacular styles” used in Edo popular narrative fiction. He noted that each of these styles had its own stylistic property and merit: the kanbun style was suited for heroic and graceful (*hisō tenga*) matters, the *wabun* style for soft and gentle (*yūjū onwa*) manners, the *ōbun-chokuyaku* style for detailed and precise (*chimitsu seikaku*) content, and the *zokugo-rigen* style for humorous and variegated (*kokkei kyokusetsu*) topics. Ryūkei proposed a new contemporary style that combined all four. His *Keikoku bidan*, which was dictated using the newly developed shorthand, blends some *wabun* and vernacular style elements (similar to Bakin’s *yomihon* style) into a narrative that consisted primarily of a mixture of high-toned kanbun-based styles (including classical Chinese-style poetry and abundant rhythmical parallel phrases) and the heavily Sinitic “direct-translation-of-European-language” style.

In subsequent years, Ryūkei’s primary concern in reforming written styles shifted to creating a new standard style for what he called *futsūsho* (popular works) – by which he meant practical writings for a general audience, including government proclamations, school textbooks, newspapers, and letters – in contradistinction to styles for what he called *bungakusho* (literary works), including academic treatises and belles-lettres. In March 1886, Ryūkei published *Nihon buntai moji shinron* (New Theory of Japanese Written Styles and Orthography), which he had dictated during a stay in Europe and America (1884–5). Here Ryūkei advocated what he called *ryōbun-tai* (“double writing style,” or kanbun-kundoku style with kana glosses for Chinese characters), which was, he argued, developed in the late Edo narrative fiction by Bakin and used in Meiji popular newspapers. The merit of the “double writing style” was that it combined the readability of the kanbun-kundoku style with the accessibility of the kana style. The *ryōbun-tai* also had the educational function of introducing kanji and kanbun-kundoku style to

beginners. While arguing against the advocates of exclusive kana writing or of Romanization, Ryūkei proposed a reduction of kanji in daily use to three thousand characters for “popular works” to make them easy to read for everybody. Ryūkei states that while bungakusho should combine all existing styles, futsūsho should primarily use a vernacular style close to speech, which would be the basis for a new “double writing style” and serve as a practical writing style for a wide audience.

In April 1886, one month after the publication of Yano Ryūkei’s *New Theory of Japanese Written Styles and Orthography*, Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859–1935) published “Buntairon” (Theory of Written Styles) as part of his influential *Shōsetsu shinzui* (The Essence of the Novel, 1885–6). While the reform of fiction had been proposed in the early 1880s in an attempt to disseminate new political ideals widely, Shōyō’s *Essence of the Novel* emphasizes the autonomous cultural value of the novel, severing its significance from direct political or moral efficacy. Shōyō stresses the value of the novel in terms of “Art” (*bijutsu*), a recently imported Western notion, the function of which should elevate people’s mind and spirit through aesthetic, emotional, and affective pleasure.

Lumping together various different past genres hitherto not conceived as a unified category, Shōyō traces the “universal development of fiction (*shōsetsu*)” from mythology to romance/fable/allegory to the novel and proclaims that the most advanced form of *shōsetsu*, the “true novel,” is the Western “artistic, realistic novel.” He contrasts this with the “less advanced” kind of allegorical, “didactic novel” to which, Shōyō claims, most of the best Japanese fiction since Bakin belongs. Significantly, movable-type reprinting of early nineteenth-century *gesaku* fiction – such as *yomihon* by Bakin, *ninjōbon* by Shunsui, and *kokkeibon* by Sanba – appeared from the 1880s and became popular among new readers. Shōyō was also clearly aware of the popularity of contemporary political novels such as Yano Ryūkei’s *Keikoku bidan*, which had elevated the image and status of fiction among educated youth, including the young Shōyō himself. In contradistinction to the contemporary political novel, in which women usually figure allegorically as metaphors for oppressed people or popular rights, or as figures supporting the male fighters, Shōyō placed a new focus on the private, affective world of contemporary everyday life, and emphasized the centrality of “love between a man and a woman” (*airen* – later *ren’ai*, a neologism and translation of the Western word “love”) as the primary subject for the “artistic, realistic novel.” Shōyō moved in this direction in writing novels such as *Tōsei shosei katagi* (Manners and Lives of Contemporary Students, 1885–6) and *Imotose kagami* (Mirror of Marriage, 1886).

Following Bakin's earlier discussion of literary language – which was formulated under the influence of Ming and Qing Chinese vernacular fiction – Shōyō distinguishes among three literary styles: (1) *gabun-tai*, a “gentle and elegant classical style”; (2) *zokubun-tai*, a “lively colloquial style that transcribed contemporary spoken language”; and (3) *gazoku-setchū-tai*, an amalgamation of “elegant” and “colloquial” styles. Equating *gabun* with *wabun* (classical Japanese prose), Shōyō says that its “soft, gentle, graceful, and elegant” quality is well suited to describing elegant and refined manners, but that this elegant style is limited since it cannot depict “fervent feelings, heroic actions or grand and sublime states.” Instead, Shōyō values the “clarity” and “vigor” of the colloquial style for its potential to depict vividly contemporary manners; but, due to the great distance in Japan between the spoken language and written language, the *actual* spoken language, which tends to be “vulgar, unrefined, and verbose,” cannot be used in an artistic novel except in dialogue. The colloquial style should be used for speech, particularly that of lower-class characters, but the narrative needs to be written in an appropriate blend of the elegant and colloquial styles.

Shōyō's views of literary language for new fiction overlap to a certain extent with Yano Ryūkei's, but Shōyō's clear avoidance of the *kanbun* or Sinitic styles reveals his fundamental attitude toward contemporary political fiction, the most popular of which was Ryūkei's *Keikoku bidan*, written in the manner of Bakin's *Nansō Satomi hakkenden* (The Chronicle of the Eight Dogs of the Nansō Satomi Clan, 1814–42) as well as *The Water Margin*, especially in terms of plot development, allegorical characterization, and high-toned style. As Shōyō reveals in “*Bunshō shinron*” (New Theory of Written Styles, May and July 1886), he tried to sever novel writing from the high-toned Sinitic *kanbun-kundoku* style as well as from the 7–5 syllabic rhythms of Bakin's *yomihon* style, which he viewed as locked into conventional patterns. Shōyō wanted to avoid the oral tonality of the Sinitic style found in Ryūkei's *Keikoku bidan* and Tōkai Sanshi's (1852–1922) *Kajin no kigū* (Chance Meetings with Beautiful Women, 1885–8, 1891, 1897), the two most enthusiastically received political novels, which were often recited aloud by groups of young, politically ardent students. At the same time, Shōyō differentiated his position from the promoters of *genbun-itchi*, who he claimed naively advocated “writing as one speaks” without trying to create a new expressive *written* style.

As Maeda Ai has pointed out, the shift from woodblock printing to movable-type printing in the early to mid 1880s corresponded to the shift from “communal reading” (associated with oral reading and the rhythmic patterns of

Bakin's yomihon and Meiji political novels) to "solitary reading" and a diversification of reading practices. Shōyō's presence as a respected university graduate, one who advocated the new novel (with a new focus on private life in contemporary society) both in theory and in practice, inspired and encouraged younger intellectuals such as Futabatei Shimei (1864–1909), who created new experimental colloquial styles in his translations of Russian novels and explored the social and moral dilemma of an inward-looking youth in contemporary Meiji society in the novel *Ukigumo* (Drifting Clouds, 1887–9).

New notions of the novel were also promoted in *Jogaku zasshi* (Women's Education Magazine, 1885–1904), which was founded in 1885 and provided the main forum for progressive male and female intellectuals to advocate the social and cultural advancement of women. "Reform of women" surfaced as one of the central concerns of the new nation builders, as seen in debates in *Meiroke zasshi*. Translations of feminist thought by Spencer, Mill, and Henry and Millicent Fawcett appeared from the end of the 1870s to the early 1880s, at the height of the Freedom and People's Rights movement, but most of these translations emphasized the notion of natural rights rather than women's rights. From the mid 1880s, however, renewed attention was given to the status of women, now regarded as a key indicator of the nation's level of civilization. Fukuzawa Yukichi's series of discussions on women and male–female relations in "Nihon fujin ron" (On Japanese Women, 1885), "Danjo-kōsai ron" (On Male–Female Relationships, 1886), and other essays exemplified this new trend.

Emphasizing that women should develop certain specialized skills to achieve independence, Iwamoto Yoshiharu (1863–1942), the progressive Christian educator and editor in chief of *Jogaku zasshi*, cited women's aptitude for writing and encouraged educated women to write good novels, particularly for women, addressing issues not yet raised by recent new male novelists ("Women and Writing as Profession," 1887). Iwamoto considered the home to be a key social domain for women – managing the household, helping the husband, educating the children – but he encouraged women to contribute to society through their writing and moral influence. Progressive women associated with *Jogaku zasshi*, such as Nakajima (née Kishida) Toshiko (literary name Shōen, 1864–1901) and Shimizu Toyoko (literary name Shikin, 1868–1933), had participated in the popular rights movement; they now turned to writing, believing in the social and moral efficacy of the novel, and encouraged other women to write. Many of them addressed such issues as women's education, friendship, aspirations for independence, marriage, and the family system. The 1890 Imperial Rescript on Education

reintroduced a Confucian gender hierarchy within the family, while the Civil Codes of 1898 further strengthened the concept of the *ie* (house/family) and stipulated that all property had to be inherited by the oldest son, ultimately tying the family structure to the patriarchal emperor system. A gender-segregated secondary education system was formally institutionalized by the 1899 Ordinance for Women's Higher Schools; here "women's higher school" was positioned at the level of men's "middle school" with the "higher school" and the university open only to men. Women as readers and writers, however, continued to increase as attendance at the women's higher school rapidly grew and as journalism expanded.

As the popular rights movement was suppressed and redirected toward national consolidation, a new generation of young intellectuals, exemplified by Tokutomi Sohō (1863–1957), differentiated their positions from those of the state modernizers in the oligarchic government. Inheriting Enlightenment and popular rights ideals but still criticizing his "allies in the People's Rights movement" for "distorting true Anglo-Saxon liberalism," Tokutomi Sohō advocated "industrialism, commoner-ism (*heimin-shugi*), and pacifism" in his book *Shōrai no Nihon* (The Future Japan, 1886). Sohō, relying on a recently published section of Spencer's *Principles of Sociology* ("Political Institutions," 1882), argued for an evolution from an aristocratic, military social structure toward a democratic, industrial society, which Sohō claimed Japan was now undergoing. Taking into consideration Japan's climate, geographical position, and geopolitical environment, Sohō claimed that it was ideally situated for industry and trade. With the proceeds from the successful sales of *The Future Japan*, he then established a general-interest magazine called *Kokumin no tomo* (The Nation's Friend, 1887–98), which provided a major forum for a new generation of progressive intellectuals and writers.

Presenting a related but alternative view of Japan's future was a group of young intellectuals, centered on Miyake Setsurei (1860–1945) and Shiga Shigetaka (1863–1927), who established a magazine called *Nihonjin* (The Japanese) in 1888. Together with the journalist Kuga Katsunan (1857–1907), who created the politically oriented newspaper *Nihon* (Japan) in 1889, they argued that a strong national spirit (*kokusui*) and the preservation of cultural autonomy were essential for national independence in an age of imperialism. Unlike the Meirokusha intellectuals of the 1870s, they shared a belief in a unique Japanese character, one formed by specific historical and environmental forces; Japan had a mission to develop this unique national character not only for itself but for world civilization, which they saw as progressing through competition among different cultures.

In *Nihon fūkeiron* (Landscape of Japan, 1894), which is said to have been one of the most widely read books among students in the latter half of the Meiji period, Shiga Shigetaka depicted Japan's "elegant, beautiful, and powerful" environment by interlacing *kanshi*, *waka*, and *haiku* with detailed observations of natural landscape. Uchimura Kanzō (1861–1930), an influential Christian leader, social critic, and frequent contributor to *Kokumin no tomo* and *Nihonjin*, called Shiga the "Japanese Ruskin" and argued that "both from its geographical position and its historical formation, Japan has the special potential to merge Asian and European features," to be a "mediator between the East and the West" (*Chijinron* or Theory of Earth and Man, 1894). From the Sino-Japanese War (1894–5) to the Russo-Japanese War (1904–5), essays on Japan's unique cultural heritage emerged, stressing its position as a bridge between Eastern and Western civilizations. Those published in English included Uchimura's *Japan and the Japanese* (1894), Nitobe Inazō's (1862–1933) *Bushido: The Soul of Japan* (1900), and Okakura Kakuzō's (literary name Tenshin, 1862–1913) *The Ideals of the East, with Special Reference to the Art of Japan* (1903), *The Awakening of Japan* (1904), and *The Book of Tea* (1906).

Within this discursive context a new notion of *bungaku* ("literature") rapidly assumed cultural importance from the late 1880s onward. The term *bungaku*, which originated in Confucius' *Analects* and meant "learning," "studies," or "scholars" ("official Confucian scholars" in particular), was adopted as a translation of the Western word "literature" in 1870 by the Meirokusha scholar Nishi Amane. Two interrelated modern Western notions were introduced: first, the broader, eighteenth-century Enlightenment notion of humanities, and second, the newer, nineteenth-century, more specialized notion of aesthetic and imaginative literature. These intertwined notions of *bungaku* were reflected in the shifting institutional categorizations of academic disciplines.

Tokyo University was established in 1877 with four divisions: law, science, humanities (*bungaku*), and medicine. The central emphasis was overwhelmingly on Western learning. Out of concern for the loss of the *wakan* (Japanese and Chinese classics) studies, the president Katō Hiroyuki (a former Meirokusha member) established the Classics Training Course (*Koten kō-shūka*) in 1882 as an ad hoc annex to the division of humanities. When Tokyo University became the Imperial University in 1886, the Classics Training Course was abolished as part of a large-scale educational reform under the Minister of Education Mori Arinori (1847–89), a founding member of Meirokusha and one of the major promoters of Westernization. The

Imperial University was then divided into five Colleges: Law (incorporating political science and economics, which used to be part of the humanities division), Medicine, Engineering, Humanities (*bunka daigaku*), and Science. The College of Humanities initially consisted of the Departments of Philosophy, Japanese Classics (*wabungaku*), Chinese Classics (*kanbungaku*), and Linguistics (*hakugengaku*). In the following year (1887) it added the Departments of History (Western history), English Literature, and German Literature, and in 1889 it created the Department of Japanese History (*kokushi*), making “national literature” (*kokubungaku*) and “national history” two separate disciplines for the first time.

In 1890, the first modern literary histories and anthologies of “national literature” were published by several university graduates of the new *kokubungaku* (national literature) department. Mikami Sanji (1865–1939) and Takatsu Kuwasaburō’s (1864–1921) two-volume *Nihon bungakushi* (History of Japanese Literature, 1890) was the first full-length literary history, with abundant excerpts from ancient to the late Edo periods. Such literary histories considered literature to be “reflections of national life” and tried to present, through concrete literary examples, the “development of the mentality of the nation” so that “the nation’s people would deepen their love for the nation” and that “the national spirit would be elevated.” In stressing the continuity and progress of the “national spirit” as signs of a civilized and advanced nation, the perspective of these Meiji literary histories was clearly shaped by nineteenth-century European historiography, particularly Hippolyte Taine’s (1828–93) *History of English Literature* (1864; English translation, 1872), and by Spencerian evolutionism.

While these Meiji scholars continued to use the earlier Confucian notion of *bungaku* to mean “learning” or “studies,” they dissociated the content of that learning from Confucian studies and criticized the Confucian view of *bungaku* for “disdaining fiction and belles-lettres,” thereby affirming the recent elevation of the *shōsetsu* as a respected genre. At the same time, Meiji literary historians emphasized that leisurely activities such as writing fiction and composing elegant *wabun* (classical Japanese-style prose), *waka* (classical Japanese-style poetry) and *kanshi* (classical Chinese-style poetry) represented only a small part of the larger enterprise of *bungaku*. For Meiji literary historians, *gakumon* (learning) consisted of two large areas: *bungaku* and *kagaku* (science), and *bungaku* in turn embraced a large body of writings that included both *bibungaku* (elegant writing, or belles-lettres) and *ribungaku* (rational or intellectual writing), which spanned history, philosophy, and political science. This broad notion of *bungaku* was, as we have seen,

institutionalized in 1877 with the establishment of Western academic disciplines at Tokyo University.

While Meiji literary historians emphasized the comprehensiveness of bungaku as humanities, they had to deal with the narrower definition of bungaku, of literature as bibungaku or what they also referred to as *junbungaku* (pure literature), which “skillfully expresses human thought, feeling, and imagination by means of certain styles: its purpose is to be practical and to create pleasure; and it transmits basic knowledge to the majority of people.” Mikami and Takatsu emphasized that while practical efficacy is the common attribute of bungaku in a broad sense, “pure literature” is characterized by *both* its practical function and its spiritual pleasure. This emphasis on spiritual pleasure strongly echoes *Shōsetsu shinzui*’s advocacy of the novel and the influence of Victorian literary discourse, as represented in particular by Matthew Arnold.

Following Taine’s *History of English Literature*, Mikami and Takatsu attempted to define national character through Japanese national literature (*kokubungaku*):

Each of the nations in the world has its own unique and distinct character and mentality. What has been recently discussed as the national spirit (*kokusui*) clearly manifests itself in each country’s national literature. Japanese people are full of reverence for gods and full of loyalty to their lord; the Chinese value proper decorum and order; and since both peoples (Japanese and Chinese) respect righteousness and loyalty, their literature, including their fiction, tends to focus on moral justice. Westerners espouse the ideals of freedom and rights, and they have high respect for women. Even among the Western nations, the English are calm and practical, whereas the French are gallant and tend to be emotional. Thus the literatures of the English and the French respectively manifest the distinct traits of their national characters. Generally speaking, Japanese literature can be characterized as elegant and graceful, Chinese literature as grand and heroic, and Western literature as precise, detailed, and exhaustive.

Under the impact of the Western phonetic alphabet, the modern scholars of Japanese national literature designated phonetic kana-based wabun or classical Japanese-style writing from the Heian period as the basis of Japanese “national language,” in contradistinction to kanbun (texts in the classical Chinese style), which was now regarded as foreign or Chinese. Indeed, Mikami and Takatsu excluded all kanbun texts from the body of the national literature. This exclusion also reinforced the new idea of literature as belles-lettres or pure literature, since the major body of historical, philosophical,

religious, and political writings in Japan had been written in the kanbun style. That the *History of Japanese Literature* characterized Japan's "national literature and national character" as "elegant and graceful" was apparently due to their view of phonetic wabun as the basis of the Japanese national literature and their promotion of the new idea of bungaku as "elegant, pure literature." The terms used here were similar to the ways in which Yano Ryūkei and Tsubouchi Shōyō associated kanbun, wabun, and Western writing styles with particular rhetorical modes, but the written styles and rhetorical modes were now associated with national character.

In the newly constructed body of national literature, from which all the texts written in kanbun were eliminated, Heian works written in kana were highly valued for developing "Japanese" literary genres such as the *monogatari* (tale), *nikki* (diary), and *kikō* (travel diary), which these literary historians saw as reflecting the "internal life" of the period as opposed to the "external state of the period recorded in kanbun texts." In accordance with Shōyō's evolutionist view of genre, they considered prose in general to be a more advanced literary form than verse, reversing a long-held genre hierarchy, and gave new attention to Heian vernacular prose texts, particularly prose fiction (*monogatari*). Valued most was *The Tale of Genji*, which was recanonized as the great predecessor to the refined, realistic novel. But while the first modern scholars of national literature highly praised the *Genji* as the highest achievement of Heian literature, they could not hide their dissatisfaction with the "tendency of its style to be monotonous and spiritless," which they noted was a "weakness of wabun style" and which they blamed on female authorship. Indeed, the Meiji scholars of national literature valued the "more vigorous and manly" "Japanese-Chinese mixed style" (*wakan konkōbun*) that was developed in the medieval and Tokugawa periods, which they believed fused *yamato kotoba* (Japanese words) and *kango* (Chinese words) into a higher style. In line with an evolutionist historical narrative, they glorified the "remarkable progress of national literature" in the Tokugawa period, particularly the "vast expansion of literary genres" that "embraced both upper and lower classes." The central concern was to emphasize the continuous "development and progress" of Japanese national literature, implicitly calling for its further progress through active incorporation of aspects of Western languages and literatures.

This position was shared by the influential *Shin-kokubun* (New National Written Language) movement, which promoted an updated wabun-based mixed style (instead of the dominant, kanbun-based mixed style) both for the new standard writing and for the new literary language. This movement was

initiated in 1890 by the classical Japanese scholar and waka poet Ochiai Naobumi (1861–1903), a graduate of the Classics Training Course, and soon supported by Mori Ōgai (1862–1922) and others. After his return from a five-year stay in Germany as a medical officer, Ōgai, who had received solid training in classical Chinese learning before studying German, started to experiment with different literary styles and developed a unique experimental “Japanese-Chinese-Western” mixed style (*wa-kan-yō konkōbun*), which is manifested in his translation of European poetry in the anthology *Omokage* (Vestiges, 1889), on which he collaborated with Ochiai and a kanbun scholar as well as with his younger sister. It is also apparent in the novellas that are referred to as Ōgai’s “German trilogy”: “Maihime” (The Dancing Girl, published in *Kokumin no tomo* in 1890), “Utakata no ki” (Foam on the Waves, 1890), and “Fumi-zukai” (The Courier, 1891).

In the new discourse on national literature, *The Tale of Genji* occupied an ambivalent position, as evident in Uchimura Kanzō’s notorious condemnation of the work in a lecture delivered in 1894:

The Tale of Genji might have left beautiful language to Japan, but what has it ever done to raise our moral spirit? Worse than doing nothing, the *Genji* has made us effeminate cowards. I would like to exterminate such literature [*bungaku*] from our ranks! (applause) . . . Literature is not such an idle, trifling business. Literature is a weapon with which we must fight in the world, against devilish enemies, in our attempt to improve our society and our country . . . not just for today but for years to come.

The ambivalent mixture of praise and dissatisfaction that Meiji national literary historians showed toward the *Genji* reflected the competing notions of literature and literary language in the late 1880s to the 1900s, a period in which various controversies occurred with regard to the moral, social, aesthetic, and political value of literature, particularly of the novel. For example, in the so-called *Bungaku gokusui* (or *kyokusui*) *ronsō*, a debate that occurred in 1889–90 regarding “whether bungaku was declining or prospering,” many of those who saw a decline in literature complained that contemporary fiction (including works by Shōyō, Futabatei, and Ōgai) only depicted the silly passions of male and female students and consequently narrowed the range of the novel, the “true form” of which should depict the “great ideals of the universe” and the “true feelings of great individuals for the purpose of enlightening people.” By contrast, their opponents, who saw bungaku as prospering, argued that the mission of the novel was to “reveal the truth of life aesthetically and realistically by depicting contemporary human feelings.” Despite their widely opposing views, these debates

generated a widespread consensus about the importance of *bungaku*, calling for “Great Literature,” the “Great Poet,” and a “national literature” (*kokumin bungaku*) that could contribute to the “spirit of the nation.”

From the latter half of the 1880s, a new standard expository style called *futsūbun* (standard written style), a mixed style based on more regularized *wabun* syntax and less Sinitic syntax, developed, but *kanbun* remained the basis of literacy and a central part of language education for both reading and writing. This changed when the 1894 revised curriculum for the secondary school eliminated mandatory composition in *kanbun* for the first time and emphasized the “harmony” of *kokugo* (“national language,” defined at this point as “writing mixed with *kanji*”) and *kanbun*, with *kokugo* as primary and *kanbun* as subsidiary. Although the prestige of Sinitic writing drastically depreciated following Japan’s victory over China in the Sino-Japanese War (1894–5), multiple styles continued to be used, depending on the genre. Various experimental colloquial styles also emerged that updated the dialogue style used in late Edo popular fiction, that incorporated the new style of public speech, or that came from the new practice of translating modern Western literature. The new written styles were experimental hybrids represented by such notions as *gazoku setchū-tai* (high-low fused style) and *wa-kan-yō konkōbun* (Japanese, Chinese, Western mixed style), which actually allowed for various amalgams. These styles were conceived in terms of overlapping, multiple registers, metaphorically associated with class (high/low, noble/vulgar), gender (feminine/masculine), rhetorical modes (elegant beauty, heroic, sublime), or nationality (Japanese, Chinese, Western).

However, from the early 1900s, particularly after Japan’s victory in the Russo-Japanese War (1904–5), the phonocentric ideology of the national language emerged as the core of systematic national language policy, in which the differences between the spoken and written languages as well as differences among written styles were ideologically suppressed. Right before the start of the Sino-Japanese War in 1894, Ueda Kazutoshi (1867–1937), one of the first university graduates of the national literature department and the chief architect of the modern national language policy, returned from a four-year research stay (1890–4) in Germany – where he had witnessed the promotion of a standardized national language by the *Deutscher Sprachverein* – and gave a lecture, “*Kokugo to kokka to*” (National Language and the Nation, 1894), in which he referred to the “national language” (*kokugo*) as the “spiritual blood binding the nation’s people together.” In “*Hyōjungo ni tsukite*” (On a Standard Language, 1895) Ueda argued that the establishment of a “standardized spoken language”

(*hyōjungo*) – in contradistinction to regional dialects – was the foremost priority for Japan's development as a modern nation-state, and stressed the interdependence of colloquialization and standardization. Ueda's endeavor resulted in the promotion of a standardized plain colloquial style, called the *genbun-itchi* or "unification of the spoken and written languages" style, for primary school textbooks, beginning in the early 1900s, when a state system of primary school textbook compilation was established. The first state-compiled textbooks regulated the number of kanji (500 characters were introduced in the four-year primary school curriculum), standardized kana, adopted phonetic orthography, and employed a new plain colloquial style for the lower grades.

Competing notions of literature and literary languages coexisted until the mid 1900s, but the novel rapidly rose in cultural status following the end of the Russo-Japanese War (1904–5), when journalism expanded significantly. Terms such as *junbungaku* or *bibungaku*, used since the 1890 in contradistinction to the broader notion of *bungaku* ("learning," "humanities," "literature"), started to disappear after this time, with *bungaku* beginning to refer distinctly to literary art or aesthetic literature with the novel as the central genre. The so-called Japanese Naturalist writers and critics gained an influential position through newly established journals such as *Shinchō* (New Tides, est. 1904), *Waseda Bungaku* (Second Series started in 1906), *Bunshō sekai* (World of Writing, est. 1906 by the influential publishing company Hakubunkan), and *Taiyō* (The Sun, arguably the most influential general-interest magazine of the Meiji period, established by Hakubunkan in 1895). These magazines widely promoted the newly institutionalized notion of *genbun-itchi* language.

Tayama Katai (1871–1930) published an essay, "Rokotsu-naru byōsha" (Raw Description, February 1904), in *Taiyō*, in which he referred to the two most respected and popular novelists of the time, Ozaki Kōyō (1868–1903) and Kōda Rohan (1867–1947), as well as Tsubouchi Shōyō and Mori Ōgai, as "great giants of the past" and attacked "contemporary advocates of artificial literary techniques" as "slaves of literary style." Katai criticized earlier Meiji literature as "powdered, ornate writings" or "gold-plated literature" and proudly placed the new movement toward "unadorned, bold description" in contemporary Japanese writing alongside the new trends in Western literature, as exemplified, in his words, by "fin-de-siècle revolutionaries" such as Henrik Ibsen, Leo Tolstoy, Émile Zola, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Gabriele D'Annunzio, Gerhart Hauptmann, and Hermann Sudermann. According to Katai, these Western writers "destroyed the gold-plated literature" (of classicism and Romanticism) by being "outspoken," "truthful," and "natural."

In an influential article titled “Bungeijō no shizenshugi” (Naturalism in Literary Arts, *Waseda bungaku*, 1908), Shimamura Hōgetsu – a leading critic who had become a professor of Aesthetics and English literature at Waseda College in 1905 upon his return from a three-year stay in England and Germany – pointed out that the recently emerged Japanese Naturalism, as opposed to earlier Naturalism that “sought objective description under the influence of Zola,” was a special current that appeared after Japanese intellectuals experienced “Sturm und Drang or Romanticism from around 1901–2 (when enthusiastic zeal for Nietzsche and Aesthetic Life emerged) until 1904–5.” Hōgetsu aligned recent Japanese Naturalism with European Impressionism, Symbolism, and fin-de-siècle Decadence. All of these movements were understood as further developments of European Naturalism, which they believed liberated individuals by addressing social and moral problems and destroying traditional social norms and literary forms.

Japanese Naturalist writers and critics promoted the genbun-itchi colloquial written language for its “clarity, directness, and immediacy,” seeing it as suited to unaffected and sincere expression, and forcibly classified the existing various mixed written styles into three distinct categories: (1) the “neoclassical” *gabun* style, (2) the classical Chinese-based *kanbun* style, and (3) the modern colloquial *genbun-itchi* style. Now a clear line was drawn between “outdated classical language” and “modern *genbun-itchi* language,” which they promoted as a literary style for the novel of a new age. In reality, the colloquial literary language of the early twentieth century novel had been created largely through interaction with modern Western literature. It was not so much “natural” or “transparent” (as it came to be regarded after the mid 1920s, when the *genbun-itchi* style had been thoroughly standardized and naturalized) as fresh, exotic, and cosmopolitan.

Kanshibun in the Meiji period and beyond

MATTHEW FRALEIGH

Sinitic genres flourished in the Meiji period with unprecedented splendor, giving *kanshibun* (Sinitic poetry and prose) a ubiquity it had never had before. A tremendous expansion of *kanshi* (Sinitic poetry) composition had taken place in late Edo, aided on the one hand by newly introduced poetic theories that promoted its naturalization and on the other by greater access to both educational opportunities and printed reference materials, which facilitated the acquisition of literacy and compositional proficiency in Literary Sinitic. These trends continued into Meiji, when poetic societies devoted to *kanshi* sprung up in both rural and urban areas, the social backgrounds of Japanese *kanshi* poets further diversified, a broader range of female poets came to participate, and new venues were established to showcase poetic production.

Yet it was not simply latent momentum from the Edo period that brought about the brilliant florescence of *kanshi* during these years, for a variety of distinctly Meiji period factors lay at its root. The dramatic political and sociocultural shifts accompanying the Restoration stimulated poets with a seemingly inexhaustible supply of new material, overseas experience opened for them new vistas of expression, and engagement with other Sinospheric poets, most importantly the contingent of Qing diplomats posted to Japan, furnished them with new interlocutors and critics. Most crucial, however, was the transformed Meiji media landscape, for it helped cultivate aspiring poets by providing them ready access to models that they could emulate while also fostering novel forms of poetic expression and interaction.

From our present-day vantage-point, *kanshi* composition may seem stodgy and old-fashioned, but such a view only began to take hold in the years between the late 1880s and early 1890s, when emerging “national language” (*kokugo*) discourse drew the borders around the newly forged canon of “national literature” (*kokubungaku*) in such a way as to exclude *kanshibun*. As scholar Iritani Sensusuke has observed, at least until this transition took place, *kanshi* appeared to be the type of verse that would be most

conducive to addressing the changes that the new era had brought to Japan, owing to its greater diversity of forms, its broader range of thematic content, and its larger vocabulary.¹ Many contemporary observers shared this view; in 1896, Masaoka Shiki (1867–1902), a critic and poet who composed in both Japanese and Chinese forms, declared matter-of-factly: “Comparing the development of waka, haiku, and kanshi in the literary world at present, kanshi are most advanced, haiku second, and waka third.” Significantly, Shiki attributed the advanced status of Japanese kanshi not to the lingering presence of poets born prior to the Restoration but to the vitality of the younger kanshi poets who were his peers.

Miura Kanō, the author of the most extensive scholarly treatment of Meiji kanshi, divides the period into three parts: the first phase, from 1868 to 1880, dominated by the poetry societies of Ōnuma Chinzan (1818–91) and Mori Shuntō (1819–89); the second phase, lasting through 1897, during which time Shuntō’s son Mori Kainan (1863–1911) was in ascendance; and the third phase, a period of decline that came shortly after Japan’s victory in the Sino-Japanese War.²

The poets who dominated the first dozen years of Meiji kanshi had largely made names for themselves prior to the Restoration. Ōnuma Chinzan had demonstrated his precocious talents by publishing his first poetry volume in 1838 and by the mid 1850s, he was clearly the central figure in Edo kanshi circles. Dwelling among other literarily inclined individuals in the Shitaya district, Chinzan was able to support himself as a professional poet, earning fees for his teaching and evaluation of students’ manuscripts, as well as for his own compositions. As head of the Shitaya Ginsha poetry group, Chinzan had consistently eschewed official service, meaning that his activities as poetic mentor, anthology editor, and commentator continued more or less unchanged through the Restoration. Yet Chinzan’s remove did not mean he was unresponsive to the transformations he saw around him. His somewhat satirical *Tōkeishi* (Tokyo Poems), published just one year after the Restoration (and promptly banned), was one of the first kanshi collections to survey the culture of the new capital. In the following quatrain, Chinzan draws upon ancient diction interpreting the first two hexagrams of *The Classic of Changes* (representing pure *yang* and pure *yin*) to describe present-day couture:

The whole world in barbarian garb; stalwarts’ aims shifted now;
Only wrestlers and courtesans dress as they always have.

¹ Iritani Sensuke, *Kindai bungaku to shite no Meiji kanshi* (Tokyo: Kenbun Shuppan, 1989).

² Miura Kanō, *Meiji kanbungakushi* (Tokyo: Kyūko Shoin, 1998); *Meiji no Kangaku* (Tokyo: Kyūko Shoin, 1998).

From this we know: it is the sturdiest and the most pliant that
Embody the ultimate virtues of “fitness” and “constancy.”

While many poetry societies operated in early Meiji Tokyo, it was the Matsuri Ginsha, established by Mori Shuntō in 1874, that became the chief rival of Chinzan’s Shitaya Ginsha. Both Chinzan and Shuntō had studied kanshi under Yanagawa Seigan in their youth, but Nagoya was Shuntō’s primary base during the late Edo period. Upon his relocation to Tokyo in 1874, Shuntō embarked upon an ambitious publishing agenda that quickly brought him national recognition. Just one year after his arrival, he published *Tōkyō saijin zekku* (Quatrains by Tokyo’s Men of Talent), a two-volume anthology that enjoyed longstanding popularity. Containing compositions by more than 160 poets (beginning with Chinzan), the collection exemplifies several particularly Meiji features, such as sequences composed by poets during excursions abroad (to China, Taiwan, Europe, and the United States), as well as the appended contribution of Ye Songshi, a Qing literatus who had arrived in Tokyo to teach Chinese only the previous year. In contrast to Chinzan, Shuntō actively cultivated ties with Meiji statesmen, who made up a significant number of the contributors to the kanshi collections he published.

In addition to such anthologies, periodical media was another important vehicle for the popularization of kanshi in early Meiji. Literary magazines that were devoted to or featured kanshi prominently proliferated during these years: notably Shuntō’s *Shinbunshi* (1875–81); Narushima Ryūhoku’s *Kagetsu shinshi* (1877–84); and Sada Hakubō’s *Meiji shibun* (1876–80). Even before these magazines emerged, however, the modes of poetic composition and communication that they would come to encourage had been pioneered in the pages of daily newspapers, Ryūhoku’s *Chōya shinbun* foremost among them.

Narushima Ryūhoku (1837–84) embarked upon a career as a journalist after losing his post in the Restoration. He had served the previous regime as shogunal tutor and compiler of historical chronicles while also making a name for himself as a poet and chronicler of urban culture. The two volumes of his *New Chronicles of Yanagibashi* (1859–71, published 1874) document the distinctive customs of the Yanagibashi geisha district before and after the Restoration. Following in the tradition of Terakado Seiken (1796–1868), Ryūhoku used hybridized kanbun to humorously satirize changing customs and mores: a style that Hattori Bushō (1842–1908) would also adopt in *Tōkyō shinhanjōki* (A New Record of Flourishing Tokyo, 1874–6), one of the early Meiji period’s best-selling books. Though the Meiji regime

attempted to suppress the publication of both texts, these works were nevertheless popular not only at the time of their publication but among readers and writers of the next generation; as Nagai Kafū (1879–1959) would later recall, “there wasn’t a student around in Meiji who was unfamiliar with Ryūhoku’s *New Chronicles*.”

From the beginning of his ten years overseeing the *Chōya shinbun*, Ryūhoku made *kanshibun* an important regular feature of the newspaper. Timely compositions by established poets appeared in almost every issue, often accompanied by the commentary, critique, or poetic replies of other well-known figures. Readers of the paper from all regions of Japan took part as well, submitting their recent compositions for evaluation or offering their own harmonizing responses to poems they had read in its pages. The *Kagetsu shinshi* magazine that Ryūhoku launched a few years later expanded this interactive literary mode to include a diverse array of kanshi and other poetry as well as translations, travelogues, and essays (in both kanbun and classical Japanese). The multiple references to *Kagetsu shinshi* in the novels of Mori Ōgai (1862–1922) indicate how popular the kanshi and kanbun works printed in such magazines were among those who would become the eminent writers of the next generation.

One other significant readership for Japanese kanshibun that emerged in early Meiji was Chinese, and cognizance of this new audience manifested itself in various ways. While the fruit of Japanese kanshi poets’ exchanges with Qing literati who traveled to or worked in Japan had appeared sporadically in the pages of Japan’s newspapers and magazines in the mid 1870s, the 1878 establishment of the first Chinese embassy in Tokyo made such opportunities much more common. Traditionally educated Japanese shared a common written language with the Qing officials and regularly engaged them in poetry exchanges and wide-ranging “brush-talks”; these were regularly featured in periodical media and also published as monographs. So eager were Japanese poets to seek out critiques of their kanshi or to solicit kanbun prefaces to their poetic anthologies that the Qing embassy even explicitly assigned staff members the responsibility of coordinating such interaction. The Qing officials likewise availed themselves of the abundance of kanbun and kanshi texts circulating in early Meiji Japan to produce a diverse range of works systematically introducing Japanese culture and society to a Chinese audience. Even Qing scholars unaffiliated with the embassy drew upon published texts to produce some of the earliest Chinese anthologies of Japanese kanshi, such as Chen Manshou’s 1883 *Riben tongren shixuan* (A Selection of Poems by Japanese Comrades), and Yu Yue’s

massive *Dongying shixuan* (A Selection of Poems from Japan), which followed shortly thereafter.

The figure who was central to the second stage of Meiji kanshi, Mori Kainan, reflected this increased level of interaction with Qing poets. In his childhood, Kainan had the rare opportunity to study poetry composition and spoken Chinese with a native speaker, and his poetic tastes were likewise informed by more recent trends. While Qing dynasty poems had received some attention from earlier Japanese figures, both Kainan and his father Shuntō produced anthologies that made Qing poems more familiar and accessible. Kainan was particularly known for his ornate style and romantic themes, a tendency that was already apparent in some of the poems he published in *Kagetsu shinshi* as a young man.

The approach of Kokubu Seigai (1857–1944), who came to rival Kainan’s prominence during this second stage, could not have been more dissimilar. Though he emerged from Kainan’s Seisha poetic group, Seigai took his inspiration from the poetry of earlier dynasties, the bold and sweeping style he favored contrasting with Kainan’s delicacy. Kanshi figured prominently in the political novels that emerged in the mid-1880s and 1890s, which were written in a style of Japanese derived from kanbun, and Seigai is said to have been the author of the kanshi woven into Shiba Shirō’s (pen-name: Tōkai Sanshi) tremendously popular novel *Kajin no kigū* (Chance Meetings with Beautiful Women, 1885–8, 1891, 1897). Seigai was best known, however, for the topical poems he began publishing regularly in newspapers and magazines of the 1890s, many of which provided critical commentary on current events. As Gōyama Rintarō has observed, this genre of topical kanshi was arguably the most widely read in the Meiji period, with Seigai’s success leading Noguchi Neisai (1867–1905) and others to produce kanshi columns in major media that were critically responsive to recent political and cultural developments. The journalist and critic Hasegawa Nyozeikan (1875–1969) fondly recalled how Seigai’s kanshi could often be seen scrawled on the classroom blackboards of his student days in the 1890s.

In the aftermath of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–5, kanshi became a less prominent feature of the literary scene. Whereas kanshi columns were common in major national and regional newspapers through mid-Meiji, these began to disappear by the Taishō era (1912–26), though a range of magazines continued to feature kanshi regularly through the 1940s, and even today a small handful of journals maintain the practice. Those educated in the first decades of Meiji, including such literary giants as Natsume Sōseki (1867–1916), continued to compose kanshi well into the twentieth century, but

altered educational priorities meant that the population of kanshi producers rapidly dwindled. While basic literacy in Literary Sinitic remained part of the curriculum for those coming of age in the early twentieth century, the technical training necessary to compose kanshi increasingly became something acquired only through independent initiative. A greater emphasis upon acquiring Western languages was unquestionably one factor leading to the demise of kanshi, but to understand this shift in terms of a simple antithetical tension between Chinese and Western discourse risks obscuring the ways in which Literary Sinitic had served as a major vehicle by which Meiji intellectuals encountered and translated Western ideas.³

³ Several informative works on Sinitic literature in Meiji include: Kanda Kiichirō, ed. *Meiji bungaku zenshū*, vol. 62, *Meiji kanshibunshū* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1983); Kinoshita Hyō, *Meiji shiwa* (Tokyo: Bunchūdō, 1943); Saitō Mareshi, *Kanbunmyaku no kindai: Shinmatsu Meiji no bungakuken* (Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku Shuppankai, 2005); *Kanbunmyaku to kindai Nihon: Mō hitotsu no kotoba no sekai* (Tokyo: NHK Books, 2007); Gōyama Rintarō, *Bakumatsu, Meiji no kanbungaku no kenkyū* (Osaka: Izumi Shoin, 2014).

Translated fiction, political fiction

DENNIS WASHBURN

Meiji Japan may be described, in both instrumental and metaphorical senses, as a translation culture. Almost all of the oligarchy's policies aimed at modernizing the state were dependent to some degree on the translation of Western political, legal, and technological knowledge. At the time of the Meiji Restoration, a number of leading writers and intellectuals held the position that the best way to foreclose the possibility of cultural cooption was to adapt Enlightenment ideals as a way to encourage a new moral consciousness. One prominent exponent of this view was Nakamura Masanao (1832–91, literary sobriquet Keiu), a Confucian scholar and educator whose best-selling translations of Samuel Smiles's *Self Help* (1859; *Saigoku risshi-hen*, 1871) and John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* (1859; *Jiyū no kotowari*, 1872) helped popularize the modern myths of the self-made man and the positivist views of individual initiative, rationalism, and autonomy. Such popular translations not only helped garner support for the aims of modernization by supplying information about the West, but also acted in concert with other developments to stimulate the creation of a market for literary translations. In particular, the institution in 1872 of universal compulsory education to grade four, coupled with the emergence of a commercially viable press during the 1870s, created a larger readership with an emerging consciousness of national identity.

If early Meiji literature is distinguished by the ideologically motivated translations of the modernizers, it is equally marked by a change in the status of *gesaku* ("playful fiction") writers, who re-imagined themselves in a new social role as a bastion of culturally essential values. The works of Kanagaki Robun (1829–94) exemplify this trend. Robun was a journalist who specialized in humorous accounts of the follies accompanying the introduction of Western customs. His most notable works include *Seiyōdōchū hizakurige* (Shank's Mare to the West, serialized 1870–6), a reworking of the Edo fiction writer Jippensha Ikku's *Tōkaidōchū hizakurige* (Shank's Mare on the Tōkaidō, serialized 1802–22) that transports the pratfalls and slapstick adventures of

Ikku's peripatetic characters Yaji and Kita to a global stage. Robun's sharpest and most topical satire, however, is aimed at the domestic scene. Works such as *Agura nabe* (Sitting around the Stewpot, 1871–2), in which the fad of eating beef stands in for the age of civilization and enlightenment, skewer the foibles and pretensions of the modernizers.

Though late gesaku writers enjoyed some degree of commercial success with their satiric writings, their oppositional stance was already an indication that significant changes in manners and customs were under way and could not be stopped. When the Ministry of Religious Instruction mandated in its 1872 guidelines for writers that fiction had to serve the interests of the state, the basic conception of the social value of literature began to be prescribed so that even gesaku, with its supposedly frivolous attitude, had to assume a more serious role. It was politically advantageous for modernizers to disparage the Tokugawa period as frivolous and backward, and even conservative intellectuals saw popular forms of pre-Meiji literature and storytelling as increasingly old-fashioned. Still, although gesaku came to be identified with a passing age, the practices and values of late Tokugawa fiction remained popular throughout the nineteenth century. Robun, for example, had a major success in 1879 with his gesaku-style work *Takahashi Oden yasha monogatari* (Tale of the Demon Takahashi Oden), which was based on a notorious murder case of 1876. Takabatake Ransen (1838–85) also turned to more contemporary settings and stories, as in his *Chōtori Tsukuba no suso moyō* (A Pattern of Butterflies and Birds at the base of Mount Tsukuba, 1883–4), in order to keep the practices and techniques of gesaku up to date.

As it turns out, the durability of literary modes inherited from the Tokugawa period in the face of fundamental changes in language, publishing formats, and modes of circulation was a crucial condition for the boom in translations. The study of Chinese texts and the work of Nagasaki interpreters, especially those who created the scholarly specialization of Dutch Studies, or *Rangaku*, laid much of the linguistic groundwork that was exploited in the new economy of print media. Meiji translators did not have to rely exclusively on neologisms for their work, since they could draw on terms from earlier Rangaku translations, from late Tokugawa period translations by scholars of Chinese, and from classical Chinese vocabulary. In addition, the well-established literary practice of adapted fiction, *hon'an shōsetsu*, provided a model for localizing foreign texts.

The models provided by Rangaku scholars and the practice of adaptation, *hon'an*, is reflected in the work of early Meiji translators, who tended to rely on elements of classical rhetoric already accessible to readers familiar with

the conventions of *kanbuntai* (classical Chinese style), a concise Sinitic style of writing. They also drew upon the hybrid practice known as *kanbun kundokutai*, reading classical Chinese in Japanese syntactic order. There were important exceptions, such as Nakamura Keiu and Fukuzawa Yukichi (1834–1901) who tried to write and translate colloquially for a mass audience, but for the most part early Meiji translators used the hybrid styles in all types of translations, including literary works, until the mid 1880s, when a new generation of translators better trained in Western languages began their experiments to create new vernacular styles, known as *genbun-itchi* (unification of spoken and written languages) style, which ultimately led to a standard form of modern written Japanese.

Like items of vocabulary and style, the general principles of translation owe debts both to Tokugawa stylistics and to the changed worldview that made translation such a vital activity. This is illustrated by the ideas of Morita Shiken (1861–97), who had called for a more thorough classification of all scholarly activities in Eastern culture as a way to emulate the rationalistic, scientific West. This prescriptive tendency is apparent in Morita's "Rules for Translation" (*Hon'yaku no kokoroe*), which appeared in the newly established journal *Kokumin no tomo* (The Nation's Friend) in 1887. For Morita, the ideal translation transparently re-creates Japanese as an international language, and so he urges the abandonment of the customary reliance on ornamental terms from classical Chinese in favor of a more literal shift to modern Western idioms. The method of reading classical Chinese as Japanese had a long history, but no such tradition apart from the relatively recent emergence of Rangaku existed for working with Western languages. Moreover, the belief that fiction was a frivolous pursuit lingered among some translators who were interested in Western literatures. Given this history, it was difficult even for modernizers to reconcile completely their misgivings with the prestige accorded literature, especially the novel, in the West.

These considerations were certainly crucial to Oda Jun'ichirō (1851–1919, pen-name Niwa Jun'ichirō), whose abridged translation of Bulwer-Lytton's novels *Ernest Maltrevers* and *Alice* was published in 1878 under the title *Karyū shunwa* (A Romance – literally "spring tale" – of Cherries and Willows). Like many early Meiji translations, *Karyū shunwa* is not a direct or literal reworking of the original, but a Tokugawa-style adaptation.

This translation has been accorded an important place in the history of modern literature in Japan because of the reasons behind Oda's choice. Bulwer-Lytton's novels were popular in England at the time Oda traveled and studied there, and he understood their appeal. *Ernest Maltrevers* and *Alice*

are pastiches of melodrama and romanticism. Their sentimental, often sensationalist, plots gesture toward more traditional, “respectable” values, while their protagonists reflect the Byronic ideal of the autonomous, self-made hero. For Oda, the hybrid quality of these novels seemed especially appealing because they possessed familiar melodramatic narrative elements while dealing with social and political issues. In a brief postscript to his translation he compared Bulwer-Lytton’s works to late Tokugawa romances such as *Shunshoku umegoyomi* (Plum Calendar of Spring Colors, 1832–3) by Tamenaga Shunsui (1790–1844). Even so, he conceived of his readership not as mere consumers of gesaku, but as educated, enlightened men. His purpose was to inform his readers about conditions in the West, and to that end he employed a modified Sinitic style.

The significance of works like *Karyū shunwa* in the development of rhetoric and style is harder to discern now because fundamental changes, driven in large part by more sophisticated translations, occurred over the course of the 1880s. Nevertheless, *Karyū shunwa* marked an important historical turn because it made a strong appeal about the value of fiction. At almost the same time that translations of fiction began to appear in greater numbers, conflicting views about the value and social role of narrative fiction reached a brief convergence with the appearance of a new genre, the political novel, or *seiji shōsetsu*.

Seiji shōsetsu, a term that typifies the hybrid nature of early Meiji forms, refers to a group of novels written for the most part during the 1880s. Many of the authors of this genre – Komuro Angaidō (1852–85), Miyazaki Muryū (1853–89), and Sakazaki Shiran (1853–1913) – were journalists or political activists involved in the People’s Rights movement, which pursued the creation of a popularly elected assembly, the institution of civil rights, and the promulgation of a constitution. These men shared Oda’s belief that novels could be used to enlighten, though their target audience was the uneducated masses who needed instruction in modern ideas of freedom and rights. They enjoyed popular success because their works employed romantic figures and historical settings ranging from Restoration era Japan to the French Revolution.

The most commercially successful author of *seiji shōsetsu* was Yano Ryūkei (1850–1931), who published his *Keikoku bidan* (Commendable Anecdotes on Creating a Nation) in 1883–4. This novel details the fall of ancient Thebes, a subject that, because it was so removed from current events, helped protect the liberalizing sentiments of the novel from government censorship. Yano aimed his work at a market of more highly educated readers, which helped make fiction seem socially acceptable, and his success

inspired Tsubouchi Shōyō to translate Benjamin Disraeli's *Coningsby* and Bulwer-Lytton's *Rienzi* in 1885. It also encouraged other writers to try their hand at infusing political ideology into fiction.

The hybridity of the political novel is apparent in two of the most popular and influential works: *Setchūbai* (Plum Blossoms in the Snow, 1886) by Suehiro Tetchō (1849–96), which is marked by the intrusions of political dialogues into a love-romance narrative; and *Kajin no kigū* (Chance Meetings with Beautiful Women, 1885–8, 1891, 1897) by Shiba Shirō (1852–1922, pen-name Tōkai Sanshi), a romance centered around stories about the struggle for freedom and national independence in contemporary Asia, Africa, and Europe. The protagonist Tōkai Sanjin (“Wanderer from the Eastern Seas”) lives in Philadelphia, where he meets several beautiful women: Yūran, an advocate for constitutional monarchy in Spain; Kōren, who opposes British rule in Ireland; and their butler, who is an exiled rebel against Manchu rule in China. Sanjin visits many countries fighting against European colonial power and eventually joins with a Japanese group plotting to overthrow the Yi dynasty and claim Korea for Japan.

These political novels largely replicated certain stylistic tendencies of gesaku. The authors of Tokugawa adaptations of Ming fiction constituted a literary elite who made use of vernacular language and popular literary conventions within a framework provided by the classical Chinese idiom of their education. In that sense, the political novel was as much in the tradition of the Tokugawa practice of *hon'an*, adaptation, as *Karyū shunwa*, and it played the same crucial role as translation literature in introducing new idioms and worldviews and promoting new patterns of literary production and consumption.

By 1882, many large-circulation daily newspapers had sprung up in the major cities, a significant number of regional and specialized publications were founded, and a majority of publishing ventures had switched from woodblock to movable-type printing, reducing costs and improving the efficiency of distribution. Readership expanded in both geographical and socio-economic terms, and mass literacy gradually changed reading habits as well, which shifted away from communal and oral practices toward the norm of silent reading by individuals. Viewed within the context of these enormous material transformations, perhaps the most important achievement of translations and political fiction was in taking advantage of new media to establish the novel as the artistic medium of modern culture that best represented the aspirations and sensibilities of an emerging middle-class readership.

Newspaper serials in the late nineteenth century

S A T O R U S A I T O

Although it had various precedents in the Edo period, the newspaper as a daily collection of news first established itself as a major medium in the early Meiji period, within the larger Westernization movement called *bunmei kaika* (civilization and enlightenment) that led to Japan's increased contact with other countries and its entry into the world economy. Japan's first daily newspaper, *Yokohama mainichi shinbun* (Yokohama Daily), was founded on December 8, Meiji 3 (January 28, 1871 under the Gregorian calendar), and soon others such as *Tokyo nichinichi shinbun* (Tokyo Daily, est. 1872) and *Yūbin hōchi shinbun* (Post-Dispatch Newspaper, est. 1872) followed suit. These newspapers were characterized by their *kanbun*-style language and their focus on economy and business that matched their target audience of entrepreneurs and intellectuals. At the same time, they contained columns devoted to strange events, both domestic and foreign, that appealed to their readers' curiosity, a curiosity that would fuel the spread of the newspaper medium.

The newspaper began to expand its scope in the course of the 1870s, when papers such as *Yomiuri shinbun* (Yomiuri Newspaper, est. 1874), *Hiragana e'iri shinbun* (Hiragana Illustrated Newspaper, est. 1875; soon renamed *Tokyo e'iri shinbun*, or Tokyo Illustrated News), and *Kanayomi shinbun* (Kanayomi Newspaper, est. 1875) targeted a more general audience including women and children. Characterized by their focus on everyday topics and their use of colloquial language, these newspapers differentiated themselves physically by using smaller-sized paper; and they soon came to be known as *koshinbun* (small newspapers), in contrast with the more serious *ōshinbun* (large newspapers) described above.

Another feature of the *koshinbun* that set them apart from the *ōshinbun* was the prominence of a column called *zappō* (miscellaneous reports), in which one can discern the literary tropes of Meiji narrative fiction beginning to take shape. A combination of tabloid news and neighborhood gossip, these columns covered a variety of topics such as local crime, adultery, the pleasure

quarters, and even domestic quarrels. To the extent that they targeted not only public figures but also ordinary people, often exposing embarrassing details, the zappō columns were a double-edged sword: readers were entertained but also feared becoming their victims. Through these columns, the newspaper, while playing a kind of didactic function of *kanzen chōaku* (praising virtue, chastising vice), fostered a readership whose enjoyment was intricately tied to the exposure of private lives.

Soon, the newspapers began to serialize the reports appearing in these columns, and this resulted in the reports becoming more story-like and crossing into the realm of fiction. By the end of the 1870s, these serialized “reports” called *tsuzuki-mono* had established themselves as the favorite reading material of newspaper subscribers, stimulating the sales of *koshinbun* at a time when the newspaper industry as a whole was undergoing rapid expansion due to two contemporary developments: the Seinan War (1877), triggered by the rebellion of the Meiji Restoration hero Saigō Takamori (1828–77), and the *Jiyū minken undō* (Freedom and People’s Rights movement). This movement (thought to have begun when Itagaki Taisuke [1837–1919], among others, submitted a call for a representative form of government in 1874) gained momentum in the late 1870s, fueling the transformation of the newspaper industry.

Defined by its serialized form, the *tsuzuki-mono* varied widely in its subject matter, ranging from “Kinnosuke no hanashi” (The Story of Kinnosuke, serialized in *Tokyo e’iri shinbun* from August to September 1878), a story about a merchant who has fallen on hard times after becoming involved with a geisha, to narratives that would become known as *dokufu-mono* (poisonous women tales), which focused on real women criminals. The most famous of the *dokufu-mono* was the story of Takahashi Oden (1850–79), which first appeared as a *tsuzuki-mono* in multiple newspapers the day after her execution for robbery and murder on January 31, 1879.

As popular as they were, *tsuzuki-mono* elicited a mixed response from the newspapers. *Yomiuri shinbun* made a concerted effort to maintain its ethical position by doing without *tsuzuki-mono*, believing that the format of a report based on facts but embellished with fiction undermined the role of the newspapers as purveyors of news as truth. In an attempt to maintain its respectability, the *Yomiuri* established *Yomiuri zōtan* (Yomiuri Miscellany), a column comparable to the editorial columns of *ōshinbun*. By contrast, *Tokyo e’iri shinbun* frequently illustrated the *tsuzuki-mono* to entertain its readers, while maintaining a semblance of factual news by employing the figure of the reporter as narrator who presents the story as an investigative report.

Kanayomi shinbun, founded by popular author Kanagaki Robun (1829–94), while not employing illustrations at this time, utilized tsuzuki-mono as a kind of advertisement for an illustrated book version that would follow if the story generated enough interest. For example, Robun's "Torioi Omatsu no den" (The Story of Actress Omatsu), often regarded as the first tsuzuki-mono, began serialization on December 10, 1877, but the story was discontinued on January 11, 1878 with an announcement that the story would continue in book form. The story of Takahashi Oden followed a similar path, as Robun curtailed the serialization to publish the story in book form as *Takahashi Oden yasha monogatari* (Tale of the Demon Takahashi Oden, 1879). These books, called *jitsuroku shōsetsu* (sensational stories produced by mixing facts and fiction), enabled writers such as Robun to free themselves up from the constraints of news reporting and to embellish facts for the entertainment of the readers.

By the early 1880s, however, ambivalence toward the genre began to dissipate, and the tsuzuki-mono became the centerpiece of many newspapers. Added to the mix of serialized narratives in the newspapers were translations of Western stories as well as the political novels, a distinct literary genre of the Meiji period that was used as a vehicle to spread the ideals of the Freedom and People's Rights movement. Often read in an allegorical manner in which characters and stories were understood as representing actual people or events, the political novels, appearing in both the *ōshinbun* and the *koshinbun*, challenged not only the supposed factual basis of tsuzuki-mono but also the presumed role of fiction as entertainment for women and children. The popularity of the tsuzuki-mono was such that even the *Yomiuri*, which had long resisted carrying tsuzuki-mono, was finally forced to relent in early 1885. But the *Yomiuri* was quick to find a solution that would enable it to carry entertainment while reestablishing its respectability as a provider of news as truth. Heeding the advice of Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859–1935), an important contributor to the paper who had just published the first installment of his *Shōsetsu shinzui* (The Essence of the Novel, 1885–6), the *Yomiuri* established an independent *shōsetsu-ran* (fiction column) in January 1886 in an effort to draw a clear distinction between news and fiction and to clarify the fictional nature of newspaper serials. In addition to being used by Shōyō for his literary experiments in the late 1880s, this column provided a forum, in the late 1880s and early 1890s, for other major authors of modern Japanese literature such as Yamada Bimyō (1868–1910), Kōda Rohan (1867–1947), and Ozaki Kōyō (1868–1903).

Shōyō and the *Yomiuri* also took the lead in experimenting with a literary genre that would quickly become the next dominant genre in newspaper

serials, namely, detective fiction. In December 1887, at a time when this genre had not established itself in Japan, Shōyō translated and serialized the American detective story XYZ by Anna Katharine Green (1846–1935), which appeared as “Nisegane tsukai” (The Counterfeiter) in the supplementary issues of *Yomiuri shinbun*. In January 1888, the journalist Kuroiwa Ruikō (1862–1920) quickly followed suit with his newspaper serialization of “Hōtei no bijin” (A Beauty in Court), a translation of the American writer Hugh Conway’s *Dark Days*. Over the course of the next five years, Ruikō would serialize over twenty works, many of them by the French writers Émile Gaboriau (1832–73) and Fortuné du Boisgobey (1821–91), generating a detective fiction boom in Meiji Japan.

The emergence of the detective story in the late 1880s appeared to be a perfect marriage between content and form within the literary landscape of the time. Parasitic rather than groundbreaking, Ruikō’s stories drew heavily on the genres that took an interest in secrets, crime, law, and foreign countries. At the same time, Ruikō made sure to fully utilize the format of the newspaper serial, whether ending each installment in a manner that created suspense or holding a whodunit contest in which readers were invited to guess the culprit.

The overwhelmingly positive reception of Ruikō’s detective stories in the late 1880s was surprising nonetheless, considering that the *tantei* (detective) had quickly become a hated figure upon its introduction as a government position in 1881 and that it had been vilified in various political novels of the 1880s. Many of Ruikō’s detective stories were serialized in *E’iri jiyū shinbun* (Illustrated Liberal Newspaper, est. 1882), where he was the editor-in-chief and where many political novels had been serialized in an effort to impress on readers the injustices of the Meiji government and its detectives. In this sense, Ruikō’s stories were a part of a radical shift that took place in the late 1880s, a political lame duck period when the Freedom and People’s Rights movement waned and people awaited the promulgation of the Constitution in 1889 and the opening of the Diet in 1890, the two primary achievements of the movement. In this time of transition, Ruikō’s detective stories guided the politically minded public through a literary genre that turned unjust crimes into entertaining puzzles for the detective and readers alike.

Despite the overwhelming success of Ruikō’s translations, detective fiction’s reign as the dominant genre of newspaper serials was short-lived, sputtering out after Ruikō abandoned the genre in the early 1890s. Detective fiction would exercise a profound effect on Japanese literary consciousness for decades to come, as exemplified by Natsume Sōseki (1867–1916)

who remained preoccupied with the genre throughout his literary career. But as far as serialized fiction was concerned, the newspapers would soon find a suitable replacement in the *katei shōsetsu* (family novels) that proliferated in the late 1890s in the hands of such authors as Ozaki Kōyō and Kikuchi Yūhō (1870–1947) as well as Ruikō himself, all of whom translated, adapted, or were heavily influenced by the works of Bertha M. Clay. While the singularity of their source might be surprising, the subject matter of Clay's works – the ethical importance of marriage and fidelity, especially for women – makes sense given the emphatic connection between serialized fiction and its milieu since the late 1890s was a period when major ideological frameworks of the Japanese family were being constructed and propagated in conjunction with the Meiji Civil Code (1896–98).

Translation, vernacular style, and the Westernesque *femme fatale* in modern Japanese literature

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The history of modern Japanese literature begins with translation in more than one sense. First, the nineteenth-century European concept of “literature” was translated into the Chinese compound *bungaku*, investing an old word with a new meaning. The institution of this new concept precipitated a watershed in the social history of fiction, raising it from the lowly status of frivolous entertainment to the high culture of civilized nations. Second, the Meiji period ushered in an era of literary translations from Western languages that would have a decisive impact on Japanese literary production. Translating Western literary texts played an essential role in the creation of a new literary language for modern Japanese fiction. Using Futabatei Shimei (1864–1909) as a case study, this entry explores the underlying relationship between literary translation, vernacular composition, and the emergence of a new gender archetype for modern Japanese literature.

The Meiji era (1868–1912) was characterized by calls for reform in virtually every arena of Japanese life; language and women were especially prominent targets for change. With respect to language, reformers advocated bringing writing into conformity with spoken language, following the model of modern Western vernacular literature. With respect to women, reformers promoted the adoption of Western fashions, hairstyles, and, most importantly, education. The unprecedented figure of the schoolgirl would come to personify the rapidly changing face of Meiji Japan. These calls for reform constitute the essential background for Futabatei’s dual career as literary translator and novelist, as the discussion below will demonstrate.

Futabatei Shimei is widely hailed as the progenitor of Japanese literary modernity, a distinction that derives primarily from his creation of the *genbun-itchi* (unification of spoken and written languages) vernacular style that would later become the very foundation of the modern Japanese novel.

He was the first to attempt translating modern Western fiction into vernacular Japanese, and one of the first to try composing original fiction in vernacular Japanese. Significantly, his earliest efforts at literary translation predate his work as a novelist. By 1886, he had translated a work by Nikolai Gogol (title unknown), and by March of the same year he had translated part of Ivan Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*. Although these translations were never published and their manuscripts have been lost to history, Tsubouchi Shōyō's (1859–1935) recollections tell us that both were written in a vernacular style. *Ukigumo* (Drifting Clouds) was published in installments from July 1887 through August 1889. In the meantime, Futabatei also debuted as a literary translator with the serialized publication of *Aibiki* (Turgenev's "The Rendezvous," from *A Sportsman's Notebook*). As this chronology suggests, Futabatei's creation of a vernacular Japanese literary language was inextricably tied to the process of translation.

Although we habitually think of translation as a transference between two discrete and established languages, Futabatei used translation to create a new literary language in Japanese. In this sense, his translations from modern Russian literature constitute original innovations. Indeed, the form of literature presented by Futabatei's *Aibiki* and *Ukigumo* was so new as to ultimately create a radical divide between modern Japanese fiction and all that preceded it.

Prior to Futabatei's work, the styles available to Japanese literary translators derived from two local traditions: classical Japanese prose (*wabun* or *gabun*) and Japanese reading conventions for literary Chinese (*kanbun-kundoku*). The latter quickly emerged as the preferred medium for translation (as in Niwa Jun'ichirō's 1877 translation of Bulwer-Lytton's *Ernest Maltravers*, mentioned in the previous chapter). The preference for the *kanbun-kundoku* style in the translation of Western literatures is related to the fact that it derived from techniques for rendering classical Chinese into Japanized pronunciations and syntactical patterns. *Kanbun-kundoku* style was thus an interlingual *écriture par excellence*, and it was already quite familiar to the educated classes of 1870s and 1880s Japan. Yet as a medium of translation, its potential to transform the Western novel was substantially limited to the sphere of narrative content. What *kanbun-kundoku* translations offered Japanese readers was a compelling story and a more intimate sense, however fictional, of the daily lives and sensibilities of Westerners.

In translating vernacular Russian fiction, Futabatei abandoned the preexisting styles of *kanbun-kundoku*, instead seeking to forge a new style that would convey the form, content, and vernacular nature of the original texts. This was not a simple matter of writing Japanese as it was actually spoken.

Japanese precedents for rendering colloquial speech in writing included Shikitei Sanba (1776–1822), a writer of popular Edo fiction, and San'yūtei Enchō (1839–1900), a raconteur whose performance was captured verbatim by a new, Western-inspired shorthand technique in the Meiji era publication of *Kaidan Botan dōrō* (A Ghost Story Peony Lantern, 1886). With respect to the representation of dialogue, Sanba had already achieved vernacular realism with orthographic innovations that indicated dialectal idiosyncrasies in pronunciation. Yet use of the vernacular was limited to dialogue, with the narrative passages written exclusively in the gabun style. If the vernacularization of Japanese writing were simply a matter of replicating speech, as so many of its proponents claimed, then the publication of *Botan dōrō* would have represented the completion of, rather than a suggestive prelude to, the development of this style.

However, Futabatei's pioneering interest in vernacular literature was not inspired by these Japanese precedents, but rather by his encounter with modern Russian literature. His effort to develop a new literary style was driven by his devotion to a new conception of literature itself. Though the effect of his work was not immediate, in the long run it proved to be the most incontrovertible: when subsequent Japanese Naturalists such as Tayama Katai (1872–1930) retrospectively refer to the kanbun-kundoku style fiction they read as youths in the 1880s, it is almost always as a trope for their as yet immature conception of literature; by contrast, their glowing recollections of *Aibiki* invariably narrate their awakening to literature proper (bungaku in the modern sense of the term).

As a translator, Futabatei is renowned for his adherence to the form of the original text. In a frequently cited interview ("Yo ga hon'yaku no hyōjun" [My Standard for Translation], 1906), he stated that as a translator he "never disposed of a single comma or period arbitrarily," and even attempted to reproduce "the same number of words as the original." At a time when other literary translators had few inhibitions about altering the content of the translated text and none whatsoever about altering its formal characteristics, Futabatei's pious attitude toward the source text was original in itself. And it was what both compelled and enabled him to create a new literary language for Japanese.

Where Futabatei fundamentally departed from his predecessors and contemporaries in the production – translation or composition – of Meiji literature was in his understanding of literature. Simply stated, Futabatei was the first Meiji writer to treat the novel with the respect customarily reserved for the Chinese classics – ethical philosophy, history, Chinese poetry – that

constituted the essential syllabus for elite education in pre-Meiji Japan. In other words, he was one of the first in Japan to accord the novel the respect normally reserved for the language of *truth*, as evidenced in his 1886 essay “Shōsetsu sōron” (Theory of the Novel). Therein, Futabatei defined the novel as a genre that borrows the contingent appearances of reality for the sole purpose of revealing the idea (i.e. truth or meaning) hidden within. The calculated use of language and plot are essential to achieving this aim. Although the essay does not discuss literary translation, we can infer from its logic that Futabatei’s goal as a translator was to convey the idea revealed by the source novel, which was necessarily a product of both linguistic form and narrative content. It was his understanding of the original text as an indivisible unit of form and content that necessitated the creation of a new target language.

If the genbun-itchi movement ostensibly aimed to close the gap between colloquial speech and writing, it was fundamentally driven by a desire to achieve parity between Japanese and modern European forms of writing. What set Futabatei apart from contemporary rivals in the development of the genbun-itchi style was not his superior ability to mimic spoken Japanese in writing, but rather his genius for translating vernacular Russian literature into elements from spoken Japanese diction. This decisive difference is easily obscured if we consider genbun-itchi only as the realistic representation of common parlance in prose, or rather, the representation of reality in prose via the language of colloquial Japanese.

Frequently cited as a prime example of felicitous modern Japanese prose style, *Aibiki* may appear to the modern-day reader as “natural” Japanese, especially in comparison to the now-outmoded language of Niwa’s *Karyū shunwa* or other examples from Futabatei’s day. However, when *Aibiki* first appeared, Futabatei’s prose struck his contemporaries as anything but “natural.” One contemporary reviewer of *Aibiki* found its descriptive language so cloying that he believed Futabatei must have embellished Turgenev’s descriptions to make up for a dull plot. A comparison of *Aibiki* with the original text shows that this was not the case. What was initially jarring about Futabatei’s translation were elements that, when translated into English, would not strike us as particularly odd. Here is an English translation of the second sentence of *Aibiki* that retains the syntax and verbatim meaning of Futabatei’s text as much as possible:

A light rain had been falling since the morning, and in the breaks between the clouds a warm sun would shine now and then, truly fickle skies.

In English, nothing seems “strange” about this passage. The personification of nature in Western literatures, as old as Homer’s “rosy-fingered dawn,” is so familiar that we might not even notice that the expression “fickle skies” invests a natural phenomenon with intentionality. However, this kind of personification had virtually no place in the literary lexicons of classical Japanese or Chinese, much less in the figures of everyday speech.

Futabatei must have been well aware that his translation would seem “strange.” If he had wished to produce a “natural” version of Turgenev’s story in Japanese, he could have reduced the personifying descriptions of nature to a semantic content that could then be repackaged in a form already available to Japanese writing. If he had done so, however, he would have been left with precious little to translate. Not only was his method of translation revolutionary; his choice of text was equally radical. Whereas preceding translations of Western fiction reflected a primary interest in exotic stories, Futabatei chose to translate a work that conveyed almost no story at all. By manifesting a modern Western literary text in and as language, Futabatei’s *Aibiki* definitively exposed the fact that his contemporaries in the literary world apprehended modern Western literature as mere content.

