

THE TALE OF GENJI

A JAPANESE CLASSIC ILLUMINATED

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With its vivid descriptions of courtly society, gardens, and architecture in early eleventh-century Japan, *The Tale of Genji*—recognized as the world’s first novel—has captivated audiences around the globe and inspired artistic traditions for one thousand years. Its female author, Murasaki Shikibu, was a diarist, a renowned poet, and, as a tutor to the young empress, the ultimate palace insider; her monumental work of fiction offers entry into an elaborate, mysterious world of court romance, political intrigue, elite customs, and religious life. This handsomely designed and illustrated book explores the outstanding art associated with *Genji* through in-depth essays and discussions of more than one hundred works.

The Tale of Genji has influenced all forms of Japanese artistic expression, from intimately scaled albums to boldly designed hanging scrolls and screen paintings, lacquer boxes, incense burners, games, palanquins for transporting young brides to their new homes, and even contemporary *manga*. The authors, both art historians and *Genji* scholars, discuss the tale’s transmission and reception over the centuries; illuminate its place within the history of Japanese literature and calligraphy; highlight its key episodes and characters; and explore its wide-ranging influence on Japanese culture, design, and aesthetics into the modern era.

368 pages; 304 color illustrations; bibliography; index

THE TALE OF GENJI



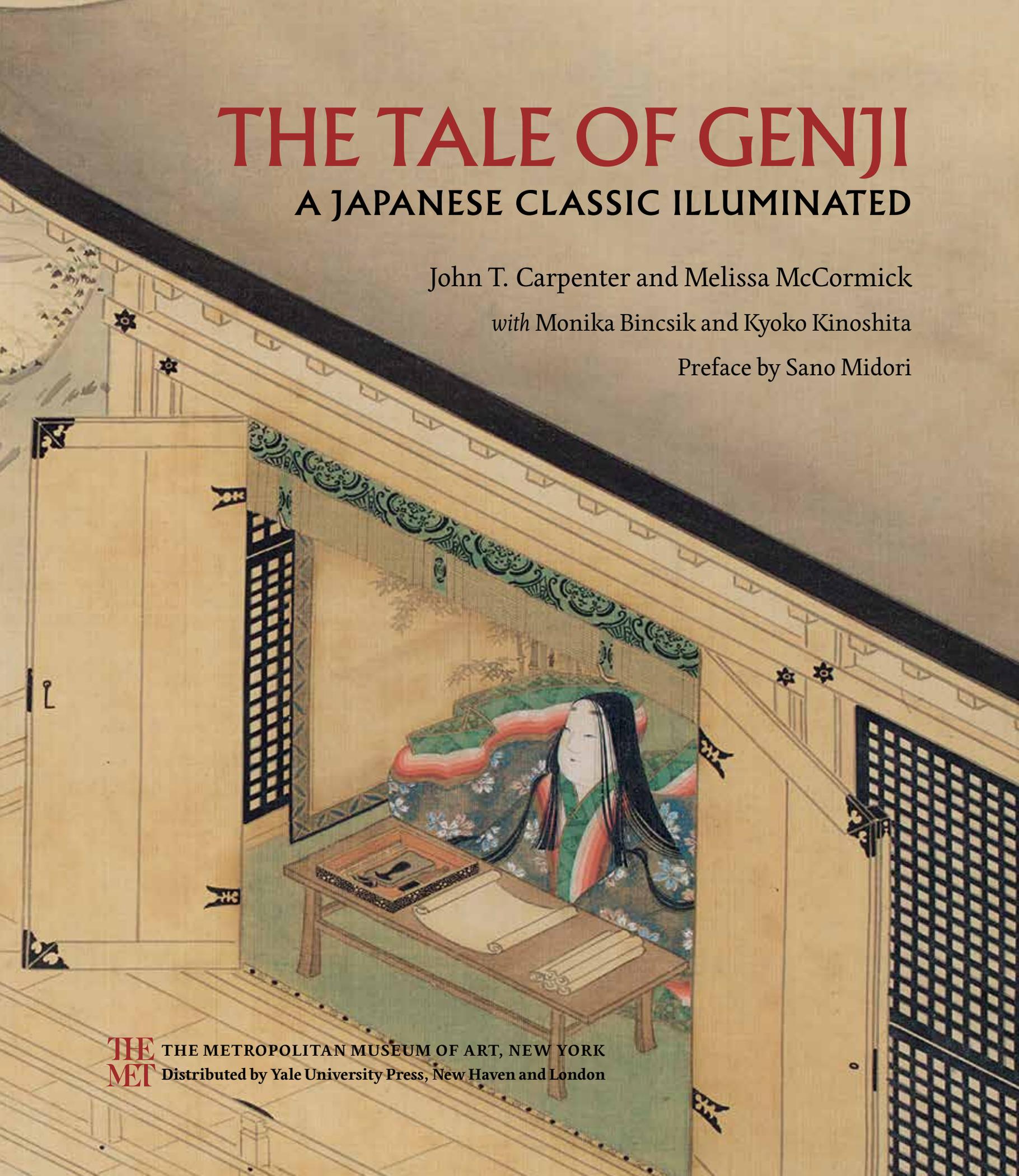
THE TALE OF GENJI

A JAPANESE CLASSIC ILLUMINATED

John T. Carpenter and Melissa McCormick

with Monika Bincsik and Kyoko Kinoshita

Preface by Sano Midori



**THE
MET**

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The exhibition is organized by The Metropolitan Museum of Art and The Japan Foundation, with the cooperation of the Tokyo National Museum and Ishiyamadera Temple.



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Director's Foreword

The Tale of Genji is Japan's most renowned literary work. Through translation into modern Japanese as well as into English and numerous other languages, it has earned a place as a canonical work of world literature—a part of our shared cultural legacy. The quantity, diversity, and sheer beauty of the art that *The Tale of Genji* has inspired is staggering. Other than the Bible, it is hard to think of a comparable work of literature in the West that has so many of its episodes or characters pictorialized. It is therefore fitting that The Met—with its strong commitment to display masterpieces from every culture around the globe—should host an exhibition of artworks inspired by a literary work of such universal appeal.

The exhibition dedicated to introducing the art of *Genji*—the first of this scope and featuring so many Japanese masterpieces—has been curated by John T. Carpenter, Mary Griggs Burke Curator of Japanese Art at The Met, and guest curator Melissa McCormick, Professor of Japanese Art and Culture at Harvard University. They have been assisted at every turn in the exhibition planning, loan negotiation, and catalogue writing by Monika Bincsik, Diane and Arthur Abbey Associate Curator for Japanese Decorative Arts at The Met, and Kyoko Kinoshita, Professor of Japanese Art History at Tama Art University and Project Associate Curator for East Asian Art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Reflecting the compendious nature of the original tale, this accompanying catalogue has also been a monumental undertaking. In addition to the contributions of the curatorial team, Professor Sano Midori of Gakushuin University, one of the most eminent scholars of the art of *Genji* in Japan, kindly contributed the preface to this volume.

A particularly meaningful and motivating factor in presenting the *Genji* exhibition in our galleries was that Mary Griggs Burke (1916–2012), the esteemed collector of Japanese art and former Trustee of the Museum, was particularly fond of the art related to famous Japanese narrative. In 2015, the Museum was the beneficiary of a transformative gift of more than 300 works of Japanese art from the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation—including several of the masterpieces of painting and decorative art included in this exhibition—and plans began in earnest at that time to display these works as part of a more comprehensive presentation.

Mounting a major international loan exhibition dedicated to *The Tale of Genji* would not have been possible without the

organizational and financial support of The Japan Foundation, which this year is bringing together a broad program of cultural events in the United States. We also owe a special debt of gratitude to our colleagues at the Tokyo National Museum, not only for loans of several works, but also for their special cooperation and expertise, without which the many loans from around Japan could not have made the trip across the seas. Also crucial to the success of the exhibition was the unstinting cooperation of the famed Buddhist temple Ishiyamadera, which lent not only many precious treasures related to *The Tale of Genji* and its author, Murasaki Shikibu, from its storerooms, but also altar accessories that help re-create the sacred atmosphere of the temple in the Arts of Japan, The Sackler Wing Galleries of The Met. Seikado Bunko Art Museum generously allowed us to display for the first half of the exhibition the rare set of *Tale of Genji* screens by Tawaraya Sōtatsu. This is the first time that these screens, designated as a National Treasure, have been allowed to leave Japan. Similarly, The Museum Yamato Bunkakan in Nara lent its prized twelfth-century illuminated Lotus Sutra, also a National Treasure.

