

in 2008 the erstwhile royal rituals had been fully transferred onto the ceremonial protocol of the new head of state by what were largely administrative measures. Thus the elites' project of "re-ritualizing the state" (p. 60) was accomplished.

A few inaccuracies in the book need pointing out: One may call it an improper entanglement of facts to say that the first Rana prime minister, Jung Bahadur, tied his newly conferred kingship to his prime-ministership (p. 33), when historians argue that he in fact intended to pass on the title of Maharaja of Kaski and Lamjung to his sons and that of prime minister to his brothers, which led to quarrelling among his heirs and ultimately the massacre of 1885. The assertion that there had been no violent death of a Shah king before 2001 (p. 80) is perhaps a bit of an overstatement. While this is certainly true of the post-1950-period, it is not of the early Shah period. In 1806 King Rana Bahadur, who had abdicated, was assassinated by his half-brother Sher Bahadur. Other misleading statements include that the girl chosen to embody Kumari remained in office "until she reached approximately age twelve" (p. 122), while it is bleeding, usually with the onset of menstruation or when teething, that ends a girl's tenure, and that the Khadgasiddhijatra did not take place during the Dasain of 2011 (p. 225 n. 10), which it indeed did. These are, however, only minor lapses, which neither affect the validity of the overall argument nor diminish the major conclusions stated in chapter 7.

Just to single out some points the present reader finds remarkable: The book looks at political change through the lens of ritual studies and, more particularly, draws attention to often neglected aspects of rituals, including their planning, organization, and administration. Actors involved in such processes, the "makers of ritual behind the scenes," usually remain unknown (*Ritualmacher hinter den Kulissen*, ed. by J. Gengnagel and G. Schwedler [Münster: LIT Verlag, 2013], 13). Anne Mocko has documented their agency and voices. From such a perspective, the actual staging of rituals represents only the final outcome of complex negotiations. Following Nepalese royal rituals sequentially, both through the annual cycles and over multiple years, also elucidates how change once introduced sets precedent for and thus eases subsequent performances. The book also brings to light the often ad hoc character of decisions and many intriguing moments in which coincidence comes to either hinder or help actors, leading one to wonder more generally how much of what is couched in historians' narratives in terms of cause and effect actually was the outcome of happenstance or coincidence.

In short, the book under review can be warmly recommended. For those who are interested in Hindu kingship or, from an even broader perspective, modern monarchy and democracy, it provides an accessible introduction to the Nepalese case. For those particularly interested in Nepalese history and religion, it will be a mine of carefully collected and referenced data, a stimulating look into the performance of rulership and a contribution to ongoing discussions on religion and secularism (cf. *Religion, Secularism, and Ethnicity in Contemporary Nepal*, ed. D. Gellner, S. Hausner, C. Letizia [New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2016]). Thus it is not only fortunate that somebody has dealt with these recent dynamics of Nepalese royal ritual, but that it was Anne Mocko who did so. Her book will certainly captivate both general readers as well as specialists.

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Reading "The Tale of Genji": Sources from the First Millennium. Edited by THOMAS HARPER and HARUO SHIRANE. New York: COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2015. Pp. xx + 610. \$65.

This impressive anthology presents translations of texts—some well known, others less so—that trace the reception history of the canonical work of Japanese literature, *The Tale of Genji*. The collection's appearance marks the growth of non-Japanese interest in the *Genji* and its now assured place in world literature. Whereas Shirane's previous edited volume on *Genji* reception (*Envisioning "The Tale of Genji": Media, Gender, and Cultural Production*, Columbia Univ. Press, 2008) examines the tale's impact in visual and popular culture through scholarly papers, this volume gathers sources focused on the readerly engagements from the tenth through twentieth centuries. Many of the materials have

never appeared in English translation. Even in Japanese scholarship, I am hard-pressed to identify a single, convenient volume that brings together a comparably rich, vast array of *Genji* reception history. Indeed, even among scholars of *Genji*, everyone is bound to make some discoveries, whether in the texts themselves or the astute editorial comments.

