

researchers with a method that assists in locating the manuscripts of her three chosen works in time and space, in particular the copies of al-Būṣīrī's *Burda*, which analysis comprises most of her book. In regard to al-Jazūlī's *Dalā'il al-khayrāt*, researchers are advised to read Abid's publication alongside that of Daub, while for Qāḍī 'Iyād's *Kitāb al-Shifā'*, Dagmar Riedel's ongoing project, *Making Books Talk: The Material Evidence of Manuscripts of the Kitāb al-Shifā' by Qadi Iyad (d. 1149) for the Reception of an Andalusian Biography of the Prophet between 1100 and 1900*, might give further insights into the manuscript production of this important work.

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*The Tale of Genji: Translation, Canonization, and World Literature*. By MICHAEL EMMERICH. New York: COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2013. Pp. xv + 494. \$95 (cloth), \$35 (paper).

These days, any book “between covers” brings a certain joy. To read with the smell of paper, not the glow of a screen, quickens the heart, especially of the premodernist. When the book, counting notes and online bibliography, is over five hundred pages, though, the blessing may seem mixed. So it was with a twinge of resistance that I opened Michael Emmerich's study on the Japanese classic *Genji monogatari (The Tale of Genji)*. Steeling myself with the notion that for the moment (of which I had no more than two free) I only needed to check the author's opinion on one thing, I followed the index to the proper page and scanned it. Scanning turned into absorption. Absorption blocked out the rest of the workaday world. Damn.<sup>1</sup> He got me. On I read, heedless of the passing hours.

It is not unusual for a tome on Japanese literature to divide my attention from every other duty, although curiously some of the best recent reads—Tomi Suzuki's *Narrating the Self: Fictions of*

1. I do not consider this swear word a breach of scholarly decorum, since it is directed not at the author, but at the situation, and ultimately at my own inability to foreswear a good time.

*Japanese Modernity* (1996), Haruo Shirane's *Traces of Dreams: Landscape, Cultural Memory, and the Poetry of Bashō* (1998), David Barnett Lurie's *Realms of Literacy: Early Japan and the History of Writing* (2011), and now this book—come from individuals associated with or trained at Columbia University. (The back of the Emmerich dust jacket in fact gave me pause: is it appropriate for the author's mentor to dub his protégé's monograph a "stunning tour de force"?) This volume is, however, quite simply extraordinary. Lest I be thought a paid endorser for the press or a member of the writer's circle, let me turn to the evidence for such an encomium (and in due course, some quibbles).

Following an uncommon path, I will begin with the format. Emmerich gives potent space to the way that Tsuruya Kieemon, publisher of the celebrated *gōkan* (combined booklets) serial *Nise Murasaki Inaka Genji* (A Fraudulent Murasaki's Bumpkin Genji, 1829–42), lavished care on the production of elegant chapters. He details papers (including crepe with printed imitations of gold flecks) and the printing of subtly patterned back covers, which set the standard for over four decades of subsequent practice. This is neither antiquarian trivia nor simple due diligence, for as Emmerich explains, such sophisticated techniques as adding one or two shades of thin ink to select illustrations brought depth to the page and enhanced themes. It must be no coincidence that the frontispiece of each of Emmerich's chapters is printed atop a light ground of patterns from the *gōkan*'s back covers. Copious figures throughout (many from the author's personal collection) not only support the analysis but provide the reader an aesthetic immersion worthy of the subject. Emmerich thanks the press, as should we. He may not belabor the point, but by its very material incarnation the book counters any assumption that images matter less than words.

The overall project compassionately acknowledges others' labors over the text. Offering us the aid of "the late Mitani Kuniaki," who wrote that *Genji monogatari* "is literature that demands to be read again" (p. 1), Emmerich compares our reading selves to Ukifune in her boat or Genji about to cross to Akashi. Welcoming us into the layers of time and space that stretch from the eleventh century, Emmerich argues that the many rereadings of *Genji monogatari* mean readers and non-readers alike cannot share a selfsame *Tale of Genji*. Translation, circulation, and discourse on *Genji*—the very things he will examine and is by his own efforts part of—produce something, but not a stable subject. Emmerich is always cognizant that he is writing "a" history, not "the" history, of how *Genji* was read, but he does not miss such politically consequential topics as the concern among Meiji Japanese that Murasaki Shikibu's novel would never be appreciated outside Japan.