The Met is grateful to the many dedicated donors who made this groundbreaking presentation possible. We recognize the Mary Livingston Griggs and Mary Griggs Burke Foundation Fund, 2015; the Estate of Brooke Astor; the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation; and Ann M. Spruill and Daniel H. Cantwell, for their important commitments to the exhibition. For making possible this beautiful catalogue, we deeply appreciate the support of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; the Florence and Herbert Irving Fund; the Charles A. Greenfield Fund; The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Foundation; the Mary Livingston Griggs and Mary Griggs Burke Foundation Fund, 2015; the Parnassus Foundation; and the Richard and Geneva Hofheimer Memorial Fund.

Finally, we extend our deep gratitude to all of the lenders, including distinguished museums in Japan and in the United States, as well as to individuals who generously offered to make works in their collections available to the public.

Max Hollein

Director

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Foreword from The Japan Foundation

THE JAPAN FOUNDATION is honored to partner with The Metropolitan Museum of Art to organize “*The Tale of Genji: A Japanese Classic Illuminated*.” This exhibition launches a series of events introducing Japanese arts and culture that are being held in the United States during 2019.

The Japan Foundation was established in 1972 as a special legal entity under the auspices of the Japanese Foreign Ministry and has been promoting international cultural exchange between Japan and the rest of the world for more than four decades. In the United States, the Foundation has established cultural centers in New York and Los Angeles, where, in addition to supporting Japanese studies and language education, we introduce Japanese culture to the American people, especially in the areas of the visual and performing arts, films, and literature.

The Tale of Genji is set in the imperial court of Heian-period Japan (794–1185). Written in the mid-Heian period, it is considered to be the greatest work of Japanese literature. The author, Murasaki Shikibu, was a court poet and lady-in-waiting. Through the story of Genji, she created a faithful and emotionally rich depiction of the society and lives of the nobles in the imperial court that has remained popular for a thousand years. Although the story takes place over a millennium ago in the elegant world of the imperial court, the universal human experiences that it describes continue to enthrall contemporary readers. In addition to modern Japanese, it has been translated into more than ten languages, gaining an enduring place as a well-loved classic of world literature.

This exhibition looks at a broad variety of works that derive from *The Tale of Genji*, presenting a unique view of Japanese art that transcends periods and genres. In addition to the printed and handwritten copies of the story that remain, scenes from *The Tale*

of Genji have been painted over the centuries on picture scrolls and on folding and sliding screens. Fixing the images in our minds, the further use as motifs in furnishings and costumes has taken *The Tale of Genji* beyond the realm of literature and greatly influenced the art and culture of later ages.

Works presented here begin with eleventh-century Buddhist images, writings, and the Lotus Sutra; continue through screen paintings by the Rinpa school founder Tawaraya Sōtatsu, *ukiyo-e* prints, refined decorative arts, Noh theater masks and costumes; and extend to modern Nihonga paintings and contemporary *manga* works. They include several masterpieces that are designated by Japan as National Treasures or Important Cultural Properties. Together, they form a superb collection of art that eloquently attests to the extent and breadth of the affection and appreciation that *The Tale of Genji* engenders. By taking the audience on a thousand-year voyage through the history of Japanese art, the exhibition presents a unique opportunity to become fully immersed in the world of *The Tale of Genji*.

In closing, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to each of the institutions and collectors who graciously consented to the loan of their precious artworks for this exhibition. I would also like to extend my deepest appreciation to The Metropolitan Museum of Art for spearheading this project, to the Tokyo National Museum and Ishiyamadera Temple for their collaboration in the planning, and to all those whose efforts made this exhibition possible.

Andō Hiroyasu
President
The Japan Foundation

Statements from Cooperating Institutions

ISHIYAMADERA TEMPLE is honored to cooperate with The Metropolitan Museum of Art on the special exhibition “*The Tale of Genji: A Japanese Classic Illuminated*.” Legend has it that the noblewoman Murasaki Shikibu made a retreat to this temple for seven days and, while observing the full moon of the eighth month, was inspired to begin writing the tale, now recognized as a classic of world literature. This iconic moment is commemorated in the *Genji* Room at the Main Hall of the temple.

A temple of the Shingon Buddhist sect, located on the Seta River in Otsu City, Ishiyamadera has a history dating back to the eighth century, when it was founded by Priest Rōben. Already by the Heian period (794–1185), during the time *The Tale of Genji* was written, this temple was a famous place for devotees of the compassionate bodhisattva Kannon. Members of the court often visited this temple to worship Kannon, and even today the temple remains popular as the thirteenth holy site on the pilgrimage of thirty-three temples dedicated to Kannon in western Japan.

Ishiyamadera houses countless treasures of premodern Buddhist sculpture, scriptures, and paintings, notably screens and hanging scrolls related to *The Tale of Genji* and its author, Murasaki Shikibu. The temple’s Main Hall and two-storied Tahōtō Pagoda are recognized as National Treasures. We are proud to share these masterpieces of Buddhist art and paintings related to the art of *Genji*, including rare images of Murasaki Shikibu, with an international audience at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Washio Henryū

Fifty-second Superintendent Priest

Ishiyamadera Temple, Otsu City, Shiga Prefecture

IT IS A GREAT HONOR for the Tokyo National Museum to work with The Metropolitan Museum of Art on the major loan exhibition “*The Tale of Genji: A Japanese Classic Illuminated*.” Both institutions have a long history of presenting Asian art to the public: The Met was founded in 1870 and the Tokyo National Museum, the oldest of the Japanese national museums, opened its doors two years later, in 1872. While The Met is famous as an encyclopedic museum, our museum collects, houses, and preserves a comprehensive collection of 117,000 works of art and archaeological objects from Asia, focusing on Japan.

Over the years our museums have cooperated on a number of important exhibitions. Notably, we lent many treasures to The Met’s exhibitions “Turning Point: Oribe and the Arts of Sixteenth-Century Japan” in 2003 and “Art of the Samurai: Japanese Arms and Armor, 1156–1868” in 2009. In turn, The Met generously lent the precious sliding-door panel paintings (*fusuma-e*) of Chinese immortals originally from the Abbot’s Quarters of Ryōanji Temple to our 2012 exhibition “Kyoto from Inside and Outside: Scenes on Panels and Folding Screens.”

Furthermore, the two institutions also share a history of displaying the marvelous collection of Japanese art built by New York-based collectors Mary and Jackson Burke. In 1985, the Tokyo National Museum hosted the exhibition “A Selection of Japanese Art from the Mary and Jackson Burke Collection.” It is wonderful to see that eight works related to *The Tale of Genji* included in that presentation, along with several others, in 2015 became a permanent part of The Met’s holdings and are featured in this latest exhibition.

The Tale of Genji has earned recognition as a literary work translated into more than a dozen languages around the globe, and we are so pleased that our museums can collaborate on bringing artworks inspired by it from distinguished Japanese and American collections to a wider international audience.

Zeniya Masami

Executive Director, Tokyo National Museum

Acknowledgments

THE GESTATION OF the exhibition “*The Tale of Genji: A Japanese Classic Illuminated*” and this accompanying catalogue has been a long, complex undertaking, involving a vast roster of people. The idea for an exhibition focusing on art inspired by *The Tale of Genji* developed out of a series of discussions between John T. Carpenter, Mary Griggs Burke Curator of Japanese Art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Melissa McCormick, Professor of Japanese Art and Culture at Harvard University; and Julia Meech, former curator of Japanese Art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art and currently an independent scholar and editor of *Impressions: Journal of the Japanese Art Society of America*. Melissa and Julia had earlier explored plans for an exhibition on the topic, but when the already substantial holdings of *Genji*-related artworks in The Metropolitan Museum of Art were enriched even more by a major gift from the Mary Griggs Burke Foundation in 2015, everyone agreed that the timing was perfect for the Museum to host a *Genji* exhibition. Mrs. Burke had a well-known love for *The Tale of Genji*, and her interest in the area was guided by the expertise of Miyeko Murase, Atsumi Professor Emerita of Columbia University. By the time of the Burke gift, Melissa had already published widely on the art of *Genji*, and given John’s long-standing interest in Japanese classical literature and calligraphy of the late Heian period—the time when Murasaki Shikibu created her compendious narrative—we realized how we could cocurate the exhibition and join our strengths to tell the story of *Genji*’s millennium-long artistic tradition.

We are deeply indebted to three institutions that were indispensable to the success of this project: The Japan Foundation, the Tokyo National Museum, and the Buddhist temple Ishiyamadera. For additional support of the exhibition, we are also tremendously grateful to a remarkable group of donors: the Mary Livingston Griggs and Mary Griggs Burke Foundation Fund, 2015; the Estate of Brooke Astor; the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation; and Ann M. Spruill and Daniel H. Cantwell. This groundbreaking publication would not have been possible without the generous support of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; the Florence and Herbert Irving Fund; the Charles A. Greenfield Fund; The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Foundation; the Mary Livingston Griggs and Mary Griggs Burke Foundation Fund, 2015; the Parnassus

Foundation; and the Richard and Geneva Hofheimer Memorial Fund.