Futabatei’s stringent personal standard for translation was driven by a passionate belief in the ability of the vernacular novel to reveal the truth. This same passion inspired Futabatei to write *Ukigumo*. The basic story of *Ukigumo* is fairly simple: the protagonist, Utsumi Bunzō, is in love with his cousin, Sonoda Osei. Her mother, Omasa, has hinted that she would support their marriage. But when Bunzō loses his job, everyone begins to turn against him. Omasa becomes increasingly hostile toward him and friendly toward Honda Noboru, his former colleague in the prestigious government bureaucracy. In turn, Osei also seems to shift her affections from Bunzō to Noboru. Things go from bad to worse, and by the end of the novel Bunzō is completely alienated from his surroundings.

A natural born mimic, Osei has a distinct facility for picking up on new trends, and an equal tendency to discard them as soon as something newer comes along. Bunzō, by contrast, is characterized by an unswerving adherence to ideals, making him incapable of adapting to his surroundings. While Osei is a talker, Bunzō is a thinker who sees everything in terms of written texts. The ever-widening gap between the two, when read as the failed betrothal of speech and writing, emerges as a powerful metanarrative on the essential dilemmas of vernacularization in modern Japanese literature.

The divide between Bunzō and the other main characters stems from a conspicuous difference in their relationships to language. Bunzō is constantly

hampered by his inability to manipulate spoken language: from the inability to curry favor with his boss that results in his loss of employment to his inability to verbally mollify Omasa; his frequent reduction to stuttering and speechlessness in moments of highly charged emotion; and, most importantly, his inability to secure Osei's affections in the face of competition from the silver-tongued Noboru. By contrast, the other characters share an easy facility with the spoken word. Omasa spins out words "with a will that could turn even a heron into a crow," and Noboru's rise up the bureaucratic ladder is fueled by "an inexhaustible wealth of eloquence" when it comes to flattering the boss.

Bunzō's late father, we are told, was a former retainer for the Bakufu – an undesirable résumé in the wake of the Meiji Restoration. Pinning all of his hopes on his son, he places such a complete emphasis on education that Bunzō's subjection to the written word becomes his most significant patrimony. The fundamental incompatibility between the malleable spoken parlance of social commerce and the inflexible, letter-bound language of ideas serves as the impetus for the entire narrative of *Ukigumo*, a novel distinguished by the fact that almost all of its key events are verbal exchanges.

Osei is the enigmatic hybrid at the center of this class/language divide. Not only is she presumably of mixed class, as the daughter of Omasa and Bunzō's paternal uncle, but her penchant for mimicry assimilates the written diction of Chinese and English to her everyday speech. Indeed, the study of these languages constitutes the core of her secondary education. The degree to which Bunzō's idealization of Osei hinges upon her use of language becomes comically clear in the following passage. The two are home alone together, and their conversation quickly turns to their relationship. When Osei innocently declares that Bunzō is her newfound confidant, he responds with a faltering attempt to confess his true feelings:

"... but I am utterly incapable of associating with you as a confidant."

"Now what is that supposed to mean? Just why can't you associate with me as a confidant?"

"Why? Because I don't understand you, and you also don't understand me, so associating as a confidant is, well ..."

"Is that it? But I believe that I understand you very well. You are learned, your conduct is exemplary, you treat your parents with filial piety ..."

"That's why I say that you don't understand me. You say that I treat my parents with filial piety, but I am not a good son. For me ... there is something more ... important than parents ..." stammered Bunzō, hanging his head.

Osei stared at Bunzō with a puzzled look. “Something more important than parents . . . something . . . more important . . . than parents . . . Oh, there is also something more important to me than parents.”

Bunzō raised his hung head, “What? You too have that?”

“Yes, I do.”

“Wh-who is it?”

“It’s not a person, it is Truth.”

Osei’s demonstration of fluency in Bunzō’s learned language generates the comedy of their exchange. Bunzō has been tutoring Osei in English, a process that includes lecturing her about abstract social and ethical questions. When he suddenly blurts out that he is not a “good son,” Osei recasts his faltering confession into the form of a test question, and then searches for a clever answer: what could be more important than parents or filial piety? It must be the new Western ideal of “truth.”

This word was a key component of many of the new thought systems coming in from the West, such as Christianity, philosophy, and science. The established Japanese translation, *shinri*, carries the weight of written language in a way that is closer to the Latin *veritas*. It is certainly not a term used in casual conversation. Osei never elaborates on what she means by “Truth.” In fact, the issue of meaning has nothing to do with her use of the word here; it is simply a clever way to keep up her end of a conversation that apparently strikes her as highly intellectual. Her enunciation of an absolute value in modern Western thought thus reduces the term to the status of an exotic verbal prop. This is the constitutive difference between Osei and Bunzō. Osei is not subject to the written word. While her language is quintessentially performative, however, Bunzō reads it in the referential mode. To our literal-minded protagonist, the word “truth” is strictly bound to the textual sources that give it meaning. Thus, when Osei spouts out this word in place of the beloved’s name he was expecting to hear, he sees a direct reflection of the speaker’s pristine self, instead of his own image inadvertently parodied in her performance.

The language of *Ukigumo* directly reflects both the polyphony of heterogeneous class idioms and the complex polyglossia of Chinese, Western, and Japanese letters that constituted the original impetus for and the essential challenges to the vernacularization movement. Yet Futabatei’s first novel is much more than a simple reflection of the polyphonic and polyglossic conditions of his times. Within the battlefield of written and spoken language – or foreign *linguae francae* and the native colloquial – what Osei personifies is the bewitching appeal of a language that can alchemically compound all of

these differences under the single sign of “Truth.” Osei is both Futabatei’s dream and his nightmare. She spans the gap between writing and speech, between foreign languages and Japanese, with no apparent effort. This was precisely Futabatei’s goal as a vernacular writer. As both translator and novelist, he attempted to create a language that would span all of these gaps. Yet given his profound reverence for the Russian novel as a textually fixed language of truth, he must have harbored deep-seated anxieties about the elusive medium of spoken Japanese. Indeed, he must have been haunted by the possibility that writing in the Japanese vernacular would have the same effect as Osei’s pronouncement of “Truth” – a hollow ring that reduces the truth of the modern novel to the status of mere talk.

If *Ukigumo* depicts a state of paralysis in Bunzō that can be traced to a fundamentally irresolvable conflict between heterogeneous languages, then it seems quite fitting that Futabatei himself – as the person who both sensed and created this crisis in fiction – would meet the same fate as a novelist. By the time he was writing the final section of his debut novel, Futabatei had already begun to harbor serious doubts about literature as a vehicle of truth. His doubts proved so consuming that Futabatei would not compose another novel of his own until 1906, and he even abandoned literary translation for almost an entire decade, until 1896. His disillusionment with the novel bears a striking resemblance to Bunzō’s relationship with Osei. Just as Bunzō had idolized Osei as a bearer of “Truth,” Futabatei had embraced the novel as that which reveals the idea hidden within the contingent forms of appearance. Yet in actual practice, Futabatei was confounded by the contingent forms of language itself. Despite his clear advocacy of the vernacular novel, the narrative of *Ukigumo* shows that Futabatei was deeply troubled by conflicting forms and ideas of language. Language being the very medium of the novel, his profound loss of confidence in the ability of fiction to represent truth seems all but inevitable.

The next generation of radical vernacularists, the Naturalists, grew up with a significantly different set of linguistic contingencies, among which the language of Futabatei’s translations would come to occupy a position of central importance. His translations clearly demonstrated the potential for radical stylistic innovation. In an age when the vernacular style was becoming the lingua franca of Japanese fiction, Tayama Katai called for a revamping of the vernacular that would jettison its most writerly elements (“Rokotsunaru byōsha” [Raw Description], 1904). While his essay articulated an apparently simplistic conception of the relationship between language and reality, in practice his model was none other than Japanese literary translation. In

Katai's words, "the translation of Turgenev's *Aibiki* – this too felt ineffably new, intricate, free. I read it enough to memorize it. And it would be impossible to say how much I used it as a reference in the writing of the vernacular style." His hope was to bring Japanese writing not simply closer to "nature," but also closer to his image of the Western model.

Katai's epoch-making 1907 novella *Futon* (The Quilt) was a clear effort to put into practice the ideals set forth in his essay. Yet despite his profession of absolute faith in the technical ability, and even the moral and artistic necessity, of the "raw" vernacular to represent "nature" (i.e. "truth"), he made his name with a novel that, like *Ukigumo*, overlaid the pure image and promise of this ideal language with the figure of a duplicitous Westernesque femme fatale. Yoshiko, the main female character of *Futon*, is idolized by her mentor as the embodiment of his stylistic ideals: she writes in a fluent, colloquial style unfettered by conventional norms, and even her variety of facial expressions seem to offer a transparent window into her soul. But in the end, her mentor Tokio discovers that Yoshiko has merely manipulated these new techniques of self-expression to dupe him into believing that she is a New Woman, pure of mind and body, in the image of his favorite works of Western literature, when in fact she has betrayed his trust by entering into a physical relationship with a young man. After he discovers her duplicity, she hands him a written apology in which she confesses, "I am a fallen schoolgirl . . . The duties of the new Meiji woman Sensei taught me, I was not putting into practice. In the end, I am still an old woman without the courage to put new ideas into practice." Yoshiko's admission of guilt is articulated in a style that Katai had already idealized as the best possible medium for conveying truth. In a manner that harkens back to Futabatei's *Osei*, this siren of transparent language not only established the paradigm for Japanese Naturalist fiction, but also marked many of its fundamental anxieties.

If we focus solely on the genre of fiction, the underlying contradictions of Japanese Naturalism are easily obscured by the semblance of "vernacular realism." Yet on the Japanese stage, the Naturalist theater of Shimamura Hōgetsu (1871–1918) gave rise to a new star and cultural icon – Matsui Sumako (1886–1919) – whose renowned performances of the heroines of translated European dramas reveal the underlying exoticism of the Naturalist project in ways that are impossible to overlook.

Hōgetsu's approach to theater reform mirrors Katai's rejection of literary artifice in the novel. Hōgetsu found the "element of exaggeration" in kabuki aesthetically appalling, asserting that it should "obviously be replaced by naturalistic facial expressions." According to him, the aim of a modern

Japanese theater should be the naturalistic representation of life on stage. But Hōgetsu's New Theater did not produce naturalistic stage performances of the realities of Japanese life. Rather, he chose to launch his modernization of the Japanese stage with the production of translated European dramas of the female struggle for selfhood such as Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* and Hermann Sudermann's *Heimat*. In other words, he sought to reproduce the purported realities of European life in modern European drama – a feat that, for the Japanese actors and actresses called upon to perform his vision, required a level of study that defies any definition of the word “natural.”

Hōgetsu served as both translator and director for the epoch-making 1911 Japanese production of *Ningyō no ie* (*A Doll's House*) that catapulted Matsui Sumako to stardom. Critics hailed Sumako's performance of Nora as the first example of natural gender performance on the Japanese stage, which had long been dominated by the practice of female impersonation by male actors (*onnagata*). Her delivery of Hōgetsu's translated lines was particularly singled out for praise, and she quickly developed a reputation for her ability to quickly and perfectly memorize entire scripts – a feat that most of her male contemporaries on the Japanese stage achieved only with the greatest difficulty. However, the spectacle of a Japanese woman speaking translated lines and playing the part of a Norwegian housewife offers the most conspicuous evidence that the relationship between vernacular realism and gender representation was anything but transparent. In the case of modern Japan, translation was the crucial third element that linked them together, ensuring that what Naturalist criticism proclaimed as “natural,” whether in terms of content or of stylistic mode, actual practice revealed to be essentially *exotic*.

The rise of modern women's literature

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The Meiji Restoration of 1868 inspired a variety of social, political, and religious reforms. Eager to lead the country into the folds of “civilized nations,” progressive-minded politicians and intellectuals encouraged modifications in language, literature, music, theater, dress, national governance, and education. Women were a major target of reform. Captivated by Western rhetoric then popular, reformers believed that the status of a nation's women was the measure of that nation's civilization. While progress was afoot in Japan on many levels, Japanese women, or so these reformers believed, were far from modern. In order to address this wrong, new fashions were encouraged. Women would be required to change their clothing, their cosmetics, their speech, the way they arranged their hair, some were even encouraged to learn the latest trends in ballroom dancing – all in an attempt to modernize. In 1871 five girls were sent to the United States on a mission to study American womanhood. Later that year a nationwide educational ordinance was passed making schooling mandatory for all children. Girls were ensured an equal education with boys, at least for the first year. In journals and magazines writers began arguing for equality in marriage and the elimination of prostitution and concubinage – all to the further improvement of women's rights. Women began to assume more prominent roles outside their traditional occupations – in volunteer organizations, on political platforms, and in a limited number of new professions. By the mid 1880s, male educators and writers began to clamor for a modern woman writer. Women were shortly to answer the call.

Certainly, women had been writing all along. Poetry schools, particularly those promoting the aesthetics of the *Kokin wakashū* (Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern, 905), had long been in operation and served as finishing schools for young women with the financial wherewithal to afford the tuition. Many of these schools persisted into the Meiji period and offered women an important outlet for their creative endeavors. The Haginoya, for

example, established by Nakajima Utako (1841–1903), enrolled Higuchi Ichiyō (1872–96) and Miyake (née Tanabe) Kaho (1868–1943), among other women writers. But for most progressive educators and writers at the time, these schools produced, with rare exception, old-fashioned replicas of a tired tradition. The call was out for a “Modern Murasaki,” a “Meiji Shōnagon,” in short, a writer of prose fiction who would grapple with contemporary issues in a modern idiom.

Prose fiction by women writers in the modern period is generally acknowledged to have begun with Miyake Kaho and her 1888 novella *Yabu no uguisu* (Warbler in the Grove). Kaho opened the gates and stories by women trickled out yearly, eleven in 1889; thirteen in 1891; and finally, in a relative deluge of activity, twenty-four in 1895. Numerous journals and periodicals provided outlets for these female-authored works. *Jogaku zasshi* (Women's Education Magazine), founded in 1885, was important not only as a forum for women's writing but for providing the encouragement and impetus to many aspiring authors. With the dual goals of encouraging self-worth among a female readership while at the same time disabusing male readers of chauvinistic attitudes, the journal dedicated space to women's writing. Moreover, the editor, Christian educator Iwamoto Yoshiharu (1863–1942), despaired that many male-authored works were inappropriate reading material for his female audience, either because they relied too heavily on arcane and overly erudite diction or because the subject matter was licentious. He openly solicited works from women. *Iratsume* (The Maiden) was inaugurated in 1887 under the editorship of the rising novelist Yamada Bimyo (1868–1910), who along with the journal's co-founders was interested in promoting women's literary endeavors. Like the *Woman's Education Magazine*, it focused on a readership of middle- to upper-class women, and catered to male readers in addition to female. Mainstream newspapers, such as the *Yomiuri*, offered women an opportunity to publish their works, and the mainstream literary periodicals *Miyako no hana* (Flower of the Capital, est. 1888), *Shin Shōsetsu* (The New Novel, est. 1889), *Taiyō* (The Sun, est. 1895), and *Bungei kurabu* (Literary Arts Club, est. 1895) frequently included works by women. In 1895 *Literary Arts Club* published the first special issue devoted exclusively to women's writing, then referred to as *keishū bungaku* (ladies' literature), showcasing twelve female writers and in some cases presenting their calligraphy and even their photographs. The issue was a runaway success, selling out the thirty thousand copies of its first printing and going to print for a second run.

Women writers clearly were not without encouragement in their literary endeavors. To this end, male mentors were particularly influential. Male relatives – fathers, brothers, uncles – occasionally male teachers, and even husbands, encouraged these soon-to-be writers to pursue their craft. Miyake Kaho, for example, was initially promoted by the literary lion Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859–1935), who was an acquaintance of her father's. Koganei Kimiko (1871–1956) had an ally in her literary brother, Mori Ōgai (1862–1922); Wakamatsu Shizuko (1864–96) was married to the editor Iwamoto Yoshiharu; and with the help of her father Kitada Usurai (1876–1900) apprenticed herself to Ozaki Kōyō (1868–1903), the leader of the Ken'yūsha (Friends of the Inkstone) literary society.

But mentorship also brought with it the power and privilege of determining artistic direction. The very term used to describe women writers at this time, *keishū sakka*, is indicative of this direction. Derived from China where it denoted talented and sequestered “ladies,” the term suggests privilege, decorum, and high-mindedness. Generally daughters of affluent and distinguished families, these *keishū sakka* – or *lady* writers – had received an above-normal education. Many had attended the new government-funded secondary schools for women or those private academies founded by Christian missionaries. They were conversant with Western ideas and were eager to participate in the modernizing efforts of their male counterparts. In her *Warbler in the Grove*, Miyake Kaho introduces readers to two of these newly fashioned women. Namiko and Hamako, both products of the Meiji reforms, wear their imported Western gowns with grace and assurance, their conversations richly garnished with English. While Kaho's women encounter the West in their exclusive boarding school, Kimura Akebono (1872–90) treated readers to the vision of the Japanese woman conquering the West on foreign soil. In her delightfully imaginative *Fujo no kagami* (A Mirror for Womanhood, 1889) she writes of a young Japanese woman who travels to England and the United States where she attends college, impressing all with her grace and brilliance. When she returns to Japan, she builds a silk factory for women workers – complete with a nursery and daycare center.

A number of the women who wrote during this period found their way to literature via the lecture circuits, having earlier made a name for themselves as participants in the *Jiyū minken undō* or Freedom and People's Rights movement. When women were banned from the lecture stage in the late 1880s, they turned their energies to writing. Their subsequent works reflect their political agenda. This is true of Nakajima Shōen (1864–1901), the former Kishida Toshiko, who contributed *Sankan no meika* (The Noble Flower of the

Valley) to the burgeoning offerings by women in 1889. Loosely based on her own experiences, the work is considered the first “political novel” by a woman. Shōen's willingness to use her own life as the basis for her fiction encouraged other women to do the same. Shimizu Shikin (1868–1933), a former younger colleague of Shōen's on the lecture circuit, also recounted experiences from her own life in “Koware yubiwa” (The Broken Ring, 1891). Describing a woman who refuses to abide by the traditional lessons learned at home and school that would have her submit to an unhappy marriage, Shikin takes Kaho's outwardly westernized woman and liberates her spirit. Fukuda (née Kageyama) Hideko (1865–1927), who also shared the lecture stage with Shōen and Shikin, memorialized her experiences in the autobiographical record *Warawa no hanseigai* (My Life at Mid-point, 1904).

Most women writers of the Meiji period grounded their fiction in their own personal realm. Few had the imaginative vision of Kimura Akebono and most were hesitant to peer beyond the confines of their own experience. Those who did often met criticism. When Kitada Usurai wrote of scenes in the Yoshiwara licensed quarter in her 1895 piece “Asamashi no sugata” (Wretched Sight), she was harshly rebuked by critics who felt she had overstepped her bounds as a *lady* writer. Miyake Kaho was similarly criticized for writing dialogue that featured a woman of ill repute. How was it possible for a proper young lady to have access to such a character? Either Kaho had not written the scene in question. Or this lady writer was no lady. Most women writers of this age, therefore, steered away from overt social criticism and trained their sights on the traditional marriage system, limiting themselves to marriage plots. Many works by women of this period, therefore, describe a young woman's (reluctant) preparation for marriage; her disappointment in the marital union or else her disappointment in her inability to marry the man of her choice or to marry at all; her unfair treatment at the hands of her in-laws; and her suicide (or at the very least “self” sacrifice) as the result of any or all of these scenarios. Kitada Usurai, before offending critics, had made her debut with “Sannin yamome” (The Widowed Three, 1894) which charts the fates of three young people whose lives are destroyed by a capricious family system that values only loyalty and finds no room for individual love. When women resist marriage, happiness is not guaranteed. In “Shirobara” (White Rose, 1895) Tazawa Inafune (1874–96) writes passionately of a young woman who fights back, struggling to retain her integrity under the patriarchal system. Intelligent, idealistic, and morally courageous, when the heroine refuses the marriage her father has arranged for her, the would-be suitor tricks her into traveling with him to a seaside resort where he

drugs her with chloroform and rapes her. When she regains consciousness, she throws herself in the sea. The penalties were severe for those who chose to ignore contemporary social values. Fiction by women in this era is therefore often dark and morbid, but not without exception. Shimizu Shikin's "Imin gakuen" (School for Émigrés, 1899) recounts the happy union of a young woman who fears her husband will divorce her when he discovers she is related to a *burakumin*, or outcaste. Far from it, his love only intensifies and they slip away to Hokkaido – in a move that some say prefigures *Hakai* (The Broken Commandment, 1906) by Shimazaki Tōson (1872–1943).

For many Meiji women translation offered another creative outlet. The above-mentioned Nakajima Shōen translated/adapted Bulwer-Lytton's *Eugene Aram* in 1887 under the title *Zen'aku no chimata* (The Crossroads of Good and Evil). Koganei Kimiko was well known for her translations of German and English poetry into graceful classical Japanese. But none achieved the recognition that Wakamatsu Shizuko received for her many translations from English. Shizuko is most remembered for *Shōkōshi*, her translation of Frances Hodgson Burnett's *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1885–6), which was serialized from 1890 to 1892. Shizuko's translation is important not only for introducing readers to literature for children, but also for forging a path to *genbun-itchi* or a modern literary vernacular.

Shizuko's translation, like many of the works noted above, was published in the pages of *Women's Education Magazine*. Women were not the only contributors to the journal. By 1892 it had begun to showcase some of the brightest young male talents in Japan, including Hoshino Tenchi (1862–1950), Kitamura Tōkoku (1868–94), and the aforementioned Shimazaki Tōson. These young men were eager to redirect *Women's Education Magazine* along more purely literary lines. In order to preserve the didactic call of his journal, while answering the demands of his young male colleagues, Iwamoto divided the journal into a "White Covers" and a "Red Covers," with issues published alternately. "White Covers" was devoted to social reform, literary criticism, poems, and short stories and was read by both men and women; while "Red Covers" dealt with household management and children and appealed almost exclusively to women. Iwamoto assigned Shimizu Shikin and Wakamatsu Shizuko to editorial positions in the latter. Although the division of the journal gave women more authority over their half, it also subordinated their literary efforts to those of men. It marginalized their writing by limiting it primarily to the home and the practical, while men's efforts were held to be critical, cerebral, high art. Despite Iwamoto's efforts to accommodate his male protégés, they found his insistence on

literary didacticism, rigid values, and pragmatism too stifling for their evolving romanticism. In 1893 they broke with *Women's Education Magazine* and formed *Bungakukai* (Literary World), which would serve as an important outlet for the early Romantic movement in Japanese literature until its demise in 1898.

A number of women writers also published in the pages of *Literary World*, most significantly Higuchi Ichiyō (1872–96), whose work “Takekurabe” (Comparing Heights) was serialized here from 1895 to 1896. “Takekurabe,” heralded as a masterpiece, is a bittersweet story of unrequited love, class conflict, and the painful dulling of dreams. Significantly, the story is set on the border of the licensed quarters for legal prostitution. Many of Ichiyō’s stories deal with the denizens of the quarters and their ill-fated lives. Unlike her contemporaries, who wrote of prostitution with a somewhat speculative detachment, Ichiyō’s depiction of the quarters was based on actual observation as she found herself living outside the walls of the quarters. Although she had aspired to an education, her family’s fortunes had fallen, and Ichiyō spent her adulthood struggling to survive. For her, writing was more than a pastime, it was a livelihood. She set about her task with great diligence and pride; her works – often wistful and elegiac – are known for their beautifully wrought prose tinged with the elegance of the Heian classics, which she had studied as a young girl, and the wit of “floating world” author, Ihara Saikaku (1642–93), whom she studied independently once she aspired to take up writing as a profession. Ichiyō was the only truly professional woman writer of her era. Unlike her *keishū* contemporaries, she was not supported by a father, brother, or husband. Legally the family head, she scrambled to provide for her mother and sister. Whereas other female authors were criticized for investing too much of themselves in their craft, Ichiyō appeared all the more admirable and tragic for her dedication to writing.

Although the 1895 special *keishū* issue of the *Literary Arts Club* was followed by a sequel in 1897, the era of “women writers” had technically ended in 1896 with the deaths of three of its most prominent members: Wakamatsu Shizuko, Tazawa Inafune, and Higuchi Ichiyō. The loss of these three bright lights in the literary realm was followed by the loss of legal rights in the political realm. In 1898, after nearly a decade of debate that had not included female representation, the Meiji Civil Code was finally inaugurated. Women were stunned to find that not only did the code fail to advance their cause, it confined all women under a patriarchal system that had earlier been exclusive to the samurai class, in many ways the most restrictive of the four former classes. Women were denied basic legal rights and expected to submit to the

will of the household head, who was invariably male. Rather than silencing women, however, the conservative political trends encouraged women to turn to literature all the more, either as readers of family romances or as writers of stories that protested the frustrations of the family system. The turn of the century also saw *keishū sakka* transition into the *joryū sakka*, or writer of the female style. Having benefited from the universal educational system and the leveling of the classes, the *joryū sakka*, unlike her more reticent predecessor, was not averse to taking risks, defying social expectations, and presenting herself to public scrutiny.

From feminist orator to cloistered daughter, from imperial tutor to household maid, Meiji women writers hailed from diverse backgrounds and made their mark in an impressive assortment of genres and styles: romantic poetry, political essays, kabuki dramas, novellas, and stories. The works that emerged during the period, and the image of the woman writing them, were in constant flux, the terms of their evaluation shifting along with attitudes governing the reception of women in the public sphere. During the early part of the period, women writers were referred to as *keishū sakka*, a term redolent with class and moral implications. By the end of the era, they would be known as *joryū*, a term that while less exclusive was nevertheless drenched in gender-based assumptions. Entering the public arena at a time when the boundaries of that space were highly unstable, the appellation “lady” writer allowed a certain elasticity. The writer could step past the lines that had earlier demarked her limits and have a public voice as long as she continued to speak *as a lady*. Women writers of this early period explored new avenues of expression and embarked on new paths – some short and untenable, others highly successful. Like their male counterparts, these *keishū* writers were eager to craft a new language. In addition, they sought styles and approaches that would meet the demands of a newly insistent modernity. The works that emerged at this time are marked by unevenness, experimentation, and energy.

Melodrama, family romance, and the novel at the turn of the century

KEN K. ITO

Orphans, hidden identities, steep social ascents and even steeper descents, villainy and virtue, and, above all, the moral consecration engendered by suffering – these are the ingredients of the melodramatic mode that gripped Japanese fiction at the turn of the twentieth century. Although few Japanese literary critics have used the term, the most prominent novels of this period functioned as melodrama: they attempted to excavate stark moral polarity from the messy realities of human relations. But, if this led to highly emplotted narratives where good battled evil, it also laid bare the irresolvable contradictions behind the yearning for moral certitude. The melodrama's trademark hyper-emotionalism stemmed from the impossibility of moral clarity.

Most Western students of melodrama have identified it as a socially engaged mode: melodrama addresses social ideologies in recently transformed societies where older, more stable values have been overturned and where newer values remain contested. Peter Brooks made this point succinctly in his discussion of the rise of theatrical melodrama following the French Revolution: "It comes into being in a world where the traditional imperatives of truth and justice have been violently thrown into question, yet where the promulgation of truth and ethics, their instauration as a way of life, is of immediate, daily political concern."¹ Japan following the Meiji Restoration experienced social upheaval every bit as sweeping as the French Revolution, and the melodramatic mode endeavored to articulate moral principles for the times. The issues confronted by Meiji melodramatic fiction comprised a catalogue of modern dislocations: the monetization of human relations in an emerging capitalist nation-state; the evaporation of the Edo period status system and its replacement by ever-shifting occupational

¹ Peter Brooks, *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama and the Mode of Excess* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1976), 15.

and status categories; and the threats to family from new ideologies of gender, love, and the individual.

Meiji melodramatic novels achieved unmatched social penetration by riding the wave of Meiji print capitalism. The novels discussed here were first serialized in newspapers. *Konjiki yasha* (The Golden Demon), the blockbuster novel by Ozaki Kōyō (1868–1903) that stands as the definitive example of the form, appeared in the *Yomiuri shinbun* between 1897 and 1902. And *Onna keizu* (A Woman's Pedigree), by Izumi Kyōka (1873–1939), was carried by *Yamato shinbun* in 1908. Both were quickly brought out in book form by Shun'yōdō, the foremost literary publisher of the day, with numerous subsequent editions. Appearing at a time when there was not yet a clear demarcation between high and low in the literary field, these works and others like it were broadly read by literary elites and ordinary consumers, men and women, old and young. But it would be a mistake to understand the immense popularity of Meiji melodrama as a phenomenon restricted to print culture. Works like these were rapidly and repeatedly transformed into other cultural media. *Konjiki yasha*, for example, was adapted for the stage while it was still being serialized, and there were already five productions by 1903. Artists produced picture books based upon the story, and poets turned it into narrative poetry. When the movies arrived, the story was quickly put on film, with approximately twenty versions following. *Onna keizu* was adapted into an enduring favorite of the *shinpa* theater, a form that combined kabuki conventions of staging and acting with Western realism to produce something that resembled Western theatrical melodrama. It is a sign of the importance of theatrical adaptation that in 1914 *Onna keizu*'s author, Izumi Kyōka, penned a new scene for the stage depicting the heart-rending final farewells of the protagonist and his geisha lover; this scene grew so famous that it came to function as an emblem for the story, although the original novel did not contain it. *Onna keizu* was also adapted five times for the movies. Meiji melodramatic fiction, then, was more than a literary genre – it was a cultural phenomenon that jumped from one medium to the next, persistently repeating its plots of domestic strife and superheated emotions.

The family – as a locus of moral and emotional responses to political, economic, or social change – constituted the thematic center of Meiji melodramatic fiction for specific historical reasons. At the turn of the twentieth century, immense ideological forces were focused on the family, which the Meiji state and its propagandists sought to employ as an instrument for social stability amidst the disruptions of modernity. The state's family initiatives centered upon a model called the *ie*, which defined the family as a lineage

continuing over time through generational replacements. The ie's contribution to social stability was that it organized the family into a strict hierarchy. By granting authority to a male househead, it placed men over women, and parents over children. It prioritized birth order, determining family inheritance through male primogeniture. The ideological convenience of the ie was most prominently on display in family-state ideology, in which the family ruled by its househead was seen as a synecdoche for the nation ruled by the emperor. At the turn of the century the ideological system centering on the ie was inescapable: it was enshrined in imperial rescripts, taught in *shūshin* moral education textbooks, and empowered by the Meiji Civil Code of 1898, which granted special authority to househeads.

Confronting a discursive universe dominated by an overdetermined model of the family, Meiji melodramatists worked to produce alternatives and revisions. They produced family romances in the general sense that they offered substitutes for family relations usually presented as "natural" or "traditional." It is impossible, however, to attribute either total resistance or complicity to these efforts. Constructed in the shadow of a hegemonic discourse, these alternatives to the ie recycle even as they seek to displace.

This kind of ideological ambiguity runs through *Konjiki yasha*, a novel of stunning extravagance, in terms both of the emotions it contains and of the virtuosic prose enlisted to convey them. The main character of *Konjiki yasha* is an orphan, a recurring figure in Meiji melodramatic fiction that serves a range of thematic functions. The orphan can be an emblem for a culture in transition, "fatherless" in the sense of being separated from his origins. Without the protection of family, the orphan can exhibit heart-tugging vulnerability, yet he or she can also be seen as a free agent, able to make life's choices and form new alliances outside of archaic encumbrances. The orphan also presents an important index to the moral worth of the surrounding society, because the question of how he or she is treated strikes to the core of a society's values. The plot device employed by the melodramatic family romance to resituate the orphan is adoption. This is a social practice that can uphold conservative versions of family: the proponents of ie ideology invariably valorized adoption because it provided a means to continue family lineages amidst the uncertainties of biological reproduction. Yet the very nature of adoption as a culturally constructed tie meant that it provided a model for alternative, unofficial forms of affiliation.

Konjiki yasha contains adoptions of both types. Its orphaned protagonist, Hazama Kan'ichi, is initially slated to marry Shigisawa Miya, the daughter and only child of his benefactor, and become a *yōshi*, or adopted son-in-law,

a legal status sanctioned by the Meiji Civil Code as a way of securing a male househead. This is a prospect Kan'ichi welcomes because he is in love with his gorgeous bride-to-be. Miya's beauty, however, draws the attention of a wealthy suitor, Tomiyama Tadatsugu, the son of the founder of "Tomiyama Bank." Miya chooses money over love, a choice supported by her parents. This fateful decision calls forth a moment of superheated emotion, when Kan'ichi gives voice to melodrama's characteristic polar morality:

"I grant you that, when it comes to the power of money, there's no comparison between Tomiyama and me. He's a rich man, rich as they come, and I'm just a poor student. But think about this well, Miya – human happiness is one thing money can't buy. Happiness and money are two different things. In human happiness, harmony in the household is what comes first. And what is harmony in the household? It can't be anything else but that a husband and wife love each other deeply."

At this moment, the novel attempts to institute a melodramatic binary between love as virtue and money as vice. Many commentators have thus viewed the work as a paean to the ideology of conjugal love that flowed into Meiji Japan from the West. Subsequent developments, rife with ideological contradictions, make this simple reading insupportable.

As a consequence of Miya's decision, Kan'ichi is cast adrift. Not only does he lose Miya, he also loses the family he might have gained through adoption; he is once again an orphan. Kan'ichi disappears for a while from Miya's life and from the novel. When he returns to the story, he has undergone a shocking transformation: he has become a brutal moneylender, preying on the weaknesses of those in need. This change might have signaled a precipitous melodramatic descent, the lover become a dealer in filthy lucre. But this moneylender is far from coldhearted; in fact, continually and painfully tortured by the love he has lost, he feels too much. Kan'ichi's degradation is a marker of a love he cannot escape. This love, however, reveals itself to be of a different nature from the conjugal love to which he had seemed to adhere. Inflamed by separation and impossible longing, Kan'ichi's "love" is a dark passion felt as unbearable pain. With bitter irony, Miya too finds, after her marriage, that she is enslaved by the same emotion. Despite possessing all the wealth she desires, she cannot forget the love of her youth. Like Kan'ichi, she becomes obsessed with a love whose measure is the suffering she embraces. *Konjiki yasha* does not have a conclusion, because Ozaki Kōyō died before he could complete the novel, but, where the work leaves off, Miya has been made an invalid, nearly mad with longing. A major ideological contradiction in *Konjiki yasha*, then, is that the "love" dominating its pages has nothing to

do with virtue: the love possessing Kan'ichi and Miya can never join them – it can only consume.

The trope of adoption, too, contains contradictions. Once Kan'ichi has left the Shigisawa household, he learns the moneylender's trade by entering a quasi-adoption by a feared usurer called Wanibuchi Tadayuki. The text tells us that the latter "thought of Kan'ichi as his own child." The moral ambiguity here is that the affect and the functions of family, including protection and support, have been firmly located within the cash nexus. The impossibility of disentangling sentiment from money continues to Kan'ichi's final act in the unfinished novel, which is to use the considerable wealth he has gained from moneylending to rescue a couple on the verge of a love suicide. Kan'ichi gains some comfort from helping another couple achieve what he has lost, figuratively adopting the couple and allowing them to realize the love-marriage that eluded him. This is an adoption that stands as an alternative to any conventional or juridical definition of family. Yet the patriarchal role that Kan'ichi takes shows that this affiliation replicates some of the functions of filiation. What is more, Kan'ichi's adoption of the young couple is only made possible by his financial power; his final satisfying embrace of love, it turns out, is dependent on filthy lucre. The family romance of *Konjiki yasha* ends up proving the inseparability of love and money.

Izumi Kyōka's *Onna keizu* contains a metafictional nod to *Konjiki yasha*. Its orphan hero, Hayase Chikara, is at one point mistaken for an actor playing the role of Kan'ichi in a traveling theatrical adaptation of the earlier work. This allusion is significant for a number of overlapping reasons. First, one melodramatic novel pays homage to a famous predecessor, and, by having its protagonist misidentified as an actor, suggests the histrionic heights he will scale. Second, Izumi Kyōka was a disciple of Ozaki Kōyō, the literary godfather of the turn of the century who led a coterie called the Kenyūsha, or "Friends of the Inkstone." The younger writer was best known not for melodramatic fiction but for gothic tales of the supernatural. Thus, in attempting a melodramatic novel of his own, he had acknowledged his mentor, the writer of the monumental work of its type. This gesture, however, casts an additional, more personal shadow into *Onna keizu*, for Kōyō had attempted to separate Kyōka from the woman he loved, a geisha who would eventually become his wife. This incident lies behind the episode in *Onna keizu* in which Sakai Shunzō, Hayase Chikara's mentor, demands that the younger man leave Otsuta, the geisha who has come to live with him.

The melodramatic binary of *Onna keizu* sets romantic love, of the sort exemplified by Chikara and Otsuta, against the demands of family. The

intertwining storylines are set into motion by a wish voiced by Chikara's friend, Kōno Eikichi, to marry Taeko, Sakai Shunzō's beautiful daughter. This wish stems not so much from romantic attraction but from Eikichi's urge to find a wife appropriate for his clan, which his description makes clear is an ie:

"Yes, it's been my father's principle to assemble my siblings, our family, our clan, in order to form a certain strata in society. To the extent possible, he wants birth order to be reflected precisely in my sisters' incomes, so that if my oldest sister has 300 yen, the next would have 250 yen, the one after that 150 yen, and the youngest 100 yen.

So far, this has been carried out. And his vision is to have their children, and then their grandchildren, gradually rise in social rank. Thus, if the current generation consists of university graduates, then the next generation will have doctorates, and the following, professorships. Do you see?

In other words, our family alone will be eventually able to form a political party within the House of Peers. Our distant dream is to be able to organize the cabinet from within our clan."

The Kōno clan counts upon lineage to organize economic and political relations. To join such a family, Taeko must be thoroughly investigated to determine her fitness, and it is in this effort that Eikichi attempts to enlist Chikara, whom he knows is close to the Sakai household.

This is an effort that Chikara, an adherent of romantic love who abhors the marriage negotiations of the ie, will not assist. He is doubly reluctant because, despite his feelings for Otsuta, he is himself drawn to Taeko, with whom he was raised but dare not approach because she is the daughter of his master. Chikara's refusal leads Eikichi's allies to punish and discredit him by telling Sakai about his relationship with Otsuta. Angered over his disciple's secret sexual liaison, Sakai rises to the full height of his patriarchal entitlement and confronts Chikara with an ultimatum: "Will you leave me, or leave your woman?" Bound by loyalty and obligation, Chikara ultimately decides that he must part from Otsuta.

At this point, Chikara cannot stay in Tokyo any longer, and he leaves alone for Shizuoka (where he is mistaken for a traveling actor playing the part of Kan'ichi). He chooses this provincial city because it is the home of the extended Kōno clan, on whom he plots revenge and from whom he works to protect Taeko. His actions reveal the hidden identities and hidden lineages found among all the characters. These hidden identities start with Chikara himself; although we have known he was Sakai's disciple, we now learn that he was formerly a notorious pickpocket taken in by Sakai to be reformed and

educated. He is someone who owes his life to the affiliative relationship with his mentor. Taeko, who has been presented thus far as the birth daughter of Sakai and his wife, turns out to be the child that Sakai had with his mistress, the geisha Koyoshi. This is a woman that Otsuta refers to as her “older sister,” using geisha parlance for a respected senior woman in the trade. Otsuta herself is an orphan, and so the occupational tie to Koyoshi is her most important affiliation. Hidden lineages extend even to the Kōnos, the professed adherents of the *ie*: it turns out that Eikichi’s older sister was actually fathered by a stablehand who had an affair with her mother. The convoluted hidden lineages of *Onna keizu* tell us that the *ie* is not what it seems, that its most vociferous supporters suffer from moral rot, and that crucial human linkages exist as affiliative relations outside of its confines.

In the last section of the novel, Chikara becomes a demonic antihero, acting out his rage against the Kōnos, smug in their family ideology, and the pain of his separation from Otsuta, who will die of tuberculosis. His revenge turns on exposing the moral degradation of the *ie*. He succeeds in seducing at least one, and possibly two, of Eikichi’s married older sisters. He reveals her origins to the sister fathered by the stablehand. The Kōnos respond to these provocations by trying, unsuccessfully, to poison him. The final confrontation with Kōno Hideomi, Eikichi’s father and the family patriarch, surpasses even the novel’s previous indulgence in excess. Face to face with Hideomi on a cliff-top, a total eclipse darkening the land, Chikara catalogs the transgressions of the Kōno clan and demands its dissolution. Hideomi draws a pistol to murder Chikara, but is thwarted by his daughters. Seeing that he can no longer count on his flesh and blood, Hideomi first turns his pistol on his wife and then blows out his brains, followed shortly by his daughters throwing themselves off the cliff. That night, Chikara quietly kills himself by swallowing the poison meant for him; he dies clutching to his breast a lock of Otsuta’s hair.

What can we make of this conclusion littered with bodies? Although there is no doubt that the *ie* could be a coercive institution, the melodramatic urge to brand it as evil has led to extravagant destruction. Kyōka himself, or perhaps his publisher, appears to have had second thoughts about the ending. The book version of the work published by Shun’yōdō in 1908, contained a new epilogue in the form of Chikara’s suicide note addressed to Eikichi, in which Chikara disavows what he has uncovered about the Kōno family lineage and urges Eikichi to build “a second household, more beautiful and pure.” This exhortation is puzzling because Eikichi nowhere exhibits the potential for redemption. The author, in a further turn, repudiated this epilogue in some later editions. The checkered history of the epilogue

suggests, perhaps, the contradictions inherent in viewing any model of family within a moral binary.

Japanese scholars have had difficulty positioning melodramatic fiction within modern literary history. Works like *Konjiki yasha* and *Onna keizu* are referred to as *shinbun shōsetsu* (newspaper novels), although many other kinds of works, including canonized ones such as Natsume Sōseki's *Kokoro*, were serialized in newspapers. They are also called *taishū shōsetsu* (popular fiction), although literary historians are aware that the term came into being in the 1920s as part of the effort to delineate the borders between high-culture and popular literature. The powerful presence of melodramatic fiction at the turn of the twentieth century and the audience it continued to hold in adapted forms call for a better accounting of its historical position, its relations to social realities and cultural discourses, and, especially, the impact it had on later cultural production.

Modern Japanese poetry to the 1910s

K Ō J I K A W A M O T O

In a massive effort to “modernize” Japan, an enormous number of translations from Western books and documents were published, both officially and privately, during a mere thirty- to forty-year period before and after the country’s opening to the outside world in the late 1850s. Literature, too, was made part of this wholesale importation of Western civilization, and while stories like *Robinson Crusoe* (1872) and *Aesop’s Fables* (1873) were rendered into Japanese, poetic translation had to wait until the early 1880s.

Shintaishishō (Selection of New-Style Poems, 1882) was the first anthology of Western poems in translation. Though heavily censured by the leading literati of the day, the anthology literally created a new age of Japanese poetry, and younger readers ardently embraced its appearance. Prior to the publication of the *Shintaishishō*, different *kinds* of poetry existed, a plethora of them, to be sure, but no generic name for “poetry,” nor anything remotely comparable to Western poems. There were thirty-one-syllable *waka*, orthodox linked verse (*renga*), popular linked verse (*haikai*), and seventeen-syllable *haiku*, *kyōka* (comic *waka*), *senryū* (comic *haiku*), *kanshi* (classical Chinese-style poetry), and *kyōshi* (comic *kanshi*). Compared with Western poems, the Japanese models tended to be extremely short. The word *shi* (詩) was used to indicate only *kanshi*, a particular genre of poetry, and *Shintaishishō* should be given credit for both adopting the word as a general term for “poetry” in the Western sense and providing concrete examples of that form for the first time.

The three editors of the collection, professors at the recently founded University of Tokyo, were not literary specialists: Toyama Masakazu (1848–1900) was a sociologist and Yatabe Ryōkichi (1851–99) a botanist. Inoue Tetsujirō (1855–1944), though a German philosophy major and a *kanshi* poet himself, was apparently not at home in “vernacular” literature of Japan. This lack of proficiency, however, also meant freedom from old *waka* clichés and stale literary conventions. Of the translations from Shakespeare, Thomas Gray, Longfellow, Tennyson and others, Yatabe’s rendering of Gray’s “Elegy

Written in a Country Churchyard” (*Gurē-shi funjō kankai no shi*) stands out as an exceptionally fine piece of work. Yatabe translated Gray’s four-line stanzas of iambic pentameter into three-line stanzas of “double 7–5” syllabic meter: two traditional 7–5 syllable lines are combined into a line of 7–5–7–5 meter with a light caesura in the middle. Gray’s first two lines:

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o’er the lee

are neatly rendered into a line and a half in the Japanese version:

Yamayama kasumi (7) / *iriai no* (5) // *kane wa naritsutsu* (7) / *no no ushi wa* (5)
Shizukani ayumi (7) / *kaeri-yuku* (5) //
(The mountains become hazy, the evening / bell is tolling, and the herd in
the fields
Slowly make their way back home /).

Yatabe and others intended to use samples like these to show, above all, the verbal expanse possible in the Western forms: an expanse that allowed for the development of “more or less continuous thought.” It was this verbal expansiveness that they sought to contrast with the extremely limited span of haiku and waka whose brevity was more akin to “sparklers or shooting stars” in Toyama’s words.

Nevertheless, the so-called “new-style poem” (*shintaiishi*) did not offer anything revolutionary. As the editors themselves admitted, its meter was the same old 7–5-syllabic schemes, which must have disappointed many readers. From its recorded origin, meter in Japanese poetry had always depended on a 7–5-syllabic count. For all their endeavors to “make it new,” the editors of the *Shintaishishō* had few choices, settling on the 7–5 rhythm as a final resort. However, the book was pioneering in three ways. First, it employed a regular line break at the end of each verse, which, surprisingly enough, had never been practiced in Japan before. Second, the stanzaic form was a complete novelty. These two formal devices contributed significantly to a visible and well-organized structuring of the poems. Third, the deliberate and audacious choice of plain vocabulary and simple phraseology over clichés – Wordsworth’s “real language of men” – provided much easier reading, paving the way for longer poems.

The clumsy and overly casual look of the *Shintaishishō* convinced readers that they could easily outdo the authors, and similar books of “new-style” poems and verses sprang up in rapid succession. These books were mostly of inferior quality, however, and contributed primarily toward the promulgation of military and children’s songs. The *Shintaishishō* also triggered

the appearance of two narrative poems of some length. Yuasa Hangetsu's (1858–1943) *Jūni no ishizuka* (The Twelve Stones, 1885) tells, in 5–7 meter, the story of Judge Ehud, who stabs the Moabite King Eglon and frees the children of Israel (Judges 3:15–30). Ochiai Naobumi's (1861–1903) highly popular *Kōjo Shiragiku no uta* (Song of the Faithful Daughter Shiragiku, 1888), on the other hand, is a Japanese translation in 7–5 meter of Inoue Tetsujirō's narrative *kanshi* (1884), about the trials and tribulations of a samurai's daughter during the Seinan War (1877). Thus, the *shintaiishi*, which became the equivalent of a Western poem, took its place among the multitude of older poetic genres. The term was later replaced by the simpler *shi*, which now means both poetry in general and Western-style poems in particular.

The most notable outgrowth of the *Shintaishishō* came out in 1889. A year after his return from Germany, the military doctor and, later, eminent novelist and critic Mori Ōgai (1862–1922) published *Omokage* (Vestiges), a collection of poetic translations and adaptations. It was generally considered far superior to the *Shintaishishō* in terms of literary virtuosity and stylistic refinement. While four other authors are cited, Ōgai obviously master-minded the whole project, proposing general and specific plans and explicating German and English poems to other authors. With their graceful wording and well-balanced 7–5 meters, the Japanese poems in *Omokage* were regarded as excellent models for future poems.

Omokage experimented with several ideas, including four types of translation or adaptation according to their degrees of fidelity to the source text: the “semantic,” “syllabic,” “rhyming,” and “tonal” translation. The “semantic” variety simply conveys a poem's meaning, regardless of the poetic form adopted in Japanese translation. The “syllabic” translation puts emphasis on the syllabic pattern of the original poem. For example, Goethe composed “Mignon” (“Kennst du das Land?”), from his novel *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, in iambic pentameter, a line generally consisting of 10 syllables. Ōgai's Japanese version “Minion no uta” (Mignon's Song) accordingly assigns two 10-syllable segments to each line, considering that two Japanese syllables are more or less tantamount to one German or English syllable:

Ein sanfter Wind vom blauen Himmel weht
Aoku hareshi sora yori / shizuyakani kaze fuki
 (From the clear blue sky, the wind softly blows)

With its deep-felt longing for the bright sunshine of Italy, “Minion no uta” was one of the best-loved pieces of the collection. The same 10–10-syllable meter is employed in Ōgai's “Manfuretto issetsu” (A Fragment of *Manfred*)

from a play by Byron. Such attempts at “syllabic” translation reveal the editors’ zeal in creating alternatives to the all too hackneyed 7–5 and 5–7 meters. Other experiments in meter included “Ashi no kyoku” (Reed Songs), which employed an 8–7 meter, reflecting the alternating 8- and 7-syllable lines of Nikolaus Lenau’s original “Schilflieder,” and “Aru toki” (Once), based on Eduard Ferrand’s “Einst,” translated in 8–6 meter.¹

The third category of “rhyming” translation adds end rhyme to the above two elements. Rhymes in Japanese verse are mostly ineffectual and, indeed, imperceptible in most cases. Apart from Ōgai’s “Mignon’s Song,” however, Ochiai Naobumi’s “Ineyokashi” was another favorite, presenting a 7–5-meter translation of the song “Good Night” from Byron’s *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*. The Japanese version rhymes *ababcdcd* exactly like the original. The fourth category, the “tonal” type, applies merely to kanshi translations, which not only rhyme but also replicate the metrical scheme of the German and English poems by converting stressed and unstressed syllables into Chinese characters of contrasting tones. Early to mid-Meiji Japan saw the high tide of Chinese studies, and *kanbun* (classical Chinese writings read in Japanese), including kanshi, were familiar to the intellectuals of the day. Ōgai’s kanshi rendering of Lenau’s “Gekko” (Das Mondlicht) and another passage from Byron’s *Manfred* are a tremendous tour de force. The same is true for “Kikaigashima” (Kikai Island), Ichimura Sanjirō’s (1864–1947) kanshi adaptation of an episode from *The Tales of the Heike*, and Ōgai’s “Tōkyō-kō” (Chivalrous Robber) from Wilhelm Hauff’s *Die Karawane* (The Caravan). Regrettably, only a few can fully appreciate Ōgai’s and Ichimura’s achievements today, let alone follow their lead.

The first major poet to appear in the wake of *Omokage* was Shimazaki Tōson (1872–1943). His first collection *Wakanashū* (Young Herbs, 1897) broke new ground in new-style poetry. His poems, full of youthful pathos and sensuality, are an exquisite mixture of traditional waka suaveness and fresh “modern” sensibilities. His “Hatsukoi” (First Love), which begins “*Mada agesomeshi maegami no*” in a 7–5 meter, was enthusiastically welcomed by young readers:

When I saw you under the apple tree
 With your hair swept up for the first time
 ...
 When you gently extended your soft white hand

¹ Kobori Keiichirō and Kanda Takao, eds., *Omokage*, in *Meiji-Taishō yakushishū* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1971), 105–67.

And gave me an apple
It was the very first time I loved someone
With the pale red of the autumn fruit

(Translated by Leith Morton)

Reform movements in traditional short poems started in the early 1890s, led by Masaoka Shiki (1867–1902). While a student at the University of Tokyo, he initiated an effort to revitalize haiku, which had entered a dry period. An artist friend introduced him to *shasei* (sketching from nature), as it was then practiced at the National School of Art under the Italian painter Antonio Fontanesi (1818–82). Shiki advocated *shasei* as a means of replacing over-worked formulas with writing based on real-life observation, thereby making haiku a truly modern genre. Traditional *haikai renga* (popular linked poetry) consisted of thirty-six verses composed alternatively by two or more people. Shiki despised linked poetry, decrying the practice as an outmoded social game without an ounce of individualism. Shiki freed *hokku* (the 5–7–5 opening verse of linked verse) from the ensuing linked verses and renamed it haiku, regarding it as an autonomous modern poem:

Keitō no	The coxcombs –
jūshigohon mo	there must be fourteen,
arinubeshi	fifteen of them out there

(Translated by Kōji Kawamoto)

Using the medium of the newspaper, which was rapidly gaining ground at this time, Shiki gained a steady following for his new movement. Together with his disciple Takahama Kyoshi (1874–1959) and others, he laid the groundwork for what would become the most popular poetic genre in Japan, which today is said to have a million professional and amateur practitioners.

In 1898, Shiki directed his attention to *waka*, a far older poetic form of 5–7–5 meter, again using the principle of *shasei* to renovate a traditional genre. Having become mostly bedridden since 1897, he again conducted his campaign through newspapers and magazines. Prizing *Man'yōshū* (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves, late eighth or early ninth century) for its unaffected language and close intimacy with nature, Shiki derided the highly esteemed *Kokinshū* (Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern, c. 905) for its shallow witticism and childlike wordplay. The realism (*shasei*) Shiki praised in *Man'yōshū* consisted mainly in careful observation of everyday happenings and seasonal changes in nature:

Kame ni sasu	The sprays of wisteria
fuji no hanabusa	arranged in the vase
mijikakereba	are so short
tatami no ue ni	they don't reach
todokazarikeri	to the tatami

(Translated by Burton Watson)

Shiki's group turned out many outstanding poets, including Itō Sachio (1864–1913), Shimaki Akahiko (1876–1926), and Nagatsuka Takashi (1879–1915). Psychiatrist Saitō Mokichi (1882–1953), above all, won huge critical acclaim with his first collection *Shakkō* (Red Light), published in 1913. Faithful as he was to Shiki's high esteem for *Man'yōshū* and his tenet of *shasei*, Saitō deepened his realist principle by expanding its scope to "inner life." His tense lyricism, stirred by a strong sense of being alive, earned him a reputation as one of the greatest waka poets in modern times:

Nodo akaki	The red-throated
tsubakurame futatsu	chimney swallows, two of them,
hari ni ite	upon the rafters –
tarachine no haha wa	and underneath, my mother
shinitamō nari	who is going to die now.

(Translated by Edith Marcombe Shiffert and Yūki Sawa)

In 1899, the school teacher and waka poet Yosano Hiroshi (pseudonym Tekkan, 1873–1935) formed *Shinshisha* (New Poetry Society) and he started the magazine *Myōjō* (Venus) the following year to promote waka and new-style poems in a romantic and aesthetic vein. Tekkan was a fine poet who is known for his exquisite love verses, but his greatest achievement lay in helping Yosano Akiko (1878–1942) make a sensational debut with her first waka collection *Midaregami* (Tangled Hair) in 1901.

Yosano Akiko joined Tekkan's group in 1900, fell in love with him, and boldly gave voice in her poetry to the innermost thoughts and feelings of a young girl in love. The book startled the strongly male-dominated society of the time with its bold affirmation of love and instinct, proud flaunting of youth and feminine beauty, and point-blank denigration of moral scruples. She was well read in classical Japanese literature and, with a daring mixture of words borrowed from recent Western and Japanese literature, created her own style of great intensity:

Chibusa osae	Pressing my breasts
shinpi no tobari	I softly kick aside
soto kerinu	the curtain of mystery
Koko naru hana no	How deep the crimson
kurenai zo koki	of the flower here.

(Translated by Janine Beichman)

Publishing a series of personal poetry collections in rapid succession, Akiko quickly established her fame as a modern-day rival to the eminent women poets of the Heian period.

Given the patronage of such luminaries as Mori Ōgai, the New Poetry Society produced a number of major poets, waka and otherwise. Ishikawa Takuboku (1886–1912), a precocious and short-lived prodigy, revolutionized waka in his two collections: *Ichiku no suna* (A Handful of Sand, 1910) and *Kanashiki gangu* (Sad Toys), published posthumously in 1912. Carefully avoiding classical literary language, he worked out a unique semi-colloquial delivery while successfully maintaining an intimate poetic rhythm that used unusual enjambment. His subject was often a poor aspiring poet's frank expression of longing, nostalgia, and bitter sense of defeat:

Tawamure ni	Carrying mother on my back
haha o seoite	Just for a joke.
sono amari	Three steps:
karoki ni nakite	then weeping –
sanpo ayumazu	She's so light.

(Translated by Geoffrey Bownas and Anthony Thwayte)

Ueda Bin's (1874–1916) *Kaichō-on* (The Sound of the Tide), the most important collection of translated poems in modern Japan, appeared in 1905. In contrast to earlier collections containing chiefly British, American, and German poems, *Kaichō-on* featured a considerable number of the latest French and Belgian poets of the Parnassian and Symbolist schools: Leconte de Lisle, Charles Baudelaire, Paul Verlaine, Stéphane Mallarmé, Émile Verhaeren, Georges Rodenbach, and others. Through Ueda's superb translations and his well-informed commentaries, Japanese readers had their first encounter with the decadence, spleen, and anxiety of European modernism. It is especially worthy of note that, following the steps of Mori Ōgai, Ueda experimented with various new meters based on alternating seven and five syllables: for example, on top of the standard 7–5–7–5 (“double 7–5”) and 5–7–5–7 meters, he exploited 5–5–7–7, 5–7–5, and 8–7–6 meters. By far the most admired of all the pieces in the collection is “Rakuyō” (Fallen Leaves), a stunning Japanese rendering of Verlaine's “Chanson d'automne”

(Autumn Song). The first strophe of Ueda's translation, placed side by side with the French text, reads:

Les sanglots longs	<i>Aki no hi no</i>
Des violons	<i>vioron no</i>
De l'automne	<i>tameiki no</i>
Blessent mon cœur	<i>mi ni shimite</i>
D'une langueur	<i>hitaburuni</i>
Monotone.	<i>uraganashi</i>

The Japanese version roughly means: "The sighs of violins on an autumn day sink deep into my heart and make me feel so sad." Ueda conveys the meaning, mood, and music of the source text in six Japanese lines of five syllables each. This meter, his own invention, gives the same contradictory impressions of lightness and torpor as the extremely short lines of the French poem. The frequent occurrence of the vowel "o" in the first three lines reproduces the prominent "dark" and nasal vowels, such as [ɔ], [o], [œ], [ō], and [ã], in the original French verse, and the sharp [i] sound dominating the whole Japanese stanza adds poignancy to the dejected mood.

The Symbolist poems in *Kaichō-on*, such as Baudelaire's "Harmonie du soir" (Evening Harmony) and Mallarmé's "Soupir" (Sigh), received a warm and immediate welcome in Japan, and not only because Ueda deliberately made use of graceful poetic words and phrases culled from ancient classics. French Symbolist poetry, with its harmonious fusing of inner feelings and natural landscapes as well as its heavy dependence on the evocative power of verbal music, has a peculiar affinity with traditional waka poetry, especially in the vein of *Shinkokinshū* (New Collection of Ancient and Modern Times, early thirteenth century). Ueda himself often explained Symbolism in terms of Japanese aesthetic ideals such as "yūgen" (mystery and depth). Among the poets deeply inspired by *Kaichō-on*, Kanbara Ariake (1876–1952) had already established a reputation as a Romantic poet under the influence of Keats, Shelley, and, later, Dante Gabriel Rossetti. His fascination with Ueda's collection, however, provided an impetus to his development as a poet and to his fourth collection, *Ariake-shū* (1908), which contained deeply charming poems such as "Matsurika" (Jasmine) and "Tsukishiro" (Faint whitening of the sky at moonrise), each composed in a uniquely Symbolist manner.

Kitahara Hakushū (1885–1942), a former member of Tekkan's group, was no doubt the most fervent follower of Ueda Bin's teachings of aestheticism and fin-de-siècle decadence. He quickly assimilated everything he had learned from Ueda and amazed the reading public with his first book of poems

entitled *Jashūmon* (The Evil Faith), published in 1909. Here are the opening lines of the most famous piece “*Jashūmon hika*” (Secret Song of the Heretics), a fascinating poem more in an atypical Parnassian rather than a Symbolist vein:

I believe in the heretical teachings of a degenerate age,
the witchcraft of the Christian God,
...
The blue-eyed Dominicans chanting the liturgy who tell me even
in dreams
Of the God of the forbidden faith, or of the blood-stained Cross,
The cunning device that makes a mustard seed big as an apple,
The strange collapsible spyglass that looks even at Paradise.
(Translated by Donald Keene)

In his sumptuous and sensual style, Hakushū intentionally exoticizes Christian faith, with obvious anachronism, as if it were being seen from the eyes of people of the Edo period under the edict against Christianity. In his second collection *Omoide* (Memories, 1912), he exoticized his native town Yanagawa (in Kyūshū) in the same way, “seeing” the town from the eyes of a foreign visitor. In 1913 Hakushū also published his first waka collection, *Kiri no hana* (Paulownia Blossoms), whose delicate and sensuous freshness also owes a great deal to *Kaichō-on*:

Kimi kaesu	I see her off in the morning
asa no shikiishi	the pavement crunching
sakusaku to	under her feet –
yuki yo ringo no	Oh, snow, keep falling on her
ka no gotoku fure	like the scent of apples!
	(Translated by Kōji Kawamoto)

Kaichō-on was one of the last major books of translated poems to consistently use alternating seven-and-five rhythmic patterns and marked one of the last collections of poetry translated into fixed metrical form. The movement toward colloquial free verse was under way since around 1907. Novelist Nagai Kafū (1879–1959) published *Sango-shū* (Coral Collection) in 1913, and his fluent free verse translations of modern French poets from Baudelaire to Mathieu de Noailles were widely acclaimed. In the same year, poet and sculptor Takamura Kōtarō (1883–1956), a former member of Tekkan’s group who later studied art in New York, London, and Paris, published *Dōtei* (Journey, 1914), a ground-breaking anthology of colloquial poems. Mori Ōgai’s curt and purely colloquial translations of German Expressionist

poets Richard Dehmel and Klabund, in his collection *Sara no ki* (Sal Tree, 1915), made a great impact on other translators and poets. Ueda Bin had also been trying his hand at colloquial style, and his work was posthumously compiled and published in 1920 as *Bokuyōshin* (Pan), which included superb renderings of late nineteenth-century French poets like Tristan Corbière, Jules Laforgue, and Rémy de Gourmont. These fine examples led in time to the epoch-making appearance in 1917 of Hagiwara Sakutarō's (1886–1942) first anthology *Tsuki ni hoeru* (Howling at the Moon), which communicates the urban solitude, melancholy, and nervous thrills of modern man in a highly sophisticated colloquial style. His “Kaeru no shi” (Death of a Frog) reads:

A frog was killed.
 A circle of children raised their hands.
 All together
 lovely
 bloody hands they raised.
 The moon rose.
 On the hill a man is standing.
 Under the hat is his face.

(Translated by Edith Marcombe Shiffert and Yūki Sawa)

Since the simple 7–5 and 5–7 meters, as well as their newly devised variations, sound too vapid to modern ears, Japanese poems have been mostly written in free verse since the 1910s. There is a sense, however, that Japanese poetry will never break completely free from the spell of seven-and-five-syllable units. T. S. Eliot's following comment on *vers libre* remains true of modern Japanese free verse, if his “iambic pentameter” is replaced with “seven-and-five rhythm”:

But the most interesting verse which has yet been written in our language has been done either by taking a very simple form, like the iambic pentameter, and constantly withdrawing from it, or taking no form at all, and constantly approximating to a very simple one.

(T. S. Eliot, “Reflections on *Vers Libre*,” 1917)

Between the Western and the traditional:
Mori Ōgai, Nagai Kafū, and Tanizaki
Jun'ichirō

SHUNJI CHIBA

The presiding member of the Meiji period's premier literary circle *Ken'yūsha*, Ozaki Kōyō (1868–1903), died on October 30, 1903 at the age of thirty-six; within four months Japan declared war on Russia, precipitating the Russo-Japanese War, on February 8, 1904. Futabatei Shimei (1864–1909) anticipated this collision and reasoned that knowledge of the enemy would be crucial to victory. Aware of the importance of language acquisition, Futabatei enrolled in the Russian program at the Tokyo Foreign Language School (Tōkyō Gaikokugo Gakkō), and through his study came into contact with Russian literature and European literary theory before composing *Ukigumo* (Drifting Clouds, 1887–9), considered Japan's first modern novel. Few of his contemporaries, however, were capable of appreciating its innovations. Frustrated, Futabatei withdrew from the literary scene. Filling the vacuum in his wake was Ozaki Kōyō, who bridged the gulf between early modern fiction and the modern narrative forms that emerged in earnest after the Russo-Japanese War.

The Treaty of Portsmouth ended hostilities on September 5, 1905. Victory over Russia ostensibly vouchsafed Japan's first-class nation status. Concomitant was a euphoric attenuation of the psychosocial anxieties that had plagued early Meiji, together with a wave of burgeoning individualism among the younger generation. Natsume Sōseki (1867–1916) touched on these after-effects in a speech given six months after the war's end: "Presently, Japan has come out ahead in a test of military might, but that is not all. This has likely had a profound impact on the Japanese at a mental level." Fittingly, Sōseki's literary activity best encapsulated this shift. Born in 1867, less than a year before the late Kōyō, Sōseki did not debut until later, achieving quick popularity with *Wagahai wa neko de aru* (I Am a Cat) and "London tō" (Tower of London) in January 1905, mere months after the literary world had lost its primary figurehead. Soon thereafter the Naturalist

authors – Kunikida Doppo (1871–1908), Shimazaki Tōson (1872–1943), Tayama Katai (1872–1930), Masamune Hakuchō (1879–1962), et al. – ushered in what would be the heyday of Japanese Naturalism. The seeds he had sown finally bearing fruit, Futabatei himself returned to the literary scene with *Sono omokage* (An Adopted Husband, 1906).

Mori Ōgai (1862–1922) was equally galvanized, albeit belatedly. Ōgai had studied abroad in Germany as an army surgeon from 1884 to 1888 and had become a leader of the incipient literary community after his return with several short stories set in Germany, including “Maihime” (The Dancing Girl, 1890), “Utakata no ki” (Foam on the Waves, 1890), and “Fumizukai” (The Courier, 1891), lauded for their syncretic *gabuntai* (“elegant” or neoclassical) style. A number of his translations of European literature also had an impact. Moreover, he did much to assist the establishment of literary theory in Japan, his contributions equal to those of Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859–1935) and Futabatei. Nevertheless, as Japan became embroiled in the war with Russia, Ōgai found devoting further energies to such pursuits increasingly difficult and abandoned literature.

The journal *Subaru* (1909–13) offered Ōgai an opportunity to return to the literary scene. Two months after Yosano Tekkan (1873–1935) and Akiko’s (1878–1942) poetry journal *Myōjō* (1900–8), the chief vehicle for Meiji era Romanticism, ended its hundred-issue run in November 1908, Ishikawa Takuboku (1886–1912), Yoshii Isamu (1886–1960), Kinoshita Mokutarō (1885–1945) and other former contributors launched a new journal. Under Ōgai’s leadership, *Subaru* would become an enclave for aesthetic anti-Naturalism during the predominately Naturalist 1900s, not only carrying narrative pieces like Ōgai’s “Hannichi” (Half-day, 1909), *Vita Sexualis* (1909), *Seinen* (Youth, 1910), and *Gan* (Wild Goose, 1911–13), but also serializing Ōgai’s column “Mukudori tsūshin” (Starling Notice), in which the author discussed current trends in European letters.

In *Seinen*, Mōri Ōson, Ōgai’s self-caricature, is appraised by the protagonist-narrator as “a dried-up old man who would mingle with the fresh-faced and dodder about confused, complain and make snide remarks, write stories and plays plotted out as though by a surveyor taking geodesic measurements with rod and twine.” Ōgai’s modern-day stories display a methodically calculated and highly rational style, very much as if measured with “rod and twine.” Although this humorously masochistic self-portrait does a marvelous job of relativizing the author, Ōgai was one of the foremost figures conversant in Western literary thought, and occupied the seat of leadership in the circles with which he associated.

Futabatei and Ōgai were not alone in returning to the literary scene at this juncture. Nagai Kafū (1879–1959), having made a name for himself as an advocate of “Zolaism” with *Yashin* (Ambition) and *Jigoku no hana* (Hell Flowers) in 1902, departed for the United States in 1903 and, after four years in America and a fifth in France, returned to Japan in 1908. While still abroad, Kafū periodically sent manuscripts to Tokyo for publication, culminating in the well-received *Amerika monogatari* (American Stories, 1908), which compiled his narratives penned in the United States and France; its companion volume *Furansu monogatari* (French Stories, 1909), on the other hand, was banned by the censors and would not see wide circulation until 1915, in a significantly redacted edition. This setback notwithstanding, Kafū followed with a productive flurry, penning among others “Kitsune” (The Fox, 1908), “Fukagawa no uta” (A Song of Fukagawa, 1909), “Kanraku” (Pleasure, 1909), and “Sumidagawa” (The River Sumida, 1911). This career-defining period helped breathe new life into the post-Russo-Japanese War literary scene.

With his extensive experience with Western civilization, Kafū spared nothing in his excoriation of the superficial aping of the West in Japan’s modernization. Not all were sympathetic, however: Ishikawa Takuboku denounced him for “having the aura particular to rich kids of provincial extraction who spend more time and money in Tokyo than they should, only to return with no intention of doing much of anything, stopping everyone they pass to sneer about how tawdry and coarse the local geisha are,” and suggested in “Kire-gire ni kokoro ni ukanda kanji to kansō” (Thoughts and Feelings that Came to Mind in Bits and Pieces) that “Mr. Kafū would be best served by going back to Paris.” Still, the critique in these works interrogated the fundamental form of Western and Japanese modernization and problematized the current atmosphere of public self-congratulation.

In “Kichōsha no nikki” (Diary of a Returnee, 1909), Kafū laments Tokyo’s deplorable state:

What are the modern Japanese thinking? Do they assume with no little pride that with this they’ve become some outstanding, first-rate nation? This is neither improvement, nor advancement, nor construction. Meiji is destruction. All they have done is tear down the beauty of the old system and replace it with shoddy rubbish built overnight . . . From what I know of the West, not all is everywhere modern. Despite modernity’s encroachments, there remain spaces it cannot conquer. Otherwise put, the West has about it a strong musk of ages past. It reeks of history.

Kafū recognized the contemporary West as predicated on its history and traditions – hence his criticism of Japan’s emulation – but, perhaps informed

by this understanding, his focus gradually shifted to Japan's tradition and a rediscovery of "Edo." Kafū met Ōgai soon after the publication of *Jigoku no hana*, and was elated when the latter confessed to having already read his debut novel. Kafū would henceforth revere Ōgai as a mentor, and, with Ōgai's recommendation, was granted a professorship at Keiō University in 1910. In May of the same year, he founded the journal *Mita bungaku*, and began serializing the editorial *Kōcha no ato* as well as penning the short stories later collected in *Shinbashi yawa* (Night Tales from Shinbashi, 1912). With Ōgai's backing in the form of the stories provided for each issue – such as "Fushinchū" (Under Reconstruction, 1910), "Hanako," and "Mōsō" (Daydreams, 1911) – and numerous translations, *Mita bungaku* developed into one of the stronger bases for the anti-Naturalist camp. April saw the debut of Mushanokōji Saneatsu's (1885–1976) and Shiga Naoya's (1883–1971) journal *Shirakaba* (White Birch, 1910–23), while September saw the second incarnation of the journal *Shin-shichō* (New Current of Thought, 1910–11), whose group included Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886–1965). Together, these new journals signaled the dawn of Taishō literature.