While there are a number of individuals involved, roughly three-quarters of the book consists of translations and commentary by Thomas Harper. His unpublished dissertation on Mootori Norinaga's (1730–1801) *A Little Jeweled Comb* (Univ. of Michigan, 1971) has been a major resource for English-language scholarship on Norinaga's influential work on the *Genji*. To see Harper's work made more widely available, and updated, is thus gratifying. Harper tellingly changes his translation of *monogatari* from "novels" to "romances" or "tales," which aligns with current scholarship. Indeed, his explanation about his choice of terminology (pp. 12–13), and his comparisons with the Western literary tradition (pp. 416–17), are tantalizing. They present one gateway for readers with backgrounds besides Japanese literature to begin placing *Genji* in a comparative, global context.

It is on this note about the volume's readership, however, that I have some questions. In discussing the significance of Norinaga's work, Harper observes: "every shift in literary perception and opinion that accompanied 'the rise of the novel' [in eighteenth-century England] is echoed in Norinaga's treatise" (p. 417). This coincidence is fascinating, and it is not the only stated reason why we should pay heed to *The Little Jeweled Comb*. In the global context to which this volume aspires, it makes sense to highlight the nearly contemporaneous developments in thinking about prose fiction. At the same time, there is the potential danger of subsuming Norinaga's achievement under a rhetoric of what is articulated as "world literature," but all too often a disguised, Western-centric rubric of values and judgments based in the English language. So, in appraising the book's value, I ask: how accessible should such a collection as this one be, and for whom would it be the most useful?

In the tradition of Columbia University Press's anthologies, this *Genji* volume mostly succeeds in contextualizing its contents for non-specialists. Still, one is assumed to have read stretches of *The Tale of Genji* and engaged in its serious study. Haruo Shirane's succinct introduction provides some of the larger groupings through which to grasp the array of sources to come, but it does not offer a detailed background for navigating *Genji* itself—a stance that is only natural for this volume's scope and purposes. For example, in "Gender and Reception," I would have anticipated some more commentary to explicate the opening quotation by the modern scholar Tamagami Takuya. Yes, *Genji* "was originally written by a woman, for women, about women" (p. 4). Why was that? Shirane does not explain fully. The ideal reader for this sourcebook might then not be an undergraduate coming fresh to Japanese literature. As much as I find the sources introduced here to be compelling, it is difficult to conceive of an introductory course that would entail students purchasing this relatively expensive, thick book in addition to *Genji*.

Of course, the instructor might find some parts more suitable to her class than others. I will point out some sections that drew me, especially in considering world literature, pedagogy, and translation. The first chapter, "Discussions of Fiction," presents nearly all of the significant Heian discussions on the *monogatari*, including excerpts from *Genji*. In doing so, however, some of the excerpts feel abrupt. Naturally, in a volume of this scope, space is at a premium. The first excerpt from the *Kagerō Diary* thus consists of only its first paragraph. While better included than not, it cannot illustrate the introduction's provocative ending: "[the diary] may well have served as an example to [Murasaki Shikibu] of the hitherto unexplored possibilities of prose fiction" (p. 13). Still, since the *Kagerō Diary* is available in multiple translations, that it is given short shrift here is a fair trade-off for the less familiar texts.

Chapter 2 contains just that: *Genji* "gossip." It is in this chapter's preface that one of the volume's missions is eloquently articulated. Anticipating the later contents, Harper describes the "great flood of scholarship" that was beginning to be produced. "In all," he declares, "it constitutes the world's richest record of the reception of a work of fiction" (pp. 39–40). While simple, this is worth stating. The observation speaks volumes about why this book is needed, how much work still remains to be done to right the imbalances of how the world privileges certain voices over others. Then Harper acknowledges what was lost with this flood: "It overwhelmed, and probably drowned, another sort of voice that was beginning to be recorded at about the same time." He describes this voice as gossip, women's conversations about, say, who in the tale is the most charming (p. 40). These materials offer a glimpse

into what was the most voluminous kind of engagement with the tale in its initial centuries. Still, as in contemporary, virtual fan communities of popular media, these *Genji* lists are demanding in their intensity. Unrelentingly, they test one's recollection. It is to the editor's credit that the references to all scenes are included in brackets—it is just one of the ways in which this book shows its meticulousness, one which the reader can reciprocate as much as she chooses to do.