Among those strengths were the tremendous scope of The Met’s holdings of Japanese art and its talented personnel. First and foremost, that includes Monika Bincsik, Diane and Arthur Abbey Associate Curator for Japanese Decorative Arts, who worked alongside us every step of the way in the planning and preparation of this catalogue and who is responsible for presenting the bridal palanquin and the extraordinary array of silk robes, lacquer furniture, and decorative works that help contextualize the paintings at the core of the exhibition. Similarly, the exhibition could not have occurred without Kyoko Kinoshita, Professor of Japanese Art History at Tama Art University and Project Associate Curator for East Asian Art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, who not only lent her scholarly knowledge of early modern Japanese painting to the catalogue but also met with the staff of lending institutions, negotiated loans in Japan, and arranged visits to Japanese collections. Akazawa Mari of Morioka Junior College, Iwate Prefectural University, served as an advisor on historical architecture and contributed the related appendix at the end of the book.

Even before the genesis of this project, Melissa drew on the knowledge of the late Chino Kaori, Professor of Japanese Art at Gakushuin University, and of her successor, Professor Sano Midori, the foremost *Genji* painting scholar. We are honored that Professor Sano offered to contribute the preface to this volume. As curators we would also like to acknowledge our indebtedness to the many *Genji* exhibitions that have been held in Japan over the past several years, including the groundbreaking show presented at the Museum of Kyoto in 2008. Catalogues prepared by our Japanese colleagues aided our research throughout the project.

The many important loans for this show required the cooperation of institutions in Japan, and we were fortunate to partner with The Japan Foundation, under the leadership of Ambassador Andō Hiroyasu, along with Itō Masanobu at the Tokyo headquarters and the New York representatives Matsumoto Kenji and Honda Osamu. All were wonderful allies in organizing and bringing to fruition this complex undertaking. In Japan we are honored and proud to collaborate with the Tokyo National Museum, where the whole team of curators and administrators lent a crucial helping

hand, including the former Directors of the Curatorial Planning Department, Shimatani Hiroyuki (now Director of Kyushu National Museum) and Matsumoto Nobuyuki (now Director of Nara National Museum), and their successor Tomita Jun, as well as the curatorial team of Tazawa Hiroyoshi, Tsuchiya Takahiro, Seya Ai, Oyama Yuzuruha, Takeuchi Namiko, Ōhashi Miori, and everyone in their registrar's office. Early on we benefited from the guidance of the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Tokyo, especially from Asaka Hiroshi (now at the Kyoto National Museum) and Higuchi Rio (now at the National Institutes for Cultural Heritage). Another crucial partner from the very beginning of this endeavor has been Ishiyamadera Temple. The Superintendent Priest Washio Henryū and his daughter and designated successor, Washio Ryūge, along with the Vice Superintendent Priest Washio Ryūmyō, the curator Tanaka Mizuho, and research advisor Professor Okuda Isao, all went out of their way to facilitate numerous research trips by the entire exhibition curatorial team and conservators and to make them feel welcome at the temple.

In addition to these colleagues at the Tokyo National Museum and Ishiyamadera Temple, the various curators and staff members of lending institutions in Japan were indispensable for allowing precious works from their collections to be presented at The Met. At the Kyoto National Museum, where we viewed works and made arrangements for the temporary storage and conservation of loans from western Japan, we are especially indebted to Asaka Hiroshi, Fukushi Yūya, and Sakaguchi Satoko.

It is impossible to list everyone who worked with us on this project or to enumerate all that they did to facilitate this complex international endeavor, but we would like to express our gratitude to our colleagues at the following institutions: Toda Hiroyuki at Fukui Fine Arts Museum; Taniguchi Yoriko and Takase Haruyuki at Himeji City Museum of Art; Kuwabara Tomosaburō, Adachi Katsura, and Hato Kōji at Imabari City Kono Museum of Art, Ehime Prefecture; Abbot Kobayashi Chōzen of Jōdoji Temple and Unemoto Ryō of the local cultural promotion division, Onomichi City, Hiroshima; Sae Yahashi, Kamakura Hinami, Yukawa Madoka, Tatsuzawa Natsuko, and Sakurai Kimiko at Kodansha, Ltd., Tokyo, for assistance securing the loan of paintings related to the *Fleeting Dreams (Asaki yumemishi)* manga series, and, of course, the artist, Yamato Waki; Kawada Masayuki and Gotō Kenichirō at Kuboso Memorial Museum of Arts, Izumi, Osaka Prefecture; Matsunaka Hiroshi and Yasui Masae at the Kyoto City Library of Historical Documents; Asano Shūgō, Miyazaki Momo, and Furukawa Shōichi at The Museum Yamato Bunkakan, Nara; Sawada Kazuto at the National Museum of Japanese History,

Sakura, Chiba Prefecture; Ogura Yoshio at the Osaka Aoyama University Museum of History and Literature, Kawanishi; Sawatari Kiyoko at the Osaragi Jiro Memorial Museum, Yokohama; Kōno Motoaki, Andō Ichirō, Uraki Kenji, and Yoshida Eri at Seikado Bunko Art Museum, Tokyo; and Yotsutsuji Hideki, Yoshikawa Miho, and Andō Kaori at The Tokugawa Art Museum, Nagoya. We are also deeply indebted to Yabumoto Kozō, Yabumoto Taichi, and Kitajima Tetsuya for facilitating certain loans from Japan.

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At Oka Bokkodō conservation studio in Kyoto, Oka Iwatarō and his staff gave timely intervention on conservation issues. Nippon Express, under the direction of Itō Kazuyoshi and Inomata Masaru, was in charge of the transport of works within Japan.

For the special attention given to the custom-made bamboo blinds for The Met's Shoin Room, we owe a special thanks to Ōkubo Buemon and Ōkubo Kaori, and the team of craftsmen at the Misubu Company in Kyoto. Okayama Keiji of the Kitaori fabric-weaving company in Kyoto created an elegant curtain of state for the same display.

For photography in Japan, we turned to Kanai Morimichi for expertly recording paintings and objects at Ishiyamadera Temple and the Kyoto City Museum of History, and to Murakami Kōji and Asō Sachio at Murakami Archives for photography of the Jōdoji Temple screens. Yamaki Gashō at Shōkokuji Temple assisted with an image of a work from its collection. Yasuda Ken'ichi and Yasuda Yukio kindly assisted in acquiring images of the Yasuda Yukihiko painting for the catalogue.

One of the remarkable aspects of the exhibition is how it demonstrates the extent of important *Genji*-related artworks in public and private American collections. We would like to

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thank our colleagues at the following lending institutions: Laura Allen and Yuki Morishima at the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco; Judy Stubbs at the Sidney and Lois Eskenazi Museum of Art, University of Indiana, Bloomington; James Ulak and Ann Yonemura at the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.; Martha Tedeschi, Rachel Saunders, Amy Brauer, Nicole Linderman, Francine Flynn, Penley Knipe, and Anne Driesse at Harvard Art Museums / Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts; Shawn Eichman and Stephen Salel at the Honolulu Museum of Art; Jennifer Casler Price at the Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas; Pamela Parmal at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Madeleine Viljoen and Margaret Glover at the New York Public Library; and Cary Liu and Zoe Kwok at the Princeton University Art Museum.

We are very appreciative of collectors in the United States who shared books, prints, paintings, and other objects that they own or helped us acquire. Michael Emmerich kindly made his first edition of Yosano Akiko's modern Japanese translation of *The Tale of Genji* available. Richard Waldman and Doug Frazer of the Art of Japan gallery brought to my attention the meticulous paintings by Tsukioka Yoshitoshi based on the artist's *Hundred Views of the Moon* print series and made them available for the exhibition. Stephen Marvin and Allen Rosenbaum lent precious *deigan* and *hannya* Noh masks from their collections. John C. Weber, as he has done on so many occasions, allowed us to borrow treasures from his collection; we also are indebted to Dr. Weber's collections manager, Lori Van Houten, for her assistance and advice and to Julia Meech, the curator of his collection, for her early role, as mentioned above, in encouraging us to create a *Genji* exhibition.

A number of supporters of the Asian Art Department have in recent years made munificent donations of artworks that are featured in the exhibition or have assisted with the underwriting of programming. In addition to the aforementioned Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, we owe our gratitude to Mary Wallach, who continues to enable the Japan section to flourish through the generosity of her family's foundation and through her personal support of acquisitions, programs, and publications. As this catalogue was going to press at the end of 2018, Mary and Cheney Cowles made several gifts of Japanese painting and calligraphy that will be featured in rotations of this and subsequent exhibitions. Raymond and Priscilla Vickers in 2016 presented the rare fragment of calligraphy by Fujiwara no Yukinari. John and Pauline Gandel enabled the acquisition of the gorgeous *maki-e* lacquer shelf for cosmetic boxes described in these pages. Alan and Barbara Medaugh lent timely support for the acquisition of prints and

paintings included in the exhibition, as did Alvin Friedman-Kien and Ryo Toyonaga.