The year 1910 witnessed two events crucial to modern Japanese history – the Great Treason Incident and the Annexation of Korea. The former began when the authorities got wind of an assassination plot against the emperor hatched by two or three conspirators, and subsequently moved to crack down on leftists in a spate of indiscriminate arrests. At the end of a secret trial, twelve anarchists and socialists were executed, including socialist intellectual Kōtoku Shūsui (1871–1911), who bore no connection to the assassination plot. This stringent suppression proceeded in step with Japan's imperial ambitions, embodied in the colonization and annexation of Korea. As Ishikawa Takuboku lamented in "Jidai heisoku no genjō" (Our Current Closed Age, 1910), here the state's authoritarian system, abetted by the consolidation and expansion of its powers during wartime, took full shape.

In response, Ōgai published "Chinmoku no tō" (Tower of Silence, 1910) and "Shokudō" (Cafeteria, 1910) in *Mita bungaku*. A satire, the allegorical account of the former concerns the Paashii tribe's "Tower of Silence" and their custom of slaying those who read Western books. Closing the narrative, the author writes: "In the Paashii tribe's culture, both the arts and sciences appear dangerous. At all times and places reactionary forces conspire against those who walk a new path, and swell up to persecute them. All that differs is the excuse given in each place and time. Pernicious Western writings are but one." "Shokudō," by contrast, dramatizes a lunchtime conversation about the Treason Incident between civil servants that delineates the history and various filiations of anarchism. For Ōgai, this was a risky undertaking.

Kafū's reaction is recorded in "Hanabi" (Fireworks, 1919). Catching sight of police caddies transporting the prisoners, he opines:

Of all I have encountered, this makes me most sick at heart. As a writer, one must not remain silent in the face of suppression. In the Dreyfus Affair, was not Zola forced into exile for crying out for justice? But I and my contemporaries have done nothing. I couldn't bear my conscience, and have felt intense shame in being a writer. I wondered whether it would be best to lower my art to the level of the Edo period scribblers.

While this is retroactive narrativization of his career trajectory, Kafū's suspicion vis-à-vis modernity and its contradictions eventually turned his attention toward traditional Japanese culture.

On September 13, 1912, General Nogi Maresuke (b. 1849) and his wife committed suicide, following the Meiji emperor in death. Ōgai learned of this after the emperor's funeral proceedings, and in his diary confessed to feeling "half-incredulous." With his background in Western learning and decades-long involvement in the state's nation-building project, Ōgai was exploring the problematic relationship between the logic of the nation-state and the ethical life of the individual in his fiction, such as "Kano yō ni" (As If, 1912) and "Fujidana" (Wisteria Trellis, 1912) in the Gojō Hidemaro cycle. Nogi's death profoundly affected Ōgai, prompting him to compose the historical narrative "Okitsu Yagoemon no isho" (The Last Testament of Okitsu Yagoemon, 1912), conceived in form as the posthumous testimony of a retainer who commits suicide at his master's death. The narrative reveals Ōgai's negotiating his sympathies for Nogi.

From the perspective of Western-inflected Meiji rationalism, General Nogi's suicide was an anachronistic aberration. Ōgai could accept that the personal relationship between Nogi and the Meiji emperor was complex, but in Nogi's death Ōgai perceived a sublation of the contradictions endemic to the modern regime of rational skepticism, effected by the feudal ethics of *bushidō*, which stipulated fealty and its prerequisite self-abnegation. Within the framework of the historical narrative, Ōgai would continue to explore the implications of this dilemma, in "Abe ichizoku" (The Abe Family, 1913), "Gojiingahara no katakiuchi" (The Vendetta at Gojiingahara, 1913), "Sakai jiken" (The Sakai Incident, 1914), "Yasui fujin" (Madam Yasui, 1914), "Sanshō dayū" (Sanshō the Steward, 1915), "Saigo no ikku" (The Final Line, 1915), and "Takasebune" (Down the Takase River, 1916).

In producing his historical fictions Ōgai amassed Edo period military household almanacs (*bukan*), and became acquainted with Shibue Chūsai

(1805–58), a late Edo scholar of applied philology (*kōshōgaku*) and the subject for Ōgai's eponymously titled *Shibue Chūsai* (1916). Relying on documents procured from Chūsai's descendants, Ōgai meticulously relates the Tsugaru-born doctor's biography and the fate of his house. Ōgai also acknowledges his private sympathies: "Chūsai traveled the same path as I . . . If Chūsai were my *contemporaine*, our sleeves would undoubtedly have brushed together in some alley." Ōgai would subsequently write many more biographical accounts of Edo period Confucian scholars, such as in *Izawa Ranken* (1916) and *Hōjō Katei* (1916).

Regarding this corpus, Ōgai was equivocal: "It is still unclear to me why my modern intellect would impose a genealogical tendency on the *denki* (biography) genre" (*Nakajikiri*); and elsewhere: "no matter how much one expands the notion of the novel, my narratives would not be called novels" ("Kanchōrō kanwa," Idle Chatter from the Kanchōrō Residence, 1917). Karatani Kōjin (b. 1941), touching on the famous 1891 "Botsu-risō" (Absence of Ideals) debate between Ōgai and Tsubouchi Shōyō, has argued that Ōgai's position helped institutionalize modern Japanese literature by introducing a perspectival frame based on a single vanishing point, but Ōgai's *denki*, radically diverging from the novel form, no longer conformed to this paradigm.

Kafū, for his part, had completely immersed himself in his Edo-oriented aesthetics by the early years of Taishō, retiring from teaching in 1916. Along with essays such as *Hiyori geta* (1915), which traces the author's perambulations through the old city's "back alleys and side streets," or *Edo geijutsuron* (1920), a critical treatise on *ukiyo-e* prints, Kafū wrote several novels informed by these aesthetic concerns. These include *Ude kurabe* (Geisha in Rivalry, 1916–17), which sensuously depicts the lives and loves of geisha in the Shinbashi pleasure quarters, and "Ame shōshō" (Quiet Rain, 1922), the elegiac tale of a generation forsaken by the modern age. Additionally, on September 16, 1917, Kafū made the first entry in his extended diary *Danchōtei nichijō* (Gut-Wrenching-House), which he would continue until his death.

The May 5, 1926 entry responds to Ōgai's *Shibue Chūsai*:

Stayed up late into the night reading Mr. Mori's life of Shibue Chūsai. Mr. Ōgai's writing in this history promises to establish a new standard. Not only is the prose highly detailed and powerful, the style is marked by an exquisite antiquity, each word and phrase replete with implication. The vernacular style is of its own accord fully realized, and stands for the first time on equal footing with the classical language.

Kafū's comments could apply to his own *Danchōtei nichijō*, chronicling as it does the minutiae of a modern intellectual's life, in contrast to Ōgai's historical reconstruction. Kafū, inspired by Ōgai's example, composed *Shitaya no hanashi* (Shitaya Story, later *Shitaya sōwa* [Shitaya Gleanings], 1924), detailing the careers of his maternal grandfather Washizu Kidō and other late Edo *kanshi* poets.

Let us return to the literary watershed of 1910. The second incarnation of the journal *Shin-shichō*, inaugurated in September, furnished a platform for Tanizaki Jun'ichirō's early works, such as "Shisei" (The Tattooer, 1910) and "Kirin" (Kylin, 1910), which exuded sensational and lurid energy. According to the autobiographical *Seishun monogatari* (Tales of My Youth, 1932–3), Tanizaki "felt antipathy for Naturalist literature and aspired to bear the opposition's standard," and thus found it difficult to make headway in the literary world until Kafū's *Amerika monogatari*. Tanizaki, having suffered a bout of neurasthenia, was convalescing at a friend's country house when he encountered Kafū's collection: "I felt a proximity, as though my literary blood-brother had made his appearance. Should I manage to make my debut, I thought to be recognized first by none other than this – imagining the arrival of such a day, I indulged in fantasizing."

The following year, Tanizaki published "Shōnen" (The Children, 1911) and "Hōkan" (The Jester, 1911) in *Subaru*, and in November *Mita bungaku* carried a laudatory review by Kafū entitled "Tanizaki Jun'ichirō-shi no sakuhin" (Mr. Tanizaki Jun'ichirō's Work) which heaped lavish praise on the young author: "Tanizaki has broken new literary ground none in our Meiji circle have attempted or otherwise been able to open . . . Ueda Bin [1874–1916] was nearly moved to tears on reading Tanizaki's exquisite work, and Mori Ōgai asked if 'the author of "Shisei"' would be gracing us with his presence. I am not alone in my adulation of Tanizaki." Idle daydreams had now seen realization.

However, as Noguchi Takehiko (b. 1937) discusses in his *Tanizaki Jun'ichirō ron* (On Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, 1973), at the root of this encounter between Tanizaki and Kafū was a misapprehension of sorts. In his evaluation of these early works, Kafū noted that Tanizaki would "pluck out the soul of Edo with his lucid prose," and that the "totally urban" character of his writing was to be interpreted as a kind of nativism: "Since Tokyo, replacing Edo, is the author's intellectual homeland, his writing is completely native. As for the importance of possessing a native spirit for the creation of modern art, those who know the work of Wagner or Ibsen or Grieg or D'Annunzio are all aware of it."

Kafū, having spent five years in America and Europe and possessing an awareness of the interrelationship between Western civilization and its historical tradition, had worked toward a rediscovery of Edo, and it was at this juncture that Tanizaki's literature, which seemed to take Edo as its "reality" and its arts as a fountain of vital energy, appeared. However, Tanizaki would soon turn his back on this "native spirit" and, looking increasingly westward, attempt to transpose the aesthetic notions explored in "Shisei" and his other early work onto his own lifestyle. The same month that Kafū's review was published, Tanizaki's "Himitsu" (The Secret, 1911) appeared in *Chūō kōron* (Central Review, 1887–), a significant milestone for any young author. The story's postscript articulates unequivocally this transition: "My heart has become ever harder to sate with 'secrets' and similarly tepid diversions, as it seeks out ever more lurid, ever more sanguineous pleasures." From its masochistic perversion and pathologically carnal subject matter, Tanizaki's Taishō period work came to be christened as "the literature of the diabolic."

Dying the year before, Ōgai did not live to witness the terrible destruction of the Great Kantō Earthquake (1923), which claimed ten thousand lives in a matter of moments. In the West, the carnage of the First World War had exhausted the faith theretofore held in human will and reason. Both war and natural disaster erupted without forewarning, and individual will and reason were left impotent in their wake. Consequently, the category of the "individual" – the nineteenth-century novel's substrate – began to buckle. As symbolized by Uno Kōji's (1891–1961) lapse into madness and Akutagawa Ryūnosuke's (1892–1927) suicide, the years intervening between the earthquake and the end of Taishō traced an epochal shift in modern Japanese letters.

Two important journals began publication the year following the earthquake: *Bungei sensen* (The Literary Front, 1924–32) and *Bungei jidai* (The Literary Age, 1924–7). The former operated as the base for the Proletarian Literature movement, while the latter served as the hub for Yokomitsu Riichi's (1898–1947) and Kawabata Yasunari's (1899–1972) New Sensationism. The Proletarian camp rallied around the teleological necessity of the Marxist historical process, while the New Sensationists sought a mode of expression suited to their new reality, inspired by the postwar literature of Europe and its mission to supplant the "logic of reason" with a "logic of feeling" in the vein of Paul Morand's (1888–1976) *Ouvert la nuit* (1922) or German Expressionism. The Meiji and Taishō literary establishment foundered under this bipartite modernist assault, stagnated, and fell increasingly silent.

Tanizaki's Yokohama residence was destroyed in the fires resulting from the earthquake, forcing a relocation to Western Japan. Though this was intended as a temporary move, Tanizaki found himself fascinated by the region's cultural traditions and links to the classical literary canon, rooted in its climate and customs, and would remain there until moving to Atami for health reasons late in life. Tanizaki soon completed *Chijin no ai* (Naomi, 1924–5), a thematic culmination of his early work, only to pen *Manji* (Quicksand, 1928), written exclusively in the Osaka dialect, followed by *Tade kuu mushi* (Some Prefer Nettles, 1928–9), another crucial turning point. Tanizaki's writing in this period, incorporating vestiges of a classical world, demonstrated similarity to Kafū's in its critical appraisal of contemporary civilization.

The father-in-law in *Tade kuu mushi*, a resident of Kyoto's Shishigatani district, keeps a mistress whose tastes and behavior he fastidiously molds to his traditional standard, and so bears a striking resemblance to Yō in Kafū's "Ame shōshō," who tries to have his mistress learn the Sonohachi-bushi jōruri style, and even to Kafū himself, discernible in the semi-autobiographical "Shōtaku" (House for a Mistress, 1912). Moreover, portions of Kafū's *Ōkubo-dayori* (Tidings from Ōkubo, 1913) are congruent with the aesthetics elaborated in Tanizaki's *In'ei raisan* (In Praise of Shadows, 1933):

Looking at recent architecture, or the new residences of wealthy business men, the trend is to lower the ceilings to eliminate any duskiness in the Japanese rooms, regardless of its effect on the building's structure, while the gardens favor open views at the expense of plants and shrubbery. Still, I cannot help feeling that Japanese complexions, demeanor, clothing, interior decoration and furniture, do not harmonize when exposed to excessive lighting.

Far from the center of literary activity, Tanizaki could pursue themes that drew his interest, writing *Yoshino kuzu* (Arrowroot, 1931), *Mōmoku monogatari* (A Blind Man's Tale, 1931), *Bushūkō hiwa* (The Secret History of the Lord Musashi, 1931), *Ashikari* (The Reedcutter, 1932), and *Shunkin shō* (A Portrait of Shunkin, 1933) during this productive time. In stark contrast, Kafū found himself at odds with many of the major publishing companies, and the target of infelicitous treatment by the journalistic establishment. In 1931, Kafū published *Tsuyu no atosaki* (During the Rains), his first important work in quite some time, which depicted the florid lifestyle of a Ginza café waitress; Tanizaki immediately penned a glowing review "Nagai Kafū-shi no kingyō ni tsuite" (On Mr. Nagai Kafū's Recent Work) articulating profound understanding for Kafū, thus returning the goodwill received at his debut.

Perhaps encouraged, Kafū composed *Bokutō kidan* (A Strange Tale from East of the River, 1937), recounting an affair with a Tamanoi-district prostitute through narratologically self-referential mise-en-abyme, informed by André Gide's (1869–1951) *Paludes* (1896) and *Les Faux-monnayeurs* (1925). Kafū's adoption of an experimental structure resonated with the wider perception that nineteenth-century realism and the novel it buttressed were no longer viable. For his part, Tanizaki's early Shōwa writing adapted elements of the *monogatari* or classical tale in an attempt to break new ground. His skepticism about the conventional novel form is evinced in his postscript to *Shunkin shō* (A Portrait of Shunkin): "As long as one works in the novel form, the more deftly one writes the more artificial and false the result."

Shunkin shō takes the form of a historiographical investigation conducted by the author-narrator. Curiosity piqued, the narrator visits the grave of the deceased Shunkin, seeks out surviving acquaintances, and begins reconstructing her biography, at times doubting the factuality of his materials, at other times speculating about the various lacunae they present. Structurally bearing strong resemblance to Ōgai's *Shibue Chūsai*, Tanizaki's novel suggests that the trajectory of Ōgai's career – shifting ever further away from the rigorously unified perspectival regime of Ōgai's earlier fiction – was a vector shared by modern Japanese literary history as a whole. While Ōgai abandoned the novel for his reinvention of the historical biography, Tanizaki, member of the subsequent generation, worked toward a critical dismantling of the novel through the formal conventions furnished by Ōgai's historiography. Ōgai became disenchanted with the modern novel form at the time Sōseki was composing *Meian* (Light and Darkness, 1916) and Arishima Takeo (1878–1923) was writing *Aru onna* (A Certain Woman, 1919) – a seminal moment in the maturation of the modern Japanese novel. Tanizaki's works in the *monogatari* mode can be read as gestures against the homogenizing perspective of the modern novel.

Tanizaki's next project was a modern translation of the eleventh-century *Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Genji), though the massive undertaking would not be completed until the end of World War II, when the author restored passages that had been considered slanderous to the imperial house during wartime. Also straddling wartime was *Sasameyuki* (The Makioka Sisters, 1943–8), which depicted the lives of four daughters of a wealthy Osaka merchant and their immersion in Kamigata culture. With the war's end, Kafū moved to publish his unreleased manuscripts; a renewed receptivity for the author's defiant spirit secured him a surge in popularity, but his postwar material did not demonstrate the brilliance of his earlier work. By contrast,

Tanizaki's productive drive and creativity did not wane; he wrote *Shōshō Shigemoto no haha* (Captain Shigemoto's Mother, 1949), reminiscent of a Heian period picture scroll in its aesthetics, *Kagi* (The Key, 1956), which negotiated the shady territory between the artistic and the pornographic, and *Fūten rōjin nikki* (Diary of a Mad Old Man, 1961), which boldly depicted the sexual yearning of an elderly man for his son's young wife.

(Translated by Charles Woolley)

Natsume Sōseki and the theory and practice of literature

MICHAEL K. BOURDAGHS

Natsume Sōseki (1867–1916) has intrigued scholars and readers for more than a century, due in large measure to the productive contradictions that drove his work. He created an indisputably modern literature while appropriating techniques and practices that predated modernity – whether from Japan, China, or the West. He wrote highly intellectual works whose heroes grappled with abstract philosophical dilemmas – even as they walked through narratives rooted in plebeian melodrama. Sōseki created some of the darkest works of modern fiction – and some of the funniest. His novels feature intricately engineered structures, clock-like formations in which seemingly minor details mesh together with uncanny precision – novels that nonetheless remain remarkably open-ended and ambiguous.

Born Natsume Kinnosuke, the youngest child of a prosperous family in the city now called Tokyo, he belonged to the last generation to remember the old Edo culture as it existed before the drastic changes of the Meiji period. A superfluous child in a family with five older brothers, Kinnosuke was sent out for adoption as a baby. But – as he reminisced in *Garasudo no uchi* (Inside My Glass Doors, 1915) – he soon returned to his original home when his birth-family sister discovered the infant sitting unattended among wares for sale in front of his adoptive family's store. Kinnosuke was subsequently again adopted by the Shiobara family, legally changing his name to Shiobara Kinnosuke. When he was nine, the Shiobaras divorced, and Kinnosuke again returned to live with his birth family – though he would remain on the Shiobara family registry until he was twenty-one. Sōseki would use this early history as raw material for his autobiographical novel, *Michikusa* (Grass by the Wayside, 1915), and it undoubtedly shaped his other fiction, with its frequent depictions of a sense of alienation that arose not just on urban streets, but also from within the family home.

Kinnosuke progressed through the elite track of the new Meiji educational system. But he struggled to choose his field of specialization and considered,

among other possibilities, architecture, English literature, and classical Chinese studies (he spent several months enrolled at Nishō Gakusha, an academy for classical Chinese learning). In 1890 Kinnosuke enrolled in the English Department at the Imperial University in Tokyo, finally settling the question of his academic specialty. He would go on to produce translations, letters, and even poetry in English, all attesting to his high level of proficiency in the language, but he also retained a lifelong ambivalence toward it.

In 1889 Kinnosuke met a contemporary who would have a decisive impact: the poet Masaoka Shiki (1867–1902). Under Shiki's influence, Kinnosuke fostered what became a lifelong passion for composing poetry in classical genres, most notably *kanshi* (classical Chinese poetry); Sōseki is frequently declared modern Japan's greatest *kanshi* poet. He would practice other forms associated with traditional literati culture, too, including calligraphy, painting, and *noh* chanting. It was soon after Kinnosuke met Shiki that he began using the pen-name Sōseki.

After graduating from the university in 1893, he taught English at Matsuyama Secondary School in Shikoku (his experiences there provided material for his comic 1906 novel *Botchan*, probably Sōseki's most popular work among Japanese readers), and later at the Fifth Higher School in Kumamoto in Kyushu. In 1900, an unexpected and largely unwanted opportunity arose: he was selected by the Ministry of Education to be sent to England for intensive study. The two years Sōseki spent in London were, he would later write, the unhappiest of his life. He faced isolation, culture shock, and an apparent nervous breakdown, as well as the death of Masaoka Shiki. His initial plan to read through the canon of British literature faltered when, halfway through his stay in London, he came to the devastating realization that he had no idea what "literature" even was.

This realization became the impetus for his major work as a literary theorist. He stopped reading literary texts, since "To read literary works to try to learn what literature was, I believed, was the same as trying to wash blood with blood" ("Preface" to *Bungakuron* [Theory of Literature], 1907). In their place, he launched into an ambitious survey of two rising scientific disciplines, psychology and sociology. After returning to Japan in 1903 and taking up a teaching position at Tokyo Imperial University (replacing Lafcadio Hearn as lecturer on English literature), he used his reading notes as the basis for a series of university lectures and ultimately for his *Bungakuron*.

Bungakuron represents an ambitious attempt to produce a scientific theory of world literature, valid for all places and all times. Using psychological studies of

the stream of consciousness by such figures as Lloyd Morgan and William James, Sōseki produced a new definition of literature. Human culture consisted of two broad realms, science and literature. Whereas the content of science could be expressed as F , where F referred to the focal point of consciousness at any given moment, the content of literature consisted of $F + f$, where f referred to the emotional fringes of consciousness. This f indicated not only the importance of affect in literature, but also the temporal fluidity of the reading process: the F of one moment of consciousness recedes when a previously peripheral f shifts from the fringes of consciousness to its focal point, becoming the new F – only to retreat back to the fringes again (becoming f again) when another new F emerged in the ongoing wave-flow of consciousness. The sociological side of the theory arrived when Sōseki claimed that the $F + f$ formula characterized not only moments of individual consciousness, but also the shared consciousness or *Zeitgeist* of a given society.

Sōseki's use of quantitative language to define literature allowed him to break with previously dominant discourses of literature – whether the rhetoric studies of classical Chinese learning or the belletristic and social-evolutionary modes of Western literary history. In doing so, Sōseki devalued the role of both morality and aesthetics in literature: both have their place, he argued, but neither was decisive in determining literary value, which depended instead on the intensity of feeling that a passage solicited in its reader's consciousness. This effect was always partially contingent, because a reader's response to a text is historically and culturally determined. This meant that the literary value of a work would fluctuate across time, so that someday perhaps even Shakespeare might be forgotten. Sōseki explicitly rejected the notion that literary history develops along a linear, civilizational trajectory, arguing that there is no reason why non-Western literatures such as Japan's need develop along the same course as Western literature.

While he later spoke disparagingly of *Bungakuron*, Sōseki would continue to develop his literary theories in a number of celebrated lectures, including “Watakushi no kojishugi” (My Individualism, 1914) and “Gendai Nihon no kaika” (The Civilization of Present-Day Japan, 1912). But even before the publication of *Bungakuron*, he had shifted direction to pursue fiction writing. In early 1905, he published his first stories: “Rondon tō” (Tower of London), a semi-autobiographical account of a hallucinatory visit to the titular landmark that puts into practice many of the psychological theories discussed in *Bungakuron*, and *Wagahai wa neko de aru* (I Am a Cat), a comical piece narrated in the first person by a nameless cat about daily life in the household of the (very Sōseki-like) teacher who has adopted him. The latter piece

proved so popular that Sōseki continued the story, eventually serializing eleven installments that were subsequently published in book form.

From 1905 to 1907, he published a string of stories and novellas. These often feature experimental narrative strategies, including the philosophical stream-of-consciousness narration found in *Kusamakura* (1906) and the boisterous, befuddled first-person narrator of *Botchan*. Sōseki has often been celebrated as an early master of the *genbun-itchi* vernacular prose style that emerged as the norm for modern realism in Japan, but these early stories – with, for example, a cat standing in as narrator – suggest he was also interested in playfully bending the dominant forms of literary narration. This experimental bent carried over into Sōseki's later novels, which often employ non-standard devices – such as the epistolary novel form Sōseki knew from his studies of eighteenth-century British literature. Rather than interpret Sōseki as a master of modern psychological realism, it often seems more appropriate to see him as an early modernist, a contemporary of Joseph Conrad and Henry James (both of whose works he knew).

In 1907, Sōseki shocked the literary world by resigning his elite university appointment to become editor of the literary page of the *Asahi* newspaper in what was then considered the vulgar world of journalism. From this point on, all of Sōseki's major works appeared first in serialized form in the *Asahi*. His first newspaper novel, the melodramatic *Gubijinsō* (Poppy, 1907), while popular with readers and containing many of what would become Sōseki's characteristic themes, was a critical failure. After that, however, came a string of works that would cement Sōseki's critical reputation in many minds as modern Japan's greatest novelist – as well as one of its most popular writers.

The first six of these are conventionally grouped together as if they formed two trilogies. There is no carryover in terms of story among them, but each trilogy seems to form a sequence of novels dealing with different stages of life. *Sanshirō* (1908) traces in comic fashion the misadventures of its eponymous hero, a country boy thrust into the mysteries of modern urban life as a student at Tokyo Imperial University, in particular his failed attempts at romance with the strikingly independent-minded women he meets. In 1909, Sōseki followed up with *Sorekara* (And Then), tracing the process by which its hero, the adult son of an elite Tokyo family, risks his social and familial position due to his love for the wife of a friend. The novel provides a striking instance of the romantic triangle narrative – in which two male characters compete for the affections of a single female – that would appear in many of Sōseki's novels and lead later critics to cite René Girard's theory of mimetic desire. Recent critics have also noted that in many of these works the

homosocial relationship between the male rivals sometimes develops such passionate intensity as to enter the realm of the homoerotic. The depiction of female characters in these novels has also led to debates over the status of gender in Sōseki's works: females are often positioned as veritable objects whose ownership is disputed between males, yet those same female characters often seem to think and act autonomously, all the while remaining unfathomable to the male characters.

In 1910 Sōseki published *Mon* (The Gate), concluding the first “trilogy.” It tells of Sōsuke and Oyone, a middle-aged couple living a modest life in Tokyo until their dark past threatens to return and disrupt their tranquility: years earlier, Sōsuke “stole” Oyone from a friend, and now that friend, living abroad on the Asian continent, has plans to visit Tokyo and call next door on their landlord. Including lively passages of third-person, stream-of-consciousness narration, the novel traces Sōsuke's spiritual crisis. *Mon* foregrounds another theme that has attracted critical attention: the role of empire in Sōseki's works. Not only does the past in *Mon* return by way of semi-colonial Asia, but Oyone and Sōsuke openly discuss the 1909 assassination of Itō Hirobumi by a Korean nationalist in Manchuria. Sōseki had visited colonial Korea and Manchuria in 1909 and published a narrative of his journey, *Mankan tokorodokoro* (Travels in Manchuria and Korea). Critics point to passages in the travelogue expressing prejudicial attitudes toward other Asians, while more sympathetic readers cite passages from it and other works that show Sōseki seemingly troubled by Japanese imperialism. Sōseki's refusal of a Doctors of Letters degree from the Ministry of Education in 1911, for example, is cited as a sign of his growing distance from the Meiji state and its policies. Sōseki's works were, incidentally, widely read by contemporary writers on the Asian continent, including Lu Xun, Ba Jin, and Yi Kwangsu.

Higan sugi made (To the Spring Equinox and Beyond, 1912), published after a nearly fatal bout with stomach ulcers, opens the second “trilogy” with another self-consciously experimental work. As Sōseki remarked in the preface that preceded newspaper serialization, the work consists of a series of only tangentially related episodes, each capable of standing as a discrete story but that together form a loose narrative following young Keitarō, as he hears stories about the tangled lives of people around him, including his friend Sunaga, trapped in a romantic triangle, and Sunaga's uncle Matsumoto, whose young daughter has recently died. In *Kōjin* (The Wayfarer, 1912–13), the obligatory romantic triangle is formed between Ichirō, tormented by fears that his wife Onao might not be faithful to him, and his younger brother Jirō, whom Ichirō employs to test Onao's fidelity. The last section of the

novel introduces a new narrating voice, a friend of Ichirō's who travels with him and writes a long letter to Jirō (quoted verbatim) describing the elder brother's mental deterioration. As is often the case in Sōseki, the ending leaves the plot ambiguously open-ended.

Kokoro (1914), Sōseki's best-known novel in the West, completes the second trilogy. In the first of its three sections, an unnamed first-person narrator recalls his encounter as a student with an older man he calls "Sensei," who has seemingly withdrawn from the world. Sensei hints that there is a guilty secret in his past, one connected to his wife Shizu, that explains his present state. In the middle section, the student returns home to the country after graduation to tend to his dying father. News of the death of the Meiji emperor reaches them shortly before the father's condition worsens. A long letter from Sensei arrives, confessing his past secret – and announcing his imminent suicide. The student abandons his dying father as he desperately boards a train to return to Tokyo. (We never learn what happens to him after that, though critics have pointed to tantalizing hints embedded in the novel's first half). *Kokoro*'s final section, comprising roughly half of its pages, consists of Sensei's letter. It details his guilt over having betrayed his friend K in their student days, when both fell in love with the same woman (Shizu). K commits suicide, and Sensei blames himself. The letter closes with Sensei linking his own decision to commit suicide with the emperor's death, as well as the ritual suicide shortly thereafter of General Nogi and his wife: Sensei feels the age he belongs to is passing.

In 1915 Sōseki published the autobiographical *Michikusa*. In 1916 he began serializing *Meian* (Light and Darkness), a long and complex narrative of an unhappy marriage, in which Sōseki again frequently employed stream-of-consciousness style narration. His death on December 9, 1916, from the stomach ulcers that had plagued him for years, left the work unfinished, though many critics have celebrated it as a masterpiece.

Sōseki's impact on Japanese literary history goes beyond his own works. In his role as literary editor of the *Asahi*, he functioned as an influential gatekeeper, boosting the careers of numerous young writers. In addition, every Thursday afternoon he hosted a salon for young writers at his own home, gathering about him a group of fiercely loyal disciples who would dominate Japanese letters for decades to come – including Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, Kume Masao, Nogami Yaeko, Uchida Hyakken, and Abe Jirō, among others. Sōseki's contract with the *Asahi* permitted him to publish his works in book form after their newspaper serialization, and he used this power in 1914 when bookseller Iwanami Shigeo approached him about a proposed new

publishing venture. That year, the new Iwanami Shoten brought out Sōseki's *Kokoro* as its first title, launching one of the most influential publishing houses of modern Japanese literature.

The early critical reception of Sōseki was dominated by his disciples, in particular Komiya Toyotaka (1884–1966) and Morita Sōhei (1881–1949). Under their leadership, the first of what would become many editions of Sōseki's complete works was published by Iwanami in 1916–19. In their criticism, the disciples stressed the ethicality of Sōseki's literature – and of Sōseki himself, celebrating his motto of *sokuten kyoshi* (follow heaven, abandon self). This version of Sōseki came under radical assault in 1956, when the young critic Etō Jun (1932–99) published his first major study of the author, rejecting earlier hagiographical models for a more critical approach. Another major turning point in Sōseki's reception came in the 1970s and 80s, when a new generation of critics – including Karatani Kōjin (b. 1941), Komori Yōichi (b. 1953), and Ishihara Chiaki (b. 1955) – published influential new interpretations that again transformed Sōseki. No longer the hero of the modernization of Japanese literature, he was now celebrated as the first great critic of Japanese modernity.

A new era of women writers

JOAN E. ERICSON

In the first years of the twentieth century – the final years of the Meiji era (1868–1912) – women confronted a host of restrictions imposed by the newly constructed “family system,” yet the profound social transformations in education, urbanization, and even the organization of work and home, created new terrains for women as both readers and authors. The ideology of the Meiji family, embodied in the Civil Code (1898) and expressed in the slogan *ryōsai kenbo* (good wife, wise mother), codified Neo-Confucian ideals of female domesticity, passivity, and sacrifice, and extended patriarchal samurai practices to families of all classes. Limitations on women’s freedoms, including a ban on attending public meetings or joining political associations, mirrored *de jure* powerlessness in the family, where women lacked control over property or, in divorce, a claim on their children. However, even by the end of the nineteenth century, educated women writers plumbed the boundaries of their domestic box, notably in the constraints inherent in marriage. The struggles of their protagonists reflected elusive ideals of romance, of equitable partnerships in the *katei* (home), and of aspirations for female autonomy, if not equality.

Among the most profound social changes by the first decade of the twentieth century was a near universal literacy for young women, and the expansion of opportunities for higher education in urban centers. The efforts of privileged, predominantly male, social reformers established a series of institutions of higher learning for women, and venues such as *Jogaku zasshi* (Women’s Education Magazine) that championed women’s writing. Male mentors were crucial for the publication and visibility for a succession of women writers. Yet these mentors often imposed their own expectations on how a woman should write, and male critics routinely inflicted crude gendered stereotypes on a writer’s style and language. Overshadowing the debate on literary styles was a much more extensive discourse on women, driven largely, if unobtrusively, by the shifting gendered dynamics of

everyday life. The organization of the home, housework, and the socialization of children, as much as increasing opportunities for work and higher education, were in flux and subject to exhaustive, if not always far-reaching, reappraisals of the place of women. Women were not only the subject of this discourse, but also a significant part of the audience, with increasing disposal income. In response to this market, a number of commercially successful female-focused magazines were launched in quick succession – *Fujin gahō* (Ladies' Pictorial, 1905), *Fujin no tomo* (Ladies' Friend, 1906), *Fujin sekai* (Ladies' World, 1906) – along with more short-lived literary venues, such as *Joshi bundan* (Women's Literary, 1905) or the political (socialist) *Sekai fujin* (Women of the World, 1907).

Commercial magazines ostensibly appealed to the urban educated wife responsible for maintaining a nuclear household, most commonly employing a confessional style (*kokuhaiku*) on domestic affairs, though the readers included many single working women and girls in higher schools. At the heart of the most notable stories and essays written by women in this era was the fundamental question “How should a woman live, and how should a woman write?” Nogami Yaeko's (1885–1985) “Kaki-yōkan” (Persimmon Sweets, 1908), published in the prestigious literary journal *Hototogisu* (Cuckoo) associated with Natsume Soseki's Thursday Club, presents a complex, layered appraisal of what a marriage might mean through a humorous sketch. A graduate of the Meiji Women's School, a progressive institution that did not recite the Imperial Rescript on Education, Nogami addressed the common Meiji experience where an unwanted but unavoidable marriage equaled social death. Nogami's unexpected plot twists, only slowly revealed, with their veracity always in doubt, depict a woman's capacity – leaving a marriage, leaving secular life – to defy the most strictly policed proprieties and control her own life.

Tamura Toshiko (1884–1945) published a succession of stories: “Ikichi” (Lifeblood, 1911) in the feminist journal *Seitō* (Bluestocking), followed by “Seigon” (The Vow, 1912) and “Onna sakusha” (A Woman Writer, 1913) in the mainstream literary journal *Shinchō*, that depict, respectively, the psychological dislocation following a forced loss of virginity, the disenchantment of a marriage propelling escalating recriminations, violence, and the prospect of divorce, and a writer racked with self-doubt, indecision, and marital discord. Tamura, influenced by the *shingeki* (new theater) and the New Woman exemplified by Ibsen's Nora, achieved remarkable notoriety with her award-winning novel “Akirame” (Resignation, 1911) which was serialized in the *Asahi* newspaper. Her depictions of the frissons of sexuality and collisions between

the sexes received considerable critical scrutiny and acclaim in special issues of *Shinchō* (New Tides, 1913) and *Chūō kōron* (Central Review, 1914); by her late twenties, she was the most celebrated woman writer of the era. Yet Tamura's portrait of an irresolute artist was unflattering; her writer was indecisive and petty, codependent in a dysfunctional marriage. Tamura's writing, her exploration of conflicted intimacies in a vernacular style, would pass out of critical favor after she left Japan for Canada in 1918 following her lover.

The unabashedly feminist journal *Seitō* (1911–16), founded by Hiratsuka Raichō (1886–1971) along with four other Japan Women's College graduates, exemplified the direct challenge to constraints of conventional morality embodied in the media-grabbing slogan “New Woman.” Raichō's 1911 manifesto, from the inaugural issue, opened with the striking declaration: “In the beginning, woman truly was the sun . . . now she has become the moon – shining by the light of others, dependent on others for a living, a moon whose face is as pale and ashen as an invalid's.” Raichō's lengthy, lyrical manifesto was a clarion call to women to recover authenticity and participate in a broadly conceived creative project to manifest hidden female Genius that was in all women. *Seitō* initiated a series of highly contentious public debates on chastity, abortion, and prostitution. Raichō's defense of the “New Woman” (1913), published in *Chūō kōron*, embraced, unreservedly, the term for herself and her project, to free women from sexist mores, from hypocritically gendered, or even from self-doubt. The New Woman may have been better known as a figure of scandal or the subject of scorn – notably from well-known educators such as Shimoda Utako (1854–1936) or Naruse Jinzō (1858–1919) – yet the wide diversity of feminist perspectives and literary styles in *Seitō* changed the basic presumptions of what a woman would write or read.

The oldest and the youngest authors published in *Seitō* are indicative of the range of its New Woman discourse, even as they illustrate its limits in the face of implacable institutional reaction. Fukuda Hideko's (1865–1927) “Fujin mondai no kaiketsu” (The Solution to the Woman Question, 1913) presents the most sweeping indictment of the limits of women's rights, or liberation, without a communal system, with “equal welfare of all,” including both men and women. A veteran of the *Jiyū minken undō* (Freedom and People's Rights movement), the 1885 Osaka Incident, and the founding of the socialist journal *Sekai fujin*, at forty-eight Hideko was a generation older than the other feminists of *Seitō*. Her “Solution” highlighted the centrality of class inequalities, even as it invoked a utopian, pre-industrial era. The article, most probably, provoked a ban of the entire issue for being “disruptive of public peace and order.” Itō Noe (1895–1923) who, at age twenty, would succeed

Raichō as editor, questioned even more sharply the prevailing social practices, translated articles by foreign feminists such as Emma Goldman, and condemned sanctimonious charity and narrow-minded morality. Itō's "Atarashiki onna no michi" (The Path of the New Woman, 1913) employs dramatic, repetitive language to celebrate the courage of such pioneers and exhort them to continue their struggles: like Raichō, her path is not so much a political platform with specified goals as an emotionally charged expression of commitment. Her short story "Wagamama" (Willfulness, 1913), one of her sixty-something contributions, depicts a young woman forced to return home to Kyushu for an arranged marriage, and the courage required to stand up for the life she desired. Her story closely mirrored her own experiences, fleeing a first marriage to join Tsuji Jun (1884–1944), a writer and translator who was her teacher from Ueno Girls' School; two sequels would trace the unraveling of her relationship with Tsuji. Itō would later be publicly involved with an older married man, Ōsugi Sakae (1885–1923), whose fellow socialist-activist lover, Kamichika Ichiko (1881–1981), created further scandal by stabbing him in the neck in 1916. On September 16, 1923, long after the journal had ceased publication, Ōsugi and Itō, still unmarried, raising seven children, and continuing to work as activist organizers in a working-class district, were murdered by the police.

Over the course of the interwar period, a new generation of women writers achieved considerable popularity and notoriety, with readership sufficient to support their literary careers that, for many, continued in the decades following the Pacific War. Yet most female authors confronted critical condescension that categorized much of their work as *joryū bungaku* (women's literature) and that, if not explicitly disparaging, effectively segregated it from the modern canon. Critics assumed that "women's literature" referred to a specific literary style – principally characterized by sentimental lyricism and impressionistic, non-intellectual, detailed observations of daily life. A few women, such as Miyamoto (née Chūjō) Yuriko (1899–1951), were treated as "masculine" exceptions. Her first publication, "Mazushiki hitobito no mura" (A Flock of the Poor, 1916) in *Chuō kōron*, portrays the misery of tenant farmers, as seen by a privileged, if well-meaning, schoolgirl from the city. The calculated cunning of the impoverished trying to change their own desperate circumstances first induces revulsion in the protagonist, followed by a more skeptical and nuanced appraisal of her own motives for trying to help others. The tone is more cautionary and the description of social conditions more analytical than in many works of "women's literature" that covered similar experiences.

In the decade that followed the First World War, amidst accelerating social change, women's visibility in urban white-collar jobs – elementary school teachers, clerks, office workers, telephone operators, waitresses – unsettled gendered conventions. Single women, working in the tertiary sector, often migrants to Tokyo and independent of patriarchal families, exercising considerable freedom in dress, comportment and love lives, provoked fierce condemnation from conservatives. We should note that for most women this realm of freedom was outside their experience: the vast majority of adult women (over 85 percent) were not in the paid workforce, and nearly three-quarters of those who worked were in manual labor. Even for educated women, discriminatory restrictions in employment were inescapable, as were the limitations of their sex-segregated second-rate education. Yet the freedoms of a relatively few women were widely represented in popular culture, culminating in the image of the *modan gāru* (modern girl) or *moga*, most often depicted as a decadent libertine, independent, adventurous, shameless, an icon of the era that incurred much ire.

Yosano Akiko's (1878–1942) “‘Onnarashisa’ to wa nani ka” (What Is ‘Womanliness’?, 1921), published in *Fujin kōron* (Ladies’ Review), indicts hide-bound male conservatives who championed what they claimed were time-honored, fast-disappearing feminine ideals of love, refinement, and modesty. Already renowned as a *tanka* poet for *Midaregami* (Tangled Hair, 1901), Yosano had become a prolific public intellectual on a wide range of women's issues. She advocated full gender equality in education and work, and characterized “motherhood” (read, parenting) as a jointly shared project. For Yosano, the goal was to improve the “humanness,” the best, admired traits regardless of gender, and cut through the cant justifications of gender privilege. Few would follow Yosano's utopian ideals, but in a period of relative political moderation, reactionary outrage had limited impact in reining in the burgeoning print culture: *outré* women were good copy.

By the mid 1920s, the diversity of women's experiences and aspirations were a commonplace in the shifting media landscape that now included not only widely read newspapers and a broad array of mass-marketed magazines, but also movies and radio. Reflecting broader global dynamics, women were represented not only as significant subjects of endless reportage, analysis, and marketing, but also as agents, redefining their roles and expressing their voices, especially in the rapidly expanding market niche of *fujin zasshi* (women's magazines). A proliferation of new mass-marketed women's magazines – *Fujin kōron* (1916), *Shufu no tomo* (Housewife's Friend, 1917), *Fujin kurabu* (Ladies' Club, 1920), *Fujo kai* (Women's World, 1920), *Ie no hikari*

(*Light of the Family*, 1925) – and regular coverage of their contents in daily newspapers brought women’s perspectives, albeit limited in reference to “women’s spheres,” to the attention of a broad, increasingly educated public. Social surveys from 1920s Tokyo suggest that most women working in white-collar jobs were avid subscribers. But critics commonly disparaged these magazines as catering to the fantasies of housewives or housebound middle-class daughters. Women’s education expanded the pool: higher school graduates constituted 10 percent of their age cohort in the general population. Maeda Ai has argued that these graduates were the core readership of women’s journals.

The mass-marketed women’s magazines recast income opportunities for all writers, male or female, though the majority of literary works published in their pages were by men or were anonymous. Their commercial success enabled them to bid up the price for submissions and to pay writers significantly more. Yet in the view of critics like Ōya Sōichi (expressed in 1926), this popular writing only debased the value of literary works, unleashing a flood of “slipshod works.” In 1928, the established female playwright Hasegawa Shigure (1879–1941) founded *Nyonin geijutsu* (Women’s Arts) to showcase literature by women, and as a distinct departure from other women’s magazines. The writers whose work appeared in the first issue did not share a common literary style, ideology, or educational background, unlike the coterie journals of their male counterparts. It distinguished itself by a serious intellectual quality and an explicitly feminist orientation: all articles written or translated by women. In an interview with Setouchi Harumi (Jakuchō), Enchi Fumiko (1905–86) later described how Hasegawa had attempted to include a diverse collection of forms, styles, and themes, encouraging contributors to try new approaches: Enchi attributed both her own drama *Banshun sōya* (Late Spring Evening of Merriment, 1928) and Hayashi Fumiko’s (1903–51) shift from poetry to the prose of *Hōrōki* (Diary of a Vagabond, 1928–30) to Hasegawa’s influence.

The women depicted in *Nyonin geijutsu* were a far cry from the “docile dolls” Yosano Akiko had decried, and writers were celebrated for their representation of women as active agents, warts and all. Nakamoto Takako’s (1903–99) “Suzumushi no mesu” (The Female Bell-Cricket, 1929) was singled out in the *Asahi* newspaper series on “Recent Women Writers” by the critic Hirotsu Kazuo (1891–1968) for its exemplary portrait of “female malice.” Nakamoto’s female protagonist, impoverished and struggling in the margins of the city, exudes only contempt for the self-sacrificing kindness of her partner. Her exploitative bullying punishes with cool indifference.

Hayashi Fumiko's *Diary of a Vagabond* (1928–30) launched an especially prominent and prolific literary career that often focused on her impoverished beginnings. Her diary offered a perspective from below that was considered authentic, a depiction not so much of desperation as of the dogged determination and capacity for self-delusion of those who live on the margins.

Despite increasingly strict scrutiny from censors from the early 1930s, women writers continued to probe the inherent inequalities of sexual politics. Sata Ineko's (1904–98) "Crimson" (1936) depicts an unhappy, unstable marriage that highlighted the limits of shared political convictions. Sata had achieved initial recognition through her autobiographical account of exploited child labor in "Kyarameru kōjō kara" (From the Caramel Factory, 1928), published in *Puroretaria geijutsu* (Proletarian Art), and continued political writing and communist affiliation in the face of state repression. Yet her portrait of humiliation at her husband's infidelities suggested that the promise of radical equality in politics did not apply to sexual double standards. Uno Chiyo's (1897–1996) "Mohō no tensai" (A Genius of Imitation, 1936) presents a straightforward account of the events in her life that influenced her to be a writer, mostly leading up to the publication of her story "Haka o abaku" (To Open a Grave, 1921) in *Chūō kōron*. Readers were far more likely to be familiar with her recent *Iro zange* (Confessions of Love, 1935) based on the messy love life of the painter Tōgō Seiji, her former husband, including a comically detailed and detached description of his well-known failed love suicide in 1929. Uno depicts a woman writer's identity through a succession of male affiliations, seeing the world through his eyes, adopting his tastes and styles, as a part of trying to be a "good wife."

Through the shifting social dynamics of the interwar period, many women writers came to be widely read. In certain ways, the experiences of these successful writers mirrored the broader trends in politics (tending leftist, then widespread apostasy), aesthetic tastes (naturalism and confessional fiction) and, in particular, print culture, where mass-market monthlies and daily newspapers provided outlets beyond the control of the literary establishment, often transforming writers into celebrities who were expected to provide their avid fans with myriad details about their personal lives. The categorization of their work as "women's literature" misled in its inability to capture both what was specific to the work and the wide range of styles and themes to which it was applied. Yet most women also wrote with a "double vision," engaged in a variety of modernist trends and always acutely aware of the gendered dynamics that shaped the world of their characters, as much as it shaped their own.

Literary marketplace, politics, and history: 1900s–1940s

HIDEO KAMEI AND KYOKO KURITA

This chapter highlights three main developments in Japanese literature in the first half of the twentieth century. First, it examines changes in the literary marketplace. With improvements in publishing and distribution, as well as a rise in literacy rates, what sorts of readership developed, how did publishers try to cater to them, and what sorts of writers emerged? Second, it looks at the formation of the canon of “pure literature” (*jun bungaku*), together with the emergence of competing standards, including nationalism and Marxism-Leninism. Third, it analyzes a series of embroilments between literature and politics, and the impact they had on historical interpretation.

During the first decade of the twentieth century, large-scale book distributors appeared, building a nationwide distribution network for a retail market that supplanted the old book-lending and book-exchange systems. As railroad transportation proliferated during the 1890s, the large publishers, which had wholesale as well as retail capabilities, sold not only their own publications but also books purchased from other publishers to retail bookstores in cities large and small, nationwide. Two publishers – Jitsugyō no Nihonsha and Hakubunkan – made a breakthrough in increasing sales, using contrasting but equally effective methods.

Jitsugyō no Nihonsha began operations in 1897 with a magazine, *Jitsugyō no Nihon* (Industrial Japan, 1897–2002), which attracted a loyal readership. They also started *Fujin sekai* (Ladies’ World, 1906–33), *Nihon shōnen* (Japanese Boys, 1906–38) and other popular magazines aimed at various market segments. They quickly expanded by commissioning large retailers outside Tokyo to sell those magazines on their behalf, and by offering a favorable returns policy on unsold copies. Hakubunkan also began operations with the publication of a magazine, *Nihon taika ronshū* (Collected Essays by Renowned Authors of Japan, 1887–94). They established themselves firmly by publishing war-oriented periodicals during wartime: *Nisshin sensō jikki* (Authentic Records of the Sino-Japanese War, August 1894–January 1896) and *Nichiro*

sensō jikki (Authentic Records of the Russo-Japanese War, February 1904–December 1905). After these successes, they continued to launch new journals: a general-interest magazine, *Taiyō* (The Sun, 1895–1928); *Shōnen sekai* (Boys' World, 1895–1934) for young readers; and a literary magazine, *Bungei kurabu* (The Literary Club, 1895–1933). Eventually they became the largest publisher in Tokyo. While each issue of *Nihon taika ronshū* sold about 9,000 copies, *Nisshin sensō jikki* sold over 65,000 copies per issue. War offered a great opportunity for the mass media to boost circulation. The enormous success of *Nisshin sensō jikki* had a coat-tails effect on other Hakubunkan magazines: the first issue of *Taiyō*, which later became the publisher's flagship journal, sold more than 80,000 copies, and maintained sales of over 50,000 per issue thereafter. It was an amazingly high figure for the time, and distribution was supported by a large number of retailers.

The largest publisher in Japan today is Kōdansha. It started up in 1910 as Dai Nihon Yūbenkai Kōdansha (hereinafter DNYK). In his inaugural address, founder Noma Seiji supplied the motto, "When eloquence declines, justice also declines. Eloquence is the light of society." Accordingly, the publisher's maiden enterprise was a magazine on public speaking and debate, called *Yūben* (Eloquence). The *kōdan* (storytelling) part of the company's identity is at least as important as *yūben*, harking back to a traditional performance art that gained popularity in Meiji as oral "stories" that were recited even in rural settlements. Realizing that this could be developed as a new niche market, in November 1911 DNYK launched the magazine *Kōdan kurabu* (Kōdan Club, 1911–46; 1949–62). This proved such a success that it was soon challenged by competitors such as *Kōdan sekai* (The World of Kōdan, 1912–23), and sales dropped. Such magazines were competing not only for the same audience, but also to secure the services of the same *kōdan* masters and specialized stenographers. DNYK responded to this crisis by circumventing both masters and stenographers: they employed established journalists such as Hasegawa Shin (1884–1963) and inexperienced but talented writers such as Yoshikawa Eiji (1892–1962), to write new *kōdan* stories. The stories were welcomed by readers, and sales of *Kōdan kurabu* improved.

In 1923, right after the Great Kantō Earthquake, DNYK swiftly published the photojournalistic book *Taishō daishinsai daikasai* (The Great Earthquake and Fire of the Taisho Period), selling 400,000 copies. In January 1925, they launched the monthly magazine *Kingu* (King, 1925–57), which had a triple focus: entertainment, spiritual development, and social advancement. It was an instant hit, the debut issue selling 740,000 copies, an unprecedented number in Japanese publishing history. Its success was due to the fact that

it was accepted as a “family” (*katei*) magazine, appealing to three generations at once. Urban companies and factories named it as their recommended reading; in the rural areas, young men’s and women’s social groups kept issues of *Kingu* in their meeting places; even the military designated it as the only approved popular magazine. Within a year of its debut, circulation had reached one million.

In Japan, mass literacy owes its start to the Meiji government’s inauguration of a public educational system in 1872. Primary education was compulsory, though at first there were no coordinated curricula, textbooks, or even teachers. Little by little the institutions took root, creating the basis for a mass readership, and also providing literary fodder for teachers-turned-writers. By 1902, primary school attendance rates had risen to 90 percent. The number of primary school teachers rose from about 60,000 in 1893 to over 100,000 in 1902, and to 150,000 in 1919. In that process, provisional teachers were replaced by young graduates of the newly established normal schools. *Hakai* (Broken Commandment, 1906) by Shimazaki Tōson (1872–1943) and *Inaka kyōshi* (Country Teacher, 1909) by Tayama Katai (1872–1930), two representative stories about young teachers, reveal much about the literacy and literature of this period.

The protagonist of Tōson’s *Hakai* hides his identity as a *burakumin*, a descendant of outcastes who had lived in restricted areas during the Edo period, and against whom deep-rooted prejudice remained in Meiji Japan. He becomes a teacher at an elementary school in a small mountain village but is distressed by instances of prejudice and discrimination against *burakumin*, as well as by the principal’s insidious authoritarianism. He finally confesses his outcaste identity in front of his students, resigns from his teaching position, and leaves for Texas in search of a new life. *Hakai* won critical acclaim as a novel that grappled seriously with social injustice. In Katai’s *Inaka kyōshi*, the protagonist is from a family so poor he cannot afford to enter even a public secondary school. He nonetheless manages to become a substitute teacher at an elementary school in a farming village in the northern Kantō region. Feeling isolated, he finds solace in the world of literature, but his health is destroyed by tuberculosis, and he dies young. He draws his last breath quietly as he listens to the cheerful commotion of a lantern parade outside, celebrating a military victory against Russia at Liaoyang in China. In a serene tone Katai deliberately contrasts this celebratory atmosphere with the tragic fate of a nameless young soul who accomplished nothing at a significant historical juncture.

Both Katai and Tōson chose to write about a young man in a rural town or village surrounded by the mountains, and they both depicted the beauty of

the natural environment. The way these works pictured the fresh, unspoiled atmosphere of the countryside was widely appreciated, as was the celebration of local characters. Both *Hakai* and *Inaka kyōshi* were commended as among the best fruits of the Naturalist movement, which swept the nation around the turn of the century; literary histories have followed suit. But in emphasizing the opposition of individual versus society, this canonization tends to overlook the role of the developing publishing industry and distribution system.

Katai's *Inaka kyōshi* actually describes an exceptionally favorable reading environment. The young protagonist is surrounded by literature-loving classmates at his junior high school, and the head priest of the rural temple where he finds lodging turns out to have been active in some literary movement when he lived in Tokyo as a young man. The reality was closer to what one would infer from the opening of Tōson's *Hakai*: few bookstores in farming or fishing villages and limited rural literacy. The protagonist in *Hakai* had studied at a normal school, where he learned the virtue of aspiration and developed a thirst for knowledge. After graduation, he had gone off to a remote region with no intellectual atmosphere to take a post as a primary school teacher. One day at a newly opened "magazine store" he finds a copy of a book titled *Zangeroku* (Confessions) by a social activist who is fighting discrimination against burakumin. It is from then that the young man's own mental agony ensues. In other words, the plotline of *Hakai* hinges on the emergence of a "magazine store" in a small, isolated town in the middle of the mountains in Nagano prefecture.

The only other people who had the habit of reading books in those villages were *meibōka* (local notables), meaning wealthy landowners or practicing doctors. They obtained books by looking through newspaper advertisements and sending in their orders to be delivered by mail. That was the kind of intellectual environment in which young teachers more typically found themselves. They could not afford to purchase books freely, so they would find a few like-minded colleagues to split the cost of a book. Recent scholarship has revealed the existence of numerous book clubs all over the country with names such as Shoseki Kōdoku Kai (Book Reading Society) and Zasshi Dōmei Kōdoku Kai (Magazine Reading League).¹

Unlike the passive readers of *kōdan* books and *Kingu* magazine, the readers of *Hakai* and *Inaka kyōshi* had such a high level of literacy that they could

¹ See several studies by Nagamine Shigetoshi, e.g. "*Dokusho kokumin*" no *tanjō* (Tokyo: Nihon Editā Sukūru Shuppanbu, 2004); also Wada Atsuhiko, *Media no naka no dokusha* (Tokyo: Hitsuji Shobō, 2002).

become writers themselves at any time, if they were so inclined. And indeed, a large number began to do just that. It is remarkable that the vast majority of the novels and memoirs by those now-forgotten teacher-writers basically hewed to the templates provided by *Hakai* and *Inaka kyōshi*, reiterating in different words the story of a young teacher's internal conflict, usually intertwined with some romantic theme. The young teachers were also participating in a national literacy program, an attempt to use the school system to inculcate the populace with a "standard spoken language" based on the speech of educated Tokyoites. The program, which drew heavily on the writings of Ueda Kazutoshi (1867–1937), a professor at Tokyo Imperial University, began by teaching teachers-in-training at "humanities colleges" and at the normal schools. It is not clear how much Tōson and Katai were aware of such efforts, but their stories about young teachers appeared exactly at the time when Ueda had envisioned the first fruits of the reform efforts would be harvested, in the first decade or so of the twentieth century. Furthermore, these works exhibited the colloquial style that was considered ideal for young teachers to have mastered at secondary schools.

As vernacular literacy increased, a new readership developed, spurred by readers' ambitions to make a name for themselves in the new regime. In 1902, *Seikō Zasshisha* launched the publication of *Seikō* (Success, 1902–16) magazine. This illustrates the continuing importance of Meiji Enlightenment literature, written on the theme of *risshi* (ambition, aspiration). Ever since Nakamura Masanao published *Saigoku risshi-hen* (Tales of Ambition in Western Lands, 1871), a translation/adaptation of Samuel Smiles's *Self-Help* (1859), the term *risshi* had been broadly popularized, representing the spirit of self-reliance expressed in the phrase "Heaven helps those who help themselves."

The pervasive influence of *Saigoku risshi-hen* on Meiji youth can be glimpsed in Kunikida Doppo's (1871–1908) "Hibon-naru bonjin" (An Exceptional Common Person, 1903). Doppo depicts with great respect a friend who was so inspired by Nakamura's book that he chose to study at a night school in Kanda (in Tokyo) as he worked during the day, until he finally achieved his dream of becoming an engineer at an electric lighting company. If these uplifting stories were popular, it was due to the impoverished background of so many young people whose families lacked the financial resources to support them through higher-level schooling. In the course of the Meiji era, the term *risshi* had in fact changed its meaning from its more spiritual or abstract origins, to connote more narrowly and practically the goals of upward social mobility and financial independence.

Emigration was an attractive option for some who felt that in Japan their hard work and perseverance was ultimately useless compared with such advantages as a college diploma. The only place where they could fully reap the benefits of hard work alone was in the New World or some other land of opportunity such as the Japanese colonies. Seeing an opportunity here, the writer Ogōchi Gokyō published the novel *Shokumin ō* (The Emigration King, 1907), and in the same year Seikō Zasshisha ventured into this genre with *Shokumin sekai* (The Emigrants' World), running essays by powerful politicians such as Ōkuma Shigenobu (1838–1922) and Gotō Shinpei (1857–1929). Critics have often decried what they see as the artificial nature or the lack of reality of the conclusion of Tōson's *Hakai*, in which the protagonist leaves Japan for Texas to start a new life. However, emigration was in fact an attractive and even realistic option for some.

The development of a mass readership is an important premise for understanding the impact made by the writers of the *Shirakaba* (White Birch, 1910–23) magazine. *Shirakaba* was originally a coterie journal created by young graduates of Gakushūin University, a college founded to educate the nobility and aristocracy. The “Shirakaba school” included such writers as Mushanokōji Saneatsu (1885–1976), Shiga Naoya (1883–1971), and Arishima Takeo (1878–1923).

From the start, literary circles generally regarded *Shirakaba* with contempt as the literary hobby-horse of the children of well-off aristocratic families. But Gakushūin's student body was hardly homogeneous. In addition to princes of the blood and wealthy nobles, there were the scions of impoverished aristocratic families, such as Mushanokōji. Shiga Naoya and Nagayo Yoshirō (1888–1961), who both belonged to the Shirakaba school, were actually from commoner families. In this dialogical “space” emerged a tendency to find universality. These writers aspired to embody humanity itself, liberated from all limitations set by social hierarchy. The Shirakaba writers toyed with the public's misperception of them as *o-botchan*: privileged, easy-going, innocent. Rather than trying to contradict this image explicitly, they wrote stories whose titles seemed to celebrate the stereotype, such as Mushanokōji's *Omedetaki hito* (A Happy Simpleton, 1911) and *Seken shirazu* (Ignorant of the World, 1912).

In 1916, the *Shirakaba* satellite magazine *Seimei no kawa* carried a portion of Kurata Hyakuzō's (1891–1943) *Shukke to sono deshi* (A Monk and his Disciples), a play based on the life of Shinran (1173–1262), the influential Buddhist priest. Shinran preached that the only redemption from earthly corruption was salvation by Amida Buddha. When the whole play was published by

Iwanami Shoten in book form in the following year, it created a Shinran boom, opening up a new horizon for reviving Shinran's doctrines as a religion of good works, not just faith and salvation. It is not an overstatement to say that this play's publishing success laid the foundation for Iwanami's financial stability.

Whether colored by religious belief or not, a new literary genre arose called *kyōyō shōsetsu*, a type of spiritual Bildungsroman. Mushanokōji's deep interest in religious figures was reflected in his *Kōfuku-mono* (A Happy Person, 1919), written as a memoir of a young member of a religious sect who recorded his "master's" lectures and practices. Another Shirakaba school writer, Nagayo Yoshirō, wrote a memoir-style novel from a more secular point of view, titled *Takezawa-sensei to iu hito* (A Man Called Mr. Takezawa, 1924–5). The young male narrator of Nagayo's novel delineates an ideal man of sterling character and profound culture. The narrator, who has come to know him personally, learns from Takezawa's words and actions, and improves himself. This appealed to the young intellectuals of the early decades of the twentieth century, who valued self-cultivation and spiritual fulfillment. "Awakening" and "new lifestyle," along with "self-reflection" and "spiritual cultivation," were the keywords with which young people of this period – the first two decades or so of the twentieth century – distinguished themselves from the previous generations.

These "awakened" youth began to make their mark as not merely consumers of literary publications, but activists or potential activists with a serious commitment to social issues. Starting in 1918, for example, Mushanokōji attempted to create a commune he called "Atarashiki mura" (The New Village). In a separate development, Kagawa Toyohiko (1888–1960), a Christian-Socialist activist, obtained a wide readership with his novel *Shisen o koete* (Overcoming the Crisis of Death, 1920), which questioned the meaning of "devotion" and "practice." This was based on many years of experience doing relief work in the slums of Osaka and became a bestseller of the same magnitude as Kurata's *Shukke to sono deshi*. Kagawa's realistic depiction of people struggling with illness and poverty as well as of a protagonist devoting himself to saving them moved readers' hearts and evoked their sympathy. The publisher, Kaizōsha, made enough profit from it to grow into a large publishing company.

It was Mikami Sanji and Takatsu Kuwasaburō who first used the term *jun bungaku* (pure literature), in their *Nihon bungakushi* (History of Japanese Literature, 1890); they meant to imply aesthetic literature, as distinguished from utilitarian works on science, history, and other topics. The

term *jun bungaku*, however, started to be used in the second decade of the twentieth century, when entertainment literature had proliferated and targeted a mass readership at a low level of literacy. Some writers then felt the need to impress upon the public the distinction between mass literature and their own autobiographical novels. They started to refer to their own works as *jun bungaku*, while they coined a somewhat derogatory term for mass entertainment literature: *tsūzoku bungaku* (“common” or popular literature).

The concept of *jun bungaku* took shape with the genre of the “I-novel” (*watakushi shōsetsu*) at its core. In the Shirakaba school the most prominent exponents of the “I-novel” were Mushanokōji and Shiga. Shiga tried to construct a fictional universe with his works, and expected the reader to participate in it. For example, *Wakai* (Reconciliation, 1917), one of his representative works, narrates the protagonist’s tragic loss of a newborn baby to illness, and follows the troubled relationship between the protagonist and his father until they achieve reconciliation. How their antagonism originated is not explained in the novel. Another novel Shiga had published a few years earlier, *Ōtsu Junkichi* (1912), is a story about the break-up of a father and a son: the protagonist falls in love with the housemaid, and wants to marry her; but because his father opposes their marriage, he moves out of the house. Shiga wrote *Wakai* with the assumption that the reader had read his previous works. Shiga would also implant in one novel references to another novel, in order to link different stories together. The protagonist of *Wakai*, for example, is a novelist, and he recollects the plot of a story he had written before, which is essentially the plot of Shiga’s own *Kōjinbutsu no fūfu* (An Amiable Couple), published earlier in 1917. Shiga assumes that the reader is familiar with that previous work and expects the reader of *Wakai* to identify the protagonist in *Wakai* as Shiga himself.

For the first two decades of the twentieth century, a number of writers tried to write about their own lives and about mundane matters of everyday life. Contemporaries soon came to refer to these works as “*watakushi shōsetsu*” (I-novels), a term that has permanently entered the critical lexicon. In its original usage it was vital that the protagonist himself be a writer of fiction; that his novels somehow reference the author’s own previous works; and that there be some mechanism to inform the reader that the protagonist is identical with the author himself.

Around the time when Shiga Naoya’s literary style was generally accepted as the canon-setter for pure literature, a group of writers without formal education emerged. They drew public attention by giving voice to physical senses and sensations. Miyajima Sukeo (1886–1951), for example, is best

known for *Kōfu* (A Miner, 1916), a story about a mining explosives expert. In his youth, Miyajima had led a vagabond life. Starting with an apprenticeship at a sugar wholesaler at age thirteen, he hopped from one job to another. He began to love literature thanks to book lenders and his brother's personal library. In 1914, he bought from a street vendor an issue of *Kindai shisō* (Modern Thought, 1912–14), an anarchist journal, and this resulted in his involvement in the Syndicalist Society. *Kindai shisō* was terminated in 1914 but then revived under Miyajima's leadership during 1915–16. And in 1916, Miyajima made his debut as a fiction writer with the novel *Kōfu*. Early in the novel, we read a pleasant description of the natural scenery in the locale where the story takes place, but then we meet Ishii, the miner, in his hell-hole. A chilling description ensues of the effects of mining on the mountain itself, culminating in this passage:

The mountain groaned with pain, its huge body writhing every time dynamite exploded. But the tremendous, resounding echoes of the blast, the pulverized rock fragments hard as iron, gave Ishii a sense of great excitement every day.

Using anthropomorphic expressions emphasizing physical sensation, Miyajima passes from a sense of man's affinity with Nature to an antagonistic relationship between the two. We learn later that Ishii is resentful of the company's unfairness and exploitation, and also of his fellow workers' servility. Outside the mine he resorts to liquor and violence to divert his mind from indignation, getting into a fight with another miner with whom he was already at odds: at the end of the story, they stab each other to death. Other novels before *Kōfu* had depicted harsh workplace environments, but this was the first to capture the existential angst of a laborer who engaged Nature directly. His urge to attack something is redirected at Nature, and he perversely enjoys the thrill of violating her personified "body." *Kōfu* was banned three days after its publication for its "corruption of public morals" in violation of the Publication Law. Miyajima was forced to eliminate the problematic passages in order to include it in his collection *Urami naki satsujin* (A Murder without Enmity, 1920).

Hayama Yoshiki (1894–1945) also used personification in his metaphorical expression of the laborer's mentality in *Umi ni ikuru hitobito* (The Ocean Dwellers, 1926).

A steam boat, the Manju-maru, its belly swollen with 3,000 tons of coal, headed toward Yokohama in the blizzard . . . Giant waves were crashing beyond the island. The Manju-maru was in the water almost up to her decks.

With great apprehension, she tried to envision herself among the surging billows of the Pacific, and she mustered the courage to venture forth. The bridge commanded her engines to make the utmost speed given her final stage of pregnancy.

Instead of giving detailed descriptions of a horrific experience, this prosopopoeia concretizes the desperate physical and emotional conditions into which the crew members are drawn. Hayama's metaphors and similes are outlandish, even to the point of humorousness, yet they are imbued with the threat of catastrophe. "The danger to which the ship's body is exposed, a danger they themselves share, gives fantastic, superhuman power to the sailors, just as an old woman suffering from palsy might carry a large stone mortar out of a house at the time of a fire." He continues in this vein, leading the reader to the uprising of the lower-ranking crew members.

Hayama actually had some seafaring in his résumé – stints as an apprentice seaman on a Calcutta service cargo vessel and as seaman third class on a coal carrier – in addition to literary studies at the High School Division of Waseda University and various jobs on land. In 1921 he started working as a journalist for the *Nagoya News*, but he was arrested and imprisoned for two months for participating in a labor dispute he went to cover for the paper. He began writing *The Ocean-Dwellers* while he was in prison. Since the government had not yet issued the Peace Preservation Law (1925), he was even able to receive a gift copy of Marx's *Das Kapital* during his incarceration.

Itō Sei (1905–69) opened up another new horizon with his close historical and textual analysis of literary language and style. His *Shin shinri-shugi bungaku* (The New Psychological Literature, 1932) pointed out that the literary reforms of modern colloquial-style literature, conducted under the slogan "write as if speaking," were better described as "writing based on conversation." He argued that such a choice limited fictional narrative to a linear progression and a predictable pace.

In Itō's view, the Shinkankaku-ha or New Sensationists, who built on the experimental work of writers such as Miyajima and Hayama, rightly rebelled against the presumed objectivity and limited scope of the new colloquial literature. He praised "Atama narabini hara" (The Head and also the Belly, 1924) by Yokomitsu Riichi (1898–1947) for imparting a sense of unprecedented narrative speed, which created a refreshing emotional distance between the text and the reader. However, some critics had regarded this technique as an excessively straightforward imitation of the rapid, regular succession of photographs in a simple motion picture: it still lacked psychological depth. How, then, could one capture modern life in literary language without falling

into stale, trite rhythms either linguistically or structurally? Could one not represent several perspectives simultaneously? These are the questions Itō himself had tried to address creatively in his short story “Kikō no zettai-sei” (The Tyranny of Structure, 1930). It opens as follows:

When I enter the room, Kubo lifts his head from the microscope, and signals with his eyes to take a look. He gets up from his chair to let me sit down and see. Drawn inside a bright, circular space is the map of a cell membrane. *An unfamiliar form. What degree of magnification am I in? Obscenity is flowing out of all these strange patterns. Indeed, any efficient configuration must necessarily be obscene. I will explain that to this biologist sometime.* I hear Kubo’s voice behind me. *How loud his voice is, speaking over the magnified image of this delicate, infinitesimal form!* The sound of his voice makes these shapes in the liquid under the glass slide tremble. *The vibration of the atmosphere originates in his jutting larynx.* “Isn’t that fascinating? You are looking at the base of a pistil of some silver-dragon grass, specifically the cross-section of an ovule . . .”

In this scene Itō splices together subjective material – observations evoked by the microscopic view of an object; the physical perception of sound – with objective material (description and dialogue) in such a way as to defamiliarize viewer, viewed, and viewing all at once. He described this technique as one that allowed him to project “fantasy, memory, desire, grief, joy, and a variety of images generated in one’s mind by association” but invisible from without.

Tane maku hito (The Sower), a magazine founded by Komaki Ōmi (1894–1978), Kaneko Yōbun (1894–1985) and others in 1921, supported the Russian Revolution and promoted the rise of a new genre called “the literature of the fourth class,” or “working-class literature.” Although the destruction and chaos attending the Great Kantō Earthquake and Fire of September 1923 obliged Ōmi and his colleagues to end publication of *Tane maku hito*, in the following year they made a fresh start with a new magazine, *Bungei sensen* (The Literary Front, 1924–32). Then in 1925 they, along with a few others, founded Nihon Puroretaria Bungei Renmei (League for Proletarian Literature of Japan). Soon, members of the Shinjinkai (Freshmen Club), a socialist study group at Tokyo Imperial University, began to join the league: Hayashi Fusao (1903–75), Nakano Shigeharu (1902–79), Kaji Wataru (1903–82), Kawaguchi Hiroshi (1905–?) and others. These Shinjinkai writers were theorists proud of their intellectual abilities, whereas writers like Miyajima and Miyachi Karoku (1884–1958) had actual experience working for low wages, and took a different approach.

