TRADITIONAL JAPANESE ARTS AND CULTURE


N
SEA OF JAPAN
IWAMI
(in Shimane
Prefecture)
Matsue
IZUMO
(in Shimane
Prefecture)
TSUSHIMA
CHIKUZEN
(in Fukuoka Prefecture)
HIZEN
(in Saga and
Nagasaki Prefectures)
San'yō area
Yamaguchi
Hiroshima
HARIMA
(in Hyōgo
Prefecture)
SETTSU
(in Hyōgo
Prefecture)
Kyoto
Kobe
AWAJI
Nara
Osaka
(Naniwa)
and Sakai
SHIKOKU
Nagasaki
BUNGO
(Ōita Prefecture)
KYUSHU
KAWACHI
(in Ōsaka-fu)
YAMATO
(Nara Prefecture)
HYŪGA
(Miyazaki Prefecture)

Note: The name of the premodern province is given first, followed in parentheses by its modern equivalent. In cases where the boundaries of the premodern province do not coincide with a modern prefecture, its approximate location in relation to the modern prefecture is given.

TRADITIONAL JAPANESE ARTS AND CULTURE

An Illustrated Sourcebook

Edited by Stephen Addiss,
Gerald Groemer, and
J. Thomas Rimer

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PREFACE

For nearly fifty years, students of Japan, whatever their particular interests, were exposed to Japanese culture, history, and philosophy through the English translations of primary documents as found in *Sources of Japanese Tradition* (Tsunoda, de Bary, and Keene). In the preface to the first edition, the editors remarked that "since the arts of Japan have such a unique importance in the modern world — indeed, are the embodiment of Japanese civilization to many — there must be a place for the discussion of Japanese aesthetics" (ix). For that reason they included a small number of translated texts dealing with subjects related to the arts.

In the intervening decades, it has become increasingly evident that the cultural and artistic traditions of Japan, perhaps more than any other element in that society, helped to create a consciousness among Japanese of their history and identity and provided, and still provide, a context for an understanding of the aims and accomplishments of their culture. In addition, there is now a greater interest in traditional Japanese culture abroad than ever before. Art exhibitions, touring theatrical groups, translations of traditional Japanese literature, and concerts of traditional music — to say nothing of the work of European and American potters and those who write *haiku* in Western languages — have brought the arts of Japan ever closer to Western enthusiasms and sympathies.

Therefore, we believe this is the appropriate occasion to assemble for the first time a reader on traditional Japanese art and culture that will serve and inform this growing interest. This collection will be appropriate both for classroom study and for general readers who seek some understanding as to how Japanese writers, artists, and intellectuals viewed their own culture before the coming of the modern period. The collection should also be useful to those with an interest in comparative studies, particularly since we have included a certain amount of material concerning the connections Japan maintained both with China and later, in the Edo (or Tokugawa) period (1600 – 1868) with Europe, significant historical connections now far better understood by Western scholars than they were fifty years ago.

In our view, perhaps the most remarkable feature of the collection lies in the fact that in all the periods of traditional Japanese culture surveyed, we discovered

that the connections among individual forms of artistic expression were, if sometimes subtle, always profound and powerful. The shared assumptions among those working in the visual arts, literature, music, and theater are here made strikingly clear in a fashion not possible in a collection dealing with only one form of creative activity. In addition, the effect of these traditions is often cumulative. Those writing poetry or plays in the Tokugawa period, for example, used and appropriated cultural forms from earlier periods in a highly creative fashion. We hope that our cross referencing, plus the index, will allow these connections to become even more apparent. The index can thus serve as a kind of reader's guide, both to individual topics and to the connections among artistic forms. We hope in particular that teachers will find material here that, whatever their particular interests, will help them to understand wider issues in traditional Japanese culture.

We chose to group the readings by large historical periods, then within those periods by artistic forms (poetry, gardens, theater, calligraphy, etc.). The introductory matter given before each reading is meant to provide a context for a greater understanding on the part of the reader of each individual selection, linking the sections together so as to reveal both their differences and their commonalities. The illustrations, chosen and annotated by Stephen Addiss, also point out elements that help to make up the particular traditions of visual culture.

Although a significant amount of the material that appears here has already been made available in English translation, much of it has appeared in sources difficult to obtain and often out of print. In addition to these, a number of selections, particularly in the area of traditional Japanese music and theater, are translated here for the first time by Gerald Groemer.

It has been our hope to make these readings as accessible as possible to students, teachers, and others making use of this book. For this reason, many of the footnotes have been removed from the original translations, many of which were originally intended for more limited scholarly purposes. Explanatory interpolations lacking in the original texts or translations are indicated in brackets. We have maintained the romanization of Asian languages as found in the original translations. For those wishing to research these details, the sources of the translations and the location of the original Japanese texts are provided at the end of each selection. When texts have been retranslated, easily available standard translations have also often been cited to allow the reader to locate a given passage in its larger context. Bibliographical information is included in the references. Finally, the reader should be reminded that this is a collection of readings *about* Japanese artistic and cultural traditions. Those who desire to read works of literature, philosophy, theater texts, etc. should look to a number of splendid anthologies that have appeared in recent years, as well as to other studies, listed in the section on further readings, many of which have excellent bibliographies of such primary material.

Note: Terms in Chinese are rendered in the pinyin system. When citations in-

clude words rendered in the older Wade-Giles system, pinyin has been added in brackets.

The three editors of this volume have received help from a number of sources. We would first like to thank Patricia Crosby of the University of Hawai'i Press for her enthusiastic encouragement and her patience, without either of which this volume could never have been assembled. We also wish to thank many scholars for their help over a period of several years during which the project has been realized. In particular, we would like to acknowledge Audrey Yoshiko Seo for her many useful comments and suggestions and Paula Locante of the University of Pittsburgh for her skill in preparing the manuscript from so many disparate sources. We would like to thank as well our managing editor, Jennifer Harada, and our intrepid copy editor, Bojana Ristich, who located and corrected our various infelicities. Finally, we are very appreciative of the efforts of Dr. Katherine Carlitz of the University of Pittsburgh, who provided pinyin readings for some older renderings of Chinese names, titles, and place names.

INTRODUCTION

Traditional Japanese arts are among the richest in the world. They are also among the most elusive. Few peoples have cared longer or more deeply about beauty than the Japanese, but they have written about it in most cases obliquely, relying on the arts themselves to convey their own expressive charge. It is rare that one can find a statement as direct as that of the tenth-century courtier-poet Ki no Tsurayuki:

> Japanese poetry has the human heart as seed and myriads of words as leaves. It comes into being when men use the seen and the heard to give voice to feelings aroused by the innumerable events in their lives. The song of the warbler among the blossoms, the voice of the frog dwelling in the water — these teach us that every living being sings. It is song that moves heaven and earth without effort, stirs emotions in the invisible spirits and gods, brings harmony to the relations between men and women, and calms the hearts of fierce warriors.

Despite the timeless universality of this statement, many aspects of the Japanese sense of beauty have changed, sometimes drastically, over different eras and among different groups, so that for almost every statement that one can make about Japanese beliefs about the arts, the opposite often seems equally true.

There are of course certain themes that recur, such as the love and respect for nature, leading to the appreciation for natural materials and effects. Over the centuries, unglazed ceramics have been as highly admired as decoratively glazed works, unpainted wood has often been utilized in both sacred and secular architecture, and the beauty of both the ink and the bare paper has been a feature of much *sumi* (monochrome black ink) painting. This love and admiration for natural materials goes back to the earliest prehistoric eras, when there was no attempt to develop glazes (as was being done in China) but rather the natural look of clay, as transformed through fire, was paramount. Nevertheless, in eras such as the Heian period (794–1185), supremely decorative arts flourished under the aegis of a highly refined courtly taste that was never totally lost in succeeding centuries, and there was a strong development of such arts as painted architecture and highly decorated papers for writing in calligraphy.

Another set of opposing characteristics that recur in Japanese cultural history is

the love and respect for the old, combined with (and sometimes challenged by) the fascination for the new. The latter often meant looking outside Japan for inspiration, primarily to China and Korea and in recent times to the West, but the influences were always absorbed and eventually transformed by underlying Japanese artistic values. This transformation happened not only with Buddhist and courtly arts, but also with poetry, secular painting, theater, and music. Even when searching for the new, there was a sense of connecting with the past, as in a late sixteenth century statement: "Creativity is complete devotion to new things. Learning from the accomplishments in form attained by our predecessors, one must invent in a way that meets this time."[1]

Many other interesting recurrences and dichotomies in Japanese writings about the arts could be discussed, but this book was not primarily created to offer analysis from a contemporary point of view; rather we have sought to let the Japanese speak for themselves. Yet this can be a double-edged sword. Over the ages, Japanese have written not only informative but also deeply evocative statements about their various forms of cultural expression in poetry, prose, visual art, music, and theater, but also much has been left unsaid — and perhaps this too tells us something about Japanese culture and the Japanese sense of beauty.

In many Japanese arts, particularly after the introduction of Zen Buddhism, suggestion has often been more important than direct statement, and frequently the implicit has been valued over the explicit. Within this framework, readers, listeners, and viewers were expected to contribute much of the total aesthetic to the experience of poetry, painting, theater, and music. This was true not only in emotional affect, but even in some of the specifics of the original expression. For example, when the *haiku* master Matsuo Bashō wrote

A crow has perched
on a withered branch —
autumn evening

he left it to the reader whether to visualize a single crow and a single branch or several, since the poem could also be translated

Crows have perched
on withered branches —
autumn evening

or even

Crows have perched
on withered branches —
autumn evenings

1. Cited in Kuitert, *Themes in the History of Japanese Garden Art,* p. 209.

Which did Bashō envision? Even this question has no single answer; of two paintings of this subject executed and/or inscribed by Bashō, one depicts a single crow and the other, many. Therefore with just the poem, readers could imagine the scene as they wished. Within this deliberate ambiguity, Bashō was not only creating something new, but also relying upon centuries of understood, but seldom articulated, emotions based primarily upon the human response to nature.

This is not to say that vagueness is endemic to the Japanese language or spirit; there has been great precision when so desired in both artistic and societal matters. Many seemingly improvised elements in painting, poetry, and music actually followed strict guidelines, and in a broader context — for example, in sumptuary and tax laws — one can find much meticulous definition and categorization. But in matters of emotional expression, Japanese artists have often appealed to an interaction that allows the reader, viewer, or listener to participate in the experience rather than merely receive it.

There has long been a certain distrust of words regarding beauty in Japan, perhaps influenced by Taoism and Zen, but perhaps also ingrained in the spirit of a country in which nature itself, rather than purely human endeavor, is so highly regarded. When the compiler-editors first talked together about preparing this volume as a sourcebook rather than a compendium of our own commentaries, we immediately recognized the difficulties. There are very few books on this subject in any language, and this is not by accident. Until little more than one hundred years ago, there was, for example, no general term for "aesthetics" in Japanese, and those who seek in this volume for philosophizing about culture and the arts in the Western sense will be disappointed. Indeed, such modern Japanese theoretical writers on aesthetics as Watsuji Tetsurō, Kuki Shūzō, and Yanagita Kunio have made considerable use of Western assumptions and concepts in developing their own explanations, often trying to relate elements in traditional Japanese culture to wider artistic and cultural currents in the world.

Premodern Japanese writers were not attempting to produce aesthetic treatises in the Western sense of the word, and the arts that became the natural object of their inquiries were also not always defined and delimited in ways that modern observers would take for granted. To begin with, the most common general term for art *(gei),* borrowed from Chinese, was not clearly separated from what we would term a craft or even a technique. As a result, deciding what is and is not properly included in a sourcebook on Japanese arts and culture was one of the first tasks faced by the editors.

Moreover, some areas of artistic endeavor are not readily formed into units that can be easily treated as parallels to Western equivalents. For example, it is questionable whether the many musical arts that Japan has produced over the millennia ever aimed for the same goals sought by Western composers. Premodern Japanese singers, composers, and teachers of what is today generally assumed to be the Japanese equivalent of Western music tended to think of their art not so much

as a repertory of highly individualized masterpieces that expressed the emotions of the creator or performer but rather as a "way" *(michi* or *dō)* eventually leading to some kind of enlightenment.

The notion of a "way," closely linked to Buddhist, Taoist, and Confucian philosophy, also colored the thinking of many of those who wrote about the "way of calligraphy," the "way of tea," and the like, as included in this volume. Yet many other "ways" existed as well, some of which were arguably artistic in nature: the "way of incense," the "way of flower arranging," the "way of martial arts," or even the "way of love." Although many texts on these "ways" tend to be highly specialized, they do help to transmit traditional Japanese conceptions of art and culture.

Since mastering an art required one to travel down a chosen "way," it is hardly surprising that writings on traditional arts tend to be highly practical, teaching the nature of the correct way and the steps along the path. These steps in the field of music might be the mastery of specific techniques and hallowed pieces or styles from the past, knowledge of traditional semi-sacred texts, details on instrumentation or vocal production the biographies or accomplishments of honored teachers, the rules that were to govern the behavior of acolytes, and much else. Much of this is, for better or worse, so specific and concrete that it may be of little interest to anyone not already traversing the "way" in question.

Throughout history, many groups, large and small, each claiming to posses the "correct" version of a "way," assembled around skilled or charismatic teachers. Writings emerging from such associations often seek to establish not general aesthetic principles or philosophy, but rather argue that one version of tradition is more old, orthodox, or meaningful than another. Such writings too are often not easily understood by the outsider, to whom the differences discussed, so important to the group members, may be so minor as to appear entirely trivial.

Rather than attempting to explain such details and their historically varying meanings, we have selected a variety of texts — including poetry, fiction, diaries, letters, instructional writings, and what might be called musings on beauty — in order to present more general ideas on how traditional Japanese saw the purposes and achievements of their arts before the opening to the West in 1868. In the compilation of this volume, we found many happy surprises — texts we had not known existed, interrelationships between works that we had not suspected, commentaries that were works of art, and works of art that were also commentaries.

In concentrating upon those Japanese arts most studied in the West, our ultimate purpose has been to help our readers discover principles or assumptions from which Japanese poetry, prose, painting, sculpture, architecture, theater, and music were created. In part 4, we have even included a section on the preparation of food, since that too became an art in Japan.

Before beginning, however, we should ask ourselves: What *is* Japan? Like the United States, the inhabited geography of this chain of islands has changed greatly over the centuries. In the prehistoric Jōmon period (ca. 15,000 – ca. 200 BCE), semi-isolated groups of peoples lived in a few areas of moderate climate. They depended primarily upon hunting and gathering, but they also began to live in small permanent settlements earlier than in most other countries. In part because of this semi-settled lifestyle, they produced what may be the world's first pottery, a form of creativity that was of little use to nomadic peoples.

An influx of peoples from Korea and also from Pacific islands transformed Japan around 200 BCE, bringing much broader-based forms of agriculture and leading to larger settlements and more centralized government. During the succeeding historical period (beginning traditionally in 552), the Japanese islands gradually became more fully settled and under the control of a central government, but the areas of northern Honshu and the northern island of Hokkaido, inhabited primarily by an ethnic minority called Ainu (who may have descended in part from the original prehistoric Jōmon peoples) remained outside of central Japanese control until recent centuries. Thus what was considered "Japan" in various periods differed geographically, ranging from south-central Honshu and northern Kyushu in earlier eras to most of what we now consider Japan. Any reasonably complete consideration of the arts of Japan today would include an examination of the traditions of the Ainu, as well as those of Okinawa. However, these traditions, particularly those of the Ainu, were not traditionally set down in written form. Moreover, they were commonly based upon principles differing fundamentally from those developed by the majority Japanese society. For these reasons we have not included a discussion of them, although suggested materials are included at the beginning of Suggested Further Readings in Western Languages at the back of the book.

This book is divided into four broad historical sections, beginning with Early Japan, the first part of which is the prehistoric era consisting of the Jōmon, Yayoi, and Tumulus (Kofun) periods (roughly 15,000 BCE – 552 CE). Although by definition nothing was written in prehistory, in fact many nonverbal texts were created of materials such as clay. As shown here in photographs, these have left us fascinating glimpses into the lives of peoples who constructed, in historical sequence, elaborate cooking and storage vessels and semi-abstracted figurines, then simpler and more graceful pottery, and eventually *haniwa,* unglazed earthenware figurines and other objects that stood between the worlds of the living and the dead. The origins of what is now called Shintō must have been part of the belief system in these eras, including the importance of purification, as well as the respect for a multitude of deities that reside in nature.

The second half of our first section covers the Nara (Tenpyō) and preceding Asuka and Hakuhō eras (552 – 794), during which powerful cultural influences from China and Korea were adopted and transformed. These included a writing

system, new ideas about government, Confucian and Taoist worldviews, and especially the splendor of Buddhism, which became a vital element in Japanese religious and artistic life. This period covers a major transformation of Japanese culture as strongly influenced by continental models, and from this time on, we may see the Japanese as balancing between native and imported conceptions of artistic expression, now leaning more one way, now the other. Even in the times of greatest outside influence, however, indigenous values were never completely lost. Perhaps this was owing in part to the geography of Japan as a chain of islands, restricted but also protected by large bodies of water. It may also be argued that a powerful, if usually unstated, belief system has been an underlying factor in Japanese life since prehistoric times.

The second major section of this book, Courtly Japan, covers the Heian period (794–1185), distinctive in that the imperial court held a dominant position in Japanese arts, in terms of both creation and patronage. Great compilations of poetry were selected and written in exquisite calligraphy on highly decorated paper; the world's first (and some still say the greatest) novel, *The Tale of Genji,* was composed by Murasaki Shikibu (Lady Murasaki); court music borrowed from China was developed to Japanese taste; forms of theater were created and transformed; Buddhist sacred writings (sutras) were elegantly copied in gold and silver on decorated papers; and Buddhist painting and sculpture reached a degree of power and beauty that was never surpassed. Many Japanese still consider the tenth and eleventh centuries as representing the pinnacle of Japanese culture, at least in terms of refinement and elegance.

The growing power of the warriors is demonstrated in the third section of the book, Samurai Japan, which includes the Kamakura and Muromachi (Ashikaga) eras (1185–1568). Here we can see the ideals of Pure Land Buddhism reaching out to all Japanese and influencing artists in a number of different fields, in part as a response to an age unsettled by the political decline of the imperial court. The battles between powerful warrior clans were immortalized in *The Tale of the Heike,* which also sums up the purpose of the arts in the line, "How touching that in the end, even idle words and flowery expressions lead to praise of the Buddha."[2]

In the latter centuries of this period, a newly introduced form of Buddhism, Zen, became an increasingly powerful cultural force and fostered a new sense of beauty. It emphasized the rustic, the spontaneous, and the natural in a way that both absorbed Chinese influences in the medium of ink painting and harkened back to the prehistoric Japanese reverence for the sacred spirits in nature. During this era, courtly arts continued to be important, but newer or hybrid forms such as *nō* drama, linked verse, and arts connected with the tea ceremony came to the

2. See Kitagawa and Tsuchida, *The Tale of the Heike,* vol. 2, p. 523.

fore. Tea taste in particular often stressed the beauty of the simple, unadorned, and homely, creating a kind of art that suggests artlessness.

The final section of the book, Merchant Japan, covers the most diverse periods in Japanese traditional history, the Momoyama and Edo (or Tokugawa) eras (1568 – 1868). The growing power of the merchants during this time did much to influence Japanese culture, but patronage from courtiers, samurai-turned-bureaucrats, wealthy farmers, and a new class of Confucian-educated scholars led to a great diversity of art and artistic purpose. It was during this time, above all, that an incredible variety of Japanese prose, poetry, art, music, and theater came forth, leading to a complex aesthetic that foreshadows our own contemporary multifaceted artistic world, in which seeming opposites can happily coexist. For example, in eighteenth-century visual arts, the development of elaborate woodblock prints featuring famous beauties and actors coincided with some of the simplest and most powerful ink paintings created by major Zen masters. Similarly, the deliberately over-the-top dramatics of *kabuki* theater were celebrated at the same time as the understated depth of *haiku* poetry by such masters as Bashō.

The understanding of this dichotomy was frequently discussed in the Edo period in terms of the words *ga* (elegant) and *zoku* (worldly), as in a comment by the literati poet-painter-calligrapher Gion Nankai (1676 – 1751):

> The contrast of *ga* and *zoku* is a concept used by aristocrats, scholars, and gentlemen; it has nothing to do with the lower classes. Only elevated and gentle words come in the category of *ga,* while *zoku* originally referred to the popular, common things in society. Among such things there are the good and the bad, and we do not have to despise everything common. . . . Although poetry and prose do not belong to the world of *zoku,* in every collection there will be some *zoku* poems. Some poets devote their life's work to *zoku,* and factual accounts may also be *zoku.* Simply put, *ga* is neatness, propriety, and elegance, while *zoku* is worldliness. Poetry cannot be written without an understanding of how *ga* and *zoku* differ.[3]

Despite this division, some of the arts of early modern Japan can also be understood as bringing together *ga* and *zoku,* such as in *haiku* poetry, which attempted to express the extraordinary through the ordinary.

Seen through the ages, Japanese artistic culture is such a rich field that in this volume we have been able to present only a small selection of what we consider to be significant texts about a number of different arts. As noted above, much has been left unsaid in Japanese writings on the arts, and some arts and styles have

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3. From the *Shihō gazoku-ben* section of Gion Nakai's *Shiketsū* (1787). The translation is adapted from that in Nakano, "The Role of Traditional Aesthetics," p. 127.

been discussed more fully or more often than others. As a result, this anthology also emphasizes some areas more than others. The editors have done their best to maintain a sense of balance, in part by including a number of illustrations. This allows us not only to introduce art from the prehistoric periods, but also gives us the chance to enhance the words of poets, warriors, monks, and everyday people by presenting some works themselves as primary aesthetic texts. We hope our readers will use this volume as a springboard for investigating Japanese culture and sense of beauty more fully; we have thus concluded the volume with a list of suggested further readings in Western languages.

The three compilers of this book have different areas of knowledge. J. Thomas Rimer brings to this volume his expertise in Japanese literature and theater, as well as his great and deep appreciation for all aspects of Japanese culture. Stephen Addiss contributes his long study of Japanese visual arts, literati culture, and the world of Zen. Gerald Groemer adds his intense research in Japanese music and related arts. As editors, our purpose has been to present the texts with minimal introductions or commentary so as to let the original materials speak as directly as possible to the readers. We hope that this volume will be useful for all those interested in Japanese culture, and if our readers turn from this book to further study and to the arts themselves, we will have accomplished our task.

1 EARLY JAPAN

The Jōmon, Yayoi, Tumulus, Asuka, and Nara Periods

Prehistoric Japan

Japan had a civilization and culture for many thousands of years before a system of writing was imported and gradually adapted to suit the Japanese language. One definition of aesthetics is the (almost impossible) task of translating beauty into words, but we might also ask whether the most direct expression of beauty is the works themselves, rather than any words about them. In the case of the first twelve thousand years of Japanese culture, we have only the works, and these can speak very eloquently, if not verbally.

The pottery vessels and figurines of the Jōmon period (to about 200 BCE), for example, show a fascination with the natural material of the clay rather than the development of glazes. The cord markings upon the vessels gave the era its name, Jōmon; current scientific dating systems now rank it as the world's oldest pottery, placing it earlier than 10,000 BCE. By 2,000 BCE one witnesses an astonishing outpouring of surface and rim designs, almost always abstract but occasionally suggesting masks, waves, or flames. There can be no question of the creative vitality of this period, while the great variety of Jōmon shapes and forms suggests that rather than a single standard of formal beauty, there was a preference for bold and exuberant individuality (see plates 1, 2). One particularly striking image among the small clay figurines of the Jōmon period is of a cat-like face with thin slanted eyes, a semi-human body with strange separations over the marked shoulders, and a simplified hand brought to the chest (see plate 3). There is no way to be sure what this figurine represented or symbolized, but the expressive force of the work, stemming from its mysterious combination of human and nonhuman qualities, is undeniable.

In the succeeding Yayoi period (to about 250 CE), a new group of peoples came to the islands from the Korean peninsula, bringing with them more advanced ag-

ricultural methods, which led to the establishment of larger settlements than had been possible previously. During this era, ceramic forms became much more restrained and the shapes more refined. Vessels were composed primarily of smooth rather than decorated surfaces (see plate 5). What does this say about a change in aesthetics? This is something that can only be determined visually, but the new emphasis upon harmony of form rather than decorative effusion suggests a new direction in visual values that should not be ignored in any understanding of the history of Japanese art and culture.

The Tumulus (Kofun) period (about 250–550 CE) is distinguished by its huge tombs, often in "keyhole" shapes surrounded by moats (see plate 6) and covered with clay forms called *haniwa.* These, unlike most grave goods crafted to be buried with the deceased, were placed on top of the tombs, suggesting some kind of connecting force between the living and the dead. While the forms were at first simple cylinders, they gradually evolved into shields, houses, boats, animals, and finally human shapes (see plates 7, 8, 9). Their purpose is still uncertain; if they were guardians of the tombs, why do they have such a variety of forms, including women, children, birds, and animals as well as warriors? Whatever their original function, these *haniwa* demonstrate a multifaceted view of the life and activities of the period shortly before Buddhism came to Japan. The relative simplicity of the forms gives us opportunities to consider for ourselves the aesthetics of the era based on visual evidence.

Asuka, Hakuhō, and Nara (Tenpyō) Periods (552–794 CE)

Written documentation in Japan begins with the arrival of Chinese civilization. The earliest text known concerning the beginnings of Japanese civilization is the *Record of Ancient Matters* (*Kojiki;* trans. Philippi), compiled in 712, many centuries after the periods and centuries with which it deals. As the title suggests, even at that time the compilers indicated their understanding that Japanese civilization stretched back many centuries.

Shintō

With the coming of Chinese civilization and the Buddhist religion to Japan, beginning in about the sixth century, the corpus of native beliefs known as Shintō, literally "Way of the Gods," came to be more clearly perceived and defined in contradistinction to continental Buddhist beliefs. Many important aspects of basic Japanese aesthetic attitudes, such as purification, cleanliness, and the importance of ritual, however, had already been highly developed in the ancient period. Rituals informed many aspects of life, secular as well as religious; it might be argued

that at this time there was no clear division between the two. Festivities, including drinking songs with music, were an important part of early Japanese society, as is seen in the fortieth song of the *Chronicles of Japan* (*Nihon shoki,* or *Nihongi;* trans. Aston).

He who brewed
This fine liquor—was it because
He took his drum
And standing it up like a mortar,
Singing while he brewed
Did the brewing of the beer,
Dancing while he brewed
Did the brewing of the beer,
That this fine liquor,
Fine liquor,
Made me feel so extra good?
Sa! Sa!
(Cranston, *A Waka Anthology,* p. 27; *Kojiki,* p. 237)

The death song of Prince Karu appears in both the *Record of Ancient Matters* and the *Anthology of Ten Thousand Leaves (Man'yōshū)* in slightly different forms. Here, in the latter version, one can find some aspects of a Shintō ceremony for a loved one.

There on the river
Of Hatsuse the hidden land
In the upper shallows
They pound sacred poles,
In the lower shallows
They pound splendid poles.
On the sacred poles
They hang bright mirrors,
On the splendid poles
They hang splendid jewels.
Like a splendid jewel
The dear girl for whom I long:
Like a bright mirror
The dear girl for whom I long;
If they say that she is there,

Then shall I go
To my country, to my home:
Else for whose sake should I go?
(Cranston, *A Waka Anthology,* p. 714; *Man'yōshū,* vol. 3, p. 357)

Early Architecture

Ancient Japanese chronicles place the beginning of the Japanese imperial line as early as 600 BCE. By 710 CE, when Nara became the official capital of Japan, Buddhism had become the state religion, but Shintō, closely linked to the imperial family as well as to the population in general, continued to be important. Perhaps the most significant manifestation of this enduring relationship can be seen in the strong ties maintained by the Kyoto court to the Grand Shrine of Ise, located on the Shima peninsula some hundred miles southeast of the capital. The shrine is dedicated to Amaterasu-Ōmikami, the sun goddess mentioned below. According to the aesthetic ideal of purity, the *Record of Rituals for the Imperial Shrine at Ise* of 804, "A new shrine shall be built every twenty years" (*Kōtai jingū gishiki-chō,* p. 6). Except for a period of warfare in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, this scheme has been followed for well over a millennium so that the shrine is forever both old and new. The shrine has been rebuilt sixty-one times, but the reverence for ancient values has been so great that the present buildings, constructed in 1994, are considered to be representative of the most ancient aspects of traditional Japanese architecture (see plate 10). The use of plain, unpainted wood; thatched roofs; articulation of structural elements; austere and elegant spaces; raised-floor construction; highly crafted wood-joining techniques without the use of nails; and many other aspects of the Ise Shrine have had a profound effect on the subsequent history of Japanese architecture, reinforced by the building of countless other shrines throughout the country (currently more than 140,000).

Because of the important association of the Ise Shrine and the imperial court, it became the custom to send a high-ranking member to serve at the shrine as an official priestess. The early eleventh-century novel *The Tale of Genji* (*Genji monogatari;* trans. Seidensticker) contains a moving scene in which Genji bids farewell to one of his early loves, Lady Rokujō, who plans to accompany her daughter from Kyoto to Ise, where she will serve as priestess. The author's description of the simple surroundings on the outskirts of the capital, the Shrine in the Fields, suggests that the ancient type of architecture developed in the earlier period still remained important.

It was over a reed plain of melancholy beauty that he made his way to the shrine. The autumn flowers were gone and insects hummed in the wintry tangles. A wind whistling through the pines brought snatches of music to most wonderful effect, though so

distant that he could not tell what was being played. Not wishing to attract attention, he had only ten outrunners, men who had long been in his service, and his guards were in subdued livery. He had dressed with great care. His more perceptive men saw how beautifully the melancholy scene set him off, and he was having regrets that he had not made the journey often. A low wattle fence, scarcely more than a suggestion of an enclosure, surrounded a complex of board-roofed buildings, as rough and insubstantial as temporary shelters.

The shrine gates, of unfinished logs, had a grand and awesome dignity for all their simplicity, and the somewhat forbidding austerity of the place was accentuated by clusters of priests talking among themselves and coughing and clearing their throats as if in warning. It was a scene quite unlike any Genji had seen before. The fire lodge glowed faintly. It was all in all a lonely, quiet place, and here away from the world a lady already deep in sorrow had passed these weeks and months. Concealing himself outside the north wing, he sent in word of his arrival. The music abruptly stopped and the silence was broken only by a rustling of silken robes. (Seidensticker, *The Tale of Genji,* p. 186; *Genji monogatari,* vol. 14, pp. 368–369)

Yoshida Kenkō, in his *Essays in Idleness* (*Tsurezuregusa;* trans. Keene), notes that the customs involving the Shrine in the Fields still continued on in the fourteenth century.

I believe that the most charming and touching sight is the Shrine in the Fields when an imperial princess is in residence. It is amusing how the people there avoid Buddhist words like "sutra" or "Buddha" and speak instead of "colored paper" or "the One inside." Shinto shrines as a rule are too charming to pass without stopping. There is something peculiarly affecting about the atmosphere of their ancient groves, and how could the buildings, surrounded by a vermilion fence with sacred streamers tied to the *sakaki* boughs, fail to impress? Especially splendid are Ise, Kamo, Kasuga, Hirano, Sumiyoshi, Miwa, Kibune, Yoshida, Ōharano, Matsunoo, and Umenomiya. (Keene, *Essays in Idleness,* pp. 24–25; *Tsurezuregusa,* p. 110)

Another important Shintō shrine that has had an effect on the development of Japanese architecture is the Izumo Shrine, near Matsue on the Japan Sea. It is dedicated to another Shintō deity, Ōkuninushi-no-mikoto, often credited with the introduction of medicine, sericulture, and the art of farming. According to semi-legendary accounts in the *Record of Ancient Matters,* Emperor Suinin was distressed that his son was born dumb, but one night the emperor was told in a dream that "if my shrine is built like a palace, then the prince shall surely speak" (Philippi, *Kojiki,* p. 220; *Kojiki,* pp. 196–197). After obeisance to the deity the prince gained the power of speech, and the shrine was conceived as a palace to the deity. Also according to the *Record,* it was to be constructed "like the plentiful heavenly dwelling

where rules the heavenly sun-lineage of the offspring of the heavenly deities, firmly rooting the posts of the palace in the bedrock below, and raising high the cross-beams" (Philippi, *Kojiki,* p. 134; *Kojiki,* pp. 122–123). Similarly, in the *Chronicles of Japan* it is stated, "as to the dimensions of the building of the palace, its pillars shall be high and massy, and its planks broad and thick" (Aston, *Nihongi,* vol. 1, p. 80; *Nihon shoki,* vol. 67, pp. 150–151). The shrine has always been huge, and although the present main sanctuary structures (rebuilt in 1744) contain a number of changes from the originals, the basic style of construction is regarded as perhaps even older than that employed at Ise.

Secular architecture was closely integrated into ceremonies allied to Shintō beliefs. The first song in the *Record of Ancient Matters* celebrates the new house of the deity Susanoo no Mikoto after his marriage.

When this great god first built Suga Palace, clouds rose from that place. And so he composed a song. That song:

In eight-cloud-rising
Izumo an eightfold fence
To enclose my wife
An eightfold fence I build,
And, oh, that eightfold fence!

(Cranston, *A Waka Anthology,* p. 7; *Kojiki,* p. 89)

The eighty-third song in the *Chronicles of Japan* is a ritual blessing for a new house. Accompanied by the zither *(koto),* it concludes with drinking and dancing.

The rooting vine-ropes
Of the young dwelling we raise up,
The pillars
We raise up
Are the coming to rest of the heart
Of the master of the house.
The inner beams
That we lift into place
Are the flourishing of the heart
Of the master of this house.
The rafters
That we fit in place
Are the ordering of the heart
Of the master of this house.

The sheathing
That we fit in place
Is the calming of the heart
Of the master of this house.
The rope-vines
That we tie in place
Are the firming of the life
Of the master of this house.
The thatching
That we lay in place
Is the overflowing of the wealth
Of the master of this house.
Izumo
Is a new clearing;
From the new clearing
Rice ears ten hands long
In shallow vessels
Brewing the fine great liquor:
See how good it is—
Come, it's for you to drink,
My boys!

When I dance
Raising on high
The antlers of a stag
Of this lone
Leg-cramping mountain,
In sweet wine
Eka market
You won't buy it for a price.
May it please you to applaud,
Strike your plans clap-clap,
My eternal ones!
(Cranston, *A Waka Anthology,* pp. 97–98; *Nihon shoki,* vol. 67, pp. 512–513)

The *Record of Ancient Matters* includes a revealing story and poem about a carpenter.

In the ninth month the carpenter Inabe no Mane, using a stone for cutting block, trimmed timbers with an adze, and though he trimmed all day, he never missed and damaged the blade. The Emperor came by and wondered at this, asking, "Don't you

ever miss and hit the stone?" Mane replied, "I never miss." And so the Emperor summoned his palace women and had them undress and wrestle in an open place, wearing only loincloths. At this, Mane stopped and looked up for a moment as he went on trimming, and without realizing it, his hand slipped and he damaged his blade. The Emperor consequently rebuked him, saying, "Where does he come from, this slave who does not fear Us, who with dishonest mind lightly gives false replies?" And he turned him over to the Mononobe to be executed in the fields. At this, one of his fellow carpenters, grieving in regret over Mane, composed a song, saying:

How sad a loss—
Inabe the carpenter,
The ink-string he stretched;
If he is no more,
Who is going to stretch it?
A loss, that ink-string!

(Cranston, *A Waka Anthology,* p. 94; *Nihon shoki,* vol. 67, pp. 489–490)

Prototypes of Theater: *Kagura*

Among the great number of ancient myths recorded in the *Record of Ancient Matters* is a celebrated account of the sun goddess Amaterasu, who, shocked by the misdeeds of her brother, Haya-susa-no-o-no-mikoto, goes into hiding in a cave. The succeeding events, in which the other gods attempt to lure her out again, have sometimes been interpreted as an example of death and rebirth, as rituals to bring the sun back to life after winter, or as a reflection of ancient shamanistic rites. Analogues of such myths can be found throughout the world, reappearing even in Wagner's *Das Rheingold,* where the goddess Freia is captured and the gods lose their youthful appearance because they can no longer eat the golden apples in her garden. Since medieval times the legend of Amaterasu has often been cited as the origin of the religious dance genre *kagura* (literally "deity seat"), and thus of all Japanese dance, music, and theater in general and in particular *nō* and *kabuki.*

Amaterasu-Ōmikami, seeing this [her brother's blasphemous actions] with fear, opened the Heavenly Rock-cave door, went in, and shut herself inside. Then the High Heavenly Plain and the Central Land of the Reed Plains became entirely dark, and constant night reigned. The wails of the myriad deities sounded everywhere like summer flies, and all types of calamities arose. Then the eight hundred myriad deities assembled in a divine meeting at the Riverbed of Heavenly Peace. They made Omoikane-no-kami [the god of wisdom of counsel], the child of the god Takami-musuhi, ponder the matter. They

gathered together the long-crying cocks of the Eternal World to cry [to urge the sun to reappear]. They took the heavenly hard rock from the upper stream of the River of Heavenly Peace, and they took iron from the Mountain of Heavenly Metals. They sought the smith Amatsumara and commissioned Ishikoridome-no-mikoto to make a mirror. They commissioned Tamanoya-no-mikoto to make long strings of myriad *magatama* beads. They summoned Amenokoyane-no-mikoto and Futodama-no-mikoto to remove the whole shoulderbone of a male deer of the Mountain of Heavenly Fragrance and take heavenly white cherry wood from the Mountain of Heavenly Fragrance and [with these] perform a divination. They uprooted, roots and all, flourishing *masakaki* trees of the Mountain of Heavenly Fragrance. To the upper branches they attached long strings of myriad *magatama* beads; on the middle branches they hung a large mirror; from the lower branches they suspended white cloth made of paper mulberry and bluish hemp cloth. Futodama-no-mikoto held these various objects as solemn offerings, and Amenokoyane-no-mikoto intoned an auspicious liturgy. Amenotajikara-o-no-kami stood concealed beside the door, while Ame-no-uzume-no-mikoto bound up her sleeves with a cord of heavenly buck-grass from the Mountain of Heavenly Fragrance, tied around her head a wig of the heavenly *masaki* vines, and bound together bundles of pampas grass from the Mountain of Heavenly Fragrance to hold in her hands. Then, overturning a bucket before the Heavenly Rock-cave door, she stamped thunderously upon it. She became divinely possessed, exposed her breasts, and pushed her skirtband down to her genitals. The High Heavenly Plain shook as the eight hundred myriad deities laughed together. Amaterasu-Ōmikami, thinking this strange, opened a crack in the Heavenly Rock-cave door and said from within: "Because I have shut myself in, I thought that the High Heavenly Plain would be dark and that the Central Land of the Reed Plains would be completely dark. So why is it that Ame-no-uzume sings and dances and all the eight-hundred myriad deities laugh?" Then Ame-no-uzume spoke: "We rejoice and dance because a deity superior to you is here." While she was saying this, Amenokoyane-no-mikoto and Futodama-no-mikoto brought out the mirror and showed it to Amaterasu-Ōmikami. Thinking this more and more strange, Amaterasu-Ōmikami gradually came out of the door and approached the mirror. Then the hidden Amenotajikara-o-no-kami took her hand and pulled her out. Futodama-no-mikoto immediately extended a sacred *shirikume* rope behind her and said: "You may go back no further than this!" When Amaterasu-Ōmikami came forth, the High Heavenly Plain and the Central Land of Reed Plains became light. Then the eight hundred myriad deities deliberated together and imposed upon Haya-susa-no-o-no-mikoto a fine of restitutive gifts placed on a thousand tables. After the cutting of his beard and the nails of his hands and feet, he was exorcized and divinely banished. (*Kojiki,* pp. 80–84; trans. Gerald Groemer [hereafter G. G.]; see also Philippi, *Kojiki,* pp. 81–86. Note that the translation here, unlike Philippi's, does not attempt to reconstruct the pronunciation of Japanese personal and place names during the seventh and eighth centuries. Another version of the same legend, differing only in details, can

be found in the *Chronicles of Japan* [Aston, *Nihongi,* vol. 1, pp. 40–45; *Nihon shoki,* vol. 67, pp. 111–113].)

Precursors of Pantomime and Dance

The *Chronicles of Japan* recount various versions of a legend about two brother gods, one a hunter, the other a fisher, who exchange the tools of their trades. Both return empty-handed, but the younger brother has lost the elder brother's fishhooks at sea. The elder brother stubbornly refuses to accept replacements, greatly anguishing the younger brother, who visits the sea god under the ocean and is finally taught how to solve the problem. The mime described here later served as a legitimizing myth, testifying to the historical roots of Japanese theatrical practice.

When the day came for the elder brother to go fishing in the sea, the younger brother stood on the shore and whistled. A sudden storm arose, and the elder brother was engulfed and distressed. Seeing no means of saving his life, he besought his younger brother from afar, saying: "You have long lived on the ocean and must possess some excellent art. Please aid me. If you save my life, my descendants for the next eighty generations shall not leave your precincts but shall become mimes in your service *[wazaoki no tami]*." Thereupon the younger brother stopped whistling, and the wind again returned to rest. So the elder brother recognized the younger brother's power and admitted his serious fault. But the younger brother was angry and would not speak to him. Hereupon the elder brother, wearing only a loincloth, smeared the palms of his hands and his face with red earth and said to his younger brother: "Thus I defile my body and make myself thy mime *[wazaoki-hito]* forever" He kicked up his feet and made steps imitating his drowning struggles. When [he mimed] the tide wetting his feet, he performed foot-divination [i.e., probably stood on tip-toe, as when performing a kind of divination]; when it reached his knees, he raised his feet; when it reached his thighs, he ran around in a circle; when it reached his loins, he braced his loins; when it reached his sides, he placed his hands upon his chest; when it reached his neck, he threw up his hands and waved his palms. From that time until now, this [custom] has never ceased. (*Nihon shoki,* vol. 67, pp. 183–185; trans. G. G.; see also Aston, *Nihongi,* vol. 1, pp. 106–107. Another version of the same story can be found in the *Record of Ancient Matters,* chs. 42–44 [Philippi, *Kojiki,* pp. 148–155; *Kojiki,* pp. 134–143].)

Music and Ritual

One useful source of information on the arts in ancient Japan can be found in the writings of visitors to Japan from China, who composed what we might now call ethnographic notes on early Japanese civilization as they observed it. Here is an ex-

cerpt from an "Account of Wa" from *The History of the Kingdom of Wei (Wei zhi),* compiled by Chen Shou (233–297 CE); it indicates the use of music and dance at times of mourning; body painting; a tradition of ritual purity; and the importance of shamans, who may have even served as rulers.

The people of Wa[1] [i.e., the Japanese] dwell in the middle of the ocean on the mountainous islands southeast of the [prefecture of] Dai-fang [a Chinese outpost near modern-day Seoul]. They formerly comprised more than one hundred communities. During the Han dynasty [206 BCE–220 CE] Wa envoys appeared at the Court; today, thirty of their communities maintain intercourse [with us] through envoys and scribes. . . .

[In the country of Kunu, located perhaps in Kyushu] men, great and small, all tattoo their faces and decorate their bodies with designs. . . . The Wa, who are fond of diving into water to get fish and shells, also decorated their bodies in order to keep away large fish and waterfowl. Later, however, the designs became merely ornamental. Designs on the body differ in the various countries—their position and size vary according to the rank of the individual. . . .

The land of Wa is warm and mild. In winter as in summer the people live on vegetables and go about bare-footed. Their houses have rooms; father and mother, elder and younger, sleep separately. They smear their bodies with pink and scarlet, just as the Chinese use powder. They serve meat on bamboo and wooden trays, helping themselves with their fingers. When a person dies, they prepare a single coffin, without an outer one. They cover the graves with sand to make a mound. When death occurs, mourning is observed for more than ten days, during which period they do not eat meat. The head mourners wail and lament, while friends sing, dance, and drink liquor. When the funeral is over, all members of the whole family go into the water to cleanse themselves in a bath of purification. . . .

The country formerly had a man as ruler. For some seventy or eighty years after that there were disturbances and warfare. Thereupon the people agreed upon a woman for their ruler. Her name was Pimiko [Himiko]. She occupied herself with magic and sorcery, bewitching the people. Though mature in age, she remained unmarried. She had a younger brother who assisted her in ruling the country. After she became ruler, there were few who saw her. She had one thousand women as attendants, but only one man. He served her food and drink and acted as a medium of communication. She resided in a palace surrounded by towers and stockades, with armed guards in a state of constant vigilance. (Tsunoda, *Japan in the Chinese Dynastic Histories,* pp. 8–20; *Gishi wajinden,* pp. 105–112)

1. Written with the ideograph for "dwarf."

Music and ritual were particularly important for funerals. These were traditionally accompanied by dance, or by eight days and nights of wailing and singing, a fact recorded as well in the "Age of the Gods" section of the *Chronicles of Japan* (Aston, *Nihongi,* vol. 1, pp. 22, 66). When music began to be imported from abroad, it was also soon put to use at funerals. A record from 435 CE taken from the *Chronicles* describes the funeral of an emperor in which there was music from Silla, an area that is today part of Korea.

Forty-second year [of the reign of Emperor Ingyo],
Spring, First Month, Fourteenth Day

The emperor passed away. He was very old. When the king of Silla heard that the emperor had died, he was shocked and saddened. He sent eighty [i.e., many] ships as tribute with eighty musicians and dancers *[uta-mai no hito]* of all kinds. When the ships anchored at Tsushima [island], [the musicians] wailed loudly. When they arrived at Tsukushi [Kyushu], they again wailed loudly. When they anchored at Naniwa [Osaka] harbor, they all donned plain mourning clothes. Carrying all their tribute and arranging their many kinds of instruments, they proceeded from Naniwa to the capital [Anaho, in Yamato province]. Wailing and crying, dancing and singing, they proceeded to the shrine of temporary interment, where they assembled. (*Nihon shoki,* vol. 67, p. 449; trans. G. G.; see also Aston, *Nihongi,* vol. 1, pp. 325–326)

One of the important musical instruments in early Japan was the *koto*, a form of zither that at this time probably had five or six strings rather than the thirteen found in the modern instrument. The seventy-fourth song from the *Record of Ancient Matters* indicates that the instrument was to be built from fine wood.

In this reign there was a tall tree west of—River. The tree's shadow cast by the morning sun reached Awaji Island, and when struck by the evening sun, crossed over Takayasu Mountain. Now, they cut down this tree and fashioned a ship from it, and that ship was very swift. They gave the ship the name Karano. Every morning and evening they used this ship to transport drinking water drawn from the springs on Awaji Island to present to the Emperor. After the ship was wrecked, they burned it for salt and fashioned a cithern from the unburnt timbers. The sound of the cithern resounded over seven leagues. Hence this song.

Karano, oh
They burned it for salt.
  Of its leftovers
They fashioned a cithern
  For to pluck and play:
  In Yura Strait

In mid-strait on sunken rocks
Stand swaying-touching
Oozy stalks
Softly-softly.
(Cranston, *A Waka Anthology,* p. 45; *Kojiki,* p. 283)

The ninety-sixth song from the *Record of Ancient Matters* also celebrates the *koto*.

Once when the emperor went to Yoshino Palace there was a maiden beside the Yoshino River, and her figure was lovely. And so he wed this maiden and returned to the palace. Later when he visited Yoshino again, he stopped at the place where he had met the maiden, set up a great royal camp chair, seated himself upon it, and had the young lady dance while he played the cithern. And since the lady danced well, he composed a song. That song:

To the hand of a god
Seated upon a camp chair
Playing a cithern
She dances, this woman—oh, that
This were the eternal land!
(Cranston, *A Waka Anthology,* p. 56; *Kojiki,* p. 315)

Buddhism

The coming of Buddhism to Japan is dated by the *Chronicles of Japan* as 552 CE, though modern scholarship prefers 538 CE. The arrival of this religion brought with it an enormous amount of cultural influence from both Korea and China. Buddhist influences, interwoven with the native Shintō tradition, formed the basis on which later Japanese aesthetics would develop. The *Chronicles of Japan* indicate how the king of Paekche (whose territory occupied a portion of what is now Korea) wished to send the blessings of this religion, which had arisen many centuries before in India, to Japan.

552 CE, Winter, Tenth Month

King Sŏng-myŏng of Paekche,[2] also called King Sŏng sent Hui Narisach'igye, with the rank of *talsol,*[3] of Western Paekche, and others to the emperor with presents of a gold

2. Twenty-sixth king of Paekche; ruled 523–554.
3. The second of sixteen Paekche ranks.

and copper statue of Shakyamuni, several banners and silk parasols, and a number of volumes of Sutras. Separately he wrote in praise of the merit of diffusing abroad religious worship, saying, "This doctrine is the most excellent among all doctrines, though it is hard to explain and hard to comprehend. Even the Duke of Chou and Confucius did not know of it. This doctrine creates immeasurable, boundless religious merit and good fortune and so leads on to supreme enlightenment. Imagine a man in possession of treasures to his heart's content, able to satisfy all his wishes in proportion as he used them. Thus it is with the treasure of this wonderful doctrine. Every prayer and hope is fulfilled; nothing is wanting. From distant India it has come here to the three Han [Korea], where there are none who do not receive it with reverence and respect as it is taught to them."

For these reasons, thy servant, Myŏng, King of Paekche, has humbly dispatched his retainer, Narisach'igye, to transmit it to the Imperial Country, and to diffuse it therein, so as to fulfill the recorded saying of Buddha: "My law shall spread to the East." (*Nihon shoki,* vol. 68, p. 101; trans. G. G.; see Aston, *Nihongi,* vol. 2, pp. 65–66)

In the *History of the Sui Dynasty (Sui shu),* compiled in 629–636 CE, one finds a Chinese traveler's description of Japan after the first introduction of Buddhism. Some differences from the earlier descriptions quoted above can be found, but even though Chinese and Buddhist culture was beginning to find a solid foothold in Japan, many of the old native ways were slow to change.

As for dress and adornment, the men have outer and inner garments, the sleeves of which are very small. Their foot-gear is shaped like sandals, painted with lacquer, and tied on with strings. Many of the common people usually go barefoot. They are not permitted to use gold or silver ornaments. Their ordinary dress is a wide piece of cloth tied on without sewing. They do not wear head-gear, but let their hair hang down over their ears. During the Sui period [ca. 581–618], the King for the first time instituted head-gear [to indicate rank]. It was made of brocade and colored silk and decorated with gold and silver inlaid flowers.

The women arrange their hair on the back of the head. They wear outer and under garments and scarves, all with designs. They have combs cut from bamboo. They weave grass into mattresses. For covers they use various skins lined with colored leather.

The men have bows and arrows, swords, spears, catapults, and polished axes. Their armor is of lacquered leather. They cut bones to make arrow-heads. They have a standing army, but there is little warfare. When the King holds Court, it is deemed indispensable to have military display and musicians playing native music. . . .

As for musical instruments, they have five-stringed zithers and flutes. Both men and women paint marks on their arms and spots on their faces and have their bodies tattooed. . . . They have no written characters and understand only the use of

notched sticks and knotted ropes. They revere Buddha and obtained Buddhist scriptures from Paekche. This was the first time that they came into possession of characters. They are familiar with divination and have profound faith in shamans, both male and female.

On the first day of the first month, it is customary for them to have archery tournaments, and to play games and drink liquor. Their other festivals are in general identical with those of the Chinese. They like chess, betting, juggling, and dice games. . . .

The dead are put in coffins; near relatives gather by the side of the corpse to sing and dance. (Tsunoda, *Japan in the Chinese Dynastic Histories,* pp. 28–31, revised; *Zuisho wakoku-den,* pp. 130–131)

Court Music

As with architecture and religious texts, the influence of China on the development of early Japanese music was profound. In the seventh century, music and entertainment for Buddhist religious services were usually imported from China. Again, the *Chronicles of Japan* make mention of the power of Buddhist chant and also offer an anecdote about Buddhist sculpture.

552, Summer, Fifth Month, First [Seventh?] Day

A report from the province of Kafuchi [Kawachi]: "From within the sea at Chinu, in the district of Izumi, Buddhist music echoes like the sound of thunder. A beautiful light shines like the radiance of the sun." In his heart the emperor wondered at this and sent Ikehe no Atahi—here we have only Atahi, and the surname is not given, probably lost because of an error in copying—to go upon the sea and investigate.

At that time Ikehe no Atahi went upon the sea and as a result discovered a log of camphor wood shining brightly as it floated on the surface. At length he took it and presented it to the emperor, who ordered an artist to make of it two statues of the Buddha. These are the radiant camphor wood statues now in the Temple of Yoshino. (*Nihon shoki,* vol. 68, pp. 103–105; trans. G. G.; Aston, *Nihongi,* vol. 2, p. 68)

One of the first documented forms of theater imported from the continent was *gigaku,* a masked dance drama accompanied by music. *Gigaku* was supposedly brought to Japan by Mimaji (Jp. Mimashi), who had studied in Wu and arrived in Japan in 612 CE.[4] *Gigaku* masks, ancient musical instruments, and other important materials are stored in the Shōsōin, the eighth-century Imperial Treasure House in Nara. The Shōsōin, constructed to house the gifts presented by delegates from

4. *Nihon shoki,* vol. 68, p. 199; see also Aston, *Nihongi,* vol. 2, p. 144.

all over the Buddhist world when Nara became an "official" Buddhist capital in 752, is itself a remarkable monument of early Japanese architecture (see plate 12). Furthermore, the items stored there provide precious insights into early Japanese music and performing arts (see plate 13).

Folk Music

In contradistinction to the music of the court, local forms of music and dance, as pointed out by the Chinese visitors quoted above, continued to play an important role throughout the country. Some examples of such art are described in gazetteers *(fudoki),* compiled by court officials beginning in 713. One of the events at which song and dance were performed is sometimes referred to as *utagaki* or *kagai.* Here are a few samples of such brief descriptions.

In the *fudoki* of Settsu province it is written: In Otomo County, west of Hahiguri Hill, there is a mountain named Mount Utagaki. In the old days men and women climbed up and assembled at top of the mountain, where they regularly held *utagaki,* hence the mountain's name. (*Shaku Nihongi;* cited in *Fudoki,* pp. 423–424; trans. G. G.)

Mount Kishima [in Hizen province]. . . .
The men and women of the rural villages climb the mountain every spring and fall, bringing along wine *[sake]* and zithers *[koto];* they hold hands and enjoy the view, drink, sing, and dance. When they are done singing, they go home. They sing the following verse:

Climbing the steep path up Mount Kishima,
I miss my grip on a sheaf of grass,
and clutch her hand instead.

This is known as the "Kishima version" [of song and dance]. (*Man'yōshū chōshaku,* vol. 3; cited in *Fudoki,* p. 515; trans. G. G.)

Hitachi province, Mount Tsukuha. . . .
When cherry trees start to bloom in spring and when leaves turn color in the fall, men and women from eastern provinces arrive in groups, some on foot, some on horseback. They bring along food and drink and have a good time. They sing the following songs:

She said we could meet on Mount Tsukuha
whose proposal has she accepted?

Won't we meet after all?
A night on Mount Tsukuha,
sleeping without a lover,
will not the day break soon?

So many different songs are sung that I cannot record them all here. According to a local saying, a girl who fails to earn a proposal at the meeting on Mount Tsukuha cannot be considered a woman at all. (*Fudoki,* pp. 41–43; trans. G. G.)

Buddhist Architecture

The founding of the Buddhist temple complex of Hōryūji, south of Nara, in 607 CE marked the political and cultural importance of the continental style for the Japanese court. Constructed individually in the symmetrical Chinese style but arranged in an unusual asymmetrical plan, these wooden edifices show several differences in character and construction from the Shintō shrines described above. For example, the structural elements are not so prominently displayed, the roofs are made of tiles instead of thatch, and the eaves of the roof are curved slightly upward rather than maintaining the straight lines of Shintō architecture. While Hōryūji is still relatively small in comparison with massive temples that were built later in Nara and Kyoto, it remains impressive both in its elegant proportions and as the oldest extant wooden temple complex in the world. It marks a strong influence in terms of architectural aesthetics from China and Korea while still maintaining a few more traditional Japanese elements. In later Buddhist temples, the rafters also become curved, and the layout of buildings is entirely symmetrical, showing even stronger continental influence than at Hōryūji.

Sculpture

The coming of Buddhism brought the need for religious icons, and early Japanese Buddhist sculptures, often created on Korean and Chinese models, are among the most evocative in the history of Japanese art. For example, the sculptor Tori Busshi, whose grandfather had emigrated from China to Japan in 522, created for Hōryūji a gilt bronze triad of the historical Buddha flanked by two bodhisattvas, with an inscription on the back dated to 623. The style of the images, emphasizing large heads and hands with linear arabesques of drapery, recalls Chinese sculptures of a century earlier, while an early seventh-century image of Miroku, the Buddha of the future, is carved from wood in a more naturalistic manner reflecting contemporary influence from Korea. These continental styles, however, were quickly assimilated and became gradually transformed in Japan, as was to happen with so many examples of influence from abroad.

In 753, the footsteps of the Buddha were carved into stone at the great temple of Yakushiji in Nara, and on a companion stone, twenty-one sacred Buddhist poems were engraved. Several of these poems help to provide a sense of the importance of not only the sculpting of the footprints, but also the ceremonies of striking the stone and circumambulating the footprints. Here are two of them.

The good men of old
Must have seen with their own eyes
Him whose holy prints,
Themselves beyond our seeing,
We now carve upon the rock,
We now carve upon the fine stone.

May the ringing
Of the stone whereon we fashion
The holy footprints
Reach heaven, and earth itself resound—
For the sake of father and mother,
For the sake of all people.

(Selected from Cranston, *A Waka Anthology,* pp. 767–772; *Bussoku sekika,* pp. 240–244)

Literature

Until the arrival of Chinese culture, the Japanese had no writing system. At first, members of the court learned to read Chinese directly, but within a few generations, a native syllabary emerged as Chinese characters were used phonetically to indicate the sounds of the Japanese language. However, the need for foreign words, at that time borrowed from the Chinese, required the continuing use of Chinese characters. Therefore, as the Japanese language developed, it contained a mixture of phonetic symbols and characters, as it still does today. In addition, scholars and the educated public continued to study classical Chinese, and a sophisticated knowledge of Chinese religious, philosophical, and poetic texts was widespread in Japan for well over a thousand years until the end of the nineteenth century, when the study of classical Chinese was generally replaced by English, French, or German.

Poetry

The most important contribution to Japanese literature during this period was the compilation of the *Anthology of Ten Thousand Leaves (Man'yōshū)* sometime in the eighth century. The *Anthology* contained some four thousand poems from the Nara period, written in a variety of styles. The original language in which these poems were composed is difficult to decipher since Chinese characters are sometimes used for pronunciation and sometimes for meaning, but the poems themselves, which beautifully reveal the feelings of the Japanese at this time toward religion, love, death, travel, and a host of other topics, are striking in their openness, sense of wonder, and profundity. Some Japanese readers and scholars believe that despite the long and distinguished history of Japanese poetry, the *Anthology of Ten Thousand Leaves* remains the most significant collection of all.

Of the many poets included in the *Anthology,* the greatest is surely Kakinomoto Hitomaru (ca. 665–715), who served as court poet for three sovereigns. Although he never wrote on the nature of his poetic vision, the poem quoted here will help explicate some of his most prevalent themes, which relate to travel, longing, and loss. They were to become extremely influential in the development of the later court poetry tradition.

In the sea of Iwami,
  By the cape of Kara,
There amid the stones under sea
Grows the deep-sea *miru* weed;
There along the rocky strand
Grows the sleek sea-tangle.
Like the swaying sea-tangle,
Unresisting would she lie beside me—
My wife whom I love with a love
Deep as the *miru*-growing ocean.
But few are the nights
We two have lain together.
Away I have come, parting from her
Even as the creeping vines do part.
My heart aches within me;
I turn back to gaze—
But because of the yellow leaves
Of Watari Hill,
Flying and fluttering in the air,
I cannot see plainly

My wife waving her sleeve to me.
Now as the moon, sailing through the cloud rift
Above the mountain of Yakami,
Disappears, leaving me full of regret,
So vanishes my love out of sight;
Now sinks at last the sun,
Coursing down the western sky.

I thought myself a strong man,
But the sleeves of my garment
Are wetted through with tears.
Envoys
My black steed
Galloping fast,
Away have I come,
Leaving under distant skies
The dwelling-place of my love.

Oh, yellow leaves
Falling on the autumn hill,
Cease a while
To fly and flutter in the air
That I may see my love's dwelling-place.
(Nippon Gakujutsu Shinkōkai, *The Manyoshu,* pp. 33–34; *Man'yōshū,* vol. 4, p. 82)

Another crucial literary and religious document widely studied and copied during this period was the *Lotus Sutra (Hokekyō),* one of the central texts of Buddhism and particularly important in the development of religious beliefs first in China and Korea, then in Japan. This sutra, read in Japan in Chinese translations from the original Sanskrit, assumed a central place in the development of the early Japanese religious sensibility. Perhaps the most important section of the sutra can be found in Part III, where the famous "Parable of the Burning House" is presented. By the constant study and recitation of this sutra, the use of simile and parable became a source of literary technique much employed in later writings of all kinds down to the modern period. Here is one of the most significant and often quoted sections of the entire sutra. Some of the Buddhist terminology is specialized, but the general import of the passage is clear. The Buddha is speaking to his close disciple, Shariputra.

"Moreover, Shariputra, I too will now make use of similes and parables to further clarify this doctrine. For through similes and parables those who are wise can obtain understanding.

"Shariputra, suppose that in a certain town in a certain country there was a very rich man. He was far along in years and his wealth was beyond measure. He had many fields, houses and menservants. His own house was big and rambling, but it had only one gate. A great many people—a hundred, two hundred, perhaps as many as five hundred—lived in the house. The halls and rooms were old and decaying, the walls crumbling, the pillars rotten at their base, and the beams and rafters crooked and aslant.

"At that time a fire suddenly broke out on all sides, spreading through the rooms of the house. The sons of the rich man, ten, twenty, perhaps thirty, were inside the house. When the rich man saw the huge flames leaping up on every side, he was greatly alarmed and fearful and thought to himself, I can escape to safety through the flaming gate, but my sons are inside the burning house enjoying themselves and playing games, unaware, unknowing, without alarm or fear. The fire is closing in on them, suffering and pain threaten them, yet their minds have no sense . . . of loathing or peril and they do not think of trying to escape!

"The father understood his sons and knew what various toys and curious objects each child customarily liked and what would delight them. And so he said to them, 'The kind of playthings you like are rare and hard to find. If you do not take them when you can, you will surely regret it later. For example, things like these goat-carts, deer-carts, and ox-carts. They are outside the gate now where you can play with them. So you must come out of this burning house at once. Then whatever ones you want, I will give them all to you!'

"At that time, when the sons heard their father telling them about these rare playthings, because such things were just what they had wanted, each felt emboldened in heart and, pushing and shoving one another, they all came wildly dashing out of the burning house.