Emmerich focuses on text and image interplay because that is the heart of premodern Japanese vernacular literature, too often cut away from modern print editions. The rich legacy of illustrated *Genji* scrolls and booklets is well known and is ever better reflected in English-language scholarship. We know that woodblock print artists made much of the tale, but Emmerich introduces us to the intermediary that shaped most of those prints: *Nise Murasaki Inaka Genji*. He substantiates the tremendous impact that this work had on both the literary and visual fields. Mitsuuji, the character who stands in for the eponymous eleventh-century hero Genji in the *Inaka Genji* text, was for the nineteenth century *the* romantic pinnacle, showing up on stage as well as in fashion, erotic materials, and other intertexts.

Chapters one and two hinge on the exciting attempt "to let early modern books teach us how to read them" (p. 33). Emmerich makes a case for the brilliance of Ryūtei Tanehiko (1783–1842). Tanehiko has been introduced to the English reading public—how could he not have been, since he was one of the most influential and prolific writers of his day? Prior studies, Emmerich contends, do not allow us to forget that Tanehiko's work was popular among the crassest of readerships. The best defense against such undervaluing is a thorough exploration of the devices Tanehiko deploys in his fiction, and Emmerich does not disappoint. He catalogs image strategies that Tanehiko devised and the artist Utagawa Kunisada (1786–1865) presented in the designs of pages. Emmerich calls some of these metapictures, because they comment on the pictorial nature of the text while leading the reader to engage with the material form. Other tactics include frame-breaking devices that further enliven the reading experience within and across pages, exploiting the thickness of the page, or provoking the reader to rotate a booklet. These "image-text-book relations," with image importantly first in the list, constitute another indispensable aspect of Edo literature that Emmerich clarifies.

By the end, you will comprehend Tanehiko's dominance of the publishing world. Emmerich argues that Tanehiko was more central to the fate of *Genji monogatari* in Japan than the tale's author, Murasaki Shikibu, because Tanehiko created the image of *Genji monogatari*, an image whose prestige was largely unknown to the popular audience before he got there. At times the book verges on being overly insistent on this point, and yet as Emmerich points out, it is hard to break the circular logic by which contemporary readers—literary critics especially—get it in their heads that *Inaka Genji* parodied a *Genji monogatari* that was beloved by all. The field of Japan studies has learned to dwell on the after-life of books, but tends to assume works exist as “originals” and have long enjoyed, and been enjoyed for, whatever canonical status we assign them today. Start without preconceptions and look from the period perspective, Emmerich urges. Notice how Tanehiko quotes *Genji monogatari* but does not lord scholasticism over his audience. Let us not just investigate reception histories, but rename them in the interest of highlighting the active role that readers and re-readers play in the conception of literature.

This, Emmerich's major theoretical contribution, occurs early in the introduction, when he proposes abandoning the term “reception” in telling the history of how *Genji monogatari* was read, substituting instead “replacement.” In this process *Genji* was continually “replaced” by new versions, translations that served both those who would settle the value of the text and readers desirous of active consumption. The many ways, amusingly catalogued, in which the tale was commodified for the Millennial Celebration of *Genji monogatari* between 2007 and 2009 demonstrate that the tale itself is not necessary to its later re-placement, either in the literal sense of switching to some new rendition or the metaphorical idea of changing the status accorded the old. That new place is not only literary, but social, economic, and political, Emmerich maintains. His is a more fully embodied notion of canonization than “reception” implies, and it merits wide discussion and adoption.

Emmerich also questions the prominence of modern theories of Text that make it hard to account for the embodied experience of a work like the *Genji* that exists in so many forms and instances. Roland Barthes may have killed the Author and located the Text in readers' immaterial encounters, but Emmerich lays the philosopher to rest with an anecdote about a linked-verse poet who copied *Genji monogatari* over twenty-three times. Next, *Inaka Genji*'s incarnations and their censorship between 1829 and 1928 have their day. Two neologisms, the “yomihonization” of the *gōkan*, which may also be seen as the “bibliographic translation” from one format to another, capture a change in the meaning of text and the emergence of modern novel fiction (*shōsetsu*). As movable type editions of *Inaka Genji* lose their woodblock and pouch-binding specific features, especially illustrations, and despite a late blossoming in the *gōkan* genre, the preeminence of Tanehiko and Mitsuiji too is forgotten. The transformation is not, as we may have imagined, that sudden; it is only that few scholars have so attentively traced the decay of the popularity enjoyed by a work of truly popular literature, as *Inaka Genji*, the bestselling *gōkan* of its age, was.

