JAPAN STUDIES REVIEW

Volume XXVII
2023

Interdisciplinary Studies of Modern Japan

JAPAN STUDIES REVIEW
VOLUME TWENTY-SEVEN
2023
A publication of Florida International University
and the Southern Japan Seminar

CONTENTS

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the twenty-seventh volume of the *Japan Studies Review* (JSR), an annual peer-reviewed journal sponsored by the Asian Studies Program at Florida International University. JSR remains an outlet for the Southern Japan Seminar. The 2023 issue contains scholarship on interdisciplinary topics in traditional and contemporary Japanese studies, with a special section dedicated to translation.

This volume features four original articles. In "Shimamura's Transfigurative Gaze in *Snow Country*," Masaki Mori analyzes Kawabata Yasunari's novel by focusing on the unusual role of the protagonist as an artist-like figure whose aesthetic perception offers an alternative gaze to the occurrences and gender dynamics in the story. Next, "The Sidoti Affair: Religion, Culture, and Society in Early Eighteenth-Century Japan" by Salvatore Ciriacono examines the conflicting legacy of Palermo-born Jesuit missionary Giovanni Battista Sidoti reintroducing Christianity in Japan in the Edo period, his encounter with Arai Hakuseki, and the role of the Dutch influencing the Far East. In "Places and Place-Making in *Genji Monogatari*: The *Kiritsubo* Chapter," Marcela López Bravo approaches the narrative of *Genji Monogatari* (Tale of Genji) using place-making processes and geocriticism to study the role of place in the Heian Period. In "Zen and the Art of Detection: The Case of Janwillem van de Wetering (1931–2008)," Ben Van Overmeire, Xiao Liu, and Yuan Li explore how the detective fiction by Dutch writer Janwillem van de Wetering reflects Zen Buddhist elements like the role of "emptiness" in the style and content of this literary genre.

There are also three essays. Kazuaki Tanahashi presents an intriguing commentary on contradictory elements of Zen Buddhism in his essay titled "Zen Paradoxes," illustrated with his own calligraphy. Junko Baba, in "The Dramatic Effect of Graphic Mimetics/Onomatopoeia in Manga," reveals the multi-modal dramatizing purpose of hand-drawn elements of mimetics and onomatopoeia to enhance suspense elements in the visual narrative and grammar structure of *shonen* and *shojo* genres in popular manga. Steven Heine's "Dōgen's Approach to Uses of the Buddhist Canon in the 'Reading Sūtras' ('Kankin' 看經) Fascicle" interprets Zen master Dōgen's spiritual practice of reading or reciting sūtras through a philosophical discussion of kōan cases in relation to various Zen Buddhist canonical references to this ritual.

A special section on translation appears in this issue: "'Merging Sameness and Otherness': A New Translation of the *Cantongqi* 參同契 With Capping Phrase Commentaries" by Steven Heine with Xiaohuan Cao. Finally, there are three book reviews, including a review article by Stephen Jenkins on Brian Victoria's *Zen Terror in Pre-War Japan*; Masaki Mori's *Haruki Murakami and His Early Work*, reviewed by María Sol Echarren; and Takeshi Matsuda's *Voluntary Subordination*, reviewed by Yoneyuki Sugita.

ii

Re: Submissions, Subscriptions, and Comments

Submissions for publication, whether articles, essays, translations, or book reviews, should be made in electronic formats, preferably Word for Windows via email attachment. The editors and members of the editorial board will referee all submissions.

Annual subscriptions are $45.00 (US). Please inquire to make an electronic payment or wire transfer, or send a check payable to *Florida International University* to:

c/o Steven Heine, Professor of Religious Studies and History
Director of the Asian Studies Program
Florida International University
Modesto A. Maidique Campus, SIPA 523
Miami, FL 33199

The FIU Asian Studies Program office number is 305-348-1914. Submissions for publication should be sent to asian@fiu.edu.

Visit our website at http://asian.fiu.edu/jsr. PDF versions of past volumes are available online. All comments and feedback on the publications appearing in the *Japan Studies Review* are welcome.

ISSN: 1550-0713

Articles

SHIMAMURA'S TRANSFIGURATIVE GAZE
IN *SNOW COUNTRY*

Masaki Mori
University of Georgia

In discussing *Yukiguni* 雪國 (*Snow Country*) (1936–1948) by Kawabata Yasunari 川端康成, the role of the main character, Shimamura 島村, as an unlikely protagonist, to say the least, is mainly due to his non-committal stance to life. Some research in the last few decades has shed new light on the understanding of this character through feminist or historicized reassessments. With those analyses in mind, discussing an essential yet unexplored aspect of what he is and how he affects the text is still possible. Shimamura can be considered an artist-like figure with a consistent inclination to utilize his knowledge and rapport with the environment for carefully crafting his idealized world of beauty through internal processing. Shimamura, however, only finds his strategy too fragile to maintain his aestheticized perception in the face of external reality that does not cease changing, and he typically flees before the artifact of his making crumbles down.

An Unlikely Protagonist

Shimamura fails to impress the reader as a regular protagonist, although he is the sole male figure of importance. He appears to be little more than a dilettante who habitually indulges himself in haphazard pleasure by sensuously savoring his surroundings through sharp sensitivity without actively affecting them, "as though he were observing from the outside, always maintaining a certain detachment, without really participating in the events" (Ricca 2). He does not assert himself very much in interacting with the other characters, and no serious conflict develops between him and them to be somehow resolved in the end. He visits the hot spring resort about once a year, as the young geisha named Komako points out, only to leave for Tokyo abruptly before the interpersonal situation becomes too entangled, especially with her. In a word, he "has no intention of taking any responsibility for events occurring in the snow country" (Tawada 23). He comes to see her in a faraway location at a time of his choosing while leaving his family behind for an indefinite duration and remembering them only occasionally. This fundamental indifference to any significant relational

commitment prevents him from functioning as a central figure who initiates a series of actions to form the story's plot line as proper in the Western novel.[1]

Shimamura is not only disqualified as a protagonist in a regular sense, but his characterization is also somewhat at fault. Having inherited enough wealth to disengage him from the necessity to earn a livelihood, yet cynically regarding his unproductive lifestyle as *mui toshoku* 無爲徒食, he seeks "solace 心休め" as an intellectual (24),[2] most likely university-educated, in making self-financed publications on dance apparently as an extension of his unprofessional interest. To gain a sense of self-integrity, he sometimes takes to solitary mountain hiking for as long as a week before he comes down to a nearby human habitation like the hot spring resort village. For such strenuous outdoor exertion, his body must be stoutly constituted. When a blind masseur renders her service at his request during his second visit, however, she comments on what she feels as "soft 柔かい" and "plump just right ちやうどよい工合に太つて" as indicative of his "very good social status ずゐぶん結構なお身分" (49).[3] While likely originating in an attempt by Kawabata, who was rather slim, to differentiate himself from the figure of his novel that contains autobiographical elements,[4] this apparent contradiction regarding Shimamura's physical traits also suggests this character as forged out of the author's imagination similar to the two female counterparts.[5]

---

[1] It is well known that, in this sense, Kobayashi states that "Kawabata Yasunari has never written a single novel" (295). Cited by Nakayama (37), Seidensticker similarly points out that "we cannot recognize the beginning, the middle, and the end in a Western [Aristotelian] sense," and that "nothing is resolved" in Kawabata's "novel" (48; the bracketed insertion is mine). See also Nakayama 37–40 and Ozaki 208. All the translations from secondary Japanese sources are mine.

[2] Kawabata, *The Complete Works*, 19, 26, 89, 104. All the quotations from the original text of *Yukiguni* in Japanese are from this edition and all the translations from the original text are mine.

[3] See Mori, "Kawabata's Mirrored Poetics," 59.

[4] Nihei ascribes Shimamura's bodily traits to "the situation around 1935" of "the first mount-climbing boom" that enticed even urban people like him into physical exertion in the remote hills (44). Even so, a city dweller recently initiated into outdoor exercise is not likely to undertake a week-long, solitary hike as he does.

[5] See Mori, "Kawabata's Mirrored Poetics," 59–63.

Shimamura's presence in the novel is dually awkward as a main character who does not contribute to the plot development very much while harboring inconsistency as a literary creation. As explained elsewhere, the story's structural coherence lies on a symbolic level centering on the two female characters,[6] not on him leaving them promptly before getting so closely involved as to cause inevitable conflicts. Besides the women who are vividly presented, albeit in two different ways, this male figure pales dismally due to his non-assertive, rather withdrawn attitude.[7] For all his shortcomings as a protagonist, however, *Snow Country* is ultimately Shimamura's story because everything we read is filtered through his perception. What does not attract his attention is simply and carefully left out and not presented to the reader. In this sense of being "the observer," he is placed "at the very center of the novel" (Washburn 254).

As critics have pointed out, the novel's mode of narration is closely linked to Shimamura's viewpoint.[8] He does not narrate the story, but what the text delineates never strays far away from his consciousness, whether human beings/affairs or natural objects/phenomena. In this sense, the narrative standpoint constantly hovers between the character and the presumed narrator, which remains unidentified. Typically, after tracing Shimamura's internal thoughts, the textual attention is diverted to what lies external and yet within his perception at the next moment. It is never identified who provides the description,[9] but what is described always stays in the scope of the character's view. This is Kawabata's narratological

---

[6] See Mori, "Symbiotic Conflict," 51–72.

[7] Miyoshi points out "Shimamura's insubstantiality" while calling Komako "life-sized and full-bodied" (107, 106). Comparing Komako to the *shite* of Noh drama, Araki (334), citing Nakamura, considers her the story's protagonist. See also Nakamura 100, Ozaki 208, 204, and Washburn 250, 252, 254.

[8] See, for instance, Araki 333, Cornyetz 42, Miyoshi 107, Ochner 45, Tawada 23, among many others.

[9] Claiming that "there is basically no distinction between the narrator and the subject of the sentence," Nakayama identifies the text's "subject, protagonist" with Kawabata in terms of "the writer's self-projection [into the text] in a deeper sense" (34, 58, 63; the bracketed insertion is mine). Nakayama explains this self-projection in the form of rephrasing a short paragraph with details in one or two more paragraphs (48, 50, 52–53, 55).

invention that facilitates the infusion of his aesthetic sensitivity into the story through the unassertive protagonist without branding his authorial design too noticeably on the text.

The narratological device is applied to some of Kawabata's other fictional works, and another good example is *Yama no oto* 山の音 (*The Sound of the Mountain*), which has a protagonist endowed with a similarly keen sense of beauty. Ogata Shingo 尾形信吾, who has just turned sixty years old at the novel's onset, deals with several problems in his three-generational family in addition to unresolved issues from his past and a premonition of coming death. In these unlikely circumstances set against the dreary social reality of occupied Japan a few years after World War II, he often finds solace in aesthetic moments with artifacts and in the natural surroundings of his daily routine, and his longing for beauty, coupled with psychological implications and intricate symbolism, imparts layers of meaning to the text.

Given his social position as a company employee, however, the characterization of Shingo is somewhat awkward for a person of great aesthetic sensitivity. First, unlike Shimamura, he has such a strong sense of socially expected responsibilities and proprieties as to repress his sexual desires into distorted forms of dreams.[10] Then, he is a corporate executive, but the details of his work are not revealed, except for his daily commute by train from Kamakura to his office in Tokyo. In this respect, he is akin to similarly positioned figures in some of the post-WWII films by Ozu Yasujiro 小津安二郎. Their work routine consists of pressing their stamp on company forms for bureaucratic authorization and meeting visitors in their office or other establishments in addition to the train commute. That shows the extent of understanding of corporate life by artists like Ozu and Kawabata insofar as the settings of their respective creations require. In the case of *The Sound of the Mountain*, Kawabata's artistic sensitivity is grafted into the otherwise ordinary office worker, rendering Shingo a curious, if not impossible, literary being.

In contrast, Shimamura, the character with an artistic temperament, does not pose much difficulty in *Snow Country* because he writes about arts for the profession of his choice and does not follow a regulated schedule tied to specific office work. The fact that his full name is never mentioned, unlike Shingo's case, also renders him less individually defined, allowing him to be unburdened with social attributes. In that capacity, he takes full advantage of

---

[10] See Mori, *Decoding the Beard*, 129–149.

his temporary residency on the other side of a long tunnel to satisfy his strong disposition for beautiful objects. This mindset of his reveals itself even before his initial train ride reaches the tunnel,[11] regardless of the snowfall outside on the southern side of the mountain range, in the first mirror scene that opens up an aesthetic passage, "not just spatially but culturally and psychologically into a realm created by art" (Washburn 248), toward his emergent snow country.

His extraordinarily heightened sense of beauty is directed at whatever entices his mind, consisting of humans and natural elements, including seasonal phenomena, fauna, and flora. With humans, he is solely interested in female beauty, of which he is such a connoisseur as to notice a woman's maturing to twenty years old by just looking at her neckline. In this way, Shimamura is fascinated with Komako's physical features, even comparing her lips to "a ring of leeches 蛭の輪" (29, 81) in an oddly apt simile to indicate certain softness, smoothness, moisture, subdued luster, and slow, constant motion.[12] Her solidly physical charm is sharply contrasted to another young female character named Yoko, whose segmented, metonymical beauty is composed of two intangible emanations, glistening eyes and the "almost sorrowfully beautiful voice 悲しいほど美しい聲" (10, 47, 69, 110). The former is physically accessible to him as her special clientele, while he stays aloof from the latter for the better part of the story to preserve his perception of her rarefied beauty intact. This "male gaze that stares unilaterally at a female form is hardly unusual in Kawabata's literary works" (Tawada 16), and Yoko's image reflected on the train window in the initial mirror scene is a typical example.

Shimamura also directs a close, aestheticizing gaze at his natural environment, starting with elements of fire and snow. As the novel's title suggests, snow underlies the entire story even during warm seasons in his imagination as well as in local people's psyche. Fire adds a contrasting color to the pure white of snow, either literally in the initial and last fire-related scenes or metaphorically in the form of the dawn-dyed snow field and the

---

[11] See Nihei 40.

[12] This particular example is the closest in *Snow Country* to what Cornyetz calls "the tension between the aestheticized mediation of reality and the desire for the Real" or Kawabata's "dual fascination and abhorrence" with women that "strokes only the surface of an image that is privileged above a depth or meaning" (Cornyetz 42, 54, 43).

colored leaves under the first snow he imagines. The natural instances here, imagined or not, are symbolically associated with Komako, who has a reddish skin hue under a layer of white powder and wears red underwear kimono as geisha.

The same goes for wild plants and insects. For example, the gentler, poetically celebrated *hagi* grasses he sees on a hillside at a distance during his third visit actually turn out to be tall, tough *kaya* plants. There are many references to insects, mainly moths and butterflies, which are also symbolically linked to Komako. He minutely observes, for instance, a beautiful moth immobile on the window mesh of his inn room about the length of a woman's finger, likely hers, in intimate association, recalling his own left index finger tangibly reminiscent of her during his initial train ride scene.[13] She is also associated with silkworms evidently through her first rented room to which she brings Shimamura, because the space was once used to keep and grow the domesticated moths. Metaphorically, he feels the upstairs room somewhat precariously suspended like a cocoon. He also senses her presence "like a silkworm 蠶のやうに" that turns translucent when ready to weave thread into a cocoon as she manages her modest, private life as a new, young geisha (46). And he finds the room very clean, like silk thread, as he repeatedly has an impression of cleanness about its inhabitant throughout the text.

Shimamura's aesthetic scheme also links Yoko to nature. He overhears, for instance, her singing folksongs on two occasions with that beautiful voice he adores. Both songs refer to various singing insects along with other insects, trees, and birds, thereby associating her being with the natural surroundings as pure, simple, and unspoiled. In accordance with her name, the Leaf One, which hints at symbiotic interdependency with Komako the Horse One,[14] Yoko expresses both antipathy toward Komako and care for

---

[13] These references to *kaya* and insects do not subscribe to the "*mediated* impressions of the material world*" of "classical Japanese literature" that Cornyetz argues, because they deviate from "second nature, or acculturated nature, not nature itself" present in "premodern Japanese literature" (Cornyetz 19, 29). They are more akin to the Haiku poetry that arose in the Edo period and aimed at taking materials from everyday experience against the stagnant conventions of Tanka poetry. See also Childs (10) and Miller (A131).

[14] See Mori, "Symbiotic Conflict," 55 and 69.

her when she comes to his room on an errand. As she talks, she picks up a small moth on the floor. When he opens the window to throw away the moth she has just killed, he finds drunk Komako frolicking with a customer outside. The episode strengthens Komako's symbolic tie to a fragile insect while further suggesting Yoko's ambivalently strained relationship with her insomuch as his consciousness is involved.

In this way, Shimamura aestheticizes everything around him to his liking as long as the object, human or otherwise, is worth attracting his awareness. In his scale of beauty, human beings and those in nature are not only similarly valued but also intertwined with each other in a complex web of symbolism. In terms of excessive self-indulgence in aestheticization, he compares to another literary figure, Gustav von Aschenbach in *Death in Venice* by Thomas Mann, who was a contemporary of Kawabata. Unlike the Japanese counterpart, however, the German character fixates on one human being, the Polish boy Tadzio, whose beauty he elaborately defines through his ingrained familiarity with classical Greek culture, and he actually pays little attention to the renowned beauty of the lagoon city. Seductively alluring as Venice might appear to him at first, Aschenbach soon finds it as an unsavory place of stagnant water, corruption, and fertile soil for an infiltrating epidemic.

In contrast, not only is the Japanese esthete's gaze divided between two female figures, but it is also liberally turned to phenomena and objects in the natural surroundings. His gaze is not haphazard; rather, it is at once selective and formative. For instance, regardless of the reality of their actual beings, the two female characters are presented only through his perception in a certain binary way, with Komako as the physically available *woman* and Yoko as an intangibly pure *girl*, although they are quite close to each other in age. At the same time, he notes that they have maternal tenderness in common when they enjoy taking care of the innkeeper's small daughter on separate occasions. He also observes with close interest Yoko's tender nursing of sick Yukio "in the way of a young mother 幼い母ぶり" on the train ride (11). He thus identifies them with three *archetypes* of male desire: the prostitute, the virgin, and the mother.[15] In this aesthetic scheme, natural

---

[15] It is not that, as Yoko Tajima argues, the two female characters have "become a single, indistinguishable person in his mind...in an attempt to create his ideal woman" when Shimamura's perception makes such a marked contrast between them (28).

elements are frequently evoked to stand symbolically as aspects of the women, as pointed out above.

Shimamura is capable of aestheticizing the world around him, partly because he can afford to not work for a livelihood, is not always bound to his family life, and is basically spending his time as he likes. More importantly, he is a special kind of character with "a modernist sensibility" (Washburn 253), not only alienated and self-conscious as expected, but also receptively creative for maximizing an aesthetic effect. In a word, as the initial mirror scene illustrates with Yoko's image floating on the dark, half-transparent train window, his perceptive mind transmutes the select objects that lie outside through its own preference of beauty and superimposes the aestheticized consciousness back onto the external world in a kind of cinematic composition.[16] This process is possible thanks to the central role he plays in the aforementioned narrative style. What the reader finds in the text as a result, including nature, is not "a projection of the state of mind of the characters" but solely of his mind (Ricca 6). The snow country as a closed locus on the other side of a tunnel is an artistic construct that his mind fashions out of his perception. In this sense, as "a special character that offers the viewpoint and resembles an artist," Shimamura "tries to create a unique world with his imagination" (Mizenko 165, 160), although he is not a genuine artist who creates an artifact to be shared and appreciated by the others in society. He constructs his snow country solely for his aesthetic, "extremely self-centered" consumption through his "artistic control."[17]

That is why Shingo in *The Sound of the Mountain* is an awkward character equipped with a keen sensitivity to beauty for a regular office worker. Constantly required to attend to the necessities, demands, and problems of real life, he has aesthetic moments to console himself often, yet sporadically. Unlike Shimamura, he fails to bring about a consistent vision of a world of beauty around him. Aschenbach in *Death in Venice* is more akin to Shimamura in this respect, not only because he is also a writer with disposable time and resources for flexibly scheduling a vacation but also in terms of his capability to remake Tadzio's perceived beauty with his

---

[16] See Mori, "Kawabata's Mirrored Poetics," 52–53, and "Symbiotic Conflict," 70.
[17] Mizenko 166, Washburn 254.

thorough knowledge of classical Greek culture, especially Idealism and mythology, in spite of the boy's physical shortcomings like ill aligned teeth.[18]

Aestheticizing Perception and Textualization

Different from the German novelist figure, however, Shimamura is not an accomplished writer in his own estimate, although he is regarded as an expert in some quarters. In his youth, probably as a Humanities major at a university in Tokyo, he used to write about Japanese dance, which he had been familiar with since his childhood. However, as soon as people began to recognize him as a critic in the field, he suddenly switched his interest to Western dance.[19] He is now considered a specialist in ballet thanks to the translations of books he has published at his own expense, and he cynically thinks of his new professional reputation. Here, Shimamura "not only laughs at himself scornfully, but even recognizes that this laughter is itself a source of self-indulgent pleasure" (Tawada 14).

This rare, anecdotal reminiscence of his past indicates the centrality of writing in Shimamura's life, albeit basically for self-satisfaction. Because only a few people could afford to study at a relatively small number of universities in pre-WWII Japan, he belongs to the elitist class of intelligentsia. As such, although he does not have to make a living, he takes pride in the act of writing and publishing as those intellectuals were socially expected to avail themselves of their privileged education for the sake of modern nation-building since the Meiji era. His abrupt shift of the subject matter away from Japanese dance upon public recognition of his writings hints at latent insecurity and lack of confidence. After all, whatever his major was, he apparently did not get a Bachelor's degree for his original interest in Japanese dance that had developed out of his personal, hobby-like knowledge.

---

[18] Ozaki compares the protagonists of *Snow Country* and *Death in Venice* in relation to their respective authors.

[19] Kawabata took an opposite turn. While he was adept at incorporating contemporary Western literary ideas and movements during his early writing career, he increasingly showed interest in his native cultural and literary heritage from his middle age on, considered representative of the Japanese aesthetic tradition by the middle of the twentieth century. Washburn considers Kawabata's "conscious invocation of the classical…a sign of his modernism" (247).

His new subject, ballet, does not come from his academic specialization, either. In fact, he "knows no ballet at first hand, no real West, indeed no real Japan" (Miyoshi 108). Even so, he continues to make limited publications at his own cost, although his translations on specialized foreign topics do not attract popular attention. It is because the writing allows him some pretense to guard his pride as an author, albeit with an eroding sense of cynicism about the tenuous situation in which he has placed himself. This time, he does not have to be concerned with the authenticity of his knowledge because very few Japanese have seen its actual stage performances by Western dancers, and there are no ballet experts in Japan.[20] He can enjoy imagining the dance enactment he himself has never observed and keep on writing about it without fear of receiving well-grounded criticism. Writing thus largely satisfies his desire for self-identity as a recognized intellectual, although he is well aware of the fragile basis of that pretense. His written texts carry little significance in his own estimate.

Here, a comparison with Komako's sustained writing activities yields a revealing contrast. Her writings include diary-keeping and recording of all the novels she has read over the years. The text refers to her diaries five times. In the first of those, she surprises Shimamura by telling the exact number of days, one hundred ninety-nine, that have passed since her last encounter with him on May 23rd, thanks to her diaries. She also states that she started writing a diary when she left her hometown for Tokyo to serve as a barmaid at sixteen. She was so poor that she drew lines in pencil on a cheap blank notebook to make her diary entries. In the second instance, she declares that she will burn all her diaries before she dies, in response to his interest in seeing them. In the third, she adds to the diary's origin, disclosing its very first entry with Yukio, the sick young man on the initial train scene, who alone saw off Komako, likely at their port town's train station, on her way to Tokyo when she was sold off undoubtedly due to her family's financial difficulties.

The fourth reference is the most dramatic. When Komako accompanies the departing Shimamura at the train station of the inland spa

---

[20] Kawabata wrote two ballet-related novellas, including *Hana no warutsu* 花のワルツ (*Waltz of Flowers*) (1936–1937), about the same time as the publication of early segments of *Snow Country*, and *Maihime* 舞姫 (*The Dancing Girl*) (1950–1951), two years after he made a supposedly definitive edition of *Snow Country*. Shimamura's interest in ballet thus reflects the author's that stretched two decades over World War II.

resort, Yoko rushes in to inform her of Yukio's critical condition and pleads for her to go home, where the three of them live together, but Komako refuses to budge with the justification of seeing off a customer. Alarmed, he tries to change her mind, reminding her of Yukio as an important figure at the very beginning of her oldest diary, and he tells her "to go and write yourself on the last page of that person's life その人の命の一番終りの頁に、君を書きに行くんだ" (69). Still, she does not go back. She then tells Shimamura that she can send him all her diaries after declaring her inability to keep writing anymore and an intention to burn them away. The last of the five references is rather cursory. When he visits her room in another house to which she has moved, he is impressed to see a long series of her diaries on top of a wardrobe.

Komako's diaries are important to the story in several respects. First, indicative of her fastidious nature in keeping herself and her living conditions tidy, she has recorded what transpires every day for years. Second, she uses the diary not only to reminisce about past events but also to reject them in reaction to her present situation. Such are the cases with her plan to destroy all the diaries at the time of her death for a clean ending to her life's story and her refusal to rush back to see the dying Yukio against Shimamura's mention of the very first page of her diary. Third, the diary is mentioned intermittently, and yet quite frequently enough for the two of them to share in private as proof of intimacy.

Ultimately, Komako's writing habits reveal a crucial difference from Shimamura's with regard to their attitudes toward life. For Komako, diary-keeping, as well as ten notebooks on all the novels she has read, constitutes part of her daily routine. While she occasionally neglects it when she is busy with her work that repeats itself day after day, it is easily surmisable that the diaries "faithfully record the unfolding of her relationship with Shimamura since their first meeting" through "textualizing it" (Ueda 178–179). Her writing might be "an attempt to reduce the selected events of her own life and the imaginary experiences of fictional characters to a common denominator" or "a psychological attempt to order her life, to circumscribe her small universe, to place herself into some kind of context" (Buckstead 16–17). She neither strongly attaches herself to her writings nor places too much importance on them after all, and her diaries in particular amount to little more than what a regular diary is supposed to be, the quotidian tracing of life on paper supposedly for later rereading.

Shimamura is an occupational writer by his own choice, even though he does not place much importance on his own publications. And he does not take the trouble of recording his everyday activities, which befits his rather

dissolute, unorganized way of life. Interestingly, however, when he urges Komako to "write [herself] on the last page" of Yukio's life at his deathbed, he compares life to a kind of journal on which, regardless of actual writing or one's will, entries are mnemonically made. In this metaphorical sense, he also engages himself in the act of keeping a diary of his passing experiences, past and present. The question, then, is what would his internal diary resemble? It consists not so much of a daily factual registry as of a loosely chronological series of mediated impressions of what he considers aesthetically appealing. His inner writing in this regard rather resembles *zuihitsu* 随筆, in which the author writes down whatever items attract attention as worthy of interest in an apparently random order, as initiated in *Makura no soshi* 枕草子 (*The Pillow Book*) by Sei Shonagon 清少納言 at the end of the tenth century.

Shimamura's internal, metaphoric registry, however, differs from the classical format of *zuihitsu* in one crucial respect. It is not simply selective of unrelated objects on the basis of his interest but consistently *re*-constructive with his criteria of beauty for a coherent worldview. For instance, in addition to the impression of Komako's physical cleanness, he is consistently inclined to view her way of life as tragically fragile and exquisitely pure all the more for her "acts of futility 徒勞" or long-term unrequited commitments that apparently do not yield any positive effects on herself (37, 51, 60), such as becoming a geisha bound by a multi-year contract for the sake of paying for Yukio's medical bills. He also cites as another example her habit of writing down the basic information in notebooks, such as the characters' names of all the novels she has read over the years. She cannot afford to purchase books as she likes. As a result, the range of books accessible to her, either left over by customers or borrowed from colleagues, is limited, and the qualities are compromised, and yet she reads the novels avidly and records their bare facts. Shimamura bluntly calls this diligent writing habit of hers, which runs parallel to keeping her diary, a futile act. She promptly, yet nonchalantly agrees, but this does not necessarily mean that the writing habits are entirely meaningless for her. Yoko's metonymically segmented beauty of glimmering eyes and especially the clear, beautiful voice that sounds "almost sorrowful" also exemplifies his consistent mode of mental registration.

Transfigurative aestheticization is inherent in Shimamura's life. When he reads a guidebook for his self-admittedly useless hobby of hiking, for instance, the publication "rather gave his imagination a free rein 反つて空想を自由にした" about roaming the local mountains precisely because of the

terse, practical, non-descriptive information the book provides, bringing about a sense of "unrealistic charm 非現實的な魅力" (89). In fact, he tends to get absent-minded at any moment, even when he is engaged in physical hiking "while viewing the mountains 山を眺めながら" (48). Similarly, he takes advantage of an old book about the snowy region's customs not simply for information but for pleasure to visualize the beauty of *chijimi* linen clothes turning vermillion at sunrise while spread out and bleached on deep snow, although he never chooses to visit the place in the midst of winter. The imagined scene associates Komako with snow, as pointed out above. Because of the same book, he also feels more attached to *chijimi* when he thinks of the laborious handiwork that young girls of Yoko's age in the old days put into weaving the special cloth during the long winter (122–124), thereby sensuously associating *chijimi* he wears for a sense of coolness in summer with the two women in the snow country. In such cases involving texts, he "internalizes the awareness of reality through reading, critiquing and modifying what has already been written...as his own proper experiences" (Ueda 178).

Through this aesthetic signification of perceived objects into a coherent meaning of internal registry, his mind symbolically associates Komako with seasonally fleeting natural objects, including snow, in terms of fragile beauty and brevity of being. That is also why she is often implicitly compared to dying insects in the fall, especially moths, as well as to the silkworm that spins the delicate, precious thread out of its own short life. The wild *kaya* bush that looks to him like the delicate *hagi* plant is another variation. These cases of symbolization are neither coincidental nor unrelated to one another. On the contrary, they are clustered around Shimamura's perception of Komako, internally organized to induce a desired, consistent sense of ephemeral feminine beauty. The process extends to his contact with the entire surroundings, selecting on his criteria of beauty what is worth preserving in sensuously flowing mnemonic registry. In this sense, it can be said that the text of the novel *Snow Country,* in the form of the Shimamura-centered narration, basically results from tracing his internal counterpart of a metaphorical diary.

Therefore, apart from its actuality, insomuch as his perception is involved, the relatively closed space of a hot spring locale turns out to be his artistic construct, rendered more workable as conveniently isolated on the other side of a long tunnel, far away from the bustling city where he has a family life and other responsibilities. Released awhile from such social obligations with which his quite bohemian temperament is innately

incompatible, he can perceptively re-create the place to his liking. As an artifact of this nature, it has to remain "static" (Ozaki 207). Thus, he always senses the coolness of snow in the village even during warm months while away in the city, when the two women, especially Komako, are associated with snow and *chijimi* for color, coolness, soft touch, fragility, cleanness, and beauty. In this respect, his short trip to a few nearby towns geographically extends his snow country not only in physical proximity but for the thematic continuity of an aestheticized plane, for those towns used to produce the special fabric woven with nimble hands of young maidens, he imagines, like Yoko.

In the context of this pervasive aestheticizing, his predilection for ballet assumes crucial significance. To Shimamura, the appeal of ballet resides in the very fact that it is not possible to view the actual performances by Western dancers on Japanese soil in his contemporaneity, as he can visualize them as he likes, through "distanced representations" of imported publications he has collected (Cornyetz 42). He "appreciates the illusions in which his own fancy dances 彼自身の空想が踊る幻影を鑑賞してゐる," phrasing the pleasure as "an ultimate empty theory 机上の空論" and "heavenly poetry 天國の詩" (24). He acknowledges the uselessness of his self-indulgence by calling his illusion "pathetic 哀れな" (105). By his own cynical admission, his "research 研究" (24) on ballet apparently amounts to little more than a manifestation of escapism from the reality in which he is incapable of making any meaningful contribution to academia or society in general.

At the same time, his highly selective fantasizing of Western dance epitomizes his aesthetic strategy for an artistic undertaking. Based on the books and images that he has imported and owns, what he imagines cannot possibly be a very authentic rendition. But it is not merely imitative of, or even inferior to the original he does not observe. Rather, his imagination likely brings forth a rarefied, ethereal version that is as unrealistically beautiful as any actual performance could present. Also, terms like "theory," "poetry," and "research" suggest how metaphorical writing underlies his mental reconstruction of a targeted object. In a word, his imagined ballet is his creation akin to his transfigured snow country that includes Komako and Yoko, and the "futile action" that he "uses to describe Komako's life…could very well apply to his own" case in the sense that it induces artifacts of beauty (Washburn 255).

Artistic Constructs in the Face of Change

Accordingly, he poses an apt question to himself, whether he "might have been treating [Komako] like Western dance 西洋舞踏扱ひにしてゐたのかもしれない" or with "an unrealistic view 非現實的な見方" like Yoko's floating image on the train window (25, 23). It is inferable, then, that his perception mediated through internal textualization presents to the reader the two women and the snow country as his artistic constructs rendered more beautiful than they objectively are, as "what they should or could be, which surpasses that which they are" through "reordering the world as it ought to be, or the movement to reconstruct the real for greater aesthetical pleasure" (Cornyetz 34). This reconstruction of an external image might seem processed automatically, and Shimamura might look like "eras[ing] himself from the representation" in "a dialectic of non-being in being" (Cornyetz 46, 48), but his subjectivity still manifests itself in the very act of internal, coherent, systematized textualization for his artistic enterprise.

That is certainly the case with Komako. She is the main reason Shimamura repeatedly comes back to the hot spring resort, and he is attracted to her not only for sensuality but also because of the delicate, fleeting beauty he sees in her, as discussed above. Against his expectation, however, he is sometimes surprised to find signs of her underlying vitality and dynamism, physical as well as mental. For instance, her reddish skin color under the layer of geisha's white powder hints at her fundamentally healthy constitution and emotional life. Those signs of her robust life force are always there for him to observe, but he chooses not to take notice of them. If he cannot ignore them, he would rather adjust them to his aesthetic scheming. Although he is greatly impressed by the sheer force of sincerity inherent in her *shamisen* performance, for example, he pities her for her lack of an able master to learn from or the right audience that can appreciate her musical skills, relegating her solitary efforts and achievement to another example of her futile acts that enhance her hapless beauty. He is thus prone not to recognize the strength inherent in her being and way of life, and he fails to understand it positively. "He is able to relax with Komako only when she" does not go against "the image he has created," and he "is unable to love Komako for the person she is" (Tajima 41, 32). When she "reveals her true self," he not so much "reacts with fear or distaste" as recoils from accepting or confronting it (Tajima 32). If we come back to the plant symbolism, the tough *kaya* plants, not the delicate *hagi* as he mistakenly believes them to be, rightly stand for what she really is in this sense after all.

The same goes for the hot spring resort village with socioeconomic implications. Shimamura's mind aestheticizes the rural locality, turning it into an essentially static snow country of his making. Indeed, to critics who consider the text "a reflection of [Kawabata's] desire...to depict the beauty of old Japan" or "a sentimental longing or nostalgia on the part of social elites whose order is threatened by cultural change," *Snow Country* must be construed as the author's attempt to capture and freeze the beauty of the place, easily identifiable as Echigo Yuzawa in Niigata Prefecture, before it lost its charm to modernization as he did with one of his later novels, *Koto* 古都 (*The Old Capital*) (1962), about Kyoto.[21]

But the text actually indicates the changing reality that does not necessarily accommodate Shimamura's scheme. The remote village was hard to reach before the train line arrived a few years ago.[22] With passage from and to Tokyo greatly facilitated, many tourists have begun to visit the place all year around, not only for the spa but also to enjoy seasonal pastimes, such as appreciation of new leaves in spring and colored ones in fall, mountain climbing in summer, and skiing in wintertime. In this context, Masato Nihei argues that the text "shows abundant interaction with the cultural, social context" of its initial magazine publication in the mid-1930s. He specifically considers the rising popularity of skiing and mountain hiking in the actual region with tourists from Tokyo around 1935 essential to the creation of the story as "a kind of novel of travel and customs 一種の紀行的風俗小説," and he thinks that the popularity started the transformation of the modeled village into a new "skiing resort" in the text as well as in reality (Nihei 41, 42–43).

As a result, certain urban amenities are now available, such as new restaurants and taxis that transport visitors about two kilometers between hotels and the train station. The cocoon warehouse, which also functions as a movie theater in the evening, suggests a thriving silk industry. In short, not exactly "symbolic of pre-industrialized Japan" as Kawabata's "purified domain" of "unchanging, culturally particular...aestheticized past" anymore

---

[21] Ochner 45, Washburn 247. Cornyetz calls Kawabata's aestheticism "a reactionary modernism" as a manifestation of the fascist political ethos of Japan leading up to World War II and even after it (35).

[22] According to Tawada (22), the long tunnel at the novel's onset was actually completed in 1931, four years before the first installment of *Snow Country* was published in 1935.

(Cornyetz 19, 35, 36),[23] the village "impoverished" shortly before has turned economically better off thanks to the train system, which in turn has helped the resort village to attract more professionals of entertaining arts like Komako who find their work there "financially lucrative" (Tawada 22, 23). It is not that "even the historical context is erased" in this snow country as "a device that Kawabata made" to "fix the image of disappearing 'beautiful Japan'" as Kōjin Karatani argues (244–246).[24]

On the one hand, Shimamura makes use of certain modern conveniences like the taxi and especially the train by means of which he easily comes and goes at his pleasure. On the other hand, he keeps a psychological distance from certain changes of modernity brought on the place. For instance, he does not go and see any movies in the warehouse, probably because the films come to the countryside months after they premiered in large cities, and he might have already seen them. More importantly, while he interacts with select local people like the two women and the blind masseur, he does not associate himself with other visitors from the city at all, including the skiers who take advantage of one of Japan's first skiing facilities easily accessible from Tokyo. They are short-time tourists, unlike him. They tend to have drinking parties in the evening, for which the geisha are in high demand. Often drunk, Komako occupies herself with going from one party to another for her business engagements. Thus, tourists' presence with noisy parties not only reduces his chances to see her but also mars the delicate environment he needs to fashion out his aestheticized world. Shimamura's basic attitude toward the ongoing changes that affect the village

---

[23] Childs shares this view by stating that "the *Yukiguni* is beautifully clean and unpolluted, just as Japanese culture was once, in Kawabata's view, unpolluted by foreign ideas from the West" (9). See also Washburn 248.

[24] It is of some interest to note that both Cornyetz and Karatani respectively historicize the novel in the context of political, ideological milieux of that time. Cornyetz considers Kawabata's traditionalist aesthetic stance affiliated with the fascism's opted return to the supposedly untainted past. Karatani ascribes the "revival" of certain established writers like Kawabata, around 1935 when the first segment of *Snow Country* was published, to "the collapse of Marxism" brought about by heavy governmental crackdowns, which also meant at once "releasing from 'the West'" and "overcoming the modernity" in the Japanese context (244). Still, Nihei critiques their kind of interpretation of "return to Japanese *tradition*" (39, emphasis in the original).

is indifference, if not outright antipathy, while he takes new amenities for granted. He disregards what goes against his undertaking or does not contribute to it, just as he does with his select, reconfigured perception of Komako.

In socioeconomic dynamics, change inevitably takes place, and the village becomes increasingly commercialized with its economy closely tied to the influx of visitors from elsewhere, especially the Tokyo area. More importantly, the two female characters undergo their vicissitude. Yoko cannot stay virginally and ethereally pure and aloof even in Shimamura's transfigurative perception. Toward the end, she has direct contact with him when she comes to his room alone with a message from Komako, and she even entertains the idea of accompanying him to Tokyo. In the concluding scene of the warehouse on fire, he witnesses how her calf convulsed when she falls from a higher floor, which is practically the novel's only direct reference to her kinetic physicality. At the moment, he feels "Yoko's internal life transform 葉子の内生命が變形する" (139), as Yoko's being undergoes a fundamental change.

Komako, too, does not remain to be "a static figure" even through Shimamura's self-serving perception (Washburn 248). Her observed passing into her twenties is one sign of the change that she undergoes. As the story unfolds, she reveals her true passionate nature when she gets increasingly attached to him, although both of them are fully aware of the fine yet definite line that they should not cross between (apprentice) geisha and her client from the very beginning of their relationship. Declaring that "only women can really love ほんたうに人を好きになれるのは、もう女だけなんです (104)," she often comes to see him against her own best judgment during his third visit. He realizes that "he has to leave now 最早ここを去らねばならぬ" (125), presumably for good because her emotional life turns out more than what he can handle, even for a man with a reduced sense of social obligations. He "never stares back at her when she does at him" because "his stare...presupposes the object not staring at him" (Ueda 177). Her frequent and intense stare thus unsettles him. In other words, she growingly exhibits "ordinary reality and a substantial sense of existence that impedes" his artistic pursuit in the end (Mizenko 165–166).

Gender Dynamics

Regarding the gender relationship, Yoko Tajima argues that this novel is indicative of how the male-dominated society molds women into the socially expected roles of submission and that Shimamura is a typical

example of a man who exploits women for his pleasure with little compunction.[25] I assume that the imbalanced power dynamics between genders are understood in the context of the socioeconomic reality of 1930s Japan. On the other hand, Yuka Hirai thinks, in accordance with my position, that Shimamura increasingly recognizes "otherness" in the women (92). This idea negates Karatani's assertion, along with his notion of the culturally fossilized snow country, that Shimamura "never meets 'others'" because "he is not interested in anything other than the images reflected on his consciousness" (243). At the same time, Hirai's claim about the twenty-first-century readers that the text "demands their reconsideration" of simply tracing Shimamura's perception of women "as objects of aesthetic appreciation and egotistical sexual interest" with a sense of guilt is overstretched. Such a morally forced reconsideration is obviously not "the author's strategy" (Hirai 95). Keeping a critical distance from the male character, readers in the new century, regardless of gender, likely do not identify with him. The appreciation of the novel hinges on the extent to which, aware of his personal traits and sociohistorical limitations, they can partake of his aesthetic experiences without entirely empathizing with him.

The Fire Scene as an Aesthetic Ending
        With the two women's changes urgent on his mind, Shimamura restructures the fire scene into an internally processed climax. The novel's ending does not give a clear closure on the surface, because the text does not have a regular plot that should resolve complications centering on conflicts among characters at its finale. The apparent rivalry between Yoko and Komako remains undissolved and unexplained, while Shimamura is not committed to either of them to the end. The story's resolution comes only through his artistically restructuring perception, and for his own benefit alone. He imagines himself lifted into the air, consumed and purged by two kinds of fire coming from opposite directions, the celestial, starry cold fire of stardust streaming down from the Milky Way and the real flames flaring up from the burning warehouse. As I argued elsewhere,[26] the former fire symbolically magnifies Yoko's ethereal, intangible beauty, while the second

---

[25] In the author's fiction-making, Kazuko Saegusa finds "the essence of Kawataba's literature" in the way "the man [in a higher position] has his own way while being aware of hurting the woman [in a lower status]" (53).
[26] Mori, "Symbiotic Conflict," 69–71.

stands for Komako's physical beauty and overflowingly ardent passion. The male character's imagination makes it possible for him to feel cleansed at the mid-air meeting point of the two kinds of fire.

The self-centeredness of this modernist antihero is obvious when he pursues his interest in beauty, or more precisely, the creation of imagined beauty to his liking even in the critical situation of a bursting fire that endangers Yoko's being and makes Komako reckless for her rescue. In the midst of the disastrous commotion, Shimamura finds himself entranced to view the extraordinarily clear, enormous Milky Way stretching fully across the night sky "as if embracing the earth 大地を抱かうとして" (135), and he feels lifted up toward it. This Milky Way reminds him of the one that Matsuo Basho 松尾芭蕉 "saw...over the rough sea 荒海の上に見た" in one of his famous poems (133).

There is a crucial difference, however, between the founder of Haiku poetry and Kawabata's character. Basho's poetics in creating poetry is to be one with the object by erasing the dichotomy between one's subjectivity and external object,[27] like the Keatsian Negative Capability. Similarly, a typical Japanese reading of that particular Haiku poem does not find any assertion of subjectivity confronting the immense Milky Way, whether the subject acknowledges one's paltriness or nature's sublimity as is the case with a typical Western interpretation. The viewing subject exists only as a part of nature that includes the impressive Milky Way.[28]

In contrast, Shimamura's Milky Way directly accommodates his interpretation not only for beauty of enormity but also for sexual connotations of "frightening voluptuousness 恐ろしい艶めかしさ" with which it *appears* to embrace the earth and *him* and "flow down rustling like fine particles into Shimamura さあと音を立てて…島村のなかへ流れ落ちる" at the very end

---

[27] Basho says: "Your poetry issues of its own accord when you and the object have become one...if your feeling is not natural – if the object and yourself are separate – then your poetry is not true poetry but merely your subjective counterfeit." See Yuasa (33).

[28] Discussing nature in this novel, Childs argues that traditional East Asian landscape art "invariably depicts human beings blending in as part of the scene," in contrast to its Western counterpart that "usually takes the perspective of the human being looking on from the outside" (3).

(133, 140).[29] In his case, rather than having "[t]he coming together of human and nature" (Cornyetz 57) or "unity with nature...without distinction between subject and object" (Mizenko 161), the imaginative subject locates itself solidly at the center of what is taking place, in the face of an overwhelming natural phenomenon and a pressing human disaster to utilize the entire scene for maximal aesthetic pleasure through internal metaphorical registering. While the self-awareness of individuality sharply demarcated from the external has been hastily grafted from the West onto the Japanese psyche in the process of modernization since the Meiji Period, this relentless pursuit of beauty by way of internal appropriation of perceived objects is peculiar to him.

The emotion-fraught scene at the end complicates the web of relationships among the three main characters instead of bringing a clear resolution to it. The fire scene can be regarded as conclusive of the novel only in the sense that it offers a heightened aesthetic moment culminating from the rest of the novel. That aestheticization is only possible through Shimamura's internal act of rewriting his perception. While the contrastingly attractive female characters are foregrounded throughout the text, it is his internal remodification that renders them so remarkable for their respective beauty. Shimamura proves himself to be the novel's protagonist in the final scene, too, although he characteristically does not take any action when he stands aback and watches the fire scene from behind the crowd.

For his scheme, he does not care to understand the actuality of the location of his desire. The resort village is relevant to him insomuch as the place provides him with materials to construct his aestheticized world, and he "never visits the Snow Country in a true sense" (Ueda 178). When Komako challenges him to come to the village in the midst of winter when the snowstorm is the fiercest, he cannot answer. Unlike her and other local residents who are inured to endure the long, cold months, Shimamura is there as a passing visitor, promptly leaving the place in the end before the heavily snow-laden season sets in. Thus, he does not even undergo a symbolic death for spiritual regeneration in the cycle of nature. Instead, in the final scene, he prefers a last moment to enjoy a mere illusion of aesthetic cleansing by positioning himself in the air to be consumed/purified by two sorts of fire

---

[29] Saeki describes nature in this scene as "evoking sexual ecstasy for...a sense of unity while being...an overwhelming, separate entity" (16). See also Araki (348).

competing/complementing from opposite directions, which is possible only through the internal rewriting of his own perception, before he, as usual, flees the reality he cannot deal with or would not dare to.