Needless to say, we were absolutely delighted that certain works that were earlier sought as loans ended up being accessioned by the Museum as gifts or purchases. As mentioned above, Mary and Cheney Cowles, who had earlier agreed to lend us albums of Momoyama court calligraphy on sumptuously decorated papers by courtier Konoe Nobutada and aristocratic lady Ono no Ozū for the exhibition, generously made them gifts to the Museum, along with several other paintings and calligraphies from their collection. We are also indebted to the research work of Paul Berry and Michiyo Morioka, who have been advisors for the Cowles Collection over the years. When we were seeking a complete set of the woodblock-printed book series *A Fraudulent Murasaki's Rustic Genji* by Ryūtei Tanehiko with illustrations by Utagawa Kunisada, Sebastian Izzard not only located a complete set of the volumes in Japan but also, with his wife, Miki, generously donated them to the Museum. Similarly, when we approached David Libertson of Ronin Gallery to see if he had access to any impressions of the Kuniyoshi print series *Scenes amid Genji Clouds Matched with Ukiyo-e Pictures*, he excavated five examples in excellent condition from his store-room and, with his parents, gifted them to the Museum.

It would be impossible to name every colleague outside The Met who lent advice and support to the exhibition and catalogue project, but we would like to especially thank Matthew McKelway, Takeo and Itsuko Atsumi Professor of Japanese Art and Director of the Mary Griggs Burke Center, and Midori Oka, Associate Director of the Mary Griggs Burke Center at Columbia University, for cooperating with us on the planning of an international symposium and for lending support in various ways. Koichi Yanagi of the gallery Kokon in New York also assisted in securing loans.

To realize an exhibition at The Met, curators rely on an extensive team of professionals at every turn. The project was embraced enthusiastically early on by Thomas P. Campbell, former Director, and then by his successor Max Hollein; as well as by Daniel H. Weiss, President and CEO; Andrea Bayer, Deputy Director for Collections and Administration; Quincy Houghton, Deputy Director for Exhibitions; and Martha Deese, Senior Administrator for Exhibitions and International Affairs. In the Exhibitions Department, Rachel Ferrante helped oversee logistical details, and in Registration, Reagan Duplisea made sure that loans were safely transported and installed. Naomi Takafuchi arranged publicity both locally and in Japan. For fundraising, Clyde B. Jones III, John Wielk, Elizabeth A. Burke, Evelin M. Chabot, and the entire team in the Development Department helped the curators reach out to an array of sponsors.

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John T. Carpenter

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Lenders to the Exhibition

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Note to the Reader

Selection of Works

Certain National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties in collections in Japan are too fragile to travel or cannot be displayed for more than a week or two because of strict restrictions on exposure to light or on mountings incorporating ivory or whalebone fixtures. Although they are not included in the Museum's exhibition, selected works appear with entries in this book's catalogue because they are crucial to the story of the art of *Genji*. In this category are certain early manuscripts and Nihonga paintings from the Tokyo National Museum of Art (cats. 3, 7, 62, 63) and paintings by Iwasa Matabei from the Yamatane Museum of Art and the Idemitsu Museum of Arts (cats. 33, 34). Due to similar exposure restrictions, more than half of the works featured in this catalogue will be rotated in the course of the exhibition at the Museum. A checklist is provided on the special exhibition website.

Essays and Catalogue Entries

Titles of chapters and translations of prose sections of *The Tale of Genji* are for the most part taken from Dennis Washburn's 2015 translation. Translations of poems from the tale are mostly from Edwin A. Cranston's *A Waka Anthology*, volume 2, *Grasses of Remembrance* (2006). The sources of all references from literary works and translations are cited in notes and listed in the bibliography. Unless otherwise noted, translations of text appearing on the works of art proper are by the authors of the entries.

Transliteration of premodern Japanese words and poetry texts uses the Hepburn system of romanization. For consistency in the transliteration of poems throughout the volume, romanization, indentation, and capitalization follow Cranston, cited above. This means the particle は and the word あはれ (pathos) are rendered as they are pronounced today, *wa* and *aware*, rather than *ahare* or *ha*; the particle を is transliterated as *o* rather than *wo*; こひ (love) as *koi* rather than *kohi*; and けふ as *kyō* rather than *kehu*. The transcriptions of Japanese texts adheres as closely as possible to traditional *kana* usage (*kyū-kanazukai*).

The titles Emperor and Empress are used throughout, both in translations from the tale and in reference to historical sovereigns, reflecting the most common usage in recent translations and commentaries in English.

Historical dates in discussions are usually given with the month according to the lunar calendar used in premodern Japan along with a Western year equivalent. If a particular day falls at the end of the year, the numerical year given follows that connected with the particular *nengō* (year designation). For instance, Fujiwara no Michinaga and Fujiwara no Yukinari both died on the fourth day of the twelfth month of Manju 4 (1027), but in the Gregorian calendar this is equivalent to January 3, 1028; Utagawa Kunisada died on the fifteenth day of the twelfth month of Genji 1 (1864), or January 15, 1865.

Words and place-names that have entered common usages do not have macrons: daimyo rather than *daimyō*; Tokyo and Kyoto rather than Tōkyō and Kyōto.

Japanese names are given in traditional order, surname first, except for the names of scholars who are better known for publishing in English.

Dimensions exclude mountings; unless otherwise noted, height precedes width precedes depth.

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Preface

SANO MIDORI

The Tale of Genji traces the life of the radiant Genji, an emperor's son who loses his mother while still a young child, chronicling his encounters with love, loss, prosperity, and betrayal as well as the lives and romances of his descendants. Including as many as 438 characters (500 by some counts) and spanning more than seventy years, the tale is an epic work of literature written by a Japanese noblewoman. She is thought to have begun writing the tale in the year 1001, following the death of her husband after only three brief years of married life. As word of her literary prowess spread, Fujiwara no Michinaga (966–1027) soon invited her to serve as a tutor for his daughter Shōshi (988–1074), empress to Emperor Ichijō (980–1011). While in this role the author continued to write *The Tale of Genji*, which gradually expanded to fifty-four chapters.

In the *Diary of Murasaki Shikibu* (*Murasaki Shikibu nikki*), an entry dating to the first day of the eleventh month in 1008 records that the nobleman Fujiwara no Kintō (966–1041) approached the ladies in attendance at Michinaga's mansion and teasingly asked for the author of *The Tale of Genji* by using the nickname of one of her heroines, "the young Murasaki." In later years, the author of the famous tale came to be known as "Murasaki Shikibu," her first name deriving from this incident and her last name taken from her father's court title. Although the exact date of the tale's completion remains unclear, the diary entry clearly shows that the uncommonly lengthy saga had already earned an outsize reputation within court circles in the early years of the eleventh century.

The noblewoman known as Takasue no Musume, a member of the mid-ranking provincial governor class (*zuryō*), recalls in her memoir, the *Sarashina Diary* (*Sarashina nikki*), that at the age of thirteen she was delighted to receive from an aunt all fifty-plus chapters of *The Tale of Genji*. By then, the year 1020, the tale as it exists now, in fifty-four chapters, had largely taken shape and was circulating widely among the upper echelons of society. And from this date forward, it has continued to captivate readers. Objectively speaking, the very fact that a courtly romance has survived for one thousand years, sustained by individuals in each generation, is truly remarkable.

The tale can be read as a coming-of-age story about a man who, heartbroken over his forbidden love for his father's consort, engages in one assignation after another as he seeks out the ideal woman. It also served as a reference work on Japanese imperial court ceremonies and conventions, as well as political tactics. Over the centuries *Genji* has attracted a passionate readership and has been interpreted using a multitude of approaches. Nevertheless, this Heian-period story, very much a product of its time and place, had by the thirteenth century become difficult to understand. Painstaking efforts were made to explicate the text through commentaries, guides, and digests, making the work easier to comprehend and more enjoyable for readers. Similarly, the pictorialization of the narrative evolved to meet the expectations of such individuals.

The earliest extant illustrations of *The Tale of Genji* are horizontal handscrolls from the mid-twelfth century, but manuscripts and digests with depictions of striking scenes were likely created earlier, soon after the tale first appeared. *Genji* pictures were made by not only highly trained professional artists but also skilled court ladies and young women enthralled by the tale. The extensive artifactual legacy of the tale is richly diverse, and a considerable number of works have survived to this day: for example, gorgeous folding-screen paintings that convey the political authority of powerful warriors; beautiful albums imbued with an aura of tradition that combine paintings with collaborative calligraphy by emperors, courtiers, and noblemen; monochrome handscrolls that gave expression to the desires of young women readers; items for bridal trousseaux that display the social status of a house and lineage; and elaborate decorative objects whose *Genji* motifs embed meanings in rebuslike fashion.