The argument of this monograph about the place of *The Tale of Genji* in world literature is less familiar still. For those who assume that the existence or absence of a translation is a matter of labor, or the serendipitous encounter with the right translator, the second half of the book is an object lesson. Emmerich sees *Genji* today in a triangular field: *Genji* as world literature, *Genji* as surviving only in replacements, and, because world literature “is a mode of relating to works” (p. 230) in the context of their global circulation, *Genji* as a discursive figure arising from its replacements. Rather than canon-bust with standard comments about the inventedness of the classic and the power relations that put it into our hands, he outlines the inevitability that the text will be propagated in various forms and—by necessity—in translation. Some of the fun comes in confirming how *The Tale of Genji* has *not* been read by so many, who nonetheless have opinions to spare: for example, Georges Bousquet, who dubbed *Genji* a tedious novel by Japan's Madeleine de Scudéry, a comment that, sloppily recalled, birthed a conversation on tedious female authors. Murasaki Shikibu's image as a woman writer, and the image of her book as a source of social history, were both foundational in 1882 when Suematsu Kenchō published his partial English translation, the first ever (and still in print). Emmerich establishes beyond doubt the influence that Suematsu's translation had both globally and domestically. The final story of *Genji*'s replacement by modern Japanese translations takes us to Yosano Akiko, and a quarter century later Tanizaki Jun'ichirō with Masamune Hakuchō, aka “the translationperson” (p. 316). Probing the

evidence for how these notables and their translations related to one another, it refutes existing narratives. Tanizaki does not get a pass for censoring *Genji*, and Hakuchō's twisting path, on which he went from loathing *Genji* to discovering in it, via Waley's translation, a writer as foreign and fabulous as André Gide, unrolls across wartime to the postwar era, with *Genji* as a translation of "Japan the cultural nation."

For those hesitant to beguile long hours with Emmerich, here are findings that you ignore at your peril:

1) *Genji monogatari* (the eleventh-century text as well as *Kogetsushō*, its chief early modern commentary) was not that widely read during the early modern period.

2) *Nise Murasaki Inaka Genji* is not a parody of *Genji monogatari*.

3) To understand Edo literature, you must take into account image-text-book relations.

4) Arthur Waley did not produce the first translation of *Genji monogatari*.

Each of these points is extensively, rigorously, and passionately argued, accompanied by generous passages of fluid translation from sources alternately venerable and obscure.

Now for the quibbles. One sometimes wishes the author had been more a fan of Hemingway or Strunk and White than of Murasaki Shikibu: some very long sentences contribute to the bulk. I must also address the somewhat misleading title. The book is not "about *The Tale of Genji*" in the way that a glance at the LC cataloging might suggest and the ordinary reader might expect. It has no close reading of themes; nor does it function as a teaching companion. It does not facilitate comparisons of *Genji* to Proust, Shakespeare, or *Dream of the Red Chamber* (although all come up), information that devotees of world literature might be anxious to acquire. A colleague in that very field complained to me, with some justification and a good deal of exasperation, "there's practically nothing in it about *The Tale of Genji*!" A title more reflective of the author's agenda (e.g., *Translation, Canonization, and World Literature: The Case of The Tale of Genji*, or *Translation and Canonization of The Tale of Genji in World Literature*) would not necessarily have warned off such readers, but one should not read this book hoping to suss out the relationship among Murasaki Shikibu's characters or devour her affinities with Jane Austen. Read it if you care about Japanese literature of multiple periods and are curious how *The Tale of Genji* came into your hands in English, that is, *why we count it as a masterpiece of world literature*.

This treatment of *Genji*'s rise to the status of world literature and national classic is required reading for anyone who chooses to put the tale into a curriculum. It should cause the teacher to question the comparisons he or she makes, to foster the thought not only "why am I reading *Genji monogatari* in English?" but "why am I reading *Pride and Prejudice* or *The Story of the Stone* in English?" Where, in other words, does our sense of literary historical importance, if not indeed of literary value itself, come from, and how does it cross cultures? The Japanese tradition, with its centuries of commentaries, its strong pedagogical drive, which extends even to comic book versions of "the classics," has this above all to teach us: the reading of literature is not just pleasant diversion; it is bound up with enormous projects of history, philosophy, nationalism, colonialism, literacy, and consumerism. Without taking anything away from *Genji*, which rewards repeated reading, its long circulation makes us ponder our placement in a world of "literature," "literary studies," and "world literature." The very notion that such an important work can be and has been "replaced" so often astonishes.