He fails as an artist because he does not produce artifacts to be shared with anyone else in the story. His artistic talent is all used up for his own consumption. It is Kawabata, the author, who enables the novel's reader to take part in Shimamura's self-centered yet exquisite world of beauty. The text stands on the tenuous dynamics of a tension between the protagonist's internal drive to create an aesthetic world of his artistic manipulation and the changing reality, both human and socioeconomic, that eludes the manipulation and threatens to undermine its foundation on the other side of a long tunnel.

Works Cited

Araki, James T. "Kawabata and His *Snow Country*." *The Centennial Review* 13, no. 4 (1969): 331–349.

Buckstead, Richard C. *Kawabata and the Divided Self*. Taipei: China Printing, 1972.

Childs, Iraphne R. W. "Japanese Perception of Nature in the Novel *Snow Country*." *Journal of Cultural Geography* 11, no. 2 (1991): 1–19.

Cornyetz, Nina. *The Ethics of Aesthetics in Japanese Cinema and Literature: Polygraphic Desire*. Routledge: New York, 2007.

Hirai, Yuka 平井裕香. "Voices Echoing in the Mirror: The Impossibility of Response to Female Voices in Kawabata Yasunari's *Snow Country* 鏡の中で響く声 川端康成『雪国』が求める女への応答の未完性." *Shōwa Bungaku Kenkyū* 昭和文学研究 (*Showa Literary Studies*) 79 (2019): 85–98.

Karatani, Kōjin 柄谷行人. *Shūen wo megutte* 終焉をめぐって (*Concerning the End*). Kōdansha gakujutsu bunko 講談社学術文庫 (Kōdansha Academic Books). Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1995.

Kawabata, Yasunari 川端康成. *Kawabata Yasunari zenshū dai jukkan* 川端康成全集第十巻 (*The Complete Works of Kawabata Yasunari Vol. 10*). Tokyo: Shinchōsha 新潮社, 1980.

Kobayashi, Hideo 小林秀雄. *Bungei hyōron ge* 文芸評論 下 (Literary Criticism II). Chikuma sōsho 筑摩叢書 210 (Chikuma Books 210). Tokyo: Chikuma shobō 筑摩書房, 1974.

Miller, Mara. "Aesthetics as Investigation of Self, Subject, and Ethical Agency in Postwar Trauma in Kawabata's *The Sound of the Mountain*." *Philosophy and Literature* 39.1A (2015): A122–A141.

Miyoshi, Masao. *Accomplices of Silence: The Modern Japanese Novel*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974.

Mizenko, Matthew マシュウ・ミゼンコ. "*Kawabata bungaku ni okeru 'kagami'* 川端文学における「鏡」('Mirrors' in Kawabata's Literature)." *Gunzō Nihon no sakka* 群像日本の作家 13 (*A Group of Japanese Writers 13*). Tokyo: Shōgakukan 小学館, 1991. 158–166.

Mori, Masaki. "Decoding the Beard: A Dream-Interpretation of Kawabata's *The Sound of the Mountain*." *The Comparatist* 18 (1994): 129–149.

----------. "Kawabata's Mirrored Poetics." *Japan Studies Review* 8 (2004): 51–68.

----------. "Symbiotic Conflict in *Snow Country*." *Japan Studies Review* 11 (2007): 51–72.

Nakamura, Mitsuo 中村光夫. *Ronkō Kawabata Yasunari* ＜論考＞川端康成 (Thoughts on Kawabata Yasunari). Tokyo: Chikuma shobō 筑摩書房, 1978.

Nakayama, Masahiko 中山眞彦. "*Kyūsai toshite no bungaku:* Yukiguni *to sono futsuyaku ni tsuite* 救済としての文学―『雪国』とその仏訳について (Literature as a Salvation: On *Snow Country* and its French Translations)." *Gendai bungaku* 現代文学 (Modern Literature) 29 (1984): 32–64.

Nihei, Masato 仁平政人. "*'Ryokō' suru kotoba, 'yama aruki' suru karada: Kawabata Yasunari* Yukiguni *ron josetsu* 「旅行」する言葉、「山歩き」する身体―川端康成『雪国』論序説 (The Words That 'Travel,' the Body That 'Hikes Mountains': A Preliminary Discussion on Kawabata Yasunari's *Snow Country*)." *Nihon bungaku* 日本文学 (Japanese Literature) 66, no. 6 (2017): 39–50.

Ochner, Nobuko. "Two Snow Countries: Transforming Kawabata's Novel into Film." Ed. Valerie Wayne and Cornelia Moore. *Translations/Transformations: Gender and Culture in Film and Literature East and West*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i and the East-West Center, 1993. 45–52.

Ozaki, Jun 小崎順. "Yukiguni *to* Venusu ni shisu 『雪国』と『ヴェニスに死す』(*Snow Country* and *Death in Venice*)." *Hokkaidō daigaku gengo bunkabu kiyō* 北海道大学言語文化部紀要 (Proceedings of the Faculty

of Languages and Cultures at Hokkaido University) 18 (1990): 210–
199.

Ricca, Laura. "The Aesthetics and Poetics of the Image in Japanese Culture.
An Example from the Literary Tradition: *Yukiguni* [Snow Country]."
Proceedings 1, no. 9 (2017): 1–10, doi:10.3390/proceedings
1091087.

Saegusa, Kazuko 三枝和子. "*Kawabata no gōman* 川端の傲慢 (Kawabata's
arrogance)." *Yuriika* ユリイカ 21, no. 3 (1989): 50–57.

Saeki, Shōichi 佐伯彰一. "Shirarezaru kami wo motomete: kindai nihonin
ni totte no shizen 知られざる神を索めて 近代日本人にとっての自然 (In
Search of an Unknown God: Nature for the Modern Japanese)."
Kokubungaku: kaishaku to kyōzai no kenkyū 国文学 解釈と教材の研
究 17, no. 7 (1972): 10–18.

Seidensticker, Edward G. "Kawabata Yasunari." *Bungei dokuhon: Kawabata
Yasunari* 文芸読本 川端康成 (A Literary Guidebook to Kawabata
Yasunari). Tokyo: Kawade shobō, 1962, 43–53.

Tajima, Yoko. "A Reading of *Snow Country* from Komako's Point of View."
Trans. Donna George Storey. *U.S.–Japan Women's Journal* 4
(1993): 26–48.

Tawada, Yoko. "Dandelions Dancing in the Snow." Trans. Michael
Bourdaghs. *Japan Forum* 30, no. 1 (2018): 12–25,
doi.org/10.1080/09555803.2017.1307253.

Ueda, Wataru 上田渡. "*Yukiguni—monogatari no kōzo-ka wo koete* 『雪国』
―物語の構造化をこえて (*Snow Country*: Beyond the Structuralizing
of the Story)." *Kaishaku to kanshō bessatsu: Kawabata Yasunari
Yukiguni 60 shūnen* 解釈と鑑賞別冊 川端康成「雪国」６０周年 (1998):
174–180.

Washburn, Dennis C. *The Dilemma of the Modern in Japanese Fiction*. New
Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.

Yuasa, Nobuyuki. "Introduction." *The Narrow Road to the Deep North and
Other Travel Sketches* by Matsuo Bashō. London: Penguin Books,
1966. 9–49.

THE SIDOTI AFFAIR:
RELIGION, CULTURE, AND SOCIETY IN
EARLY EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY JAPAN[1]

Salvatore Ciriacono
University of Padua

In recent years, Italian and Japanese historians have shown renewed interest in the significance of the events surrounding the mission to Japan in the early eighteenth century of the Palermo-born Jesuit Giovanni Battista Sidoti.[2] Partly, this may be linked to the rediscovery of the missionary's body in what was the home of the European Christian community in Edo during the Tokugawa period, which has caused Japanese historians to return to the issue of Japan's policy at the time with regard to these foreign communities. Within the world of Catholicism, renewed interest in this devout missionary has come together with moves for his beatification: a process that requires the compilation of an exhaustive dossier that examines the Jesuit's legacy and work.

One clear aspect of the whole affair, however, is its bearing on the cross-culture debate, which figures so largely in historiography throughout the world. The interest of such research seems to extend beyond the circles of faithful Catholics, given that Sidoti's attempts to reintroduce Christianity to Japan (after a long period of religious persecution that began in the first decades of the seventeenth century) occurred at a critical period in Japanese history. Also, a major figure in that period was the enigmatic and fascinating Arai Hakuseki, active at the time when the shogun Tokugawa Yoshimune was pursuing a program of important cultural reforms.

Having made a clandestine landing on the shores of Japan, Sidoti was imprisoned and subjected to long interrogation in order to discover the real purpose of his presence in the country; as will be discussed later, those interrogations, for a number of reasons, were carried out by Hakuseki and

---

[2] Sidoti and not "Sidotti," as has been established by documentary evidence gathered by one of the most informed of Sidoti's biographers, Mario Torcivia, *Giovanni Battista Sidoti (Palermo 22 agosto 1667 – Tokyo 27 novembre 1715): Missionario e martire in Giappone* (Palermo: Rubbettino, 2017).

thus raise the issue of how one is to interpret this figure of key cultural importance in the Japan of the day. His career reveals him to have been a man of broad interests ("an encyclopaedist") but also "an administrative reformer in advance of his age [involved in matters relating to] coinage, foreign trade, taxation, diplomatic protocols, justice, the samurai code and 'benevolent government.'"[3]

The encounter between a Catholic missionary and a figure of some originality within the Japanese culture of the day can be read in various ways, with at least three possible approaches to an interpretation. The first approach could focus on an issue of growing importance in contemporary historiography: how it reflects the "translation" of cultures and knowledge.[4] As noted by Francesco Mazzei, this encounter between a European cleric and a Japanese intellectual can be taken as a "case study of extraordinary significance."[5] The period of interaction and mutual incomprehension between the two cultures is significant within the broader context of developments in Japanese culture.

A second approach might focus on the outlook of a devout Catholic at this precise moment in history: how his training as a priest, his membership of the Jesuit order – and the policies followed by the Roman Curia of the day – all affected his personal history. And the third possible approach might focus on the role of the Dutch in the "transfer" of European culture to the Far

---

[3] Joyce Ackroyd, trans., *Told Round a Brushwood Fire: The Autobiography of Arai Hakuseki* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), 1.

[4] See, following upon many studies of the issue, Peter Burke, "Translating Knowledge, Translating Cultures," in Michael North, ed., *Kultureller Austauch. Bilanz und Perspektiven der Frühneuzeitforschung* (Cologne, Germany: Böhlau Verlag, 2009), 69–77. Peter Burschel and Sünne Juterczenka, eds., *Begegnen, Aneigen, Vermessen: Europäische Expansion als Globale Interaktion* (Stuttgart, Germany: F. Steiner Verlag, 2016): As suggested by Burschel and Juterczenka "engaging with, acquiring, measuring" seem good parameters for assessing the significance of such encounters, which remain a fascinating and problematic issue about Japan.

[5] Franco Mazzei, "Il Giappone e i gesuiti al loro primo incontro," in Luisa Bienati and Matilde Mastrangelo, eds., *Un'isola in Levante: Saggi sul Giappone in onore di Adriana Boscaro* (Napoli: Scriptaweb, 2010). Citing John Witney Hall, Mazzei observes that the case of Japan "enables those engaged in comparative cultural studies to analyze social phenomena involving complex variables as if under laboratory conditions" (217).

East, a role they had been playing for centuries. Their part in this story is far from secondary, given that they provided the Japanese authorities with translations of materials, even if they had no direct responsibility for Sidoti's imprisonment and interrogation. Nevertheless, the incident reflects a cultural context that had existed for some time.

G.B. Sidoti and Arai Hakuseki: A Clash of Cultures

As already observed, the principal aspect of this whole incident is the encounter between G.B. Sidoti and Arai Hakuseki, even if the dramatic conclusion of the whole affair - the priest's imprisonment and subsequent death – went somewhat beyond the field of cultural interaction.

The key aspect of the incident for modern historians is undoubtedly Hakuseki's interrogation of the imprisoned priest, and yet there is still some debate as to how important a light this whole affair casts upon the religious, scientific, and political culture of Japan at the time. In other words, historians have yet to determine what importance was given at the time to this interrogation of a priest who, after landing on a deserted beach on a small island in the far south of the Japanese archipelago, had disguised himself as a samurai to gain direct access to the shōgun of the day, Ienobu Tokugawa (to whom Hakuseki was head counselor).[6] Why, it is asked, after his capture on October 10, 1708, and the subsequent interrogation by the Nagasaki authorities responsible for that area, was it decided to send this law-breaking foreigner many miles away to the city of Edo? And, why did the shōgun appoint someone with the political and intellectual prestige of Hakuseki to interrogate a prisoner whose disguise suggested that he was some sort of adventurer and no representative of a foreign power or state?

As we know, after the decrees of the shogunate in the first decades of the seventeenth century, Japan had broken all relations with Christian powers – in particular with Spain and Portugal, which were considered a latent threat to the stability of the state and, above all, to the authority of the shōgun. Historians once stressed how the regime of the shogunate would result in what has been described as the "closure" of the country. That closure was then improperly referred to as *sakoku*, following the definition of the country's policies by Englebert Kaempfer,[7] and was set in contrast to the

---

[6] Torcivia, *Giovanni Battista Sidoti*, 72.

[7] Fuyuko Matsukata "Contacting Japan East India Company Letters to the Shogun", in Adam Clulow-Tristan Mostert eds., *The Dutch and English East India Companies. Diplomacy, Trade and Violence in Early Modern Asia*

"opening outwards" (*kaikoku*) which was said to date from the beginning of the eighteenth century and the shogunate of Yoshimune Tokugawa, who is credited with a more outward-looking foreign policy (a shift which has even been seen as cyclical within the political traditions of Japan). More recent interpretations have replaced this notion of absolute closure with a less rigid one that more fully reflects the complex political reality of the day. There is still no doubt that, from a religious point of view, the Tokugawa dynasty saw the increasing number of Christian conversions during the sixteenth century as a threat to their government, which had been established after epic and bloody conflicts.

In the sixteenth century, the so-called "Christian century" in Japan, after the arrival of Francis Zavier in 1549, witnessed the number of converts rise to an estimated 150,000 with around 200 Christian churches and the presence of 83 Jesuit priests.[8] It was Yeiasu Tokugawa (in many ways, the

---

(Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018), 79–98; Tashiro and Downing Videen, "Foreign Relations during the Edo Period: Sakoku Reexamined," 290; Tashiro Kazui and Susan Downing Videen, "Foreign Relations during the Edo Period: Sakoku Reexamined," *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 8/2 (1982), 283–306; Robert K. Sakai, "The Satsuma – Ryūkyū Trade and the Tokugawa Seclusion Policy," *Journal of Asian Studies* 23 (1964), 391–403; Derek Massarella, *A World Elsewhere. Europe's Encounter With Japan in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 329–369; Adam Clulow, *The Company and the Shogun: The Dutch Encounter with Tokugawa Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013); "Die Edikte zur Regulierung des Verkehrs mit anderen Staaten von 1635 und 1639," in Constantine Nomikos Vaporis, ed., *Voices of Early Modern Japan* (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2012), 98–104; Katō Hidetoshi, "The Significance of the Period of National Seclusion Reconsidered," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 7/1 (1981), 85–109. The term *sakoku* was introduced into European studies of Japan by Engelbert Kaempfer. See also Detlef Haberland, ed., *Engelbert Kaempfer. Werk und Wirkung* (Stuttgart, Germany: F. Steiner Verlag, 1993).
[8] M. Di. Russo, ed., *Alessandro Valignano, Dialogo sulla missione degli ambasciatori giapponesi alla curia romana* (Firenze: Olschki, 2016), 3n; Rosa Caroli and Francesco Gatti, *Storia del Giappone* (Roma: Laterza, 2004), 81–88 and 254n; George Elison, *Deus Destroyed: The Image of Christianity in Early Modern Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 237–241. See also Jurgis Elisonas, "Christianity and the

Japanese version of the French Henri IV) who decided to put a definite end to the spread of Christianity after he had emerged triumphant following the military/political "demise" of both Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi. But even these latter had shown some ambivalence with regard to Christianity as it gained a foothold in the country: the first anti-Christian edict was issued in 1587 by Toyotomi Hideyoshi.[9] In these decades of fundamental importance for the religious and cultural evolution of Japan, the Dutch were already present as direct competitors of the Portuguese, arriving in the country before them in 1543. They encouraged the Japanese authorities to view Catholic missionaries as a sort of avant-garde for the Papacy and the Christian powers who wished to impose their rule on the archipelago.[10] Hakuseki certainly shared this political and historical view, continuing to consider Christianity "in terms of its potential threat to social order" at the time when (as Hakuseki saw it) the new dynasty "had to" impose itself as the governing force in the nation.

  According to Torcivia, Sidoti's insistence on speaking directly with the shōgun possibly led to the authorities transferring the priest from Nagasaki to Edo. However, Kiri Paramore, a scholar who has studied the history of Christianity in Japan, has recently suggested that one should consider the degree to which the first interrogation of the Jesuit in Nagasaki (involving Dutch interpreters) might have influenced the decision to allow

daimyo," *The Cambridge History of Japan* 7 (1991): 301–372. With regard to the relationship between trade and missionary work, Charles Boxer observed that "the preachers take the Gospel and the trade takes the preachers. If there were no merchants who go in search of earthly treasures to the East and the West Indies, who would transport thither the preachers who take heavenly treasurers?" See Charles R. Boxer, *Portuguese Merchants and Missionaries in Feudal Japan, 154–1640* (Aldershot, England: Variorum, 1990), vii.

[9] Kiri Paramore, *Ideology and Christianity in Japan* (Routledge/Leiden Series in Modern East Asian Politics, History and Media), Taylor and Francis, Edizione del Kindle, 2009, 109–119.

[10] Proof of the lack of Dutch interest in any form of religious goals in their presence in the East is given by the fact that "the missionary seminary established by the Dutch Company at Leyden (1622) was closed for lack of money in 1633," in J.S. Cummins, "Introduction," *Christianity and Missions, 1450–1800* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 1997), xxxiv.

that prisoner to be moved to Edo.[11] Hakuseki, who was responsible for overseeing the foreign trade that flowed through Nagasaki, might have been seen by the authorities in that port city as the government representative who could best deal with the issue, and thus, the prisoner should be sent to the capital. Once appointed by the shōgun to investigate Sidoti's presence in Japan, Hakuseki was prompted to undertake the task as soon as the prisoner arrived in Edo.[12]

      Historical research into Hakuseki and this incident highlighted his standing as a "Grand Inquisitor." But also on how significant this affair was in his intellectual development when Japan was becoming more open to the outside world, both politically and culturally. At this historical juncture, after the persecution and execution of thousands of Christians who had refused to abandon their faith, Western Catholicism was no longer perceived as "a territorial threat."[13] As Paramore points out, in the considerations put forward

---

[11] Torcivia, *Giovanni Battista Sidoti*, 76–86. Held under the jurisdiction of the local Bugyō, the interrogations in Nagasaki were conducted by five Dutch members of the VOC. There were some difficulties as these latter did not know Italian (many of the questions were therefore put in Portuguese or Latin), nor did Sidoti know Japanese well enough to give adequate answers to the questions put to him. The same difficulties emerged in the interrogations in Edo conducted by Hakuseki.

[12] Sidoti was held in the *Kirishitan Yashiki*, the Edo prison used for the last Christians left in Japan. See Ikuo Higashibaba, *Christianity in Early Modern Japan: Kirishitan Belief and Practice* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2001). The biography is drawn up by Stefania Nanni, *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* 92 (2018) *ad vocem* Sidoti. However, some Japanese did continue to practice Christianity in secret "these were the so-called *Kakure-Kirishitan*, as these crypto-Christians were known," in Yoshie Kojima, "Oggetti liturgici di lusso tra Europa e Giappone (XVI e XVII secc.)," *Quaderni Storici* 123/3 (2006), 551.

[13] Overall, when the persecutions of Christians began various religious orders were present in Japan, not always showing great solidarity with each other: Jesuits, Franciscans, Dominicans, Preaching Orders, and Augustinians. See Lino M. Pedot, *La S.C. De Propaganda Fide e le missioni del Giappone (1622–1838)*, vol. II, n. 7 (Vicenza: Urbaniana University Press, 1946), 57. However, the conflicts between the Holy See and Spain and Portugal regarding supervision of the action of missionaries ultimately worked to the advantage of the Jesuits. Some Italian Jesuit missionaries had tried to enter

by Masao Maryama,[14] the dialogue between Hakuseki and Sidoti does not simply reflect a straightforward rejection of "foreigners" and Christianity (as argued by historians of Japan throughout the twentieth century). Instead, the episode was proof "of a much more significant and universal historical development," indicating some kind of engagement between traditional cultural/political thinking and a stance embodying timid "opening-up" towards the outside world.

There is no question that this process of "opening up" involved the existence of a political system that had abandoned centralized political/cultural control, "bringing religious powers in general into confrontation with secular authority."[15] Furthermore, this confrontation implied a desire to overcome national and cultural barriers. It should not be forgotten that, after playing his own part in a close confrontation of two cultures (and their respective ideas regarding both religious and worldly matters), Hakuseki would argue in favor of sparing the life of the impenitent Sidoti, against the wishes of severe and inward-looking political authorities, who were still tending to oppose openness to the outside world.[16] The

Japan as early as 1643; this was the case of Marcello Mastritti and Antonio Rubini, both captured and executed (Torcivia, *Giovanni Battista Sidoti*, 30). A figure of 30,000 has been given for those Japanese killed during the Shimabara rebellion in 1637–1638 (the figure of 36,000 seems exaggerated). This massacre was the work of Iemitsu Tokugawa, who sent a total of 100,000 soldiers to crush the rebellion. On this episode, known to us through a historical tradition that it is not easy to verify. See Arcadio Schwade, "Die Frühgeschichte des Christentums in Japan im Überblick," in Adrian Hisai and Ruprecht Wimmer, eds., *Mission und Theater: Japan und China auf den Bühnen der Gesellschaft Jesu* (Regensburg, Germany: Schnell & Steiner, 2005), 348–349.

[14] See the classic *Studies in the Intellectual History of Tokugawa Japan,* Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1974

[15] Paramore, *Ideology and Christianity in Japan*, 4.

[16] Ultimately, Sidoti was neither executed nor tortured – as had happened to thousands of Japanese during the persecutions of the seventeenth century – but solely imprisoned. The alternatives proposed by Hakuseki himself were: release from prison, which carried the risk of setting a bad example for possible future missionaries from Europe to Japan; a death sentence; or life imprisonment under the close guard of two Japanese servants. After much reflection, it was this last alternative that was chosen. However, Sidoti

variations in ideology, power, religion, and cultural/social outlooks in Japan make it difficult to offer a single interpretation of the forces at play.

Since Rationalism and Neo-Confucianism were key factors in Hakuseki's performance in his role within government, his encounter with Sidoti should certainly not be underestimated. Ultimately, Hakuseki would become an advisor and historian to two shoguns: Ienobu (1709–1712) and Ietsugu (1712–1716). His close ties with the Tokugawa dynasty are revealed by his historical writings, including the *Hankanfu*, an analytical genealogical study of the 337 feudal families (the *daimyo*) that provided support to the ruling dynasty throughout 1600–1680. In another study (*Tokushi yoron*), Hakuseki explored the relations between the emperor and the shōgun, looking above all at what had happened in China and the role played there by Christianity. He saw the introduction of this religious faith as one of the concomitant causes of the crisis of the Ming dynasty.

Hakuseki justified the role of the Tokugawa, especially the *Tenno* (the Japanese emperor, who was traditionally held to be of divine origin), arguing that they had legitimately established their supremacy over the other feudal families during the sixteenth century, thus fulfilling a historic role.[17] Indeed, the scholar's *Koshitsū* (Understanding Ancient History) was a critical study of the earliest documentary sources, earning him a recognized place as one of the key exponents of *kokugaku* (national or nationalistic

---

continued his missionary proselytizing even during imprisonment and managed to convert and baptise the two guards/servants, at which point the authorities left all three to die in underground holes "deprived of light and air and fed solely with a gruel of rice" (Torcivia, *Giovanni Battista Sidoti*, 105, 113).

[17] As Harald Kleinschmidt points out: "Japanese historians had an additional terminological problem to confront. They had to adapt Chinese nomenclature to fit the anomalous duality of the postmedieval Japanese authority structure: the continuous existence of both emperor and shogun. Confucian theories of legitimacy had been premised on the assumption of a single legitimate ruler in whom all powers and prerogatives were vested." Arai Hakuseki was directly involved in such issues. I would like to thank Kleinschmidt for allowing me to make use of the bibliography drawn up as part of his syllabus at the University of Hildesheim: "Geschichte der europäisch-japanischen Beziehungen bis 1945," 75.

historiography).[18] Hakuseki also wrote an autobiography (*Oritaku-shiba-no-ki)*, whose prime focus is the illustration of his work within government, which casts light on how he approached his long conversations with Sidoti.[19] Undoubtedly, this encounter with an Italian priest enabled him to add to his already encyclopedic knowledge, which embraced such fields as geography and popular customs, religion and family life, and ancestor worship, one of the main "targets" of Catholic missionaries in the East at that time. We know, for example, that he was indebted to these conversations for some of the ideas that appear in his *Sairan Igen* (a five-volume work on geography).

The discussions with Sidoti, which we know were divided into four parts and saw the presence of two interpreters from Nagasaki, are themselves the object of Hakuseki's three-volume *Seiyō Kibun* (Notes on the West), with the third volume containing an in-depth discussion of Christianity owing to the conversations with Sidoti.[20] Around 1715, Hakuseki retired from any political role due to his difficult relationship with Ienobu's more authoritarian

---

[18] This was characterized by a "nativist" or ancient tradition which was Confucian (*kogaku*) and would be a defining feature of the historical period of the Tokugawa in Edo. Many Japanese historians argue that this movement had a deep influence on the history of contemporary Japan: John S. Brownlee, *Japanese Historians and the National Myths, 1600–1945* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1997); Susan L. Burns, *Before the Nation: Kokugaku and the Imagining of Community in Early Modern Japan* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).

[19] *Told Round a Brushwood Fire* has, from a literary point of view, been compared with Benvenuto Cellini's *Vita* and Rosseau's *Confessions* (Ibid., 17). Its importance lies in the fact that it not only outlines his vision of the government and society of his day but is a primary first-hand source of material regarding the policies of the shogunate with a limited number of such sources. See Kate Wildman-Nakai, "Apologia pro Vita Sua: Arai Hakuseki's Autobiography," *Monumenta Nipponica* 36/2 (1981), 177. According to Wildman-Nakai many of Hakuseki's initiatives, however, remained nothing but proposals, as noted in *Shogunal Politics: Arai Hakuseki and the Premises of Tokugawa Rule* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988). Also, see Ulrich Kemper, *Arai Hakuseki und seine Geschichtsauffasung: Ein Beitrag zur Historiographie Japans in der Tokugawa-Zeit* (Wiesbaden, Germany, Harrassowitz, 1967).

[20] In *Seiyō Kibun*, see the comments by Alessandro Valota, *Nuova Rivista Storica*, LV (1971), 210–213.

successor, Yoshimune Tokugawa.[21] But *Seiyō Kibun* was not published until 1882, given that the author himself had wanted it to circulate solely in manuscript form amongst the chosen few (since it dealt with the thorny problem of Christianity in Japan).

Therefore, while the Sicilian priest made a fundamental contribution to Hakuseki's *opera omnia* – which, as some scholars have pointed out, only makes a limited contribution to the many disciplines that the author covers – it proves that the encounter with Sidoti (and his ultimate fate) had a profound impact upon the Japanese intellectual.[22] When he drew up his final account of these conversations for the shōgun, Hakuseki recognized that the knowledge he had acquired about the West was new to the Japan of his day. In doing so, he reflects the highest cultural aspirations of a society that wished to assimilate Western culture, to not merely equal it but surpass it, like in

---

[21] Yoshimune became shōgun in 1716 and is considered to have been one of the most competent and dynamic of those of the Tokugawa dynasty. The economic reforms he proposed (known as the reforms of the Kyōhō period) aimed primarily to increase the wealth of the country and led to Hakuseku being forced out of (or reigning from) his position because they clashed with his own Confucian approach to government. Furthermore, an entire faction within the *bakufu* government opposed Hakuseki. Yoshimune himself is to be credited with relaxing (in 1720) the regulations introduced in 1640 to prevent the translation and diffusion of foreign language works in Japan, opening the country to Western scientific literature, particularly the so-called Dutch Studies (*Rangaku*). As Grant Goodman points out, the influx of these works did not permeate Japanese culture in depth but did exert an influence that ran in parallel to the changes within it. See Grant K. Goodman, *Japan and the Dutch, 1600–1853* (Richmond, Routledge Curzon, 2000), 49; and Ackroyd, *Told Round a Brushwood Fire*, 7–8. Chinese science was by then appearing less efficient than its Western counterpart. This opened a new phase that has been described as "Early and Late Phases of Chinese Wave II and Western Waves I and II" in Masayoshi Sugimoto and David L. Swain, eds., *Science and Culture in Traditional Japan, A. D. 600–1854* (Cambridge, MA: Tuttle Publishing, 1978), 148.

[22] "A person of multiple interests, Arai Hakuseki was a 'dilettante' in the best sense of the word. His cultural background and knowledge ranged over a number of fields and was certainly not limited by his adherence to the doctrines of the Confucian school of his day." See Bruno Lewin, "Arai Hakuseki als Sprachgelehrter," *Oriens Extremus* 13/2 (1966), 191.

Seiyō Kibun. In the second volume, dedicated to the study of the different continents (Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, and America), Hakuseki admits that he had learned a lot from Sidoti, who undoubtedly must have been a good source of information regarding Italy. The admission confirms the limited geographical knowledge undoubtedly gained from the first contact with Europeans, especially Matteo Ricci, who became known in Japan thanks to his connections with China.[23]

However, it was in the field of religion that the professed Neo-Confucian[24] aimed – through an engagement with Catholicism – to establish an exchange of information that would confirm the superiority of his worldview when compared to that championed so determinedly by the Catholic missionary. Besides, Hakuseki's own reading and interpretation of Confucianism was more eclectic than original, as scholars have emphasized how much he owed to other Confucian thinkers such as Hayashi Razan, Kumazawa Banzan, and Ogyu Sorai.[25] Thus, when drawing up his report for the shōgun, the Japanese intellectual, though expressing a certain respect for the dogged coherence demonstrated by Sidoti, would underline how:

> …in the exposition of his religious doctrine there is not one word that is even close to being logical. It seemed as if intelligence and ignorance had suddenly changed sides and

---

[23] As a Japanese historian has observed: "the Japanese, until the coming of Westerners, were of the opinion that the world consisted of Japan, India, and China. Naturally they had no notion of the existence of Europe, Africa, and America." It was Abraham Ortelius' atlas, which arrived in Japan in 1590 following the first Japanese embassy to Italy, that opened up the country to wider geographical knowledge. See Shintarō Ayusawa, "Geography and Japanese Knowledge of World Geography," *Monumenta Nipponica*, 19/3.4 (1964), 276–277.

[24] Obviously, the interpretation of Neo-Confucianism is a complex matter which cannot be dealt with here. Many readings have been advanced with regard to this school of thought, which drew upon the numerous traditions within original Confucianism. On this issue, see Herman Ooms, *Tokugawa Ideology: Early Constructs, 1570–1680*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985); and Herman Ooms, "Introduction to 'The Nature of Early Tokugawa Confucianism,' by Kurozumi Makoro," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 20/2 (1994), 331–375.

[25] Paramore, *Ideology and Christianity in Japan*, 78–200.

> that two different people were talking. I thus came to see that Western science has a precise knowledge of external forms and phenomena – that is, it knows solely physical reality whilst it is still unrelated to metaphysical reality. If this is the case, it is no wonder if in their theory of the universe they argue for the existence of a creator.[26]

On the other hand, his Neo-Confucian world vision strove for a hendiadys between the two worlds, which was far from easy to achieve. However, according to Hakuseki, it should inspire all activities of the government with which he identified. Within such a Confucian world, there were three fundamental bonds underlying the existence of society as a whole, the first of these consisting of the obedience subjects owed to the sovereign. Given that the adoration of God was a task reserved to the sovereign alone, any contemplation of the deity by a subject resulted in the undermining of social order.[27]

---

[26] I cite the transaltion by Renzo Contarini and Augusto Luca in *L'ultimo missionario: L'Abate Giovanni Battista Sidotti e la sua scomparsa in Giappone nel 1708* (Milano: Edizioni Italia Press, 2009), 18. Furthermore, as note by Arai Hakuseki, "in the exposition of his faith, the European is absurd and superficial; a discussion therefore would be superfluous. However, one cannot pass over without criticism the more outrageous assertions," such as those regarding a Creator God and Paradise (Ibid., 129). See also Torcivia, *Giovanni Battista Sidoti*, 102–104. Another Japanese ideology would depict Christianity in these terms: "its basis is simplistic, its vocabulary is vulgar, and that is why it easily beguiles the masses…It pretends to represent human ethical enlightenment by forsaking the Way of humanity" (Paramore, *Ideology and Christianity in Japan*, 116). Anti-Christianity would not come to an end soon, even if in Hakuseki one sees it as being rather more open-minded and inclined to theoretical reflection. These prejudices would, in fact, even be revived and strengthened when Japan found itself having to face Russian expansionism on the island of Hokkaido during the eighteenth century.

[27] The second principle was based upon respect and obedience shown by younger family members towards parents, while the third involved the subordination of wife to husband. These principles were seen as establishing a sort of equilibrium (between chaos and order, the famous principles of Yin and Yang) that would not disturb the established order. On the other hand,

These philosophical ideals were an integral and indivisible part of Hakuseki's view of the world, especially the practice of government. As referenced in the above-cited historical works, the Japanese scholar also studied them within the framework of centuries of history. To Sidoti's interrogator, Christianity seemed closer to Buddhism and even Taoism, all of these religions falling far short of Confucianism. This aspect was true of Christianity, founded on some transcendental anthropomorphism (the existence of God the Father), a belief incompatible with Confucianism and, therefore, far from compatible with an appropriate exercise of government.[28] However, it was also true that, like Christianity, Confucianism had been persecuted in Japan over previous decades, with the governing powers favoring Buddhism. The latter had been imposed throughout the country by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who had previously used Christianity in his struggle for supremacy with other feudal lords but later turned against it.[29] It had been the Buddhists themselves who had pursued a strategy of convincing the shogun to abandon Confucianism. In this fight against Confucianism, the interrogation of Sidoti would further convince Hakuseki that this was the case: "I inquired about this matter and my doubts were cleared up."[30]

In response to the shōgun's request for his recommendations as to Sidoti's fate, Hakuseki stressed the coherence with which the priest had

---

"once that doctrine [Christianity] begins to flourish, rebellion subjects ipso facto arise in the land; that also is the inevitable natural consequence" (Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, 238).

[28] Paramore suggests that Hakuseki was convinced "that the ban on Christianity in the early Tokugawa period was used to suppress samurai Confucian thinkers who were clearly not Christian." Samurai, too, fell victim to this sort of intolerance, being lumped together with Christians. Many of them would choose death over persecution (Paramore, *Ideology and Christianity in Japan*, 110–111).

[29] Beatrice Bodart-Bailey, "The Persecution of Confucianism in Early Tokugawa Japan," *Monumenta Nipponica* 48/3 (1993), 293–314. However, even Hakuseki's Neo-Confucianism would not have been easy to impose, given the conflicts that soon emerged with Yoshimune. As Bodart-Bayley points out, Confucianism had been considered "in many ways inappropriate for the socio-political conditions then prevailing in Japan" (Ibid., 295). See Peter Nosco, *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984).

[30] Paramore, *Ideology and Christianity in Japan*, 111, 119–120.

supported his ideas (a coherence that was much appreciated by the Japanese intellectual) and deduced that one could rule out the missionary ever abandoning his beliefs. Undoubtedly, Hakuseki saw Confucianism as superior to Christianity in many ways, but he did not regard the latter solely with blanket hostility, recognizing within it certain positive ideals. Furthermore, he abandoned the idea that Christianity might destroy the country from the outside or in a frontal clash of powers. This position, a fixed part of Japanese political and historical thinking over previous decades, was dismissed as a fairy tale. At the same time, he stressed that it was an internal threat to the nation, undermining its political values and ideals. Thus, one could have no reservations in supporting the shōgun's decision to repress the religion.

Christianity Put to the Test: The Case of Japan

Sidoti and Hakuseki embodied two different visions of the world, each with its own underlying ideological, cultural, and, above all, religious structures that influenced their actions. There is no doubt that Sidoti's hope to recover the "lost land" of Japan (where the process of Christian conversion had been so abruptly and violently interrupted in the first decades of the seventeenth century) was part of what one can describe as a process of "globalization" which, theoretically, might be seen as inspired by greater openness to the outside world. Even though this process inevitably required those promoting it to engage with other cultures, the Christian and particularly Catholic missions could be said to be early examples of "globalist" politics. [31] Protestant missions may have been active in the seventeenth century, but in later centuries they became more dynamic after the decline of Spain and Portugal. Indeed, the missionary spirit itself – inspired by such institutions as the Society of Jesus and the *Congregazione de Propaganda Fide* (established in 1622) – might be seen as expressing the desire to "reconquer lost lands" which had become a part of Catholicism itself due to the successes of Reformed religions in Europe.[32]

---

[31] Ronnie Po-chia Hsia, ed., *A Companion to Early Modern Catholic Global Missions* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2018); Thomas Banchoff and José Casanova, eds., *The Jesuits and Globalization: Historical Legacies and Contemporary Challenges* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2016); Cummins, *Christianity and Missions*, xvi–xxxvii.

[32] For the *Congregazione de Propaganda Fide*, see Giovanni Pizzorusso, *Governare le missioni, conoscere il mondo nel XVII secolo: La*

Missionaries, imbued with this spirit of expansionism, might be seen as little more than elite assault troops. However, their cultural influence should be studied and examined without allowing one's interpretation to be dictated by religious or ideological dogma.[33] There is no question that the very expansion of the Jesuits' sphere of operations meant that the Society had to take adequate account of different cultural and political environments: it was no accident that missionaries adopted strategies of adaptation to the areas in which they were aiming to operate.

From this point of view, a comparison of China and Japan is significant, precisely because of the "closure" of the latter during the Edo period.[34] In China, Francesco Saverio, Alessandro Valignano, Matteo Ricci,[35] Michele Ruggieri, Martino Martini, and Daniello Bartoli, followed

Congregazione pontificia de Propaganda Fide (Viterbo, Italy: Sette Città, 2018). The Jesuits could mediate between different worlds in part due to their linguistic expertise. See their role as peacemakers in the conflict between an eastward-expanding Russia and a Western-expanding China at the end of the seventeenth century: Joseph Sebes, *The Jesuits and the Sino-Russian treaty of Nerchinsk (1689): The Diary of Thomas Pereira* (Rome: Institum Historicum S.I., 1961).

[33] Claudia von Collani, "The Exchange of Knowledge between Europe and China by Missionaries," in Ulrich van der Heyden und Andreas Feldtkeller, eds., *Missionsgeschichte als Geschichte der Globalisierung von Wissen: Transkulturelle Wissensaneignung und – vermittlung durch christliche Missionare in Afrika und Asien im 17, 18, und 19: Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, Germany: F. Steiner Verlag, 2012), 111–126; Agustín Udías, *Jesuit Contribution to Science: A History* (New York: Springer, 2015); Peter Claus Hartmann, "Rolle und Bedeutung der Jesuiten fuer den Wissenstransfer von Kontinent zu Kontinent im 17 und 18: Jahrhundert," in Werner Drobesch and Peter G. Tropper, eds., *Die Jesuiten in Innerösterreich: Die kulturelle und geistige Prägung einer Region im 17 und 18: Jahrhundert* (Klagenfurt, Germany: Hermagoras, 2006), 59.

[34] Arimichi Ebisawa, *Christianity in Japan: A Bibliography of Japanese and Chinese Sources* (Tokyo: International Christian University, 1960).

[35] Matteo Ricci is to be credited with having initiated a profitable exchange between distant worlds, despite his fundamentally Eurocentric culture. In China, he put into practice an approach that had been proposed by Alessandro Valignano based on experiences in Japan. To that end, he had drawn up a *Cerimoniale per i missionari del Giappone*. See the edition by Joseph Franz

later by the likes of Ferdinand Verbiest, Athanasius Kircher, and Johann
Adam Schall,[36] engaged with imperial dynasties that never reached the levels
of closure to the outside world shown by the Tokugawa in Japan.

Undoubtedly, the Jesuits in China had to overcome wariness and
distrust and spend long hours obediently waiting for access to their imperial
interlocutors. For instance, upon his arrival in Macao in 1619, J.A. Schall had
to wait for the suspension of certain edicts banning foreign scientists before
making his way into the Celestial Empire. However, it is also true that the
missionaries were allowed to settle in China and make their own
contributions to the already developed knowledge regarding subjects such as
geography, hydraulics, agriculture, mineralogy, firearms, astronomy, and
applied mathematics.

When dealing with such a range of cultural accomplishments, the
historical response of the Jesuits had been one of *akkomodation*,[37] a cultural

Schütte, with preface by Michela Catto (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e
Letteratura, 2018). Also see Joseph F. Moran, *The Japanese and the Jesuits:
Alessandro Valignano in Sixteenth-Century Japan* (New York: Routledge,
1993); Andrew C. Ross, "Alessandro Valignano: the Jesuits and Culture in
the East," John W. O'Malley et al., eds., *The Jesuits. Cultures, Sciences, and
the Arts, 1540–1773* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 336–351.
[36] There is a vast historical literature on these figures. With no attempt to be
exhaustive, one might list: the classic study by Joseph Needham, *The Shorter
Science and civilization in China* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University
Press, 1978), as well as Guido Abbattista, "Saperi scientifici, tecnologia e
religione: l'Europa cattolica alla scoperta della Cina in epoca moderna,"
Rivista Storica Italiana 1 (2018): 283–296; John Fletcher, ed., *Athanasius
Kircher und seine Beziehungen zum gelehrten Europa seiner Zeit*
(Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz, 1988); Roman Malek, ed., *Western
Learning and Christianity in China: The Contribution and Impact of Johann
Adam Schall von Bell, S.J. (1592–1666)*, vol. 2 (Sankt Augusti, Germany:
China-Zentrum, 1998); Aldo Caterino, "La generazione dei giganti: Geografi
e astronomi gesuiti in Cina," in Antonio Paolucci and Giovanni Morello eds.,
Ai crinali della storia: Padre Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) tra Roma e Pechino
(Torino: Umberto Allemandi & C., 2009), 69.
[37] On this issue, see the Introduction ("Missioni e globalizzazione:
L'adattamento come identità della Compagnia di Gesù") by Michela Catto
and Guido Mongini in *Evangelizzazione e globalizzazione: Le missioni
gesuitiche nell'età moderna tra storia e storiografia*, edited by M. Catto, G.

policy that met with no little opposition from other religious orders involved in missionary work. The fear of orthodox Catholic authorities over these centuries was that one might pass from accepting "different types of behaviour" to "different values."[38]

In China, too, the Catholic missionaries met with resistance to their endeavors, which were both religious and cultural.[39] For example, the emperor Kangxi threw his own authority behind the defense of ancestor worship, a body of rituals deeply embedded in Chinese cultural traditions that the Catholic church viewed solely as idolatry. This controversy would see the Jesuits adopt their traditional "accommodation" policy, which the Dominicans fiercely criticized. The doctrinal position of the Church on this issue was asserted by Pope Clement XI, who in 1705 sent Cardinal Charles-Thomas Maillard de Tournon as his representative to the court of emperor Xangxi to insist that these Chinese rituals be banned. This mission was probably urged upon Clement XI by the *Congregazione de Propaganda Fide* (though further research is required into certain aspects thereof), and it was Cardinal Maillard de Tournon's visit to China that would be the first step in

Mongini and Silvia Mostaccio, n. 42 (Firenze: Dante Alighieri, 2011); and Renate Dürr, "Berichte und Kritik: Akkomodation und Wissenstransfer. Neuer-scheinungen zur Geschichte der Jesuiten in der Frühen Neuzeit," *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 44/3 (2017), 487–509.

[38] These matters raise issues of ethnocentrism and cultural relativism: Mazzei "Il Giappone e i gesuiti", cit., 216-219). A more complex matter is the relation between the Jesuits and the reforming policies developed during the eighteenth century, which deserves more in-depth consideration than it can be given here. However, it was Pope Clement XIV who was led, for a range of reasons, to suppress the Company of Jesus in 1773, as the Order would not be re-established until the beginning of the following century. For an initial approach to this issue, see Sabina Pavone, "The History of Anti-Jesuitism: National and Global Dimension," *The Jesuits and globalization*, 111–130.

[39] For more on the case of Ferdinand Verbiest, who had to overcome great resistance even from such an intellectually open-minded an emperor as Kangxi before works of European philosophy and astronomy were accepted, see Noël Golvers, ed., *The Christian Mission in China in the Verbiest Era*: *Some Aspects of the Missionary Approach* (Leuven, Belgium: Ferdinand Verbiest Foundation, 1999).

Sidoti's ill-fated mission to Japan.[40] What is indisputable is that the ecclesiastical authorities had, as early as 1701, included Sidoti among the seventeen possible candidates for delegates to accompany the cardinal to China, with the idea of attempting to enter Japan coming at some later stage. It likely was an initiative to run parallel to the De Tournon mission, though with somewhat different aims. Certain aspects of the whole affair are better illuminated by what we know of Sidoti's interrogation and Hakuseki's report rather than by official Vatican sources, as these merit a more in-depth study.

In his interrogation, Sidoti tells Hakuseki that before landing on the island of Yakushima in 1708, he had sent a letter to the *Congregazione de Propaganda Fide*, requesting an agreement with the Japanese authorities to be permitted to summon several missionaries to Japan. However, this daring mission does not fall within the ambit of the cultural and scientific policy that had been characteristic of the missions undertaken by the Jesuits (who, it should not be forgotten, had not been present in Japan for decades). In fact, Sidoti was not even a member of the Society of Jesus: though he had studied at the Jesuit college in Palermo, he had subsequently worked as a simple parish priest in the city. Nor does he seem to have shared the fundamental principles that inspired the order. Sidoti had also served as Auditor for the Dominican cardinal Tomaso Maria Ferrari (a figure by whom he was strongly influenced). During this interrogation by Hakuseki, he stressed that the position of "auditor" came immediately under the authority of the cardinal (and thence of the papacy). Sidoti himself had only been recognized as an Apostolic Missionary after having the chance to join De Tournon's mission to undertake his own project in Japan.[41] The whole affair, therefore, reveals that he was inspired much more by a personal spirit of missionary zeal, comparable to that embodied by Francesco Saverio, than by adherence to the sort of cultural policy that the Jesuits had pursued up to that date in the Far East.[42]

---

[40] Eugenio Menegon, "Culture di corte a confronto: legati pontifici nella Pechino del settecento," in Maria Antonietta Visceglia, ed., *Papato e politica internazionale nella prima età moderna* (Roma: Viella, 2013), 563–600, especially 580. Even though the document quoted by Menegon cites "Sidotti" (sic) as the Jesuit concerned, Torcivia has demonstrated that this is an error.