The *Genji* exhibition at The Metropolitan Museum of Art and this accompanying book capture the appeal of the tale and the history of its reception from every perspective. The featured handscrolls, illustrated books, poem papers, fans, folding screens, *maki-e* lacquer, and textiles present a comprehensive overview of the formats of *Genji*-related artworks, including examples from

each historical era, artistic style, technique, and representational intent. At the core of the exhibition and book, however, are superlative works from collections in the United States, including those from the Mary Griggs Burke Collection that permanently entered The Met's holdings in 2015.

Among the highlights featured in the following pages is the *Genji Album* in the collection of the Harvard University Art Museums (cat. 38). Commissioned by a regional daimyo in 1509, it includes paintings by the court artist Tosa Mitsunobu (active ca. 1462–1525) and calligraphy brushed on colorful papers by six different noblemen. With works this old, even in cases where artists or calligraphers have been identified, it is unusual to have such detailed information about the patron and his intentions, making this album a rare example that demonstrates a provincial daimyo's engagement with culture from the capital.

Another intriguing work is a once monumental set of handscrolls from the seventeenth century that was subsequently sold and scattered among collections around the world (cats. 54–57). The elusive nature of the dispersed scrolls and painting fragments inspired their nickname, the “Phantom *Genji* Scrolls” (*Maboroshi no Genji monogatari emaki*); this exhibition and book reunite the known examples from collections in the United States. The paintings in these scrolls do not follow the tale's traditional iconography but instead adhere to its original text, depicting subjects such as secret trysts and funerals that were scrupulously avoided in previous paintings, thus creating a new kind of unconventional *Genji* scroll. In addition to the scrolls and fragments in Japan and the United States, parts of the original set have been found in Belgium and France. As the search for the missing scrolls continues, one can only hope that this exhibition and publication might inspire future discoveries.

The Phantom *Genji* paintings, although innovative in their design, bear the traits of traditional artistry. They were executed by an experienced professional painter trained in the style of the Kyoto Kano school, who employed rich mineral pigments and gold to produce exquisitely detailed and beautiful compositions.

At the other end of the spectrum in style and execution are the monochrome *Genji* scrolls from the Spencer Collection of the New York Public Library (cat. 29). These alluring paintings exude the charm and naiveté of the work of an amateur who was likely a non-professional female artist; an Edo-period connoisseur attributed them to the daughter of an aristocrat. A colophon dates the scrolls to 1554 and proclaims them to be diligently copied from an original. Also featured in this exhibition and book are some of the most important large-scale folding screens with *Genji* themes in U.S. collections, from a dramatic screen from the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, Texas, to a pair of screens from the Sidney and Lois Eskenazi Museum of Art at the University of Indiana that portrays scenes of voyeurism, a representational trope found throughout the tale (cats. 30, 46).

To be able to view these and many other crucial works in one venue is indeed a rare opportunity, one that I personally find deeply moving. Some scholars maintain that Murasaki Shikibu died in the year 1019. If this theory is correct, 2019 marks the 1,000th anniversary of her death. I offer my heartfelt respect and gratitude to all of those who worked tirelessly to bring this once-in-a-lifetime *Genji* exhibition and accompanying publication to fruition. I hope that many have the chance to enjoy the visualization of this extraordinary tale.



INTRODUCTION

A Thousand Years of the Art of Genji

JOHN T. CARPENTER and MELISSA MCCORMICK

THIS VOLUME CELEBRATES the spectacular artistic tradition inspired by *The Tale of Genji*, a monument of world literature, and traces the evolution and reception of its imagery over the course of ten centuries. Filled with vivid descriptions of the society, gardens, and architecture of the mid-Heian imperial court (794–1185), the tale provides entrée into a mysterious and even exotic world. But what present-day readers in any language quickly apprehend is its common humanity, for it explores relationships between men and women, issues of friendship and trust, the dynamics of power, and the contingencies of social class. Narrated in a way that immerses readers inside the minds of characters as they act out amid a fully realized world, *Genji* has long been recognized as the world’s first novel. With four full English translations now available, not to mention versions in numerous languages published within the past century, *Genji* is familiar and beloved around the world, but the general public outside of Japan has yet to be exposed to the full range of artistic works made in its cultural sphere.

Beginning soon after it was written in the early eleventh century, *The Tale of Genji* inspired every possible art form, from intimately scaled albums, scrolls, and fans to boldly designed hanging scrolls and screen paintings. Scenes from the tale also adorned silk robes, lacquer boxes, containers for grooming tools and writing implements, incense burners, and even palanquins for transporting young brides to their new residences. One might venture to say that the only comparable literary work that engendered a common visual language and iconography for knowledgeable readers is the Bible. This book traces the artistic impact of the tale from premodern classical works to parodies of *Genji* in woodblock prints of the early modern period, continuing into the early twentieth century with Nihonga paintings that bear the evidence of encounters with European modes of representation, and ending with contemporary *manga*. This survey takes as its premise that this millennium-long tradition of artistic engagement with the tale not only reflects historical understandings of the work but also actively shaped readers’

interpretations. Therefore, only by studying these artworks can we truly grasp the layers of reception that influence how we view *The Tale of Genji* today.

Female Authorship and Readership

Murasaki Shikibu, as the author of the tale came to be known, was a noblewoman in the early eleventh-century court and served as a tutor to the young empress Fujiwara no Shōshi (later known as Jōtōmon’in, 988–1074), whom we can assume was one of the first readers of the tale in progress. Thus, it can be observed, *Genji* was conceived by a woman author with a female readership in mind. Even the script employed to write the tale, a phonetic syllabary called *kana*, was referred to as the “women’s hand,” or *onna-de*, as outlined in John T. Carpenter’s essay in this volume. This mode of writing used for the vernacular was appropriate for *The Tale of Genji*, which is a *monogatari* (literally “speaking of things”), a genre of fiction rooted in the oral storytelling tradition and firmly associated with women’s writing. Deemed a “non-serious,” feminine, and private form of writing, the *monogatari* proved to be the perfect vehicle for Murasaki Shikibu to fly under the radar, so to speak. By employing the language of romance tales, she could make “unladylike” references to Chinese classical literature, level subtle and sometimes less-than-subtle critiques against the societal and political system around her, and explore the fallibility of men and women of various social classes. In the process, Murasaki Shikibu produced a work that in itself represents the strongest possible argument for the power and relevance of the *monogatari* genre. Indeed, the female authorship of *Genji* is essential to understanding the tale. Virginia Woolf, in a review published in the July 1925 issue of British *Vogue*, responded to Arthur Waley’s translation of the tale by commenting on Murasaki’s style of writing:

On she went, therefore, without hesitation or self-consciousness, effort or agony, to tell the story of the



Historical provinces and places referred to in *The Tale of Genji*. Map by Anandaroop Roy, based on Tyler 2001, p. 1121

enchancing boy—the Prince who danced “The Waves of the Blue Sea” so beautifully that all the princes and great gentlemen wept aloud. . . . To light up the many facets of his mind, Lady Murasaki, being herself a woman, naturally chose the medium of other women’s minds.

It is also important to keep in mind the female subjectivity behind the male protagonist Genji and the degree to which his character is saturated with ambiguity, beginning with his identity as an imperial prince demoted to commoner status in the first chapter. Murasaki invented one of the most wonderfully in-between characters in Japanese literature, a man who retains the aura of his imperial heritage, including his epithetic radiance, but who must struggle to navigate the obstacles both placed in his path and brought on by his own reproachful proclivities. Along the way Genji is praised, at times hyperbolically, but also criticized and undermined by the author and her female narrators, who every so often address the reader directly. Murasaki managed to create a character who, despite his flaws, became an archetype for