In order to resolve the conflicts that emerged between the two factions in the League, the League’s leading literary theorist, Aono Suekichi (1890–1961),

wrote a thesis promoting “art based on research.” Aono told writers to seek literary reality, not in the subjective depiction of daily affairs the way Shiga Naoya did, but scientifically, based on positivistic social studies. That is the way to a proletarian literature, a “natural growth” that will produce writers of the intelligentsia who identify with the proletariat, poets born from laborers, and farmer-novelists. This framework served Aono as a way to put Miyajima and Miyachi’s works, as well as the *Tane maku hito* authors, in their place. Ultimately the literature emanating naturally from a growing proletarian class could transform into a true literature for the proletariat only if each author had a clear sense of purpose guided by the class awareness of the proletarian leadership.

In 1927, after a series of complex negotiations, Aono, Hayama, Komaki, and others founded the Rōnō Geijutsuka Renmei (League of Laboring and Farming Artists), with *Bungei sensen* as their new organ magazine. In 1928 Hayashi, Nakano, and others founded the competing Zen Nihon Musansha Geijutsu Renmei (called “Nippona Artista Proleta Federacio” in Esperanto and known as NAPF or “Nappu”) with their own organ magazine, *Senki* (The Battle Flag, 1928–31). Both *Bungei sensen* and *Senki* carried a number of works that even today are considered the best of that era’s proletarian literature.²

In the kaleidoscopic splinterings and realignments of these various movements, Kurahara Korehito (1902–91) emerged as a literary theorist. His major “thesis” had a pervasive influence: it set the canon among the NAPF writers for both criticism and creative work. Kurahara had gone to the Soviet Union in 1925 as a special correspondent for the *Miyako shinbun* newspaper to study Russian literature. He returned to Japan in November 1926, and soon became an influential figure thanks to his thesis, “Marukusu-shugi bungei hihyō no kijun” (The Criteria for Marxist Literary Criticism, 1927). In it he quotes the Russian literary theorist Georgii Plekhanov: “The critic’s primary task is to translate the philosophy of art expressed in an artwork into the language of sociology, and to discover what one might call the sociological value of literary phenomena.” Kurahara argued that a “scientific” critical method would clarify the ideology and social class that a given work represents and would then analyze the sociological basis for this ideology’s emergence in modern society. The technical evaluation of relative artistic merit is a secondary issue.

² For example, *Senki* carried Kobayashi Takiji’s (1903–33) *Kani kōsen* (1929) and Tokunaga Sunao’s (1899–1958) *Taiyō no nai machi* (1929). *Bungei sensen* carried Kuroshima Denji’s *Ana* (1928) and Iwatō Yukio’s *Gatofu Fusegudaa* (1928).

Just before 1930, a socio-economic phenomenon occurred called the *enpon* (one-yen book) boom, whose historical roots go back to the Great Kantō Earthquake of September 1, 1923. The earthquake and its subsequent massive fires delivered a tremendous blow to the publishing industry in Tokyo. Kaizōsha was finding it particularly difficult to rebuild the company. In 1926, as a last-ditch effort, they publicized a new thirty-eight-volume collection, *Gendai Nihon bungaku zenshū* (Collected Works of Modern Japanese Literature), later expanded to sixty-two volumes, to be printed and published one volume at a time for one yen a volume. They began to take reservations in the following year, and unexpectedly the number of subscribers quickly reached over a quarter of a million, and finally 400,000. Observing this success, Shinchōsha decided to publish *Sekai bungaku zenshū* (World Literature Collection; 57 vols.), and obtained more than half a million orders. Other publishers had similar success: Heibonsha's *Gendai taishū bungaku zenshū* (Modern Popular Literature Collection; 60 vols.), Shunyōdō's *Meiji Taishō bungaku zenshū* (Collection of Meiji and Taishō Literature; 50 vols., later increased to 60) and others were able to secure over 200,000 subscribers each.

The large number of subscribers resuscitated the publishing companies. All books printed in Osaka after the earthquake sold like hotcakes in Tokyo, regardless of genre or topic. Moreover, *enpon* sets offered great value for the money: one yen for an average of five hundred pages of literature at a time when a novel less than a third of that length cost about one and a half yen. Every publishing company published collected works by subscription. Ordinarily, 20–30 percent of printed books remained unsold. But publication by subscription allowed them to adjust the number of copies to print, thus minimizing losses due to overprinting. That in turn made it possible to keep the price low.

This *enpon* boom, and the seeming prosperity of the publishing industry, gave the supporters of the proletarian literary movement a false basis for understanding their mission. The illusion was created that there were bourgeois publications and bourgeois writers in a bourgeois market, when there had been no fundamental growth in economic terms. Based on this misconception, proletarian literary activists spent much time and energy defining the essence of proletarian literature, contrasting it with bourgeois literature. Prompted by their fear that the general audience might be totally engulfed by the *enpon* boom, the NAPF writers actively engaged in a debate on the “popularization of art” (*geijutsu no taishū-ka*). In “*Kaiketsu sareta mondai to atarashii shigoto*” (Resolved Issues and New Tasks, 1928), Nakano Shigeharu

stated that it was a mistake to be overly concerned about the division of proletarian art between “true proletarian art” and “art for directly agitating and propagandizing the masses.” The activist writers’ greatest concern was not categories of art, but how to lead “the masses.” Art was useful only as a means of raising consciousness. The Communist Party’s ultimate goal was to unite the workers in large factories in important industries.

The law that governed publication was the Publication Act of 1893, issued by the Meiji government, under which the Ministry of Internal Affairs was concerned with two areas: “disturbance of peace and order,” and “corruption of public morals.” The sanction often used, *hakkin* (short for *hatsubai kinshi*, prohibition of sale) referred to banning the publisher from selling the work in question after it had been printed. Such a law did help authorities keep track of what was being published. But far more troublesome for Communist writers was the Peace Preservation Law promulgated in April 1925, which prohibited the founding of associations that “tried to alter the *kokutai* (national polity) or to deny the private ownership system.” The penalty for a violation was up to ten years’ imprisonment with or without forced labor. The law was originally devised to incapacitate the anarchists, but during the 1930s it was wielded against the Communist Party. The Party had chosen to exist as an illegitimate entity in order to confront the Peace Preservation Law; it advocated the abolition of the monarchy and an overthrow of the *tennō-sei* (emperor system). Since *Senki* was a bulletin for a legitimate professional association of writers, the NAPF, and not officially an organ of the illegitimate Communist Party, the most damage the government could do to *Senki* was a prohibition on the sale of a given issue. However, even if *Senki* was not an official Communist Party organ, its provision of funds to the Party could put it in violation of the Peace Preservation Law, and that authorized more draconian sanctions.

The literary critic Kobayashi Hideo (1902–83) studied Marx but was skeptical of what was known as the Leninist Literary Movement. He made a debut as a critic with his “Samazama-naru ishō” (A Variety of Designs, 1929), the year after he graduated from the French Department of Tokyo Imperial University. Kobayashi’s skepticism established his reputation as the spearhead of anti-Marxist criticism. This makes sense within the framework persisting even today, which divides the literary scene of the late 1920s to early 1930s into two opposing groups – the literature of engagement of the Proletarian Literature movement and the belles-lettres of the Geijutsu-ha (“Art” school). Yet no one read Marx’s works more carefully than Kobayashi.

In “Hitotsu no konponteki-na mondai” (A Fundamental Question, 1930), for example, Kobayashi refers tellingly to a passage from Marx’s *The Poverty of Philosophy* (originally *Misère de la philosophie*, 1847). In Kobayashi’s view, Japanese Leninist writers were merely what Marx called “metaphysicians.” Kobayashi speculates that if one wishes to learn from Marx, one should not be so concerned with analyzing political or economic situations using logical categories born out of Marx’s many layers of abstraction; instead, one must face the reality of one’s own world, just as Marx did. This reasoning led Kobayashi to the position that journalism, which turns one’s essays and novels into marketable commodities, is a social mechanism for presenting theoretical categories as if real. He critiqued both the commercialization of words, and the Leninist literature that never acknowledged this trap. Thus Kobayashi established himself as a unique critic, and his analytical prowess sustained his status as a canonical critic for a long time.

Some Marxist critics approached the phenomenon of the popularization of art and literature as a matter not of politics but of socio-economics. For example, the *tanka* poet/economist Ōkuma Nobuyuki (1893–1977) tried, in *Marukusu no Robinson monogatari* (Robinson’s Tale Told by Marx, 1929), to explain the masses’ reading habits by offering, not exactly the standard Marxian “allotment” of labor and products, but an analysis of how much time the masses could afford to “apportion” to different activities. The analogy was to the efforts of Robinson Crusoe, alone on his island, to use his time wisely.

According to a report prepared by the Research Section of the Social Affairs Department of the Osaka municipal government, titled “Yoka seikatsu no kenkyū” (A Study of Leisure Activities, 1923), Osaka’s residents spent their leisure time in a variety of ways. As to reading in particular, among 719 survey respondents the number spending their “free time in the evening after work” on that form of leisure activity was highest in winter (230), and lowest in summer (169). Those who wanted to read for relaxation after a day’s hard work naturally preferred to read entertainment, and the time they could spend on reading must have been between one and two hours. According to the same report, among 281 female factory workers between the ages of twenty and twenty-nine, only twenty-one women answered that in winter they read during their “free time in the evening” after work (exclusively), and a mere eleven replied that they read on Sundays, holidays, and other off-days (exclusively). Furthermore, in summer, these numbers dropped by about 50 percent. But among a younger cohort (177 female factory workers between the ages of fifteen and nineteen) we find that altogether some 30 percent

spent time in literacy-related activities. Clearly both employers and employees had begun to understand the necessity of improving literacy.

A survey of 1,323 female factory workers, done in Tokyo in 1921, suggests that they made their magazine selections on the assumption that they would eventually become housewives. In this survey, *Fujin sekai* (Ladies' World, 1906–33) was by far the most popular, followed by *Shufu no tomo* (Housewife's Friend, 1917–2008) and *Fujokai* (Women's World, 1910–52). *Fujokai* was a relatively highbrow magazine, but the first two carried practical information for household management.³ Compared to female factory workers, it is more difficult to distinguish between housewives' working hours and free time. But we do know that, during the 1920s, *Shufu no tomo*, with its triple motto ("Instructive, Cultivating, Entertaining"), rapidly increased its circulation until it became a million-seller along with *Kingu* in 1934. By 1917, the cumulative number of female high school graduates reached 200,000, and in 1931 it exceeded a million. Compared to female factory workers, who commonly held primary school diplomas at most, this new cohort had a higher level of literacy and higher ambitions. New women's magazines targeting the professional woman as a new market began to appear, extolling women's rights and liberation. *Fujin kōron* (Ladies' Review, 1916–) is the most famous of all. A magazine survey conducted in 1922 with nine hundred professional women as subjects showed that three magazines – *Fujin kōron* (196), *Fujokai* (181), and *Shufu no tomo* (144) – competed with each other quite closely, and that the readership of other women's magazines lagged far behind.

In the latter half of the 1920s, two female readers of women's magazines emerged as two rather different types of writers: Sata Ineko (1904–98) and Hirabayashi Taiko (1905–72). Due to her family's destitution, Sata Ineko withdrew from an elementary school when she was in the fifth grade and started working at a caramel factory. She worked as a maid in a restaurant and then as a store clerk; she got married, suffered abuse, attempted suicide three times, got a divorce, and gave birth to a daughter. After her divorce, she became acquainted with Nakano Shigeharu, a member of the Proletarian Arts League, began participating in League activities, and wrote "Kyarameru kōjō kara" (From the Caramel Factory, 1928), a compelling story based on her childhood experiences. Although it appeared in *Puroretaria geijutsu* (Proletarian Art, 1927–8), Sata's work was unaffected by that journal's theoretical, revolutionary language, and focused simply on the depiction of the

³ See Nagamine Shigetoshi, *Zasshi to dokusha no kindai* (Tokyo: Nihon Editā Sukūru Shuppanbu, 1997), 175.

young girl, who maintained her fresh sensitivity even in a painfully hostile environment. Soon after Sata's debut, a new magazine for women's liberation, *Nyonin geijutsu* (Women's Arts, 1928–32), started up, offering her more opportunities to publish her work. She gradually became one of the representative writers of the NAPF.

Hirabayashi Taiko was another notable writer who had struggled with adversity. She came from a rural family of modest means. Over her mother's objections, she entered Suwa Women's High School in Nagano. Immediately after her graduation in 1922 she moved to Tokyo and became an intern operator at the Central Telephone Office, only to be fired after two months, reportedly due to a call she made while on duty to a Socialist activist, Sakai Toshihiko (1870–1933). She associated with a group of anarchists, and started living with one of them, Yamamoto Torazō. In 1923, at the time of the Great Kantō Earthquake, a vicious rumor spread that socialists and Koreans were scheming to commit arson. Hirabayashi and Yamamoto were arrested by the authorities and jailed in Ichigaya Prison.

Hirabayashi was released on condition that she leave Tokyo. She and Yamamoto led a vagabond life in Korea and Manchuria until 1924, when Yamamoto was arrested in Dalian for *lèse-majesté*. Hirabayashi gave birth to a baby girl at a clinic, but the baby died of malnutrition. Later in the year, she returned to Japan and associated with the writers of *Bungei sensen*,⁴ which eventually published her “Seryōshitsu nite” (In a Clinic Ward, 1927). As the title suggests, this work is based on her experience during her journey in Manchuria. The female protagonist and her husband are thrown into jail; but because she is suffering from a severe case of beriberi triggered by her pregnancy, she is sent to a medical clinic. The clinic, however, does not offer the care she and the baby need. She has no money to buy milk. Although she understands that breast-feeding would transmit her beriberi and cause the baby's death, she lets her baby suck on her breast. “No matter whether it is a beriberi patient's milk or pus, my beloved child is gulping it down! . . . After all, we are mother and child only for a while. Ahead of me awaits a jail, standing like a massive wall.” Hirabayashi continued to portray similar, spirited women at the bottom of the social hierarchy, driven to rebel out of sheer desperation. With these stories, Hirabayashi became an important contributor to *Bungei sensen*.

⁴ *Bungei sensen* was supported by the Rōnōtō (Labor-Farmer Faction), which stood in opposition to the Communist Party's *The NAPF*, to which Sata contributed her works.

In the 1920s, the anti-Communist Japanese government employed both the “stick” of the Peace Preservation Law and the “carrot” of universal male suffrage. The Soviet-dominated Comintern, in its 1932 “Thesis on Japan’s Condition and the Japanese Communist Party’s Task” (commonly known in Japan as “the ’32 Thesis”), saw fit to call for the destruction of Japan’s emperor system. The imperiled Japanese Communist Party issued a counterargument, based on their own sense of their country’s “condition.”⁵ This internecine confusion precipitated a mass secession from the Party, known as *tenkō* (renunciation). Within a month, 30 percent of imprisoned Communists had renounced their party affiliation, and by 1935 the figure was close to 90 percent. This *tenkō* phenomenon had a marked influence on literature. Typical manifestations are to be found in Shimazaki Tōson’s *Yoake-mae* (Before the Dawn, 1929–35) and Hayashi Fusao’s (1903–75) *Seinen* (The Youth, 1932), especially in the ways they describe the Meiji Restoration (1867–8).

Tōson’s *Yoake-mae* is a long historical novel that depicts the social changes around the time of the Meiji Restoration from the viewpoint of a young protagonist, the station chief of the Magome relay station on the Edo–Kyoto Trunk Road. He is also a believer in *Kokugaku* (National Learning), a field of study that tried to define Japan’s unique characteristics through the textual explication of classical texts such as the *Kojiki* and the *Man’yōshū*. In the Edo period, National Learning was widely popular among wealthy merchants and landowners, rather than among the samurai class who valued Chinese studies (privileging Confucianism). After the Meiji Restoration, devotees of National Learning hoped to re-create the strong bonds of trust that they said had united the emperor and the people before the warrior class began to monopolize political power. This movement was called *ōsei fukko*, the restoration of imperial rule. Tōson wrote this novel based on his belief that the *Kokugaku* ideal, deeply rooted among the people, was the real moving force behind the Meiji Restoration.

The novel attracted both praise and criticism. Miyamoto Kenji (1908–2007), one of the leaders of the Leninist Literature Movement along with Kurahara Korehito, argued that *Yoake-mae* erred both ideologically and methodologically. He accused Tōson of failing to acknowledge that the Meiji Restoration

⁵ In 1933, two leading members of the Japanese Communist Party, Sano Manabu (1892–1953) and Nabeyama Sadachika (1901–79), wrote a critique titled *Kyōdō hikoku dōshi ni tsuguru sho* (A Statement to the Comrade Co-defendants), which criticized the Comintern as a tool of Soviet foreign policy and proclaimed that the Japanese Communists should develop their own strategy, one that conformed better to Japan’s history and actual current conditions.

had an element of bourgeois revolution, a lapse that undercut the '32 Thesis. Miyamoto also criticized Tōson for not correctly appreciating the Restoration's "historical limitations" in that it had inaugurated another system of absolutist control without first thoroughly dismantling the feudal system. Furthermore, according to Miyamoto, Tōson was incapable of depicting the Meiji Restoration from the perspective of the revolutionary proletariat.⁶

By contrast, Hayashi Fusao (1903–75), a NAPF writer, praised *Yoake-mae*. Hayashi himself was beginning to serialize in the magazine *Chūō kōron* his own historical novel about the Meiji Restoration, titled *Seinen*. The protagonists were Itō Hirobumi and Inoue Kaoru, two actual leaders of the Meiji government. Hayashi wrote this novel so as to re-invent those two as the original revolutionists who tried to protect Japan from the colonizing powers of the West. This deviation from the '32 Thesis led some to conclude that Hayashi had already defected, ideologically, when he started writing *Seinen*.

Around 1935, after the initial enpon sales strategy began to fail, literary journalists started promoting a "literary renaissance" as the publishing industry's Next Big Thing. Although the number of reservations for enpon series was still huge, many subscriptions were dropped, particularly after the Great Depression of 1929. As a strategy to turn the mounting surplus of cheap volumes into cash quickly, bargain-book dealers formed ad hoc associations, such as the Teikoku Tosho Fukyūkai (Imperial Book Dissemination Association) and Ryōsho Fukyūkai (Good Book Dissemination Association). They held book fairs, selling all enpon copies uniformly for 10 sen each – one tenth of the original price. After a book fair held in Seoul, Korea in 1932 succeeded in selling a large number, similar events were held in Manchuria, Taiwan, and other locations under the Japanese occupation. This greatly contributed to the dissemination of Japanese literature over the occupied regions.

In his essay "Sōsaku hōhō-jō no shin-tenkan" (A New Change in the Method of Writing, 1933), Tokunaga Sunao (1899–1958) used a comment by Engels to denounce Kurahara's insistence on the unification of political practice and creative activity. Prior to writing this essay, Tokunaga had written *Taiyō no nai machi* (A Town with No Sunshine, 1929), the most sophisticated proletarian novel, which fictionalized an actual printing company strike in which he himself had participated. Dramatic changes of scene and a fast-moving narrative strongly suggest that Tokunaga wrote it with

⁶ Miyamoto Kenji, "Seiji to geijutsu: seiji no yūisei ni kansuru mondai," in *Puroretaria bunka* (October 1932–January 1933).

cinematization in mind. “Sōsaku hōhō-jō no shin-tenkan” had the intended liberating effect on writers who were feeling shackled by the political tentatiousness of Kurahara’s theory.

Some writers explored new methods of expression, leaving questions of Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy behind. *Kokyū wasureubeki* (Unforgettable Old Friends, 1935) by Takami Jun (1907–65) features as narrator a writer wrestling with psychological as well as political repression. Takami’s essay “Byōsha no ushiro ni nete irarenai” (One Cannot Afford to Lie behind Description, 1936) confessed that he was skeptical of consensus values, and no longer believed it possible to share authentic emotion through objective description. The narrator must participate in the action of the story. Takami’s arguments were accepted as a literary manifesto by fellow-writers who were similarly self-conscious about the act of writing.

One development during this period of “literary renaissance” in the mid to late 1930s was the so-called unification of pure literature and popular literature. Yokomitsu Riichi, who had declared he would remain a writer of the supremacy-of-art school, now advocated the unification of pure literature and popular literature in his “Junsui shōsetsu-ron” (On the Pure Novel, 1935). He identified the two essential elements of the popular novel as chance and sentimentality. Interestingly, a work that exhibited a wealth of both of these “essential” qualities appeared soon afterwards: *Mugi to heitai* (Wheat and Soldiers, 1938), a novella by Hino Ashihei (1907–60), which gained huge popularity nationwide. In 1937, the year the North China Incident (Marco Polo Bridge Incident) occurred, Hino finished writing *Funnyōtan* (Some Excrementitious Matter, 1937), and joined the Japanese Army. In February of the following year, *Funnyōtan* won the sixth Akutagawa Award, and attracted media attention as a bold work by a soldier on active duty. He was then transferred to the Army’s Public Relations Department, and was sent to China, where he witnessed the Battle of Xuzhou. This experience became the basis for his novella *Mugi to heitai*. Hino’s novella, which was a great hit, was a documentary of the battleground written by a soldier-writer of the time. Following in Hino’s footsteps, another soldier on duty, Ueda Hiroshi (1905–66), sent in his manuscript for *Kōjin* (Yellow Dust, 1938) from a war zone, and Hibino Shirō (1903–75), who was wounded in a battle, wrote *Wūsun Kurīku* (Wusong Creek, 1939).

Soldiers at the front also formed a new market of readers. In December 1941, the government took a step toward launching what it later called the Great East Asia War. The government drafted people from a wide range of educational backgrounds, professions, and ages, and they joined the volunteer

soldiers, who were primarily farmers and factory workers. This expansion of military personnel entailed a diversification of reading materials among the soldiers and officers. Realizing that *Kingu* magazine and *kōdan* stories were insufficient reading, the military distributed a number of Japanese classics including *Man'yōshū* as well as war stories. The largest demand among the soldiers and officers was for *gunkashū* (collections of war songs), and the military ordered several hundred thousand copies from distributors.

At the time of the North China Incident newspaper companies and magazine publishers sent professional writers to the front as special correspondents, resulting in book-length reportage. For example, Hayashi Fusao, sent by Chūō Kōronsha, wrote “Shanghai sensen” (The Shanghai Front, 1937), and Ishikawa Tatsuzō (1905–85), also sent by Chūō Kōronsha, wrote “Ikiteiru heitai” (Living Soldiers, 1938). Ishikawa’s “Ikiteiru heitai” was barred from circulation because it contained graphic descriptions of Japanese soldiers’ violence against noncombatants, and was considered to be a violation of the Publication Law for “disturbing peace and order.” The Publication Law had been revised to give harsher punishment, and as a result Ishikawa received a four-month prison sentence, suspended for three years.

For the left-wing writers who were targeted by the Thought Criminal Probation Law promulgated in 1936 and who were prohibited from writing, it was an extremely difficult era. Government pressure was so strong that Tokunaga Sunao had no choice but to discontinue the publication of his *Taiyō no nai machi*. However, so long as a writer kept within the confines set by the state, the sales of literary books were steady. If a writer chose the kinds of topics the mass media liked, followed the preferences of the Ministry of Home Affairs and high-ranking military officials, any work of fiction sold almost as well as a bestseller. Having chosen this path, Iwata Tōyō (1893–1969), known as Shishi Bunroku after the war, wrote *Kaigun* (The Navy, 1942), and Niwa Fumio (1904–2005) wrote *Kaisen* (A Naval Battle, 1942).

Paradoxically, the literary renaissance was possible despite, even because of, wartime controls. It was only from 1944 that the number of publications decreased and the paper quality noticeably deteriorated. Japanese supply ships were sunk more frequently by the Allied Forces and the shortage of supplies became severe. After Japan lost the war, the demand for books on political philosophy and translations of foreign literature surged. Major publishing companies that had taken refuge in Sapporo and in the western cities started publishing large numbers of books on coarse recycled paper, and the publishing industry quickly recovered.

Canonization and popularization: anthologies and literary prizes

EDWARD MACK

In 1926, the publishing company Kaizōsha launched a massive advertising campaign for its new, multivolume *Gendai Nihon bungaku zenshū* (Complete Works of Contemporary Japanese Literature). The title proclaimed that the anthology contained all of the works (or at least, all that mattered) of modern “Japanese” literature, with the semantically ambiguous “Japanese” allowing readers to conflate the linguistic, cultural, and ethnic senses of the word. The accompanying copy made it clear that the “contemporary” period coincided with the creation of the modern state in 1868. The anthology made material a national literary canon even as the state was in the midst of an imperial project that involved the strategic manipulation of the boundaries of “Japanese”-ness.

The anthology found a receptive market and initiated a boom in cheaply priced anthologies known as the one-yen book boom (*enpon būmu*). These anthologies were sold not only throughout the “inner territories,” but also to Japanese-reading communities throughout the empire and the world. Later, when remaindered copies of the mass-produced *Complete Works* reentered the market at even lower prices, they reached still more readers. The result, therefore, was not merely the transfer of cultural prestige to certain literary works but also their broad dissemination. Many readers discovered literature through these durable books decades (and sometimes generations) after they were originally purchased.

In 1935, roughly a decade later, the publishing company Bungei Shunjūsha launched a new literary award, the Akutagawa Prize. As with the anthology, this prize was not the first of its kind; it was, however, far more successful than its predecessors. This was due to the centrality and power of its backer, Kikuchi Kan (1888–1948), who published the general interest magazine *Bungei shunjū* (1923–); the coverage the award subsequently received in that magazine, and in the press in general; the respect accorded to its namesake, the author Akutagawa Ryūnosuke (1892–1927); the authority of its selection committee members, including Tanizaki Jun’ichirō (1886–1965), Yokomitsu

Riichi (1898–1947), and Kawabata Yasunari (1899–1972); and the attention drawn by related scandals, including a public argument between Kawabata and Dazai Osamu (1909–48) and the uproar over Ishihara Shintarō's (b. 1932) selection for 1955. Awarded biannually to this day, the Akutagawa Prize continues to draw national press coverage and to dramatically increase sales of the winning works.

The *Complete Works* and the Akutagawa Prize represent moments in which cultural legitimacy and prestige were transferred to specific works through extra-literary mechanisms. That is to say not that the choices were arbitrary, but that the necessarily subjective decisions of the judges were then mediated through material mechanisms. These mechanisms did more than celebrate and legitimate works. They also celebrated and reinforced the generic notion of “modern Japanese literature,” a category whose contents could change without itself being called into question. By utilizing the dominant framework of the nation, this rubric situated this literature within a constellation of national literatures, assuring everyone that Japan possessed this marker of advanced-nation status. It presented the works to readers who identified Japanese as something belonging to them, in contrast to other national literatures, which did not.

These mechanisms were also effective marketing tools, rendering the selected works as far more valuable commodities. The *Complete Works* garnered roughly 340,000 subscribers at its peak, despite containing works that previously sold only a fraction of that number of copies. The whole, the canon of modern Japanese literature, was more valuable than the sum of its parts. As for the Akutagawa Prize, it is well known that it too can greatly increase sales of a work.

One literary prize that is not awarded in Japan, but which also conflates individual writers with the nation, must also be mentioned: the Nobel Prize for Literature. At the time of this publication, only two Japanese writers have received the award: Kawabata Yasunari in 1968 and Ōe Kenzaburō (b. 1935) in 1994; there is also speculation over the odds that a third writer, Murakami Haruki (b. 1949), might receive the prize in the near future. In the preceding two cases, the prize has been attended by revelry over national achievement, reinforcing the link between literary production and the ethno-nation-state. While the success of ethnically Korean writers such as Yu Miri (b. 1968) and Ri Kaisei (b. 1935) and foreign-born writers like Yang Yi (b. 1964), all of whom received the Akutagawa Prize, should have destabilized such a link, they have often instead been treated as deviations from a normative ethnonational literary identity.

National literary anthologies like the *Complete Works* experienced a resurgence in the decades following World War II, beginning with the publication of Kadokawa Shoten's *Complete Works of Shōwa Literature* from 1952. This inaugurated a new, three-decade-long boom in large-scale anthology publication. Although such anthologies continue to appear, many argue that the loss of cultural centrality for literary production will mean that this mechanism has lost its efficacy. It could also be argued that changes in the world of publishing and the migration of much of the earlier works to the Internet have undermined the form, though not the rubric. Regardless of its future efficacy, however, the historical influence of the national literary model exerted by these forms on readers, writers, and scholars is clear.

Colonialism, translation, literature: Takahama Kyoshi's passage to Korea

S E R K - B A E S U H

In 1911, less than a year after Japan's annexation of Korea, the prominent haiku poet and writer Takahama Kyoshi (1874–1959) serialized an account of his travels to Korea in *Osaka mainichi shinbun* (Osaka Daily Newspaper) and *Tokyo nichinichi shinbun* (Tokyo Daily). The story is a fictionalization of the author's own experience of traveling to Korea twice in the same year. The newspapers, which probably funded the trips, commissioned him to write about Japan's newly acquired colony. The novel, which follows the narrator from Shimonoseki, in Japan, to the Korean cities of Pusan, Taegu, and Seoul, and then finally to Pyöngyang, revolves around the narrator's encounters with Koreans from all walks of life as well as various types of Japanese settlers and sojourners in the colony, ranging from small business owners struggling to scrape by to *tairiku rōnin* (continental adventurers) pressing for Japanese expansion further into the Asian Continent. In 1912, a slightly revised version of the story, entitled *Chōsen* (Korea), was published in book form.

Not only is the novel one of the earliest literary renditions of Japanese colonial experience in Korea, it also provides a valuable window into the issues of collective identity, language, and translation that would continue to reverberate in later Japanese-language literary works about colonial Korea, including "Futei senjin" (Recalcitrant Korean, 1922) by Nakanishi Inosuke (1887–1958), "Junsa no iru fūkei: 1923 nen no hitotsu no sukecchi" (Landscape with a Patrolman: A Sketch from 1923, 1929) by Nakajima Atsushi (1909–42), and "Kusa fukashi" (Deep Grass, 1940) by Kim Saryang (1914–50), to name a few.

When the narrator and his wife arrive at the port of Pusan, they witness a Japanese merchant who underpays his young Korean porter and then shoos away the protesting boy. The narrator feels ashamed as "a compatriot," as if he himself were the one behaving shamefully. In other words, the narrator's embrace of collective Japanese identity coincides with a feeling of shame that might open up the possibility to reflect on how he is implicated in the colonial

relationship. What pushes the narrator toward Japanese national consciousness is his encounter with Korea, Japan's colony. He confesses that before coming to Korea he never had a chance to ponder "what is called our nation" (*waga kokumin to iu mono*) and what it means to be "a people" (*minzoku*), separate from the rest of humanity. However, after setting foot in Korea, he cannot help but think of himself as Japanese.

His developing national consciousness leads him to harbor what he calls "contradictory feelings." He feels sympathetic toward Koreans as a colonized people, yet at the same time he cannot help but feel proud to be a member of the Japanese nation. The tension arising from the narrator's split conscience seems to be resolved by his ultimate affirmation of Japan as a great nation. Nevertheless, this tension lingers in the novel. For example, despite his identification with Japan, the narrator sympathizes with his Korean translator Hong Wönsön and with the *kisaeng* (Korean courtesans comparable to the Japanese geisha) Sodam when he locates a sliver of contempt for the Japanese in their smiles.

Even though the narrator embraces Japanese identity in the face of Koreans, the novel betrays the uncertainty of ethnic boundaries between the Japanese and Koreans. It captures the anxiety that the Japanese might feel about the lack of clear ethnic boundaries, for example when the narrator's friend Hoshino, who invited him to visit Korea, frowns upon seeing Japanese children playing with their Korean friends in the street and talking to each other in "half-Japanese and half-Korean." Hoshino does not merely resent the creolization of Japanese or the notion of Japanese settlers "going native." Rather, he reveals his anxiety over the porosity of ethnic boundaries between the Japanese and Koreans, by lamenting "if this goes on, the Japanese will have become Korean (*nihonjin no hō ga chōsenka shite shimaunoda*)."

With the lack of phenotypical differences like skin color, language constituted the most conspicuous ethnic marker in colonial Korea. Language strictly differentiated the colonizer from the colonized, and Japanese was privileged as the colonizer's language. In the novel, Japanese thus registers as the language of progress and eclipses Korean, so much so that Hong tells the narrator that he has urged hot-headed nationalist youths in his home province Pyōngan to learn the language instead of resisting colonial rule. According to his reasoning, learning Japanese is equivalent to embracing colonial rule.

Paradoxically, it is also through language that the colonized can cross ethnic boundaries, although the intricate mechanisms of colonial bureaucracy, including the household registration system, rendered illegitimate

such transgressions. Ethnic crossing does not necessarily involve a conscious act of deception on the part of the colonized who desires to “pass” as the colonizer. Due to the absence of phenotypical differences, Koreans who speak fluent Japanese are often assumed to be Japanese.

It comes as a surprise to the narrator that a group of geisha speaking the Hiroshima and Osaka dialects at his welcome party turn out to be Koreans originally from Seoul, because he has assumed that speaking regional dialects must indicate Japanese identity. Needless to say, in the narrator’s mind, language stands out as the surest marker of the homogeneous collectivity of the Japanese nation as opposed to Korean identity, despite the heterogeneity of the Japanese language.

At one point in the novel, Japan’s place in the colonial world order is also linguistically mapped in relation to the West. While observing a Japanese Protestant minister teaching Japanese to a group of Koreans, many of whom look clueless about what the minister is explaining, the narrator recollects that he learned English in the same manner from an American missionary in middle school. He thus projects himself onto the colonized, who are in a linguistically and politically unequal relationship with the colonizer, and his encounter with Korea enables him to retrospectively see Japan’s own unequal relationship with the West. Perhaps, the narrator’s consciousness of Western domination lies behind his “contradictory feelings,” making him simultaneously sympathize with Koreans, the actually colonized, and proud of Japan’s rise as the only non-Western colonial power.

The contradiction is especially significant because it parallels Japanese nationalist discourse on colonialism. For example, a similar sentiment creeps into one of Yasuda Yojūrō’s (1910–81) essays on his 1932 trip to Korea (published in *Kogito* [Cogito], no. 35, 1935), before his rise to fame as the foremost aesthete of the Japanese Romantic school (*Nihon rōmanha*). Though it fleetingly laments the fate of the Korean nation, the travelogue nevertheless implicitly affirms Japan’s colonization of Korea as an inevitable event in the course of Japan’s struggle to survive by imitating the West. The writer and critic Hayashi Fusao’s (1903–75) infamous *Daitōa sensō kōteiron* (An Affirmation of the Greater East Asia War, 1964–5) is another notable example that shows how this contradiction pervades the insidiously apologetic justification for Japanese colonialism. In the book, Hayashi simultaneously acknowledges the cruelty of Japanese colonial rule over Korea and legitimizes Japan’s colonization of the country as an unavoidable part of Japan’s long struggle to defend the nation against Western aggression since its forced opening to the West.

In the novel *Chōsen*, the narrator's contradictory feelings never fully develop into critical reflections on Japanese colonialism. Nevertheless, he verges on self-reflection at least momentarily when he interacts with his translator Hong. As a matter of fact, the novel illuminates both translation's challenge to and its collusion with colonialism through the character of Hong.

When the narrator first meets Hong, what strikes him most is Hong's harrowingly wrinkled mouth, which seems more like a painful scar than a normal sign of aging. Ishibashi Kōzō, Hong's associate and a friend of the narrator's, informs him that Hong lost all of his teeth due to torture and wears dentures. (It is later revealed that Hong was once an anti-Japanese patriot, protesting Japan's annexation of Korea.) Thus, Hong's wrinkled mouth metonymically stands for a trace of colonial violence, which has transformed an anti-Japanese patriot into an associate of the Japanese colonialist Ishibashi.

In a sense, Hong prefigures a vast number of translators serving for Japanese colonialism. Japanese colonial rule in Korea, like other instances of colonial rule, required an army of translators in order to ensure that its power pervaded every nook and cranny of society. Despite its highly intrusive apparatus of governance, Japanese colonial rule could not have operated without translation simply because the majority of the colonized could not understand the colonizer's orders, rules, and laws in his language.

As a supposed representative of Korea, Hong fleshes out the violent implications of translation. When Hong accompanies the narrator and Ishibashi to social gatherings and various places, he translates Korean thoughts, customs, and history for the Japanese. Through his translation, "Korea" is reified as the sum of the particular attributes assigned to it and its people, and represented "as it is." As a Korean, Hong is supposed to authentically represent Korea. Thus when claiming that Japan's colonization has saved Korea from the tyranny of its corrupt and incompetent ruling class, he speaks on behalf of the entire nation, the majority of whom cannot speak for themselves in the colonizer's language.

Although the narrator respects Hong for his poise and excellent command of Japanese, at times he feels uncertain about whether Hong faithfully translates for him. Finding himself at the mercy of the translator, the narrator is acutely aware of his limitations in communicating with the colonized. Despite the risk of miscommunication, he has to rely on translation in order to communicate with the majority of Koreans. Interestingly, the novel has a couple of moments during which the narrator obsessively focuses on Hong's

disfigured mouth while observing him translating for the Japanese. On those occasions, the novel seems to suggest that, ultimately, it is the acute awareness of violence rather than any essentialist idea of ethnic or linguistic differences that turns an instance of translation into a venue in which the colonizer can encounter the colonized as the other who persistently questions the legitimacy of his understanding of the colonized.

Primitivism and imperial literature of Taiwan and the South Seas

ROBERT TIERNEY

The South Seas (*Nan'yō*) – roughly what we now consider Southeast Asia including Taiwan – was not only an important vector of Japan's imperial expansion from the late nineteenth century, but also a focus for the colonial imagination of many writers. In the 1880s, intellectuals such as Shiga Shigetaka and Taguchi Ukichi strongly advocated Japan's southern expansion (*nanshinron*), whether through trade or conquest. In 1895 Japan acquired Taiwan, its first southern colony, and in 1914 it seized Micronesia from Germany and later ruled the islands under a League of Nations mandate. Thanks to war-induced disruptions in European trade with Asia, Japan vastly expanded its trade ties and investments in Southeast Asia from 1914, sparking a boom in travel writing and domestic expositions featuring *Nan'yō*. One can date from this time the development of a “popular (*taishū*) orientalism”¹ in Japanese mass media, epitomized by the manga *Bōken Dankichi* (The Adventures of Dankichi, 1933–9), in which a young Japanese boy rules over a tropical island peopled by cannibals. This popular series and other similar works open a window onto Japanese stereotypes about *Nan'yō* and its “savage” inhabitants.

To be sure, these stereotypes did not appear *ex nihilo* in the 1930s. In 1884, Suzuki Keikun, another proponent of southern expansion, published *Nanyō tanken jikki* (A True Record of my Explorations of the South Seas) in which he describes acts of cannibalism in the Marshall Islands, although later scholars have noted his extensive reliance on Western sources.² By contrast with the Marshall islanders, the Taiwanese aborigines were generally depicted as headhunters, notably in monochrome prints (*kawaraban*) published at the

¹ Kawamura Minato “Taishū orientarizumu to Ajia ninshiki,” in *Bunka no naka no shokuminchi*, vol. 7 of *Iwanami kōza kindai Nihon to shokuminchi*, ed. Oe Shinobu et al. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1993), 107–36.

² Takayama Jun, *Nankai no daitankenka Suzuki Keikun, sono kyojō to jitsujō* (Tokyo: San'ichi shōbō, 1995).

time of the 1873 Taiwan military expedition. After Taiwan became a Japanese colony in 1895, Nitobe Inazō, then a bureaucrat with the Government-General of Taiwan, justified colonization as a civilizing mission that would eradicate headhunting. Notwithstanding vaunted claims to bring civilization to “savages,” the colonial regime only extended its control to the resource-rich interior of Taiwan by waging brutal military campaigns, culminating in the genocidal five-year pacification campaign of 1909–14.

Even after law and order were established in the aboriginal territories, aboriginal rebellions periodically occurred, most famously the 1930 Musha Incident, in which Ataiyal tribesmen massacred 134 Japanese at a school sporting event. Particularly after the Musha Incident, the “savages,” henceforth “pacified,” often appear in fictional works by Japanese writers. In these works, the “savages” are often innocent and pure creatures and their villages are depicted as utopian spaces free from conflict and the discontents of civilization. In addition, after the “savages” have been incorporated in the Japanese empire, writers often avail themselves of the trope of savagery to search for a deeper self or an inner savage that lay hidden beneath the veneer of their modern identity. In Ōshika Taku’s 1935 novella *Yabanjin* (The Savage), for example, a young man disillusioned with modern life is sent to police the highlands of Taiwan and sets out to find his primeval self. Exchanging his police uniform for aboriginal clothes, he joins a headhunting expedition and eventually marries an aboriginal woman to free himself from the civilized modernity that prevailed in metropolitan Japan.

In short, Japan’s colonial literature of Taiwan and Nan’yō offers diametrically opposed images of indigenous peoples perhaps best summed up by the contrast of the violent headhunter and the happy primitive. Scholars of Western colonial culture have noted a similar ambivalence in the trope of the “savage” in Western discourse. One in a series of colonial powers to rule Taiwan and Micronesia, Japan borrowed liberally from its imperial predecessors even as it strove to distinguish its rule from theirs. In particular, Japanese imperialists were quick to adopt the entire panoply of colonial discourses that had accumulated during five centuries of Western exploration and colonization of non-Western parts of the world. As I will show by considering the cases of Satō Haruo and Nakajima Atsushi, Japanese writers were also strongly stimulated by the speculations of anthropologists and by translations of Western writers such as Pierre Loti, Robert Louis Stevenson, Joseph Conrad, and Herman Melville.

Anthropology, which entered Japan during the late nineteenth century, was a science of “savagery” that exerted a great influence on writers. Though

the earliest Japanese anthropologists concerned themselves with speculations on the origins of the Japanese people, they later turned their attention to the inhabitants of the Japanese colonies. Torii Ryūzō, the most important academic anthropologist in the first half of the twentieth century, led four study missions to the interior of Taiwan between 1896 and 1899. In later years, he spoke with wonderment of the discovery of Japan's very own "savages" in Taiwan, who "would offer a wonderful field of studies" to Japanese anthropologists.³ If Torii strove to classify the different tribes of Taiwan, Mori Ushinosuke lived in Taiwan for two decades and advised the colonial government on policies toward aboriginal societies. Critical of colonial policies that aimed to assimilate the aborigines, he served as the first curator of the aboriginal holdings of the Taiwan Museum and sought to preserve artifacts threatened by colonial policies. Similar to Mori in Taiwan, Hijikata Hisakatsu was a sculptor who went to Palau in 1929 to draw inspiration from primitive art. During his thirteen years' residence there, he acquired an unmatched ethnographic expertise on Micronesian societies and published ethnographic diaries, studying Micronesian customs, religions, and arts. Mori and Hijikata also exerted strong influence on writers who traveled to the colonies.

In the summer of 1920, Satō Haruo (1892–1964) went to Taiwan and, through the good offices of Mori Ushinosuke, he traveled through the unsettled aboriginal regions under police escort. After returning to Japan, Satō wrote a dozen literary works based on his Taiwan experiences, including the travel journal *Musha* and a short story "Demon Bird" (*Machō*), both set in aboriginal Taiwan. Published in the *Chūō kōron* in October 1923, the latter is an allegorical work that analyzes an episode of scapegoating in an aboriginal village. Satō ostensibly obtained the idea for the story from a brief passage in Mori's *Ethnography of Taiwan* in which he notes that members of certain Ataiyal group believe that a mysterious bird (*hafune*) appears to people about to die and that certain people can manipulate this bird; the bird manipulator sometimes becomes a scapegoat targeted by other members of the group after the occurrence of unexplained death. Adopting the objective style and the cool distance of an ethnographer examining a primitive society, the narrator of "Demon Bird" first offers an explanation for the custom of scapegoating and then an account of the most recent incident of persecution. In his explanation, the narrator says aborigines tend to discover a bird

³ Torii Ryūzō, "Torii jinruigaku kenkyū: Taiwan no genjūmin joron," in *Torii Ryūzō zenshū*, vol. 5 (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1976), 4.

manipulator in a person who is different from others in her behavior and therefore inspires anxiety in the community. As villagers begin to spread rumors, the suspect is targeted as a scapegoat, but the villagers refrain from attacking her until an external catastrophe strikes the village.

The narrator places the persecution within the aboriginal village in the context of a colonial conquest. The villagers only set upon the hapless bird manipulator after a colonial army has marched through their village and ordered all young men to assemble inside a building that they then proceed to burn down. Indeed, the persecutors of the alleged bird manipulator copy the tactics the colonial army had employed against them, offering an instance in which the colonized imitate the barbarism rather than the civilization of the colonizer. The narrator also highlights the ethnographer's dependence on a colonial apparatus when he describes how he happened to learn of this episode: "Two armed police officers protected me on my right and left . . . Two completely assimilated savages served as our guides and porters . . . The tale I am going to tell was told in turns by these two porters as they were walking and then translated for me by one of the policemen in our party."

In addition to being a subtle deconstruction of an ethnographic report, "Demon Bird" is also an allegory on the recent scapegoating of Koreans during the Great Kantō Earthquake of September 1, 1923. The work was published shortly after the earthquake and in later years Satō Haruo spoke of "Demon Bird" as a novel about rumors (*ryūgen*), a key term associated with the 1923 quake. While he never refers by name to this massacre, the persecution of Koreans corresponds to a similar schema: a natural disaster of unprecedented scale, the role of rumors, the fabrication/recognition of an invisible enemy, and the reaffirmation of the boundaries of the community by massacre of a designated scapegoat. In this story, Satō shows the terrible price exacted by imperialism on the streets of Tokyo itself.

Just as Satō uses allegory to criticize Japan's imperialism in the 1920s, Nakajima Atsushi (1909–42) writes allegories of the South Seas in the early 1940s. Best known for his stories based on Chinese classics, Nakajima is in many ways the exemplary writer of the Japanese empire. After growing up in Korea, Nakajima worked as an English teacher in Yokohama until 1941, when he accepted a position of Japanese language textbook editor with the *Nan'yōchō* or South Sea Agency that administered Micronesia. The previous year, he completed *Hikari, kaze to yume* (Light, Wind, and Dreams), a fictional autobiography of Robert Louis Stevenson's final years in Samoa, and critics have interpreted his departure for Micronesia as a self-conscious emulation of Stevenson. Nakajima became a close friend of the ethnographer Hijikata

Hisakatsu and drew liberally on the latter's diaries and ethnographic notes in writing his fiction or travel sketches.

Nakajima's short story "Mariyan" is a portrait of a highly educated and assimilated Micronesian woman as seen through the eyes of a young Japanese colonial official and an ethnographer named H (a reference to Hijikata). The narrator first meets Mariyan at H's house, where she assists the ethnographer in translating a Palauan oral narrative. On a later visit to Mariyan's home, he discovers Japanese books, including an anthology of English poetry edited by Kuriyagawa Hakuson and a translation of Pierre Loti's novel *Marriage of Loti*, a prototype for colonial romances in the South Seas. He feels strangely pained (*itamashii*) to discover that Mariyan reads these works, indicating a degree of empathy and identification with her. Later, he records Mariyan's critique of Loti's novel: "Naturally, I don't know anything about what went on long ago and in Polynesia, but even so, it is hard to believe that such things could really have happened." In effect, the narrator, though he serves as a colonial official in Palau, attempts to situate himself toward Mariyan outside the ordinary binary of colonizer and colonized, in part by stressing his affinities with her and in part by his implicit critique of Western imperialism.

Nakajima was fully aware that his own views of the Nan'yō had been shaped by his encounter with Western writers. In the story "Mahiru" (High Noon, 1942), the narrator takes himself to task for the inauthenticity of his views of Micronesia. He accuses himself of seeing not the actual scenery but rather a stereotypical South Seas haunted by the "ghost of modernity and of Europe" and refracted through the vision of Western artists. While he imagines he is gazing at the Nan'yō, he sees only "reproductions of Gauguin paintings" or "pale copies of the Polynesia depicted by Loti and Melville." The narrator points to one of the blind spots in Japan's vision of its colonies: Japan's empire building presupposed a prior self-colonization and a larger project to catch up with the West. In 1995, Masaki Tsuneo argued that prewar Japanese had to put on "western eyeglasses" to view the other nations of Asia before they could actually rule colonies in Asia.⁴ Anticipating Masaki's postcolonial speculations by more than five decades, Nakajima offers the first diagnosis and extended reflection on the aporia and ambivalence of the Japanese colonial gaze toward the South.

⁴ Masaki Tsuneo, *Shokuminchi gensō* (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobō, 1995), 239–47.

From empire to nation: the spatial imaginary of the 1920s to early 1950s

SEIJI M. LIPPIT

Modernity in Japan, as elsewhere, was characterized by massive displacements of bodies, technologies, and discourses across extended territories, a movement that left its unmistakable imprint on literary and cultural practice. In particular, the formation of the modern nation-state, the establishment of industrial capitalism, and the creation and expansion of empire represented an uprooting and reconfiguration of prior social and cultural formations that decisively shaped the spatial imaginary of modern literature. This chapter focuses on a particular trajectory within this historical process, namely the line extending from modernism's engagement with the topography of empire in the 1920s and early 1930s to the wrenching dislocations that accompanied the implosion of empire and the perpetually deferred "return" to the nation in the immediate postwar period.

Literary critic Maeda Ai has shown how the construction of modern interiority, typically understood as a withdrawal from the broader landscape of social and political conflict, was closely linked to the widespread migration to the cities in the late nineteenth century that undergirded the emergence of modernity in Japan. Maeda argues that the topos of the second-floor boarding room, the literary space that framed the construction of interiority in such landmark works as Futabatei Shimei's (1864–1909) *Ukigumo* (Drifting Clouds, 1887–9) – often considered the first modern novel – to Tayama Katai's (1872–1930) *Futon* (The Quilt, 1907) – considered the origin of the I-novel – was the minimum unit of urban space transformed by migration from the countryside. Even earlier, Mori Ōgai's (1862–1922) "Maihime" (1890) had figured the discovery of interiority in terms of a corporeal and affective movement from Tokyo to Berlin (at the height of its imperial power) to colonial Saigon.

By the 1920s, the accelerated process of urbanization, which involved the rapid swelling of populations in the cities, the rise of consumer capitalism, the explosion of mass culture, and the increasing politicization of cultural production, had placed this interiority under siege. Both modernist and

proletarian literary practice can be seen as responding, in different ways, to these transformations, recording the dispersal and transformation of subjectivities within this fluid environment while tracking the multiple sensations and affects produced by the commodification of the human body and its dislocation from familiar sites of social and cultural meaning. Meanwhile, the emergence of the discourse of the I-novel during this time (retroactively applied to prior literary production) can be seen as a reaction formation to the destabilization of literary interiority.

Alongside such processes of modernization and urbanization, the formation and expansion of empire – a development roughly contemporaneous with the creation of the modern nation-state – was a driving force in the creation and dispersal of subjectivities across vast spaces. As a material practice, literature was deeply involved in the formation of both national and imperial space through its participation in the creation and dissemination of a common, standardized language. The emergence of the conception of a national language, which gathered steam in the period following the Sino-Japanese War, was closely connected to the perceived need to spread the Japanese language across the actual and projected space of the Japanese empire.

Yet such a spread of language, no less than of bodies, ideologies, or social practices, was not a smooth or continuous process, but was instead met with repeated interruptions and resistances. In the fiction of the 1920s, the topography of empire comes to frame fundamental contradictions in Japanese modernity, conflicts that coalesce around Japan's identity as a non-Western imperial power and the unresolved displacements and contradictions between nation and empire as the basis for modern subjective identification. Modernist experiments with the national language should be understood within this context.

Proletarian literature engaged the space of empire as a site of class struggle and anticolonial conflict. For example, Hirabayashi Taiko's "Seryōshitsu nite" (In a Clinic Ward, 1927) is set in a charity hospital in the colonial territory of Manchuria, which is marked as a foreign material and linguistic space. This territory, however, also exists as a part of the power structure of the Japanese state, which comprises a complex network including institutions of medical science, discipline, and the commodification of human bodies. The heroine of the work moves from one space of incarceration to another – from the hospital ward, dominated by the instrumental power of medical research and capital accumulation, to the space of the prison, dominated by the apparatus of state power. Spatially, there exists no line of escape; rather,

the only possible way out is temporal, in the promise of a future revolution hinted at by the flashing, bright red light that adorns the entrance to the prison in the work's closing line.

Modernist writers who engaged with colonial and semi-colonial topographies in their fiction and travel writings include Akutagawa Ryūnosuke (1892–1927), Satō Haruo (1892–1964), Nakajima Atsushi (1909–42), Hayashi Fumiko (1903–51), and Yoshiyuki Eisuke (1906–40). Avant-garde poets Anzai Fuyue (1898–1965) and Kitagawa Fuyuhiko (1900–90) founded the pioneering journal *A* in the city of Dalian in colonial Manchuria. Akutagawa's *kaika-mono* (enlightenment pieces), including one of his most famous stories, “Butōkai” (The Ball, 1920), along with Edogawa Rampo's “Oshie to tabisuru otoko” (Traveler with the Pasted Cloth Picture, 1929), cast a nostalgic glance at Meiji era Tokyo as a colonial landscape, thus creating a palimpsest of Tokyo as simultaneously a colonial city and an imperial capital. Yet, it is perhaps the writings of Yokomitsu Riichi (1898–1947) that most prominently underscore the stakes of the modernist engagement with topographies of empire.

The relation of modernist literature to the urban landscape is often discussed in the context of the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923, whose material and symbolic impact permeated cultural practice. It should be pointed out, however, that the earthquake cannot be reduced to a natural disaster alone, for its historical significance is closely tied to the context of Japan's imperial project. Thus the post-earthquake violence toward Koreans and other residents deemed foreign or subversive at the hands of vigilante groups and police can be seen to reflect a consciousness of the violence of colonial policy as of the growing resistance to it – symbolized, for example, by the March 1, 1919 uprising against colonial rule in Korea. Furthermore, the reconstruction of Tokyo, led by Home Minister Gotō Shinpei (1857–1929), the former administrator of colonial Taiwan and the first director of the South Manchurian Railway, took place under the rubric of rebuilding the “imperial capital,” and was intended to showcase the city as a metropolitan center to rival those of Europe.

The ruin and rebuilding of Tokyo serve as the context for much of modernist practice across a variety of genres, including literature, poetry, film, photography, and architecture. Kobayashi Hideo (1902–83), writing not long after completion of the imperial capital's reconstruction was proclaimed, wrote of a literature that had lost its home, as embodied in a city whose continual cycles of transformation had left it bereft of material repositories of memory. The modernist response to this sense of loss

developed along two trajectories, an enjoyment of dynamic change and the liberation from traditional social forms on the one hand, and a sense of nostalgia for what was being lost on the other.

For Yokomitsu, this ambivalence found expression in colonial and semi-colonial topographies. In “Aoi Tai-i” (Pale Captain, 1927), the narrator crosses over to colonial Seoul, where, under the pale, electrified light of the colonial state apparatus, Korean and Chinese addicts and beggars occupy the margins of the space of representation. Such depictions of squalor and degeneration typically serve, in colonial narratives, to highlight the civilized positionality of the colonizer. In Yokomitsu’s story, however, this opposition collapses in the final scene, in which the narrator seeks out the imprint of the dead addict’s face in the muddy ground: “Within that death mask I discovered my own contorted face . . . I began to feel all round my own face with my hands. No matter how much I felt my own face, it was the face of the shaking beggar that was there, living, before my eyes, countless trembling faces, weaving before me, clinging and sucking like tentacles.” The death mask here serves as a mirror, both reflecting and proliferating the narrator’s subjectivity.

Such conflicts of identity further unfold in the variegated, fluid topography of the semi-colonial city in Yokomitsu’s novel *Shanghai* (Shanghai, 1928–32). As the novel’s title indicates, there is a certain conjunction of text and city – both are conceived as assemblages of material objects (written words and bodies) that circulate through networks defined by the relations of ideology, capital, and political/military power. As Maeda Ai has written, Yokomitsu depicts the city as being composed of three separate yet intersecting spaces – the colonial city, the revolutionary city, and the slum city. Each is defined according to different relations to capital and to institutions of political and military power. They also represent shifting alliances and identifications – between Japan and the Western imperial powers on the one hand, and between Japan and China as belonging to a common cultural/ethnic sphere on the other. By the end of the narrative, Sanki and Osugi, the novel’s two protagonists, have traversed this entire terrain and arrive at the pitch blackness of Osugi’s squalid room amidst the general strike that has shut down the city.

The 1930s saw increasing interest in the *gaichi*, or the outer territories of the Japanese imperial state, as reflected in Ishikawa Tatsuzō’s (1905–85) *Sōbō* (The Multitude, 1935), which narrated the story of Japanese settlers migrating to Brazil and won the inaugural Akutagawa Prize in 1935. Writings by Korean writers in Japanese also appeared in major literary journals with increasing frequency, including Kim Saryang’s (1914–50) “Hikari no naka ni” (Into the Light, 1939), which was nominated for an Akutagawa Prize in 1940. The first

Daitōa Bungakusha Taikai (Greater East Asia Writers' Conference), in which Yokomitsu Riichi played a prominent role, brought delegations of writers from around the Japanese empire to Tokyo in 1942.

As the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937 marked a new stage in Japan's military push into the Asian continent and the mobilization for total war, depictions of the peripheral spaces of the Japanese empire were increasingly tied to the war effort. Some of the most prominent writers of the day, including Yokomitsu and Hayashi Fumiko, were sent overseas by newspapers, journals, and the government in order to write accounts of the war for the reading public. Ishikawa Tatsuzō's "Ikiteiru heitai" (Living Soldiers, 1938) led to the banning of the journal in which it appeared and the arrest of the author. The works of Hino Ashihei (1907–60) chronicling the lives of ordinary soldiers on battlefields in China became massive bestsellers, leading to the author's purge after the war. Not all literary depictions of the gaichi can be reduced to mere military propaganda, however, as shown in the case of Ibuse Masuji's (1898–1993) *Hana no machi* (City of Flowers, 1942), which explored the multiethnic and multilingual space of occupied Singapore.

The implosion of the empire at the end of the war marked a radical transformation in the spatial imaginary of Japanese literature. Historians such as Mitani Taichirō have argued that the loss of empire, sudden and automatic as it was, did not engender any extended process of decolonization, an engagement with the material and psychological consequences of the collapse of the imperial state.¹ However, the implosion of empire left its unmistakable traces on the literature of the immediate postwar period.

In his essay "Metsubō ni tsuite" (On Ruin, 1948), for example, Takeda Taijun (1912–76) described the fundamental rupture that attended the collapse of empire. Takeda recalls that he learned of the nation's defeat amidst the sounds of jubilant celebration on the city streets of Shanghai, where he spent the end of the war. He notes that he experienced then for the first time a sense of "absolute ruin" (*zenteki metsubō*), unprecedented in Japanese history. While Japanese cultural history is filled with stories of the fall of individual heroes or the ruination of families and lineages, the total collapse of the nation was a new experience: "Seen from the world's perspective, Japan's partial ruin, and therefore the surviving residue, may appear as some grotesque, sinewy foodstuff that remains undigested. However, just this amount of collapse

¹ See Mitani Taichirō, "Dai hakkan maegaki," in *Iwanami Kōza: Kindai Nihon to shokuminchi*, vol. 8, *Ajia no reisen to datsu-shokuminchika* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1993), vii–viii.

has, in the history of the Japanese sensibility regarding ruin, given to it a completely new countenance, one of absolute ruin.”

For Takeda, ruin is something on the order of a bodily affect as much as any political or religious concept. It follows the “physical” (*butsuriteki*) and “spatial” (*kūkan*) laws of the universe, whereby nations and races are chewed up and digested like so many plants and animals. Ruin is, in essence, a visceral sensation produced by defeat in war and the collapse of empire, a sensation of being thrust outside the boundaries of national identity into an existence characterized by an abject corporeality. This is, for example, the fundamental theme of Takeda’s classic fictional work *Mamushi no sue* (This Outcast Generation, 1947), which revolves around the experience of dejection and degradation haunting Japanese residents of Shanghai in the days following the defeat. Narrating a woman’s attempt to exact revenge on an abusive and tyrannical former official of the imperial state, the work depicts the breakdown of state power as well as the dissipation of the so-called “Japanese spirit,” which leaves in its wake only a corporeal, material existence that is described as a “grotesque, pulpy mass, like the entrails of a pig.”

Furthermore, the imprint of empire’s collapse is visible in the thematic of “return,” which, as Kawamura Minato has stated, inaugurates postwar writing.² With some 6.5 million Japanese scattered throughout the battlefields, colonies, and occupied territories at the war’s end, the implosion of empire set in motion a massive movement across vast spaces, as soldiers, settlers, officials, and other civilians began a frantic scramble to return to the Japanese islands. Meanwhile, millions of former colonial subjects dislocated by the machinery of the imperial state and economy (including 1.35 million Koreans in Japan at the war’s end) remained displaced and struggled to return home. This wrenching dislocation of bodies and psyches left a deep imprint on early postwar writings.

To illustrate this theme of return, Kawamura cites the haunting opening of the widely read postwar novel by Takeyama Michio (1903–84), *Biruma no tategoto* (The Harp of Burma, 1948), which takes the form of a story told by a soldier returning from the battlefield: “Our Japanese soldiers who came back from overseas were a pitiful sight. They looked thin, weak, and exhausted.” In addition, one could also cite Ōoka Shōhei’s (1909–88) *Nobi* (Fires on the Plain, 1951), the story of a soldier’s harrowing descent into madness in the closing days of the war, narrated from the confines of a psychiatric institution on the outskirts of Tokyo upon his return to Japan. In turn, Hayashi Fumiko’s

² See Kawamura Minato, *Sengo bungaku o tou* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1995), 1–12.

(1903–51) epic novel *Ukigumo* (Drifting Clouds, 1949–51) opens with the scene of Yukiko's arrival at a repatriation center in the town of Tsuruga, returning from Dalat in French Indochina (present-day Vietnam), where she had worked as a secretary for the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in the last years of the war.

In each of these cases, however, the act of return is haunted by the essential impossibility of its completion. Mizushima, the protagonist of Takeyama's novel, in fact refuses to return to Japan, abandoning his unit and remaining in Burma as a Buddhist monk in order to mourn for the soldiers lost in battle. In *Fires on the Plain*, Tamura's horrific experiences of slaughter and cannibalism have cost him his sanity, and he continually relives his trauma, ordered to recollect his experiences by one of the doctors. Despite his physical return to Japan, psychologically and emotionally he remains on the battlefields of the Philippines. In the case of Yukiko in *Drifting Clouds*, upon her return to Tokyo she confronts a faded nation that has been shorn of its colonial possessions, reduced to the "the trunk of its body, having in its defeat lost Korea, Taiwan, the Ryūkyū Islands, Sakhalin, Manchuria, all of it." She experiences this dismemberment of the empire as a fundamental deformation of the national corpus, and she spends the remainder of the narrative trying desperately and unsuccessfully to recapture the fantasy of colonial life that she had experienced during the war.

In fact, as Kawamura points out, those who returned to Japan experienced a radical sense of disjunction between the image they held in their minds and the transformed place they actually encountered: an occupied, bombed-out state shorn of its empire. The sense of spatial dislocation and the reconfiguration of national borders is, for example, visible in Takeda's *Hikarigoke* (Luminous Moss, 1954), in which the narrator stands at the national border in a coastal Hokkaidō town, looking at a formerly Japanese island, now foreign territory. The postwar return was, in essence, an impossible task: not only because many who were overseas never made it to the Japanese islands, or because there were some colonial settlers who were "returning" to a place they had never known, but rather because the end of the war marked a fundamental transformation in national consciousness.

The sense of being thrown outside the familiar strictures of state and society was an unsettling, terrifying experience, as well as one loaded with utopian possibilities for the future. The literature of ruin found its expression in many forms: the narrative and poetic accounts of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; Shiina Rinzō's (1911–73) literature of the physical and spiritual ruins of Tokyo; Tamura Taijirō's (1911–83) "literature of the

flesh” set in the ruined capital; the literature of fallenness or decadence of Sakaguchi Ango (1906–55). For writers such as Tamura and Ango, the fall into the depths of postwar ruin also signified the possibility of rebirth, the emergence of a new conception of humanity.

Soon, however, the sense of dislocation and the disjunction that existed between the imperial state and the postwar nation-state would be obscured within the process of postwar reconstruction. As Takeda notes in “On Ruin,” the sense of being thrown into an abject materiality was followed by a temptation to forget the experience of total ruin. Remarking that at some point he found his extreme state of mind turning toward thoughts of “every-day preparations,” Takeda writes: “The reason that I stop thinking about ruin is due to a simple laziness, cowardice, and forgetfulness. The profundity that ruin maintains runs too deep for me, and I find myself unable to bear the vertigo that I feel when I stand at its primal precipice and look back at the path of culture.”

Part of this attempt to overcome the postwar rupture involved the formation of new discourses of national collectivity that sutured the disjunction between past and present. Perhaps the most prominent example can be found in the rising currency of discourses of national identity based on ethnic homogeneity, which, as Oguma Eiji has shown, displaced conceptions of the multiethnic imperial state that had previously been a dominant force in official accounts of Japanese identity. In the postwar period, the work of Kim Tal-su (1919–97) can be seen to inscribe the effects of this discursive re-centering of national collectivity. Thus Kim’s story “Fuji no mieru mura de” (A Village in View of Mount Fuji, 1951) narrates an encounter with the resurgent borders of ethnic community, which push to the margins any alternative political associations. The story describes a visit by a group of Korean intellectuals to the family home of a *burakumin*, or “outcaste,” intellectual, where they expect to find a sense of political solidarity, but instead meet only with naked racism.

Yet the rise of new conceptions of national collectivity, which displaced the memory of the multiethnic imperial state to forge phantasmatic continuities with the past, were also met by various counter-movements, attempts to preserve not only the memory of empire, but, perhaps more importantly, the experience of rupture that the collapse of the imperial state represented. For example, the postwar oeuvre of Hayashi Fumiko and Hotta Yoshie (1918–98) can be seen to revolve around the memory of empire and the inextricable intertwining of continuities and discontinuities in postwar Japan under occupation. Like Takeda, Hotta was living in Shanghai at war’s end, and

his postwar consciousness was shaped by the experience of imperial collapse and his return to a transformed Japan under occupation, which he articulated as a deep fissure in consciousness. In the postwar period, Hotta published a wide range of fiction, including a series of narratives about exiles living in wartime Shanghai, novels exploring the topography of wartime and postwar Tokyo, and historical fiction based on events such as the Siberian expedition and the Nanjing massacre.

The common thread in this diverse set of writings is the depiction of various spaces of occupation, ranging from Shanghai and Nanjing under Japanese control to occupied Tokyo. In his novel *Jikan* (Time, 1955), Hotta depicts the split subjectivity of Chen, a Chinese resident of Nanjing whose home has been taken over by a Japanese officer and who outwardly collaborates with the occupation while simultaneously maintaining a clandestine resistance. This characterization echoes the divided consciousness of his earlier “Kage no bubun” (Shadow Pieces, 1952), in which Hotta presents a narrative of two inhabitants of Tokyo under Allied occupation. One is a beggar who wanders the city streets warning of impending nuclear apocalypse, bearing on his body the marks of war, defeat, and occupation. The other is an office worker whose outwardly calm and quotidian existence, consumed with “everyday trivialities,” conceals the lingering traumas of a continuous series of occupations: “His life had been occupied by conflicts, occupied by war, and occupied by the Occupation; occupied by school, occupied by the army and occupied by his firm.” Ultimately, the two figures are shown to be one and the same; their differing relations to the past, of both remembrance and forgetting, are merely two sides of occupied Japan. In this way, Hotta’s works enfold a history of the prewar to postwar periods that is defined by the repetition of occupation, first by the Japanese militarist state and subsequently by the Allied authorities.

Hayashi Fumiko, whose prewar and wartime experience was defined by continual movement through various social spaces of urban and rural Japan as well as through battlefields and occupied territories, narrated the experience of return to a defeated nation in *Drifting Clouds*. The heroine of this novel, Yukiko, tries to recapture the sense of luxury and exalted status that the colonial project afforded her. Yet in the ruins of the imperial capital, the colonial fantasy proves elusive, and Yukiko is instead faced with a realization that the emergent neocolonial order now places her in the position of the colonized. When she converses in English with an American soldier near the Shinjuku black market, she enjoys the memory of her colonial experience: “Yukiko sensed a return of her life in Dalat, when she used to speak to the

Annamese with a mixture of French and English, and she spoke a few halting words.” Yet she also becomes aware of her essential similarity to Niu, the Annamese mistress of the Japanese official Tomioka during the war. In *Drifting Clouds*, the postwar black market serves as a space of exchange, in which the remnants and fragments of Japanese empire are converted into the postwar order, mediating between the vast imperial topography of the early twentieth century and the delimited space of the postwar nation-state. Hayashi’s novel provides one illustration of the ways in which the after-effects of the expansion and implosion of empire permeated the spatial imaginary of postwar literature.

Japanese literature and cinema from the 1910s to the 1950s

HIROKAZU TOEDA

In December of 1895, the Lumière brothers first displayed their Cinématographe in Paris. Approximately one year later, film arrived in Japan. Though it was initially valued for its documentary function in photographing local people and scenery, it soon began to draw subject matter from performing arts and sideshow entertainment: the oldest surviving Japanese film is *Momijigari* (Maple Viewing, 1899, first shown publicly in 1903), a record of a performance by the kabuki actors Ichikawa Danjūrō IX (1838–1903) and Onoe Kikugorō V (1844–1903).

In the essay collection *Byōshō rokushaku* (Six-foot Sickbed, 1902), Masaoka Shiki gave *katsudō shashin* (moving pictures) as the first item in a list of “things I haven’t seen but would like to.” It is probably no accident that the writer who promoted the technique of “sketching” (*shaseibun*) in the reformation of the *haiku* should be so interested in film. Shiki’s close friend Natsume Sōseki commented in “Bungaku zatsuwa” (Miscellaneous Remarks on Literature, 1908) that, “if *shaseibun* is a panorama, the novel is a moving picture.” At the same time, he would later remark in the lecture “Nakami to keishiki” (Content and Form, 1911) that he had “never particularly liked these things called moving pictures.” As suggested by the term “moving pictures,” this medium, still new to Japan, was often treated as a kind of sideshow entertainment, and to the authors of the Meiji period, who had just begun pursuing literature as an earnest artistic activity, it remained an unfamiliar medium.

However, as films became longer, they came to make use of stories created by contemporary authors. As early as the 1910s, domestic novels such as Kikuchi Yūhō’s (1870–1947) *Ono ga tsumi* (One’s Own Sin, 1899–1900) and Yanagawa Shun’yō’s (1886–1965) *Nasanu naka* (The Stepchild, 1912–13) provided fitting material for the so-called *shinpa* (new school) films: contemporary melodramas that drew inspiration from the *shinpa* theater. Films would continue to be produced based on stories taken from popular novels into the Taishō period and beyond, including film adaptations of Kikuchi Kan’s

popular novels. At the same time, starting in the late Meiji period, a number of authors appeared whose writings were shaped by an awareness of filmic expression.

Throughout the late Meiji and Taishō periods, movie theaters gradually grew in number around Tokyo's Asakusa entertainment district. Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886–1965), who began writing in the same period, often wrote these spaces into his early fiction. “Himitsu” (The Secret, 1911) is set in the labyrinthine streets of Tokyo's Shitamachi area around 1910, still in the wake of the Russo-Japanese War; the last remnants of Edo linger in the narrow streets, with the newly built movie theater becoming a symbol of the transformation of the capital's commercial districts in the face of modernization.