"At this time the rich man, seeing that his sons had gotten out safely and all were seated on the open ground at the crossroads and were no longer in danger, was greatly relieved and his mind danced for joy. At that time each of the sons said to his father, 'The playthings you promised us earlier, the goat-carts and deer-carts and ox-carts—please give them to us now!'

"Shariputra, at that time the rich man gave to each of his sons a large carriage of uniform size and quality. The carriages were tall and spacious and adorned with numerous jewels. A railing ran all around them and bells hung from all four sides. A canopy was stretched over the top, which was also decorated with an assortment of precious jewels. Ropes of jewels twined around, a fringe of flowers hung down, and layers of cushions were spread inside, on which were placed vermilion pillows. Each carriage was drawn by a white ox, pure and clean in hide, handsome in form and of great strength, capable of pulling the carriage smoothly and properly at a pace fast as the wind. In addition, there were many grooms and servants to attend and guard the carriage. . . .

"At that time each of the sons mounted his large carriage, gaining something he

had never had before, something he had originally never expected. Shariputra, what do you think of this? When this rich man impartially handed out to his sons these big carriages adorned with rare jewels, was he guilty of falsehood or not?"

Shariputra said, "No, World-Honored One. This rich man simply made it possible for his sons to escape the peril of fire and preserve their lives. He did not commit a falsehood. Why do I say this? Because if they were able to preserve their lives, then they had already obtained a plaything of sorts. And how much more so when, through an expedient means, they are rescued from that burning house! World-Honored One, even if the rich man had not given them the tiniest carriage, he would still not be guilty of falsehood. Why? Because this rich man had earlier made up his mind that he would employ an expedient means to cause his sons to escape. Using a device of this kind was no act of falsehood. How much less so, then, when the rich man knew that his wealth was limitless and he intended to enrich and benefit his sons by giving each of them a large carriage."

The Buddha said to Shariputra, "Very good, very good. It is just as you have said. And Shariputra, the Thus Come One [one of the ten epithets for a Buddha] is like this. That is, he is a father to all the world. His fears, cares and anxieties, ignorance and misunderstanding, have long come to an end, leaving no residue. He has fully succeeded in acquiring measureless insight, power and freedom from fear and gaining great supernatural powers and the power of wisdom. He is endowed with expedient means and the paramita [perfection] of wisdom, his great pity and great compassion are constant and unflagging; at all times he seeks what is good and will bring benefit to all.

"Yet living beings, drowned in the midst of all this, delight and amuse themselves, unaware, unknowing, without alarm or fear. They feel no sense of loathing and make no attempt to escape. In this burning house which is the threefold world, they race about to east and west, and though they encounter great pain, they are not distressed by it.

"Shariputra, when the Buddha sees this, then he thinks to himself, I am the father of living beings and I should rescue them from their sufferings and give them the joy of the measureless and boundless Buddha wisdom so that they may find their enjoyment in that.

"Shariputra, the Thus Come One also has this thought: If I should merely employ supernatural powers and the power of wisdom; if I should set aside expedient means and for the sake of living beings should praise the Thus Come One's insight, power and freedom from fear, then living beings would not be able to gain salvation. Why? Because these living beings have not yet escaped from birth, old age, sickness, death, care and suffering, but are consumed by flames in the burning house that is the threefold world. How could they be able to understand the Buddha's wisdom? (Selected from Watson, *The Lotus Sutra,* pp. 56–60 ; *Hokekyō,* vol. 1, pp. 158–170)

Painting

The art of painting in Japan was strongly influenced with illustrations prepared, often in a borrowed Chinese style, for the sutras. For example, the eighth-century *Sutra of Cause and Effect (E-ingakyō)* both tells and shows the story of the life of the Buddha. One painting represents the Buddha after his enlightenment preaching to three Brahmins; the style emphasizes the figures and utilizes landscape elements primarily to divide space. Below the image, the sutra is written in regular columns, to be read from top to bottom, right to left. In this case, a single word has been cut out from the text, the character for "ear"; could this work of religious calligraphy have been regarded as so holy that the excised character was used for an amulet by someone with ear or hearing problems? If so, this suggests that the power of Buddhist art was very significant during an era when the religion was taking hold so strongly in Japan.

After 664, the Japanese government conscripted soldiers to guard northern Kyushu and the outlying islands from possible attack. One of the poems in the *Anthology of Ten Thousand Leaves* is by one of those lonely conscripts and indicates another purpose for the art of painting.

Oh, for the leisure
To take down my wife's features,
Captured in a sketch—
I who go along my way
Would look at it and remember.
(Cranston, *A Waka Anthology,* p. 632; *Man'yōshū,* vol. 4, p. 410)

Style

Finally, in early Japan a sense of style was clearly important.

The opening sections of the fourth song in the *Record of Ancient Matters* describe the special garments of Susanoo no Mikoto.

Again, this god's first consort Suserihime no Mikoto was very jealous of his other wives. Then the god her husband grew tired and decided to go up from Izumo to Yamato. Dressed and about to leave, he stood with one hand on his horse's saddle and one foot in the stirrup, and sang:

Jet-berry black
Is the raiment that I take
To adorn myself

In my full array;
Bird of the offing
Peering down at its breast,
Flapping its wings:
These clothes do not become me—
I cast them away,
Waves that draw down the shore.
Kingfisher green
Is the raiment that I take
To adorn myself
In my full array;
Bird of the offing
Peering down at its breast,
Flapping its wings:
These too do not become me—
I cast them away,
Waves that draw down the shore.
Indigo
Sown in mountain fields:
Pounded
Dye-plant
Juice-stained
Is the garment that I take
To adorn myself
In my full array;
Bird of the offing
Peering down at its breast. . . .
(Cranston, *A Waka Anthology,* pp. 10–11; *Kojiki,* pp. 103–105)

As we can see, early Japanese created a great variety of arts and styles, ranging from expressions of indigenous beliefs and celebrations to arts influenced by imported religion and culture. Before the sixth century, we have to rely upon the works themselves, notably ceramics, to understand aesthetic conceptions and sensibilities. After the Chinese written language was borrowed and then adapted, elements from the past were codified while new forms and styles came into being; poetry in particular expressed many aspects of the Japanese sense of beauty. The continuing development and interaction of the two streams — indigenous and imported — was to become a crucial feature of Japanese arts throughout their history.

2 COURTLY JAPAN

The Heian Period and After

In 794, Japan's capital was moved from Nara to Heiankyō (the modern Kyoto). The growth of this new and prosperous city — built, like Nara, on a Chinese-style grid plan — marked the high point of the court's artistic, cultural, and political influences on all of Japan. The peace and prosperity of the Heian period (794 – 1185) lasted for some three hundred years, an astonishing record when compared to the flux of political and military upheavals typical of much of the world at that time. It was in this period of relative tranquility and stability that many of the great Japanese artistic traditions reached maturity and achieved the important status and influence that would continue to the present time. In the minds of many Japanese today, the Heian period remains the most elegant and refined era in Japanese history.

In the Nara period, as was noted above, the prestige of the Chinese example remained central. Travel by ship to China from Japan was always difficult and dangerous. With the fall of the Tang dynasty around 907, communications with China became even more difficult and the force of Chinese precedent less pervasive. Japan was thus not subject to the consistent and powerful Chinese cultural influence that continued to be important in such countries as Vietnam and Korea, which maintained closer ties with China because of their direct land connections. By the time relatively close ties were again established with China in the mid-fourteenth century, a truly ingenious Japanese culture had developed in a number of unique ways. China continued to be admired, of course, but from an increasing artistic and cultural distance.

For the court, the study of the Chinese language remained important, but the development of written Japanese, which began in the Nara period, now permitted the composition of sophisticated prose and poetry in the vernacular and gave rise to new styles of painting and calligraphy. As will be clear from a reading of the various sources that follow, Chinese art and literature lived on as an important yet not overwhelming ideal, just as in the United States European art and literature remained of great importance from the beginnings through much of the twenti-

eth century. The poets, writers, and artists of the court certainly saw themselves as Japanese; indeed, it was the juxtaposition of their artistic creations with what they knew of Chinese accomplishments that helped establish their own cultural self-definition.

Poetry

Given the high quality and strong influence of Chinese poetry, widely read at court, a certain amount of poetry in Chinese continued to be written by Japanese courtiers, mostly men. Such poetry is discussed below, although to modern readers both in Japan and elsewhere, it is judged to be of less significance than that composed in Japanese.

The most widely practiced and admired form of poetic art written in Japanese during the Heian period was that of the *waka*—or, as it is sometimes termed, the *tanka*—a thirty-one-syllable form, early examples of which can already be found among the various longer poems included in the *Anthology of Ten Thousand Leaves.* The terms *waka* and *tanka* themselves illustrate a certain self-consciousness concerning the essential differences between Chinese and Japanese poetry. The character for *ka* means "poem." *Wa* means "Japanese," so a *waka* is a poem composed in Japanese. *Tan* means "short," so a *tanka* is a short poem, as opposed to a long one, which during this period would have been composed in the Chinese language. Although it has often been maintained that writing *waka* was primarily the province of women since they seldom were given the opportunity to study Chinese, there were as many or more excellent male *waka* poets, both in the Heian period and after. A third term for the Japanese poem is simply *uta* (literally, "song"), reflecting its history in being combined with chant and music. The great courtier-poet Fujiwara Teika (1162–1241) wrote "the art of *yamato-uta* (Japanese poetry) seems shallow but it is deep; it seems easy, but it is difficult. There are few who understand it."[1]

The first important court collection of *waka* was compiled at the request of Emperor Daigo (r. 897–930) around 920. This anthology, which contains some 1,100 poems chosen by a group of court poets, is entitled the *Collection of Old and Modern Japanese Poetry (Kokin wakashū;* in brief *Kokinshū)* and represents, among other things, an attempt to trace the history of the form from early examples down to Daigo's times. Indeed, Ki no Tsurayuki (872?–945?), one of the chief compilers and an excellent poet in his own right, included quite a number of his own poems.

Tsurayuki's celebrated preface, written in Japanese, begins with one of the most often-quoted definitions of and justifications for Japanese poetry. The opening of

1. Cited in Hempel, *The Heian Civilization of Japan,* p. 132.

his essay in particular has been cited again and again, in a variety of contexts, for over a thousand years. After his general definition of the purposes of poetry, Tsurayuki proceeds to trace the history of Japanese poetry (in all forms) and finishes with critiques of certain earlier *waka* poets. His praise of the emperor, who commissioned the anthology, is fulsome and suggestive of similar appreciations presented to European monarchs for their sponsorship of various artistic projects. The preface is filled with details of poetic history too complex to explain in this brief space, but a significant portion of the document is included here since it shows so concisely how the Heian poets viewed their heritage. (Those wishing a more detailed analysis are urged to consult the two excellent annotated English-language translations now available.)

Japanese poetry has the human heart as seed and myriads of words as leaves. It comes into being when men use the seen and the heard to give voice to feelings aroused by the innumerable events in their lives. The song of the warbler among the blossoms, the voice of the frog dwelling in the water—these teach us that every living creature sings. It is song that moves heaven and earth without effort, stirs emotions in the invisible spirits and gods, brings harmony to the relations between men and women, and calms the hearts of fierce warriors.

Our poetry appeared at the dawn of creation. But that which survives goes back to Shitateruhime in the eternal heavens and to Susanoo-no-mikoto on the ore-rich earth. In the era of the mighty gods, the number of syllables in a poem was unregulated and statements were artless, so that it must have been difficult to grasp nuances of meaning. When the human era began, Susanoo-no-mikoto introduced the thirty-one-syllable poem. Thenceforth, conceptions and words became multifold and diverse as poets praised blossoms, admired birds, felt emotion at the sight of haze, and grieved over dew. As a long journey begins with an initial step and continues for months or years, or as a high mountain grows from the dust and mud at its base to tower where heavenly clouds trail, so too must it have been with poetry.

The Naniwazu poem was composed at the beginning of an imperial reign; the Asakayama poem is a playful poem composed by a palace attendant. Those two are, as it were, the father and mother of poetry, the first lines we learn in calligraphy practice. . . .

Because people nowadays value outward show and turn their minds toward frivolity, poems are mere empty verses and trivial words. The art of composition has become the province of the amorous, as unnoticed by others as a log buried in the earth; no longer can it be put forward in public as freely as the miscanthus flaunts its tassels.

In the beginning, it was entirely different. Whenever there were flowery spring mornings or moonlit autumn nights, the Emperors of past generations summoned

their attendants and commanded them to compose poems suitable to the occasion. Sometimes the poets strayed in unknown places, drawn by the blossoms; sometimes they groped in unfamiliar darkness, hoping to see the moon; and we may suppose that the Emperor understood which man was wise and which foolish when he perused their sentiments. Nor was the practice of the art restricted to such times. Men found comfort in composing poems in which they expressed wishes for a lord's long life or for patronage through comparisons with pebbles or allusions to Mount Tsukuba, or in which they gave voice to gratitude for favors beyond their stations or for benefactions that filled their hearts to overflowing, or in which they compared romantic passion to Mount Fuji's smoke, or yearned for friends at the sound of waiting-insects, or in which they thought of growing old in the company of the Takasago and Suminoe pines, or recalled past days when they were like Man Mountain, or sighed over the brief blossoming of the maidenflower. Likewise, they turned to poetry when they saw blossoms scattering on a spring morning, or heard leaves falling on an autumn evening, or lamented as the years brought snow and waves to the reflections in their mirrors, or recognized in dismay their resemblance to dew on the grass and foam on the water, or lost yesterday's prosperity, or were treated coldly by former intimates after falling on hard times, or linked their love to the waves at Matsuyama, or drank from field water, or gazed at the lower leaves of bush clover, or emulated the restlessness of the snipe beating his wings before dawn or spoke to others of trials as numerous as the joints on black bamboo, or made reference to the Yoshino River to complain about the ephemerality of relations between the sexes. When people today hear that smoke no longer rises from above Mount Fuji or that the Nagara Bridge has been rebuilt, the poetry of the past is their sole consolation.

Poetry is thus of great antiquity, but it was not until the reign of the Nara Emperor that composition became widespread. (It may have happened because His Majesty was especially skilled in the art.) During that reign, there appeared a poetic genius called Kakinomoto Hitomaro of Senior Third Rank. With such a poet in such a reign, there must have been a perfect union of Emperor and subject. To the Emperor's eyes, colored leaves, floating on the Tatsuta River of an autumn evening, resembled brocade; to Hitomaro's mind, cherry trees, blooming in the Yoshino Mountains on a spring morning, seemed exactly like clouds. There was another man, Yamanobe Akahito, who was also an extraordinary poet. It was impossible for Hitomaro to excel Akahito, or for Akahito to rank below Hitomaro.

Other superior poets also became famous in each of the reigns that followed one another like the spaces between joints of black bamboo; they appeared as frequently as filaments are twisted to make thread. . . .

Thanks to this collection, poetry will survive as eternally as water flows at the foot of a mountain; thanks to the assembling of these poems in numbers rivaling the sands of a beach, there will be heard no complaints of the art's declining as pools in the Asuka River dwindle into shallows; there will be rejoicing for as long as a pebble takes

to grow into a mighty rock. (Selected from McCullough, *Kokin Wakashū,* pp. 3–8; *Kokin wakashū,* pp. 93–104)

In addition to Tsurayuki's Japanese preface, a second preface, in Chinese, was composed by Ki no Yoshimochi (?–919), an eminent scholar of Chinese literature and a recognized poet in both languages. Given the continued high status of Chinese poetry in Heian Japan, it is not surprising that such a document was also provided. In general, Yoshimochi's arguments parallel those of Tsurayuki, but a close reading will indicate certain differences in emphasis as well. Here are a few significant passages from it. (Again, the various references are explained in the two annotated editions of the *Kokinshū* mentioned above.)

Japanese poetry plants its roots in the earth of the heart and produces its flowers in the groves of words. People cannot remain passive when they live in the world: their thoughts are easily swayed, their moods alternate between sorrow and happiness. A poem is a response in words to an emotion stirring the heart. A comfortable man composes a happy poem, a miserable man a sad one. Poetry allows us to describe our thoughts and express our indignation. Nothing surpasses Japanese poetry as a means of moving heaven and earth, stirring the spirits and gods, inculcating upright conduct, and bringing harmony to the relations between husband and wife. . . .

When a warbler raises its voice among springtime flowers or a cicada chirps on an autumnal tree, it expresses itself in song, although without conscious art. It is nature's law that all things possess this faculty. But during the seven divine reigns the times were unsophisticated and men were simple: individual feelings and aspirations were not consciously recognized, and so the Japanese poem did not come into existence. The thirty-one-syllable poem dates from Susanoo-no-mikoto's arrival in Izumo Province. That is the origin of our present *tanka.*

Thereafter the Japanese poem was always used to communicate sentiments, even by the Heavenly Grandson and the sea god's daughter. Poetic composition flourished after the human reign began. There were numerous styles, such as the long poem, the short poem, the returning poem, and the mixed poem; and lines of development gradually multiplied. Poetry grew as a cloud-brushing tree grows from a wispy seedling, or a heaven-reflecting billow from a dewdrop. In compositions like the Naniwazu poem, which was presented to the Emperor, or the Tominoogawa poem, which was written as a response to the Crown Prince, poetry entered the realm of the mysterious and supernatural. But most of the poems of antiquity used old-fashioned language. Poetry did not yet seek to please the ear or eye, but served solely to instruct. Whenever there were good seasons or beautiful scenes, the earlier Emperors commanded their banquet guests to compose Japanese poems. The sentiments of rulers and subjects

were revealed, and degrees of sagacity also became apparent, so that poetry enabled the sovereigns both to satisfy their people's aspirations and to select able men.

After Prince Ōtsu composed the first poems in Chinese, those who were proficient in that art admired and imitated his style. The introduction of the Chinese writing system caused a change in our Japanese customs, which led in turn to the gradual decline of the Japanese poem. However, there was the great Hitomaro, whose divine imagination has had no equal in ancient or modern times, and there was also Yamabe Akahito, another genius of poetry. An endless succession of others also made Japanese poetry their profession. (Selected from McCullough, *Kokin Wakashū,* pp. 256–259; *Kokin wakashū,* pp. 334–342)

Nature and the Seasons in Japanese Poetry

More than a third of the poems in the *Collection of Old and Modern Japanese Poetry* deal with nature, the seasons, and related concerns. The constantly changing seasons and the emotional shifts associated with those changes were to become a central part of Japanese poetics, including the seventeen-syllable *haiku,* which developed many centuries later and came to serve as a central influence in the development of the visual arts as well.

Important precedents for this close association of human emotion with the seasons can be found as well in the *Anthology of Ten Thousand Leaves.* Perhaps the most significant of these is the famous poem of Princess Nukada (fl. about 650) on choosing a favorite among the seasons.

When the Emperor Tenji commanded Fujiwara Kamatari, Prime Minister, to judge between the luxuriance of the blossoms on the spring hills and the glory of the tinted leaves on the autumn hills, Princess Nukada decided the question with this poem.

When, loosened from the winter's bonds,
  The spring appears,
The birds that were silent
Come out and sing,
The flowers that were prisoned
Come out and bloom;
But the hills are so rank with trees
We cannot seek the flowers,
And the flowers are so tangled with weeds
We cannot take them in our hands.

But when on the autumn hill-side
We see the foliage,
We prize the yellow leaves,
Taking them in our hands,
We sigh over the green ones,
Leaving them on the branches;
And that is my only regret—
For me, the autumn hills!
(Nippon Gakujutsu Shinkōkai, *The Manyoshu,* pp. 10–11; *Man'yōshū,* vol. 4, p. 19)

In her *Pillow Book (Makura no sōshi),* the court lady Sei Shōnagon (956?–1017?) recorded charming and sometimes witty observations on herself and on Heian court society in general. In one celebrated passage, she indicates the nature of her shifting pleasures as she observes the passage of time from spring through summer, then to fall and winter.

In Spring It Is the Dawn

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. It is beautiful indeed when snow has fallen during the night, but splendid too when the ground is white with frost; or even when there is no snow or frost, but it is simply very cold and the attendants hurry from room to room stirring up the fires and bringing charcoal, how well this fits the season's mood! But as noon approaches and the cold wears off, no one bothers to keep the braziers alight, and soon nothing remains but piles of white ashes. (I. Morris, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon,* vol. 1, p. 1; *Makura no sōshi,* pp. 43–44)

Another court lady, known to us simply as the Lady of Sarashina (1008?–?), the daughter of a court official, Sugawara Takasue, kept a diary that reveals with great poignancy her changing emotional states. In a central passage, she writes of an encounter with a man with whom she apparently falls in love; although they feel attracted to each other, they never manage to express their feelings in any explicit fashion, and no deeper relationship develops between them. Their conversation, not unexpectedly, turns on the seasons.

When distinguished visitors like High Court Nobles and Senior Courtiers came to the Palace, there were fixed rules about which ladies-in-waiting would receive them. An inexperienced outsider like me would certainly not be chosen; in fact I was so unimportant that such visitors would not even be aware of my existence. On a very dark night in the early part of the Tenth Month, while some priests were chanting the Perpetual Sacred Readings in the most beautiful voices, I and another lady-in-waiting stayed near the door of the chapel. As we lay there, chatting and listening to the priests, a gentleman approached. "We could run and fetch one of the ladies from the inner apartments," said my companion, "but it would make a bad impression. Never mind! We must adapt ourselves to circumstances. Let's just stay and see how things turn out!" While she got up and spoke to the gentleman, I lay where I was and listened to their conversation. He talked in a quiet, gentle way and I could tell that he was a man of perfect qualities. "And who may your companion be?" I heard him say; but there was none of the crude, lecherous tone in his voice that one would expect from most men who asked this sort of question. Then he started speaking about the sadness of the world and other such matters, and there was something so sensitive about his manner that, for all my usual shyness, I found it hard to remain stiff and aloof. I therefore joined my companion and the gentleman. "So there is still a young lady in this Palace whom I do not know!" he said, surprised to hear my voice, and he gave no sign of wanting to leave.

It was a dark, starless night and the rain made a delightful patter on the leaves. "There is a special elegance and charm" he said "about dark nights like this. Do you ladies not agree? If everything were lit up by the moon, the brightness would only embarrass one."

He spoke about the different beauties of Spring and Autumn. "Each has its own delight," he said. "On Spring nights the sky is beautifully shrouded with mist. The moon then is not too bright and its light seems to be floating a way in the distance. How delightful it is at such a time to hear someone plucking gently at the strings of a lute that have been set in the key of the Fragrant Breeze! When Autumn comes the sky is still misty, but the lucent moon shines through so clearly that one feels one could pick it up in one's hands. The soughing of the wind and the hum of the insects blend in such a way that all the savors of Nature seem to have come together. At such moments the strumming of the great zither accompanied by the clear notes of a flute makes one wonder how one could ever have admired Spring. But then there is a Winter night when the sky is chill, the air bitter cold, and the piles of snow reflect the moonlight. Then the tremulous sound of the flageolet makes one forget about both Spring and Autumn." So he continued for a while, before asking us which season we liked best. My companion named Autumn as her favorite, but I decided to answer with a poem,

The hazy Springtime moon—
That is the one I love,
When light green sky and fragrant blooms
Are all alike enwrapped in mist.

He repeated my lines several times. "So you turn down the Autumn nights!" he said and added his own poem,

Should I be spared to live beyond tonight,
Spring evenings will remain within my heart
In memory of how we met.

My companion, who had declared her preference for Autumn, composed the verse,

It seems your hearts have all been drawn to Spring.
Am I alone to gaze at Autumn moons?

(I. Morris, *As I Crossed a Bridge of Dreams,* pp. 90–92; *Sarashina nikki,* pp. 519–520)

The same paradigm holds true in fiction as well. In a scene from *The Tale of Genji,* Prince Genji creates each directional garden for the seasonal preference of the ladies whom he wishes to please.

He stayed on, talking affectionately until it was quite dark.

"But aside from house and family, it is nature that gives me the most pleasure, the changes through the seasons, the blossoms and leaves of autumn and spring, the shifting patterns of the skies. People have always debated the relative merits of the groves of spring and the fields of autumn, and had trouble coming to a conclusion. I have been told that in China nothing is held to surpass the brocades of spring, but in the poetry of our own country the preference would seem to be for the wistful notes of autumn. I watch them come and go and must allow each its points, and in the end am unable to decide between song of bird and hue of flower. I go further: within the limits allowed by my narrow gardens, I have sought to bring in what I can of the seasons, the flowering trees of spring and the flowering grasses of autumn, and the humming of insects that would go unnoticed in the wilds. This is what I offer for your pleasure. Which of the two, autumn or spring, is your own favorite?"

He had chosen another subject which produced hesitation, but one on which silence would seem merely rude.

"If Your Lordship finds it difficult to hand down a decision, how much more do I. It is as you say: some are of the one opinion and some of the other. Yet for me the autumn wind which poets have found so strange and compelling—in the dews I sense a fleeting link with my mother."

He found the very muteness and want of logic deeply touching.

Then we two feel alike. You know my secret:
For me it is the autumn winds that pierce.

"There are times when I find them almost more than I can bear."

How was she to answer? She made it seem that she had not understood. Somehow he was in a complaining mood this evening. He caught himself just short of further indiscretion. She had every right to be unhappy with him, for he was behaving like a silly stripling. He sighed a heavy sigh, and even that rather put her off with its intrusive elegance. She seemed to be inching away from him.

"I have displeased you, and am sorry—though I doubt that most people of feeling would have been quite as displeased. Well, do not let the displeasure last. It could be very trying."

He went out. Even the perfume that lingered on upset her.

"What a scent he did leave on these cushions—just have a whiff. I can't find words to describe it." Her women were lowering the shutters. "He brings everything all together in himself, like a willow that is all of a sudden blooming like a cherry. It sets a person to shivering." (Seidensticker, *The Tale of Genji,* pp. 345–346; *Genji monogatari,* vol. 15, pp. 322–323)

Poetry as Social Intercourse

The composition of *waka* poetry was a skill expected of all members of the court class. On more formal occasions, poets often presented their works in contests held at court. Topics were assigned, and poets often had to compose and recite aloud an appropriate new verse on the spot. In addition, *waka* could be written and exchanged informally, for a variety of social and amorous purposes, often on the spur of the moment. For the recipients, the paper on which a poem was written and the calligraphy employed were considered to be as revealing of the character and intentions of the author as the poem itself. The model for the composition of excellent poetry was, of course, the *Collection of Old and Modern Japanese Poetry,* and aspiring courtiers, as noted above, often memorized its entire contents. Despite such preparations, not everyone became adept at composing poetry. Some, as the passage below suggests, fared better than others. Here Sei Shōnagon describes at length the functions of poetry in social surroundings. Her expectations were high.

Next the Empress placed a notebook of *Kokinshū* poems before her and started reading out the first three lines of each one, asking us to supply the remainder. Among them were several famous poems that we had in our minds day and night; yet for

some strange reason we were often unable to fill in the missing lines. Lady Saishō, for example, could manage only ten, which hardly qualified her as knowing her *Kokinshū.* Some of the other women, even less successful, could remember only about half-a-dozen poems. They would have done better to tell the Empress quite simply that they had forgotten the lines; instead they came out with great lamentations like "Oh dear, how could we have done so badly in answering the questions that Your Majesty was pleased to put to us?"—all of which I found rather absurd.

When no one could complete a particular poem, the Empress continued reading to the end. This produced further wails from the women: "Oh, we all knew that one! How could we be so stupid?"

"Those of you," said the Empress, "who had taken the trouble to copy out the *Kokinshū* several times would have been able to complete every single poem I have read. In the reign of Emperor Murakami there was a woman at Court known as the Imperial Lady of Senyō Palace. She was the daughter of the Minister of the Left who lived in the Smaller Palace of the First Ward, and of course you have all heard of her. When she was still a young girl, her father gave her this advice: 'First you must study penmanship. Next you must learn to play the seven-string zither better than anyone else. And also you must memorize all the poems in the twenty volumes of the *Kokinshū*.'"

"Emperor Murakami," continued Her Majesty, "had heard this story and remembered it years later when the girl had grown up and become an Imperial Concubine. Once, on a day of abstinence, he came into her room, hiding a notebook of *Kokinshū* poems in the folds of his robe. He surprised her by seating himself behind a curtain of state; then, opening the book, he asked, 'Tell me the verse written by such-and-such a poet, in such-and-such a year and on such-and-such an occasion.' The lady understood what was afoot and that it was all in fun, yet the possibility of making a mistake or forgetting one of the poems must have worried her greatly. Before beginning the test, the Emperor had summoned a couple of ladies-in-waiting who were particularly adept in poetry and told them to mark each incorrect reply by a *go* stone. What a splendid scene it must have been! You know, I really envy anyone who attended that Emperor even as a lady-in-waiting."

"Well," Her Majesty went on, "he then began questioning her. She answered without any hesitation, just giving a few words or phrases to show that she knew each poem. And never once did she make a mistake. After a time the Emperor began to resent the lady's flawless memory and decided to stop as soon as he detected any error or vagueness in her replies. Yet, after he had gone through ten books of the *Kokinshū,* he had still not caught her out. At this stage he declared that it would be useless to continue. Marking where he had left off, he went to bed. What a triumph for the lady!" (I. Morris, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon,* vol. 1, pp. 17–19; *Makura no sōshi,* pp. 58–63)

Prose

As was mentioned above, *The Tale of Genji* represents not only the most impressive work of fiction created in the context of court culture, but has also remained for many readers through the centuries the greatest work in prose in traditional Japanese literature.

In the Heian period, however, many in the court considered fiction to be a lesser form of self-expression. Perhaps basing their prejudice on the received Chinese view that fiction, unlike poetry, recounted falsehoods, they believed the form unworthy of the highest literary status, which was reserved for poetry. In the course of her novel, the author, Murasaki Shikibu, wrote a defense of the art of fiction in the form of a dialogue between Prince Genji and Princess Tamakazura. It remains one of the most celebrated passages on the literary art in the classical Japanese tradition.

This year the rainy season was more severe than usual. Day after day the rains came down without a let-up, and time hung heavily on the hands of the ladies in Prince Genji's household. As a distraction they had recourse to illustrated romances.

Lady Akashi was proficient in this art and had several such works prepared for her daughter, the little Princess. The greatest enthusiast, however, was Tamakazura, who now spent all day reading and copying romances. Many of her young ladies-in-waiting also took an interest and had accumulated a fascinating collection of stories, some from real life, some fictitious. . . .

One day when Genji came into Tamakazura's rooms he noticed several illustrated romances scattered about the place. "Really," he said with a smile, "you women are incorrigible. Sometimes I wonder whether you haven't been born into this world just so that you can be deceived by people. Look at these books! There probably isn't an ounce of truth in the lot of them—and you know that as well as I do. Yet here you are, utterly fascinated and taken in by all their fabrications, avidly copying down each word—and, I may add, quite unaware that it is a sultry day in the middle of the rainy season and that your hair is in the most frightful mess."

Genji paused for a while. "But then," he continued, "if it weren't for old romances like this, how on earth would you get through these long tedious days when time moves so slowly? And besides, I realize that many of these works, full of fabrications though they are, do succeed in evoking the emotion of things in a most realistic way. One event follows plausibly on another, and in the end we cannot help being moved by the story, even though we know what foolishness it all really is. Thus, when we read about the ordeals of some delightful princess in a romance, we may find ourselves actually entering into the poor girl's feelings.

"Again, the author may so dazzle us with the brilliance of his writing that we forget

about our initial incredulity. Later on, when we think back calmly on the story, we may be annoyed that we should have swallowed its absurdities. But at first hearing we only notice how fascinating it all is.

"Of late I have occasionally stopped to listen while our young Princess's ladies are reading aloud to her, and I have been much impressed by what good authors we have. Perhaps the reason they write so well is simply that they are used to telling lies, but I expect there is more to it than that."

"I rather imagine," said Tamakazura, pushing away her inkstone, "that it is only those who are themselves in the habit of being deceitful who have to delve like that into the writer's possible motives. Honest people accept what they read as completely true."

"Yes," said Genji, "it was rather churlish of me to speak badly about these books as I did just now. For the fact is that works of fiction set down things that have happened in this world ever since the days of the gods. Writings like the *Chronicles of Japan* really give only one side of the picture, whereas these romances must be full of just the right sort of details."

He smiled and continued, "The author certainly does not write about specific people, recording all the actual circumstances of their lives. Rather it is a matter of his being so moved by things, both good and bad, which he has heard and seen happening to men and women that he cannot keep it all to himself but wants to commit it to writing and make it known to other people—even to those of later generations. This, I feel sure, is the origin of fiction.

"Sometimes the author will want to write favorably about people, and then he will select all the good qualities he can think of; at other times, when he wants to give a fuller description of human nature, he introduces all sorts of strange and wicked things into his book. But in every case the things he writes about will belong to this actual world of ours.

"Chinese story-tellers differ from our own, both in their learning and in the way they write. Even in Japan, literature has changed greatly since earlier times. And then, of course, there is a large gap between serious and superficial works. To dismiss all these types of fiction as so much falsehood is surely to miss the point. For even in the Law that the Buddha in his great mercy bequeathed to us there are parts known as Accommodated Truths. As a result we find certain seeming inconsistencies, especially in the Vaipulya sutras, which no doubt give rise to doubts in the minds of the unenlightened. Yet in the last analysis these Accommodated Truths tend to the same aim as all the rest of the sutras. The difference between Buddhahood and Earthly Lust as described in the scriptures is precisely the same as that between the good and the bad qualities of fictitious characters. So, when we regard these works of fiction in the proper light, we find that they contain nothing superfluous."

Thus did Genji show that romances could serve a most useful purpose. (I. Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince,* pp. 308–310; *Genji monogatari,* vol. 15, pp. 430–439)

Literature in Chinese

Educated Japanese in the court began their studies by reading and writing in classical Chinese, for somewhat the same purposes as Europeans and, later, Americans used Latin to express certain varieties of elevated thought, a custom that occurred most often, as in the case of a writer like Milton, in the composition of poetry. The early impetus for this sustained interest in written Chinese came with the importation of Buddhism and its many texts. Emperor Tenji (r. 668–671), who was convinced that nothing could surpass literature in giving a sense of order to human behavior and that scholarship was the best path toward moral enrichment and personal enlightenment, established a school to teach Chinese and permit the literary arts to flourish. By the Heian period, students were writing poetry and essays in proper Chinese forms.

Chinese texts, particularly the great classics from the Chinese Confucian and historical tradition, were often read aloud at court, probably using Japanese pronunciations of the Chinese characters. Such readings would have been hard to follow, however, and were probably valued more for their sonority and dignity than for their precise meaning. Such a ceremonial reading is recorded in the diary of Lady Murasaki. It was held as one of many festivities surrounding the birth of a new prince.

The Doctor of Letters who read out the text from the classics was Chamberlain Hironari. Standing below the balustrade, he read out the opening passage from the *Records of the Historians,* while behind him in two lines stood twenty men, ten of fifth and ten of sixth rank, twanging their bows.

What is known as the evening bath was really only a formal repetition of the first bath, and the ceremony was as before. I think there was a different reader: it may have been Munetoki, the Governor of Ise, reading the usual text from the *Classic of Filial Piety.* Takachika, I heard, was the reader for the "Emperor Wen" chapter from the *Records,* the three men taking turns over the seven-day period.

The whole spectacle, with Her Majesty in spotless white setting off in contrast the vivid shapes and black hair of her ladies-in-waiting, seemed like a skillful black-and-white sketch that had come alive. (Bowring, *Diary of Lady Murasaki,* pp. 14–15; *Murasaki Shikibu nikki,* p. 453)

As was indicated above, the study of Chinese was considered appropriate for the men of the court but not for the women. In a revealing passage in the diary of Lady Murasaki, written after the death of her husband, she discusses the fact that she is often criticized for her abilities in reading Chinese.

There is also a pair of larger cupboards crammed to bursting point. One is full of old poems and tales that have become the home for countless insects which scatter in such an unpleasant manner that no one cares to look at them any more; the other is full of Chinese books that have lain unattended ever since he who carefully collected them passed away. Whenever my loneliness threatens to overwhelm me, I take out one or two of them to look at; but my women gather together behind my back. "It's because she goes on like this that she is so miserable. What kind of lady is it who reads Chinese books?" they whisper. "In the past it was not even the done thing to read sutras!" "Yes," I feel like replying, "but I've never met anyone who lived longer just because they believed in superstitions!" But that would be thoughtless of me. There is some truth in what they say. (Bowring, *Diary of Lady Murasaki,* p. 55; *Murasaki Shikibu nikki,* p. 497)

In a second passage, Lady Murasaki indicates that her skill surpassed that of her brother. Her father evidently discouraged her so that she was, like so many women around the world for so many centuries, obliged to hide her learning. Nevertheless, the empress was quite pleased with her skill and asked for her help.

There is a woman called Saemon no Naishi who, for some strange reason, took a dislike to me. I head all sorts of malicious, unfounded rumors about myself. His Majesty was listening to someone reading the *Tale of Genji* aloud. "She must have read the *Chronicles of Japan*!" he said. "She seems very learned." Saemon no Naishi suddenly jumped to conclusions that spread it abroad among the senior courtiers that I was flaunting my learning. She gave me the nickname Lady Chronicle. How very comical! Would I, who hesitate to show my learning even in front of my own servants at home, ever dream of doing so at court?

When my brother, Secretary at the Ministry of Ceremonial, was a young boy learning the Chinese classics, I was in the habit of listening with him and I become unusually proficient at understanding those passages that he found too difficult to grasp and memorize. Father, a most learned man, was always regretting the fact. "Just my luck!" he would say. "What a pity she was not born a man!" But then I gradually realized that people were saying "It's bad enough when a man flaunts his Chinese learning; she will come to no good," and since then I have avoided writing the simplest character. My handwriting is appalling. And for those "classics" or whatever they are that I used to read, I gave them up entirely. Yet still I kept on hearing these remarks; so in the end, worried what people would think if they heard such rumors, I pretended to be incapable of reading even the inscriptions on the screens. Then Her Majesty asked me to read with her here and there from the *Collected Works* of Po-Chü-i [Bai Juyi],

and, because she evinced a desire to know more about such things, to keep it secret we carefully chose times when the other women would not be present, and, from the summer before last, I started giving her informal lessons on the two volumes of "New Ballads." I hid this fact from others, as did Her Majesty, but somehow both His Excellency and Her Majesty got wind of it and they had some beautiful copies made of various Chinese books, which His Excellency then presented to her. That gossip Saemon no Naishi could never have found out that Her Majesty had actually asked me to study with her, for had she done so, I would never have heard the last of it. Ah, what a prattling, tiresome world it is! (Bowring, *Diary of Lady Murasaki,* pp. 57–58; *Murasaki Shikibu nikki,* pp. 500–501)

Painting

Apparently no treatises on the art of painting from the Heian period survive. Nevertheless, there remain several evocative descriptions concerning the central importance of this art form in the court. As usual, Sei Shōnagon has a sharp eye for the challenges of art, as well as for the foibles of court society.

Things That Lose by Being Painted

Pinks, cherry blossoms, yellow roses. Men or women who are praised in romances as being beautiful.

Things That Gain by Being Painted

Pines. Autumn fields. Mountain villages and paths. Cranes and deer. A very cold winter scene; an unspeakably hot summer scene. (I. Morris, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon,* vol. 1, p. 124; *Makura no sōshi,* pp. 116–7)

In *The Tale of Genji* Murasaki Shikibu composed a lengthy chapter entitled "The Picture Competition" (E-awase), in which she provides intriguing details concerning a court painting contest, held somewhat in the manner of the more familiar poetry contests of the period. This section of *Genji* has often been cited as an important source of reliable information concerning many aspects of the social function of painting within court society.

A brief bit of background will be helpful in reading this lengthy excerpt. Genji, who had been exiled to Suma (on the sea, near the modern city of Kobe), has now returned and been heartily welcomed back by virtually all members of the court. In the painting contest, there are two rival sides, one headed by Akikonomu, mentioned above, and the other by Genji's close friend and occasional rival, Tō no Chūjō. Genji contributes the paintings he has done in exile to Akikonomu's party, and thus she wins the day.

The emperor loved art more than anything else. He loved to look at paintings and he painted beautifully. Akikonomu was also an accomplished artist. He went more and more frequently to her apartments, where the two of them would paint for each other. His favorites among the young courtiers were painters and students of painting. It delighted him to watch this new lady, so beautiful and so elegant, casually sketching a scene, now and again pulling back to think the matter over. He liked her much better now.

Tō no Chūjō kept himself well informed. A man of affairs who had strong competitive instincts, he was determined not to lose this competition. He assembled master painters and he told them exactly what he wanted, and gave them the best materials to work with. Of the opinion that illustrations for the works of established authors could always be counted on, he chose his favorites and set his painters to illustrating them. He also commissioned paintings of the seasons and showed considerable flair with the captions. The emperor liked them all and wanted to share his pleasure with Akikonomu; but Tō no Chūjō objected. The paintings were not to leave the Kokiden apartments.

Genji smiled. "He was that way when he was a boy, and in many ways he still is a boy. I do not think it a very deft way to manage His Majesty. I'll send off my whole collection and let him do with it as he pleases."

All the chests and bookcases at Nijō were ransacked for old paintings and new, and Genji and Murasaki sorted out the ones that best suited current fancies. There were interesting and moving pictures of those sad Chinese ladies Yang Kuei-fei [Yang Guifei] and Wang Chao-chün [Wang Zhaojun]. Genji feared, however, that the subjects were inauspicious.

Thinking this a good occasion to show them to Murasaki, he took out the sketchbooks and journals of his exile. Any moderately sensitive lady would have found tears coming to her eyes. For Murasaki those days had been unrelieved pain, not easily forgotten. Why, she asked, had he not let her see them before?

> "Better to see these strands where the fishermen dwell
> Than far away to weep, all, all alone."

"I think the uncertainty might have been less cruel."
It was true.

> "Now more than in those painful days I weep
> As tracings of them bring them back to me."

He must let Fujitsubo see them. Choosing the more presentable scrolls, the ones in which life upon those shores came forward most vividly, he could almost feel that he was back at Akashi once more.

Hearing of Genji's activities, Tō no Chūjō redoubled his own efforts. He quite outdid himself with all the accessories, spindles and mountings and cords and the like. It

was now the middle of the Third Month, a time of soft, delicious air, when everyone somehow seemed happy and at peace. It was also a quiet time at court, when people had leisure for these avocations. Tō no Chūjō saw a chance to bring the young emperor to new raptures. He would offer his collection for the royal review.

Both in the Kokiden apartments and in Akikonomu's Plum Pavilion there were paintings in endless variety. Illustrations for old romances seemed to interest both painter and viewer. Akikonomu rather preferred secure and established classics, while the Kokiden girl chose the romances that were the rage of the day. To the casual observer it might have seemed perhaps that her collection was the brighter and the more stylish. Connoisseurs among the court ladies had made the appraisal of art their principal work.

Fujitsubo was among them. She had had no trouble giving up most pleasures, but a fondness for art had refused to be shaken off. Listening to the aesthetic debates, she hit upon an idea: the ladies must divide into two sides. . . .

The first match was between an illustration for *The Bamboo Cutter,* the ancestor of all romances, and a scene centering upon Toshikage from *The Tale of the Hollow Tree. . . .*

The Bamboo Cutter illustration, by Kose no Omi with a caption by Ki no Tsurayuki, was mounted on cerise and had a spindle of sandalwood—rather uninteresting, all in all.

"Now let us look at the other. Toshikage was battered by tempests and waves and swept off to foreign parts, but he finally came home, whence his musical activities sent his fame back across the waters and down through the centuries. This painting successfully blends the Chinese and the Japanese and the new and the old, and I say that it is without rival."

On stiff white paper with a blue mounting and a spindle of yellow jade, it was the work of Tsunenori and bore a caption by Michikaze. The effect was dazzlingly modern. The left had to admit defeat. . . .

Genji stopped by and was much diverted. If it was all the same, he said, why not make the final judgments in the emperor's presence? He had had a royal inspection in mind from the start, and so had taken very great pains with his selections, which included a scroll of his own Suma and of his Akashi paintings. Nor was Tō no Chūjō to be given low marks for effort. The chief business at court these days had become the collecting of evocative paintings. . . .

The day was appointed. The careful casualness of all the details would have done justice to far more leisurely preparations. The royal seat was put out in the ladies' withdrawing rooms, and the ladies were ranged to the north and south. The seats of the courtiers faced them on the west. The paintings of the left were in boxes of red sandalwood on sappanwood stands with flaring legs. Purple Chinese brocades were spread under the stands, which were covered with delicate lavender Chinese embroidery. Six little girls sat behind them, their robes of red and their jackets of white lined with red, from under which peeped red and lavender. As for the right or Kokiden side, the boxes

were of heavy aloes and the stands of lighter aloes. Green Korean brocades covered the stands, and the streamers and the flaring legs were all in the latest style. The little page girls wore green robes and over them white jackets with green linings, and their singlets were of a grayish green lined with yellow. Most solemnly they lined up their treasures. The emperor's own women were in the uniforms of the two sides.

Genji and Tō no Chūjō were present, upon royal invitation. Prince Hotaru, a man of taste and cultivation and especially a connoisseur of painting, had taken an inconspicuous place among the courtiers. Perhaps Genji had suggested inviting him. It was the emperor's wish that he act as umpire. He found it almost impossible to hand down decisions. Old masters had painted cycles of the four seasons with uncommon power, fluency, and grace, and a rather wonderful sense of unity; but they sometimes seemed to run out of space, so that the observer was left to imagine the grandeur of nature for himself. Some of the more superficial pictures of our own day, their telling points in the dexterity and ingenuity of the strokes and in a certain impressionism, did not seem markedly their inferior, and sometimes indeed seemed ahead of them in brightness and good spirits. Several interesting points were made in favor of both.

The doors to the breakfast suite, north of the ladies' withdrawing rooms, had been slid open so that Fujitsubo might observe the proceedings. Having long admired her taste in painting, Genji was hoping that she might be persuaded to give her views. When, though infrequently, he was not entirely satisfied with something Prince Hotaru said and offered an opinion of his own, he had a way of sweeping everything before him.

Evening came, and still Prince Hotaru had not reached a final decision. As its very last offering Akikonomu's side brought out a scroll depicting life at Suma. Tō no Chūjō was startled. Knowing that the final inning had come, the Kokiden faction too brought out a very remarkable scroll, but there was no describing the sure delicacy with which Genji had quietly set down the moods of those years. The assembly, Prince Hotaru and the rest, fell silent, trying to hold back tears. They had pitied him and thought of themselves as suffering with him; and now they saw how it had really been. They had before their eyes the bleakness of those nameless strands and inlets. Here and there, not so much open description as poetic impressions, were captions in cursive Chinese and Japanese. There was no point now in turning to the painting offered by the right. The Suma scroll had blocked everything else from view. The triumph of the left was complete.

Dawn approached and Genji was vaguely melancholy. As the wine flagons went the rounds he fell into reminiscence.

"I worked very hard at my Chinese studies when I was a boy, so hard that Father seemed to fear I might become a scholar. He thought it might be because scholarship seldom attracts wide acclaim, he said, that he had rarely seen it succeed in combining happiness with long life. In any event, he thought it rather pointless in my case, because people would notice me whether I knew anything or not. He himself undertook

to tutor me in pursuits not related to the classics. I don't suppose I would have been called remarkably inept in any of them, but I did not really excel in any of them either. But there was painting. I was the merest dabbler, and yet there were times when I felt a strange urge to do something really good. Then came my years in the provinces and leisure to examine that remarkable seacoast. All that was wanting was the power to express what I saw and felt, and that is why I have kept my inadequate efforts from you until now. I wonder," he said, turning to Prince Hotaru, "if my presuming to bring them out might set some sort of precedent for impertinence and conceit."

"It is true of every art," said the prince, "that real mastery requires concentrated effort, and it is true too that in every art worth mastering (though of course that word 'mastering' contains all manner of degrees and stages) the evidences of effort are apparent in the results. There are two mysterious exceptions, painting and the game of *Go,* in which natural ability seems to be the only thing that really counts." (Selected from Seidensticker, *The Tale of Genji,* pp. 310–316; *Genji monogatari,* vol. 15, pp. 175–178)

Calligraphy

In the classical Chinese aesthetic canon, so important in the formation of taste and skill at the Japanese court, the so-called three sister arts — poetry, painting, and calligraphy — were regarded as equals in importance; indeed, if any of the three was considered to be a lesser form of artistic expression, it might have been painting. Various styles of calligraphy developed at this time were used both for writing Chinese characters and for the Japanese *kana* syllabary.

Calligraphy as Art

Literary texts, particularly those of poetry, had enormous value in court society. As printing was not yet available, beautiful hand-copied manuscripts became treasured items, to be admired and preserved.

Here is an account from the diary of Lady Murasaki when she was serving as lady-in-waiting to one of the consorts of Emperor Ichijō (r. 986–1001). She comments especially on the gifts that the empress has received on the occasion of her return to the palace with the new baby prince. Among them are hand-written selections from three of the most important poetic anthologies of the time.

The next morning Her Majesty held a close inspection of the gifts she had received the night before. The accessories in the comb boxes were so indescribably beautiful I could have gazed at them for ever. There was, in addition, another pair of boxes.

In the top tray of one of them were some booklets made of white patterned paper: the *Kokinshū, Gosenshū* and *Shūishū,* each in five volumes, four sections to a volume, copied by Middle Counsellor Yukinari and the priest Enkan. The covers were of fine silk and the ties were of similar imported material. In the bottom tray lay a number of personal poetry collections by poets old and new; poets such as Yoshinobu and Motosuke. Those in the hands of Enkan and the Middle Counsellor were, of course, for safe keeping, but these other collections were for more everyday use; I do not know who had copied them, but they were of unusually modern design. (Bowring, *Diary of Lady Murasaki,* p. 37; *Murasaki Shikibu nikki,* pp. 476–477)

Calligraphy as a Means of Social Intercourse

Sei Shōnagon, always a close observer of those she encounters, dismisses out of hand a self-important functionary because of his clumsy hand.

Once during a long spell of rainy weather the Secretary of the Ministry of Ceremonial, Nobutsune, arrived at the Empress's palace with a message from His Majesty. A cushion was brought out for him, but he pushed it away even farther than he normally did on these occasions and sat down on the floor.

"Whom do you think that cushion is for?" I asked him.

"If I sat on the cushion after being out in this rain," he replied with a laugh, "it would get all nasty and stained with my footmarks."

"How so?" I said. "Are you under the impression that the cushion is to *couch* your feet *on*?"

"There's nothing very clever about that remark," said Nobutsune. "If I hadn't mentioned my footmarks, you'd never have thought of your little joke."

He then kept on pointing out that it was he, not I, who was responsible for the joke. At first I found this rather amusing, but after a while I could no longer bear to hear him praising himself so lavishly and, turning to the Empress, I told the following story: "Many years ago there lived in the palace of the Great Empress an attendant called Enutagi [lit. "dog vomit"] who, despite her low rank, had made quite a reputation for herself. Fujiwara no Tokikara [lit. "depending on the weather"] (who died while serving as Governor of Mino) was at that time a Chamberlain. One day he called at the room where many of the lower attendants were gathered and said, 'So this is the famous Enutagi! Why don't you look like your name?' 'I do,' she replied, 'but it depends on the weather.' Everyone, including the High Court Nobles and senior courtiers, found Enutagi amusing, because even when a trap was set for her in advance she always managed to acquit herself cleverly. And the stories about her must be true. They've been handed down for a long time without any change."

"Yes," said Nobutsune, "but it was Tokikara who put the idea into her head. As for myself," he continued, "I can compose a good poem in either Chinese or Japanese on any subject you give me."

"Really?" I replied. "Very well, I'll give you a subject and you will kindly write me a poem in Japanese."

"Splendid," said Nobutsune. "But why only one subject? I can just as well handle a whole lot."

Hearing his boast, the Empress herself proposed a subject, at which Nobutsune promptly took his leave, saying, "Dear me, how frightening! I'd better be off."

"He has an appalling hand," someone explained after he had left the room. "Whether in Chinese characters or Japanese script, the results are equally poor. People are always laughing at him about it. That's why he had to escape."

One day when Nobutsune was serving as Intendant in the Office of Palace Works he sent a sketch to one of the craftsmen explaining how a certain piece of work should be done. "Kindly execute it in this fashion," he added in Chinese characters. I happened to notice the piece of paper and it was the most preposterous writing I had ever seen. Next to his message I wrote, "If you do the work in this style, it will certainly turn out strangely." The document found its way to the Imperial apartments, and everyone who saw it was greatly amused—except, of course, Nobutsune, who was furious and after this held a grudge against me. (I. Morris, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon,* vol. 1, pp. 112–114; *Makura no sōshi,* pp. 157–159)

On the other hand, Shōnagon's vision of a perfect young lover is as romantic as any that can be found in *The Tale of Genji.*

A young bachelor of an adventurous nature comes home at dawn, having spent the night in some amorous encounter. Though he still looks sleepy, he immediately draws his inkstone to him and, after carefully rubbing it with ink, starts to write his next-morning letter. He does not let his brush run down the paper in a careless scrawl, but puts himself heart and soul into the calligraphy. What a charming figure he makes as he sits there by himself in an easy posture, with his robe falling slightly open! It is a plain unlined robe of pure white, and over it he wears a cloak of rose-yellow or crimson. As he finishes his letter, he notices that the white robe is still damp from the dew, and for a while he gazes at it fondly.

Then he makes arrangements for delivering his letter. Instead of calling one of the ladies in attendance, he takes the trouble to get up and select a page-boy who seems suitable for the task. Summoning the boy to his side, he whispers his instructions and hands over the letter. The page leaves for the lady's house, and for some time the gentleman watches him disappear in the distance. As he sits there, he quietly murmurs some appropriate passage from the sutras.

Now one of his servants comes to announce that his washing-water and morning gruel have been prepared in the neighboring wing. The gentleman goes there, and soon he is leaning against the reading-desk and looking at some Chinese poems, from which he now and then reads out a passage that he has particularly enjoyed—altogether a charming sight.

Presently he performs his ablutions and changes into a white Court cloak, which he wears without any trousers. Thus attired, he starts reciting the sixth scroll of the Lotus Sutra from memory. A pious gentleman indeed—or so one might think, except that at just this moment the messenger returns (he cannot have had far to go) and nods encouragingly to his master, who thereupon instantly interrupts his recitation and, with what might strike one as sinful haste, transfers his attention to the lady's reply. (I. Morris, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon,* vol. 1, pp. 261–262; *Makura no sōshi,* pp. 238–239)

In a striking passage from *The Tale of Genji,* Lady Murasaki conveys the centrality of calligraphy in court culture. As always, a close connection is made between the character of the writer and the calligraphy produced. Various comparisons are made and sustained in the "contest" that occurs here.

It was now decided that Genji's daughter would go to court in the Fourth Month. The crown prince was very impatient. The hall in which Genji's mother had lived and Genji had had his offices was now assigned to his daughter. The finest craftsmen in the land were busy redecorating the rooms, which it might have seemed were splendid enough already. Genji himself went over the plans and designs.

And there was her library, which Genji hoped would be a model for later generations. Among the books and scrolls were masterpieces by calligraphers of an earlier day.

"We live in a degenerate age," said Genji. "Almost nothing but the 'ladies' hand' seems really good. In that we do excel. The old styles have a sameness about them. They seem to have followed the copybooks and allowed little room for original talent. We have been blessed in our own day with large numbers of fine calligraphers. Back when I was myself a student of the 'ladies' hand' I put together a rather distinguished collection. The finest specimens in it, quite incomparable, I thought, were some informal jottings by the mother of the present empress. I thought that I had never seen anything so fine. I was so completely under their spell that I behaved in a manner which I fear did damage to her name. Though the last thing I wanted to do was hurt her, she became very angry with me. But she was a lady of great understanding, and I somehow feel that she is watching us from the grave and knows that I am trying to make amends by being of service to her daughter. As for the empress herself, she writes a subtle hand, but"—and he lowered his voice—"it may sometimes seem a little weak and wanting in substance."

"Fujitsubo's was another remarkable hand, remarkable and yet perhaps just a little uncertain, and without the richest overtones. Oborozukiyo is too clever, one may think, and somewhat given to mannerism; but among the ladies still here to please us she has only two rivals, Princess Asagao and you yourself, my dear."

"The thought of being admitted to such company overwhelms me," said Murasaki.

"You are too modest. Your writing manages to be gentle and intimate without ever losing its assurance. It is always a pleasant surprise when someone who writes well in the Chinese style moves over to the Japanese and writes that just as well."

He himself had had a hand in designing the jackets and bindings for several booklets which still awaited calligraphers. Prince Hotaru must copy down something in one of them, he said, and another was for a certain guards commander, and he himself would see to putting something down in one or two others.

"They are justly proud of their skills, but I doubt that they will leave me any great distance behind."

Selecting the finest inks and brushes, he sent out invitations to all his ladies to join in the endeavor. Some at first declined, thinking the challenge too much for them. Nor were the "young men of taste," as he called them, to be left out. Yūgiri, Murasaki's oldest brother, and Kashiwagi, among others, were supplied with fine Korean papers of the most delicate hues.

"Do whatever you feel like doing, reed work [a highly mannered style in which the calligraphic strokes merge into a landscape painting] or illustrations for poems or whatever."

The competition was intense. Genji secluded himself as before in the main hall. The cherry blossoms had fallen and the skies were soft. Letting his mind run quietly through the anthologies, he tried several styles with fine results, formal and cursive Chinese and the more radically cursive Japanese "ladies' hand." He had with him only two or three women whom he could count on for interesting comments. They ground ink for him and selected poems from the more admired anthologies. Having raised the blinds to let the breezes pass, he sat out near the veranda with a booklet spread before him, and as he took a brush meditatively between his teeth the women thought that they could gaze at him for ages on end and not tire. His brush poised over papers of clear, plain reds and whites, he would collect himself for the effort of writing, and no one of reasonable sensitivity could have failed to admire the picture of serene concentration which he presented.

"His Highness Prince Hotaru."

Shaking himself from his reverie and changing to informal court dress, Genji had a place readied for his guest among the books and papers. As the prince came regally up the stairs the women were delighted anew. The two brothers carried themselves beautifully as they exchanged formal greetings.

"My seclusion from the world had begun to be a little trying. It was thoughtful of you to break in upon the tedium."

The prince had come to deliver his manuscript. Genji read through it immediately. The hand could not have been called strikingly original, but of its sort it was disciplined and orderly. The prince had chosen poems from the older anthologies and set each of them down in three short lines. The style was a good cursive that made spare use of Chinese characters.

"I had not expected anything half so good," said Genji. "You leave me with no recourse but to break my brushes and throw them all away."

"I do at least give myself high marks for the boldness that permitted me to enter such a competition."

Genji could not very well hide the manuscript he had been at work on himself. They went over it together. The cursive Chinese characters on unusually stiff Chinese paper were very good indeed. As for the passages in the "ladies' hand," they were superb, gently flowing strokes on the softest and most delicately tinted of Korean papers. A flow of admiring tears threatened to join the flow of ink. The prince thought that he could never tire of such pleasures. On bright, bold papers made by the provisioner for our own royal court Genji had jotted down poems in a whimsical cursive style, the bold abandon of which was such as to make the prince fear that all the other manuscripts must seem at best inoffensive.

The guards commander had also hoped to give an impression of boldness, but a certain muddy irresolution was hidden, or rather an attempt had been made to hide it, by mere cleverness. The selection of poems, moreover, left him open to charges of affectation.

Genji was more secretive with the ladies' manuscripts and especially Princess Asagao's.

The "reed work" was very interesting, each manuscript different from the others. Yūgiri had managed to suggest the flow of water in generous, expansive strokes, and his vertical strokes called to mind the famous reeds of Naniwa. The joining of reeds and water was accomplished very deftly. There were sudden and bold variations, so that, turning a page, the reader suddenly came upon craggy, rocklike masses.

"Very fine indeed," said the prince, a man of wide and subtle interests. "He has obviously taken it very seriously and worked very hard."

As the conversation ranged over the varieties of calligraphy and manuscripts, Genji brought out several books done in patchwork with old and new papers. The prince sent his son the chamberlain to bring some scrolls from his own library, among them a set of four on which the emperor Saga had copied selections from the *Manyōshū,* and a *Kokinshū* at the hand of the emperor Daigo, on azure Chinese papers with matching jade rollers, intricate damask covers of a darker blue, and flat Chinese cords in multicolored checkers. The writing was art of the highest order, infinitely varied but always gently elegant. Genji had a lamp brought near.

"I could look at them for weeks and always see something new. Who in our own day can do more than imitate the smallest fragment?"

They were for Genji's daughter, said the prince. "Even if I had a daughter of my own, I would want to be very sure that she was capable of appreciating them. As it is, they would rot ignominiously away."

Genji gave the chamberlain a fine Korean flute and specimens of Chinese patchwork in a beautifully wrought aloeswood box.

He now immersed himself in study of the cursive Japanese styles. Having made the acquaintance of the more notable calligraphers, he commissioned from each a book or scroll for his daughter's library, into which only the works of the eminent and accomplished were to be admitted. In the assembled collection there was not an item that could have been called indifferent, and there were treasures that would have filled gaps in the great court libraries across the seas. (Seidensticker, *The Tale of Genji,* pp. 517–520; *Genji monogatari,* vol. 16, pp. 169–175)

Gardens

Although little can be located or excavated in the way of actual physical remains of gardens from this early period, the art of the Japanese garden was already well developed at this time. There are, indeed, so many descriptions of gardens and their shifting seasonal beauties in *The Tale of Genji* that it is difficult to quote any single representative passage. Sei Shōnagon's response to such gardens, however, is both brief and evocative.

During the long rains in the Fifth Month, there is something very moving about a place with a pond. Between the dense irises, water-oats, and other plants one can see the green of the water; and the entire garden seems to be the same green color. One stays there all day long, gazing in contemplation at the clouded sky—oh, how moving it is!

I am always moved and delighted by places that have ponds—not only in the winter (when I love waking up to find that the water has frozen over) but at every time of the year. The ponds I like best are not those in which everything is carefully laid out; I much prefer one that has been left to itself so that it is wild and covered with weeds. At night in the green spaces of water one can see nothing but the pale glow of the moonlight. At any time and in any place I find moonlight very moving. (I. Morris, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon,* vol. 1, p. 126; *Makura no sōshi,* pp. 246–247)

A Treatise on the Art of Gardens

Most of the treatises on the arts of Japan were written in later periods. It is surprising, therefore, to find an early work entitled *Notes on Garden Making (Sakuteiki),*

attributed to the courtier Tachibana no Toshitsuna (1028–1094). Like his father, he loved gardens and collected various writings, as well as comments gleaned from gardeners whom he knew, in order to compose this treatise. The work was long treated as a secret transmission and was not made widely available until many centuries later. What follows constitutes the first four sections of the work, which benefits enormously from being read in its entirety. The Blue Dragon and White Tiger mentioned in the text are two of the four Guardian Gods important in Heian-period geomancy; in this scheme blue equals east and white equals west. These designations go back to the ancient Chinese *Book of Rites (Li ji)*.

I. Basics

When creating a garden, first be aware of the basic concepts.