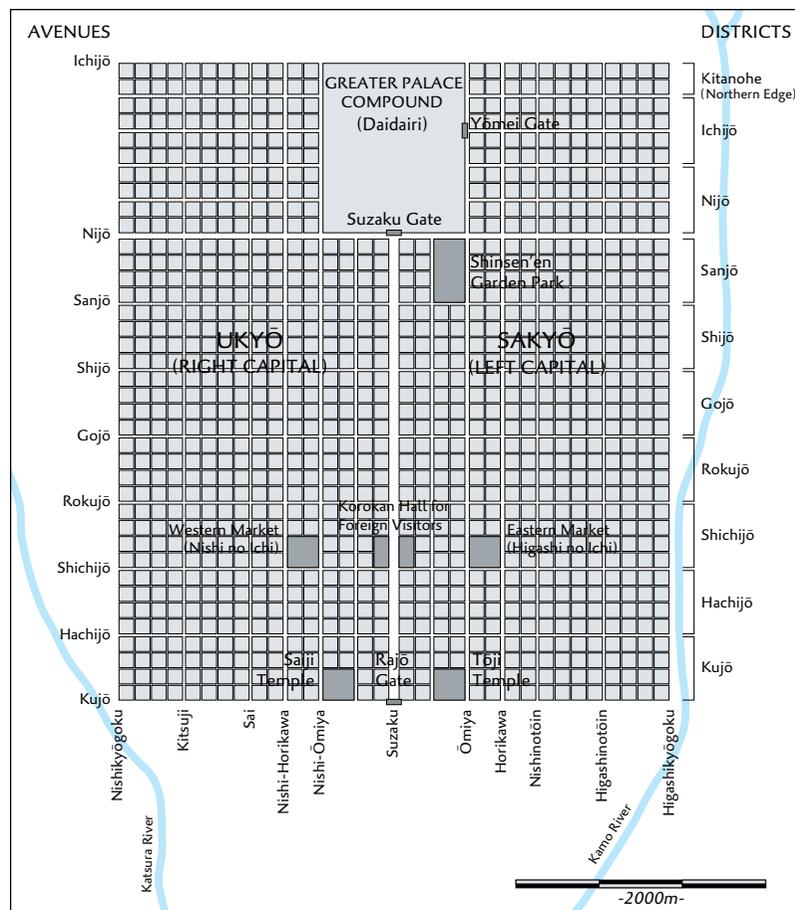
male readers and patrons of *Genji* artwork, particularly in the late medieval and early modern periods. Elite rulers, from members of the imperial court to regional daimyo, and shoguns of the Ashikaga and Tokugawa clans found much to identify with in the character of Genji, even beyond his amatory powers. Genji’s period of exile proved an irresistible source of self-analogy to men in unstable political situations or those who simply empathized with the soul searching found in those passages, while Genji’s subsequent rise—never ascending the throne but in many ways surpassing it symbolically—became aspirational for warriors without claims to the imperial line. Such an understanding of Genji finds perfect expression in many of the artworks illustrated here.

Although Genji may seem to be the epicenter of the work, he is surrounded by a panoply of female characters, who not only “light up the many facets of his mind,” as Woolf described it, but illuminate one another’s minds as well, resulting in the portrayal of diverse female personalities and interrelationships described with unprecedented depth and nuance. In addition to prose, Murasaki Shikibu had at her disposal the versatile poetic form of

waka (thirty-one-syllable poetry) to help flesh out these characters. Composing *waka* was central to communication between men and women of the elite classes, and nearly every episode of the tale includes a poetic exchange. The nearly eight hundred *waka* that appear in *The Tale of Genji* function in a variety of ways, but they are especially crucial for giving insight to female characters. The inherent distancing effect of adopting a poetic voice allows for an indirect means to register discontent, express emotions, proposition a man or put him in his place, and establish social harmony between women. Through both prose and poetry, Murasaki delineated a range of female characters, from those deserving of praise to others as complicated and morally ambiguous as Genji. It is no surprise, therefore, that not only readers but also female artists came to see themselves in these characters and the tale's author. This volume gathers together an unprecedented number of *Genji* paintings and illustrations by women, including the monochrome illustrations of 1554 attributed to Kaoku Gyokuei (cat. 29), the flamboyant calligraphy of late sixteenth-century court lady Ono no Ozū (cat. 12), the illuminated version of *Genji* by Isome Tsuna of a century later (cat. 13), the highly regarded paintings of the daughter of a Kano painter, Kiyohara Yukinobu (cat. 21), the work of modern artist Uemura Shōen (cat. 63), and *manga* by Yamato Waki (cat. 106).

Origins and Setting of the Tale

According to legend, Murasaki Shikibu began writing the tale on the night of the full moon in the eighth month at Ishiyamadera, a temple to the southeast of Kyoto, close to Lake Biwa, where she had gone to pray for inspiration. Through the ages, imaginary portraits of the author have captured this iconic moment of the tale's genesis (cats. 19–24). From medieval times, the apocryphal story of Murasaki and the connection with Ishiyamadera have been interwoven, as demonstrated in the *Illustrated Legends of Ishiyamadera (Ishiyamadera engi emaki)* (cat. 18). By the fourteenth century, the Main Hall of the temple had already featured a so-called *Genji* Room to honor this momentous event. Even the inkstone that Murasaki purportedly used to brush the foundational chapters survives in both myth and material form, and by the nineteenth century was memorialized in popular culture (fig. 58, cat. 97). We know that the tale was well along its way by 1008, when Murasaki mentions the work in her diary. It must have been complete by about 1019 because the daughter of the high-ranking courtier Sugawara no Takasue recalls in her memoir, *The Sarashina Diary*, that in 1020—when she was thirteen years old—she was delighted to have access to a complete, fifty-four-chapter manuscript version.



The Capital (Heian-kyō) in the age of *The Tale of Genji*. Map courtesy of Matthew Stavros

This exhibition and publication, therefore, commemorate the thousandth anniversary of the completion of the tale.

Reading the tale, with its meticulous descriptions of settings and situations, we feel as if we are present in the palace environs of the Heian court, although the author set the tale two or three generations before her time, during the reign of Emperor Daigo (885–930), no doubt to avoid direct comparisons with her contemporaries. Nevertheless, she may have based aspects of her protagonist Genji on the imperial regent Fujiwara no Michinaga (966–1027), the most powerful political and cultural leader of the day, and some have speculated that the character named Murasaki was based on the author herself. All of the episodes of the tale are set in places that actually existed in and around the capital—formerly called Heian-kyō or Miyako (“the Capital”), and now known as Kyoto—and most of the place-names are still used to this day (see the maps of the Capital and of sites mentioned in the tale on this spread).

The descriptions of gardens, architecture, and interior furnishings in *Genji* are faithful to what other documentary evidence

tells us about palace buildings and residential structures of the Heian period. The appendix “*Shinden Architecture and The Tale of Genji*,” authored by Akazawa Mari, reconstructs the appearance of the interior settings in which so many of the various episodes of the tale transpired. When painting scenes from the tale, artists sometimes attempted to capture the archaic settings and costumes of the Heian court. But in most cases they transposed the familiar characters into anachronistic settings, for example, depicting them garbed in Edo-period garments and carrying on amid the distinctive architectural environments of the early modern period, spaces with floors fully covered in tatami mats and fitted with built-in shelves and alcoves that did not appear until hundreds of years after the tale was written.

Approaches to the Art of *Genji*

The four essays that precede the catalogue section of this volume outline the complex interplay in the art of *Genji* between text and image, narrative content and decorative intent, and functionality and beauty. Some readers may be familiar with deluxe illuminated manuscripts, especially of Christian and Islamic religious texts, but perhaps there is nothing comparable anywhere in the world to the deluxe handscrolls and albums of painting and calligraphy inspired by *Genji*.

As argued in Carpenter’s essay, “Learning the ‘Women’s Hand’ in Heian Japan: *Kana* Calligraphy and *The Tale of Genji*,” calligraphy was considered one of the supreme arts in the premodern Japanese cultural context, and every educated person was expected to be able to write fluently with a flexible-tip brush fashioned from animal hair. The appearance of one’s handwriting was a sign of the refinement of one’s aesthetic sensibilities. The extent to which labor and expense were lavished on decorated writing papers—whether for the National Treasure *Tale of Genji* handscrolls of the mid-twelfth century (figs. 8–10, 12) or for the gorgeous album leaves brushed by the likes of Karasumaru Mitsuhiro, Konoe Nobutada, and Ono no Ozū in the Momoyama period (cats. 10–12, 39)—is a further reflection of the high esteem in which calligraphy was held, even into early modern times.

In her essay “Beyond Narrative Illustration: What *Genji* Paintings Do,” Melissa McCormick begins by analyzing a scene from the twelfth-century *Genji Scrolls* to outline a methodology for how to read and interpret the prose and poetry of the *Genji* text in a synergistic manner with painting. Turning to the seminal *Battle of the Carriages* screens commissioned by Emperor Ōgimachi in 1560, she then demonstrates how *Genji* imagery functions

metaphorically as a statement of the cultural and political concerns of an artwork’s patron in the age in which it was produced.