[41] See the note by Kort Verhaal (F. Valentjin, ed., *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën*, 157–164), cited in Torcivia, *Giovanni Battista Sidoti*, 45–69.

[42] Mazzei, "Il Giappone e i gesuiti," 220.

Another point that should be made clear is that the French Jesuits seem to have attributed more importance to the cultural and scientific aspects of their work than had their Iberian predecessors, whose focus had been much more theological, and that it was the French branch of the order whose missionary work benefitted from the policies adopted by Louis XIV from the 1680s onwards. One can, therefore, hazard an explanation as to why Clement XI, who felt very strongly about the prohibition of Chinese ancestor worship, should have sent a French cardinal and not a representative of the Roman Curia to urge this policy upon the Chinese emperor.[43]

Dutch Calvinists and Catholic Missionaries in a Changing Japan

Given the political and cultural defenses raised by the Tokugawa to protect their institutional role and shield the country from a much-feared invasion by "the barbarians from the south,"[44] it must have been an arduous task for Western knowledge to penetrate the country. It is all the more puzzling that, by the end of the eighteenth century, "the Japanese were better acquainted with European civilization than the people of any other non-Western country."[45] Indeed, one must agree with those who argue that the importation of Western natural sciences did not begin all at once at the end of isolationism (*sakoku*) in 1854 but (that they had) had some opportunities

---

[43] Eugenio Menegon, *Ancestors, Virgins, and Friars: Christianity as a Local Religion in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press**,** 2009); Abbattista, "Saperi scientifici, tecnologia e religione," 294; Florence Hsia, "Jesuits, Jupiter's Satellites, and the Académie Royale des Sciences," *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts*, 241–257.

[44] Michael Cooper, "A Mission Interrupted: Japan," in Johannes Meier, ed., *"Usque ad ultimum terrae": Die Jesuiten und die transkontinentale Ausbreitung des Christentums, 1540–1773* (Goettingen, Germany: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 2000), 393–407. According to Harald Kleinschmidt, these early forms of Japanese nationalism, which he defines as "*indigenate*," were strongly influenced by Confucianism. The concept of "national identity" – or Japanese nationalism and imperialism – were therefore different to the parallel concepts developing in Europe. See the unpublished paper, Harald Kleinschmidt, "Formation, Adaptation, Response: Nationalism in Japan c.1900: Critical Notes on 'Transfer Nationalism,'" October 22, 2019, Alfred Krupp Foundation, Greifswald, Germany.

[45] Donald Keene, *The Japanese Discovery of Europe, 1720–1830*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1969), 123.

to spread within Japan even during the time of the Tokugawa dynasty, thanks to those few who used the small port available at Nagasaki. It is also where the Dutch company VOC enjoyed special status within the international trade system, making the introduction of this knowledge possible.

In effect, the most rigid prohibitions within Japan, ordered in the first decades of the seventeenth century, concerned primarily the works written in that period by Jesuit missionaries resident in China.[46] This focus on expressions of Iberian culture amounted to veritable censorship (not always successful), which aimed to prevent certain studies from surreptitiously reaching Japan via China. Its indirect effect was to benefit the influx of Dutch know-how, which could thus penetrate all fields of cultural endeavor. Even so, the Dutch would continue to enjoy this cultural advantage over their English and German rivals until the Meiji restoration.[47]

This broad cultural context within which Hakuseki's interrogation of Sidoti occurred when the shogun Tokugawa Yoshimune played a central role in a new openness to Western culture. It would, however, be mistaken either to overemphasize the impact of this new openness or to underestimate the strength of underlying opposition to Catholicism.[48] The range of interests concerned here found expression in a broad field of cultural and scientific disciplines, not least amongst which was that of translation itself. The year 1811 would see the foundation of a center for the translation of scientific-technical works, with the word *yogaku* (Western knowledge) slowly replacing *rangaku* (Dutch knowledge). By then, translating works into Western languages was part of the process of study and assimilation that was

---

[46] Doi Tadao, "Das Sprachstudium der Gesellschaft Jesu in Japan im 16. und 17: Jahrhundert," *Monumenta Nipponica* 2 (1938), 437–465; Schwade, "Die Frühgeschichte des Christentums," 349.

[47] Yabuti Kiyosi, "The Pre-History of Modern Science in Japan: The Importation of Western Science during the Tokugawa Period," in William K. Storey ed., *Scientific Aspects of European Expansion* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1996), 260n. See also Salvatore Ciriacono, "Scientific Transfer between Europe and Japan: The Influence of Dutch and German Medicine from the Edo Period to the Meiji Restoration," *Comparativ. Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und vergleichende Gesellschafts-forschung* 20, Ht. 5 (2010), 110–129.

[48] Goodman, *Japan and the Dutch*, 49–65 and 119–146; Peter Francis Kornicki, *The Book in Japan*, vol. 7 (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1998), 339.

strategic in Japan's bid to stand as a competitor to Western science and technology.[49]

Of course, this is not to say that the Dutch interpreters from Nagasaki played a decisive role in the interrogation of the Sicilian priest, but only to recognize that they were an active part of the context within which it took place. Nor should one forget that, in the presence of his Japanese interrogator, Sidoti did not fail to voice his contempt for the Dutch Calvinists who had been appointed to provide an oral translation (his description of them as lying Protestant traitors is recorded in the report of Hakuseki's interrogation), and that the interpreters themselves made clear their own hostility towards Catholicism. At the same time as these European religious distinctions were made, Sidoti also asserted clear and defined ideas regarding his national identity, stressing to Hakuseki that he was "Italian, of the Apostolic Church of Rome" and not Castilian or Portuguese. Clearly, the Palermo-born priest felt it was his duty to spread the Gospel, seeing himself as a part of the Catholic church's wider cultural policy (one of expansion pursued by every church and ideology). The dialogue between Sidoti and Hakuseki was a harsh clash that flooded over into rigid conflict, but that does not make it any less worthy of attention.

Moreover, one can also see the role of ideological limitations in the behavior of the party represented by the Japanese intellectual. Setting aside the strictly theological issues, Hakuseki saw Sidoti Catholicism as representing a rather simplistic religious worldview based on a strict distinction between an earthly existence and a religious one, each having little to do with the other. Embodying at the highest level the political and

---

[49] One of the greatest *Rangakusha* (scholars of Dutch Studies) was probably Ōtsuki Gentaku, a publisher and linguist of fundamental importance in this period. In 1788, he published his two-volume "Rangkaku kaitei" (*Steps to Dutch Learning*), regarded as the first work in Japan to cover all aspects of a European language. In his preface, Gentaku admits that up to the present it was China and its science that was reckoned as the most advanced, but in this new period Holland seemed to have overtaken them in terms of scientific knowledge and scientific literature (Goodman, *Japan and the Dutch,* 122). This comment reveals the careful level of attention focused on both culture and science. In 1796, Gentoku collaborated on a Japanese-Dutch dictionary compiled by one of his numerous students, Imamura Sanpaku, together with other interpreters working in Nagasaki (Yabuti Kiyosi, "The Pre-History of Modern Science in Japan," 224).

ideological world of which he was part, the Japanese intellectual did not stray from a political and historiographical view of Christianity in terms of its potential threat to social order. He did not doubt that the new dynasty would continue to lead and govern the country. Indeed, the Confucianism to which Hakuseki adhered with firm conviction has been recognized as maintaining a focus on the human heart or soul and a dislike for the imposition of orthodoxy.

Nevertheless, many Confucian thinkers also hoped that many religious practices would find a solid base in existing institutions (in the case of Japan, the shogunate). His fidelity to this institution and its cultural policies meant that Hakuseki could not draw too close to such a different world to overcome the religious and historical barriers between him and the Catholic missionary. If this was the cultural outlook in Japan during this period, it is thus clear that Hakuseki's timid openness to other world views had little chance of coming to anything. In effect, the whole incident reveals how Japanese culture remained dominated by the cultural ideology and political system that had taken shape over the course of previous centuries. One must also observe how these cultural influences have changed over time, possibly as future reflection outside the scope of this discussion.

PLACES AND PLACE-MAKING IN *GENJI MONOGATARI*: THE *KIRITSUBO* CHAPTER[1]

Marcela López Bravo
Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens

Introduction

Genji Monogatari (Tale of Genji)*,* written in the Heian Period (794–1185), has been read and studied for over a millennium in Japan and for about 140 years in the West ever since Suematsu Kenchō published an English version of the first 17 chapters in 1882. Yet, the study of place in the narrative remains underexplored. In literary criticism, scholars have mainly focused on the study of time rather than place, and in the last twenty years, they have started to examine the latter. A thorough understanding of place-making processes in *Genji Monogatari* helps the reader to comprehend not only the narrative but also the Heian Period. Because the tale is too complex to consider all of the instances, this article focuses on Chapter I – *Kiritsubo* – Paulownia Pavilion, as it offers multiple scenes that exemplify the sense of place as a progressive process, as defined by Doreen Massey. In this chapter, "space, implied in the title, the space of the court will be contested" (Tambling, 2009). It is also an excellent referent to examine the characters' reactions to placements and displacements that occur due to the place-making processes happening at the court: "the only space that is to be occupied" (Tambling, 2009).

Murasaki Shikibu (ca. 978–1016) was a poet and lady-in-waiting for Empress Shōshi at the Imperial Court, positioned there by Fujiwara no Michinaga. Along with the *Kokin Wakashū* (Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems) and *Ise Monogatari* (Tale of Ise), *Genji Monogatari* is one of the three most frequently and exhaustively commented texts of the classical Japanese literary canon written in the first decade of the eleventh century (Cook, 2016). "The *Tale of Genji*, in particular, is the highest pinnacle of Japanese literature," remarked Yasunari Kawabata in his Nobel Prize acceptance speech, "[e]ven down to our day there has not been a piece

---

[1] Author's Note: The present article is a revised and adapted version based on a chapter of my dissertation. See López Bravo, Marcela, "Using Virtual Reality to Teach Interactively the Role of Place in *Tale of Genji*" (Ph.D. diss., Waseda University, 2021).

of fiction to compare with it" (Kawabata, 1968). Indeed, *Genji Monogatari* is still considered one of the most valuable works of Japanese literature.

But which of its versions should be considered the central one? Although the original text (or texts) of the *Genji Monogatari* is/are lost, and many apocryphal versions were in circulation, two centuries later, two carefully collated texts appeared, the descendants of which form the basis of all standard modern versions of the work. The first one, the *Aobyōshi-bon* (Text in Blue Covers), began to be compiled by Fujiwara no Shunzei, and his son Teika finished it in 1225. The second one, the *Kawachi-bon* (the compilers of which had been governors of Kawachi), was compiled by Minamoto no Mitsuyuki and his son Chikayuki in 1255 (Harper & Shirane, 2015, 211).

Genji Monogatari narrates the life and romantic relationships of Hikaru Genji, the dazzling son of an emperor and a low-status concubine. Early on, his father removes his son's imperial status to protect him from court intrigue. Once Genji became a commoner, he was set among the highest elite as a court official. Although he dies before the tale ends, the narrative continues to tell the story of his descendants. *Genji Monogatari* is also an exquisite introduction to Heian court's daily life (Shimauchi, 2019). Furthermore, it has been broadly used as a historical source to understand the court at this time. *Genji Monogatari* offers its readers a window into the moral, political, and cultural beliefs, forms of entertainment, dress manners, and other valuable insights into the lifestyles of the elite in the Heian Period.

Genji is the dis-placed one who refused to stay where he was placed and always transgressed borders, with expectations to reclaim his position. He even created a new place that shifted the centrality of power. Rokujō's mansion became the place where emperors and courtiers wanted to "hang out" since the palace was now a rarified Palace controlled by the Right (Shikibu & Washburn, 2016, 1021). The Genji text, in its ever-changing movement of displacement, dramatically demonstrates that nothing is established without exclusionary effects and, more importantly, that whatever is established will, in turn, be displaced: whether it be the shining Genji, his father and imperial succession, Genji's lineage, masculinist ambition, or the topoi of the Capital (Okada, 2009).

Defining Place: Why Does "Place" Belong at the Center of Analysis?

Right from the beginning of her narrative, Murasaki Shikibu "places" *Genji Monogatari* but blurs the timeline: "In a certain reign, it matters not whose…" (Shikibu & Tyler, 2002, 1). Without needing to

speculate, on the other hand, we know for certain where the tale is located and where the action takes place, although we are never told the specific time of the story. The characters of *Genji Monogatari* move through the space of Heiankyō, the Japanese imperial Capital, and from one place to the next. Their relations and movements show that different characters occupy different spaces, and their locations and places afford them differentiated mobility. *Genji Monogatari* is "framed by geographical space, more than by time," and "each chapter is a narrative unit that focuses on setting out for, reaching, and interacting with [or should we say 'lingering' at] a specific place, and occasionally with its surrounding area," as space "governs the narrative progression" (Strand, 2015, 41–42).

Although many Western scholars have dedicated their careers to the study and investigation of *Genji Monogatari*, analysis of place remains largely overlooked, consistent with Bertrand Westphal's (2011) assertion that literary theory has the most significant deficit in spatiotemporal approaches. With the analysis centered on "place," this study offers a different approach utilizing geocriticism and Doreen Massey's place-making theory to help readers and students tackle obscure meanings and peculiarities found in *Genji Monogatari*. But before we move forward, we need to clarify and specify what "place" means in this context because, as Yi Fu Tuan has stated, "[these terms] require each other for definition" (1977, 6). Philosophers, geographers, and thinkers have been arguing about the meaning of place for quite some time now.

Place has been widely defined as being a meaningful location or a space made meaningful by Cresswell (2014), Tuan (1977), Lefebvre (1974), and others. Oftentimes, both terms, "space and place, are not clearly distinguished from one another analytically, or their meaning is reversed" (Agnew & Livingstone, 2011, 318). At other times, they are used interchangeably, but "neither term, nor the relationship between them, enjoys precise definition" (Withers, 2009, 657). Hence, the differences between space and place must be considered, however problematic these may be. The Oxford English Dictionary defines "space" as "a continuous area or expanse which is free, available, or unoccupied" and "place" as "a particular position, point, or area in space; a location" (Oxford.com). Many philosophers have dedicated volumes to discuss their differences, similarities, and interrelations.

Henri Lefebvre attempted to clarify what space meant but unfolded a million other ideas and inspired many to philosophize about it. His book *The Production of Space* (1974) is "arguably the most important book ever

written about the social and historical significance of human spatiality and the particular powers of the spatial imagination" (Soja, 1996, 8). For Lefebvre (1974), space can be divided into three categories: perceived, conceived, and lived space. Furthermore, it is heterogeneous but susceptible to homogenizing forces. Tuan considered space as movement, on the one hand, and place as a pause, on the other, so that "what begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value" and "if we think of space as that which allows movement, then place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place" (Tuan, 1977, 6). For Lefebvre and Tuan, "places are socially constructed, and their existence and meaning are dependent on how people move through, interact with, think about, and represent both the cultural and physical features in them" (Seaman, 2016, 39). In *Genji Monogatari*, for example, gardens are a good representation of how the Heian society thought of and interacted with nature.

Michael Foucault developed this idea further and considered that the production of space was a social praxis appropriated for the specific goals of implementing power, and it is not independent (Grbin, 2015). In *Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias* (1967/1984), he held that "we live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another" (Foucault, 1984, 3). He then argues that there are two types of places: utopias and heterotopias. Utopias are not real places but unreal spaces or placeless places; "their counter-sites would be heterotopias, real places or sites that are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted" (Foucault, 1984, 3). A place/space is defined by at least six principles, or "heterotopic" statuses, which we will not discuss, but mainly heterotopias "show that the spatial configurations represent and have immanent cultural, functional, political, and symbolic meanings" (Grbin, 2015, 309). In contrast, Michael de Certeau in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984) explains place as "an instantaneous configuration of positions which indicate and imply stability while space instead is 'practiced place'" (de Certeau, 1984, 117). He further relates place to the everyday experience and explains that we take turns and detours as we walk through a city.

In *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (1989), Edward Soja argues against the binary of imagined versus real space and considers a third possibility. This idea can be referred to as the healthy, tumultuous, and heterogeneous medium, or in his words, "an-Other," which cannot be included in either category: "It is sort of the

center of the periphery, or more precisely, a contact zone between a center that dissipates and a periphery that affirms" (Westphal, 2011, 69). Three layers are lived: first space, second space, and third space. Edward Casey (1993), who was influenced by Gaston Bachelard, "consider[s] the different ways in which philosophers have thought about (or ignored) place in their work" and presents "a carefully argued case for the importance of place" (Cresswell, 2014, 202). He also regards mapping as "charting one's own way in a given place or region" (Casey, 1993, 10).

Placing Place in Literary Analysis
Spatial Turn
Literary criticism has typically focused on time rather than space/place, but over the last twenty years, some scholars have changed gears, bringing place to the forefront of the inquiry. Some scholars attribute the shift to advances in communicative technology, others to maps, travel, the Internet, and Global Positioning Systems (GPS), and yet others argue that it is owed to transformations in cultural perspectives. Regardless of the reasons, it is undeniable that analyzing place brings a new perspective to literary criticism. As Scott Cohen has written, "focusing on the particulars of geography in notoriously difficult text can make conveniently solid that which routinely slips through the readers' grasp," and in particular, "the study of space and place can serve as steady anchors and a powerful lens in the study of opaque texts by having them examine the poetics and politics of the places" (Cohen, 2018, 172). Hence, this study utilizes geocriticism to analyze *Genji Monogatari* and employs Doreen Massey's theoretical analysis to explain the place-making processes.

Geocriticism
Geocriticism is a new method of literary analysis that installs place "at the center of the debate, one in which the spatial referent is the basis of the analysis, not the author and his or her work," as "one moves from the writer to the place" (Westphal, 2011). In the case of this article, "readers" move from "Murasaki Shikibu" and "*Genji Monogatari*" to "Kyoto" (Heiankyō) and its surrounding areas. This framework allows readers to form a pluralistic image of the places and understand the narrative from a new perspective. Westphal argues that by taking a geocritical perspective, one chooses a plural point of view located at the crossroads of distinct representations. He also suggests that one,

> …contributes to the process of determining a common space, born from and touching upon different points of view. Also, we can come closer to the essential identity of the referenced space. At the same time, we can confirm that any cultural identity is only the result of incessant efforts of creation and re-creation. This conclusion establishes one of the methodological tenets of geocriticism: multifocalization of views on a given referential space… geocriticism studies a concept that comes in many different forms (interface, connections, etc.), but forms that all lead the researcher to identify the interactive boundaries and to accord to them a nonmarginal status. (Westphal, 2011, 114)

This approach to studying *Genji Monogatari* benefits the readers by sensitizing them to different aspects of place and exploring them in a multiplicity of ways, which in turn will help them understand the place-making processes that have taken place in this tale.

Place as a Progressive Process

Doreen Massey, professor of geography and one of the major figures in twentieth-century geography, cleverly disputes the notion posited by Harvey that "time-space compression and its effects depend solely on the economic conditions under which space is 'produced'" (Harvey, 1973). Further, she argues that the space time compression remains under-examined, without much social context, and is usually one-sided. We need to consider other aspects, such as gender and ethnicity, since they also cause differentiated movement and communication differences across space. Massey also provides several examples to demonstrate that power relations influence flows of movement in space and from one place to another. Different social groups have different access to mobility and access. Causality and differentiated mobility help develop the politics of mobility and access. She calls it the "power-geometry of time-space compression" and states that "different social groups and different individuals are placed in very distinct ways in relation to these flows and interconnectedness" (Massey, 1993, 156). Thus, we are no longer just trying to understand who moves and who remains put, but also the power in relation to those movements (or lack thereof). This point is emphasized throughout *Genji Monogatari* and the

chapters selected for this study: Who gets access to which women/men? Who gets to serve at the Palace? Who lives in which pavilion? Who succeeds the emperor? Who roams as an unranked prince? And who is stripped of rank and becomes a commoner?

Many argue, then, that movement in the time-space compression generates insecurity, and as a result, people need a peaceful and quiet "place" to be secure. This type of characterization of a single identity and an unproblematic place, Massey explains, is problematic. For her, the problem stems from following Heidegger's logic, which characterizes space/place as "being" rather than "becoming" (1993). She further argues that if we were to think of a progressive sense of place, then we would be able to get out of the conceptual entanglement. To solve it, she urges us to rid ourselves of two ideas: (1) that places have single identities; and (2) that places require boundaries to be drawn. Doris Bargen seems to echo her when she discusses the *shinden* architecture in *Genji Monogatari*:

> Although the conventions of *shinden-zukuri* architecture were well known and the space around and within the residence was clearly delineated, the *meaning* of that space for those who occupied it was ambiguous, fluid, and constantly shifting. (Bargen, 2017, xii)

For Massey, places have multiple identities rather than seamless, cohesive ones, and there is not one encompassing sense of place for all. Additionally, these multiple identities are the source of both richness and conflict.

Utilizing this analytical framework, Massey did not just criticize Heidegger and others; instead, she proposed a new way to interpret place. In Massey's view, "what gives place its specificity is the fact that it is constructed of a particular constellation of relations that are articulated together at a particular locus," and therefore, "places can be imagined as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings," so that "the sense of place becomes extra-verted and includes a consciousness of its links to the world, thus, it integrates the local and the global positively" (Massey, 1993, 66). Furthermore, a place, Massey posits, has four characteristics. First, it is an "active" process that depends on spatial interactions. The implication of the static "being," proposed by Heidegger as place, is now formed of processes instead. Massey is not the first to challenge Heidegger's static conception of place. In the 1920s, Watsuji indicated this in his book, translated into English in 1961 as *A Climate: A Philosophical*

Study (Watsuji, 1920). He considered that by placing too much emphasis on time, Heidegger had somewhat overlooked the dynamicity of place where a person engages in social activities.

The second characteristic is that places have no boundaries as in a division provided by a framed enclosure. Instead, we have the particularity of linkage to the outside. The linkage becomes part of what constitutes that place rather than the dichotomy of inside/outside. If we analyze place in this alternative way, then the newcomers are not necessarily threatening. In *Genji Monogatari,* we see the Akashi Priest becoming excited when Genji arrives at Suma because, in his mind, this event opens up the perfect opportunity for his daughter to get married to get the place he thinks she deserves in the world. Third, places cannot possess a single identity. Utilizing the same example, for Genji when he is first exiled, Suma is dreadful and a source of pain, while later, when he is back in the Capital, he thinks of it with nostalgia. Fourth, the first three characteristics do not deny place and its specificity, which is continually reproduced. Place's specificity is linked to the evolving social relationships "associated with the geographical uniqueness of the space and its bond to a historical layering, related in turn, to a local and global scale" (Massey, 1993, 68).

Following Massey's idea that places do not have a single sense for all the characters, as evidenced in *Genji Monogatari*, we can better understand their surroundings as the constellations of spatial interactions and relations create a sense of place with multiple identities. For instance, it explains how the emperor may be grieving for his lost love on a bright moonlit night while the Kokiden Consort played music. Reading the narrative through this lens shows that each place is formed by processes that make it specific but not static. Heiankyō's geographical uniqueness and its bond to a historical layering connect to a global and local scale to showcase the social, political, and amorous relations associated with nature in the Heian Period.

In thinking of places, a series of social relations facilitates the conceptualization of the relations between center and periphery (so common in *Genji Monogatari*) and the arrival in the center of those who were previously marginal (for example, when the Akashi Lady comes to Rokujō-in). At the same time, "entering into the peripheral allows the traveler to assert authority in a way that would otherwise be beyond reach within the social structure of the imperial court" (Strand, 2015, 8). This is demonstrated, for example, in Chapter XII – "*Suma*" when Genji is stripped of his rank in the Capital and self-exiles and yet still commands respect in the province, so

much so that the Akashi priest would rather have his daughter married to him than to a provincial governor.

Genji Monogatari Scholarship in English Discusses Place

If, as Westphal suggests, "databases organized around spatial criteria are rare… and indices that associate a work with a place are far less common than dictionaries of characters" (Westphal, 2011, 117). By extension, it can be safely argued that *Genji Monogatari* is no different. In fact, there are several websites, blogs, and charts of characters, but not many are dedicated to places. One exception worth mentioning is Genjipedia.com, created by Mac Gill, a graduate student at the University of Iowa pursuing an MA in Library and Information Science. Miss Mac has created a detailed interactive map of *Genji Monogatari* places. Although it is still under construction, it seems to be a promising resource for anyone embarking on the study of place in this tale.

Of the many scholarly works available in English, only a few analyze place in *Genji Monogatari* to a certain extent, while others briefly discuss it. Still, most offer information about the tale's setting in Heiankyō or place in the Heian Period rather than examining the narrative from the perspective of place. Bargen wrote that the text offers: "detailed descriptions of the characters' movements in space [place], be it in residential complexes, in the countryside, or in journeys between the capital and [other places] …emphasis on location, in large part shapes the characters' identity" (Bargen, 2017, 10).

Even though the author refers to the *Sumiyoshi Monogatari* (The Sumiyoshi Tale)*,* the same idea applies to *Genji Monogatari*. Thinking of places as a series of social relations makes it easier to conceptualize the relations between the center(s) and the periphery(ies) (so common in *Genji Monogatari*) and the arrival of the previously marginal in the center (for example, when the Kiritsubo lady is assigned the Kōrōden pavilion). We could also take Chapter IV – *Yūgao*, as an example. While we are not told Yugao's location when she is scared by Tō No Chujō's wife, she escapes; at her new dwelling in Gojō, she is flirtatious with Genji and is the one who initiates their poem exchange and, in turn, their romance. In the same chapter, Genji takes her on a love escapade to a farther location, making them vulnerable until the spirit of the jealous Lady Rokujō kills her.

Placing *Genji Monogatari* and Murasaki Shikibu in Heiankyō

It was Hemingway's conviction that the place where a person writes influences the text itself (Herlihy, 2011). Following this, before delving into the analysis of place in the tale, it is vital to localize *Genji Monogatari* and its author Murasaki Shikibu in Heiankyō, where most of the action takes place. More specifically, out of 54 chapters, 41 occur in the Capital, ten in Uji, about seventeen kilometers away from Kyoto, and the remaining three about 50 kilometers away, in Suma, Akashi, and a pilgrimage to Sumiyoshi, respectively. It is important to note that ideas of distance have considerably changed since the tale was written, and getting to a place like Uji, for example, was considered quite a long journey. Suma and Akashi envisioned faraway locations where one could be exiled and free from social scrutiny. Regardless of where they happen, all of the chapters in *Genji Monogatari* have the court as the main center of power, so concentrating the analysis on understanding how it worked is crucial to comprehending the tale.

Starting at the center, a brief description of the Capital and its origins will be provided first, followed by a more detailed description of the important places it includes. In 794, after a series of mishaps, Emperor Kanmū had to move the Capital from Nagaoka, its previous location, to Heiankyō. Many have not heard of Nagaoka; this may be because it was the imperial Capital for only ten years (784–794). Before that, the Capital had been located in Nara, but it had to be moved because powerful Buddhist monks tried to usurp the throne. Even though one may think that Heiankyō was built on deserted land, it must be noted that the location was already inhabited. It had settlers: the Kamo and the Hata clans. The latter, Chinese immigrants, donated the land for the Capital. Buddhism already had a stronghold in the area because Prince Shotoku, with the support of the Hata clan, had promoted it. For example, both Koryō-ji Rokkaku-dō and Yasaka pagoda predate the founding of the Capital. The Hata clan also built Fushimi Inari and Matsuo shrines before the Capital was established. As shown in Figure 1, Heiankyō was laid out in a rectangular grid.
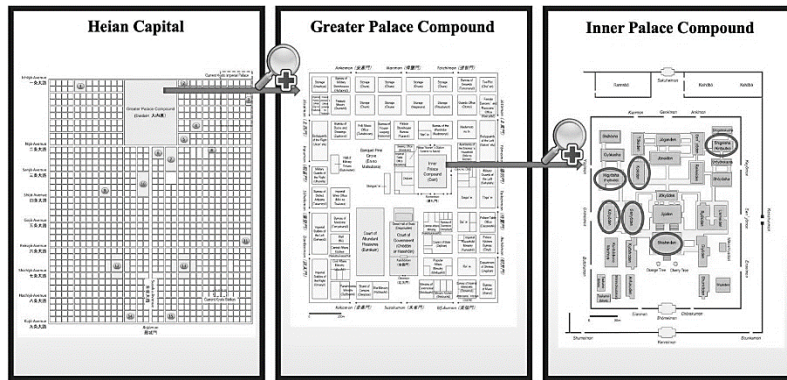
Figure 1. The Heian Capital, the Greater Palace Compound, and the Inner Palace Compound. Initially edited by Mark Jewel, Jlit (jlit.net), further edited by the author

The grid measured roughly 5.2 kilometers from north to south and around four and a half kilometers from east to West (Bargen, 2017; Stavros, 2014). The Capital was protected from evil by Mt. Hiei on the Northeast and by Fugaoka, a hill north of the *Daidairi* (Greater Imperial Palace), where the god Gembu (the Warrior of Darkness) was held to reside (Bargen, 2017). Suzaku-Ōji, the main avenue, was 82 meters wide. Although it no longer exists, Senbon-dōri (Thousand Tree Street) marks its original course. The avenue, which runs north-south from the Suzaku-mon (gate), the southern entrance to the *Daidairi*, to Rashō-mon, the Capital's southern entrance, divided the city into the Sakyō (Left Capital) to the east and the Ukyō (Right Capital) to the West. This arrangement reflected the Imperial government's division in which the emperor faces south to survey his realm and is flanked by his two Ministers – the Minister of the Left and the Minister of the Right (in charge of governing the Eastern and Western Provinces, respectively). The western half of the city was deserted compared to the eastern part (Bargen, 2017; Stavros, 2014;).

As Tyler indicates, "this is why, in history, as in the world of the Tale, the imperial palace compound is located in the north of the capital city, facing south, and why the residences of the nobility all face south as well" which "also explains the government's bilateral symmetry" (Shikibu &Tyler, 2001). Each half of Heiankyō had nine *jō* (zones) that ran from east to West; the northernmost was *ichijō* (First Street), and the southernmost was *kujō*

(Ninth Street), on each side of the Capital. North-South avenues divided the Right and Left zones into eight *bō* (quarters) of about seventeen acres each; these were further divided into 16 *cho* or *machi* (blocks) of about 120 meters on one side. Each *machi* could be further divided into 32 rectangular *henushi* (lots), eight *henushi* north to south, and four *henushi* east to West. One *henushi* measured about thirty by fifteen meters. On Shichi-jō (Seventh Street), and symmetrically in the right and left halves of the city, there were two markets, and near them, two guest houses, the East and West Kōrōkan. The guest houses were used to lodge foreign ambassadors because they were not allowed in the *Dairi* (Imperial Palace enclosure).

The *Daidairi* was surrounded by a moat and an embankment with fourteen gates. The gates were symmetrically located as follows: four each on the east and west sides and three each on the north and south sides. Gardens with streams, recreational areas, open spaces, and walled-in offices and residences occupied the interior. The *daidairi* contained the *dairi*, the inner enclosure, where the emperor's quarters were located, and the *kōkyū* (rear) palace, where his women resided, to the east of the *daidairi*'s central east-west axis and the north of the north-south one. It was at the center of the northern part of the city and occupied one-fifth of its roughly 400 acres (1.3 kilometers from north to south and 1.1 kilometers from east to West). Even though it no longer exists, just north of Senbon-dōri, a stone still marks its location.

Although it provides a window into Heian architecture, the Imperial Palace existing today in Kyoto is not the original one, nor is it at the exact location. The present Imperial Palace used to be the residence of a Fujiwara nobleman. Emperors also stayed there when the Imperial Palace was under renovation because of fires or earthquakes. In 1308, it became the official *sato-dairi* (outside Imperial Residence), and emperors could stay for extended periods of time. The buildings one visits nowadays were rebuilt in 1856, but they were built in imitation of those in the Heian Period. The Shishin-den (Pure Dragon Hall), the place where the enthronement and other ceremonies were celebrated, contains the throne crowned with a phoenix. There are replicas of paintings on wall panels done in 888. A person can reach the hall by going up 18 steps flanked by a cherry tree to the east and a citrus tree to the West. The trees represent the places where the guards from the Left (east) and the Right (West) stood when on duty. The Seiryō-den (Pure Cool Hall) was initially meant to serve the emperors but, in the end, was used for functions.

The Shinsen-en (Sacred Spring Garden), located southeast of the *Daidairi* enclosure, was designated an Imperial garden and was only opened to the public on special occasions. It was a popular place to celebrate Imperial poetry parties, contests, and Buddhist ceremonies. It was also an important place for public events in *Genji Monogatari*. For example, the Shinsen-en was the place where Genji's and his brother Suzaku's coming-of-age ceremonies were celebrated. The garden also featured a lake where boats would have musicians and drinks. Only a small pond remains today, with an islet on which rests a shrine dedicated to the Dragon Queen, south of Nijō Castle. The Rajō-mon (Main City Gate), which fell into ruin after the Heian Period, was located at the southern end of Suzaku-Ōji: "The only thoroughfare to the city was through this gate which also stood at the head of the Toba road leading to the river port south of the capital" (Plutschow, 1983, 21). Today, a stone remains in the middle of a children's playground. Still, it is interesting to note that the Toba road is not mentioned in the English *Genji Monogatari* translations.

Temples in Heiankyō.

While in Nara, temples occupied locations north of the Palace, in Heiankyō, they were placed in the southern end of the city. In the beginning, there were only two temples, one in the West, To-ji (also called Kyoō Gokoku-ji (Temple for the Transmission of the Teachings to the King and the Protection of the State), and another in the east, Sai-ji. In contrast with the location, temples occupied in Nara, Sai-ji, and To-ji guarded the southern end of the city. They were located on either side of Rajomon (*rajo*: city walls, *mon*: gate) "as if to balance the protective presence of the *daidairi* at the extreme north end" (Bargen, 2017). It is argued that the reason for this location and the limited number of temples is that after the Buddhist "pope" tried to usurp the throne in Nara, the Buddhist monks' main functions were to conduct rites and prayers to protect the imperial Palace, the Capital, and the state. Kūkai, the founder of the Shingon Buddhist sect and head of To-ji, was allowed to establish a Shingon center within the imperial enclosure. Some of To-ji's halls, the Ko-dō (Lecture Hall), Shoku-dō (Refectory), and Taishi-dō Hall (the living quarters of Kūkai), still stand today, and the temple is one of the few early Heian period sites that can still be visited. Interestingly, every 21st of the month, there is a market held in memory of Kūkai (on his death day). Sai-jo was burnt down in 990, but its pagoda, not mentioned in *Genji Monogatari,* survived until 1233, when it also burnt down.

Shrines in Heian-Kyō

Go-jō, Roku-jō, and Kiyomizu temples do not predate the Capital's founding but were built before *Genji Monogatari*. When Yūgao dies at the hands of Lady Rokujō's spirit, it is here that Koremitsu takes her body to have it cremated. A little farther away, there are other temples, including Kurama, located about 13 kilometers away from the Imperial Palace, and Daiun-ji, located about 9 kilometers away; both temples claim to be the Northern Hills temple where Genji first discovered Murasaki. Herbert Plutschow (1983) argues that Daiun-ji may be the rightful title owner since, in 971, a statue of Kannon was installed there at the request of a princess hoping to be cured of a mental illness, and this started the tradition of worshiping Iwakura Kannon at the temple to pray for the mentally ill. Since Genji had a fever, he may have gone there to be cured. Unfortunately, he offers no proof of this nor elaborates it further, so it is difficult to confirm his claim. Although the Heian Shrine in Kyoto today was not built during the Heian Period, its buildings are a replica of that peculiar architecture, as are its gardens. People can stroll through them to get an accurate idea of the shape and size of Heian period shrine building structures.

Mountain Retreats and Temples

To avoid the pollution of the Capital, once people were on the point of death or getting old, they would retreat to the mountains. Emperors would abdicate in the name of their sons and live in the hills until they died.

Enryaku-ji and Mt. Hiei: Mt. Hiei is located to the Northeast of the city. It is important to note that the Northeast was the location from where demons were supposed to spread epidemics and fires. In order to protect the city from them, Enryaku-ji was built, and monks were tasked with beating bells and reciting sutras. In Shaka-dō there is a pillar marking the Devil's gate, the only remaining structure from the Heian Period since Oda Nobunaga burnt all 400 temples on Mt. Hiei in 1571.

Mount Takao: Located northwest of Kyoto and famous for its spring and autumn colors, this mountain had (and they survive to this day) two temples, Jingo-ji and Kozan-ji, which still retain the original buildings. Jingo-ji was constructed in 781 by Wake no Kiyomaro to pray for prosperity and peace for the "nation." In 802, Wake no Kiyomaro's son and the emperor invited Saichō, who founded the Tendai sect, to teach the priests of the country. In 809, Saichō invited Kūkai, who later founded the Shingon sect. The two worked harmoniously until 813, when they disagreed with their sects' teachings. Two years after Saichō's death, in 824, Jingo-ji merged with

Jingan-ji. Kūkai became the abbot and Jingo-ji, a Shingon sect temple that eventually moved to To-ji (in the city).

Nonomiya Shrine

A palace to prepare the priestess to enter the Grand Shrine of Ise is located in Sagano, about 8 kilometers northwest of Kyoto. Princesses lived in the shrine to undergo three years of purification before becoming the Priestesses of Ise. In *Genji Monogatari,* Lady Rokujō accompanied her daughter when she was named priestess, and Genji visited them there. The shrine, shown in Figure 2, has a black *kuroko torii* gate, which still has the bark and brushwood fences resembling the Heian Period. After the system of *saio* (an unmarried, young female relative of a Japanese Emperor who would serve at the Ise Grand Shrine) fell into disuse, the sanctuaries remained special shrines to perform imperial rites before, amid growing chaos, they fell into gradual decline. Because the shrine was considered auspicious and imperial members respected it, Emperor Nakamikado issued an edict and mandated the protection of the shrine from collapse. Despite being small, the shrine is still popular today.

Figure 2. **Nonomiya Shrine entrance and votive tables, photo by author**

Uji

Most of the last ten chapters of *Genji Monogatari* happen at Uji, which lies seventeen kilometers south of Kyoto. Uji was a center for Buddhism and the place where Heian aristocrats hunted for fireflies. Murasaki Shikibu lived near *Rozan-ji* temple, but it is believed that she wrote part of the tale at Ishiyama Temple. Her grave is near the streets Horikawa and Kitaōji, and Uji city has taken advantage of *Genji Monogatari*'s

popularity to advertise itself as "The Town of *The Tale of Genji*," with signs all over marking the locations where some of the scenes of the last ten chapters of the tale were set. Many vending machines are even decorated with *Genji Monogatari* art as a way to advertise it. Interestingly, the tale takes place in Kyoto, not Uji.

In sum, the places that matter in *Genji Monogatari,* from the most important to the least, are the *dairi* (the Imperial Palace), the *daidairi* (Greater Imperial Palace), the city and its close environs, the temples and shrines in the center of the city, those in the close vicinity of the city, the periphery of the city (for example Uji) and last the farther locations (for example, Suma). For example, most of the narrative in Chapter I – *Kiritsubo* happens at court, within the *dairi*, except for the emperor's messenger's visit to Genji's grandmother's house in Nijō, Genji's wife's house in Sanjō and the visit to the Korean diviner in the Kōrōkan. Even in those three instances in which the narrative leaves the *dairi*, it does so to show events related to or narrated in relation to the emperor's orders or desires.

Chapter I – *Kiritsubo*

Chapter Number	Title in Japanese	Translator: Arthur Waley	Translator: Edward Seidensticker	Translator: Royall Tyler [RT]	Translator: Dennis Washburn [DW]
I	*"Kiritsubo"*	"*Kiritsubo*"	"The Paulownia Court"	"The Paulownia Pavilion"	"The Lady of the Paulownia-Courtyard Chambers"

Introduction to Chapter I – "Kiritsubo"

In the name of Chapter I, "*Kiritsubo*," *kiri* stands for "paulownia tree," and *tsubo* for "a small garden between palace buildings." When put together, *Kiritsubo* means the pavilion in the Palace with a paulownia tree in its garden. Hence, the lady who lives in that pavilion is also called Kiritsubo. (Shikibu & Tyler, 2001) In this chapter, and also throughout the tale, many other ladies are named after the main flower in the garden of the pavilion

where they live. In the *Kiritsubo* chapter, readers are presented with the Imperial Palace and its standing in the world. We are shown how the Palace is central to the courtiers of the Heian Period and how the Heian Court feels about its relation to China and Korea.

Moreover, it illustrates how the places that people occupy are assigned respecting a strict hierarchy, where even the emperor, who is "above the clouds" and has the highest rank, is also expected to respect and abide by these regulations. There are grave consequences when a character disregards the established hierarchy, and Kiritsubo Consort's death is a prime example. Most importantly, we see that places have multiple identities, as Doreen Massey posited, rather than just one cohesive sense, and that the same place can be both a source of richness and conflict for the different people who occupy it.

In "*Kiritsubo*," the reigning emperor is in love and favors a lower-ranking *koi* (Consort) who lives in the Kiritsubo pavilion (within the *dairi*). His behavior enrages women of higher standing in the court, especially the Kokiden Consort, the daughter of the powerful Minister of the Right. She has borne the emperor a prince and other children. When *Kiritsubo* bears a child, the emperor lavishes so much attention on him that the Kokiden Consort fears her own son will be displaced in succession to the throne. She and other court ladies conspire to make Kiritsubo's daily trips from her pavilion to the emperor's and back a daunting task. The emperor then decides to assign her to the Kōrōden, a pavilion located closer to the Seiryōden (his quarters), but for that, he needs to displace its longtime resident. Criticism and displeasure in court mount up, and, as a result, Kiritsubo falls ill and soon after dies. The emperor is now desolated and spends all of his time thinking of his younger son, who must live outside of court at his grandmother's house until the mourning for his mother is over. He regularly checks on his son by sending emissaries and invitations to the grandmother, asking her to return him to court. The grandmother refuses but later agrees to send the young Prince back to the Palace, where his beauty and manners dazzle everyone, and now even the Kokiden Consort treats him kindly.

Although the emperor cannot forget his favorite Consort, one of the ladies of his staff tells him that she has seen a girl who greatly resembles his lost love. He is intrigued and wants to meet her, but her mother, aware of how Kiritsubo has been treated, fears for her daughter and refuses to send her to court. Soon after, the girl's mother dies, and the emperor manages to bring her to the Palace. She is installed in the Fujitsubo (Wisteria) pavilion, and because her standing is much higher (her father was an emperor) than that of

Kiritsubo, nobody dares to mistreat her. Genji hears of the resemblance between Fujitsubo and his mother and develops a crush on her. Because the emperor's younger son excels at everything he does and his beauty has no comparison, the emperor wishes he could appoint him to the throne, but he knows that the little Prince will be without his mother's side. The emperor's fears are confirmed when a Korean physiognomist sees the Prince. The emperor then decides to make him a Genji (commoner) rather than have him roam as an unranked prince, but he also ensures his favorite son's future. At the time of Genji's coming-of-age ceremony, the emperor arranged to marry him to Aoi (Heartvine), the daughter of the powerful Minister of the Left, forging a powerful alliance between the two families.

Places in Chapter I – "Kiritsubo"

Most of the narrative in Chapter I – "*Kiritsubo"* happens at court, within the *dairi* (inner palace compound). There are two exceptions: first, the emperor's messenger visits Genji's grandmother's house, and second, the visit to the Korean diviner in the Kōrōkan. Even if they happen outside, the three events are related to or narrated in relation to the emperor's orders or desires. Within the *dairi,* some places are private and public. The private ones are the pavilions occupied by the Emperor and his Consorts, as follows: Seiryōden, Kokiden, Kōrōden, Kiritsubo, and Fujitsubo. The public places include the crossbridges, bridgeways, and the Shinsen-en (Sacred Spring Garden). Analyzing this chapter's places clarifies several essential processes in the Heian Period:

> 1. The Imperial Palace was the center of the society, and everyone with aspirations tried their best to get a position there (the closer to the emperor, the better).
> 2. As someone pushes to the center, someone else needs to rescind their position or at least have it challenged.
> 3. The placements and displacements do not (or are not supposed to) happen randomly; a very structured hierarchy must be followed. Even the emperor must abide by them or face the consequences.

The pavilions within the *dairi* housed the emperor, his high- and low-ranking consorts and their attendants, and various supporting structures and offices. Consorts were assigned pavilions in accordance with a structured hierarchy.

Rank, length of serving term, and favoritism would determine who lived closer to the emperor's pavilion, the Seiryōden. In principle, a higher rank would place a consort closer, and a lower rank would have her farther away. Winning the emperor's favor could make one "jump" closer. This "jump" would be frowned upon if the Consort had no backing in court, and it would be overlooked if the lady had strong male relatives to support her in court.

The Seiryōden, the emperor's pavilion, was the center of the *dairi* and the place every man with a desire to advance in the court had his eyes on. The emperor was to call people to serve but had to respect the hierarchical rules and could only favor those of lower rank after he had done so with the higher-ranking ones if he wanted to avoid harsh criticism. The "*Kiritsubo*" chapter, cited from the translations by Royall Tyler (RT) and Dennis Washburn (DW), shows that the emperor flouted the social norms by favoring a lower-ranking consort:

> "She lived in the Kiritsubo. His Majesty had to pass many others on his constant visits to her, and no wonder they took offense." (RT 4)

> "Because the Kiritsubo was in the northeast corner of the Palace, and thus separated from the emperor's quarters in the Seiryōden, he would have to pass by the chambers of many of other court ladies on his frequent visits to her. Their resentment of these displays was not at all unreasonable…" (DW 5)

The emperor is so infatuated with Kiritsubo that he would have her stay past the hour when she should return and not divide his attention. So often he visited his beloved lady in her pavilion that "he is known as the Kiritsubo Emperor" (Shirane, 2015, 366). However, the emperor's favoritism towards Kiritsubo disrupted the *dairi*'s order and triggered a sequence of events, such as conspiracies, anxieties, and displacements.

First, the conspiracies: Kiritsubo was attacked when coming to and leaving the Seiryōden, and the other ladies at the Palace used the public places – crossbridges, bridgeways, and hallways – to display their displeasure with the emperor's attitudes:

> "On the far too frequent occasions when she went to him, there might be a nasty surprise awaiting her along the

crossbridges and bridgeways, one that horribly fouled the skirts of the gentlewomen who accompanied her or who came forward to receive her; or, the victim of a conspiracy between those on either side, she might find herself locked in a passageway between two doors that she could not avoid, and be unable to go either forward or back." (RT 4)

"…it was decided that the woman herself would have to go more often to the Seiryōden. The more she went, however, the more her rivals would strew the covered passageways connecting the various parts of the Palace with filth. It was an absolutely intolerable situation, for the hems of the robes of the accompanying attendants would be soiled. On other occasions, when the woman could not avoid taking the interior hallways, her rivals would arrange for the doors at both ends to be closed off so that she could neither proceed forward nor turn back, trapping her inside and making her feel utterly wretched." (DW 5)

The fact that no one was scolded or reprimanded for the despicable behavior further proves that the emperor acted unjustly.