—Select several places within the property according to the shape of the land and the ponds, and create a suitable atmosphere, reflecting again and again on one's memories of wild nature.

—When creating a garden, let the exceptional work of past master gardeners be your guide. Heed the desires of the master of the house, yet heed as well one's own taste.

—Visualize the famous landscapes of our country and come to understand their most interesting points. Re-create the essence of those scenes in the garden, but do so interpretatively, not strictly.

—In order to create the appropriate solemnity in a noble's residence, build mountains in the garden such as those seen in the *Gion Illustrated Text* [a Chinese Buddhist text describing Jetavanna, the Buddhist monastery in India and famous as well in China and Japan]. At the place where the garden will be built, first study the land and devise a general plan. Based on that, dig out the shape of the pond, make some islands, and determine from what direction the water will enter the pond as well as from where it will exit.

II. Southern Courts

When designing the Southern Courts of aristocratic residences, the distance from the outer post to the central stair roof to the edge of the pond should be eighteen to twenty-one meters. On the other hand, if there are to be imperial processions in the court, this distance should be twenty-four or even twenty-seven meters. However, consider this. If the property is 120 meters square, and the Southern Court is made to be twenty-four or twenty-seven meters deep, what should the size and shape of the pond be? This must be carefully thought out. For shrines or temples, a depth of only twelve to fifteen meters should be sufficient.

—Regarding the placement of islands in the pond, first determine the overall size

of the pond according to the conditions of the site. As a rule, if conditions will allow it, the side of the central island should be on axis with the center of the main residence. On the back side of the island, a place for musicians should be prepared, as large as twenty-one to twenty-four meters across. The front of the island should remain plainly visible in front of the musicians' area and so, if there is not enough room on the central island, another island may be constructed behind it, and a plank deck constructed to allow the island to connect the two. I have heard that because it is important to allow the island to show fully before the musicians' area, these temporary decks may be built when the central island is too small.

It is commonly considered to be improper if the underside of the curved bridge can be seen from the seat of honor. To amend this, many large or small stones should be placed beneath the bridge. The bridge should not align with the center of the central stair roof but rather should be placed off-center in the garden so that the eastern post of the bridge aligns with the western post of the central stair roof.

The creation of mountain forms or Meadows should follow the lay of the land and the shape of the pond. Breezway posts should not be buried in the ground but rather should be cut short and set on large, rugged mountain stones. The posts of the Fishing Pavilion should also be set on large stones.

III. Ponds and Islands

Since it is not possible to fill ponds with water before they are built, prior to the construction of a pond and its Islands, a Water Level must be set up. The surface of a pond should be twelve to fifteen centimeters beneath the bottom edge of the veranda of the Fishing Pavilion. Stakes should be placed where a pond will be built and marked with this height. In this way one can determine exactly how much a given stone will be covered with water and how much will be exposed. The soil base underneath the stones set in a pond must be reinforced with Foundation Stones. If this is done, even though many years might pass, the stones will not collapse and, moreover, even if the pond is drained of water, the stones will look as if they are well set.

If an island in the pond is constructed to the exact shape that it is planned to be and then lined with stones along its edges, the stones will not hold when the pond is filled with water. It is better to dig out the shape of the pond in a more general way and then after setting stones on the island edge, gradually determine the shape of the islands.

The waters of the pond and Garden Streams should flow out of the garden to the southwest, because the waters of the Blue Dragon should be made to flow in the direction of the White Tiger. A horizontal stone should be set at the outflow of the pond, its top set twelve to fifteen centimeters below the bottom side of the Fishing Pavilion's veranda. When the pond is completely filled with water, the excess will flow out over this stone, thereby establishing the water level in the pond.

IV. Stones

It is unusual to set large stones in places other than beside a waterfall, on the tip of an island, or in the vicinity of a hill. In particular, stones taller than ninety centimeters should not be set near any buildings. He who ignores this rule will not be able to hold onto his household; it will fall into disorder. Solitary Stones are best set on a rocky shore, at the foot of a hill, or at the tip of an island. To form a foundation for a Solitary Stone set in water, several large stones should be set deeply in a triangular pattern so that they are not visible above the water. After the Solitary Stone is set in the center of this triangle, other Foundation Stones should be firmly packed in around it.

—There is also a way to create gardens without ponds or streams. This is called the Dry Garden Style and should be created by setting stones along the base of a hill or with Meadows in the garden.

To create a garden scene that evokes the feeling of a mountain village, first build a high hill by the building, and then set stones from the top to bottom in such a way as they appear as bedrock breaking the surface of the ground. The posts of the building should be set directly on top of these stones.

Stones can also be set the foot of small hills, by the base of a tree, or near the posts of a veranda, depending on one's own intuition. Care should be taken, however, when setting stones or planting plants in the court since space must be left directly in front of the Main Hall for people attending formal ceremonies. (Takei and Keane, *Sakuteiki,* pp. 153–162; *Sakuteiki,* pp. 224–226)

Essays in Idleness, reflecting views from several hundred years later, also contains a celebrated passage on gardens. However, Yoshida Kenkō stresses the trees and plants, rather than the rocks, ponds, and other elements involved.

The trees I should like for my house are pine and cherry. Five-needled pines will do. As for cherry blossoms, the single-petaled variety is preferable. The double-cherry trees formerly grew only at the capital in Nara, but lately they seem to have become common everywhere. The cherry blossoms of Yoshino and the "left guard" tree of the palace are all single. The double-petaled cherry is an oddity, most exaggerated and perverse. One can do quite nicely without planting it. The late-blooming cherry is also unattractive, and even disagreeable when infested by caterpillars. In plum blossoms I prefer the white and the pink. The early-blossoming single variety and the charmingly scented double crimson are both agreeable. The late plum, flowering in competition with the cherry, suffers by contrast; indeed, it is overwhelmed. It is unpleasant, moreover, to see the withered blossoms clinging to the boughs. The Kyōgoku middle counselor and lay priest planted single plum trees near his eaves, saying how impetuous and charming the plum blossoms must be to flower and scatter before any oth-

ers. Two of these plum trees apparently still survive on the south side of his house in Kyōgoku. Willows are also charming. Young maple leaves about the beginning of the fourth month are lovelier than any flowers or autumn leaves. Orange trees and laurels both look best when the trunks are old and big.

Among plants the best are kerria roses, wisteria, irises, and pinks. For a pond, water lilies are best. Among autumn plants I prefer reeds, pampas grass, bellflowers, *hagi, ominaeshi, fujibakama,* asters, burnet, *karukaya,* gentians, and chrysanthemums. Yellow chrysanthemums are also good. Ivy, arrowroot vine, and morning glories are all best when they grow on a low fence, not too high nor too profusely. It is hard to feel affection for other plants—those rarely encountered, or which have unpleasant-sounding Chinese names, or which look peculiar. As a rule, oddities and rarities are enjoyed by persons of no breeding. It is best to be without them. (Keene, *Essays in Idleness,* pp. 123–126; *Tsurezuregusa,* pp. 207–208)

Religious Art

The exacting traditions of continental religious art, most notably in architecture, painting, and sculpture, came to Japan through the voyages to China of such revered Buddhist monks as Kūkai (774–835). Upon Kūkai's return to Japan, he began to have constructed a complex of Buddhist monasteries in the mountains south of Nara. This complex, usually referred to as Kōyasan, or Mount Kōya, became both the inspiration for and repository of great works of art related not only to the Shingon sect, but also to Buddhist art in general.

Kūkai's writings suggest the importance of ritual and art to religious enlightenment. By the Heian period, such attitudes had become a part of the core values of Japanese artistic practice.

The Dharma is beyond speech, but without speech it cannot be revealed. Suchness transcends forms, but without depending on forms it cannot be realized. Though one may at times err by taking the finger pointing at the moon to be the moon itself, the Buddha's teachings which guide people are limitless. Extraordinary feats which may dazzle another's eyes, however, are not valued at all. The Buddha's teachings are indeed the treasures which help pacify the nation and bring benefit to people.

Since the Esoteric Buddhist teachings are so profound as to defy expression in writing, they are revealed through the medium of painting to those who are yet to be enlightened. The various postures and mudras [depicted in mandalas] are products of the great compassion of the Buddha; the sight of them may well enable one to attain Buddhahood. The secrets of the sutras and commentaries are for the most part depicted in the paintings, and all the essentials of the Esoteric Buddhist doctrines are,

in reality, set forth therein. Neither masters nor students can dispense with them. They are indeed [the expressions of] the root and source of the oceanlike assembly [of the Enlightened Ones, that is, the world of enlightenment].

During the sixth month of Enryaku 23 (804), I, Kūkai, sailed for China aboard Ship One in the party of Lord Fujiwara, envoy to the T'ang [Tang] court. By the eighth month we reached the coast of Fukien [Fujian] and by the end of the twelfth month arrived at Ch'ang-an [Chang'an], where we lodged at the official guest residence. The envoy and his retinue started home for Japan on the eleventh day of the third month, Enryaku 24 (805), but in obedience to an imperial edict, I alone remained behind in the Hsi-ming [Ximing] Temple where our Eichū (d. 816) formerly had resided.

One day, while calling on the eminent Buddhist teachers of the capital, I happened to meet the abbot of the East Pagoda Hall of the Ch'ing-lung [Qinglong] Temple. . . . This great priest was the disciple chosen to transmit the Dharma from the Tripi-Taka Master of Broad Wisdom [Pu-k'ung] [Bukong] of the Ta-hsing-shan [Daxing-shan] Temple. His virtue aroused the reverence of his age; his teachings were lofty enough to guide emperors. Three sovereigns who revered him were initiated by receiving *abhiṣeka* [sprinkled holy water]. The four classes of believers looked up to him for instruction in the Esoteric Buddhist teachings.

I called on the abbot in the company of five or six monks from the Hsi-ming [Xi-min] Temple. As soon as he saw me he smiled with pleasure and joyfully said, "I knew that you would come! I have waited for such a long time. What pleasure it gives me to look upon you today at last! My life is drawing to an end, and until you came there was no one to whom I could transmit the teachings. Go without delay to the altar of *abhiṣeka* with incense and a flower." I returned to the temple where I had been staying and got the things which were necessary for the ceremony. It was early in the sixth month then that I entered the altar of *abhiṣeka* for primary initiation. I stood before the Matrix Mandala and cast my flower in the prescribed manner. By chance it fell on the Body of Mahāvairocana Tathagata in the center. The master exclaimed in delight, "How amazing! How perfectly amazing!" He repeated this three or four times in joy and wonder. I was then given the fivefold *abhiṣeka* and received instruction in the grace *(kaji)* of the Three Mysteries. Next I was taught the Sanskrit formulas and ritual manuals for the Matrix Realm and learned the yogic practices which use various sacred objects of concentration to gain transcendental insight.

Early in the seventh month I stood before the Diamond Mandala and I was given once more the fivefold *abhiṣeka.* When I cast my flower it again fell on Mahāvairocana, and the abbot marveled as he had before. Also, early in the following month I received the *abhiṣeka* for the ordination into the mastership of the transmission of the Dharma. On this day I provided a feast for five hundred monks and made wide offerings to the four classes of believers. The dignitaries of the Ch'ing-lung [Qinglong] Temple, Ta-hsing-shan [Daxingshan] Temple, and others all attended the feast, and everyone was delighted for my sake.

Then I received instruction in the mantras and mudras of the five divisions of the *Vajraśekhara Sutra* and spent some time learning Sanskrit and the Sanskrit hymns. The abbot informed me that the Esoteric Buddhist scriptures are so abstruse that their meaning cannot be conveyed except through art. For this reason he ordered the court artist Li Chen [Li Zhon] and about a dozen other painters to execute ten scrolls of the Matrix and Diamond Mandalas and assembled more than twenty scribes to make copies of the *Vajraśekhara Sutra* and other important Esoteric Buddhist scriptures. He also ordered the bronzesmith Chao Wu [Zhao Wu] to cast fifteen ritual implements. These orders for the painting of religious images and the copying of the sutras were issued at various times.

One day the abbot told me: "Long ago, when I was still young, I met the great Tripiṭakaka Master [Pu-k'ung] [Bukong]. From the first moment he saw me he treated me like his son, and on his visit to the court and his return to the temple I was as inseparable from him as his shadow. He confided to me, 'You will be the receptacle of the Esoteric Buddhist teachings. Do your best! Do your best!' I was then initiated into the teachings of both the Matrix and the Diamond and into the secret mudras as well. The rest of his disciples, monks and laity alike, studied just one of the two great teachings [Diamond and Matrix] or a yogic practice on one sacred object of concentration with the use of one mudra, but not all of them as I did. How deeply I am indebted to him I shall never be able to express.

"Now my existence on earth approaches its term, and I cannot long remain. I urge you, therefore, to take the mandalas of both realms and the hundred volumes of the teachings of the Diamond Vehicle, together with the ritual implements and these objects which were left to me by my master. Return to your country and propagate the teachings there.

"When you first arrived, I feared I did not have enough time left to teach you everything, but now I have completed teaching you, and the work of copying the sutras and making the images has also been finished. Hasten back to your country, offer these things to the court, and spread the teachings throughout your country to increase the happiness of the people. Then the land will know peace, and people everywhere will be content. In that way you will return thanks to the Buddha and to your teacher. That is also the way to show your devotion to your country and to your family. My disciple I-ming [Yiming] will carry on the teachings here. Your task is to transmit them to the Eastern Land. Do your best! Do your best!" These were his final instructions to me, kind and patient as always. On the night of the full moon, in the twelfth month of the past year, he purified himself in a ritual bath and, lying on his right side and making the mudra of Mahāvairocana, he breathed his last.

That night, while I sat in meditation in the Hall, the abbot appeared to me in his usual form and said, "You and I have long been pledged to propagate the Esoteric Buddhist teachings. If I am reborn in Japan, this time I shall be your disciple."

I have not gone into the details of all that he said but have given the general im-

port of the acharya's instructions. (Hakeda, *Kūkai,* pp. 145–150; *Kōbō Daishi chosaku zenshū,* vol. 1, pp. 24–32)

In a passage from the diary of Lady Sarashina, composed in the twelfth century, it seems apparent, both from the text and from the illustration provided for it some centuries later, that the kind of Buddhist iconography visible in the religious sculpture of the time had become thoroughly domesticated.

Yet we continue to live despite all our suffering. I was greatly worried that my expectations for the future world would also be disappointed, and my only hope was the dream I remembered from the thirteenth night of the Tenth Month of the third year of Tenki. Then I had dreamt that Amida Buddha was standing in the far end of our garden. I could not see Him clearly, for a layer of mist seemed to separate us, but when I peered through the mist I saw that He was about six foot tall and that the lotus pedestal on which He stood was about four foot off the ground. He glowed with a golden light, and one of His hands was stretched out, while the other formed a magical sign. He was invisible to everyone but me. I had been greatly impressed but at the same time frightened and did not dare move near my blinds to get a clearer view of Him. He had said, "I shall leave now, but later I shall return to fetch you." And it was only I who could hear His voice. Thereafter it was on this dream alone that I set my hopes for salvation. (I. Morris, *As I Crossed a Bridge of Dreams,* p. 121; *Sarashina nikki,* p. 53)

Music and the Beginnings of Theater

Thanks to patronage of the court, music was an important feature of life in the capital. Music and dance performances were found as well in the countryside, and often the nobility took an interest in these forms and began to incorporate them into the musical life of the court. The beginnings of theatrical performance, often closely linked to music and dance, are usually traced to the countryside, though court rituals probably always included strong theatrical elements. Some of these components, both rural and urban, contributed to the development of the *nō* drama, one of the earliest varieties of theatrical performance that has survived until today but that did not develop in the form we know it until sometime in the fourteenth century. Records concerning music and theater from the period remain scanty, though far more abundant than what is available for ancient Japan. The texts presented below focus on musical genres. Important forms of theater such as *dengaku* and *sarugaku,* which emerged and flourished during this age, will be treated in the next chapter because of their relation to the history of the *nō* drama.

The court found it important to support and codify traditions. Around the late seventh century an imperial department of music was established. A legal code from 701 indicates that it contained performers and teachers of both the native (Japanese) genres and types of music and dance imported from Korea and China.

Proper lineage was important for political and social standing. In his *New Record of Sarugaku (Shin sarugaku-ki)*, Fujiwara no Akihira (989? – 1066?) invented a fictional family. One member is an "ideal type" of a court *(gagaku)* musician who exemplifies what was perhaps expected of an outstanding court musician of the day.

Kurō, the youngest son, has been adopted by someone in the employ of the Office of Court Music *[gagaku-ryō].* He has finished learning Koguryŏ music, Tang music, and Silla music, as well as Japanese song and dance. He is only fifteen years old but already a master of these arts. He is proficient at playing mouth organ *[shō],* double-reed end-blown flute *[hichiriki],* pan pipes *[shō],* and transverse flute *[fue];* large hanging drum *[taiko],* small barrel drum *[kakko],* small side drum *[ikko],* hip drum *[yōko],* small rattle drum *[furitsuzumi],* friction drum *[suritsuzumi],* small gong *[shōko],* cymbals *[dobyō shi],* and others. He has mastered [the modes] *sōjō, hyōjō, banshiki-chō, ōshiki-chō, taishiki-chō, ichikotsu-chō,* and *agari-chō shi [kamimuchō].* He can dance skillfully the dances Ryō-ō, Sanju, Engiraku, Ōjō, Kanshū, Manzairaku, Sō furen, Seigaiha, Ittokuen, Anrakuen, Sogō, Komaboko, Rōzō, Goshōraku, Chikyū, Nasori, Hannari, Toso, Koinju, and Konron hassen. He has learned the entirety of the 120 pieces of the song and dance *[bugaku]* repertory. Since he is good looking, he is loved by many people. His demeanor is proper and upright, so he pleases everyone. In particular, the priests of Hiei-zan and traveling priests from rural temples come to see and hear him. They become so enchanted they throw their robes at him; they are so astonished they wave their tannin-paper clothing at him. (*Shin sarugaku-ki,* p. 294; trans. G. G.)

The importance of music at the Heian court is well illustrated by passages in Sei Shōnagon's *Pillow Book*.

Pleasant-Seeming Things: . . . The director of sacred dances *[mikagura];* banner-waving performers of sacred dance *[kagura] . . . ;* the head of a troupe of itinerant performers *[kugutsu].* (*Makura no sōshi,* p. 114; translated here and throughout this section by G. G.; I. Morris, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon,* vol. 1, p. 70.)]

Embarrassing Things: When someone plays a zither poorly and without tuning it, just for his own pleasure. (*Makura no sōshi,* p. 146; Morris, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon,* vol. 1, p. 103)

Things That Seem Better at Night Than in the Daytime: . . . The sound of a seven-

string zither *[qin;* Jp. *kin]; . . .* The *hototogisu* [a cuckoo-like bird known for its song]; . . . The sound of a waterfall. (*Makura no sōshi,* p. 323; Morris, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon,* vol.1, p. 154)

Things That Are Unpleasant to Hear: Someone who has an ugly voice yet speaks and laughs without restraint; a drowsy voice reciting mystic incantations *[darani];* the sound of someone learning to play the *hichiriki.* (*Makura no sōshi,* p. 323; Morris, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon,* vol. 1, p. 155)

Enviable People: . . . On first learning the zither *[koto]* or the flute *[fue],* one wonders if and when one will ever reach that level [of proficient players]. (*Makura no sōshi,* p. 211; Morris, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon,* vol. 1, p. 162)

String Instruments: The lute *[biwa]* in the *fukujōjō* and *ōshikijō* modes; the *kyū* section of the piece *Sogōkō;* the melody known as the "song of the warbler" *[uguisu no saezuri];* the thirteen-string zither *[sō no koto]* is wonderful; the *sōfuren* melody. (*Makura no sōshi,* p. 250; Morris, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon,* vol. 1, p. 189)

Concerts [asobi]: The best time for them is at night when one cannot see people's faces. (*Makura no sōshi,* p. 249; Morris, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon,* vol. 1, p. 189)

Songs: Popular songs *[fuzoku];* especially "The Sugi Tree by the Gate." Sacred dance songs *[kagura-uta]* are also nice. Modern songs *[imayō],* when they are long and have a elaborate melody. (*Makura no sōshi,* p. 301; Morris, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon,* vol. 1, p. 234)

Wind Instruments

I love the sound of the transverse flute: it is beautiful when one hears it gradually approaching from the distance and also when it is played near by and then moves far away until it becomes very faint. There is nothing so charming as a man who always carries a flute tucked out of sight in his robe when he goes out in a carriage, on horseback, or on foot.

I particularly like hearing familiar tunes played on the flute. It is also very pleasant at dawn to find that a flute has been left next to one's pillow by a gentleman who has been visiting one; presently he sends a messenger to fetch the instrument, and when one gives it to him carefully wrapped up, it looks like an elegant next-morning letter.

A mouth organ is delightful when one hears it in a carriage on a bright, moonlit night. True, it is bulky and rather awkward to play—and what a face people make when they blow it! But those who play transverse flutes can look ungraceful.

The *hichiriki* is a very shrill instrument, the autumn insect it most resembles being the long cricket. It makes a terrible noise, especially when it is played badly and is not something one wants to hear near by. I remember one of the Special Festivals at Kamo [where *kagura* was performed], when the musicians had not yet come into His Majesty's presence. One could hear the sound of their flutes from the back, and

I was just thinking how delightful it was when suddenly the *hichiriki* joined in, playing a crescendo until all the ladies, even those who were most beautifully groomed, felt their hair standing on end [i.e., were deeply moved]. Then the procession came before the emperor with all the string and wind instruments playing together splendidly. (*Makura no sōshi,* pp. 250–251; Morris, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon,* vol. 1, p. 190)

Dances

The "Dances of Suruga" [Suruga-mai] and "The One I Seek" [Motomego] are very interesting; the "Dance of Peace" [Taiheiraku], with its long swords and other weapons, is disagreeable but nevertheless fascinating; I have heard that in China enemies danced it together; the "Dance of the Birds" [Tori no mai]; in the "Dance of the Pulled Head" [Batō] the dancer's hair is in disorder. He has a disagreeable look in his eyes, but the music is delightful. In the "Squatting Dance" [Rakuson] I like the way in which the two performers strike their knees on the floor. The "Horse Figure" [Komagata, perhaps an error for the Korean-style *gagaku* piece Komaboko]. (*Makura no sōshi,* pp. 249–250; I. Morris, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon,* vol. 1, p. 189)

The Tale of Genji also offers elaborate and evocative descriptions of musical and other performances.

On the day of the excursion the emperor was attended by his whole court, the princes and the rest. The crown prince too was present. Music came from boats rowed out over the lake, and there was an infinite variety of Chinese and Korean dancing. Reed and string and drum echoed through the grounds. Because Genji's good looks had on the evening of the rehearsal filled him with foreboding, the emperor ordered sutras read in several temples. Most of the court understood and sympathized, but Kokiden thought it all rather ridiculous. The most renowned virtuosos from the high and middle court ranks were chosen for the flutists' circle. The director of the Chinese dances and the director of the Korean dances were both guards officers who held seats on the council of state. The dancers had for weeks been in monastic seclusion studying each motion under the direction of the most revered masters of the art.

The forty men in the flutists's circle played most marvelously. The sound of their flutes, mingled with the sighing of the pines, was like a wind coming down form deep mountains. "Waves of the Blue Ocean" [Seigaiha], among falling leaves of countless hues, had about it an almost frightening beauty. The maple branch in Genji's cap was somewhat bare and forlorn, most of the leaves having fallen, and seemed at odds with his handsome face. The General of the Left replaced it with several chrysanthemums which he brought from below the royal seat. The sun was about to set

and a suspicion of an autumn shower rustled past as if the skies too were moved to tears. The chrysanthemums in Genji's cap, delicately touched by the frosts, gave new beauty to this form and his motions, no less remarkable today than on the day of the rehearsal. Then his dance was over, and a chill as if from another world passed over the assembly. Even unlettered menials, lost among deep branches and rocks, or those of them, in any event, who had some feeling for such things, were moved to tears. The Fourth Prince, still a child, son of Lady Shōkyōden, danced "Autumn Winds" [Shūfūraku], after "Waves of the Blue Ocean" the most interesting of the dances. All the others went almost unnoticed. Indeed complaints were heard that they marred what would otherwise have been a perfect day. Genji was that evening promoted to the First Order of the Third Rank, and Tō no Chūjō to the Second Order of the Fourth Rank, and other deserving courtiers were similarly rewarded, pulled upwards, it might be said, by Genji. He brought pleasure to the eye and serenity to the heart, and made people wonder what bounty of grace might be his from former lives. (Seidensticker, *The Tale of Genji,* pp. 133–135; *Genji monogatari,* vol. 14, pp. 273–274)

To some courtiers at least native genres continued to sound more familiar than Chinese and Korean-style court music.

It was late in the Tenth Month. The vines on the shrine fence were red and there were red leaves beneath the pine trees as well, so that the services of the wind were not needed to tell of the advent of autumn. The familiar eastern music [*azuma asobi,* a native genre based on *fuzoku* folk music] seemed friendlier than the more subtle Chinese and Korean music. Against the sea winds and waves, flutes *[fue]* joined the breeze through the high pines of the famous grove with a grandeur that could only belong to Sumiyoshi. The quiet clapping that went with the koto was more moving than the solemn beat of the drums *[tsuzumi].* The bamboo of the flutes had been stained to a deeper green, to blend with the green of the pines. The ingeniously fabricated flowers in all the caps seemed to make a single carpet with the flowers of the autumn fields.

"The One I Seek" [*Motomego,* an *azuma asobi* piece] came to an end and the young courtiers of the higher ranks all pulled their robes down over their shoulders as they descended into the courtyard, and suddenly a dark field seemed to burst into a bloom of pink and lavender. The crimson sleeves beneath, moistened very slightly by a passing shower, made it seem for a moment that the pine groves had become a grove of maples and that autumn leaves were showering down. Great reeds that had bleached to a pure white swayed over the dancing figures, and the waves of white seemed to linger on when the brief dance was over and they had returned to their places. (Seidensticker, *The Tale of Genji,* p. 594; *Genji monogatari,* vol. 16, pp. 330–331)

Certain seasons were thought to be best for certain music, even if the exact nature of the correspondence continued to be a subject of debate.

"The misty moon of spring is not the best, really," said Genji. "In the autumn the singing of the insects weaves a fabric with the music. The combination is rather wonderful."

"It is true," replied Yūgiri, "that on an autumn night there is sometimes not a trace of a shadow over the moon and the sound of a koto or a flute can seem as high and clear as the night itself. But the sky can have a sort of put-on look about it, like an artificial setting for a concert, and the autumn flowers insist on being gazed at. It is all too pat, too perfect. But in the spring—the moon comes through a haze and a quest sound of flute joins it in a way that is not possible in the autumn. No, a flute is not really its purest on an autumn night. It has long been said that it is the spring night to which the lady is susceptible, and I am inclined to accept the statement. The spring night is the one that brings out the quiet harmonies."

"The ancients were unable to resolve the dispute, and I think it would be presumptuous of their inferior descendants to seek to do so." (Seidensticker, *The Tale of Genji,* p. 603; *Genji monogatari,* vol. 16, pp. 384–385)

Learning an instrument properly took time and effort, but these efforts were considered to be of the greatest importance since music was though to have a supernatural efficacy. In Genji's mind the greatest accomplishments had come even before his time.

"It is very difficult indeed to master any instrument," he [Genji] continued. "The possibilities seem infinite and nothing seems complete and finished. But there are few these days who even try, and I suppose it should be cause for satisfaction when someone masters any one small aspect. The seven-stringed koto *[kin]* is the unmanageable one. We are told that in ancient times there were many who mastered the whole tradition of the instrument, and made heaven and earth their own, and softened the hearts of demons and gods. Taking into this one instrument all the tones and overtones of all the others, they found joy in the depths of sorrow and transformed the base and mean into the fine and proud, and gained wealth and universal fame. There was a time, before the tradition had been established in Japan, when the most enormous trouble was required of anyone who sought to learn the art. He must spend years in strange lands and give up everything, and even then only a few came back with what they had gone out to seek. In the old chronicles there are stories of musicians who moved the moon and the stars and brought unseasonable snows and frosts and conjured up tempests and thunders. In our day there is scarcely anyone

who has even mastered the whole of the written lore, and the full possibilities are enormous. So little these days seems to make even a beginning—because the Good Law is in its decline, I suppose." (Seidensticker, *The Tale of Genji,* pp. 604–605; *Genji monogatari,* vol. 16, p. 351)

The social and religious functions of music are well articulated in an important work entitled *The Collection of Well-Known Accounts, Past and Present (Kokon chomon-jū),* compiled by Tachibana no Narisue, an early Kamakura-period courtier about whom very little is known. The collection appears to have been completed in 1254 and contains some 726 anecdotes, some taken from earlier literary sources, on a great variety of subjects, including the court music of the slightly earlier Heian period.

No. 257 (1096)

When Nobuakira, a Former Administrator in the Chamberlain's Office [Tokoro no Shū], *Played the Drum and Made a Mistake in the Beat*

Nobuakira, a former administrator in the Chamberlain's Office, was renowned as a *gagaku* drummer. At the time of the retired emperor Shirakawa, the emperor Horikawa made a trip to the Rokujō Palace. Nobuakira, who had been repeatedly recommended by the Suzaku Major Counselor [Minamoto no Toshiakira, 1044–1114], was summoned by the emperor and asked to play the large drum of the right [used for Korean-style music]. Kobe no Masakiyo [1049–1119] and Ōga no Motomasa [1079–1138] played the flutes. Nobuakira made a mistake in the rhythm of the piece "Ōnintei" because he had often heard Motomasa play "Ōnintei" previously and was certain that Motomasa's melody did not differ from his own. Yet this time Motomasa played it differently, causing Nobuakira to miss a beat. When Nobuakira went to the musician's room, he said angrily to Motomasa, "I have often heard your melody; you have always played it as I do. This time you did not; that caused me to miss a beat. It felt like someone was cutting off my head alive!" Motomasa answered, "You cannot blame anybody else. As you say, my usual way of playing follows tradition closely; therefore, the melody matches yours. This time, however, the main flute part was played by Masakiyo. When he rests, he lets me lead. I had no choice but to play it in his manner. If you play the drum, then you must know other styles of flute playing as well!"

How measured and superb an answer that was! It was Nobuakira's willfulness that made him not follow the flute players. When one plays the drums, one must realize that one has to follow and match the flute players exactly. This is an old transmission. (*Kokon chomon-jū,* pp. 210–211 [vol. 6], translated here and throughout this section by G. G.)

No. 264 (ca. 1100)

Minamoto no Yoriyoshi Learns the Flute from Tamate Nobuchika

Minor inspector Minamoto no Yoriyoshi, a supervisor in the imperial music bureau *[gakuso],* was a man of such artistic taste that he needed not feel shame when compared to ancient masters. He studied the flute with Tamate Nobuchika. Nobuchika lived in Nara, but Yoriyoshi walked this long stretch every other day or once every few days in order to receive instruction. Sometimes Nobuchika would teach him, at other times not. In the latter case, Yoriyoshi was crestfallen as he walked the long way home without accomplishing his mission.

One time Nobuchika was in a rush field, driving out insects. Yoriyoshi joined him, and together they drove out insects from morning to evening. Then, when Yoriyoshi was about to return home, Nobuchika casually taught him one piece. Another time, during the bean harvest season, Nobuchika was cutting beans. When he was done, he used the handle of his sickle to teach Yoriyoshi how to play. That is how Yoriyoshi learned this art. Moreover, he was not afraid to learn from people of low status. He visited such people, paying no heed to their social station. Thus it is reported that he learned *tenjinraku* from a lowly old priest at the bridge of the Hachiman Shrine. Yoriyoshi knew the location of the grave of Hakuga Sanmi and often visited it to pay his respects, for he was a truly cultured man. (*Kokon chomon-jū,* p. 213 [vol. 6])

No. 271 (1130)

Ōga Motomasa Transmits a Secret Piece to Ōno Chikakata [1088–1151]

Early one morning, the flutist Ōga Motomasa came to Ōno Chikakata. Chikakata hurried to greet him. Motomasa said, "I am on my way as an emissary to the Hachiman Shrine, where I have some urgent business." Chikakata let him stay for a while, serving him wine and other things. Motomasa then continued, "Actually, I am not going to the Hachiman Shrine at all! I came today to have Ōga Motokata [1115–1174] play the *komabue* [flute used for Korean-style music] for you. Even though I have taught him all the secret pieces, it is of no use without a knowledge of the spirit of the dance. I am old and do not know if I will still be alive today or tomorrow. That is why I would like him to play for you. That is why I came here with him today. Even though there are sections that are secret, please listen to them carefully."

Chikakata showed great interest and called his sons Narikata and Chikahisa [1123–1213], who were still boys. He made them dance while he listened to the flute playing. He made Motokata play until the end of the day and wrote down all the sections where the number of beats increased [or: where the tempo accelerates].

Chikakata expressed great emotion. Motomasa shed profuse tears; his joy knew no bounds. Finally he said to Motokata, "Today you have learned all the music of the right; I have transmitted to you all my secret pieces. If anything else remains unclear, you will have to consult my younger sister."

Even though his younger sister was a woman, she was no less skillful than Motomasa. She was called the nun of Yasui. Her name may have been Yūgiri. (*Kokon chomon-jū,* pp. 221–222 [vol. 6])

No. 430 (940–950)

When the Hichiriki Master Mochiteru Moved Pirates to Tears by His Playing

Once while on a trip to Nankaidō (Shikoku and environs), the *hichiriki* master Mochiteru fell into the hands of pirates. When they wished to kill him, he shrewdly told them, "I have long served at court with my *hichiriki* and am a world-renowned man. Now I am to be senselessly killed by pirates! For this I have my karma to blame. Let me live but a little longer; I would like to play one more beautiful melody."

The pirates put away their drawn swords and let him play. Because Mochiteru believed that this would be his last accomplishment, with tears streaming from his eyes, he played the melody "Agajō." At this the uncompassionate band of robbers themselves broke down in tears. They released Mochiteru and even brought him to the south shore of Awaji, where they let him debark.

Anyone who is well versed in the arts can count with certainty on such miraculous powers. Even in our times many things of this sort occur. (*Kokon chomon-jū,* pp. 341–342 [vol. 12])

No. 489 (ca. 1153)

Fujiwara Takahiro's [?–1155] Attachment to Instrumental Music

Around 1153, the monk Takahiro became seriously ill. In the following year, on the eleventh day of the second month, Myōon'in nyūdō [Fujiwara Moronaga, 1137–1192], who was at the time prime minister and lieutenant general of the palace guards, came to his house for a visit. Despite his illness, Takahiro sat up and said, "If only I could hear music, my agonizing pains would surely cease." Myōon'in called for musicians to play. Myōon'in himself played the *biwa.* Takahiro said, "My soul is now at peace." Only after some time had passed did Myōon'in return home. What a touching, compassionate visit this was!

Since Takahiro was so old when he became severely ill, he might have made invocations to the Buddha; instead, because of his spiritual imprisonment in earlier incarnations, he desired to hear music. That is why it was so touching. (*Kokon chomon-jū,* p. 390 [vol. 15])

No. 656 (1095)

When Tsunenobu-kyō, the Lord of Dazai, Cut Down a Zelkova Tree before the Inn at the Mushiroda Station in Chikuzen Province

When Tsunenobu-kyō [1016–1097] was named to the position of Dazai no Sochi, he set out on a journey. On the fifteenth day of the eighth month he arrived at

the post station of Mushiroda in Chikuzen [today Fukuoka Prefecture]. The moon shone brightly in the night sky. Before the inn, however, a large zelkova tree spread its branches and leaves so widely that the moon could not shine through. Tsunenobu immediately ordered the tree to be cut down. Then he played, facing the moon, all night long, completely enraptured in his *biwa.* When morning dawned, he traveled onward.

Persons of such deep artistic sensibilities are today no longer to be found. (*Kokon chomon-jū,* p. 500 [vol. 19])

Puppetry

The art of puppetry was to reach its greatest heights in the Edo period, when it was accompanied by *jōruri* recitation and *shamisen* music (a form of puppet theater now usually referred to as *bunraku*). Yet puppeteers and related female entertainers referred to as *kugutsu,* existed even in the Heian period. The most famous — and disapproving — description of *kugutsu* is contained in *A Record of Kugutsu (Kugutsu-ki* or *Kairaishi-ki),* written by Ōe no Masafusa (1041 – 1111), the poet and scholar of the Chinese classics, sometime around 1087.

The *kugutsu* have no settled places of residence, no houses of their own. They live in tents beneath the sky. In their pursuit of water and grazing land they wander around, changing their place of residence. In their customs they are similar to northern barbarians in China.

The men are all hunters who use bows and horses. They dance [juggle] with two swords and juggle seven balls, or they manipulate wooden figures that dance or peach-wood puppets that fight. They endow them with the soul of living people. It is almost like a magic show, when they change sand and rocks into gold coins or plants and trees into birds and wild animals. They can dazzle people.

The women make up their eyebrows, apply face whitener, and walk with swaying hips. They dye their teeth and grin and apply rouge and powder. They sing lascivious songs and make indecent music in order to appear desirable and coquettish. Fathers, mothers, and husbands know it but do not chide them. When they meet travelers or strangers, they have no compunction about spending the night with them. For their favors they are given expensive embroidered clothing, brocade outfits, golden hairpins, and mother-of-pearl chests that are not disdained or turned down by anyone.

The *kugutsu* do not cultivate a single parcel of farmland, nor do they pick one branch of mulberry for sericulture. That is why they are not controlled by any governmental authority. They are not sedentary but strictly vagrants. They do not recognize any lord or king above them, nor do they fear any provincial governors. Since they are not subject to any corvée or tribute, they lead a comfortable existence.

At night they worship their god Hyakudaifu [or phallic cult], dance, play the drums, and cause an uproar. Thus they pray for luck and assistance.

In the east, the troupes from Mino, Mikawa, and Tōtoumi, etc. are the most mannerly; these are followed by the groups from Harima to the south, and Tajima to the north. The groups from Kyushu are the lowest.

The names of the best-known *kugutsu* women are Komi, Nichihyaku, Michitose, Manzai, Kogimi, Magogimi, etc. Scattering the dust like the legendary Chinese singer Han'e, their songs resonate into the rafters. Listeners dampen their caps with tears of emotion and know not how to calm themselves. The *kugutsu* excel in up-to-date songs, rice-planting songs, sacred songs, boatmens' songs, street songs, packhorse men's songs, folk songs, Buddhist songs, and countless others.

The *kugutsu* are unique under heaven. Who could not feel sympathy for them? (*Kairaishi-ki;* trans. G. G.)

Shamans

Shamanism, traceable at least to the Queen Himiko mentioned in Chinese descriptions of ancient Japan, was common in Japan throughout its history. In the "family" invented by Fujiwara no Akihira in his *New Record of Sarugaku* (mentioned above), the author includes those who represent an "ideal type" of shaman during the Heian period.

The fourth daughter is a shaman *[miko, kannagi].* She is renowned for divination, *kagura* dancing, striking the string of her catalpa bow, and transmitting the voices of the dead. When she dances, the wind lifts her sleeves, making her appear almost like an angel. Her singing voice is supple and refined, like that of the mythical Kalavinka bird. She does not rely on a zither for the mode, but her song makes the gods appear; nor does she rely on a drum for the rhythm, but even the foxes come to listen. For these reasons, men and women of all ranks from far and near stream to her, causing a scene like at a marketplace. So much rice is brought [as offerings] that no room remains for placing it [on the altar?]; so many sacred staffs *[mitegura]* are found that they can hardly be counted. (*Shin sarugaku-ki,* p. 84; trans. G. G.)

Asobi

Ōe no Masafusa, who composed the document on puppets quoted above, also wrote about women entertainers in his *Record of Female Performers (Yūjoki* or *Yūjo no ki),* dated about 1087. Although the *asobi,* also known as *asobime* and *ukareme* or by the Sino-Japanese term *yūjo,* were long associated with prostitution, they also became

important creators and transmitters of the performing arts; many even mixed with the highest levels of the Kyoto court.

During the mid-Heian period, *asobi* apparently often operated from boats, which usually carried a principal *asobi*, an apprentice, and an elderly *asobi* who rowed the boat. The most famous *asobi* colonies lay along the Yodo River, which connects Kyoto to the sea (and the modern city of Osaka), or its tributaries, at such places as Eguchi, Kanzaki, and Kashima.

In the province of Yamashiro from the port of Yodo, traveling west for a day on the Uji River, one arrives at Kaya. Everyone who travels among the areas of San'yō [Western Honshū], Saikai [Kyushu], and Nankai [Shikoku and the Ise area] uses this route. Tributaries of the river flow in all directions, to many villages and locations, in the direction of Kawachi Province. Here lies what is known as Eguchi. Here one also finds the Ajifu pasture of the Imperial Bureau of Medicine and the villages of the Imperial Bureau of Housekeeping.

Arriving in the province of Settsu, one finds places such as Kanzaki and Kashima. Countless dwellings stand side by side. Throngs of female singers *[utame]* pole their small boats to inns, where they invite the travelers to their beds. Their voices makes the drifting clouds stop; their rhythms float over the river. Even wanderers here forget their homes. At the rush isles of Naniwa, fishermen and merchants park their boats stern to stern, so close that the water disappears. It is the finest entertainment quarter under heaven.

The first *yūjo* at Eguchi was named Kannon. Others are named Nakanokimi, Koma, Shirome, Tonomori. At Kashima the one named Miyagi is the most renowned, and then there are Niyoi, Kōro, Kujaku, and Tachihira. At Kanzaki, Kakohime is the boss. Others are named Koso, Miyako, Rikimyō, and Koji. All of them sing like an incarnation of a nightingale and look like the descendants of the legendary beauty Sotōri. From the highest aristocrat to the lowliest commoner, all desire to bring these women to the bedroom and lavish love on them. Some become wives or concubines, to be cherished until the day they die. Even wise men and men of character cannot help doing this. The women worship at the Sumiyoshi Shrine in the south and the Hiroda Shrine in the west, praying that men will desire them. They especially worship Hyakudaifu [Hyakudayū], another name for Saenokami [a god of travelers who also oversaw relations between the sexes]. They carve hundreds and thousands of images of this deity. This often misguides people's spirit. It is an archaic practice.

It is said that when men of high rank and refined taste are on their way from Kyoto to Kaya and wish to be entertained by *yūjo,* they prefer the women of Eguchi. Lords and their retinue who come from the western provinces prefer the women of Kanzaki. In either case this is because these women are the first they see. What the women earn is known as *marute.* When their designated time with a customer is up, they become shameless, display an angry countenance, argue, and fight. They are

given a length of plain silk cloth or rice, according to customs governing a fair price. Women dwelling in these boats that ply the rivers serve the high and mighty: they are known as *tanzen* or *ide-asobi* [dispatched entertainers] and receive small gratuities that they use to get by a day at a time. Others are known as *keiyhō* or *dōken.* On the prow of their boats they have a high pole used for raising banners with semi-circular emblems.

This has been described in a preface by Gō no Kanrin, but here I have merely recorded additional information. (*Yūjoki,* pp. 153–156; trans. G. G.)

In her diary, the Lady of Sarashina recalls an encounter with a group of female singers while she was traveling near Mount Ashigara in Sagami Province. On her trip, her party lodges at the foot of the mountain, in a dense forest.

From somewhere in the dark three women singers *[asobi]* emerged, the eldest being about fifty, the others about twenty and fourteen. They set up a large umbrella in front of our hut, and our servants lit a fire. The oldest woman told us that she was the granddaughter of the famous singer Kohata. Their hair, which was extremely long, hung beautifully over their foreheads; they all had fair complexions and looked attractive enough to serve as waiting-women.

Our party was charmed by their appearance and even more impressed when they started singing, for they had fine, clear voices that rose to the heavens. The women were invited to join us. One member of our group remarked that the singers in the western provinces [i.e., the *asobi* of Eguchi] were no match for these performers, whereupon they burst out into a splendid song, "Should you compare us with those of Naniwa. . . ." Yes, they were really pretty to look at, and their beautiful singing ended far too soon. We were all so sad to see them disappear into those fearful mountains that we wept as they walked away. I, being young and impressionable, was particularly moved by the scene and, when the time came, did not want to leave the shelter of our hut. (I. Morris, *As I Crossed a Bridge of Dreams,* pp. 47–48; *Sarashina nikki,* pp. 291–292)

Shirabyōshi

Female entertainers called *shirabyōshi* were also very popular in this and succeeding periods. The term, which literally means "white rhythm," is difficult to explain, and the origin of these performers and their dances has always been in dispute. Here is one explanation, given by Yoshida Kenkō in his *Essays in Idleness.*

Ō no Hisasuke [1212–1285; a court musician] relates that the lay priest Michinori [the courtier and scholar Fujiwara no Michinori, 1106–1159] selected the most in-

teresting dance steps and taught a woman called Iso no Zenji to perform them. She appeared in a white cloak with a dagger at her side and a man's hat on her head; that is why her dances were known as "men's dances." The daughter of this Zenji, a woman named Shizuka followed her in this profession. This is the origin of the *shirabyōshi,* women performers who sang stories about the Buddhas and the gods. In later time Minamoto no Mitsuyuki [poet and scholar; 1163–1244] composed many pieces for them. There are also pieces written by the Emperor Go-Toba. It is said he taught them to Kamegiku, a favorite *shirabyōshi* of Emperor Go-Toba. (Keene, *Essays in Idleness,* pp. 185–186; *Tsurezuregusa,* p. 271)

Imayō

Imayō, a term that might be translated "up-to-date songs," were very popular among the common people. Thanks to the efforts of such patrons as the retired emperor Goshirakawa (1127–1192), they were collected and so made more widely known in the late Heian period. In his *Songs to Make the Dust Dance (Ryōjin hishō kuden-shū),* of which only a fragment remains, Goshirakawa gives his views on the origins of these songs and records how he learned them from *asobi, kugutsu,* courtiers, and in particular from an aged woman named Otomae.

From ancient times down to the present, songs known as *kagura* [sacred Shinto dance songs], *saibara* [folk-song based court banquet songs], and *fuzoku* [popular songs of eastern Japan arranged as court music] have been learned and transmitted at court. *Kagura* began when Amaterasu-Ōmikami pushed opened the heavenly rock-cave door; *saibara* originated from the popular songs sung when tribute from all provinces was being presented to the Ministry of the Treasury. This was quite unusual. The government of the time must have been both good and bad, at once commendable and deplorable. In public and private, *saibara* were performed as elegant music [i.e., *gagaku*] on the zither, the lute, and the flute and played in the modes of this land. They move the heaven and the earth, appease violent spirits, govern the land, and are a sign of a contented populace. *Fuzoku* are used for a mode-setting introduction at [performances of *azuma asobi*] in the palace gardens and at the Kamo festival. Also, in the past, they were sung at New Year's parties in which high officials visited the regent. In recent years they seem to have been abandoned on such occasions and are no longer sung there.

Still other songs have also been learned and transmitted. One type, called *imayō* [modern songs], is a broad category that includes many types, such as *kami uta* [god songs], *mono no yō* [meaning unknown], and *ta uta* [rice-planting songs].

According to the biography of Prince Shōtoku [*Shōtoku Taishi denryaku,* p. 74;

written in 917], during the reign of Emperor Yōmei [585–587], a man named Haji no Muraji [or Muraki] lived at a lodge in Nanba [i.e., Osaka]. He was a skilled singer with a fine voice. Once when he was singing at home at night, he heard someone on the roof singing together with him. Thinking it odd, Haji no Muraji stopped singing, but no sound was to be heard. When he began singing again, the voice on the roof sang along. Baffled, he stepped outside for a look and saw something running away. He pursued it, chasing it to Sumiyoshi Bay, where he fell into the water and drowned. It had been a metamorphosis of the Keikoku star [i.e., Mars] that had been praising his song. This was the source of *imayō.* (*Ryōjin hishō kuden-shū,* pp. 440–441; trans. G. G.)

I have often experienced divine revelations while singing *imayō* on my pilgrimages to temples and shrines. When I think about these experiences one by one, I believe that they did not occur because my singing was possessed with divine spirit, since my voice is feeble and lacks beauty. Instead, such revelations might be the product of my years of devoted practice, or perhaps they are the result of my deep faith, with which I have dedicated myself to singing. I have been practicing *imayō* for over forty years. Many other people in the past have no doubt trained as much as I have. I love *imayō,* but my voice is weak and does not project. I deeply regret these deficiencies, but to no avail. Yet thanks to my practice, even though I possess such a miserable voice, when I have come upon a rich and artful voice that I can hardly be expected to match, or when I come upon a high female voice, I can manipulate my voice in various ways, allowing me to hold my own. The fact that singing neither high-pitched melodies nor awkward low ones presents difficulties is, I believe, due to the merit of my long years of practice.

The *imayō* of these days are not intended simply for entertainment. When they are sung with sincerity at shrines or temples, they bring about divine revelations and cause our wishes to be granted. They are sure to fulfill one's desire for an official position; they prolong life and cure illnesses instantly. (*Ryōjin hishō kuden-shū,* pp. 439–470; trans. G. G; see also Kwon, "The Emperor's Songs")

Buddhist Chant

From around the ninth century, Buddhist priests authored a number of technical treatises explaining Buddhist music theory, repertory, cosmogony, and the details of ceremony. Chant and other musical genres associated with Buddhist rites and rituals constituted one of the most important genres of performing arts during the Heian and Kamakura periods. As the following tale from the anonymous *Collection of Tales from Uji (Uji shūi monogatari)* indicates, even courtiers participated in performances, in which *gagaku* was performed as well.

How the Emperor Horikawa [r. 1086–1107] had Myōsen play the flute

Again, long ago, in the reign of Emperor Horikawa, a gathering of Nara priests was summoned for a ceremonial reading of the Mahāprajñā Sutra, and among the priests who came to Court was Myōsen. On this occasion the Emperor himself was playing the flute, and made use of a variety of modes. But each time he changed the mode, Myōsen never missed the note in his chanting. When the astonished Emperor sent for him, he came and knelt in the garden. On the Emperor's command, he came and sat on the verandah. "Do you play the flute?" asked the Emperor. "I can play a little," he answered. "I thought as much," said the Emperor, and he handed Myōsen his own flute to play. He gave such a superb performance of the tune "Ten Thousand Years" that the Emperor was lost in admiration, and without more ado presented him with the flute. The flute in question is still preserved, and I understand that it is in the possession of Yukikiyo, the chief priest of the Yahata Shrine [i.e., the Iwashimizu Hachimangū, south of Kyoto]. (Mills, *A Collection of Tales from Uji,* p. 322; *Uji shūi monogatari,* pp. 285–286)

3 SAMURAI JAPAN

The Kamakura and Muromachi Periods

Art and Politics

With the coming of civil wars around 1185, the balance of power began to shift away from the court and toward the warrior class. Many of the samurai who were successful in monopolizing the power in the country in the Kamakura and Muromachi periods (1185–1568) were from the provinces and had little exposure to the high culture of the Heian court. Most rustic warriors, however, admired the court and its refinement, although there were some exceptions. The late thirteenth-century warrior Obusuma Saburō, for example, was extolled for his lack of cultural attainments:

> Because he was born in a warrior house . . . what could be more natural for him than to practice the skills of the warrior? What is the use of filling one's heart with thoughts of the moon or flowers, or composing verse, or plucking a lute? The ability to strum a zither or blow a flute doesn't count for much on the battlefield. Everybody in his household—women and children included—learned to ride wild horses and train daily with the longbow. (Colcutt, "Daimyo and Daimyo Culture," p. 10, amended; *Obusuma Saburō ekotoba,* p. 126)

Many in succeeding generations, however, strove to learn the refinements of the courtier class and participate in the ideologies of Japanese high culture. Samurai Japan thus by no means represents a culture radically different from that of courtly Japan but rather shows a melding of samurai and courtier mentalities. The arts and the aesthetic values underlying them were to change and develop, but in this sphere, at least, the court maintained its prestige and so a real advantage.

The court poets, painters, and other artists and writers, on their side, now were able to maintain their cultural, if not political, hegemony by serving as mentors and

teachers to the newcomers. In the preceding period, as we have seen, there were relatively few examples of true aesthetic treatises, possibly because the assumptions on which the culture was based were shared by all those who participated in it. In a real sense, therefore, writings on matters pertaining to the arts were not particularly necessary. Now, with a new class of aspirants to high culture, the need for teaching the new varieties of students, many of whom were politically powerful, required that rules be codified, traditions defined, and "schools" created, each with its own traditions and secrets to pass along. This need to articulate artistic values gave rise to self-consciously composed documents on the nature and purposes of the various arts. This section thus contains an increasing number of excerpts from treatises on a variety of art forms. Nevertheless, as will be clear as well, the literary texts written in the medieval period, as in the Heian period, remain in many ways the best means to trace the development of cultural attitudes. A number of these famous passages are cited below.

Another crucial influence during this long period was Buddhism. The readings provided in the previous section suggest that for the Heian court class, Buddhism had become an important part of life. The devastating civil wars, however, brought a sense of despair to the population as a whole, and the Buddhist conviction that this world is one of sorrow and delusion now seemed to capture the spiritual imagination of the entire populace. It might be said that in the Heian period Buddhism had been primarily a court religion. Now, in various new or developed forms, it became the religion of the nation. While Esoteric Buddhism remained strong, it was Pure Land (Amida) Buddhism that captured the minds and spirits of everyday people, and later it was to be Zen that made a great impact upon the samurai elite.

Pure Land Buddhism, at its most basic, taught that repeating the mantra "Namu Amida Butsu" (literally, "Hail Amida Buddha") with perfect faith was all that was needed to obtain rebirth in Amida's Western Paradise, from which the final step to nirvana was much easier than from a purely earthly life. The great monk Hōnen (1133–1212) wrote the following:

The method of salvation that I have propounded is neither a sort of meditation, such as has been practiced by many scholars in China and Japan, nor is it a repetition of the Buddha's name by those who have studied it and understood the deep meaning of it. It is nothing but the mere repetition of the "Namu Amida Butsu," without doubt of his mercy, whereby one may be born into the Land of Perfect Bliss. (Coates and Ishizuka, *Hōnen the Buddhist Saint,* pp. 728–729)

The signature image of Pure Land Buddhism is the *raigō* (literally, "welcoming"), in which Amida Buddha attended by bodhisattvas descends to earth to

claim the soul of the dying believer. Another major Pure Land sect monk, Genshin (1131–1192), described this scene:

> The great vow of Amida Nyorai is such that he comes with twenty-five Bodhisattvas and the host of a hundred thousand monks. In the western skies purple clouds will be floating, flowers will rain down and strange perfumes will fill the air in all directions. The sound of music is continually heard and golden rays of light stream forth. In brilliant rays which dazzle the eyes, he will appear. (Reischauer, "Genshin's Ōjō Yōshū," p. 68)

According to a document attached to a *raigō* painting in Konkaikōmyō-ji, Genshin found it important to create his own image of this "welcoming."

> I, the monk Genshin . . . have reverently drawn an image of Amida edifying the sentient beings. Generating a vow in my ardent longing, I declare: the light of the Buddha brilliantly shines and descends with the heavenly multitude. . . . I shall go when Amida comes to invite me: a ray of light suddenly shines forth between his eyebrows; music sounds out, astonishing my ears. (Reischauer, "Genshin's Ōjō Yōshū," p. 142)

In addition to religious writings, the famous literary classics of this period attest to the widespread nature of religious values. A close reading of such famous medieval classics as the fourteenth-century *The Tale of the Heike (Heike monogatari)* and *An Account of My Hut (Hōjōki),* by Kamo no Chōmei (1155–1216), and Yoshida Kenkō's *Essays in Idleness,* already cited in the preceding section, reveal with eloquence new religious and aesthetic attitudes, often closely tied together. Below are some of the most enduring of these.

Mujō

One of the most important of these values is *mujō,* often translated as "impermanence." The belief that nothing in life is stable and that humankind can only take refuge in the acceptance of change itself constitutes a pervasive element in much medieval poetry, prose, drama, and art. Perhaps the most concise and powerful statement of this belief can be found in the opening section of *The Tale of the Heike. The Tale* is a chronicle of precisely those civil wars of 1185 that destroyed the power of the court and the centrality of its culture. Although we read the text today in printed form, *The Tale* began as an oral text, recited around the country by blind minstrels to a musical accompaniment on the *biwa,* a four-stringed lute played

with a large plectrum. There are many versions of these stories, but the one that has gained ascendancy was taken down in written form in 1371 from a version chanted by a celebrated performer named Kakuichi. When we read the text today, which runs to an astonishing 782 pages in the English translation by Hiroshi Kitagawa and Bruce T. Tsuchida, it is clear that the original performers of *The Tale,* like their counterparts in Europe, had prodigious memories. The text reveals with great eloquence that for its original audiences, who were not all literate, the grandeur and the fall of the Heian court was indeed something to be mourned. True, the evil Kiyomori, a member of the Heike family, brings about the ruin both of his family and of the entire culture, but this destruction itself is something that can only be lamented.

The opening passage, one of the most famous in all medieval Japanese literature, indicates in the strongest terms the impermanence of the world as we can know it. The bell of the Gion Temple, mentioned in the first sentence, is the one that rang at the death of the Buddha in ancient India. In the last section of *The Tale,* another bell is rung, that of a secluded mountain temple of Jakkō-in, near the now ruined city of Kyoto, where the empress has retired to become a Buddhist nun. The narrative is framed by these contrasting sounds of evanescence.

The bell of the Gion Temple tolls into every man's heart to warn him that all is vanity and evanescence. The faded flowers of the *sāla* trees by the Buddha's deathbed bear witness to the truth that all who flourish are destined to decay. Yes, pride must have its fall, for it is as unsubstantial as a dream on a spring night. The brave and violent man—he too must die away in the end, like a whirl of dust in the wind. (Kitagawa and Tsuchida, *The Tale of the Heike,* p. 5; *Heike monogatari,* vol. 32, p. 83)

Kamo no Chōmei was a poet and courtier who witnessed the court's fall from power. Later in his life, he left his position in the capital and became something of a Buddhist recluse. There had been similar aristocratic hermits before him in the Heian court, notably the great poet Saigyō (1118–1190), who left his family and his position at court to become a mendicant monk and traveling poet. Chōmei's *An Account of My Hut,* however, written toward the end of his life, became the classic statement of a felt need to abandon the secular world, seemingly filled only with disappointment, danger, and impermanence. The opening paragraphs of *An Account of My Hut* capture these feelings with striking eloquence.

The flow of the river is ceaseless and its water is never the same. The bubbles that float in the pools, now vanishing, now forming, are not of long duration: so in the world are man and his dwellings. It might be imagined that the houses, great and

small, which vie roof against proud roof in the capital remain unchanged from one generation to the next, but when we examine whether this is true, how few are the houses that were there of old. Some were burnt last year and only since rebuilt; great houses have crumbled into hovels and those who dwell in them have fallen no less. The city is the same, the people are as numerous as ever, but of those I used to know, a bare one or two in twenty remain. They die in the morning, they are born in the evening, like foam on the water.

Whence does he come, where does he go, man that is born and dies? We know not. For whose benefit does he torment himself in building houses that last but a moment, for what reason is his eye delighted by them? This too we do not know. Which will be first to go, the master or his dwelling? One might just as well ask this of the dew on the morning glory. The dew may fall and the flower remain—remain, only to be withered by the morning sun. The flower may fade before the dew evaporates, but though it does not evaporate, it waits not the evening. (Keene, *Anthology of Japanese Literature,* pp. 197–198; *Hōjōki,* p. 23)

More than a hundred years later, when Yoshida Kenkō wrote his *Essays in Idleness,* these attitudes had become deeply imbedded in Japanese culture. For Kenkō, the fact of impermanence now becomes both a spiritual and an aesthetic value, producing in a sensitive person the possibility of a sense for beauty deriving from an inevitable self-awareness concerning one's own evanescence. These attitudes are clear in this remarkable passage, in which Kenkō indicates quite clearly that the knowledge of our own ultimate passing away is at the basis of our deeper understanding.

If man were never to fade away like the dews 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. Consider living creatures—none lives so long as man. The May fly waits not for the evening, the summer cicada knows neither spring nor autumn. What a wonderfully unhurried feeling it is to live even a single year in perfect serenity! If that is not enough for you, you might live a thousand years and still feel it was but a single night's dream. We cannot live forever in this world; why should we wait for ugliness to overtake us? The longer man lives, the more shame he endures. To die, at the latest, before one reaches forty, is the least unattractive. Once a man passes that age, he desires (with no sense of shame over his appearance) to mingle in the company of others. In his sunset years he dotes on his grandchildren, and prays for long life so that he may see them prosper. His preoccupation with worldly desires grows ever deeper, and gradually he loses all sensitivity to the beauty of things, a lamentable state of affairs. (Keene, *Essays in Idleness,* pp. 7–8; *Tsurezuregusa,* pp. 94–95)

In another section from *Essay in Idleness,* Kenkō stresses that we are touched perhaps less by the obvious beauty of the moment than by our emotions of anticipation as to what will come or on our reflections on what is already passing.

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. Branches about to blossom or gardens strewn with faded flowers are worthier of our admiration. Are poems written on such themes as "Going to view the cherry blossoms only to find they had scattered" or "On being prevented from visiting the blossoms" inferior to those on "Seeing the blossoms"? People commonly regret that the cherry blossoms scatter or that the moon sinks in the sky, and this is natural; but only an exceptionally insensitive man would say, "This branch and that branch have lost their blossoms. There is nothing worth seeing now."

In all things, it is the beginnings and ends that are interesting. Does the love between men and women refer only to the moments when they are in each other's arms? The man who grieves over a love affair broken off before it was fulfilled, who bewails empty vows, who spends long autumn nights alone, who lets his thoughts wander to distant skies, who yearns for the past in a dilapidated house—such a man truly knows what love means.

The moon that appears close to dawn after we have long waited for it moves us more profoundly than the full moon shining cloudless over a thousand leagues. And how incomparably lovely is the moon, almost greenish in its light, when seen through the tops of the cedars deep in the mountains, or when it hides for a moment behind clustering clouds during a sudden shower! The sparkle on hickory or white-oak leaves seemingly wet with moonlight strikes one to the heart. One suddenly misses the capital, longing for a friend who could share the moment.

And are we to look at the moon and the cherry blossoms with our eyes alone? How much more evocative and pleasing it is to think about the spring without stirring from the house, to dream of the moonlit night though we remain in our room! (Keene, *Essays in Idleness,* pp. 115–118; *Tsurezuregusa,* pp. 201–202)

Aware

A second term, soon to become in the sensibilities of medieval and Edo writers and thinkers a key concept in the vocabulary of the Japanese arts, is *aware* (pronounced *ah-wah-ray*), often referred to as *mono no aware.* The term is a difficult one to match in English. Some have suggested the rather awkward phrase "the ahness of things," meant to suggest a sudden deep and intuitive understanding of life and its transience that can come on someone unawares and move him or her

tremendously. In the Heian period, *aware* sometimes included a sense of joy, but in the medieval period, it came to represent primarily a sudden consciousness of the sad, even tragic nature of one's feelings and of the world itself.