In her essay “Evolving Iconographies of *The Tale of Genji*: Early Modern Interpretations of a *Yamato-e* Theme,” Kyoko Kinoshita discusses how conventions established by Tosa artists working for a courtly clientele were incorporated into the repertory of painters of other schools in the Edo period. Especially important in this regard are the Kano ateliers of both Kyoto and Edo, as well as independent painters such as Tawaraya Sōtatsu and Iwasa Matabei who conceived of some of the most distinctive and dramatic pictorial interpretations of the tale. The essay concludes with a number of works by Kiyohara Yukinobu, an artist of the Kano lineage who gained a reputation as an important female artist.

In “*Genji* and Good Fortune: Bridal Trousseaux in the Age of the Tokugawa Shoguns,” Monika Bincsik explains how a tale that some believed could be deleterious to female readers, given its emphasis on *Genji*’s amatory liaisons, emerged as the favored pictorial subject for decorating objects made for bridal trousseaux of prominent samurai daughters. It seems that the tale’s risqué content was overlooked in order to draw on the numerous exemplars of female virtue that the tale had to offer, not to mention the felicitous symbolism of *Genji*’s political ascendancy. Here the appreciation of *Genji* expands as well to the enjoyment of an elegant lifestyle, exemplified by gorgeous silk robes and lacquered furniture and accessories keyed to auspicious symbolism of a long-ago courtly setting. The production of these deluxe works of art, whether magnificent screens, garments, or furnishings, bespeaks the considerable material and financial commitment to *Genji* artworks by the highest levels of elite society.

Catalogue Sections

To convey what it was like to hold *The Tale of Genji* in one’s hands and how the text itself became an aesthetic object, Chapter 1 introduces various *Genji* manuscripts and calligraphic excerpts of great historical significance and visual appeal. Through the centuries, illuminated manuscript versions of the tale were cherished for both their meticulous paintings and their elegant transcriptions of the texts, especially the poetry, by famous calligraphers of every era. Chapter 2 relates the largely untold story of the tale’s relationship to Buddhism, manifest in not only its narrative content but also ritual practices intended to sanctify the tale and the worship of Murasaki Shikibu as a Buddhist deity. In the medieval period, commentators on *Genji* began promoting the idea that, if deciphered properly, the tale could reveal profound spiritual truths. Integral to

this belief was the Ishiyamadera origin legend cited above and the notion that the tale emerged from the awakened mind of its author. Far from simple, the numerous imaginary portraits of Murasaki at work writing her tale at Ishiyamadera are rooted in Buddhist beliefs and a tradition of *Genji* sacralization. This aspect of *Genji* reception is fully explained only through the array of artifacts that make up this section of the book.

The following core chapters of the catalogue are devoted to the pictorialization of scenes from *The Tale of Genji*, introducing viewers to the tale's plot and main characters through images of singular iconic moments from the narrative (for a chapter-by-chapter synopsis of the plot, see the appendix "Genji at a Glance"). In Chapter 3, monochrome (*hakubyō*) versions of the tale reveal an understated aesthetic of ink painting that brilliantly complements the courtly styles of calligraphy used to transcribe the text. But ink-based *Genji* paintings also encompass amateur handscrolls that communicate a personalized vision of the tale, intricate miniature albums by professional painters, and dramatic, expressive renditions of scenes by artists like Iwasa Matabei (cats. 32–34). Chapter 4 focuses on the colorful and meticulously brushed paintings of the Tosa school, beginning with the two oldest fully intact sets of *Genji* paintings in the world: the late medieval fan-painting screens from Jōdoji Temple and the *Tale of Genji Album* from the Harvard Art Museums (cats. 36, 38). Works by virtually every major artist of the Tosa school are included in this section, demonstrating the dynamic range and development over time of *Genji*-themed paintings by this lineage. Continuing the story, Chapter 5 discusses later innovations in *Genji* painting by independent artists, anchored by Tawaraya Sōtatsu's boldly designed screens (cat. 53) and Iwasa Matabei's evocation of medieval monochrome imagery in his psychologically engaging renditions of characters and scenes from the tale (cats. 32–34). Artists of the Kano atelier in both Edo and Kyoto broke new ground in pictorializing the tale, exemplified by the so-called Phantom *Genji* Scrolls (ca. 1655), which employ gold and vibrant colors to depict in exquisite detail scenes never before illustrated in the history of *Genji* painting. Modern *Genji* painting,

or Nihonga, portrays familiar-looking scenes in a surprising new palette and an enlarged scale, as in the screens of 1912 by Matsuoka Eikyū, modeled in part on the twelfth-century *Genji Scrolls*. In the modern era, *The Tale of Genji* continued to function as a touchstone for artists, who combined traditional techniques and subjects with approaches from Western art.

Chapter 6 shows how *Genji* was not only read, but lived. The tale shaped the way people engaged with the world and conducted their lives: individuals acted out episodes, behavioral guides for women used characters as exemplars, bridal trousseaux were embedded with auspicious *Genji* iconography, and aristocrats and warriors re-created the tale's fictional gardens and architecture in three dimensions. Works featured in this section include a stunning lacquer and gold bride's palanquin and numerous objects that allowed individuals to interact with and embody *Genji*, such as robes, games, lacquers, and ceramics.

Chapter 7 begins with the first illustrated printed books of *Genji* (ca. 1650), which generated an unprecedented level of readership and ushered in a new era of *Genji* culture. *Genji* parodies and examples of *ukiyo-e* prints evince *Genji* pictorialization responding to Edo urbanity, emerging printing technologies, and commercial culture. Works by two female artists who bookend the twentieth century provide a fitting conclusion to the catalogue: the poet and author Yosano Akiko, whose translation of *Genji* into the vernacular allowed readers to experience the tale as a modern novel (cat. 105); and the artist Yamato Waki, whose monumental *manga* series *Fleeting Dreams* (*Asaki yumemishi*) translated *Genji* into the visual idiom of girls' comics, making Murasaki's tale accessible to a whole new generation of readers (cat. 106).

A thousand years of undiminished engagement with *The Tale of Genji* by Japanese readers and more than a century of enjoyment by audiences around the globe have earned the world's "first novel" a special place in the annals of world literature. This volume aims to shed light on the visual and material culture inspired by *Genji* and to demonstrate how artists of every generation have added their insights and innovative interpretations on how to read the tale.

THE TALE OF GENJI

Handwritten text in a cursive style, likely a form of Japanese calligraphy (Sōsho). The text is written vertically on aged, textured paper with gold leaf accents. The characters are highly stylized and difficult to decipher without specialized knowledge of the specific dialect or script used.

Learning the “Women’s Hand” in Heian Japan: Kana Calligraphy and *The Tale of Genji*

JOHN T. CARPENTER

He had always read *The Tale of Genji* in the small type of modern editions, but when he came across it in a handsome old block-printed edition it made an entirely different impression on him. What would it have been like when they read it in those beautiful flowing manuscripts of the age of the Heian Court?

—Kawabata Yasunari, *Beauty and Sadness*, 1964¹

IT MAY SURPRISE MANY READERS that the earliest printed editions of *The Tale of Genji*, long recognized as Japan’s greatest literary work, were not published until the early seventeenth century, more than six hundred years after Murasaki Shikibu wrote it. The earliest surviving manuscript sections—illustrated handscrolls of the mid-twelfth century comprising texts on gorgeous decorated papers juxtaposed with evocative paintings—represent only discrete portions of twenty of the novel’s fifty-four chapters. From the time chapters first circulated in the salon of Empress Shōshi (988–1074), the only way to read the tale was to borrow a manuscript copy or commission one to be made.

The edition transcribed and edited under the supervision of Fujiwara no Teika (1162–1241) beginning around 1225 became the authoritative version—the one on which modern editions and translations are based—though variant texts such as the Kawachi Edition (*Kawachi-bon*) continued to circulate as well.² Along with being a talented poet and compiler of anthologies, Teika earned repute as a skilled editor of literary texts and left behind numerous manuscripts and transcriptions of poems in his distinctive, idiosyncratic handwriting (cat. 4). We can assume that he had transcribed sections of Murasaki’s manuscript in his own hand, though no verifiable examples survive. While confronting the daunting task of creating a reliable edition of the compendious tale, Teika recorded in his diary the high esteem in which he held it: “‘Wild words and fancy phrases,’ though it may be, this is a work of extraordinary genius. . . . How dare anyone discuss it thoughtlessly?”³

As *Genji* gained wider recognition in aristocratic circles during the medieval period, an apocryphal story began to spread claiming that Murasaki Shikibu, while on a pilgrimage to Ishiyamadera Temple near Lake Biwa—to pray for inspiration after being tasked with creating a new tale—had written the first draft of Chapter 12, “Exile to Suma” (*Suma*), and Chapter 13, “The Lady at Akashi” (*Akashi*), on the back of scrolls of a Buddhist sutra. Legend also has it that, subsequently, the celebrated courtier-calligrapher Fujiwara no Yukinari (972–1027) inscribed the fair copy of the chapter that was to be presented to Princess Senshi (964–1035).⁴ Yukinari was active precisely at the time the female writers Murasaki and Sei Shōnagon—the highly opinionated author of *The Pillow Book* (*Makura no sōshi*)—were producing their works, and the court calligraphy he perfected represented the prevailing styles of the day, discussed below (cats. 7, 8). Regrettably, no indisputable examples survive of *kana* (Japanese phonetic system of syllabic writing) brushed by Yukinari, though abundant examples speculatively attributed to him do point to a distinctive, highly refined style of eleventh-century court *kana* (for example, figs. 4, 5). There is no evidence to suggest that Yukinari and Murasaki were on close terms, nor is there any documentation to corroborate this attractive picture of the greatest writer and the preeminent calligrapher of the era collaborating on a chapter of *The Tale of Genji*. Nevertheless, this legend of bonds forged between these two paragons of late Heian culture reminds us that over the centuries prose and poetry sections of the tale were often brushed in elegant formats by the most talented calligraphers of their day. This essay explores how *Genji*, written in the vernacular and preserved in manuscript copies, serves as one of the most illuminating records of attitudes toward calligraphy from the time it was written, a thousand years ago, and how excerpts and poems from the tale were favorite texts for calligraphers through the ages.