As I came from the Twelve-stories to the edge of the pond and emerged onto the intersection by the Operakan playhouse, the decorative lighting and the arc lamps glistened on my heavily made-up face and cast the patterns of my kimono into clear relief. When I arrived in front of the Tokiwaza theater, I saw the image of my figure, splendidly transformed into a woman, reflected amid the bustling crowds in the entryway mirror of a photographer's studio.

Wandering at night through Asakusa while dressed as a woman, the protagonist finds his own reflection beneath “the decorative lighting and the arc lamps” and praises himself for having “splendidly transformed into a woman.” In the background are the Asakusa theaters: the Operakan and the Tokiwaza. The Ryōunkaku tower, referred to by Tanizaki as the “Twelve-stories,” was the major landmark of Asakusa until the Great Kantō Earthquake, while the decorative lighting that illuminates Tanizaki's nighttime streets had been unveiled to popular acclaim in the nearby Ueno Park for the Tokyo Industrial Exhibition of 1907. In the Asakusa of “Himitsu,” dedicated movie theaters like the Operakan and San'yūkan have begun to increase in number alongside earlier stage theaters like the Tokiwaza, Ichimuraza, Ryūseiza, and Miyatoza. One night, about a week after the protagonist's “splendid transformation” in the passage above, he makes his way to the San'yūkan. There, intoxicated by the image of his own transvestite figure amid the play of light and shadow and the intermingled gaze of men and women, he happens to meet a certain woman, referred to as T, with whom he had formerly been romantically involved. Faced with defeat in a “contest of femininity” with a woman whose beauty rivals that of a film actress, he resolves to give up his cross-dressing habit. Against the backdrop of the projection screen, the protagonist, whose transvestitism recalls the kabuki *onnagata* (female impersonator), faces off against T, who resembles a

film actress, and T is the victor. Using the movie theater as his setting, Tanizaki wrote this piece roughly ten years before female actresses would appear in Japanese film.

Another work that suggests Tanizaki's sensitivity to the evolving geography of Tokyo movie theaters is "Jinmenso" (The Tumor with a Human Face, 1918), a supernatural story written seven years after "Himitsu," in which Tanizaki experimented with the incorporation of filmic techniques into his fiction. Whereas the theaters of "Himitsu" are the newly built facilities of Asakusa, the ones in "Jinmenso" are those spreading to what were at the time the Tokyo suburbs. References to the theaters of Shibuya and Shinjuku, then considered the "outskirts of Tokyo," appear as early as the opening sentence.

Utagawa Yurie had in recent days heard from two or three sources a strange rumor – that a certain terribly strange film, a mysterious drama in which she played the leading role, had been recently playing at some not particularly well known theaters in Shinjuku and Shibuya and was now making the rounds of the outskirts of Tokyo.

This opening impressively captures a moment in which, in a background of increasing urban migration, Tokyo's residential and commercial districts were reaching into the suburbs and new theaters were being built in response. There are many points of interest, such as the fact that a supernatural urban legend surrounding the film actress Utagawa Yurie is introduced as a "rumor" circulating in the Tokyo suburbs, and the suggestion that a film "making the rounds of the outskirts of Tokyo" through the distribution of the "Globe Company" has been circulating not only within Tokyo but also outside of Japan, in a larger global system. More immediate, however, is Tanizaki's acute awareness of the spread of movie theaters to the Tokyo suburbs. Tanizaki correctly grasped and incorporated into his fiction a contemporary moment in which, from the late Meiji into the Taishō period, movie theaters were spreading from the center of Tokyo to the city's suburbs, with new facilities being built in Shinjuku, Shibuya, Aoyama, Shinagawa, Sugamo, and other such places. Utagawa Yurie's image is photographed, edited, and distributed through these increasing numbers of theaters, to the point at which the actress herself is astonished and disoriented by the multiplication of her own image beyond her understanding or control.

During the Taishō period, other novelists also wrote on the topic of film. Satō Haruo's (1892–1964) "Shimon" (Fingerprint, 1918) also uses the setting of a movie theater and incorporates filmic techniques of expression. In

Akutagawa Ryūnosuke's (1892–1927) “Katakoi” (Unrequited Love, 1917), the female protagonist falls in love with the image of a foreign actor, while “Kage” (Shadow, 1920) tells the story of a schizophrenic Chinese man whose relationship with his doppelganger is overlaid on the events of a film. Shortly before his death, Akutagawa would also produce “Yūwaku” (Temptation, aka San Sebastian, 1927), with the subtitle “a screenplay,” as well as “Asakusa Kōen” (Asakusa Park, 1927). Unfolding at roughly the same time, the series of exchanges between Akutagawa and Tanizaki known collectively as the “plotless novel” debate closely mirrored contemporary discourse on film, shaped by two competing trajectories: on one hand, the pursuit of experimentation by avant-garde filmmakers of the 1920s, and on the other, a tendency to rely increasingly heavily on narrative.

In the 1920s, as the silent film came into maturity and avant-garde films arrived from Europe and America, the interaction between literature and film began in earnest. In 1920, Tanizaki Jun'ichirō began working as a script consultant for Taishō Moving Picture Corporation (Taikatsu), where Thomas Kurihara (1885–1926), recently returned from Hollywood, produced the film *Amachua kurabu* (Amateur Club, 1920) based on Tanizaki's script. This collaboration accelerated the so-called Pure Film Movement (*Jun-eiga-geki undō*), but Tanizaki would soon distance himself from film, and the movement would draw to a close in a mere two years.

In 1926, Kinugasa Teinosuke (1896–1982), having recently left Makino Productions, banded together with the group of writers surrounding the journal *Bungei jidai* – the so-called “New Sensationist School” (*shinkankaku-ha*), which included such writers as Yokomitsu Riichi (1898–1947), Kawabata Yasunari (1899–1972), Kataoka Teppei (1894–1944), and Kishida Kunio (1890–1954) – to form the New Sensationist Film Alliance (Shinkankaku-ha Eiga Renmei). Inspired by recent Western films like Robert Wiene's *Das Kabinett des Dr. Caligari* (The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, 1920) and F. W. Murnau's *Der Letzte Mann* (The Last Man, aka The Last Laugh 1924), the group released its first film, *Kurutta ippēji* (A Page of Madness, 1926), within a year. In order to render the world of the human mind into visual images, this film completely eschewed inter-titles, emphasized the contrast between light and shadow, and used extremely short cuts, flashbacks, close-ups, and multiple exposures, all of which created a distinctive visual rhythm and effect. This work, reminiscent of German Expressionist film, is representative of Japanese avant-garde film in the 1920s, in which serious writers and filmmakers collaborated to create a new form of art and blazed a trail for Japan's postwar avant-garde filmmakers. Kinugasa drew ideas for his expressive techniques

from Yokomitsu's fiction, while Yokomitsu and Kawabata went on to write with an even deeper awareness of the medium of film.

In Yokomitsu's case, these influences can be seen in works such as *Shanghai* (1928–31), a full-length novel that takes place in the titular international metropolis, and “Kikai” (Machine, 1930), an experimental story that uses extremely long sentences and avoids paragraph breaks in order to represent a stream of human consciousness in the first person. In Kawabata's case, characteristic works include *Asakusa kurenaidan* (Scarlet Gang of Asakusa, 1929–30), an urban novel about Tokyo's largest entertainment district, and “Suishō gensō” (Crystal Phantasm, 1931), a short story that follows the psychological movements of its unnamed housewife protagonist from a first-person perspective. Following the initial serialization of *Asakusa kurenaidan* in the *Asahi shinbun* from December 1929 through February 1930, Kawabata's work was adapted by director Takami Sadae for Teikoku Kinema; the film was released in September 1930, and Kawabata published the remainder of the novel in the journals *Kaizō* and *Shinchō* later the same month.

In 1930, the publisher Shinchōsha's annual literary yearbook *Bungei nenkan* declared that, “Beginning this year, there is a sense that perhaps the film and literary worlds have entered into a state of even closer relation and negotiation.” Beginning around 1930, issues surrounding the relationship between literature and film became a major topic of literary reflection. The writer/critic Itō Sei (1905–69), influenced deeply by film, wrote to Kawabata in 1930 to express his “pessimism” that “literature absolutely cannot compete with film,” as well as his “firm belief” in the uniqueness of literature. Yokomitsu meanwhile wrote to Hori Tatsuo (1904–53) in 1930 that at present there were two kinds of writers: those in whom contact with film had inspired an ambition for further creativity and those whom it had brought stagnation. Indeed, one of the common trajectories of writers of this period was to be inspired by film to write fiction, and then, in response to a pessimistic sense that literature could not compete with film, to arrive at a new discovery of what was distinctive about literary expression.

Experiments with cinematic techniques like close-ups and flashbacks can be seen in the early fiction of Hori Tatsuo, beginning with “Bukiyōna tenshi” (A Clumsy Angel, 1929). Hori was also influenced to a significant degree by Jean Cocteau, the French poet and director of the film *Le Sang d'un poète* (The Blood of a Poet, 1930), whose works he translated for publication as *Kokutōshō* (Cocteau Collection, 1929).

Inspired by the avant-garde film movements carried out by the French Surrealists in the wake of the First World War, experiments with poetic

visuality such as the “cine-poem” helped to shape the Japanese poetry of the 1920s. For example, visual poems like Takenaka Iku’s (1904–82) “Ragubī” (Rugby, 1929) and “Hyakkaten” (Department Store, 1929) and Kondō Azuma’s (1904–88) “Gunkan” (Battleship, 1928) were composed with reference to film scenarios. When film entered the talkie era in the 1930s, figures like Kitagawa Fuyuhiko (1900–90) created a “screenplay literature movement” that emphasized the value of the screenplay as a genre of literary art.

Print media were actively incorporating writing about film at this time: film journals like *Eiga ōrai* (Film Dispatch, 1925) and *Eiga jidai* (The Age of Film, 1926) began publication, while newspapers, literary journals, and general interest magazines incorporated vibrant film columns. Between the late Taishō and early Shōwa periods, as symbolized by the nearly synchronous appearance of the journals *Bungei jidai* (The Literary Age, 1924), *Gikyoku jidai* (The Age of Theater, 1924), and *Eiga jidai* – the name of each suggesting that its titular medium was the favored child of the age – literature, theater, and film developed in parallel and through mutual interaction.

In the 1930s, as the talkies came to displace the silent films of the earlier era, new relations emerged between film and literature. Following Japan’s first talkie, Goshō Heinosuke’s (1902–81) *Madamu to nyōbō* (The Neighbor’s Wife and Mine, 1931), the talkies gradually increased in number, but silent films did not disappear all at once. Since the audio of the early talkies was often unclear, many viewers still preferred to listen to the explanations of the *benshi* (the oral lecturers who had provided explanation, narration, and dialog for films of the silent era), and it was only with the gradual advance of audio technology that the talkies became more widespread. By the mid 1930s, works by writers like Kawabata Yasunari, Tanizaki Jun’ichirō, and Ozaki Shirō (1898–1964) were being adapted one after another in a wave of “literary films” (*bungei eiga*) that included Goshō’s *Koi no hana saku: Izu no odoriko* (The Flower of Love Blooms: The Dancing Girl of Izu, aka The Izu Dancer, 1933, adapted from Kawabata’s 1926 work), Shimazu Yasujirō’s (1897–1945) *Shunkinshō: Okoto to Sasuke* (A Portrait of Shunkin: Okoto and Sasuke, 1935, adapted from Tanizaki’s 1933 novella), and Uchida Tomu’s (1898–1970) *Jinsei gekijō* (The Theater of Life, 1936, adapted from Ozaki Shirō’s 1933 novel).

As Japanese filmmakers moved to the era of the talkie, the greatest challenge for filmmakers was dialog and its enunciation. During the transition to the talkie, Shōchiku studio head Kido Shirō (1895–1977) and director Shimazu Yasujirō (usually credited with the establishment of the early Shōchiku style) set to work studying the plays of Kishida Kunio and Kikuta Kazuo (1908–73), especially the former’s one act plays such as *Buranko* (Swing,

1925), *Kami fūsen* (Paper Balloons, 1925), and *Hazakura* (Cherry Tree in Leaf, 1926). As a result of these explorations, Shōchiku's *Tonari no Yae-chan* (Our Neighbor, Miss Yae, 1934), written, adapted, and directed by Shimazu, was a great hit and became one of Shōchiku's best-regarded films of the era.

Kishida, recently returned from a period of study in France, had in the mid 1920s written critical works like *Warera no gekijō* (Our Theater, 1926) that argued for the importance of dialog and for a dramaturgy that emphasized the role of the actress. This kind of actress-centric dramaturgy is one of the reasons why Shōchiku's films during the 1930s were considered primarily to be women's films. By this time, Shōchiku had established a system of production in which the producer rather than the director held the ultimate creative authority, and it was through such authority that Shōchiku's producers turned many early stage actresses into film stars: Kurishima Sumiko (1902–87), Tanaka Kinuyo (1909–77), Kawasaki Hiroko (1912–76), Kuwano Michiko (1915–46), and Takasugi Sanae (1918–95). Due largely to the popularity of these actresses, Shōchiku films were able to draw large female audiences, forming a broader viewer base. This female-centric film culture, often called the Shōchiku Kamata-Ōfuna style, in reference to the studios where it was established, came to define Shōchiku film both for filmmakers and for audiences.

Yokomitsu's *Kazoku kaigi* (Family Conference, 1935), serialized in the *Tokyo Nichi Nichi* and *Osaka Mainichi* newspapers, was adapted to the screen by Shimazu Yasujirō in 1935. Later, Kishida Kunio's *Danryū* (Warm Current, 1938), also serialized in the *Tokyo Nichi Nichi* and *Osaka Mainichi* newspapers, was adapted in 1939 by Shimazu's protégé Yoshimura Kōzaburō (1911–2000) and became one of Shōchiku's hit films. Many of Kawabata Yasunari's works were adapted to the screen as well. After Takami Sadae's 1930 adaptation of *Asakusa kurenaidan*, Kawabata's novels were adapted one after another into films like Goshō Heinosuke's *Koi no hana saku: Izu no odoriko* (1933), Katsu'ura Sentarō's *Minakami shinjū* (Love Suicide at Minakami, 1934), Naruse Mikio's (1905–69) *Otomegokoro san shimai* (Three Maiden Sisters, 1935) based on Kawabata's *Asakusa no shimai* (Sisters of Asakusa, 1932), Sasaki Yasushi's (1908–93) *Maihime no koyomi* (Calendar of a Dancing Girl, 1935), and Shimizu Hiroshi's (1903–66) *Arigatō-san* (Mr. Thank You, 1936), based on Kawabata's "Arigatō" (Thank You, 1925).

Yukiguni (Snow Country, 1935–47), which was written almost simultaneously with its film adaptation, was informed by Kawabata's deep awareness of the medium of film. In the novel's famous opening sentence – "The train came out of the long border tunnel into snow country" – the movement of the train from a dark space into an alternative world of light suggests the

beginning of a film, with the darkness of the theater giving way as a new fantasy world is projected on the silver screen. As the scene unfolds and the reader is drawn into the phantasmal “snow country,” Kawabata’s narrator explores the metaphors that link this world to the experience of film.

In the depths of the mirror the evening landscape flowed past, the reflecting surface and reflected images moving like a doubly exposed film. There was no connection between character and background. The characters were transparent and without substance, the scenery a hazy current of dusk, and as these two melted into one another, an otherworldly symbolic realm came into view.

The rectangular window of the locomotive looks out to the outside world, and through this lens one is able to experience the phantasmal world on the other side. Seen through a cinematic simile that identifies the image in the window with “a doubly exposed film,” the interior of the train car begins to resemble the space of the theater, where one can experience another world by watching moving images projected on the screen. Soon thereafter, the evening scenery outside the train overlaps with Yōko’s reflection, and the narrator explains their interaction in terms of a projected image (*eizō*): “the image projected onto the mirror lacked the strength to overpower the lights outside, but neither would those lights overpower the image.” Kawabata, who from the beginning of his career had been partial to depicting a “symbolic realm” in which distinctions between subject and object were dissolved, here deploys the motif of the filmic image to depict the fusion of interior and exterior worlds. This motif is repeated in the climax of the work, when the events of a fire on the ground are projected against the Milky Way above – the superimposition of heaven and earth – while, in the cocoon storehouse, fire bursts from the film itself.

The works adapted as literary films during this period were of course not limited to those of so-called “pure literature” but also included many works of popular fiction. For example, serial works like Nakazato Kaizan’s (1885–1944) *Daibosatsu tōge* (The Great Bodhisattva Pass, 1913–41) and Yoshikawa Eiji’s (1892–1962) *Miyamoto Musashi* (Miyamoto Musashi, 1935–9), first adapted by Inagaki Hiroshi (1905–80), became hugely popular period films and would go on to be remade by many later directors.

With the Marco Polo Bridge Incident of July 7, 1937 and the eruption of the war in China, Japan’s domestic policy likewise moved increasingly toward militarism. Following the promulgation and enactment of the Film Law in 1939 and the tightening of state controls over media, national policy films

made up the majority of film production. Among these were literary adaptations, including the extremely popular *Aizen katsura* series (The Love-Troth Tree, 1938), based on a work by Kawaguchi Matsutarō (1899–1985) and adapted in four parts by Nomura Hiromasa (1905–79).

Kumagai Hisatora (1904–86) directed a 1938 adaptation of Mori Ōgai's "Abe ichizoku" (The Abe Clan, 1913) before moving on to shoot documentary war films like *Shanghai rikusentai* (The Naval Brigade at Shanghai, 1939). Tasaka Tomotaka (1902–74), similarly, moved from human dramas like *Shinjitsu ichiro* (One Path of Truth, 1937) and *Robō no ishi* (A Pebble by the Wayside, 1938), both adaptations of works by Yamamoto Yūzō (1887–1974), to the massive war film *Tsuchi to heitai* (Dirt and Soldiers, 1939), based on Hino Ashihei's (1907–60) novel of the same name. Yamamoto Kajirō (1902–74) likewise began the war with adaptations like *Tsuzurikata kyōshitsu* (The Composition Class, 1938, based on a work by Toyoda Masako [1922–2010]) and *Tōjūrō no koi* (The Loves of Tōjūrō, aka The Loves of a Kabuki Actor, 1938, based on a work by Kikuchi Kan [1888–1948]) but, following the outbreak of the war with America, directed the massively popular war epic *Hawai Marē oki kaisen* (Sea War from Hawaii and Malaya, 1942).

Following the end of the Allied occupation and the liberation of Japanese media from occupation censorship, Japanese film, as if in response to the renewed popularity of Japanese literature, entered a postwar golden age. This prosperity led in turn to the success of Japanese films at international film festivals. Beginning with the success of Kurosawa Akira's (1910–98) *Rashōmon* (Rashomon, 1950) at the 1951 Venice Film Festival, films like Yoshimura Kōzaburō's *Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Genji, 1951), Mizoguchi Kenji's (1898–1956) *Saikaku ichidai onna* (The Life of a Woman by Saikaku, aka The Life of Oharu, 1952) and *Ugetsu monogatari* (Tales of Moonlight and Rain, aka Ugetsu, 1953), Kinugasa Teinosuke's *Jigokumon* (The Gate of Hell, 1953), Kurosawa's *Shichinin no samurai* (Seven Samurai, 1954), and Mizoguchi's *Sanshō Dayū* (Sansho the Bailiff, 1954) met with high acclaim at the Venice and Cannes festivals throughout the early 1950s. With the exception of Kurosawa's *Shichinin no samurai*, all of these films were based on works of Japanese literature: some on classical works – *Genji monogatari* on Murasaki Shikibu's classic, *Saikaku ichidai onna* on Ihara Saikaku's *Kōshoku ichidai onna* (The Life of an Amorous Woman, 1686), and *Ugetsu monogatari* on Ueda Akinari's story collection of the same name (1776) – and others on major works of modern literature – *Rashōmon* on Akutagawa Ryūnosuke's stories "Rashōmon" (1915) and "Yabu no naka" (In a Grove, 1922), *Jigokumon* on Kikuchi Kan's stage play "Kesa no otto" (The Husband of Kesa, 1923), and

Sanshō dayū on Mori Ōgai's 1915 historical novel. Significantly, of the films to meet with international acclaim, even those based on modern works were set in Japan's premodern past, and their success at such festivals is equally indicative of the Orientalist gaze as it is of the high regard given these films as works of art.

Major postwar authors like Mishima Yukio (1925–70) and Abe Kōbō (1924–93) had their works adapted to the screen, but they also expressed a strong interest in the production of film. The most famous of Mishima's works to be made into a film were *Kinkakuji* (The Temple of the Golden Pavilion, 1956), adapted by Ichikawa Kon (1915–2008) as *Enjō* (Conflagration, 1958), and Kurahara Koreyoshi's (1927–2002) 1967 adaptation of *Ai no Kawaki* (Thirst for Love, 1950). Mishima's own involvement in film production included writing, producing, directing, and starring in the short film *Yūkoku* (Patriotism, 1965), as well as his work as an actor in Masumura Yasuzō's (1924–86) *Karakkaze yarō* (Chilly Bastard, aka Afraid to Die, 1960), Fukasaku Kinji's *Kurotokage* (Black Lizard, 1968), and Gosha Hideo's (1929–92) *Hitokiri* (Assassin, aka Tenchu!, 1969). Abe, on the other hand, penned the screenplays for a number of his own original works, working with the avant-garde director Teshigahara Hiroshi (1927–2001) to create new experiments, including *Otoshiana* (Pitfall, 1962), *Suna no onna* (Woman in the Dunes, 1962), *Tanin no kao* (The Face of Another, 1964), and *Moetsukita chizu* (The Burned Map, aka The Ruined Map or The Man without a Map, 1967). The postwar period saw a new class of cross-media creators: authors who later became directors, and film directors who became authors of fiction.

(Translated by Thomas Gaubatz)

Modern drama

M. CODY POULTON

Though Japan possesses one of the richest theater traditions in the world, drama was not regarded as a literary genre there until the nineteenth century. In contrast to the West, where Aristotle and Shakespeare established drama as an important literary genre, for Asian civilizations poetry and, to a lesser extent, prose narrative were the only literary genres worth noting. However great were the playwrights prior to Meiji, their plays were written in the service of, and were secondary to, performance. Indeed, in traditional Japanese theater, performers (usually actors, but also the *gidayū*, or chanters, in the puppet theater) were more important than playwrights, and many playwrights of traditional theater were performers too. To some extent this tendency has carried on to the present day.

The “discovery” of drama as a literary genre was part and parcel of Meiji Japan’s program of nation building. Iwakura Tomomi’s 1871–3 mission to the USA and Europe noted the importance accorded by governments there to the theater as a civilized entertainment and tool for diplomacy. During the Edo era *noh* had served a similar function. Kabuki was by far more popular and more accessible to European audiences, but its long association with prostitution made it an object of embarrassment for a people eager to prove to Westerners that they too had an advanced civilization. By the early 1870s, efforts were made to clean up kabuki. Calls for theater reform typically came from top down. When Japan’s first “modern” theater, the Shintomi-za, opened in downtown Tokyo in 1878, actor Ichikawa Danjūrō (1839–1903) vowed in its inaugural speech that he would clean kabuki of its filth and make it a respectable art. His address was in fact written for him by Fukuchi Ōchi (1841–1906), a powerful figure in government circles and later a prolific playwright. One of Japan’s earliest interpreters of Western culture, Nishi Amane (1829–97) – who introduced Aristotle’s *Poetics* to Japanese readers in his *Hyakugaku renkan* (Encyclopedia, 1870–2) – likewise called kabuki a “medium for the lewd and the base.” Attempts to raise drama into the

ranks of a literary genre were driven by a quest for purity, both moral and aesthetic.

By 1886 the theater reform (*kairyō* was a buzzword of the period) movement had coalesced into the Society for Theater Reform (Engeki Kairyō Kai), an organization comprised of powerful government officials. Prime Minister Itō Hirobumi's soon to be son-in-law Suematsu Kenchō was the Society's president. Suematsu spoke for the society when he advocated the abolition of the *onnagata* (male specialists of female roles), *hanamichi* (a ramp running through the auditorium used for actors' entrances and exits), *chobo* (musical and narrative accompaniment adopted from the puppet theater), and other devices typical of kabuki.

Nevertheless, most of the reforms that the Society advocated seemed cosmetic to Meiji intellectuals, who maintained that the Society was missing the point by not focusing on the craft of writing plays. Nishi Amane's most brilliant student, Mori Ōgai (1862–1922), attacked the measures proposed by the Society for Theater Reform, calling for the creation of what he called “straight drama” (*seigeki*), to be distinguished from musical theater (*gakugeki*) like opera or much kabuki. For Ōgai, real reform would come only when the text became the most important element of the theatrical production. “First the drama, then the performance,” Ōgai wrote in an essay “Surprised by the Prejudice of Theater Reformers” (“Engeki kairyō no henken ni odoroku,” 1889). He called for “backstage poets” who would make dialogue the “master” of the drama. Similarly, poet Kitamura Tōkoku (1868–94) advocated the excision of musical and choreographic elements from the new drama. His *Hōrai kyoku* (Song of Penglai, 1891), which some regard as Japan's first modern play, was a dramatic poem written in classical Japanese, modeled on Byron's *Manfred*.

The most trenchant critic of the Society, however, was Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859–1933), whose stature as a literary critic (established with *Shōsetsu shinzui* [The Essence of the Novel] in 1885–6) was eclipsed by a lifelong devotion to the theater. Besides translating all of Shakespeare's plays, Shōyō wrote extensively on both Japanese and Western theater, composed his own historical and dance drama for the kabuki theater, trained his own actors, and founded one of Japan's first modern theaters, the Bungei Kyōkai (Literary Society, established in 1906). A man with a foot in both worlds, he saw Shakespeare as the fulcrum on which kabuki could be transformed into a modern theater. In “Our Nation's Historical Drama” (*Wagakuni no shigeki*, 1893–4), Shōyō attacked the absurdities of traditional history plays (*jidai-mono*), advocating a clear distinction between

dramatic and narrative modes, greater structural consistency, and deeper psychological delineation of character. Kabuki ran the gamut of human emotions in the course of a single play or performance, wrote Shōyō, with “sudden swings from the severe to the salacious, to the refined and elegant, now virtuous, now violent, now awesome, now weird, never just one thing or another.”¹ This, he acknowledged, was part of its pleasure, but the traditional theater’s taste for variety over coherence was a mark of its impurity and irrationality. As in his criticism on fiction, Shōyō would take issues with attempts to make theater a didactic medium intended to create better citizens. Characters like Iago or Shylock interest us not for their moral qualities but rather because of their psychological complexity. Shōyō was one of the first critics in the modern era to praise Chikamatsu’s domestic plays (*sewa-mono*) for their attention to the daily lives of commoners over the extraordinary and spectacular exploits of the heroes and villains of the history plays. This was reflective of a new interest in realism, sparking the rehabilitation of Edo writers like Chikamatsu and Saikaku while at the same time anticipating the rise of naturalism in the coming decades.

Writers and critics in the Meiji era agreed that the literary status of the dramatic script would have to be raised before a serious, modern theater could be created in Japan; increasingly, playwrights would come from outside the world of kabuki, and actors would lose the control they once had over the lines they spoke. Though there have been a number of excellent modern kabuki playwrights (Hasegawa Shin [1884–1963] being one example), it remained a theater largely resistant to change. Its successor, *shinpa* (a melodramatic theater that had retained many elements of kabuki) was hardly better. Modern drama (which came to be called *shingeki*, “new drama”) necessitated a rejection of traditional models. The new drama would be more logical, a mouthpiece for the playwright, and a forum for the exploration of new ideas on society and human relations. Writing on the birth of *shingeki* in Japan, novelist and playwright Mishima Yukio (1925–70) noted that “modern life destroyed society’s conventional stereotypes of emotions” which had been codified into the acting patterns (*kata*) of traditional theaters like kabuki and *shinpa*; in *shingeki* the text and not the acting needed to convey the new emotional realities. “The audience of *shingeki*,” Mishima

¹ Tsubouchi Shōyō, “Wagakuni no shigeki” (Our Nation’s Historical Drama), in Nomura Takashi and Fujiki Hiroyuki, eds., *Kindai bungaku hyōron taikēi*, vol. 9, *Engkiron* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1985), 51.

wrote, “comes to see a drama not to seek familiarity in acting patterns but to be awakened from sleep.”²

That drama could be the consummate form for expressing ideas about contemporary society was driven home to the Japanese with the first full productions of works by European playwrights like Henrik Ibsen, Gerhart Hauptmann, George Bernard Shaw, and Anton Chekhov in the first decade of the twentieth century. Plays by Ibsen and Hauptmann, more than any European fiction, were the true catalysts of the naturalist movement in Japan. Ibsen’s *John Gabriel Borkman*, first produced by Osanai Kaoru (1881–1928) and Ichikawa Sadanji II’s (1880–1940) Free Theater (Jiyū Gekijō) in 1909, and *A Doll’s House*, staged by Shōyō and Shimamura Hōgetsu’s (1871–1918) Literary Society in 1911, had a galvanizing effect on Japan’s youth, who questioned parental authority and the role of women in modern society. In the following decades, practically every writer in Japan experimented with drama. Tanizaki Jun’ichirō (1886–1965) started out as a playwright, a disciple of theater director and critic Osanai Kaoru. Likewise, Ueda (Enchi) Fumiko (1905–86) made her literary debut with a play in a production at Osanai’s Tsukiji Little Theater in 1928. Many other women, including Osanai’s elder sister Okada Yachiyo (1883–1962), Hasegawa Shigure (1879–1941), Nogami Yaeko (1885–1985), and Osaki Midori (1896–1971) would devote a considerable part of their early careers to drama and theater. Theater historian Oyama Isao lists more than eighty professional playwrights active before 1940.

Drama may have been a congenial genre for expression, but getting plays staged was more difficult than publishing them as it required actors, directors, and other theater artists with the skills to stage modern theater and a regular paying audience to support the substantial expense of production. Because of these factors, modern drama took longer to mature in Japan than fiction or poetry. Osanai Kaoru, who until his death in 1928 was, along with Shōyō, the spearhead for modern theater in Japan, alienated many Japanese writers by consistently favoring productions of Western plays. Many writers had to turn to kabuki or shinpa for productions of new Japanese plays before eventually establishing their own independent theaters in the 1920s and 30s.

The rhetoric of modernity resolved itself into two forms of verbal expression: monologue and dialogue. To a great extent, modernity in Japan was a discovery of private life, what Karatani Kōjin has called interiority, and this

² Mishima Yukio, “A Small Scar on the Left Kneecap,” from *Backstage Essays*, excerpted in *My Friend Hitler and Other Plays by Yukio Mishima*, trans. and ed. Hiroaki Sato (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 59.

tended to privilege fiction, especially confessional fiction, over the dialogic nature of drama. The public nature of Edo culture is witnessed in the central importance held by kabuki and other performing spoken arts like *rakugo* and storytelling (*kōdan*). Maeda Ai pointed out that, as printed books became more plentiful and literacy rose in the Meiji era, reading became a private affair, which fundamentally changed the nature of literary expression and public tastes. Given the collaborative nature of theatrical production and its need for a public audience, theater remained a social art form even as its public was turning increasingly to the more private pleasures of reading, and various attempts were made in theater to compete with print literature by stressing the importance of the text and downplaying its theatricality.

In the decades to follow, attempts were made to revive the lost sociality of theatergoing by making it more politically topical. Osanai himself had written that “theater’s instinct was to head for the outdoors,” a remark no doubt instigated by a politicizing trend in 1920s Japanese society. Theater artists were more successful in resisting political pressure than writers of fiction through the 1920s and 30s, probably because of the solidarity afforded them by theater companies. Even so, censorship and surveillance over the theater was even stricter than over print literature. Two seats were reserved in every theater for censors who could stop a production even if the script had prior approval. Leftist playwrights and artists in Japan during this period often resorted to the kind of impromptu performances at factories and street corners, called “living newspapers,” where actors would extemporize over contemporary events.

The language of modern Japanese drama, which mirrored the *genbun-itchi* movement in fiction, also evolved gradually. Shōyō’s early translations rendered Shakespeare into the style of jōruri puppet plays, and Tōkoku’s and Ōgai’s first attempts at original drama were written in classical Japanese. Dialogue drama in the modern vernacular did not appear until the first decade of the twentieth century, and for a long time its style was burdened by the influence of translated Western drama, witnessed in the work of playwrights like Nagata Hideo (1885–1949) and Nakamura Kichizō (1877–1941), who attempted to write problem plays in the style of Ibsen. More successful in this style were writers like Kikuchi Kan (1888–1948) and Yamamoto Yūzō (1887–1974), who wrote about social issues such as deadbeat dads and infanticide in thrillingly modern, dramatic dialogue.

By the early decades of the twentieth century, various literary styles and movements had flooded into Japan from Europe. Naturalism may have had the most immediate shock value, but European Symbolist and Expressionist

theater also influenced the course of modern drama in Japan. The *dramas statiques* of the Symbolist writer Maurice Maeterlinck inspired writers as diverse as Ōgai, Kinoshita Mokutarō (1885–1945), Izumi Kyōka (1873–1939), Kubota Mantarō (1889–1973), and Kinoshita Junji (1914–2006). Their plays typically eschewed dramatic conflict, instead evoking through indirect and lyrical language a particular mood or emotion. To some degree, such drama was more congenial to the Japanese, who tend to avoid discord and direct displays of emotion. This preference can be seen today in the so-called “quiet theater” of playwrights like Matsuda Masataka (b. 1962) and Hirata Oriza (b. 1962). By contrast, the Expressionist dramas of Strindberg, Wedekind, and Toller would have an impact on leftist writers like Murayama Tomoyoshi (1901–77) in the 1920s.

Realism nonetheless became the dominant mode of modern drama in Japan as in the West, giving rise to two camps: an apolitically inclined psychological realism and a more politically motivated social or socialist realism. Shingeki before and after the war remained strongly leftist in orientation (Kubo Sakae’s [1900–55] *Land of Volcanic Ash*, 1938, is regarded as the pinnacle of socialist realist drama in Japan), but with the death of Osanai Kaoru in 1928, many writers and artists became disenchanted with ideological debates and sought to focus on what they regarded as purely artistic standards of excellence. Arguably the greatest playwright of this generation was Kishida Kunio (1890–1954), who had studied under director Jacques Copeau in Paris in the early 1920s. A master stylist of dialogue, Kishida created a body of work that with a Chekhovian touch provided wry portraits of Japanese middle-class families struggling with the clash of traditional and modern values. Together with fellow playwrights Iwata Toyo’o (1893–1969; pen-name Shishi Bunroku) and Kubota Mantarō, Kishida established the Literary Theater (Bungaku-za), Japan’s oldest existing shingeki company, in 1937.

After 1945, only a few of Japan’s prewar playwrights and theater artists managed to salvage their careers. Both Kishida and Kubo had written their best work before the war. Kishida, like Kikuchi Kan, was ostracized by colleagues due to his collaboration with militarists during the war, and even the principled Kubo was unable to reconcile his ideals with the compromises he had made in order to survive; he committed suicide in 1958. Some promising playwrights, like Morimoto Kaoru (1912–46), died young. A few, like Kinoshita Junji, Miyoshi Jūrō (1902–58), and Tanaka Chikao (1905–95), would write their best work in the postwar period. Next to Kikuchi Kan’s *Chichi kaeru* (Father Returns, 1917) and Morimoto’s *Onna no isshō* (A Woman’s Life, 1945), Kinoshita’s *Yūzuru* (Twilight Crane, 1948)

was the most frequently performed modern Japanese play of the twentieth century. A new generation of playwrights came of age in the postwar period, people like Fukuda Tsuneari (1912–94, who also translated Shakespeare), Abe Kōbō (1924–93), Mishima Yukio, and Akimoto Matsuyo (1911–2001). Director Senda Koreya's (1904–94) criticism, translations, and productions of Bertolt Brecht, much of which could not be produced until after 1945, would influence the work of post-1960s playwrights like Satō Makoto and Inoue Hisashi.

Abe's plays in particular anticipated a disenchantment with old leftist politics and the realist style in postwar Japan. The year 1960 marks the tumultuous renewal of the US–Japan Security Treaty as well as the first production in Japan of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. Theater had an especially important role to play in the cultural and political ferment of this decade. Young Japanese who came of age during this decade protested Japan's involvement as US ally in the Vietnam War, but also questioned their own colonial history in Asia prior to 1945. Playwrights like Abe and Betsuyaku Minoru (b. 1937) found absurdism more effective than realism for the exploration of the shattering events of Japan's twentieth century. Betsuyaku's early collaborations with director Suzuki Tadashi (b. 1939) at the Waseda Little Theater, including such works as *Zō* (The Elephant, 1962) and *Matchi-uri no shōjo* (The Little Match Girl, 1966), explored the traumatic aftermath of Hiroshima and the deprivations of Japan's defeat. Perhaps Japan's greatest modern playwright, Betsuyaku was born and raised in Manchuria and writes in a strangely deracinated Japanese; a prolific playwright and essayist, his absurdist plays are both lyrical and funny.

The artists of the avant-garde theater of this period (called *angura*, an abbreviation of “underground”) soon found that the unconventional, intimate spaces in which they were obliged to perform were excellent for creating new dynamics between actors and audiences. Playwrights like Kara Jūrō (b. 1940) and Satō Makoto (b. 1943) performed in tents pitched in public spaces, evoking the carnival atmosphere that Kara believed was the essence of early kabuki. Terayama Shūji (1935–83), a protean talent (poet, playwright, photographer, director for stage and screen), undertook a radical inquiry into the relationships between text, venue, actors, and audience, creating with his company Tenjō Sajiki theater in the streets, parks, buses, and even bathhouses. “The most important thing in dragging ‘drama’ outside ‘theater buildings’,” he wrote, “is removing the borderline between fiction and reality. Drama must be at the same level as history, where fiction and

reality are often ambiguous.”³ Terayama’s work (which captured the period’s fascination with violence, the erotic, and the irrational) traced what became a typical trajectory of post-1960s theater: away from plays as literary texts, toward drama as a blueprint for performance. The turn from text not only marked a new nativism in Japanese theater but also anticipated the rise of performance and post-dramatic theater studies in the West, resulting in an increasing focus on effects only live theater could manifest. (Antonin Artaud was a seminal influence on artists like Terayama.) The fierce physicality of modern Japanese performance is best exemplified in the *butō* style of dance created by artists like Hijikata Tatsumi (1928–86) and Ōno Kazuo (1906–2010) in the 1960s, or Suzuki Tadashi’s physically rigorous actors’ training method. Much of the work created by playwrights like Terayama and Abe Kōbō in the 1970s, and Ōta Shōgo (1939–2007) in the 1990s, minimizes verbal expression to explore the languages of movement, music, ambient sound, light, and architectural form. Musical theater has undergone a resurgence, witnessed by the ever-popular Takarazuka Revue; Saitō Ren’s (b. 1940) *Shanghai Vance King* (1980) and much of Inoue Hisashi’s (1934–2010) work are fine examples of this genre. In recent years, groups like Ku Na’uka, Dumb Type, Nibroll, and Chelfitch have explored intriguing disjunctions between text, technology, and the body. Osaka-based Ishinha’s grand spectacles, reminiscent of Robert Wilson, use language musically, to create rap-like patterns that are a part of the overall scenography.

Drama since the 1960s can be challenging for a reader and equally bewildering for audiences. Kara Jūrō’s plays, for example, are as delightful to watch as they defy interpretation; even his actors have trouble making sense of his lines. Drama in this vein is typically non-linear, irrational, episodic, dream-like, with shifting narrative lines and characters that trade on motifs of role-play and metamorphosis, frequently transforming themselves into historic or mythical figures. Such plays suggest a quest for yet deep distrust of transcendent narratives, and a constant interrogation into the nature of identity, memory, and reality.

With the exception of a few playwrights like Kawamura Takeshi (b. 1959) and Tsuka Kōhei (1948–2010; he inspired a generation of other playwrights of Korean ancestry, like Chong Wishing and Yu Miri), drama after the 1970s began to lose its political edge. The speedy, noisy plays of Kōkami Shōji (b. 1958) and Noda Hideki (b. 1955) in the 1980s signaled a depoliticization of the *angura*

³ Terayama Shūji, “The Labyrinth and the Dead Sea,” in Carol Fisher Sorgenfrei, *Unspeakable Acts: The Avant-garde Theatre of Terayama Shuji and Postwar Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2004), 287–8.

aesthetic into mainstream entertainment and were emblematic of the celebratory, narcissistic culture of Japan's bubble years. Since the 1990s, ongoing economic and political stagnation and disasters like the 1995 Kobe earthquake and the Tokyo Sarin gas attack and, more recently, the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami, have given rise to a more sober theater culture and a return to realist, well-crafted plays, represented by playwrights like Nagai Ai (b. 1951) and Hirata Oriza. Recent decades have also witnessed a renewed interest in drama dealing with social and political issues, like shut-ins (*hikikomori*) in Sakate Yōji's (b. 1962) *Yaneura* (The Attic, 1995) and "freeters" (young casual laborers) in Okada Toshiki's (b. 1973) *Enjoy* (2008). Even the playful, ever popular Noda has tackled contentious historical topics in more recent work like *Oil* (2003) and *Egg* (2012). Over the course of fifty years Inoue Hisashi, who died in 2010, won both commercial and critical success for his politically engaged, tragicomic biographies, like *Shimijimi Nippon Nogi Taishō* (Earnest Japan: General Nogi, 1979) and *Kumikyoku gyakusatsu* (Massacre Rhapsody, 2009), based on the police murder of leftist writer Kobayashi Takiji.

Finally, it should be mentioned that many stage playwrights have also distinguished themselves as writers for cinema and/or television. Women playwrights have especially been active in writing television drama, Hashida Sugako's (b. 1925) long-running series *O-Shin* (1983–4) being the most celebrated example.

Modern poetry: 1910s to the postwar period

T O S H I K O E L L I S

Modern Japanese poetic language passed through several phases in its attempt to establish a modern style, models for which were sought in various schools of modern European poetry. Through experimentation with various rhythmic structures, inclining toward or moving away from the traditional 5-7 and 7-5 meter, and through the expression of new “modern” sensibilities, integrating romantic themes and the tenets of symbolism, a new genre of verse writing, *kindaishi* (modern poetry), was established. Roughly speaking, the first half century after the Meiji Restoration can be seen as a period when the aspiration to “modernize” constituted the predominant driving force for poetic creation.

These early endeavors reached a culminating point with the publication of *Jashūmon* (The Evil Faith, 1909) by Kitahara Hakushū (1885–1942). Kitahara aestheticized poetic language through the ingenious use of Chinese characters, combining the visual effects of the characters with the sound effects of *hiragana* and *katakana*, creating an autonomous poetic space that was imbued with a heavily symbolic and mystical atmosphere. “Ether” is written as 依依兒, with the reading *eeteru* in hiragana; 麻痺薬, meaning anesthetic, is accompanied by the reading *shibire-gusuri*, literally meaning numbing medicine. Sensual images abound, for example: “In the room, moisture thickens in the twilight, the lily’s nectar decays with sweetness” (“Mitsu no muro,” The Room of Nectar); this sensuality is often combined with exotic images: “the quivering window, like the faint smile of the magical manor of Arabia” (“Nōmu,” Thick Fog). Kitahara’s exploration of language and the boldness with which he employed unconventional, entrancing images paved the way for the birth of a new kind of poetry that dealt with imagery hitherto foreign to the Japanese lyrical tradition.

It was also around this time that writing free verse in colloquial or semi-colloquial Japanese quickly gained momentum. Nagai Kafū’s (1879–1959) *Sangoshū* (Coral Collection), consisting of translations of modern French

poetry, came out in 1913, and Takamura Kōtarō's (1883–1956) *Dōtei* (Journey) came out in 1914. Takamura, with his first-hand experience of being a Japanese artist living in New York, London, and later Paris, epitomized artistic and intellectual contact with contemporary European culture and produced poems in lucid language, expressing his fascination with that culture as well as his struggle to assert his identity as an “Oriental” man, describing “a Japanese,” in “Netsuke no kuni” (The Land of Netsuke), as being “like a monkey, like a fox, like a flying squirrel, like a gluttonous goby, like a killifish, like a devil-shaped ridge-end tile, like a broken chip of a tea bowl.”¹

It was in 1917, however, that the major breakthrough in the development of modern Japanese poetic language occurred, brought about by the publication of *Tsuki ni hoeru* (Howling at the Moon) by Hagiwara Sakutarō (1886–1942). Grappling with the modern lyrical form, Hagiwara endeavored to verbalize the “trembling of the nerves” through an appropriate “inner rhythm,” to use the poet’s own words (“*Tsuki ni hoeru jo*,” Foreword to *Howling at the Moon*, 1917). Hagiwara did not simply employ the modern colloquial language but challenged it, cutting into the fabric of the dominant standardized language, creating self-sustaining texts which presented themselves as unique verbal constructs that resisted being incorporated into the discourse of everyday life.

The newness of Hagiwara’s verse and its distinct colloquial style were intimately related to a sense of uneasiness and bewilderment in discovering the modern subject. Alienation from the surrounding landscape, resulting in the defamiliarization of that landscape, or of the subject itself, is a dominant theme in Hagiwara’s early work, producing many images of the human body on the verge of deterioration. Hagiwara’s second poetic collection, *Aoneko* (The Blue Cat), published in 1923, has a similar feeling of alienation and physical decay, though, in this collection the sense of languor and torpidity overwhelms the theme of the subject in crisis. From “*Namamekashii hakaba*” (The Erotic Cemetery):

And you, the lonely-looking phantom,
From the shade of your roaming body
Comes the smell of a rotten fish in the backstreets of an impoverished fishing
village

¹ All translations of poetic texts are mine. I have given priority to giving a literal translation so as to convey the original texture of the poem.

For Hagiwara the uncertainty of the state of being was thematically intertwined with the sense of a loss of a place of belonging. This eventually led him to pursue the theme of an eternal deprivation of homeland in his last poetic collection, *Hyōtō* (Iceland, 1934).

Around the time Hagiwara was working on the poems of *The Blue Cat*, a new generation of poets were opening up new arenas of poetic expression. The domestic sociocultural setting for poetic creation was also undergoing a marked change with the rise of mass culture centering in Tokyo, and to a limited extent in Nagoya and Kobe. As Tokyo began to take on a new identity that signified its connectedness with the contemporary metropolitan cultures of Europe and America, a sense of contemporariness, a feeling that they were working on the same ground as their fellow poets in the West, prevailed among the younger poets born at around the turn of the century. Rather than being “modernizers,” they looked at themselves as responding to the modern society of which they were already part. The first to respond to the new cultural environment of the early 1920s were the avant-garde poets, who made their sensational debut with manifestos proclaiming the arrival of a new age.

The earliest of these was “Mouvement Futuriste Japonais par R-Hyrato” (The Japanese Futurist Movement Manifesto by R. Hirato), handed out by the poet Hirato Renkichi (1893–1922) at a central street corner in mid-town Tokyo in 1921. In 1923, a poetic magazine, *Aka to kuro* (Red and Black), edited by a number of self-proclaimed avant-garde poets, appeared; on the cover of its first issue, it claimed: “Poetry is a bomb! Poets are black criminals who throw the bomb on the hard walls and doors of prison!” Below is the opening of a poem entitled “Hibiya” by Hagiwara Kyōjirō (1899–1938), one of the founding members of this magazine, published in his first collection, *Shikei senkoku* (Death Sentence) in 1925:

The intense rectangle
 Chains and gunfire and conspiracy
 Troops and gold and decoration and fame
Higher higher higher higher higher soaring higher
The central point of the capital – Hibiya

Located to the south of the Imperial Palace, together with the Police Headquarters, the Marine Agency, and the House of Peers, the Hibiya district represented the political, financial, and military center of modern Tokyo. Significantly, it was at the Hibiya intersection that Hirato Renkichi stood to hand out the futurist manifesto.

With the visual effect of the vertical lines on the printed page (here partially conveyed by the use of bold face), the poem aims to convey the dynamic power emanating from this metropolitan center, amidst the swirl of conspiracy and competition for “gold and decoration and fame.” Although captivated by the power of this rapidly growing capital, the text enfolds another message: this intense center is also full of “pitfalls,” where “laborers of intelligence” are exploited and buried.

The latter half of the 1920s is the period in modern Japanese poetic history for which the descriptive term “internationalism” would be most fitting. This was reinforced by influential figures who had spent a substantial period of time overseas, and who, upon their return to Japan, published up-to-date remarks on the literary scene in contemporary Europe and actively produced translations. Horiguchi Daigaku (1892–1981), the son of a diplomat who had spent many years of his youth in major European cities, was one notable figure; his landmark collection of French poetry in translation, *Gekka no ichigun* (Richness under the Moonlight), was published in 1925. The collection included 340 pieces by sixty-six poets, selected by Horiguchi to provide an overview of modern French poetry, from Charles Baudelaire and Paul Verlaine to Paul Valéry, Guillaume Apollinaire, Jean Cocteau, and the more recent works of Francis Picabia and Yvan Goll. Horiguchi was a versatile translator, using both classical and colloquial Japanese, skillfully adopting different styles to bring out the texture of the original. The kaleidoscopic presentation of this collection opened new ground in poetic creation, particularly in disseminating the “l’esprit nouveau” sensibility that contributed strongly to the flourishing of modernist poetry toward the end of the 1920s.

Another influential figure was Nishiwaki Junzaburō (1894–1982), who is also known as one of the earliest surrealist poets in Japan. After having studied at Oxford, Nishiwaki returned to Japan in 1926 to take up a position as professor in English Literature at a private university in Tokyo. In 1927 he published *Fukuikutaru kafu yo* (Oh, the Fragrant Stoker), the first surrealist anthology in Japan. One of Nishiwaki’s students, Takiguchi Shūzō (1903–79), later became the central figure in the exploration of surrealist theory in Japan.

At around the same time, Anzai Fuyue (1898–1965) and a group of young poets living in Dalian, a port city at the tip of the Liaotung Peninsula handed over to Japan by Russia after the Russo-Japanese War (1904–5), were embarking on a poetic enterprise of their own through a small journal called *A*: the first character of “Asia” in Japanese. Embracing their ambivalence toward the landscape of a newly colonized area, a former Chinese village developed by the Russians on the Parisian model and only half-built at the time of the

Japanese take-over, the poets of *A* produced works featuring stillness of imagery, detachment, and economy of words, as in the following lines: “The city is being folded. / Banks go bankrupt, the canal turns pale” (“Neko,” *A Cat*, *A*, no. 16, January 1926).

Thirty-five issues of *A* were published between 1924 and 1927, and copies circulated among the poetic milieus in Tokyo. The newness of imagery and its formalistic approach contributed to the creation of a specific modernist sensibility and prepared the ground for the publication of what came to be known as the representative of “l’esprit nouveau,” the modernist poetic journal *Shi to shiron* (Poetry and Poetics), in 1928. Anzai was one of its eleven founding members, together with Kitagawa Fuyuhiko (1900–90), who had also been a member of *A* for the first couple of issues. *Poetry and Poetics* marks the height of high modernism in Japanese poetry, publishing fourteen full volumes until 1931. It was renamed *Bungaku* (Literature) in 1932, and six more volumes were published up to 1933. Each volume of *Poetry and Poetics* consisted of at least two hundred pages, elaborately bound and systematically divided into sections on essays, creative work, and critical notes. The journal functioned as a central vehicle for introducing recent and contemporary trends in Western literature: the first two volumes alone included introductory notes on poets such as Jules Romains, Paul Verlaine, Max Jacob, Jean Cocteau, Stefan George, Rainer Maria Rilke, and Paul Eluard as well as essays on futurism and surrealism. The journal also became an experimental ground for the application of newly introduced poetic theories and techniques: poetic formalism, cine-poems, constructivist prose poetry, and surrealism.

The closing of *Poetry and Poetics* coincides with the turning point in the history of modern Japanese poetry. The Manchurian Incident (1931) brought about a fundamental change in Japan’s sociocultural climate, affecting not only the formalists but also the proletarian poets, who had actively opposed the “l’esprit nouveau” poets through the publication of *Senki* (Battle Flag), the official journal of NAPF (Nippona Artistia Proleta Federacio/All Japan Proletarian Artists’ Association), between 1928 and 1931. The new literary movement, which responded to the post-1931 climate and which proceeded to push the formalists and proletarians to the margins, came to be known as the “cultural renaissance.” This movement sought to reassess and restore the cultural tradition that had largely been left unexamined by both the proletarians and the internationally inclined modernists of the 1920s. Three major poetic journals appeared: *Kogito* (Cogito), *Shiki* (Four Seasons), and *Nihon romanha* (The Japan Romantic School), the first issues of which came out in 1932, 1933, and 1935 respectively. Later, despite conditions

that made it increasingly difficult to publish, *Cogito* and *Four Seasons* continued to appear regularly as late as 1944. Strongly influenced by the ideologue of the Japan Romantic School, Yasuda Yojurō (1910–81), these poets sought to respond to renewed visions of Japanese modernity, struggling and negotiating with the dramatically changing political climate. With the consolidation of the wartime regime, much of their activity eventually became mingled with wartime discourse and lost its critical power.

Of the poets active during this time, Itō Shizuo (1906–53) was regarded as *Cogito*'s key poet, while Miyoshi Tatsuji (1900–64) occupied a central position in the *Four Seasons* group. Many of Itō's early lyrics embrace tension and refraction, as the semantic function of the language is challenged by the poetic structure. In addition, the recurrent theme of an impossible return to the past strongly echoes the idea of "irony" as it was advocated by the Japan Romantic School. In contrast, Miyoshi's verses are lyrical in the classic sense, composed of lines that lead to evocative but stable imagery, supported by a free, rhythmic beat:

Soaking wet in the rain, they stay quietly clustered in the same place.
It would not be surprising if a hundred years elapsed by in this single
instant.

The rain is falling. The rain is falling.
Bleak and dreary rain is falling.

... ("Ō-Aso," The Great Aso Mountain, in *Kusasenri*, 1939)

Four Seasons attracted a number of lyrical poets, including Tachihara Michizō (1914–39) and Nakahara Chūya (1907–37), whose melodious integration of traditional sensitivity to nature with unique sentiments of the modern individual have been influential in the later lyrical tradition of modern Japanese poetry.

Although the "cultural renaissance" was certainly the dominant discourse of the militarist period, there were nevertheless traces of resistance and rebellion from a number of poets. Two notable figures were Kaneko Mitsuharu (1895–1975), who spent much of his time in the port cities in the Southern Pacific, *en route* to Europe, and Oguma Hideo (1901–40), one of the last of the proletarian poets whose voices quickly disappeared from the literary scene of the 1930s. The latter is represented by the following lines:

If they cut off my hands, I will write with my feet,
If they cut off my feet, I will write with my mouth,
If they gag my mouth,

Let me sing with the hole in my ass.

(“Genjitsu no toishi,” Whetstone of Reality, in *Oguma Hideo Shishū*,
Collected Poems of Oguma Hideo, 1935)

The Japanese poetic scene of the immediate postwar period can be summed up as a series of attempts to start a new page. In the wake of Japan’s defeat, the poets were adamant in their desire to leave behind the modernist past and to embark on the production of *gendaishi* (contemporary poetry) as opposed to *kindaishi* (modern poetry). The most influential of the postwar movements was led by the *Arechi* (Waste Land) group, which published a poetic journal, *The Waste Land*, between 1947 and 1948. This was followed by the publication of an annual poetic anthology *Arechi shishū* (The Waste Land Poetic Collection), between 1951 and 1958. Its leader, Ayukawa Nobuo (1920–86), argued that poets should radically question what they were writing for, and that the reason for writing poetry lay not in the value of its aesthetics but in the reality of everyday life. The recovery of “meaning” in poetry was the central concern in the immediate postwar period, a stance that was also shared by the poets of *Rettō* (Archipelago, 1952–5), who took a clearly leftist position. The poets who played the central role in these groups, Ayukawa and Tamura Ryūichi (1923–98) of *Waste Land* and Sekine Hiroshi (1924–94) and Hasegawa Ryūsei (b. 1928) of *Archipelago*, among others, were all in their twenties at the time, which reinforced a sense of a generational break from prewar poetic activity.

A strong concern with the relationship between poetry and historical consciousness was the salient engine for poetic activity during the first couple of decades after 1945. A gradual change took place in the 1960s, however, leading to the widely quoted proclamation of “the rhetorical present” (*shūjiteki genzai*) by the poet and influential critic Yoshimoto Takaaki (1924–2012) in his *Sengo shishi-ron* (On Postwar Poetic History, 1978). Yoshimoto’s terminology, which suggests the dominance of rhetoric over experience in the contemporary approach to poetry, gave rise to numerous debates concerning the interpretation of his thesis. The gradual transformation of “post-war” sensibility, particularly with the emergence of a generation for whom war experience did not constitute an immanent question of poetics, opened up a space for poets to grapple with language from diverse angles.

In the earlier history of modern Japanese free verse poetry, women poets were indisputably a minority. It is in the post-1945 period that we find an efflorescence of female voices, with Tomioka Taeko (b. 1935) in the fifties, Shiraiishi Kazuko (b. 1931) in the sixties, together with many others, boldly

shaking off the shackles of being a “woman,” desiring to verbalize all that had been repressed in the male-dominated tradition of modern Japanese poetry. It was high time, then, for the appearance on the scene of a poet like Itō Hiromi (b. 1955), who has, since her debut in the 1980s, consistently challenged the genderization of “woman,” radically weaving words out of her physiological self and exploring new territories of the body, voice, and poetry.

Trends in postwar literature, 1945–1970s

KENSUKE KŌNO AND ANN SHERIF

During the Japanese empire's long wars with China and the Allies in the 1930s and 40s, people on the home front relied on the officially controlled print media and radio for news. On August 15, 1945, the radio delivered the emperor's broadcast announcing Japan's surrender. Only two days later, readers found in the *Asahi* newspaper a poem composed by a leading poet, Takamura Kōtarō (1883–1956), called "Ichioku gōkyū" (The Lamentations of One Hundred Million) about this astounding turn of events. Takamura, who had distinguished himself as a leading free verse poet and as a sculptor who had trained in Paris, wrote several volumes of poetry after Pearl Harbor in support of Japan's imperialist expansion, employing the propagandistic rhetoric of the day. "The Lamentations of One Hundred Million" not only registered the shock of the nation's defeat in a long, harrowing war, but expressed a sense of incredulity at hearing the human voice of an emperor who had been considered divine. Takamura represents the perspective of still deferential imperial subjects, ashamed that the nation had pushed its sovereign to such an extreme – a viewpoint that would soon be complicated by issues of war responsibility.

In the drive toward Total War, the state maintained strict control over media and speech for more than a decade. Many individuals subscribed to the government's rhetoric and worked actively toward the realization of the "Greater East Asian Co-Prosperty Sphere." Whether enthusiastically or out of fear, the majority of writers cooperated with the war effort and empire building. Novelists and poets who dared to oppose the government's agenda either ended up in jail or retreated into silence. After the war, the Allied Occupation forces dismantled the empire and discredited the ideology and rhetoric that had supported it. The Tokyo War Crimes Trials did not, however, target writers. Takamura Kōtarō, one of the very few writers to be confronted about complicity with Japan's militarism, withdrew from the literary world and spent seven years in self-imposed exile in northern Japan.

He also gave expression to his guilt in the poetry sequence “Angu shōden” (Autobiographical Sketch of Imbecility): “I have seen a sickening amount of my own imbecility . . . I’ll be glad to submit to the extreme penalty.”

In October 1945, the Allied Occupation authorities ordered the release of some five hundred political prisoners. The General Headquarters (GHQ) of the Occupation also declared the 1925 Peace Preservation Law null and void, thus removing one of the former regime’s main legal mechanisms for domestic repression. Among the freed political prisoners were members of the Japan Communist Party (JCP) and other fervent Marxists. The JCP leaders immediately went to work rebuilding the Party. Many leftist writers believed that the new society envisioned by the American occupiers would be the foundation for a democratic revolution.

In 1946, following the revival of the JCP, literary writers led by Miyamoto Yuriko (1899–1951) and Nakano Shigeharu (1902–79) founded the journal *Shin Nihon bungaku* (New Japanese Literature). All the charter members of the New Japan Literature Association (Shin Nihon Bungaku Kai) had been part of the proletarian literary movement before the war, but a few honorary members such as Shiga Naoya (1883–1971), Nogami Yaeko (1885–1985), and Hirotsu Kazuo (1891–1968), while having few links with Marxism and leftism, also joined the group out of the fervent belief in a fresh start for Japanese literature. However, the group soon became embroiled in philosophical and ideological debates with other progressive literary groups such as the Kindai Bungaku (Modern Literature) group and, for a certain period, was heavily swayed by the political aims of the JCP. By the sixties, the Shin Nihon Bungaku Kai had broken with the Communist Party and focused on producing its influential, high-quality literary journal (*Shin Nihon bungaku*), which launched the careers of many important writers and critics.

The literary critic Etō Jun (1932–99) later regarded Japanese literature under Occupation censorship as existing in a “closed linguistic space” because certain topics – from Hiroshima and Nagasaki to anti-American sentiments – were banned. When GHQ sought to excise art forms that extolled “feudal values,” they brought certain samurai films and kabuki theater under close scrutiny. At the same time, writers and filmmakers had to search for new modes of representation because much of the language that had become standard in descriptions of wartime experience, of heroism, and of Japan’s military was now taboo. Progressive writers who had initially seen the Occupation as the first step toward a democratic revolution and a new opportunity for socialism were also faced with the increasingly anti-Communist Cold War agenda of the United States. Although far less brutal

than the pre-1945 censorship system, the Civil Information and Education Section (CIE) and other parts of the Occupation extensively censored Japanese literature and print media. The dismantling of the CIE and the Press Code in the last years of the Occupation signaled the advent of a political system that, for the first time in centuries, did not have an extensive and formal censorship apparatus.

The Occupation did not place as strict controls on the flow of information as had the earlier imperial state – after all, the new postwar constitution guaranteed freedom of speech, thought, the press, and assembly. As the publishing industry witnessed a surge in activity, publishers vied to acquire precious imported paper or even black market paper. Readers were so hungry for new books that lines formed in front of bookstores the night before the Iwanami Publishing Company's release of *The Collected Works* of the philosopher Nishida Kitarō (1870–1945). Prosperity, however, proved fleeting. Many of the small publishers that sprung up in the late forties fell victim to oversupply, fluctuations in the distribution system, labor struggles, and management problems.

Noteworthy during the first years after the war was the flood of *kasutori* or pulp magazines on the market. Linked with the sexually titillating entertainment culture that had sprung up in Tokyo and other cities, the cheaply produced *kasutori* magazines alarmed the Japanese police sufficiently that some titles were confiscated under Article 175 of the Criminal Code (in force since the Meiji period). In January 1947, the police targeted *Ryōki* (Bizarre) because it contained a short story portraying a military wife who has an adulterous affair. However, social values and the law changed rapidly during the Occupation: by October of the same year the laws against adultery, along with those banning acts of *lèse-majesté*, had been eliminated.

In 1945 ten thousand readers eagerly snatched up the first issue of the *kasutori* cultural magazine *Riberaru* (Liberal) to read not only a translation of a Maupassant short story but also essays such as “On Sexual Desire” by the respected author Mushanokōji Saneatsu (1885–1976) or “On Chastity” by Kikuchi Kan (1888–1948). Remarkably, the same issue featured *pan pan* (prostitutes who serviced the Occupation GIs) and a risqué dialogue between husband and wife as an “English Conversation Skit.” A wide variety of *kasutori* magazines sprung up, serving briefly as a venue for literature. *Romansu* (Romance, 1946), with fiction by the influential Kikuchi Kan and the *buraiha* (“Decadent”) writer Oda Sakunosuke (1913–47), sold 300,000 copies in six months. Pictures of voluptuous women on the cover and inside the magazines promoted sales too. The sensational sexological magazine *Aka*

to *kuro* (Red and Black, 1946), edited by sexologist Takahashi Tetsu, featured nude photographs and articles on “Carnal Art.” *Decameron*, *Sex Culture*, *Jeep*, *Okay!*, *Venus*, *Cabaret*, and *Odd Tales Graph* were among the many erotic titles published in 1947.

From established authors such as Nagai Kafū (1879–1959), Hayashi Fumiko (1903–51), Hirabayashi Taiko (1905–72), Ishikawa Jun (1899–1987), Sakaguchi Ango (1906–55), and Oda Sakunosuke, to newer generations of novelists like Noma Hiroshi (1915–91) and Takeda Taijun (1912–76), novelists of all stripes were writing about sex. The kasutori culture may suggest a general fascination with the carnal scene in entertainment areas of the city, but these writers had more fundamental concerns in mind. They sought to represent people who, in reconstructing a body crushed by wartime experiences, attempted to repossess and reconceive of physicality and sexuality as part of their new daily life.

As literary writers explored the means and meanings of liberating desire, the postwar media simultaneously pursued the commodification of sex. This included the scientific mode, as exemplified by the popularization of works such as Dutch gynecologist Th. H. Van de Velde’s *Ideal Marriage: Its Physiology and Technique*. Translated into Japanese as *Kanzen naru fūfu* (The Complete Couple), the book offered detailed information about sexual techniques and a frank examination of the centrality of sex to the health of marital relations. The rise of Van de Velde’s manual to bestseller status in the late 1940s suggests that audiences existed both for such imported scientific views of sexuality, and for the titillating and often transgressive sexuality portrayed in the pulps.

The authorities periodically sought to control representations of sexuality in highly publicized proceedings such as the Japanese translation of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* case. During the 1950s, both the translator Itō Sei (1905–69) and the publisher Oyama Shoten were found guilty of violating obscenity laws. Such exercise of authority was seen again in the legal prosecution of Shibusawa Tatsuhiko’s (1928–87) *Akutoku no sakae* (1960s), a translation and adaptation of the Marquis de Sade’s *L’Histoire de Juliette ou les prospérités du vice*, and of Nosaka Akiyuki’s (1930–) challenge to the censors when he republished Nagai Kafū’s “pornographic” short story “Yojōhan fusuma no shitabari” (Behind the Papering of the Four-and-a-Half-Mat Room) in the 1970s, among others.

Not surprisingly, the masculine quest for a new identity and a new voice in the postwar world became a central concern, both in literary works and in authors’ lives, which were fascinating to the media and to readers. Literary celebrities such as Nagai Kafū, Masamune Hakuchō (1879–1962), and Shiga

Naoya wrote in their familiar idiom about the ravaged cities, but their techniques seemed somehow inadequate in representing the disruption and destruction that readers encountered. If anything, the task of finding an idiom suitable to the early postwar age fell to novelists who had been dedicated to modernism and the avant-garde during the relatively open 1920s, or even to those who had been implicated in the ideology and complicity of the 1930s.

One such writer who began republishing soon after the war was Dazai Osamu (1909–48), who saw into print a number of works that he had penned during wartime but had held back in fear of censorship. In the first of these publications, *Otogizōshi* (Fairy Tales, October 1945), Dazai parodied folk stories such as “Momotarō” (Peach Boy), which had been employed to promote values of the imperial system and the war effort. Dazai’s last two novels, *Shayō* (The Setting Sun, 1947) and *Ningen shikkaku* (No Longer Human, literally “Failed Human,” 1948), struck a chord with readers and critics. In *The Setting Sun*, Dazai portrays an upper-class family who in the postwar period faces the demise of their way of life in both material and ethical terms. *No Longer Human* is heavily autobiographical, especially in its depiction of the many “failures” of the protagonist Yōzō, in the failed love affairs, the short flirtations with politics, and the multiple attempts at suicide. However, Dazai resists the confessional style, and instead weaves a compelling tale of a tragically flawed man. Readers burdened by the wounds of a long, painful war identified with the protagonist who, like themselves, felt that he had failed in many ways but who also recognized the formidable challenges posed by external social forces.

With its provocation and shock value, Sakaguchi Ango’s (1906–55) essay on the aesthetics of early postwar ruins, “Daraku ron” (On Decadence, 1946), struck many readers as utterly original in its take on identity in this transitional age. Having witnessed flames engulfing Tokyo, Ango provocatively proposed that fear is not the sole significance of such a sight: he perceived “the beauty of those people obedient to destiny, the beauty of love in the midst of that appalling destruction.” Yet he asserts that this beauty is false, a delusion, and that those same people who showed obedience to the state’s demand for sacrifice and self-denial must, in the postwar ruins, do the most human thing: be “decadent.” His championing of decadence depends not only on the context of a society in an extreme state of flux, but also on an understanding, shared by many of his readers, that the “healthy” morality that had been promoted by imperial Japan had been utterly discredited by Japan’s defeat and the values of the Occupation. In short, Ango identified material chaos and moral devastation as an opportunity for Japan to rethink

what it means to be alive: “We must, by degeneration from ‘healthy morality,’ once more become real human beings.”

The cohort of writers who had experienced the extreme political repression of the 1930s and the militarization of the late thirties and forties was known as the First Generation of Postwar Writers (*Dai-ichiji sengo ha*). The innovations of this generation were not solely thematic or philosophical. Noma Hiroshi attempted to forge a new literary language, a style appropriate to the nihilistic worldview of those who knew the profound violence of war and the soul-searching over complicity in the aftermath. His consciously complex sentence structures have been described as “sticky” and “thick,” capable of evoking a visceral reaction in readers. So provocative was his writing technique in *Shinkū chitai* (Zone of Emptiness, 1952), his acclaimed novel about life in the Japanese military, that “his contemporaries felt they had encountered a style of writing that could replicate the assault on reason, a descriptive technique that recreated the sense of a humanity pushed to the breaking point.”¹ Noma joined many fellow writers in exploring political and philosophical issues, including essays on Marxism in the post-Stalinist world that he published after disillusioning revelations about the horrific abuses of Stalinist totalitarianism in the mid 1950s. Some of these male writers were ultimately broken by the extended political and cultural crises of the 1930s and 1940s. Both Oda Sakunosuke and Sakaguchi Ango struggled with drug addiction, and Dazai Osamu’s suicide in 1948 is emblematic of the despair of this age.

From early Meiji until 1945, writers, editors, and publishers worked under a government censorship apparatus that monitored expressions of resistance to state and imperial aims, and enforced certain notions of morality. The Home Ministry was overt in its approach, which meant that publishers had to keep in mind the government’s practice of banning sales of already published books (*hatsubai kinshi*), which could result in huge losses for the publisher. Readers could see the censorship marks (*fuseji*, X, and other marks substituted for printed characters) in their books and magazines and notice that pages were missing.

SCAP (Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers), in contrast, set up the Civil Censorship Detachment (CCD, 1945–9), which was in charge of monitoring all materials published in Japan for violations of the Press Code (which included a ban on “false or destructive criticism of the Allied Powers”). SCAP, however, insisted that CCD’s activities not be made obvious to the general

¹ Douglas Slaymaker, *The Body in Postwar Japanese Fiction* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 93.

public. Publishers and the press were of course aware of the censorship because they were required to submit materials to CCD before publication. The case of Yoshida Mitsuru's (1923–79) *Senkan Yamato no saigo* (Requiem for Battleship Yamato, 1946) illustrates the interaction between censor and author. The Yamato was the imperial Navy's last hope, even as the air war dominated the late stages of World War II. As the enormous battleship headed toward Okinawa in April 1945, it was sunk in a fierce Allied attack, with the loss of more than two thousand crew members. Yoshida, a junior naval officer, survived to write a stirring first-person account of the ship's final mission and of the men on board. CCD, however, would not permit publication of Yoshida's memoir because they deemed it evocative of "Japanese militaristic spirit."