The Tale of the Heike is a particularly striking source of scenes meant to stir such feelings in their listeners or readers. Two of them are presented here. Civil war breaks out between the Heike forces and their enemies, the Genji (Minamoto) clan. Eventually, during a celebrated battle scene at Ichi no Tani, a profoundly touching scene takes place that evokes the conflicting worlds of courtier and warrior.

Naozane, seeing overwhelming victory for his side, said to himself: "The Heike courtiers are running away to the beach to their boats. Ah, I wish I could challenge a great general of the Heike!"

As he was riding to the beach, he caught sight of a fine-looking warrior urging his horse into the sea toward a boat anchored a little offshore. The warrior wore armor laced with light green silk cords over a twilled silk battle robe decorated with an embroidered design of cranes. On his head was a gold-horned helmet. He carried a sword in a gold-studded sheath and a bow bound with red lacquered rattan. His quiver held a set of black and white feathered arrows, the center of each feather bearing a black mark. He rode a dapple gray outfitted with a gold-studded saddle. He was swimming toward the offing when Naozane roared at him: "You out there! I believe you are a great general. It is cowardly to turn your back on your enemy. Come back!"

Naozane beckoned to him with his fan. Thus challenged, the warrior turned his horse around. When he reached the beach, Naozane rode alongside, grappled with him, and wrestled him to the ground. As Naozane pressed down his opponent and removed his helmet to cut off his head, he saw before him the fair-complexioned face of a boy no more than sixteen or seventeen. Looking at this face, he recalled his son, Naoie. The youth was so handsome and innocent that Naozane, unnerved, was unable to find a place to strike with the blade of his sword.

"Now tell me who you are," asked Naozane. "Declare yourself! Then I will spare your life."

"You? Who are you?" replied the youth.

"I am a warrior of little importance. A native of Musashi Province, Kumagai no Jirō Naozane, that is who I am."

"I cannot declare myself to such as you. So take my head and show it to others. They will identify me."

"Ah, you must be a great general, then," replied Naozane. But he thought to himself: "The slaughter of one courtier cannot conclusively affect this war. Even when I saw that my son, Naoie, was slightly wounded, I could not help feeling misery. How much more painful it would be if this young warrior's father heard that his son had been killed. I must spare him!"

Looking over his shoulder, he saw a group of his comrades galloping toward them. He suppressed his tears and said: "Though I wish to spare your life, a band of my fellow warriors is approaching, and there are so many others throughout the countryside that you have no chance of escaping from the Genji. Since you must die now, let it be by my hand rather than by the hand of another, for I will see that prayers for your better fortune in the next world are performed."

To this, the young warrior replied simply: "Then take off my head at once!"

So pitiable an act was it that Naozane could not wield his blade. His eyes saw nothing but darkness before him. His heart sank. However, unable to keep the boy in this state any longer, he struck off his head. Frenzied with grief, Naozane wept until the tears rushed down his cheeks.

"Nothing is so bitter as to be born into a military family! Were I not a warrior, I should not have such sorrow! What a cruel act this is!"

He covered his face with the sleeves of his armor and wept. But he could no longer stand there weeping. Then as he was wrapping the head in a cloth, he found a flute in a brocade bag tucked into a sash around the boy's waist.

"What a tragedy! At dawn I heard the sound of a flute from within the Heike lines. It was this youth who was playing. Among the hundred thousand warriors on our side, there is no one who has carried with him a flute to a battlefield. What a gentle life these nobles and courtiers have led!"

Murmuring these words, he returned to his own army. When he presented the head to Yoshitsune for inspection, all the warriors shed tears in sympathy. It was soon recognized as the head of Lord Atsumori, only seventeen years of age, a son of the chief of the Palace Repairs Division, Tsunemori.

It is said that the flute had first been possessed by Emperor Toba who gave it to Atsumori's grandfather, Tadamori, an excellent player of the instrument. It was then passed on to his son Tsunemori, who in turn gave it to Atsumori, since his surpassing talent on the flute deserved his possession of it. This flute was known as Saeda.

Even singing, an exaggeration of words and speech, can now and then cause enlightenment to awaken in a man. Simply the sound of this flute played by Atsumori inspired Naozane to pursue the way to the Buddha. (Kitagawa and Tsuchida, *The Tale of the Heike,* pp. 561–563; *Heike monogatari,* vol. 33, pp. 219–222)

In the end, the Heike are forced to leave the capital city of Kyoto. They take the young emperor with them as a kind of talisman. In a great battle, the young child is drowned because his grandmother, Nii-dono, wishes to protect him from the ignominy of capture. His death is in many ways the most shocking and saddest scene in the entire chronicle.

Genji warriors had overrun all of the Heike boats and had slain the helmsmen. The Heike defenses had degenerated into complete collapse—escape was no longer

possible. As his soldiers flung themselves in panic to the bottoms of their boats, Tomomori could feel death approaching. Boarding a small boat, he rowed to the imperial vessel.

"We are in the midst of a catastrophe! Destroy everything and throw it into the sea!" he ordered. "We must ready ourselves to meet our end."

The vessel was scoured from the stem to stern, swept and mopped to leave nothing graceless in the wake of death. All the while court ladies questioned Tomomori: "Vice-Councilor, how goes the battle?"

"You will soon receive some men of the east as your unexpected guests!" he answered with a bitter laugh.

"How can you make fun of us at a time like this?" they wept.

Nii-dono had determined to destroy herself; no fear showed in her face. Calm, unlike the others, she put on a double outer dress of dark gray mourning color, tucked up her glossy silk skirts, secured the sacred jewel under her arm, and placed the sacred sword in her sash. Then she took the emperor in her arms and said: "Though I am a woman, I shall not fall into the hands of the enemy. I shall accompany His Majesty. Any among you who remain faithful to him follow me!" With these words, she made her way to the gunwale of the imperial vessel.

The emperor was then eight years old but looked much older. He was so handsome that it was as if an aura of light glowed around his head. His long raven locks flowed loosely down his back. With a puzzled expression on his face, he inquired: "Where are you going to take me, grandmother?"

Nii-dono turned her gaze to him and suppressing her tears, replied: "Your Majesty cannot know what this is all about! Since you had mastered the Buddha's Ten Precepts in a former life, you were blessed to ascend to the supreme place of honor as the emperor in this world. But the day of this destiny is over, and now an evil karma is about to carry you away to the world beyond. I pray you—first turn to the east to bid farewell to the Sun Goddess of the Great Ise Shrine, and then to the west to repeat 'Hail Amida Buddha,' so that Amida will welcome you to the Pure Land Paradise in the west."

Thus instructed by Nii-dono, the emperor put on a parrot green silk outer robe and had his hair bound up at the sides. Tears rushed down his cheeks as he joined his little palms. He first turned to the east to bid farewell to the Sun Goddess and then to the west to repeat "Hail Amida Buddha."

Nii-dono took the emperor in her arms and consoled him, saying: "In the depths of the waves you will find a capital!" With these words, she plunged with him to the bottom of the sea.

What a pity it was that the fleeting spring breeze should carry away the sacred flower, and that the uncompassionate waves of life and death should thus engulf the jeweled person! His abode in the capital was called Long Life Hall, and the gate of his palace Eternal Youth, through which nothing of great age was allowed to pass. In spite of this, before he reached the age of ten he became but mud at the bottom of

the sea. How transient his life—that he was obliged to abandon the throne rewarded him for his mastery of the Buddha's Ten Precepts! The dragon above the clouds suddenly plunged below the surface of the sea only to become a fish. In times past he had resided in a heavenly palace as great as that of the king of the Paradise of Bonten or the Palace of Correct Views of Ten-taishaku [one of the tutelary gods of Buddhism], and had been waited upon by kinsmen, courtiers, and ministers. After such an elegant life at court, he had been deprived of his comfort and was forced to live rudely on board a tossing boat until at last he met an ignominious end beneath the waves. (Kitagawa and Tsuchida, *The Tale of the Heike,* pp. 676–677; *Heike monogatari,* vol. 33, pp. 335–337)

Withdrawal

As we have already seen, one prevalent attitude that grew in importance in this period was that of withdrawal from the world. This ideal of retreat formed an essential component of the social and spiritual attitudes of the time. As was mentioned above, poets such as Saigyō began to take the path of withdrawal even before the fall of the court culture, but with the collapse of the court, there were many who found withdrawal an ideal to be cherished and, if possible, followed. There was, strictly speaking, no one term used in the Japanese language at that time to capture these attitudes, but this congruence of convictions and beliefs remained extremely important, even down to twentieth-century Japan, when such a haiku poet as Taneda Santōka (1882–1940) roamed the mountains and villages of rural Japan, begging, drinking, and writing his verses.

The attitude of withdrawal found an early and classic exposition in Chōmei's *An Account of My Hut.* The son of a Shintō priest, Chōmei was born to a position of considerable status, but eventually he gave this up to live in what he called his "ten-foot-square hut." The text, sophisticated, ironic, and sometimes playful, should perhaps not be taken altogether at face value, but the persona of the recluse he created was to become the model, and the ideal, for many succeeding generations.

I inherited the house of my father's grandmother and for a long time lived there. Afterward I lost my position and fell on hard times. Many things led me to live in seclusion, and finally, unable longer to remain in my ancestral home, in my thirties I built after my own plans a little cottage. It was a bare tenth the size of the house in which I had lived, and being intended just as a place where I might stay it had no pretensions about it. An earthen wall was, it is true, raised around it, but I lacked the means to put up an ornamental gate. I also built a rough shed of bamboo posts for my carriage. I must confess that when the snow fell or gales blew, I could not but feel alarmed; and

since the house was near the Kamo River, there was considerable danger of flooding as well as the threat of bandits.

For over thirty years I had tormented myself by putting up with all the things of this unhappy world. During this time each stroke of misfortune had naturally made me realize the fragility of my life. In my fiftieth year, then, I became a priest and turned my back on the world. Not having any family, I had no ties that would make abandoning the world difficult. I had no rank or stipend—what was there for me to cling to? How many years had I vainly spent among the cloud-covered hills of Ohara?

Now that I have reached the age of sixty, and my life seems about to evaporate like the dew, I have fashioned a lodging for the last leaves of my years. It is a hut where, perhaps, a traveler might spend a single night; it is like the cocoon spun by an aged silk worm. This hut is not even a hundredth the size of the cottage where I spent my middle years.

Before I was aware, I had become heavy with years, and with each remove my dwelling grew smaller. The present hut is of no ordinary appearance. It is a bare ten feet square and less than seven feet high. I did not choose this particular spot rather than another, and I built my house without consulting any diviners. I laid a foundation and roughly thatched a roof. I fastened hinges to the joints of the beams, the easier to move elsewhere should anything displease me. What difficulty would there be in changing my dwelling? A bare two carts would suffice to carry off the whole house, and except for the carter's fee there would be no expenses at all.

Since first I hid my traces here in the heart of Mount Hino, I have added a lean-to on the south and a porch of bamboo. On the west I have built a shelf for holy water, and inside the hut, along the west wall, I have installed an image of Amida. The light of the setting sun shines between its eyebrows. On the doors of the reliquary I have hung pictures of Fugen [the highest of the Bodhisattvas] and Fudō [chief of the Buddhist Guardian Kings]. Above the sliding door that faces north I have built a little shelf on which I keep three or four black leather baskets that contain books of poetry and music and extracts from the sacred writings. Beside them stand a folding *koto* and a lute.

Along the east wall I have spread long fern fronds and mats of straw which serve as my bed for the night. I have cut open a window in the eastern wall, and beneath it have made a desk. Near my pillow is a square brazier in which I burn brushwood. To the north of the hut I have staked out a small plot of land which I have enclosed with a rough fence and made into a garden. I grow many species of herbs there.

This is what my temporary hut is like. I shall now attempt to describe its surroundings. To the south there is a bamboo pipe which empties water into the rock pool I have laid. The woods come close to my house, and it is thus a simple matter for me to gather brushwood. The mountain is named Toyama. Creeping vines block the trails and the valleys are overgrown, but to the west is a clearing, and my surroundings thus do not leave me without spiritual comfort. In the spring I see waves of wisteria like

purple clouds, bright in the west. In the summer I hear the cuckoo call, promising to guide me on the road of death. In the autumn the voice of the evening insects fills my ears with a sound of lamentation for this cracked husk of a world. In winter I look with deep emotion on the snow, piling up and melting away like sins and hindrances to salvation.

When I do not feel like reciting the *nembutsu* and cannot put my heart into reading the Sutras, no one will keep me from resting or being lazy, and there is no friend who will feel ashamed of me. Even though I make no special attempt to observe the discipline of silence, living alone automatically makes me refrain from the sins of speech; and though I do not necessarily try to obey the Commandments, here where there are no temptations what should induce me to break them?

I do not prescribe my way of life to men enjoying happiness and wealth, but have related my experiences merely to show the differences between my former and present life. Ever since I fled the world and became a priest, I have known neither hatred nor fear. I leave my span of days for Heaven to determine, neither clinging to life nor begrudging its end. My body is like a drifting cloud—I ask for nothing, I want nothing. My greatest joy is a quiet nap; my only desire for this life is to see the beauties of the seasons. (Selected from Keene, *Anthology of Japanese Literature,* pp. 205–212; Hōjōki, pp. 35–45)

In this construct of emotions, the past often seems more important than the present. Yoshida Kenkō, many decades later, reflects similar attitudes in a passage from his *Essays in Idleness.* Kenkō speaks of his friends who have died, but there is a larger dimension here as well. In the Heian period, those privileged to live at court felt that their contemporary civilization was the best their world had ever seen. Now, in the long aftermath of the civil wars, the present was often sensed as dreary, if not dangerous; only the past held one particular kind of beauty, that of nostalgia for something that could never come again.

When I sit down in quiet meditation, the one emotion hardest to fight against is a longing in all things for the past. After the others have gone to bed, I pass the time on a long autumn's night by putting in order whatever belongings are at hand. As I tear up scraps of old correspondence I should prefer not to leave behind, I sometimes find among them samples of the calligraphy of a friend who has died, or pictures he drew for his own amusement, and I feel exactly as I did at the time. Even with letters written by friends who are still alive I try, when it has been long since we met, to remember the circumstances, the year. What a moving experience that is! It is sad to think that a man's familiar possessions, indifferent to his death, should remain unaltered long after he is gone. (Keene, *Essays in Idleness,* pp. 29–30; *Tsurezuregusa,* pp. 113–114)

Yūgen

Another aesthetic predisposition that came into use at this time can be captured in the term *yūgen*. The word is particularly difficult to translate but is sometimes rendered as a sense of the mysterious and sublime, of "mystery and depth," that can only be sensed indirectly. In the view of the leading poet of his time, Fujiwara no Teika (1162–1241), *waka* poetry showing these qualities was of the highest order. Perhaps the most eloquent definition of the term can be found in an important treatise on poetry by Kamo no Chōmei, *A Treatise without a Name (Mumyōshō)*. Chōmei includes his discussion under the rubric of "modern style," cast in the form of questions and answers.

Question: I understand your explanations of the material under discussion thus far, but when it comes to the so-called style of mystery and depth, I find it very difficult to comprehend just how one should go about it. I wish you would be so kind as to teach it to me.

Answer: Every poetic style is difficult to master. Even the old collections of oral traditions and guides to composition only explain such difficulties as it is possible to resolve by taking someone by the hand and leading him along, as it were, and when it comes to poetic effects we find nothing at all precise.

This is all the more true of the style of mystery and depth, whose very name is enough to confound one. Since I do not understand it at all well myself, I am at a loss as to how to describe it in any satisfactory manner, but according to the views of those who have developed the skill necessary to penetrate its mysteries, the qualities deemed essential to the style are overtones that do not appear in the words alone and an atmosphere that is not visible in the configuration of the poem. When both conception and diction are full of charm, these other virtues will be present of themselves.

On an autumn evening, for example, there is no color in the sky nor any sound, yet although we cannot give any definite reason for it, we are somehow moved to tears. The average person lacking in sensibility finds nothing at all impressive in such a sight—he admires only the cherry blossoms and the scarlet autumn leaves that he can see with his own eyes. Or again, it is like the situation of a beautiful woman who, although she has cause for resentment, does not give vent to her feelings in words, but is only faintly discerned—at night, perhaps—to be in a profoundly distressed condition. The effect of such a discovery is far more painful and pathetic than if she had exhausted her vocabulary with jealous accusations or made a point of wringing out her tear-drenched sleeves to one's face.

By these two analogies it should be evident that this is a matter impossible for people of little poetic sensibility and shallow feelings to understand. . . . How can

such things be easily learned or expressed precisely in words? The individual can only comprehend them for himself.

Again, when one gazes upon the autumn hills half-concealed by a curtain of mist, what one sees is veiled yet profoundly beautiful; such a shadowy scene, which permits free exercise of the imagination in picturing how lovely the whole panoply of scarlet leaves must be, is far better than to see them spread with dazzling clarity before our eyes.

What is difficult about expressing one's personal feelings in so many words—in saying that the moon is bright or in praising the cherry blossoms simply by declaring that they are beautiful? What superiority do such poems have over mere ordinary prose? It is only when many meanings are compressed into a single word, when the depths of feeling are exhausted yet not expressed, when an unseen world hovers in the atmosphere of the poem, when the mean and common are used to express the elegant, when a poetic conception of rare beauty is developed to the fullest extent in a style of surface simplicity—only then, when the conception is exalted to the highest degree and "the words are too few," will the poem, by expressing one's feelings in this way, have the power of moving Heaven and Earth within the brief confines of a mere thirty-one syllables, and be capable of softening the hearts of gods and demons. (Brower and Miner, *Japanese Court Poetry,* p. 269; *Mumyōshō,* pp. 86–88)

Yūgen as an aesthetic concept was later adopted by Zeami Motokiyo (1364?–1443?), undoubtedly the greatest writer of *nō* drama and *nō* theories in the history of the form. As a young man, Zeami studied Japanese poetry, the Chinese classics, and other elements considered important for an aristocratic education in his period. Zeami's major principles concerning the theater are discussed below in the section on the *nō* drama, but this passage from one of his treatises will help reveal the pervasiveness of the term.

Entering the realm of *yūgen*

The aesthetic quality of *yūgen* is considered the highest ideal of perfection in many arts. Particularly in the *nō, yūgen* can be regarded as the highest principle. However, although the quality *of yūgen* is manifested in performance and audiences give it high appreciation, there are very few actors in fact who possess this quality. This is because they never had a taste of the real *yūgen* themselves. So it is that few actors have entered this world.

What kind of realm is represented by what is termed *yūgen?* For example, if we take the general appearance of the world and observe the various sorts of people who live there, it might be said that *yūgen* is best represented in the character of the nobility, whose deportment is of such a high quality and who receive the attention and respect not given to others in society. If such is the case, then, their dignified and mild appearance represents the essence of *yūgen.* Therefore, the stage appearance of *yūgen*

is best indicated by their refined and elegant carriage. If an actor examines closely the nobility's beautiful way of speaking and studies the words and habitual means of expression that such elevated persons use, even to observing their tasteful choice of language when saying the smallest things, such can be taken to represent the *yūgen* of speech. In the case of the chant, when the melody flows smoothly and naturally on the ear and sounds suitably mild and calm, this quality can be said to represent the *yūgen* of music. In the case of the dance, if the actor studies until he is truly fluent, so that his appearance on stage will be sympathetic and his carriage both unostentatious and moving to those who observe him, he will surely manifest the *yūgen* of the dance. When he is acting a part, if he makes his appearance beautiful in the Three Role Types [an old person, a woman, a warrior], he will have achieved *yūgen* in his performance. Again, when presenting a role of fearsome appearance, a demon's role for example, even should the actor use a rough manner to a certain extent, he must not forget to preserve a graceful appearance, and he must remember the principles of "what is felt in the heart is ten, [what appears in movement seven]," and "violent body movements, gentle foot movements," so that his stage appearance will remain elegant. Thus he may manifest the *yūgen* of a demon's role.

An actor must come to grasp those various types of *yūgen* and absorb them within himself; for no matter what kind of role he may assume, he must never separate himself from the virtue of *yūgen.* No matter what the role—whether the character be of high rank or low rank, a man, a woman, a priest or lay person, a farmer or country person, even a beggar or an outcast—it should seem as though each were holding a branch of flowers in his hand. In this one respect they all must exhibit the same appeal, despite whatever differences they may show in their social positions. This Flower represents the beauty of their stance in the *nō;* and the ability to reveal this kind of stance in performance represents, of course, its spirit. In order to study the *yūgen* of words, the actor must study the art of composing poetry; and to study the *yūgen* of physical appearance, he must study the aesthetic qualities of elegant costume, so that, in every respect of his art, no matter how the role may change that the actor is playing, he will always maintain one aspect of his performance that shows *yūgen.* Such it is to know the seed of *yūgen.* (Selected and adapted from Rimer and Yamazaki, *On the Art of the Nō Drama,* pp. 92–94; *Nōgaku ronshū,* pp. 424–425)

Finally, the role of the arts in personal cultivation was to remain extremely significant. The mark of a person of breeding included an exposure to various classical arts and accomplishments, a concept considerably at variance with most of our own contemporary notions. The following selection from *Essays in Idleness* explicates a number of these assumptions.

The most important qualifications of a man are familiarity with the classics and a knowledge of the teachings of the sages. Next is handwriting; even if a man does

not make this art his chief study, he should learn it anyway, for it will help him in his learning. Next, he should study medicine. A knowledge of medicine is indispensable in order to keep oneself in good health, to help others, and to fulfill one's duties of loyalty and filial affection. Next, archery and riding certainly deserve attention, for they are listed among the Six Arts. A knowledge of letters, arms, and medicine is truly essential. Any man who would study these arts cannot be called an idler.

Next, since food nurtures man like Heaven itself, a knowledge of how to prepare tasty food must be accounted a great asset in a man. Next comes manual skill, which has innumerable uses.

As for other things, too many accomplishments are an embarrassment to the gentleman. Proficiency in poetry and music, both noble arts, has always been esteemed by rulers and subjects alike, but it would seem that nowadays they are neglected as a means of governing the country. Gold is the finest of the metals but it cannot compare to iron in its many uses. (Keene, *Essays in Idleness,* pp. 104–105; *Tsurezuregusa,* pp. 188–189)

Before moving on to specific forms of artistic expression, we should note that as time went on, there was a distinct shift away from a taste for elegance and refinement, which had reached its apogee in the preceding Heian era, to a preference among many for the muted, subtle, rustic, and understated. One may see the strong influence of Zen in this change of aesthetic; it appears in all the arts, perhaps most tellingly in the writings on the tea ceremony that end this part of the book.

Poetry

Waka

As mentioned above, *waka* poetry, the techniques of which remained the province of the Heian nobility, remained the most highly regarded literary form during this period. Poetry was considered a public art, and those wishing to participate in poetry contests often took lessons in how to master the intricacies of the tradition. For this reason, a number of treatises were written by eminent teachers for their pupils. Readers seeking specific details should consult the list provided under further readings, since many of these treatises are somewhat technical in nature and require some knowledge of both classical Japanese and the traditions of *waka* poetry in order to be fully understood. We have included here a series of more general statements about the art of poetry by some of the greatest poets and writers of this period.

Fujiwara Teika (1162–1241) was one of the most gifted poets and critics in the entire history of *waka* poetry. He is generally credited with having consolidated

the tradition after the confusions of the 1185 civil wars, and his critical writings remained a central point of reference for aspiring poets for many centuries. Here is a striking passage from a letter to one of his pupils, now referred to as *Monthly Notes (Maigetsushō)*, in which he discusses the central importance of the "style of intense feeling" *(ushin)*.

Among the ten styles there is not one in which the true nature of poetry resides more wholly than in the style of intense feeling. It is extremely difficult to create, for it cannot by any means be put together at random in any of a variety of ways. Only when one has composed one's thoughts and entered into the unique realm of this style is it possible to compose in it, and even at that success is rare. It must be for this reason that great poetry has been said to be possible only when every poem is suffused with deep feeling. However, if one goes through excessive contortions in the effort to instill even greater feeling into it, the poem will be overdone and overcomplicated, and such defective, imperfect, and incomprehensible poems are even more distasteful and ugly than those which lack feeling. The borderline between success and failure is of supreme importance and must constantly be given the most careful thought. Those who are serious about this art must not even occasionally compose in an easygoing manner without concentrating their minds. To produce a faultily constructed poem not only becomes a source of embarrassment by inviting the adverse criticisms of one's detractors, but also leads to the debilitation of one's artistic powers. Thus one hears of people who, having brought criticism upon themselves, have pined away and died of chagrin, or who, having had a fine poem expropriated by someone else, have after death appeared in dreams weeping and lamenting and demanding the return of their poems, with the result that these have been expunged from the imperial anthologies. Instances of this kind are not limited to the ones I have cited, and I find them most affecting.

One must take pains, both on the days of preparation for a poetry meeting or competition, and on informal occasions, to compose one's poems with great care, reciting them over and over to oneself. Carelessness will inevitably give rise to adverse criticism later on. You, my lord, should continually have your mind fixed upon poems that are in the style of intense feeling. However, there are times when it is quite impossible to compose in this style. When one feels ill at ease and the depths of one's heart are in turmoil, no amount of effort will succeed in producing a poem in the style of intense feeling. If one persists in trying to produce such a poem under such conditions, one's artistic powers will weaken and the result will be a faultily constructed poem. At such times one should compose "lively" poems, that is, poems whose style and phrasing are light and easy, and whose over-all effect, though lacking in any deep emotion, is somehow pleasing to the ear. This advice should be especially borne in mind on informal occasions when the topics are not given out in advance, for even

such trivial poems as these will, when one has composed four or five or as many as ten of them, disperse one's heavy spirits and quicken one's sensibilities so that one can compose with assurance. (Brower and Miner, *Japanese Court Poetry,* pp. 258–259; *Maigetsushō,* pp. 127–129)

Kamo no Chōmei, the author of *An Account of My Hut,* was also an important poet. In his treatise on poetry, *A Treatise without a Name,* mentioned above, he describes in striking detail the character and actions of the poets of his period and discusses the various skills necessary for them to acquire. In his remarks, Chōmei also makes clear the complex politics of poetry composition at the time.

Section 55: *Disorderliness at Poetry Contests in Recent Years*

When attending poetry contests sponsored by various people in these days, it becomes evident that, starting with the setup of the meeting place, down to careless habits about clothing, there is no limit to the growing disorder in appearance and style. Although titles may be announced as long as ten or twenty days before the day of the meeting, people—I really can't imagine what they are doing all day—prepare their poems at the meeting, thus idling away the time until very late in the night, spoiling the pleasure; they disregard the regulations about discussion periods and chatter, each about his own private affairs; they have no sense of shame in the presence of the great experts and quite openly give themselves exalted airs as if they knew everything. There is no one who gives praises and reprimands on the basis of a profound knowledge of what the *uta* should be. And even when people of the older generation now and then decide about what is good and bad in poems, they take care not to hurt anybody's feelings; they give priority to their favorites; thus it becomes uninteresting to devote much thought to the composition of poems, and to bring forth a good poem is like wearing embroidered silk on a dark night. They think that it is a good thing to recite aloud and they stretch their necks and strain their voices; it is quite horrible. In all this there is a lot of noise but no dignity and what was meant to be graceful just looks artificial. The reason for this is that they don't feel any real attachment from the bottom of their hearts, but want to get an understanding of the way of the *uta* by sheer imitation.

Section 62: *The Lay Priest Dōin and His Devotion to the* Uta

In his devotion to the discipline of the *uta* there was none to match the Lay Priest Dōin. Until his eighties he went on foot every month to the shrine of Sumiyoshi, praying to the gods that they might help him compose fine poems. He deserves praise for this. At one poetry contest, with Kiyosuke as judge, one of Dōin's poems lost; obtrusively Dōin made his way to the judge, real tears rolling down his cheeks, and he complained with sobs. Kiyosuke did not know what to say. When he told of

the incident later, he said that he had never experienced a matter of such an extreme. When Dōin reached his nineties, probably because he could not hear well, at poetry contests he would draw close to the seat of the judge and stick by his side. The appearance of this old man listening so intently was an unusually impressive sight. The compilation of the *Collection of a Thousand Years (Senzaishū)* was undertaken after the death of this Lay Priest. Even after he had passed away, the memory of his particular devotion to the discipline of the *uta* was so alive that eighteen of his poems were graciously accepted for that anthology, and when he was seen in a dream expressing his joy with tears in his eyes, it was so moving that another two poems were added, now making twenty altogether. This is how it must have happened.

Section 65: *Lord Toshinari's Daughter and the Kunaikyō Working at the Elaboration of Their Poems*

During the reign of the present emperor there are two ladies, one known as Lord Toshinari's daughter, the other as the Kunaikyō, who possess such skill in composition that they need not shun comparison with the masters of old times. They are however very different in their method of composition. I have heard that when Lord Toshinari's daughter composes for court recitation, she goes through different anthologies a few days before the event, reading them with care again and again, and when she feels that she has read enough, she puts everything aside, dims her lamp and, shutting herself off from other people, puts her mind to work. The Kunaikyō keeps books and scrolls open around her from beginning to end, uses a shortened lamp stand to have the light close and works at her poems day and night without break. This lady has become sick because of excessive concentration on the composition of poetry and has once been on the verge of death. Her father, a Zen Priest, warned her: 'Everything depends on your being alive. How can you be so absorbed in your poetry that you become sick!' But she did not listen to his advice, and when she finally died it must have been because of an accumulation of such things.

Jakuren appreciated this very much and despised her brother, the Major General Soechika, who certainly showed no eagerness in regard to poetry. He expressed his regret about it, saying: "Why is he that way? How did he come by his present status? When I occasionally visit his chamber of night duty at the palace, even when there is an official gathering of poets, he scatters bows and whistling arrows around, has the marksmen sit before him, and cares nothing about the poetry contest." (Selected from Kato, "The Mumyōshō," pp. 393, 396–398; *Mumyōshō,* pp. 38–45)

Renga

Renga, which is usually translated as "linked verse," began as a game or pastime, but by the medieval period, it had become a serious form of poetic art. *Renga* is a communal form of poetic composition, usually involving a group of poets who ex-

change "links" in a set length, which most often ranged from twenty to a hundred sections. The *waka* form of thirty-one syllables is broken down into two units, 5-7-5 and 7-7, and each poet participating in a given round makes a link, so that the first poet writes a verse of 5-7-5, the second poet a link of 7-7, the next poet 5-7-5, and so on. The opening verse *(hokku)* is particularly important, as it sets the tone for the entire sequence. Some of the principles developed for *renga* composition continued on during the Edo period, when similar concepts came to serve as guides in the composition of *haiku* and *haikai* (see below).

The rules for *renga* compositions are extremely complex and involve a set relationship between the movement of the individual topics within a given sequence and a general rhythmic movement of *jo* (introduction), *ha* (development), and *kyū* (fast finale), moving from slow to fast in much the same manner as in the succeeding sections of a *nō* play. Those wishing details of the technique of *renga* composition should consult Earl Miner's study on Japanese linked poetry, cited in the bibliography, for a clear and thorough discussion of the various principles involved.

The person generally credited with changing *renga* from a parlor game into a form of high poetic art is the courtier and poet Nijō Yoshimoto (1320–1388). In his writings, he chose talent rather than learning as the basis for success in this difficult art.

Renga arises from within one's heart and must be learned for oneself. There is absolutely no need to learn from master teachers. One should constantly seek out occasions for composing *renga* with accomplished poets. . . . To practice *renga* solely at gatherings of incompetent poets is worse than not practicing at all. This is something one must be careful about when one is a beginner. It is also why the *renga* of even skilled poets suffers if they live in the hinterland, for however short a time. . . . The only way to improve as a poet is to practice with superior poets and acquire experience at attending sessions. In addition, one should gain inspiration by perusing the *Kokinshū* and the two collections which follow, *The Tale of Genji, The Tales of Ise,* books of *utamakura* [places that have inspired poets in the past], and suchlike works. (Keene, *Seeds in the Heart,* pp. 927–928, adapted; *Rengaron-shū,* p. 37)

Yoshimoto realized the difficulties in beginning to learn how to master this still new and complex art.

While one is still a beginner, one should not ponder too much one's verses. As is true also for the other arts, it is better to express one's first thoughts as they come, rather than mull over the pros and cons which can lead only to confusion. However, when a good many outsiders and other accomplished poets are present at a session, the beginner should hesitate somewhat to speak out. Even after he has become skillful

at composing *renga,* he will still find it difficult to decide on the spot whether a given verse of his own is good or bad. It frequently happens that even when the poet himself thinks a verse is poor, the judge may award it high marks for its skill. This is not a sign of incompetence on the judge's part nor is it proof that the poet cannot tell his good from his bad verses. It occurs simply because at a certain moment a particular verse just happens to have caught the judge's fancy. (Keene, *Seeds in the Heart,* p. 928; *Rongaron-shū,* p. 38)

Another important poet who wrote on *renga* was the Buddhist priest Shinkei (1406–1475). A fine *waka* poet himself, he felt that this art was now in decline. In his view, *renga* was the poetic art most appropriate to his times. In his manifesto-like statement below, he echoes the preface to the *Kokinshū,* composed some five centuries before.

In recent times the art of the *waka* has been completely abandoned, and I therefore thought I would try to study and clarify this art of the *renga* as sincerely as I could, in the hope that I might embody in *renga* at least some fragments of the teachings of *waka,* soften the hearts of soldiers and rustics, and transmit its feelings to people of later ages. (Keene, *Seeds in the Heart,* p. 944; cited in Okuno, *Rengashi,* p. 103)

For Shinkei, a *renga* poet of the highest talents can keep in mind at the same time both the meaning of each particular verse and the larger sense of the whole as the sequence develops. The following observation is from his most well-known book of poetic criticism, *Whisperings (Sasamegoto),* written in 1463.

Question: Why is it that the verses by a poet who has attained the highest realm of expression should become increasingly difficult to understand?

Answer: Our predecessors have discussed this matter. It is to be expected that ordinary people who have ears only for the verse that has just been linked should find it difficult to understand the mind of a man for whom the study and practice of this art involve not disregarding the meaning of every previous verse and every single particle. He keeps the whole of the hundred links in mind, constantly going back and forth, considering links that skip a verse or repeat an earlier theme, and he gives careful thought even to the link that the next man is likely to append to his own verse. (Keene, *Seeds in the Heart,* pp. 945–946; *Rengaron-shū,* p. 126)

Renga in one sense was a natural development from the *waka* poetry contests that began in the Heian period. Yet although the public recitation of poetry is a part of the Western tradition as well, there seems to be no form of serious poetry that is meant to be composed by a group rather than by a single poet.

Painting

The mysterious power of art is well expressed in a tale taken from the thirteenth-century *A Collection of Tales from Uji* concerning a painter named Yoshihide (who, incidentally, has never been identified). This striking anecdote was later recast into a celebrated short story entitled "Hell Screen" (Jigokuhen), written in 1919 by the great modern Japanese novelist Akutagawa Ryūnosuke (1872–1927).

How Yoshihide, a Painter of Buddhist Pictures,
Took Pleasure in Seeing His House on Fire

Again, long ago there was a painter of Buddhist pictures named Yoshihide. His neighbor's house caught fire, and when the flames threatened to engulf Yoshihide's house too, he saved himself by running out into the street. Inside the house he had some pictures of Buddhist divinities that he had been commissioned to paint. Also inside were his wife and children, all caught there without even having time to dress. But Yoshihide did not give them a thought, he simply stood on the other side of the street congratulating himself on his own escape. As he watched, he could see that the fire now had a grip on his own house, and he continued to watch from the other side of the street until the house was a mass of billowing smoke and flame. Several people came up to him to express their sympathy at this awful disaster, but he was completely unperturbed, and when asked why, all he did was to go on standing there on the other side of the street watching his house burn, nodding his head and every now and then breaking into a laugh. "What a stroke of luck!" he said. "This is something I've never been able to paint properly for all these years." The people who had come to express their condolences asked him how he could just stand there like that. "What a shocking way to behave! Has some demon got into you?" they asked. Yoshihide, however, only stood laughing scornfully, and replied, "Of course not. For years now I've not been able to paint a good halo of fire in my pictures of the god Fudō. Now that I've seen this, I've learned what a fire really looks like. That's a real stroke of luck. If you want to make a living at this branch of art, you can have any number of houses you like—provided you're good at painting Buddhas and gods. It's only because you have no talent for art that you set such store by material things."

It was perhaps from this time on that he began to paint pictures of his "Curling Fudō," which even nowadays people praise so highly. (Mills, *A Collection of Tales from Uji,* pp. 196–197; *Uji shūi monogatari,* pp. 127–128)

Most Japanese consider the Zen-inspired ink painter Sesshū Tōyō (1420–1506) to be the greatest artist of the period and one of the most powerful in the history of Japanese art. He was able to work in both a strongly outlined style and a softer "bro-

ken ink" tradition, but always with confident and forceful brushwork. The Ashikaga shoguns were among his patrons, and he was sent along with an official Japanese delegation to China in 1467 and remained there until 1469. During his stay, he met a number of important painters and government officials and was considered by his Chinese hosts the superior of their own artists at the time. Sesshū studied carefully the works he saw there, and many of those impressions helped shape the great paintings of his mature years. Sesshū wrote little about his own views of art, but the few fragments that remain are of great value.

Sesshū evidently believed in the necessity of observing nature. In one manuscript that has been preserved, he wrote as follows:

In painting landscapes, trees and other such objects should be profoundly subtle. The best practice is to copy with easy strokes (easily but not slavishly) the brushwork of the Chinese painter Ma Yüan [Ma Yuan, fl. 1200] and Hsia Kuei [Xia Gui, fl. 1190–1230] and others. Although the ancients said that "painting is not an imitation of other things," real landscape, that is, everything seen before one's eyes, is the proper teacher in painting. (Covell, *Under the Seal of Sesshū,* p. 5, adapted; *Koga bikō,* vol. 2, p. 675)

The poet-priest Genryū, who accompanied Sesshū on the voyage to China, confirmed this attitude on Sesshū's part.

When the venerable Sesshū went to China, I was on the same boat. He saw, one after another, all the famous cities, the prosperity and beauty of the capitals and the provinces, every sort of barbarian people from those clothed in grass to those robed in wool, and other things of strange form—he sketched every one of these. It will be understood without more words why his power of execution equals his great inspiration. (Covell, *Under the Seal of Sesshū,* p. 21, adapted; *Koga bikō,* vol. 2, pp. 668–669)

Genryū wrote as well on Sesshū's remarkable reception in China.

Art took him to far places, even to the Middle Flowery Kingdom. The Emperor looked at his paintings and considered them rare treasures of the country and did not allow him to paint without an edict. Finally he was given the First Seat in the famous Tendō temple in order to show appreciation for his art. Upon his return to Japan, his reputation increased tenfold.

Sesshū said, "Within the great country of China, there are no painting masters. That is not to say that there are no paintings, but no painting teachers there except

as there are mountains . . . and as there are rivers . . . strange plants, trees, birds, and beasts, different men and their manners and customs. Such are the real paintings of China. In regard to the techniques of using ink and the art of handling the brush, these must be mastered first in the mind and then translated by the hand—things which I should do for myself.

That is what I mean by saying that there are no teachers in China." Sesshū's painting is inspired and excellent. Truly he is one man in a thousand years. (Covell, *Under the Seal of Sesshū,* p. 24, adapted; *Koga bikō,* vol. 2, p. 671)

When Sesshū returned to Japan, the Ōnin civil war was beginning to devastate Kyoto. After a period of wandering, Sesshū moved to the area now near the modern city of Yamaguchi in Yamaguchi Prefecture, where the Ōuchi family became his patron. After further travels, he returned to Yamaguchi, where he built his studio in a natural setting. There he was visited by scholars and others from all over the country. Sesshū asked another of his colleagues who traveled with him to China, the priest Ryōshin, to write a description of his studio. This account was probably composed in 1476, just as the Ōnin wars were ending.

The painter Sesshū has selected a beautiful spot in the northwestern corner of the province of Bungo and built there a small pavilion with a signboard reading "Heaven-Created Painting." In front, it is touched by the waters; behind soars a mountain range. At the left, there rises a solitary castle; two streams flow to the right. Here nature's situation and arrangement possesses a thousand changes, a myriad of appearances. Heaven has kept this spot ideal.

Those of the upper classes such as princes and others of the nobility, and those of the lower classes such as business men and merchants—all beg for a few strokes from his brush or any fragments that may be left about. Many come and go, and it is said that the crowds are held back from entering the studio by an iron gate, but this is mere gossip.

Through the open door let us look in at his seat. In every direction, paints and brushes lie disordered among large and small paintings. Some are on finely woven silk and others on coarse paper. There are rolls of finished and unfinished paintings rising to the ridge of the roof, while mounted paintings hang on the walls. At the end of the day, when weary in body and spirit from studying colors and painting the seasons, he rests by the railing, loosens his robes at the neck, and lets the wind caress his skin. Often he draws deep breaths and expands his lungs, meditating on the midden meaning of painting. (Covell, *Under the Seal of Sesshū,* p. 27, adapted; *Koga bikō,* vol. 2, p. 670)

Sesson Shūkei (1504–1589?), a later painter in the same tradition, consciously chose Sesshū as his spiritual source of inspiration and created both landscapes and

figure paintings of the highest quality. In this description of the art of painting, Sesson, like his master, stresses the importance of interior inspiration to exterior technique.

The art of painting is indeed the craft of the Immortals. While it is similar to calligraphy, there are some differences. Calligraphy is pattern which has no (pictorial) form; painting encompasses all things. When you create a painting, with brush infused with your spirit, you should wield the brush with a dedicated heart, as though on a holy pilgrimage through the seas and mountains.

Indeed, to create the myriad phenomena in a single stroke, like the dragon's stirring up clouds, and the tiger's calling up the winds, your spirit should freely manifest itself.

As for method, it is the speed of the brush which determines the quality of the brushwork. Having mastered the brush techniques of the bone and flesh brush strokes, one can manipulate the rise and fall, the clear and impure, the quality of light and shade. When you paint with the tip of the brush, make no distinction between the brush tip and your hand. This is what is meant by freedom of brushwork. Beware of using the belly of the brush, even inadvertently.

Whatever forms you wish to paint, apply the dark ink first and then the lighter tones. A painting should be about seven parts dark to three parts light tones. As for shading, when you divide up the picture according to near and distant areas, do not overlook the ratios of light and dark ink.

It is precisely the creation of a painting, that in observing the mysteries of nature and the phenomena of heaven and earth, should be considered the realm of the Tao.

Now, as for studying the paintings of former masters, if you strive only to emulate their brushwork, your own painting will not profit. For example, even with the paintings of Sesshū, whom I took as master, it was difficult to borrow and still maintain the integrity of my own brush. When copying in reverence to a master of the past, it is not your own brush at work. Therefore, in painting, in other words, in the patterns which recreate the universe, the brush should be handled with the strength of your own conviction, even though modeled and trained on the brushwork of your teachers. If you do not perform in this way, you cannot call the painting your own. I have studied Sesshū many years, but see how different my style is from his. As for the subject matter of painting, landscape and figure painting are the essentials and should be the backbone of your artistic endeavors.

Written by Sesson while living in Hedare in Hitachi, in the second lunar month of the eleventh year of Temmon (1542). (Cited in Ford, *A Study of the Painting of Sesson Shukei,* pp. 17–18; "Sesson," pp. 325–326)

Calligraphy

As was noted in the discussion on court culture above, the ability to write attractive and evocative calligraphy was considered an important cultural requisite for both men and women. The importance of that tradition continued, as Yoshida Kenkō points out in his *Essays in Idleness.* Given the woeful state of penmanship in our times, his words may well seem as painful to young Japanese as they do to us.

A person with a bad handwriting should not be embarrassed to write his own letters. There is something irritating about people who, pleading their writing is ugly, ask others to write for them. (Keene, *Essays in Idleness,* p. 33; *Tsurezuregusa,* p. 118)

The art of calligraphy was continually refined and then passed down from generation to generation. A number of treatises were written in the medieval period by masters of the art to guide young students. The most accessible of these, the *Summary of Calligraphy (Jubokushō),* was written in 1352 by an eminent calligrapher, Prince Son'en (1298–1356) for his student, the young emperor Go-Kōgen (r. 1352–1371). The treatise reveals the great patience and skill needed to master this difficult art and shows as well the debt that medieval calligraphers believed they owed not only to earlier masters in the Japanese tradition, but to the great Chinese classical calligraphers as well. Here are some excerpts from this treatise.

The Way of Holding the Brush

From the beginning of your training, you must hold the brush in the established manner. If you learn an improper grip, it will be difficult to correct. The proper grip is to place the brush halfway between the joints of the middle finger, supporting the brush with the side of the index finger and the flat of the thumb. Put both the third finger and the little finger firmly together without squeezing and place them under the middle finger, giving it strength. Keep the palm empty and without pressure. It is unsightly to bend the thumb knuckle in or out, so just keep it in the right position.

The correct shape of the hand when holding the brush is rounded and attractive. Although a difficult position at first, this grip will be especially beneficial later. Such a grip is fundamental in order to use the brush with facility and to write characters well. If your grip is poor, the characters likewise will be poor. You should also hold the brush quite firmly.

The Importance of Copying the Model Line by Line

Do not copy the model straight through from beginning to end. First, practice one or two Chinese poems over and over many times for many days. When the image of

the model emerges clearly in your mind and you are able to write an almost identical copy from memory, then proceed gradually further into your studies. If you practice well from the beginning, you will be able to duplicate the model later without putting in so much effort.

The Importance of Brushwork

Although the act of putting characters on paper is the same for the talented and the untalented calligrapher, it is the brushwork that determines the quality. The way to acquire this brushwork is to examine carefully and understand the classics of calligraphy. I invite you to ask me any further questions concerning these matters.

In the end, everyone who studies a model should be in accord with it and there should be no difference between his writing and the model. Those who practice incorrectly try to imitate the form of the characters. The form looks similar, but they cannot reproduce the vigor of the brush and so their characters seem to be without life. This is futile.

The shape of a character is, in a manner of speaking, a person's appearance, and the vigor of the brush is the expression of the workings of his heart. Ultimately, the study of any Way is a labor of the heart. If you base your study on the heart of the classic calligraphers and study the Way thoroughly, you will naturally master its mysteries.

At each bending, curving, horizontal, and vertical line, apply your bush according to the examples of the ancient masters; leave nothing to chance, and you will naturally gain proficiency. In the beginning of your studies, you should practice by taking the correct posture, concentrating while you move the brush quietly. After you have achieved proficiency, your writing will not depart from the rules of calligraphy even though you let the brush follow its own bent. Confucius said that by the age of seventy he could follow the desires of his heart and not transgress what was right. It is the same in this case, and it will be enough if you practice calligraphy in this way.

The brushwork of the classic masters is filled with life and displays no weakness. You should concentrate at the beginning and the end of each stroke and at every point, and write without a careless moment. The talented calligrapher pays close attention to every point of the stroke and puts his soul into it—the striking start, the pulling through, the turning, and the concluding lift. The writing of the untalented is as useless as a broken tree. Think of this spirit as you write each stroke and there will be no careless places. When there is even a single careless place, the entire character looks bad. If you fail to concentrate for even one character, everything becomes useless.

In broader terms, the energy of a floating cloud, a waterfall, a spring, the curving shape of a dragon or a serpent, and the bent form of an old pine—these in their own right are your models. In his own treatise, the Chinese calligrapher Wang Hsi-chih [Wang Xizhi] describes the narrowing-down stroke as a withered wisteria ten thousand years old. You should understand such matters. After all, the calligraphy of the talented is a living thing and looks as if it has been given life. As a result, the characters appear larger than they really are, because they are filled with purpose.

The Cycle of Good and Bad during Your Studies

While you are still a beginner and practicing calligraphy, your brush may suddenly stagnate and your characters will not resemble the model. Unexpected things inevitably occur. At such times you will become inattentive and entertain idle thoughts. Pay no heed, and just continue to practice as usual. Then, in four, five, or perhaps ten days, you will again improve and will surpass what you previously considered your best. This will happen again and again. Do not give up while you are a beginner. Over time your efforts will lead step by step to a mature form.

Times for Practice

Every day you should apply yourself for some time, about two to four hours. Of course you should not neglect your official meetings and other studies, for, needless to say, you cannot make writing practice your first priority. Still, there should be a proper time reserved for it.

The Importance of Having Many Models

It is important to have a wide range of models. Decide on one model for your practice, but peruse many others to further your studies.

Brushes

It is best to use a good brush even for practice. If your brush is different from the brush used for the model, the shape of your characters also will differ. A brush well suited to the copybook is best. In general, the brush to be used depends on the paper. A rabbit-hair brush for glossy paper and a deer-hair one for ordinary paper; the winter hair of the deer for spindle-tree paper; the summer hair for paper made in Sugihara; the summer hair again for silk; a wood brush for cloth. Wood brushes are made from the willow tree.

In ancient times they most often used summer hair, for such a brush can be used for all occasions. I have heard that the summer hair of old was particularly superb. The summer hair of recent times has deteriorated; the ends do not align and the brushes are hopeless. So unless you are writing on Sugihara paper, it is best simply to use rabbit hair. In general, brush hair is poor these days and there are no brushmakers; as a result, there are no good brushes. (Selected from DeCoker, "Secret Teachings in Medieval Calligraphy," pp. 197–228; *Kodai chūsei geijutsuron,* pp. 249–260. For those who wish to examine the entire treatise, plus other more technical treatises available in translation, consult the bibliography at the end of this book.)

Gardens

Since the preceding Heian period, gardens and the philosophy of gardening continued to constitute an important part of Japanese aesthetics. The principles set forth in *Notes on Garden Making (Sakuteiki),* cited earlier, were to continue in their importance, with the placement of rocks, trees, and waterfalls based on concepts found in Japanese and Chinese cosmology. Readers wishing details on these arrangements during this later period will enjoy consulting the translation of a treatise by Zōen (c. 1450), which can be found in *Secret Teachings in the Art of Japanese Gardens* by David A. Slawson, cited in the bibliography.

A new factor for some was the growing importance of Zen Buddhism, which, directly or indirectly, influenced so many of the arts during the period. One of the most celebrated garden designers during these centuries, Musō Kokushi (1275–1351; also referred to as Musō Soseki) was also a master poet and scholar, who shared many of the same enthusiasms and convictions as the painter Sesshū. His ability to combine his own garden design with the contours of the nearby natural surroundings helped push garden design at this period to new heights of elegance and subtlety. Two of his most famous constructions, which can still be seen in Kyoto, are the garden at the Tenryūji Temple in the Arashiyama district to the west of the city and the beautiful moss garden at the nearby Saihōji Temple. Both were constructed in 1339.

Musō's brief essay, "On Gardens and the Way," explains in suggestive and poetic terms his ideals as a designer of gardens in the context of Zen.

From Dialogues in the Dream, *section 57*

From ancient times until now there have been many who have delighted in raising up mounds of earth, making arrangements of stones, planting trees, and hollowing out watercourses. We call what they make "mountains and streams." Though all seem to share a common liking for this art of gardening, they are often guided by very different impulses.

There are those who practice the art of gardening out of vanity and a passion for display, with no interest whatever in their own true natures. They are concerned only with having their gardens attract the admiration of others.

And some, indulging their passion for acquiring things, add these "mountains and streams" to the accumulation of rare and expensive things that they possess, and end up by cherishing a passion for them. They select particularly remarkable stones and uncommon trees to have for their own. Such persons are insensible to the beauty of mountains and streams. They are merely people of the world of dust.

Po Lo-t'ien [Bo Letian] dug a little pool beside which he planted a few bamboos, which he cared for with love.[1] He wrote a poem about them:

1. Po Lo-t'ien is a sobriquet for Po Chü-i (Bo Juyi), a Chinese poet much loved in Japan during the Heian period and after.

The bamboo—its heart is empty.
It has become my friend.
The water—its heart is pure.
It has become my teacher.

Those everywhere who love mountains and rivers have the same heart as Lo-t'ien and know the way out of the dust of the world. Some whose nature is simple are not attracted by worldly things and they raise their spirits by reciting poems in the presence of fountains and rocks. The expression "a chronic liking for mist, incurably stricken by fountains and rocks" tells something about them. One might say that these are secular people of refined taste. Though they are in the world and without the spirit of the Way, this love of the art of gardens is nevertheless a root of transformation.

In others there is a spirit that comes awake in the presence of these mountains and rivers and is drawn out of the dullness of daily existence. And so these mountains and rivers help them in the practice of the Way. Theirs is not the usual love of mountains and rivers. These people are worthy of respect. But they cannot yet claim to be followers of the true Way because they still make a distinction between mountains and rivers and the practice of the Way.

Still others see the mountain, the river, the earth, the grass, the tree, the tile, the pebble, as their own essential nature. They love, for the length of a morning, the mountain and the river. What appears in them to be no different from a worldly passion is at once the spirit of the Way. Their minds are one with the atmosphere of the fountain, the stone, the grass, and the tree, changing through the four seasons. This is the true manner in which those who are followers of the Way love mountains and rivers.

So one cannot say categorically that a liking for mountains and rivers is a bad thing or a good thing. There is neither gain nor loss in the mountain and the river. Gain and loss exist only in the human mind. (Musō Kokushi, *Sun at Midnight,* pp. 162–164; *Muchū mondō-shū,* pp. 398–400)

Not all garden designers, however, had the Zen discipline of Musō Kokushi. Constructing the gardens at the famous Katsura villa in Kyoto, Prince Toshitada (1619–1662) aimed at an elegance inspired by the glory of court aesthetics as reflected in *The Tale of Genji.*

He himself went many times to the place and engaged workmen to build various pavilions. He also had garden mounds built. Stones were placed and laid, and a dam was constructed by means of which water was introduced from the Katsura River.

The hues of the cherry blossoms, the songs of the birds, the mountain trees, the arrangement of the islands in the pond—all were strange and beautiful. He had Chi-

nese-style boats constructed and launched them on the water. Page boys in Chinese costume with their hair tied up in the Chinese way took the helm and poled the boats around. The yellow of the kerria *[yamabuki]* was spilling over the rocks on the shore. This was the height of its splendor. It looked just as it is described in the *Tale of Genji. . . .* People who saw the place said with astonishment that it was just as though the glories of the past had reappeared in this world. (Kuitert, *Themes in the History of Japanese Garden Art,* p. 204; cited in Mori, *Katsura Rikyū no kenkyū,* p. 201)

One special feature of many Japanese gardens is the use of "borrowed scenery," incorporating large-scale natural elements outside the garden itself into the design. One anecdote relates how the tea master Kobori Enshū (1579–1647) criticized a garden built for the *daimyō* (feudal lord) Chūnagon.

When daimyō Chūnagon was in Kyoto with his attendants, a tea party was to be held in his house at Ōtsu. The guests were expected within the near future, and among the preparations he had given orders that a garden with hills and a stream should be made. It happened that Kobori Enshū was in Ōtsu, and although the daimyō was absent someone showed him the garden. Seeing it he said: "For the grand style of a daimyō, this is a petty garden. One cannot even see the magnificent mountains and the vast lake." Some servants heard this and when the lord returned they immediately informed him of Enshū's opinion. Hearing it daimyō Chūnagon burst out in laughter. "Indeed, he is right!" And he had the little hillocks removed, and incidentally he had the wall opposite the reception room reconstructed so that a section in the middle remained cut out. In this little opening he ordered a lattice frame to be placed so that one could view the lake, Mount Hiei, Karasaki, and Mount Mikami in one glance. Then he invited Enshū. When Enshū saw it, he clapped his hands. "This is indeed a lordly garden! Real mountains and water are summoned to present the garden form." Thus he praised it and went back home. (Kuitert, *Themes in the History of Japanese Garden Art,* pp. 209–210; cited in Mori, *Katsura Rikyū no kenkyū,* p. 201)

Theatrical and Musical Performance

Buddhist Chant

One of the earliest essays devoted to the history and aesthetics of Buddhist chant in general is the *Origins of Buddhist Chant (Shōmyō genru-ki),* by the Kegon monk and scholar Gyōnen (1240–1321), who became from 1277 the abbot of Tōdaiji, the imposing temple of the Kegon sect in Nara. Gyōnen, like most other Buddhist intellectuals of his day, was greatly concerned with the relation of music, modes, and pitches to cosmology, morality, and religious practice. Buddhist chant for him, and

for most of those who practiced it, was not simply music in the modern sense of the word, but more of a means for gaining insight into the essence of Buddhist truth.

The Way of Buddhist chant *[shōmyō]* is ancient. The sound of the voice, pure and elegant, pleases the ears; the substance of the tone, sad or happy, delights the spirit of everything alive. Unmediated speech contains the aspects of poverty and wealth; the songs, stretched and elongated, reveal luck and misfortune. High and low render, in conformance with the moment, beneficial effects for invisible spirits. Melodic inflections, corresponding to the situation, reveal beneficent virtues to underground [souls]. The four elements, hit and struck, produce loud and soft sounds; atoms, assembled and collected, produce high and low pitches. The knowing spirit receives the melodies of songs; likes and dislikes arise within judgments of feeling and consciousness.

Pitches, divided into the modes *ryo* and *ritsu,* bring to life *yin* and *yang* in the two times six pitches. The pitches, existing in the forms of the basic range *[kō]* and the derived range *[otsu]*, differentiate Heaven and Earth on the first and fifth pitches [of the heptatonic scale]. Human beings are gladdened by the modes *[chōshi]*. Each of the five modes, the six modes, and the seven modes possess wonderful virtues. . . . The transverse flute *[yokobue]* is the marrow of life of the music, and leads the instruments in pieces with strings and winds. The metal chimes *[hōkei]* are the bones and eyes of the sounds and allow the tuning of melodic inflections to be recognized. Musical compositions bring alive inner [sacred] and outer [secular] texts; they are consolidated in *gigaku.* Voices lend resonance to manifest and esoteric Buddhist truths, according to the darkness of string and wind instruments. . . .

Buddhist chant is also one of the five ancient Indian disciplines. It is informed by the spoken sounds of all heavenly directions. In accordance with the perceptive faculties, it proclaims the Law of the Buddha and fathoms the principle of things. The object of its teaching is what regards the perception of the phenomena of the three genders, the principle of the six verbal forms, the refinement of the seven cases, and the eightfold declinations. But here only the melodic aspect of Buddhist chant is treated. (*Shōmyō genru-ki,* p. 864; trans. G. G.)

Dengaku

One of the most widely appreciated forms of performance in the medieval period was "field music" *(dengaku).* It is thought by modern scholars that in the beginning, as the name suggests, music and song provided a rhythm to assist in planting the spring rice seedlings. By the Heian period, however, participants continued their performances independent of the agricultural cycle. The popularity of *dengaku* was enormous. In an account in his *Record of Dengaku in the Capital (Rakuyō*

dengaku-ki), the poet and scholar Ōe no Masafusa (1041–1111) mentions an event at which seemingly the entire population of Kyoto, high and low, clergy and laity, was engulfed by *dengaku* fever, which has been interpreted as a form of popular political protest. As recounted in the *Record of Great Peace* (*Taiheiki,* compiled in 1371) and elsewhere, *dengaku,* often performed by professionals in troupes, continued to earn fervent support from courtiers and the public for hundreds of years. It also became an important source of the *nō* drama in succeeding centuries.

During the summer of the year 1096 a great *dengaku* performance took place in the capital. I do not know the origins of *dengaku;* it was first done in rural areas and eventually made its way to the aristocracy. [In the performances of 1096, acrobatics or dances on] stilt-like footgear, [acrobatics or dances on] one-legged [stilts], performances with hip-drums *[kosho- tsuzumi],* small rattle drums on a stick *[furitsuzumi],* cymbals *[dōbyōshi],* clappers threaded together *[binzasara],* and dances performed by rice-planting women and harvesting women took place uninterruptedly, day and night. Everyone was stunned by all the commotion. Townspeople, civil officials, and warriors each formed groups, visited temples, and spilled into the city streets. All the residents of the city acted as if mad, as if possessed by a fox spirit. They wore silk clothing of the utmost quality and beauty, ornate and elegant, embroidered with gold and silver. The rich squandered their assets; the poor emulated the rich.

The imperial princess Ikuhōmon-in [1076–1096] was particularly fascinated with *dengaku,* which was most eagerly witnessed at Mount Hakoya, the Kyoto retreat of the retired emperor. People from all houses and all places formed groups and participated. Groups included young men, the clergy, and the laity. Sculptors of Buddhist statues and makers of sutra scrolls donned hats and sleeveless ceremonial overgarments and performed *bugaku* dances such as "Ryō-ō" and "Batō." Later, the imperial scribes performed such arts as well. The courtier Koremune no Takakoto [1015–1096], costumed as an old and feeble man, then presented the Chinese-style art of *man'en no gi.* The courtiers Aritoshi, Arinobu, Suetsuna, Atsumoto, and Ariyoshi, all equally eminent scholars and military men, donned ceremonial garb, put on armor, or tucked up their clothing behind. Warriors formed squadrons, went to the retired emperor's palace, drumming, dancing, and leaping. Despite laws prohibiting the manufacture of clothing with stencil-dyed designs, even the police *[kebiishi]* wore such luxurious attire on the streets in broad daylight as they took part in *dengaku* performances. The guests of the retired emperor also formed groups and visited the palace. Warriors too paid calls to the palace. Provisional middle counselor Fujiwara no Mototada wielded a fan attached to a nine-foot pole; the courtier Fujiwara no Michitoshi wore mere flat sandals of woven rush; Imperial Adviser Fujiwara no Munemichi wore only tall straw sandals. From this, one can guess the kind of garb worn by retainers: some donned but a loincloth or wrapped a red cloth around their waists, their hair a mess,

their heads covered with nothing but rice-planting hats. Parading between Rokujō, the palace of retired emperor Shirakawa, and Nijō, the provisional palace of Emperor Horikawa, they raised dust in the streets and obstructed traffic. What is the cause of such strange events in recent years?

Thereafter, the imperial princess Ikuhōmon-in fell ill; she died a short while later. The carriage from which she had viewed *dengaku* now turned into her funeral carriage. This was evidently a mysterious omen; even sages and wise rulers are not above worldly happenings. (*Rakuyō dengaku-ki;* trans. G. G.)