Chapters 3 and 4 describe how medieval readers of *Genji* negotiated the objections against fiction in the canonization of *Genji*. As Harper explains, it was the association with *waka* that gained the study of *Genji* credibility. For the first excerpt, Harper chooses two poems based on *Genji* from the *Senzaishū*. What impressed me was that the translation is not based on the anthology, but on Kitamura Kigin's (1624–1705) commentary. Like *Genji* itself, *Reading "The Tale of Genji"* anticipates figures who loom large subsequently. This excerpt's translation is just a page long, but for the amount of space it occupies, it efficiently conveys how *Genji* provided the foundation for versification. This chapter ends with what would be a discovery for many: Wiebke Denecke's translation of *Sino-Japanese Poems on the Tale of the Shining Genji*. This curious work juxtaposes the conventionally separated realms of Sino-Japanese and the vernacular. It is another gateway for configuring *Genji* in a genuinely global rendition of "world literature." It would have been useful, however, to explain the translation of "Sino-Japanese" for *kanbun*, and why it is not necessarily "Chinese." Indeed, *Reading "The Tale of Genji"* seems to purposefully avoid discussing *kana*. Neither *kanbun* nor *kana* are listed in the index, which serves as an efficient glossary. I have my ideas as to why this decision was made (and I do not miss this overused, misleading binary), but a note would have been helpful.

Like the previous chapter, "Obsequies for *Genji*" demonstrates vividly just how problematic fiction was for some. The chapter renders "almost all the known documents relating to *Genji kuyō*" (p. 179), the Buddhist rites that, in this case, were held to diminish the sins of those engaged with frivolous talk. The completeness is impressive and useful. With *Genji*'s place assured in the world canon, to read of these reservations and the ways in which people negotiated them—whether through religious ritual, doctrinal argumentation, or versification—is illuminating. The chapter sparks renewed thinking about newer, contemporary forms of writing that challenge traditional values.

The apocrypha that are featured in the fifth chapter dovetail with these concerns. The chapter conveys an essential message: "The *Genji* that we read today is not the *Genji* that its earliest readers read" (p. 206). This point liberates the readers of *Reading "The Tale of Genji"* from a misconceived preoccupation with an original, and underlines its core mission: to show how the process of writing, reading, copying, and interpreting *Genji* led to a fluid work that has meant many different things to many people. One illustration of this point is Motoori Norinaga's *Tamakura*, a chapter that he wrote to fill in the beginning of the relationship between the Rokujō Lady and *Genji*. The work exhibits Norinaga's mastery of Heian prose, and shows how scholarship took different forms through history. Still, as Harper notes, "little of the learning that informs Norinaga's imitation of *Genji* survives the process of translation" (p. 214). My own sense is that more survives than "little," but translation does flatten out the variety in the original. The tone throughout *Reading "The Tale of Genji"* is fairly consistent despite the array of sources from over a millennium. This could be an effect of the conscientious editing. But if one goal is to show the diversity of voices engaged with the *Genji*, a more purposeful differentiation of diction and style would have been desirable, even if it had resulted in less fluid English.

To illustrate this potential, let me turn to Gaye Rowley's renditions of Kaoku Gyokuei's (1526–after 1602) work, which present the only female voice in the chapters on medieval and Edo-period commentaries. As Rowley comments, "Gyokuei's tone is conversational, almost chatty" (p. 360). Her translations convey that. So while female and male writing generally do exhibit distinct tones, there is still an overall effect of collapsing historical time: the English of translation remains similar, unlike the original. This characteristic is inevitable in such an anthology. In fact, it is a testament to the translators' skill and dedication that the book as a whole is as accessible as it is and reads so smoothly. But to return to my questions about the place of this book and its audience, the provocateur in me wonders whether *Reading "The Tale of Genji"* as part of the movement of English-language world literature makes things too easy for English users. Should one be able to read so casually a millennium of reception history?