As part of its Total War agenda, the imperial government enforced positive literary depictions of the battlefield and stories that would exalt the soldiers' heroic sacrifice. After the defeat, literary writers took on a significant role in redefining the cultural and political meanings of the massive, costly, and now discredited military venture. Yoshida's *Battleship Yamato* does not glorify war as heroic or beautiful, yet it approaches the massive losses with solemnity, offering a stark contrast to the irreverent celebration of decadence espoused by Sakaguchi Ango.

In contrast, Ōoka Shōhei's (1909–88) autobiographically inspired novel *Furyoki* (Taken Captive: A Japanese POW's Story) reveals the author's conviction that death on the battlefield is "a pure and simple waste" and that luck is the only guarantee of survival. Ōoka, a veteran and former prisoner of war, completed the first draft in early 1946, only months after the war's end. Out of concern that the work might be censored, Ōoka's publisher delayed publication until February 1948, when the first of nine sections appeared in print. The first-person narrator of *Taken Captive* is a Japanese soldier fighting in the Philippines during World War II. Weakened by malaria, the narrator has been left behind by his unit. He tries to flee from the approaching Allied troops but collapses in the jungle. His military training included the lesson that a soldier should take his own life rather than be taken prisoner of war, so he decides to do just that. But he pauses to wonder what to do should an enemy soldier come across him first. A key passage in the novel describes precisely that encounter: a young American walks toward him, and stops only feet away. The hidden narrator raises his rifle but does not shoot.

For the epigraph of the section, Ōoka chose a phrase from the medieval (thirteenth-century) Buddhist treatise *Tan'nishō*: "It is not from goodness of heart that you do not kill." The narrator had thought deeply about the ethical

dimensions of killing another soldier, but in the end it was not moral questioning or his spirit that resulted in not pulling the trigger. Rather through some trick of fate the soldier survived, against all odds, malaria, the battlefield, and captivity as a prisoner of war, and was able to return to Japan after the war. He also remains acutely aware that, lacking such divine intervention and despite his “goodness of heart,” there was a distinct possibility that he might have killed the GI. *Taken Captive* explores the complex feelings of shame at being in POW camp accompanied by relief that he and his comrades are out of harm’s way. The novel brings to life the various personalities of the Japanese in the camp, and the psychologies of men who have been freed from the rules and customs of the imperial military but who, as soldiers of a defeated nation, subsequently have to reconceive of their individual and group identities under the authority of the victors.

The Occupation authorities kept especially close watch over writings about the A-bombed cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Among the best-known atomic bomb writers, Nagai Takashi (1908–51) completed a manuscript about his experiences as a *hibakusha* (atomic bomb survivor) and as a physician treating other *hibakusha* in Nagasaki less than a year after the bombing in January 1946. However, because of the Occupation Authority censors, who determined that publication should not be allowed so soon after the war, Nagai’s compelling memoir *Nagasaki no kane* (The Bells of Nagasaki) did not appear in print until three years later, when it immediately drew huge attention from the reading public. The doctor’s medical and scientific insights into radiation disease that afflicted many *hibakusha*, his invocation of Nagasaki’s Christian past and his own faith, and the compelling writing style contributed to the book’s huge success. In 1949, the year when the USA lost its monopoly over atomic bombs, the Occupation encouraged a shift away from silence about the bomb to a new discourse that both represented people in all countries as potential victims and divorced the USA from the ethically controversial act of using the weapons.

Hiroshima writers such as Hara Tamiki (1905–51) and Ōta Yōko (1906–63) were similarly conscious of the Occupation censors when writing about the August 1945 bombings and their aftermath. Ōta started writing her powerful novel *Shikabane no machi* (City of Corpses) within weeks of the bombing, even as she suffered from symptoms of life-threatening radiation disease. The censors ordered her to delete sections of her manuscript, and the expurgated version was finally published in 1948. *City of Corpses* did not appear in complete form until 1950, when Occupation censorship had been phased out. Similarly, the publication history of Hara Tamiki’s critically acclaimed

Natsu no hana (Summer Flowers), completed within six months of the end of the war, features a search for a venue and title that would evade the eyes of the censors and a long wait before a mainstream publisher issued a single-volume version in 1949.

Hara describes the experience of the August 6 atomic bombing in his autobiographically inspired *Summer Flowers*. As he struggles through the ruins of the city, encountering the dead and dying at every step, the first-person narrator struggles to grasp this unprecedented event, articulating his experiences in terms of familiar genres: “I had surely seen spectacles like this at the movies,” he comments, and later likens the scenes to Poe’s “The Fall of the House of Usher.” Passing by a streetcar flipped over on its side, a horse dead on the ground, the narrator compares what he has seen to “the world of surrealist paintings.”

The Japanese government dedicated the nation to economic recovery and prosperity under the American nuclear umbrella; a new national identity as victim of nuclear war helped to bury ethical questions about the Japanese empire’s imperialism and militarism in Asia. The government played its part in fashioning discourses of peace and “No more Hiroshima” as part of postwar nationalism and memory, even as it promoted its alliance with the nuclear-armed Cold War superpower United States. From the 1950s, the Japanese government encouraged the rebranding of the anniversaries of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings on August 6 and 9 and the surrender on August 15 as public rituals of mourning and healing.

Arguably the best-known work of atomic bomb literature among general reading audiences is Ibuse Masuji’s (1898–1993) novel *Kuroi ame* (Black Rain, 1965). The novel’s narrative frame introduces readers to Hiroshima in 1950. We come to know the struggles of hibakusha who are still plagued by radiation disease, the shadow of death, and social discrimination five long years after the atomic bombing. A couple with no children, Shigematsu and Shigeko have taken in their niece Yasuko and are seeking a suitable marriage for her. Every prospect, however, comes to nothing. Shigematsu suspects that suitors are cautious because he and Shigeko are hibakusha. When he hears of rumors that Yasuko might also have been in Hiroshima on August 6, Shigematsu is determined to squash them by sharing her diary with the matchmaker. He sets about copying his niece’s diary by hand, and then, wanting to muster more evidence, copies his own diary and even his wife’s. Yet his efforts to enlist the authority of texts to help his niece come to naught when Yasuko, who was exposed to the black rain that fell after the bombing, starts to show symptoms of radiation sickness. Years after its end, the war’s

dark and destructive shadow abruptly intrudes, provoking fear and anxiety in the midst of a peaceful and stable daily life. *Black Rain* raises the question of whether peacetime will forever be haunted by this new variety of war and weapons. Significantly, more than half of Ibuse's novel consists of direct quotes from diaries of actual hibakusha. A single telling of the story of August 6 is not sufficient; instead, the author makes a monumental effort to communicate the experiences of the bombing by transcribing numerous narratives from actual survivors.

Although the atomic bombings were only one variety of wartime experience for Japanese people, many literary writers, whether hibakusha or not, have focused on the trauma and aftermath. Notable works are Hayashi Kyōko's (b. 1930) short story "Matsuri no ba" (Ritual of Death, 1975) and Takenishi Hiroko's (b. 1929) "Gishiki" (The Rite, 1978), which depict the experiences of female hibakusha. Other authors chose the historical novel as the genre most appropriate to depicting the bombings, such as Inoue Mitsuharu's (1926–92) *Chi no mure* (People of the Land, 1963), Fukunaga Takehiko's (1918–79) *Shi no shima* (The Island of Death, 1971), and Oda Makoto's (1932–2007) *HIROSHIMA* (Hiroshima, 1981).

Another significant theme of liberating the emperor himself from the imperial institution is explored in Marxist writer and poet Nakano Shigeharu's (1902–79) compelling postwar story "Goshaku no sake" (Five Cups of Sake, 1946). The story takes the form of a letter written by an aging school teacher to his student who is a member of the Communist Party. Slightly tipsy, the teacher rambles on about the shift from totalitarianism to democracy. He is tortured by regrets, recalling the past when he passively saw off students and family to the front. Now he can only watch as his student becomes caught up in the Communist Party and read the press coverage of the new democracy. He writes about a ceremony for the promulgation of the new postwar constitution, when he realized how much the attitude and posture of the assembled resembles those during wartime mobilization for the imperial cause. No one – not the emperor, not the Japanese people – has been liberated, he concludes.

Although the Occupation authorities did not put an outright ban on writing about the emperor, a tacit proscription was quickly put in place. One writer who violated that taboo was Fukazawa Shichirō (1914–87), who is best known for the gritty *Narayama bushikō* (The Ballad of Narayama, 1956), a prize-winning novella inspired by folk tales about the practice of abandoning old people in the remote mountains. In 1960, he published the playful, darkly comic story "Fūryū mutan" (The Story of a Dream of Courtly Elegance), which depicts a man who dreams that he witnesses a rebellious group with "leftist passions" occupying

the imperial palace grounds. Even as a carnivalesque atmosphere fills the grounds with fireworks and folk dancing, the crown prince and princess are decapitated. Fukazawa's story attracted praise but more notably harsh criticism – publicly from the Imperial Household Agency and informally from many sides – until finally Fukazawa went into hiding and his publisher Chūō Kōronsha made public apologies. A young right-wing fanatic stormed the home of the publisher's president, injuring the president's wife and murdering his housekeeper. After this outburst of violent acts, Fukazawa himself retreated from such topics, and other writers and publishers grew increasingly reluctant to treat in fiction the figure of the emperor.

The *bundan*, or literary establishment, evolved as writers, critics, and the media defined the parameters of canonical modern literary production during the first half of the twentieth century. In the early years after the war, many of the prominent bundan writers and publishers retreated from public view, but by 1949 the bundan started to enjoy a revival, although in a very different form. After 1945, the number of small publishers increased dramatically, joining the already dominant major houses Chūō Kōronsha and Shinchōsha, to become active producers in the literary field. Chikuma Shobō, Kawade Shobō, Kadokawa Shoten, Iwanami Shoten, Kōdansha, and Shūeisha are among the presses that benefited from the postwar boom in publishing, and contributed to the expansion of literary publishing and readerships by issuing journals that focused on or featured fiction and poetry.

From the 1960s through the 1980s, a remarkable number of literary journals including *Shinchō*, *Bungakukai*, *Gunzō*, *Bungei*, *Umi*, and *Subaru* lined bookstore shelves. Each issue was voluminous (nearly three hundred pages) and was published every month, all in Tokyo. The journals stimulated further attention by establishing literary prizes. Long-standing and influential prizes such as the Akutagawa Prize and the Naoki Prize were revived in 1949. The *shinjinshō*, or prizes for new writers, gave publishers a central role in spotlighting the younger generation and shaping the careers of new writers. These same years witnessed a boom in the publication of *zenshū* or multi-volume collected works of modern Japanese literature. Most major publishers issued their own variation of such *zenshū*. In this way publishers played a decisive role in defining the modern literary canon. The long-lasting commercial viability of handsomely produced, heavily annotated, and often pricey sets of hardcover books confirmed the prestige of literature as a cultural form, from the Occupation period through the 1980s.

This reverence accorded to literature, however, started to diminish during the 1980s. The power of multimedia such as television, cinema, anime,

manga, and later digital media created new audience expectations and desires for other modes of representation. Generations of young people favored a variety of cultural modes, and not only textually based ones. The hierarchy of cultural authority that placed literature at the top became a thing of the past. But while audiences for literature dwindled, literature did not die. This shift did, however, have real economic repercussions for publishers. To maintain their literature lists and to compensate for losses involved in producing a literary journal, publishers had to reap profits from selling manga.

The 1950s, the period when the postwar *bundan* came into being, spanned the end of the Allied Occupation and the start of new wars on the Korean peninsula and in Indochina (Vietnam). Domestically, the fifties was a decade of political and cultural divisions and debate. Article 9 of the new postwar Constitution banned Japan from maintaining a military, yet the Diet established the so-called Self-Defense Forces (SDF) in 1954. The end of the Allied Occupation resulted in Japan's sovereignty in 1952, but the Cold War alliance between the two countries resulted in the USA wielding a considerable level of indirect control over Japan, including the maintenance of American military bases on Japanese soil. Moves toward remilitarization by a conservative Japanese hegemony and the continued intrusive hand of its "Free World" ally (the United States) in Japanese society were both factors in stimulating leftist movements that supported the Soviet Union and revolutionary China.

In 1952 Noma Hiroshi completed his full-length novel *Shinkū chitai* (*Zone of Emptiness*), which portrays the regimentation of the imperial Japanese Army soldiers in the "homeland" before they were shipped to the front, and the corruption of the military command. Noma exposes the insidious violence that was exercised as a routine part of military education and training, and the degradation and terror of all involved in that system. Although classified as a work of leftist literature, the novel won a wide reading audience, as well as critical acclaim, and resonated especially with the antiwar and antimilitarist sentiments of the postwar *bundan*. A film version appeared in the early 1950s.

The main character in *Zone of Emptiness* is Kitani, a private from the poorest stratum of society. He is falsely accused by his superiors of stealing a wallet, and is put in jail. Kitani's humiliation and abjection as a soldier and as a man is a central theme. Noma portrays with nuance the humiliation and brutality directed at new soldiers, particularly well-educated ones, by uneducated veteran soldiers. Noma also portrays the psychology of Soda, a well-educated soldier who, filled with self-hatred and anger as he watches the impotence of

the abused intellectual soldiers, fantasizes that the complacent Kitani can destroy the military. Some contemporary critics complained about the social dynamics and values implied by the character of Soda, who seems to be a proxy for Noma himself.

In the aftermath of the Korean War (1950–3), which initiated Japan's economic recovery and rapid economic growth, the focus of literature started to move away from wartime, with writers turning to stories about contemporary families, the home, and daily life. The debuts of Yasuoka Shōtarō (1920–2013), Shōno Junzō (1921–2009), and Yoshiyuki Junnosuke (1924–94) in the mid fifties accelerated the popularity of family-oriented novels. Among these, Yasuoka Shōtarō's novel *Kaihen no kōkei* (*A View by the Sea*, 1959) presents a moving portrait of a broken family. The family in question consists of a father who had been a military veterinarian and a commissioned officer during the war, his wife, and their son Shintarō, who also served in the military. Late in the war, Shintarō contracted tuberculosis and was discharged from the army. He and his mother lived together peacefully until the defeat, at which point the father came home a changed man, his military identity and his patriarchal authority erased by Occupation reforms. Shintarō never thought of himself as someone who could step into his father's shoes – he had been a low-ranking, sickly soldier, and in peacetime he remains stuck in a similar place, uninspired and lacking in ambition. In the midst of this new order, his mother starts showing signs of dementia.

The novel begins with Shintarō receiving notice from the mental hospital that his mother does not have long to live; he and his father make the journey to see her. The narrative describes the time they spend with her during her final days, as Shintarō comes to the realization that it was his mother who held the family together during the long war. Through flashbacks, he ponders the flaws in his father, whose identity relied so heavily on regressive models of authority and masculinity. The mother fades rapidly, while the son, a man suggestive of his times, has not only suffered the symbolic loss of the authoritative paternal figure, but also witnessed the breakdown of the mother figure.

Critics during the 1950s and 1960s considered Yasuoka as part of the same line of “Third Generation of New Writers” as Shimao Toshio (1917–86) and Kojima Nobuo (1915–2006) because they were skilled writers who explored themes of individuals and family still living with – and trying to grow beyond – the dark legacy of war. All of these authors went to war. Shimao had the remarkable experience of being a *tokkōtai* or kamikaze pilot. On a small island in the Pacific, he and his squad made preparations for takeoff and resigned

themselves to a certain death, only to receive the news of the war's end. Shimao was inspired to write many fictional works based on these experiences, such as "Shuppatsu wa tsui ni otozurezu" (The Departure Finally Never Came, 1962). Shimao also produced many stories and novels inspired by his family life after the war and especially his wife's mental illness, the most famous of which is the novel *Shi no toge* (The Sting of Death, 1960).

The first chapter of *The Sting of Death* portrays a married couple in crisis, as Miho discovers her husband Toshio's infidelity. The two had met and fallen passionately in love late in the war, when Toshio's squad was posted on an island in the South Pacific, and married soon after the war. The work, which is regarded as autobiographically inspired literary prose fiction, portrays, among other things, Shimao's fall from his identity as a military hero (a suicide pilot), and his transformation into an ordinary father whose days should be occupied with work and family life but who is frequently absent. His unfaithfulness sparks madness in his wife, and she relentlessly forces him to recount his extramarital relationships. Toshio breaks down and apologizes, time and time again. In turn, Miho has moments of clarity and asks for her husband's forgiveness. In real life, Shimao's wife recovered and the two reconciled, but the novel ends less certainly. Shimao continued, for more than fifteen years, to write *Sting of Death* in different formats including novella and short story, until he published it in its final form in 1977.

Kojima Nobuo's acclaimed novel *Hōyō kazoku* (Embracing Family, 1965) also portrays marital infidelity, but this time it is the wife who is having the affair. The Miwa family enjoys a comfortable middle-class lifestyle, thanks to the booming economy, and can even afford to have a maid. Miwa Shunsuke is an academic and translator who lectures about life in America, where he lived for a year. His wife Tokiko is less than satisfied with his old-fashioned attitudes and fecklessness, and decides to have a fling with an American GI. She flaunts her romance to her husband, saying that he should just grin and bear it. "Look at it objectively. Think of it as a comedy. You're a literature specialist, after all!" Tokiko mocks him. And Shunsuke does not argue back. Again, we see the collapse of the traditional role of the patriarch. It is easy to read this novel as an allegory for US-Japanese relations at the time, but Kojima's work has much greater psychological depth. Indeed, the plot takes a surprising turn: Tokiko is stricken with breast cancer, and does not recover. It is this trauma that forces Tokiko and Shunsuke out of their bitterness and self-absorption.

While critics labeled Kojima and Yasuoka as the "Third Wave New Writers," the debut of writers such as Ishihara Shintarō (b. 1932), Kaikō Ken

(1930–89), and Ōe Kenzaburō (b. 1935) marked the rise of a generation of novelists who had been too young to fight during the war. These young writers conceived of literature and its relationship to the media in new ways, and had different political and cultural reference points. It was in the mid fifties that the mass media started to feature the awarding of literary prizes such as the Akutagawa Prize and the Naoki Prize as part of popular culture.

The iconic figure in this massive shift toward middle-brow culture and the diversification of media is the indomitable Ishihara Shintarō. Although Ishihara became a prominent and highly controversial neoconservative politician later in life, he was a huge star of youth culture in the 1950s. His *Taiyō no kisetsu* (Season of the Sun, 1956), a story of rebellious youth, rose to prominence not only as entertainment, but also because of the controversy that it provoked when Ishihara won the prestigious Akutagawa Prize, which had until then been reserved for highbrow fiction. *Season of the Sun* was quickly made into a movie, and was celebrated in the new popular weekly magazines (*shūkanshi*). This in turn spawned new fashions such as the *Shintarō-gari* (Shintaro haircut) that matched well with aloha shirts, and the *Taiyōzoku* or Sun Tribe: self-absorbed middle- and upper-class adolescents who reject sexual abstinence and rebel by driving cars fast and having fun in the sun. Shintarō had a role in promoting the film and singing career of his younger brother Ishihara Yūjirō (1934–87), who became the most hailed star of popular youth culture movies of the fifties and sixties such as *Kurutta kajitsu* (Crazed Fruit, 1956).

Another literary writer who emerged at this time was Mishima Yukio (1925–70), whose literary hits in this period ranged from *Kinkakuji* (The Temple of the Golden Pavilion, 1956), depicting a Buddhist monk so obsessed with a beautiful temple that he is driven to destroy it, to crowd pleasers such as the earnest love story *Shiosai* (The Sound of Waves, 1954) and *Nagasugita haru* (Spring So Long, 1956), a best-selling humorous tale of a marital engagement that drags on for too long. Many of Mishima's novels were made into movies, but they had only a minor impact on Japanese cinema. Mishima's interest in the movies differed from that of Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886–1965), whose engagement with cinema in the 1910s and 20s stemmed from his fascination with the potential of film as a medium. By contrast, Mishima became involved in film mostly because of its commercial potential and because he was an exhibitionist. The campy cult film *Kurotokage* (Black Lizard, 1968, directed by Fukusaku Kinji), based on Mishima's stage adaptation of an Edogawa Rampo detective story, with its transvestite star and a Mishima cameo, has arguably had longer appeal than his other forays into the movies. If anything, theater stimulated

Mishima's imagination more than did film: he wrote a number of well-regarded modern plays and innovative noh plays.

Mishima, who in 1970 gained international celebrity by staging his own ritual suicide as a public spectacle, lived and wrote as flamboyantly as he died. He flaunted his provocative political opinions about the emperor and the Japanese Self Defense Forces, and even formed his own private army, dressing his men in designer uniforms. For all the popular heterosexual love stories, he also attracted audiences by writing frankly about homosexuality in works such as *Kamen no kokuhaku* (Confessions of a Mask, 1949). Despite his sometimes unconventional themes, his novels' popular appeal can be explained partly by his use of plot-heavy, character-driven narratives and the employment of familiar genres.

Of this generation of writers, Ōe Kenzaburō stands out as the most stylistically innovative and thematically bold. Like Ishihara and Mishima, Ōe used fiction as a means of expressing his alienation from mainstream Japanese society. He also portrayed many rebellious characters who want to fight. Yet Ōe is creative and willing to imagine pathologies, dilemmas, time, and space beyond the ordinary, and to experiment with the potential of language. Ōe's reputation as a writer was cemented when his "Shiiku" (The Catch, also translated as Prize Catch, 1957) won the Akutagawa Prize. The story evokes the imaginative worldview of children in an isolated rural village during wartime and their encounter with an African-American GI whose plane crashed nearby. A number of his early works also venture into sexual obsession and perversion. His acclaimed novel *Kojinteki na taiken* (A Personal Matter, 1964) was inspired by what for Ōe was in fact a very individual matter: the birth of his son with brain damage. It was in this powerful work that he succeeded in exploring the ways that personal struggles are entangled with history and politics. Clearly one of the subtexts of many of Ōe's works, including *Man'en gannen no futtobōru* (translated as *The Silent Cry*, 1967), is the anxiety of the nuclear age, as the Cold War nuclear arms race threatened humankind with annihilation.

The frank and graphic use of violence and sex in Ōe's novels has proven controversial. In his earlier novels, the writer emphasized characters who resorted to violence as a means of critiquing the gap that existed between postwar ideals of democracy and actual practice. Like Mishima, Ōe portrays homoeroticism frankly. While Mishima has been labeled "fascist," and Ōe progressive, they were among the few male writers of their generation to treat same-sex relations in their writing either as a site of liberation or as part of a marginalized or pathological identity. As he matured as a writer and

person, Ōe grappled in his writing with the struggle of disabled people to find a voice. The writer's repeated return to his native Shikoku in his fiction aimed at creating in narrative form an alternative kind of community, one capable of resisting the modern pathologies of violence and the security state.

Japan's membership in the "Free World" during the Cold War dictated that it maintain a strong military alliance with the USA, and it also contributed to its choice to pursue rapid economic growth based on industrialization and consumerism. A decade of citizen protests against the US–Japan military alliance, culminating in 100,000 people surrounding the Diet Building and uniting against ratification of the Security Treaty in 1960, is evidence that the nation's course was not chosen by unanimous agreement. Into the 1960s, anti-establishment protests continued, splintering into diverse groups of leftists, communists, and progressives, each seeking to voice their own political vision in opposition to the conservative hegemony that ruled Japan. The escalation of the Vietnam War in the early 1960s had implications for Japan, because the American military bases on Japanese soil were essential to the US war effort, and Japanese industry profited from the war. In reaction, citizens' groups openly expressed their disagreement with the use of Japan as a staging ground for this controversial and hugely costly military venture, even as they enjoyed the fruits of consumer society.

In this atmosphere of sixties protest and challenging the status quo, Ishimure Michiko (b. 1927) wrote *Kugai jōdo* (Paradise in the Sea of Sorrow, 1969), her remarkable literary account of the staggering human and environmental costs of industrial pollution. Ishimure's work concerns the infamous mercury poisoning of humans and other creatures in the Minamata area, south of Nagasaki, on the island of Kyushu. Chisso, a chemical and fertilizer company, had been dumping mercury-laden effluent into a drainage canal leading out into the bay at Minamata since the 1930s. Thousands of local people who ate seafood from the bay became ill, and many died excruciating deaths because of the mercury; many children were born with severe physical and mental disabilities. The company denied that its plant was the cause, and continued to dump toxic effluent into the bay even after the mercury poisoning was scientifically confirmed in 1956. For years, the Japanese and local governments colluded with the company in the cover-up. Ishimure's book brought attention to the plight of Minamata and encouraged readers to reconsider the meaning of economic progress at any price.

In *Paradise in the Sea of Sorrow* Ishimure used her writing to bring to life the voices of witnesses, in their local dialect, and to transcend the boundaries between the living and the spirits of the dead. Ishimure also describes the

initial refusal of intellectuals in Tokyo to acknowledge the extent of this tragedy in this distant fishing community. Even the industrial workers and middle-class residents of the Minamata area tended to discriminate against the patients, fearing that their claims would threaten the prosperity of their community and their lifestyle. The text also evokes the beautiful mountains and bay at Minamata, all the while poisoned by the wastes of progress. In the words of her translator Livia Monnet, the text has “magico-religious, spiritual dimensions,” as the narrator acts “as a medium or shaman for the resentful spirits and ghosts of those who died.”

From the 1970s, a period marked by economic prosperity and solidification of the urban middle class, male writers such as Furui Yoshikichi (b. 1937), Gotō Meisei (1932–99), Abe Akira (1934–89), and Kuroi Senji (b. 1932) explored in their fiction the complex inner lives of people living in cities. This focus on subjectivity and mental states earned the diverse group of writers the label *naikō no sedai* (introverted generation), intended originally as a criticism of the apparent lack of attention to social issues in their writing. Furui’s Akutagawa Prize winning novella *Yōko* (1971) begins with the line “Yōko was sitting alone at the bottom of a deep ravine,” suggesting her literal and figurative isolation, as well as her inability to function socially and emotionally. The narrator delineates Yōko’s isolation in terms of pathology and mental illness (eating disorders and neurosis), but more powerfully describes an interiority that comes into contact with other worlds that evoke Japanese myth and shamanism and that hover between death and life. Furui’s work destabilizes the notion of a unitary self by suggesting the multiple senses of subjectivity encompassed in each character – some rational and social, others fusing with a nostalgic sense of community or spirituality. Furui’s fiction emphasizes the precariousness of negotiating urban life as it rushes forward into the future, heedless of the complex and conflicting psychological and spiritual needs of today’s human beings.

Women's fiction in the postwar era

SHARALYN ORBAUGH

Japan was at war, effectively if not officially, from 1931 to 1945. After its surrender Japan was governed by the Allied Occupation forces from September 1945 until regaining sovereignty in April 1952. It is not surprising that a decade and a half of war followed by nearly seven years of foreign occupation should have a large influence on any nation's subsequent literary production. In the case of Japan the pervasiveness of the militarist rhetoric, the wholesale devastation of the cities by explosive, incendiary and atomic bombs, and the psychic and material repercussions of unconditional surrender created a situation in which echoes and influences of the war and its aftermath resonated strongly for several decades. The so-called "postwar period" lasted at least until the mid 1980s, when Japan's preeminent economic prosperity and international stature allowed for new kinds of national self-definition.

The resonances of war and Occupation did not affect everyone in the same way. The idealized men and women of propaganda and the actual roles assigned to men and women meant that wartime and Occupation period experiences were highly differentiated by gender. As a result, the postwar literature produced between 1945 and 1985 is also in many cases distinctly gendered. In tracing the influences of the war and the Allied Occupation on the prose literature produced by women in that forty-year period it is essential to note the nature and causes of these differences.

During the years of increasing militarism in the 1930s and into the 1940s, both women and men were assigned important roles to play in the imperial project, but those roles were very different. Men were liable to induction – into the military or into various kinds of factory work – contributing directly to the waging of the war. Women's roles were, at first, less directly related to the military aspects of war. Women were encouraged to bear as many healthy children as possible as part of the *kodakara butai* (the "childbearing troop"), and all contraception was banned. They were encouraged to join

local chapters of national women's organizations that explicitly supported the war effort.

As the war intensified and able-bodied men were increasingly scarce, women's roles became more active: women were put in charge of food rationing and neighborhood safety drills; they were drafted into munitions factories or were charged with growing food and delivering quotas to the government; they had to worry about fathers, sons, and brothers in the military; they had to try to keep life together for dependent family members as food, medicine, fuel, and commodities grew ever scarcer; and finally they had to cope with the effects of air raids, fires, homelessness, and disease.

It was not just the real-life wartime roles that were gendered; the metaphorical or symbolic meanings of masculinity and femininity, used pervasively in propaganda, were complementary. The iconic symbol of masculinity was the soldier, exerting himself valiantly and unstintingly for the empire until his death in battle. The symbol of femininity was the flower *nadeshiko* (*Dianthus superbus*), signifying a sweet, demure, endlessly self-sacrificing woman. This image of unspoiled maidenliness was held up as the ideal for women to aspire to being, and the ideal that men were fighting to protect. Although Japanese women did contribute in myriad material ways to the war effort, in propaganda the main task projected for them throughout the war was to keep the home fires burning through their domestic labor and, if married, to produce children for the sake of the imperial mission.

The seven years of the Allied Occupation saw significant psychological and material improvements brought to women's lives by the new Constitution (1947) and other social and juridical changes: the right to vote, equal rights in marriage, and equal opportunities for education. For men, the Occupation had fewer positive effects, at least in psychological terms. The Tokyo War Crimes Trial brought to international consciousness the atrocities committed by Japanese soldiers: men – civilians, soldiers, and politicians – were held responsible for the conception and execution of what was figured in the court as an unjust war. Even from a more nationalistic point of view, it was men who had failed to win the war, and who had accepted “unconditional surrender.” Women's participation in activities that had supported the war effort was virtually absent from the indictments of the War Crimes Trials held throughout Asia, or the self-flagellating rhetoric that lamented Japan's defeat.

In practical terms, however, many women experienced grave hardship when the war ended. Many were faced with the news that their fathers, husbands, or sons would not be returning, so that they would remain solely

responsible for keeping their dependants fed and clothed under material circumstances that were in some ways just as difficult as the worst months of wartime. Japan's worst food crisis in modern times occurred in 1946, after the war was over. Many women, although continuing to be the sole support of their children, lost their wartime jobs and joined the huge ranks of the unemployed as returning men were given precedence in hiring. The presence of a large occupying army, lack of food, and no access to gainful employment led to a rise in prostitution.

All of these differences in male and female experience in modernizing and militarizing Japan – before, during, and immediately after the war – are visible in the gendered nature of much postwar literature.

The immediate effects of the war on women's writing can be seen by looking at publishing statistics. Women's share of annual literary publications had grown rapidly from about 10 percent of the total in 1930 to nearly 20 percent of the total in 1940.¹ Publications by both men and women were curtailed between 1941 and 1945, because of the exigencies of the Pacific War. Once the war ended, however, literary journals were relaunched, paper shortages eased, and the literary world came back to life. Nonetheless, during the years of the Occupation (1945–52), women's share of literary production fell steeply from its 1940 level, returning to 10 percent. Although the defeat had brought a respite from the wartime demands on women's labor and attention, and although many gains were made in women's rights during this period, it remained an extremely difficult time in material terms. After 1953, however, the percentage share of literary production by women once again rose: in 1956 it was 15 percent, and in 1958, 18 percent. This slow but steady rise continued throughout the 1960s, 70s, and 80s, paralleling improvements in women's educational opportunities, economic prosperity, and a general boom in literary activity.

Another way to grasp the gendered changes in postwar literature can be seen by looking at the distribution of the literary awards that were and continue to be significant in the insular world of Japanese publishing. One of the most prestigious is the Akutagawa Prize, given twice annually to the best piece of (high-culture) prose fiction by an emerging author and often acting as a gateway to a distinguished literary career. In the two decades between its inception in 1935 and 1954, the Akutagawa Prize went only twice

¹ Figures for all publishing data derived from Yoshida Sei'ichi, *Gendai Nihon bungaku nenpyō* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1958); Muramatsu Sadataka and Watanabe Sumiko, *Gendai josei bungaku jiten* (Tokyo: Tōkyōdō Shuppan, 1990); and Odagiri Susumu, *Nihon kindai bungaku nenpyō* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1993); calculations by the author.

to women: Nakazato Tsuneko (1909–87) in 1939 and Shibaki Yoshiko (1914–91) in 1942. Expressed as a percentage, women won the award 6 percent of the time. In the decade from 1955 to 1964, however, women were awarded the Akutagawa Prize 12.5 percent of the time, rising to 26 percent in the decade from 1965 to 1974, and again to 35 percent between 1975 and 1984.

Other literary prizes had similar gendered trajectories, with women writers represented in greater numbers beginning in the late 1950s. The Noma Prize, for example, which is given annually to an outstanding new literary work and had never gone to a female-authored publication, was awarded in 1957 to two novels by female authors: Enchi Fumiko (1905–86) for *Onnazaka* (literally, Women's Hill, translated as *The Waiting Years*, 1949–57) and Uno Chiyo (1897–1996) for *Ohan* (Ohan, 1947–57). The Naoki Prize, which is given twice yearly to the best piece of middlebrow prose fiction, was awarded to only one woman in the two decades between 1935 and 1954, Koyama Itoko (1901–89), in 1950 (3.5 percent of total winners). Between 1955 and 1964, however, the percentage of female winners shot up to 21 percent before waning somewhat in later decades. Not only were women recognized for their publications but they were also invited to join literary prize committees themselves, with Kōno Taeko (1926–2015) and Ōba Minako (1930–2007) serving on the Akutagawa Prize committee, for example.

As noted, only 10 percent of the literary works published between 1945 and 1952 were by women authors. Not only was the percentage of Occupation period publication by women small, but also the number of women writing was very limited: three women – Hirabayashi Taiko (1905–72), Hayashi Fumiko (1903–51), and Sata Ineko (1904–98) – accounted for fully one third of all female literary publications, and more than half of all publications by women were produced by just six female authors. All of these prolific authors were born well before the war and already had established writing careers. Many of them had also been involved in prewar left-wing movements. Unlike the so-called Third Generation of New Writers (*Dai-san no shinjin*) – an important new wave of young male authors that emerged after the war, most of whom were born around 1920 – there was no similar groundswell of new, young female talent.

Virtually all of the women who did manage to publish during the Occupation focused on a similar theme: the real-life situation of ordinary people as they were affected by the war and its aftermath. Unlike the surrealistic, darkly humorous, self-satirizing tone that characterized the work of *male* writers of the period, such as Kojima Nobuo (1915–2006) or Yasuoka Shōtarō (1920–2013), the fiction produced by women tended to be

realistic depictions of the day-to-day problems of finding food and shelter for oneself and one's children in the absence of a husband and all the other social safety nets of prewar society. Prostitutes and desperate mothers – and some women who are both – are the paradigmatic figures in immediate postwar fiction by women. Unlike the prostitutes that populate the fiction of male *nikutai bungaku* (literature of the flesh) writers, the sex worker protagonists of female-authored stories are neither sexualized nor glorified; they are struggling to survive in challenging conditions.

Despite the dire circumstances addressed, the majority of the immediate postwar stories published by women are concerned with the process of reconstructing the home, even if it is a barely intact structure enclosing a newly imagined type of family. This is in contrast to the radically deconstructed home and social structures highlighted in the work of many postwar male authors.

One of the best-known short stories of the postwar period, for example, is Hayashi Fumiko's "Hone" (Bones, 1949), about a middle-class war widow, Michiko, who is left as the sole support of her young daughter as well as her ailing father and bedridden brother. After losing her wartime factory job and falling ill with tuberculosis, Michiko begins a life of prostitution to make enough money to feed her family. Although she suffers from guilt at the thought of her betrayal of the prewar middle-class value system she used to live by – symbolized in the story by the recurring figure of a woman in a white apron with a baby carriage – Michiko gradually recovers a sense that she and her daughter will survive this low period (though her father and brother will not) and return to a stable life. Many of Hayashi's postwar works feature similarly melodramatic elements – wives whose chastity has been compromised by the desperate circumstances of the war and its aftermath – but those works resolutely refuse to pursue dramatic, tragic narrative resolutions. Instead the dominant message is that lives – particularly women's lives – will go on.

In the 1930s and early 1940s Hayashi had helped to support the war effort by serving in China as a special correspondent for the *Mainichi* and *Asahi* newspapers, but the wartime experiences of her contemporary, Hirabayashi Taiko, followed a different path (though one also typical for a number of women writers). Involved with anarchist groups from the 1920s, Hirabayashi spent most of the war years – from 1937 to 1945 – imprisoned for left-wing activities. Because she was suffering from tuberculosis, too, when she was not in prison she struggled just to stay alive. Hirabayashi was very quick to publish once the war was over. "Hitori yuku" (Going on Alone, 1946), for

example, is an autobiographical account of her years spent incarcerated while the war raged outside. It ends with her joyous relief when she is finally released from prison and admitted into a hospital where her tuberculosis will be treated. Another story published in 1946, “Otete tsunaide” (Holding Hands), takes up the problem of children orphaned by the war. The protagonist, Keiko, has adopted a young orphaned girl, but finds that the time and effort of childcare is interfering with the important work she wants to do toward improving women’s rights now that the war is over and democracy is being promoted. Keiko ultimately decides to send the girl to another family, which she believes will be better for both of them.

A large percentage of the fiction by women writers produced between 1945 and 1955 gestures toward the fact that women’s bodies and minds had been mobilized during wartime (and leading up to it) in ways very different from men’s. The focus in many stories on “inappropriate” sexuality and “inconvenient” children reflects the fact that women’s social education for more than forty years had been concentrated on motherhood and women’s proper role in the proper multigeneration family, in the service of the empire. The circumstances of the war and its immediate aftermath had shattered the cohesive images so prevalent in wartime propaganda, and fiction by female writers reveals the ways that those prewar ideologies had controlled and betrayed women. When the war came to an end, women found themselves facing the very real, immediate, and embodied consequences (as in children and other dependants) of those ideologies. The realist mode that characterizes their Occupation period fiction reflects the necessity for women and men to find a way to survive until new categories of national and self-identity can be constructed, and perhaps to take an active political role, like Hirabayashi’s protagonist Keiko, in creating those new identities.

By the end of the Allied Occupation in 1952 the nation was beginning to show signs of recovery from the devastation of war. The outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 had only increased American–Japanese interdependence, through the network of US military bases that remained after the Occupation ended. Although the existence of the bases was a contentious issue, the presence of US servicemen and the USA’s continued investment in Japanese infrastructure throughout the 1950s (and into the Cold War era that followed) undoubtedly aided in Japan’s economic recovery. Japan’s “economic miracle” of annual double-digit economic growth began in the mid 1950s and continued through the 1960s, leading to increased material wellbeing for most of its citizens.

This economic and social recovery led to a resurgence of literary productivity, including among women, in the second half of the 1950s. The female writers who attained prominence in this period were generally of a higher social class and better educated than their predecessors: Enchi Fumiko and Kōda Aya (1904–90), for example, were both daughters of extremely eminent men of letters – linguist Ueda Kazutoshi (1867–1937) and writer Kōda Rohan (1867–1947) respectively. Another important woman who emerged in the 1950s was Ariyoshi Sawako (1931–84), who had graduated from a Japanese women's college and had traveled abroad to study. The activities of these women, and others such as Sono Ayako (b. 1931), led literary critic Usui Yoshimi (1905–87) to declare the period a *saijo jidai* (era of talented women).

Among these talented women Enchi Fumiko garnered the greatest reputation. Although Enchi had begun her writing career before the war with plays and essays in literary journals, she was not well known until her long novel *Onnazaka* was serialized, beginning in 1949. *Onnazaka* was completed in 1957 and was followed in 1958 by *Onnamen* (literally, Women's Masks, translated as *Masks*). These two novels – conspicuous for the word “woman/women” (*onna*) in their titles – comprise harsh indictments of the prewar *ie* (household) system within which women had no legal rights and were important only to the extent that they pleased their husbands and bore them suitable children. Enchi makes little direct reference to the war in *Onnamen*, and none in *Onnazaka*, which is set entirely in the prewar period, but her criticisms of the *ie* system resonate fully with the images of proper womanhood that had prevailed in militarist and imperialist propaganda. Moreover, the fact that Enchi wrote these two dark novels ten years *after* the granting of political rights to women during the Occupation suggests that she was pessimistic about the degree of improvement such juridical changes would bring; she implies that the old systems, though no longer legally in force, continue to configure gender roles in society and the family. At the same time, her works also imply that individual women have many choices when it comes to colluding with or resisting intransigent social systems.

Enchi's fiction is notable for its deployment of the fantastic or occult as a mode for revealing the psychological depth of women's inner life and the subtle connections between women, while simultaneously challenging the dominance of consensus reality (the patriarchal legacy of the *ie* system). The family is again being reimagined, but Enchi's work takes a step away from the realist mode dominant in women's writing during the immediate postwar period.

Many important male writers from the late 1950s and through the 1960s concerned themselves with Japan's place in Cold War geopolitical alignments, and particularly with the question of Japanese masculinity during a period that was marked by vigorous economic recovery but continued reliance on the USA for military protection. Women writers of this period, however, appeared far less concerned with Japan's international orientations. As influential male critic Etō Jun (1932–99) argued, women's literature at this time comprised the "personal statements of women who were made to bear serious responsibility for the heavy burden of the *bōkoku* [the national defeat in WWII]." They share this responsibility with the men, but, in Etō's view, respond to it differently:

[I]n order to gloss over the humiliation of "national defeat," men have built up elaborate bluffing self-deceptions, but women on the contrary have tried to throw themselves *bodily* into the fissures between reality and the fabrications created by these ruined men.

("Michisū no sugomi," *Gunzō*, June 1968, emphasis added)

Male writer and *Gunzō* Prize committee member Yasuoka Shōtarō concurred, saying the writing of women in the 1960s was *osorubeki*: terrifying or ghastly (in its brilliance) ("Osorubeki joryū," *Gunzō*, June 1968). These views may be overly dichotomized, but Etō is correct that the gendered/sexed *body* becomes a crucial element in the fiction of many of the emerging female writers in this period, often deployed in terrifying or ghastly ways, with the explicit intention of revealing and destabilizing entrenched power structures. Kōno Taeko (1926–2015), Kurahashi Yumiko (1935–2005), Mori Mari (1903–87), Ōba Minako (1930–2007), and Takahashi Takako (1932–2013) concentrated much of their creative energy on exploring the nature of sex, gender, and sexuality, and the social and political structures – such as the family – that configured those concepts. In this sense they followed in the footsteps of the female authors of the Occupation period such as Hayashi Fumiko and Hirabayashi Taiko. But, building on the work of Enchi Fumiko perhaps, a large percentage of the significant fiction published by women in the 1960s and 70s makes use of a fantastic or science-fiction-like mode, and includes graphic and disturbing scenes of physical or psychological abnormality, violence, and grotesque sexuality, as well as more gentle challenges to consensus reality.

Akutagawa Prize winner Kōno Taeko, for example, gained prominence through her many works that featured a childless woman who enjoys violent masochistic sex. The complex ways in which masochism can expose and then

challenge traditional power hierarchies is explored in depth in her shocking 1964 story “Yōjigari” (Toddler Hunting), in which a woman derives sexual pleasure from fantasizing the horrific beating and torture of a boy who represents herself. Other works in this vein include “Ari takaru” (Ants Swarm), and the later novel *Mīratori ryōkitan* (The Bizarre Tale of the Mummy Hunter, 1990), in which a woman learns to feign cruelty in order to please her masochistic husband. Through the masochistic relationships her protagonists enjoy, Kōno's works reveal the particularities of socially constructed gender roles, showing how a woman may be exerting dominance exactly at the moment she seems most vulnerable, or may be most acquiescent when she seems most cruel.

Kurahashi Yumiko, deeply versed in contemporary French literature, engaged themes that many readers and critics found shocking – threesomes, incest (brother–sister), self-mutilation, bisexuality, hermaphroditism, and, like Kōno, sadomasochism – couched in a fantastic, surreal, or parodic mode. The intent of these themes was not sensationalism, but rather to dispute the binary nature of self and other, female and male, and to challenge the idea of a unitary, autonomous human subject as the basis for social and political power structures.

The 1960s fiction of literary daughter Mori Mari – her father was the eminent Mori Ōgai (1862–1922) – approached gender and sexuality from a different direction, but one that was similarly shocking to some readers. Her trilogy of novellas from the early 1960s, “Kareha no nedoko” (Bed of Withered Leaves, 1962), “Nichiyōbi ni wa boku wa ikanai” (I'm Not Coming on Sunday, 1962), and “Koibitotachi no mori” (The Lovers' Forest, 1961), featured male homosexual protagonists, but, as Kazumi Nagaike has argued, these highly aestheticized, unrealistic narratives actually worked to highlight and deconstruct social myths of *femininity* and *female* sexuality rather than attempting to depict accurately the lives of gay men.

Some women writers of the 1960s and 70s preferred to use a more realist mode (though including elements of “magical realism”) in their contestations of traditional gender roles. Ōba Minako and Takahashi Takako, for example, feature protagonists who are lonely even in the midst of “idyllic” middle-class marriages and families, with problematic mother–daughter relationships highlighted in stories such as Ōba's “Sanbiki no kani” (The Three Crabs, 1968) or “Yamauba no bishō” (The Smile of a Mountain Witch, 1976), and Takahashi's “Sōjikei” (Congruent Figures, 1971). In attempting to bring mothers into the position of speaker or subject, Ōba and Takahashi contested the relegation of “the mother” to nothing more than what Marianne Hirsch

terms the “object” or “ground” against which the *child’s* subjectivity is developed, and simultaneously contested the idealized image of “motherhood for the state” that had been prevalent in earlier decades.²

As we see in Ōba’s “Yamauba no bishō,” in contesting the traditional “family romance” women authors often employed the figure of the *yamauba* (or *yamanba*), a demon woman of the mountains familiar from Japanese folklore. The attributes of the yamauba stand for the reverse of the sanctioned image of women: living alone in the mountains rather than in the domestic urban household; devouring rather than bearing and rearing children; killing handsome young men rather than becoming docile wives; and having the ability to change form to entice unwary travelers, as opposed to the guileless and ever-true nadeshiko flower of wartime feminine imagery.

The 1970s saw the debut of the first generation of writers who were born after the end of the war, Kanai Mieko (b. 1947) and Tsushima Yūko (b. 1947) prominent among them. Later in her career Kanai turned to realist fiction and novels of manners, but her first stories, published in the early 1970s, replicate the disturbing themes employed by Kōno and Kurahashi: incest (father–daughter), self-mutilation, hermaphroditism, and so on, and for the same purpose: an exploration of the power structures that underpin social arrangements such as gender and familial roles, to further undermine the lingering traces of the prewar *ie* system. But Kanai’s concerns exceed the national boundaries and political history of Japan (as did Kurahashi’s). Her characters are often nameless archetypes (father, prostitute, real estate agent), living in unspecified and ambiguous locations, and her stories include numerous references to non-Japanese literature and art. Her graphically violent short story “Usagi” (Rabbits, 1972), for example, which concerns the relationship between female literary expression and the psychic mess resulting from traditional family roles, takes its inspiration from *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*.

Tsushima Yūko, in contrast, sets her early stories, all in a realist mode, in easily recognizable Japanese locations. The protagonists of her works defy social convention by having and raising children out of wedlock. Her 1980 novel *Yama o hashiru onna* (Woman Running in the Mountains, trans. 1991), for example, features a protagonist who is pregnant and unmarried, bringing embarrassment to the parents with whom she lives, but ultimately affirming the possibility of creating new, viable forms of family outside of traditional

² Marianne Hirsch, *The Mother/Daughter Plot: Narrative, Psychoanalysis, Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989).

institutional structures. (Tsushima draws on the figure of the yamauba in this novel.) In 1982's "Danmari ichi" (The Silent Traders) she explores the ramifications of these new family structures for the children that inhabit them, again coming to an affirmative conclusion.

A final trend in postwar women's writing deserves mention: the emergence of expatriate writers such as Ōba Minako and Kometani Fumiko (b. 1930), both of whom began their literary careers while living in the United States and writing about Japanese characters coping within unfamiliar cultural currents. For both Ōba and Kometani the differences between Japanese and North American people are significant, but not intimidating; their characters function with grace and depth in their new environments. Both authors won the Akutagawa Prize (Ōba in 1968; Kometani in 1985 for *Sugikoshi no matsuri* [Passover]), suggesting the appeal of these successfully internationalized characters within the literary establishment, possibly because of the contrast with the geopolitical unease and dependence still commonly thematized in much male-authored fiction of the period.

The emergence of girls' manga and girls' culture

YUIKA KITAMURA

The genre of comic books in Western culture is associated with young male readers, but in modern Japan comic books (manga) became closely associated with female readers and writers. *Shōjo manga* (girls' comics) appeared as early as the 1910s. In 1899, the Girls' High School Order was promulgated, with girls separated from boys in a single-sex school system and the school curriculum aiming to make good wives and wise mothers. This gender separation created the concept of *shōjo* (girls), consequently giving birth to girls' culture. Teenage magazines, which began appearing at the end of 1880s, at first targeted girls as well as boys in spite of such titles as *Shōnen no sono* (Boys' Garden), but they began to be separated by gender soon after the genderization of education that occurred after the Sino-Japanese War (1894–5). In 1902, *Shōjokai* (Girls' World), the first *shōjo zasshi* (girls' magazine) appeared, followed by many other girls' magazines. Readers of those magazines were limited – mainly, girls of the middle or upper class who could go to girls' high schools (which constituted only 10–20 percent of all girls), but these girls' magazines became an essential part of the pre-World War II girls' culture.

The prewar girls' magazines carried a few humorous comic strips in simple square-shaped *koma* (frames) arranged in orderly rows. Most popular, however, were *shōjo shōsetsu* (girls' novels), which were illustrated. Particularly popular was Yoshiya Nobuko's (1896–1973) stories accompanied by Nakahara Jun'ichi's (1913–83) illustrations, both of which had a great influence on postwar *shōjo manga*. Female readers shared their enthusiasm for these illustrated stories by contributing letters to the “readers' section” of the magazines.

After the hiatus of the Pacific War, a period of tight government control, censorship, and paper rationing, girls' magazines revived – a revival that included prewar style girls' novels but also actively carried Western girls' novels, articles on fashion, news on Hollywood stars and Japanese celebrities,

and girls' manga. The translations of Western girls' novels such as *Anne of Green Gables* (*Akage no an*, Japanese translation by Muraoka Hanako [1893–1968], 1952) deeply appealed to postwar girls along with American movies. The admiration for Western culture had a great effect on girls' manga – their locales, characters, and stories – especially up until the 1970s.

“Story manga” (comics with stories) came to the forefront in postwar girls' magazines, with Tezuka Osamu's (1928–89) *Ribon no kishi* (Princess Knight, 1953–6) proving a great success. Takahashi Makoto, another noted manga writer, combined story manga with lyric illustrations. He drew brilliant illustrations of girls in freely arranged frames – like a three-column frame to depict melodramatic stories such as *Arashi o koete* (After a Storm, 1958). Girls' manga gradually became more original, focusing on human psychology and using flexible frames. By contrast, boys' manga represented action (such as sports and violence) in movie-like square frames.

In the 1960s, love became a popular theme in girls' manga. Mizuno Hideko's (b. 1939) *Hoshi no tategoto* (The Harp of Star, 1960) was the first girls' manga that depicted love between a man and a woman (a prince and a princess in a northern European myth). Another good example is Nishitani Yoshiko's (b. 1943) *Remon to sakuranbo* (Lemons and Cherries, 1966), which described teenage love and ordinary high school life in Japan.

The percentage of manga grew larger and larger in girls' magazines, while girls' novels gradually lost popularity. From the end of the 1950s, weekly and monthly magazines that were based strictly on girls' manga proliferated. This created a demand for new manga writers, and many magazines encouraged readers to submit their own manga. Editors selected potential contributors, trained them, and debuted them in their magazines. Girls' manga writers were now mostly women, and the age difference between writers and readers grew smaller.

Girls' manga made a dramatic breakthrough in the 1970s. Sophisticated techniques were developed, including the extremely flexible layout of frames, *tenbyō* (stippling drawing), and *kakeami* (handwritten net-drawings); and a large number of words – speech, internal thought, narration, and authorial commentary – were artfully arranged not only inside but also outside the *fukidashi* (balloons). These enabled girls' manga to feature extremely complicated stories and minutely detailed psychological description.

It was also around this time that the *Hana no nijū-yonen-gumi* (The Flowery Year-Twenty-Four Group, the women comic writers born around 1949) became active. (They are also referred to as the Forty-Niners.) Many of their works are now considered classics of girls' manga. *Tōma no shinzō*

(The Heart of Thomas, 1974–5) by Hagio Moto (b. 1949) is one of them. The locale is a boys' boarding school (gymnasium) in West Germany. The main characters are Juli, the protagonist, and two other boys, Oskar and Erich. This manga opens with the death of Thomas Werner, a thirteen-year-old boy in the school. *Tōma no shinzō* is full of mysteries – Thomas's death, Juli's detached behavior, Oskar's real father, and Erich's sickness – which are explored in depth and through very subtle drawings. At the end, each boy grows up, and Juli decides to become a priest and leaves the boarding school.

Girls' manga by the Forty-Niners bear close similarities to serious novels. *Tōma no shinzō* has the atmosphere of German *Bildungsroman*, dealing with religion, death, love, (sexual) violence, and racism. Other Forty-Niners wrote compelling – sometimes controversial – stories on diverse themes like eternal life (Hagio, *Pō no ichizoku* [The Clan of Po], 1972–6), the pregnancy of a teenage girl (Ōshima Yumiko [b. 1947], *Tanjō* [Birth], 1970), and homosexual love (Takemiya Keiko [b. 1950], *Kaze to ki no uta* [The Sound of the Wind and Trees], 1976–84).

Another related movement in the 1970s was *otomechikku manga* (maidenly comics). They established a major theme of girls' manga – love and self-affirmation brought about by a man (boy). The cute and romantic items illustrated in this genre (e.g. homemade cookies, a bouquet of petite flowers, white lace curtains over French windows) helped to develop the concept of *kawaii* (cute), one of the major characteristics of Japanese girls' culture.

In the 1970s, Japan witnessed a women's liberation movement. More than 30 percent of the high school girls went to college or junior college. Women's participation in society increased and their lifestyle diversified, but there were still many tight restrictions. Both the Forty-Niner Group's manga and *otomechikku manga* show women and girls struggling to find their own space and a different means of self-expression. The Forty-Niners, for instance, often chose boys as main characters, as in *Tōma no shinzō*. They created new possibilities under the guise of “boy” characters, who were free from the restrictions on women in the real world. They also explored sexuality and eroticism, which had been a major taboo for girls' manga. BL (boys' love) comics – manga on love between boys – was also born in the 1970s and became an integral part of girls' manga.

With the development of girls' manga in the 1970s, the readership gradually expanded to adult women (and sometimes men), which led in the 1980s to new girls' manga magazines targeting readers of different age groups, such as a new genre called *redisu komikku* (ladies' comics). Ladies' comics,



Figure 3. Hagio Moto's *The Heart of Thomas*, trans. Matt Thorn (Seattle, 2012). Juli talks to Erich about his feelings toward the deceased Thomas. Juli's thoughts are represented outside the balloons. Fantagraphics Books.

characterized by extensive description of sex, enjoyed a publication boom in the late 1980s.

Girls' manga in the 1980s often involve groups of teenagers. Yoshida Akimi's (b. 1956) *Banana fisshu* (Banana Fish, 1985–94), for example, describes friendship and (non-sexual) love between Ash, a teenage street gang leader in New York, and Eiji, an ordinary Japanese boy. It has a large-scale cast of gangsters, mafia, and politicians working in the United States.

In the 1990s, a new genre of *yangū redīsu* (young ladies') comics emerged; it was an intermediate genre between girls' manga and ladies' comics, and described various problems of young women at work (such as relationships with colleagues, career achievement, and private life). *Sentō bishōjo* (Beautiful Fighting Girl) also became a keyword for the 1990s. Takeuchi Naoko's (b. 1967) *Bishōjo senshi Sērā Mūn* (Sailor Moon, 1992–7) is a good example. It attracted younger readers as well as foreign readers. (It was at about this time that Japanese comics began to be translated into foreign languages and became a global subculture.)

Rekishi fantajī (historical fantasy) and *wa-mono* (comics that describe Japanese traditional culture) have been in the forefront in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Yoshinaga Fumi's (b. 1971) *Ōoku* (The Inner Chambers, 2005–), an internationally acclaimed historical fantasy, depicts a transgendered world in the Edo castle where the shōgun is female and her wife and mistresses are male. It won the 2009 James Tiptree Jr. Award for science fiction or fantasy that promotes a better understanding of gender.

Girls' manga, which grew from modest beginnings, has played a crucial role in girls' culture in the postwar period. More recently it has been expanding beyond girls' culture to win a wider readership, including adult women, boys, men, and international audiences.

Modern Japanese literature from Okinawa

DAVINDER L. BHOWMIK

In 1879, a decade after the formation of the nation-state of Japan, the Japanese government annexed the Ryūkyū Islands of which Okinawa is part, and began to strongly promote assimilation. This was largely carried out top-down in the school system, which required students to use standard Japanese and punished those who lapsed into Okinawa dialect. While modern poetry and drama were among the first literary genres in Japanese to emerge in this environment, prose fiction, owing to the time it took for authors to master Japanese, did not appear until the first decade of the twentieth century.

“Kunenbo” (Mandarin Oranges), published by Yamagusuku Seichū (1884–1949) in the journal *Hototogisu* (Cuckoo) in 1911, garnered the attention of critics for its arresting display of local color, then much in demand. In addition to showcasing the Okinawa region, the story, set during the Sino-Japanese war (1894–5), depicts a fractured society in part loyal to China and resistant to the incursions of modernity, and in part pursuing modernity through an allegiance to Japan. “Kunenbo,” which features local color *and* resistance to political authority, begs the question of just what literature from Okinawa is – regional or minority? The literary successes that followed “Kunenbo” contain not only some degree of regional flourishes, which serve as a balm to the urban weary, but also a certain degree of resistance to the notion of Okinawans as ethnic minorities.

Whereas identity is a clear theme of prewar literature from Okinawa, after the devastating spring 1945 Battle of Okinawa in which the Japanese Imperial Army indiscriminately killed civilians, executed Okinawans who spoke in dialect, and forced civilian suicides, the battle and its after effects became a major theme of postwar writing. Among this literature, of particular note is Ōshiro Tatsuhiro’s (b. 1925) *Kakuteru pātī* (The Cocktail Party), published in 1967, and awarded Okinawa’s first Akutagawa Prize. Though set in the period of the American occupation, the novella, which centers on an Okinawan man’s efforts to fight for justice after the rape of his daughter by an American

soldier, is eerily timeless. Okinawa's subjugated position is evident in Okinawa's troubled history, from as early as 1609 when the Shimazu clan from Satsuma invaded the Ryūkyū Islands and set into place colonial rule, to decades of prewar discrimination, the Battle of Okinawa, the prolonged American occupation, and the reversion to Japanese sovereignty in 1972 (without the removal of American military bases). These historical events as well as the recurring rape of Okinawan girls and women, such as the infamous 1995 rape of a twelve-year-old schoolgirl by three US military servicemen, make *The Cocktail Party* a sobering read.

Just as discussions of the US–Japan Security Treaty made Okinawa daily newspaper fare in 1967 when Ōshiro won his prize, the eve of Okinawa's reversion saw Higashi Mineo (b. 1938) win the Akutagawa Prize for *Okinawa no shōnen* (The Child of Okinawa, 1971), a work that depicts a military base town through the eyes of a child. International attention paid to the 1995 rape kept Okinawa the object of media scrutiny and no doubt resulted in judges selecting Matayoshi Eiki's (b. 1947) novel on Okinawan burial customs, *Buta no mukui* (The Pig's Revenge), for the Akutagawa Prize in 1996.

Perhaps the only Akutagawa Prize winning work from Okinawa not directly linked to contemporary politics is Medoruma Shun's (b. 1960) "Suitekiteki" (Droplets), which won in 1997. The literary merit of Medoruma's magic realist tale of a sanshin-playing, Orion beer drinking, womanizing farmer and his rascally cousin is plain to see. But Medoruma also builds into his story of a rural farmer the theme of wartime memory, taking great pains to distinguish the private from the public.

Though "Droplets" brought Medoruma fame in 1997, he had been publishing stories locally since the early 1980s and continues to write much longer fiction today. In addition to writing lengthier works, another discernible shift from the early to more recent stories is that his protagonists are more likely to be strong and violent than weak and passive. In 1999 Medoruma published in the *Asahi* newspaper "Kibō" (Hope), an ironic short story that some took to be non-fiction. In this story, in which the 1995 rape serves as a backdrop, the protagonist, an Okinawan who has just strangled to death an American child, reflects that his is a crime both natural and inevitable for those without power, who are forced to live under conditions of constant fear. In subsequent novels Medoruma's protagonists are perpetrators of violence instead of victims of it.

It would be farfetched to state that Medoruma's emboldened protagonists reflect a strengthening body politic in Okinawa today, since the prefecture is far from unified. Even so, one cannot ignore the fact that contemporary

authors are increasingly taking on controversial subject matter. Mainland author Ikezawa Natsuki (b. 1945), a long time resident of Okinawa, published *Kadena* (Kadena, 2009), a work of historical fiction that has for its setting Kadena Air Force Base, the largest military base in the Pacific. Ōshiro Tatsuhiro also recently published a collection of short stories that focus on another of Okinawa's basetowns, Futenma, the city that surrounds Futenma Marine Corps Air Station, slated since 1996 for relocation to Okinawa's pristine north. Both *Kadena* and *Futenma yo* make visible the irrepressible violence contained in military structures so often described by critics as naturalized or invisible.

By far the most daring but overshadowed of contemporary authors is Sakiyama Tami (b. 1954). Like Medoruma, she has published stories since the early 1980s, two of which were nominated for the Akutagawa Prize. Shortly after the 9/11 attacks Sakiyama penned an essay in which she declared her intention to bring into collision *shima kotoba* (island language) and Japanese. This methodological shift, as evidenced in a series of seven stories published in the literary journal *Subaru* in 2006–7, collectively known as the *Kuja* stories, has made her writing challenging to say the least. Among several dying dialects, Iriomote Island dialect dances on the pages of her stories together with standard Japanese. So long as Sakiyama continues her bold project there is no fear that modern Japanese literature from Okinawa is a superfluous body of writing.

Postwar Zainichi writings: politics, language, and identity

MELISSA L. WENDER

Language is front and center in postwar Zainichi writings: texts penned by people of Korean descent residing in Japan. These authors began to compose poetry and fiction in the Japanese language in a prewar colonial world in which they were indubitably *Korean*, so they either wrote in Korean or wrote in Japanese as a second language, highly conscious of using the language of the colonizer. However, between the 1950s and the 1980s, they insinuated their way into Japan's literary scene in a different manner. Most of them were authors with native proficiency in Japanese language, raised and acculturated in Japan, but as resident aliens in Japan they were allied either with the North (the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, or DPRK) or with the South (the Republic of Korea, or ROK). Since then, their writing has taken a symbolically prominent place in contemporary Japanese literature, as its most important "minority" literature. Some writers even identify themselves, borrowing the American turn of phrase, as "Korean Japanese." In the postwar period Zainichi literature is at least as influenced by Japanese context as it is by Korean heritage: it is often written in the distinctly Japanese form of the so-called autobiographical *shishōsetsu* or "I-novel," and focused on people negotiating an existence in Japan or as Japanized within Korea.

In 1945, when the war ended, approximately 2 million Koreans remained in Japan, but their numbers soon shrank, since many hastened to return home, and roughly 600,000 ended up staying. If the immediate postwar period was a tumultuous era for everyone living in Japan, it was all the more so for those of Korean descent. They soon found themselves stripped of Japanese citizenship (they could apply for it, but it was difficult to get) and discriminated against as they had been under colonialism, and their native country politically divided. They also started to partition themselves into Left and Right, and by 1955 two powerful groups – Sōren (short for Zai-Nihon Chōsenjin Sōrengōkai, or General Association of Korean Residents in Japan) affiliated with the North, and Mindan (short for Zai-Nihon Daikanminkoku Mindan, or Union of

Korean Residents in Japan) with the South (Republic of Korea, or ROK) – respectively. It was only in 1965, as a result of a treaty normalizing relations between Japan and South Korea, that Mindan affiliates became able to achieve ROK citizenship and with it permanent resident status in Japan; only much later did the latter become possible for non-ROK citizens. As members of a formerly colonized population facing discrimination, uncertain legal status, and political segmentation, Zainichi authors have shared a concern about hybrid identity, language, and culture with postcolonial and minority writers elsewhere. The division of their homeland, however, has meant that national affiliation takes on a particular significance for them.

Like their Japanese peers, these writers wrote in a literary world dominated, at least at first, by the *shishōsetsu*. The form has been characterized as an apolitical one, but if the content of one's real life is filled with discrimination or memories of colonialism, the fiction itself takes on political implications even when it does not refer directly to political events. To read the works of Kim Tal-su (1919–97), a devotee of Shiga Naoya (1883–1971) and the first Zainichi writer to break into the Japanese publishing world in the postwar period, is, as Kawamura Minato points out in his groundbreaking *Umare tara soko ga furusato* (Home Is Where You're Born, 1999), to read a history of Zainichi political life. This is not to say that there are no personal elements or literary devices in his work, but, as Tomi Suzuki has shown, *shishōsetsu* is above all a practice of *reading*. And so it has been with Kim Tal-su: readers have taken his works as a window into the realities of first-generation Zainichi experience. Since he was not only surrounded by but also engaged in the political struggles of his community, his work, however fictional it might be, was able to serve as a political voice within the Japanese intellectual world. At the much-examined ending to “Fuji no mieru mura de” (In the Shadow of Fuji, 1952), after being rejected for his love interest in a Japanese girl, the main character shoots a rifle at the iconic mountain. It does not matter much whether the story is “true” or not: the crux is the very desire of a Zainichi Korean to do such a thing, and the emotional release that this symbolic murder of Japanese-ness would bring.

However, it was only with the next generation that the controversy over the *shishōsetsu* form took center stage in the discussion of Zainichi fiction, with a 1970 roundtable discussion by second-generation writer Ri Kaisei (b. 1935), first-generation writer and critic Kim Sōk-pōm (b. 1925), and the Japanese novelist Ōe Kenzaburō (b. 1935), published in the journal *Bungaku* (Literature). Most memorable is Ri's claim that Zainichi writers should seek to affirm their Korean “identity” (borrowed from English), and both his and

Ōe's staunch opposition to Koreans' assimilation, literary or otherwise. Indeed, Ōe seems almost envious of Ri's in-born opportunity to resist Japanese-ness, with almost natural ways to twist the content, form, and language of literature by weaving into it Korean-ness.

Just two years later, Ri Kaisei became the first Zainichi writer to be crowned with the Akutagawa Prize for "Kinuta o utsu onna" (Woman Who Beats the Fulling Block, 1972) in a story that did precisely that. "Kinuta" thematically and in its very form questions the meanings of individual lives in relationship to the national identities of Korea and Japan. It travels through multiple voices and linguistic registers, including names in Korean script, names in Japanese pronunciation, a *sinse t'aryŏng* or traditional Korean lament, a poem written by the narrator as child, and the narrator's confident adult voice. All this suggests that the notion that the *shishōsetsu* could adequately represent human experience is false. Instead, we can take the story to mirror the common current view that identity is always shifting, constructed as it is through languages and narratives. In Ri's hands, that construction is not passive; one must always recall, even revive, Korean-ness. The politics of this view are not simple. Ri Kaisei rose to prominence in the era just following normalization of relations with the ROK. Like Kim Tal-su before him, Ri began his adult life affiliated with Sōren, but abandoned that group, not to join Mindan or the South, but for a place in the Japanese literary left. As such he travelled to the ROK, yet rallied with Japanese against the suppression of leftist poet and playwright Kim Chi-ha (b. 1941) and refused to take on South Korean citizenship.

For at least the next decade, the view that Zainichi literature should affirm Korean identity remained ascendant. Ri's contemporary Kin Kakuei (1938–85), who was less leftist, less troubled by an affiliation with the ROK, and less concerned with peppering his writing with Koreanisms, was recognized in the 1990s by the Zainichi scholar Takeda Seiji (b. 1947), leading to a rise in interest in his work, but for Kin Kakuei, it came too late; he had committed suicide in 1985.

It was nearly two decades before another Zainichi writer was awarded the Akutagawa Prize. This time, in 1989, the winning story was by an author whose experience was worlds apart from Ri Kaisei's. Like him, Yi Yang-ji (1955–92) was a second-generation Zainichi Korean and decidedly concerned with the history of Korean oppression, but she was a Japanese citizen, and from a relatively comfortable economic background that enabled her to travel to South Korea to study. In Yi Yang-ji's day, politics had by no means disappeared from the Zainichi experience. And yet more overtly

political works, like poems of Osaka poet Chong Ch'u-wŏl (1944–2011) about the Zainichi movement against the Japanese government's requirement that all Zainichi Koreans be fingerprinted, had receded into the background, and those with a more existential flavor, like Yi's, took the limelight.

Nearly all of Yi's writing revolves around struggling Zainichi women, and some of it, including the prize-winning *Yuhi* (Yuhi, 1988), is about women who (like Yi herself) study in South Korea. In both *Yuhi* and *Koku* (Time, 1984), for example, the main characters are schooled in Korean language and traditional Korean arts, and yet never fully accepted as Korean. *Koku*, in particular, details the torment resulting from that rejection, of being post-colonial, and – in addition – of being a woman. Kawamura Minato characterizes that distress as a desire to escape; it can also be seen, particularly in light of the shamanistic and artistic references throughout Yi's work, as a lament that acknowledges the inherent dignity of individual human experience.

By the time Yu Miri (b. 1968) won the Akutagawa Prize in 1997 and became the most popular Zainichi writer of all time, the landscape had shifted significantly. Although Yu has never hidden her Korean-ness and sometimes writes about it overtly, her popularity and critical acclaim do not rely on her being a representative of that minority. Instead, she is a full-fledged participant in debates of *Japanese* concern, foremost among them dysfunctional families and violent young people. Her point that Zainichi families share a good deal with Japanese families seems to have met with little opposition. Yet, in the margins of the literary world, we still find Kim Sŏk-pŏm railing against Ri Kaisei for deciding, at long last, to give up statelessness for South Korean citizenship. In the same decade, Kaneshiro Kazuki's (b. 1968) *Gō* (Go, 2000), a story of love between a tough Korean boy and a very middle-class Japanese girl, was a commercial success as a book and then a film. Yang Sŏk-il's (b. 1936) hardboiled thrillers likewise found a broad readership. If Zainichi Koreans still share the experience of social and political discrimination, in the literary world their writing no longer addresses that common denominator.

Contemporary Japanese fiction

STEPHEN SNYDER

By the late 1970s, after a period of relative economic turmoil due to the Oil Shock of 1973, Japan returned to the rapid, export-driven growth that characterized much of its postwar experience. It was the early stages of the period known in retrospect as the Bubble Economy, marked by overheated securities and real estate markets, conspicuous overseas investments, and equally conspicuous domestic consumption. The modest but increasing affluence enjoyed in the 1960s, as the postwar recovery took hold, was replaced by a sense of increasing economic ascendance, mirrored in foreign admiration for Japanese products and management practices and fear of Japanese economic might. The political opposition of the late 1960s was a fading memory or an object of nostalgia, and the seeds of what would eventually be dubbed “Cool Japan” were being sown domestically and readied for export. As the 1970s came to a close, Japan was in the process of reimagining itself both in its own eyes and in those of the world, and the literature of the period reflects a sense of rupture that reshaped the cultural landscape.