Sarugaku

At one time written with characters that could be translated as "monkey entertainment," *sarugaku* had its origins in a variety of Chinese music or performing arts that seem to have arrived in Japan during the Nara period. In the medieval period, it developed into a form of entertainment, usually comic, that eventually also became part of the *nō* tradition; in the early fifteenth century, during Zeami's time, for example, *nō* was often referred to as *sarugaku nō.*

Heian-period descriptions of *sarugaku* performances often reveal striking details of early performance practice. Here is such a description by the courtier Fujiwara no Akihira, (989? – 1066) as noted in the *New Record of Sarugaku.*

For over twenty years I have wandered throughout both the eastern and western parts of the capital observing, but *sarugaku* performances such as the ones tonight have never been seen before, now or in the past. Among the genres performed were *shushi sarugaku* [*noronji;* perhaps Buddhistic theatricals]; the "dwarf's dance" *[hikihito-mai]; dengaku;* puppeteering *[kugutsu-mawashi];* Chinese-style conjuring *[tōjutsu];* juggling with various objects *[shinadama];* juggling with an object resembling a small hourglass drum *[ryūgo];* juggling with eight balls *[yatsudama];* one-man mimicry of wrestling *[hitori-zumō]* and one-man board games *[hitori sugoroku];* supple acrobatics *[hone nashi]* and stiff acrobatics *[hone ari];* mimicry of the flabby posture of the county superintendent and of the fine footwork of the prawn-fishing lower official; mimicry of the rolled-up trouser-skirt of the functionary Higami and of the aged woman from Yamashiro bashfully covering her face with a fan; tales of a *biwa*-playing priest and auspicious songs sung by *senzu manzai* performers; mimicry of patting one's protruding belly below a skinny rib cage and of the way a praying mantis extends its neck; mimicry of wealthy St. Fukō begging for a Buddhist stole and of the nun Myōkō hunting for diapers; mimicry of the manner in which the servant Kei shows his/her unadorned face and of a flustered court attendant [who forgot his flute?] whistling; mimicry of an old man dancing and of shamanesses and courtesans putting on makeup; mimicry of the pranks of Kyoto youths and of a country bumpkin

from eastern Japan coming to the capital for the first time. And how splendid the men drumming the accompaniment and the priests appeared! Everyone in attendance was doubled over in laughter and open-mouthed in wonderment over the comic performances and the farcical lines. (*Shin sarugaku-ki,* pp. 3–30; trans. G. G.)

Here is another description of a *sarugaku* farce that took place in the late years of the Heian period, as recorded in *A Collection of Tales from Uji.*

How the Musicians Ietsuna and Yukitsuna Tricked Each Other

Again, long ago there were these two musicians. Now everybody knows what comics musicians are, but these two were quite unique. One evening in the reign of Emperor Horikawa [i.e., 1086–1107], when a *kagura* performance was being given in the courtyard outside the Sacred Mirror Room of the Palace, the Emperor commanded that the entertainment on this occasion should be something special, and the chief archivist sent for Ietsuna to inform him of the order. Having received these instructions, Ietsuna pondered on what trick they might do, then beckoning his brother Yukitsuna over into a corner, he told him of the Emperor's wishes and said, "I have an idea for something to do. What do you think of it?" "What do you propose to do?" "I'm going to get into the bright light of one of the bonfires, pull my skirt right up and show my bony legs, then I'll call out "It's v-v-very l-l-late, I'm f-f-frozen s-s-stiff, I th-th-think I'll w-w-warm m-m-my b-b-balls, and run round the fire three times. What do you think of that?" "It's a fine idea," said Yukitsuna, "but isn't it going a bit far to show your skinny legs and say that about warming your balls in front of the Emperor?" "You're right," said Ietsuna. "I'll do something else, then. What a good thing I discussed it with you!"

The Courtiers in Attendance and others privileged to be present were all agog, wondering what show the brothers were going to put on. The master of ceremonies [i.e., the courtier who headed the *kagura* dancers] announced Ietsuna, and out he went, but he came off without having performed anything very special, leaving everyone, including the Emperor, rather unimpressed. Then the master of ceremonies once again came forward and announced Yukitsuna. Pretending to be really cold, Yukitsuna hoisted his skirt up above his knees, showing his bony shins, then in a quavering voice which suggested he was shivering, he shouted, "It's v-v-very l-l-late, I'm f-f-frozen s-s-stiff, I th-th-think I'll w-w-warm m-m-my b-b-balls," and ran about ten times round the fire. The whole audience, the Emperor along with the rest, exploded with laughter. Ietsuna hid in a corner, muttering to himself, "What a swine to play a dirty trick like that on me!" So annoyed was he with his brother that for some time he refused even to look at him. But after a while he reflected that for all his annoyance at having been tricked, he couldn't let things go on as they were, and he sent word to

Yukitsuna to say, "Let's forget about that trick of yours. After all, brothers shouldn't stay bad friends." Yukitsuna was very glad to visit him and patch up their quarrel.

At the Extraordinary Kamo Festival, a *kagura* performance was held at the banquet following the procession, and Yukitsuna said to Ietsuna, "When the master of ceremonies announces us, I'll go up to the bamboo stand [near the residential palace, planted with various kinds of bamboo] and make lots of noise, and I want you to chime in and ask me what on earth I'm supposed to be. Then I'm going to say, 'A leopard, a leopard,' and do a really good imitation of one." "That's easy," agreed Ietsuna. "I'll do my best with the cross-talk." When the master of ceremonies came forward and announced Yukitsuna, he quietly got up, and going to the bamboo stand, crawled around waiting to say "A leopard" as soon as his brother asked him what he was. But what Ietsuna said was, "What kind of leopard are you?" With the words that he had been waiting to give as an answer taken right out of his mouth, Yukitsuna was left with nothing to say, and beat a hasty retreat from the scene.

I understand that the Emperor himself heard about this trick played on Yukitsuna and saw the funny side of it. Everybody said it was Ietsuna's revenge for the trick Yukitsuna had played on him earlier. (Mills, *A Collection of Tales from Uji,* pp. 240–242; *Uji shūi monogatari,* pp. 178–180)

Nō

ZEAMI

The *nō* theater, which drew heavily on *dengaku* and *sarugaku,* came to its first great fruition under the leadership of Kan'ami (1333–1384) and his son Zeami. During the Muromachi period it was to become the dominant form of Japanese theater and was widely popular. Then as now, the *nō* used only male actors, who play all the roles. *Nō* has often been described as a form of total theater, blending dance, music, choral and solo singing, mime, and speech into a remarkably effective synthesis. *Nō* was patronized by the samurai, the aristocracy, and, in modern times, the general public as well. *Nō* influenced later forms of drama such as kabuki and *bunraku,* which developed in the Edo period.

Zeami, who was chosen for patronage when still a boy by shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358–1408) himself, was given, as noted above, a superior classical education, learning the Chinese classics, *waka* poetry, and other subjects considered to be the province of courtiers and aristocrats. Later in his life, he wrote a number of treatises on the art of the *nō* that explain its profound aesthetics in suggestive and effective detail. A few selections follow that can perhaps suggest some general sense of his intentions and beliefs.

The treatises, which constitute some 250 pages in English translation, are difficult to excerpt, but several general statements can be made about Zeami's point

of view. First, the treatises are performer-centered. Zeami uses the continuing metaphor of the flower to explain the development and expression of the actor's highest skills. Second, Zeami suggests in a number of places a general rhythmic progression that runs through both individual plays and the performance of an entire program. This rhythmical progression goes from slow to fast and is broken down into three stages, which Zeami labels *jo, ha,* and *kyū.* These terms, which can be traced back as far as *gagaku* performance, also played a part in the composition of *renga* sequences, as was noted above. Third, despite the complex and sometimes metaphysical language occasionally employed, Zeami's concerns are always practical, and his treatises as a whole constitute one of the first occasions in the history of theoretical writings in the world to concentrate so heavily on the audiences and their reactions.

A few important topics discussed in depth in the various treatises are outlined below. The following is an excerpt from the earliest of the treatises, *Style and the Flower (Fūshikaden),* dated 1420. In it, Zeami describes the way in which a successful playtext can be composed. The *shite* he mentions represents the Japanese term for the chief actor in the play. Performers such as Zeami often wrote their own playtexts, and indeed, Zeami's own works have long been considered the finest every composed. Many of his plays are still performed in the current repertory, which consists of something between 250 and 300 plays out of the thousands that have been written over the centuries.

Writing texts for the *nō* represents the very life of our art. Even if a person is not possessed of extraordinary learning, still, if he has attained a certain level of technique, he can create a good *nō* play.

First of all, in the opening play, the source for the text should be authentic [based on legends, or the classics] and the play composed in such a way that from the opening speech the audience can recognize the subject matter. It is not necessary to compose the text in any complex artistic fashion, but the general effect should be smooth and gentle, while giving a colorful impression from the beginning. On the other hand, when it comes to the plays that make up the rest of the program, they must be composed with the greatest care given to the words and the general style to be employed. For example, if a play involves a location famous in history, or an ancient spot of interest, it is wise to collect and write into the key passage of the play some poetic phrase the words of which are well know to the audience. The writer should not include such crucial material in a play at a moment when the *shite* is not chanting or performing some important moment in his role. After all, as far as the audiences are concerned, they will only give their undivided attention to the most gifted players. Thus if the spectators find reflected in their eyes the speech and gestures of a company's great actor, those who see and hear will be touched and react with emotion.

In this regard, it is best to choose poetic quotations that are elegant and quickly recognized by the audience. If an actor makes use of such elegant expressions, his demeanor will of itself, surprisingly enough, seem to possess the artistic qualities of *yūgen.* Words that give a stiff impression make a performance difficult. Still, although such stiff speeches may be hard for an audience to follow, there are times when they can be effective. The situation depends on the nature of the central character in the play. Proper usage will depend on distinctions in the story concerning the characters involved. In any case, any vulgar expressions will make a play lose its artistic merit. (Adapted from Rimer and Yamazaki, *On the Art of the Nō Drama,* pp. 43–44; *Nōgaku ronshū,* pp. 378–379)

In his *Mirror Held to the Flower (Kakyō),* dated 1427, Zeami discusses the various degrees of knowledge and understanding that could be found in his various audiences and how the actor must respond to such differences.

There are spectators of discernment who do not really understand the art of the *nō.* On the other hand, there are those spectators who possess a true grasp of the essential nature of the *nō* but who cannot observe subtle differences. Those who have both a practical and theoretical understanding of *nō* represent the highest level of spectator. For example, there are occasions when a fine performance does not meet with success, and times when an unskilled performance pleases, but no one must use these exceptions as a basis for one's general judgments. Truly gifted players customarily have success with outdoor and other large-scale performances, while lesser actors perform profitably at smaller playing areas at country fairs or on other such occasions.

An actor who understands how to make his performance attractive to his audience brings good fortune to the *nō.* Then too, a spectator who understands the heart of the actor as he watches a performance is a gifted spectator. The following might be said concerning making judgments: forget the specifics of a performance and examine the whole. Then forget the performance and examine the actor. Then forget the actor and examine his inner spirit. Then, forget that spirit, and you will grasp the nature of the *nō.* (Rimer and Yamazaki, *On the Art of the Nō Drama,* pp. 101–102; *Nōgaku ronshū,* pp. 431–432)

In the same treatise Zeami outlines the correct principles for composing and performing the musical elements of a *nō* chant and the relation of music to text.

There are two aspects to the study of the chant. The person who composes the text should know the principles of music and how to make the words flow together

in a euphonious fashion. For his part, the performer who sings must know how to fit the melody to the words and to chant the syllables and words in a clear and correct manner. Since the beauty of the chant derives from the syllables and the words performed, the melodies must be composed in such a way that the pronunciation is always correctly represented, and the linking between the phrases smooth and flexible. When the chant is performed, if the singer has mastered these principles and really knows them well, both the composition and the performance will reinforce each other and produce an enjoyable effect. As this is true, a standard should be established by which the melody is attached to the chant. The flow of the phrases must be attractive, and the sound characteristics of the text must be in harmony with the melody, so that the results will of themselves be musical. That is, the melody provides the basic frame for the musical composition, and the artistic effect derives from the spirit of the performer, who shades the melody in terms of the flow of the phrases. Thus an actor has various elements of music that he must master—the physical problems of using the breath, the development of his own emotional concentration in order to direct it properly, and the understanding of the melody, as well as the music that lies behind the melody. In terms of practicing the musical aspects of *nō,* the following should be taken to heart: forget the voice and understand the shading of the melody. Forget the melody and understand the pitch. Forget the pitch and understand the rhythm.

In learning the art of musical performance, there is a proper order to be followed: first, the words of the text must be learned thoroughly; then the melody must be mastered; then the actor must learn how to color the melody; finally, he must learn how to apply the proper pitch accent. After all these steps are taken, the actor must concentrate on how to bring his performances to flower. At every stage, an emphasis must be placed on the rhythm. When practicing the voice, miss no occasion to obtain this kind of training, so beneficial to personal development. (Rimer and Yamazaki, *On the Art of the Nō Drama,* pp. 102–103; *Nōgaku ronshū,* pp. 432–433)

In his treatise *The True Path to the Flower (Shikadō),* dated 1420, Zeami writes of three basic elements required of an actor for a superior performance. Zeami's remarks on calligraphy in this regard are revealing.

In the performance of *nō* there are three basic elements: Skin, Flesh, and Bone. The three are almost never found together in the same actor. In the art of calligraphy, it is said that the three have never been found together except in the work of Kūkai.

When it comes to explaining the elements of Skin, Flesh, and Bone in terms of the *nō,* then what can be described as Bone represents that exceptional artistic strength that a gifted actor shows naturally in his performance and which comes to him of itself through his inborn ability. Flesh can doubtless be defined as that element visible

in a performance that arises from the power of the skills of the actor that he has obtained by his mastering of the Two Basic Arts of chant and dance. Skin, on the other hand, may be explained as a manner of ease and beauty in performance that can be obtained when the other two elements are thoroughly perfected. To put it another way: when considering the art that comes from Sight, the art that comes from Sound, and of the art that comes from the Heart, it can be said that Sight should be equated with Skin, Sound with Flesh, and the Heart to the Bone. Within the category of the chant itself, these three qualities can be seen to exist. The beauty of the voice of the actor represents the Skin, the interest of the melody is the Flesh, and the techniques of breathing employed represent the Bone. The same principle applies to the dance. The beauty of the actor's appearance represents the Skin, the artistic patterns of the dance represent the Flesh, and the richness of the emotions manifested by the dance represents the Bone. These are matters to be pondered over with great care.

On this point, when I look at the artists who are performing today, I find that not only are there no artists who can truly manifest these three principles in performance, but indeed there are none who even know that such conceptions exist. My father taught me such things privately, and I have taken his lessons to heart. From what one can observe in the performances of actors these days, they are only able to manage certain elements of Skin. And yet such is not the true Skin [which has behind it the Flesh and the Bone]. It is only the Skin that they attempt to imitate. Such actors have not gained a fluent mastery.

Then again, even if an actor should manage to possess all three of these qualities, there is still more that he must understand. Even if he possesses them (the Bone, his naturally inherited talent; Flesh, his acquired skills in chant and dance; and Skin, the elegance of his outward appearance on stage), these three have, of themselves, no greater significance than each of these individual qualities may possess. It is difficult to describe the qualities of an actor who has truly fused them together. To speak of such a level of achievement involves, for example, a true mastery of those artistic principles that have already reached a high degree of perfection, to a level where the artist moves beyond his means of expression to produce a performance of profound ease. The spectators, witnessing his performance, will be caught up in his mastery and will forget themselves; only afterward will they reflect on the performance, realizing that they found no weak spots whatsoever. Such, for the audience, represents the sensation of having seen an actor whose years of training have added to the Bone of his natural skills. Secondly, they will find in him one whose art, no matter how often it is observed, will seem inexhaustible. Such is the effect of the Flesh of an artist who exhibits the mastery of the skills that are highly developed to the point of rare mastery. Thirdly, the audience will always find the actor elegant. This quality derives from his attainment of the skills represented by Skin. When the actor himself can naturally reflect those emotions felt in mutuality with the audience, it can be said that he is one who has truly blended Skin, Flesh, and Bone. (Rimer and Yamazaki, *On the Art of the Nō Drama,* pp. 69–71; *Nōgaku ronshū,* pp. 404–406)

In *A Mirror Held to the Flower,* Zeami expresses the need for an actor to hold a certain portion of his physical and spiritual power in reserve.

What Is Felt in the Heart Is Ten; What Appears in Movement Is Seven

The expression "when you feel ten in your heart, express seven in your movement" refers to the following. When a beginner studying the *nō* learns to gesture with his hands and to move his feet, he will first do as his teacher tells him and so will use all his energies to perform in the way in which he is instructed. Later, however, he will learn to move his arms to a lesser extent than his own emotions suggest, and he will be able to moderate his own intentions. This phenomenon is by no means limited to dance and gesture. In terms of general stage deportment, no matter how slight a bodily action, if the motion is more restrained than the emotion behind it, the emotion will become the Substance and the movements of the body its Function, thus moving the audience. (Rimer and Yamazaki, *On the Art of the Nō Drama,* p. 75; *Nōgaku ronshū,* pp. 410–411)

Eventually, in the most advanced and difficult stage of all, the actor must develop the ability to see himself as others see him on the stage.

Again, as concerns the dance, it is said that "the eyes look ahead and spirit looks behind." This expression means that the actor looks in front of him with his physical eyes, but his inner concentration must be directed to the appearance of his movements from behind. This is a crucial element in the creation of what I have referred to above as the Movement beyond Consciousness. The appearance of the actor, seen from the spectator in the seating area, produces a different image than the actor can have of himself. What the spectator sees is the outer image of the actor. What an actor himself sees, on the other hand, forms his own internal image of himself. He must make still another effort in order to grasp his own internalized outer image, a step possible only through assiduous training. Once he obtains this, the actor and the spectator can share the same image. Only then can it actually be said that an actor has truly grasped the nature of his appearance. For an actor to grasp his true appearance implies that he has under his control the space to the left and to the right of him, and to the front and to the rear of him. In many cases, however, an average actor looks only to the front and to the side and so never sees what he actually looks like from behind. If the actor cannot somehow come to a sense of how he looks from behind, he will not be able to become conscious of any possible vulgarities in his performance. Therefore, an actor must look at himself using his internalized outer image, come to share the same view as the audience, examine his appearance with his spiritual eyes and so maintain a graceful appearance with his entire body. Such an action truly

represents "the eyes of the spirit looking behind." (Rimer and Yamazaki, *On the Art of the Nō Drama,* p. 81; *Nōgaku ronshū,* pp. 414–415)

In his treatise *Disciplines for the Joy of Art (Yūgaku shūdō fūken),* which is undated, Zeami finds even deeper metaphysical principles involved in the actor's art.

As for the principle of Being and Non-Being [expressed in the doctrines of Buddhism], Being might be said to represent an external manifestation that can be seen with the eyes. Non-Being can be said to represent the hidden, fundamental readiness of mind that signifies the vessel of all art [since a vessel itself is empty]. It is the fundamental Non-Being that gives rise to the outward sense of Being [in the *nō*]. For example, quartz represents a completely transparent substance that of itself is clear, without color or design; yet from it, fire and water can be born. If elements so different in character as fire and water can issue from this colorless matter, what chain of cause and effect can bring this about?

There is a certain poem, as follows:

> Break open the cherry tree
> And look at it:
> There are no flowers,
> For they themselves have bloomed
> In the spring sky.

[So it is with the *nō*]. What gives the actor the seeds for endless flowering in every aspect of his art is that interior spiritual power that lies within him. And, just as pure quartz gives birth to fire and water, and just as the cherry tree gives birth to flowers and fruits of a different nature from itself, so a truly gifted actor carries out his interior artistic intentions in myriad ways through his artistic performances, and may be called a "man of capacity," the vessel of our art.

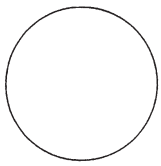
Indeed, in the meritorious, life-sustaining art of the *nō,* there are many elements of nature—flowers, birds, the wind, the moon—that adorn it. The world of nature is the vessel that gives birth to all things, alive and inert alike, in all the four seasons' flowers and leaves, snow and the moon, mountains and seas together. To make all this multitude of things an adornment for our art, an actor must become one in spirit with the vessel of nature and achieve in the depths of the art of the *nō* an ease of spirit that can be compared to the boundlessness of that nature itself, thus to achieve at last the Art of the Flower of Peerless Charm. (Rimer and Yamazaki, *On the Art of the Nō Drama,* pp. 118–119; *Nōgaku ronshū,* pp. 445–446)

ZENCHIKU

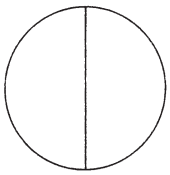
Zeami's son-in-law, Konparu Zenchiku (1405–1468?), along with his highly successful accomplishments as a playwright, was also an important theoretician who, in a different fashion than Zeami, concentrated on a number of religious and cultural issues related to Buddhism, finding in the *nō* drama a symbolic cosmos of meaning. These issues are most succinctly expressed in one of his treatises, usually referred to in English as *Six Circles, One Dewdrop,* probably written in the 1440s. Zenchiku's difficult works, perhaps because of the power and suggestiveness of their mystical language, have stimulated scholars to a variety of interpretations since the treatises first appeared. His "seven categories" are listed here. The precise meanings of these mysterious Zen *kōan*-like statements are difficult to fathom, but those with even a cursory interest in the *nō* will appreciate how many layers of meaning can be ascribed to both the text and performance in this venerable theatrical form.

A Record of Six Circles and One Dewdrop

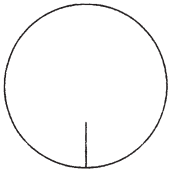
In the way of our family's profession of *sarugaku,* the body exhibits extreme beauty, and the voice produces melodic patterns. In these activities, the performer is not aware of the specific arm movements, nor of where to place his feet; is this not a wondrous function that is fundamentally without subjective control and objective awareness? Thus, the art provisionally assumes the form of six circles and one dewdrop. The first circle is called the Circle of Longevity, the second, the Circle of Height, the third, the Circle of Abiding, the fourth, the Circle of Forms, the fifth, the Circle of Breaking, and the sixth, the Circle of Emptiness; the One Dewdrop represents the most profound level.



The Circle of Longevity. The first circle is the fundamental source of the *yūgen* of song and dance. It is the vessel in which deep feelings develop upon viewing a performer's movement and listening to his singing. Due to its round, perfect nature and eternal life span, it is called the Circle of Longevity.

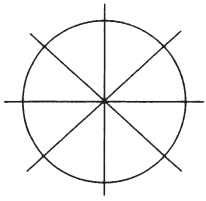


The Circle of Height. In the second circle, the Circle of Height, this single point rises becoming spirit; breadth and height appear, and clear singing is born. This is the unsurpassed, highest fruition of feeling.

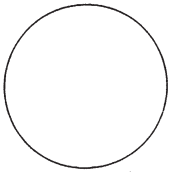


In the third circle, the Circle of Abiding, the short line's position is the peaceful place where all roles take shape and vital performance is produced.

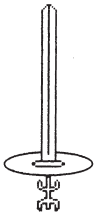
In the fourth circle, the Circle of Forms, the various forms of heaven and earth, all things in creation, are at peace.



The fifth is the Circle of Breaking. When the inexhaustible varying shapes of the ten directions of heaven and earth are produced, they are originally born within this circle. However, since they temporarily break its round form, I have named it the Circle of Breaking.



The sixth, the Circle of Emptiness, is the rank of no-master and no-form; coming back to the beginning, again one returns to the Original Circle of Longevity.



The final One Dewdrop is the ultimate, the most profound stage, just as rain and dew, frost and snow all vanish, collecting into a single dewdrop. (Adapted from Thornhill, *Six Circles, One Dewdrop,* pp. 24–31; *Konparu kodensho shūsei,* pp. 197–204)

Kyōgen

Interspersed with performances of the poetic and slow-moving *nō* were comic plays called *kyōgen* (literally, "mad words"), which, rather like satyr plays in the Greek tradition, lightened the atmosphere and provided diverting moments for audiences. *Kyōgen* actors also performed interludes between the two sections into which most *nō* plays are divided. In these brief scenes, the *kyōgen* actor often has a conversation with the *shite* and explains in simpler language the nature of the historical situation, poetic allusion, or other material that constitutes the subject of the more poetic portions of the play.

During the medieval period, no treatises on the art of *kyōgen* were apparently

written. From the subsequent Edo period, a number of such documents exist, and these will be quoted below. The descriptions and purposes of *kyōgen* expressed in these documents seem to reflect the more socially stratified society of that later period. The exact nature of the *kyōgen* plays performed at the time of Zeami remains in some dispute, as virtually no early playtexts from this period exist. Zeami does comment on *kyōgen* actors in one of his treatises, however, and his comments seem to describe aspects of the art of *kyōgen* even as it is performed today.

As for the functions of *kyōgen* actors, it is well known that their method of creating amusement for the audiences in the form of a comic interlude involves the use either of some impromptu materials chosen at the moment, or of some interesting incidents taken from old stories. On the other hand, when these actors take part in an actual *nō* play, their function does not involve any need to amuse the audience. Rather, they are to explain the circumstances and the plot of the play that the audience is in the process of witnessing.

Kyōgen itself would merely be considered vulgar if its only aim were to make the audience laugh boisterously on all occasions. It is said that true gaiety lies within a delicate smile, and such impressions are always effective and moving for an audience. If a *kyōgen* actor can create such an atmosphere for his spectators and cause their gentle smiles, while still maintaining their interest, then he will have achieved the highest level of humor that shows in itself the quality of *yūgen.* One who achieves this is truly a master of comedy. (Adapted from Rimer and Yamazaki, *On the Art of the Nō Drama,* p. 170; *Shūdōshū,* pp. 272–273)

The *Biwa*

The *biwa* might be described in Western terms as a variety of short-necked lute, performed by plucking the strings with a large plectrum. The Japanese *biwa* is closely related to the Chinese *pipa,* which was doubtless imported into Japan well before the Nara period. The *biwa* formed part of the ensemble of court music performed at the Heian court, but in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the instrument was used to accompany itinerant ballad singers who performed such epic tales as *The Tale of the Heike,* as was noted above.

Particular instruments of value were often assigned their own names; indeed, Sei Shōnagon commented on the strange names assigned to various instruments at court.[2] Those who played them treasured and cared for them the way a violinist might a Stradivarius today.

2. See I. Morris, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon,* vol. 1, pp. 98–99.

One particularly well-known story concerning the *biwa* is that of the Heike general Taira no Tsunemasa (? – 1184). As he is described in *The Tale of the Heike,* he was "greatly talented in poetry and music" so that "even in the midst of turmoil, he found solace in these arts."

According to *The Tale,* once when he performed the melody "Shōgen-Sekishō" (Heaven and Earth), a secret melody considered to be particularly beautiful at a shrine, "serenity pervaded the shrine. Charmed by the liquid sounds, the goddess appeared in the form of a white dragon hovering at Tsunemasa's side."[3]

The most famous of the stories about Tsunemasa and his love of music concerns his *biwa,* which was named "Green Mountain" (Seizan).

When Tsunemasa was seventeen years of age, he was sent as an imperial envoy to the shrine of Hachiman at Usa. At that time he took with him the *biwa* Seizan. When he arrived at the shrine, he played one of the three secret melodies before the abode of the god Hachiman. The assembled priests, who had never heard such a masterful performance, were so deeply impressed that they wet the sleeves of their green robes with tears. Even for those who had no hearts, the melody was as moving as a shower of heavenly grace.

The story of this incomparable instrument is as follows. During the reign of Emperor Ninmyō, in the third spring of the Kashō era [850], when the chief of the Headdress Office, Sadatoshi, went to China, he met a famous master of the *biwa* named Lien Ch'ieh-fu [Lian Qiefu]. From this master, Sadatoshi learned three styles of playing. Before returning to Japan, he was presented with three *biwa* called Genjō ["Black Elephant"], Shishimaru ["Young Lion"] and Seizan ["Green Mountain"]. But during his return voyage, the Dragon God, who must have envied him, raised a great storm. To calm the Dragon God, Sadatoshi cast Shishimaru into the waves. Thus it was that he brought back only two *biwa* to our country. These instruments were presented to the emperor, who designated them imperial treasures.

Long afterward, one autumn night during the Ōwa era [961 – 963], Emperor Murakami sat in the Seiryō-den hall, playing the *biwa* Genjō as the white moon shone and the cool wind blew. Then a shadowy apparition rose before His Majesty and began to sing gracefully. The emperor ceased to play the *biwa* and inquired: "Who are you? Where did you come from?"

"I am Lien Ch'ieh-fu," replied the shadow, "a Chinese player of the *biwa* who taught Sadatoshi the three styles of playing many years ago. Of these three there is one for which I did not give the entire secret. For this fault I have been thrown into the land of devils, where I am still waiting. Tonight I heard the wondrous sound of the *biwa*

3. Kitagawa and Tsuchida, *The Tale of the Heike,* pp. 399 – 400.

streaming from this place. This is why I have come. Now let me give this melody to Your Majesty so that I may attain Buddhahood."

The shadow took Seizan from the emperor's side and tuning the strings, taught the emperor the melody *Shōgen-Sekishō* ["Heaven and Earth"], a secret melody of great beauty. Thereafter the emperor and his retainers were all afraid of playing this *biwa* and so Seizan was transferred to the Ninna-ji temple at Omuro. It is said that when Tsunemasa was still a child, he was favored by the abbot above all others, and therefore the *biwa* was presented to him. It had been made of rare wood; the back was covered with purple rattan and on the front was a picture of the dawn moon peeping through the green trees of summer mountains. Hence the *biwa* came to be called Seizan, that is "Green Mountain." It was an excellent instrument, in no way inferior to Genjō. (Kitagawa and Tsuchida, *The Tale of the Heike,* pp. 444–445; *Heike monogatari,* vol. 33, pp. 107–108)

Kouta

Kouta, which might best be translated as "short songs," were usually of popular origin but were soon taken up by the higher classes for their own entertainment. The first significant group of *kouta* taken down in written form can be found in a 1518 collection entitled *Songs for Leisure Hours (Kanginshū).* The name of the compiler is uncertain. Most of the songs chosen were evidently those sung on private occasions, and the remainder came from the repertories of various performing groups. There are two prefaces to the collection, one in Japanese and one in Chinese. The Chinese preface, given below, is an attempt to attach a distinguished pedigree to what was in fact an art of the common people. The same attempt at "gentrification" can be found in many similar efforts, notably in Zeami's writings on the *nō* theater, where he also creates a dignified lineage for what was in his time a popular drama.

Now to speak of the practice of song, one must go back to the very beginning, a time when all things under heaven were first evolving out of a still chaotic universe. The various gracious emperors have made careful use of song as an instrument of rule, and the tradition associated with song used in this way is quite old, as we see when we seek precedents in China. The reason the emperors of the earliest period sought the harmony of the five voices was to gain a tranquil mastery over the hearts of their subjects through music that their government might become an ideal one. In other words, through harmonizing the five voices, the six rhythms, the seven sounds, and the eight winds, these princes achieved the marvels of music. And through the harmonious cooperation of both the voiced and unvoiced, the long and the short sounds of words, and the short, long, slow, and swift measures of music they were able to realize

the beauties of effective rule. The civilized man hears music, regulates his life with its quiet measures, and becomes a perfect paradigm of the virtues. Consequently, in the *Book of Songs [Shi jing]* it says: "If one can gain a cultivation of the feelings through music, then one's reputation for righteousness and virtue will be long-lived."

As for the individual himself, when because of an excess of feeling he can no longer express himself fully in the voice of normal emotive expression, he has resort to song, prolonging the sounds of his voice. When even this expedient is insufficient, he moves his arms, unconsciously and without realizing that he is doing so, stamps his feet, and through the movements of the entire body gives total articulation to his feelings. The reason that music under an administration which is in effective control soothes and quiets the heart, as well as gives it pleasure, is that such an administration is in close harmony with the people's will. And the reason why the sounds of envy and of anger are to be heard in the music of chaotic times is that such government violates righteousness, while the hearts of its people run in an unrighteous pathway. That is why poetry is the most fitting way to amend the morals of both the individual and his government and to move to righteousness even the devils who, though invisible, inhabit the world. Poetry, the word itself declares, is a means of expressing pure feelings.

It is clear that the birth of *kouta* was not an affair restricted to the universe of men. When the wind blows and it rains, this natural blessing is bestowed on all things, and we have heaven's *kouta*. When water flows bubbling in the stream bed, when leaves fall gently from the trees, we have *kouta* played by the natural world at large. But it does not end here. The dragon sings; the tiger roars; the crane cries, as do other great birds; the nightingale in spring, the katydid in autumn; all sorts and kinds of animals and insects singing on flowery branches and on the grass of the meadows; can we not call each a beautiful *kouta* of the natural world? All the more reason for us to think that whatever man's feelings have expressed is a *kouta*. The more than 5,000 volumes of the Daizō sutra are the priests' *kouta*. The books of the Five Kings and those of the Three Emperors are the *kouta* of the former rulers. These form the basis for the education and improvement of the nation's ways and customs. They instruct husband and wife in their proper behavior, vassal and lord in theirs, and father and son in theirs. They aim to elevate morality. Ah, *kouta,* how vast is the meaning of this word. (Hoff, *Like a Boat in a Storm,* pp. 30–33; *Kanginshū,* pp. 146–147)

The Tea Ceremony

The tea ceremony *(chanoyu),* using whisked, powdered tea, developed as an important aesthetic undertaking in the Muromachi period (1392–1568), but tea itself as a beverage in boiled form was imported from China many hundreds of years before. The monk Eisai (1185–1333) brought whisked tea back when he returned from his studies of Zen in China, and the famous tea fields at Uji were begun at this time.

The tea ceremony developed close ties with Zen Buddhism. As the eighteenth-century *Zen Tea Record (Zencharoku)* indicates, the "ceremony" itself, which involves the preparation and drinking of tea in a quiet place, using rustic utensils, was assigned strong metaphysical and religious overtones.

If you are to take up the teascoop, immerse your heart and mind fully in it alone and give no thought to whatever other matters. This is to treat it first and last. When replacing it, do so conveying your heart and mind to it from their depths, as in the beginning. (Hirota, *Wind in the Pines,* p. 24; *Zencharoku,* p. 283)

There are many varieties of tea ceremony, each with its own hallowed and sometimes conflicting traditions. The deeper aesthetic level, however, remains congruent. There are a number of studies in English that provide many details about these various traditions, and there is no space here to provide such necessary detail. The comments below, by six masters of the tea ceremony, will at least suggest something of its continuing philosophical importance.

Murata Jukō (1423–1502), highly knowledgeable about the arts of China, served as an adviser to the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa (1434–1490), who built the famous Silver Pavilion (Ginkakuji) in Kyoto, where tea ceremonies were often performed. He warned against pride and self-attachment in a letter concerning the importance of the kind of understatement that produced the aesthetic of simplicity. His references to *hie* (chill) and *karuru* (withered) are terms that can be traced back to the aesthetic views of the *renga* poet Shinkei, mentioned above. Such terms suggest the profound beauty of the humble, the spare, and the faintly perceived. His comments also reflect the use of Japanese ceramics for tea, instead of only the Chinese objects employed earlier, a trend he criticizes as sometimes overdone.

To the Priest Furuichi Harima:

Nothing will hinder one more in the practice of this way [of tea] than feelings of self-satisfaction and self-attachment. It is altogether reprehensible to envy skilled practitioners or to scorn beginners. One must approach the accomplished, beseech their least word of instruction, and never fail to guide the inexperienced.

Critical above all else in this way is the dissolution of the boundary line between native [articles] and [things] Chinese. This is vital, truly vital; give it careful attention.

These days, however, mere novices, thinking to exemplify the "chill and withered" *(hie- karuru),* procure pieces from [the rural kilns of] Bizen and Shigaraki, and without having gained recognition from anyone, they assume the airs of being "far advanced and seasoned"; it is unspeakably absurd.

"Withered" means that, possessing splendid utensils, one has grown to appreciate their properties fully, thereby coming to attain, at the very ground of one's heart and mind, the quality of being advanced and seasoned. Thus, everything one may do thereafter manifests the character of "chill and lean" *(hie-yase);* it is this that holds power to move.

Nevertheless, one not in a position to appraise and acquire fine pieces should not vie with others [in collecting utensils but use what one has].

Moreover, however cultivated one's manner, a painful self-awareness of one's shortcomings is crucial. Just remember that self-satisfaction and self-attachment are obstructions. Yet the way also lies unattainable if there's no self-esteem at all. A dictum of the way states: "Become heart's master, not heart mastered"—words of an ancient. (Hirota, *Wind in the Pines,* p. 198; *Jukō kokoro no fumi,* p. 448)

Takeno Jōō (1502–1555) was an adept at the tea ceremony and the teacher of the greatest tea master of all, Sen no Rikyū. Greatly knowledgeable in the poetic arts of *waka* and *renga*, his description of a proper tea ceremony draws on these long classic traditions. In discussing the aesthetic of *wabi* (literally, "loneliness"), he, like Zeami and others, traces a line back to the Age of the Gods and Amaterasu. This particular document was sent to Sen no Rikyū.

The word *"wabi"* has been used in a variety of ways by people of the past in their verse, but in recent times it has come to indicate an open and straightforward attitude *(shōjiki),* deeply modest and considerate, and free of arrogance. In the year, it is the tenth month that embodies the mind of *wabi.* Lord Teika wrote in a poem:

The world knows
no falseness now,
this month of early winter.
Who, then, out of trueheartedness,
begins these drifting showers?

Thus is Teika's insight, as only he could have composed. "Who then, out of trueheartedness" intimates that which lies beyond intellect and words, just as one would expect of Teika. Nothing at all is overlooked.

The tea gathering is essentially patterned on life in quiet retreat, in which one delights in matters apart from mundane existence. A friend pays a visit, and one receives him with [just] the preparation of tea, arranging whatever flowers there are for consolation. Among the words of my teacher that I heard and took to heart is this precious instruction:

Let there be not a single act divided from heart and mind. This means that at the foundation of the gathering is the attitude of offering hospitality [even] where

mind does not precisely follow mind; hence, it is an act that accords with what is right and proper without self-consciousness that is genuinely and unaccountably astonishing.

You are not an ordinary person, but have ears that hear, eyes that see—faculties capable of perceiving—so that the resplendent virtues you possess are without shadow. I take pleasure in tea fully apprehending with my heart, but am inarticulate and cannot explain why. The fundamental meaning of this way of tea thus clumsily expressed in words surely seems shallow.

The source of the spirit of *wabi* in the land is the goddess Amaterasu. The great master of Japan, if she desired to construct a shrine hall by inlaying gold, silver, and precious gems, what person could say it should not be so? But, with thatched roof, offerings of unhulled rice, and in everything else down to the least detail profoundly modest and never negligent, the Deity is the finest of tea practitioners.

The dictum of neither casting aside the old nor searching out the new is essential. Even now, it has become the practice to seek out the old and uphold it as treasure; it is lamentable. In times to come, the very shape and image of tea will perish, and saddening as it is, it may all become the employment of dealers.

The priest Kūkai pondered the term *wabi* for a number of days, but finally could make nothing of it. A person who is possessed of nothing at all from the very beginning cannot grasp it. Respectfully,

Eighth month, fifth day
Daikoku-an [Jōō]

(Hirota, *Wind in the Pines,* pp. 208–209; *Shinshū chadō zenshū,* vol. 8, pp. 16–18)

Sen no Rikyū (1522–1591) possessed such talent and fame that he became tea master to Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–1598), who was for a considerable period the most powerful military figure in Japan. After Hideyoshi's death, however, the Toyotomi family lost power early in the next century to the family of Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542–1616), who became the first of the hereditary shoguns whose lineage continued until the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Rikyū and Hideyoshi had a celebrated falling out, and the intemperate Hideyoshi was so angered that he eventually forced Rikyū to commit suicide.

One of the best known documents long attributed to Rikyū is the *Record of Nanbō (Nanbōroku* or *Nanpōroku),* supposedly compiled by one of Rikyū's disciples, Nanbō Sōkei, about whom very little is known. This record was "discovered" by Tachibana Jitsuzan (1655–1708) exactly one hundred years after Rikyū's death and is thought by many to be a forgery, or at most a rewriting of notes left behind by Nanbō. Nevertheless, it has become one of the most important sources for discussions of Rikyū's style. In it Rikyū's tea ceremonies are portrayed as refined and subtle, with links to Buddhism evident at every turn.

In the small room, it is desirable for every utensil to be less than adequate. There are those who dislike a piece when it is even slightly damaged; such an attitude shows a complete lack of comprehension. Broken or cracked pieces of contemporary ware are difficult to use, but utensils as estimable as Chinese *cha-ire* [a type of tea caddy] have been handed down remarkably often used even though mended with lacquer.

Further, in selecting utensils to be used together, one must have a grasp of such combinations as a contemporary teabowl with a Chinese *cha-ire.* It is said that, even though in Jukō's day all the various utensils were still refined and elegant, Jukō himself would put a treasured [Korean] Ido teabowl in its cloth cover when using it for tea, handling it in the same manner as a Temmoku bowl, and at the same time would invariably use a *natsume* [lacquered tea container] or contemporary *cha-ire* with it. . . .

No utensil ranks with the scroll in significance. Contemplating it, both guest and host attain wholeness of mind and realization of awakening in *chanoyu-samādhi.* Calligraphies of Zen monks are foremost among scrolls. With veneration for what is written, one savors the virtue of the calligrapher, of practitioners of the way, of the masters. Writings done by persons in secular life should not be displayed, though scrolls inscribed by poets with verses expressing the way may sometimes be used. With the four-and-a-half-mat room, the spirit differs from that of the radical thatched-hut style; you must fully perceive this distinction in relation to the above. A calligraphy in which the words of the Buddha or patriarchs and the virtue of the calligrapher function together makes for the finest of scrolls and a notable treasure. Scrolls in which the words of the Buddha or patriarchs are employed, but which are works of calligraphers who cannot be called persons of extraordinary virtue, belong to the second rank.

Paintings may also be hung, depending on the painter. The works of Chinese monks include numerous images of Buddhas and patriarchs and various portraits. There are people who do not hang such paintings, saying that to do so may give some the impression of a private chapel in one's residence, but this is altogether unwarranted. One should display such scrolls appreciating them all the more. Rikyū said, "That a person take refuge in the Buddhist path is of particular importance." . . .

The meal for a gathering in a small room should be but a single soup and two or three dishes; saké should also be served in moderation. Elaborate preparation of food for the *wabi* gathering is inappropriate. Needless to say, harmonizing strongly and lightly flavored dishes should be understood in the same way as that of the thick and thin services of tea. . . .

It is only after many years of practice that you will grasp in its details the fact that everything, from the hundred thousand ways of displaying utensils to the straw-thatched *wabi* tearoom, is governed by the measurements, based on *yin* and *yang,* applied in using the *daisu* [a stand used to display tea utensils]. Moreover, since the fundamental intent of *wabi* lies in manifesting the pure, undefiled Buddha-world, once host and guest have entered the *roji* [garden pathway] and thatched hut, they

sweep away the dust and rubbish [of worldly concerns] and engage in an encounter with mind open and entire; hence, there is no need to speak insistently of measurements and *sun* and *shaku* [units of linear measure], or of the formal rules of tea procedure. *Chanoyu* is just a matter of building a fire, boiling water, and drinking tea. There should be nothing else involved. Here the Buddha-mind emerges to reveal itself. Because people are overly particular about rules of conduct and formal greetings, it degenerates into a variety of social concerns, or the guest begins to watch for the host's mistakes, later to cast slurs on him, and the host ridicules the guest's errors. Wait though one may for a person who thoroughly comprehended these matters, who knows when such a person will appear? . . .

[Change is inevitable, and is often for the worse.] "Be that as it may, to think thus merely manifests an attachment to the way of tea. Even the great Way of the Buddhas and patriarchs, of the bodhisattva saints and sages, has its eras; it prospers and declines. One must not be saddened in the least about tea. Neither is it the case that no Buddha will appear in this latter age. In the way of tea also, people with a true realization will come forth in later ages, and they will surely sense and share the aspiration that you and I have kept. If such a person extends a bowl of tea toward me—even though a hundred years have passed—it will moisten my bones. Will not my departed spirit rejoice in accepting it? Without fail I shall become a guardian spirit of the way of tea. Surely the Buddhas and patriarchs will lend their power."

Thus he spoke with grave and earnest concern. (Selected from Hirota, *Wind in the Pines,* pp. 226–239; *Nanbōroku,* pp. 14–15, 125, 127)

Rikyū admired the teachings of the Buddhist priest Hōnen (1133–1212), the patriarch of the Pure Land sect, and he studied with care and reverence the famous "One-Page Testament of Hōnen." Imbued with the spirit of the man he considered a spiritual ancestor, Rikyū wrote his own "One-Page Testament," in which he attempted to sum up his view of the efficacy of the tea ceremony. Both are reproduced below. Rikyū's references to *suki* (literally, "to delight in") go back at least as far as Kamo no Chōmei, who saw love and devotion to the arts as a means of cultivating spiritual sensitivity.

The One-Page Testament of Hōnen

The *nembutsu* [prayer to the Buddha] I have taught is not the contemplative practice that has been discussed and proclaimed by the accomplished sages of China and Japan. Neither is it to recite the *nembutsu* after having awakened to its meaning through scholarly study. It is simply to utter *"Namu-amida-butsu,"* realizing that if you just say it, you are certain to attain birth in the Land of Bliss. Nothing else is involved.

The teachings speak of three essential attitudes, four rules of practice, and so on, but these are all inherent and fulfilled in the thought that you will decidedly be born

through *Namu-amida-butsu.* If you imagine there to be some profound matter apart from this, you will isolate yourself from the compassion of the two Honored ones, Śākyamuni and Amida, and will slip from inclusion in the Primal Vow.

You may have carefully studied all the teachings that Śākyamuni taught during his lifetime, but if you entrust yourself to the *nembutsu,* then you should—turning into a foolish person ignorant of even a single written character, or becoming the same as the unlettered women and men who enter the Buddhist path while remaining at home—without assuming the manner of a sage, simply say the *nembutsu* with wholeness of heart.

As testimony, I seal this with imprint of my hands.

The faith and practice taught in the Pure Land path are exhaustively stated on this single sheet of paper. I know no special doctrine whatsoever apart from what is written here. To keep erroneous teachings from arising after my death, I have thus recorded my thoughts.

Sealed: Genkū (Hōnen) (Hirota, *Wind in the Pines,* p. 244; *Hōnen, Ippen,* p. 164)

The One-Page Testament of Rikyū

Chanoyu as we now practice it is not the *chanoyu* that has been discussed and proclaimed in the past by the accomplished teamen of China and Japan. Neither is it to partake of tea having grasped its essence through scholarly study. It is simply to drink tea, knowing that if you just heat the water, your thirst is certain to be quenched. Nothing else is involved.

Concerning [the ideal of] *suki* [here, a devotion to the art of tea]: Know that when you simply cleanse your heart and mind, all things essential are inherent in that. If you imagine there to be some profound matter apart from this, you will isolate yourself from the compassion of others and fail to be among those who manifest the mind of *suki.*

Though you may have acquired fine utensils, both native and Chinese, if you entrust yourself to this way of tea, then you should—becoming an impoverished person ignorant of even a single written character, or the same as the women and men who enter the Buddhist path while remaining at home—without assuming the manner of a "person of *suki,*" simply heat the water with wholeness of heart. (Hirota, *Wind in the Pines,* p. 245; *Chadō zenshū,* vol. 9, p. 494)

Sen Sōtan (1578–1658) was the grandson of Rikyū and became a great tea master in the early Edo period. His memories of his grandfather reveal the importance of Rikyū's insights for the generation that followed. The term *roji* (garden pathway) is the path leading to the teahouse itself.

[During the tenth month] Rikyū and [his son Dōan] attended a morning gathering hosted by a certain person. In a morning storm, the leaves of an oak *(muku)* had fallen and scattered [onto the stepping stones], and the surface of the *roji* gave precisely the feeling of a mountain forest. Rikyū, looking back [on the *roji*], said, "All of this is engaging. But the host, being unaccomplished, will probably sweep up the leaves."

Just as he thought, after the intermission not a single leaf remained. At that time Rikyū commented, "As a general rule concerning the cleaning of the *roji,* if guests are to come in the morning, one should sweep the previous evening; if at noon, one should sweep in the morning. After that, even if fallen leaves should collect, the accomplished practitioner will allow them to lie as they are." . . .

One spring, Lord Hideyoshi filled a large bronze bowl with water and placed it in the alcove. Beside it, he placed a branch of plum with crimson blossoms, and ordered Rikyū to make the flower arrangement. Hideyoshi's attendants murmured among themselves about the difficulty of the task. But Rikyū held the branch of crimson plum inverted over the bowl and slid his hand down lightly and easily, knocking off the flowers. The open blossoms and buds floated together on the surface of the water, making an elegant sight. "I tried somehow to embarrass that fellow Rikyū, but he wouldn't be flustered!" Hideyoshi said, expressing his thoughts without the slightest ill-feeling. . . .

A student of Rikyū asked what kind of room was appropriate for *chanoyu.* He answered: "A room in which much old wood has been used for repairs." . . .

Rikyū said: "*Chanoyu* is always in danger of becoming like the decorative costumes of court musicians. You should perform with paucity in all things." . . .

Once, after Rikyū's enforced suicide, Hideyoshi had found something to his liking concerning a brazier and muttered that at such times he felt the loss at having killed Rikyū. (Selected from Hirota, *Wind in the Pines,* pp. 250–259; *Chadō koten zenshū,* vol. 10, pp. 199–244)

Despite the best intentions of many tea masters, many lovers of tea came to prize tea caddies, tea bowls, and other wares extremely highly. At this time, Portuguese Catholic missionaries were resident in Japan, and their written comments on various aspects of Japanese art and culture are the first we have from a Western perspective. For them, the tea ceremony was sometimes seen to exemplify a meaningless extravagance, as in this citation from the writings of João Rodriguez (1561–1634).

[T]hey spend large sums of money . . . in purchasing the things needed for drinking the kind of tea which is offered in these meetings. Thus there are utensils, albeit of

plain earthenware, which come to be worth ten, twenty, or thirty thousand *cruzados* or even more—a thing which will appear as madness and barbarity to other nations that hear of it. (Cited in Cooper, *They Came to Japan,* p. 265)

Rodrigues, however, was able at the same time to discern many of the underlying values of the tea ceremony wares, writing elsewhere of those who possessed an ability to grasp the more subtle and hidden qualities in these objects and noting that not everyone was capable of such discernment.

The last word on tea utensils, however, should be given by a Japanese observer, who stresses that connoisseurship by itself is not enough.

A man who has the ability to discriminate the best and the worst among all sorts of tea-ceremony utensils, who performs the tea ceremony gracefully, and who lives by teaching the tea ceremony is called a tea master. Among men of this type, only those who never use any eye-catching utensils and who are well grounded in the three principles of *sakubun* [creative originality], *tegara* [achievement], and determined devotion to the art are to be called *wabi-suki* [tea ceremony in the subdued or rustic taste] tea masters. (Itoh, *The Elegant Japanese House,* p. 60; *Yamanoue Sōji ki,* pp. 52–53)

4 MERCHANT JAPAN

The Momoyama and Edo (Tokugawa) Periods

Social Classes, Art, and Aesthetics

With the complex battles of the late sixteenth century, new forces came into play in Japanese culture, and so in the Japanese arts. Although this section is mainly concerned with the Edo period (1600 – 1868), some of the beginnings of these new trends took place during the preceding Momoyama period (1568 – 1600), which is thus included here as well.

The Edo period (named for the new capital city of Edo, now Tokyo) is also often referred to as the Tokugawa period, in reference to the Tokugawa shogunate, founded by Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542 – 1616). The Tokugawa shogunate, a continuous line of military rulers who governed Japan, lasted for more than two and a half centuries. After winning the decisive battle of Sekigahara in 1600, Tokugawa Ieyasu and his forces managed to pacify the country. He moved his capital north to Edo and, in order to reinforce the peace, took a number of steps to organize a rapidly urbanizing society. With the country at peace and trade within the country expanding, older cities developed and new trading centers arose and prospered. With such developments, of course, came a new distribution of wealth.

In terms of the arts, two important facts stand out. First, the Tokugawa leaders became increasingly wary of possible foreign intervention by Catholic missionaries in the unstable internal politics of the country. They therefore decided to curb these influences, so by the 1630s Japan had banned Christianity and virtually cut off ties with the West, except for a trickle of contacts in Nagasaki, largely with the Dutch (safely Protestant and completely dedicated to trade) and the Chinese. Despite this enforced isolation, however, the fascination of Japanese artists, intellectuals, physicians, and others for various aspects of European science and culture continued to increase. Toward the end of the Edo period, Western concepts of art, particularly in the realm of painting, began to bring a fresh stimulus to the country. Mean-

while, a strong new wave of Chinese influence came into Japan with Zen monks of the Ōbaku sect in the middle and later seventeenth century. This influence was to have a great effect on Japanese education, which took on many Neo-Confucian elements, and upon many forms of art. Therefore the enforced isolation ordained by the Tokugawa government paradoxically led to greater interest in foreign ideas and influences than might otherwise have been the case.

The second important element concerned the internal social organization of the nation. Many of the techniques used by the Tokugawa shoguns were borrowed from the Neo-Confucian ideas developed in China and were at this time newly current in Japan. For example, the population was divided into four social classes, in descending order: samurai, farmers, artisans, and, at the bottom, the merchants. In this context the arts, like other aspects of society, began to show developments along clear class lines. These original four divisions, however, were largely arbitrary and did not always reflect actual conditions. In the first place, many elements of society were not included, among them aristocrats associated with the Kyoto court; Buddhist and Shintō priests; *nō* actors; doctors; outcasts; some artists; and others. Even more important, as the merchants continued during this long period of peace to gain economic power, educational opportunities, and an increasing amount of leisure time, they began to serve as major supporters of the theater (especially the puppet theater and *kabuki*) and eventually as patrons of the arts as well. The advent of printing in Japan, as in Europe, also helped facilitate the spread of both classic and contemporary writings to all social classes. As a result, there existed during this period parallel artistic cultures, created and patronized by aristocrats and the highly educated at one end of the spectrum and by the merchant-class townspeople and even peasants at the other. Some crossing over was possible, of course, but the Tokugawa government frowned on any overt appreciation by the samurai and educated classes of the "vulgar" arts of the common people. In addition, the shogunate promulgated numerous laws limiting the cultural and artistic activities of the commoners, although these laws were only partially successful.

In the most general terms, it can be said that as a result of this complex social interplay, two kinds of tendencies in the arts developed. The first was largely aristocratic in nature, drawing on the past both by paying homage to Chinese sources, which, as in previous periods, had served as a kind of "alternate" past, and by reviving some of the classical traditions of Japan. The samurai and other highly educated classes who took an interest in these scholarly, intellectual, and referential arts helped continue the grand traditions from earlier periods. The second, described below, concerns the development of a new popular culture.

One significant group in the aristocratic camp was composed of those who referred to themselves as *bunjin,* or "men of culture." They were inspired by precedents both from Japan, such as writers like Kamo no Chōmei, and especially from the Chinese literary tradition, such as the famous poet and recluse Tao Yuanming

(365 – 427 CE). These *bunjin* artists and intellectuals spent at least part of their lives in seclusion, meditating on old texts and creating art and poetry that paid homage to elements at considerable variance with the bustle of everyday Edo-period life. Some of the most famous of these *bunjin,* such as Ishikawa Jōzan (1583 – 1672), who retired to his villa in Kyoto to write poetry, helped introduce and reintroduce classical Chinese culture into the larger society; others, such as the Buddhist monk, poet, and calligrapher Ryōkan (1758 – 1831), turned to both the Chinese and Japanese roots of Buddhism. There were many others who, in emulation of such figures, became in effect roving artists and writers. Unlike in China, where competitive examinations for government service meant that most literati could achieve a position from which to enjoy painting, poetry, and calligraphy without financial worries, in Japan only a few *bunjin* were able to obtain stipends or income. As a result, some had to support themselves through their artistic production. Nevertheless, they maintained their individualistic artistic personalities, rather than forming family schools like most other Japanese artists.

The appeal of the aesthetic ideas that lay behind the art and literature such men and women created was very powerful during the Edo period, but perhaps because such art and literature presume considerable knowledge of Chinese and Japanese precedents, they have been less studied and appreciated in the West than the more popular arts. The works, for example, of such novelists as Ueda Akinari (1734 – 1809) and Takizawa Bakin (1767 – 1848), both of whom assumed a considerable knowledge of classical Chinese and Japanese literature on the part of their readers, have perforce become more distant for modern readers, both in Japan and elsewhere. Their work is of the highest quality but often difficult of access. By the same token, it must not be forgotten that, in their way, the arts and culture of the Edo period were as cosmopolitan and sophisticated as those of modern Japan. If some aspects of this period seem increasingly remote to our times, it is because the focus then was largely on China (rather than Europe), a culture that has grown as distant for many Japanese in the past hundred years as it has usually remained for Europeans and Americans.

Popular culture of the Edo period, however, is both more approachable and far more direct. The arts that were patronized by the townspeople, from the theater to popular novels by such writers as Ihara Saikaku (1642 – 1693) and the woodblock prints that achieved such a high circulation, serve as fascinating examples of both the skill and power of popular culture during this period. It is no wonder, then, that when the West discovered Japanese culture after the opening of the country in the 1850s, such emblems of popular culture as the woodblock print entranced viewers and artists in Europe and the United States. These enthusiasms created new influences that before the end of the nineteenth century helped bring about important changes in modern European art as well.

Edo-period townspeople invented original aesthetic values and modes of percep-

tion, and indeed some of these were in turn eventually accepted by the warrior class. Though commoner concepts of art and culture were rarely articulated systematically or at length in learned treatises, they colored much of the everyday discourse on the arts through value judgments expressed in popular novellas and guides to the pleasure quarters and in ideals of behavior and deportment. One set of such judgements, not created anew during the Edo period but emphasized in a new manner by the commoners of this era, centered on the perceived or imagined marginal distinctions between the ultimately high-brow values of the city, which were considered elegant and refined, and the unsophisticated, crude, and low-brow values of the countryside. Yet even the educated, highly cultured townspeople often looked to the countryside as a repository of simple, unaffected values that ought not to be scorned. In a guide to Edo pleasure centers published in 1774, for example, the author notes that at Itabashi establishments (located on the city's border) "the language used has a delightful rustic flavor." By contrast, women working at Sanjūsangendō in the Fukagawa area did not pay sufficient attention to hairstyles and manner of dress. "Moveover, they sing popular songs. Because of this, they are of inferior character," this author laments, indicating that while the "folk" elements might be appreciated, vulgar elements of "popular" styles were beyond redemption.[1]

A related, though far more elusive, aesthetic value of the townspeople was known as *iki* (or *sui*). Although this concept excluded the vulgar and centered on notions of what was chic, stylish, or up to date, it did not simply mean "high class," nor did it simply replicate fads of the day. Instead, *iki* required a degree of understatement or modesty, a sense of refinement that was not ostentatious (braggarts or those who flaunted their wealth or knowledge were never *iki*). *Iki* ideals, which included clothing styles, colors, and the mood of musical genres, as well as forms of behavior, flourished particularly in the pleasure quarters, both among the male customers and the women who worked there. Here the "connoisseur" *(tsū)* who knew the rules of the game, or the courtesan who understood the worries of her client but did not embarrass him by saying as much, patterned their behavior in what may be seen as an aesthetic manner. By contrast, the phony *(hankatsū)* or the boor *(yabo)* personified the antithesis of the ideal of *iki*. Such types might wear clothing that, though expensive, featured slightly outmoded patterns or loud colors; sing tasteless songs; or behave in a manner that could only be interpreted as arrogant, jaded, or simply crude.

The pleasure quarters and the theater areas were perhaps the most important source of Edo-period commoner aesthetics. It was in this "floating world" *(ukiyo)* — a term that refers to the insecurity of those drifting in and out of it, the fleeting nature of the pleasure found there, and in the end, the Buddhist notion of the un-

1. "Fumigurama murasaki no kanoko," p. 132.

real nature of phenomenal reality in general — that the most *iki* styles of a form of theatrical recitation known as *jōruri* were cultivated. The theater and its actors also stimulated new designs for clothing, hairpins, tobacco pouches, and much else. It was the pleasure quarters that provided the backdrop for much Edo-period literature, art, and music. The polychrome woodcuts, known as *ukiyo-e* or *nishiki-e* (literally "brocade prints") often featured portraits of star actors and the most revered courtesans.

An additional complexity, and one that enriched the arts of the Edo period still further, was a continuation of a tendency toward a cultural appropriation already established in the medieval period. Just as the samurai wished to understand and participate in the arts of the nobility, so the merchants wanted to take part in the higher forms of artistic expression that by tradition belonged to the wealthy samurai and aristocratic classes. The rapid spread of printing brought such great classics as *The Tale of Genji* to the urban commoners; traditional works such as *The Tale of the Heike* were now used as source material for *kabuki* and puppet plays. While the commoners wished to borrow, however, they nevertheless went on to create their own culture, which they enjoyed in a natural and unassuming fashion. The creative tension between inherited artistic attitudes and techniques and genuine artistic aspirations of the new commoner class helped produce a freshness in the arts of Edo that renders them particularly vibrant. This process can nowhere be better observed than in the work of the most revered artistic figure of the entire period, the *haiku* poet Matsuo Bashō (1644–1694). In his work and that of his followers the successful functioning of all these diverse strands can be clearly observed.

Poetry

During the Edo period, poetry was composed and appreciated in a variety of forms, including all those popular in the preceding periods: *waka, renga,* and poetry in Chinese *(kanshi).* Although the art of *haiku* was certainly known in the preceding period, the writing of this verse was not considered a form of high art until transformed by the genius of Bashō.

The development of *haiku* (which might be translated as "comic verse" or "humorous verse") is complex. There are two simple points, however, that are of importance for the citations that follow. First, the verse form of *haiku* itself, which consists of seventeen syllables (5-7-5) consists of the first portion of the longer classical thirty-one syllable *waka* (5-7-5-7-7). The skills and the artistic regulations necessary to compose *waka* were considered too difficult for most commoners to learn, but this shorter form, which depended less on precedent and a knowledge of the vast canon of *waka,* seemed more possible to master and thus spread widely during the Edo period. Second, *haiku* developed from a form of linked verse, *haikai,*

which was in turn a form that borrowed certain elements from the classical *renga,* or linked verse, sequencing, such as the use of the seasons and fixed shifts in subject matter. Many of the famous poems by Bashō, for example, that we term *haiku* were actually opening verses *(hokku)* to sequences written by a group of poets together. Bashō, as a great teacher, had his verses preserved, and they often can stand alone without difficulty. But as a reading of his travel diaries makes clear, they were often intended to begin an exchange with his students; indeed, it was as a teacher that Bashō largely supported himself.

Bashō

Haiku has become internationally popular as a verse form, and Bashō's name is known around the world through translations of his elusive works into various European and Asian languages. Despite the fact that Bashō traveled around the country teaching the art of *haiku,* he wrote no formal treatises on the art of poetry. However, some examples from two categories of writings that shed considerable light on his aesthetic convictions and principles are provided here, as they reveal much about his artistic stance. We have not included here statements on the techniques of *haiku* writing, which can be found in a number of other sources, but rather more general statements that reflect on Bashō's convictions concerning the purposes of poetry in particular and the arts in general.

The first of these two categories consists of autobiographical statements by Bashō himself. Most of these can be found in his various travel diaries. While *The Narrow Road to the Deep North (Oku no hosomichi),* published posthumously in 1702, is the most famous of these, all of the diaries contain fine poems and remarkable insights into the mind and soul of this remarkable artist. These works are often written in an elegant and elusive prose style referred to as *haibun,* which might be rendered as "*haiku* prose." These passages complement the poems beautifully and often help extend their meaning.

In his *Records of a Travel-Worn Satchel (Oi no kobumi),* written in 1687, Bashō begins with a description of his own poetic vocation; he tried other sorts of work, he suggests, but he is driven on by poetry alone. After this opening passage he shows the connections he wishes to establish between the plebeian art of the *haiku* and the great classic arts of the medieval period, citing names mentioned in the earlier sections of this anthology. The link he finds in common with these great precursors is to become one with nature, a theme that resonates throughout his work.