Second, the anxieties: because Kiritsubo had a son and the emperor was even more attentive to her now, the Kokiden Consort was worried for her son; "she feared that he might appoint his new son Heir Apparent over her own" (RT 4), and courtiers were afraid for the fate of the realm,

"at this sad spectacle their senior nobles and privy gentlemen could only avert their eyes. Such things had led to disorder and ruin even in China, they said, and as discontent spread through the realm, the example of the Yōkihi came more and more to mind, with many a painful consequence for the lady herself" (RT 1)

In Tyler's translation, the emperor's behavior was called a "sad spectacle" and "deplorable" in Washburn's. Also, by comparing the events with those in China's Tang Dynasty, we are shown there is no respect for rules. Here, Kiritsubo could not bear the criticism and fell sick: "Despite her [Kiritsubo's] faith in His Majesty's sovereign protection, so many belittled her and sought to find fault with her that, far from flourishing, she began in her distress to

waste away" (RT 4). The emperor's full support and affection should make a lady happy, but her reputation was ruined because he did not abide by the rules.

Third, as a consequence, the emperor displaced (evicted) the old resident of the Kōrōden pavilion, which was located next to his, and installed Kiritsubo there. Seeing how she suffered from such endless humiliations, as circumstances favored her enemies' designs, His Majesty had the Intimate long resident in the Kōrōden move elsewhere and gave it to her instead (to have her nearby): "The one evicted nursed a particularly implacable grudge" (RT 4). Later, Kiritsubo is so sick that the emperor has to grant her permission to return to her parent's residence:

> "His Majesty, who could no longer keep her by him, suffered acutely to think that he could not even see her off."
> (RT 4)

> "Resigned to the fact that the life of his true love was approaching its end and mindful of the taboo against defiling the palace with death, His Majesty was nonetheless grief-stricken beyond words that the dictates of protocol prevented him from seeing her off." (DW 5)

Because she is on the verge of death, the emperor is not allowed to get "polluted" and has to stay away from her, knowing she will die. When she leaves the Palace (and soon after dies), order is restored within the *dairi*. First, *Kiritsubo*'s son, Genji, the emperor's favorite, leaves the Palace for mourning:

> "He still longed to see his son, but the child was soon to withdraw, for no precedent authorized one in mourning to wait upon the emperor." (RT 6)

> "His Majesty desperately wanted to see the young Prince his beloved had left behind at the Palace, but there was no precedent for permitting anyone to serve at court while having to wear robes of mourning. So it was decided that the boy should be sent from the Palace to his mother's residence." (DW 6–7)

The emperor's movements were constrained, and he would not see his son until the mourning period was over. He had to "send a trusted gentlewoman or nurse to [the Nijō residence] to find out how he was getting on" (RT 7). Regardless of how miserable he felt and how much he missed his son, he could not visit him. Moreover, the response he gets from the grief-stricken grandmother highlights once again how the attention he lavished on Kiritsubo was inappropriate. The emperor sent his messenger to Genji's grandmother, and one would expect that a visit from the Palace would bring joy, but in this case, the reaction is quite different. The grandmother's response suggests that "a visit from the court only brings more sorrow. Her poem reveals both her grief and her deep displeasure at the Emperor's unforgivable behavior" (Okada, 2011, 190). We can say then that the Palace made the emperor feel imprisoned, although he was in charge of the realm. The Kokiden Consort's behavior made this feeling even more acute.

The Kokiden pavilion is located "close by in the north side of his private chambers in the Seiryōden" (DW 13). They are occupied by the Kokiden Consort, who now does not worry about her position anymore and shows she does not care about Kiritsubo's death or the emperor's feelings. She is happy now that the *dairi* is once again in order.

> "[The Emperor] heard the Kokiden Consort... making the best of a beautiful moon by playing music far into the night. He did not like it and wished it would stop… the offender, willful and abrasive, seemed determined to behave as though nothing had happened." (RT 11)

> "…with the moon in full splendor, [the emperor] could hear [the Kokiden Consort] indulging in musical entertainment to pass the night. [he] was appalled and found it quite unpleasant…The Kokiden Consort was a proud and haughty woman who behaved as though she couldn't care less about His Majesty's grief." (DW 13)

Even if order had been restored, the Kokiden Consort should have respected the fact that the emperor was in mourning, and not doing so brought her criticism from others and made the emperor more distant, but she has enough support – her father is the powerful Minister of the Right – to act in such manner. Occupying the Kokiden pavilion gave its residents leeway to act recklessly since they had almost as much power as the emperor (and sometimes even more). This pavilion occupies a vital place throughout the

tale. In this same place, Genji is caught in bed with Kokiden's sister, Oborozukiyo, and ultimately gets stripped of his rank, leading him to self-exile.

The Kōrōden pavilion is only mentioned in the first chapter of *Genji Monogatari* after the emperor assigns it to Kiritsubo, displacing its long-term resident. We are not informed what happened to the original Kōrōden resident other than: "the one evicted nursed a particularly implacable grudge" (RT 4) in Tyler's translation and "causing her to nurse a deep resentment that proved impossible to placate" (DW 5) in Washburn's version. The lady displaced from the Kōrōden pavilion probably felt that she would be protected by belonging to or living within the *dairi*, but being moved out of her quarter did not just mean she had to accustom herself to another environment. Instead, she lost protection and status and ended up being out of the picture or, as in this case, completely out of the narrative since she is never mentioned again. We learn that even occupying the closest place to the emperor for a long time does not guarantee safety forever. In other words, status is fragile. One wonders what type of support she had. But the same place, Kōrōden, has a different appeal for different people. Kiritsubo "caught a break" since once placed there, she was no longer humiliated in public, but at the same time, the lady that was displaced from there was never able to tame her jealousy.

The Kiritsubo pavilion, of all those named in *Genji Monogatari*, is the one located the farthest from the Seiryōden. Moreover, it is located in the Northeast, the unlucky location closest to the Demon's gate. It is to be occupied by lower-ranking people, those not supposed to enjoy the highest favor from the emperor. But Murasaki Shikibu places the emperor's favorite lady there and later the son they had together, who also was his favorite. The Kiritsubo pavilion has multiple identities, which not only vary in terms of people but also over time. For Kiritsubo and her gentlewomen, it was a source of anxiety because every time she had to call on the emperor, they knew they would be humiliated. Later, when Genji gets the pavilion for himself, the same gentlewomen continue serving him. Now, they were no longer humiliated but likely missed his mistress and were sad there. Since Genji was to wait on the Emperor "for five or six days," the Kiritsubo pavilion was a happy place because he could be closer to the Fujitsubo Consort than if he had returned home (although when he became an adult, he could no longer get past the curtains). At the same time, the distance to the Seiryōden is "a reminder of his contradictory position in being both favored and denied at the same time" (Tambling, 2009). For Aoi, Genji's wife, since the Heian

uxorilocal custom mandated that she remained at her house, the Kiritsubo implied that she would be alone (Bargen, 2017).

The Fujitsubo – *fuji* (wisteria) and *tsubo* (pavilion) – was also named for the flowers in its garden, and so was the lady who occupied it. Figure 3 shows it is located about the same distance from the Seiryōden as the Kokiden pavilion, destined to house a high-ranking lady. Many important events during the tale happen here since the lady who comes to occupy it is the emperor's surrogate for the lost Kiritsubo and also the object of Genji's love. She is exalted to the rank of Empress (skipping the Kokiden Consort) and has a son, Reizei, who will eventually occupy the throne after Suzaku, the Kokiden Consort's son.
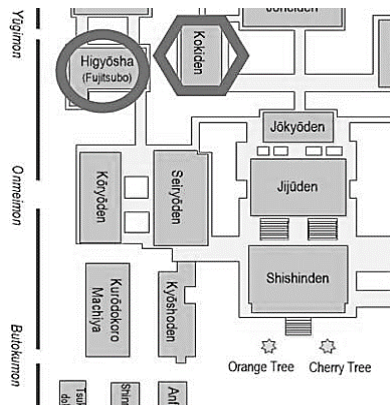
**Figure 3. Fujitsubo Pavilion in Relation to Kokiden Pavilion.
Initially edited by Mark Jewel, Jlit (jlit.net),
further edited by the author**

The Nijō (Second Avenue) residence was Kiritsubo's family house and was not far from the Imperial Palace enclosure, but the Grand Counselor had died, so the widow had a hard time keeping up the place, which gave it an air of melancholy. She retired there on every occasion she had gotten sick while serving at the Palace and later died there. For her, Nijō was a source of solace because she could escape the humiliations of the court, but also of sadness since living there would mean separation from the emperor and her son. For the emperor, this meant separation from his first love and from his favorite son right after her death. But later, when Genji became an adult, it

also provided him with the chance to redeem himself and to show Genji his love when he,

> "decreed that the Office of Upkeep and the Office of Artisans should rebuild [it], which they did beautifully. The layout of the trees and garden hills was already very pleasant, but with much bustle and noise they handsomely enlarged the lake." (RT 18)

For Genji, Nijō was a reminder of his dead grandmother and of how much he missed the Palace when he was mourning as a child, but once it is renovated, he "kept wishing with many sighs that he had a true love to come and live with him there" (RT 18). Thus, the Nijō residence also changes its meaning throughout time.

The Sanjō (Third Avenue) residence was the Minister of the Left's house and Genji's uxorilocal home. In Tyler's translation, the residence is not mentioned by location in the "*Kiritsubo*" chapter, but it appears in Washburn's version. Throughout the tale, "Genji was not free to live at home, for His Majesty summoned him too often" (RT 17). He was required to serve at the Palace many days in a row and would only come to his wife's home sporadically. These movements from, to, in, and out of his wife's house created many opportunities for Genji to court several women.

As previously explained, getting access to the *dairi* shows that place-making in *Genji Monogatari* depends on movement and communication. Okada states in *Displacements of Conquest, Or Exile, The Tale Of Genji, And Post-Cold War Learning,* "the marriage of daughters of high-ranking families often take center stage in *Genji Monogatari* in the form of fatherly desire and the determination to find appropriate husbands and situations, whether as imperial consorts or as wives of prominent courtiers" (Okada, 2009, 69). In the "*Kiritsubo*" chapter, there are several such examples backing his claim. First, Kiritsubo, and later Fujitsubo, then Aoi, and at last, the Minister of the Right's fourth daughter. These women were married off to secure a better position for the family within the court. At no point in the chapter is there any mention of the wives-to-be's feelings or desires. These "'ambitions' run on gender lines; the father/[brother] usually want something for the daughter/[sister] while the mother does not" (Tambling, 2009, 116).

The first example of the father's ambitions and the mother's reticence is Kiritsubo, who was sent to serve in court, despite having no

backing to protect her, which ultimately (in conjunction with the emperor's disrespect of established hierarchies) brought about her death. Her mother, in conversation with one of the emperor's messengers, states:

> "We had such hopes for her from the time she was born, and my husband, the late Grand Counselor, kept urging me almost until his last breath to achieve his ambition for her and have her serve His Majesty. 'Do not lose heart and give up,' he said, 'just because I am gone.' So, I did send her, although I felt that if she had to enter palace service without anyone to support her properly, it might be wiser to refrain, because what mattered to me was to honor his last wishes." (RT 17)

In this case, it is clear that, regardless of Kiritsubo's mother's knowledge of the risks involved in sending her daughter to the Palace, her deceased husband's desires could not be resisted. At the same time, the emperor also knows he should not "pamper" her to the point of scandal, but he does, despite her begging him to stop. Once she is gone, he laments losing her but also makes a "sorrier spectacle than ever before" (RT 9). While Kiritsubo pleaded with the emperor to let her return to her family house, he did not grant her permission until the very end, when it was already too late.

Later in the chapter, after several years have passed and the emperor still remembers his beloved Kiritsubo, none of the prospects he is presented with please him. Until one day, the Dame of Staff tells him about a Princess that greatly resembles her. Like Kiritsubo's father, this Princess's father has also died. The emperor approaches the Princess's mother, and this time again, the mother is scared at the prospect of having her daughter serve in court: "She received the proposal, because she knew how unpleasant the Heir Apparent's mother could be and shrank from exposing her daughter to the blatant contempt with which this Consort had treated the Kiritsubo rival" (RT 14). Although this Princess does not have to worry because she can count on proper support since her deceased father was a former emperor, the rivalry to which her daughter would be subjected makes the mother worry. She dies before consenting or refusing the emperor's request, so in the end, the princess is brought to court because of her family, mainly the "principal men in her mother's family" (RT 14), although it was better for her (and for themselves). Again, the men's interests, to have women placed at the Palace

where they can enhance the men's chances of climbing the political ladder, are put above the women's desires and well-being.

There are two more arranged marriages in this chapter. Both are narrated from the fathers' perspective and with the same intention as the first two: to enhance the men's chances of acquiring more power in the court. First, the Minister of the Left offers to marry his daughter, Aoi, to the emperor's favorite but demoted to commoner son, Genji. This marriage benefits all three men involved, the fathers-in-law and the groom-to-be. Forging this alliance, the emperor ensures his favorite son will have a strong position and even more robust backing. Even without having any say in the alliance, Genji is secured with a good family to provide for him. And the Minister of the Left gets the upper hand versus his rival, the Minister of the Right. In Dennis Washburn's words, "Moreover, the addition of Genji to the Minister's [of the Left family] diminished the prestige of his rival the Minister of the Right, who as grandfather of the Crown Prince would eventually assume power as Chancellor" (DW 20). Genji, who is younger than his wife, never really gets along with her, and we learn in subsequent chapters, we learn that Aoi is displeased with the match. Not only does she find Genji childish, but he never truly respects her. Second, the Minister of the Right marries his fourth daughter to Genji's wife's brother, the son of his main rival for power, the Minister of the Left. He was the Middle Captain in the Inner Palace Guard, and the Minister of the Right could "hardly ignore such a promising [and talented] prospect" (DW 20). In this case, the woman was already in the Palace but needed a husband to restore or balance the power lost when Genji married Aoi.

In this way, all of the marriage arrangements in the Kiritsubo chapter are meant to bring women to the Palace, the center of society, where the men in the families would get better chances to get close to the throne or rise in the ranks of the court. In effect, proving Doreen Massey's idea that power relations influence flows of movement in space from one place (outside of the Palace) to another (the Palace), these women are moving but are not in charge. Also, different social groups have different access to mobility and access. Kiritsubo is a case in point: she was of lower rank, and even after getting a better-located pavilion (the Kōrōden) because of the extreme favor of the emperor, she was mistreated, or we could argue even that it was because of the attentions the emperor lavished on her that she had to suffer so much.

Conclusion

Examining *Genji Monogatari* in light of Doreen Massey's idea that places do not have a single sense of place for all the characters helps us understand how they felt, for instance, how on a bright moon night, the emperor may be mourning for his lost love, while the *Kokidēn* Consort is playing music without a care in the world. Instead, there are constellations of spatial interactions and relations that, when combined, create a sense of place with multiple identities. This geocritical approach to reading the narrative makes it evident that each place is formed by processes that make them specific but not static. The social, political, and amorous relations in association with nature in the Heian Period determine the geographical uniqueness of the Heiankyō and its bond to a historical layering, related in turn to a local and global scale.

References

Agnew, J. A., & Livingstone, D. N. (2011). *The SAGE Handbook of Geographical Knowledge*. London: SAGE Publications.

Bargen, D. (2017). *Mapping Courtship and Kinship in Classical Japan.* Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Casey, E. S. (1993). *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World (Studies in Continental Thought)*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Cook, L. (2016). "Premodern Commentary on the Classical Literary Canon." In H. Shirane, T. Suzuki, & D. Lurie (Eds.), *The Cambridge History of Japanese Literature*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CHO9781139245869.015.

Cresswell, T. (2014). *Place: An Introduction*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. ProQuest Ebook Central. http://ebookcentral.pro quest.com/lib/waseda-ebooks/detail.action?docID=1780033.

Certeau M. d. (1984). *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkely, CA: University of California Press.

Cohen, Scott (2018). "Space, Movement, and Modern Literature." In R. T. Tally Jr. (Ed.), *Teaching Space, Place, and Literature*. New York: Routledge.

Foucault, M. (1984). "Of Other Spaces." *Diacritics: A Review of Contemporary Criticism*, 16(1).

Grbin, M. (2015). "Foucault and Space." *Socioloski Pregled*, 49(3), 305–312.

Harper, T., & Shirane, H. (2015). *Reading The Tale of Genji: Sources from the First Millennium* (Illustrated ed.). New York: Columbia University Press.

Herlihy, J. (2011). "The Role of Place in Literature." *In Paris or Paname*. Leiden: Brill. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789401206969_004.

Kawabata, Y. (1968). *Japan, the Beautiful and Myself*. NobelPrize. https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/1968/kawabata/lecture.

Lefebvre, H. (1974). "La production de l'espace." *L'homme et la société*, 31(1), 15–32. https://doi.org/10.3406/homso.1974.1855.

Massey, D. (1993). "Power-Geometry and Progressive Sense of Place." In J. Bird., B. Curtis., T. Putnam., G. Robertson., & L. Tickner (Eds.), *Mapping the Futures: Local Cultures, Global Change*. London: Routledge, 59–69.

Okada, R. (1990). "Domesticating the *Tale of Genji*." *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 110(1), 60–70. https://doi.org/10.2307/603910.

Okada, R. (2011). "Figures of Resistance: Language, Poetry, and Narrating in *The Tale of Genji* and Other Mid-Heian Texts." *The Tale of Genji* (108–123). London: Routledge.

Plutschow, H. E. (1983). "Historical Kyoto with Illustrations and Guide Maps." *The Japan Times*. Tokyo: The Japan Times, Ltd.

Plutschow, H. E. (1990). *Chaos and Cosmos: Ritual in Early and Medieval Japanese Literature*. Leiden: Brill's Japanese Studies Library.

Seaman, A. (2016). *Exploring the Connections Between Literary Places, Literary Texts, and Tourist Performance*. Ph.D. dissertation, Clemson University.

Shikibu, M., & Suematsu, K. (1882). *The Tale of Genji*. London: Trubner and Co.

Shikibu, M., & Tyler, R. (2002). *The Tale of Genji* (Deluxe ed.). London: Penguin Classics.

Shikibu, M., & Washburn, D. (2016). *The Tale of Genji* (Unabridged ed.). New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Shimauchi, K. (2019). "The Story at the Heart of Japanese Culture: 'The Tale of Genji.'" Nippon.com. https://www.nippon.com/en/japan-topics/g00690/the-story-at-the-heart-of-japanese-culture-the-tale-of-genji.html.

Soja, E. W. (1989). *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*. London: Verso.

Soja, E. W. (1996). *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Stavros, M., Knapp, R. G., & Ruan, X. (2016). *Kyoto: An Urban History of Japan's Premodern Capital (Spatial Habitus: Making and Meaning in Asia's Architecture)* (Reprint ed.). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Strand, K. D. (2015). *Aesthetics of Space: Representations of Travel in Medieval Japan*. Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Michigan.

Tambling, J. (2009). "'Kiritsubo': Genji, Spacing and Naming." In R. Standley-Baker., M. Fumi., & J. Tambling (Eds.), *Reading the Tale of Genji: Its Picture Scrolls, Texts and Romance*, 103–131. Kent, UK: Global Oriental Ltd.

Tuan, Y. (1977). *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Westphal, B. (2011). *Geocriticism: Real and Fictional Places*. Trans. Robert Tally. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Withers, C. (2009). "Place and the 'Spatial Turn' in Geography and in History." *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 70, 637–658. https://doi.org/10.1353/jhi.0.0054.

ZEN AND THE ART OF DETECTION:
THE CASE OF JANWILLEM VAN DE WETERING
(1931–2008)

Ben Van Overmeire, Xiao Liu, Yuan Li
Duke Kunshan University

Overview

The detective fiction of the Dutch writer Janwillem van de Wetering (1931–2008) has reached global audiences. Often, not in the least by himself, this detective literature is interpreted as inspired by the author's own experiences with Zen Buddhism, documented in three memoirs. However, the exact nature of this engagement has remained unclear. Most of Van de Wetering's detective works are set, after all, in Holland, a place that seems very remote from Asia, let alone Buddhism. In this article, we suggest that the Zen elements of Van de Wetering's detective fiction can be understood under the term "emptiness," a very prominent concept in Zen modernism. Hence, this study examines the significance of emptiness in this author's style and content, demonstrating how popular literature disseminated Buddhist ideas.

Introduction

Janwillem van de Wetering was a man of many faces. After growing up in the Netherlands, he lived in Cape Town, South Africa, where he was unhappy as a businessman, joined a motorcycle gang, and married a poet. The marriage rapidly fell apart, and Van de Wetering, driven by a quest to find out the meaning of life, went to London to study philosophy. Philosophy did not help much, but in London, he did discover Zen Buddhism through the writing of Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki.[1] Convinced that Zen had the answer to his existential questions, he set off for Japan, staying in Kyoto's famous Daitokuji temple for about a year between 1958 and 1959. Though he initially felt like he had failed at Zen because he did not get enlightened, Van de Wetering would remain fascinated with Zen for the rest of his life, studying under various teachers and achieving enlightenment under the guidance of

---

[1] Ben Van Overmeire, "Portraying Zen Buddhism in the Twentieth Century: Encounter Dialogues as Frame-Stories in Daisetz Suzuki's Introduction to Zen Buddhism and Janwillem Van de Wetering's *The Empty Mirror*," *Japan Studies Review* 21 (2017): 3–24.

the Zen teacher Walter Nowick in Maine, a place where he ended up spending most of his life.

After publishing two autobiographical reflections on his Zen experiences, Van de Wetering became famous for a series of detective novels centered around the "Amsterdam cops." This series is partly based on his own experience as a policeman in Amsterdam, but reviews and advertising materials connected these detective novels with the author's unique Zen experiences. This connection was encouraged by Van de Wetering himself, who, in various interviews, never tired of referring to the impact of Zen practice in his works. In this article, the first survey of Van de Wetering's detective fiction that focuses on Zen elements, we investigate this connection.[2] We propose that his novels contain a serious engagement with Zen Buddhist ideas, which we capture with the term "emptiness," a very prominent concept in Zen modernism to be explained in the following section.

There is some work on detective fiction and religion, but nearly none discusses Buddhism, let alone Zen. Over 30 years ago, Robert Paul argued that detective fiction "appeals directly to those moral and spiritual roots of society unconsciously affirmed and endorsed by the readers."[3] In positing a rational, ordered universe and engaging questions of good and evil, Paul asserts that detective fiction is ultimately theological. In *Holy Clues: The Gospel According to Sherlock Holmes*, Stephen Kendrick similarly argues that detective stories impose an ethical order on reality as religion does. For him, the stories surrounding the world's most famous detective can be read as allegories for the search for the divine, the mystery that hides behind the guise of reality.[4] In *Mysterium and Mystery*, William David Spencer argues that the detective has replaced the priest as representing the

---

[2] For this study, the authors have referenced the following works by Van de Wetering: *Afterzen: Experiences of a Zen Student Out on His Ear*; *Hard Rain*; *Inspector Saito's Small Satori*; *Outsider in Amsterdam*; *Robert Van Gulik: His Life, His Work*; *The Corpse on the Dike*; *The Hollow-Eyed Angel*; *The Maine Massacre*; and *The Perfidious Parrot*.

[3] Robert S. Paul, *Whatever Happened to Sherlock Holmes: Detective Fiction, Popular Theology, and Society* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1991), 7.

[4] Stephen Kendrick, *Holy Clues: The Gospel According to Sherlock Holmes* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000).

social order that once the priest had guaranteed.[5] In this scholarship on religion and detective fiction, detective fiction is seen as a tool to establish and maintain ethics and morality.

Other investigations have highlighted the religious roots of detective fiction, often presented as a very scientific genre. As Van de Wetering was very much aware, prominent authors of detective fiction were spiritualists like Arthur Conan Doyle or Edgar Allen Poe. Chris Willis has argued that detective fiction and spiritualism emerged at the same time and are structurally similar: both "make the dead speak in order to reveal a truth."[6] Van de Wetering had been familiar with spiritualism since his youth, as his father was a fervent member of the community in his native Rotterdam and took his son with him to seances.[7] If detective fiction, as one scholar argues, was always a rationalization of the supernatural needs of the human brain, Van de Wetering's detective fiction is, in many ways, a return to the roots of this genre.[8] We differ, then, from Don Adams' discussion of Buddhism in Western detective fiction as concurrent with "the scientific-materialist worldview and the technological triumphs of applied science in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries" because Adams sees Buddhist elements as compensating for the lack of transcendental framework in this secular genre.[9] Instead, we see detective fiction's scientific rationality as a mask hiding its significant investment in the intuitive and the supernatural. Recent detective fiction has in fact turned more and more towards the religious and metaphysical.[10]

---

[5] William David Spencer, *Mysterium and Mystery: The Clerical Crime Novel* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1992).

[6] Chris Willis, "Making the Dead Speak: Spiritualism and Detective Fiction," in Warren Chernaik, Martin Swales, and Robert Vilain, eds., *The Art of Detective Fiction* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 60–74.

[7] Marjan Beijering, *Op Zoek Naar Het Ongerijmde: Leven En Werk van Janwillem van de Wetering (1931–2008)* (Waarbeke, Belgium: Asoka, 2021), 27–29.

[8] James Carney, "Supernatural Intuitions and Classic Detective Fiction: A Cognitivist Appraisal," *Style* 48/2 (2014): 203–218.

[9] Don Adams, "The Enlightenment of Fu Manchu: Buddhism and Western Detective Fiction," *Contemporary Buddhism* 16/2 (2015), 245.

[10] Kim Toft Hansen, "Chinese Court Case Fiction: A Corrective for the History of Crime Fiction," *Northern Lights: Film & Media Studies Yearbook* 9/1 (2011): 63–77.

Representations of any Asian religion, including Zen, in Western literature are usually Orientalist to a certain degree, and as we will explore, Van de Wetering's work is no exception. In a thought-provoking article, Sheng-mei Ma argues that the figure of the Zen detective is nothing more than a perpetuation of Orientalism of the worst kind. Drawing on a wide range of Zen detective "texts" (including film), she describes "Zen handymen" as "popular culture's wishful duplications of what alleges to be the transcendental from Eastern mysticism."[11] Though Ma's critique focuses on the Dutch Orientalist and detective fiction writer Robert van Gulik (1910–1967), it could easily be applied to Van de Wetering's own "Zen detectives." Apart from the fact that Van de Wetering deeply admired his Dutch predecessor (as attested by a biography he wrote of Van Gulik), we sometimes find Orientalist stereotyping and misogyny of the worst kind in his work.[12]

Yet to dismiss these detective novels as nothing more than Orientalist constructs is to hold onto a concept of Orientalism that is too one-sided and reductive. In recent years, scholars like Urs App have argued that Orientalism was more than a Foucauldian power play that resulted in making the Orient, in using Edward Said's words, the West's "contrasting image, idea, personality, experience."[13] Something else was going on, a curiosity, flawed as it might have been, that produced profound changes in the history of Western thought (as seen, for instance, in the influence counterculture continues to hold on the academic study of religion). It is too easy to dismiss Van de Wetering's fiction as nothing but racist and misogynist. This article shows that when we look closer, we find a genuine engagement with what Van de Wetering considered the core of Zen Buddhism: the idea of emptiness.

Scholars have looked at Zen in Van de Wetering's work before. One of the authors of the present article used his novel *The Japanese Corpse* to argue that in combining the hard-boiled detective genre with Buddhist ideas,

---

[11] Sheng-mei Ma, "Zen Keytsch: Mystery Handymen with Dragon Tattoos," in Peter Baker and Deborah Shaller, eds., *Detecting Detection: International Perspectives on the Uses of a Plot* (New York: Continuum, 2012), 115–138.
[12] Janwillem Van de Wetering, *Robert Van Gulik: His Life, His Work* (New York: Soho Press, 1998).
[13] Urs App, *The Birth of Orientalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); and Edward W Said, *Orientalism*, 1st ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 2.

Van de Wetering's work constitutes an iteration of Buddhist modernism.[14] Before that, in 1984, the magazine *The Armchair Detective* featured a full-length article on Van de Wetering's detective fiction and Buddhism. However, this article references "Buddhism" in general (doctrines like the Eightfold Path) and says little about Zen.[15] The same is true of the otherwise excellent studies of Sabine Vanacker, who notes at several points in her analysis the putatively Zen elements in Van de Wetering's work. But these elements remain limited to karma, a cyclic notion of time, and the indifferent attitudes of the protagonists.[16] The elements Vanacker identifies are not typical for a Zen modernist author. McMahan has described Zen modernists as being more interested in the secular elements of Buddhism, such as meditation and philosophy.[17] If Van de Wetering were to only mention the supernatural elements of Buddhism, he would be quite exceptional.

He is not. Though references to karma, reincarnation, and cyclical time do indeed occur in Van de Wetering's oeuvre, more often his books are interested in a series of interconnected Buddhist ideas we will collectively refer to as "emptiness." That the term "emptiness" was vital for Van de Wetering bears no doubt. All his memoirs on Zen Buddhism have "emptiness" or a synonym in the title: *The Empty Mirror, A Glimpse of Nothingness* and *Pure Emptiness* (Zuivere Leegte, translated as *Afterzen* in English). The last one of these books even concludes with an elaborate reflection on emptiness as needing to be supplemented with freedom and compassion, a point we will return to below.

[14] Ben Van Overmeire, "Hard-Boiled Zen: Janwillem Van De Wetering's The Japanese Corpse as Buddhist Literature," *Contemporary Buddhism* 19/2 (2018): 382–397.

[15] Sydney Schultze, "Zen and the Art of Mystery Writing: The Novels of Janwillem van de Wetering," *The Armchair Detective* 18/1 (1984), 20–21.

[16] Sabine Vanacker, "Imagining a Global Village: Amsterdam in Janwillem Van De Wetering's Detective Fiction," in Marco de Waard, ed., *Imagining Global Amsterdam: History, Culture, and Geography in a World City* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012), 169–186; and Sabine Vanacker, "Double Dutch: Image and Identity in Dutch and Flemish Crime Fiction," in Marieke Krajenbrink and Kate M. Quinn, eds., *Investigating Identities: Questions of Identity in Contemporary International Crime Fiction* (Kenilworth, NJ: Rodopi, 2009), 215–228.

[17] David L. McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

We are also not the first to use the term emptiness to discuss the cultural translation of concepts from East-Asian religions into Western literature. Jonathan Stalling sees the influential but flawed understanding of Chinese poetry in America as being about "emptiness" as something that requires careful analysis, acknowledging both the cultural-specific intersection that produced it and its indebtedness to discourses of power such as Orientalism.[18] One of these intersections is the idea that Western epistemology stresses some things, and that Buddhist emptiness was latched upon to overthrow this something with, well, something else. Reading Buddhist literature (or Buddhism in general) as being about "emptiness" might not be right, but it is also not wrong. By studying emptiness, we also aim to add this term to the repertoire of Buddhist modernism that David McMahan studies in his groundbreaking work of the same title.

Towards a Study of Dutch Detective Fiction about East Asia: A Short Excursus

Before diving in, we want to first take a moment to emphasize that, in writing detective fiction with themes drawn from East Asian traditions (and occasionally set in that region), Van de Wetering is in good company: before him, the aforementioned Dutch sinologist Robert van Gulik achieved world fame with his Judge Dee novels, which were based on collections of classic Chinese mystery cases (not coincidentally also called *gongan*, koan).[19] Judge Dee is a Confucian administrator during the Tang dynasty, and in his quest to solve crimes, he meets all strata of Tang society. As with Van de Wetering, the interest of these novels does not derive from the reader trying to solve the mystery themselves but from the dialogues and interactions surrounding the MacGuffin of the corpse.

A contemporary of Van Gulik, Bertus Aafjes (1914–1993) is another Dutch author who wrote a series of stories featuring an East-Asian detective. Like Gulik's Dee, his Judge Ooka is an inventive man who combines executive and legal powers to find and punish criminals. Unlike

---

[18] Jonathan Stalling, *Poetics of Emptiness: Transformations of Asian Thought in American Poetry* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011). His definition of emptiness can be found on page 14.

[19] For the legal context of Zen koan literature, see T. Griffith Foulk, "The Form and Function of Kōan Literature: A Historical Overview," in Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright, eds., *The Kōan: Text and Contexts in Zen Buddhism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Van Gulik, who focused on China, Aafjes found inspiration in Japanese history, namely the figure of Judge Ooka Tadasuke (1677–1752). The series led to five collections, published around 1969–1973, showing that it was commercially successful.[20] Remarkable about Ooka is that he uses haiku, a Japanese poetic genre often associated with Zen through authors like Matsuo Basho (1644–1694), to solve crimes. Van de Wetering created his own version of Ooka in the Japanese detective Saito, whom we will discuss later in this article.

What drives these Dutchmen writing detective novels about East Asia, and why were they so popular? One explanation could be found in the nostalgia for the Dutch imperial past. As Van de Wetering often reminds us, the Dutch were the only colonial nation allowed to trade with the Japanese and maintained significant possessions in South-East Asia until the end of the Second World War. Van de Wetering grew up in a house displaying prominently the inheritance of this empire, including a Chinese statue of a "laughing Buddha."[21] Van de Wetering's father worked for the Rotterdam-based trading company Internatio, which managed the cotton trade with the Dutch South Indies.[22] At least in the case of Van de Wetering, then, it is likely that the detective novel becomes a way of inquiring into this colonial past, reliving it by adopting the ideas of Asia and adapting the folk heroes of East Asia according to an Orientalist lens, Orientalism being in part the exertion of power through literary imagination.

What is Emptiness?

We now turn to the key Buddhist idea in Van de Wetering's novels. The Buddhist concept of emptiness (*shunyata*, also translatable as "hollowness") has its roots in Mahayana doctrine. Philosophically the concept is a thinking-through of the consequences of the fundamental

---

[20] Ho-Ling Wong, "Judge Ooka in the East and West," Criminal Element, September 9, 2011 (accessed May 25, 2023, https://www.criminalelement.com/judge-ooka-in-the-east-and-west/).

[21] He would later, in 1980, recall about the statue: "That statue did nothing, it sat and smiled. It didn't seem to be occupied with anything but still, in a way that I could not understand, seemed very busy." This is quoted in Beijering, *Op Zoek Naar Het Ongerijmde*, 27. Our translation is from the Dutch original.

[22] Ibid.

Buddhist doctrines of no-self and dependent origination.[23] We have no enduring, eternal self because we are constantly changing, and so is everything else. If things had an enduring self or essence, they would be unable to change, leading to a "block universe" where everything stays the way it is, forever.[24] Emptiness, thus, is best understood as meaning "empty of intrinsic existence."[25] The most important Buddhist thinker of emptiness, the Indian philosopher Nagarjuna, distinguished between ultimate and provisional realities. Although ultimately the truth is that nothing really exists and everything is empty, of course, in conventional reality, things do exist, and they can exist because they do not have an existence independent from the world around them.

This thinking-through of emptiness famously leads to the position that Nirvana, the goal the Buddha attained and the tradition presented as the ultimate goal for all Buddhists, is not different from samsara, the phenomenal world. It does not mean they are completely identical since both samsara and Nirvana are themselves empty of self-existence. It means that one cannot, in the Mahayana, run from this world and escape toward Nirvana, which would imply a complete lack of compassion. It is this latter aspect of emptiness that Van de Wetering thinks that most contemporary Buddhists, even Zen masters, get wrong: they get obsessed with the negative aspects of emptiness and forget to be good and compassionate human beings. In his last memoir, *Afterzen*, he elaborates on this concept, which, like the rest of his work, takes the Zen Mu koan as encoding the teaching of emptiness.[26] The following section provides an examination of this koan.

Mu and Other Koan

In Van de Wetering's oeuvre, emptiness is often discussed through "Joshu's Mu," the most important koan in the Japanese Rinzai monastic curriculum. A koan is a riddle without an answer. Drawn from the biographies of the legendary masters of the Zen school, most of whom were said to have lived during the Tang dynasty, koans usually depict an

---

[23] Paul Williams, Anthony Tribe, and Alexander Wynne, *Buddhist Thought: A Complete Introduction to the Indian Tradition* (London: Routledge, 2012), 109–110.

[24] Ibid., 110.

[25] Ibid., 109.

[26] Janwillem Van de Wetering, *Afterzen: Experiences of a Zen Student Out on His Ear* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999).

interaction between a student and a master. The master demonstrates his mastery by baffling the student. Here is Joshu's Mu ("Zhaozhou's Wu" using the Chinese pronunciation of the characters) as an example:

> A monk asked Zhaozhou, "Does even a dog have Buddha-nature?"
> Zhaozhou said, "No."[27]

Here, the anonymous student asks a question about doctrine, one that was part of a lively debate.[28] In this debate, it was common sense to assume that, like all other sentient beings, the dog indeed did have Buddha-nature. But Joshu refuses to acknowledge this, and in doing so, he is often seen to point beyond philosophy and language. He demonstrates that his actions and words are beyond the comprehension of ordinary human beings. He is enlightened, a Zen master.[29]

Interactions like Joshu's Mu were collected in koan collections and then gradually adopted for study: if Joshu is enlightened, then, you can understand enlightenment (and become enlightened yourself) by meditating on the koan. This ritual is exactly what Van de Wetering was asked to do when he entered the Daitokuji temple in Kyoto in 1958. In his three published memoirs, he wrote extensively about the koan, and performed it in a documentary the Dutch Buddhist broadcasting organization made about his life and work.[30]

Due to the importance of Joshu's Mu in Van de Wetering's life, it should be no wonder that this koan and other koan appear regularly in his detective fiction. The license plate of a suspicious vehicle in *The Japanese Corpse* reads "66–33 MU," and various characters in the novels talk about

---

[27] Thomas Cleary, *Unlocking the Zen Koan: A New Translation of the Zen Classic Wumenguam [Mumonkan]* (London: Aquarian/Thorsons, 1993), 1.

[28] Robert H. Sharf, "How to Think with Chan Gong-An," in Charlotte Furth, Judith T. Zeitlin, and Hsiung, Ping-Chen, eds., *Thinking with Cases: Specialist Knowledge in Chinese Cultural History* (Honolulu: Hawai'i University Press, 2007), 205–243.

[29] Ibid., 225.

[30] Jurgen Gude, "Janwillem Van De Wetering - To Infinity and Beyond," Boeddhistische Omroep Stichting, August 29, 2004 (accessed May 25, 2023, https://www.uitzendinggemist.net/aflevering/22656/Janwillem_V an_De_Wetering_To_Infinity_And_Beyond.html).

emptiness.[31] In *Hard Rain*, the koan also appears in a long conversation detectives De Gier and Grijpstra have with two fellow agents called Karate and Ketchup. They are discussing the death of "Jimmy," a small-time drug dealer who studied Zen Buddhism and Chinese in his spare time. Karate and Ketchup found beautiful Chinese calligraphy in Jimmy's hideout and discovered that Jimmy drew the characters himself. Meanwhile, De Gier has gotten very stoned smoking a heavy joint:

> "So Jimmy says he made those letters himself – an impossibility; the fellow is quite gone. And the letters were beautiful. So I tell him not to bullshit so much, and what do you think? The lady from The Hague [a prostitute who lives with Jimmy] fetches some paper and a jar of ink, and he's got a brush and shnatz whyatzh, Jimmy throws down a Chinese phrase."
> "With handcuffed hands?"
> "Right," Karate said. "Swoosh. Down on the paper. No thought. Just one stroke. There it was."
> "MM," Ketchup said.
> "Moo," repeated de Gier. "The lowing of a cow. Cows have it too. They can say it all in their one eternal sound."
> "No, this is Chinese," Ketchup said. "Meaning emptiness, not-there, you know? That's Zen again. So there is nothing. And subject [Jimmy] drew that for us, in half a second or so. He explained all and everything. By denying, you know? There is nothing going on."[32]

The humor in this passage derives from its playful allusion to a number of Zen tropes. First of all, what Jimmy has painted is the character representing Mu. The way he does it implies the Zen idea of the master as an ordinary man. According to their hagiographies, many Zen masters lived in poverty and simplicity and did not behave according to the ethical standards of their time.[33] The archetype of this is the Sixth Patriarch of Zen Huineng, a

---

[31] Van Overmeire, "Hard-Boiled Zen," 4.

[32] Janwillem Van de Wetering, *Hard Rain* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 59–63.

[33] As Stuart Lachs shows, this trope even appears in the autobiographical narratives of twentieth-century masters like Shengyen. See Stuart Lachs,

southerner (the south was supposed to be "Barbarian") who was illiterate but could nevertheless attain insight by hearing the difficult verses of the Diamond Sutra while hauling firewood. Huineng is even more famous for winning a poetry competition with his master's most accomplished student (still not having learned how to read). That a petty criminal like Jimmy could understand the meaning of "Mu" and even draw it in beautiful calligraphy matches this idea very well. Ironically, this performance is not for the sake of conveying spiritual insight, as it is simply a subtle way of denying an accusation by the police. The ordinariness (even pettiness) of Jimmy's goal in using the elaborate calligraphy again refers to Zen iconoclasm that refuses to turn the Way of Zen into something sacred that can be studied. That "sacredness" here is symbolized by De Gier's comparison of the "Om" sound of Indian religions, the basic vibration of the cosmos, to the lowing of a cow. "Om" becomes "Mu," and Mu is nothing special.

      The commissaris, the police commissioner who oversees Grijpstra and de Gier's detective efforts, also often mentions emptiness. Often, conversations he has with suspects resemble koan. When asked what his life goals are by Skipper Peter, a wealthy man who only cares about money, the commissaris answers as follows:

> "Nothing," the commissaris said.
> "Beg pardon?"
> "Not-something," the commissaris said. "Because if it was something I could get it and then what. Right?"
> "Your target is Nothing?"
> "That's correct."
> "Nothing can't be," Skipper Peter said. "Oh. I see." He smiled wistfully. "The   ever-recording? Like love or something?"
> "Nothing," the commissaris said firmly.[34]

"When the Saints Go Marching In: Modern Day Zen Hagiography," The *Shimano Archive*, March 9, 2011 (accessed May 25, 2023, https://www.academia.edu/944021/When_the_Saints_Go_Marching_In_Modern_Day_Zen_Hagiography).

[34] Janwillem Van de Wetering, *The Perfidious Parrot* (New York: Soho Press, 1997), 262.

When, in response, Skipper Peter tries to paraphrase the commissaris's answer as "zero," he is again surprised:

> "Zero is still something," the commissaris said seriously. "It has a rim." His finger drew an oval. "You'll want to get rid of that."
> "Take the rim off Zero," Skipper Peter said, leaning further out of his chair, about to fall out altogether, but the servant set him upright again. "Then what?"
> The commissaris changed his tone from didactic to respectful. "And your goal, sir?"
> Skipper Peter straightened his admiral's hat, put his hands on his knees. His voice suddenly boomed. "Three hundred million dollars. I tripled my goal last year. It used to be a hundred but times change, sir."[35]

This dialogue is again playfully referring to a koan featuring emptiness, namely the famous exchange between the Zen saint Bodhidharma and the Chinese emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty. Like the commissaris and Skipper Peter, in this conversation, there is a wise man and a powerful man, and the wise man carries the day:

> Emperor Wu: "What is the religious merit of all my efforts on behalf of Buddhism?" Bodhidharma: "None whatsoever."
> Emperor Wu: "Who are you to say such a thing to me!?"
> Bodhidharma: "I don't know."[36]

The context here is that Emperor Wu has spent money building Buddhist temples and expects Bodhidharma's gratitude for this deed. But Bodhidharma, who sees everything as ultimately insubstantial, refuses to acknowledge that he himself is a person. In the dialogue between the commissaris and Skipper Peter, Van de Wetering is likewise making fun of the business-minded orientation towards life, an orientation that aims to set

---

[35] Ibid., 262–263.

[36] John R. McRae, *Seeing Through Zen: Encounter, Transformation, and Genealogy in Chinese Chan Buddhism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003), 22.

specific goals to guarantee safety and happiness. Life, Van de Wetering affirms through the commissaris (whose first name is not coincidentally "Jan," the same as the author's), is not that easily tamed by flowcharts and spreadsheets.

However, understanding emptiness does not lead to ascetic detachment or indifference. The commissaris uses the Heart Sutra, one of the most important texts in East-Asian Buddhism, which speaks about emptiness, to solve crimes:

> He liked the idea of emptiness. If something isn't there, one doesn't have to worry about maintaining or protecting it…The commissaris, from his lowly position as an incarnate human, could only see the empty aspects of his case, the loopholes. How to turn them around and give the bits of void form?
> "Imagine the missing piece," the commissaris told his mirror image in the bathroom, "right here. On your lower level."[37]

Like elsewhere in Van de Wetering's oeuvre, understanding emptiness is fundamental to crime-solving.[38] For him, emptiness is not something negative that requires you to quit your job and have "a good time" instead.[39] It is part of daily existence, just like in one version of the famous Ox-herding pictures where the enlightened individual must return to the bustle of the market.[40]

---

[37] Janwillem Van de Wetering, *The Hollow-Eyed Angel* (New York: Soho, 1996), 166.

[38] One other example can be found in Janwillem Van de Wetering, *The Maine Massacre* (New York: Pocket Books, 1980), 151.

[39] Van de Wetering, *Hard Rain*, 208.

[40] For a recent discussion of the Zen ox-herding pictures in relation to literature, see Pamela D Winfield, "To Tame an Ox or to Catch a Fish: A Zen Reading of the Old Man and the Sea," in On-cho Ng and Charles S. Prebish, eds., *The Theory and Practice of Zen Buddhism* (Singapore: Springer Singapore, 2022), 275–298.

Empty Plot, Empty Genre, Empty Mind

Thus far, we have shown that characters in these novels discuss emptiness quite often. But, emptiness is, we argue, more than a conversation topic in Van de Wetering's fiction or a way to superficially enrich the contents of light reading. Instead, emptiness is the very way these novels are organized. Reviews of the novels have often noted how frustrating these books are when read as detective novels: nothing much happens. When reading through all of them, we often found ourselves wondering what the point was. Almost none of the conversations the detectives have with people related to the murder yield anything helpful to solve the crimes. When the crime is solved, it is often not even through their doing. One of the first Dutch reviewers of Van de Wetering's first detective novel, *Outsider in Amsterdam* (1975), noted that "what happens in the novel seems mere coincidence" instead of constituting a coherent, clear plotline.[41] Another reviewer compared Van de Wetering's novels to hard-boiled detective fiction, which also tends to feature incoherent plot lines.[42] The sense that the plot is incidental to the novels pervades reviews of Van de Wetering's work in general.

As if anticipating the response of his readers, in *Outsider in Amsterdam*, Van de Wetering inserted a lengthy scene that can be read, in retrospect, as a metafictional commentary on his fledgling oeuvre. Grijpstra and de Gier are in the room of one of the main suspects of the murder, a Papuan named Van Meteren. Grijpstra has fallen asleep. De Gier wakes him up by playing the drums. Grijpstra wakes up and starts playing the flute, accompanying his colleague. They get so into their music that Van Meteren walks in and out of the room unnoticed multiple times. He eventually joins them in making music using a "jungle drum." After the music concludes, Van Meteren explains:

> I heard you both play so nicely and I thought my
> contribution might go with it. This is a drum from the
> forests of New Guinea. My mother's grandfather used it as
> a telegraph, to pass messages to the next village. It can also
> be used to make music. And our witch doctors have other
> uses for it. Whoever knows the drum well can create

---

[41] Rinus Ferdinandusse is quoted in Beijering, *Op Zoek Naar Het Ongerijmde*, 149. Our translation is from the Dutch original.
[42] Ibid.