In the conclusion, Emmerich pitches us a hardball of challenges to the status quo, that is, to the timidity and apologies with which some who have been most involved in translation rather than theory, so-called, have shielded themselves. Drawing a conclusion from the implications of his work, in place of the perfunctory summary that ends the typical monograph, Emmerich shows how the presumably marginal field of Japanese literary studies has helped to wake up English and comparative literature departments to their own translingual contexts. Noting that our discipline (not to mention Chinese literary studies) has always needed a transnational perspective, and citing no less than a literary history by the longest-working king of translators, the late Donald Keene, Emmerich reviews the ebb and flow of interchanges among areas. Relatively resigned to the fact that his work will be disregarded by the putative center, Emmerich lays out how we have been the agents of that center's undoing, and the vanguard of its discovered future in translation and global studies, finally observing "there was never any catching up to do" (p. 396). If Emmerich rightly grasps the current state of debates on translation

in Japanese literary studies, most of us do not realize that we have already turned to translation in a productive fashion. What we should do now is return to the progress we made in the 1960s, when we had elevated our discussions about translation to a principal node in the field.

Book reviews often end with the hopeful note of praise “this book deserves to be read widely.” Rarely has it been truer.

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*Chinese Writing and the Rise of the Vernacular in East Asia.* By PETER FRANCIS KORNICKI. Oxford: OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2018. Pp. xxx + 393. \$97.50.

Every once in a while, we encounter a work that synthesizes the field with an insight that points to new marks for the discipline and its related intellectual endeavors and has the power to change the way we look at what we know. *Languages, Scripts, and Chinese Texts in East Asia* is the second such work by this author, following his *The Book in Japan: A Cultural History from the Beginnings to the Nineteenth Century* (1998). With characteristic clarity and sound logic, Kornicki recounts the processes of how and to what degree written Sinitic became vernacularized in the East Asian sphere.

As the author states in the conclusion (p. 297), there are three obvious reasons for the existence of a work such as this: Sinitic has flourished outside of China for nearly two thousand years; it lived alongside local vernaculars rather than replacing them until the twentieth century; and the societies that engaged with Sinitic did so to different degrees and in very different ways. Indeed, in Part I (Orientation) Kornicki provides the most substantial discussion thus far of the significance of East Asian vernacularization. He weaves his discussion from three different strands. He introduces the problems of script, orality, material texts, and the migration of texts in East Asia; he lays out a detailed survey of the techniques for reading and translating Chinese texts that led up to the development of their vernacular versions; and finally, he focuses on Buddhist, Confucian, and other widely circulating texts that are exemplary of the processes of vernacularization. By doing so, he fixes a series of methods through which we can sort out the multitude of issues involved in the vernacularization of Sinitic in East Asia. A work as comprehensive as this cannot cover all details, but Kornicki successfully creates a general framework capable of encompassing all aspects and contexts necessary to investigate Sinitic literacy and its shifts in pan-East Asian history. All of his insights and observations are substantiated with bibliographical and historical evidence that is measured against current scholarship in multiple languages. This is where the author’s expertise makes this book even more valuable and indispensable.

The East Asia that this book explores—often referred to more conceptually than precisely as the Sinosphere—comprises not only the usual members Japan, Korea, and Vietnam, but also the historical Ryūkyū Kingdom and the Jurchen, Khitan, Mongol, and Tangut empires through centuries. These communities, at one time, all shared Sinitic literary culture, and employed one or more of these three options: writing Sinitic with Sinitic, writing vernacular with Sinitic, or creating vernacular scripts in place of Sinitic. What we see in the coexistence of written Sinitic and spoken vernaculars is a continuing process of localizing Sinitic, which in turn reveals two resulting phenomena: a clear division of the written and the oral dimensions; and the absence of translation of local vernaculars into a common Sinitic that could be exchanged between cultures. Thus, a “Sinitic Republic of Letters” never happened (p. 52), because Sinitic never became a spoken language, not to mention the limited opportunities for cross-cultural personal encounters. Rather, each society eventually developed its own script to write the vernacular, and East Asian intellectuals, including those in China, almost totally depended on the written (Sinitic) word for acquiring knowledge, for domesticating Chinese characters, and for vernacularizing their pronunciation. Most of East Asia, therefore, was monolingual, and in the oral dimension even educated people were prisoners of their own vernaculars (p. 100). This is in fact consistent with the “hermetic” nature of East Asian book cultures (p. 299), due to two factors: most Sinitic texts