In this mortal frame of mine which is made of a hundred bones and nine orifices there is something, and this something is called a wind-swept spirit for lack of a better name, for it is much like a thin drapery that is torn and swept away at the slightest stir

of the wind. This something in me took to writing poetry years ago, merely to amuse itself at first, but finally making it its lifelong business. It must be admitted, however, that there were times when it sank into such dejection that it was almost ready to drop its pursuit, or again times when it was so puffed up with pride that it exulted in vain victories over the others. Indeed, ever since it began to write poetry, it has never found peace with itself, always wavering between doubts of one kind and another. At one time it wanted to gain security by entering the service of a court, and at another it wished to measure the depth of its ignorance by trying to be a scholar, but it was prevented from either because of its unquenchable love of poetry. The fact is, it knows no other art than the art of writing poetry, and therefore, it hangs on to it more or less blindly.

Saigyō in traditional poetry, Sōgi in linked verse, Sesshū in painting, Rikyū in tea ceremony, and indeed all who have achieved real excellence in any art, possess one thing in common, that is, a mind to obey nature, to be one with nature, throughout the four seasons of the year. Whatever such a mind sees is a flower, and whatever such a mind dreams of is the moon. It is only a barbarous mind that sees other than the flower, merely an animal mind that dreams of other than the moon. The first lesson for the artist is, therefore, to learn how to overcome such barbarism and animality, to follow nature, to be one with nature. . . .

From time immemorial the art of keeping diaries while on the road was popular among the people, and such great writers as Ki no Tsurayuki, Kamo no Chōmei, and the nun Abutsu brought it to perfection. Later works are by and large little more than imitations of these great masters, and my pen, being weak in wisdom and unfavored by divine gift, strives to equal them, but in vain. It is easy enough to say, for example, that such and such a day was rainy in the morning but fine in the afternoon, that there was a pine tree at such and such a place, or that the name of the river at a certain place was such and such, for these things are what everybody says in their diaries, although in fact they are not even worth mentioning unless there are fresh and arresting elements in them. The readers will find in my diary a random collection of what I have seen on the road, views somehow remaining in my heart—an isolated house in the mountains, or a lonely inn surrounded by the moor, for example. I jotted down these records with the hope that they might provoke pleasant conversation among my readers and that they might be of some use to those who would travel the same way. Nevertheless, I must admit that my records are little more than the babble of the intoxicated and the rambling talk of the dreaming, and therefore my readers are kindly requested to take them as such. (Yuasa, *The Narrow Road to the Deep North,* pp. 71–74, amended; *Oi no kobumi,* pp. 52–55)

The second category of writings consists of various statements concerning the composition and the goals of *haiku* poetry. These observations by Bashō were most often articulated in response to questions posed by his disciples.

The Master would never volunteer to speak on matters that he was not questioned about. If a particular problem was not apparent to someone, the person did not know enough to inquire. And if that person did not inquire, the Master did not offer instruction. Undoubtedly there was much left that no one knew enough to ask about. (Shirane, *Traces of Dreams,* p. 257; *Uda no hōshi,* p. 245)

In one of his most celebrated statements on the art of *haikai*, Bashō described the arc of the poet's inspiration.

The Master taught, "You should awaken to the high and return to the low." "You should constantly seek out the truth of poetry and with that high spirit return to the *haikai* that you are practicing now." (Shirane, *Traces of Dreams,* p. 255; *Sanzōshi,* p. 546)

During the course of Bashō's career, he sometimes drew close to the tenets of classical Japanese and Chinese literature. Yet toward the end of his life, he insisted that the ultimate focus of *haiku* should remain on the plain and the ordinary, in terms of both vocabulary and subject matter.

As the form of one's verses gradually becomes heavier, it falls into the trap of logic and reason, and one creates difficult, overly intricate verse. When that happens, one should abandon the poetic style that one has used until that point and compose lightly and gently, with ordinary words. That will give the poetry a sense of immediacy. (Shirane, *Traces of Dreams,* p. 276; *Shōmon haijin shokan-shū,* p. 203)

The relation between the artist and the object of his contemplation elicited another of Bashō's most famous observations on this ultimately spiritual relationship.

When the Master said, "As for the pine, learn from the pine; as for the bamboo, learn from the bamboo," he meant casting aside personal desire or intention. Those who interpret this "learning" in their own way end up never learning.

The phrase "learn" means to enter into the object, to be emotionally moved by the essence that emerges from that object, and for that movement to become verse. Even if one clearly expresses the object, if the emotion does not emerge from the object naturally, the object and the self will be divided, and that emotion will not achieve poetic truth. The effect will be the verbal artifice that results from personal desire. (Shirane, *Traces of Dreams,* p. 261; *Sanzōshi,* pp. 547–548)

Bashō employed a number of terms in explicating his aesthetic convictions. His disciple Hokushi listed some of the most central of these, all difficult of any precise definition. *Sabi* is sometimes translated as "quiet loneliness"; its root meaning is "rust." *Shiori* can be rendered as "bending" and *hosomi* as "slender."

In composing poetry and prose, one must not forget what is called *fūga,* the art of poetry. *Sabi, shiori, hosomi,* and elegance are *fūga.* Without this understanding, vernacular poetry will become a collection of commonplace words, it will become rude, or vulgar, or it will be trapped by logic, losing the original spirit of *haikai.* For those pursuing the way of *haikai,* this is of utmost importance. (Shirane, *Traces of Dreams,* p. 80; *Yamanaka mondō,* p. 23)

These qualities may be considered as "overtones" that, although they do not appear in the words of the poem, nevertheless determine its atmosphere. On one occasion, Kyorai, another of Bashō's major disciples, provided something of a definition of *sabi.*

Yamei asked, "What is the meaning of the *sabi* of a verse?"

Kyorai answered, "*Sabi* is the complexion of the verse. It does not mean a quiet and lonely verse. For example, when an elderly man puts on helmet and armor and enters the battlefield, or when he wears a beautiful uniform and attends a banquet for nobles, he still has the form of an old man. The same is true of *sabi,* which exists both in brilliant verses and in quiet verses. Let me give one example.

cherry blossom guardians
their white heads
bumping together.

The Master said of this poem, "The complexion of *sabi* clearly manifests itself. That pleases me." (Shirane, *Traces of Dreams,* pp. 77–78; *Kyorai-shō,* pp. 512–513)

The image portrayed here can be of old men assigned to look after the cherry trees in full bloom; the white heads nodding together as they inadvertently slip into sleep is an image at once touching and humorous. A second possible meaning, however, is the blossoms stirred by the wind and rustling against each other; interpretations are always up to the recepient of the poem.

As for the choice of subject matter for *haikai,* the debate continued among Bashō's disciples as to what the relation to the past, and in particular the poetic past, should be. Again, Kyorai offers observations based on Bashō's beliefs.

Someone asked, "Kyoriku has argued that the province of classical poetry and that of *haikai,* that is to say, the topics of classical poetry and the topics of *haikai* are separate. If so, when a *haikai* poet composes on a classical topic, it is as if he or she is invading the province of classical poetry. What do you think?"

Kyorai answered, "You have a good reason to doubt. From the distant past, people have spoken of poetic places in classical poetry and of those in *haikai* as though they were separate. But the actual situation is different. Classical poetry has many regulations, which place limits on the topics and on poetic places. These rules cannot be violated. Consequently, poetic places and topics in classical poetry are fixed, but those in *haikai* are unbound. Anything can be a *haikai* topic; any place can be a poetic place in *haikai;* there is no word that *haikai* cannot use. The difference between classical poetry and *haikai* lies in their perception and their atmosphere. For example, one could call cherry blossoms a topic of classical poetry and rapeseed a topic of *haikai,* but it would be a mistake to say that cherry blossoms is not a *haikai* topic. (Shirane, *Traces of Dreams,* pp. 197–198; *Tabineron,* pp. 199–200)

For Bashō, poetry lived both in and out of time. This state is perhaps best captured by his disciple Dohō.

Bashō's poetry has both the eternal unchanging and the momentary everchanging. These two aspects become one at the base, which is the truth of poetic art. If one does not understand the unchanging, one cannot truly understand Bashō's *haikai.* The unchanging does not depend on the new or the old and is unrelated to change or trends; it is firmly anchored in the truth of poetic art.

When one observes the poetry of successive generations of classical poets, one can see that poetry changes with each generation. And yet there are many poems that transcend the old and the new, that appear no differently now from when they appeared in the past, and that are deeply moving. One should consider these poems the unchanging.

It is the law of nature that all things undergo infinite change. If one does not seek change, *haikai* cannot be renewed. When one does not seek change, one becomes content with the current fashion and one does not pursue the truth *[makoto]* of *haikai.* If one does not seek the truth or guide the spirit in that pursuit, one cannot know change based on truth. These people are only imitating others. Those who pursue truth, by contrast, will move one step ahead, not being content to tread on the same ground. No matter how much *haikai* may change in the future, if it is change based on truth, it will be the kind of *haikai* advocated by Bashō.

Bashō said, "One should never, even for a moment, lick the dregs of the ancients. Like the endless changes of the seasons, all things must change. The same is true of *haikai.*"

As the Master lay dying, his disciples asked him about the future of *haikai.* The Master answered, "Since I have entered upon this path, *haikai* has changed a hundredfold. And yet of the three stages of calligraphy—the 'stopping' *[shin],* the 'walking' *[gyō],* and the 'running' *[sō]—haikai* has yet to move beyond the first and the second stages." While he was alive, the Master would occasionally say in jest, "My *haikai* has yet to untie the opening of the straw bag." (Shirane, *Traces of Dreams,* p. 264; *Sanzōshi,* pp. 545–546)

Yosa Buson

As indicated above, Bashō sought the sublime through the ordinary in poetry. Among the poets who followed him, some strove, somewhat in the fashion of the *bunjin* ideals, to incorporate and emphasize classical learning in their poetry. The most important of these later masters is Yosa Buson (1716–1783), a highly sophisticated painter and a poet writing in classical Chinese as well as in Japanese. He deeply revered Bashō, whom he considered his spiritual master, and his several works of calligraphy with colored ink sketches of Bashō's *Narrow Road to the Deep North* remain among the most evocative visual creations of the mental and spiritual world of *haiku.* Although Buson never knew the Master himself, he came to know some of the poets who studied with Bashō's disciples.

Buson apparently wrote relatively little in terms of his general artistic stance. On one occasion, however, he wrote his comments on the nature of *haikai* in connection with his editing a manuscript of poems by the deceased poet, Kuroyanagi Shundei.

Kuroyanagi Korekoma edited his late father's manuscript and asked me to do its preface. So I write. I once met Kuroyanagi Shoha [Shundei] at his villa in the west suburbs of Kyoto. At that time he questioned me about *haikai.* I answered that the essence of *haikai* is to use ordinary words and yet to become separate from the ordinary. Be separate from the ordinary and still use the ordinary.

How to become separate from the ordinary is most difficult. A well-known Zen priest [Hakuin Ekaku, 1685–1768] said, "You should try to listen to the sound of the clapping of one hand." This is the Zen of *haikai* and the way of being separated from the ordinary.

Shoha understood, and again questioned. "What you, old master, told me about how to become separate from the ordinary is profound, but it is still something we have to attain by our own efforts, isn't it? Is there any easy way to a shorter road to detachment from the ordinary?"

I answered, "Yes. You should read Chinese poetry. You have been good at Chinese poetry for a long time. There is no other way than that."

Shoha dared to ask, "Chinese poetry and *haikai* are different, and yet you say we should abandon *haikai* and read Chinese poetry. Isn't it a roundabout way?"

I answered, "Painters [Buson was referring to painters in the literati style] have a theory of detaching the ordinary, which says, 'While painting there is no other way to exclude the ordinary than to read many books, then the atmosphere from the books becomes superior and the atmosphere of ordinary cities becomes inferior. Those who want to learn should follow this way.' Even painters throw away their brushes and read books in order to exclude the ordinary. So Chinese poetry and *haikai,* why should they be apart?"

Shoha understood at once.

One day he questioned me again. "Since old times there have been many different gateways to *haikai* and each is different. Which gateway shall I enter to reach that pavilion's innermost room?"

I answered, "There are no gateways to *haikai.* There is only the *haikai* gateway itself. Here I will quote a theory of fine art. 'Great artists do not set up a gateway [school]. A gateway exists naturally.' It is the same with *haikai* too. Take all the streams into your water bag and keep them and choose for yourself what is good and use it for your purposes. Think for yourself about what you have inside yourself. There is no other way. But still, if you don't choose appropriate friends to communicate with, it is difficult to reach that world."

Shoha asked, "Who are the friends?"

I answered, "Call on Kikaku, visit Ransetsu, recite with Sodo, accompany Onitsura [Bashō's associates, all dead at this time]. Day after day you should meet these four old poets and get away from the distracting atmosphere of the cities. Wander around the forests and drink and talk in the mountains. It is best if you acquire *haiku* naturally. Thus should you spend every day and some day you will meet the four poets again. Your appreciation of nature will be unchanged. Then you will close your eyes and seek for words. When you get *haiku* you will open your eyes. Suddenly the four poets will have disappeared. No way of knowing where they became supernatural. You stand there alone in an ecstacy. At that time, flower fragrance comes with the wind and moonlight hovers on the water. This is the world of *haikai.*"

Shoha smiled. (Sawa and Shiffert, *Haiku Master Buson,* pp. 156–157; *Shundei kushū-jō,* pp. 290–292)

Some of Buson's *haiku*, depending upon an intellectual recognition of references to earlier Chinese and Japanese poetry, can be difficult for modern readers. Many others, however, present brilliant visual images that combine his painterly vision with *haiku* aesthetics. At their best, Buson's poems represent a brilliant congruence, in T. S. Eliot's phrase, of tradition and individual talent that remains unmatched in the history of this poetic form.

Kobayashi Issa

In the development of the art of *haiku* during the later Edo period, one of the most beloved and respected poets for Japanese readers today remains Kobayashi Issa (1763 – 1827). If Buson's *haiku* often represented the cultivated and learned elements in *haiku* history, Issa's work is at an opposite pole, rendering the simple insights of a humble life in a popular and unpretentious manner. This unforced simplicity represents one reason his work continues to appeal. Another is perhaps related to his often difficult life, to which he responded with dignity and the expression of fresh emotions of the sort that can still resonate with readers today.

Issa, the son of a farmer, was brought up in the mountainous area of Shinano, now Nagano Prefecture, in central Japan. Mistreated as a stepson, he left his village for Edo, where eventually he became a teacher of *haiku*. His father, who died in 1801, always wished that his son would return to his native place, but problems with his half-brother made such a move difficult. He finally was permitted to share the family property in 1813; shortly after his return he married and began to write some of his most moving poetry, concerning various aspects of his family situation, as well as the life of nature that he now observed in his native village.

Although a prolific poet, Issa is not known to have written any poetic treatises as such. Nevertheless, the attitudes he adopted toward his art and the ideals for which he strove can be glimpsed in his 1819 travel diary, *The Year of My Life (Ora ga haru)*. This is a particularly touching work because, among other subjects, the poet treats in a lyrical fashion the birth and death of his second child. He begins with a description of her life as a baby and young girl.

Last summer, when the day for setting out bamboo slips was drawing nigh, a child was born to us. We named her Sato, hoping she might grow in wisdom, despite the fact that she was born in ignorance. This year, when her birthday came round, she bobbed her head at us, and waved her hands, and cried, which was her way of telling us she wanted a paper windmill of a kind that was then extremely popular among the small children. So we bought one for her. But she soon set to licking it and sucking it, and finally, with prodigal indifference, she flung it away. Her mind seems to flit from one thing to another, resting nowhere. Now she is busy with a clay pot, but she soon smashes it. Next she will be fascinated by a paper screen, but she soon tears it. And if we praise her for her actions, she accepts our approval at face value, and smiles delightedly. Not a cloud crosses her tiny mind. She is pure moonlight, and beams all over from head to foot, delighting us far more than the most accomplished performer on the stage could possibly do. Occasionally a visitor will ask her to point out a dog or a bird to him, and at such times she is completely captivating—from the tip of her toes

to the top of her little head. She seems just like a butterfly, poised lightly on a sprig of young grass, resting her wings.

I believe this child lives in a special state of grace, and enjoys divine protection from Buddha. For when the evening comes when once a year we hold a memorial service for the dead, and I have lit the candles on the family altar, and rung the bell for prayer, she crawls out swiftly, wherever she may be, and softly folds her tiny hands, like little bracken sprouts, and says her prayers in such a sweet, small voice—in such a lovely way! For myself, I am old enough that my hair is touched with frost, and every year adds waves of wrinkles to my brow, yet so far I have not found grace with Buddha, and waste my days and months in meaningless activity. I am ashamed to think my child, who is only two years old, is closer to the truth than I. And yet no sooner do I leave the altar than I sow the seeds of future torments, hating the flies that crawl across my knees, killing the mosquitoes that swarm around the table, and even worse, drinking the wine that Buddha has prohibited.

Just as I was reproaching myself in this fashion the moonlight touched our gate, adding a breath of coolness to the evening air. A group of children dancing outside suddenly lifted their voices and cried aloud. My little girl at once threw down the little bowl she had been playing with, and crawled out to the porch, where she, too, cried out and stretched forth her hands to the moon. Watching her, I quite forgot my old age and my sinful nature, and indulged myself with the reflection that when she should be old enough to boast long hair with waving curls, we might let her dance, and that would be more beautiful, I fancied, than to hear the music of the twenty-five celestial maidens.

Not a day passes in which she gives her legs a moment's rest, at least during the daylight hours. Therefore, when night comes, she is tired out and sleeps soundly until the sun is high in the sky the following morning. Her mother takes advantage of her being in bed to do the cooking and the cleaning. When these chores are all completed, she has only a short time left to rest and catch her breath before the child wakes up. As soon as she hears the child crying in her room, she takes her up from her bed and carries her out to the yard to relieve herself. Then she nurses her. The child sucks her mother's milk with a smile on her face, and gently taps her breast to express her happiness. At this moment the mother forgets entirely all the pain she suffered in her womb and all the dirty diapers she must wash each day. She yields herself completely to the joy of having a child—a joy more precious than jewels.

Nursing her child
On the bed, the mother
Counts the flea bites
On her tiny body.

(Yuasa, *The Year of My Life,* pp. 93–95; *Ora ga haru,* pp. 457–459)

Issa's section on the death of his daughter, one of the most famous passages in Edo literature, brings all of these themes together, and the poet creates a kind of humbled understanding of the human condition, which remains, in the end, inexplicable.

It is a commonplace of life that the greatest pleasure issues ultimately in the greatest grief. Yet why—why is it that this child of mine, who has not tasted half the pleasures that the world has to offer, who ought, by rights, to be as fresh and green as the vigorous young needles on the everlasting pine—why must she lie here on her deathbed, swollen with blisters, caught in the loathsome clutches of the vile god of pox? Being, as I am, her father, I can scarcely bear to watch her withering away—a little more each day—like some pure, untainted blossom that is ravished by the sudden onslaught of mud and rain.

After two or three days, however, her blisters dried up and the scabs began to fall away—like a hard crust of dirt that has been softened by the melting snow. In our joy we made a boat with fresh straw, and pouring hot wine ceremoniously over it, sent it down the river with the god of smallpox on it. Yet our hopes proved all in vain. She grew weaker and weaker, and finally on the twenty-first of June, as the morning-glories were just closing their flowers, she closed her eyes forever. Her mother embraced the cold body and cried bitterly. For myself—I knew well it was no use to cry, that water once flown past the bridge does not return, and blossoms that are scattered are gone beyond recall. Yet try as I would, I could not, simply could not cut the binding cord of human love.

The world of dew
Is the world of dew,
And yet. . . .
And yet. . . .

(Yuasa, *The Year of My Life,* pp. 103–105; *Ora ga haru,* pp. 462–463)

Haikai and *haiku* have a long tradition, and many continue to compose in these forms today, both in Japan and elsewhere in other languages. Some later writers have drawn on the more learned traditions of Buson, some on the deceptively transparent simplicities of Issa. These trends were implicit in the work of Bashō, whom both admired.

Prose

The coming of printing and the enormous growth of the urban classes during the Edo period created a considerable market for writers of various kinds, who addressed themselves to a public with diverse and shifting interests.

Learned Tales

There were certain writers who, whatever their personal backgrounds, wrote for a group of learned readers such as the scholars, intellectuals, and highly educated samurai who enjoyed reading poetry in Chinese and the work of the Neo-Confucian philosophers. Probably the two most important artists of this kind were the novelists Takizawa Bakin and Ueda Akinari, both mentioned above.

At the end of the Edo period, Bakin, the author of the voluminous *Biography of Eight Dogs (Nansō satomi hakkenden),* was surely the most admired, respected, and most widely read novelist of late Tokugawa Japan. In addition to his own prodigious output (some early Western observers dubbed him the "Balzac of Japan"), he was also a skilled translator, producing among other works a splendid translation of the lengthy Chinese novel about the Ming loyalists, known in English as *The Water Margin.* The length and stylistic difficulties of Bakin's novels have caused his works, if not his reputation, to vanish during the twentieth century. Bakin tried to combine the highest ideals and techniques of both Chinese and Japanese classical fiction. His very erudition, however, has removed him from the sustained attention of most Japanese writers and readers, who in this century have turned consistently to Europe rather than China for many of their literary inspirations. His work (which remains virtually untranslated) shows the lasting appeal of the classical Chinese models, which continued to inform the art of the *bunjin,* the *haiku* of a poet like Buson, and the composers of poetry in Chinese such as the great Buddhist poet and calligrapher Ryōkan.

Ueda Akinari has been luckier. As newer translations of his work reveal, his prose is also enmeshed in a web of references to the classical literatures of China and Japan. Nevertheless, Akinari's stories are never less than compelling on their own terms. Mysterious, often strangely erotic in a muted fashion, these tales, often close to Western ghost stories in their subject matter, are capable of haunting readers even today; indeed some of them have been used as the basis for at least one now classic postwar film.

Akinari wrote little about his aesthetic views directly, but the prefaces to his two major collections, the 1768 *Tales of Moonlight and Rain (Ugetsu monogatari)* and *Tales of the Spring Rain (Harusame monogatari)* of 1808, brief though they are, shed some light on Akinari's artistic strategies. The preface to *Tales of Moonlight and Rain* reveals not only Akinari's erudition, but also his debt to the past and his sly sense of humor and irony.

Lo Kuan-chung [Luo Guanzhong, ca. 1330–1400] wrote *The Water Margin,* and for three generations he begot deaf mutes. For writing *The Tale of Genji,* Lady Murasaki was condemned to hell. Thus were these authors punished for what they had done. But consider their achievement. Each created a rare form, capable of expressing all degrees of truth with infinitely subtle variation and causing a deep note to echo in the reader's sensibility wherewith one can find mirrored realities of a thousand years ago.

By chance, I happened to have some idle tales with which to entertain you, and as they took shape and found expression, with crying pheasants and quarreling dragons, the stories came to form a slipshod compilation. But you who pick up this book to read must by no means take the stories to be true. I hardly wish for my offspring to have hare lips or missing noses.

Having completed this work one night late in the spring of the Meiwa era, under the zodiac of the earth and the rat, when the rain cleared away and the moon shone faintly by my window, I thereupon gave it to the publisher, entitling it *Tales of Moonlight and Rain.* (Zolbrod, *Ugetsu Monogatari,* p. 97, adapted; *Ueda Akinari shū,* p. 35)

The preface to *Tales of the Spring Rain,* written toward the end of Akinari's life, is even more brief yet touches on some of the same concerns. Again, the suggestion of a difference between copying and creative appropriation is set forth as well.

For how many days has the spring rain been here? How pleasant and still it is! I took out my favorite writing brush and inkstone, but though I pondered long and hard, I could think of nothing to write. Merely to imitate the old romances is a task for the novice. My own circumstances, at present, differ little from those of a humble woodsman: how could I draw upon my own life for a tale? Stories of the past—and of the present as well—have deceived many; indeed, I myself, being unaware that such accounts were lies, have on occasion misled others by repeating them. But what of that? Such tales will continue to be told, and there will always be some who honor them as true history. Well aware of this, I go on writing my stories, as the spring rains keep falling. (Hackman, *Tales of the Spring Rain,* p. 3; *Ueda Akinari shū,* p. 145)

Popular Prose

As the urban merchant class grew in size and wealth, city dwellers found both an increase in leisure time and a desire for self-cultivation, and a vast amount of writing was created and enjoyed. Ranging from Buddhist tracts to guidebooks and stories, this truly popular literature helped define Edo culture and still remains popular today. Of all the writers to address this public, none achieved the fame or success of Ihara Saikaku. He began his prodigious career as a poet of comic *haiku*

and *haikai,* but he turned to writing a series of hilarious and often cunning satires and stories that set the patterns for popular Edo literature down to the end of the nineteenth century. Saikaku wrote little concerning the art of his humor, letting his writings speak for themselves. Much of the best of his writing is based on his insight into the foibles of the merchant class and, occasionally, of the samurai as well. It was precisely to poke fun at all kinds of platitudes and self-righteousness that Saikaku wrote his work. Some modern critics have insisted that Saikaku was basically a realist. His highly amusing and ornate style does not suggest realism in the modern Western sense, but through his insistence on showing the slippages between abstract ideals and actual human actions and reactions, Saikaku captured a sense of life that, even in translation, retains both its freshness and its universality. Here, by way of example, is a passage from Saikaku's 1688 *The Japanese Family Storehouse (Nippon eitaigura),* which sets down, in ironic terms, the ways to success through self-abnegation, many suggestive of Confucian strictures about prudence and self-sacrifice.

For each of the four hundred and four bodily ailments celebrated physicians have produced infallible remedies, but the malady which brings the greatest distress to mankind—to even the wisest and and cleverest of us—is the plague of poverty.

"Is there a treatment to cure this?" a poor man asked a gentleman of great wealth.

"My dear fellow," the rich man replied, "if you have lived till now without knowing such things, you have wasted precious years. In matters of health the best time to take preventive measures is before you reach the wrong side of forty, and you have left this consultation until rather late. However, I observe certain factors which may yet pull you through—your custom of wearing deerskin socks, for example, and bamboo clogs with thick leather soles. If that indicates your approach to life, we may even make a moderately rich man out of you. I have, it so happens, an excellent nostrum called 'The Millionaire Pill,' and I shall give you the prescription:

Early rising	5 parts
The family trade	20 parts
Work after hours	8 parts
Economy	10 parts
Sound health	7 parts

Grind the ingredients thoroughly, use common sense to get the proportions correct, mix carefully, swallow and inwardly digest twice daily—and there is no reason why you should not become a millionaire. However, during treatment it is imperative to abstain from certain noxious things:

(1) Expensive foods, expensive women, silken suits for day-to-day wear.
(2) Private palanquins for wives; private lessons in music or poem-cards for eligible daughters.

(3) A professor of percussion for the sons of the house.
(4) Kickball, miniature archery, perfume appreciation, and poetry gatherings.
(5) A craze for the tea ceremony, and for remodelling the best rooms on tea principles.
(6) Flower-viewing, boating excursions, baths in the middle of the day.
(7) Evenings out with friends, gambling parties, playing Go or backgammon.
(8) Classes for townsmen in sword-drawing and duelling.
(9) Temple-going, and preoccupation with the next world.
(10) Getting involved in others' troubles, and standing surety.
(11) Lawsuits over reclaimed land, and meddling in new mining projects.
(12) Saké with supper, excessive pipe-smoking, unnecessary journeys to Kyoto.
(13) Backing Sumō contests for charity, and giving too generously to temple funds.
(14) Carving knick-knacks during business hours, and collecting fancy sword-accessories.
(15) Familiarity with Kabuki actors, and with brothel quarters.
(16) Borrowing money at a monthly rate of more than eight in the thousand monme.

All these things are more deadly than blister-fly drugs or arsenic. I need hardly say, of course, that to taste any one of them is fatal—but the very idea of them must never enter your head."

He bent close to his questioner's ear—a little ear, full of the promise of poverty—and the man listened enraptured, accepting every word as a drop of pure gold. He resolved to follow this wealthy person's advice, and to work unremittingly from morn till night. (Sargent, *The Japanese Family Storehouse,* pp. 59–60; *Nippon eitaigura,* pp. 47–48)

As Saikaku was eager to show in this and other works such as *Heartfelt Worldly Calculations (Seken mune san'yo)* of 1692, actual human behavior would inevitably fall short, delightfully short, of these maxims.

Following are some excerpts from a document that reveals in a striking way the subordinate position that women were assigned in Tokugawa society. In the Neo-Confucian norms now widely adapted, there were considered in the life of every person to be five cardinal relationships: ruler-subject, father-son, husband-wife, older brother-younger brother, and friend-friend. All but the last might be described as vertical relationships. In other words, the wife was subject to the husband, the subject to the ruler, and so forth. Nowhere are these attitudes better captured than in the famous (and for many modern readers infamous) *Greater Learning for Women (Onna daigaku),* attributed to the philosopher Ekiken (1650–1714). Widely circulated and quoted, this document was said to serve as a training guide for young brides. The reference to the *Lesser Learning* (sometimes translated *El-*

ementary Learning) refers to a text by Zhu Xi (1130 – 1200), *Xiao xue*, well known in both China and Japan. The excerpts below constitute about half of the full text.

Seeing that it is a girl's destiny, on reaching womanhood, to go to a new home, and live in submission to her father-in-law and mother-in-law, it is even more incumbent upon her than it is on a boy to receive with all reverence her parents' instructions. Should her parents, through excess of tenderness, allow her to grow up self-willed, she will infallibly show herself capricious in her husband's house, and thus alienate his affection, while, if her father-in-law be a man of correct principles, the girl will find the yoke of these principles intolerable. She will hate and decry her father-in-law, and the end of these domestic dissensions will be her dismissal from her husband's house, and the covering of herself with ignominy. Her parents, forgetting the faulty education they gave her, may indeed lay all the blame on the father-in-law. But they will be in error; for the whole disaster should rightly be attributed to the faulty education the girl received from her parents.

More precious in a woman is a virtuous heart than a face of beauty. The vicious woman's heart is ever excited; she glares wildly around her, she vents her anger on others, her words are harsh and her accent vulgar. When she speaks, it is to set herself above others, to upbraid others, to envy others, to be puffed up with individual pride, to jeer at others, to outdo others,—all things at variance with the "way" in which a woman should walk. The only qualities that befit a woman are gentle obedience, chastity, mercy, and quietness.

From her earliest youth, a girl should observe the line of demarcation separating women from men; and never, even for an instant, should she be allowed to see or hear the slightest impropriety. The customs of antiquity did not allow men and women to sit in the same apartment, to keep their wearing-apparel in the same place, to bathe in the same place or to transmit to each other anything directly from hand to hand. A woman going abroad at night must in all cases carry a lighted lantern; and (not to speak of strangers) she must observe a certain distance in her intercourse even with her husband and with her brothers. In our days, the women of the lower classes, ignoring all rules of this nature, behave themselves disorderly; they contaminate their reputations, bring down reproach upon the heads of their parents and brothers, and spend their whole lives in an unprofitable manner. Is not this truly lamentable? It is written likewise, in the *Lesser Learning,* that a woman must form no friendship and no intimacy, except when ordered to do so by her parents or by the "middleman." Even at the peril of her life, must she harden her heart like rock or metal, and observe the rules of propriety.

In China, marriage is called *returning,* for the reason that a woman must consider her husband's home as her own, and that, when she marries, she is therefore returning to her own home. However humble and needy may be her husband's position,

she must find no fault with him, but consider the poverty of the household which it has pleased Heaven to give her as the ordering of an unpropitious fate. The sage of old taught that, once married, she must never leave her husband's house. Should she forsake the "way," and be divorced, shame shall cover her till her latest hour. With regard to this point, there are seven faults, which are termed the "Seven Reasons for Divorce": (i) A woman shall be divorced for disobedience to her father-in-law or mother-in-law. (ii) A woman shall be divorced if she fail to bear children, the reason for this rule being that women are sought in marriage for the purpose of giving men posterity. A barren woman should, however, be retained if her heart is virtuous and her conduct correct and free from jealousy, in which case a child of the same blood must be adopted; neither is there any just cause for a man to divorce a barren wife, if he have children by a concubine. (iii) Lewdness is a reason for divorce. (iv) Jealousy is a reason for divorce. (v) Leprosy, or any like foul disease, is a reason for divorce. (vi) A woman shall be divorced, who, by talking overmuch and prattling disrespectfully, disturbs the harmony of kinsmen and brings trouble on her household. (vii) A woman shall be divorced who is addicted to stealing.—All the "Seven Reasons for Divorce" were taught by the Sage. A woman, once married and then divorced, has wandered from the "way," and is covered with the greatest shame, even if she should enter into a second union with a man of wealth and position.

It is the chief duty of a girl living in the parental house to practice filial piety towards her father and mother. But after marriage, her chief duty is to honor her father-in-law and mother-in-law—to honor them beyond her own father and mother—to love and reverence them with all ardor, and to tend them with every practice of filial piety. While thou honorest thine own parents, think not lightly of thy father-in-law! Never should a woman fail, night and morning, to pay her respects to her father-in-law and mother-in-law. Never should she be remiss in performing any tasks they may require of her. With all reverence must she carry out, and never rebel against, her father-in-law's commands. On every point must she enquire of her father-in-law and mother-in-law, and abandon herself to their direction. Even if thy father-in-law and mother-in-law be pleased to hate and vilify thee, be not angry with them, and murmur not! If thou carry piety towards them to its utmost limits, and minister to them in all sincerity, it cannot be but that they will end by becoming friendly to thee.

A woman has no particular lord. She must look to her husband as her lord, and must serve him with all worship and reverence, not despising or thinking lightly of him. The great life-long duty of a woman is obedience. In her dealings with her husband, both the expression of her countenance and the style of her address should be courteous, humble, and conciliatory, never peevish and intractable, never rude and arrogant:—that should be a woman's first and chiefest care. When the husband issues his instructions, the wife must never disobey them. In doubtful cases, she should enquire of her husband, and obediently follow his commands. If ever her husband should enquire of her, she should answer to the point;—to answer in a

careless fashion were a mark of rudeness. Should her husband be roused at any time to anger, she must obey him with fear and trembling, and not set herself up against him in anger and forwardness. A woman should look on her husband as if he were Heaven itself, and never weary of thinking how she may yield to her husband, and thus escape celestial castigation. . . .

Let her never even dream of jealousy. If her husband be dissolute, she must expostulate with him, but never either nurse or vent her anger. If her jealousy be extreme, it will render her countenance frightful and her accents repulsive, and can only result in completely alienating her husband from her, and making her intolerable in his eyes. Should her husband act ill and unreasonably, she must compose her countenance and soften her voice to remonstrate with him; and if he be angry and listen not to the remonstrance, she must wait over a season, and then expostulate with him again when his heart is softened. Never set thyself up against thy husband with harsh features and a boisterous voice! (Chamberlain, *Things Japanese,* pp. 502–505; *Onna daigaku-shū,* pp. 31–59)

The possibilities for satire here are great, and those who have read such works of Saikaku as *The Woman Who Loved Love (Kōshoku ichidai onna)* or *Five Women Who Loved Love (Kōshoku gonin onna),* can only imagine with what relish Saikaku's large public devoured his delicious parodies. These deflect with skill and delicacy the pompous and self-serving in a fashion reminiscent of the great French playwright Molière. Both have a clear sense of where authentic virtue lies.

Finally, it might be noted that despite the fact that Saikaku was a popular writer and had a large following, his style was clever and learned, depending in some ways on the same kind of literary and poetic knowledge that a writer like Ueda Akinari consciously set out to expect of those who read his work. While some of Saikaku's humor comes from the situations in which his characters find themselves, other elements derive from the intellectual recognition on the reader's part of certain references to classical Chinese and Japanese culture. Here, by way of example, is an extract from a Saikaku story entitled "The Almanac Maker," in which the humor is based on an assumption that the reader can pick up a reference to a famous passage in Yoshida Kenkō's *Essays in Idleness.* Here is the relevant passage in Kenkō.

The pleasantest of all diversions is to sit alone under the lamp, a book spread out before you, and to make friends with people of a distant past you have never known. The books I would choose are the moving volumes of the [Chinese poetry collection] *Wen Hsüan* [Wen Xuan], the collected works of Po Chü-i [Bo Juyi], the sayings of Lao Tzu [Laozi], and the chapters of Chuang Tzu [Zhuangzi]. Among the works by scholars of this country, those written long ago are often quite interesting. (Keene, *Essays in Idleness,* p. 12; *Tsurezuregusa,* p. 100)

Here is Saikaku on a street corner in Edo, as the young gallants spend their evening "watching all the girls go by." They are in for some surprises.

There was in the capital a band of four inseparable young men who were known for their handsome appearance and riotous living. Thanks to large inheritances they could spend every day in the year seeking their own pleasure. One night, till dawn, they might amuse themselves in Shimabara with China-girl, Fragrance, Flora-point, and Highbridge. Next day they would make love to Takenaka Kichisaburō, Karamatsu Kasen, Fujita Kichisaburō, and Mitsuse Sakon in the Shijō-gawara section. Night or day, girls or boys, it made no difference to their pleasure.

After the theatre one evening they were lounging around a tea shop called Matsuya and one of them remarked, "I have never seen so many good-looking local girls as I did today. Do you suppose we could find others who would seem just as beautiful now?" They thought they might, and decided to watch for pretty girls among the people who had gone to see the wistaria blossoms and were now returning to their homes. After a worldly actor in the group had been chosen as chief judge, a "beauty contest" was conducted until the twilight hours, providing a new source of amusement for the jaded gentlemen.

At first they were disappointed to see some maids riding in a carriage which hid them from sight. Then a group of girls strolled by in a rollicking mood—"not bad, not bad at all"—but none of the girls quite satisfied their exacting standards. Paper and ink had been brought to record the entries, and it was agreed that only the best should be put on their list.

Next they spied a lady of thirty-four or thirty-five with a graceful long neck and intelligent-looking eyes, above which could be seen a natural hairline of rare beauty. Her nose, it was true, stood a little high, but that could easily be tolerated. Underneath she wore white satin, over that light blue satin, and outside—reddish-yellow satin. Each of these garments was luxuriously lined with the same material. On her left sleeve was a hand-painted likeness of the Yoshida monk, along with his passage, "To sit alone under a lamp, and read old books. . . ." Assuredly, this was a woman of exquisite taste.

Her sash was of folded taffeta bearing a tile design. Around her head she had draped a veil like that worn by court ladies; she wore stockings of pale silk and sandals with triple-braided straps. She walked noiselessly and gracefully, moving her hips with a natural rhythm. "What a prize for some lucky fellow!" a young buck exclaimed. But these words were hardly uttered when the lady, speaking to an attendant, opened her mouth and disclosed that one of her lower teeth was missing, to the complete disillusionment of her admirers. (Keene, *Anthology of Japanese Literature,* pp. 336–337; *Kōshoku gonin onna,* pp. 261–263)

Saikaku's quick wit and his eye for shifts in fashion and appreciation of the foibles of the changing world never failed him. In that sense his art served as a perfect camera, or perhaps as a slightly distorting mirror, to reveal the vicissitudes of Edo society. Apparently, his many generations of readers never tired of serving as the occasional target of his bracing satires.

The National Studies Movement and the Japanese Classics

During the Edo period, in which the prestige of Chinese culture loomed so large, a continuing search for an authentic Japanese cultural identity was undertaken by a group of scholars who participated over the course of several generations in what is termed the National Studies Movement *(kokugaku)*. Strictly speaking, this was not a philosophical quest that involved any particularly artistic considerations as its direct goal. Yet in seeking to uncover the basic values of Japanese life and culture through the study of ancient texts, the scholars active in this movement examined certain elements in ancient culture that are related to art and culture, since many of the texts they studied with such care were literary in nature. The movement has been widely studied and written about, both in Japanese and in English, so there is no need to provide any extensive documentation here. It is clear, however, that those who participated located a space of natural and spontaneous feeling in the Japanese character that they saw in contradistinction to the rational, and in their view oversophisticated, layers of imported Chinese culture that had continued to arrive in Japan over the centuries.

In the context of this present volume, the most important of these philologists and scholars was Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801), whose investigation of such classic texts as the Heian period's *Tale of Genji* produced what might be termed in our contemporary sense the first literary criticism written in Japan. Generally speaking, most of the treatises excerpted here were written by practitioners of a particular art for their disciples. Motoori, on the other hand, did not write narrative fiction himself; rather, he used fiction to explicate basic views of humanity that he found expressed in the text. In this sense, his attitude toward his material is quite familiar to modern readers.

One of the most influential essays of Motoori, and surely one of his most profound, dealt with his definition of the classic "virtue" of *aware,* that sense of wonder and pathos referred to in earlier sections of this book. In this kind of emotional response to the world he located a key element in the Japanese character, as revealed in *The Tale of Genji.*

What Confucianism deems good Buddhism may not; and what Buddhism considers good Confucianism might regard as evil. Likewise, references to good and evil in

the *Tale* may not correspond to Confucian or Buddhist concepts of good and evil. Then what is good or evil in the realm of human psychology and ethics according to the *Tale of Genji?* Generally speaking, those who know the meaning of the sorrow of human existence, i.e., those who are in sympathy and in harmony with human sentiments, are regarded as good; and those who are not aware of the poignancy of human existence, i.e., those who are not in sympathy and not in harmony with human sentiments, are regarded as bad. Regarded in this light, good and evil in the *Tale* may not appear to be especially different from that in Confucianism or Buddhism. However, if examined closely it will be noted that there are many points of difference, as, for example, in the statement about being or not being in harmony with human sentiment. The *Tale* presents even good and evil in gentle and calm terms unlike the intense, compelling, dialectical manner of Confucian writings.

Since novels have as their object the teaching of the meaning of the nature of human existence, there are in their plots many points contrary to Confucian and Buddhist teaching. This is because among the varied feelings of man's reaction to things—whether good, bad, right, or wrong—there are feelings contrary to reason, however improper they may be. Man's feelings do not always follow the dictates of his mind. They arise in man in spite of himself and are difficult to control. In the instance of Prince Genji, his interest in and rendezvous with Utsusemi, Oborozukiyo, and the Consort Fujitsubo are acts of extraordinary iniquity and immorality according to the Confucian and Buddhist points of view. It would be difficult to call Prince Genji a good man, however numerous his other good qualities. But the *Tale* does not dwell on his iniquitous and immoral acts, but rather recites over and over again his profound awareness of the sorrow of existence, and represents him as a good man who combines in himself all good things in man.

For all that, the *Tale* does not regard Genji's misdeeds as good. The evil nature of his acts is obvious and need not be restated here. Besides, there is a type of writing which has as its purpose the consideration of such evils—in fact, there are quite a few such writings—and an objective story therefore need not be used for such a purpose.

The novel is neither like the Buddhist Way which teaches man to attain enlightenment without deviating from the rightful way, nor like the Confucian Way which teaches man how to govern the country or to regulate one's home or one's conduct. It is simply a tale of human life which leaves aside and does not profess to take up at all the question of good and bad, and which dwells only upon the goodness of those who are aware of the sorrow of human existence.

The purpose of the *Tale of Genji* may be likened to the man who, loving the lotus flower, must collect and store muddy and foul water in order to plant and cultivate the flower. The impure mud of illicit love affairs described in the *Tale* is there not for the purpose of being admired but for the purpose of nurturing the flower of the awareness of the sorrow of human existence. Prince Genji's conduct is like the lotus flower which is happy and fragrant but which has its roots in filthy muddy water. But

the *Tale* does not dwell on the impurity of the water; it dwells only on those who are sympathetically kind and who are aware of the sorrow of human existence, and it holds these feelings to be the basis of the good man. (Tsunoda, de Bary, and Keene, *Sources of Japanese Tradition,* pp. 533–535; *Genji monogatari no ogushi,* pp. 197–200)

While general studies of Japanese art and aesthetics were not undertaken before the modern period, passages such as this one show a sophisticated awareness of these elements embedded in the fabric of Japanese culture.

Painting

Just as an increasing amount of literature was written to respond to an increasingly divergent audience of readers, so a great variety of painting styles were practiced for various sectors of the public. First, traditional styles of painting already active before the Edo period, such as the Tosa and Kanō schools, which supplied the samurai and the aristocracy with works of art, continued. Second, while the widespread taste for Zen-influenced paintings decreased, major Zen masters such as Hakuin Ekaku created a large number of works for their followers. Third, other Edo-period artists, such as Maruyama Ōkyo (1733–1795) and his followers, brought a new realism of vision within the general framework of Japanese painting. Fourth, a few painters such as Shiba Kōkan (1747–1818) began an attempt to work more directly in what they took to be Western methods through a careful study of European prints, books, and other materials. Fifth, literati painters *(bunjin)* developed an important school of painting and calligraphy in the Chinese manner, somewhat transformed by Japanese aesthetic concerns. Finally, the development of woodblock prints and paintings, as well as illustrations for books, aimed at the popular urban market, provided new and important contributions to the ever-widening spectrum of the visual arts of the Edo period. Many artists in these different schools and groups wrote treatises on the history and significance of their particular styles and traditions. A sampling of these is provided here.

The Tosa School and Tosa Mitsutoki

One of the most celebrated treatises of painting from the Edo period was composed by the painter Tosa Mitsutoki (1617–1691); entitled *The Great Transmission of the Methods of Japanese Painting (Honchō gahō daiden),* it appeared in 1690. In it, Mitsutoki stressed the importance of a lightness of touch, somewhat akin to similar ideas expressed by Bashō in terms of the art of poetry.

The essence of painting can be summarized in one word: lightness. In all respects, when creating a painting, one should paint lightly, a rule that applies not only to ink painting but also to multicolored painting as well. The overall design of the painting should be left incomplete. Only one-third of the smaller additions should be painted in. In illustrating poetry, one should not attempt to depict the entire contents. One should paint in such a way that there are overtones. Since blank space is part of the larger design, it should be endowed with meaning. (Shirane, *Traces of Dreams,* p. 272; *Nihon no geijutsu ron,* pp. 235–236)

The Kanō School

The Kanō school, one of the most prestigious of all the painting schools, maintained a strong interest in the power of Chinese precedent. Kanō painters, as complete professionals, could also paint in the more delicate, colorful *yamato-e* (Japanese painting) style, as is made clear by the painter Kanō Einō (1631–1697) in 1678.

The *yamato-e* manner is an expression of human sensibilities, so it is gentle. . . . Clouds are placed above and below the scenes to differentiate space and to emphasize what is important by covering the trivial. There are many pine trees in the design. These are done by arranging a series of similar branches one above the other and painting them dark green. (Wheelright, "A Visualization of Eitoku's Lost Paintings at Azuchi Castle," p. 102; *Honchō gashi,* p. 414)

The great explosion of castle, palace, and mansion building that took place after the Momoyama period, as Japan was reunited by powerful shoguns, led to the need for large-scale paintings. The greatest Kanō master of the time was Eitoku (1543–1590), the grandson of Kanō Motonobu (1476–1559).

He did landscapes, figures, flowers, birds, all in *saiga* [small or elaborate paintings]. Frequently he did *taiga* [large or expansive paintings]. When he chose to do *taiga,* his brushwork had the vigor of leaping cranes and fleeing snakes. . . .

Eitoku gained so many commissions, however, that he gave up the more detailed style. Eitoku had no time to do *saiga,* but did *taiga* completely. Some of his pine and plum trees extended one hundred or two hundred feet, and some of his figures were three or four feet tall. His brushwork became rugged and tempestuous. No one compares his quality to Motonobu's, though. In ink painting, he used a straw brush, and, for the most part, had his grandfather's style, yet he produced a strikingly new conception. It was extraordinary, having a unique fascination not present in the art

of his precedessors. (Wheelright, "A Visualization of Eitoku's Lost Paintings at Azuchi Castle," p. 95; *Honchō gashi,* pp. 410–411)

One of the prominent painters of the period, Kanō Yasunobu (1613–1685), created important works both for the residence of the shogun and for the imperial palace in Kyoto. In his *The Secret Way of Painting* (*Gadō yōketsu*, 1680) he made a number of statements about the higher purposes of art, particularly as seen in Chinese terms.

Since Fu Xi drew the eight trigrams, the way of painting has corresponded with virtue in heaven and earth and extends to the nature of the myriad phenomena. During the time of the Yellow Emperor, pictures based on the forms of dragons, turtles, fish, and birds were drawn, finally inventing characters. Since that time painting and calligraphy have developed together. Painting enables the development of civilization. It improves human morals, intensifies the unknowable, and measures the obscure. Painting and calligraphy are one and cannot be separated. (Jordan and Weston, *Copying the Master and Stealing His Secrets,* p. 26; *Gadō yōketsu,* p. 3)

Yasunobu also discusses the relationship between talent and learning, a crucial issue for a style of painting that depends to an important extent on example and precedent. In the end, Yasunobu insists that training is more important than raw talent because for a family school it was necessary to have a method that would serve for all descendants.

In general, paintings produced by talent are no match for those produced through training. In my family tradition, it is said that the subtlety of paintings created through innate talent is truly remarkable. But while valued, it is difficult as a method for future generations. Although the pinnacle of learning can be transmitted only through intense suffering, it is an immutable way, fully transmittable to future generations who will receive it, and nothing will be lost. The way [of training] remains for posterity, through both oral and written means. Thus, painting begins with method and regards sublime talent as secondary. Because it is difficult to appreciate the ways of the ancients appropriately without fully mastering their methods, we should refine our discussion of painting and make contemplation of the high level of artisanship of the past our goal. (Jordan and Weston, *Copying the Master and Stealing His Secrets,* p. 27; *Gadō yōketsu,* p. 4)

Literati Painting

Despite a shared interest in the arts of China, painters in the so-called "literati style," like the *bunjin* poets who wrote poetry in classical Chinese, were at a far remove from the formal traditions of the Kanō academy. These literati artists took certain elements from Chinese painting and incorporated them into their own free and eclectic visions, often referred to as *nanga* (literally, "southern painting," a reference to the works by Chinese artists working outside the official academies of painting). Perhaps due to their literary background, *bunjin* artists wrote quite extensively about their art.

TANOMURA CHIKUDEN

Tanomura Chikuden (1777–1835), a much-admired painter in this tradition, made a number of trenchant comments on the art of painting in his *Prattlings of a Mountain Hermit* (*Sanchūjin jōzetsu,* 1813). Some of the most striking are included below. In the following, Chikuden comments on the differences in national character as a caution to Japanese painters who would work in the *nanga* style.

Japanese are by nature reckless and hasty; Chinese are by nature slow and leisurely—the inherent natures of each are already different from the very beginning. Thus, one who studies painting should examine this ideal carefully and bear it in mind. (Wylie, "Nanga Painting Treatises of Nineteenth Century Japan," pp. 143–144; "Sanchūjin jōzetsu," p. 366)

For Chikuden, the high purpose and usefulness of art were profound.

In the world, there is a point of view that painting has no benefit; this is only due to a lack of exposure to it. This is an interesting aspect of painting: it is initially confusing and obscure. As with precipitous ravines and deep valleys when first attempting them, we think there is no path which allows entry. If over time we develop our appreciation of painting, just as easily as a transcendent immortal descending from the firmament, we determine the way ourselves. From its misty limits and dark interiors, marvelous frontiers are penetrated and strange scenes emerge. Towers and pavilions of all shapes and sizes, paths and roads winding and turning, red banners and feather banners are all contained within that space. The fragrance of the flowers and grasses and the peaceful singing of the birds are there as well. If you unroll a painting before you morning and evening—the longer it is looked at, the greater your intimacy with it—your heart will become peaceful. When your heart is peaceful then your will becomes pure, worldly desires thereby disappear, and wisdom is born. One so wise will

not be tempted by fame and riches. And following this, to continue on to the level of "the virtuous enjoying longevity" is not far. (Wylie, "Nanga Painting Treatises of Nineteenth Century Japan," pp. 123–124; "Sanchūjin jōzetsu," p. 355)

Like many others, Chikuden sees the intimate parallels between poetry and painting.

Poetry and painting follow the same tracks, and painting also arises from within native ability. That is why I say it is more interesting to read good Tang and Song verses, thereby obtaining their intent, than to force one's own poems. It is much better to appreciate the excellence of famed paintings of previous generations than to force one's own painting. If a person does not write or paint himself, he will not understand this, but neither do those who do paint understand it. What can be done? (Wylie, "Nanga Painting Treatises of Nineteenth Century Japan," p. 145; "Sanchūjin jōzetsu," p. 367)

And again:

A poet chants about all manner of things and a painter depicts life. Their inspiration is one and the same. To depict the form is fairly easy, but to transmit the spirit is very difficult. (Wylie, "Nanga Painting Treatises of Nineteenth Century Japan," p. 131; "Sanchūjin jōzetsu," p. 359)

Chikuden finds the beauty of classic art the most compelling of nourishments. Here are Chikuden's comments on the purposes and limitations of imitation.

Su Dongpo wrote, "Those who adhere rigidly to form in writing poetry thus let it be known that they are not poets." Painters, first and foremost, avoid verisimilitude of form. Painted bamboo which looks like the bamboo, or painted orchids which look like orchids—this must be what is meant by "adhering rigidly to form in poetry." In recent generations, there is another type of verisimilitude of form. Those who follow Ni Zan and Huang Gongwang just for the sake of painting in the styles of Ni and Huang, or those who copy Tang Yin and Qiu Ying just for the sake of painting in the styles of Tang and Qiu—they are also adhering rigidly to form. As the Zen master says, "Those who follow me implicitly are dead" (i.e., unable to be truly enlightened). From long ago, imitation has been taken as a deformity. Since even the imitative cannot be easily achieved, how much more difficult it is to achieve the real. (Wylie, "Nanga Painting Treatises of Nineteenth Century Japan," pp. 134–135; Sanchūjin jōzetsu," p. 361)

The spiritual state of the artist also interests Chikuden.

If a landscape is painted by one who is calm, it will make the viewer calm. However, if the same scene is painted by one who is unsettled, it will make the viewer unsettled. If birds and flowers are painted by one in whose brush resides the skill of awakening change, the painting will cause the viewer to cherish the moment depicted and, becoming involved with the picture, will take pleasure in the workings of nature. However, if the same birds and flowers are painted by one who desires profit and thus primarily depicts the verisimilitude of forms, the painting will merely please the viewer's eye and debauch his sentiment. His heart itself will become overly proud. This happens because a painter depicts things by means of his heart, and the viewer by means of his own heart becomes one with the painter's heart. (Wylie, "Nanga Painting Treatises of Nineteenth Century Japan," pp. 127–128; "Sanchūjin jōzetsu," p. 357)

In general, Chikuden believes that each person possesses a true nature and true sentiment. It is necessary for painters to produce their own talent and judgement and to lead their own lives. They should not merely depend on others for ideas and style.

A painter should not worry if his painting lacks good technique, but he should be concerned if it lacks his spirit. It is especially good for those who use the brush with mere skill to copy paintings by the ancients. Those who attain the spiritual become masters in their own right, and they stand on their own feet. . . .

The heart should be sensitive; courage should be bold. If the heart is not sensitive, then it cannot rank with and protect the principles of the ancients. If courage is not bold, then it cannot weed out the bad styles of today's painters. If the heart is sensitive but courage not bold, then although one intends to paint a swan, it will end up a duck. If courage is bold but the heart insensitive, then although one intends to paint a swan, it will end up a duck. If courage is bold but the heart insensitive, then although one intends to paint a tiger, it will come out as a dog. (Wylie, "Nanga Painting Treatises of Nineteenth Century Japan," pp. 145, 143; "Sanchūjin jōzetsu," pp. 367, 366)

KANAI UJŪ

Kanai Ujū (1796–1857) was another literati painter and author; he wrote about the ideals of his art in "Talks on Silent Poetry" ("Musei shiwa," 1853).

Painting is a person's spirit-nature. If the person is lofty, his painting will also be lofty. If the person is vulgar, then his painting will be vulgar as well. The brush reveals one's

nature. Looking at a painting is the same as looking at the man who painted it. It is not only within one's heart that the spirit of books is abundant or scarce. (Wylie, "Nanga Painting Treatises of Nineteenth Century Japan," p. 215; "Musei shiwa," p. 533)

In painting there are highs and lows. If the painter's heart is lofty and straight, then his hand will be straight when he paints; if his heart is low and bent, his hand, when painting, will be bent. This variation is almost like an inch worm in its extremes of stretching high and lowering itself. Enthusiasm comes forth from life, and skill arises from clumsiness. This one principle emanates from painting: we are able to know the various levels of the quality of men by seeing their works. (Wylie, "Nanga Painting Treatises of Nineteenth Century Japan," p. 216; "Musei shiwa," p. 533)

People who like possessions and who are both rich and avaricious are not the type to appreciate elegance. Those who discuss these things cannot make a decisive judgement for all situations. Painters never allow themselves to fall into the concerns of criticism. It is only the scholars who, at the first available opportunity, take over criticism. The art of painting is profound and subtle. Landscapes reside in a subtle, wondrous sphere, and nothing that can be verbalized can describe them. This is what is called intuitive understanding. Those who talk about it do not know, and those who do hold their words! (Wylie, "Nanga Painting Treatises of Nineteenth Century Japan," pp. 213–214; "Musei shiwa," pp. 532–533)

If in one's life one has the spirit of the ancients, then one's power to learn will certainly be deep. If one puts brush to paper yet disregards the spirit of the ancients, then and only then will one's *own* spirit emerge. These words are very true. When those who study hard all their lives copy paintings from the ancients, they use them as points of reference but maintain their own standpoints. First formulating their own concerns, they do a bit of painting. They go without food a whole night or go without food for a whole day. Diligently and endlessly continuing like this for many years, the excellence of their paintings emerges from their hearts freely. (Wylie, "Nanga Painting Treatises of Nineteenth Century Japan," p. 212; "Musei shiwa," p. 532)

People all like the new and the exceptional in painting; painters are just the same, struggling to find the new and sell the exceptional. When the exceptional is excessive it becomes abnormal and common. The exceptional in a painter is fully apparent in his manner. (Wylie, "Nanga Painting Treatises of Nineteenth Century Japan," p. 218; "Musei shiwa," p. 534)

When I was twenty, I forced myself to paint, and what I knew was limited to the status quo. When I became old, I enjoyed painting and then I achieved abandon. Painting has rules. With the status quo, the rules can be a detriment. Abandon injures form; the status quo injures the spirit. I hope that scholars can, in their hearts, truly seek out this subtlety. (Wylie, "Nanga Painting Treatises of Nineteenth Century Japan," p. 215; "Musei shiwa," p. 533)

MURASE TAIITSU

Murase Taiitsu (1801–1881), a self-taught painter, joined the circle of the famous Confucian scholar and historian Rai San'yō (1780–1832) and took an interest in Japanese and Chinese history. His poems on the art of painting, written in Chinese, reveal both his personal point of view and his intellectual interests.

Past fifty years old, my spirit is not yet at rest:
Still confused: my hair is mottled with white.
Living in the city for ten years as though in the country.
Daily I play with the brush to bring forth mountains.

Mist and clouds appear and disappear,
Through their thickening and thinning we can search out near and far images.
Tall trees framing a river seem to come alive—
I'm proud that my scholarship comes first and the landscape follows.

Wet ink-tones thicken the clouds and trees.
These are hills and streams I have met before.
Artists paint without a care, but my feelings are intense
As I regard the twelve peaks of my homeland.

100 li can be reduced, but still have green mountains to climb.
These hills, that stream have touched this old face.
Flourishing the brush, I want to catch them before they escape:
Last night I dreamed of my old homeland.

Living by the castle for many years, my hair is turning white:
When I play with brush and ink it makes me smile.
Stroke after stroke from the heart—who can understand?
No need to explain, these are the mountains of my home.

Directly copying clouds and mist from within my breast,
I have no desire to climb the hills and peaks of professional artists.
I can sense the ocean in a scoop of water.
What you see as a wrinkled stone is enough for my mountains.

Painters brag and contend over brush and ink,
But who can climb the hills and peaks within?
If you ask what method was utilized by men of old,
The spirit resonance rose up, and its overflow
created mountains.

(Selected from Addiss, *A Japanese Eccentric,* pp. 9, 18, 54; *Taiitsudō shishō,* unpaginated)

Despite lofty amateur sentiments, Japanese literati painters did not often hold government positions, as did most of their Chinese counterparts. Earning a living by painting went against the literati ideal and sometimes caused misunderstandings or awkward situations. Yosa Buson, already a famous *haiku* poet, was an equally fine painter in the literati tradition, and he faced client problems at times.

Dear Katō,

I have received a request from Koito—would I please paint a landscape on her white silk kimono. This I regard as being in abominable taste. If someone like myself were to do the painting, it would look terrible on such a beauty. My student Baitei should do it; he always knows how to handle a painting for some beautiful woman's kimono in such a way that the whole design works out quite nicely. I realize that Koito, with her awful taste, won't accept such logic. It is truly a shame to think how much she will regret it when she sees what I paint. But Koito is, after all, Koito, and I can't refuse her no matter what she asks, however dreadful her taste; I'll feel like I am tattooing the [legendary beauty] Hsi Shih [Xi Shi]. How painful that it is bound to detract from her beauty. She sends words that the kimono will be ready for me in a few days. Please go and see Koito and get her to understand my feelings. It is hard to put everything in writing. We can talk it all over when we meet next. (M. Morris, "Group Portrait with Artist," p. 102; *Buson shū,* pp. 482–483 [letter no. 236])

Woodblock Prints

Despite the popularity of woodblock prints in early modern Japan, many of the artists remain obscure, and they seldom wrote much about the nature of their art. One exception is the great early painter and woodblock-book-print designer Nishikawa Sukenobu (1671–1750), who had studied in both the Kanō and Tosa schools before become a celebrated "floating world" artist in Kyoto. His remarks on painting, written in 1738, are specific and focus on the use of colors, but they also give an indication of the underlying purposes of creating a painting.

Paintings in which color is used conspicuously are called "richly colored." When a little less color is used we speak of "medium colored" and when little color is applied the term "light colored" is used.

In richly colored paintings, the usual practice of old was first to make a basic sketch. This was overpainted with heavily applied paint. Next ink was employed to depict things like the folds in the fall of clothing. After this came the elaboration of the design or pattern of the clothes etc. This was called the "finishing touch in applying color." It is said that this could be done skillfully and beautifully and was, moreover, quite simple to do, but when ink is used over color, the stroke of the brush loses its power and easily becomes vulgar. Therefore in recent times this has no longer been done.

Today in case of richly colored paintings, first a sketch is made on the blank paper. The space delineated by the ink lines is filled in with color and then the folds of the clothing are produced by shading. Then the patterns of the fabrics are painted. In this way the stroke of the brush is vivid and does not become base.

However nowadays paint is also used in detailed paintings. Such paintings benefit when color is used lightly and clearly.

In richly colored paintings paint should generally speaking not be applied heavily without good reason. When the paint forms a thick layer this will inevitably flake later. There are not a few old paintings where this has happened. Even worse, thick paint will even cause the silk to crack.