> moods, influence others. You can lame the enemy with it but if you do you take a risk. A grave risk. The power may turn around and strike you down and you have to be well protected. The drum can kill its owner, or drive him mad, and you rush off into the jungle, hollering and beating your chest.[43]

The jungle drum can essentially be anything. Its specific form, a hollow shell of wood and skin, makes it perfect for indicating one of the meanings of emptiness (*shunyata*) in Sanskrit as something seemingly substantial but in fact empty. Likewise, these "detective" novels include various genres: they are satires, philosophical treatises, and religious commentaries. This is why so many scenes in the novels are completely unrelated to solving the murder, as most of what they do.

Van Meteren will not join the detectives in making music in future novels because he was in fact the murderer. But he escapes justice. In nearly every one of Van de Wetering's detective novels, the murderer ends up not being caught. Van de Wetering thus denies his readers the clear resolution that D.A. Miller has argued is exactly the ideological function of the classic detective novel: bringing the suspect to justice and the restoration of order.[44] What we have, instead, is policemen endlessly making music and spinning philosophical tales. Why would anyone read these books?

The literary critic Sabine Vanacker has answered this question by emphasizing the exoticness of Amsterdam. For her, the "banality" of most of the action "allows an American audience access to a foreign society that is both different and cute. His [Van de Wetering's] Dutch readers recognize a pleasant version of the discourse of modesty in his image of Amsterdam."[45] This certainly seems part of the appeal here. Van de Wetering's whole career as a writer shows that he was very attuned to what would make his books commercial successes.[46] But the banality of the novels can also be understood within the framework of emptiness: only the outer shell of these novels is like a detective novel, but the substance is different.

---

[43] Janwillem Van de Wetering, *Outsider in Amsterdam* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1975), 74.

[44] D.A. Miller, *The Novel and the Police* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988).

[45] Vanacker, "Double Dutch," 226.

[46] Beijering, *Op Zoek Naar Het Ongerijmde*, 176–177.

Van de Wetering uses the novels' lack of essence to communicate another, Zen-inspired message. An outsider book in Van de Wetering's oeuvre, *Inspector Saito's Small Satori*, demonstrates this point. This collection of stories features a Japanese inspector, Saito, who solves cases by reference to a classic Chinese case collection from the Tang dynasty.[47] As mentioned, Saito is similar to Bertus Aafjes' Ooka, who uses haiku as the key to all cases he encounters. Otherwise, as with Ooka, not much happens in the plot. One of the stories in this collection is titled "Saito and the Sacred Stick" and does not involve a murder or theft. The plot involves the disappearance of a stick that Saito's uncle, who is cast as a careless Zen Buddhist master, uses when chanting the Heart Sutra in the morning. This uncle is assisted by a diminutive elderly woman called "Obasan" ("aunt"), "a pathetic little old woman" whose only virtue Saito discerns as her being a good cook.[48] Yet Uncle (spelled with a capital letter) does care for her: he is dying, and the question is where Obasan will go once he is dead. Since his cousin will not realize his filial duties towards Obasan, his uncle must give him food for thought. Instead of understanding emptiness by singing the Heart Sutra, something Saito is unable to do, he suggests something else:

> "But there are other exercises as well," he [Uncle] said, absentmindedly helping himself to the radishes. "To reach the source of the great mystery in the most direct manner may be well nigh impossible for a mind such as yours, but try something else." He chewed noisily. "Properly directed activity, for instance. The Buddha had a lot to say about that too."[49]

Searching for the stick is one example of "properly directed activity": it is a riddle that is impossible to solve intellectually because Uncle buried the stick to teach his cousin a lesson. Instead, its "solution" is taking care of Obasan. After Saito proposes she comes to live with him after Uncle dies, Obasan

---

[47] The collection was translated by Van de Wetering's hero van Gulik: Robert H. van Gulik, *T'ang-Yin-Pi-Shih. Parallel Cases from Under the Pear-Tree: A 13th Century Manual of Jurisprudence and Detection*, Sinica Leidensia, vol. 10 (Leiden: Brill, 1956).

[48] Janwillem Van de Wetering, *Inspector Saito's Small Satori* (New York: Putnam, 1985), 82.

[49] Ibid, 86.

joyfully sings a song from her childhood, and Uncle discovers something has changed and orders her to dig up the stick.

Here, the mystery is not didactic as such: what Saito likes most about Uncle is that "he never moralized," a point that is most eloquently demonstrated by the narrated memory of Uncle taking the young Saito to a brothel.[50] The riddle of the missing stick is no allegory for the fate of Obasan or the filial duties Saito should be observing. Instead, the riddle, like a koan, empties Saito's mind, and eventually, he naturally sees what needs to be done. The detective plot was a means to an end.

Empty Self

Earlier, we mentioned Van Meteren, the protagonist of Van de Wetering's *Outsider in Amsterdam*. This character is not only important for Van de Wetering's imagination of emptiness but also represents the idea that identity is a masquerade. This idea is Van de Wetering's version of the Buddhist doctrine of no-self. Van Meteren's persona in the Netherlands completely differs from his former life in Papua New Guinea, where he was a reputable man serving the queen. In Amsterdam, he served as a police constable before becoming an employee of the Hindist society, a new religious, guru-centered organization whose master had recently been murdered. The murderer turns out to be Van Meteren himself, who, as mentioned, manages to escape justice at the end of the book. Van Meteren thus smoothly moves in between identities in the book.

As his name indicates, Van Meteren is a version of Van de Wetering himself. The resemblances to Van de Wetering's autobiography are obvious to even someone remotely familiar with the author's background. Apart from the similarity of their last names, Van de Wetering also served as a police constable in Amsterdam. He even claimed that this experience provided some basis for his police novels. Like Van Meteren, Van de Wetering had a falling out with his spiritual teacher. Although he did not kill his teacher like Van Meteren, Van de Wetering's last memoir does include a story of how one of his fellow students wanted to borrow one of Van de Wetering's rifles to shoot the Zen master.[51] Though Van de Wetering was known to fictionalize his own life story, the fact that he mentions this seems to indicate a perhaps subconscious desire to commit the act, one that he presumably satisfied by

---

[50] Ibid. 80–81.

[51] Van de Wetering, *Afterzen*, 81.

having Van Meteren murder his "Hindist" teacher. *Outsider in Amsterdam* can therefore be read as a revenge fantasy written by a frustrated student.

Van Meteren is perhaps the most obvious, but not by far the only one of Van de Wetering's characters who reflects aspects of himself, as he has attested in his writing and in numerous interviews. One of the facts mentioned about Jimmy, the junkie who was into Zen mentioned earlier, was that he built a "rhino's head" with trash.[52] Van de Wetering also had an often-photographed statue of an assembled wooden rhino statue, including the head, on his property in Maine.

In a biography that is on the surface about Robert van Gulik, the great Dutch Orientalist whose Judge Dee novels were a major inspiration for his own detective fiction, Van de Wetering writes revealingly:

> Conan Doyle was Sherlock Holmes, Chandler Marlowe, Hammett Sam Spade. An author will project himself; who else can he push on his stage? Even when he does try to create others he can only shape from that part of his character that is either observable or hides itself in a shadow. In order to form a hero certain parts of the self are combined optimally, and we see the author as he would like to see himself.[53]

Van de Wetering thus sees the protagonists of detective fiction as reflections of the author's personality. This characterization gets quite complicated when applied to his own fiction, which has three protagonists: Grijpstra, De Gier, and the commissaris, in addition to a host of villains who (like Jimmy and Van Meteren) can all be connected to Van de Wetering's autobiography. It is as if Van de Wetering divides himself into his characters and with each character a different aspect of his personality.

There is plenty of evidence that Van de Wetering saw identity as nothing more than a series of masks hiding a fundamental emptiness. A common motif in detective novels is that of the hidden identity. The following passage is typical. Grijpstra is questioning Mr. Sharif, the murderer of a recluse who, like Van Meteren, will manage to escape justice.

---

[52] Van de Wetering, *Hard Rain*, 62.

[53] Janwillem Van de Wetering, *Robert Van Gulik: His Life, His Work* (New York: Soho Press, 1998), 27.

> "Mr. Diets," he (Grijpstra) said in the end, "or the Cat as some people call him, do you know this man well, Mr. Sharif?"
>
> "The Cat," Sharif said, "is known to me, but it is very difficult to know a man well. The Cat acts a part and he is a good actor. A conscious actor. We are all actors, of course, but we don't always know we are acting. We wear masks, even if we think we are being open and straightforward. Sometimes I wonder what is under the masks. Do you know, adjutant?"
>
> Grijpstra replaced his coffee cup as gently as Sharif had replaced the telephone. He looked at Sharif and his face was set.
>
> "I don't think you know, adjutant," Sharif continued, "and neither do I. But I wonder sometimes. I have wondered, in fact, if there is anything at all under these masks. We put them on at birth, and perhaps they are taken away when we die. It's a frightening thought, don't you think, that there may be nothing under the masks."[54]

Though Sharif might be frightened by the thought that there are only masks, Van de Wetering's detective fiction celebrated this vision of identity. His characters and their author had no real essence, and it was precisely this fact of human existence that allowed them to be completely free.

Conclusion

In the West, Zen is often understood as a philosophy or an aesthetic, not a religion. This understanding is sometimes at odds with Zen practice in Japan, which includes bowing down to Buddhist statues and offering chants during morning services. Instead of participating in such ritual activities, Van de Wetering's characters mainly allude to the ideas and stories of Zen, particularly the idea of emptiness as enunciated in the koan of the tradition. But this is not just some metaphysical posturing to make a mystery plot seem more profound: Van de Wetering uses emptiness to play with the conventions of the detective novel, thus proposing a new hybrid form between Buddhists

---

[54] Janwillem Van de Wetering, *The Corpse on the Dike* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976), 115–116.

and Western sleuths, to discuss fundamental questions, with the most important one for him being the nature of identity.

The way Zen works in his books is substantially different from the way religions usually operate in detective fiction. Instead of trying to establish a moral order, his fiction continuously destabilizes comfortable categories like "villain" and "policeman." Van de Wetering is hardly attached to the binary labels distinguishing good from evil. The world he portrays is not reassuring because it sees everyone properly punished for their misdeeds. If it provides any comfort, it is in the injunction not to take anything seriously.

In believing that the detective novel is an adequate vehicle for conveying Zen teachings, Van de Wetering is not far from the foundational thinker of Western Buddhism, R.H. Blyth. As reflected in the title of one of his most important works, *Zen in Western Literature and Oriental Classics*, like D.T. Suzuki Blyth saw Zen's aesthetic essence as essentially independent from Asian cultural production.[55] But whereas Blyth still looked for and found Zen in the products of Western high culture, such as the poetry and drama of Shakespeare, Van de Wetering and many of his generation thought Zen could be articulated through popular culture as well.[56] In adapting Zen for mass consumption, one could take the cynical view and say he commodified the religion. This viewpoint is surely part of the truth. But we suspect he also saw popular literature as a conduit for those teachings that had transformed his life, a kind of skillful means to spread the dharma far and wide.

---

[55] R.H. Blyth, *Zen in English Literature and Oriental Classics* (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1948).

[56] Take, for example, the well-attested presence of Zen ideas in the *Star Wars* space opera movies and so many samurai films. See Christian Feichtinger, "Space Buddhism: The Adoption of Buddhist Motifs in Star Wars," *Contemporary Buddhism* 15/1 (2014): 28–43 (accessed May 25, 2023, https://doi.org/10.1080/14639947.2014.890348); and Ben Van Overmeire, "Inventing the Zen Buddhist Samurai: Yoshikawa Eiji's Musashi and Japanese Modernity," *The Journal of Popular Culture* 49/5 (2016): 1125–1145.

Essays

ZEN PARADOXES

Kazuaki Tanahashi
Japanese Translator and Calligrapher

Introduction[1]

How do you bind yourself without rope?[2] This absurd question makes no sense at all, but there is a certain truth to it. In fact, don't we all bind ourselves at times with worry, concern, or desire? Although this question is self-contradictory, if you ponder it deeply, you may discover a profound lesson. That is a paradox. That is the rhetoric of Zen, or Chan in Chinese. (The first definition of "paradox" in *The American Heritage Dictionary*: A seemingly contradictory statement that may nonetheless be true).

In this essay, I discuss paradoxes as essential elements that make Zen unique among all schools of Buddhism. I will describe their historical development and present the text of the thirteenth-century Japanese monk Dōgen, the *Shōbōgenzō* or *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye*, as a large collection of paradoxes, showing some selections in the Appendix.

Enigma pervades Zen literature. If you read such words as "a broken wooden dipper" or "a barrel with no bottom," they are just odd phrases.[3] But they may mean more: to become completely useless in the common sense, to give up all intellectual reasoning, and to be fully engaged in the practice of meditation.

"The extremely small is vast" is a saying attributed to Sengcan (d. 606), the Third Ancestor of Chan Buddhism.[4] This statement seems to parallel the concept of "moon in a dewdrop." [5] (Figure 1) The moon symbolizes vast wisdom, while the dewdrop is a person, relatively tiny and short-lived, yet it can hold the entire moon in the sky. Zen Master Dōgen described it in this way:

---

[1] Calligraphy below is by Kazuaki Tanahashi and photography is by Zé Paiva.

[2] 無縄自縛.

[3] 破木杓、脱底桶.

[4] 極少同大.

[5] 露中月.

Enlightenment is like the moon reflected on the water. The moon does not get wet, nor is the water broken. Although its light is wide and great, the moon is reflected even in a puddle an inch wide. The whole moon and the entire sky are reflected in dewdrops on the grass, or even in one drop of water.[6]

Figure 1. "Moon in a dewdrop"

This notion makes us humble yet encourages us to realize our infinite possibility of learning and experiencing. The intuitive, poetic language of the ancient meditators helped to form the language and style of teaching of Chan in China and beyond.

How do you eat a painting of a rice cake? That is another unreal and impossible question. You need to know the background of the image: In ninth-century China, Xuanyuan searched for awakening. He burned his

---

[6] "Actualizing the Fundamental Point," *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye: Dogen's Shobo Genzo,* ed. Kazuaki Tanahashi (Boulder, CO: Shambhala, 2010), 31.

copies of scriptures and said, "A painting of a rice cake doesn't satisfy hunger."[7] Later, Dōgen developed the idea that *only* a painting of a rice cake satisfies hunger, indicating that scriptures are essential for Buddhist studies and awakening. He even said, "All painted buddhas are actual buddhas." [8] Sengai, an eighteenth-to-nineteenth-century Japanese monk painter, drew a circle and wrote at its side, "Eat this."[9]

Evolution of Paradoxes

Chan or Zen Buddhism can be characterized as a hybrid of early Buddhism, Mahāyāna Buddhism, and Daoism. Early Buddhist teaching emphasizes the notion of *anātman* or no-self, advocating liberation from self-clinging. Mahāyāna Buddhism developed the theory that all things, sentient and insentient, are not completely independent and permanent entities. It is characterized as *shūnyatā* or zero-ness: the lack of concrete divisions or boundaries. To experience this notion is called *prajñā pāramitā* or the realization of *prajñā* (true wisdom beyond wisdom).

A part of the *Heart Sūttra* is typically translated as: "Form is emptiness. Emptiness is form…In emptiness there is neither form, nor feeling, nor perception, nor impulse, nor consciousness; no eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind." Rōshi Joan Halifax and I translated it as: "Form is boundlessness. Boundlessness is form… Boundlessness is not limited by form, nor by feelings, perceptions, inclinations, and discernment. It is free of the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind."[10]

The *Heart Sūttra* was compiled in China, as I explained in my book *The Heart Sutra: A Comprehensive Guide to the Classic of Mahayana Buddhism,* but most of its elements come from earlier Indian texts, especially *Prajñā Pāramitā* literature.[11] Ancient Indian texts tended to be logical.

In contrast, early Chan texts reveal a preference for being illogical and paradoxical. You may see a clear sample in *Engraving Trust in the Heart* (*Xinxin Ming*) attributed to Sengcan. This towering text is full of

---

[7] 畫餅不充飢.

[8] 一切畫佛皆諸佛.

[9] これを喰へ.

[10] Kazuaki Tanahashi, *The Heart Sutra: A Comprehensive Guide to the Classic of Mahayana Buddhism* (Boulder, CO: Shambhala, 2015), 4.

[11] Ibid., 78.

paradoxes: "The supreme way is not difficult," "The circle of the way is boundless space," and "The wise do not make things happen."[12]

Here you may detect the influence of Daoist texts. For example, the *Daode-Jing* (*Tao Te Ching*), attributed to Laozi of the Spring and Autumn Period (771 B.C.E.–481 B.C.E.), is full of paradoxes: "High virtue is not virtue, low virtue does not lose virtue," "Greatly straight looks crooked, greatly skillful looks coarse," "One who knows doesn't speak, one who speaks doesn't know."[13]

You may also see the influence of the *Flower Splendor Scripture* (*Avatamsaka Sūtra*), first translated from Sanskrit into Chinese by the Indian monk Buddhabhadra between 419 and 420. It embodies an enormous-scale cosmology, as well as paradoxical notions such as "One is no other than many," and "Myriad years in a single moment."[14] (Figure 2)

Figure 2. "Ten thousand years in one moment"

The Sixth Ancestor, Huineng (638–713), who taught the undividedness of practice and realization, had an unparalleled influence on

---

[12] 至道無難、圓同大虚、智者不爲.
[13] 上德不德 不德不失德、大直若詘、知者不言 言者不知.
[14] 一即多、一念萬年.

Chan Buddhism. The Southern School of Chan, initiated by Huineng, which emphasized sudden enlightenment, became dominant in China. *The Sixth Ancestor's Platform Sūtra* that recorded his teaching reflects his straightforward style of teaching, not using many unusual images or paradoxes.

But his main student, Nanyue (677–744), became famous for showing an effort to polish a tile to make a mirror, as a way of illustrating that practicing meditation with the intention of becoming a buddha would not make a buddha. His fellow student Qingyuan (d. 740) talked about the price of rice in Luling when he was explaining dharma.[15] Zhaozhou (778–897) of the Nanyue lineage, who at age sixty-five became a monk, spoke about donkeys and horses crossing a bridge, a big radish, and the cypress tree in the garden.[16]

Eccentric images and odd behaviors became emblematic of the monks in the late eighth to early tenth centuries who would later be regarded as founders of the Five Schools of Chan (Fayan, Guiyang, Caodong, Yunmen, and Linji). For example, Fayan (885–958) held up an incense spoon or pointed to a bamboo screen, Guishan (771–853) knocked down a water jar, Yangshan (803–887) pushed a pillow toward a monk. Dongshan (807–869) said, "There is no soil on the great earth,"[17] and Caoshan (849–901) mentioned a well seeing a donkey.[18] Also, Yunmen (864–949) spoke about rice in the bowl,[19] and Linji (d. 867) shouted and struck students with a stick as a way of guiding them.

These renowned monks led rigorous practice in Buddhist monastic training centers. Their disciples recorded some of their words and sayings. The crazy wisdom in their teachings captured the imagination of later dharma practitioners. Eventually, these curious and even bizarre stories were devotedly studied and investigated as kōans, which often got more attention than passages from scriptures: "Transmission outside of the teaching" was often a central motto of practitioners. Studying these paradoxes and solving the "great doubt" is called "a grave matter of study

---

[15] 盧陵米作麼價.

[16] 驢渡馬渡、大蘿蔔頭、庭前柏樹子.

[17] 大地無寸土.

[18] 井見驢.

[19] 鉢裏飯.

in a lifetime." That process makes the paradoxes genuine and authentic. In fact, working on paradoxes is basic to all forms of Zen practice.

One of the earliest kōan collections was *Commentaries on One Hundred Cases* by Xuedou (980–1052), which developed into *The Blue Cliff Record,* published in 1128*. The Book of Serenity* was completed in 1224, and *The Gateless Gate* was published in 1229. Many additional collections of kōans were created.

Dōgen (1200–1253), regarded as the founder of the Sōtō (Caodong) School, calls such enigmatic dialogues, poetry, and behavior in kōans an "intimate language."[20] The word "intimate" in Zen means direct, without any intermediary such as words and intellect. It can be characterized as transcendental language. His collection of ninety-five essays, *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye* (*Shōbōgenzō*), contains a great number of kōans extending from ancient times until his teacher Rujing's time. Often, he added an equally enigmatic commentary.

Hakuin Ekaku of eighteenth-century Japan, systematized the kōan study system and is regarded as the restorer of the Rinzai (Linji) School of Zen. He wrote a certificate alongside a painting of a walking stick with a dragon, a symbol of an outstanding Zen practitioner: "Nihei Tanaka has passed the barrier against dualism called 'the sound of one hand.' This is to certify it – a heavy prize indeed for a courageous person!"[21]

Freedom From the Self

Dōgen famously said:

> To study the buddha way is to study the self. To study the self is to forget the self. To forget the self is to be actualized by myriad things. When actualized by myriad things, your body and mind as well as the bodies and minds of others drop away. No trace of realization remains, and this no-trace continues endlessly.[22]

---

[20] 密語.

[21] Kazuaki Tanahashi, *Penetrating Laughter: Hakuin's Zen & Art* (New York: Abrams Press, 1985), 90.

[22] "Actualizing the Fundamental Point," 30.

You may notice that Dōgen used the same word "self" in opposite ways. The first "self" is a self that is higher than the self – a universal self that is one with all things. The second self is an ego, a small conventional self that clings to the notion of self-identity and possessions. The basic premise of Buddhist practice, as mentioned earlier, is the realization of *anātman* or *shūnyatā.* That leads to being selfless and experiencing the flexible interconnection of all things, which is the basis of compassion and dedication in service of others.

How can we be truly selfless? Dōgen recommends meditation that is "wandering at ease" in a state of being "unconstructed in stillness," which is no other than "ultimate and unconditioned." [23] While he insists that studying with an authentic teacher is essential, he also writes: "Get enlightened by yourself without a self."[24] That is no other than "Think of not thinking," "Leap out of sound and form," "See colors with your ears," and "Just let go."[25]

The morning star represents Shākyamuni Buddha's enlightenment under the bodhi tree. The star may have been the catalyst of his awakening. On the other hand, your insight or "your eyeball makes the morning star."[26] And, "Become a buddha innumerable times – one hundred, one thousand, ten thousand, millions of times."[27]

Freedom From Division

When you meditate and settle your body and mind, the difference between large and small, long and short, right and wrong, life and death becomes obscure and insignificant. We can intuit and trust that we can experience this realm in meditation and make it a base for our understanding and action. This is what Hakuin calls "passing the barrier of non-duality."

There is a great deal of value in going beyond dualistic or divided views. If you see an enemy as not different from a friend, you fight less. If you regard non-human beings as not separate from humans, you become

---

[23] 格外逍遥、静中無造作、究竟無爲.

[24] 無師獨悟.

[25] 思量不思量、跳脱聲色、満耳見色、打失.

[26] 眼睛作明星.

[27] 無量百千萬億度作佛.

conscious of animal rights. If you see insentient beings are equal to sentient beings, you want to protect the environment.

If you take the practice of meditation not as a goal for attaining enlightenment but as "practice within realization," the goal is already achieved at the beginning of the process.[28] Isn't this surprising? Dōgen says,

> On the great road of buddha ancestors there is always unsurpassable practice, continuous and sustained. It forms the circle of the way and is never cut off. Between aspiration, practice, enlightenment, and *nirvāna*, there is not a moment's gap; continuous practice is the circle of the way.[29]

As you see, a "circle of the way" is an intriguing concept. As soon as you start the practice of meditation, your practice of each moment embodies aspiration for enlightenment, practice, enlightenment, and *nirvana*, which in Dōgen's case is an experience of non-duality.

Further, Dōgen says, "By the continuous practice of all buddhas and ancestors, your practice is actualized, and your great road opens up. By your continuous practice, the continuous practice of all buddhas is actualized and the great road of all buddhas opens up. Your continuous practice creates the circle of the way."[30] A circle can be a micro-circle, where each moment is complete in itself. Also, it can be a macro one where the practice-enlightenment of all awakened ones from different times actualizes your practice. Not only that, but *your* own practice actualizes the practice-enlightenment of all awakened ones in all times.[31] This is a dimension of meditation, a dimension free of all physical and mathematical reality. This is a measure of undivided mind.

In meditation, "The world is ten feet wide," "A tuft of hair inhales the vast ocean," "A mustard seed contains Mount Sumeru."[32] In undivided mind, there is no boundary between sentient and insentient beings: "The eastern mountain walks on water," "Emptiness claps toward the left and

---

[28] 證上修.

[29] "Continuous Practice, Part One," *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye*, 332.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid.

[32] 世界濶一丈、毛呑巨海、芥納須彌.

toward the right," "Insentient beings speak dharma," "Ask a question to a bare pillar."[33]

In a deeply contemplative mind, the east mountain or any mountain may not be separate from the cloud or the river stream. It may not be different from the viewer. When the viewer walks, the mountain may walk at the same time.

In poetry and in Zen, the products of imagination and of reality seem to enjoy equal citizenship: "A donkey's fins and a horse's beak," "When an iron tree blossoms, the world becomes fragrant," "Put your body into a fist," "Loving words turn heaven," "The whole world flies through the sky."[34] (Figure 3) Don't these statements free you from ways of seeing things through the filter of opposition?

Figure 3. "The whole world flies through the sky"

Freedom From Conventional Views

Upside down language contains eccentric rhetoric: "A bowl rolls over a pearl," "The forest runs around the hunting dog."[35] Tutology reduces the language for elucidation to self-evidence: "A well sees the well,"

---

[33] 東山水上行、虛空左拍右拍、無情説法、問取露柱.

[34] 驢腮馬嘴、鉄樹華開世界香、入拳頭裏、愛語廻天、盡界飛空.

[35] 盤走珠、林廻獵狗.

"Mountains are mountains," "Rocks inherit from rocks," "A fish goes like a fish," "A bird flies like a bird."[36]

There may be a point on the other side of a widely accepted notion. All-inclusive mind fears no contradiction: "Bodhidharma did not come to China," "A parent and a child are born at the same time," "There is no muscle in the eye," "A thousand-foot cliff on the vast flat land."[37]

For those who regard buddhas and ancestors as the ultimate teachers and enlightenment as sacred, there may be a way to go even further: "Leap beyond buddhas and ancestors," "Lose enlightenment and let go of practice," "Do not realize the utmost way," "Vast emptiness, nothing sacred."[38]

Beyond Paradox

When people try hard to become enlightened, the words "Practice itself is enlightenment" is a paradox. [39] While people are focused on improving their lives, "Every day is a good day" can be a paradox.[40] Where only sacred activity is assumed to manifest sublime awakening, "Have some tea" is a paradox.[41]

I have focused here on the experience of non-duality or realizing the wisdom beyond wisdom of seeing all things as one. However, our common wisdom in recognizing and honoring the differences and boundaries of all things is as important as wisdom beyond wisdom. Without common sense, we cannot conduct our daily activities and be ethical.

Shitou (700–790) of the Qingyuan lineage said in his poem, "Being One and Many" or "Merging of One and Many" (Cantong Qij), "Brightness and darkness contrast with each other, like the front and back foot in walking."[42] He seems to suggest that brightness, or the realm of diversity, and darkness, or the realm of oneness, take turns in our activities. This is a dynamic interaction of duality and non-duality, or pluralism and singularism, in our daily lives.

---

[36] 井見井、山是山、石相續石、魚行似魚、鳥飛如鳥.
[37] 達磨不來東土、父子同時現生、眼裏無筋骨、平地坦地其壁立千仭.
[38] 超佛越祖、失悟放行、 不悟至道、廓然無聖.
[39] 修證一如.
[40] 日々好日.
[41] 喫茶去.
[42] 明暗各相對　比如前後歩.

In this regard, I suggest in my book on *The Heart Sūttra*:

Our life may be seen as a dance with pluralism represented by one foot and singularism by the other. If there is the slightest misstep, boundaries are violated and there is a chance that, through some action, our integrity will be lost. Each step is a challenge.

However, can we not also see our dance in life and meditation as something other than the constant switching between opposites? When the dancing becomes natural and fluid, singularism and pluralism are no longer in opposition. They become one and inseparable, which allows us to keep dancing with integrity and grace.[43]

Nanquan (748–834) of the Nanyue lineage says, "Everyday mind is enlightenment."[44] Perhaps he was encouraging his students to pay attention to worldly pluralistic wisdom. "Not born" or "Beyond life" is a common phrase in Mahāyāna Buddhism.[45] These are paradoxes beyond paradoxes (Figure 4).

Figure 4. "Not born."

---

[43] *The Heart Sutra*, 19.
[44] 平常心是道.
[45] 不生.

Fascinated by Zen Master Dōgen

Peter Levitt, a poet and friend, once said, "If I were to bring one book to a remote island, I would bring a book on Dōgen." Steven Heine, another friend who I regard as one of the foremost experts on Dōgen, said, "Dogen's teachings are endlessly thought-provoking and inspiring. The approach to writing taken by Dogen is exceptionally perplexing and challenging."[46]

The beauty of Dōgen's profound poetic thinking and his linguistic somersaults have long fascinated me. In 1960 at age twenty-six I started translating Dōgen's lifework *Shōbōgenzō* (*Treasury of the True Dharma Eye*) into modern Japanese with my teacher Sōichi Nakamura Rōshi in Nagoya, Japan. In 1968 we finished our four-volume work, the first complete modern translation of the text, along with a dictionary of *Shōbōgenzō* terms.

In 1965, Robert Aitken and I translated into English *Genjō Kōan,* one of the *Shōbōgenzō* essays, in Honolulu. This followed the translation of the same text by Reihō Masunaga in his book, *The Soto Approach to Zen* (1958), which was a pioneering work on Dōgen in a Western language. In 1977 I was invited by the San Francisco Zen Center to be a scholar-in-residence. I worked with advanced Zen practitioners to translate *Shōbōgenzō* into English, while joining their daily meditation practice. In 1983, I became an independent scholar and artist, and the Zen Center continued to support my translation work for thirty-three years. In 2010, the complete translation, *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye: Zen Master Dogen's Shobo Genzo,* was published.

Treasury of the True Dharma Eye is regarded as one of the most difficult texts to study. In 2022, it occurred to me that some of the difficulties of Dōgen's text arise from his frequent use of paradoxes. He sprinkles eccentric phrases almost casually in his texts and comments on them in an equally illogical way. That is why I thought it would be useful to focus on paradoxes spoken by early Chan masters as well as by Dōgen himself in the *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye*.

Thus, I selected over three hundred paradoxes and classified them into categories. I have included a selected list of Zen paradoxes in the Appendix for your reference.

---

[46] Steven Heine, *Dogen: Japan's Original Zen Teacher* (Boulder, CO: Shambhala, 2021), 1.

Appendix: Selected List of Paradoxes

Collected from *Shōbōgenzō* 正法眼蔵 (*Treasury of the True Dharma Eye*, hereafter TTDE) by Eihei Dōgen 永平道元. Presented here:

1. Translation of paradoxical words or phrases
2. Original in *kanji* (characters of Chinese origin)
3. Sino-Japanese sound in italics
4. *kambun yomi* or reading with Japanese grammar
5. The earliest known or conjectured users of the words or phrases in *kanji* and roman alphabet
6. Fascicle names of the *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye* in *kanji* and alphabet in italics
7. Where they appear in *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye: Zen Master Dogen's Shobo Genzo*: page, paragraph, and line

Please note that some words or phrases may only seem paradoxical in context. At times, translations in this list have been modified.

I. Freedom From the Notion of the Self, Self-possession, and Preconceived Notions
Wholehearted practice/practice alone/nothing other than practice

Splattered by mud and soaked in water 抈泥滯水 *tadei taisui* 圜悟 克勤 Yuanwu Keqin 行佛威儀 *Gyōbutsu Iigi* (Awesome Presence of Active Buddhas) TTDE 267-5-3

Hear sounds with your eyes 滿眼聞聲 *mangen monsei* 道元 Dōgen 行佛威儀 *Gyōbutsu Iigi* (Awesome Presence of Active Buddhas) TTDE 269-3-10

One who is capable of speaking but doesn't speak 不語不啞漢 *fugo fuakan* 趙州 Zhaozhou 行持上 *Gyōji, Jō* (Continuous Practice, Part One) TTDE 340-3-4

Confiscate goods from the marketplace 纔奪行市 *sandatsu anshi* 道元 Dōgen 觀音 *Kannon* (Avalokiteshvara) TTDE 400-fifth line from bottom

Study the way by turning somersaults 翻筋斗而學道 *honkinto ji gakudō* [*hoikintoshi te gakudōsu*] 道元 Dōgen 身心學道 *Shinjin Gakudō* (Body-and-Mind Study of the Way) TTDE 425-1-3

Squeeze out the marrow from the bone 敲出骨裏髓 *kōshutsu kotsuri zui* 道元 Dōgen 十方 *Jippō* (Ten Directions) TTDE 591-1-3

When it is cold, cold finishes the monk 寒時寒殺闍梨 *kanji kansatsu jari* [*kanji jari wo kansatsusu*] 洞山 Dongshan 春秋 *Shunjū* (Spring and Autumn) TTDE 631-2-1

Pluck out the beginningless eon 朕兆抉出 *chinchō kesshutsu* 道元 Dōgen 自證三昧 *Jishō Zammai* (Self-Realization Samadhi) TTDE 696-seventh line from bottom

Forget about the past and be oblivious of the future 亡前失後 *bōzen shitsugo* 洞山 Dongshan 大修行 *Daishugyō* (Great Practice) TTDE 713-third line from bottom

Destroy the whole world at once 恁麼合殺 *immo gassatsu* 圜悟 Yuanwu 安居 *Ango* (Practice Period) TTDE 743-2-7

Bite off the arrowhead 齩鐵 *gōtetsu* 圜悟 Yuanwu 安居 *Ango* (Practice Period) TTDE 743-7

Freedom from achievement/be relaxed/be simple and humble/you already have what you are seeking

Ultimate and unconditioned 究竟無為 *kukyō mui* 道元 Dōgen 辦道話 *Bendō Wa* (On the Endeavor of the Way) TTDE 6-1-6

Unconstructedness in stillness 静中無造作 *jōchū muzōsa* 道元 Dōgen 辦道話 *Bendō Wa* (On the Endeavor of the Way) TTDE 6-4-2

Person with no rank 無位眞人 *mui shinnin* 臨済 Linji 説心説性 *Sesshin Sesshō* (Speaking of Mind, Speaking of Essence) TTDE 499-2-1

Broken wooden dipper 破木杓 *hamokushaku* 萬松 Mosong 佛教 *Bukkyō* (The Buddhas' Teaching) TTDE 278-4-1

Let the myriad things rest 萬事休息 *manji kyūsoku* 道元 Dōgen 坐禪儀 *Zazen Gi* (Rules for Zazen) TTDE 579-2-1

Have some tea 喫茶去 *kissa ko* 趙州 Zhaozhou 家常 *Kajō* (Everyday Activity) TTDE 625-8

Not thinking is beyond thinking 不思量底非思量 *fushiryō tei hishiryō* 薬山 Yaoshan 坐禪箴 *Zazen Shin* (The Point of Zazen) TTDE 303-3

Tea and rice maintain buddha ancestors 茶飯保任佛祖 *sahan honin busso* 道元 Dōgen 家常 *Kajō* (Everyday Activity) TTDE 622-1-4

Practice and enlightenment cannot be separate/enlightenment and delusion cannot be separate

Practice within realization (literally, practice on top of realization) 證上修 *shō jō shu* 道元 Dōgen 辨道話 *Bendō Wa* (On the Endeavor of the Way) TTDE 12-3-3

If you look for a single person who is not enlightened, it is hard to find one 一人不悟者難得 *ichinin fugosha nantoku* 臨済 Linji 大悟 *Daigo* (Great Enlightenment) TTDE 297-4-2

Become a buddha innumerable times—one hundred, one thousand, ten thousand, million times 無量百千億度作佛 *muryō hyaku sen man oku do sabutsu* 道元 Dōgen 諸法實相 *Shohō Jissō* (The Reality of All Things) TTDE 522-4-3

A greatly deluded person is further greatly enlightened 大迷人更大悟 *daimei nin kō daigo* 道元 Dōgen 大悟 *Daigo* (Great Enlightenment) TTDE 299-1-3

Circle of the way 道環 *dōkan* 道元 Dōgen 行持上 *Gyōji, Jō* (Continuous Practice, Part One) TTDE 332-1-2

Self is no other than the self/self can be beyond the self/full experience is freedom from the self itself

Study by giving up the view of self and other 罷自他見而學 *hi jita ken ji gaku* [*jita no ken wo yame te manabu*] 道元 Dōgen 辨道話 *Bendō Wa* (On the Endeavor of the Way) TTDE 18-Q16, A.para.1, line.4

Get enlightened by yourself without a self 無自獨悟 *muji dokugo* 道元 Dōgen 嗣書 *Shisho* (Document of Heritage) TTDE 168-2-2

Self since before form arose 朕兆未萌前自己 *chinchō mibōzen jiko* 道元 Dōgen 山水經 *Sansui-kyō* (Mountains and Waters Sutra) TTDE 154-1-5

The heart is all living beings 心即衆生 *shin soku shujō* 溈山 Guishan 佛性 *Busshō* (Buddha Nature) TTDE 250-5-4

Not one person is not the self 無一人不是自己 *muichinin fuze jiko* 長沙 Changsha 光明 *Kōmyō* (Radiant Light) TTDE 415-1-6

Self is invariably you 己者必定儞 *ko sha hitsjō ni* [*ko wa hitsjō nanji nari*] 道元 Dōgen 空華 *Kūge* (Flowers in the Sky) TTDE 458-4-1

The entire world of the ten directions is a *shramana*'s single eye 盡十方界沙門一隻眼 *jinjippōkai shamon isseki gan* 長沙 Changsha 三界

唯心 *Sangai Yuishin* (Three Realms Are Inseparable from Mind) TTDE 488-second line from bottom

The *sūtra* is (the *tathāgata*'s) entire body 經卷是全身 *kyōkan ze zenshin* 道元 Dōgen 如來全身 *Nyorai Zenshin* (Tathagata's Entire Body) TTDE 664-3-3

The eyeball becomes the morning star 眼睛作明星 *ganzei sa myōjō* [*ganzei myōjō wo nasu*] 道元 Dōgen 三十七品菩提分法 *Sanjūshichi-hon Bodai Bumpō* (Thirty-seven Wings of Enlightenment) TTDE 676-6-4

Visit yourself everywhere 遍参自己 *henzan jiko* 道元 Dōgen 自證三昧 *Jishō Zammai* (Self-Realization Samadhi) TTDE 697-4-4

Give up self-identity, self-possession, or preconceived ideas

Break through the snares and cages (of words and concepts) 蘿籠打破 *rarō daha* 藥山 Yaoshan 坐禪箴 *Zazen Shin* (The Point of Zazen) TTDE 304-fifth line from bottom

Go away with no string on your straw sandals 直下足下無糸去 *jikige sokka mushi ko* 洞山 Dongshan 坐禪箴 *Zazen Shin* (The Point of Zazen) TTDE 313-2-8

Completely killed (fully illuminated) 直得去死十分 *jikitoku koshi jūbun* 洞山 Dongshan 説心説性 *Sesshin Sesshō* (Speaking of Mind, Speaking of Nature) TTDE 499-6-1

Let sitting or lying down drop away 脱落坐臥 *datsuraku zaga* 道元 Dōgen 坐禪儀 *Zazen Gi* (Rules for Zazen) TTDE 579-2-3

Grasp and let go 把定放行 *hagyō hōgyō* 宏智 Hongzhi 眼睛 *Ganzei* (Eyeball) TTDE 617-third line from bottom

One's holding up the flower is broken open/they break open and clarify holding up the flower right at this moment 直下拈華裂破開明 *jikige nenge rippa kaimyō* 道元 Dōgen 優曇華 *Udon Ge* (Udumbara Blossom) TTDE 642-2-3

Just let go 打失 *dashitsu* 圜悟克勤 Yuanwu Keqin 優曇華 *Udon Ge* (Udumbara Blossom) TTDE 644-4-1

A mendicant smashes his rice bowl 乞食打破飯椀 *kotsujiki daha hanwan* [*kotsujiki hanwan wo dahasu*] 如淨 Rujing 転法輪 *Ten Hōrin* (Turning the Dharma Wheel) TTDE 692-3-4

II. Freedom From Fixed Divisions
Body and mind cannot be separated/mind and all things cannot be separated

Body and mind are not separable 身心一如 *shinjin ichinyo* 雲門 Yunmen 辨道話 *Bendō Wa* (On the Endeavor of the Way) TTDE 15-1-3

Mind is speaking outside and inside 面裏心説 *menri shinsetsu* 道元 Dōgen 説心説性 *Sesshin Sesshō* (Speaking of Mind, Speaking of Essence) TTDE 498-3-2

Large is small, small is large

The world is ten feet wide 世界濶一丈 *sekai katsu ichijō* [*sekai hiroki koto ichijō*] 雪峰 Xuefeng 古鏡 *Kokyō* (Old Mirror) TTDE 217-1-1

The extremely large is small 極大同小 *kyokudai dōshō* [*kyokudai wa shō ni onaji*] 僧璨 Sengcan 行佛威儀 *Gyōbutsu Iigi* (Awesome Presence of Active Buddhas) TTDE 264-5-2

Mustard seed contains Mount Sumeru 芥納須彌 *kenō shumi* [*ke shumi wo osamu*] 維摩經 *Vimalakirti Sūtra* 神通 *Jinzū* (Miracles) TTDE 289-5-4

The arms are long but the sleeves are short 臂長衫袖短 *hi chō sanshū tan* [*hiji nagaku sanchū mijikashi*] 伏龍 Fulong 觀音 *Kannon* (Avalokiteshvara) TTDE 401-third line from bottom

The world of blossoming flowers arises 華開世界起 *kekai sekai ki* 如浄 Rujing 梅華 *Baika* (Plum Blossoms) TTDE 582-3-1

Myriad things are all new 萬物咸新 *mammotsu kanshin* 如浄 Rujing 梅華 *Baika* (Plum Blossoms) TTDE 586-5

Spring lies in plum twigs 春在梅梢 *shun zai baishō* [*haru wa baishō ni ari*] 如浄 Rujing 梅華 *Baika* (Plum Blossoms) TTDE 588-6

Swallow the universe 吞却乾坤 *donkyaku kenkon* 如浄 Rujing 眼睛 *Ganzei* (Eyeball) TTDE 620-8

Cross over the boundless ocean of eons 往無邊劫海 *ō muhen gōkai* [*muhen no gōkai wo yuku*] 道元 Dōgen 出家 *Shukke* (Leaving the Household) TTDE 768-5-3

A long time is inclusive of a short time, a short time is inclusive of a long time/just this moment

Ten thousand years in one moment 一念萬年 *ichinen mannen* 僧璨 Sengcan 古鏡 (Old Mirror) TTDE 216-5-8

Cast away hundreds of years vertically and horizontally. 百年抛却縦横 *hyakunen hōkyaku jūō* 石頭 Shitou 行佛威儀 *Gyōbutsu Iigi* (Awesome Presence of Active Buddhas) TTDE 261-fifth line from bottom

Before the birth of your parents 父母未生已然 *fumo mishō ize*n 潙山 Guishan 十方 *Jippō* (Ten Directions) TTDE 591-fourth line from bottom

Moments as uncountable as the sands of the Ganges 恒利那 *gō setsuna* 道元 Dōgen 發菩提心 *Hotsu Bodai Shin* (Arousing the Aspiration for Enlightenmen) TTDE 658-fourth line from bottom

Many is inclusive of few, few is inclusive of many/a full experience of one thing

Always turning hundreds, thousands, myriads, and billions scrolls (of sutras) 常転百千萬億巻 *jōten hyaku sen man oku kan* 般若多羅 Prajñātara 看經 *Kankin* (Reading a Sutra) TTDE 225-7-1

Add a little to a lot 多処添些子 *tasho ten shashi* 道元 Dōgen 大悟 *Daigo* (Great Enlightenment) TTDE 299-5-4

One person or half a person 一箇半箇 *ikko han*ko 菩提達磨 Bodhidharma 行持下 *Gyōji, Ge* (Continuous Practice, Part Two) TTDE 379-3-4

Together hold out a single hand 共出一隻手 *kyōshutsu isseki shu* 道元 Dōgen 身心學道 *Shinjin Gakudō* (Body-and-Mind Study of the Way) TTDE 425-4-5

Being empty is inclusive of being full, being full is inclusive of being empty

There is not an inch of land left on earth 大地無寸土 *daichi mu sund*o 大智 Dahui 即身是佛 *Sokushin Zebutsu* (The Mind Itself Is Budda) TTDE 46-5-1

There are assemblies in the air of buddha lands in the ten directions 十方佛國集會於虚空 *jippō bukkoku shūe o kokū* [*jippō no bukkoku kokū ni shūesu*] 道元 Dōgen 法華転法華 *Hokke Tenhokke* (Dharma Blossoms Turn Dharma Blossoms) TTDE 188-2-7

The open sky receives /is received with palms together 虚空合掌
受 *kokū gasshō ju* 道元 Dōgen 家常 *Kajō* (Everyday Activity) TTDE 623-
3-3

What exists doesn't exist in a way, what doesn't exist exists in a way

There are no life and death/beyond birth and beyond death 無有生
死 *mu u shoji* 妙法蓮華經 *Lotus Sūtra* 法華転法華 *Hokke Tenhokke*
(Dharma Blossoms Turn Dharma Blossoms) TTDE 188-3-3

Touch and beak the horn on the head/ beak headhorn (surpass the
teacher) 頭角觸折 *zukaku sokusetsu* 道元 Dōgen 心不可得上 *Shin
Fukatoku, Jō* (Ungraspable Mind, I) TTDE 194-5-3

A donkey's fins and a horse's beak 驢腮馬嘴 *rosai bashi* Rujing
如淨佛性 *Busshō* (Buddha Nature) TTDE 238-5-6

A piece of rock hanging in emptiness 空裏一片石 *kūri ippen seki*
石霜 Shishuang 佛性 *Busshō* (Buddha Nature) TTDE 241-3-2

Have no sword in laughter 笑裏無刀 *shōri mutō* 懷深 Huaishen
佛性 *Busshō* (Buddha Nature) TTDE 249-5-1

Entire living beings have no buddha nature 一切衆生無佛性 *issai
shujō mu busshō* 潙山 Guishan 佛性 *Busshō* (Buddha Nature) TTDE 251-
3-2

There are trees that spread in space 於空生樹木 *o kū shō jumoku*
[*kū ni oite jumoku wo shōzu*] 道元 Dōgen 無情説法 *Mujō Seppō* (Insentient
Beings Speak Dharma) TTDE 550-second line from bottom

No beings have things 一切法無一切法 *issaihō mu issaihō* 道元
Dōgen 三十七品菩提分法 *Sanjūshichi-hon Bodai Bumpō* (Thirty-seven
Wings of Enlightenment) TTDE 674-5-1

What is visible can be invisible, what is invisible can be visible

Nothing is hidden in the entire world 遍界不曾蔵 *henkai fuzōzō*
金剛般若經 *Diamond Sutra* 佛性 *Busshō* (Buddha Nature) TTDE 235-3-7

A circle of light is neither inside nor outside 圓光非内外 *enkō he
naige* [*enkō naige ni ara zu*] 永嘉 Yongjia 神通 *Jinzū* (Miracles) TTDE
295-2-2