A number of established writers from the postwar period continued to be active well into the 1980s, providing a limited sense of continuity to the literary scene. Abe Kōbō (1924–93) and Endō Shūsaku (1923–96) were internationally known figures regularly mentioned as Nobel Prize candidates, and Ōe Kenzaburō (b. 1935), who would go on to win the prize in 1994, had made the transition from young literary insurgent to leading figure in the *bundan* (literary establishment). Other postwar writers publishing major works included Kaikō Takeshi (1930–89), Kōno Taeko (1926–2015), and Ōba Minako (1930–2007).

In 1975, however, in what is often seen as a watershed in contemporary literary history, Nakagami Kenji (1946–92) became the first writer born after the Pacific War to win the Akutagawa Prize. Nakagami depicted the violence and desperation as well as the lyrical beauty that haunted the *burakumin* ghettos of his native Shingū (in Wakayama prefecture) in a series of powerful

novels that included *Misaki* (The Cape, 1976, trans. 1999), *Karekinada* (The Straits of Kareki, 1977), and *Sennen no yuraku* (A Thousand Years of Pleasure, 1982). Nakagami's morally engaged themes and powerful prose were admired across the political spectrum. Ōe Kenzaburō praised his deep suspicion of the established order and central authority, while a relatively conservative critic such as Etō Jun (1932–99) recognized the music of Nakagami's language and felt that he created fictions that “dispense with modernity and revive a space of essential Japanese-ness lost to tales of narrative development.”¹ Nakagami was among the most accomplished writers of his generation, but his career, and perhaps the impulse his fiction represented, was cut short by his death from liver cancer in 1992.

The same critics who admired Nakagami began to identify a “crisis in Pure Literature” (*junbungaku no kiki*) beginning at about this same time. Etō, for example, dismissed the Akutagawa Prize winner for 1976, Murakami Ryū's (b. 1952) *Kagirinaku tōmei ni chikai burū* (Almost Transparent Blue, 1976, trans. 1977) as “nonsense.” He feels that Murakami's graphic account of his experiences with drugs and sex in the neighborhoods surrounding the US air force bases to the west of Tokyo was an artifact of a short-lived subculture rather than an attempt to “express the culture as a whole.”² His comments are echoed somewhat later in Ōe's characterization of the works of the new generation of writers as “mere reflections of the vast consumer culture of Tokyo.”³ Despite their political differences, Etō and Ōe shared an assumption that “serious” or “pure” literature should seek to represent and engage the national culture, and that this new fiction had other ambitions – or no ambitions at all. By 1990, Ōe worried that serious literature and a literary readership have gone into a chronic decline, while a new tendency has emerged over the last several years. This strange new phenomenon is largely an economic one, reflected in the fact that each of the novels of certain young writers like Haruki Murakami and Banana Yoshimoto sell several hundred thousand copies.

The “decline in serious literature” reflects the fact that distinctions between *junbungaku* and *taishū bungaku* (mass fiction) were becoming increasingly irrelevant. By this period traditional *taishū bungaku* had largely

¹ Quoted in Alan Tansman, “History, Repetition, and Freedom in the Narratives of Nakagami Kenji,” *Journal of Japanese Studies* 24, no. 2 (1988): 254.

² Etō Jun, “Murakami Ryū, Akutagawa-shō jushō no nansensu,” *Sandei Mainichi*, July 25, 1976, 136–8.

³ Ōe Kenzaburō, *Japan, the Ambiguous, and Myself: The Nobel Prize Speech and Other Lectures* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1995), 121–2.

evolved into its generic components – science fiction, mystery, popular historical fiction, romance – and these were being reconfigured in an emerging category that came to be called *entāteinmento bungaku* (entertainment literature). But of equal importance is the fact that emerging writers increasingly ignored the boundaries between serious and popular fiction, often moving freely from junbungaku to popular genres or combining elements of various genres in a single fiction. After winning the junbungaku-associated Akutagawa Prize for *Almost Transparent Blue*, Murakami Ryū, for example, published *Koinrokkā beibīzu* (Coin Locker Babies, 1980, trans. 1995), a novel that incorporates conventions from mystery, science fiction, and horror genres. Similarly, Murakami Haruki's (b. 1949) *Sekai no owari to hādoboirudo wandārando* (Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World, 1985, trans. 1991) is a hybrid of detective fiction, science fiction, and fantasy. These practices became widespread in succeeding generations, and while the distinction between junbungaku and popular fiction remains a topic of debate, the distinction remains relevant mostly in the shelving practices of bookstores, in literary prizes, and in high-culture literary journals that have lingering investments in the identification with serious literature.

In singling out for criticism the sales of books by Murakami Haruki and Yoshimoto Banana (b. 1964), Ōe identified the changing aesthetic and economic factors that have driven developments in fiction since 1980. After conspicuous debuts, Murakami and Yoshimoto, along with other writers such as Murakami Ryū, Yamada Eimi (b. 1959), and Shimada Masahiko (b. 1961), built careers that transcended traditional literary categories and inaugurated the notion of the *bungaku aidoru* (literary idol) that has shaped publishing practices and readership in the last three decades.

Murakami Haruki has been the most influential figure of his generation as well as Japan's best-selling writer at home and abroad. His career has spanned various genres and media and has set new standards for the commodification of literary works. It began with a series of novels – *Kaze no uta o kike* (Hear the Wind Sing, 1979), *1973-nen no pinbōru* (Pinball 1973, 1980) and *Hitsuji o meguru bōken* (A Wild Sheep Chase, 1982) – in which he refined his detached, ironic narrative style and the fantastic plot elements that characterize his later fiction. After *Noruewei no mori* (Norwegian Wood, 1987, trans. 2000), an atypically realistic romance, established Murakami's credentials as a best-selling writer, he has produced a prodigious stream of major novels (*Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, 1995, trans. 1997; *Kafka on the Shore*, 2002, trans. 2005; *1Q84*, 2009, trans. 2011), minor novels (*South of the Border*, *West of the Sun*, 1992, trans. 2000; *Sputnik Sweetheart*, 1999, trans. 2001; *After Dark*, 2004, trans. 2007), non-fiction

(*Underground*, 1997–8, trans. 2000; *What I Talk About When I Talk about Running*, 2007, trans. 2008), short story collections (often in collaboration with noted illustrators), and various ephemera, not to mention more than fifty volumes of American fiction in Japanese translation. Murakami's career is run as a successful industry, and it has become a (largely inimitable) model for literary celebrity in Japan. His fiction, which captures a sense of urban disaffection and anxiety, has resonated with a generation of readers around the world, and Murakami's spare prose and cool detachment have inspired numerous followers and imitators.

The early careers of Yoshimoto Banana and Yamada Eimi were nearly as influential as Murakami's in establishing patterns of literary celebrity. Yoshimoto's debut novel *Kitchin* (Kitchen, 1987, trans. 1993) laid out many of the relatively serious themes that she has continued to examine throughout her career – love, sexual ambiguity, and the fragility of life – but the light, *shōjo*-like tone of her work made her an instant and enduring success with a new generation of readers while also challenging traditional notions of literary gravity.

Yamada's work in the early years of her career could not have been more different from Yoshimoto's, dealing as it did with sadomasochistic relationships between Japanese women and African-American men in works such as *Beddo taimu aizu* (Bedtime Eyes, 1985, trans. 2006) and *Torasshu* (Trash, 1991, trans. 1995). But she shared with Yoshimoto, as well as with Murakami Haruki and Murakami Ryū, a sensational literary debut and meteoric rise to celebrity that has redefined the shape of the publishing industry and creative patterns themselves.

The categorization of writers into generations, schools, and movements, which was once among the central functions of Japanese criticism, became increasingly difficult as distinctions between high and popular literature dissolved and writers began to move freely among genres and among different media. Strands of development can be traced, however, emanating from the dominant literary figures of the early years of this period.

Murakami Haruki's influence is most pronounced, and can be felt in a generation of writers who cast their work in versions of his spare prose, and share his attitudes toward the importance of storytelling and his penchant for talking animals and the creation of fantasy worlds bearing little resemblance to contemporary Japan. While imitation is not the goal of these writers, many of them freely admit Murakami's influence.

Ogawa Yōko (b. 1962) won the Akutagawa Prize for *Ninshin karendā* (Pregnancy Diary, 1991, trans. 2008) in 1991. Like many of her subsequent

works, it is told in the voice of an emotionally detached young woman who is related in spirit to Murakami's signature first-person narrator. Ogawa's narrative style, like Murakami's, also juxtaposes detailed descriptions of everyday life – food or domestic activity – with disturbing and fantastic plot elements. Ogawa has said that her fiction is set not in Japan but in worlds of her own creating.

The works of Kawakami Hiromi (b. 1958) range from science fiction to romance, but the tendency toward fantasy is representative of a dominant trend in Japanese fiction after Murakami. The protagonist of her Akutagawa Prize winning *Hebi o fumu* (Tread on a Snake, 1996) destroys a talking snake, only to have it return as a middle-aged woman. In "Hokusai" (2002), the narrator meets a man at the beach who turns out to be the octopus in a celebrated erotic woodblock print.

Other writers who have been influenced by Murakami Haruki include: Yoshida Shūichi (b. 1968), whose *Pāku raifu* (Park Life, 2002), with its understated prose style and disaffected protagonists, typifies twenty-first-century urban Japanese fiction; Ekuni Kaori (b. 1964), who offers quirky depictions of everyday life and relationships in works such as *Tokyo Tawā* (Tokyo Tower, 2001) and *Kira kira hikaru* (Twinkle, Twinkle, 1992, trans. 2003); and Ishii Shinji (b. 1966), who has developed the fantasy strain in Japanese literature in fable-like novels such as *Puranetariumu no futago* (The Planetarium Twins, 2003) and *Mizuumi* (The Lake, 2007).

The influence of Murakami Ryū can be felt in a group of writers whose themes and imagery borrow from the grittiness and intensity of his work. Murakami Ryū has experimented with science fiction and fantasy in works such as *Coin Locker Babies* and *Gofun go no sekai* (The World Five Minutes Later, 1994) and with a hybrid mystery-horror genre in *In za miso sūpu* (In the Miso Soup, 1997, trans. 2003) and *Piashingu* (Piercing, 1994, trans. 2007). Murakami Ryū is representative as well of a growing tendency for writers to draw their influences from non-literary media and to work across media and occupational categories. His influences include manga, anime, and video games, and he has worked as television host, political and economic commentator, and film director, while continuing to produce fiction at a rapid pace. More recent novels have dealt with unsettling aspects of contemporary Japanese culture such as *hikikomori* in *Kyōseichū* (Parasites, 2000) and *enjo-kōsai* ("compensated dating") in *Rabu & poppu* (Love and Pop, 1996).

Murakami Ryū's influence on post-Bubble Entertainment Literature can be felt in the work of writers such as Kirino Natsuo (b. 1951), Kanehara Hitomi (b. 1983), and Ishida Ira (b. 1960) who focus on the violence and antisocial

behavior at the margins of Japanese society, often inspired by news accounts of sensational crimes or disturbing social trends. Kirino's *OUT* (1997, trans. 2003) deals with a catalog of social ills, including the marginalization of women's work, spousal abuse, and teenage prostitution, while Ishida's *Ikebukuro Uesuto gēto pāku* (Ikebukuro Westgate Park, 1997) depicts a group of dropouts who have little to do but loiter in the park of the title. The popularity of both works was enhanced, as is increasingly common, by film and television adaptations, and in Ishida's case a manga version as well. In 2003, at twenty-one years of age, Kanehara became the youngest writer (along with co-recipient Wataya Risa, b. 1984) to win the Akutagawa Prize. *Hebi ni piasu* (Snakes and Earrings, 2004, trans. 2005), which depicts the experiences of a young woman obsessed with piercings and violent sex, owes much to Murakami Ryū's early fiction in tone and content as well as to the early works of Yamada Eimi.

The influence of the global postmodern can be felt in Japanese fiction beginning with the work of Shimada Masahiko. His *Higan sensei* (Master from across the Way, 1992), for example, is a broad and inventive parody of Natsume Sōseki's *Kokoro*, a central work of the modern canon. Other writers sharing Shimada's taste for pastiche, parody, and stylistic experimentation include Takahashi Gen'ichirō (b. 1951), Abe Kazushige (b. 1968), Machida Kō (b. 1962), Matsuura Rieko (b. 1958), and Shōno Yoriko (b. 1956). Matsuura's *Ura bājon* (Opposite Version, 2000) is an extended experiment in metafictional techniques while Shōno's *Taimusurippu konbināto* (Time Warp Complex, 1994), for which she won the Akutagawa Prize, is a dreamlike trip through post-Bubble Tokyo with typical displays of linguistic and imagistic virtuosity.

Nakagami Kenji depicted the largely hidden world of the burakumin ghetto at the beginning of this period, but since the 1980s literature by and about disenfranchised groups in Japan has increasingly received critical attention and gained popularity among readers. Novels and stories reflecting the politics of identity and the problems of discrimination have become a central part of the literary discourse.

Though it has a longer history, literature by Zainichi (resident) Korean writers began to enter the mainstream only in the 1970s, as Zainichi writers received recognition in the bundan for their depictions of outsider-hood in Japanese society. Ri Kaisei (b. 1935) won the Akutagawa Prize in 1972 for "Kinuta o utsu onna" (Woman Who Beats the Fulling Block, 1972), inaugurating a list of resident Koreans who have won the prize, including Yi Yangji (1955–92) (*Yuhi*, 1988), Yu Miri (b. 1968) (*Kazoku shinema*, 1996), and Gengetsu (b. 1965) (*Kage no sumika*, 1999). In 2008, the Chinese writer Yang Yi (b. 1964)

became the first non-native speaker of Japanese to win the prize for *Toki ga nijimu asa* (A Morning When Time Bleeds), a depiction of the suffering of young people participating in China's pro-democracy movement of the late 1980s. Earlier, the American-born Levy Hideo (b. 1950) had created a literary sensation when *Seijōki no kiko enai heya* (The Room where the Star-Spangled Banner Cannot Be Heard, 1992, trans. 2011) won the Noma Literary Prize for New Writers.

Lesbian and gay literature also became more visible after 1980, as poet and novelist Takahashi Mutsuo (b. 1937) emerged as a spokesman for gay issues in Japanese society. Hiruma Hisao's (b. 1960) *Yes, Yes, Yes* (1990) was perhaps the first widely read novel in Japan to offer a positive portrayal of gay life, while Nakayama Kaho's (b. 1960) *Shiroi bara no fuchi made* (The Depths of White Roses, 2001) provided a frank depiction of a lesbian relationship.

An increasingly transnational strain in Japanese fiction can be seen in the works of writers such as Tawada Yōko (b. 1960), who has lived in Germany for much of her adult life and publishes in both German and Japanese. The influence of Kafka and Murakami Haruki are evident in works such as *Inu mukoiri* (The Bridegroom Was a Dog, 1993, trans. 1998), which won the Akutagawa Prize in 1993, and a recent multigenerational account of talking polar bears, *Yuki no renshūsei* (The Trainee of Snow, 2011). Mizumura Minae (b. 1951), on the other hand, returned to Japan after being raised and educated in the United States. She launched her career by writing a continuation of Natsume Sōseki's unfinished novel *Meian* (*Zoku Meian*, 1990). In that audacious literary debut and in works such as the bilingual *Watakushi shōsetsu from left to right* (An I Novel from Left to Right, 1995) and her *Wuthering Heights*-inspired *Honkaku shōsetsu* (A True Novel, 2002, trans. 2013), Mizumura demonstrates her deep knowledge of Japanese literary tradition as it confronts a complex historical and cultural landscape and suggests that a more literarily sophisticated readership still exists in the age of commercialization. Her recent *Haha no isan* (Inheritance from My Mother, 2012) deals with the difficulty of providing care for an aging mother, suggesting the sorts of themes Japanese fiction will confront in the coming years.

Much as Ōe lamented the decline of serious literature and increasing commercialization in the 1990s, a decade later the literary world was disturbed to find that half of the ten best-selling books for 2007 were novels that had originated as *keitai shōsetsu* (cellphone novels). Cellphone novels, generally dark romances written in short, small-screen-friendly sentences and delivered to phones in brief installments, are written most often by young women who carefully protect their identities with pen-names such as Mika or

Rin. Mika's *Koizora* (Love Sky, 2005) was viewed more than 12 million times on line and sold more than 2 million copies in print. Sales of books – both serious and popular – have on the other hand declined in recent years. Fiction in print form increasingly competes – often with limited success – for attention not only with manga and cellphone novels but with computer games, hypertext fictions, and other forms of narrative entertainment, and Japanese publishers, like their counterparts around the world, struggle to adapt to the new environment. Yet at the same time many writers continue to publish at a prodigious pace, and long, ambitious novels, such as Abe Kazushige's *Shinsemia* (Sinsemilla, 2003), a Faulkneresque evocation of small-town Japan, and Yu Miri's *Hachigatsu no hate* (The End of August, 2004), a fictionalization of the life of Yu's grandfather, a noted marathon runner, continue to find readers. And at the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, Murakami Haruki's three-volume, 1,500-page *1Q84* (2009–10, trans. 2011), a love story played out across parallel universes, produced a domestic – and ultimately an international – publishing sensation of unprecedented proportions. While the legacy of the Murakami generation remains to be determined, it seems clear that Japanese literature continues to find readers and engage with the culture it represents.

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Index

- Abbot Rikunyo (1734–1801), 465
 Abe Akira (1934–89), 736
 Abe Kazushige (b. 1968), 765, 767
 Abe Kōbō (1924–93), 701, 708, 709, 760
Adachigahara, 339
akahon (red books), 510–22
 Akazome Emon, 135, 161, 170, 193–7
 Akimoto Matsuyo (1911–2001), 708
 Akizato Ritō (?–1830), 524
 Tōkaidō meisho zue (Illustrated Sights of
 the Tōkaidō, 1797), 524–5
 Akutagawa Ryūnosuke (1892–1927), 286, 630,
 639, 669, 684, 694–5, 700
 ancient songs, 25, 26, 28–9, 37, 40–4, 52, 57–8,
 60; *see also kiki kayō*
 Andō Tameakira (1659–1716), 138, 480
 Shika shichiron (Seven Essays of
 Murasaki, 1703), 138
 anime, 729, 764
 Anzai Fuyue (1898–1965), 684, 714–15
aohon (green books), 510–22
 Aono Suekichi (1890–1961), 658–9
 Arai Hakuseki (1657–1725), 4, 461, 546
 Arakida Moritake (1473–1549), 326
 Arakida Reijo (1732–1806), 377
Arechi (Waste Land, 1947–58), 717
Ariake no wakare (Partings at Dawn), 153–5
 Arishima Takeo (1878–1923), 632, 653
 aristocrat, 4–6, 7, 8, 40–1, 71, 89–90, 102, 281–3,
 289, 325, 334, 335–6, 343, 348, 373, 403,
 448, 471–2, 475–6, 653; *see also* chapters
 7–19, 21–25
 Ariwara no Narihira (825–80), 98, 99, 100, 115,
 123–5, 235, 277, 335, 337, 379
 Ariyoshi Sawako (1931–84), 743
 Asai Ryōi (c. 1612–91), 375, 398
 Tōkaidō meishoki (Famous Places of
 the Tōkaidō, c. 1661), 399, 447
 Ukiyo monogatari (Tales of the Floating
 World, 1661), 392
 Atsumori, 8, 336, 343
aware (pathos), 80, 138, 239, 299, 474, 486
 Ayukawa Nobuo (1920–86), 717
Azuma nikki (Eastern Diary, 1681), 409
Azumakagami, 201
azuma-uta (eastland songs), 77, 79, 82, 111
Backpack Notes. See Matsuo Bashō
 Bai Juyi (or Bo Juyi, J. Haku Kyoī or Haku
 Rakuten, 772–846), 124
 Baishi wenji (Collected Works of Bai Juyi,
 J. *Hakushi monjū* or *Hakushi bunshū*,
 839), 184–6, 283
 Changhen-ge (Song of Never-Ending
 Sorrow, J. *Chōgonka*, 806), 152
 Baitei Kinga (1821–93), 530
bakufu (military government), 95, 201, 211–12,
 215, 216, 295, 297, 309, 312, 314, 348–9,
 374–6, 377–8, 388, 389, 393–5, 419, 432–3,
 505–7, 520–2, 532–3
banka (elegy), 54, 63–4, 76, 77, 83
banzuke (theater programs), 391, 425, 452
Battles of Coxinga. See Chikamatsu
 Monzaemon
 Ben no Naishi (c. 1228–c. 1270), 278
 Ben no Naishi nikki (The Diary of Ben
 no Naishi, date unknown), 268–9,
 272–3, 275
Benkei monogatari (The Tale of
 Benkei), 359
benreibun (Chinese-style parallel prose,
 Ch. *pianwen*), 179
benshi (oral lecturer for silent film), 697
 Betsuyaku Minoru (b. 1937), 708
bibungaku (elegant writing or belles-lettres),
 565–6, 570

- biwa hōshi* (lute-playing minstrels), 9, 216,
290–3, 297, 302, 303–4, 308, 355, 363,
373, 437
- Bōken Dankichi* (The Adventures of Dankichi,
1933–9), 677
- Buddhism, 3–4, 7–9, 33, 158, 235
and
 dengaku, 331
 Fujiwara no Kintō, 120
 furyū, 448
 ganmon, 179–80
 Genji monogatari, 20, 136–7
 Gozan *bungaku*. chapter 32
 Gukanshō, 201–5, 298
 gunki, 213, 290
 haikai, 403
 Heike monogatari, 295, 299, 302, 303, 309
 Ise monogatari, 160
 kana hōgo, 399
 kanshi, 457
 karon, 218, 253
 Konjaku monogatari shū, 100–1, 281
 Korai fūteishō, 226–7
 kōwakamai, 362
 kyōgen, 347, 349, 350–1, 352
 Kyōgoku Tamekane, 244
 kyōsha, 503
 Man'yōshū, 66, 68, 69, 71–4
 Motoori Norinaga, 486
 Nansō Satomi hakkenden, 549
 Nihon ryōiki, 97, 281
 nōgakuron, 341, 345, 346
 noh, 331–3, 336, 350–1
 otogizōshi, 358–61
 printed texts, 382–3, 384–5, 386, 387, 389,
 396, 398
 recluse literature, 259–67
 renga, 319
 Ryōjin hishō, 207–8
 Sakurahime zenden akebono sōshi, 544
 Sarashina Nikki, 173–4
 sekkyō, 365, 367
 setsuwa, 281, 282, 283–5
 Shinkei, 322
 Shinkokinshū, 230, 237
 Shūishū, 119
 Shukke to sono deshī, 653
 Shuten Dōji, 359–60, 368–9
 Soga monogatari, 307
 Sōgi, 323
 Towazugatari, 277
 Uji daïnagon monogatari, 282
 Wakan rōeishū, 186
 zange-mono, 419
 in the ancient period, 15, 16–17, 20, 31,
 37–9, 58
 in the Heian period, 214
 in the medieval period, 214–15
- bugaku* (court dance), 347
- bukan* (samurai directories), 387, 627
- buke-mono* (books on warrior life), 418
- bundan* (literary establishment), 729–30,
760, 765
- Bungakukai* (Literary World, est. 1893),
603, 729
- Bungei jidai* (The Literary Age, 1924–7), 630,
695, 697
- Bungei sensen* (The Literary Front, 1924–32),
630, 658–9, 664
- Bungo no kuni fudoki* (Bungo Province
Gazetteer), 47
- bunjinga* (literati painting), 410, 492
- Bunka shūreishū* (Collection of Exquisite
Literary Flourish, 818), 88–9, 91
- bunmei kaika* (Westernization movement,
“civilization and enlightenment”), 583
- bunraku*, 391, chapter 43
- Bunshō sekai* (World of Writing, est. 1906), 570
- Bunshō sōshi* (Bunshō the Saltmaker), 358
- burakumin*, 602, 650–1, 689, 760, 765
- Busu* (Delicious Poison), 349
- butō*, 709
- byōbu-uta* (screen poems), 99, 112–14, 119–20
- Cao Zhi (192–232), 58, 70
- censorship
 and *setsuwa*, 284
 in the Edo period, 348–9, 352–3, 374, 376, 380,
 388, 393–5, 440, 441, 444–5, 520–2, 523,
 532–3, 535
 in the modern period, 573, 581, 625, 647, 656,
 661, 668, 706, 722, 723, 724, 748–9
 under US occupation, 700, 720–1, 724–7
- chaban* (impromptu comedic “sketch”
performances), 525, 530
- Changhen-ge*. See Bai Juyi
- Characters of Daughters in the World*. See Ejima
Kiseki
- Characters of Sons in the World*. See Ejima
Kiseki
- Chikamatsu Hanji (1725–83), 445
- Chikamatsu Kasaku, 445
- Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653–1725), 4, 9, 10,
369, 375, 381, 429–33, 439–44, 513, 704
- Goban Taiheiki* (Chronicle of Great Peace,
Played on a Go Board, 1710), 440

- Kokusen'ya kassen* (Battles of Coxinga, 1715), 432–3, 442, 453
- Meido no hikyaku* (Courier for Hell, 1711), 442
- Shinjū Ten-no-Amijima* (Love Suicides at Amijima, 1720), 432, 442
- Shusse Kagekiyo* (Kagekiyo Victorious, 1685), 365, 438, 439
- Sonezaki shinjū* (Love Suicides at Sonezaki, 1703), 440
- Yotsugi Soga* (The Soga Heir, 1683), 439
- chikushi* (“bamboo branch” verse), 462
- China. *See also* Tang, Song, Ming, Qing dynasties, Manchuria, Sino-Japanese War, Second Sino-Japanese War
- ancient texts imported from, 19–20 and
- bunjin*, 379–80, 503, chapter 50
- Daigakuryō*, chapter 16
- haishi-mono*, 539, 541
- Kogaku*, 379
- literary genre hierarchy, 3–4
- print culture in Japan, 389–90
- Sugawara no Michizane. chapter 8
- in
- Hamamatsu Chūnagon monogatari*, 145–6
- Matsura no miya monogatari*, 151–3
- setsuwa-shū*, 9, 281, 283–4
- influence on Japanese texts, 17–18, 26–30, 34, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 52, 54, 55, 57–9, 61, 64, 67–74, 80–1, 85, 97–9, 121–2, 127, 157, 179–81, 215, 218, 219–20, 281, 290, 411, 473, 479–84, 522; *see also* *hentai kanbun*, *kanbun*, *kanji*, *Kangaku*, *kango*, *kanshi*, *kundoku*, *kyōbun*, *kyōshi*, *wakan-kon-kōbun*, chapters 6, 17, 18, 32, 46, 47, 50, and 57
- influence on primary education, 389, 557–8
- influence on state system in Japan, 17, 18, 36, 52, 59–60
- printing technology of, 382–3
- Chinese, literary. *See* *kanbun*
- chinkon* (pacification of spirits), 293
- chishi* (geographical guidebooks to famous sights), 524–5
- Chiun (d. 1448), 321
- Chōjakyō* (1627), 400
- chōka* (long poem), 6, 53, 54, 82, 112, 222, 231, 275; *see also* references to individual poems in chapter 5
- chokutō* (imperial responses), 189
- Chong Ch'u-wōl (1944–2011), 759
- chōnin* (townsman), 9, 138, 373, 377–81, 402, 405, 415–16, 462
- chōnin-mono* (books on merchant life), 418
- Chōya gunsai* (Collected Documents of the Court and Country), 180, 181, 192
- Christianity, 384, 393, 562, 564, 594, 599, 600, 620–1, 654, 726
- Chronicle of the Eight Dogs of the Nansō Satomi Clan*. *See* *Kyokutei* (Takizawa) *Bakin*
- Chronicles of Japan*. *See* *Nihon shoki*
- Chūō kōron* (Central Review, est. 1887), 630, 643, 647, 666, 668, 679, 729
- chūsei Nihongi* (medieval Chronicles of Japan), 33
- class. *See also* aristocrat, *burakumin*, *chōnin*, *daimyō*, farmer, *jige*, merchant, samurai, provincial governor
- and genre, 567
- and language, 557, 593–4
- and writing style, 561, 569
- four-class system, 373–4, 415, 419–20, 435, 553–4, 603
- in modern society, 582, 599, 603, 604, 643, 646, 655–68, 683, 707, 723, 732–3, 735–6, 741, 745, 748
- Collection of Myriad Leaves*. *See* *Man'yōshū*
- colonialism, 553, 582, 653, 666, 714–15, chapters 69, and 71; *see also* Manchuria
- and
- Korea, 626, 638, 684
- Okinawa, 753–4
- Taiwan and the South Sea, chapter 70
- zainichi* literature, chapter 79
- commoner, 5, 9, 97, 100–1, 129, 133, 164, 214, 215, 216–17, 282, 284–5, 286, 317, 318, 319, 323, 350–1, 357–8, 404, 406, 408, 432, 433, 440, 449, 450, 469–70, 471–2, 475, 486, 507, 523, 528, 533, 563, 704; *see also* *chōnin*, *jige*
- Confucianism, 3–4, 7–9, 158; *see also* Gion Nankai, Hattori Nankaku, Ogyū Sorai, chapter 49
- and
- Daigakuryō*, 103, 178
- Edo *kanshi*, 457–8, 465, 466
- Edo social hierarchy, 415
- education in the Edo period, 384
- education in the Meiji period, 558, 562–3
- fudoki*, 48
- Genji monogatari*, 136–7, 138
- Gozan *bungaku*, 312
- gunki*, 290
- Hōjōki*, 191

Confucianism (cont.)

- Honchō nijū fukō*, 420
 Itō Jinsai, 416
Kaifūsō, 86, 87
Kangaku, 379
Kashōki, 398
Kogaku, 379, 472
Kojiki, 26
Kokugaku, 472
kyōsha, 503
Man'yōshū, 68, 71–4
 Meiji family ideology, 641
 Mori Ōgai, 628
Nansō Satomi hakkenden, 548–9
Nihon shoki, 29–30
nōgakuron, 345, 346
Onna daigaku, 376
 printed texts, 384, 396, 398
 Saga anthologies, 90
 samurai, 377–8
 Sugawara no Michizane, 108–9
Taiheiki, 309–10
 the notion of *bungaku*, 564, 565
 Edo academy, 467, 469
 in the ancient period, 15, 58

 Daidōji Yūzan (1639–1730), 496
daiei (fixed poetic topic), 232, 476
Daigakuryō (Heian State Academy), 88, 90, 91,
 96, 103, chapter 16
daimyō, 91, 217, 250, 374–6, 380, 394, 395, 450
Daiten (1719–1801), 492
 dance. *See* *butō*, *bugaku*, *gigaku*, *kōwakamai*,
 kusemai, *shirabyōshi*, *noh*
dangibon (satiric teachings), 380, 498, 503
Danrin haikai, 405–6, 413, 416–17
Daruma-uta, 233, 251
 Dazai Osamu (1909–48), 670, 723, 724
 Dazai Shundai (1680–1747), 363, 483–4
dengaku (field entertainment), 216, 330–1, 334
denju (secret transmission), 213, 252,
 373, 471–2
dōchūki (travel guides), 399
Dōgen (1200–53), 215, 284
Dōjōji engi (A History of Dōjōji Temple,
 14th or 15th c.), 360–1, 362
dokugin (solo poetry composition), 407, 416
 drama. *See* theater
 Du Fu, 466

 Edogawa Rampo (1894–1965), 684, 733
 education
 for

- premodern aristocratic women, 151,
 163, 172
 women in the early modern period, 376,
 390, 398
 women in the modern period, 588, 738,
 739, 748, chapters 61, 66
 in
 the early modern period, 257, 373, 384,
 389–90, 397–8, 416, 426, 457–8, 460,
 469–70, 483, 488, 572; *see also* *terakoya*
 the modern period, 572, 576–7, 578, 590–1,
 607, chapter 56
 the premodern period, 7, 97, 184, 188,
 284, 373; *see also* *Daigakuryō*
ehon (picture book), 390–1, 425
kyōka-, 507
 -mono, 539–41, 543
nara-, 359, 362, 365
 Eifukumon'in (1271–1342), 246
Eiga jidai (The Age of Film, 1926), 697
Eiga monogatari (Tales of Flowering Fortunes,
 c. early 12th c.), 6, 84, 100, 135, 179, 298,
 chapter 19
Eiri Genji monogatari (Illustrated Tale of Genji,
 1640), 137
 Eisai (or Yōsai, 1141–1215), 284, 311
 Ejima Kiseki (1666–1735), 388, 415–16, 421–3,
 512, 513
Keisei iro samisen (The Courtesan's
 Shamisen of Love, 1701), 422
Seken musuko katagi (Characters of Sons
 in the World, 1715), 422
Seken musume katagi (Characters of
 Daughters in the World, 1717), 422
Yakusha kuchi samisen (The Actor's
 Hummed Shamisen, 1699), 421–2
 Ekuni Kaori (b. 1964), 764
 Ema Saikō, 390
emaki (picture scroll), 136, 214, 215, 292, 358–62,
 365, 409
 emperor. *See* sovereign
 Emura Hokkai (1713–88), 91, 458
 Enchi Fumiko (1905–86), 139, 646, 705, 740,
 743–4
 Endō Shūsaku (1923–96), 760
engi (record of temple origins), 38–9
Engi shiki (927), 20, 33, 34
engi-mono (stories of divine origins), 215
engo (word association), 405, 507
Engyō-bon Heike monogatari, 298, 301–3
Enokoshū (Puppy Collection, 1633), 391, 405
enpon būmu (the one-yen book boom), 660–1,
 666, 669

- Essays in Idleness*. See Yoshida Kenkō
 Etō Jun (1932–99), 640, 720, 744, 761
etoki
 as a function (the explanation of the picture), 518–19
 as a person (picture-storyteller), 216, 355
e-zōshi (picture books), 510
- farmer (peasant), 109, 349, 375, 396, 456, 555, 644, 659, 667–8, 754; *see also* four-class system *under* class
- fiction / prose fiction. *See dangibon, gesaku, gōkan, hon'an shōsetsu, kokkeibon, monogatari, ninjōbon*, novel, *otogizōshi, setsuwa, sharebon, shōsetsu, yomihon*
 and genre hierarchy, 3–4
 and Japanese storytelling tradition, 9–10
- film, 606, 684, 720, 730, 733–4, 759, 764–5, chapter 72
- fudoki*, 15–16, 19, 20–1, 34–5, 36, chapter 4
 and *setsuwa*, 280
 and *Taketori monogatari*, 121
- Fūgashū* (*Fūga wakashū*, Collection of Elegance, 1344–8), 246–7, 250; *see also* Hanazono, Emperor
- Fujin gahō* (Ladies' Pictorial, est. 1905), 642
Fujin kōron (Ladies' Review, est. 1916), 645, 663
fujin zasshi (women's magazine), 645–7, 663–4; *see also* girls' magazine and manga
- Fujiwara no (Rokujō) Akisue (1055–1123), 224–5
- Fujiwara no (Rokujō) Kiyosuke (1104–77), 225
Fukurozōshi (Book of Folded Pages, c. 1157), 225
- Fujiwara no Akihira (c. 989–1066), 97, 179–80, 181, chapter 18
Meigō ōrai (Akihira's Letters), 188
Shinsarugakuki (Account of New Monkey Music), 188–9
- Fujiwara no Ariie (1155–1216), 235–6
- Fujiwara no Chikatsune (1151–1210), 230
- Fujiwara no Fuhito (659–720), 87, 122
- Fujiwara no Hamanari (724–90), 219–20, 221
- Fujiwara no Ietaka (1158–1237), 232, 235–6
- Fujiwara no Keishi (fl. c. 1252–c. 1292)
Nakatsukasa Naishi nikki (The Diary of Nakatsukasa Naishi, c. 1292), 275–6
- Fujiwara no Kintō (966–1041), 119–20, 135, 185, 221–3
Shinsen zuinō (Newly Selected Essentials, c. 1001–2), 120, 221–2
- Waka kuhon* (Nine Grades of Japanese Poetry, c. 1009), 120, 222–3
- Fujiwara no Koretada (or Koremasa, 924–72), 119, 125
- Fujiwara no Masatsune (1170–1221), 235–6
- Fujiwara no Michinaga (966–1027), 6, 96, 100, 119–20, 134–5, 161, 170, 171, 172, 193–201, 283
- Fujiwara no Michitoshi (1047–99), 180–1, 223
- Fujiwara no Mototsune (836–91), 104–5
- Fujiwara no Nagako (1079?–?)
Sanuki no suke nikki (Sanuki no Suke Diary, c. 1109, also known as *Horikawa-in nikki*, Emperor Horikawa Diary), 175, 268
- Fujiwara no Sanekane (1085–1112), 182
- Fujiwara no Shigenori (1135–88), 283
- Fujiwara no Shunzei (1114–1204), 101, 136, 225, 228, 231–6, 239–40, 244, 256, 270, 301
Korai fūteishō (Collection of Poetic Styles from the Past, c. 1197–1201), 214, 225–7
- Fujiwara no Taishi (or Kaya no in, 1095–1155), 223
- Fujiwara no Takanobu (1142–1205), 151
- Fujiwara no Tameie (1198–1275), 155, 242–4, 248–9, 274
Eiga no ittei (The Foremost Style of Poetic Composition, c. 1264), 242
- Fujiwara no Tamenari, 197
- Fujiwara no Tameuji (or Nijō Tameuji, 1222–86), 243–4, 319
- Fujiwara no Teika (1162–1241), 101, 124, 136, 142, 149–53, 157, 159, 174, 225–6, 227–9, 240–2, 244, 250, 251, 253, 271, 300–1, 320, 344, chapters 23, 25
Eiga taigai (Essentials of Poetic Composition, c. 1222), 214, 227–9
Maigetsushō (Monthly Notes, c. 1219), 227–8, 241
Okuri (Endnotes, c. 1233), 136, 157
- Fujiwara no Yoshifusa (804–72), 103–4, 112–13, 114
- Fujiwara no Yoshinobu, 197
- Fujiwara no Yoshitsune (1169–1206), 230, 231–2, 234, 236
- Fujiwara Seika (1561–1619), 458
- Fujiwara Shunzei no musume (c. 1171–after 1252), 270–1
Mumyōzōshi (Nameless Book, c. 1200–1), 137, 149–51, 153, 155–6
- Fukazawa Shichirō (1914–87), 728–9
- Fukuda (née Kageyama) Hideko (1865–1927), 601, 643
- Fukuda Tsuneari (1912–94), 708
- Fukunaga Takehiko (1918–79), 728

- Fukurozōshi*. See Fujiwara no (Rokujō) Kiyosuke
- Fukutomi sōshi* (The King of Farts), 358
- Fukuzawa Yukichi (1834–1901), 554, 556, 557, 562, 580
- Funabenkei* (Benkei at the Bridge), 338
- furigana* (gloss), 385, 401
- furugoto* (ancient words), 111
- Furui Yoshikichi (b. 1937), 736
- furyū* performance, 337, 338, 352 and kabuki, 448
- Fushiminomiya Sadafusa, Prince (1372–1456), 250, 348
- Futabatei Shimei (1864–1909), 568, 623–5, chapter 60
- Aibiki* (1888 translation of Turgenev's "The Rendezvous" from *A Sportsman's Notebook*), 589–92, 596
- Ukigumo* (Drifting Clouds, 1887–9), 562, 589, 592–6, 623, 688, 703
- Futari daimyō* (Two Feudal Lords), 351
- Fūyōshū* (*Fūyō wakashū*, Collection of Wind-Tossed Leaves, 1271), 155–6
- fuzoku* (folk song), 111, 207
- gabun-tai* (elegant classical style), 561, 571, 589–90, 624
- gagaku* (court music), 208, 342
- gakumon* (learning), 4, 565–6
- gazoku-setchū-tai* (an amalgamation of elegant and colloquial styles), 561, 569
- Gekkai Genshō (1675–1763), 491
- Gekkōtei Shōju, 517
- genbun-itchi* (unification of spoken and written languages), 558, 561, 570–1, 580, 588, 591, 602, 637, 706
- Gendai Nihon bungaku zenshū* (Complete Works of Contemporary Japanese Literature, 1926), 660, chapter 68
- Gendai taishū bungaku zenshū* (Modern Popular Literature Collection, 1926), 660
- gender. See also women, sexuality and genre, 97–100, 118, 149, 155–6, 165–6, 193–4, 377, 381, 528, 585, chapters 27, 54 and writing systems and styles, 97–100, 196–7, 567
- in
- Ariake no wakare*, 153–5
- Futon*, 596
- Himitsu*, 693–4
- postwar Japan, chapter 76
- Torikaebaya monogatari*, 147–9
- translation of *A Doll's House*, 597
- works by Yosano Akiko, 645
- representation in kabuki, 434–5
- Genji gaiden*. See Kumazawa Banzan
- Genji kokagami* (A Small Mirror of Genji, 14th c.), 137, 390
- Genji kuyō* (*Genji Offerings*), 137
- Genji monogatari*. See Murasaki Shikibu
- Genji shaku* (*Genji Explicated*, 1160), 136, 157
- Genpei jōsuiki* (The Record of the Rise and Fall of the Genji and Heike), 297, 298
- Genpei tōjōroku* (The Record of the Genpei Battles, 1337), 297, 298, 303
- Genpei War* (1180–5), 201, 202, 211, 216, 230, 288–9, 290–1, 336, 343, 358, 363, 439, 444, 540, chapters 30, 31
- Genroku Taiheiki*. See Miyako no Nishiki
- Gentō, 283
- gesaku* (playful writing), 380, 503, 560, 578–9, 581, 582; see also *dangibon*, *gōkan*, *kusa-zōshi*, *kokkeibon*, *kyōka*, *kyōshi*, *nin-jōbon*, *senryū*, *sharebon*, *yomihon*
- Gidō Shūshin (1325–88), 313, 315, 316
- gigaku* (court dance), 347
- Gikeiki* (Chronicle of Yoshitsune), 211, 306, 307–9, 439
- giko monogatari* (neo-classical tale), 152, 155
- Gion Nankai (1677–1751), 375, 462, 463, 490–1, 503
- girls' magazine and manga, chapter 77
- Gōdanshō*. See Ōe no Masafusa
- gōkan* (bound illustrated books), 139, 377, 379, 530, chapter 52
- goryō shinkō* (belief in vengeful spirits), 448
- Gosenshū* (*Gosen wakashū*, Collection of Later Gleanings, 951), 110–11, 117–19, 124–5, 126, 161, 229, 235
- Goshūishū* (*Goshūi wakashū*, Later Collection of Gleanings, 1086), 223, 225, 233; see also Fujiwara no Michitoshi
- Gotō Meisei (1932–99), 736
- Gotō Shinpei (1857–1929), 653, 684
- Gozan bungaku* (Literature of the Five Mountains), 183, 215, 457, 459, 504, chapter 32
- goze* (itinerant female narrator), 290, 306
- Great Mirror*. See *Ōkagami*
- Great Mirror of Beauties*. See Ihara Saikaku
- Great Mirror of Male Love*. See Ihara Saikaku
- Gukanshō*. See Jien
- gunki* (military chronicle), 297
- gunki-mono* (warrior tale), 7, 101, 212–13, 286, chapter 29, 30, 31

- Gusai (or Kyūsei, d. 1378), 318–20
 Gyōjo (1405–69), 321
 Gyōkō (1391–1455), 323
Gyokuyōshū (*Gyokuyō wakashū*, Collection of Jeweled Leaves, 1313), 244–5, 250, 254; *see also* Kyōgoku Tamekane
- Hachimonji Jishō (or Hachimonjiya Jishō, d. 1745), 388, 421–2, 512, 513
 Haga Isshō (1643–1707), 416
 Hagio Moto (b. 1949), 749–50
 Hagiwara Kyōjirō, 713
 Hagiwara Sakutarō (1886–1942), 622, 712–13
haibun (haikai prose), 409–10, 418
haiga (haikai painting), 409, 496
haigon (haikai words), 403, 493
haii (haikai spirit), 379
haikai (comic or popular linked verse), 11, 79, 117, 164, 217, 237, 244, 255, 326–7, 377, 379, 386, 387, 391, 396, 505, 508, 613, chapter 41; *see also* individual haikai poets
- and
 Ihara Saikaku, 416–21
 Kagawa Kageki, 476
 Kobayashi Issa, 412–14
 Ōkuma Kotomichi, 477
 Ueda Akinari, 474, 499, 500
haiku, 11, 435, 436, 564, 573, 613, 614, 617, 692; *see also* *hokku* and individual poets
- and *senryū*, 508–9
haishi, *haishi-mono* (unofficial histories), 510, 518, chapter 55
Hamamatsu Chūnagon monogatari. *See* Sugawara no Takasue no musume
 Hana Sanjin (or Tōri Sanjin, 1791–1858), 530
Hanabusa sōshi. *See* Tsuga Teishō
hanashibon (collections of short comic stories), 399, 524
 Hanazono, Emperor (1297–1348), 245–7, 249, 278
hanka (envoy or response poem), 53; *see also* references to individual poems in chapter 5
hanpon (woodblock printing), 52
Hanshu (History of the Former Han, J. *Hansho*, 111), 19, 29, 151, 194, 283
 Hara Tamiki (1905–51), 726–7
Harima no kuni fudoki (Harima Province Gazetteer), 46, 47
 Hasegawa Nyozekan (1875–1969), 576
 Hasegawa Ryūsei (b. 1928), 717
 Hasegawa Shigure (1879–1941), 646, 705
- Hasegawa Shin (1884–1963), 649, 704
 Hashida Sugako (b. 1925), 710
 Hattori Bushō (1842–1908)
Tōkyō shinhanjōki (A New Record of Flourishing Tokyo, 1874–6), 574
 Hattori Nankaku (1683–1759), 375, 380, 460, 461, 483, 490, 503
 Hayama Yoshiki (1894–1945), 656–7, 659
 Hayano Hajin (1676–1742), 410, 492
 Hayashi Fumiko (1903–51), 646, 684, 686, 689, 690–1, 722, 740, 741, 744
Hōrōki (Diary of a Vagabond, 1928–30), 646–7
Ukigumo (Floating Clouds, 1949–51), 687–8
 Hayashi Fusao (1903–75), 658, 659, 665, 666, 668, 674
 Hayashi Gahō (1618–80), 459
 Hayashi Kyōko (b. 1930), 728
 Hayashi Razan (1583–1657), 392, 458–9, 480
Heichū monogatari (Tale of Heichū), 125
Heiji monogatari (Tales of Heiji), 290, 291–3, 301, 306
Heike monogatari (The Tales of the Heike) 6, 9–10, 62, 101, 211, 212–13, 283, 286, 333, 335, 343, 373, 384, 438, 444, 462, 616, chapters 29, 30, and 31; *see also* *biwa hōshi*
- hentai kanbun*, 283, 291, 306; *see also* *kanbun*
 Hi no Meishi (1310–58)
Takemukigaki (Record of Takemuki, 1349), 268, 277–8
 Hibino Shirō (1903–75), 667
 Higashi Mineo (b. 1938), 754
 Higuchi Ichiyō (1872–96), 423, 599, 603
 Hijikata Hisakatsu, 679, 680–1
 Hijikata Tatsumi (1928–86), 709
 Hino Ashihei (1907–60), 667, 686, 700
 Hirabayashi Taiko (1905–72), 663–4, 683–4, 722, 740, 741–2, 744
 Hiraga Gennai (1728–80), 375, 381, 410, 434, 492, 497–9, 506
Fūryū Shidōken den (The Modern Life of Shidōken, 1763), 498
Nenashigusa (Rootless Grass, 1763, sequel 1769), 498
 Hirata Oriza (b. 1962), 707, 710
 Hirato Renkichi (1893–1922), 713
 Hiratsuka Raichō (1886–1971), 643
 Hirose Tansō (1782–1856), 466
 Hirotsu Kazuo (1891–1968), 646, 720
 Hiruma Hisao (b. 1960), 766
Hisago (Gourd, 1690), 407

- Hitachi no kuni fudoki* (Hitachi Province Gazetteer), 20–1, 45–9, 74
- hiyuka* (metaphorical poems), 77, 83
- Hōgen monogatari* (Tales of Hōgen), 301, 306, 544, chapter 29
- hōgo* (vernacular Buddhist writing), 214, 285, 399
- Hōhi-ron* (A Theory of Farting, 1774, sequel 1777), 498–9
- Hōjō Dansui* (1663–1711), 419, 420
- Hōjōki*. See Kamo no Chōmei
- hokku* (opening verse of a linked-verse sequence), 6, 11, 319, 403, 405–10, 411–13, 494
and *haiku*, 508, 617
and *senryū*, 507, 508
- hōmon uta* (Buddhist song), 207–8
- hon'an* (adaptation and naturalization), 494–5, 500, 579–80, 582
- hon'an shōsetsu* (adapted fiction), 579
- hon'i* (poetic essence), 232, 239
- hon'ya* (bookseller). See publisher
- hon'ya nakama* (booksellers' guilds), 388, 394–5
- Honchō monzui* (Literary Essence of Our Court, c. 989–1066), 90, 97, 178, 181, chapter 18; see also Fujiwara no Akihira
- Honchō nijū fukō*. See Ihara Saikaku
- Honchō shōjaku mokuroku*, 16
- Honchō zoku monzui*, 180, 181, 192
- hon-kyōgen* (independent *kyōgen* plays), 348
- Horiguchi Daigaku (1892–1981), 714
- Hōseidō Kisanji, 514, 520–2
- Hoshino Tenchi (1862–1950), 602
- Hosokawa Yūsai (1534–1610), 160, 212, 253–5
- Hototogisu* (Cuckoo, est. 1897), 642, 753
- Hotta Yoshie (1918–98), 689–90
- Hou Hanshu* (History of the Later Han, c. 5th c.), 29, 194
- hyaku monogatari* (hundred tales), 283
- hyakuin* (one hundred linked verse sequence), 317, 319, 322, 325
- Hyakunin isshu* (One Hundred Poets, One Hundred Poems), 376, 392, chapter 25
- hyakushu* (one hundred poems on fixed topics), 119, 232, 317
- hyō* (memorials to the throne), 35, 179, 189, 190
- Hyōhanki* (diary of Taira Nobunori, mid-12th c.), 301
- Ibuse Masuji (1898–1993), 686, 727–8
- Ichijō Kanera (or Kaneyoshi, 1402–81), 136, 160, 252, 345–6
- Ichikawa Kansai (1749–1820), 467–8
- Ichikawa Sadanji II (1880–1940), 705
- Ichinotani futaba gunki*. See Namiki Senryū
- Ihara Saikaku (1642–93), 4, 138, 369, 375, 379, 381, 388, 396, 398, 399–401, 405–6, 532, 603, 700–1, 704, chapter 42
- Budō denrai ki* (Record of the Transmission of the Way of the Warrior, 1687), 419
- Buke giri monogatari* (Tales of Samurai Honor, 1688), 415, 419
- Dokugin ichinichi senku* (A Thousand Verses Composed Alone in a Single Day, 1675), 416
- Honchō nijū fukō* (Twenty Cases of Unfilial Piety in Our Land, 1685), 420
- Kōshoku gonin onna* (Five Women Who Loved Love, 1686), 419
- Kōshoku ichidai onna* (The Woman Who Loved Love, 1686), 419, 700
- Kōshoku ichidai otoko* (The Man Who Loved Love, 1682), 138, 400, 417–18
- Nanshoku ōkagami* (The Great Mirror of Male Love, 1687), 419
- Nippon eitaigura* (Japan's Eternal Storehouse, 1688), 400, 419–20
- Saikaku nagori no tomo* (Saikaku's Farewell to Friends, 1699), 420
- Saikaku okimiyage* (Saikaku's Parting Gift, 1693), 419
- Saikaku oridome* (Saikaku's Final Weaving, 1694), 420
- Saikaku ōyakazu* (1681), 417
- Saikaku shokoku banashi* (Saikaku's Stories from the Provinces, 1685), 420
- Saikaku yorozu no fumi hōgu* (Saikaku's Myriad Scraps of Letters, 1696), 420
- Seken munezan'yō* (Mental Calculations for Surviving in the World, 1692), 420
- Shoen ōkagami* (The Great Mirror of Beauties, subtitled *Kōshoku nidai otoko*, Another Man Who Loved Love, 1684), 418
- Ikezawa Natsuki (b. 1945), 755
- Ikkyū Sōjun (1394–1481), 215, 314–16, 504
- Kyōunshū*, 315
- ikusagatari* (battle tale), 297
- Imagawa Ryōshun (1326–1420?), 212, 250, 309
- Imakagami* (The New Mirror, c. 1174–5), 201
- imayō* (modern style songs), 299, 330, chapter 20
- imperial poetry anthology (*chokusenshū*), 5, 50, 53, 67, 80–1, 84, 85, 95, 97–8, 101, 124, 134, 155–6, 161, 213–14, 218, 256–7, 325,

- chapters 6, 9, 13, 23, and 24; *see also*
Fūgashū, *Gosenshū*, *Goshūishū*,
Gyokuyōshū, *Kin'yōshū*, *Kokinshū*,
Senzaishū, *Shinchokusenshū*,
Shingoshūishū, *Shinkokinshū*,
Shinshokukokinshū, *Shinyōshū*,
Shokugosenshū, *Shūishū*
Inaka shibai. *See* Manzōtei
 Inbe no Hironari (fl. early 9th c.), 35
Indōshū. *See* Nakamura Saikoku
 Inoue Hisashi (1934–2010), 708, 709, 710
 Inoue Mitsuharu (1926–92), 728
 Inoue Tetsujirō (1855–1944), 613–15
Inu tsukubashū (Mongrel Tsukuba Collection,
 1532), 326, 403–4
Iratsume (The Maiden, est. 1887), 599
Ise monogatari (The Tales of Ise), 5, 70, 79, 98,
 99, 100, 123–5, 126, 164, 214, 216, 235,
 237, 321, 335, 337, 376, 385, 388, 389, 390,
 402, 480, 500, chapter 13
 Ishida Ira (b. 1960), 764–5
 Ishihara Shintarō (b. 1932), 670, 732–3
 Ishii Shinji (b. 1966), 764
 Ishikawa Jōzan (1583–1672), 406, 457, 458, 462
 Ishikawa Jun (1899–1987), 722
 Ishikawa Takuboku (1886–1912), 619, 624,
 625, 626
 Ishikawa Tatsuzō (1905–85), 668, 685–6
 Ishimure Michiko (b. 1927), 735–6
Issun bōshi (Little One-Inch), 358
 Itagaki Taisuke (1837–1919), 584
 Itchū (1639–1711), 406
 Itō Baiu (1683–1745), 416
 Itō Hiromi (b. 1955), 718
 Itō Jinsai (1627–1705), 379, 416, 458, 460, 479,
 480–1
 Itō Noe (1895–1923), 643–4
 Itō Sachio (1864–1913), 618
 Itō Sei (1905–69), 657–8, 696, 722
 Itō Shizuo (1906–53), 716
 Itō Tan'an (1623–1708), 462–3
 Itō Tanboku (1680–1758), 528
 Itō Tōgai (1670–1736), 481
 Iwade no Ben, 194
 Iwakura Tomomi (1825–83), 555, 702
 Iwamoto Yoshiharu (1863–1942), 562, 599, 600,
 602–3
 Iwata Toyo'o (aka Shishi Bunroku,
 1893–1969), 668, 707
Izayoi nikki. *See* Nun Abutsu
 Izumi Kyōka (1873–1939), 606, 609–12, 707
 Izumi Shikibu (fl. c. 1000), 98, 134–5, 144, 161,
 172, 233, 331
Izumi shikibu nikki (Izumi Shikibu Diary,
 c. 1008), 98, 165, 170–2, 273
Izumo no kuni fudoki (Izumo Province
 Gazetteer), 15, 21, 47–8
Izutsu, 335–6
 Jakuren (c. 1139–1202), 232, 235–6
jidai-mono (historical or “period” book), 422
jidai-mono, jidai kyōgen (historical play), 378,
 429, 432, 433, 439, 441, 703–4
 Jien (1155–1225), 232, 298, 300
Gukanshō (1221), 201–5, 298
jige (commoner), 247–8, 250, 317, 321
jige denju (commoner transmissions), 471
Jinen Koji (The Lay-Priest Jinen), 332
 Jingū, Empress, 25–6
 Jinmu, Emperor, 23, 25, 31, 32, 36, 41, 202
 Jippensha Ikku (1765–1831), 375, 381, 513, 517,
 522, 524–31
Tōkaidōchū hizakurige (Shank's Mare, 1802),
 381, 507, 525–7, 531, 578–9
 Jitō, Empress (r. 686–97), 18–20, 29, 31, 59–62,
 65–6, 83, 256
jitsuroku (true accounts), 445–6, 539–40,
 542, 543
jitsurokutai shōsetsu (fictionalized accounts of
 recent sensational events), 394–5, 585
Jiyū minken undō (Freedom and People's
 Rights movement), 554–63, 584, 585,
 586, 600, 643
Jogaku zasshi (Women's Education Journal,
 est. 1885), 562, 599, 641
Jōgū Shōtoku hō-ō teisetsu (Imperial
 Explanation of the Dharma Prince
 Sagely Virtue [Shōtoku] of the Upper
 Palace), 38
Jōkyūki (Record of the Jōkyū Rebellion), 291,
 293–4, 301
 Jomei, Emperor (d. 641), 56–9, 83
jōruri, 9–11, 215, 356, 365–9, 377–9, 380, 421, 424,
 426–8, 430, 431, 434, 513, 520, 524, 541,
 542, 544, 547, 631, 706, chapter 44;
see also ko-jōruri
Jōruri jinidan sōshi (The Tale of Lady Jōruri in
 Twelve Parts), 365, 368
Jūjō Genji (Genji in Ten Chapters), 390
jūbungaku (pure literature), 421–2, 566–7, 648,
 654–5, 667, 699, 761–2
kabuki, 10, 11, 307, 329, 376, 377–9, 380, 391–2,
 399, 405, 498, 512, 520, 522, 524, 529, 531,
 535, 544, 547, 596, 604, 606, 692, 693,
 702–6, 708, 720, chapters 43, 44, 45

- kabuki-mono* (eccentric outlaws), 448
 Kada no Arimaro (1706–51), 484
 Kada no Azumamaro (1669–1736), 472, 484
kagai. *See utagaki*
kagami-mono (mirror histories), 100, 201;
 see also Azumakagami, Imakagami,
 Masukagami, Mizukagami, Ōkagami
 Kagawa Kageki (1768–1843), 476
 Kagawa Toyohiko (1888–1960), 654
 Kagekiyo, 368
Kagerō nikki (Kagerō Diary, c. 974), 98–100,
 161, 165, 168–70, 171, 174, 273, 278
kagura (song/dance for the gods), 207
kagura uta (shrine songs), 111, 117
 Kaibara Ekiken, 387
Kaifūsō (Florilegium of Cherished Airs, 751),
 15, 16, 17, 19–20, 51, 68, 188, chapter 6
 Kaikō Takeshi (or Kaikō Ken, 1930–89),
 733, 760
 Kaji Wataru (1903–82), 658
Kakaishō. *See Yotsutsuji Yoshinari*
kakekotoba (homophonic wordplay), 110,
 405, 507
Kaki Yamabushi (Persimmons), 353
 Kakinomoto no Hitomaro, 18, 51, 56, 59, 60–8,
 71, 72–3, 74, 76, 80, 83, 112, 494
Kakuichi-bon Heike monogatari, 296–300, 302–3
Kakyo hyōshiki (A Formulary for Verse
 Based on the Canons of Poetry,
 772), 219–20
 Kamichika Ichiko (1881–1981), 644
Kaminari, 347, 351
 Kamo no Chōmei (1155?–1216), 236, 248,
 chapter 26
 Hōjōki (The Ten-Foot Square Hut), 8, 162,
 191, 202, 261–6
 Hosshinshū (Collection of Awakenings,
 1216), 265
 Kamo no Mabuchi (1697–1769), 3, 380, 472–3,
 475, 479, 484–5, 496, 499
 Niimanabi (New Learning, 1765), 473
 Kan Chazan (or Sazan, 1748–1827), 458, 465–6
 Kan'ami Kiyotsugu (1333–84), 216, 329, 331–4,
 335, 339, 340, 343
 Sotoba Komachi (Stupa Komachi), 331–2
kana (vernacular Japanese syllabary), 51,
 97–101, 113, 187, 192, 193, 196–7, 204–5,
 214, 306, 376, 384, 385, 391, 396–7, 504,
 556, 557, 559–60, 711; *see also* gender and
 writing systems and styles, Japanese
 literature, *kanajo*, *kana-zōshi*,
 and writing system, 1
 and *kokubungaku*, *kokugo*, 3–4, 566–7, 570
 diary, chapters 15, 27
 Kana-no-kai (Kana Society), 558
 -majiribun (a style of writing reliant
 primarily on *kana*), 202
 Kanagaki Robun (1829–94), 519, 527, 531,
 578–9, 585
 Kanai Mieko (b. 1947), 746
kanajo (Preface in *kana*), 115, 157, 158–9, 220–2,
 224, 226, 230, 341, 342, 346
kana-zōshi (*kana* booklets), 376, 379, 418, 520
 Kanbara Ariake (1876–1952), 620
kanbun (Sinitic prose), 1–2, 4, 19–21, 26, 27–9,
 48, 69–70, 72, 77, 97, 102, 115, 157, 181,
 190, 218, 219, 220, 221, 228, 230, 269, 311,
 378, 379, 396, 501, 556, 557–8, 559–60,
 561, 571, 574–6, 579–80, 582, 583, 616,
 chapter 47; *see also* *kanshi*, *kundoku*
 and *kokubungaku*, 566–9
 and medieval warrior tale, 291, 292
 and *setsuwa*, 280–1, 283–4
 diary, 165, 167, 273
 Kanehara Hitomi (b. 1983), 764–5
 Kaneko Mitsuharu (1895–1975), 716
 Kaneko Yōbun (1894–1985), 658
 Kaneshiro Kazuki (b. 1968), 759
Kangaku (Chinese studies), 4, 379–80, 457,
 557–8, 616, 665
kangebon (long preaching books), 544
kango (Chinese words), 404, 567
kanji (Chinese script), 187, 196, 385, 397, 517,
 541, 557, 560, 569, 570, 625; *see also*
 gender and writing systems and
 styles, and writing system,
kanshi (Sinitic poetry), 6, 7, 10–11, 97, 112, 113,
 120, 189, 215, 218, 220, 252, 316, 406, 411,
 504, 635, chapters 6, 17, 46, 47, and 57;
 see also *kanbun*, *kanshibun*, *kyōshi*
 and aristocratic men, 5
 and Edo literature, 378–80, 381, 390
 contest, 118
 in the Meiji period, 564, 565, 613, 616
kanshibun (Sinitic poetry/prose), 91, chapters
 18, 47, and 57; *see also* *kanbun*, *kanshi*
 Kanwatei Onitake (1760–1818), 527
 Kanze Nagatoshi (1488–1541), 338
 Kanze Nobumitsu (1435–1516), 338–9
kanzen chōaku (praising virtue, chastising
 vice), 480, 541, 543, 584
 and Kyokutei Bakin, 546
 Kara Jūrō (b. 1940), 708–9
Kara monogatari (Tales of China,
 c. 1165), 283
 Karatani Kōjin (b. 1941), 628, 640, 705–6

- karon* (*waka* poetics and treatises), 101, 120, 207, 214, 340–1, 344, 346, 476–7, chapter 22
- Karukaya* (c. 1631), 366–7
- Kasa no Kanamura (fl. 715–33), 65–6, 67, 75–6, 83
- kashihon* 'ya (commercial lending libraries), 393, 513, 543
- Kashiwagi Jotei (1763–1819), 468–9
- kasutori* (pulp magazines), 721–2
- katagi-mono* (character books), 422, 529
- katari-mono* (sung narrative), 356, 438; *see also* *biwa hōshi*, *goze*, *jōruri*, *kōwakamai*, *noh*, *sekkyō*, *sekkyō-bushi*, *sekkyō-jōruri*
- katei shōsetsu* (family novel), 587
- Katō Chikage (1735–1808), 473
- Katō Hiroyuki (1836–1916), 554, 556, 564
- Katō Umaki (1721–77), 499
- Kawabata Yasunari (1899–1972), 630, 669–70, 695–6, 697–9
- Asakusa kurenaidan* (Scarlet Gang of Asakusa, 1929–30), 696, 698
- Kurutta ippēji* (A Page of Madness, 1926), 695
- Yukiguni* (Snow Country, 1935), 698–9
- Kawaguchi Hiroshi (1905–?), 658
- Kawamura Minato (b. 1951), 687, 697–9, 757, 759
- Kawamura Takeshi (b. 1959), 709
- Kawatake Mokuami (1816–93), 378, 434, 455–6, 531
- kayō* (song), 40–1, 101, 206
- kazura-mono* (woman's plays), 216
- keikobon* (practice books), 391, 428
- Keikokushū* (Collection for Ordering the State, 827), 88–9
- keishū bungaku*, *keishū sakka* (ladies' literature, lady writers), 599–604
- keitai shōsetsu* (cellphone novel), 766–7
- Kensai (1452–1510), 325
- Kenshi, 134, 135
- Kenshō (c. 1130–c. 1209), 225
- Ropyyakuban chinjō* (Complaint about the Poetry Contest in Six Hundred Rounds, c. 1193), 225
- Ki no Kaion (1663–1742), 441
- Ki no Ohito (682–738), 68
- Ki no Tadana, 189
- Ki no Tsurayuki (d. c. 945), 66, 111, 115, 159, 165, 220, 232, 341
- Tosa nikki* (Tosa Diary, c. 935), 98, 100, 165, 166–8, 186, 268
- Tsurayuki-shū* (Tsurayuki Collection), 118–19
- Ki no Yoshimochi (d. 919), 115
- kibyōshi* (yellow cover illustrated books), 379, 380, 387, 454, 503, 504, 506, 513, 515,
- Kido Takayoshi (1833–77), 555
- kigo* (seasonal word), 409, 412, 414, 508, 509
- kiki kayō*, 40, chapter 3
- kikigaki* (lecture notes), 163, 281, 282
- kikō* (travel writing), 266, 270, 410, 567; *see also* travel
- and Jippensha Ikku, 524–7
- kyōka kikōshū*, 524–6
- Kikuchi Gozan (1769–1849), 468, 469
- Kikuchi Kan (1888–1948), 669, 692, 700, 706, 707–8, 721
- Kikuchi Yūhō (1870–1947), 587, 692
- Kim Saryang (1914–50), 672, 685
- Kim Sök-pōm (b. 1925), 757, 759
- Kim Tal-su (1919–97), 689, 757, 758
- Kimura Akebono (1872–90), 600–1
- Kimura Mokurō, 518
- Kin Kakuei (1938–85), 758
- Kin'yōshū* (Kin'yō *wakashū*, Collection of Golden Leaves, 1127), 224; *see also* Minamoto no Toshiyori
- Kindai shisō* (Modern Thought, est. 1912), 656
- Kindai shūka* (Superior Poems of Recent Times, c. 1209), 227–8
- kindaishi* (modern poetry), 753, chapters 63, 74
- Kingu* (King, est. 1925), 649–50, 651–2, 663, 668
- Kinkafu*, 111
- Kinoshita Chōshōshi (1569–1649), 472
- Kinoshita Junji (1914–2006), 707–8
- Kinoshita Mokutarō (1885–1945), 624, 707
- kinpira jōruri* (Edo-born subgenre of *ko-jōruri*), 356, 438–9, 440
- Kinrai fūteishō*. *See* Nijō Yoshimoto
- kireji* (cutting word), 409, 500, 508
- Kirino Natsuo (b. 1951), 764–5
- Kishida Kunio (1890–1954), 695, 697–8, 707
- kishu ryūri tan* (story of the young noble in exile), 123, 132, 450
- Kitada Usurai (1876–1900), 600, 601
- Kitagawa Fuyuhiko (1900–90), 684, 697, 715
- Kitahara Hakushū (1885–1942), 237, 620–1, 711
- Kitamura Kigin (1624–1705), 136, 391
- Kogetsushō* (The Moon on the Lake Commentary, 1673), 138, 390
- Kitamura Tōkoku (1868–94), 602, 703
- Kiyomizu monogatari*, 398
- Kiyotsune*, 336

- Kiyowara no Motosuke (or Kiyohara Motosuke, 908–90), 124, 161
- Ko no moto ni*, 407
- Kobayashi Hideo (1902–83), 661–2
- Kobayashi Issa (1763–1827), 375, 381, 412–14
- Kobayashi Takiji (1903–33), 710
- kobunji* (Ancient Phraseology, Ch. *Guwenci*), 459, 465–8, 482, 483–4
- Kōda Aya (1904–90), 743
- Kōda Rohan (1867–1947), 423, 570, 585, 743
- kōdan* (storytelling), 445, 455, 649, 651–2, 668, 706
- Kōdan kurabu* (Kōdan Club, est. 1911), 649
- kōdan-mono* (rumor works), 547
- Kogaku* (Confucian ancient learning), 379, 472, chapter 49
- Koganei Kimiko (1871–1956), 600, 602
- Kogetsushō*. See Kitamura Kigin
- Kogo shūi* (Gleanings from Ancient Stories, 807), 35, 36
- Kōgon, Emperor (1313–64), 246, 278
- Koikawa Harumachi, 375, 520
- Kinkin sensei eiga no yume* (Master Flashgold's Splendiferous Dream, 1775), 515, 520
- Kojiki* (Record of Ancient Matters, 712), 15–16, 18–21, 45, 47, 50–2, 55, 56, 101, 111, 379, 473, 486, 487, 501, 665, chapters 2, 3
- Kojikiden* (Transmission of the Records of Ancient Matters, 1798), 486
- Kojima Nobuo (1915–2006), 731–3, 740
- ko-jōruri* (seventeenth-century *jōruri* puppet theater), 308, 356, 365–9, 438, 439, 440
- Kōkami Shōji (b. 1958), 709
- Kokan Shiren (1278–1346), 383
- Kokin waka rokujō* (Old and New Waka in Six Quires), 78, 111–12
- Kokinshū* (*Kokin wakashū*, Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems, c. 905–14), 5, 6, 58, 66, 79, 81, 84, 86, 95, 97–8, 99, 101, 124, 125, 164, 166, 214, 219–22, 226, 228–9, 230, 237, 244, 250, 252, 323, 335, 341, 373, 376, 471, 473, 474–8, 493, 598, 617, chapters 9, 13
- Kokka hachiron* (Eight Essays on Japanese Poetry, 1742), 484
- kokkeibon* (books of humor), 379, 381, 387, 503, 507, 560, chapter 53
- Kokon chomonjū* (A Collection of Things Written and Heard in the Past and Present, 1254), 282
- Kokubu Seigai (1857–1944), 576
- kokubungaku* (Japanese national literature), 4, 91, 565–70, 572, chapter 68
- Kokugaku* (nativist studies), 3–4, 33, 85, 101, 138, 252, 379–80, 381, 387, 472–7, 556, 665, chapter 49; see also Kamo no Mabuchi, Motoori Norinaga
- kokugo* (national language), 3–4, 566–7, 569–70, 572, 683
- Kokumin no tomo* (The Nation's Friend, 1887–98), 563, 564, 568, 580
- Kokusen'ya kassen*. See Chikamatsu Monzaemon
- Komaki Ōmi (1894–1978), 658–9
- Kometani Fumiko (b. 1930), 747
- Komparu Zenchiku (or Ujinobu, 1405–70?), 336–7, 339, 340, 343–6
- Bashō* (Plantain), 337
- Rokurin ichiro no ki* (Record of Six Circles and One Dewdrop, 1455), 344–6
- Komparu Zenpō (1454–1532?), 339
- Komuro Angaidō (1852–85), 581
- Konjaku monogatari shū* (Tales of Times Now Past, c. 1120), 9, 39, 100–1, 197, 215, chapter 28
- Kōno Taeko (1926–2015), 740, 744–5, 746, 760
- Korai fūteishō*. See Fujiwara no Shunzei
- Korean War (1950–3), 731, 742
- kōshō zuihitsu* (antiquarian miscellanies), 545
- Kōshoku ichidai onna*. See Ihara Saikaku
- Kōshoku ichidai otoko*. See Ihara Saikaku
- kōshokubon* (books on love), 399–400, 401 and Ejima Kiseki, 422 and Ihara Saikaku, 418–20
- kōshoku-mono*. See *kōshokubon*
- kotobagaki* (or *kotogaki*, headline), 124, 138, 158, 166, 250, 254, 272, 320, 409, 410, 477
- Kōtoku Shūsui (1871–1911), 626
- kouta* (popular songs), 377
- kōwakamai* (ballad drama), 208, 213, 286, 307, 308, 355–6, 359, 362–5, 366–7, 368, 369, 438, 444
- Koyama Itoko (1901–89), 740
- Kubo Sakae (1900–58), 707
- Kubota Mantarō (1889–1973), 707
- kudaishi* (poetry on fixed topic based on line from earlier verse), 179, 186, 190
- kuden* (secret transmission), 281
- Kuga Katsunan (1857–1907), 563
- Kujō Michie, 300
- Kumazawa Banzan (1619–91)
- Genji gaiden* (c. 1673), 138