In "medium colored" paintings paint is applied in one layer over the ink. Over this drapery is painted by grading that color. The grading of the color of garments on Chinese paintings is always done in *shōenji,* carmine regardless of the garment's color. For this reason the Japanese painters of Buddhas do the same. In correct painting this is however never done: instead shades of the specific color are used when modelling clothes.

One should pay attention that the brush is always very evenly filled with paint.

For all drawings and for all paintings in color, be they on silk or paper, sizing is used. Only when sketching in ink it is not used. To prepare sizing, put some glue together with some alum in water and cook it; when everything is completely dissolved, pour the solution through a cloth, working it through with a brush. Raw silk may also be used as a ground for painting, depending on circumstances.

For *sumi,* black ink, that made from the soot produced by burning oil is the best. Ink for painting must not contain too much glue, and the inkstick must be soft. Ink with too much glue is sticky and bad. Use the kind of ink that gives good results.

For brushes to paint large paintings, the hair of the summer coat of deer is used; the brush tips must be long. For brushes for small paintings, hair of the winter coat of deer is used, the brush tips must be short.

Many painters have a preference for a special kind of hair. Goat, sheep, and rabbit hair are often used. The hair of deer is less stiff than wolf hair, but also gives a strong line.

As regards paper, use spotless Chinese paper. For ink-drawings, etc. newly made *torinoko*-paper from Echizen Province can be used, but as this paper creases easily it is not very good. Chinese paper is far the best for paintings.

Silk for paintings must be without knots in the warp or woof threads. One must use proper painting-silk. Silk with a goldfoil backing is thin and used for painting Buddhas etc., but as the silk is quite loose, it should not be used for good paintings.

What I have above mentioned are the things I heard from old painters. All these guidelines have been of benefit to this poor artist through the years. I wrote them down . . . in the hope that young lovers of the art of painting will profit from it.

In the spring of 1738 by the Kyoto master Bunkadō (Sukenobu's studio name) (Kerlen, "Sukenobu's Colors," pp. 20–25; *Ehon yamato hiji,* vol. 10, unpaginated)

Almost a century later, in 1835, the major print designer, painter, and "old man mad about drawing" Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849) wrote about his approach to art.

Ever since antiquity, man has copied the form of things: thus from the sky he took the sun, moon and stars and from the earth, mountains, trees, fish and then houses and fields; and these simplified, modified and transformed images became the characters of our writing. But anyone calling himself a draughtsman has to respect the original form of things and when this draughtsman draws houses, palaces and temples it is essential that he knows how they are constructed.

There is a work by an architect entitled *Models of Architecture* and my publisher asked me to illustrate the second volume. The first was done by a man of the profession with technical expertise. As for myself, what I have done in this volume has more to do with the realm of art; however if, through my teaching, young draughtsmen manage to avoid doing cats when they want to draw tigers, hawks when they want falcons, even though my work may be but a small stone by the side of a mountain, I will glory in such achievement before posterity. (Forrer, *Hokusai,* pp. 335–336; *Hokusai shin-hinagata,* f. 1r)

In 1836, Hokusai says the following:

While I was enjoying a fine Spring day in that year of peace, warming myself in the sun, I received a visit from Suzanbō [his publisher], who came to ask me if I could do something for him. So I thought that the glory of war should not be forgotten, especially during a time of peace, and despite being over seventy years of age, I gathered up my strength to draw the heroes of old who were models of glory. (Forrer, *Hokusai,* p. 335; *Ehon sakigake,* f. 1r)

I find that all the Japanese and Chinese depictions of war lack strength and movement which are the qualities that are essential for such representations. Saddened by such imperfection I have been longing to make up for it and to add something that was missing. . . . No doubt my drawings have their faults and excesses, but all the same my pupils are keen to use them as models. (Forrer, *Hokusai,* p. 335; *Wakan no homare,* f. 1v)

In the preface to his famous "One Hundred Views of Mount Fuji" of 1834, Hokusai writes the following.

Ever since I was six I've been obsessed by drawing the form of things. By the time I was fifty I had published an endless number of drawings, but everything I produced before the age of seventy is not worth counting. Not until I was seventy-three did I begin to understand the structure of real nature, animals, plants, trees, birds, fish and insects.

Consequently by the time I am eighty-six I will have made even more progress; at ninety I will have probed the mystery of things; at a hundred I will undoubtedly have attained a marvellous pinnacle, and when I'm a hundred and ten, everything I do, be it a dot or a line, will be alive.

I would ask anyone living as long as I to see if my word holds true.

Written at the age of seventy-five by me, formerly Hokusai and now known as Gakyōrōjin, the old man mad about drawing. (Forrer, *Hokusai,* p. 312; *Fugaku hyakkei,* f. 1r)

The Beginnings of Western-Style Painting in Japan: Shiba Kōkan

Shiba Kōkan (1747–1818) began as a painter in the Kanō school, but influenced by scholars who had begun studying Western science and art, he attempted to learn through books and prints the rules of European drawing and painting. His treatise entitled *A Discussion of Western Painting (Seiyō gadan),* written in 1799, is one of the first documents on the subject composed in Japan. It is reproduced here in its entirety.

The diameter of the world is more than seven thousand miles, and the sea route circumnavigating it is over twenty-four thousand miles. The land known as the West is in the region lying west of China and Japan. The most distant region of the West is called Europe. It is one of the great continents and contains several thousand coun-

tries the size of Japan. One of them, the Netherlands, is divided into seven districts, one of which is Holland.

The various countries of the West all have the same style of painting. Since this style was introduced to Japan by the Dutch, and since today there are numerous examples of Dutch art in Japan, we call all Western paintings "Dutch paintings." The technique employed in this art produces a true representation of reality, greatly different from the style that is used in Japan. Many persons in Japan—among them those who paint in the traditional Chinese or Japanese technique—consider Western-style painting absurd and have no desire to learn the Western method. Not only do they think it unworthy of study but they feel that it has no artistic value and cannot be called painting at all! They seem to think that the artistic creations of the West are mere artisan's work. This is indeed an extremely foolish notion.

The Japanese and Chinese paintings that we refer to as *saiga,* or minutely painted pictures, actually come under the category of *saiku,* or artisan's work. Take, for example, the manner in which the Japanese draw hair and beards: every single strand of hair is drawn individually. The Western technique of drawing hair, however, is to suggest the hair in a few brush strokes, so that the resulting appearance is one of real hair, not a mere mass of lines. In ancient times, people were not concerned with the stress and character of the brush stroke. Fundamentally, a brush is a tool for drawing pictures. If one attempts to draw an ox without expressing the actual appearance of the ox, if one is concerned mainly with the impression given by the brush technique, then a mere spot of ink could just as well be called a picture of an ox.

For example, medical science cures illness with medicine. Relating this metaphorically to painting, let us call medical science the brush, illness the picture, and medicines the colors. The attempt of medical science to cure a specific illness with general medicine, or the attempt of the brush to correct a picture with color, is like not knowing exactly where the illness originates or just what is at fault in a painting. The primary aim of Western art is to create a spirit of reality, but Japanese and Chinese paintings, in failing to do this, become mere toys serving no use whatever.

By employing shading, Western artists can represent convex and concave surfaces, sun and shade, distance, depth, and shallowness. Their pictures are models of reality and thus can serve the same function as the written word, often more effectively. The syllables used in writing can only describe, but one realistically drawn picture is worth ten thousand words. For this reason Western books frequently use pictures to supplement descriptive texts, a striking contrast to the inutility of the Japanese and Chinese pictures, which serve no better function than that of a hobby to be performed at drinking parties.

The bones of mermaids are reputed to make a marvelous medicine. An old tale in a Dutch book tells of a mermaid who was caught just off the Indonesian island of Amboina, which once belonged to Portugal and later to Holland. The people of Amboina preserved the mermaid in embalming fluid and drew pictures of her, so

that one could see both mermaid and illustrations. The drawings were done in color to convey her luster and shape, and they had an accompanying descriptive text. After some years the preserved mermaid lost her original appearance, so that a person today who desires to know what the mermaid once looked like must resort to the drawings made of her. Had the drawings not been executed in a realistic technique, they too would be virtually useless.

Instead of using glue as we do to mix our pigments, Western artists use oil. This means that even if their paintings get wet they are not damaged. These pictures are commonly called oil paintings. Although many artists in Japan have copied this technique, few have ever attained a genuine knowledge. When I visited Nagasaki some years ago, a Hollander named Isaac Titsingh gave me a book on art entitled *Konst Schilderboek.* Perusing this work carried me into an intoxicating world. After a careful study of it, I finally attained a perfect command of its principles and can now draw whatever I wish with complete ease—landscapes, birds, flowers, men, or beasts.

Pictures that are intended to give information, because of the vast amount of accurate detail they contain, are far more effective than simple words of description. All things depicted in paintings—from the great wild goose down to the tiny sparrow, and even further to the components of eyes and beaks and legs—differ in shape and feeling. Even the color in plumage varies exceedingly. The written word in black and white cannot possibly recreate an accurate image of the true form. For this reason, the pictures drawn in Western countries are regarded even more highly than writing. Painting and writing both serve the nation; they are not devised merely for amusement.

Portraiture is an important art form in the West, where the faces of sages and political figures are recorded in copperplate engravings for the benefit of future generations. The portrayal of these men gives one as clear an understanding of their physiognomies as seeing the men themselves. Again, the contrast to Japanese and Chinese paintings is striking, for without the technique of copying reality, the Eastern artist can paint only a subjective impression of an object or a face. The same man, if painted by two different Japanese artists, will appear to be two different men. Consequently, since the true form is not described, only a vague image appears. An image of grass and flowers that does not resemble the actual plants can hardly be called a picture of them.

The indigenous art technique of Japan and China cannot possibly reproduce reality. In drawing a spherical object, a Japanese artist will simply draw a circle and call it a sphere because he has no method for representing roundness. Being unable to deal with convexity, should he draw the front view of a man's face, there is no way of expressing the height of the nose! This difficulty is not due to the way in which the lines are drawn, but to the total disregard of shading in Japanese art. I shall discuss the drawing of Western pictures in greater detail in a later book.

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Because I have followed Dutch methods and used oils to color my pictures, they bear a close resemblance to reality in the depiction of the valleys and the places where snow still lingers unmelted, while the clouds emerging as from the mouth of the mountain or the sun shining on the snow look rather like silver.

There are different schools of artists in Japan—Tosa, Kanō, and, of late, the Chinese. None of them knows how to draw Fuji. Kanō Tan'yū painted many pictures of Fuji, but they do not in the least resemble Fuji because he relied exclusively on "the spirit of the brush" and "the force of the brush." As for the Chinese-style painters, they are incapable of drawing the famous mountains and celebrated scenes of Japan. They paint nameless mountains and call them landscapes. For that matter, they do not show this particular scene or that particular famous mountain in China. These painters draw mountains and water in whatever way strikes them as interesting, giving free play to their brush. This is exactly the same thing as drawing a dream. Wouldn't it be proper to say that neither the viewer nor the man who painted the picture has the least idea of what it depicts? (French, *Shiba Kōkan,* pp. 171–174; *Seiyō gadan,* pp. 479–489)

Calligraphy

In the Edo period, calligraphy continued to serve as an important means of self-expression. Forms and styles continued in the manner fixed in previous periods, and the respect shown to Chinese classical studies ensured that these principles would be upheld. For many artists, calligraphy continued, as it had been from the beginning, as a sister art to painting.

Kameda Bōsai (1752–1826) had both skill and an intellectual interest in the art of calligraphy. Following are his comments, composed in 1819.

Bōsai's Preface to *An Encyclopedic Compilation of Running Script (Gyōsho ruisan)*

Seal, clerical, running and cursive scripts are different types of writing; running script can encompass clerical and cursive. If, however, one writes running script on the basis of clerical, it will be too constricted: if on the basis of cursive, too loose. If one parts from squareness and follows roundness, striking a balance between heavy and fine, and is in accord with the proper measure of downward and upward movement, then it will be like winds blowing and rain falling, rich in lustre with opening blossoms, but with a touch of sad, autumnal elegance: this is to master the running style. Seki Kokumei is the grandson of Hōkō and the son of Nan'rō (Kinui). For these three generations, the glorious tradition has been continued: holding the brush and working at calligraphy, all three men have soared together through the world. For this reason they have collected in their home no less than 500 works of calligraphy

and old rubbings. How elegant and flourishing! Kokumei once said "There have been collected volumes on clerical and cursive scripts of past and present. All of these are excellent and worth reading. But in the case of running script alone I have never heard of a book being compiled. Why is this? It has indeed been a lack in the Garden of Art, and a cause for lingering regret on the part of calligraphers."

He thereupon perused all books on calligraphy, past and present, and gathered together reliable examples. He examined them all, selecting the finest masterpieces to create *Gyōsho ruisan,* a generous and rich sampling to which he has devoted much effort. Herein can be seen the extent of his family's learning.

Running script styles are extremely varied: if one does not profusely penetrate them all and select models amongst them, one cannot comprehend the stylistic resonances of the great masters. Beginning students need only study from this book. They must realize that it first derives from the styles of the Han and Wei dynasties, and secondly it does not fail to include the forms of Chin [Jin] and Tang. However, it does avoid the vulgar practices of later periods, such as static thickness and gross coarseness. As for the *Lan-t'ing* [Lanting] and the *Sheng-chiao* [Shengjiao] (showing the calligraphy of Wang Hsi-chih [Wang Xizhi]) and the works of Yen Chen-ch'ing [Yen Zhenqing], their heavenly excellence is brilliant beyond description. They are the examples from which one must work.

—*Winter, eleventh month of the second year of Bunsei* (1819) (Addiss, *The World of Kameda Bōsai,* pp. 118–119; trans. by Jonathan Chaves; *Gyōsho ruisan,* pp. 1–3)

Architecture

Despite the beauty and elegance of Japanese architecture in all periods, little has been found that discusses directly the aesthetic principles that guided architectural practice. This lack of commentary may reflect the fact that architects, however striking their accomplishments, were considered craftsmen, and little other than technical manuals have apparently been preserved. This lack has been made up in the modern period, when a host of Japanese writers, ranging from the novelist Tanizaki Jun'ichirō to the philosopher Watsuji Tetsurō, as well as such foreign commentators as Frank Lloyd Wright and Bruno Taut, have commented eloquently on the subject and from a variety of viewpoints.

One document of great interest, "Mountain Peak Manuscript" (Gazankō) has been included here. Not surprisingly, perhaps, it was composed not by an architect but by the Zen monk Ōbaku Gettan (1635–1712). It describes a compound built by the famous artist and potter Ogata Kenzan (1663–1743), referred to here as "Reikai." The description is highly poetic but provides some idea about the close relationship between the structures and the natural beauty that surrounds them. Again, Chinese precedents are important. The name of the villa, the Shūseidō, can be translated as the "Hall of Mastering Tranquility."

Shūseidō ki [A record of the Shūseidō]

At the foot of Narabigaoka, there lives a certain gentleman; he has taken the name Reikai and his surname is Ogata. His father's name was Sōken, and he used the pseudonym Kōsai. The Ogata have lived in Kyoto for generations, where they have enjoyed the lavish favor of Tōfukumon'in, and are held in high esteem. Sōken was an extremely fine calligrapher whose writing compares favorably with that of the Jin-dynasty masters; he was also known as a man of taste. After Sōken's death, the young master lost his interest in worldly affairs; a desire came over him to escape the world and seclude himself. He purchased a small plot of land, in front of the Ninnaji temple, built a humble cottage, and has set up a home. In the ninth month of 1690, we were invited for a day's visit.

Strolling outside after our meal in the fresh, crystal-clear air, we felt as if we had left the ordinary world behind. The serene environment did not compare unfavorably to the hermitage of [poet-hermit] Wei Ye [960–1019] of the Song dynasty or to Tao Yuanming's village of Lu Li in Pengze xian [Jiangxi Province]. To the southwest, the luxuriously green summit of Narabigaoka jutted into the sky, somehow resembling a huge green snail. Turning to the southeast, the famous Myōshinji of Hanazono could be vaguely seen, shielded throughout the forest; the sound of its bell, however, tolling the morning and evening hour, made us feel as if we were near. In the northwest, the multi-storied pagoda of the Ninnaji stood serenely, its high eaves and lofty spire protruding though the mist-enshrouded landscape. Turning to the northeast, the peaks of Mount Kinugasa towered loftily above us; with the serenity and brilliance of the lotus leaf, it was a scene to be admired. This was the setting of the Shūseidō.

The house itself was a building of just a few rooms, with plain earthen walls and no ornamentation. The doors were of woven bamboo and the narrow winding paths were paved with stones. Pine and bamboo added verdure, and plum trees and willows cast cool shadows. We could hear the sound of water trickling into a pool, and saw steam from a tea kettle wafting out a window. Classical texts from India and China were scattered about nonchalantly; a sense of taste and refinement pervaded every furnishing.

Looking out a little to the south, we could see a small detached room whose plaque read *"Kin Sen"* [The Enlightened One]. The shrine was not more than ten feet square and had a thatched roof. Inside was a small statue of Shakyamuni Buddha, over which was a jeweled canopy. These jewels were arranged as if in a net, their delicacy pleasing to the eye.

In front of this shrine an irregularly shaped pond was dug out, spanned by a wooden bridge. Many trees and shrubs of various shapes and sizes cast their reflections into the water. Beyond the shrine was a bath with enough room for four or five people to bathe at once. In the garden to the back of the house, chrysanthemums bloomed tri-

umphantly in the frost, along with a rough bamboo hedge. Coxcombs were drenched with dew, and eggplants and potatoes grew profusely, over-flowing from the furrows. This is where the young master strolled when tired of reading or writing, lost in high-minded thoughts.

Such a situation is suitable to the spirit and pleasant to live in, for one can easily forget about the affairs of the world and about the rise and fall of prices. As for the people whose hearts become captivated by desire for fame or profit, they can find pleasure only in hunting, music, or womanizing. Here is someone, however, who in the prime of his life has turned his back on the world. A person like the young master should be praised. (Wilson, *The Art of Ogata Kenzan,* pp. 53–54, revised by the translator; Kobayashi, *Kenzan,* pp. 119–120)

Visitors to Japan provided evocative, often accurate descriptions of Japanese architecture. Engelbert Kaempfer (1651–1716), a Dutch citizen, trained in medicine and a scholar by profession, became the physician at the so-called "Dutch Factory," the trading agency on the island of Dejima in Nagasaki, virtually the only area open to Europeans at the time. He twice accompanied the annual Dutch tribute mission to Edo, taking meticulous notes that were later to form the basis for his two-volume *History of Japan,* published in 1727–1728, after his death. Originally published in English, the book later appeared in a variety of European languages and remains even today an accurate and evocative rendering of life in Japan at the time. Kaempfer's description of the shogun's castle in Edo shows his accurate and discerning eye and gives a good sense of this remarkable complex of buildings.

The shogunal castle lies in the northern part of the city; its shape is roughly circular and its circumference five Japanese miles. It consists of two outer castles, a large fortress, which is the residence of the shogun, two fortified secondary castles, and a large park situated behind the residence. The first and outer castle has ramparts, a stone-walled moat, and gates manned by a stately guard. The castle girdles a large square and surrounds half the shogunal residence, but it has so many intersections, different moats, and ramparts that I was able neither to work out its ground plan nor to properly inform myself by consulting Japanese printed illustrations. Inside the grounds of this castle are the residences of most of the territorial lords. They are arranged along streets and are magnificently built, with heavy gates closing off the outer courtyard.

The second, interior castle has ramparts, moats, bridges, and gates superior to those of the first. There is also a larger guard. It girdles a smaller square, adjoins only the front of the shogunal residence, and is surrounded by the first castle. In this second castle reside the most senior councilors, the city magistrates, and some of the most powerful lords in beautiful palaces. The shogunal residence is situated on slightly higher ground or on the top of a hill that has been flattened. It is surrounded by a

large moat built of square stone blocks. On the side of the palace, the walls of the moat are built up high with incredibly large square boulders, and the walls are slightly slanted like a steep rampart. At the back the walls are filled in with soil and on top fortified with long buildings and square multistoried guard towers. Also, the wall itself has guard posts jutting out in accordance with the art of fortification. The abovementioned square boulders are only placed on top of each other and not joined with lime or brackets. It is said that this method is used so that the wall absorbs vibrations and is not damaged by earthquakes.

Inside there is a square multistoried white tower rising high above all other buildings. With its many ornamental roofs and decorations the tower gives the castle a grand appearance from afar. So also do the fan-shaped, curved roofs decorated on top and at the end with ornamental dragon heads, with which all buildings are extravagantly covered.

The second castle is small and built like a round citadel without exterior decorations. It has only one gate. Its entrance is via the residence over a high and long bridge. The third castle is situated next to the second and is of the same type. Both these castles are well fortified and surrounded by high stone ramparts as well as deep and very wide moats through which the large river has been channeled. In these two castles the sons and daughters of the shogun are reared, if there are any. Behind the residence the ground rises to a hill, and this area is well adorned with a variety of ornamental trees and flower gardens, extravagantly constructed in accordance with Japanese taste. The gardens end with a small hilly forest with two varieties of maple leaves. Their star-shaped leaves vary from green to yellow to red and are a pretty sight. The flowers and colors of one variety are more spectacular in spring, the other in autumn.

The shogunal residence consists of only one story, albeit a very high one. Moreover, it is very spacious with many long corridors and large rooms, which can be increased and reduced in size or closed off by sliding partitions. As a result of this arrangement, there are also many small patios open to the sky, or small central areas, through which the light enters into the rooms when the partitions have been drawn back.

The most important chambers have their own names, such as the waiting room (for those who seek an audience with the councilors or the shogun), the councilors' chamber (where the councilors meet), the hall of one hundred mats (where the shogun accepts the customary homage and presents from ambassadors and the most important territorial lords), the audience chamber, the furniture room, and so forth. These rooms are all constructed according to the finest design of Japanese architectural tradition, with ceilings, beams, and pillars of cedar, camphor, and Eijiri wood [a special hardwood especially brought from Eijiri], which is patterned by nature and therefore has only a tiny coat of varnish in many rooms. But in others it has been covered with lacquer or has been carved and gilded artistically into patterns of birds and foliage. The floor is attractively covered with fine white mats, edged with gold ribbons, and it is all the decoration and all the furnishings found here and in all aris-

tocratic palaces. I have also been told that in the vicinity there is a subterranean hall or cellar, covered on top with a flat, wide tub, filled with water. For reasons of safety, the shogun removes himself to this room when it thunders, because any lightening will be stopped by the water. There are also two stores filled with valuables, guarded against fire and thieves by heavy copper roofs and solid iron doors.

The rulers who have held court in this castle are the descendants of the shogun Ieyasu, the founder of the clan. (Bodart-Bailey, *Kaempfer's Japan,* pp. 353–354)

Flower Arranging

Flower arranging had since ancient times been an art primarily associated with the aristocracy. During the late seventeenth century, however, this art surged in popularity among the townspeople in the Kyoto-Osaka area. Flower arranging was closely linked to the development of the tea ceremony, which often featured not just a hanging scroll in the tea room, but also a flower arrangement properly in tune with the seasons. As the tea ceremony developed into an art that emphasized artlessness, the set rules, formality, and complex religious and philosophical associations of the *rikka* (or *tatebana*) school of flower arranging, especially that of the Ikenobō school and the treatises of headmasters such as Sennō (d. 1555?), came under criticism from those who favored a more "natural" style, which came to be known as *nageire* (thrown together). This style provided the basis of flower arranging from the mid-Edo period, but during the eighteenth century its forms were increasingly codified to become what was known as *seika (ikebana).* In part because artistic freedom was not easily compatible with teaching a burgeoning population of amateur flower arrangers, *seika* placed much emphasis on method and form, designating three lines or branches that symbolized "heaven," "earth," and "man" and the like.

The following selections are from the first volume of *The Book of Nageire Flower Arranging (Nageire kadensho;* the title probably refers to the famous treatise on *nō,* the *Hachijō kadensho),* a three-volume treatise published in Kyoto in 1684 by an unknown author. Note that when the author remarks that this style was once difficult to grasp, he uses an expression that echoes Ki no Tsurayuki's Japanese-language preface to the *Collection of Old and Modern Japanese Poetry.*

Question: When did the *nageire* style of flower arranging originate?
Response: It was originally a simplified version of *rikka.* The origins of *rikka* date to when the Buddha was still alive. He delivered a famous sermon in which he illustrated his point by holding up a flower, but only his disciple Kashō understood the meaning [that the Buddhist teaching is transmitted from heart to heart, without the

use of words]. It is also said that this style began when the "Willow Kannon" [one of the thirty-three Kannon avatars] arranged flowers, but this is just an old apocryphal tale spun by Buddhist acolytes. It seems that rules governing the handling of flowers were not developed until the times of the eighth Ashikaga shogun Yoshimasa [1449–1473]. The *nageire* style comes from long ago, but its essence must have been difficult to grasp. Since the Bunmei period [1469–1487], when the tea ceremony flourished, it has been continually valued through the ages.

Question: Trees [branches] are tall; grasses [flowers] are short. This is a fact. Is it thus necessary for branches to be placed in a high position and grasses in a low one?
Response: It is as you say, but the *nageire* style makes no set distinction. Instead, elegance is the point. For example, daffodils are considered grasses, but since they grow tall, the leaves should be pleasantly shaped upward in a flowing manner. If the blossom is not presented in such a natural way, they will not appear pleasing. Camellias, however, though considered trees, will not look pleasing unless the leaves are kept low and the blossoms are set against these leaves. All branches and flowers should be arranged according to this principle.

Question: Are there set rules regarding the color of flowers?
Response: If one uses flowers of two different colors, one should highlight this difference. For example, a white plum blossom should be contrasted with a red camellia; a red plum blossom ought to be contrasted with a white camellia. However, when at the end of autumn or the beginning of winter the white plum blossoms begin to bloom and two or three blossoms are still unusual, or when the beautiful white camellia blooms during the midsummer festival and moon-viewing season, the color of these flowers may be disregarded. Plum and camellia then may be combined with no hesitation. The green leaves of the camellia may be used to separate the color of the two blossoms. In other cases as well, one ought to follow this principle.

Question: Does harmony exist between flowers and a vase?
Response: Indeed it does. When the stem of a flower is shaved off in order to fit into a vase with a small mouth, this looks ugly. A thinner, graceful flower should be used. On the other hand, when thin and weak-looking plants such as spring chrysanthemums or pampas grass are placed into a vase with a large mouth, this looks bad. Other cases should follow this general rule.

Question: When using two types of material, should a contrast of branches and flowers [grasses] be made?
Response: Is the answer not clear from the earlier discussion of plum blossoms and camellias? Whether one arranges branches and flowers, branches with branches, or flowers with flowers, it is always good to contrast things that grow tall with those that present a more modest appearance.

Question: Is it possible to make an arrangement with no flowers, just leaves?
Response: There is no set rule, but when using two or three types of material, at least one of these should be a flower, lest the arrangement appear dull. From the earliest springtime, when plum blossoms and adonis are found, all the way to the end of the year, when winter chrysanthemums and loquats bloom, flowers continually compete in color and scent. Nevertheless, if in an emergency no flowers except those blooming in distant locations are available, it is not inconceivable to use just leaves. It is a pity when someone thinking himself a connoisseur refuses to make an arrangement because no flowers are easily available; one should use just leaves and arrange them properly. A rack of flowerpots can be placed in front of the adjacent room *(shoen)* with an assortment of flowers that produce blossoms year round. Flowers in bloom on this rack should not be used in the arrangement if the blossoms are visible from the parlor *(zashiki).* Instead, only green leaves, bamboo grass, or maple leaves should be used. This indicates deep sensitivity.

Question: Should flower arrangements be altered according to daytime or nighttime viewing?
Response: They need not be changed much. Yet if a nighttime arrangement includes both white and yellow flowers, this will be unpleasant to the eye. At night, yellow flowers will look white. They will thus be confused for white flowers. Furthermore, peonies and marigolds close up at dusk. One should keep this in mind when arranging flowers for nighttime viewing during the day. The blossoms of some chrysanthemums *[kōraigiku]* curve outwards from dusk to morning. Althaeas, morning glories, roses, great trumpet flowers, marigolds, fringed iris, and field poppies all bloom in the daytime and wilt at night. Flowers that bloom at night will last to the morning. Thus one must carefully distinguish the timing of flowers when making arrangements at night for early morning tea parties. If one does not, the arrangements will not be of use when needed.

Question: Should flowers be chosen according to the scroll hanging in the tea room?
Response: If flowers are the subject of the scroll painting, these flowers should not be used in the arrangement. Moreover, if the scroll features birds or animals, bright red or dazzling white flowers should be avoided. If the subject of the scroll is calligraphy that praises cherry blossoms or expresses admiration for chrysanthemums, the use of such flowers in the arrangement will seem contrived. (Selected from *Nageire kadensho,* pp. 248–253; trans. G. G.)

Food and Drink

Increased leisure time and income brought about, at least for those with the means, some of the ordinary pleasures of life. Among them, the art of eating and drink-

ing took on a new importance in the cultural life of the Edo period. Many of the writings on such subjects are filled with charm, even satire, and such accounts tell much about the social mores and foibles of the period.

One important example, the *Text on Food Preparation (Shijōryū hōchōsho),* is one of the earliest treatises on cooking in Japan, dating back to the late fifteenth century. It outlines the traditions of food preparation as transmitted by the Shijō house, which was employed by the shogunate and nobility. Food preparation was not simply a means of supplying a meal. Instead, fish and fowl were often carved but not eaten at banquets, with the cutting ritual serving as a form of entertainment. The excerpts translated below, however, focus on the latter portion of the text, which covers the culinary aesthetics for actual meals.

Ranking Delicious Foods

The best foods are from the sea, followed by those from the river, while those from the mountain rank last. That is the general rule, although pheasant alone stands apart.

River fish might rank behind seafood, but carp *[koi]* is better than any sea fish. That being said, whale might still stand ahead of carp. Apart from whale, certainly nothing ranks higher than carp. The crucian carp *[funa]* and other varieties of small river fish should not be placed lower in rank than seafood. Yet, when spiral shellfish such as *nishi* are eaten with paper, it is not necessary to be too rigid about these things as long as one is careful.

By custom, mountain foods rank at the bottom. Birds captured by hawking, and even swans should not rank high—that is reserved for the pheasant alone. However, birds taken at hawking deserve particular admiration. When such birds are presented to people, they have to be grilled. And they should not be served with a side dish. Only the bird itself should be served. Though swans are not included in this category of bird, it is better to serve them alone too. This is true also for whale. The rationale for this is that nothing compares to these creatures, and for that reason they should not be combined with other things.

Sushi

Sweetfish *(ayu)* is a mainstay of sushi. Yet, regardless of the type of sushi, the intestines of the fish should not be used.

The Salted Intestines and Roe of Sweetfish

This is also a lower class of food. Nevertheless, when the salt-cured intestines of sea slugs *[konowata],* the salt-cured intestines and roe of sweetfish *[uruka]* as well as the

roe of sweetfish *[hararago]* first appear at the start of the season, they deserve a little higher rank.

That being said, it is difficult to generalize, because everything depends on the foods themselves, their colors, and the size of the serving vessels, how these are harmonized, and the order in which everything is served. Consequently, there are oral secrets about these matters.

Sashimi

Carp sashimi is made with *wasabi*-vinegar, sea bream with ginger-vinegar, sea bass with water pepper-vinegar *[tadesu],* shark with mustard-vinegar *[mikarashi],* as is skate, and turbot with fish vinegar *[nutasu].*

Thread-Fish Salad (ito namasu)

Thread-fish salad is made from crucian carp. A fish salad made from turbot is called yellow rose fish salad. Serve butter fish *[managatsuo]* with water pepper-vinegar. If the water pepper is in season, then any fish can be served with vinegar made from it.

Chopsticks

Chopsticks made from unfinished wood are said to look like silver, and red chopsticks like copper. The reason for this comparison is that silver removes impurities, while the red color of copper has medicinal properties.

Kaishiki

Kaishiki are cypress needles and bamboo leaves [used for serving]. So-called green *kaishiki* are cypress needles. Green maple leaves are highly inappropriate to use, since writings state that they are for mourning. Moreover, one should not casually turn a leaf over and use its underside as a *kaishiki.* For formal events the top sides of the leaves are used to place things on. For informal events, items should be placed on the underside of the leaf. "The hills of Nara, a boy's hands, and the two sides of an oak: in each case a bent figure"—as this poem indicates, even when using the bottom as the top [for serving], the other side of the leaf should not be exposed.

Arranging Fish

In our Way, arranging fish—no matter what the type—is esteemed above all else. But, how should a fish be arranged? The manner will determine if the results are pleasant or inauspicious. The secrets of our school concerning this matter must not be revealed to outsiders.

Thus, a fish with a head but lacking a tail is prepared by cutting it so that the head drops; a fish with a tail but without a head is prepared by cutting it so that the tail drops. When a boiled fish is placed on a tray, its head will naturally fall and its tail will be bent. To imitate this [with a raw fish], use the chopsticks to push either the head or the tail until the bones break.

The most important secret matter pertains to achieving the best results possible on the cutting board, and this is transmitted as an oral secret.

An arranged fish can be cooked and served, but guests should not be made to eat an arranged fish that has not been cooked. Therefore, it is a good idea if the master also partakes of the fish, since that indicates that it is safe to eat.

Crucian Carp from Ōmi (Today Shiga Prefecture)

If crucian carp is written on the menu as whole-boiled, then not even the end of its tail should be broken. And if it is cut at all with a knife, then it cannot be considered whole-boiled.

Food Served to Women

It is best to cut food prepared for women into big pieces. Food prepared for men should be cut into small pieces. There is an oral secret about this.

Grilled Fowl

Women should be served the breast meat with the legs of the grilled bird. Men should be served the breast meat alone. The former represents the male element, *yang,* and the latter the female element, *yin.* Therefore, women are given something *yang* since they are *yin.* Conversely, men are only given something *yin,* since they are *yang.* The details are oral secrets. The most important thing is harmony.

Cutting and Serving Octopus

Octopus should be served in the first part of the meal. When octopus accompanies rice, that is to say when it is a side-dish, it is best to cut it into thin, round pieces. Served as a refreshment for drinking, octopus is best cut into long, thick pieces. In either case it should be prepared by taking off the suction cups and removing the skin.

Skate

The skin of the skate *[ei]* should be removed. The skate must not be served with any of the skin still attached to it, because the skin contains a poison harmful to humans. People did not start eating skate until rather recently. They were once afraid of it and did not consume it. Later, according to the stories of my predecessors, at some

point skate became highly prized. To eat skate, first thoroughly clean it in water in which rice has been washed, in order to remove the poisons completely. Remove the fish from the water and squeeze out all the water; then prepare it and serve. Eating skate is said to be the best treatment for regulating the condition of the abdomen.

Shark

The skin of the shark also needs to be removed. It is never prepared with the skin still on it. . . .

Breast of Fowl Served Separately from the Legs

Why is breast of fowl served separately from the legs? It is said that a four-legged bird existed around the era of Emperor Suzaku [r. 930–945]. This reign marked an era of peace and prosperity. From that time, the word "separate from the legs" [*bessoku,* meaning "breast meat"] came to be used. Nowadays whether the bird is lark or quail, when the legs are served, if there is someone who would especially enjoy eating them, they should be given two legs [separately]. Otherwise, one leg is sufficient. It is customary to give four legs to the emperor or military ruler of Kyoto or Kamakura. This is similar to serving the breast separate from the legs for it too evokes the auspicious reign of Emperor Suzaku by giving a feeling of abundance in the realm.

However, one should not act thoughtlessly and serve four legs. Leave only one of the legs on a lark; the other three limbs should be removed. Both the wings and the feet of a duck should be left intact. Differences like leaving one foot on a lark and all of the limbs on a duck are described in secret oral teachings, but those who do not understand the secrets of the Way of cooking will jump to the assumption that it is permissible to leave any number of limbs on a small bird. Practices such as leaving the limbs on quail and other small birds are lamentable.

Blue Crab

The various ways to serve blue crab depend on the style of cooking. That being said, the manner of our school is exceptional. Blue crab is never thoughtlessly offered to the nobility without paper to eat it with. It is served in its shell. If there is no shell, it should be served in an earthen container. Recently, blue crab has been served from a kneeling position, with the crabs arranged in a row, but do not do this.

Oyster and Sea Slug Soup

This is a cold soup. The way that this has been created recently is not in the manner of the Shijō school. Because of this, it is made without knowledge of the appropriate secret oral teachings, and for that reason it is haphazardly put together.

To make this, first use a moderate amount of sea slug *[namako],* using *sake* to

bring out the color in the skin. Do the same for the oysters; then, carefully pat the oysters dry. The soup harmonizes with a spicy taste brought out by the *wasabi* green mustard; therefore it is essential to add *wasabi.* Salt and *sake* are also added to taste. If *wasabi* is lacking, other ingredients can be added to produce the spicy taste. If oysters alone are used without sea slug, it can still pass as oyster and sea slug soup. There is no suitable substitute for oysters if they are lacking, and it is unorthodox to use clams in their stead. . . .

Preparing and Serving Delicious Foods

The order for serving must be determined by the level of taste of the foods. Among fish, crucian carp is served first. After that, sea bream ought to be served. Among seafood, the first to be served should be whale. Among water fowl, it is best to serve swan, bean goose, and wild goose in that order. However, birds caught at hawking should be served separately, since they do not fit the preceding pattern. . . .

The Menu

By custom, fish salad was always used in the middle of the main tray, but recently this custom has disappeared. This is inappropriate.

In the case of grilled foods, grilled fish belongs on the main tray, and grilled fowl on the second tray. There is no instance in the records of either the Shijō or Rokujō schools of fish and fowl being placed together on the main tray. That is completely inappropriate.

It is acceptable to place delicious foods in a large soup consisting of cooked grains. There are examples of this in our school.

In the last twenty years, other things have been served on the empty plate for the pickles. Long ago, perhaps a little salt or pepper was placed there. Of course, even if these ingredients will not be used, they should be provided on the empty plate.

Cold blended soups that are garnished with delicious foods should be given greater prominence when served with vegetarian meals. When soups are arranged in vegetarian meals, usually the cold soup is given less prominence. However, since it is unappealing to find a space for a cold soup that will harmonize with the rest of the meal, there are secret oral teachings about its placement. (Selected from *Shijōryū hōchōsho,* pp. 51–65; trans. Eric. C. Rath)

Drinking rice wine was also an aesthetic delight that offered more than mere inebriation, as can be seen in a parody of Buddhist sutras written by the literati artist Kameda Bōsai, cited above. Liu Ling (third century CE) and Li Po (Li Bai, 701–762), mentioned below, were eminent Chinese poets said to enjoy drinking.

The Japanese Buddhist follower Bōsai Kō explains what he has heard: Once, the Buddha was at Enjoy-Drinking-No-Regrets Mountain, with the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove and the Eight Immortals of the Wine Cup. The Drunken Dragon, the Drunken Tiger, the Lord of Brewers, the Baron of Liquor, Drink-Like-A-Whale, Swallow-The-Ocean, Lunatic Flower, Suffering Leaf, Pleasure Grounds, Evil Horse, Drunken Laugh, Alcoholic Grief, humans and non-humans alike came from all directions. At that time the Buddha gave a complete explanation of the sermon on Saving the World through Drunken Rapture. The Great Vision Wine Buddha repeatedly gave his blessings, providing for all mankind without divisions and praising all the sages, so as to give pleasure and abolish suffering. Bleary eyes and raucous singing can purify the heart and bring eternal separation from earthly ties, so that everyone can attain perfect wisdom and enlightenment. This virtue is called *bōyūmono* (forget grief) and *sōshūshū* (sweep away grief). The flavor is named Evening Dew, and also Nectar of the Buddha's Teaching. Borrowing this wisdom from a Bodhisattva, I extinguish "trying" and "doing." Especially named by the Buddha, this wine is called *hannyatō* (liquid of wisdom).

Mankind received this sutra in olden times: when the Wine Buddha is honored, there can be no calamity within three thousand miles, no sufferings, bad dreams, evil countenances or bad luck. Swords and staffs will not be able to cut or bruise, poisons will not cause harm, spectres will have no effect, fierce gods will not need to be worshiped, evil and malice will not be able to attack. There will be no sickness, and all can live peacefully in the countryside, witnessing the Buddha.

At the time of the earth's six great shakings, the Wine Buddha appeared on earth. Holding crab's claws in his left hand, he lifted a giant cup with his right hand while uttering a single roar like that of a lion. He told the Buddha, "World-honored One. I have a form of rice juice that truly makes a hundred medicines able to comfort every anguished Bodhisattva. This fragrance is the greatest in the world of men and gods: hold a great cup, fill it to the brim with rice juice and offer it to the Buddha. The fragrance extends from No-Regrets Mountain to the Three Thousand Worlds, where three thousand cups have the flavor of ambrosia and the mood of self-enjoyment. The wine sings in the throat, strikes the tongue, stirs the nose, soothes the forehead and prevents grief. The Drunken Dragon, Drunken Tiger and High Sun drink together with Liu Ling and Li Po, drooling at the mouth, chasing the aromas, never losing the yearning and the warmth of this great wine. Not being able to endure the thirst for it, ultimately everyone lifts giant cups, empties them and becomes falling-down drunk. After a while, the strength of the wine bubbles up in men sleepily soaring without speaking in all directions with heaven and earth for a cushion, forgetting all things, forgetting the self, ears not hearing the clap of thunder, eyes not seeing sacred Mount T'ai [Taishan]. Directly entering the scenery of drunkenness, everyone can attain great joy."

The Wine Buddha also said to the Buddha, "This rice juice of mine completely abolishes thoughts of self and foolish ideas, pours over worries, fosters the inborn nature, regards equally high and low, rich and poor, joining them all together in law and truth. Opinions are lost, therefore the heart is not hindered: there is no fear, love, hate, joy or anger. Suddenly everyone is free from the fetters of earthly cares, and enters the wondrous pleasures of the drunken paradise. Thus the 365 days, four elements, 36,000 places and five senses become one. The sages of ancient dynasties depended upon this rice juice for wisdom, followed the Great Way and unified their selves. This is the way to complete enlightenment, to know the dreams of the drunken spirit. This charm for immortality, this charm for the incomparably true word can eliminate all suffering from mankind. This truth is not empty, and the magic of drunken dreams can be explained, namely:

Liu Ling and Li Po
without drinking wine
would be ordinary people—
Yoshino and Akashi's
moon and flowers
without *sake*
would be ordinary places—
drunk drunk drunk
drunk drunk, mm?

The Wine Buddha also said to the Buddha. "The meritorious virtue of the Drinker's Paradise is already well known. Long after the Buddha's death, at times of entering the world without a Buddha, when I wish all men and women to experience the peaceful joy of the Drinker's Paradise, without asking Evil Guest, Alone Sober or Banana Leaf, I guide everyone to a scenic place, prompted by painful coldness, to let them know warmth. Since olden times, if I let even one person come to the point of death without doing this for him, I cannot achieve enlightenment."

At that time the Buddha praised the Wine Buddha, saying, "Well done! Well done! Truly this is heavenly beauty, goodness and happiness!" The World-Honored One chanted in praise:

Worldly men are always anxious over worldly oppositions.
This old man always rejoices in the companionship of *sake.*
Wealth, success and great achievement are merely hidden in wine.
Being of service or being rejected, I forget all such cares.
Within complete drunkenness, months and years pass unnoticed.
I stagger around not seeing even my own body.
Originally the guest of green mountains and white clouds,
If I die of drink, why should I care if I'm buried or not?

(Addiss, *The World of Kameda Bōsai,* pp. 119–120; *Bussetsu maka shubutsu myōraku kyō,* unpaginated)

The final text is an informational and often satiric essay on a form of food that was gaining great popularity in the Edo period: meat.

"MOUNTAIN WHALE" (1832)

Scallions and meat—a perfect combination. Cooking pots all in a row—one pot per customer. Tipplers enjoy their meat with *sake,* while teetotalers take it with rice alone. As the flames grow lively, the meat bubbles and simmers in the pot. Gradually we enter the realm of savory delights! Here a customer becomes a second Fan Kuai [Fan Guai] in his craving for flesh, nor would he flinch before death at the price to obtain it; here a latter-day "Tattooed Monk" reels in his cups. Disputes and altercations erupt on every hand.

The price of a pot of meat generally falls into three categories: small, at fifty cash; medium, for one hundred; and large, for two hundred. Over the last few years, the price of meat has soared, to the point where it is on a par with eel. Yet its flavor is so tender and succulent, its curative powers so swift that who would quibble over mere price?

The animals used are boar, deer, fox, rabbit, otter, wolf, bear, and antelope; their carcasses lie heaped in the restaurant. Bucks and does lie bound and trussed, crouching as if still terrified. We may inspect them at our leisure as they hang suspended, ourselves relieved of the trouble of tracking or hunting them down. A cleaver is required to carve up a wolf, perhaps because he is such a cruel beast. One cook wields the blade and deftly butchers the carcasses. Every place his hand touches, everywhere he steps there is a whack! and a crack! as flesh slips away from the bones. The cook works with practiced hand and a full measure of expertise; at no point does the carving encounter difficulties. Passers-by pause to observe the operation.

I have heard that it was in the fourth year of the reign of Emperor Tenmu [675] that the first national decree was issued against the consumption of animal flesh. It allowed no consumption of meat whatsoever, apart from what was required for nursing the sick. As a result, meat became known as "medicinal food." Until recently in Edo there was only one establishment serving up this "medicinal food," a certain shop in Kōjimachi. Now, some twenty years later, this same "medication" has become so popular that the number of such shops defies all reckoning. As a rule, the signs for these dispensaries display a pattern of scattered autumn maple leaves, and carry a two-word inscription: MOUNTAIN WHALE. The business of these establishments is, of course, "medicinal food," but by this description they circumvent the national ban. The device is a mere code, a transparent artifice.

Edoites also dub the meat *o-bake* "ghost flesh"—again, to avoid stating bluntly what it actually is. They certainly do not mean to imply that it is actually ectoplasmic. Formerly, the meat sold in Kōjimachi was invariably wrapped in paper salvaged from battered and torn umbrellas; now, however, everyone simply wraps the cuts in bamboo husks. In a single year, how many tens of thousands of tattered umbrellas litter metropolitan Edo—and now all of them utterly useless.

The people of Edo have a saying: "No spooks live east of Hakone Barrier"—another reference, I would imagine, to the dazzling splendor of Edo at its zenith. Who would have imagined that now, at the very culmination of several centuries of prosperity, the denizens of the metropolis would make "ghost flesh" their common fare? They haul it in by cart, ship it in, every year in greater quantities than the year before—and always at a higher price than the previous year. It truly is a product that typifies this age of peace and prosperity—a marvel, to be sure.

Some may object that the availability of meat just seems marvelous, from the consumers' biased point of view. And yes, when I reflect on the matter, I wonder about those slaughtered animals—from their point of view, how does this traffic accord with an era of "great tranquillity?" Yet I reply, "No, the creatures are simply sacrificing themselves, to generate humanity. . . . If there is a general public benefit from the practice, what cause have they to resent it—even if they are, in fact, dead?"

A single slice of meat will cure ten illnesses; eating ten trotters will expel a hundred maladies. Its sovereign benefits are limitless. I meditate how now, after three cyclical rebirths, these creatures will enjoy renewed existence, will become the very flesh of men of distinction in this age of great tranquillity. Their mouths now will know only a dainty surfeit of exquisite grains and meat; their persons will don the sheerest of fabrics, the fairest bleached silks; they will know only the gladsome festivity of the banquet, and have no conception even of the existence of the miserable scholar's arduous travails. Newly incarnate, they will enjoy the blandishments of feminine delights; their progeny will be abundant. In no way will their new existence resemble that of us impoverished Confucian scholars, who must read books by scrimping on the needs of our bellies—who serve no real function in the world, either dead or alive. When one of us starvelings expires, you could toss his remains to the tigers or hyenas, only to hear them grumble: "This sad lump of flesh has been grazing on greens and legumes its entire life. What sort of flavor could it possibly have?" After sniffing the unfortunate three times, they would lumber away.

Once I addressed a fervent prayer: "Oh, in my next life, let me be animal flesh, that I may benefit all mankind. Or if I am to retain human form, then let me be a physician, that I may enrich this people with longevity." But on rethinking the matter, I thought, "No, being meat is better. That's it—meat. Pure and simple." Modern physicians are degenerate in their ways: they make their chief concern the splendid cut of their clothing, the loftiness of their gates. They parade around in grand palanquins hoisted by a four-man crew, and are preoccupied with their rounds of obsequious

service, from the home of one invalid to that of the next. They suit their manner to their patient's disposition, draw conclusions from his appearance; they lap at his urine and lick his piles. They marshal a hundred ploys, a thousand fawning tactics—though their sole concern is to avoid losing the favor of the lady of the house. These modern practitioners do not even reflect what is meant by *yin* and *yang,* what the Five Agents might be; they haven't the faintest notion what is contained in the *Golden Casket Outline* and the *Discourse on Baleful Chills.* Their consummate wish is that their curative infusions be sweet, their pills and lozenges aromatic. Oh, far, far better to ingest one pot of venison stew than a hundred doses of these quacks' flatulent concoctions! And so better to be meat. That's it—meat. Pure and simple. And this is the reason why this culinary "medication" enjoys such popularity.

A certain individual disagreed with me: "Meat is impure; to eat it is to become defiled." He would not consume it, he insisted, even if he were ailing: "Meat defiles the body and pollutes the spirit." Yet can this same individual really be sure that, in his day-to-day existence, he is innocent of any action that might defile his body, or sully his family name? There is nothing more baleful for a man than to renege on his word [lit., "eat words"]; this is a supreme defilement. And among high officials, some "feed" one another with bribes. If an official should, through some inadvertence, ingest such nutriment, it will pollute his person and defile his lord. There is nothing more baleful than this. (Why, your good name may be in jeopardy even if, through no fault of your own, you expire after consuming a bad plate of blowfish.) And recently, I have heard, the number of people who swindle away [lit., drink] the lottery winnings of others is on the rise. Public opinion does not think lightly of these other defilements—surely meat is not the only source of pollution! (Markus, "Meat and Potatoes," pp. 12–15; *Edo hanjōki,* vol. 1, pp. 151–158)

Music

Music played an important part in the arts of Edo-period Japan, both in instrumental and vocal forms. Musical accompaniment was particularly important in the development of theatrical arts.

Foreign Observers

Some of the most striking and useful descriptions of Japanese music were written by foreign observers who, because of their cultural knowledge of their own Western music, made comments and observations that even now remain of interest from a comparative point of view. The music and instruments they describe continue to be of importance until the present day.

Gaspar Coelho, a Jesuit missionary in Japan from 1572, came to know the great

general Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582), who, along with Toyotomi Hideyoshi, was responsible for a movement to unify Japan in the years prior to Tokugawa Ieyasu's final triumph in 1600. Here are comments Coelho made concerning Nobunaga's interest in Western music.

A few days ago Nobunaga came unexpectedly to our house, and before anything was known about his arrival the Fathers found themselves with him in the house. . . . Telling his companions to remain downstairs, he climbed up to the highest part of the house and began to talk to the Fathers and Brothers with much affection and familiarity. He went along to look at the clock, and he also saw a harpsichord and viol which we have in the house. He had them both played and took great delight in listening to their music; he highly praised the boy who played the harpsichord (he is the son of the king of Hyūga) and also commended the lad who played the viol. After that he went to see the bell and other curious things which the Fathers keep in that house. Such things are very necessary to attract the pagans who flock to see them out of curiosity; we have learnt from our daily experience that these things act as a bait, because they help the people to get to know us and to listen to our sermons.

Of all the things introduced into Japan so far, the playing of organs, harpsichords and viols pleases the Japanese most; for this reason we have two organs, one here at Azuchiyama and the other in Bungo, and we also have harpsichords in various places. The boys learn how to play these instruments and supply the music at Mass and on feast days in default of singers and other instruments used in Europe on feast days. This has been very necessary in these parts in order to attract the pagans and to give them some idea of the splendor and magnificence of divine worship. (Cooper, *They Came to Japan,* p. 100; *Cartas,* II, ff. 40v–41)

In 1585 another celebrated Catholic missionary, Louis Frois (1532–1597), compiled a document in which he briefly described what he saw and heard. It is obvious from his remarks that the sound of Japanese music, compared to that of sixteenth-century European music, was difficult for him to absorb or enjoy.

On the Dramas, Comedies, Dances, Songs, and Musical Instruments of Japan

1. Our dramas *[autos]* are usually performed at night; the Japanese perform them at nearly any time during the day [or night].
2. With us, one masked actor appears, very slowly; in Japan two or three unmasked actors appear on stage very quickly and pose themselves one before the other, positioned like cocks before a fight.
3. Our dramas are all in verses; theirs are all in prose.

4. Ours change frequently and new ones are created; everything in theirs is determined from the start and never changes.
5. Our tragedies are not divided into scenes; theirs are always divided into the first, the second, the third, etc.
6. When arriving on stage, our [actors] arrive from a different room, where they cannot be seen; the Japanese stand in the vicinity of the theater, behind curtains of *fune* [ships?].
7. Our dramas are always performed spoken; theirs are almost always sung and danced.
8. With us, it would be a bother and an insult to engage in foolishness during the performance of a drama; in Japan it is considered an embellishment and adornment of the performance when somebody stands outside and makes a great racket.
9. With us, masks cover the chin, from the beard down; the Japanese ones are so small that when a woman's role is played, the beard shows below.
10. In our comedies and tragedies soft musical instruments accompany; in Japan [one finds] chalice-shaped drums, kettledrums struck with two beaters, and a bamboo transverse flute.
11. In our dances the poses are changed to the sound of a drumbeat, but one does not sing to this; in Japan one always must sing to the sound of the drum.
12. Our [dancers] carry rattles and stand upright; Japanese ones carry fans and always walk like [illegible] or like persons who always look down at the floor for something they have lost.
13. Our dances are performed during the daytime; theirs are almost always at night.
14. European dances utilize many movements of the feet; the Japanese ones are more sustained and are largely performed with the hands.
15. With us, music of diverse voices is sonorous and mild; Japanese music, in which all sing together in a high voice, is the most horrible imaginable.
16. In all European music one finds the guttural voice; Japanese never sing in a guttural voice.
17. For us the melodies of the spinets, viols, flutes, organs, shawms, etc. are very sweet; the Japanese find all our instruments hard and uncomfortable.
18. We value highly the consonance of sounds and the proportion of sung organum highly; Japanese consider this *kashimashi* [noisy] and do not like it at all.
19. For us, the music of the knights is usually sweeter than that of the common folk; we cannot stand to hear the music of Japanese knights, but like that of sailors.
20. In Europe, boys sing an octave higher than men; in Japan all sing on the same pitch, in falsetto for the pitches that fall in the soprano range.

21. Our stringed instruments have six strings, except for the double ones and are played with the hand [fingers]; the Japanese ones have four and are played with a kind of comb.
22. With us, the nobility is proud to play stringed instruments; in Japan this is the occupation of the blind, like hurdy-gurdy performers of Europe.
23. Our zithers have four strings and are played by means of keys; the Japanese ones have twelve strings and are played with a kind of wooden claw, made especially for this purpose.
24. With us, the blind are very peaceful; in Japan they are very argumentative, wield canes and short swords, and are much involved in amorous pursuits.
25. The knights of Europe sleep by night and celebrate by day; Japanese knights sleep by day and have their feasts and entertainment at night.
26. In Europe, at evening occasions, at dramas, and at tragedies, eating and drinking usually do not occur; in Japan nothing of the sort takes place without wine and *sakana* [finger food].
27. With us it is common to leap while dancing and to swing around drums; the Japanese are offended by this, considering it crazy and barbarous. (Trans. G. G. from the Portuguese original reprinted in Schütte, *Luis Frois,* pp. 242–249)

The *Koto*

Fragments of zithers from as early as the Yayoi period have been unearthed in Japan, and various types of such instruments were commonly played at least by the Heian period. The most common zither *(koto* or *sō)* used during the Edo period to perform Japanese-style music contained thirteen strings. Countless composers, often blind, created pieces for this instrument. These included everything from simple melodies for beginners to complex and lengthy works intended for concert performances. Many Edo-period compositions for the *koto* remain in the repertory today.

Numerous instruction books and manuals were written for students of popular musical instruments at the time. Some are purely technical. Others, such as the *Digest of Koto Pieces (Kinkyoku shō),* published in Kyoto in 1695, provide legends of *koto* origins, the lineage of Yatsuhashi *kengyō* (1614–1685), one of the most famous *koto* players of his day, and the latter's aesthetics.[2] The historical and cultural information provided is scarcely reliable, but, just as with the case of theatrical forms such as *nō* and *kabuki,* some form of lineage was considered important for the dignity of the art.

2. *Kengyō* was the highest rank in the guild of the blind.

To begin with, there are *koto* known as *shō-no-koto (sō)* and *kin-no-koto (kin).* The *kin* has seven strings, and its length is three-and-a-half feet, or half an inch longer. The *shō (sō),* known as *tsukushi-goto,* is the instrument used today. It has thirteen strings. The reason the *shō* is called *koto* is because today the *kin* is only rarely played; nowadays everyone plays the *shō.* It is said that the original number of strings was twenty-five, but this was halved to become thirteen. It would seem that in essence it is like the twelve months of the year to which [a thirteenth] intercalary month is added.

There are many pieces for the *tsukushi-goto. . . .* [A list of *tsukushi-goto* pieces is omitted here.] It is truly wondrous music. On such a small number of strings the five tones can be transposed to form the twelve modes. Their harmonies temper people's spirits and drive out evil.

In the distant past, people who could play the *koto* performed [the piece or mode] "Kumoi," causing disorder in the stars, making untimely snow fall and dew appear, changing unbearably hot summer days into clear winter skies, and startling invisible demons and gods, thereby causing much misery. The Chinese Futsugi family, or the Shinnō family, was the first to perform "Kumoi"; it is said that they brought it to Japan.

In the olden days, during the reign of Emperor Tenmu [672–686], the emperor played the *koto* at an abode by the Yoshino waterfall toward evening. From the midst of mysterious clouds a goddess appeared and danced, reversing her sleeves five times. This was the origin of the "five ceremonial dances" *(gosetsu).* According to one explanation, at this time the sound of the emperor's *koto* harmonized with the waterfall as it dashed over the rocks. This was mysterious and wondrous. It has hence been transmitted to the present day and named "Bringing down the Waterfall" [Taki otoshi]. (*Kinkyoku shō,* pp. 114–117; trans. G. G.)

The *Shamisen*

A three-string, long-necked lute played with a large plectrum, the *shamisen* (in western Japan sometimes *samisen*) was originally imported to Japan from China through the Ryūkyū Islands (which include Okinawa). It is capable of powerful and dramatic sounds and was soon adopted for use in such theatrical forms as the puppet theater and *kabuki.*

In *The Beginner's Collection of String and Bamboo* (*Shichiku shoshin-shū;* published in Kyoto in 1664), one of several extant theories is offered as to the origins of the instrument. This volume also offers rudimentary instruction to the beginner. The historical claims tendered cannot be taken at face value, but it does seem that the *shamisen* arrived on the Japanese mainland during the 1570s, if not earlier. By the 1580s, Kyoto aristocrats were reporting hearing it played.

Concerning the shamisen

To begin with, the *shamisen* was first played in Japan during the Bunroku period [1592–1596]. There was a *biwa hōshi* named Ishimura *kengyō* [?–1642]. He was unrivaled in his resourcefulness and aptitude. Once, when he went to the Ryūkyū Islands, he saw a three-stringed instrument known as the *kokyū.* It was played with a small bow made from the hairs of a horse's tail. Ishimura carefully analyzed this *kokyū* and realized that it was a kind of small *biwa.* He noticed that the first and second strings were tuned like those of a *biwa;* the third string was tuned about two pitches higher than the third string of a *biwa.* One of the natives explained that in this area snakes were common. One such viper was called *raheika* and was eaten. Since the cry of the *raheika* resembled the sound of the *kokyū,* this instrument was played to drive out snakes. Ishimura also was said to play the *kokyū* during his stay. Later when he went back to Kyoto, he refashioned a *biwa* to produce what was to become the *shamisen.*

To learn the *shamisen* one must watch carefully how others play, how they hold the plectrum and push down the strings. When one plays a song *[uta]* on the *shamisen,* it is most important to learn the melody well. It is like learning how to paint a picture: only when one paints what one has often seen does the painting become realistic. How could one paint something that one does not bother to observe? Playing the *shamisen* is like that. It is impossible to play properly on the *shamisen* a song that one has not learned properly. (*Shichiku shoshin-shū,* pp. 197–199; trans. G. G.)

During the Edo period, numerous collections of popular songs were published. One such volume, *Pine Needles (Matsu no ha),* which appeared in 1703, includes texts of *shamisen* song forms popular in the Kansai (Osaka-Kyoto) area. Among them are suites of songs *(kumiuta),* "long songs" *(nagauta),* "short songs" *(hauta),* and other types of songs current at the time, including some hundred examples of the so-called "fling song" *(nagebushi),* long popular in the pleasure quarters and elsewhere. In the preface, the compiler notes that Japanese music began (paralleling Zeami's remarks on the drama) with the dance before Amaterasu's cave. He then notes that a two-stringed instrument, its body covered with snake skin, arrived in Japan during the Eiroku period (1558–1570) and that this was converted into the three-stringed *shamisen* by a *biwa hōshi* in the town of Sakai, south of Osaka. In the postface, the proper manner of singing and the aesthetics of *nagebushi* are outlined.

Vocal quality and principles of shamisen *playing*

Most important, songs should be sung in a sonorous manner, never sagging from beginning to end. When one hears today's singing and playing, it sounds like the

shamisen is the leader, the song the follower, and this is called "modern style." Is this not appalling? The song must be central, the instrument a true accompanist. The singing style of *honte-gumi* [basic suites] and the *shamisen* playing styles of *nagauta* and *hauta* are all different.

After the *shamisen* has been carefully tuned, great importance must be given to the opening of the song. The pacing *[jo ha kyū],* expression, and pitch must be treated with care so as not to stand out. In ensemble playing, when the tuning within a song changes, one should strive to take one's pitch from the other players because they follow their own secret oral tradition.

Nagebushi

This song may have originated as a variant of the Edo version of a Kyoto song called *rōsai.* The vocal quality should be intimate, the tuning somewhat low. If the tuning is not properly adjusted to the singer, it is hard to sing meaningfully. In the past, in the singing style known as the "Osaka style of a Kyoto brothel," the first and last lines of text were accompanied by short phrases on *shamisen,* and the ending of each phrase of the song was broken off abruptly. In the modern style, the melody is smooth, accompaniment and interludes played with only a few strokes of the plectrum, and the cadences sung melodically to the end, making it sound relaxed. The song can be sung in chorus, but the *shamisen* is best limited to a single instrument. In recent years the melody drops after the third syllable of the last phrase. This is stylish and acceptable. The melody of this song does not speed up *(kyū)* but rather ends in a slow or medium tempo *(jo* and *ha).* It gives it a peaceful feeling. The first two syllables of the third line and the first two syllables of the same line when reversed later should be sung to the same melody. This highlights the words and renders them interesting. In some cases this song changes its tuning from the middle. This tuning may be played together with other instruments tuned differently. The vocal melodies vary greatly in quality. For this reason many oral transmissions exist; they cannot be described here. Some say that *nagebushi* are women's entertainment songs. These people understand the songs' elegant qualities, and indeed it may be so. (*Matsu no ha,* pp. 514–516; trans. G. G.)