Radiance long and short, square and circular/shape of radiant light
光明長短方圓 *kōmyō chōtan hōen* 道元 Dōgen 光明 *Kōmyō* (Radiant
Light) TTDE 416-3-5

The face skin is three inches thick 面皮厚三寸 *mempi kō sanzun* 道元 Dōgen 面授 *Menju* (Face-to-Face Transmission) TTDE 572-4-5

(The ten directions) have a head but no tail 有頭無尾漢 *utō mubi kan* 九峯 Jiufeng 十方 *Jippō* (Ten Directions) TTDE 592-third line from bottom

To train to be beyond birth is a solid practice 無生修練堅牢 *mushō shūren kenrō* 道元 Dōgen 發無上心 *Hotsu Mujō Shin* (Arousing the Aspiration for the Unsurpassable) TTDE 6453-1-2

Something that happens may not happen, something that does not happen may happen

Not born/ beyond birth 不生 *fushō* 現成公案 *Genjō Kōan* (Actualizing the Fundamental Point) TTDE 30-third line from bottom

Meeting a person and/but not meeting a person 逢人不逢人 *hōnin fuhōnin* 道元 Dōgen 佛向上事 *Bukkōjōji* (Going Beyond Buddha) TTDE 316-3-2

Facing but not knowing each other 對面不相識 teim*en fusōshiki* 法演 Fayan 梅華 *Baika* (Plum Blossoms) TTDE 589-5-3

Something possible can be impossible, something impossible can be possible

Zhang drinks wine and Li gets drunk 張公喫酒李公酔 *chōkō kisshu rikō sui* 雲門 Yunmen 佛性 *Busshō* (Buddha Nature) TTDE 252-2-3

Abide in flames and turn the great dharma wheel 在火焔裏転大法輪 *zai kaenri ten daihōrin* 雪峰 Xuefeng 行佛威儀 *Gyōbutsu Iigi* (Awesome Presence of Active Buddhas) TTDE 270-5-2

An iron tree blossoms and the world becomes fragrant 鐵樹華開世界香 *tetsuju kekai sekai kō* 雪峰 Xuefeng 行佛威儀 *Gyōbutsu Iigi* (Awesome Presence of Active Buddhas) TTDE 274-6-6

The whole world flies through the sky 盡界飛空 *jinkai hikū* 道元 Dōgen 坐禪箴 *Zazen Shin* (The Point of Zazen) TTDE 313-2-6

Hold up the sun and the moon on top of a staff 拄杖頭上挑日月 *shujō tōjō chō jitsugetsu* [*shujō tōjō ni jitsugetsu wo kakagu*] 智門 Zhimen 佛向上事 *Bukkōjōji* (Going Beyond Buddha) TTDE 320-7-1

Turn the heavens and turn the earth 回天転地 *kaiten tenchi* 圜悟
克勤 Yuanwu Keqin 光明 *Kōmyō* (Radiant Light) TTDE 417-second line
from bottom

Utpala blossoms open inside fire 優鉢羅華火裏開 *uparage kari
kai* 同安 Tongan 空華 *Kūge* (Flowers in the Sky) TTDE 459-3-1

The entire world falls apart 世界崩壊 *sekai hōkai* 漸源 Jianzhi 古
佛心 *Kobutsu Shin* (Old Buddha Mind) TTDE 471-8

A black tortoise climbs up a tree backward 烏亀到上 *uki tōjō* 香山
Xuangshan 面授 *Menju* (Face-to-Face Transmission) TTDE 577-3-4

Follow waves to chase waves 随波逐浪 *zuiha chikurō* 首山
Shoushan 見佛 *Kembutsu* (Seeing the Buddha) TTDE 604-2-1

Blossoms in an eye. 眼中華 ge*nchūge* 瑯瑘 Langye 眼睛 *Ganzei*
(Eyeball) TTDE 617-7-2

Furnace and bellows, each covers the entire sky 炉鞴互天 *rohi
kōten* 如浄 Rujing 家常 *Kajō* (Everyday Activity) TTDE 623-7

A horn grows on the head 頭角生 *zukaku shō* 藥山 Yaoshan 龍吟
Ryūgin (Dragon Song) TTDE 629-7-1

The great ocean has just dried up 滄溟瀝得乾 *sōmei rekitoku kan*
宏智 Hongzhi 春秋 S*hunjū* (Spring and Autumn) TTDE 633-6

Take up the *han* in the monks' hall and strike it in the cloud 把板
雲中拍 *hahan unchū haku* 雲頂 Yunding 優曇華 *Udon Ge* (Udumbara
Blossom) TTDE 645-1-1

Eyebrows and beard will fall out 眉鬚堕落 *bishu daraku* 丹霞
Danxia 三十七品菩提分法 *Sanjūshichi-hon Bodai Bumpō* (Thirty-seven
Wings of Enlightenment) TTDE 689-5-2

A non-sentient being can be sentient, a sentient being can be non-sentient

The chair and whisk mind 椅子払子心 *ossu shin* 道元 Dōgen 即
身是佛 *Sokushin Zebutsu* (The Mind Itself Is Budda) TTDE 46-the second
to last line

Ask pillars about dharma 問取露柱 *monshu rochū* 道元 Dōgen 礼
拝得髄 *Raihai Tokuzui* (Receiving the Marrow by Bowing) TTDE 73-the
second to last line

The green mountains are always walking 青山常運歩 *seizan jō umpo* 道楷 Daokai 山水經 *Sansui-kyō* (Mountains and Waters Sutra) TTDE 154-3-1

Stone woman gives birth to a child at night 石女夜生児 *sekinyo ya shōni* [*sekiny yoru ji wo shōzu*] 道楷 Daokai 山水經 *Sansui-kyō* (Mountains and Waters Sutra) TTDE 154-3-2

All mountains ride on clouds and walk in the sky 諸山乘雲歩天 *shozan jōun hote*n 雲門 Yunmen 山水經 *Sansui-kyō* (Mountains and Waters Sutra) TTDE 158-2-3

The eastern mountain walks on water 東山水上行 *tōzan suijōkō* 雲門 Yunmen 山水經 *Sansui-kyō* (Mountains and Waters Sutra) TTDE 157-1-1

Its light swallows myriad forms 光呑萬象 *kōin manzō* [*hikari manzō wo numu*] 盤山 Panshan 都機 *Tsuki* (The Moon) TTDE 454-5-3

Insentient beings speak dharma 無情説法 *mujō seppō* 南陽 Nanyang 無情説法 *Mujō Seppō* (Insentient Beings Speak Dharma) TTDE 548-title

A fist strikes thunder 拳頭飛霹靂 *kentō hi hikireki* 如浄 Rujing 見佛 *Kembutsu* (Seeing the Buddha) TTDE 606-2-2

A dragon singing in a withered tree 枯木裏龍吟 *kobokuri ryūgin* 投子 Touzi 龍吟 *Ryūgin* (Dragon Song) TTDE 627-1-2

A lion roars in a skull 髑髏裏師子吼 *dokurori shishiku* 投子 Touzi 龍吟 *Ryūgin* (Dragon Song) TTDE 627-1-3

Five hundred skins of a wild fox three inches thick 野狐皮五百枚厚三寸 *yakohi gohyakumai kō sanzun* [*yako no kawa gohyakumai atsusa sanzun*] 道元 Dōgen 大修行 *Daishugyō* (Great Practice) TTDE 713-2-1

Going beyond division/non-separation/non-duality

One, not one 一如 *ichinyo* 辨道話 *Bendō Wa* (On the Endeavor of the Way) TTDE 15-1-3

Being one with just this, while being free from just this 即此離此 *sokushi rishi* 道元 Dōgen 有時 *Uji* (The Time Being) TTDE 110-last line

Thus/thusness (what, how, where, as it is) 恁麼 *immo* 慧能 Huineng 恁麼 *Immo* (Thusness) TTDE 331-5-2

Moment and moment do not arise sequentialy 念々不相對 *nennen fusōtai* 維摩經 *Vimalakirti Sūtra* 海印三昧 *Kai'in Zammai* (Ocean Mudra Samadhi) TTDE 381-second line from bottom

Work together with buddhas, mountains, rivers, and earth 與山河大地同参 *yo sanga daich dōsan* [*sanga to daichi dōsansu*] 道元 Dōgen 觀音 *Kannon* (Avalokiteshvara) TTDE 403-sixth line from bottom

Front and back are one 表裏一如 *hyōri ittai* 應庵 Ying'an 諸法實相 *Shohō Jissō* (The Reality of All Things) TTDE 526-2-4

Magnificent words and stunning phrases as reality 美言奇句實相 *bigon kiku jissō* 道元 Dōgen 諸法實相 *Shohō Jissō* (The Reality of All Things) TTDE 529-3-5

III. Freedom From Conventional Views
Upside down language

A well sees a donkey 井見驢 *i ken ro* [*i ro wo miru*] 曹山 Caoshan 諸惡莫作 *Shoaku Makusa* (Refrain from Unwholesome Action) TTDE 99-3-1

A bowl rolls over a pearl 盤走珠 *ban sō ju* 圜悟 Yuanwu 春秋 *Shunjū* (Spring and Autumn) TTDE 634-1-1

The forest runs around the hunting dog 林廻獵狗 *rin kai ryōku* [*hayashi ryōku wo mawaru*] 道元 Dōgen 春秋 *Shunjū* (Spring and Autumn) TTDE 634-5-4

The old lapis lazuli hall brightly illuminates the moon 瑠璃古殿照明月 *ruri koden shō meigetsu* 雪竇 *Xuedou* 春秋 *Shunjū* (Spring and Autumn) TTDE 634-9

Tautology/negative tautology

A well sees the well 井見井 *i ken i* [*i i wo miru*] 道元 Dōgen 諸惡莫作 *Shoaku Makusa* (Refrain from Unwholesome Action) TTDE 99-3-2

Mountains are mountains 山是山 *san ze san* [*yama kore yama*] 雲門 Yunmenn 山水經 *Sansui-kyō* (Mountains and Waters Sutra) TTDE 164-6-1

Rocks inherit from rocks 石相續石 *seki sōzoku seki* [*ishi ishi ni sōzokusu*] 道元 Dōgen 嗣書 *Shisho* (Document of Heritage) TTDE 169-1-1

A fish goes like a fish 魚行似魚 *gyokō ji gyo* [*uo yuki te uo ni niru*] 道元 Dōgen 坐禪箴 *Zazen Shin* (The Point of Zazen) TTDE 314-6-2

A bird flies like a bird 鳥飛如鳥 *chōhi ji chō* [tori tobi te tori no gotoshi] 道元 Dōgen 坐禪箴 *Zazen Shin* (The Point of Zazen) TTDE 314-6-4

Blind ones lead blind ones 衆盲引衆盲 *shumō in shumō* [*shumō shumō wo hiku*] 佛蔵經 *Buddha Storehouse Sūtra* 海印三昧 *Kai'in Zammai* (Ocean Mudra Samadhi) TTDE 386-3-3

Gourd vines entangle with gourd vines 胡盧藤種纏胡盧 *koro tōshu ten koro* [*koro tōshu koro ni matou*] 如浄 Rujing 葛藤 *Kattō* (Twining Vines) TTDE 479-2-1

A jewel is within a jewel 珠裏有珠 *juri u ju* [*juri ni ju ari*] 道元 Dōgen 春秋 *Shunjū* (Spring and Autumn) TTDE 633-fourth line from bottom

Going beyond the ultimate

Leap beyond buddhas and ancestors 超佛越祖 *chōbutsu osso* 道元 Dōgen 行佛威儀 *Gyōbutsu Iigi* (Awesome Presence of Active Buddhas) TTDE 264-5-1

The Three Vehicles and the Twelve Divisions of the teaching are not essential 三乗十二分教総不要 *sanjō jūnibunkyō sō fuyō* [*sanjō jūnibunkyō subete fuyō*] 玄沙 Xuansha 佛教 *Bukkyō* (The Buddhas' Teaching) TTDE 280-1-1

A true buddha has no form 眞佛無形 *shimbutsu mukei* [*shimbutsu wa katachi nashi*] 臨済 Linji 神通 *Jinzū* (Miracles) TTDE 294-3-1

Lose enlightenment and let go of practice 失悟放行 *shitsuwo hōgyō* 道元 Dōgen 大悟 *Daigo* (Great Enlightenment) TTDE 296-1-5

Someone going beyond buddha is not-buddha 佛向上事人是非佛 *bukkōjōji nin ze hibutsu* 洞山 Dongshan 佛向上事 *Bukkōjōji* (Going Beyond Buddha) TTDE 317-2-2 and 317-3

A thousand sages, no transmission 千聖不傳 *senshō fuden* 盤山 Panshan 佛向上事 *Bukkōjōji* (Going Beyond Buddha) TTDE 320-3-2

Beyond mind, beyond buddha 非心非佛 *hishin hibutsu* 馬祖 Mazu 行持上 *Gyōji, Jō* (Continuous Practice, Part One) TTDE 342-8

Vast emptiness, nothing sacred 廓然無聖 *kakunen mushō* 菩提達磨 Bodhidharma 行持下 *Gyōji, Ge* (Continuous Practice, Part Two) TTDE 355-10

Go beyond ordinary and sacred 超凡越聖 *chōbon osshō* 金剛般若疏 *Commentary on the Diamond Sūtra* 光明 *Kōmyō* (Radiant Light) TTDE 418-6-2

Tear apart the old convention of ordinary and sacred 擘破凡聖窠窟 *hekiha bonshō sōkutsu* 道元 Dōgen 無情説法 *Mujō Seppō* (Insentient Beings Speak Dharma) TTDE 551-3-3

What is imaginary (or artificial creation) is real

A piece of rock hanging in emptiness 空裏一片石 *kūri ippen seki* 石霜 Shishuang 佛性 *Busshō* (Buddha Nature) TTDE 241-3-2

Spirits emerge and demons vanish 神出鬼没 *shinshutsu kibotsu* 雪峰 Xuefeng 行佛威儀 *Gyōbutsu Iigi* (Awesome Presence of Active Buddhas) TTDE 274-fourth line from bottom

A fine dream is illuminated as all buddhas 好夢諸佛 *kōmu shobutsu* 道元 Dōgen 夢中説夢 *Muchū Setsumu* (Within a Dream Expressing the Dream) TTDE 437-6-3

All buddhas are painted buddhas 一切諸佛皆畫佛 *issai shobutsu kai gabbutsu* 道元 Dōgen 畫餅 *Gabyō* (Painting of a Rice Cake) TTDE 446-4-8

All painted buddhas are actual buddhas 一切畫佛皆諸佛 *issai gabutsu kai shobutsu* 道元 Dōgen 畫餅 *Gabyō* (Painting of a Rice Cake) TTDE 446-4-8

The entire world and all phenomena are a painting 盡界盡法者畫圖 *jinkai jimpō sha gato* [*jinkai jimpō wa gato nari*] 道元 Dōgen 畫餅 *Gabyō* (Painting of a Rice Cake) TTDE 449-1-1

Flowers in the sky emerge from the earth 空華從地發 *kūge jūchi hotsu* [*kūge wa chi yori hassu*] 石門 Shimen 空華 *Kūge* (Flowers in the Sky) TTDE 467-3-1

Relics of wooden buddhas 木佛舍利 *mokubutsu shari* 道元 Dōgen 如來全身 *Nyorai Zenshin* (Tathagata's Entire Body) TTDE 665-seventh line from bottom

Relics of eight *koku* and four *to* (approximately twenty-five bushels) 八斛四斗舍利 *hachikoku shito shari* 道元 Dōgen 如來全身 *Nyorai Zenshin* (Tathagata's Entire Body) TTDE 666-1-1

Burning paper coins to attract the spirit of the dead 燒錢引鬼 *shōsen inki* 宏智 Hongzhi 王索仙陀婆 *Ōsaku Sendaba* (King Wants the Saindhava) TTDE 756-ninth line from bottom

Enter into a donkey womb 生身入驢胎 *shōshin nyū rotai* [*shōshin rotai ni iru*] 道元 Dōgen 三十七品菩提分法 *Sanjūshichi-hon Bodai Bumpō* (Thirty-seven Wings of Enlightenment) TTDE 676-3-3

Contradiction to accepted facts

Bodhidharma did not come to China 達磨不來東土 *Dharma fu rai tōdo* [*Dharma tōdo ni ko zu*] 玄沙 Xuansha 一顆明珠 *Ikka Myōju* (One Bright Pearl) TTDE 35-2-1

Parent is young and the child is old (literaly, father is young and the child is old) 父少子老 *fushō shirō* 妙法蓮華經 *Lotus Sūtra* 法華転法華 *Hokke Tenhokke* (Dharma Blossoms Turn Dharma Blossoms) TTDE 187-4-1

Not meeting even one person 不逢一人 *fubu ichinin* 洞山 Dongshan 坐禪箴 *Zazen Shin* (The Point of Zazen) TTDE 312-3-13

Wait till I don't talk, then you hear it 待我不語時即聞 *taigo fugoji sokumon* [*ware fugo no toki wo mate ba sunawachi kika n*] 洞山 Dongshan 佛向上事 *Bukkōjōji* (Going Beyond Buddha) TTDE 315-2-6

The ringing of the bell is serene 鈴鳴寂静 *reimei jakujō* 伽耶舍多 Gayashata 恁麼 *Immo* (Thusness) TTDE 327-11-5

On the vast, flat earth, there is a sheer eight-thousand-foot cliff 平擔擔地其壁立千仞 *heitan tanchi go hekiritsu senjin* 道元 Dōgen 身心學道 *Shinjin Gakudō* (Body-and-Mind Study of the Way) TTDE 430-1-1

A great merit needs no reward 大功不賞 *daikō fushō* 如浄 Rujing 夢中説夢 *Muchū Setsumu* (Within a Dream Expressing the Dream) TTDE 431-1-8

Even an antagonist nods and smiles 恨家笑點頭 *onke shō tentō* 道元 Dōgen 夢中説夢 *Muchū Setsumu* (Within a Dream Expressing the Dream) TTDE 432-5-4

There is no muscle in the eye 眼裏無筋骨 *ganri mu kinkotsu* 道元 Dōgen 畫餅 *Gabyō* (Painting of a Rice Cake) TTDE 448-5-1

In death, find life 死中得活 *shichū tokukatsu* [*shichū ni katsu wo u*] 洞山 Dongshan 説心説性 *Sesshin Sesshō* (Speaking of Mind, Speaking of Essence) TTDE 493-6

THE DRAMATIC EFFECT OF GRAPHIC MIMETICS/ONOMATOPOEIA IN MANGA

Junko Baba
University of South Carolina

Introduction

The mainstream manga genres have a distinctive narrative structure and grammar, particularly for *shonen* (boys) and *shojo* (girls) story manga.[1] One of the most indispensable elements of Manga grammar is "onomatopoeia/mimetics." In addition to audible English onomatopoeia in comics (*giongo*, hereafter), Japanese mimetics also include phenomimes that show the manner of actions (*gitaigo*, hereafter) and psychomimes that show psychological depiction (*gijyogo*, hereafter). While *giongo* substitutes sound effects*, gitaigo* and *gijyogo* constitute dramatic effects that make stative manga vivid and lively with movements and psychological depth, comparable to mood enhancement by background music (BGM) played in animation or films. Handwritten onomatopoeia words in the background of today's manga are thought to have originated with Tezuka Osamu, known as "the god of manga," who initiated the practice in the post-war period.[2] But American comics started to use onomatopoeia in 1917 when a comic version of silent animation film was made.[3]

In manga, onomatopoeia/mimetics are used both within speech bubbles and independently, added as hand-drawn images. While usage within the speech balloon is not considerably different from literary usage, the independent use of hand-drawn onomatopoeia/mimetics is predominant in manga and is considered to be characteristic of this genre.[4] Some argue that onomatopoeia in manga is rendered more accessible when handwritten than

---

[1] Kimura Yoji and Masuda Nozomi, "Manga ni okeru Kajyu Hyogen [Load Expression in Manga]," *Kansai Daigaku Shakaigaku-bu Kiyo* 32/2 (2001), 235.

[2] Jon Holt and Teppei Fukuda, "The Power of Onomatopoeia in Manga," *Japanese Language and Literature*, trans. Natsume Fusanosuke 56/1 (2002), 157–184.

[3] Takeuchi Osamu, *Manga Hyogen Gaku* Nyumon [Introduction of Manga Expression] (Tokyo: Chikuba shobo, 2005), 21–22.

[4] Ikuhiro Tamori, *Onomatopoeia Gioingo to Gitaigo no Gakuen* [Garden of Onomatopoeia] (Tokyo: Keiso shobo, 2003), 90–92.

typewritten, with the handwritten word being closer to the graphic immediacy of a drawing. However, others claim it is more important to note "how linguistic information can be categorized into onomatopoeia."[5]

Among the main reasons for the prevailing influence of onomatopoeia/mimetics in manga are (1) the abundance of subjective camera-work views and (2) subjective interpretation of the given situations.[6] When it comes to the function of onomatopoeia/mimetics in manga, Chitoku Morooka points to its supportive roles in explaining situations and the psychology of the characters, with *giongo* depicting sound effects and *gitaigo* functioning like stage directions.[7] Takao Maruyama comments that there are many *gitaigo* in Japanese that describe people's attitudes and manners because of the social emphasis on relationships and an excessive awareness and perception of others.[8] While acknowledging the comical and powerful expressions of onomatopoeia/mimetics in manga, which supplement and interact with images, Naomi Mizuta suggests that animation has far less *gitaigo* because it is supplemented with movement, sound effects, and BGM, creating moods.[9]

Although onomatopoeia usage in American comics such as Marvel and DC comics has drastically declined in the last decade or so,[10] Japanese mimetics in manga are used more than three times as much as onomatopoeia used in their American comics counterparts, and it is an indispensable part of

---

[5] Fuse Hidetoshi, *Manga wo kaibo uru* (Tokyo: Chikuma shobo, 2004), cited in Giancarla Unser-Schutzm, "Language as the Visual: Exploring the Intersection of Linguistic and Visual Language in Manga," *Image & Narrative* 12/1(2011), 3.

[6] Kenichi Idehara, "Sodosei – Otaku Bunka no baai," *Hikone Ronso* 388 (2011), 21.

[7] Chitoku Morooka, "Koma no naka no Onomatope manga Hyogen ron. [Onomatopoeia Expressions in Manga Frames]," *Konan Jyoshi Daigaku Kiyo* 47 (2011), 17.

[8] Takao Maruyama, "Eigo no giongo/gitaigo ni tsuite – Nihongo to no hikakaku [Comparison of Japanese and English onomatopoeia], *Meiji Daigaku Kyoyo Ronshu* 187 (1986), 135.

[9] Naomi Mizuta, "Manga to animeshin no onomatope" [Onomatopoeia in Manga and Anime], *Kurashiki Geijutsu Kagaku Daigaku Kiyo* (2006), 202.

[10] Sean A. Guynes, "Four-Colour Sound," *Public Journal of Semiotics* 6/1 (2014), 61.

Japanese manga. The abundant use of mimetics in Japanese manga is partially due to the frequent use of *gitaigo* and *gijyogo*, which have no comparative categories in English (and other languages).[11]

The purpose of this study is to suggest that the essence of the Japanese popular story manga is, in fact, suspense, and it attempts to analyze the use of mimetics as a dramatic effect in the enhancement of storylines of suspense. However, graphic characteristics of Japanese mimetics in manga will be discussed at some length before discussing the main topic. The data analysis will focus on eight popular manga selected by ranking in North America and Japan,[12] with four works each, in *shonen* and *shojo* genres:

- *Shonen* manga: *One Piece*, *Naruto*, *Bleach*, and *Fairy Tail*
- *Shojo* manga: *Skip Beat*, *Ouran High School Host Club*, *Dengeki Daisy*, and *Kimi ni Todoke*

Onomatopoeia/Mimetics in Manga

First of all, onomatopoeia/mimetics are written in two kinds of Japanese phonetic alphabets: *hiragana* and *katakana*. Visually, hiragana has a soft impression due to the cursive touch, whereas katakana has a hard impression with a sharp edge. While hiragana is used for indigenous words, katakana is mostly used for loan words. In general, *giongo* are written in katakana, whereas *gitaigo*, including psychomimes (*gijyogo*), are written in hiragana.[13] Yet, there are many exceptions in manga, when artists attempt to add creative touches mainly by emphasis with katakana or softening with hiragana. In a 2016 article published in *Multimodal Communication*, it was determined that *shonen* manga tends to use more katakana than *shojo*, though it partially seems due to the more frequent use of *giongo* in *shonen* manga, as shown later. This research explains that the more frequent use of katakana in *shonen* genre is "reserved for military directives and declarations of war,"

---

[11] Junko Baba, "Survey of Japanese Onomatopoeia Education by Japanese Learners and English Manga Translation," *Proceedings of 30th Annual Conference for Southern Association of Teachers of Japanese* (2016), 21.

[12] Eight popular North American manga works (four *shonen* and four *shojo*), endorsed by popular ranking in the New York Times Book Review and Orikon Review in Japan, were chosen from the manga fan website.

[13] Kisha Handbook, *Shinbun Yoji Yogoshuu* (Tokyo, Kyodo Tsushinsha, 2010).

while hiragana, "which was far more prevalent in s*hojo* works, is an everyday script developed in ancient Japan by women and for women."[14]

In particular, manga artists also create idiosyncratic onomatopoeia/mimetics. Tamori Ikuhiro explains that they are (1) completely different forms, and (2) partially different from conventional onomatopoeia/mimetics.[15] For example, in reference to the first kind (1), they even came up with idiosyncratic hiragana with two dots voiced as follows:

$$\text{み゙　あ゙}$$

As for the second kind (2), the partially different forms, they (a) increase the repetition of the word バタバタバタ *bata bata bata*, (b) partially change the constituted sound, ジョボジョボ *jyobo jyobo* instead of ジャボジャボ *jyabo jyabo*, and (c) exaggerate the vowel sound, as with うわああああ *uwaaaaa*. In data collected for this study, this kind of innovative onomatopoeia/mimetics constitutes between 27-30% of the entire use.
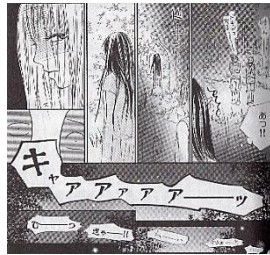
Figure 1[16]　　　　　**Figure 2**[17]

In addition, Japanese can be written both vertically and horizontally. The horizontal lettering of handwritten mimetics arrests the visual flow of the vertical lettering in the speech balloon, whereas the letters in the frame remain in the flow if they are written vertically. Morooka observes that the former

---

[14] K. Partha Mimish, et al., "Pow, Punch, Pika, and Chu: The Structure of Sound Effects in Genres of American Comics and Japanese Manga," *Multimodal Communication* 5/2 (2016), 103.

[15] Tamori, *Onomatopoeia Gioingo to Gitaigo no Gakuen*, 124–132.

[16] Shiina Karuho, *Kimi ni Todoke* 1 (Tokyo: Shueisha, 2015), 29.

[17] Majima Hiro, *Fairy Tale* 1 (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2015), 16.

case has a "breaking" effect, causing readers to stop and pay attention, whereas the second case enhances "activity, speed, and rhythms."[18]

The example in Figure 1 of *giongo* "*kyaa*" in katakana indicating a scene from *Kimi ni Todoke* shows the scream of the female classmates, when the creepy-looking main character is chosen to perform "ghost," in a *kimodameshi* event, the outdoor version of a haunted house. It should be noted that graphic letters are written horizontally in katakana "キャアアーッ *kyaaaa*," stretched out to show the frozen moment.

In contrast, the female scream of "きゃ˜˜˜ *kyaa*," in Figure 2 shows infatuation by girls who become excited by the presence of the handsome star figure in *Fairy Tail*, and the hiragana letters are written vertically above the heads of fans in radial patterns upwards, showing the girls' moods as one of elation. It seems "*kyaa*" in Figure 1 is effective in katakana in showing the sharp scream literally indicating only generic sound, whereas "*kyaa*" in Figure 2 in hiragana with heart-shaped eyes morpheme seems more appropriate in hiragana, whose visually softer impression indicates warm affection and not just sound.

Japanese manga expression is more frequently characterized by the use of close-up filmic shot types than American mainstream comics. The abundance of this kind of close-up frame enables subjective intervention by the artist drawing readers' attention to details of facial action in emotional expressions where *gitaigo* and *gijyogo* can be effectively used to enhance subjective expression.[19] Furthermore, *gitaigo* and *gijyogo* are designed to function like stage directions to supplement the narrative, showing the characters' actions and emotions.[20]

One of the most effective uses of close-up of hands with *gitaigo* was observed in the following examples. In this scene from *Bleach* in Figure 3, the protagonist has an inner struggle with the regret that he could not do anything to protect his family from the *Shinigami*, the death god's attack. His frustration is symbolically expressed with his tightly clenched fist and graphically expressive shaking *gitaig*o "gu (グッ)" in katakana, illustrating his trembling frustration in a close-up frame shot.

---

[18] Morooka, "Koma no naka," 22.

[19] Idehara, "Sodosei – Otaku Bunka no baai," 21.

[20] Morooka, "Koma no naka," 17 and 21.

Figure 3[21]   **Figure 4**[22]

In a like manner, the heroine in *Skip Beat* shows mixed emotions of anger, frustration, and bitter resentment with the *gitaigo* of "ぎゅう *gyuu* (squeeze) in hiragana," slowly squeezing her dress with a trembling hand in a similar close-up shot (Figure 4). It is interesting that this shot in close-up is accompanied by the boyfriend's ultimate blow in the remarks, breaking up with her within the same frame. The above close-up camera angle of hand expression enables readers to empathize with the characters while drawing attention to subtle physical manifestations of the characters' inner state, which is otherwise difficult to observe visually.

Another characteristic of manga, which is rather culturally specific, is the use of inactive amorphic scenes in order to "show aspects of the environment drawing out scenes and focusing on the setting or mood."[23] Scott McCloud regards them as cultural traits that "often emphasize being there [of oriental philosophy] rather than getting there" of goal-oriented Western culture.[24]

The preferred choice of inactive amorphic scenes seems to be deeply rooted in Japanese aesthetics in appreciation of "ma-intervals" or emptiness. J.W. Boyd explains that "empty and often silent *ma* ['intervals'] sensitize the viewer to a fresh mode of experience – non-linear and evanescent in its

---

[21] Kubo Taito, *Bleach* 1 (Tokyo: Shueisha, 2016), 42.

[22] Yoshiki Nakamura, *Skip Beat* 1 (Tokyo: Hakusensha, 2004), 2.

[23] Niel Cohn, "A Different Kind of Cultural Frame: An Analysis of Panels in American Comics and Japanese Manga," *Images & Narratives* 12/1 (2011), 122.

[24] Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993), 81.

immediacy, what might be called a 'transparent lightness.'"[25] Examples of such "ma-intervals" can be observed in filming techniques, as well as traditional Noh and Kabuki performances in their "moments of no action" or the freezing moment of *mie* pause. It should be noted that these kinds of aesthetic emptiness are interpreted with meditative quality as in Zen.

Inactive amorphic scenes with environmental shots can also be accompanied by mimetics, and they are frequently used in intervals between chapters or the introduction of settings for new acts. Let's observe the following scenes:
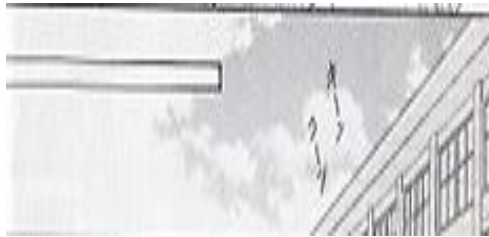
Figure 5[26]   **Figure 6**[27]

In Figure 5 from *One Piece*, a new chapter takes the story to the same place ten years later, beginning with a static image of the place and *giongo don*, "ta-Da," as shown above. Since it is not generic *giongo,* in terms of mimicking sound and used as BGM, it is written in hiragana here, which is less disturbing even though it is written in large letters with an exclamation mark. *One Piece* uses this technique frequently, including when introducing new characters into a scene.

Another example, used frequently with school drama, is the sound of the school music chime "*kin koon*" (ding dong), which indicates the next scene will take place at the school (Figure 6). The sound of the school chime rings at the beginning and the end of each class period at school; therefore, it can be symbolically used to indicate "ma" between scenes as well.

---

[25] J.W. Boyd, "Intervals (Ma) in Japanese aesthetics: Ozu and Miyazaki," *Japan Studies Association Journal* 9/1 (2011), 47–48.

[26] Eiichiro Oda, *One Piece* 1 (Tokyo: Shueisha, 2015), 43.

[27] Kyosuke Motomi, *Dengeki Daisy* 1 (Tokyo: Shogakkan, 2007), 10.

Suspense Drama Effect in Manga

In drama script theory, conflicts between characters are indispensable in the creation of complex relationships, necessary for the development of deep psychological drama. Furthermore, the element of suspense is an essential part of an exciting story, a mark of reader empathy with the main characters with whom they share joys and sorrows.[28] Suspense, in a wider sense of the term, is defined as a "state of mental uncertainty, with expectation of or desire for decision, and usually some apprehension or anxiety" (Oxford.com). As noted by Mikos Lothar, "Suspense in drama, in turn, has been viewed as experience of apprehension about the resolution of conflicts and crisis."[29] Thus, Lothar views excitement and suspense as "essential patterns of experience in film and television narratives."[30] Dolf Zillmann further explains that "hopes and fears are inseparably interwind in the apprehensions that produce suspense."[31] In other words, the audience can afford to enjoy the suspense as a form of virtual adversity, as Zillmann affirms that representations of "Death, mutilation, torture, injury, and social debasement" provide excitement concurrent with the expectation of a happy ending.

The popular manga artist Hirohiko Araki also endorses this essential factor of suspense as key to the popular manga storyline by asserting the importance of creating adversity for the main character, providing excitement for readers in consort with the idea in mind of a final victory.[32] The manga selected for this study share a common theme of dealing with an "initiation story" concerning the main character, who begins his or her life journey in adversity but becomes a hero or heroine by overcoming a series of hardships.

---

[28] Karl Iglesias, *Writing Emotional Impact* (Livermore, CA: WingSpan Press, 2005), 14–17.

[29] Mikos Lothar, "The Experience of Suspense: Between Fear and Pleasure," Peter Vorderer, et al., eds., *Suspense: Conceptualizations, Theoretical Analyses and Empirical Explorations* (Oxfordshire, England: 1996), 38.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Dolf Zillmann, "The Psychology of Suspense in Dramatic Exposition," in Peter Vorder, J. Wuff, and Mike Friedrichsen, eds. *Suspense: Conceptualization, Theoretical Analysis, and Empirical Explorations* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 202.

[32] Hirohiko Araki, *Araki Hirohiko no Manga Jutsu* (Tokyo: Shueisha. 2015), 128.

Karl Iglesias also claims that the major component of writing a plot for suspense is to create a "cause and effect" sequence of stimulus and response:

> Stimulus and response are the building blocks of any story because this is how we make sense of our lives – by understanding how things respond to others, how they're caused by others. We have an inner emotional need to make sense out of things, the world, and the universe. We know that everything has a cause, and when we know the cause, we understand the effect…one action causing another, adding up to some meaningful point that touches the thoughts and emotions of the reader.[33]

Stimuli (S) here refers to the physical and emotional impact on the character and Response (R) refers to the emotional or physical action the character takes after such a stimulus is given. By creating this kind of S-R sequence, readers are emotionally involved and emphasized more with the character. Japanese mimetics in popular manga with suspense seem to work as basic building blocks to create this type of S-R sequence for its dramatic effect.

Analysis and Result

Mimetics that appear in the first 100 pages of each manga work from Volume 1 in the series have been collected as data for this analysis. First, the study shows the usage of *giongo* (sound) and *gitaigo* (manner) for each genre and analyzes how the suspense elements of S-R are used effectively for *giongo* and *gitaigo* to create the suspense effect.

***Giongo* (Sound) vs *Gitaigo* (Manner/Psychology) Usage**

The total average number of mimetics used in each genre is useful for this analysis: *Shonen* (Boys), 227 words; and *Shojo* (Girls), 218 words. As indicated in Table 1, manga works of *shonen* genre (62.6%) show a higher percentage of *giongo* than *shojo* ones (44.5%) by 18.1%, whereas those of *shojo* genre (55.4%) show a higher use of *gitaigo* than *shonen* ones (37.4%) by 18%. In general, there seems to be a tendency for *shojo* genres to have a higher use of *gitaigo* owing to its detailed description of the psychology,

---

[33] Iglesias, *Writinig Emtional Impact*, 80–81.

attitudes, and gestures of the characters in the romance or drama narratives. The results support a previous study.[34]

MIMETICS MANGA WORKS		GIONGO	GITAIGO	TOTAL
S H O N E N	Fairy Tail	71.6%	28%	254
	One Piece	66.2%	33.8%	234
	Naruto	48.5%	51.5%	237
	Bleach	62.8%	37.2%	183
	Average	62.6%	37.4%	227
S H O J O	Ouran High School	39.9%	60.1%	203
	Skip Beat	41.4%	58.6%	324
	Kimi ni Todoke	40.5%	59.5%	153
	Dengeki Daisy	57.9%	42.1%	195
	Average	44.5%	55.4%	218

Table 1. Frequency Ratio of Sound and Manner Mimetics

However, it should be noted that the percentage of the use for *giongo* and *gitaigo* may vary to some extent, depending on the artist's styles and emphasis on action that accompanies sound or psychological depth. For example, the *giongo* frequency rate is relatively high in *Dengeki Daisy* (42.1%), which is higher than the *shonen* average (37.4%). Conversely, *Naruto* shows a relatively high percentage of *gitaigo* (51.1%), close to *shojo* average of 55.4%. The usage of *giongo-gitaigo* seems to depend on the manga artists to an extent, as shown in their way of deciding how much to include in the story in the way of psychological and action elements.

S-R Sequence

In this section, I would like to examine how suspense elements of S-R are used in *giongo* and *gitaigo* mimetics for both *shonen* and *shojo* genres. *Giongo* and *gitaigo* appear in the eight works studied and are coded into S (stimuli), R (response), and N (Neutral), according to their function within the sequence of panels. Neutral (N) is used to indicate independent sound or

---

[34] Mimish, et al., "Pow, Punch, Pika, and Chu," 302.

action in the scene, sound or action which has nothing to do with the sequence of S-R.

	MANGA GENRES	S	R	N	Total Mimetic Words
GIONGO	Shonen	49.3%	28.3%	22.4%	568
	Shojo	27.9%	35.4%	36.7%	390
Average		38.6%	31.8%	29.6%	958
GITAIGO	Boys	27.4%	54.4%	18.2%	340
	Girls	23.1%	67.4%	9.5%	485
Average		25.3%	60.9%	13.9%	825

Table 2. S-R Sequence of Mimetics
(Notes: S: Stimuli, R: Response; N: Neutral)

As shown in Table 2, *giongo* are used slightly more frequently as stimuli (S) (38.6%) than response (R) (31.8%). *Giongo* as stimuli is remarkably high in *shonen* genres (49.3%), compared with that of girls (27.9%). The higher percentage of the use of stimuli (S) in the *shonen* genres seems to be attributable to the sound effect of destruction depicted by sequence of *giongo* during the battle scenes (as in Figure 5 from *One Piece*).

Conversely, the usage of *gitaigo* is higher in response (R) for an average of (60.9%) than as stimuli (25.3%), and the usage of manner as stimuli is slightly higher in *shojo* (67.4%) than in *shonen* (54.4%). It seems reasonable to predict a higher usage of response (R) among *gitaigo*, due to its main function of showing emotional and attitudinal reactions in response to the stimuli. As for the neutral use of *giongo*: it is higher in the *shojo* genre due to its effect in enhancing the reality of the daily lives and/or the use of inactive amphophile panels in creating the aesthetic effects of "ma" discussed earlier. Conversely, neutral action is seen to be higher in the *shonen* section, due to its being an action-based story.

Giongo S-R

Let's observe the S-R sequence of *giongo* from *Kimi ni Todoke* in Figure 7. I briefly mentioned the effect of the sliding door in the classroom with *giongo* term "*gara*" (rattle, slide, swish), which can be used for a changing scene or entering the character into the scene. In sequence, however, *giongo* "ガラ *gara*" in katakana, depicts the abrupt entrance of the main character who is notoriously creepy because of her resemblance to the heroine in the horror film *Ring*. Because of her sudden appearance in the

classroom as a stimulus (S), the response (R) of her classmates is depicted with a suppressed noise of a crowd "ざわ *zawa*" in hiragana. Gingo "*zawa*" simplifies the "unstable mind" or "psychological uneasiness" of the crowd, compared with the generic noise of the crowd "*gaya gaya.*"[35] Due to its psychological implication and the fearful expressions and blank faces of her classmates, it seems more appropriate to use hiragana to soften the intensity of the noise into a whispering quality.

Figure 7[36]

Giongo-Gitaigo: Laughter (S)-Emotion (R)

In other instances, *giongo* signaling laughter as stimuli (S) may evoke psychological tension or conflict. When we examine different kinds of laughter, even the generic "*ha ha ha*" can be employed in different contexts and with different connotations. In Figure 8, the laughter "あНははH *ha ha ha*" shows a burst of embarrassed laughter after the main hero confesses his interest in the heroine, in which stimuli causes her to blush in response (R).

Figure 8[37]   **Figure 9**[38]

---

[35] Tsuruko Asano, *Giongo Gitaigo Jiten* [Giongo Gitaigo Dictionary] (Tokyo: Kadokawa, 1974), 134.
[36] Shiina, *Kim ni Todoke*, 43.
[37] Shiina, *Kimi ni Todoke*, 84.
[38] Oda, *One Piece*, 6.

In contrast, in Figure 9, a different version of the laughter "だはっはっはっ *DA ha! Ha! Ha!*" accompanies Shunks' ridicule when he hears the main character Luffy expressing his determination to become a great pirate. This humor arises from the obviously disqualifying reason that Luffy cannot swim. Because of implied ridicule in this laughter as a stimulus, it evokes resentment of Luffy as a response, saying, "It's not a big deal unless I fall off from the ship. Besides I am a tough fighter," whose utterance accompanies "DON!" in the alphabet to show his decisive punch, after the appearance of Shunks with *gitaigo* "どん *don*" in hiragana. It should be noted that both *giogo* are written in hiragana in order to show embarrassed laughter and ridicule with some affection between friends.

Gitaigo(S)-Gitaigo (R) Sequence

Now, I would like to illustrate how *gitaigo* can function for an S-R in the following examples from *One Piece* and *Bleach*. In Figure 10 from *One Piece*, Shunks tries to save Luffy from the alligator when it almost attacks him. Shunks' sharp stare with his eyes wide open is indicated by "ギロッ *giro*" as stimuli (S), and the frame beneath shows the response (R) of Luffy. The appearance of an alligator frightens Luffy "ビクッ *biku*," and Luffy shakes "*gata gata*" in fear, sweating "じわっ *jiwa*" in the left side frame. It should be noted that the first three *gitaigo*, "ギロッ *giro*," "ビクッ *biku*," and "ガタガタ *gatagata*" are all in katakana to emphasize immediate sharp reaction, whereas the last *gitaigo* "じわっ *jiwa*," which indicates the slow dripping of oozing sweat depicted with hiragana, has a generic letter for *gitaigo*.

Figure 10[39]   **Figure 11**[40]

---

[39] Oda, *One Piece*, 39.
[40] Majima, *Fairy Tail*, 17.

In the final example from *Fairy Tail* (Figure 11), the glimpse of the sharp eye gase "チラ *chira*" by the charismatic Saramandar who has a magical power to infatuate girls (S), triggers the keen "heart-squeezing" (キュン *kyun*) of Lucy (R), the main character. It is interesting to note different kinds of eye gaze used as stimuli to trigger significant psychological reactions of the characters in both instances, with the wide variety of *gitaigo* employed to indicate nuance of eye gaze and expression.

Conclusion

This study has discussed how the multi-modal nature of Japanese hand-drawn onomatopoeia/mimetics intersects and works between images within the visual context of the story. Some supportive roles of onomatopoeia/mimetics are made clear in conjunction with the flow of vertical/horizontal writings, as well as comparatively subjective nuances derived from such camera techniques as close-ups and environmental shots.

As shown in this analysis, *giongo* are used more often than *gitaigo* in *shonen* genres than in *shojo* ones, though there are some slight exceptions with *Naruto* in *shonen* genre and *Dengeki Daisy* in the *shojo* genre. In Stimuli-Response (S-R) sequence analysis, *giongo* are used more often for stimulus in *shonen* genres, while *gitaigo* are used more frequently in *shojo* ones as a response to the stimuli. These results are consistent with the fact that *shonen* genres are more inclined to action, and *shojo* genres are more psychologically driven.

In essence, I have discussed the dramatic effect of Japanese onomatopoeia/mimetics in popular manga in developing suspense storylines based on script theory. The fundamental elements of the plot in suspense making have an S-R structure, which dramatizes the conflicting relationships and psychology of the characters by stimulating the other to trigger the emotional response of hurt and excitement. These salient features of Japanese manga, along with the mimetics frequently associated with it, seem to enhance the suspense elements within S-R building blocks of the plot. I hope this study has shed some light on the major function of Japanese mimetics, which goes beyond English onomatopoeia and creates and adds dramatic effects, movement, and BGM for two-dimensional manga.

DŌGEN'S APPROACH TO USES OF THE BUDDHIST CANON IN THE "READING SŪTRAS" ("KANKIN" 看經) FASCICLE

Steven Heine
Florida International University

> The practices of "chanting sūtras" 念經, "reading sūtras" 看經, "reciting sūtras" 誦經, "copying sūtras" 書經, "receiving sūtras" 受經, and "upholding sūtras" 持經 all represent the practice-realization 修證 of the buddhas and ancestors 佛祖.　　　　　　　　　—Dōgen

I. Problematizing Terminology and Methodology

The main aim of this essay, originally presented at a national meeting of the Association for Asian Studies several years ago, is to explore some of the multiple levels of discourse embedded in the fascicle, "Reading Sūtras" ("Kankin" 看經), written by Dōgen 道元 (1200–1253) in 1241 and included in his masterwork, the *Shōbōgenzō* 正法眼藏 [hereafter SH]. I also consider related texts by the Sōtō Zen master in order to try to capture his approach to textuality and canonicity in light of the famous pronouncement by his Chinese mentor Rujing (如淨, 1163–1228), which disclaims the role of the ceremony of sūtra reading (*kankin* 看經) in addition to four other ritual practices normally considered routine at a Zen temple: burning incense, making bows, reciting the name of Buddha, and performing repentance. (All citations of Dōgen are from Dōgen, *Dōgen Zenji zenshū* 道元禅師全集, edited by Kawamura Kōdō, et al., 7 vols. Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1988–1993).

These training techniques are all to be abandoned, according to Rujing, in favor of the priority of the dedicated practice of zazen-only or just-sitting (*shikan taza* 只管打坐) as the key to attaining an experience of casting off body-mind (*shinjin datsuraku* 身心脱落). The latter phrase is how Dōgen characterized his own experience of awakening that was attained during a prolonged meditation session while practicing at Tiantong temple under the supervision of Rujing as part of the summer retreat (*ango*) of 1225.