- kundoku* (a Japanese method of reading Chinese-character texts), 17–18, 26, 27, 33, 34, 100–1, 180, 557, 559–60, 561, 580, 589–90
- Kunikida Doppo (1871–1908), 624, 652
- Kurahara Korehito (1902–91), 659, 665–7
- Kurahashi Yumiko (1935–2005), 744, 745, 746
- Kurata Hyakuzō (1891–1943)
- Shukke to sono deshi* (A Monk and His Disciples), 653–4
- kurohon* (black books), chapter 52
- Kuroi Senji (b. 1932), 736
- Kuroiwa Ruikō (1862–1920), 586–7
- Kurotobi Shikibu, 517
- Kuroyanagi Shōha (1727–71), 493
- Kurumamochi no Chitose (or Chine, fl. 720s–730s), 65
- kusa-zōshi* (woodblock illustrated books), 401, 539, 542–3, chapter 52; *see also* *akahon*, *aohon*, *e-zōshi*, *gōkan*, *haishi*, *kibyōshi*, *kurohon*
- kusemai* (a type of syncopated song and dance), 332, 334, 362
- Kyō suzume*, 399
- Kyō warabe*. *See* Nakagawa Kiun
- kyōbun* (comic Chinese prose), 503, 506
- kyōgen* (comic theater), 11, 213, 216–17, 286, 328–9, 335, 424, 426, 525, chapter 36
- kyōgen kigo* (fictitious speech and ornate language), 137, 215
- Kyōgoku house, 243, 246–7, 249–50, 275; *see also* Kyōgoku Tamekane, Kyōgoku Tamenori
- Kyōgoku Tamekane (1254–1332), 243–5, 249, 251, 254, 276
- Tamekane-kyō wakashō* (Lord Tamekane's Notes on Poetry, 1287?), 244
- Kyōgoku Tamenori (1227–79), 243
- kyōka* (comic waka), 191, 379, 380, 436, 509, 613, chapter 51
- and Jippensha Ikku, 522, 524–6
- Kyokutei (Takizawa) Bakin (1767–1848), 559–62, chapter 55
- Chinsetsu yumiharizuki* (The Marvelous Story of the Drawn-Bow Moon, 1807–11), 544–5, 546
- Keisei suikoden* (A Courtesan's Water Margin, 1825–35), 522
- Nansō Satomi hakkenden* (The Chronicle of the Eight Dogs of the Nansō Satomi Clan, 1814–42), 381, 393, 548–50, 561
- kyōsha* (mad person), 503
- kyōshi* (comic Chinese poetry), 379, 380, 470, 503–6, 509, 613
- kyōyō shōsetsu* (educational novel, *Bildungsroman*), 654
- Lady Ise (c. 877–c. 940)
- Ise-shū* (Lady Ise Collection), 119, 166
- Lady Kasa, 80, 98
- Lady Koshikibu
- Ōsaka koenu Gon Chūnagon* (The Provisional Middle Counselor Who Did Not Cross over the Hill of Meeting), 140
- Lady Nijō (1258–?), 270, 278–9
- Towazugatari* (The Unrequested Tale, c. 1306), 268–9, 276–7
- Lady Ōtomo no Sakanoue (c. 695–fl. until 750), 65, 77, 84, 98
- leishu* (Chinese encyclopedias), 20, 281, 282
- Levy Hideo (b. 1950), 766
- Li Bo, 466
- Li Panlong (1514–70), 482
- logography/logographs (logographic writing), 17–18, 26, 28–9, 33, 37, 40, 51; *see also* *kundoku*
- love, *See also* *kōshokubon*, marriage, sexuality and
- Buddhism, 7–8
- jōruri*, 378
- kabuki*, 378, 449, 454
- Meiji melodramatic fiction, chapter 62
- in
- Edo literature, 9, 532, chapter 54
- Funabenkei*, 338
- Genji monogatari*, 129–32
- girls' manga, 749–52
- Hamamatsu Chūnagon monogatari*, 146–7
- Heichū monogatari*, 125
- Imin gakuen*, 602
- Izumi shikibu nikki*, 170–2
- Izutsu*, 335–6
- Kagerō nikki*, 170
- Katakoī*, 694–5
- Kojiki*, 23, 26, 42–4
- Matsura no miya monogatari*, 151–2
- Ningen shikkaku*, 723
- Ōtsu Junkichi*, 655
- political novels, 582
- Ryōjīn hishō*, 208
- Sagoromo monogatari*, 140–2
- Sotoba Komachi*, 331–2
- Sumiyoshi monogatari*, 150
- Takekurabe*, 603

- love (cont.)
Taketori monogatari, 123
Torikaebaya monogatari, 147–9
Ukigumo, 592
Utatane, 273–4
Yoru no Nezame, 143–4
You xianku, 121–2
 zainichi literature, 757, 759
 in works by
 Izumi Kyōka, 606–11
 Natsume Sōseki, 637–9
 Tsubouchi Shōyō, 560
 Yosano Akiko, 618–19
 poems by
 Ikkyū, 315–16
 Shimazaki Tōson, 616–17
 poems in
 early Sino-Japanese anthologies, 90–1
 Gosenshū, 117, 118
 Gyokuyōshū, 245
 Hyakunin isshu, 257–8
 Japanese and Chinese, 108
 Kokinshū, 116–17
 Man'yōshū, 51–2, 54, 55–6, 59, 62–4, 72–5,
 77, 78, 79; *see also sōmon*
 Myōjō, 618
 Shinkokinshū, 231, 232, 233–4, 241
 Shūishū, 117
 suicide (*shinjū*), 378, 451, 547, 647, 698
 and Chikamatsu Monzaemon, 10, 432,
 440, 442
Love Suicides at Amijima. See Chikamatsu
 Monzaemon
Love Suicides at Sonezaki. See Chikamatsu
 Monzaemon
 Lu Ji (261–303), 58
 Lu You, 466
 Machida Kō (b. 1962), 765
 Maeda Ai (b. 1968), 561–2, 646, 682, 685, 706
 Maejima Hisoka (1835–1919), 557
Mai no hon (Books of Dances, 1632), 364
Makura no sōshi. See Sei Shōnagon
makurakotoba (poetic epithet, lit. “pillow
 word”), 56, 61, 81
Man Who Loved Love. See Ihara Saikaku
Man'yō daishōki (An Apprentice's Records on
 the *Man'yōshū*, 1690), 84–5, 472
Man'yōshū (Collection of Myriad Leaves,
 c. 759), 5, 6, 9, 40, 88, 91, 98–9, 101,
 110–12, 114, 116, 118, 122, 124, 149, 151,
 212, 226, 231, 236, 379, 403, 471–3, 477,
 484–5, 487, 500, 617–18, 668, chapters 1,
 and 5; *see also* Kakinomoto no
 Hitomaro, Ōtomo no Yakamochi
Man'yōshū chūshaku (1269), 46, 84
 Manchuria, 2, 638, 664, 666, 683–4, 688,
 708, 715
 manga, 139, 677, 729–30, 764, 765, 767; *see also*
 girls' magazine and manga
 Manzei (fl. 704–31), 68
 Manzōtei (1756–1810)
 Inaka shibai (Provincial Theater, 1787,
 republished in 1802), 523
 marriage
 in
 Heian literature, 127–8, 131, 145–8, 150,
 154, 168–70
 Kojiki and *Nihon shoki*, 41–2
 modern period, 562, 592, 598, 601–2,
 607–11, 639, 655, 678, 727, 732, 738,
 745–6, chapter 66
 noh play, 335
 otogizōshi, 358
 the Edo period, 532, 548
 politics in the Heian period, 5, 122, 124, 195
 premodern practice, 269–70, 278
 Masamune Hakuchō (1879–1962), 624, 722
 Masaoka Shiki (1867–1902), 478, 573, 617–18,
 635, 692
Masukagami (The Clear Mirror, c. 1333–76), 6,
 201, 212, 285, 304
 Matayoshi Eiki (b. 1947), 754
 Matsuda Masataka (b. 1962), 707
 Matsunaga Teitoku (1571–1653), 326–7, 391,
 404–5, 417
 Matsuo Bashō (1644–94), 4, 64, 244, 266–7, 327,
 375, 379, 381, 406–13, 492
 Nozarashi kikō (Skeleton in the Fields), 410
 Oi no kobumi (Backpack Notes, 1688), 407
 Oku no hosomichi (Narrow Road to the
 Deep North, 1694), 266, 410, 411
Matsura no miya monogatari, 151–3
 Matsuura Rieko (b. 1958), 765
 Medoruma Shun (b. 1960), 754–5
 Mei Yaochen, 462
Meigō ōrai. See Fujiwara no Akihira
meishoki (records of famous places), 398–9
meisho-zue (illustrated guidebooks), 399
 Meng Haooran, 459
Meng qiu (J. *Mōgyū*), 283
 merchant, 355, 356, 373, 375–6, 377–8, 392, 396,
 415–16, 417, 418–20, 435, 442, 471, 482–3,
 486, 489, 491, 499, 584, 632, 665; *see also*
chōnin, four-class system *under* class
michiyuki (travel scene), 10, 299, 350, 428

- Mikami Sanji (1865–1939), 565–7, 654
- Mikohidari house, 149, 151, 225–6, 236, 240–7, 346; *see also* Fujiwara no Ietaka, Fujiwara no Shunzei, Fujiwara no Tameie, Fujiwara no Teika, Jakuren, Kyōgoku house, Nijō house, Reizei house
- Mimasuya Nisōji (1785–1856), 455
- Minamoto no Michitomo (1171–1227), 236
- Minamoto no Sanetomo (1192–1219), 211, 212, 228, 242, 289
- Minamoto no Shitagō (911–83), 124, 126–7, 178–9, 180–1, 191
- Minamoto no Tamenori (d. 1011), 181
- Minamoto no Toshiyori (c. 1055–c. 1129), 225, 226
- Toshiyori zuinō* (Toshiyori's Poetics, c. 1115), 207, 221, 223–4
- Minamoto no Tsunenobu (1016–97), 223, 225
- Minase sangin hyakuin* (Three Poets at Minase, 1488), 325
- Ming dynasty, 312, 313, 381, 385, 390, 422, 467, 482, 483, 488, 494, 495, 497, 541, 559, 561, 582
- Mishima Yukio (1925–70), 701, 704–5, 708, 733–4
- mitate* (visual transposition), 110, 114, 405, 527
- Miyachi Karoku (1884–1958), 658–9
- Miyajima Sukeo (1886–1951), 655–9
- Miyake (née Tanabe) Kaho (1868–1943), 598–601
- Miyake Kanran (1674–1718), 461–2
- Miyake Setsurei (1860–1945), 563
- Miyako no Nishiki
- Genroku Taiheiki* (1702), 401–2
- Miyamasu, 337–8, 339
- Miyamoto Kenji (1908–2007), 665–6
- Miyamoto (née Chūjō) Yuriko (1899–1951), 644, 720
- Miyazaki Murū (1853–89), 581
- Miyoshi Jūrō (1902–58), 707
- Miyoshi no Tameyasu (1049–1139), 181
- Miyoshi Shōraku (1696–1772), 433, 443
- Miyoshi Tatsuji (1900–64), 716
- Mizukagami* (The Water Mirror, c. 1185–90), 201
- Mizumura Minae (b. 1951), 766
- mokkan*, 18
- Momonoi Naoaki (aka Kōwakamaru, 1393–1470), 213, 362
- Monmu, Emperor (r. 697–707), 59–60, 87
- monogatari* (vernacular tale), 5–6, 100, 101, 377, 396, 486, 632, chapters 10, 11, and 12; *see also specific monogatari titles*
- and
- genre hierarchy, 3–4, 378–9
- national literature, 567–9
- nikki*, 166, 170–1, 268–9
- otogizōshi*, 214, 357
- setsuwa*, 39, 285, 286
- storytelling, 282–3
- vernacular histories, chapter 19
- warrior tale, 287, 289, 297
- monogatari sō* (Buddhist priest-storytellers), 215
- Monokusa Tarō* (Lazy Tarō), 358, 400
- Montoku jitsuroku*, 194, 197–8
- Mori Arinori (1847–89), 564
- Mori Kainan (1863–1911), 573, 576
- Mori Mari (1903–87), 744, 745
- Mori Ōgai (1862–1922), 567–8, 570, 600, 615–16, 619, 621–2, 682, 700, 701, 703, 706–7, chapter 64
- Abe ichizoku* (The Abe Clan, 1913), 627, 700
- Maihime* (The Dancing Girl, 1890), 568, 624, 682
- Omokage* (Vestiges, 1889), 568, 615–16
- Mori Shuntō (1819–89), 573, 574, 576
- Morimoto Kaoru (1912–46), 707–8
- Morita Shiken (1861–97), 580
- Motomasa (1400?–32), 339, 343
- Sumidagawa* (River Sumida), 336–7
- Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801), 3, 138, 380, 387, 472, 473–4, 479, 485–7, 500–1
- Ashiwake obune* (Small Boat Parting the Reeds, c. 1759), 474
- Isonokami sasamegato* (Whisperings from Isonokami, 1816), 474
- Shibun yōryō* (Essentials of Murasaki's Writings, 1763), 474
- Mozume Takami (1847–1928), 558
- Mugonshō* (Silent Notes, 1603), 326
- Mumyōzōshi*. *See* Fujiwara Shunzei no musume
- Murakami Haruki (b. 1949), 670, 761–4, 766, 767
- Murakami Ryū (b. 1952), 761–2, 764–5
- Murasaki Shikibu (d. c. 1014), 98, 100, 134–5, 137, 170, 184, 185, 331
- Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Genji), 5–6, 8–10, 70, 96, 98, 99, 100, 101, 112, 120, 121, 123, 126–8, 164, 169, 172, 173–4, 176, 178–9, 193, 195–7, 214, 216, 236, 237, 240–1, 268–9, 270, 273–4, 276–7, 285, 321, 326, 343, 376, 390, 392, 418, 438, 450, 474, 480, 486, 493, 500, 522, 567–8, 632, 700, chapters 11, 12, and 13

- Murasaki Shikibu (d. c. 1014) (cont.)
Murasaki Shikibu nikki (Murasaki Shikibu
 Diary, c. 1010), 99, 165, 172–3, 174, 195
 Murase Kōtei (1746–1818), 463
 Murata Harumi (1746–1811), 473–4
 Murataya Jirobē, 524–5
 Murayama Tomoyoshi (1901–77), 707
 Muro Kyūsō (1658–1734), 460
 Mushanokōji Saneatsu (1885–1976), 626,
 653–5, 721
 music. *See gagaku, kagura*
Mutsuwaki (Record of the Battles
 in the North, 1051–62),
 290–1, 297–8
 Myōjō (Venus, est. 1899), 618, 624
 myth, 16–17, 22, 34, 35, 36–7, 40, 42–4,
 121, 486, 560, 736
 and *noh*, 329, 338, 346
 in
chūsei Nihongi, 33
fudoki, 46, 49
Kogo shūi, 35
Kojiki, 23–6
Man'yōshū, 60
Nihon shoki, 30–1
otogizōshi, 358
setsuwa, 284
- Naba Kassho (1595–1648), 460
 Nagai Ai (b. 1951), 710
 Nagai Kafū (1879–1959), 575, 621, 711–12, 722–3,
 chapter 64
 Nagai Takashi (1908–51), 726
 Nagata Hideo (1885–1949), 706
 Nagatsuka Takashi (1879–1915), 618
 Nagawa Kamesuke (active 1772–89), 453
 Nagayo Yoshirō (1888–1961), 653–4
 Nakagami Kenji (1946–92), 760–1, 765
 Nakagawa Kiun
Kyō warabe (1658), 398–9
 Nakahara Chūya (1907–37), 716
 Nakajima Atsushi (1909–42), 672, 678,
 680–1, 684
 Nakajima (née Kishida) Toshiko (aka
 Shōen, 1864–1901), 562, 600–1, 602
 Nakajima Utako (1841–1903), 599
 Nakamura Jūsuke II (1749–1803), 452
 Nakamura Kichizō (1877–1941), 706
 Nakamura Masanao (aka Keiu, 1832–91), 554,
 556, 580
Saigoku risshi-hen (1871 translation of
 Samuel Smiles's *Self-Help*), 554,
 578, 652
- Nakamura Saikoku (1647–95)
Indōshū (Teachings Collection, 1684), 405–6
 Nakanishi Inosuke (1887–1958), 672
 Nakano Shigeharu (1902–79), 658, 659, 660–1,
 663, 720, 728
Nakatsukasa Naishi nikki. *See* Fujiwara no
 Keishi
 Nakayama Kaho (b. 1960), 766
 Nakazato Kaizan (1885–1944), 699
 Nakazato Tsuneko (1909–87), 740
 Namiki Gohei (1747–1808), 434, 453–5
 Namiki Senryū (or Sōsuke, 1695–1751), 433,
 443–4, 445, 453–4
Ichinotani futaba gunki (Chronicles of the
 Battle of Ichinotani, 1751), 433, 444–5
 Namiki Shōza (or Shōzō, 1730–73), 431, 445
Nanakusa sōshi (The Seven Herbs), 358
 Nansenshō Somahito, 522
Nanshoku ōkagami. *See* Ihara Saikaku
Nansō Satomi hakkenden. *See* Kyokutei
 (Takizawa) Bakin
 NAPF (Nippona Artista Proleta Federacio/All
 Japan Proletarian Artists'
 Association), 659, 660–1, 664, 666, 715
 Naruse Jinzō (1858–1919), 643
 Narushima Ryūhoku (1837–84), 574–5
 nation, 175, 387, 393, 426, 435, 456, 457, 463–4,
 477, 578, 582, 588, 607, 623, 625, 661,
 669, 670–1, 719, 726–7, 742, 744, 757,
 758, 761, chapters 56, and 69; *see also*
 colonialism, *kokubungaku*, *kokugo*
 nationalism, 3–4, 106–7, 258, 472, 487, 648
 nation-state, 3, 598, 605, 627, 652, 699–700,
 702, 735, 737–8, 753
 Natsume Sōseki (1867–1916), 316, 576, 586, 612,
 623, 632, 642, 692, 765, 766
 nature, 8, 10, 80, 378, 484, 502, 592, 656; *see also*
 season, *kigo*
 and reclus literature, 262–6
 in poetry, 63, 66–7, 81, 232, 269, 413, 461, 491,
 508, 617, 716
New Flower Gathering. *See* Yosa (Yoza) Buson
 newspaper, 515, 554, 555–6, 557, 558–9, 563,
 574–7, 582, 599, 606, 612, 617, 637, 638,
 639–40, 642, 645–6, 647, 651, 659, 668,
 672, 686, 697, 698, 719, 741, 754,
 chapter 59
Nihon (Japan, newspaper, est. 1889), 563
Nihon bungakushi (History of Japanese
 Literature, 1890), 565–7, 654
 Nihon Puroretaria Bungei Renmei (League
 for Proletarian Literature of
 Japan), 658

- Nihon ryōiki* (Record of Miraculous Events in Japan, c. 787–824), 39, 97, 100–1, 214, chapter 28
- Nihon shoki* (or *Nihongi*, Chronicles of Japan, 720), 5, 15–17, 18–21, 45, 47, 50–2, 55, 98, 101, 111, 121, 135, 194, 204, 285, 384, 473, chapters 2, 3
- Nihonjin* (The Japanese, est. 1888), 563
- Nijō house, 243–51, 253, 318, 324; *see also*
Fujiwara no Tameuji (or Nijō Tameuji), Hanazono (Emperor), Hosokawa Yūsai, Nijō Yoshimoto, Tonna (or Ton'a)
- Nijō Yoshimoto (1320–88), 249–50, 318–21, 326, 340, 343
- Kinrai fūteishō* (Notes on Poetic Styles of the Recent Past, 1387), 249
- Renri hishō* (Treasured Notes on the Principles of Linking, 1349), 320
- Tsukuba mondō* (Tsukuba Dialogues, 1372), 318
- Tsukubashū* (Tsukuba Collection, 1356–57), 319–20
- niku no kamiuta* (deity song couplets), 207
- ningyō jōruri*, chapter 44; *see also jōruri*
- Ninigi, 23, 25, 30, 60
- ninjōbon* (books of sentiment and romance), 377, 381, 387, 513, 530, 560, chapter 54
- Nintoku, Emperor, 23, 26, 41, 42–4, 55
- Nise monogatari*, 402
- Nise Murasaki*. *See* Ryūtei Tanehiko
- Nishi Amane (1829–97), 554, 564, 702
- Nishimura Shigeki (1828–1902), 554
- Nishiwaki Junzaburō (1894–1982), 714
- Nishiyama Sōin (1605–82), 405, 406, 417
- Nitobe Inazō (1862–1933), 564, 678
- Niwa Fumio (1904–2005), 668
- Noda Hideki (b. 1955), 709–10
- nōgakuron* (nōh drama treatises). chapter 35
- Nogami Yaeko (1885–1985), 639, 642, 705, 720
- Noguchi Neisai (1867–1905), 576
- Noguchi Takehiko (b. 1937), 629
- nōh, 6–7, 8–9, 10, 75, 198, 208, 213, 215–17, 237, 255, 286, 308–9, 314, 348–9, 355, 366, 379, 385, 429, 545, 702, chapters 34, and 35
- and
Genji monogatari, 137–8
kabuki, 428
ko-jōruri, 366
kōwakamai, 362
kyōgen, 347–8, 349–51, 352, 354
otogizōshi, 355
- Noma Hiroshi (1915–91), 722, 724, 730–1
- Shinkū chitai* (Zone of Emptiness, 1952), 724
- Nonoguchi Ryūho, 376
- norito* (prayers, liturgies), 33–4, 36, 60
- Nosaka Akiyuki (b. 1930), 722
- novel, European, 4, 423, 430, 580; *see also shōsetsu*
- Nukata, Princess (or Nukada, c. 627–after 690), 58–9, 64, 81, 98
- Nun Abutsu (d. c. 1283), 243
- Izayoi nikki* (Diary of the Sixteenth Night Moon, c. 1283), 268, 269, 274–5
- Utatane* (Fitful Slumbers, c. 1265), 268, 273–4, 278
- Nyonin geijutsu* (Women's Arts, est. 1928), 646, 663
- Nyoraishi (or Joraishi, 1603?–74), 397–8
- nyosho* (books for women), 392, 398
- Ō no Yasumaro (d. 723), 26–8, 32
- Ōba Minako (1930–2007), 740, 744, 745–6, 747, 760
- Ochiai Naobumi (1861–1903), 478, 567–8, 615, 616
- Ochikubo monogatari*, 127–8, 150
- Oda Jun'ichirō (or Niwa Jun'ichirō, 1851–1919)
Karyū shun'wa (A Romance of Cherries and Willows, 1878), 580–1, 582, 591
- Oda Makoto (1932–2007), 728
- Oda Sakunosuke (1913–47), 721–2, 724
- Ōe Kenzaburō (b. 1935), 670, 733, 734–5, 757–8, 760, 761–2, 766
- Ōe no Masafusa (1041–1111), 181–2
Gōdanshō (Ōe Conversations, c. 1108), 178–9, 182, 281–2
- Gōke shidai* (Proceedings of the Ōe House), 182
- Ōe no Masahira (952–1012), 191, 194
- Ogawa Yōko (b. 1962), 763–4
- Ōgishō* (Poetic Profundities, c. 1144), 224–5
- Oguma Hideo (1901–40), 716–17
- Ogyū Sorai (1666–1728), 4, 379–80, 381, 459–60, 465–7, 479, 481–5, 487, 489–90, 495, 503
- Ōjin, Emperor, 23, 26, 41
- Ōjōyōshū* (Essentials of Salvation, c. 984–85), 214
- Oka Seibei Kiyotoshi, 438
- Okada Toshiki (b. 1973), 710
- Okada Yachiyo (1883–1962), 705
- Ōkagami* (The Great Mirror, c. 12th c.), 6, 100, 193, 197–201, 202, 282, 285, 298
- Okakura Kakuzō (aka Tenshin, 1862–1913), 564
- Oku no hosomichi*. *See* Matsuo Bashō
- Ōkubo Shibutsu (1767–1837), 468–9

- Ōkubo Toshimichi (1830–78), 555
 Ōkuma Kotomichi (1798–1868), 476–7
 Ōkuma Nobuyuki (1893–1977), 662
 Ōkuma Shigenobu (1838–1922), 653
 Ōnin War (1467–77), 212, 217, 249, 252, 314, 323, 336, 338, 345
Onna chōhōki (Record of Treasures for Women), 376
Onna daigaku (Women's Great Learning), 376
 Ōno Kazuo (1906–2010), 709
 Ono no Komachi, 99, 115, 144, 332
 Ōnuma Chinzan (1818–91), 573–4
 Ōoka Shōhei (1909–88), 687, 725–6
ōrai-mono (textbook containing model letters for various occasions), 181, 396, 526
 oral performance, 9–10, 11, 42, 59, 194, 284, 355, 430, 431, 434, 437, 523–4. *See also* *benshi*, *katari-mono*, *kōdan*, *norito*, *otoshi-banashi*, *rakugo*, *sekkyō*, *sekkyō-bushi*, *sekkyō-jōruri*, song, storytelling, theater
 Orikuchi Shinobu (1887–1953), 20–1, 132
Ōsaka koenu Gon Chūnagon. *See* Lady Koshikibu
 Osaki Midori (1896–1971), 705
Osana Genji (Child Genji, 1665), 376
 Osanai Kaoru (1881–1928), 705–7
 Ōshiro Tatsuihiro (b. 1925), 753–4, 755
 Ōsugi Sakae (1885–1923), 644
 Ōta Nanpo (1749–1823), 411, 436, 470, 495, 504–5, 506, 523
 Ōta Shōgo (1939–2007), 709
 Ōta Yōko (1906–63), 726
Otogi bunko (The Companion Library), 356–7
otogizōshi (Muromachi tale), 213, 215, 400, 723, chapter 37
 and
 kōwakamai, 363
 monogatari, 214
 noh, 355, 360–1
 setsuwa, 286, 355, 360–1
 Ōtomo no Yakamochi (718?–85), 50, 52, 64, 65, 75–84
otoshi-banashi (comic oral storytelling), 523–5, 527
 Ōya Sōichi (1900–70), 646
 Ōyodo Michikaze (1639–1707), 417
 Ozaki Kōyō (1868–1903), 570, 585, 587, 600, 623
 Konjiki yasha (The Golden Demon, 1897–1902), 606–9, 612
 Ozaki Shirō (1898–1964), 697
 Ozawa Roan (1723–1801), 474–5
 Paekche, 17, 31, 68–9, 81
 painting, 6, 110, 111, 215, 313, 314, 316, 355, 473, 489, 493–4, 496–7; *see also* *bunjinga*, *byōbu-e*, *emaki*, *haiga*, *shasei*, *ukiyo-e*
 Parhae, 91, 105
 phonography/phonographs (phonographic writing), 17–18, 26–7, 29, 33, 37, 40, 42, 44, 48, 51; *see also* *kana*
Pillow Book. *See* Sei Shōnagon
 pleasure quarters, 399, 405, 415, 418–19, 422, 448–9, 450, 453, 454, 506, 523, 532–3, 534, 538, 584, 628
 poetry. *See* ancient songs, *haikai*, *haiku*, *kan-shi*, *kindaishi*, *kyōka*, *kyōshi*, *renga*, *sedōka*, *waka*
 and genre hierarchy, 3–4
 Priest Bunshi Genshō (1555–1620), 459
 Priest Gensei (1623–68), 458, 462
 Priest Keichū (1640–1701), 84–5, 138, 472
 Priest Keikai (or Kyōkai), 39, 97
 Priest Mujū
 Shasekishū (Tales of Sand and Pebbles, 1279–83), 281, 349
 provincial governor, 5, 35, 46, 47, 72, 96, 99, 109, 130, 134, 166, 189
 publisher, 356–7, 375, 376, 380, 417–18, 428, 434–5, 439, 447–8, 469, 494, 524–5, 527–8, 529–30, 535–6, 543, 547, 555–6, 570, 582, 606, 611, 631, 639–40, 696, 721, 722, 724–7, 729–30, 767, chapters 39 and 40; *see also* Hachimonji Jishō, Murataya Jirobē
 puppet theater. *See* *bunraku*, *jōruri*, *ningyō jōruri*
 Qing dynasty, 466, 494, 497, 545, 559, 561, 572, 574, 575–6
 Rai San'yō (1780–1832), 463, 469–70
 Nihon gaishi (An Unofficial History of Japan, 1827), 470
rakugo, 455, 523, 530, 706
rakuji, 399
Rangaku (Dutch Studies), 579
Record of Ancient Matters. *See* *Kojiki*
Record of Miraculous Events in Japan. *See* *Nihon ryōiki*
 Reizei house, 225, 243, 247, 250, 251–2, 318; *see* Reizei Tamesuke, Reizei Tamehide, Reizei Tamekazu
 Reizei Tamehide (d. 1372), 247
 Reizei Tamekazu (1486–1549), 253
 Reizei Tamesuke (1263–1328), 243, 244, 319

- rekishi monogatari* (historical tale), 193, 298
 religion. *See* Buddhism, Christianity,
 Confucianism, myth, Taoism, Shinto
renga (linked verse), 119, 212, 213, 214, 215–17,
 224, 235, 237, 249, 252–3, 255, 266, 269,
 272, 314, 335, 340, 346, 355, 396, 613, 617,
 chapter 33
 and *Genji monogatari*, 137–8
 and *haikai*, 403–5
Renri hishō. *See* Nijō Yoshimoto
 Ri Kaisei (b. 1935), 670, 757–9, 765
Rikkokushi (Six National Histories), 32, 193
risshi (eight-line “regulated poems,” Ch.
 lǔshi), 186, 189, 460
rōei (chanting of poetry in Chinese), 186–7,
 299; *see also* *Wakan rōeishū*
 Rokujō house, 149, 151, 224–6, 236, 346; *see also*
 Fujiwara no (Rokujō) Akisue,
 Fujiwara no Ariie, Fujiwara no
 (Rokujō) Kiyosuke, Kenschō
Roppyakuban chinjō. *See* Kenschō
Roppyakuban uta-awase (The Six-Hundred
 Round Poetry Contest, c. 1193–4), 136,
 225, 232
Ruijū fusenshō (late 11th/early 12th c.), 20,
 46, 176
 Russo-Japanese War (1904–5), 553, 564, 569,
 570, 623, 625, 649, 693, 714
Ryō no gige (833), 20
Ryō no shūge (late 9th/early 10th c.), 20
Ryōjin hishō (Secret Selections of [Songs to
 make] the Dust on the Rafter
 [Dance], 1179), 101, chapter 20
Ryōkan (1758–1831), 381, 476
Ryōunshū (Cloud-Topping Collection, 814),
 88–9, 90
 Ryūtei Rijō (d. 1841), 527, 529, 530
 Ryūtei Tanehiko (1783–1842), 139, 520, 522, 547
 Nise Murasaki Inaka Genji (Fake Murasaki’s
 Bumpkin Genji, 1829–42), 139, 522
sabi (withered, melancholy beauty), 216,
 265, 461
 Saemon Gorō, 331, 332, 339
Sagoromo monogatari. *See* Senji
saiibara, 112, 116, 207–8, 330
 Saigō Takamori (1828–77), 584
 Saigyō (1118–90), 232, 248, 277, 331, 406, 411,
 chapter 26
 Sankashū (Collection of a Mountain
 Home), 259, 260
saimon (prayers), 189
 Saitō Mokichi (1882–1953), 618
 Saitō Ren (b. 1940), 709
 Sakaguchi Ango (1906–55), 688–9, 722,
 723–4, 725
 Sakaki Hyakusen (1697–1752), 496
 Sakate Yōji (b. 1962), 710
 Sakazaki Shiran (1853–1913), 581
 Sakiyama Tami (b. 1954), 755
 Sakurada Jisuke (1734–1806), 454
Sakurahime zenden akebono sōshi. *See* Santō
 Kyōden
samurai/warrior, 7, 8, 11, 97, 137, 211–13, 250,
 256, 285, 289, 323, 349, 352–3, 362, 363,
 373–5, 377–9, 380, 381, 389, 392, 393–4,
 397, 406, 426, 450, 471, 472, 482–3, 491,
 503, 505–6, 532, 553–4, 555, 603, 641, 665;
 see also chapters 30 and 31
 San’yūtei Enchō (1839–1900), 531
 Kaidan botan dōrō (A Ghost Story: Peony
 Lantern, 1886), 589–90
sandaishū (first three imperial poetry
 anthologies, c. 905–1007), 111; *see also*
 Gosenshū, *Kokinshū*, *Shūishū*
Sandō. *See* Zeami Motokiyo
Sanemori, 336
Sanetaka kōki. *See* Sanjōnishi Sanetaka
Sangoku denki (Transmissions from Three
 Countries, early 15th c.), 283–4, 355
 Sanjōnishi Sanetaka (1455–1537), 252–3
 Sanetaka kōki (1470s–1509), 304
sanjūrokkasen (thirty-six poet-sages), 120
Sankashū. *See* Saigyō
Sanshō Dayū (c. 1639), 366
Santi shi (Song Dynasty Anthology of Tang
 Poetry “in Three Forms,” J.
 Santaishi), 316
 Santō Kyōden (1761–1816), 375, 388, 517, 520–2,
 527, 528, chapter 55
 Chūshin suikoden (The Loyal Retainer’s
 Water Margin, 1799–1801), 541, 542–3
 Mukashigatari inazuma byōshi (The Straw
 Sandal, 1806), 544
 Nishiki no ura (Behind the Brocade,
 1791), 528
 Sakurahime zenden akebono sōshi (Book of
 the Dawn: The Unexpurgated Story
 of Sakurahime, 1805), 543–4, 549
 Santō Kyōzan, 357, 510–15, 517
Sanuki no Suke nikki. *See* Fujiwara Nagako
Sarashina nikki. *See* Sugawara no Takasue no
 musume
Saru Genji zōshi, 400
sarugaku, 216, 330–1, 333, 340–1, 343, 345, 346, 363;
 see also *noh*, *kyōgen*

- Sasamegoto*. See Shinkei
- Sata Ineko (1904–98), 647, 663–4, 740
- Satō Haruo (1892–1964), 678, 679–80, 684, 694
- Satō Makoto (b. 1943), 708
- Satomura Jōha (1524–1602), 326
- season, 10, 112, 162–3, 262–3, 264, 343, 378, 496;
see also *kigo*
- in poetry, 54, 67, 78, 81, 86, 99, 108, 112, 114,
116–17, 119, 186, 231, 237, 239, 269, 319,
413, 461, 506, 617
- Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–45), 667,
686, 699
- sedōka* (repeating-head poem), 53–4, 78,
222, 231
- Segawa Jōkō III (1806–81), 455–6
- Sei Shōnagon (d. early 11th c.), 96, 98, 172
- Makura no sōshi* (The Pillow Book, c. 1005),
96, 98, 99, 120, 150, 174, 184, 207, 254,
391, chapter 14
- Seiami (or Iami, Jōami), 333, 336
- seiji shōsetsu* (political novel), 558–9, 560, 561–2,
576, 585, 586, 600–1, chapter 58
- seirei* (spiritualist or native sensibility),
462–3, 467
- Seitō* (Bluestockings, est. 1911), 642–3
- Sekai kōmoku* (A Guide to Historical
Settings), 431
- Seken munezan'yō*. See Ihara Saikaku
- Seken musuko katagi*. See Ejima Kiseki
- Seken musume katagi*. See Ejima Kiseki
- Sekine Hiroshi (1924–94), 717
- sekkyō*, *sekkyō-bushi* (sermon ballad), 10,
213, 215, 286, 355, 356,
365–9, 438
- sekkyō-jōruri* (ballad sung to shamisen
accompaniment), 215
- Semimaru (early Heian?), 277
- Senda Koreya (1904–94), 708
- Sendai kuji hongī* (Ancient Matters and
Fundamental Records of Early
Ages), 36
- Sengaku (b. 1203), 84–5
- Sengohyakuban uta-awase* (The Poetry
Match in Fifteen Hundred
Rounds, 1201–3), 232
- Senji (d. 1092)
- Sagoromo monogatari* (The Tale of
Sagoromo, late 11th c.), 101, 140–2,
143, 144, 149–50, 158, 276
- senmyō* (vernacular proclamations), 33–4
- senryū* (satiric *haiku*), 379, 380, 413, 503, 504,
505–6, 507–9, 613
- Senzaishū* (*Senzai wakashū*, Collection of
a Thousand Years, 1188), 101, 226, 232,
301; see also Fujiwara no Shunzei
- Sesonji Koreyuki (d. 1175), 136, 157, 271
- Sesson Yūbai (1290–1346), 312–13
- setsuwa* (anecdotes), 5, 9, 10, 38, 39, 100–1, 182,
197, 213, 214, 215, 224, 259, 349, 355, 399,
chapter 28
- and *otogizōshi*, 286, 355, 360–1
- and warrior tale, 286, 289, 291, 292, 298–9
- Seventh Diary*. See Kobayashi Issa
- sewa-mono* (contemporary-life play), 378,
433, 451
- and Chikamatsu Monzaemon, 432, 439,
441–2, 704
- sexuality. See also gender
and
- kabuki*, 428
- kasutori* magazines, 721–2
- postwar translations, 722
- homosexuality in
- Torikaebaya monogatari*, 149
- works by Mishima Yukio, 734
- works by Ōe Kenzaburō, 734
- in
- Akirame*, 642–3
- Ariake no wakare*, 153–5
- girls' manga, 750–2
- Hamamatsu Chūnagon monogatari*, 146–7
- Honchō monzui*, 192
- Ikkyū's poems, 315–16
- senryū*, 508
- setsuwa*, 285
- Shunshoku umegoyomi*, 534–5
- works by Ihara Saikaku, 417–19
- works by Ōe Kenzaburō, 734
- works by postwar women writers,
744–5, 765
- works by Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, 629–30,
632–3
- Shaku Nihongi* (13th c.), 33, 46
- sharebon* (books of wit and fashion), 375–6, 379,
380, 381, 387, 503, 506, 520, 522, 523, 525,
528, 532–3, 540–1
- shasei* (sketching), 617–18, 692
- Shasekishū*. See Priest Mujū
- Shiba Shirō (aka Tōkai Sanshi, 1852–1922)
- Kajin no kigū* (Chance Meetings with
Beautiful Women, 1885–8, 1891,
1897), 561, 576, 582
- Shiba Zenkō, 520
- Shibaki Yoshiko (1914–91), 740

- Shibu kassenjō-bon* (The Four Part Battle Account), 303
- Shibun yōryō*. See Motoori Norinaga
- Shibusawa Tatsuhiko (1928–87), 722
- Shichidaiki* (Record of Seven Lifetimes, 771), 38
- Shichinin no samurai* (Seven Samurai, 1954), 700
- shiden-mono* (historical work)
and Kyokutei Bakin, 544–6, 547–8
and Santō Kyōden, 544
- Shiga Naoya (1883–1971), 626, 653, 655, 659, 720, 723, 757
- Shiga Shigetaka (1863–1927), 564, 677
- Shigeshige yawa*. See Tsuga Teishō
- Shigyoku (1383–1463), 345–6
- Shiina Rinzō (1911–73), 688
- Shiji* (Historical Records, J. *Shiki*), 3, 19, 29, 180–1, 283
- Shijing* (Classic of Poetry, 600 BCE), 58, 86, 115, 157, 219, 220–1, 318, 481, 482, 484, 489
- Shika shichiron*. See Andō Tameakira
- shikashū* (personal waka poetry collection), 165, 239
- Shikisanban* (the three noh ritual pieces), 329–31
- Shikitei Sanba (1776–1822), 375, 381, 527–31, 547, 560, 589–90
- Ukiyo-buro* (Bathhouse of the Floating World, 1813), 527–9
- Ukiyo-doko* (Barber of the Floating World, 1813), 529–30
- shiku no kamiuta* (deity song quatrains), 207
- Shimada Masahiko (b. 1961), 762, 765
- Shimaki Akahiko (1876–1926), 618
- Shimamura Hōgetsu (1871–1918), 571, 596–7, 705
- Shimao Toshio (1917–86), 731–2
- Shimazaki Tōson (1872–1943), 602, 616–17, 624
- Hakai* (Broken Commandment, 1906), 602, 650–2, 653
- Wakanashū* (Young Herbs, 1897), 616–17
- Yoake-mae* (Before the Dawn, 1929–35), 665–6
- Shimizu Shikin (1868–1933), 562, 601, 602
- Shimoda Utako (1854–1936), 643
- Shin Rotei (or Kantōbē, Akasukabē, d. 1816), 527
- Shin'yōshū* (*Shin'yō wakashū*, Collection of New Leaves, 1381), 246
- shinbun shōsetsu* (newspaper novel), 612, 637;
see also chapter 59 on newspaper serials
- Shinchokusenshū* (*Shinchokusen wakashū*, New Imperially Commissioned Collection, 1235), 227, 232, 240–2, 256, 300; see also Fujiwara no Teika
- shingeki* (modern theater), 11, 642, chapter 73
- Shingoshūishū* (*Shingoshūi wakashū*, New Later Collection of Gleanings, 1384), 318;
see also Nijō Yoshimoto
- Shinjū Ten-no-Amijima*. See Chikamatsu Monzaemon
- Shinkei (1406–75), 321–5
- Sasamegoto* (Murmured Conversations, 1463), 322
- Shinkokinshū* (*Shinkokin wakashū*, New Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems, c. 1205–21), 101, 134, 214, 226, 227, 229, 238, 240–1, 248, 250, 256, 317, 319, 411, 474, 484, 487, 620, chapter 23;
see also Fujiwara no Teika
- shinpa* theater, 606, 692, 704–5
- Shinran (1173–1262), 214, 653–4
- Shinsarugakuki*. See Fujiwara no Akihira
- Shinsen jikyō* (Newly Selected Mirror of Characters, 893), 113
- Shinsen kisōki* (Newly Selected Record of Scapulamancy), 35
- Shinsen man'yōshū* (New Selections of Myriad Leaves, c. 893–913), 113
- Shinsen rōishū* (New Selection of Poems to Sing, c. 1116–22, alt. 1122–33), 185
- Shinsen Tsukubashū* (The New Tsukuba Collection, 1495), 325
- Shinsen zuinō*. See Fujiwara no Kintō
- Shinshokukokinshū* (*Shinshokukokin wakashū*, New Later Collection of Ancient and Modern Times, 1439), 250
- Shintaishishō* (Selection of New-Style Poems, 1882), 613–15
- Shinto, 160, 208, 282, 396, 477, 484
- Shinzō Inu tsukubashū* (New Mongrel Tsukuba Collection, 1643), 404–5
- shirabyōshi* ("white beat" singers), 206, 208, 295
- Shiraishi Kazuko (b. 1931), 717
- Shirakaba* (White Birch, est. 1910), 626, 653–4, 655
- Shirakawa kikō*. See Sōgi
- shishōsetsu* (*watakushi shōsetsu*, I-novel), 175, 655, 682–3
and *zainichi* literature, 756–8
- shiwa* ("talks on poetry"), 469
- shōdō* (preaching), 180, 292, 303, 306
- Shoen ōkagami*. See Ihara Saikaku

- Shōji ni-nen shodo hyakushu* (First Set of Hundred-Poem Sequences in the Second Year of the Shōji Era, 1200), 232
- shōjo shōsetsu* (girls' novel), 748
- Shoku Nihongi* (Chronicles of Japan Continued, 797), 26–7, 29, 32, 33–5, 37, 46
- Shokugosenshū* (*Shokugosen wakashū*, 1251), 242–3; *see also* Fujiwara no Tameie
- Shokukokinshū* (Later Collection of Ancient and Modern Times, 1265), 250
- Shōmonki* (The Record of Masakado, 935–40), 290–1, 297–8
- Shōmu, Emperor (701–56), 65–6, 69, 76–7, 83
- Shōno Junzō (1921–2009), 731
- Shōno Yoriko (b. 1956), 765
- shōsetsu*. *See* fiction, *hon'an shōsetsu*, *jitsurokurai shōsetsu*, *katei shōsetsu*, *keitai shōsetsu*, *kyōyō shōsetsu*, *novel*, *seiji shōsetsu*, *shishōsetsu*, *shōjo shōsetsu*, *taishū shōsetsu*, *Tsubouchi Shōyō: Shōsetsu shinzui*
- Junsui shōsetsu-ron*, 667
- kusa-zōshi* and the notion of, 518–19
- otogizōshi* and the notion of, 357
- Shōtetsu (1381–1459), 214, 244, 250–2, 321, 323, 344
- Shōtetsu monogatari* (Conversations with Shōtetsu, c. 1448–50), 227
- Sōkonshū* (Grass Roots Anthology), 250–1
- Shōtoku, Prince (Shōtoku Taishi, trad. 574–622), 31, 36, 37–8, 56, 87, 346
- Shōtoku taishi denryaku* (Chronicle Biography of Prince Shōtoku, 10th c.), 38
- Shufu no tomo* (The Housewives' Friend, 1917–2008), 645, 663
- Shūishū* (*Shūi wakashū*, Collection of Gleanings of Poems, 1005–7), 106, III, 117, 119, 223, 229
- Shukke to sono deshi*. *See* Kurata Hyakuzō
- Shun'e (1113–91), 261
- Shunshoku tatsumi no sono*. *See* Tamenaga Shunsui
- Shunshoku umegoyomi*. *See* Tamenaga Shunsui
- Shūron* (A Religious Dispute), 352
- Shusse Kagekiyo*. *See* Chikamatsu Monzaemon
- Shuten Dōji* (The Demon Shuten Dōji), 359–60, 368–9, 400
- Silla, 31, 68, 69, 78, 81, 86, 91
- Sinitic, Literary. *See* *kanbun*
- Sino-Japanese. *See* *kanbun*
- Sino-Japanese War (1894–5), 3, 4, 553, 564, 569, 573, 576, 648, 683, 748, 753
- Sōanshū*. *See* Tonna
- Sōboku (d. 1545), 326
- Soga monogatari* (Tale of the Revenge of the Soga Brothers), 290, 306–7, 438, 439
- Soga no Umako (d. 626), 36
- Sōgi (1421–1502), 160, 214, 252, 266–7, 322–6, 406
- Chikurinshō* (The Bamboo Grove Collection, 1476), 323–4
- Oi no susami* (An Old Man's Diversions, 1479), 324
- Shirakawa kikō* (Record of a Journey to Shirakawa, 1468), 266
- Tsukushi no michi no ki* (Record of the Road to Tsukushi, 1480), 266
- Sōkonshū*. *See* Shōtetsu
- sōmon* (exchange poem), 54, 63, 77, 78, 83
- Sonezaki shinjū*. *See* Chikamatsu Monzaemon
- song. *See* ancient songs, *imayō*, *kagura*, *rōei*, *saibara*, *utagaki*, *wasan*
- Song dynasty, 192, 215, 311, 314, 316, 379, 465–7, 479, 484, 489
- Sono Ayako (b. 1931), 743
- Sōseki (1474–1533), 325, 326
- Sotoba Komachi*. *See* Kan'ami Kiyotsugu
- sovereign, 5, 95–7, 161, 211–12, 287–9, chapter 3; *see also* individual emperors
- and
- fudoki*, 45, 46–7
- Kaifūsō*, 86–90
- Kojiki*, 23–6
- Man'yōshū*, 50–1, 54–7, 58–62, 64–6, 76–7, 80, 82–5
- Nihon shoki*, 28–33
- Sendai kuji hongī*, 36
- Shoku Nihongi*, 34
- waka*, 101, 111–13; *see also* imperial poetry anthology
- women's writing in the Heian period, 99, 100
- modern emperor system, 556–7, 562–3, 607, 626, 661, 665
- Sōyō (d. 1563), 326
- storytelling, 7, 9–10, 291, 308, 309–10, 356, 427, 523–4, 579; *see also* *etoki*, *goze*, *katari-mono*, *kōdan*, *otoshi-banashi*, *rakugo*, *sekkyō*, *sekkyō-bushi*, *sekkyō-jōruri*, *setsuwa*
- Su Dongpo, 466
- Suehiro Tetchō (1849–96), 582

- Sugawara denju tenarai kagami* (Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy, 1746), 433, 443–4, 453
- Sugawara no Fumitoki (899–981), 178, 180, 190–1
- Sugawara no Michizane (845–903), 5, 6, 95, 97, 125, 173, 177, 190, 203, 444, chapter 8
- Sugawara no Takasue no musume (b. 1008)
Hamamatsu Chūnagon monogatari (after 1058), 142, 145–7, 150
- Sarashina nikki* (Sarashina Diary, c. 1059), 8, 98, 99, 135–6, 142, 165, 173–4
- Yoru no Nezame* (Wakefulness/Nezame at Night), 142–4, 150
- Suiko, Empress (trad. r. 592–628), 23, 31–2, 36, 56
- Sukeroku*, 430, 452
- Sumiyoshi monogatari*, 150
- Sumiyoshi taisha jindaiki* (Record of the Age of the Gods of the Great Sumiyoshi Shrine), 35–6
- Tachibana Akemi (1812–68), 476–7
- Tachibana Narisue, 282
- Tachibana no Moroe (684–757), 75–6, 84
- Tachihara Michizō (1914–39), 237, 716
- Tada Nanrei (1698–1750), 447
- Tadanori*. See Zeami Motokiyo
- Taiheiki* (Chronicle of Great Peace, c. 1370), 7, 212, 213, 215, 278, 303, 306, 309–10, 331, 390, 439–40, 444, 450, 495
- Taira no Kiyomori (1118–81), 271, 288–9, 291, 292, 295–7, 304, 307
- taishū bungaku* (mass literature), 761–7
- taishū shōsetsu* (popular fiction), 612
- Tajihi no Agatamori (?–737), 68
- Takabatake Ransen (1838–85), 579
- Takahama Kyoshi (1874–1959), 617
- Chōsen* (Korea, 1912), chapter 69
- Takahashi Gen'ichirō (b. 1951), 765
- Takahashi Mutsuo (b. 1937), 766
- Takahashi no Mushimaro (fl. 720s–c. 737), 65, 74–6, 81
- Takahashi Takako (1932–2013), 744, 745–6
- Takahashi ujibumi* (Account of the Takahashi Lineage Group, 789), 35
- Takami Jun (1907–65), 667
- Takamitsu nikki* (Takamitsu Diary, aka *Tōnomine Shōshō monogatari*, c. 962), 125, 166
- Takamura Kōtarō (1883–1956), 719–20
- Dōtei* (Journey, 1913), 621, 712
- Takasago*. See Zeami Motokiyo
- Takatsu Kuwasaburō (1864–1921), 565–7, 654
- Takayama Sōzei (d. 1455), 321
- Takebe Ayatari (1719–74), 410, 492, 496–8, 499, 500
- Honchō Suikoden* (A Water Margin in this Realm, part 1, 1773; part 2, incomplete, 1774), 496–7
- Nishiyama monogatari* (Tale of the Western Hills, 1768), 496–7
- Oriogusa* (Tales from Now and Again, 1771), 496
- Takeda Izumo (d. 1747), 441, 453, 512, 513
- Takeda Izumo II (or Koizumo I, 1691–1756), 433, 443
- Takeda Seiji (b. 1947), 758
- Takeda Taijun (1912–76), 686–7, 688–9, 722
- Takemiya Keiko (b. 1950), 750
- Takemoto Gidayū (1651–1714), 431, 439, 440–1, 442
- Takemukigaki*. See Hi no Meishi
- Taketori monogatari* (The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter, c. 909), 79, 98, 121, 122–3, 124, 126, 127, 137
- Takeuchi Kakusai (1770–1826), 540
- Takeuchi Naoko (b. 1967), 752
- Takeyama Michio (1903–84), 687–8
- Takiguchi Shūzō (1903–79), 714
- Tale of Genji*. See Murasaki Shikibu
- Tales of Heike*. See *Heike monogatari*
- Tales of Ise*. See *Ise monogatari*
- Tales of Times Now Past*. See *Konjaku monogatari*
- Tamekane-kyō wakashō*. See *Kyōgoku Tamekane*
- Tamenaga Itchō, 447
- Tamenaga Shunsui (1790–1844), 377, 529, 530
- Shunshoku tatsumi no sono* (Spring-Color Southeast Garden, 1833–5), 533
- Shunshoku umegoyomi* (Spring-Color Plum Calendar, 1832–3), 533–5, 581
- Tamura Ryūichi (1923–98), 717
- Tamura Taijirō (1911–83), 688–9
- Tamura Toshiko (1884–1945), 642–3
- Tanabe no Sakimaro (fl. 740s), 76
- Tanaka Chikao (1905–95), 707
- Tane maku hito* (The Sower, est. 1921), 658–9
- Tang dynasty, 17, 19, 20, 39, 45, 58, 69, 82, 88, 102, 103, 105, 121, 123–4, 184, 186, 190, 192, 314, 316, 389, 459–60, 462, 465–7, 482, 497
- Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886–1965), 139, 626, 629–33, 669, 693–5, 697, 705, 733
- tanka* (short poem), 219, 222, 645, 662; see also *waka*, and references to individual poems in chapters 5 and 23

- tanka* (short poem) (cont.)
 and
 azuma-uta, 77
 fudoki, 48
 Man'yōshū, 50, 53–4
 Shinkokinshū, 230
 Tao Qian (365–427), 58, 72, 490, 494
 Tao Yuanming (365–427), 461
 Taoism, 20, 58, 68, 71, 72, 90, 123, 490
Tatsumi fugen (Women's Words From the Southeast, 1798), 528
 Tawada Yōko (b. 1960), 766
 Tayama Katai (1872–1930), 570, 590, 595–6, 624
 Futon (The Quilt, 1907), 596, 682
 Inaka kyōshi (Country Teacher, 1909), 650–2
 Taya Munetake (1715–71), 484
tayū (chanter), 427, 437, 446
 Tazawa Inafune (1874–96), 601–2, 603
 Teimon school, 404–5, 406, 417, 508
 and Danrin haikai, 405
Tengu no daira (The Palace of the Tengu), 358–9
 Tenji, Emperor (r. 668–71), 17, 18, 20, 31, 58–9, 61, 83, 86–7, 256
Tenjiku Tokubei ikokubanashi. See Tsuruya Nanboku IV
 Tenmu, Emperor (r. 673–86), 18–20, 27, 31, 32, 55, 58, 59–62, 87
Tentoku daira uta-awase (Palace Poetry Match of the Tentoku Era, 960), 118
 Terakado Seiken (1796–1868), 574
 Edo Hanjōki (Prosperous Tales of Edo, 1832–6), 448, 470
terakoya (private elementary school), 373, 389
 Terayama Shūji (1935–83), 708–9
 theater, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 139, 211, 213, 376, 377, 379, 415, 507, 520, 546–7, 596–7, 606, 733–4;
 see also *bunraku*, *chaban*, *jōruri*, *kabuki*, *ko-jōruri*, *kōwakamai*, *kyōgen*, *noh*, *shingeki*, *shinpa* theater, chapters 34–7, 43–5, 72, and 73
 Tō no Tsuneyori (1401–84), 160, 212, 323
 Tōin Kinsada, 309
Tōkaidō meisho zue. See Akizato Ritō
Tōkaidō meishoki. See Asai Ryōi
Tōkaidō Yotsuya kaidan. See Tsuruya Nanboku IV
Tōkaidōchū Hizakurige. See Jippensha Ikku
 Tokugawa Mitsukuni (1628–1700), 459
 Tokunaga Sunao (1899–1958), 666–7, 668
 Tokutomi Sohō (1863–1957), 563
 Tomioka Taeko (b. 1935), 717
 Tonna (or Ton'a, 1289–1372), 247–9, 252, 253, 265, 317, 318, 323
 Sōanshū (The Grass Hut Collection, 1359), 248
Tōnomine Shōshō monogatari. See Takamitsu nikki
 Tōrai Sanna, 520
Torikaebaya monogatari, 147–9, 150, 153–4
 Toriyama Shiken (1655–1715), 459, 462
Tosa nikki. See Ki no Tsurayuki
Toshiyori zuinō. See Minamoto no Toshiyori
Towazugatari. See Lady Nijō
 Toyama Masakazu (1848–1900), 613
 travel. See also *chishi*, *dōchūki*, *kikō*, *meishoki*, *meisho-zue*, *michiyuki*
 and
 early modern literature, 409–10, 420, 469, 496, 522, 524–7
 Heian diary, 98, 99, 166–7, 170, 173, 175
 medieval diary, 269, 270, 274–5, 276, 277, 278–9
 medieval recluse literature, 266–7
 modern literature, 575
 and colonialism, 638, 683–91, chapters 69 and 70
 renga poets, 323, 325–6
 poems in
 Kokinshū, 117
 Man'yōshū, 52, 54, 60, 61, 63–4, 65, 67, 70, 74, 76, 81
 Shinkokinshū, 230
 traveling storyteller, 213, 216–17; see also *biwa hōshi*, *goze*
 Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859–1935), 567, 570, 582, 585–6, 589, 600, 624, 628, 703–5, 706
Shōsetsu shinzui (The Essence of the Novel, 1885–6), 560–2, 566, 585, 703
Tōsei shosei katagi (Manners and Lives of Contemporary Students, 1885–6), 422–3, 560
 Tsuda Mamichi (1829–1903), 554
 Tsuga Teishō (1718–after 1794), 410, 492, 494–5, 497, 500, 539
 Hanabusa sōshi (A Garland of Heroes, 1749), 494, 495
 Shigeshige yawa (Flourishing in the Wilds, 1766), 494
 Tsuji Jun (1884–1944), 644
 Tsuka Kōhei (1948–2010), 709
tsukeku (added verse), 317, 319, 321, 404, 407, 508
 and *senryū*, 508
Tsukuba mondō. See Nijō Yoshimoto

- Tsukubashū*. See Nijō Yoshimoto
tsukuri-monogatari (fictional tale), 125–8
Tsukushi no michi no ki. See Sōgi
Tsurayuki-shū. See Ki no Tsurayuki
Tsurezuregusa. See Yoshida Kenkō
 Tsuruya Nanboku IV (1755–1829), 434, 453, 455–6
 Tenjiku Tokubei ikokubanashi (The Tale of Tokubei from India, 1804), 455
 Tōkaidō Yotsuya kaidan (Tōkaidō, Ghost Stories at Yotsuya, 1825), 378, 430
 Tsushima Yūko (b. 1947), 746–7
Tsutsumi chūnagon monogatari (The Stories of the Riverside Middle Counselor), 101, 140
tsūzokubon (“popularized version” of books), 541, 542
tsuzuki-mono (serialized reports), 584–5
Tsuzurikata kyōshitsu (The Composition Class, 1938), 700
Twenty Cases of Unfilial Piety in Our Land. See Ihara Saikaku
 Uchimura Kanzō (1861–1930), 564, 568
 Ueda Akinari (1734–1809), 380, 381, 411, 474, 492, 499–502, 539
 Harusame monogatari (Tales of the Spring Rain, 1808, revised but incomplete, 1809), 501–2
 Ugetsu monogatari (Tales of Moonlight and Rain, 1776), 474, 500, 501, 700
 Ueda Bin (1874–1916), 619–22, 629
 Ueda Hiroshi (1905–66), 667
 Ueda Kazutoshi (1867–1937), 569–70, 652, 743
Ugetsu monogatari. See Ueda Akinari
Uji dainagon monogatari (Collection of Tales from Uji), 282
 Uji Kaganojō (1635–1711), 431
Uji shūi monogatari, 39, 282, 283, 286
Ukai (The Cormorant Fisher), 332–3
Ukiyo monogatari. See Asai Ryōi
Ukiyo-buro. See Shikitei Sanba
Ukiyo-doko. See Shikitei Sanba
ukiyo-e, 376, 418, 434, 445, 520, 528, 628
ukiyo-zōshi (books of the floating world), 377, 379, 380, 415, 418, 420, 421, 422, 430, 495, 499, 513, 539
 Ukyō no Daibu (c. 1157–?), 300–1
 Kenreimon-in Ukyō no Daibu shū (The Collection of Lady Daibu, c. 1232), 268, 271–2, 300–1
 Uno Chiyo (1897–1996), 647, 740
 Uno Kōji (1891–1961), 630
 Unzen Taikyoku, 304
 Urabe Kanekata (fl. late 13th c.), 33
Urami no suke, 400
 Urashima Tarō, 75
ushin (deep refined sensibility), 228, 241, 250–1, 254
Usuyuki monogatari (Tale of Light Snow, early 17th c.), 400
uta-awase (poetry matches), 99, 101, 112–14, 118, 119, 149–50, 158, 225, 232, 239; see also *Roppyakuban uta-awase*
utagaki (ritual of song and frolicking youth), 48–9, 74
utamakura (poetic toponym), 120, 269
uta-monogatari (poem tale), 98, 99, 126, 158, 283, 299
Utatane. See Nun Abutsu
 Utei Enba (1743–1822), 436, 523, 529
Utsuho monogatari (The Tale of the Cavern, late 10th c.), 126–7, 137, 141, 143, 151, 152
 vendetta (*katakiuchi*), 306–7, 363, 378, 394, 395, 429, 439–40, 443, 444, 445, 522, 530, 540, 627
wabi (subdued simplicity), 216, 265
waka, 6, 10–11, 91, 95–6, 108, 189–90, 377, 396; see also imperial poetry anthology (*chokusenshū*), individual entries on *chokusenshū* titles, *karon*, *kyōka*, *Man'yōshū*, *tanka*, chapters 5, 9, 22–25, and 48
 and
 aristocratic culture, 4–5, 97–8, 101, 281
 diary, 165–6, 268–9
 Genji monogatari, 135–7, 149, 392
 genre hierarchy, 3–4, 378
 haikai, chapter 41
 imayō, 206–8
 Kamo no Mabuchi, 484–5
 Kokugaku, 379
 kyōka, chapter 51
 literary genres, 98, 99, 125–6
 Masaoka Shiki, 573
 modern Japanese poetry, 613–22
 Motoori Norinaga, 486–7
 Murasaki Shikibu, 134
 noh, 335, 340–1, 344
 Nun Abutsu, 274–5
 recluse literature, 259, 260
 renga, chapter 33
 samurai, 211–12
 Sei Shōnagon, 161

- waka* (cont.)
 Sugawara no Michizane, 106, 107
 Yosa Buson, 493
 commentary. chapters 13, and 22; *see also*
karon
 in
Ben no Naishi nikki, 272
Fūyōshū, 155–6
Heike monogatari, 299
Ise monogatari, 124
Man'yōshū, chapter 5
Nakatsukasa Naishi nikki, 276
Tale of Toyokage, 125
 the Kamakura period, 213–14
 the Meiji period, 564, 565
 the Muromachi period, 214
Ukyō no Daibu shū, 271–2
Wakan rōishū, 185–7
 influence on *kanshi*, 461–2
Waka kuhon. *See* Fujiwara no Kintō
 Wakamatsu Shizuko (1864–96), 600, 602–3
Wakan rōishū (Collection of Japanese and
 Chinese Poems to Sing, early 11th c.),
 6, 98, 120, 178, 185–7, 190, 223; *see also*
 Fujiwara no Kintō
wakan-konkōbun (mixed Sino-Japanese style
 writing), 2, 283, 299, 309, 500, 567
wa-kan-yō konkōbun (Japanese-Chinese-
 Western mixed-style writing),
 568, 569
 Wang Gai (1645–1707), 493–4
 Wang Shizhen (1526–90), 482
 Wang Wei, 459, 461
 Wang Xizhi (321–79, or 307–65), 69
 war. *See* Genpei War, Korean War, Ōnin
 War, Russo-Japanese War, Second
 Sino-Japanese War, Sino-Japanese
 War, World War I, World War II
 warrior tale. *See* *gunki-mono*
wasan (Buddhist hymns), 208, 214
washū (Japanese stylistic influence in *kanbun*),
 459, 468
 Wataya Risa (b. 1984), 765
Wenxuan (Selections of Refined Literature, J.
 Monzen, early 6th c.), 20, 48, 54, 58, 67,
 70, 87, 89, 184, 189–90, 192
Woman Who Loved Love. *See* Ihara Saikaku
 women. *See also* *fujin zasshi*, gender, girls'
 magazine and manga, *nyōsho*, and
 education for: premodern aristocratic
 women, women in the early modern
 period, women in the modern period
 and cinema, 698
 and imperial poetry anthology, 118, 155
 in 19th century Japan, 535, 562–3
 performers, 427, 437, chapter 20; *see also*
goze, *shirabyōshi*
 poets, 58–9, 77, 88, 118, 119, 572, 618–19,
 717–18
 writings by, 97–100, 155–6, 193–4, chapters
 11, 12, 14, 15, 27, 61, 66, and 76; *see also*
individual writers
 World War I (1914–18), 630, 645, 696
 World War II (1939–45), 80, 175, 286, 354, 429,
 632, 671, 725
 writing system, 1, 16–18, 26–8, 51, 84–5; *see also*
 gender and writing systems and
 styles, *kana*, *kanbun*, *kanji*, *kundoku*,
 logography, phonography, *wakan-*
konkōbun
 Xiao jing (Classic of Filial Piety,
 J. *Kōkyō*), 384
 Xie Lingyun (385–443), 58
yakazu haikai (rapid solo haikai
 sequences), 417
Yakusha kuchi samisen. *See* Ejima Kiseki
 Yamabe no Akahito (fl. 724–36), 65–7, 74–6,
 81, 83
 Yamada Bimyō (1868–1910), 585, 599
 Yamada Eimi (b. 1959), 762, 763, 765
 Yamaga Sokō (1622–85), 496
 Yamagusuku Seichū (1884–1949), 753
 Yamamoto Hokuzan (1752–1812), 467
 Yamamoto Yūzō (1887–1974), 700, 706
 Yamanoue (or Yamanoe) no Okura (660–c.
 733), 65, 67–70, 71–4, 75, 77, 82, 83
Yamato monogatari (Tales of Yamato, c. 951),
 75, 112, 124, 276
 Yamato Takeru, 25–6
 Yamazaki Ansai (1618–82), 462, 480
 Yamazaki Sōkan, 326, 404
 Yanagita Kunio (1875–1962), 280
 Yang Sōk-il (b. 1936), 759
 Yang Yi (b. 1964), 670, 765–6
 Yano Ryūkei (1851–1931), 559–60, 561, 567
Keikoku bidan (Commendable Anecdotes
 on Creating a Nation, 1883–4), 559,
 560, 581–2
Yashima (or *Yashima no ikusa*, The Battle of
 Yashima), 364
 Yasuoka Shōtarō (1920–2013), 731, 732, 740, 744
 Yi Yang-ji (1955–92), 758–9, 765
 Yokomitsu Riichi (1898–1947), 630, 657, 667,
 684–6, 695–6, 698

- yomihon* (reading books), 369, 377, 378, 379, 387,
 393, 510, 513, 515, 518, 520, 558–9, 560,
 561–2, chapters 50 and 55
Yorimasa. See Zeami Motokiyo
Yosa (Yoza) Buson (1716–83), 375, 380, 381,
 410–13, 492–4
 Shinhanatsumi (New Flower
 Gathering), 412
Yosano Akiko (1878–1942), 139, 237, 618–19,
 624, 645, 646
 Midare-gami (Tangled Hair, 1901), 618, 645
Yosano Tekkan (1873–1935), 618, 620, 621, 624
Yoshida Kenkō (c. 1283–c. 1352), chapter 26
 Tsurezuregusa (Essays in Idleness, c. 1331), 7,
 162, 263–5, 284, 302, 385
Yoshida Mitsuru (1923–79), 725
Yoshida Shūichi (b. 1968), 764
Yoshii Isamu (1886–1960), 624
Yoshikawa Eiji (1892–1962), 649, 699
Yoshimoto Banana (b. 1964), 761, 762, 763
Yoshimoto Takaaki (1924–2012), 717
Yoshinaga Fumi (b. 1971), 752
Yoshishige no Yasutane, 191
Yoshitsune senbon zakura (Yoshitsune and the
 Thousand Cherry Trees, 1747), 432,
 443, 444, 453
Yoshiyuki Eisuke (1906–40), 684
Yoshiyuki Junnosuke (1924–94), 731
Yōsō (1376–1458), 315
yotsugi no monogatari (succession tale), 202,
 298–9
Yotsugi Soga. See Chikamatsu Monzaemon
Yotsutsuji Yoshinari (1326–1402)
 Kakaishō (The River and Sea Commentary,
 c. 1387), 136–7
Yotsuya kaidan. See Tsuruya Nanboku IV
You xianku. See Zhang Zhou
Yu Miri (b. 1968), 670, 709, 759, 767
Yu Yue (1821–1907), 459, 575
Yuan Hongdao (1568–1610), 462, 467
Yuan Mei (1716–98), 462
Yuasa Hangetsu (1858–1943), 615
yūgen (mystery and depth), 216, 227, 228, 239,
 248, 319, 334, 341, 342–3, 346, 620
Yūryaku, Emperor, 26, 39, 41, 55–6, 83
Yūshi hōgen (Playboy Dialect, 1770), 375–6
Yutai xinyong (New Songs from a Jade
 Terrace, c. 545), 20, 58
Yuyama sangin hyakuin (Three Poets at
 Yuyama, 1491), 325

zainichi literature, 765, chapter 79
zange-mono (Buddhist confessional
 discourses), 419
Zeami Motokiyo (1363?–1443?), 6–7, 8–9, 216,
 328–9, 332–3, 334–9, 347, 429, chapter 35
 Fūshi kaden (Transmission of the Flower
 through Style and Form, 1400–18),
 340, 341, 346
 Kyūi (Nine Ranks, c. 1428), 341–2, 344
 Sandō (The Three Paths), 334, 343
 Tadanori, 336
 Takasago, 335
 Yorimasa, 336
Zekkai Chūshin (1336–1405), 313–14, 315
Zhang Zhou (c. 657–730)
 You xianku (A Dalliance in the Immortals’
 Den), 58, 70, 121–2
Zhu Xi (1130–1200), 379, 469, 479–82, 484
zōka (miscellaneous poems), 54, 77, 78, 83
zuihitsu (free-form essay), 162, 205, 215,
 259, 284