The *Shakuhachi*

The *shakuhachi* may be most simply described as a vertical bamboo flute with a notched mouthpiece and five finger holes. Historians suggest that the instrument or similar predecessors were first imported into Japan from China in the seventh century, and from the medieval period onward the instrument was often played by mendicant priests or monks. In the Edo period, the *shakuhachi* continued to be known as an instrument performed by warrior-class monks of the Fuke sect, a small branch of Rinzai Zen Buddhism. These practitioners considered the *shakuha-*

chi chiefly a tool for spiritual development, not a musical instrument. In time, however, playing the *shakuhachi* became popular among the commoner class, and well-known tunes or newly composed pieces were often performed. Of simple construction, the *shakuhachi* is capable of producing many timbres and types of pitches. *Kari* pitches, for example, are main pitches played in normal position; *meri* pitches are secondary and are produced by altering the position of the head and the embouchure and by using half-tone techniques. In *Monologue (Hitori-kotoba),* written around 1830, the *shakuhachi* player Hisamatsu Fūyō espouses a conservative, although rather typical, view of the correct approach to the Fuke *shakuhachi.*

Someone who wishes to learn the *shakuhachi* must first of all rid himself of extraneous thoughts, separate himself from his desires, and purge himself of notions of excellence and inferiority. He must center himself on the area below the navel, and focus on listening to the sound he produces from the bamboo *[shakuhachi].* For this reason he must play with the eyes closed. Especially beginners are prone to have extraneous thoughts if they play without closing their eyes.

The *shakuhachi* should not be held too firmly. If it is held too firmly, tension will result. Tension hinders the discipline of the spirit. It must be understood that tension is the "sickness" of the *shakuhachi.* The thumb and middle fingers of the right hand should hold the *shakuhachi* securely but not too firmly.

There is a norm for playing the *shakuhachi:* the notation. Departure from the norm is not permissible. Great care should be taken not to deviate from the notation.

Meri-kari is particularly important. Without *meri-kari,* it is as if one were blowing into a mere stick; it is disagreeable. A good sound is one that is strong but not rough.

Beginners should not strive to produce a beautiful tone. It is good if an exquisite tone results but bad if one seeks to produce one.

In playing pieces from beginning to end, the connections between phrases should remain unbroken, like the stem of a lotus [i.e., even when broken, it continues to be connected]. To ensure that from the start no breaks occur, the spirit should be put to use to smooth over the end of phrases. *Tsukiiro* and *nayashi* [techniques for approaching main tones at the end of sections] are useful for ensuring continuity. In each piece, the proper *hyōshi* [rhythm, tempo, timing] is important and should not be lost. Quiet pieces should be properly quiet; fast pieces should be properly fast. Each piece has its own proper *hyōshi,* which must be practiced diligently.

The beginner should first of all practice the technique of *shakuhachi* playing; when he has control over the technique, he should apply himself to the spirit. True skill is found not in technique, but in spirit. Yet spirit can be mastered only through technique. A beginner who applies himself immediately to spirit is bound to offer excuses all his life. No doubt exists about this.

Bamboo has an agreeable sound, and one should not play harshly; instead, one should play in an elastic and secure manner.

In recent years the five finger holes of the *shakuhachi* have been enlarged. Nevertheless, instruments with small finger holes should not be considered bad. When the *shakuhachi* is played in a full and resonant manner, big and small finger holes make no difference. Yet for practice, one should use an instrument with big finger holes. For a beginner it is difficult to play in a resonant manner on an instrument with small finger holes. But for the beginner the difference between big and small holes really matters little.

Some people believe that the true meaning of *shakuhachi* sound is the pathetic and emotionally restrained expression of "the sadness of things" *[mono no aware].* That is laughable! The purpose of *shakuhachi* playing is fundamentally not to produce something for others to hear. It is a tool for training one's own spirit and is heard by those who have given up their worldly desires. The sadness and happiness sensed by the listener is a product of the listener, not the player: the sad listener becomes sadder; the happy listener, happier. No doubt exists about this. (*Hitori kotoba,* pp. 169–170; trans. G. G.)

Chinese Music

The high status of poetry written in classical Chinese and of the Confucian and Neo-Confucian texts so widely admired and studied during the Edo period ensured an interest in Chinese music as well. At the time of the fall of the Ming dynasty in the mid-seventeenth century, when many Chinese artists and intellectuals fled to Japan, the Wei family of musicians arrived and took up residence in the southern city of Nagasaki, where they eventually introduced the musical arts of the Ming and Ch'ing dynasties to the Japanese. The music of a fourth-generation member of the Wei family, Gi Shimei (1728–1774), was widely admired and was published in a collection entitled *Mr. Gi's Music Book (Gi-shi gakufu),* which appeared in Kyoto in 1768. The postscript to the collection, by Miyazaki Inpo (1717–1774), a Confucian scholar and painter, helps explain the origins and aesthetics of this musical tradition, as examined from the viewpoint of a Japanese practitioner.

Mr. Gi was born in Nagasaki. His great-grandfather was named Wei Shuang-hou and was also known as Wei Zhi-tan. Shuang-hou served as an official of the Ming dynasty. Later, to avoid the disturbances [of the Ming-Qing civil war], he came to Nagasaki to settle. Shuang-hou was particularly proficient in music. His family therefore taught and passed on [its musical heritage] to succeeding generations without interruption right down to the time of Gi Shimei. Mr. Gi is very skilled at explaining the melodies and modes of the music. He once remarked, "My family alone has been responsible for transmitting this music. Would it not be a great shame if in the end it should fall into oblivion?" He thereupon took his instruments and went to Kyoto

to teach interested people, and so those who developed a knowledge of this music gradually increased in number.

At first I thought that this music would surely be a kind of *qing-shan* or *wu-geng* music [i.e., styles of Chinese ensemble music], since it was played by ensembles of string and woodwind instruments, which would be very enjoyable to listen to. But what I later heard was not this at all. The songs were adapted from ancient songs, poems, lyrics, and compositions, and the music sounded gentle and pleasant. There certainly was not any ordinary music which could be favorably compared to this. Yet at the same time it was not like ceremonial music which uses instruments of metal and stone. Nor on the other hand was it something that could be likened to common popular music. So I began to study it, and I felt very happy even after studying just a small part of the repertory.

In this music the song part is the important thing, while the instruments simply provide accompaniment and blend with the song line. Regardless of whether the music is elegant or popular, if we were to remove the song line and play only the instrumental accompaniment, we would not feel that the compositions sounded very differently one from another. But if we examine the song parts closely, then each composition possesses its own unique character, and we can more and more [appreciate that the variety is] wondrous beyond comprehension. Although this is not an ancient music, we can nonetheless now understand such phrases [in the *Book of Rites (Li ji)*] as "[the melody] here ascends liftingly, there descends sinkingly: [the melody] now undulates twistingly, now pauses like a withered tree." Is this not a fine thing? The song line occupies the upper register, while the instrumental accompaniment occupies the lower; [this also shows that] what is important is the voice part. I have come firmly to believe that the voice part simply cannot be eliminated.

The music that we play in Japan is not the ceremonial music of metal and stone instruments, yet the melodies and rhythms of the compositions of the Sui and Tang dynasties which have been passed down to us are really quite abundant. However, in those former times there must certainly have also been a voice part, and what a pity it is that we cannot hear that today. I know that the voice parts we do have today are wonderful, and more's the pity that those of former times are lost. Some say that the songs were originally set to poems which expressed people's aspirations.

Because the song words we sing today are not pronounced in the Japanese fashion, people who have not studied this music naturally have not the vaguest idea what they are singing about. Although there are in fact song words, there might as well be none at all [since no one can understand them]. I really do not know what is to be done about this. I once investigated this [and found some precedents] in ancient times. . . . [Even when] people of ancient times were unfamiliar with the explanations, it is abundantly clear to us now that it is best to chant the words to make them easily understood [even if it means changing the chanting style to a singing style to achieve comprehensibility].

The compositions transmitted by Gi Shimei include tunes in all eight tonalities. Among them the *huang-zhong* mode is the same as the *rin-shō* mode here in Japan. In recent times, of those who have expounded about the ancient modes, only Nakamura Tekisai [1629–1702, Confucian scholar] had a detailed knowledge, and he said, "The ancient *huang zhong* mode is actually today's *Chū-ryo*." According to him, the sound of this Ming music is closely related to that of the ancient Chinese modes.

As for instruments, those of bamboo include the mouth organ *[shō],* the transverse flute *[teki],* [another type of] transverse flute *[ōshō],* and the oboe *[hichiriki].* String instruments include the small zither *[shōshitsu],* the lute *[biwa],* and the moonharp *[gekkin].* As regards percussion instruments, both large and small drums are used as well as gong-chimes *[unra]* and clappers *[tanban].* The song line follows the lead provided by the transverse flute. Anyone wishing to know about the modes should inspect the strings of the zither, but the stringed instruments and voices alike enter after the flute part with which the pieces begin.

This is a general outline of Ming music. (Dean, "Mr. Gi's Music Book," pp. 327–329)

Of all Chinese instruments at this time, the *qin* (or *ch'in;* Jp. *kin*), a seven-string zither, had the greatest success among the literati. Although it had been known in earlier times (Prince Genji was said to have been an expert on this instrument), it was reintroduced in the late seventeenth century and achieved an honored place along with poetry, painting, and calligraphy. One of its greatest exponents was Uragami Gyokudō (1745–1820), now most famous as a painter. Several of his poems attest to his love for the aesthetics of the *qin.*

The harmony of the thicker strings brings tranquility,
The translucence of the thinner strings produces clarity.
They scatter away my feelings of unease,
And wash away my sense of confusion.

(Addiss, *Tall Mountains and Flowing Waters,* p. 29; *Gyokudō kinshi-shū,* p. 150)

In another verse Gyokudō refers to a listener who completely understood the inner meanings of the landscape scenes that his friend was creating in music:

Deep feeling prompts the fingers to pluck and strum,
Causing people to abstain from excess.
Such connoisseurs as Chung Tzu-ch'i [Zhong Ziqi], hearing *ch'in* music,
Instantly resonate with each other.
Craggy, craggy, the "Tall Mountains,"

Vast, vast, the "Flowing Waters."
Fame is not worth talking about,
It is pure music that washes cares from the heart.
If you don't understand the meaning of the *ch'in,*
How can you understand the heart of the ancients?

(Addiss, *Tall Mountains and Flowing Waters,* p. 53, revised; *Gyokudō kinshi-shū,* p. 156)

In one of his poems, Gyokudō rephrases a significant verse by the Sung dynasty literatus Su Tung-p'o [Su Tongpo] about his friend, the painter of bamboo Wen T'ung [Wen Tong].

When Wen T'ung painted bamboo
He saw bamboo and did not see people.
How is it that he did not see people?
Trance-like, he left his body behind,
His body became bamboo,
Endlessly putting forth new growth.
With Chuang-tzu [Zhuangzi] no longer in the world,
Who can understand this concentration of spirit?

(Addiss, *Tall Mountains and Flowing Waters,* p. 63)

Gyokudō, almost seven-hundred years later, writes about himself:

When Gyokudō plays the *ch'in*
It is as though there were no one with him.
Why is there no one?
Because, trance-like, he leaves his body behind,
His body has become the *ch'in,*
The musical tones have entered his spirit.
Now that ancient Emperors cannot return,
Who can understand this great truth?

(Addiss, *Tall Mountains and Flowing Waters,* p. 63, revised; *Gyokudō kinshi-shū,* p. 141)

Theater

Nō

Nō continued in its popularity and in the Edo period became the form of Japanese theater patronized chiefly by the Tokugawa shogunate and the *daimyō.* In this re-

gard, a number of efforts were made to give this medieval form of drama the status and the rectitude worthy of such attention. In 1647, the following formal statement, entitled "Rules to the Sarugaku Troupes," was promulgated by the government. The attempt at finding an appropriate means to incorporate the actors into the social hierarchy is clear.

Actors should not neglect the arts transmitted in all of their families. They are not to perform arts inappropriate to their status. They must solely uphold the old ways of their family's occupation. They must follow the orders of the troupe leader in all matters. If there is a lawsuit, the actor's request to the officials ought to be made through his troupe leader. When there is a matter of some dispute, the troupe leader ought to report directly to the officials concerned.

Furthermore, on occasions of performance of noh, if actors are summoned on the day prior to the performance, they will assemble at the residence of the troupe leader and practice diligently. Actors should not fail to attend on those occasions. There should be no mistakes on the following day.

Without being extravagant, actors should be frugal in all matters. Their dwellings, clothing, food, and other items ought to be plain and should suit their station. It is prohibited for them to leave behind their family's profession and study the warrior's arts, which are inappropriate to their status. Aside from the costumes and properties for noh, they should not accumulate worldly goods.

When actors play the roles of *daimyō* and lesser lords, they must conduct themselves in an appropriate and sober manner. They must not take meals with *daimyō* nor other men of rank and influence when they are in attendance.

Also, there are tales of many generations of fame of the Konparu troupe. However, the present troupe leader, though already mature, is unskilled in the art. From this point forward he must devote himself to his art. One of the older members of the Hada troupe ought to carefully advise him. Hereafter, any further negligence is immoral. (E. Rath, *The Ethos of Noh,* p. 122; *Tokugawa jikki,* pp. 487–488)

The most widely circulated document concerning *nō* performance in the Edo period was a collection now referred to as the *Treatise on the Transmission of the Flower in Eight Chapters (Hachijō kadensho),* which probably dates from the closing decade of the sixteenth century. The treatise, which incorporates a number of earlier writings, including some by Zeami, was eventually available in printed form. Largely concerned with practical matters, the treatise when read as a whole suggests a growing professionalism in the *nō* companies, and it may well have been prepared as a means to consolidate the claim of the *nō* troupes to their preservation of a form of art suitable for high patronage. In the eyes of the compiler or compilers, *nō* can show a moral, even didactic value that can appeal to the ruling classes.

All people who watch noh, including the most ignorant and lowly, will surely shun evil and be inclined toward goodness through seeing in it the pains of human existence, the workings of the laws of karma, and the importance of duty and morality. Those who commit themselves to this art will thus be certain to realize their present dreams in the next world and to attain Buddhahood. . . . While it is difficult to appeal to the general populace through poetry, nothing surpasses noh for this purpose. Since the pieces are interesting to watch, both high and low will be absorbed by them, and will quickly begin a moral life. . . . Since noh plays have the function of motivating people toward virtue, those who seek to master this Way should not take it lightly. In their study of it they should keep in mind that it is a matter of utmost importance. (C. Rath, "*Hachijō kadensho* and Early Modern Noh," p. 188; *Hachijō kadensho,* p. 513)

Such ideas are reinforced when the compilers discuss the varieties or genres of plays performed at the time. In particular, the demon plays *(shura mono),* one of which was usually presented as the fourth play in a program of five, should cause audiences to take stock of the implications of their actions.

The brief span of human life is like a dream, a flash of lightning, the morning dew, the spark from a flint. As the world is ephemeral, one cannot rely on pleasure lasting, but should take as one's true purpose the nurturing of a desire for enlightenment and prayers for the world to come. In this floating world where we are alive today, but cannot expect to be here tomorrow, the fourth noh about demons suffering in hell serves to awaken realization of the consequences of karma and that the pursuit of pleasure and fame cannot lead to enlightenment. (C. Rath, "*Hachijō kadensho* and Early Modern Noh," p. 190; *Hachijō kadensho,* p. 515)

Kyōgen

Although *kyōgen* is usually regarded as a medieval art form, already developed at the time of Zeami, there were apparently no theoretical writings concerning this form of theater before the Edo period. The most famous and influential text from that time was the ironically titled *Notes for Children (Waranbegusa),* written around 1651 by Ōkura Toraakira (1597–1662). Toraakira was head of the influential Ōkura school of *kyōgen,* which performed with the Konparu school of *nō.* According to statements by Toraakira in his postface to this collection of over eighty brief essays, he was anxious to pass on the teachings of his father, the former head of the troupe, to succeeding generations, somewhat in the same fashion that Zeami wished to preserve the teachings of his father Kan'ami. Each essay thus begins with the words "the ancients say" (or, since Japanese makes no difference between sin-

gular and plural, "a person of the past says"). *Notes for Children* provides considerable insight into the comic resources of *kyōgen,* but it reflects the traditions and innovations of Toraakira's age rather than those of the medieval period. Several of the most striking and appealing sections are cited below.

On Teaching and Learning

[No. 33] When one wishes to learn something, one ought select a teacher carefully. A teacher is like a needle, a pupil like a thread. Therefore it is a waste of time to learn from an inferior teacher. Pupils always imitate the bad habits of their teachers, and this is of no benefit for the student. One may discover one's own faults by observing one's pupils. The student's attitude is of greatest importance.

If one has committed oneself to a Way, one should make great efforts for it. One should learn in a general manner those arts that one thinks will be of benefit. Is it not foolish to neglect those things that may be helpful or spend days and months on something that will be of no use? One ought to apply oneself to one's own art; spare time should again be spent polishing one's art. Not a moment ought to be wasted. Life is limited, and time does not wait. Few live to be seventy. This is the case for large countries; how much more so it is for small countries. (*Waranbegusa,* p. 677; translated here and throughout this section by G. G.)

[No. 43] Quick learners rely too much on others and always end up making mistakes. Slower learners pay attention to their own behavior, trying not to be left behind, and thus end up surpassing the quick ones. It is said that scholarship is like this too. Clever people catch on quickly but do not ask deep questions and thus become lazy. It is as if they did not ask because they did not yet learn. Even something learned well will be forgotten; how unlikely that a clever person who has learned something quickly will not forget it! One might say that slower learners who earnestly strive to master an art will improve gradually and in the end become skillful. (*Waranbegusa,* p. 630)

[No. 44] Why are some people smug about their abilities? Even skillful actors give good and bad performances. Depending on the day or on their feelings, they still sometimes make mistakes when they speak the lines they have learned so well. At times audiences are noisy, and if this bothers an actor, he may give a poor performance. After all, he is not speaking to himself and cannot stubbornly do as he pleases.

Smugness results when beginners think it enough to deliver their lines without forgetting or stumbling. But for the spectator that is not at all enough: they look exactly like beginners. Regardless of whether an actor is bad or good, he ought to be able to perform one piece thoroughly. Becoming a skilled actor is a gradual process. Is not the sign of skill knowing what is lacking? This is different from a true lack. When a

skilled actor says he lacks something, he looks complete from the point of view of the spectator. When an amateurish actor says and tries to make you think he is complete, this appears as a lack to the spectator. What most people see as good ought to be considered good. (*Waranbegusa,* pp. 680–681)

On Nō *and* Kyōgen, *High and Low*

[No. 48] *Kyōgen* is a derivative of *nō,* related like block to cursive script. If *nō* can be likened to linked poetry *[renga], kyōgen* is like light verse *[haikai]* with unconventional words. Thus the substance of *kyōgen* is the *nō.* One speaks of the substance *[tai],* its use *[yō],* and appearance *[iro]:* the substance is used to create an appearance. The proof of this is that many *kyōgen* plots derive from *nō.* The meaning of the words of the *nō* is not altered whether they precede or follow the movements of the actor. *Kyōgen* differs in that the actions must come together with the words. The *kyōgen* popular today have no substance and are performed in haste and roughly. Rambling remarks are made, and the actor twists his face, opens wide his eyes and mouth, makes meaningless gestures, and laughs. This pleases those of low station but embarrasses those with discernment. Such *kyōgen* performances are like comic pieces in the *kabuki* so popular today; they are not the *kyōgen* of the *nō* and cannot even be called the *kyōgen* of *kyōgen.* Even if they are popular these days, these have been called, since ancient times, diseased *kyōgen.* Since they depart from the true Way of *kyōgen,* they are very easy to learn. This is not slander of today's world. This book is not to be shown to outsiders. It contains the words of the ancients only in order to allow our descendants and pupils to maintain the old rules and not to commit errors. It pleads, in the order the author happens to recall, that these things not be forgotten. (*Waranbegusa,* p. 682)

On Musical Elements

[No. 86] An accompaniment with an [invariable] beat is rare in kyōgen. Yet if one does not understand accompaniment with a beat, how can one understand free rhythm? (*Waranbegusa,* p. 692)

[No. 54] The mode of the flute is crucial. The flute begins to play at a determined time. When it starts to play, it should not lose the mode of that day's program. After a *nō* piece has ended, the mode is handed over to the *kyōgen;* thereafter it is handed back to the *nō.* This is also true for *kyōgen* performed between the acts of a *nō* play. The flute controls the mode. (*Waranbegusa,* p. 684)

On What to Strive for and What to Avoid

[No. 49] The essence of *kyōgen* is something that has substance, is naturally interesting, fresh, performed with spirit, and striking to the eye. The soul *[shin]* of *kyōgen*

is the *nō.* It is popularly said that a poor performance of *nō* becomes *kyōgen* and a poor performance of *kyōgen* becomes *nō.* This is an excellent maxim that should be pondered deeply. It is also said that of all the arts *kyōgen* is one of the most difficult to master. How true this is! In fact one may quickly progress to a certain point, but as in any art, once one becomes deeply involved, one discovers that it is more difficult that one first thought. It must be understood that it is particularly difficult to become highly skilled.

Kyōgen is an imitation of the ways of the world. Yet there are various types of imitation. There are good and bad ways to imitate things: imitations of imitations; high, middle, and low forms of laughter and tears; ways that make sense and ways that do not. Imitations of things that are too low become simply dirty, but imitations of things that are too high, of which one is ignorant, are not convincing. [To those who do not understand the differences] the hide of a tiger or leopard looks just like dog- or sheepskin. (*Waranbegusa,* pp. 682–683)

[No. 41] Think of warp, woof, and pattern. The warp is vertical, the woof horizontal, and from them a pattern appears. Similarly, when technique and words are properly learned and mastered, a pattern will reveal itself. It is the same with subject matter *[gi],* technique *[ri],* and the result *[jitsu].* (*Waranbegusa,* p. 680)

[No. 76] In *kyōgen* fast-paced sections should be performed with tranquility; slow-paced sections should be performed speedily. This is a great truth. It is a matter of an internal sense, not necessarily of actions. It is difficult to learn, not something simply there to be grasped. (*Waranbegusa,* p. 690)

[No. 79] There are many things in *kyōgen* that must be shunned: lack of substance *[tai],* boisterousness, clever speech, disorderly conduct, exaggerated opening of eyes and mouth, falling down, losing the thread of meaning, sluggishness, loss of tension, sagging, dull and lifeless speech, mistakes in rhythm or melody, vulgar or coarse buffoonery. All these are evils in *kyōgen.* These things should always and at all times be cast out so that they cannot be picked up by others. (*Waranbegusa,* p. 692)

On Tradition

[No. 19] *Kyōgen* did not fall from the sky or spring from the earth. Instead, they were fashioned from themes in old tales or poems; many rely on historical events. Thus inappropriate words should be revised. Novelty emerges when what is old is understood. If something is currently accepted, however, there is nothing to be done. In some cases, the treatment of a theme in *kyōgen* is not historically correct, but this is also not subject to revision. Great discretion is called for in these matters. As the *Essays in Idleness* say, it is best not to change something if changing it will not do any good [see Keene, *Essays in Idleness,* p. 107, no. 127]. (*Waranbegusa,* pp. 672–673)

On Knowing When to Retire

[No. 59] It is a sign of wisdom for a great a master to stop performing when it has become difficult. Old age means decline. Since acting is a visual art, when an actor's appearance deteriorates and the snow of age shows on his head; when his baldness becomes unsightly and his steps falter, even if he is still liked and praised by audiences, he must think such acclaim false. Though he may look younger than his years and be skilled, he ought to retire even if this causes pain and regret in the audience. There is no point in quitting after audiences have become bored. What a pity for a man to spoil the praise he has acquired during his youth! (*Waranbegusa,* p. 685)

Jōruri

The Japanese puppet theater, now most often referred to by the nineteenth-century term *bunraku*, began in the medieval period as an adjunct performance to help illustrate the narratives performed by the chanters of *The Tale of the Heike* and other tales described above. By the Edo period, however, the puppets had developed into a sophisticated form and were accompanied by a type of recitation known as *jōruri*, which in turn was accompanied on *shamisen*. This combination of puppetry, narrative, and music gave rise to the art of such playwrights as Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653–1724), one of the greatest literary figures in the Edo period. Chikamatsu's work was much admired, and many were curious about the techniques of his art. A famous conversation he had with his friend Hozumi Ikan, a Confucian scholar, was recorded in the collection *A Present from Naniwa (Naniwa miyage)* in 1738.

This is what Chikamatsu told me when I visited him many years ago. "*Jōruri* differs from other forms of fiction in that, since it is primarily concerned with puppets, the words should all be living things in which action is the most important feature. Because *jōruri* is performed in theatres that operate in close competition with those of the *kabuki,* which is the art of living actors, the author must impart to lifeless wooden puppets a variety of emotions, and attempt in this way to capture the interest of the audience. It is thus generally very difficult to write a work of great distinction.

"Once, when I was young and reading a story about the court, I came across a passage which told how, on the occasion of a festival, the snow had fallen heavily and piled up. An order was then given to a guard to clean away the snow from an orange tree. When this happened, the pine tree next to it, apparently resentful that its boughs were bent with snow, recoiled its branches. This was a stroke of the pen which gave life to the inanimate tree. It did so because the spectacle of the pine tree, resentful that the snow has been cleared from the orange tree, recoiling its branches itself and shaking off the snow which bends it down, is one which creates the feeling of a living, moving thing. Is that not so?

"From this model I learned how to put life into my *jōruri.* Thus, even descriptive passages like the *michiyuki,* to say nothing of the narrative phrases and dialogue, must be charged with feeling or they will be greeted with scant applause. This is the same thing as is called evocative power in poets. For example, if a poet should fail to bring emotion to his praise of even the superb scenery of Matsushima or Miyajima in his poem, it would be like looking at the carelessly drawn picture of a beautiful woman. For this reason, it should be borne in mind that feeling is the basis of writing. . . .

"There are some who, thinking that pathos is essential to a *jōruri,* make frequent use of such expressions as "it was touching" in their writing, or who when chanting do so in voices thick with tears, in the manner of the *bun'ya bushi* [sentimental *jōruri* chanting style of Okamoto Bun'ya]. This is foreign to my style. I take pathos to be entirely a matter of restraint *(giri).* Since it is moving when all parts of the art *(rikugi)* are controlled by restraint, the stronger and firmer the melody and words are, the sadder will be the impression created. For this reason, when one says of something which is sad that it is sad, one loses the implications, and in the end, even the impression of sadness is slight. It is essential that one not say of a thing that "it is sad," but that it be sad of itself. For example, when one praises a place renowned for its scenery such as Matsushima by saying, "Ah, what a fine view!" one has said in one phrase all that one can about the sight, but without effect. If one wishes to praise the view, and one says numerous things indirectly about its appearance, the quality of the view may be known of itself, without one's having to say, "It is a fine view." This is true of everything of its kind.

"Someone said, 'People nowadays will not accept plays unless they are realistic and well reasoned out. There are many things in the old stories which people will not now tolerate. It is thus that such people as *kabuki* actors are considered skillful to the degree that their acting resembles reality. The first consideration is to have the chief retainer in the play resemble a real chief retainer, and to have the daimyō look like a real daimyō. People will not stand for the childish nonsense they did in the past.' Chikamatsu answered, 'Your view seems like a plausible one, but it is a theory which does not take into account the real methods of art. Art is something which lies in the slender margin between the real and the unreal. Of course it seems desirable, in view of the current taste for realism, to have the chief retainer in the play copy the gestures and speech of a real retainer, but in that case should a real chief retainer of a daimyō put rouge and powder on his face like an actor? Or, would it prove entertaining if an actor, on the grounds that real chief retainers do not make up their faces, were to appear on the stage and perform, with his beard growing wild and his head shaven?' This is what I mean by the slender margin between the real and the unreal. It is unreal, and yet it is not unreal; it is real, and yet it is not real. Entertainment lies between the two.

"In this connection, there is the story of a certain court lady who had a lover. The two loved each other very passionately, but the lady lived far deep in the women's palace, and the man could not visit her quarters. She could see him therefore only very

rarely, from between the cracks of her screen of state at the court. She longed for him so desperately that she had a wooden image carved of the man. Its appearance was not like that of any ordinary doll, but did not differ in any particle from the man. It goes without saying that the color of his complexion was perfectly rendered; even the pores of his skin were delineated. The openings in his ears and nostrils were fashioned, and there was no discrepancy even in the number of teeth in the mouth. Since it was made with the man posing beside it, the only difference between the man and this doll was the presence in one, and the absence in the other, of a soul. However, when the lady drew the doll close to her and looked at it, the exactness of the reproduction of the living man chilled her, and she felt unpleasant and rather frightened. Court lady that she was, her love was also chilled, and as she found it distressing to have the doll by her side, she soon threw it away.

"In view of this we can see that if one makes an exact copy of a living being, even if it happened to be Yang Kuei-fei [Yang Guifei, a fabled Chinese beauty, d. 756], one will become disgusted with it. Thus, if when one paints an image or carves it of wood there are, in the name of artistic license, some stylized parts in a work otherwise resembling the real form; this is, after all, what people love in art. The same is true of literary composition. While bearing resemblance to the original, it should have stylization; this makes it art, and is what delights men's minds. Theatrical dialogue written with this in mind is apt to be worthwhile." (Keene, *The Battles of Coxinga,* pp. 93–96; *Naniwa miyage,* pp. 5–11)

During his career, Chikamatsu worked with the great chanter Uji Kaganojō (1635–1711). Uji Kaganojō's own comments on *jōruri* can be found in his *Collection of Bamboo Shoots (Takenoko-shū),* published in 1678.

In *jōruri,* there are no teachers. However, one should understand that its parent is the *nō.* The reasons for this are first, at the beginning of a day's performance of *jōruri,* the puppets perform the *nō* dances Okina, Senzai, and Sambasō. Then, when this ritual has ended, an opening melody from *nō* is played as the puppets make their entrances. Are not the robes and costumes for the important roles the same as in the *nō?* Therefore, the source of *jōruri* is the *nō.* The dramatic methods and techniques of *jōruri* are neither too subtle nor too overbearing. One must chant each piece in a style suitable to its mood. Since all the many paths of art are born and nurtured from the heart, one should follow the dictates of his heart. However, since the novice will most likely be unable to comprehend this without assistance, I will give an outline of the methods of the art of *jōruri.*

The basic scheme lies in these four musical styles: the auspicious *(shūgen),* the elegant *(yūgen),* the amorous *(renbo),* and the tragic *(aishō).* In an auspicious piece, the sound of the words, when chanting, must be elegant and proper; that is, not too

heavy or too light, yet they must be delivered with vigor and strength. This must be the foundation for all musical styles. In chanting other styles, the voice should always be the same as for the auspicious one, while deep in the heart the feeling behind the voice is altered, according to the nature of the piece.

For the elegant style, the voice should be the same as when chanting auspiciously, but the song should be softer, and the heart should feel as when one is sitting under the blossoms, listening to the *koto,* flute, or *tsuzumi* drum while passing the time of day, forgetting about the journey home.

As for the amorous style, the effort of the heart must be more fervent and earnest than for an elegant piece. One must be moved by the lovers, have a yearning heart, and chant with deep concentration. When one sinks deeply into the mood, the color of that mood manifests itself naturally. The clear dew, when it settles on a red leaf, becomes a crimson jewel.

Finally, there is the tragic style. For this, all the previous sentiments must be forgotten, only a lingering touch of love should remain. Yet the heart must maintain its strength and in its depths should like the feeling of life's uncertainty, of its transiency.

In performing any piece, posture is always most important. First of all, in the kneeling position legs should be apart, the hips set firmly back on the legs, and the head held correctly upright. One's heart should remain relaxed, and concentration should be centered on the spine. When the posture is poor, the voice and performance is poor. This is true for any art. If anyone does not understand this, it is because his accomplishments are meager.

As for music of *jōruri,* there are four essential elements. First is the pitch; second, the rhythm; third, the melody; and fourth, the timing [meaning adjustment of the mood to the occasion or to the feeling of the piece]. One must always consider the particular musical style when chanting. These are the four essential elements of the music.

The melody maintains the style; the style maintains the melody. Also the beat maintains the pause; the pause maintains the beat. This must be well understood.

The art of chanting the musical narrative of *jōruri* makes use of the mouth, tongue, and heart. The mouth and tongue listen carefully, and express what the heart feels. Among these elements, no one should take preference over the others. For example, even if the voice is suitable, if one uses words inappropriate to the particular audience, for instance, at the house of a lord, or forgets one's own special melodies, the performance will not be entertaining. This must be well understood.

The mouth must study and master the syllabary so that it can smoothly and distinctly recite the text; each syllable must be carefully enunciated, yet not be stressed too much. To chant mellifluously is the function of the tongue. When the heart know the laws of the universe, this understanding forms the basis for the four musical styles and the four elements of the music. It is only the heart that can bring art to fruition.

In all music, one must refrain from exerting force into the voice. One's strength

must, instead, be held in the heart. This certainly is true for *jōruri.* (Gerstle, *Circles of Fantasy,* pp. 183–185; *Takenoko-shū,* pp. 401–403)

In a collection of brief essays on the *kabuki* theater, *The Actors' Analects (Yakusha rongo),* described in more detail below, there is a passage that outlines the way Uji Kaganojō regarded his own mode of performance.

The pupils of the *jōruri* master, Kaganojō, once all complained to him thus. "When you, sir, are chanting, and come to a *fushi* [melodious] passage, the audience goes into raptures. When we chant a *fushi* passage, however hard we try, we never get applause. Even so, it is not that we have arranged the passage for ourselves, for we have carefully learned your setting, sir. In spite of this, we get no applause; this is very mysterious." Kaganojō burst into laughter. "It is not that at all. I merely chant *jōruri* with no other object but chanting, and when it comes to the *fushi* passage, I sing the *fushi.* As you fellows start chanting, you think of being applauded, and make your performance entertaining from beginning to end, so that when you get to the *fushi,* it is no longer a passage that is more entertaining than the rest, so there is no applause. It is bad to make applause the main purpose of your chanting." (Dunn and Torigoe, *The Actors' Analects,* pp. 78–79)

Kabuki

The art of *kabuki,* which began in the early years of the Edo period, was seen as lower in artistic and literary merit than the puppet theater, but by the middle of the eighteenth century this supreme actor's theater drew abreast, then surpassed, the puppet theater in the public's approbation. *Kabuki* began at the start of the seventeenth century as a form of women's dance performances first staged by the now legendary Okuni in Kyoto. In this early phase of the art, women often offered their personal services as well. Here is a somewhat puritanical response to such performances by John Saris (1579–1643), who was briefly in Japan in 1613, hoping to establish a trading post for the East India Company.

These women were Actors of Comedies, which passe there from Iland to Iland to play, as our Players doe here from Towne to Towne, having severall shifts of apparrell for the better grace of the matter acted; which for the most part are of Warre, Love, and such like. These women are as the slaves of one man, who putteth a price what every man shall pay that hath to doe with any of them; more than which he is not to take upon paine of death, in case the partie injured shall complaine. It is left to his owne discretion to prize her at the first, but rise he cannot afterwards, fall he may.

Neither doth the partie bargaine with the Wench, but with her Master, whose command she is to obey. The greatest of the Nobilitie travelling, hold it no disgrace to send for these Panders to their Inne, and do compound with them for the Wenches, either to fill their drinke at Table (for all men of any ranke have their drinke filled to them by Women) or otherwise to have the use of them. When any of these Panders die, though in their life time they were received into Company of the best, yet now, as unworthy to rest among the worst, they are bridled with a bridle made of straw, as you would bridle a Horse, and in the cloathes they died in, are dragged through the streetes into the fields, and there cast upon a dunghill, for dogges and fowles to devoure. (Cited in Cooper, *They Came to Japan,* pp. 65–66)

Much has been written about the art and culture of *kabuki* in Edo Japan, but the brief memoirs and observations left behind by actors, managers, and others give a unique insight into the techniques and ambitions of this remarkable theatrical tradition. As noted, one collection of these has been published as *The Actors' Analects.* Fortunately, this entire collection has been translated by Charles Dunn and Bunzō Torigoe. (Their translation is presented together with the original, unannotated Japanese text gleaned from a variety of sources. For an annotated Japanese text, see the edition of *Yakusha rongo* listed in the bibliography.)

Two major schools of *kabuki* developed in the Edo period, one in the Kyoto-Osaka area (usually referred to as *kamigata kabuki, kamigata* being the area around these two cities) and the other in the city of Edo. The following are citations from various writings of or about late-seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century actors, events, and ideas in the Kyoto-Osaka *kabuki* world.

The Relation of a Play to Reality

The realism of a play springs from fiction; if a comic play is not based on real life, it is unnatural. (Dunn and Torigoe, *The Actors' Analects,* p. 33)

Let us consider the sentiment of the various types of roles. The *keisei* [courtesan] places a great importance on her rank and is of a fantastic disposition. The warrior's lady has a heart which pities those beneath her, and yet presents a fine appearance with her immediate reaction should she be spoken to frivolously. By portraying her thus one makes sure that she is seen to be a warrior's lady. All actors make it their first aim to fit in with other roles. In a performance in which this harmony does not exist, even though the actors be famous, the play does not achieve its desired effect. And so it sometimes happens, according to the disposition of the other actor, that the scene becomes hurried, and thus cooperation is difficult. The acting may have different artistic styles. Or it may be that it becomes hurried from being too well learned. Sometimes the pace is too leisurely. At others one is carried away by the

tempo and there is a feeling of strain. Sometimes, however, even though there is a bad start, there is the possibility of retrieving the situation. At a moment of tragedy, it is unsightly for the wife of a warrior to raise her voice when weeping. Nor do men raise their voices when they weep. As a man takes on years, he returns to foolishness and thus cannot sometimes prevent himself from weeping out loud. In the display of great grief, there is a way of weeping that one does not show, and the way of weeping that one stifles. The latter has regard to the fact that others are watching, the former seems to show an unwillingness to reconcile oneself. Then again, when women take their lives or men disembowel themselves, or when a wound is received, the acting is at a higher pitch. Because the tension rises, the spoken words in the earlier and later sections are not at the same level, and, moreover, the voice has to grow weaker. (Dunn and Torigoe, *The Actors' Analects,* pp. 34–35)

Roles: Onnagata *[Female Impersonators]; Comic Roles; Villain Roles*

The *onnagata* role has its basis in charm, and even one who has innate beauty, if he seeks to make a fine show in a fighting scene, will lose the femininity of his performance. Or again, if he tries deliberately to make his interpretation elegant, it will not be pleasing. For these reasons, if he does not live his normal life as if he was a woman, it will not be possible for him to be called a skillful *onnagata.* The more an actor is persuaded that it is the time when he appears on the stage that is the most important in his career as an *onnagata,* the more masculine he will be. It is better for him to consider his everyday life as the most important. The Master [the famous *onnagata* Yoshizawa Ayame] was often heard to say this. (Dunn and Torigoe, *The Actors' Analects,* p. 53)

For one who is an *onnagata* to say that he might just as well become a *tachiyaku* [male lead role] is to pile shame upon shame. One who says that he might just as well change from an *onnagata* to a *tachiyaku* cannot help being a bad *onnagata.* One who chants to *tachiyaku* parts and does badly at them should do well when acting as an *onnagata.* This is what [Yoshizawa] Ayame always said, and indeed when he became a *tachiyaku* [during the period 1721–1723] he was in fact not good. I have come to the conclusion that this is because essentially there can be no person who can be both a man and a woman. (Dunn and Torigoe, *The Actors' Analects,* pp. 54–55)

Influence of Kabuki *by Other Genres*

Ayame related how from the days of his childhood he was installed in the Dōtombori district [of theater and prostitution in Osaka]. He acquired the name of Ayanosuke and then came under the patronage of Tachibanaya Gorōzaemon. This gentleman was a landed *samurai* from the neighborhood of Kameoka in Tamba [west of Kyoto] and was well-to-do. He was a person whose family line went back a considerable way, and an accomplished *nō* performer. Ayame's employer at the time was a *shamisen* player

in the theater, and at a time when Ayame was being urged to devote his energies to this instrument, he was also strongly advised to profit by the fact that Gorōzaemon used to come and visit him, to learn *nō.* So Ayame asked him two or three times to give him lessons, but Gorōzaemon would not consent and said that he should study hard at *onnagata* acting. The reasons he gave for not teaching him were that until he should achieve general recognition at this, it would be wrong for him to do anything else. If his attention was turned to the *nō,* his ambitions towards performances in his true field would probably he diverted. Moreover, if he insisted on learning *nō,* it would have a bad effect upon his *kabuki* work. This is because his acting would become leisurely. In addition, would he not develop a tendency to give dance pieces derived from the *nō?* When he had thoroughly mastered the art of the *kabuki* dance, as well as that of the *onnagata,* if he still wanted to attempt the *nō,* he might do as he pleased. Later, under the patronage of Gorōzaemon, he left his employer, and became a special pupil of San'emon. As such, he appeared at the same time as Yoshida Ayame, and it often happened that he was outshone by Yoshida. However, the latter learned a little about *nō* from a gentleman named Hokkokuya, and frequently sought to make a success of *shosagoto* [dance pieces] based on *nō* plays, whereas Yoshizawa still struggled along with realistic pieces. After a while his name became known, while Yoshida could find no one to appear with him, and has now abandoned the profession. Yoshizawa could now see how much to the point were the words of Gorōzaemon. He could not forget his kindness, and took for a "house name" his name Tachibanaya; he also told me in secret that he was given Gorōzaemon's nickname of Gonshichi. (Dunn and Torigoe, *The Actors' Analects,* pp. 58–59)

Otowa Jirosaburō never played in pieces which used the chanting that goes with the puppets. The reason that he gave was that in general this chanting was basically an imitation of *kabuki,* and that the puppets too were being worked in a way that copied this live theater. On the other hand, the copying of the puppets by *kabuki* is a cause of decline in the latter, he said. (Dunn and Torigoe, *The Actors' Analects,* p. 112)

Teaching and Learning

Yamashita Kyōemon said, "Sakata Tōjūrō is a born genius, and is recognized in the Three Cities [Kyoto, Osaka, Edo] as an actor of true worth. Among those actors who can be called great today, one cannot think that there is one who reaches the standard of Tōjūrō, nor can I claim to do so myself. However, perhaps because he is a born genius, he was unlikely to become a teacher. The reason for this can be seen if you take as an example a master gardener who takes, for instance, a pine tree and bends and shapes its branches, and makes of it a superb tree. Then there is the pine which has grown naturally into a fine tree with excellent shape. The other [i.e., the latter type of excellence] is an excellence in which a lack of ability has been bent and shaped and

made into a fine talent. Thus, because this sort of ability has been bent into shape, the person who is possessed of it has learned how to form artistry and how to teach it to his pupils. Therefore, he is to be relied upon as a teacher. The other, innate genius, is one to whom it came at birth, and since he himself has no experience of having been bent and shaped by others, he does not know how to bend shape them himself. Therefore, as a teacher, no reliance can be placed upon him." (Dunn and Torigoe, *The Actors' Analects,* p. 71)

A certain actor had a son, who was twelve or thirteen years old and was attending school. He said to him, "Things which an actor need not learn are the use of the abacus, and calligraphy, and there are also several other things that he can ignore." Tōjūrō heard this and said, "No, no, that is not true at all. The actor's art is like a beggar's bag. Regardless of whether you need it at the time or not, you should pick up everything as you come across it and take it away with you. You should make use only of those things which you need, and those you do not you should put on one side, and bring out when you need them. There must not be anything about which you are entirely ignorant. Even purse-cutting should be carefully studied." (Dunn and Torigoe, *The Actors' Analects,* p. 86)

Dance

Matsumoto Nizaemon said, "When I and another are performing a *shosagoto* together, should one be dancing alone the other takes up a position in front of the musicians [with his back to the audience]. At such a time many actors relax and have a drink of tea or the like. I myself do not relax. Even though I am there in front of the musicians, I am performing the dance in my mind. If I did not do so, the view of my back would be so displeasing that the performance would be brought to a halt." (Dunn and Torigoe, *The Actors' Analects,* p. 94)

The movements of the body are in the words, and when the words provide no meaning, they depend upon the style of dancing. Again, when there are no words and one dances to music, one rides upon the rhythm. Because the dance is made from the role that one is performing, one must make reality the basis of one's movements. Whatever happens, one must not forget the meaning of the sort of dance that one is performing. (Dunn and Torigoe, *The Actors' Analects,* p. 157)

There is an expression "Dancing is done through the eyes." Dancing can be compared to the human body, and the eye to the soul. If the soul is not present, the body serves no useful purpose. Dancing in which the eyes do not take part is called dead dancing, and what is called live dancing is that performed when the movements of the body and the eyes work together to express the spirit of the piece. It follows that it is of the greatest importance that one should understand what is meant by "Dancing is done through the eyes." (Dunn and Torigoe, *The Actors' Analects,* p. 160)

As the economic center of Japan gradually shifted from the Osaka-Kyoto area to Edo, the center of *kabuki* also moved from the emperor's capital to the shogun's. Collections of essays concerning the Edo *kabuki* were commonly published, intended to allow readers to better understand the aesthetics and traditions of the genre. Here are several selections from works dealing with *kabuki* in Edo, as collected in the *Sleeve Diary (Sode nikki),* published in Edo in 1771.

Nō actors generally wear masks, and those who do not reveal their faces are considered of refined status. Even though actors in the theater who wear makeup are considered of vulgar status, there is nothing to be done about this. The point is that it is fundamental that the actors' faces are made up. In any case, the origins of actors' makeup can be found in the "age of the gods" section of the *Chronicles of Japan,* where Hiko-hoho-demi no Mikoto and his elder brother Ho-no-susori no Mikoto make fishhooks and Ho-no-susori no Mikoto smears something called "red earth" on his face.

From the second day of the first month of 1715 the play *Bandō ichi kotobuki Soga* [The Soga brothers: The most auspicious in eastern Japan] was staged at the Nakamura Theater, with the late Ichikawa Ebizō II and [Ichikawa] Danjūrō II. In the second act Gorō appeared as a *komusō* [itinerant *shakuhachi*-playing monk]. Toraya Jūtoku performed the *jōruri.* This play was so well received that news of it spread to every nook and corner of Edo. It was a tremendous success, unlike anything seen or heard in recent or ancient times. A run from the second day of the first month until the seventh month with packed houses was also unprecedented. Since those days, the production of a "Soga play" as the spring play was considered an auspicious sign. Spectators enjoyed seeing "Soga plays" more than plays from other ages. Simply put, country bumpkins and boors cannot help feeling pity and sympathy when they consider the deep-seated wish of the Soga brothers, who, separated from their father at ages three and five, desire in their childish way to seek out and avenge their father's enemy. People cannot help but be moved when they hear that the brothers, with the support of their aged mother, endure eighteen years of hardship for their father's sake. Especially Tora, though a profligate, exhibits such steadfastness; and Kiō and Saburō demonstrate such loyalty. In this play one finds more sadness, love, joy, and bravery than in others. It is something easily understood even by children aged six or seven. Moreover, at this time [i.e., 1715] Ebizō was in the prime of his youth, a good-looking man much beloved by women and children. Since the play was an unprecedented success, "Soga plays" were staged the following year as well; they continued to be done thereafter, until the present day. Spring "Soga plays" have become an auspicious sign.

In sum, the anguish resulting from the filial piety of the Soga brothers produces a charm that impresses everyone and moves one to the core of one's soul.

Besides the "six arts" there are many artistic paths that are popular. [The "six arts" were the arts defined as essential for a gentleman in the Chou dynasty: rites, music, archery, horsemanship, calligraphy, and arithmetic.] Among these, none are as difficult and demanding as the art of acting, both at present and in the past. Learning the tea ceremony; *nō* chanting; *nō* dancing; playing of the *tsuzumi,* the *taiko,* or the *shamisen* is always possible if one applies oneself thoroughly, though true mastery is difficult. Yet none of these arts requires enduring as much hardship as acting. First of all, *onnagata* of course have it hard; and lead actors *[tachiyaku]* cannot succeed if they are not very masculine. Second, an actor has to have an impressive voice. Third, he has to have charisma *[aikyō]*—this charisma is his most important quality. Moreover, after mastering these three points, an actor must have insight into all the arts. If he cannot please the spectators, he will never become the star of a troupe. Achieving this poses unparalleled difficulties. Since olden times, some actors of the three capitals [Kyoto, Osaka, Edo] do not earn much audience support even though they are highly skilled; they lack charisma. On the other hand, actors whose skills are undeveloped earn high reputations and accolades from everyone, for they do have charisma. Some actors are skilled at acting, but they appear slight, lacking in breadth, and have no arresting quality. This deficiency results from insufficient manliness. Yet even if an actor's ways and manners are admirably manly, spectators will not take to him if he does not have a good voice. Rare indeed in any age is the actor who possesses all three qualities and who in addition is a great artist. (*Sode nikki,* pp. 247–254; trans. G. G.)

One specialty of Edo *kabuki* was the *aragoto,* or "rough" style of performance. In the "Kajitsu gojū sōden" (Fifty transmissions of flower and fruit; probably a reference to the Chinese preface to the Heian-period *Collection of Old and Modern Japanese Poetry*), included in a treatise published in 1772 entitled the *Pioneer Analects of Actors Then and Now (Kokon yakusha rongo sakigake),* there are observations regarding performance practice by two noted performers of the day, Ichikawa Ebizō (1688–1758; also known as Ichikawa Danjūrō II before 1735), and Sawamura Sōjūrō (1685–1756).

Aragoto depictions of an underage boy should be performed in the spirit of a young girl who is somewhat tipsy.

Before glaring at someone, one ought to shut one's eyes; when the eyes are then opened, the difference is clear.

Facing straight forward looks weak; striking a pose at an angle looks strong. In *aragoto* it is particularly important to thrust one's foot forward when striking a pose.

Makeup *[kumadori]* is best applied liberally. The white foundation should not be too even. Red makeup is best applied thinly, for it looks black if it is too thick. To produce purple, one should mix red and blue. Yellow makeup [made of arsenic tri-

sulfide] is poisonous. To apply gold or silver foil, one should use hair oil. If the white foundation does not stick properly, one should apply it once, wipe it with a piece of paper, and then reapply. . . .

In *aragoto* love scenes one should not fall in love in an overly suave manner; instead, one should fall in love boldly or innocently. . . .

If one speaks in a discerning, slow-paced manner, this will sound quick, and one will not stumble over one's words. If one speaks in a docile and quiet manner, one stumbles over one's words. Both actors and playwrights should practice their lines speaking out loud. . . .

In a full house, nobody pays attention; in an empty house, fullness is found. When playing to empty houses, one must imagine that an audience is there and do one's best. Doing this guarantees that one's voice will not tire when playing for full houses. Nor will one feel sorry for oneself. This is the principle of full houses and empty houses.

It is important for actors to be striking and conspicuous. If a young actor who has not yet achieved acclaim looks bad, he will not simply *be* unskilled but also *appear* unskilled. If he walks with an assured deportment, something good will be found in him, even if he in fact is still unskilled.

In plays about going to visit a courtesan, walking in front of the lantern bearer makes it look like one is hopelessly in love.

Looking into one's lover's eyes gives the appearance of love; looking at a villain's nose gives the appearance of hate.

When playing the role of an angry *samurai* it is good to remain seated; a *samurai* involved in an argument should not place his hand on his sword, for this gives an appearance of weakness.

When playing the role of an angry townsman, it is good to stand up; when a townsman is involved in a quarrel he fiddles with his short sword. The line "Well, in that case . . ." is one spoken only by townsmen [because it sounds like quibbling and indicates a desire for redress].

When playing the role of someone who is drunk, one should speak looking at the floor. The drunk man and the crazy man must be differentiated, but the crazy man and the deaf man are not differentiable.

The deaf man should be played like the blind man, with the ears acting as the eyes. This will make it look like he is deaf.

When playing a blind man, the actor should walk around while keeping his robe in proper position, not opening in the front or at the bottom. He will then look like a blind man. Eyes should be opened slightly one at a time. If the eyes are not partly opened in alternation, it will look like he has one bad eye.

Stutterers should stutter only syllables starting with "s" or "k." One should not stutter syllables made up solely of vowels or syllables starting with "h," "r," "m," or "t." If one stutters such syllables, the words will not be understood, and the stut-

terer will only be seen. When taking something out of one's sleeve while seated, one should first raise one's knee and make sure the action is timed correctly.

When playing a lame man, the actor should bend over and glance around suspiciously. When walking, one leg should be extended forward with strength and firmly planted; the other leg is kept weak. This will give the appearance of a lame man. It is good to look as if one were covering up the fact that one is lame.

An old samurai should not be hunched over in age; an aged townsman walks around hunched over.

The role of the *onnagata* requires one to imitate a woman. When a man walks at night in dangerous places, a new loincloth is more important than swords. When he is robbed and has his clothes torn off, his loincloth will still look good.

When shivering, one should stand on one leg. If one stands on tiptoe on one leg, one can shiver freely.

Animals [e.g., foxes, badgers] should be played walking on tiptoe. Tall people look silly walking on tiptoe; the same effect may be obtained by walking on one's heels. (*Kokon yakusha rongo sakigake,* pp. 483–490; trans. G. G.)

Danjūrō V, one of the greatest actors during the golden age of Edo kabuki, also wrote more generally about how kabuki should be approached. The following selections are excerpts from one of his essays, a collection of aphorisms.

It is better to imitate someone's spirit *(kokoro)* than the person.

Don't work together with the unskilled; work only with the skilled. Don't associate with bad actors and don't be seen with them outside. Don't get involved with them or let them drag you down.

Remember the script well. Rehearse well and repeatedly.

Put all your energy into the dress rehearsal as if it were the first performance. From the first performance try to improve, never letting down. Act as if it were always the first performance.

Remember that if the dress rehearsal goes too well, the first performance will not be good.

Playing many roles has its advantages and disadvantages; limiting one's roles has its advantages and disadvantages.

If you do too much when you are young, you will have trouble when you are old.

As you become successful, people stop criticizing you. Try to find someone who will tell you when they have seen or heard you do something poorly.

You should always think yourself unskilled. You should think you are a bad actor your whole life. It's all over if you think, "I'm terrific."

An actor ought to think highly of himself but not be vain.

In [the *aragoto* play] *Shibaraku* the *aragoto* player should not be weak. It is a sign of weakness if he thinks, "I hope the audience likes me and supports me." Instead, he should think, "I can delight the audience simply by appearing! Look what an actor I am!" He should look down on the spectators, as if they were vermin.

Approach good and bad roles in the same way. Do not dismiss bad roles. If you slight them, they will look even worse. Focus your energy even on bad roles and let them permeate you.

Don't let audiences get tired of you, but don't let them forget you. (Cited in Ihara, *Ichikawa Danjūrō no daidai,* vol. 1, pp. 64–68; trans. G. G.)

Particularly in Edo, *kabuki* rose to an incredible level of popularity, especially among townsmen and merchants. Debates as to the value of this form of theater led to an amusing poem of 1803 by Shikitei Sanba (1776–1822), one of the most popular comic writers of his time.

Theatre-lovers think theatre-haters fools.
Theatre-haters think theatre-lovers fools.
Theatre-lovers who think theatre is about morality are fools.
Theatre haters who think theatre has no morality are fools.
Such fools know not that all morality is in theatre.
Such fools know not that all theatre is in morality.

Fools, fools, if you truly know morality and attend theatre,
You realize theatre is morality,
Ah! Theatre, thou art morality!

This too, is written by a fool,
the chief priest of the Temple of Fun.

(Gerstle, "Flowers of Edo," p. 44; *Shibai kinmōzui,* p. 478)

As the Edo period came to an end, new forces from the West changed Japanese culture more dramatically than anything that had occurred since the influx of Chinese and Korean influences almost fifteen hundred years earlier. Just as in that previous era, however, elements from the past persisted, especially in the traditional arts and the belief systems that invigorated them. The study of what came

before thus remains essential to an understanding of modern Japanese culture. No country has been more effective at preserving the old while seeking out the new, and for every skyscraper in Tokyo there is a traditional home with an alcove for a painting, calligraphy, or ceramics. Similarly, down the street from a movie theater one may find an old temple; the same young woman who is beginning to assert her equality with men may also be studying the *koto,* the tea ceremony, or flower arranging. This is one reason why many Japanese feel that no outsider can ever fully understand them, and indeed their particular mix of past and future is unique.

While the opening of Japan to the West has certainly been transformative to the island nation, it has also offered opportunities for the outer world to learn from Japan. Japanese influence abroad has been widespread, from Impressionists adapting visual elements from Japanese prints to Abstract Expressionists becoming fascinated with Zen brushwork. Sushi restaurants offer Japanese food as well as its artistic preparation, while anime has not only influenced Disney films, but also has become popular in its own right as a modern form of narrative pictorial expression. The formalities of martial arts as well as sumo wrestling have been accepted along with the sports themselves, and contemporary Japanese designers utilizing age-old attitudes toward clothes and the body have become a major influence on new fashion. Surely, the "great wave" has flowed in both directions, and this sourcebook is dedicated to a deeper understanding of the traditional Japanese artistic values that now are helping to shape not only modern Japan, but also the entire interactive world in which we live.

Suggested Further Readings in Western Languages

Note: This highly selective listing includes only books not included in the bibliography.

Okinawa and Ainu

A nearly exhaustive listing of all writings in European languages on the Ainu up to 1990 can be found in Norbert R. Adami, *Verzeichnis der europäischsprachigen Literatur über die Ainu.* Veröffentlichungen des Ostasien-Instituts der Ruhr-Universität Bochum (27), 1981, and Norbert R. Adami, "Europäischsprachiges Schrifttum zu den Ainu 1981 – 1990," *Nachrichten der Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens/Hamburg,* nos. 147/148, 1990, pp. 154 – 169.

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Some Suggested Readings by Modern Writers on the Traditional Japanese Arts

The present volume deals with traditional Japanese expressions and explanations of artistic and cultural concepts, largely explained by those involved during the creation of works of art, literature, music, calligraphy, and other forms discussed in the body of the book. Traditional Japanese concepts of the arts, of course, have had their influence on Japanese culture since the Meiji Restoration in 1868, and a number of writers during the past hundred and fifty years have attempted to articulate these older values for their own generations. Some of these works have been translated and will certainly be of interest to readers of this book. Many of the translations mentioned below have been reprinted a number of times, but these citations should permit a reader to locate one or another edition.

Japanese Fine Arts

Takenobu Yoshitarō and Kawakami Kiyoshi. *A History of the Japanese Arts, from the Japanese Original Compiled by the Imperial Museum.* Tokyo, 1909; reprinted 1913.

Long out of print and difficult to find, this large, three-volume compendium is the first concerted attempt by Japanese scholars to create a history of Japanese art for Western readers. It was first published in French for the 1900 World's Fair in Paris, then in English several years later. The cultural assumptions of Okakura Tenshin and other Meiji Japanese intellectuals behind the essay, in their historical context, make for illuminating reading.

Japanese Folk Arts

Yanagi Sōetsu [Yanagi Muneyoshi]. *The Unknown Craftsman: A Japanese Insight into Beauty.* New York and Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1972.

The essays in this classic account of Japanese pottery and other folk arts were written between 1927 and 1954, and the collection has remained the standard introductory work on the subject in English. Yanagi, himself trained in the arts of Europe, brings a comparative eye to the material he examines and particularly celebrates the work of anonymous folk artists.

Japanese Architecture

Curiously enough, it was the work of two foreign visitors to Japan which first captured the traditional beauties of Japanese architecture. Bearing witness to architecture in the Meiji period and shortly after, these three writers were closer to the traditions than those writing in the postwar period.

Morse, Edward Sylvester. *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings.* New York: Dover Publications, 1961

Morse's beautifully illustrated study was originally published in 1886.

Taut, Bruno. *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture.* Tokyo: Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai, 1936.

A famous architect in post–World War I Germany, Taut's visit to Japan brought international recognition to Japanese traditional architecture and the aesthetic assumptions behind it.

Japanese Gardens

Conder, Josiah. *Landscape Gardening in Japan.* Yokoyama: Kelly and Walsh, 1893; multiple reprints by Dover; Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2002. Reprint.

Conder, a highly talented British architect who was resident in Japan for many years, wrote this account when older concepts of garden architecture were being challenged and enlarged by newer concepts by younger Japanese garden designers in the Meiji period.

The Tea Ceremony

Okakura Tenshin [Kakuzō]. *The Book of Tea.* Tokyo and New York: Kodansha International, 1989.

Okakura, a tireless promoter of the Japanese arts during the Meiji period, eventually became the curator for Japanese art at the Boston Museum after 1905. A number of his writings, and in particular this book on the significance of the tea ceremony, made him perhaps the most widely read exponent of ideas of the traditional Japanese arts in America and Europe during the early twentieth century. The book was originally published in 1906.

Poetry and Literature

Kawabata Yasunari. *Japan the Beautiful and Myself: The 1968 Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech.* Trans. Edward Seidensticker. Tokyo and Palo Alto, Calif.: Kodansha International, 1969.

Kawabata, one of the leading novelists of modern Japan, provides a trenchant personal view of the traditional Japanese concepts of poetry and literature, relating them to the Buddhist traditions, in this effective apologia for his use of the Japanese tradition in his own work.

Tanizaki Jun'ichirō. *In Praise of Shadows.* Trans. Edward Seidensticker and Thomas J. Harper. New Haven, Conn.: Leete's Island Books, 1977.

A celebrated essay, written in 1933–1934, in which another of the great writers of Japan discusses the appeal to him of subtle Japanese artistic traditions.

General

Kuki Shūzō. "The Structure of Iki." In Hiroshi Nara, *The Structure of Detachment: The Aesthetic Vision of Kuki Shūzō.* Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004.

A well-known and much admired essay on certain aspects of the Tokugawa arts and the assumptions behind them, written in 1930.

Sato Haruo. "On *Furyū.*" In Sato Haruo, *Beautiful Town.* Trans. Francis Tenny. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996.

Sato, a leading interwar novelist and poet, describes here in his essay of 1924 some of the concepts important to Edo poetry and art.

Watsuji Tetsurō. *Climate and Culture: A Philosophical Study.* Trans. Geoffrey Bownas. New York: Greenwood Press, 1988.

Watsuji, an important philosopher in the earlier half of the twentieth century, wrote a number of important works discussing traditional concepts of the arts, some still not available in English. This study, while rather general in nature, nevertheless contains a number of influential insights concerning the traditional Japanese arts. *Climate and Culture* was written in 1929, after Watsuji's return from Europe, but not published until 1935.

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The following abbreviations are used for multivolume series.

KHT *Koten haibungaku taikei.* Tokyo: Shūeisha
NKBT *Nihon koten bungaku taikei.* Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten
NST *Nihon shisō taikei.* Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten
NKBZ *Nihon koten bungaku zenshū.* Tokyo: Shōgakkan

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