Although the apparent contradiction and controversy about Dōgen promoting the practice of reading sūtras seen in relation to Rujing's denial of the efficacy of this practice is the primary topic, the scope of my inquiry regarding Dōgen's overall view of the Buddhist canon has been broadened by a study of the volume, *Spreading the Buddha's Word in East Asia: The*

Formation and Transformation of the Chinese Buddhist Canon, edited by Jiang Wu and Lucille Chia (NY: Columbia UP, 2015). Key points made in that work about the formation of, as well as rituals associated with, the canon have led me to question some basic assumptions about the key terms.

The first question is, what exactly is meant by "reading" sūtras, since the term *kan* 看 literally indicates "seeing" but generally implies "reciting" passages and/or "rotating" the sūtra repository rather than examining texts from a philosophical standpoint; that is, it seems to represent almost anything but actual reading in the conventional sense.

Second, what are the "sūtras," since it is not clear whether *kin* 經 – usually pronounced *kyō* but apparently given a slight twist in medieval Japanese based on the Chinese *jing*; similar examples of Sinicized terms used in Kamakura- era Zen are *tenzo* 典座 and *hattō* 法堂 – indicates mainly the *Lotus Sūtra* along with a small group of other prominent Mahayana sūtras. Or does the term refer to the entire Buddhist canon encompassing Hinayana and Mahayana scriptures translated or composed in Chinese based on the 983 Chengdu edition consisting of 5,048 scrolls (a number occasionally mentioned by Dōgen to suggest symbolically the entirety of Buddhist texts)?

Perhaps, as Charlotte Eubanks suggests in *Miracles of Book and Body: Buddhist Textual Culture and Medieval Japan* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011), we should consider that for Dōgen the act of sūtra reading, whether understood in the limited aspect of formal studies of writings or the more expansive ritual aspect of circumambulating while reciting canonical texts, should be considered an alternative form of meditation. In that sense, questions regarding what *kan* and *kin* mean would be viewed in relation to Dōgen's subjectivist outlook regarding the five examples of sacramental religiosity that are dismissed by Rujing.

A third question that is raised by *Spreading the Buddha's Word in East Asia* concerns the extent to which the sūtras included in the canon may function as a talismanic device that has supernatural power since there was, for example, a Buddhist tradition of believing in the capacity of the rites of recitation and circumambulation to be able to cause a physical repository to begin self-rotating, in addition to other examples of miraculous functions.

Analyzing these issues pertains to two key elements of Dōgen's traditional biographical accounts: one suggests that he read the entire Buddhist canon (twice, according to one version) while residing in Kyoto area temples (Enryakuji, Onjōji, and Kenninji) prior to his travel to China in 1223; and the other element indicates that in 1250 Dōgen received at Eiheiji

a new copy of the canon donated by his samurai patron Hatano Yoshishige, as mentioned in a couple of passages of the *Eihei kōroku* 永平廣録 [EK].

In an EK passage about this event, Dōgen considers talismanic implications of sūtras in his typically cryptic and ambiguous fashion. The episode is important because it took place during the phase of his life I have referred to as the "late late Dōgen," when the master was involved in citing for the first time various early Buddhist texts concerning the impact of karmic retribution and the value of sincere repentance in the 12-fascicle edition of SH, yet he also emphasized several uncanny spiritual occurrences that supposedly took place at Eiheiji.

Although "Reading Sūtras" is the main example of Dōgen's approach to the canon, it is not the only SH fascicle that delves deeply into various aspects of the core contradiction regarding Rujing's injunction. "Buddhist Sūtras" ("Bukkyō" 佛經) is another prominent work, as is "Whole Body of Tathagata" ("Nyorai Zenshin" 如來全身), and over a couple of dozen additional fascicles feature key terms or citations culled from the *Lotus Sūtra*, which Dōgen refers or alludes to several hundred times in all.

In a rather unsystematic and idiosyncratic yet highly inventive and intricate way in "Reading Sūtras," Dōgen comments on what Zen monks can and should be doing with scriptural texts. He sandwiches a conventional passage cited from the *Zen Monastic Rules* (C. *Chanyuan qinggui*, J. *Zen'en shingi*) from 1103 on how to perform the ritual of sūtra reading for the sake of donors, or a similar obligation, with nearly a dozen irreverent and even blasphemous encounter dialogues or kōan cases that debunk and disregard, or disorient and reorient, the practice endorsed in monastic regulations. The kōans cited seem to turn the whole matter of sūtra reading on its head by emphasizing interior or contemplative symbolism instead of external ritualism.

What follows is an outline of some of the main biographical (or hagiographical) and ritual topics relevant for understanding Dōgen's distinctive view of textuality coupled with citations of various passages in support of my analysis of the multiple dimensions of sūtra reading, or what I playfully call Dōgen's approach to "Kankinicity," which helps clarify and dispel a focus on contradiction. This method emphasizing diverse aspects of hermeneutics stands somewhat in contrast to Jonathan Silk's view that canon formation "evolves around authority, and therefore around power and the exercise of power" (see "Canonicity," in *Brill's Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, 2015).

II. Apparent Disavowals of Reading Sūtras

In a passage that appears with slight variations no less than eight times in Dōgen's corpus, Rujing (whose name is specifically mentioned in six instances) instructs that "reading sūtras" must be considered one of five traditional Buddhist practices that are irrelevant and should be eliminated, since only sitting meditation leads to the awakening experience characterized as casting (or dropping or sloughing) off body-mind. Note that, in a separate debate, the question of whether Rujing used the latter expression or it represents a creative misunderstanding proffered by Dōgen, who may have misheard Rujing's Chinese homophonic phrase indicating "casting dust from the mind" (心塵脱落), has frequently been raised. Here is a list in chronological order of the eight mentions (from *Dōgen Zenji Zenshū*, ed. Kagamishima Genryū, et al., Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1988–1993):

(1) *Hōkyōki* (1226), but probably edited near the end of Dōgen's life
(2) *Bendōwa* (1231) – no mention of Rujing
(3) *Eihei kōroku* 9.85-86 (1236)
(4) *Eihei kōroku* 1.33 (1240) – no mention of Ruing
(5) *Shōbōgenzō* "Gyōji" (1242)
(6) *Shōbōgenzō* "Bukkyō" (1243)
(7) *Shōbōgenzō* "Zanmai ō zanmai" (1244)
(8) *Eihei kōroku* 6.432 (1251)

The fascicle *Bendōwa* 辨道話 is included in the 95-fascicle version but not the 75-fascicle version of SH, so I consider it an independent text. Also, *Hōkyōki*, a record of Dōgen's conversations conducted in Rujing's abbot's quarters from 1226–1227, may represent the first appearance of the passage; although I generally agree with some modern scholars who have identified this as a text Dōgen compiled toward the end of his life, here I follow T. Griffith Foulk's chronology ("Dōgen's Take on Zazen, Sūtra Reading, and Other Conventional Buddhist Practices, in *Dogen: Textual and Historical Studies*, ed. Steven Heine, NY: Oxford UP, 2012), 75–106).

Bendōwa, without mentioning Rujing, offers a Japanese rendition of the original Sinitic injunction:

From the start (*hajimeyori*) of your consultation (*sanken*)
with a wise teacher (*chishiki*), have no recourse (*mochiizu*)
whatsoever (*sarani*) to burning incense (*shōkō*), making

bows (*raihai*), reciting the name of buddha [or buddha-mindfulness] (*nenbutsu*), performing repentance (*shusan*), or reading sūtras (*kankin*). Just (*tadashi*) sit (*taza*) and attain the casting off of body-mind (*shinjin datsuraku suru koto wo eyo*). 參見知識のはじめより、さらに燒香-禮拜-念佛-修懺-看經をもちゐず,ただし打坐して身心脱落すること をえよ.

This passage recalls what Hakuin (白隱, 1686–1769) cites in *Orategama*, written centuries later: "The Priest of Shinjū-an has explained it in this way: 'Don't read the sūtras, practice meditation; don't take up the broom, practice meditation; don't plant the tea seeds, practice meditation; don't ride a horse, practice meditation.' This is the attitude of the masters of old regarding the true study of Zen."

Note that the "Bukkyō" fascicle, citing Dōgen's "former teacher" 先師, includes the Chinese term 不用 to indicate the prohibition, rather than the Japanese construction もちゐず, and it also mentions the term *bendō* 辨道:

先師尋常道.我箇裏.不用燒香禮拜念佛修懺看經.祗管打坐. 辨道功夫.身心脱落.

Also, in EK vol. 9, which consists of Dōgen's verse comments (*juko*) on 90 kōan cases, the source passage is spread into two cases, with each including a 4-line 7-character Chinese verse (*kanshi*) by Dōgen (below is a modification of the translation by Taigen Dan Leighton and Shohaku Okumura, trans. *Dōgen's Extensive Record*, Boston: Wisdom, 2010):

9.85: Master Tiantong [Rujing] said, "In my approach, do not use burning incense, making bows, reciting the name of buddha, performing repentance, or reading sūtras, but simply engage in just sitting." 天童和尚云. 我箇裏. 不用燒香・礼拜・念仏・修懺・看経, 祗管打坐始得.
　　　Verse:
A turtle hides its hands and head, but doesn't let go [of its grasp on driftwood].
Who is it that experiences gain and loss?
Dragons and snakes mixed together are still dragons and snakes.

The distinction is based on which is coiled and which takes
        flight.
亀自手頭非不拈 / 之乎者也失将得 / 龍蛇混雑似龍蛇 / 渾坐
蟠身元羽翼.

 9.86: Master Tiantong [Rujing] said, "Practicing Zen
(*sanzen*) is casting off body-mind." 天童和尚云.参禅者身
心脱落.
        Verse:
By playing with a wooden ladle, the wind and waves arise.
With the benefaction of great and deep virtue, rewards are enhanced.
Even when seeing seas dried up or feeling cold to the core,
Don't let the teachings fade or relinquish the steady mind.
弄来木杓風波起 / 恩大徳深報亦深 / 縦見海枯寒徹底 / 莫教
身死不留心.

In addition, Dōgen concludes a lengthy discussion of zazen in EK
6.432 by saying simply after a pause, "The nose is aligned with the navel, the
ears aligned with the shoulders" 鼻与臍対. 耳対肩. The implication is that a
constantly contemplative stance symbolized by one's upright and steadfast
posture supersedes any distinction between reading sūtras and silence or
nonverbal communication.

The main reason for the disavowals indicated by Rujing is that the
five practices rely on causal and conditioning factors as a means of producing
enlightenment, which ultimately lies beyond yet is inseparable from
conditioned reality. Therefore, Dōgen writes in *Bendōwa*, "In reading sūtras
you should not expend thoughts in the vain hope that they will be helpful for
attaining realization."

But he also argues that, if executed authentically, the practice can
certainly be effective: "Actually, the meaning of reading sūtras is that, if you
understand and follow the rules of practice for sudden or gradual realization
taught by the Buddha, you will unmistakably attain enlightenment." This
suggests that authentic practice involves understanding the oneness of
cultivation and realization (*shushō ittō* 修証一等), so that, like meditation, the
genuine act of reading sūtras is a matter, to coin a phrase, of "just reading
sūtras" (*shikan kankin*) without ulterior motives and thus in harmony with
ongoing spiritual attainment.

Furthermore, in addition to commenting on a variety of Song-dynasty Chan texts throughout the SH, many of which Dōgen himself heped transport from China to Japan for the first time, Dōgen cites extensively the *Lotus Sūtra* and other Mahayana scriptures. Indeed, as Foulk has shown, all the practices supposedly rejected by Rujing as worthless and criticized as well by Dōgen in sometimes scathing or sarcastic fashion were – with the possible exception of reciting the name of Buddha (*nembutsu*), which is singled out for refutation in *Bendōwa*, where it is compared to the croaking of a frog – are also often cited in positive ways and consistently used in Dōgen's approach to monastic training. Is this one more example of Zen's deliberate duplicity or self-contradiction, and if so, how can that tendency be explained in terms of Dōgen's overall religious outlook evident in his view of sūtra reading?

The "Bukkyō" fascicle – which in some contentious, polemical passages critiques patriarchs from other schools, including Linji and Yunmen, along with Caodong school founder Dongshan (later rehabilitated by Dōgen) as well as views associated with Caodong master Hongzhi– offers a spirited defense of reading sūtras when properly undertaken:

> An ancient once said, "To read sūtras you must have the authentic eye (*gen*) for reading sutras" 古人云. 看經須具看經眼.

This fascicle further maintains:

> An ancient worthy said, "You may be deluded about the sūtras, but it is not the sūtras that are deluding you." There are many accounts of ancient worthies reading sūtras. 古徳いはく. なんぢ經にまどふ. 經なんぢをまよはさず. 古徳看經の因縁おほし.

Dōgen also challenges those deficient monks of the Great Song for their fundamental misunderstandings:

> They often say, "The Buddhist sūtras don't contain the original intention of the Buddha." The patriarchal transmission is itself his original intention. In patriarchal transmission, the mysterious, distinctive, profound, and

marvelous teaching is passed on. しかのごとくの長老等.か
れこれともにいはく.佛經は佛道の本意にあらず.祖傳これ
本意なり.祖傳に奇特玄妙つたはれり.

Moreover, Dōgen argues, "If it were as the deficient ones say, and Buddhist scriptures are to be tossed aside, you will be tossing aside the Buddha's body and mind…Hence, you need to realize beyond any doubt that there are Buddhist sūtras within the way of the Buddha. You need to explore the extensive texts and the profound meaning of mountains and rivers and make the sūtras the standard for doing your utmost to train in the Way."

III. The "10 R's" of Sūtra Reading

What exactly is meant by "reading sūtras" 看經, especially when *kan* is used instead of the expected term for "reading," *doku* 讀 (or 誦 *tonaeru*, *yomu*)? Alternative terms are 念經 (thinking of, or mindfulness toward, sūtras), 轉藏 or 轉大藏經 (turning sūtras), and 看轉大藏經 (viewing and turning sūtras).

Does the term *kin* mean a sūtra, a set of sūtras, or the complete canon, which is usually referred to as *Issaikyō* 一切經 or *Daizōkyō* 大藏經 (or 大藏教, with 經 and 教 perhaps used interchangeably)? Other terms are 經典 and 教典, but these are likely modern inventions. In any case, according to an interpreter of Dōgen, the "'authentic eye of *kankin*' (*kankin no manako*) is the same eye as the eye of the 'true dharma eye (*shōbōgen*).'"

In several SH fascicles Dōgen mentions the complete canon by referring to the 1,026 fascicles of the 5,048 scrolls of the 730 Kaiyuan edition, the first printed version in China that was followed by the 983 slightly expanded Chengdu edition. Dōgen cites this in "Jishō zammai" "Sanjūshichihon Bodaibumpō," and "Udambara," which says:

> The holding aloft of one's flower is the flower holding the flower aloft; it is represented by the plum blossom, the spring blossoms, the snow-covered blossoms, and the lotus blossom. The five petals displayed by the plum blossom embody the more than three hundred and sixty assemblies wherein Buddha voiced the dharma, the five thousand and forty-eight volumes of the sūtras, the three vehicles, the twelve divisions of the canon, and the bodhisattva stage of being thrice wise and ten times saintly.

As a compound, the term *kankin* has multifarious implications, and almost always seem to represent ritualism or sacramentalism undertaken to accumulate merit or to satisfy a donor by performing a ceremonial act, rather than scholasticism or textual studies, which becomes seemingly secondary irrelevant in many Buddhist ritual contexts.

Thinking back to the so-called 3 R's of America's Cold War-era education policy, I suggest that *kankin* indicates 10 R's, as listed below more or less in order of importance, with only the last of these involving scriptural studies in the customary sense:

(1) Reciting (chanting)
(2) Rotating (turning the repository)
(3) Remembering (memorizing the words)
(4) Repeating (memorializing the content)
(5) 'Riting (copying passages or the whole work)
(6) Regarding (viewing the scripture as an object)
(7) Rambling (walking around or circumambulating)
(8) 'Rithmetic (counting the numbers of words, lines, scrolls)
(9) Receiving (when gifted by a patron)
(10) Reading (in the sense of studying meanings and reasons).

Again, the emphasis seems to be on anything but reading. An 11th R could be "remaining" in the practice of reciting sūtras 不斷讀經, a 12th R would be the converse of "renouncing" or stopping the practice 斷讀經, and a 13th is "ripping" sūtras, as attributed in famous stories to Huineng, Deshan, and other Chan luminaries.

The significance of the practices of reciting, rotating, and rambling can be seen in the list below of everyday routines at a typical medieval Sōtō Zen temple:

Daily Observances (Mainichi Shogyōji 每日諸行事)
Circumambulation of the monks' hall in the early morning in the Buddha hall:
Sūtra chanting after the morning rice gruel
Sūtra chanting for previous abbots
Sūtra chanting for ancestors of the emperor (or shogun)
Sūtra chanting n the abbot's quarters (*hōjō* 方丈):

> Prayer (*kitō* 祈祷) revolving/reciting (*tendoku* 転読) six hundred volumes of the Great Sūtra on the Perfection of Wisdom (*Daihannya roppyaku kan* 大般若六百巻)
> Sūtra chanting for the founders [i.e., Dōgen and Keizan an] (*goeidō* 御影堂)
> Sūtra chanting for ancestors, whose funerary tablets are enshrined in the mortuary hall
> Sūtra chanting to make ties with Buddha (*kechien* 結縁)
> Sūtra chanting for the ancestors of the highest daimyō
> Reciting the *Lotus Sūtra* for the universal transfer of merit in the Buddha hall
> Midday sūtra chanting (*nitchū* 日中) in the abbot's quarters
> Intermission (*hisan* 放参), then circumambulation of the hall at hoji [i.e., the hour of the monkey (around 4 p.m. in the Monks' hal)l:
> Chanting after zazen and the evening bell (konshō 昏鐘).

An additional point is that the use of *kan* in the term "investigating Zen sayings (or kōans)" (*kanna Zen*, C. *kanhua Chan* 看話禪) does not refer to literally reading the case but attaining spontaneous, intuitive insight into its potency to trigger awakening, which purposefully lies beyond the meaning of the written word. That standpoint can be considered to have its origins in a passage from the *Platform Sūtra* attributed to Huineng, which dismisses the need for literal reading in favor of genuinely spontaneous spiritual insight:

> Section 42. There was another priest by the name of Fada 法达, who had been reading the *Lotus Sūtra* continuously for seven years, but his mind was still deluded, and he did not know where the true dharma abided. [Going to see Huineng, he bowed and asked]: "I have doubts about the sūtra, and because the master's wisdom is great, I implore you to resolve my doubts."
>
> The master said: "Fada, your dharma (*fa*) is not yet proficient (*da*). You have no doubts concerning the sūtra, [but your mind doubts its own understanding]. You are searching for the true dharma with falsehood in your mind. If your own mind were correct and secure, you would know the sūtra. I have never in my life tried to study

writings, but if you bring a copy of the *Lotus Sūtra* and read it to me all the way through, upon hearing the words I will be able to "grasp the dharma" (*fada*) all at once by understanding as if I had read it myself."

This passage furthermore highlights a key point emphasized in "Reading Sūtras," which is that the sūtras mean something different as a direct transmission for the enlightened than they do for the unenlightened, who continually struggle and become hopelessly entangled in questions of ritual protocol. In an EK passage from the mid-1230s, Dōgen emphasizes that those who understand can see the sūtra even in a teacher's flywhisk (*hossu*):

> EK 1.6. Sermon: Even practicing for three great kalpas, your effort is not yet complete. Attaining realization in a single moment cannot be defiled. An ancient said, "Relying on the sūtras by understanding their meaning is the enemy of the buddhas past, present, and future. Departing from the sūtras by one word is the same as demons' speech."
>   Without relying on the sūtras, and without departing from the sūtras, how could we ever practice? Would all of you like to see the sūtra? Dōgen held up his flywhisk and said: "This is my whisk. What is the sūtra?"
>   Following a pause Dōgen added, "It would take too long to explain, so I will leave that for another time."
> 上堂.修行三祇劫分. 功満未休.取証一刹那分. 染汚不得.古人道. 依経解義. 三世仏冤讎.離経一字.即同魔説. 既不依経.既不離経. 又且如何行李.諸人要看経麼.豎払子云. 這箇是興聖払子.那箇是経. 良久云. 向下文長.附在来日.

In light of these passages, I agree with Charlotte Eubanks' view indicating that, "The essay ["Reading Sūtras"] pivots on the crucial idea of 'turning': 'turning the sūtras' meaning over and over in one's mind, the slow turn of breath coming in and going out, the turning of the sūtra scrolls in one's hand, taking a turn around the meditation cushion." Furthermore, according to Eubanks, for Dōgen, who situates these activities in the same ritual space of the temple's practice grounds, "All of these various approaches intimate that the movement of the body through space is a physical enactment of reading, and they suggest that the process of turning

and turning again results in a fine attenuation of sūtra text and the embodied heart-mind should see reading as an instance of circumambulation."

IV. The Canon in the Period of "Late Late" Dōgen

Regarding the question of whether Dōgen, in referring to the Buddhist canon, indicated just the *Lotus Sūtra* and related scriptures or the whole body of literature encompassing diverse Indian and Chinese sources, we need to consider key elements of his traditional biography. First, as reported in the two main sources, he read the entire canon one time by the age of 18, according to *Denkōroku* by Keizan (十八歳ヨリ内ニ一切經ヲ披閲スルコト一, T.2585.82.405b26), or two times, in a passage in *Kenzeiki* (a 1472 authoritative Sōtō sect account) before leaving for China at age 23 (貞應元年壬午. 師歳二十三歳.　これまで大藏經を周覧すること二回なり).

Even if that is the case, and similar claims were made for numerous prominent monks in medieval Japan, how much do we know about what was available for reading on Mount Hiei, or elsewhere in Kyoto, at the time Dōgen practiced there from 1216 to 1223? Did Dōgen study Indian texts while still in Japan, or might the study have first taken place in China when he was also trying to absorb the "de facto Chan canon," a vast new body of texts produced during the Song dynasty that had not yet been incorporated into the mainstream canonical collection published at the end of the tenth century?

This question becomes especially important in light of reports that Dōgen received Hatano's gift of the "entire canon" during the late late phase of his life, which some commentators maintain started in the 3rd month of 1248 after Dōgen's return from a six-month trip to Kamakura, where he declined Hōjō Tokiyori's offer of a new temple later bestowed to Lanqi Daolong (J. Rankei Dōryū) as Kenchōji monastery. Dōgen's difficult decision, given that he refused an invitation from the highest authority in the land, was because of his ethical reservations about serving a martial leader who had perpetrated a lifetime of violence. From then on, he placed a strong emphasis on the inviolable impact of karmic causality (*inga* 因果), a standpoint expressed especially in the following works:

> - *Eihei Kōroku* 3.251 (the first sermon after returning from Kamakura) and continuing in various sermons such as 5.381 through the last one, 7.531, delivered in 1252

- *12-Fascicle Shōbōgenzō*, which was mainly composed during the post-Kamakura years and includes fascicles that endorse repentance but repudiate nondual views of causality for harboring antinomian implications
- *Hōkyōki*, which was probably penned, or at least heavily edited, at this late stage by Dōgen, according to a prominent recent theory; the text features several examples Rujing instructing him on the doctrine of causality.

However, the late late phase of Dōgen's career was also marked by several noteworthy supernatural occurrences, as recorded by the images included in the *Teiho Kenzeiki zue* from 1803, which was based on Menzan's 1752 text that is a revision of the original *Kenzeiki*; the relevant sequence of biographical images is numbered here, with the other-worldly examples marked by * and the canonical reference also highlighted:

52 Kamakura visit and preaching to Hōjō Tokiyori beginning in the fall of 1247
53 Lanqi Daolong (Rankei Dōryū) and an exchange of letters about zazen from 1248
54 Gemmyō and the removal of his meditation seat for betraying Dōgen by accepting the shogun's gift in 1248
55* Multicolored clouds appearing over Eiheiji in 1249
56* Appearance of 16 Rakan visualized at Eiheiji in 1249
57 "Tsukimi," or Dōgen's famous moon-viewing pavilion poem composed in 1249
58 Daizōkyō received at Eiheiji from samurai patron Hatano in 1250
59 Purple robe, sent for third time from the government and finally accepted by Dōgen in 1250
60* Bell sounds heard echoing despite lack of an actual ringing in 1251
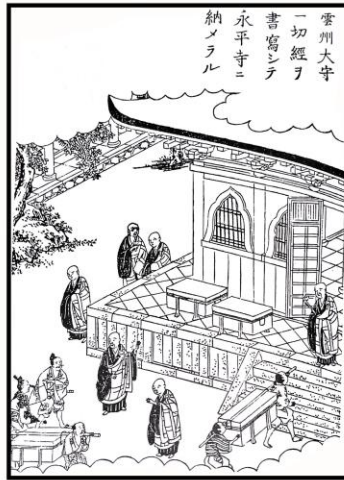
Figure 1. Daizōkyō being brought to Eiheiji in *Teiho Kenzeiki zue*

Two EK *jōdō* sermons record that the reception of the canon occurred shortly after the new year of 1250. The first sermon raises an intriguing issue about possible supernatural functions of the canon by commenting ironically on a citation of a brief dialogue involving Tang dynasty master Touzi Datong (投子大同, 819–914); the original passage reads, 師示眾云… 僧問.表裏不收時如何.師云.你擬向者裏根.問.大藏教中還有奇特事也無.師云.演出大藏教.問.如何是佛向上人.師云.現佛身, X.68n1315.36:

> EK 5.361. Sermon upon the arrival of a letter from the Great Lord of Izumo Province [Hatano Yoshishige] about his having the Tripitaka Canon copied for a donation to this temple:
>
> In a dialogue a monk asked Touzi [Datong], "Is there anything particularly special in the teachings expounded in the Tripitaka?" Touzi said, "The performance [presentation, or carrying out the deeds of] 演出大藏教 of the teachings expounded in the *Daizōkyō*."
>
> The ancient Buddha, Touzi [Datong], has thus spoken. This [donation] brings much joy to the mountain

gate [of Eiheiji]. On this occasion, I offer a verse for itinerant monks:

> The performance of teachings in the *Daizōkyō* –
> You should know that great gentlemen,
> Heavenly beings, and wise sages,
> Gain protection from this talisman.
> 演出大蔵教 / 須知大丈夫 / 天人賢聖類 /
> 幸得護身符.

> What is it like at just that moment? After a pause Dōgen says, "There are certainly sages in the world. What is good and evil 善悪 other than cause and effect 因果?"

The key phrase is Touzi's saying 演出大蔵教, which is cited in the first line of the verse and could imply the ritual of reading, the act of bringing the scrolls out of storage for viewing, or a practitioner carrying out and embodying the essence of the sūtras. The second sermon says:

> EK 5.362. On receiving a joyful letter from the Great Lord [Hatano Yoshishige] that arrived in response to [our accepting his donation of] the Tripitaka that wascopied for this temple:
> The ocean treasury of Vairocana has been transmitted from ancient times to the present. This is the threefold turning of the Dharma wheel in the multitude [of realms]. On thousands of summits and ten thousand peaks is the color of golden leaves. Sentient beings fully attain the way all at the same time. 毘盧蔵海古今伝. 三転法輪於大千. 千嶽万峰黄葉色. 衆生得道一時円.

Another important composition by Dōgen during this phase of his career was one of the poems contained in the group of "15 Verses on Dwelling in Mountains," which was probably composed in the early 1250s:

> What joy I feel in this mountain dwelling, so solitary and
>   tranquil,
> Where I regularly read 読 the *Lotus Sūtra*.

> With wholehearted contemplation, where is there any
>   longing or attachment?
> How enviable to hear the sounds of evening rain in the
>   depths of autumn.

幾悦山居尤寂寞 / 因斯常読法華経 /専精樹下何憎愛 / 妬矣秋
深夜雨声.

V. Returning to the "Reading Sūtras" Fascicle

With details of the historical and conceptual background in mind, let us return to a synopsis of the main contents of the "Reading Sūtras" fascicle before outlining some of the main principles of Dōgen's view of "Kankinicity." The fascicle opens with a passage about the metaphorical and metaphysical significance of scriptures.

> Without being buddhas and ancestors, it is impossible to
> see, hear, read, chant, and understand the meaning of sutras
> that are being transmitted by carvings on trees and rocks,
> spread in fields and villages, demonstrated in many lands,
> and expounded in empty space.

Then, the fascicle continues by commenting on numerous dialogues dealing with various ways of deconstructing the conventional ritual of recitation, including four similar stories marked below, with * indicating an apparent mocking or radical reorientation of the practice. Just as *kankin* seems to represent anything but ordinary reading in favor or reciting/rotating, these kōan cases suggest that the term means anything but ceremonialism:

(1) Yaoshan said, "Sūtras have sūtra scholars. Treatises have treatise scholars. What do you expect from this old monk?"

Dōgen: What Yaoshan taught is that a fist has a fist teacher, and an eyeball has an eyeball teacher.

(2) Huineng taught Fada [in the *Platform Sūtra*] with a verse: "When your mind is deluded, you are turned by the Dharma blossoms. When your mind is enlightened, you turn the Dharma blossoms."

Dōgen: Rejoicing in these instructions, Fada presented the following words of admiration: "After chanting the sūtra three thousand times, I was overwhelmed by Huineng's single verse."

(3) The King asked, "Everyone turns [reads] a sūtra except you, O Venerable. Why is this so?" Prajnatara said, "While exhaling I do not follow conditions. While inhaling I do not abide in the realm of skandhas. I turn hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands, and billions of scrolls of sūtras, not merely one or two."

(4)* Zhaozhou got off the meditation platform, walked around it, and said to a messenger, "The canon has been rotated 轉藏已畢." The messenger reported this to the old woman who requested the ritual, and she said, "I asked the master to rotate the entire canon. Why did he only rotate half the canon 如何和尚只轉半藏?"

(5)* Dasui walked around the meditation platform and said to a messenger, "The canon has been rotated." The messenger reported this to the old woman who made the request and she said, "I asked the master to rotate the entire canon. Why did he only rotate half of the canon?"

> Dōgen: Now, do not try to interpret this!

(6)* Dongshan, Great Master Wuben, a high ancestor, once given a meal offering and a donation, was asked to rotate the canon by a government official. Dongshan got off the meditation platform and bowed to the official. The official bowed back. Dongshan said, "You and I have chanted the canon together. How come you still don't understand it?"

(7)* After his talk on Dongshan, Rujing drew a large circle with a flywhisk and said, "Today I have rotated the canon for you." Then he threw down the whisk and descended the teaching seat.

> Dōgen: You should rotate Rujing's words, which cannot be compared with the sayings of other teachers.

(8) Yaoshan, Great Master Hongdao, never allowed his students to read a sūtra, but one day he himself was reading a sūtra. A monk asked, "Master, you never allow us to read a sūtra. How come you are reading one now?" Yaoshan said, "I need to shelter my eyes [an idiom suggesting to become one with the sūtra]." The monk said, "Can I imitate you?" Yaoshan said, "If you read a sūtra, even a calf's skin would be pierced."

(9) Yefu, Zen master Daochuan, said: "Billions of offerings to buddhas create boundless benefaction. How can it compare to reading an ancient teaching?

Yet, letters are merely inked on white paper. Please open your eyes and see through this immediately."

(10) Yunju once saw a monk silently reading a sūtra in his room. He asked the monk through the window, "Reverend, what sūtra are you reading?" The monk said, "The *Vimalakirti Sūtra*." Yunju said, "I am not asking you about the *Vimalakirti Sūtra*. What sūtra are you reading?" At this, the monk attained realization.

(11) Yaoshan, Great Master Hongdao, asked novice Gao, "Did you get [realization] by reading a sūtra or from personal guidance?" Gao said, "I diidn't get it by reading a sūtra or from personal guidance." Yaoshan said, "There are many who don't read a sūtra or receive personal guidance. How come they don't get it?" Gao said, "I can't say why they don't get it. Perhaps they don't want to hit the mark."

       Dōgen: While there are those who do or do not hit the mark in the house of buddhas and ancestors, reading a sūtra and receiving personal guidance are essential as teaching devices commonly used for everyday practice.

       These cases debunking the conventional view of sutras are followed in the fascicle by an extended discussion of monastic regulations for the ceremonial use of sutras by citing the 1103 manual, the *Zen Monastic Rules*, which begins:

> Currently in the assemblies of buddha ancestors, there are various occasions for reciting a sūtra. For example, a donor comes to the monastery and asks the assembly of monks to recite a sūtra regularly or on a particular occasion; the assembly aspires to do so on their own; or the assembly recites a sūtra for a deceased monk.

This quote continues with detailed instructions about how the ceremony cn be performed efficiently. It is almost as if Dōgen was oblivious to his own citations in the same essay of eleven kōan cases debunking the practice. However, we can fairly surmise that he seeks to create that impression in a deliberate attempt to disturb and bewilder his followers so as to stimulate their ability to attain more advanced levels of understanding.

V. Conclusion: Multiple Dimensions of Dōgen's "Kankinicity"

Finally, the term "Kankinicity" refers to various aspects of the appropriation and appreciation of Buddhist scriptures articulated in "Reading Sūtras," with the contradictory aspects now cast as complementary rhetorical and practical elements of discourse:

(A) Iconic: sandwiched between commentary on several encounter dialogues is a conventional passage from the *Zen Monastic Rules* with directives for reciting sūtras for donors and the deceased.

(B) Aniconic: despite this, various kōan cases featuring Huineng, Zhaozhou, and other Chan figures reduce and reverse conventional ritual to a mere trifling by suggesting irreverently that one circumambulation of the sūtra repository conveys the entire canon.

(C) De-iconic: Dōgen adds his own evaluative comments to kōans cited, thus showing that Zen texts should not be put on a pedestal or taken at face value becuse they too must be continually dissected.

(D) Herm-iconic: based on words of advice by Rujing and other worthies, novel yet reversible interpretations are continually turned and re-turned by Dōgen's paradoxical wordplays.

(E) Supra-iconic: in that the sūtras also possess a supernatural or talismanic quality; or is this discursive element intended ironically?

(F) Trans-iconic: Dōgen also evokes a metaphysical elaboration by arguing at the end of the fascicle that sūtras are as numerous as the grains of sand or specks of dust in the universe.

(G) In-iconic: this implies intuitive insight by virtue of the dharma eye that sees into and fully penetrates all aspects of reality as sūtras.

In sum, of all Dōgen writings, "Reading Sūtras" offers perhaps the most striking juxtaposition of reverential elements in endorsing sūtra reading and irreverent kōan discourse dismissing this ritual. But the complexity does not stop there, as it incorporates many other rhetorical aspects that greatly expand and occasionally undermine our understanding and appreciation for the depths of meaning involved in appropriating scriptures.

Translation

"MERGING SAMENESS AND OTHERNESS":
A NEW TRANSLATION OF THE *CANTONGQI* 參同契
WITH CAPPING PHRASE COMMENTARIES

Steven Heine and Xiaohuan Cao
Florida International University

Introduction

"Merging Sameness and Otherness" or the *Cantongqi* 參同契 (J. *Sandōkai*) is an intriguingly instructive verse consisting of forty-four lines with five characters each (for a total of 220 kanji) attributed to Tang-dynasty master Shitou 石頭 (J. Sekitō, 700–790). In the West today, this poem has become one of the best-known and most widely circulated expressions of classical Chan/Zen thought. There are several dozen different translations available through in-print and online editions, with some of these emphasizing the poem's literary components while others highlight the doctrinal elements. The work is also recited or chanted on numerous ceremonial occasions at various temples and practice centers, particularly in the Sōtō sect.

When considered in addition to another famous didactic poem, the "Song of the Grass-thatched Hut" or *Caoan ge* 草庵歌 (J. *Sōanka*), as well as his various sayings and dialogues, Shitou's reputation is enhanced because he was the progenitor of two main Chinese Chan lineages. One lineage gave rise to the Caodong (Sōtō) school, which competed for primacy with the Linji (Rinzai) school during the Southern Song dynasty and in medieval Japan. The other lineage led to both the Yunmen (Unmon) and Fayan (Hōgen) schools, which along with the Gui-Yang (Igyō) school, had died out by the early twelfth century, although these defunct branches were still frequently referred to for rhetorical purposes in expositions of Chan/Zen discourse.

With so many renderings of the *Cantongqi* already available, why is there a need for one more? The reason is that we present here, for the first time in a Western-language translation, a version of the text that features two appended commentaries (one in capping phrases and the other in prose) which are very useful for explicating the overall meaning and significance of Shitou's work in the context of Chinese intellectual and literary history. Both commentaries, produced by renowned Northern Song Chan thinkers, enhance our understanding of the intricate paradoxical phrasings that

distinguish reality from illusion while fully apprehending the fundamental identity of uniformity and differentiation.

The main commentary is a set of capping phrases or *zhuoyu* 著語 (J. *jakugo*) for each line written by Xuedou Chongxian 雪竇重顯 (J. Setchō Jūken, 980–1052), a prominent member of the Yunmen school who is considered the premier Chan literary figure of the first half of the eleventh century because he helped develop various styles for annotating *gong'an* (J. *kōan*) cases and related materials. Xuedou produced seven major works preserved in the Buddhist canon that have been continuously studied for a thousand years, including the verse comments or *songgu* 頌古 (J. *juko*) on cases that are featured in the *Blue Cliff Record* or *Biyanlu* 碧巖錄 (J. *Hekiganroku*). Probably composed in 1038, Xuedou's remarks on the *Cantongqi* represent one of the earliest examples of the pithy, ironic capping phrase genre, following the pioneering efforts by Fenyang Shanzhao 汾陽善昭 (942–1024), and applied in this instance not to *gong'an* but to Chan poetry.

The second commentary is a brief prose observation by Juefan Huihong 覺範慧洪 (J. Kakuan Ekō, 1071–1128), using the moniker Jiyin, who was the leading Chan literary figure of the late Northern Song. Juefan was known for challenging the typical view of "no reliance on words and letters" or *buli wenzi* 不立文字 (J. *furyū monji*) by proposing the self-avowed "literary or lettered" or *wenzi Chan* 文字禪 approach, especially in the *Shimen wenzi Chan* 石門文字禪 (J. *Sekimon bunji Zen*). Juefan's comments place Shitou's text in the ecumenical context of maxims mentioned by various eminent Tang (Dongshan and Linji) or post-Tang (Yunmen) Chan patriarchs.

The version of Shitou's verse with remarks added by Xuedou and Juefan that is cited here is published as part of a large Song-dynasty compilation of Chan writings that provides important materials covering each of the so-called Five Houses of Chan (Caodong, Linji, Yunmen, Fayan, and Gui-Yang). The text is the 5th volume of the *Eyeballs of Humans and Gods*, or *Rentian yanmu wujuan* 人天眼目第 5 卷 (J. *Ninden gammoku gokan*), and the passages translated appear in the modern version of the Buddhist canon in *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新脩大藏經 (48.2006.v5.327a-b).

Composed in 1189 to provide a summary of the main trends in the philosophical approaches of different Chan branches, the *Eyeballs* text was transported a century later to Japan. There it became a mainstay of Zen studies along with three other major works still read today: the *Blue Cliff Record* collection of 100 *gong'an* cases; the *Gateless Barrier* or *Wumen guan*

無門關 (J. *Mumonkan*) with 48 cases; and the *Record of Linji* or *Linji lu* 臨濟關 (J. *Rinzai roku*), a compendium of the teacher's life and thought.

Translation

      Readers should note that the title of Shitou's verse appears in variable translations, with the first term that implies going forth for religious practice sometimes rendered otherwise. Also, the first and third terms, which have overlapping meanings, can be translated variously as "harmony" or "distinctions." A simple translation of the title, which is the same as that of a second-century Daoist alchemy text, could be "Ode to Unity (or Integration) of Differences."

      In our rendering, Xuedou's capping phrases are cited in parentheses after each line of the verse, as in the source text, and Juefan's prose comment appears after the poem. The following represents the full title:

"Merging Sameness and Otherness" by Shitou (J. Sekitō)
[*Shitou Cantongji* 石頭參同契 (J. *Sekitō Sandōkai*)]
With Capping Phrases Appended by Xuedou
[*Xuedou Zhuoyu xintian* 雪竇著語新添 (J. *Setchō jakugo shinsoe*)]

1. The mind of the great sage of India, (Who can uphold it?)
    竺土大仙心 (誰是能舉)

2. Is transmitted directly through east and west. (Look at Shitou's eyebrows)
    東西密相付 (惜取眉毛)

3. Human sensations are beneficial or detrimental, (How true)
    人根有利鈍 (作麼生)

4. But the way does not distinguish ancestors from south or north. (So it is)
    道無南北祖 (且歎歎)

5. The true wellspring is clear and undefiled brightness, (I'm clapping along)
    靈源明皎潔 (撫掌呵呵)

6. Branching streams flow quietly amid darkness. (Not quite integrated)
    枝派暗流注 (亦未相許)

7. Attachment to distinctions from the start is delusory, (Hands wide open)
　　執事元是迷 (展開兩手)

8. But recognizing principle is not necessarily awakening. (Think this over)
　　契理亦非悟 (拈却了也)

9. All our sensations, (Let go of calculating long versus short)
　　門門一切境 (捨短從長)

10. Interact, yet do not interact. (Either heads or tails)
　　迴互不迴互 (以頭換尾)

11. Interaction leads to greater engagement, (Everyone holds a staff)
　　迴而更相涉 (者箇是拄杖子)

12. Without this, things stand on their own. (Don't set up a fixed viewpoint)
　　不爾依位住 (莫錯認定盤星)

13. Forms are always known by their appearance, (Why not open your eyes)
　　色本殊質像 (豈便開眸)

14. Sounds always seem pleasant or unpleasant. (Either way, cover your ears)
　　聲元異樂苦 (還同掩耳)

15. In darkness lofty and ordinary words sound the same, (The heart can tell)
　　闇合上中言 (心不負人)

16. In brightness pure and impure phrases become clear. (Stay silent)
　　明明清濁句 (口宜掛壁)

17. The four elements revert to their own nature, (It's what they do)
　　四大性自復 (隨所依)

18. Like a child going to their mother. (Of course)
　　如子得其母 (可知也)

19. Fire burns and winds keep blowing, (In spring, ice melts on its own)
　　火熱風動搖 (春冰自消)

20. Water moistens and the ground stays firm. (From dawn until dusk)
　　水濕地堅固 (從旦至暮)

21. Eyes see forms and ears hear sounds, (Seas are calm and rivers are still)
　　眼色耳音聲 (海晏河清)

22. Noses smell and tongues taste the salty and sour. (According to the flavor)
　　鼻香舌鹹醋 (可憑可據)

23. Therefore, for each and every phenomenon, (You must understand this)
　　然於一一法 (重報君)

24. A leaf's growth depends on the roots. (It's quite clear)
　　依根葉分布 (好明取)

25. Beginnings and ends return to the same source, (Only I know this)
　　本末須歸宗 (唯我能知)

26. The valued and humble both are expressed. (Without breaking a rule)
　　尊卑用其語 (不犯之令)

27. Within light there is darkness, (Darkness must be bright)
　　當明中有暗 (暗必可明)

28. But don't refer to it as darkness. (Brightness can't be seen)
　　勿以暗相遇 (明還非覩)

29. Within darkness there is light, (Seeing one thing is seeing all things)
　　當暗中有明 (一見三)

30. But don't refer to it as light. (There's no difference)
　　勿以明相覩 (無異說)

31. Light and darkness contrast with each other, (If a distinction is made)
　　明暗各相對 (若為分)

32. Like walking with one foot in front of the other. (Without any exception)
　　比如前後步 (不如此)

33. The myriad things each have virtue, (You should investigate)
    萬物自有功 (旨爾寧止)

34. Depicted according to their function and position. (In every direction)
    當言用及處 (縱橫十字)

35. Things coexisting like a box covered by a lid, (Look carefully)
    事存函蓋合 (仔細看)

36. Respond to one another like arrows meeting in midair. (Don't be mistaken)
    理應箭鋒拄 (莫教錯)

37. On hearing these words you grasp the source, (It can't be known)
    承言須會宗 (未兆非明)

38. But it's not based on convention. (It's beyond discrimination)
    勿自立規矩 (突出難辯)

39. If you can't see the way that's right before your eyes, (What for?)
    觸目不會道 (又何妨)

40. How will you find the path right beneath your feet? (Nothing's wrong)
    運足焉知路 (出不惡)

41. Stepping forward is not a matter of going near or far, (Singing high above)
    進步非近遠 (唱彌高)

42. In delusion you wander here and there aimlessly. (Chanting down low)
    迷隔山河故 (和彌寡)

43. Politely I urge all those seeking wisdom: (This holds true for everyone)
    謹白參玄人 (聞必同歸)

44. Do not spend your days and nights wastefully! (Spoken with sincerity)
    光陰莫虛度 (誠哉是言也)

A Prose Comment on *Cantongqi* by Jiyin (or Juefan Huihong)
[*Jiyin yue* 寂音曰 (J. *Jakuon iwaku*)]

Jiyin [or Juefan Huihong 覺範慧洪] remarks: My goal is to think deeply about this work, which contains more than forty sentences. A number of these discuss the relation between brightness and darkness. Toward the beginning the text says, "The true wellspring is clear and undefiled brightness, / Branching streams flow quietly amid darkness" [lines 5-6]. This captures the root meaning of brightness and darkness. The text also says, "In darkness lofty and ordinary words seem the same, / In brightness pure and impure phrases become clear" [15-16]. Another passage further develops this outlook by highlighting the fundamental point, "Beginnings and ends return to the same source, / The valued and humble both are expressed" [25-26].

Therefore, the following saying suggests the open-ended relationship between brightness and darkness: Writings that continuously sparkle are by no means false; rather, such speech acts are abundantly clear. For example, Dongshan Wuben [also Liangjie] explains the "Five Ranks of Straight and Crooked" 五位偏正; Linji speaks of "Wisdom within Words" 句中玄; and Yunmen talks about "Following the Waves" 隨波逐浪. By no means do these expressions indicate different flavors. Later generations have received and continue to follow those teachings. Imagine a place where truth is at once concealed and revealed in the midst of brightness and darkness; isn't that paradoxical?

寂音曰. 予嘗深考此書. 凡四十餘句. 而以明暗論者半之. 篇首便曰. 靈源明皎潔. 枝派暗流注. 乃知. 明暗之意根於此. 又曰. 暗合上中言. 明明清濁句. 調達開發之也. 至指其宗而示其趣則曰. 本末須歸宗. 尊卑用其語. 故其下廣序明暗之句. 奕奕綴聯不已者. 非決色法虛誑. 乃是明其語耳. 洞山悟本得此旨故. 有五位偏正之說. 至於臨濟之句中玄雲門之隨波逐浪. 無異味也. 而晚輩承其言. 便想像明暗之中有相藏露之地. 不亦謬乎.

Translators' Remarks

What is the significance for understanding the *Cantongqi* of the cryptic capping phrase comments by Xuedou and the brief prose remark by Juefan Huihong? To respond briefly, the overall message of these annotations is to highlight the role of contrast in apprehending true reality as the continual integration, and splintering and reconnection, of identity and difference. Juefan points out the theme, which is expressed in twelve of the forty-four sentences, regarding brightness in relation to darkness in that these

phenomena can only be known when they are distinguished from one another, even though they are by no means entirely distinct and must be seen as intersecting and overlapping at all levels. The term merging indicates at once rising above the delusions of differences to realize oneness and to plunge back into the world of multiplicity to reach the resolution of conflicts.