One obvious answer is that, no, it should not be, and that this volume is just a beginning. Careful reading of the book, as I have suggested, would only emphasize the depth, complexity, and the challenges that still lie ahead. And if fears of world literature are warranted, it is all the more important that we pay heed to the long lineage of Japanese readers engaged with the *Genji*. There was, and continues to be, a fruitful tradition of Japanese scholarship, although Harper laments, here and there (pp. 40, 225), the passing of a certain kind. The final chapter carries the discussion into the Meiji period and the twentieth century. This was when diplomats, authors, and critics attempted to launch *Genji* into the contemporary, global era. This chapter seems underdeveloped. Its subject is more extensively served in Michael Emmerich's *The Tale of Genji: Translation, Canonization, and World Literature* (Columbia Univ. Press, 2013). However, having these sources here—of readers closer to our time contemplating the relevance of *Genji* for their concerns—hammers home an implicit message of the book's subtitle, *Sources from the First Millennium*. For if there was a first millennium, we are in the second. As this book makes abundantly clear, *Genji* will only continue to inspire new interpretations.

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Transgressive Typologies: Constructions of Gender and Power in Early Tang China. By REBECCA DORAN. Harvard-Yenching Institute Monographs, vol. 103. Cambridge, Mass.: HARVARD UNIVERSITY ASIA CENTER, HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS. Pp. viii + 260. \$39.95.

Although Wu Zhao 武曩 (624–705) and the following generation of female leaders ruled competently during the late seventh and early eighth centuries, their rule has primarily been remembered as a “female-led aberrance” within the Chinese literary-historical tradition. In *Transgressive Typologies*, Rebecca Doran shows the ways historians and writers constructed this era as transgressive by associating female power with the reversal of gender roles and narrative typologies that embody unnaturalness, excess, and sexual deviance.

The central image here is a woman's transgression: she fails to recognize her proper cosmological role and ritual place, is promiscuous, and engages in improper sexual relationships. Why has this era been retrospectively reconstructed as transgressive? Doran suggests two reasons. The first has to do with women power holders' subversion of normative gender hierarchies and roles established since the Eastern Han. Just as “subservient” roles of mother and wife were defined as “natural,” women rulers were perceived as “unnatural.” The second concerns specific historical circumstances. Following Wu Zhao's death, two factions vied for power. When Li Longji 李隆基 (Xuanzong 玄宗; r. 712–756) took the throne, writers under the new regime condemned the Wu-Zhou period and its female leaders to burnish the legitimacy of Li-Tang rule.

The book's introduction outlines the study's scope and focus. Doran is most concerned with portrayals of early Tang women leaders found in Tang through Southern Song sources. As she explains, the anecdotal collections compiled two to four generations after the female leaders' deaths played a pivotal role in crafting the canonical, transgressive image; by the Song, their reputations within the historical and literary traditions were essentially fixed. This being the case, only when there are important discrepancies between representations does she consider later sources from the Ming and Qing. Doran's basic questions are: “How did the images of the female leaders from the Wu-Zhou period [. . .] through the Jinglong era become crystalized in the rhetoric of history, historical romance, and fiction? What assumptions inform the process of negative ‘canonization?’” (p. 16). Her focus on the construction of cultural images and values allows Doran to engage a wide range of texts such as standard histories, anecdotal accounts, and fictional sources, without concern for their historical accuracy or “reliability.”

Chapter one, “Female Rule and Its Representation,” traces literary-historical constructions of pre-Tang women leaders to provide a context for examining how portrayals of early Tang women leaders draw upon and depart from convention. Examining archetypes of praised and condemned female lead-