Xuedou's phrases comment with various rhetorical voices ranging from irony and contradiction to simple affirmation, which is sometimes feigned or deliberately exaggerated. In some instances, his phrase emphasizes the role of contrast, especially for sentences 5-6, 7-8, 13-14, 15-16, 41-42, while elsewhere he stresses the notion of complementarity, as in 1-2, 3-4, 29-30, 37-38, 39-40.

Also, we consider it helpful that another Northern Song commentator, Longya Huijue 瑯琊慧覺撰 (d.u.), who was a contemporary of Xuedou, has suggested dividing the forty-four sentences of Shitou's verse into ten sections, with the second main part further divvied into seven components. This passage, which helps illumine the structure and meaning of the poem, is from the second volume of the *Chanmen zhuzushi jisong* 禪門諸祖師偈頌 (J. *Zenmon shososhi geju*) or *Verses of Chan Patriarchs* that is included in *Xu zangjing* 66.1298.v2.743a-b. Readers may wish to apply that thematic framework, outlined below, to their way of interpreting the poem's significance:

Part	Lines	Main Theme
Part	*Lines*	*Main Theme*
1.	1-4	Explaining the reasons for writing
(2.	7 sections)	Do not deviate from the true wellspring
a.	5-8	Knowing truth, you won't be deluded
b.	9-12	Roots are non-abiding
c.	13-16	Sounds and forms are not obstructed
d.	17-20	Four elements are not defiled
e.	21-26	Twelve sensations depend on truth
f.	27-32	Don't get preoccupied with polarities
g	33-36	All things are no different than true mind
3.	37-38	Conditioning is the basis for discourse
4.	39-44	Coaxing novices to preach the dharma

Another key point is based on the analysis of Shitou's verse by the eminent modern Japanese scholar of Chinese Chan, Shiina Kōyū 椎名宏雄, in *Yasashiku yomu Sandōkai, Hōkyō zanmai* やさしく読む参同契・宝鏡三昧

(Tokyo: Daihōrinkan, 2018), especially 188-202. According to Shiina, the text of the *Cantongqi* appeared in at least three collections prior to being included in the *Eyeballs of Humans and Gods* and in one a century later:

- *Patriarchal Hall Collection* or *Zutang ji* 祖堂集 (J. *Sōdōshū*), from 952 (not included in the traditional canon) vol. 4.
- *Jingde-era Record of Transmitting the Torch* or *Jingde chuandeng lu* 景德傳燈錄 (J. *Keitoku dentōroku*) from 1004, in *Taishō* 51.2076 vol. 30.
- *Cascade Collection* or *Puquan ji* (J. *Bokuonshū*) in the record of Xuedou (also Mingjue 明覺, J. Myōkaku) from 1030, in *Taishō* 47.1996 vol. 6.
- *Poems of Chan Patriarchs* or *Chanmen zhuzushi jisong* 禪門諸祖師偈頌 (J. *Zenmon shososhi geju*) from N. Song, in *Xu zangjing* 66.1298 vol. 2.

Shiina also points out that two Edo-period Japanese Sōtō Zen commentaries are especially important for interpreting the meaning and significance of Shitou's work: one is *The Incomprehensible Sandōkai* or *Sandōkai funogo* 参同契不能語 by Shigetsu Ein 指月慧印 (1689-1764); and the other is *On Chanting the Sandōkai* or *Sandōkai kushō* 参同契吹唱 by Menzan Zuihō 面山瑞方 (1683-1769), the premier early modern Sōtō scholiast.

Many other Edo-period Sōtō specialists commented on Shitou's verse, including Manzan Dōhaku 卍山道白 (1635–1715), Banjin Dōtan 萬仞道坦 (1698–1775), and Tenkei Denson 天桂傳尊 (1648–1735). As is the case with Shigetsu (and also Shiina), the *Cantongqi*/*Sandōkai* is often discussed alongside Dongshan's "Precious Jewel Samadhi" or *Baijing sanmei* 宝鏡三昧 (J. *Hōkyō zanmai*), another Tang-dynasty didactic poem that is highly prized by Sōtō sect commentators yet also appreciated by Rinzai interpreters.

We conclude by citing a quip about the first two lines of Shitou's poem from the record of the eminent Southern Song Linji school master Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲 (J. Daie Sōkō, 1089–1163) that is part of a dharma hall sermon or *shangtang* 上堂 (J. *jōdō*), in *Taishō* 47.1998A3.822a:

> "The mind of the great sage of India, / Is transmitted directly throughout east and west": How do you live up to this teaching from the bottom of your heart?
> Cry out and beat the meditation cushion one time while saying, "What do these words mean?"
> 竺土大仙心. 東西密相付. 作麼生是相付底心. 喝一喝拍禪床一下云. 是何言歟.

Book Reviews

"KILLING ONE TO SAVE MANY":
A REVIEW ARTICLE ON *ZEN TERROR IN PRE-WAR JAPAN: PORTRAIT OF AN ASSASSIN* BY BRIAN VICTORIA

Stephen Jenkins
Humboldt State University

Zen Terror (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019, ISBN-13: 978-1538131664, 397 pages, $36) is the latest in a series of challenging and provocative books by Brian Victoria on the role of Japanese Zen in warfare and political violence. It is no easy thing to report on a subject that violates cherished misconceptions in a way that few want to hear, and Victoria has made a monumental contribution in this area. Although his writing can be harshly provocative, Victoria should not be classed as a muckraker or among those who enjoy upsetting cherished misconceptions by sensationalizing Buddhist violence. The edge in Victoria's tone is based on a commitment to pacifism that precedes his commitment to Buddhism. He first arrived in Japan in 1961 as a conscientious objector before he became a Zen priest and lived most of his life in Japan. He writes, "Many Western readers, myself among them, have long cherished the belief that Buddhism in general, and Zen in particular, is the peace-loving, and peace-practicing, faith they were originally attracted to" (xv). His moralizing is rooted in his disappointment and in an enduring idealistic pacifism that he continues to wish was at the heart of Buddhism. His broader non-academic writings are focused on anti-war themes, not the criticism of Buddhism or Zen.

Regardless of the ways that one might challenge this book's methods and conclusions, some of which will be found in this review, this highly recommended new work offers great value in leading us to engage and confront neglected issues that have often been obscured by naive misconceptions about Buddhism and "nonviolence" that, like many other guiding misconceptions, such as the idea that Buddhism is a philosophy, not a religion, have become so ingrained that they are difficult to uproot. Victoria's work pushes us not only to ask if Buddhism "went horribly wrong," citing an email by Damien Keown (220), but more importantly, I would argue, where Buddhist ethics continue to be horribly misread. Support for compassionate killing or warfare may be a misapplication of Buddhist ethics in any given case, but it is not a misinterpretation.

Throughout the text, Victoria raises troubling issues about the general nature of Buddhist ethics and their textual grounding. I was asked to

review this work because of having published many chapters and articles on Buddhism and "violence." The area of my research, Indian Buddhist texts, happens to be the one in which the current text is naturally weakest. Conversely, the greatest strength of this book, the illumination of a fascinating character in recent Japanese history and his relationship to Zen Buddhism, is the area where I am poorly qualified to comment with authority. Although I hope my criticism enriches the discussions the book generates, I want to be clear that this is a very valuable publication and the particular areas I criticize are ones that have been generally resistant to critique in academic circles and continue to be controversial.

Initially, books like *Zen at War* seemed to single out Japanese Zen as a shocking exception to the normative pacifism of Buddhism, but it is becoming ever clearer that Buddhist cultures have never been pacifist in practice [as Victoria notes] or in principle [as my own research has shown] in any historical context (Jerryson, 2018; Xue Yu, 2013; Jenkins 2010, 2011). The roles of Japanese Buddhists in the war are shocking to the degree that they are held up against a fanciful, naïve, and uninformed conception of Buddhist values that was promoted by early representatives like Suzuki, Dharmapala, and Rahula, and so enthusiastically received by Western converts, indigenous modernists, and scholars that they continue to dominate the understanding of Buddhism today (Frydenlund, 2017). There are important ways to interrogate and question the values of Buddhist soldiers, assassins, and terrorists, and we always have to keep in mind that all cultures fall short of their highest religious ideals, but if they are being evaluated against dubious standards, it may result in a false vilification of Zen and its Japanese practitioners. Just as importantly, we may fail to understand the real roots of Japanese political and imperialist violence and how Buddhist traditions nourished them.

Using "the life history method," the book is centered on the autobiographical accounts of Inoue Nisshō (1887–1967), the leader of a band of terrorist assassins in pre-war Japan whom Victoria uses as a touchstone for the history and culture of his time. This approach seems especially appropriate as it is increasingly clear that narrative literature is how Buddhists do most of their ethical thinking. Narrative thinking roots ethical thought in particular contextual situations in ways that, as Victoria notes with concern (214), tend to belie principled approaches and even tend toward the antinomian. Much of what Victoria laments throughout is not so much the betrayal of Buddhist ethics but Buddhist ethics themselves. Contrary to previous scholarship, Victoria convincingly establishes that Inoue was a

highly accomplished Zen Buddhist practitioner recognized by his teacher as having had an initial, though not complete, enlightenment experience. He was a tortured and profoundly thoughtful individual who could be moved to tears by the writing of Shinran. He was both a spiritual healer and a violent revolutionary.

Obsessed for much of his life about how to discern right from wrong, he was anything but a thoughtless person seduced by a vague antirational commitment to Zen "intuition." Even his own claims to "transcending reason" ring untrue. He came to his ethical stance as an existentially engaged and highly disciplined thinker and practitioner. Inoue's slogan was "killing one to save many," a basic argument from proportionalism that informs contemporary International Humanitarian Law regarding conduct during warfare. Victoria writes: "Agree or disagree with this doctrine, it does possess a moral edge, but the question is, is it a Buddhist moral edge?" (205-6). As I will discuss below and have shown elsewhere, the simple answer is yes, particularly in regard to the Mahāyāna, and fundamentalist retreats to "what would Śākyamuni say" are irrelevant to Japan and ultimately uncompelling. This idea of "killing one to save many" is quite clear in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra, Mahā-upāyakauśalya Sūtra* (not to be confused with the *Upāyakauśalya Sūtra*) and elsewhere in key examples that are missed by Victoria (Jenkins, 2010/2011; Xue Yu, 2013).

There seem to have been many such groups of assassins, often consisting of disaffected samurai who sought to restore the pure ethical simplicity of surrendering their will to a perfect commander, idealized as the emperor. Inoue led what was just one among many extremist groups pursuing political agendas with deadly force and prepared to die in the process; and he had already lived a dramatically violent life as a soldier, spy, and revolutionary before he became a committed Zen practitioner. Even his unruly childhood was characterized by violence and arson. So, although it is clear that he later saw his world through a Buddhist lens, it remains unclear to what extent his violence was Buddhist-inspired activity and to what extent this was simply a man of chronic lifelong violence caught up in a type of activity that was common at the time. If there were many such groups, and not all of them were informed by Zen practice and ideology, then what really characterizes this as a Buddhist endeavor? It seems Inoue would have been drawn to his cause regardless and simply happened to be Buddhist. As Victoria notes, much as so-called Islamic terrorism often has little to do with Islam, Zen seems to have served more as a rationale rather than as a formative influence that led to violence. That said, it served him well as a confirmation,

and his own highly regarded Zen teacher and others justified his actions and validated his motivations.

The life of Inoue raises more issues than anyone could reasonably address in a single volume, but we are fortunate that Victoria wades into the fray regardless. Let me survey a few of those issues to show how this book is richly thought-provoking. All these subjects are debatable, and one may find reasonable disagreement with Victoria on many of them, but it is certain that those debates are valuable and consequential, and Victoria provocatively guides us into them. I can only point out some of these issues, begin to address those related to research in classical texts, and raise some general doubts about the way that Buddhist "violence" has been dubiously approached among scholars, modernists, missionaries, and Western converts.

One of the first issues raised is the past and contemporary uses of meditation in support of war. Currently, "mindfulness" is being used to train effective drone pilots and snipers as well as to treat them for their PTSD when they return from war. The American military is investing in the applications of mindfulness, and at least one Japanese scholar is calling for a return to samurai values in training soldiers. This issue extends to the relationship between meditation and ethics. The so-called *samādhi*-power of Zen warriors resonates strongly with the general Indian sense that meditative attainment can be a means of acquiring martial power, even for demonic villains. Victoria comments that, "for right (as opposed to wrong) *samādhi*, one needs to suspend various spiritual hindrances, including aversion/ill will. Thus, to use samādhi to harm other sentient beings would appear, on the face of it, to be utterly impossible" (211). This is connected to another of his conclusions that "killing the designated 'other' without ill will would seem to be a dubious proposition at best" (219). However, this is what the general Mahāyāna theory of compassionate killing and warfare proposes, and non-Mahāyāna traditions also idealized lethal self-defense and warfare without murderous intentions and with positive ones (Jenkins, 2010, 2011, 2017).

A related issue is the relationship between the meditative attainment of various Zen teachers and the seemingly endless series of ethical scandals, past and present, that continue to come to light. Inoue was a rigorous practitioner and was certified as having experienced *kenshō*. Does ethically questionable conduct demonstrate that their agents have been falsely recognized, or does the misconduct of excellent meditators indicate something flawed in the basic ethical approach, or lack of one, in Zen? Unless D. T. Suzuki's views about nondualism and "intuition" are being deployed here as representative of a misguided view characteristic of the times, I find

this discussion highly problematic in its interpretation of *samādhi* and the suggestion that Zen is anti-intellectual or antirational, but this question should be left to specialists (111).

Generally speaking, in Indian thought, meditation is not regarded as having an automatic relationship to positive ethical transformation. We can see this in the fact that among the many Indian meditative traditions, Buddhism is unique in its emphasis on compassion. However, the *tathāgatagarbha*, or Buddha-nature thought that informs some Tibetan schools and most East Asian Buddhism is exceptional in emphasizing that the qualities of a buddha, including compassion, are inherent and natural qualities of consciousness that are merely obscured by ignorance. The implication is that meditative accomplishments such as Inoue's should allow compassion to spontaneously shine forth. This is the basis of ancient debates about sudden and gradual paths, which is reflected today in the Critical Buddhism movement, and could be a reason for the relative paucity of compassion rhetoric in Zen literature and the absence of specific compassion cultivation practices such as those found in the Theravāda and Madhyamaka traditions. It should be noted here that although Inoue was recognized as having an initial enlightenment experience, he had not completed the subsequent training required for full certification. It would be useful to further explore the ethical implications of that post-enlightenment training. On the other hand, most of the Zen teachers involved in unambiguous ethical scandals that I am aware of, or have been involved with, have been fully certified and by all accounts were highly accomplished meditators.

Then there is the historical relationship between Japanese Buddhist schools and the war effort. Victoria and others have well documented that support for the "great compassionate war" was not confined to Zen schools. Notwithstanding Rinzai's special relationship with the samurai, was its support for the war distinctive? Is there anything particular about Rinzai thought and practice, for instance, in the relationship between meditative practice and ethics, that would provide distinctive insight into the support for the war, or is it necessary to think more broadly?

The question I find most challenging in assessing Inoue's ideology and motivations is how to sort out the intricate synthesis of diverse ideologies. There seems to be a complex inter-identification of the *Saṅgha*, the sacralized Confucian social synthesis, martial samurai authoritarianism, and the Shintō imperial cult. Among these, Confucianism bent on the purposes of authoritarian military rule seems particularly problematic. We

see this in what Victoria calls "one of the most chilling statements in Buddhist history" from Inoue's Zen teacher, Yamamoto Gempo:

> It is true that if, motivated by an evil mind, someone should kill so much as a single ant, as many as one hundred and thirty-six hells await that person. This holds true not only in Japan but in all the countries of the world. Yet the Buddha, being absolute, has stated that when there are those who destroy social harmony and injure the polity of the state, then even if they are called good men, killing them is not a crime. Although all Buddhist statuary manifests the spirit of Buddha, there are no Buddhist statues, other than those of Shakyamuni Buddha and Amida Buddha, who do not grasp the sword. Even the guardian Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva holds, in his manifestation as a victor in war, a spear in his hand. Thus Buddhism, which has as its foundation the true perfection of humanity, has no choice but to cut down even good people in the event they seek to destroy social harmony. (122).

Although his focus on intention is correct, Yamamoto's first statement is false. According to Buddhist thought, it also matters whom one kills. When advocating killing the enemies of the Dharma, as in texts like the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, it is described as being less harmful than killing an ant. Killing an ant or other animals does not result in expulsion for a monk. The second point regarding social harmony is the most telling. It is one of the great sins in Buddhism, the so-called "immediates" that lead directly to hell, to split the *Saṅgha*. Yamamoto seems to have identified destroying Japanese social harmony and injuring the polity of the Japanese state with splitting the Buddhist community. Here it seems that Confucian and Shintō social conceptions play an important role.

To kill a person to prevent them from committing an "immediate" is one of the standard rationales of compassionate killing (Jenkins, 2016). In so doing, one not only protects others from their heinous act, but even saves the victim from eons in the hell realms. Asaṅga, the Indian commentator most likely to have influenced Zen thinking on this issue, also validates compassionate use of force to bring down vicious and exploitive rulers, but there is no sense of protecting the sacred unity of civil society. Particularly

in Theravāda countries, however, there is a strong view that society is the vessel of the Buddhist *Sāsana*, or dispensation, that encompasses ethnicity and territory. Enemies of the Dharma and, hence, enemies of Buddhist polities have the lowest moral status possible, so slaying them incurs minimal karmic risk to the killer (Jenkins, 2016).

A second problematic aspect of Yamamoto's statement is that it validates killing even good people. The problem here is not, as Victoria asserts, the first precept against killing. The precepts are guiding principles, not absolute commandments. From very early on in Buddhist tradition, the first precept is qualified by concern for intention and the moral status of the being that is killed. According to the Theravāda Vinaya, it is permissible for a monk to use weapons to defend themselves when attacked, and if the attacker should be killed in the process, there is no fault when the intention was self-defense rather than killing (Aono, 2021). The implications for the laity are obvious. The *Jīvayuddha Sutta*, cited by Victoria, in which the Buddha tells soldiers that if they die during combat while filled with murderous intentions, they will go to hell, illustrates this same concern for intention. The *sutta* is not about going to hell for killing, but about dying with murderous intentions. One's *maraṇacitta*, or dying thought, is highly determinative for future rebirth.

In the same way, Theravāda and Mahāyāna literature are both rich in examples that illustrate Buddhist warfare motivated by compassionate and protective intentions (Jenkins, 2017). From the early narrative depictions of Buddhist warfare to the Mahāyāna's elaborated theory of compassionate killing and warfare, one consistently finds this concern, which is also expressed by Inoue and his master. Victoria cites Bhikkhu Bodhi saying, "The *sutta*s [Skt., *sūtras*], it must be clearly stated, do not admit any moral justification for war…One short *sutta* even declares categorically that a warrior who dies in battle will be reborn in hell, which implies that participation in war is essentially immoral" (228). It is also generally recognized that clear condemnations of war are conspicuously absent in the *Nikāya*s, and if this *sutta* implies that war is essentially immoral, then, even by the time of the compilation of the *jātaka*s, the Buddhist tradition had missed the message. It is plain throughout Pali narrative literature, where warriors often die in battle and are reborn in heaven, that this is not how the Buddha was understood (Jenkins, 2017). In 2016, Damien Keown and I both published arguments referencing different textual resources that there is a basis for compassionate killing in the Pali canon (Keown, 2016 citing Devdas 2004; Jenkins, 2016). Attempts by modern pacifists to bypass thousands of

years of Buddhist tradition to secure a Buddhist pedigree for their ideal are highly dubious.

However, the Buddhist concern for the moral status of the victim seems to be violated here. Killing an enemy of the Dharma, or perhaps a school shooter, may entail no more demerit than killing an ant, but harming a saint is an immediate ticket to hell. This may seem intuitively obvious, but it also leaves the question open for determining moral status. In application, it has supported the dehumanization of Tamils and Rohingya, and, in legendary accounts, many Buddhist kings such as Aśoka have a propensity for mass violence against non-Buddhists (Jenkins, 2016). But so far, I have yet to see an example where killing a good person is validated. A possible exception, certainly unknown to Yamamoto, is Candrakīrti's example of a loving father who kills one of his sons so that both do not die (Jenkins, 2011). Xue Yu gives another example from the explanation of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*'s validation of killing enemies of the Dharma. Such killing is analogized to a parent killing a child with parental love to prevent them from being tortured to death for committing a crime (Xue Yu, 2013). The problem with Yamamoto's appeal to Buddhist ethics is not that he advocates compassionate killing but that he grossly distorts the ethics of compassionate killing. He appropriates it to the purposes of a problematic and uniquely Japanese social vision, where enemies of the Dharma are identified with anyone who disrupts martial authoritarianism.

This brings us to perhaps the most foundational problem raised by this book: the origin of modernist fantasies of pacifist Buddhism and what those fantasies tell about the relationship between the academy and the transmission and study of Buddhism in Euro-American contexts. As a pacifist, Victoria was admittedly attracted to this dubious image in his conversion to Buddhism. Missionaries had promoted the ideas that no drop of blood had ever been shed in the name of Buddhism, that Buddhism had made Asia mild, or that it has never been found engaged in warlike activities, etc. (Frydenlund, 2017). Although Victoria seems to have reconciled to the fact that Buddhist cultures have never in any context been pacifist, and even that the Mahāyāna "went horribly wrong" somewhere like some other recent scholars [here, I would add that tantric Buddhism merely supplies ritual techniques for the compassionate killing generally validated in Mahāyāna texts] he still makes a fundamentalist appeal to the teaching of Śākyamuni.

In response to the *Upāyakauśalya Sūtra*'s broadly influential teaching on compassionate killing, he points out that since it was likely composed in the first century BCE, "this sutra is highly unlikely to represent

the original teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha" (220). Obviously, the Buddhism that came to and developed in Japan has little to do with the Śākyamuni referenced by Victoria and has no relevance for evaluating the Japanese Buddhist *imaginaire*. It is important to remember the classic orientalist mistake of conceiving an idealized past and holding the living tradition in contempt by comparison. The retreat to an appeal to original or essential teachings of the Buddha is a last-stand defense of Buddhist pacifism, and it has all the well-recognized flaws of fundamentalist and essentialist thought. Even if true, it would represent a conceptual artifact that lies forgotten behind thousands of years of Buddhist tradition and never reached the shores of Japan.

The basic idea behind the *Upāyakauśalya Sūtra* and, in better examples than found in the book, the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* is that no action is intrinsically good or evil, but that the wholesomeness of an action depends on intention and situational context (Jenkins, 2010, 2011). It is actually a downfall to avoid taking harsh action required by a situation by hiding behind the precepts. This idea is not rooted in the Mahāyāna doctrine of emptiness as suggested in the book but was promoted earlier with simple examples by the Buddha of the Nikāyas and elsewhere in Pali texts (Jenkins, 2016; Keown, 2016).

The most common examples are medical. One that is shared with the Jains is that chopping off a child's finger is usually harmful, but when the finger has been bitten by a viper, the same violent physical act may save the child's life. Violence is not the issue; rather, harm is. Victoria finds this idea, well expressed by Inoue, frightening, and rightly so (213–214). It definitely has an ethical openness that supported warfare and assassination long before Inoue's time and continues to be used today. Both sides deployed the *Upāyakauśalya Sūtra* in the Korean War. A Sōtō Zen priest under whom I recently trained, in explaining the grandmotherly kindness of using the "encouragement stick" (*kyōsaku*), gave the disturbing and problematic example of mutilating children so that they might survive as beggars. Clearly, as Victoria notes, wisdom is also a crucial component. But in more commonsensical terms, any Theravādin Buddhist will tell you that it is correct to break a precept by lying to protect someone. The basic concern is to reduce suffering and avoid harm, informed by the guiding intention of compassion. However, this openness, characterized as "ethical particularism" by Charles Hallisey, is an ethical stance, not the lack of one. It is always balanced by concern for the horrific consequences of performing such acts without compassion and is supported by the guiding principles of

the precepts. What remains to be discovered behind the fantasy of pacifism is not the dark side of Buddhism, but a sophisticated and flexible ethics with an admirably high tolerance for moral ambiguity.

One of the few safe generalizations about Buddhism is that it is consistently anti-hate and anti-harm but has never been nonviolent in principle or practice. The Gandhian "nonviolence" that is often projected on Buddhism is neither Indian nor Buddhist, having its roots in Gandhi's reading of Tolstoy and Thoreau. *Ahiṃsā* never appeared in dictionary entries for "nonviolence" until after Gandhi, having previously been read as "nonharm" (Bodewitz, 1999). As I have argued elsewhere, the discourse of nonviolence versus violence is obfuscating when applied to Buddhism; nonharm is a far more flexible and nuanced concept that has been applied in India to the sacrifice of animals, punishment of criminals, and warfare (Jenkins 2021, 2022).

It would be a step forward if we could start constructively and critically reflecting on a Buddhist ethics of warfare that is rooted in Buddhist thought and tradition, rather than a Western fantasy promoted by missionaries and modernist representatives like Dharmapala and Suzuki and subsequently integrated into what Paul Williams calls "textbook lore." It is a highly attractive fantasy to both converts and missionaries, one of whom projects their own ideal self-image on the perfect pacifist other, while the other takes the moral high ground after centuries of colonialist exploitation and humiliation. Too often, the standard against which we hold Buddhism, sometimes with moral outrage and talk of the "dark side of Buddhism," has far more to do with modernist fantasies than actual Buddhist values (Frydenlund, 2017). Both the pacifist and the terrorist may look to Buddhism for a validating rationale for their pre-existing values, but neither should be successful.

I hope this review will contribute to the rich discussions stimulated by Brian Victoria's highly recommended and valuable book, and that any mistakes in my understanding are useful. *Zen Terror* is worthy of reading for its illumination of one of the most impactful and fascinating Japanese lives of the twentieth century, but it goes further in provocatively doing the good work of pushing us to carefully explore the role of religion in the violent forces that threaten our world by challenging us to see past our cherished preconceptions so as to deeply reconsider Buddhist practice and ideology.

Works Cited

Aono, Michihiko. "Practical Knowledge for Monks to Abstain from Killing and Injuring Living Beings in Everyday Life with Reference to the Vinayapiṭaka and the Samanta-pāsādikā," *International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culture* 31/1 (2021): 141–177.

Bodewitz, Henk. "Hindu Ahiṁsā and Its Roots." In *Violence Denied: Violence, Non-Violence and the Rationalization of Violence in South Asian Cultural History*. Edited Jan E. M. Houben & Karel R. Van Kooij. Leiden: Brill, 1999, 17–44.

Devdas, Nalini. "A Study of Cetana and the Dynamics of Volition in Theravāda Buddhism." Ph.D. Dissertation. Concordia University, 2004.

Frydenlund, Iselin. "'Buddhism has Made Asia Mild:' The Modernist Construction of Buddhism as Pacifism." In *Buddhist Modernities: Re-inventing Tradition in the Globalizing Modern World.* Edited by Hanna Havnevik, Ute Hüsken, Mark Teeuwen, Vladimir Tikhonov, and Koen Wellens. London: Routledge, 2017, 204–222.

Jenkins, Stephen. "Buddhist Challenges to the Contemporary Ethical Discourse of Violence versus Nonviolence." In *Buddhist Violence and Religious Authority: A Tribute to the Work of Michael Jerryson*. Edited by Mark Juergensmeyer and Margo Kitts. New York: Equinox, 2022.

Jenkins, Stephen. "Buddhism: Confronting the Harmful with Compassion." In *Nonviolence in World Religions*. Edited by Mike Long and Jeff Long. New York: Routledge, 2021.

Jenkins, Stephen. "Once the Buddha Was a Warrior: Buddhist Pragmatism in the Ethics of Peace and Armed Conflict." In *The Nature of Peace and the Morality of Armed Conflict*. Edited by Florian Demont-Biaggi. New York: Palgrave, 2017, 159–178.

Jenkins, Stephen. "Debate, Magic, and Massacre: The High Stakes and Ethical Dynamics of Battling Slanderers of the Dharma in Indian Buddhist Narrative and Ethical Theory," *Journal of Religion and Violence* 4/2 (2016): 129–157.

Jenkins, Stephen. "Making Merit through Warfare According to the Ārya-Bodhisattva-gocara-upāyaviṣaya-vikurvaṇa-nirdeśa Sūtra." In *Buddhist Warfare*. Edited by Mark Juergensmeyer and Michael Jerryson. New York: Oxford, 2010, 59–75.

Jenkins, Stephen. "On the Auspiciousness of Compassionate Violence,"
        Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies 33/1–2
        (2010, 2011): 299–331.
Jerryson, Michael. *If You Meet the Buddha on the Road: Buddhism, Politics,
        and Violence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.
Keown, Damien. "On Compassionate Killing and the Abhidhamma's
        "Psychological Ethics." *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 23 (2016): 45–
        81.
Xue Yu. "Buddhism and the Justification of War in Chinese Buddhist
        History." In *Buddhism and Violence: Militarism and Buddhism in
        Modern Asia*. Edited by Vladimir Tikhonov, Torkel Brekke. New
        York: Routledge, 2013, 194–208.

Masaki Mori, *Haruki Murakami and His Early Work: The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Running Artist*. Lexington Books, 2021. ISBN 978-1793635976. Pp. 115. $95.00.

Reviewed by María Sol Echarren

Haruki Murakami has been recognized for his enigmatic novels and other literary works, which have been translated into multiple languages and captured the interest of readers across the globe. Masaki Mori's *Haruki Murakami and His Early Work: The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Running Artist* invites readers to explore more deeply Haruki Murakami's career as a prolific writer of modern Japanese novels and short stories while uncovering his life as a way to comprehend his creative artistry. Mori examines Murakami's humanistic concern by analyzing three of his earlier works that Mori considers instrumental in the extensive literary criticism about the Japanese writer. Mori has deemed these three especially worthy for this study: "The Second Battery Attack" (1985), "The Elephant Vanishes" (1985), and "TV People" (1989). Mori's interpretation of these narratives correlates to Murakami's critique of modern society and consumerism, which is crucial for understanding these fictional sketches. In addition to these short stories, Mori adds enriching commentary on and meaningful anecdotes of the inspirations behind Murakami's artistry, including his other nonfictional works, travel narratives, and essays.

In this book, Mori reflects on the success of Murakami in light of the cross-cultural appreciation of his literary works. His fiction seamlessly integrates an array of Western references and cultural elements, which are often accentuated over the Japanese practices and settings. What is insightful about this research is how Mori emphasizes Murakami's cultural hybridity and aesthetic contradictions that surface throughout the writer's artistic footprint. He addresses how a Western preference is evident in the writer's extensive travels outside Japan and his enduring appreciation for non-Japanese literature and cultural stimuli. For example, this is shown in how Murakami's stories tend to merge elements of Western popular culture and global consumerism, characteristically from the perspective of male narrators working in corporate offices in a typical metropolitan city.

The book's witty subtitle, inspired by Alan Sillitoe's short story collection from 1960 titled *The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner*, illustrates what Mori considers to be Murakami's humanistic qualities that have influenced his writing style. There are two poignant details about this

title as it connects to this book's structure and thematic focus. On the one hand, the first part of Mori's book focuses on the *loneliness* that sets Murakami apart from other contemporary Japanese writers as well as his unique yet solitary process of writing fiction. On the other hand, the latter part of the book envisions the *long-distance runner*, representative of the almost four decades since his first publication in 1979. The "running artist" metaphor alludes to Murakami's passion for running compared to his creative and disciplined writing practice.

Mori follows this imagery for the book's structure, with the first part containing three chapters that situate and prepare the reader to understand Murakami's place in the literary canon and his customary writing process. Indeed, "all of his life choices, artistic attitudes, and activities set Murakami apart from many other Japanese writers and account for the *loneliness* of his position among contemporary Japanese artists" (xv). In effect, Mori claims that the themes of these short stories envelop the rest of Murakami's oeuvres, by identifying specific patterns in the writing style that go hand in hand with the artist's lifestyle, convictions, and practices.

With this in mind, Mori highlights the intricacies of Murakami's career before delving into literary analysis for the second half of this book, with a chapter reserved for each of the three bewildering short stories. In particular, "The Second Bakery Attack" alludes to the historic-political circumstances of the late 1960s in addition to some psychological and relational issues; "The Elephant Vanishes" hints at middle-class difficulties of life in the suburbs; and "TV People" criticizes the adverse effects of media and (predigitized) analog technology on human life since the proliferation of TV, alluding to the consequences of what Murakami calls the "System."

Although these stories can be initially overlooked as trivial and odd, Mori stresses the significance of each one to decipher a deeper meaning, particularly in relation to overarching sociopolitical injustices caused by the System. Behind the perplexing metaphors illustrated in these short narratives, Mori explains Murakami's disdain for the dangers of these power systems intricately portrayed in these enigmatic sketches. As such, Murakami's fictional stories blending real-world elements are inspired by magical realism, showcasing a paradox of human decadence and the ultimate loss of creative autonomy. His bestselling novels, such as *1Q84* or *Kafka on the Shore*, also echo these themes.

For instance, in the first chapter, "Murakami's Self-Conscious Ambivalence as a Japanese Writer," Mori focuses on the writer's contested self-identity and media presence. Favoring a more Western representation

and cultural affinity, Murakami is known to limit his Japanese-ness and public media exposure in his native land: "[A]n essential question hinges on how Murakami considers his own cultural identity as a writer" (2). For this, it is interesting how Mori incorporates some of Murakami's untranslated nonfiction to understand his reasoning behind the minimal regard for Japanese culture and the overall preference for a more general Western one, especially that of the United States, indicating that Murakami's fascination with American culture began in the 1960s when he was just a teenager growing up in Kobe.

  Murakami rejects the postmodern label yet has gained popularity among readers worldwide because of his ability to write fiction in a way that is not strictly Japanese. Rather, Murakami's writing has a supranational quality that creates a kind of neutral environment. Murakami "uses Japanese language in an often humorous, relatively simple style that poses few cultural impediments" (5). As Mori suggests, Murakami's professional philosophy generally denies any association with Japanese literary language but has observed the future resonance of contemporary Japanese literature, inspired by the Latin American Boom writers. Murakami's extensive travels and ability to transcend cultural barriers have attuned his writing to the global audience. Thus, while he does not want to be labeled as one more Japanese national writer, he feels it is necessary to represent Japan in a public platform as a way to pay homage to his homeland.

  The second chapter explores the identity crisis of the writer but in the scope of the Japanese literary canon. Mori suggests that the biographical details of the artist include the "seemingly unrelated aspects of his life [to] organically converge on the purpose of fiction writing" (xiv). From this, Mori indicates that Murakami is ultimately rejecting the notion of being canonized as a novelist under the umbrella of a Japanese national writer. According to Mori, Murakami's canonical criteria for ranking some of the most iconic Japanese national writers lacks an adequate rubric and omits several renowned authors of Japanese literature. In this regard, Murakami's works tend to detach from Japanese sociocultural customs to adhere to a more Western readership: "In his fiction, Japan functions as little more than a hypothesized locale" (11).

  In Chapter 3, Mori discusses the positive impact of Murakami's personal life and hobbies, particularly his keen interests in music, running, and even translation, as beneficial to his writing style. Hence, Murakami's combination of rhythmic, energetic activity and creative stamina results in a healthy preparation for writing fiction. Murakami perceives translation as an

enjoyable and wholesome practice that helps him gain new insights to perfect the writing process. Like running a long marathon or habitually jogging shorter distances, writing a novel or short story requires discipline and determination. Hence, while "translation plays a vital, integral role in maintaining his prolific career as a writer of fiction" (17), it also signifies the solitary writing process linked to the author.

After providing this detailed synopsis of Murakami's routines, Mori shifts to the literary analysis of the three short stories. The first one appears in Chapter 4, "The Second Battery Attack," depicting the story of a young couple who raided a local McDonald's to steal some burgers after experiencing hunger one night. This narrative deals with postindustrial transformation used as social criticism. However, the deeper meaning behind this story is that of a revolting capitalist mentality that deceives young people and ultimately leads them to self-destruction. Beneath the humorous or unnecessary details of this narrative, Mori cleverly exposes powerful metaphors to decode the story's relevant sociopolitical, relational, and psychological elements. For instance, the references to the nihilistic cavern and volcanic imagery in the text symbolize the narrator's desire for existential value and social change. Evidently, the couple's uncontrollable hunger leading to theft connotes issues of human consciousness (35).

Mori's analysis continues with Chapter 5 by focusing on "'The Elephant Vanishes," which tells the story of an aged elephant that has mysteriously disappeared from its small town. Nevertheless, Murakami exposes capitalism's dark motives to dispose of people's lives after they no longer serve a purpose. Mori emphasizes his own interpretation of the different versions of the original Japanese text and the English translation to deconstruct their divergent Kafkaesque attributes. Then, in the sixth chapter, "'TV People': The Slick Assault by Electronic Media," Mori explores the intricacies of this story about shrunken technicians invading the private space of the protagonist through the TV. Here, Murakami reveals the wayward effects of the media in our society and its adverse effects on people, to the point of depriving them of their autonomy. By breaking down the main components of Murakami's 1989 short story "TV People,'" Mori explores the influence of technology on humans and its sociocultural implications on the self. One interesting point is when Mori compares the "entangled plotlines" of "TV People" to a symbolical labyrinth, recalling the works by Argentine author Jorge Luis Borges, such as "The Garden of Forking Paths" (1941) and "The Aleph" (1945). Another nod to Murakami's fascination with magical realism is noted when the narrator of "TV People" reads an unnamed

novel by Colombian author Gabriel García Márquez, which echoes this Kafkaesque fusion of fiction and reality that Murakami found to be so inspirational.

Finally, in Chapter 7, Mori compares "TV People" to *Ringu* (Ring 1998, 1999), a famous Japanese horror film directed a decade afterward. The movie *Ringu* depicts nonhuman, paranormal figures emerging from the TV and causing unrest, exposing the dangers of the media in a similar fashion to Murakami's short story but with alterations in the plot and the characterization. However, the visual motif is the same, and Mori uses this example to demonstrate how Murakami has developed a new kind of ghost story (83). Even though it was not as popular as the film, Murakami's short story makes the same essential criticisms of human life invaded by technology and its result in a metaphorical death beyond the physical realm: the loss of autonomy as thinking beings, the invasion of privacy (which Mori compares to today's cyberspace and Internet surveillance issues), and even the implicit fear that results from "an irrational, yet persistently unsettling sense that the device might be taking in every minute aspect of our life with an unintermittent, insentient, nonhuman gaze" (81).

As the Japanese author distances himself from the public gaze, Mori's book aims to help readers dig deeper into Murakami's emblematic fiction by offering a close look into the complex patterns of his oeuvre. In terms of the significance of the book, Mori evaluates Murakami's trajectory by exploring three of his short stories, with the unifying premise of projecting the author's humanistic concern and creative technique. Overall, Mori exceptionally conveys Murakami's impressions concerning sociopolitical topics and thought-provoking Kafkaesque themes, showcasing the author's critical reflections. Intriguing observations leave readers wishing Mori could have explored the topic of magical realism and the influence of Latin American Boom writers in connection to Murakami's works more fully, and this would be a great analysis for another publication. But readers interested in Murakami's early works and literary career will find this book insightful and compelling, shining light on the literary path of this reserved yet renowned *running artist*.

Takeshi Matsuda, *Voluntary Subordination: The Logic and Psychology of the U.S.-Japan Security System*. Hiroshima: Keisuisha, 2022, 240 pp. ISBN:978-4863276017, ¥ 4,180.

Reviewed by Yoneyuki Sugita

Voluntary Subordination takes a fresh look at postwar U.S.-Japan relations. The core argument of this book written by Takeshi Matsuda, an American historian, is that the Japanese people have voluntarily chosen a dependent relationship with the United States because being equal, free, and independent "requires constant intellectual training and puts people under physical and mental strain, which can cause a lot of mental stress" (205–206). Focusing on the politics, culture, ideology, and values of the United States and Japan, Professor Matsuda reveals the causes of the fetters in the bilateral relations that show this partnership to be far from equal. In doing so, he considers the question of whether Japan's postwar attitude toward the United States – that is, subservient and subordinate – is the result of choices made by the Japanese government and the Japanese people or whether these choices were forced by pressure from the United States government.

This book consists of three parts. In the first part, titled "U.S.-Japan Relations and U.S. History," comprising Chapters 1 through 3, Matsuda introduces the approaches, methodologies, and characteristics of conventional studies in the history of U.S.-Japan relations. Matsuda then explains the image of the United States based on his personal engagement in American studies for nearly half a century. The third chapter focuses on the seemingly changing American culture that is not truly changing at all. Then, in Chapters 4 and 5, included in the second part titled "Forced Voluntary Servitude," the author surveys U.S.-Japan relations in the 1950s. In particular, he discusses the San Francisco Peace Treaty and the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, noting the insistence on base rights in mainland Japan and Okinawa. He also sheds light on the intricacies of major political, social, and cultural events in the United States and Japan during this time.

In the third section, "Embracing Voluntary Servitude," in Chapters 6 through 10, Matsuda explores the importance of the 1960s and the early 1970s. After discussing the background of American cultural diplomacy as well as Ambassador Edwin O. Reischauer's philosophy and scholarship, Matsuda explores the significance of the U.S.-Japan Cultural Exchange and Education Conference (CULCON) in the context of U.S. cultural diplomacy. He also analyses the relationship between the GARIOA-EROA repayment

issue between the two nations. Matsuda then delves into the historical significance of 1964 as a symbol of Japan's reconstruction. Finally, this part concludes by reviewing the reversion of Okinawa and the subsequent development of U.S.-Japan relations.

Conventional research on the United States and Japan's security relationship has tended to emphasize a structural analysis. However, the most significant feature of this study is its analysis of the psychological aspects of the bilateral relationship. Its provocative title, *Voluntary Subordination*, is a clear indication of this key point. Matsuda writes, "Government leaders and the elites around them have been ambivalent about Japan being a sovereign country, a country that exercises rights and duties that come with being a 'free and independent entity' in the U.S.-Japan relationship" (205). This book reminds me of Takeo Doi's *"Amae" no Kozo* [The Structure of "Dependence"], the bestseller from half a century ago. In this text, Doi argues that the psychological structure of the Japanese people has not changed over the past half-century; instead, it has continued uninterruptedly. Both authors demonstrate that once dependency becomes structured in human or nation-to-nation relations, it may be difficult to escape from the trend.

We may wonder, "What's wrong with voluntary subordination?" In Japan, there is a proverb that says, "profit is better than fame." In the 1940s, Japan tried to defend its fame by breaking with the United States and pushing for the establishment of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Japan's reckless challenge paid a heavy price in the form of more than 3.1 million casualties. Their total defeat in World War II forced the country to realize it was a middle power and that the most efficient way to maximize its national interests was to act like a piggyback to the most powerful nation (the United States). There is no need to defend its fame in order to gain profit.

Postwar Japan's geographic proximity to two major communist countries, the Soviet Union and China, led the United States to overestimate the threats posed by these countries to Japan and underestimate Japan's potential power. By becoming a junior partner of the United States, postwar Japan was provided security and economic recovery. Thus, Japan's most important postwar diplomacy has been to calculate the bare minimum contribution that would not jeopardize the U.S.-Japan alliance. In this sense, voluntary subordination is just a means to maximize Japan's national interest. Indeed, it represents a practical, realist tactic for a middle power.

As a leading scholar of American history and U.S.-Japan relations, Professor Matsuda's culminating research is evident in *Voluntary Subordination,* as this book raises provocative and bold hypotheses. His

successors must do their homework to verify his theories with empirical research. For example, is the concept of voluntary subordination a specific concept that applies only to Japan, or does it apply to other allies such as the United Kingdom, Germany, and the Philippines? Rather than a psychological structure unique to Japan, voluntary subordination is a deliberate and rational measure by a middle power to maximize its own national interests. As U.S. power deteriorates, Japan's stance may naturally change.

Another challenge his successors need to tackle is that Matsuda uses the concept of *Smart Yankee Trick* to analyze the significance of the Emperor's September 1947 message regarding Okinawa, concluding that the "U.S. was the source of the *Message from the Emperor*" (67). Matsuda admits, "It is true that this is a hypothesis, given the historical materials currently available to us" (67). According to the ironclad rule of empirical history, which allows the documents to speak for themselves, younger researchers are responsible for testing this hypothesis by uncovering related materials. As explored in this study, the torch has been handed to them.

This book is a must-read for those who are interested in U.S.-Japan relations. Since it is written in plain English without much jargon, *Voluntary Subordination* is highly recommended for undergraduate students and the general public, as well as scholars researching U.S.-Japan relations, international relations, and U.S. history.

EDITORS/CONTRIBUTORS

STEVEN HEINE is Professor and Director of Asian Studies at Florida International University and a specialist in Japanese Buddhism in relation to society. His latest books include *Wisdom within Words: An Annotated Translation of Dōgen's Chinese-Style Poetry* (2022) and *Approaches to Chan, Sŏn, and Zen Studies* (2023).

MARÍA SOL ECHARREN is Assistant Director of the Asian Studies Program at FIU and has earned her PhD in Spanish, specializing in Latin American literature, and serves on the MLA elections committee. She has assisted with the editing of JSR for many years, as well as numerous other publications and documents produced by the program.

JUNKO BABA is Associate Professor of Japanese for the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures at the University of South Carolina. Her research interests involve Japanese linguistics and culture.

XIAOHUAN CAO has a PhD from Hebei Normal University with her doctoral research on the impact of traditional Zen Buddhist aesthetic values on various postwar literary and artistic movements in the West.

SALVATORE CIRIACONO is Senior Scholar and Professor of Modern European and Asian History at the University of Padua. He is the author of numerous publications, including *Luxury Production and Technological Transfer in Early Modern Europe* (2017).

STEPHEN JENKINS is Professor Emeritus of Cal Poly Humboldt University. He is also a long-time researcher of the Buddhist ideals of compassion, particularly as they relate to violence and warfare.

YUAN LI is a graduate student at the University of Cambridge, specializing in natural language processing. He holds a BS in Data Science from Duke Kunshan University and Duke University.

XIAO (ANNE) LIU is a graduate student at Yale University, specializing in the history and material culture of the middle-period Silk Road. She received her BA in Art History from Duke Kunshan University and Duke University.

MARCELA LÓPEZ BRAVO is Deputy Director at the Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens and Adjunct Lecturer at FIU, teaching several courses in Asian Studies and Japanese History. In 2021, she earned her PhD in International Studies at Waseda University in Tokyo.

MASAKI MORI is Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Comparative Literature and Intercultural Studies at the University of Georgia, and he also directs five Asian language programs. His writings often center on Kawabata Yasunari and Murakami Haruki.

YONEYUKI SUIGITA is Senior Trade Policy Adviser at the British Embassy in Japan and former Professor of Japanese Studies at Osaka University and Kobe Women's Junior College. His research specializes in Japan-U.S. relations and Japanese health insurance.

KAZUAKI TANAHASHI is an artist, Buddhist scholar, and peace activist in Berkeley, California. His publications include *Painting Peace: Art in a Time of Global Crisis* (2018).

BEN VAN OVERMEIRE is Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at Duke Kunshan University. A comparatist, he examines how premodern Buddhist genres and ideas are understood today, particularly in popular literature.