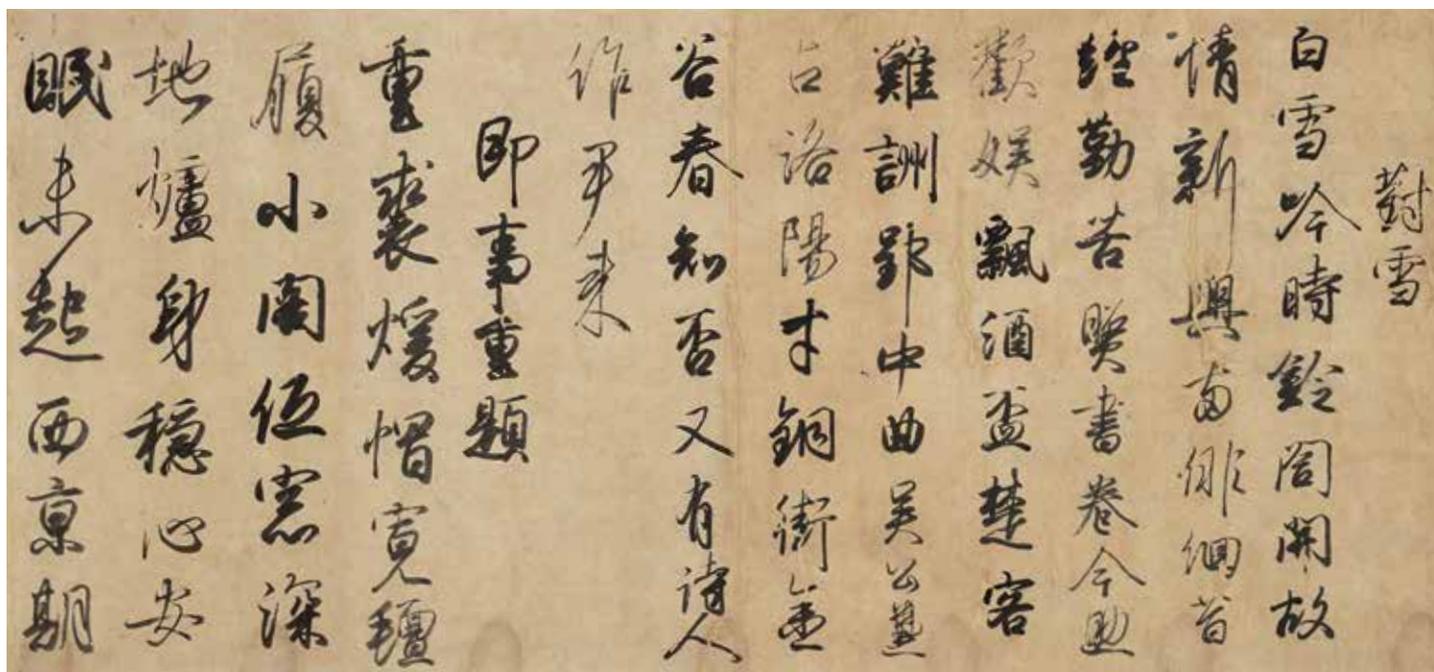


Fig. 1. *Collected Works of Bai Juyi* (detail). Fujiwara no Yukinari (972–1027). Heian period (794–1185), ca. 1018. Handscroll; ink on dyed paper; 10 in. x 8 ft. 8½ in. (25.4 x 265.2 cm). Tokyo National Museum. National Treasure. See discussion in cat. 7.

The Emergence of Kana Calligraphy

Official documents and religious and literary texts written in *kanji* (literally “Chinese characters”) by Japanese calligraphers from the eighth through the tenth century survive in great number, but there are relatively few examples of texts dating to the same period that employ *man’yōgana* (Chinese characters used as phonetic symbols to record the Japanese vernacular)—the first stage in the development of a distinctive Japanese writing system.⁵ By the early Heian period, such phonetic writing systems were generally referred to as *kana* (at first pronounced *kanna*), which literally means “temporary names.” This term was used in contradistinction to *mana* (*manna*), or “real names,” referring to Chinese characters used to represent units of meaning.

While borrowing from fully developed Tang styles of Chinese calligraphy—based on an earlier, fourth-century Wang Xizhi tradition—courier-calligraphers such as Yukinari and his predecessors Ono no Michikaze (894–966) and Fujiwara no Sukemasa (944–998) were instrumental in the consolidation of a *wayō* (Japanese-style) *kanji* calligraphy (fig. 1, cats. 7, 8). They also played a crucial role in the emergence of a distinctive style of court calligraphy to render vernacular prose and *waka* (thirty-one-syllable poetry)

(figs. 2–6). In fact, the growing prestige of *waka* played a crucial role in the evolution of Japanese court calligraphy. By the late ninth century, *kana* had already been recognized as a distinctive writing system, and documentary evidence suggests that by the early tenth century it was beginning to acquire a set of aesthetic priorities independent of Chinese calligraphy conventions.⁶

The process of creating the rapidly reproducible cursive forms that were required for manuscripts or letters in the vernacular caused calligraphers to often blur the formal distinctions between cursive *kanji* and related *kana*. Succinctly stated, the emergence of *kana* led to the creation of abbreviated forms of *kanji* not found in China, which naturally resulted in Chinese manuscripts by Japanese calligraphers in which the overall relationship of cursive and semicursive characters departs significantly from that of manuscripts by Chinese calligraphers. Furthermore, in the production of manuscripts in which semicursive *kanji* and *kana* scripts were merged, there seems to have been a conscious attempt to create *kanji* in a manner that harmonized with simplified *kana* forms.

The imperially sponsored *Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern* (*Kokin wakashū*, compiled about 905) symbolically represents official acceptance of the new writing system. No contemporaneous manuscript recensions of this text remain from the

early tenth century, but surviving are magnificent transcriptions in refined court calligraphy from the late eleventh century onward. For instance, the highly regarded Sekido version of *Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern* (*Sekido-bon Kokinshū*, referring to the former owners of a large section of the scroll, the Sekido family of Nagoya), traditionally attributed to Yukinari but now dated to a generation or two after he was active, suggests the appearance of *kana* during the late Heian period (fig. 2).

Owing to its widespread use among women of the court beginning in the ninth century, the new variety of *kana* was also commonly referred to as *onna-de*, or the “women’s hand.” Needless to say, men also wrote in *onna-de* when composing poems, letters (especially to women), and private messages in the vernacular.⁷ Nearly every page of *The Tale of Genji* refers to a poetic exchange between lovers or friends, and the characters often comment on the appearance of the calligraphy. Already by the late ninth century, there was a clear attempt to reduce to a minimum the number of Chinese characters used to represent the syllables of the Japanese language. Connecting characters to create a rhythmic flow within columns is an aesthetic aspect of *kana* that calligraphers would fully exploit in succeeding generations. The bold, yet fluid, qualities of the Wang style and the thin, delicate attributes of *kana* calligraphy made for a pleasing balance—as observed, for instance, in the manuscript versions of *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing* (*Wakan rōeishū*), which not only served as a vade mecum for poetry composition but also was well suited as a text for calligraphy models because the poems were written in both *kana* and *kanji* scripts, enabling a calligrapher to demonstrate prowess in both modes simultaneously.⁸

In the example illustrated here, from the late Heian period, both the semicursive script of the Chinese poems and the *kana* used to render the *waka* were inscribed calmly, with just enough speed to give the columns a sense of movement and rhythm, but never at a pace that seems rushed or too urgent (fig. 3).⁹ Calligraphic ligation is used judiciously; *kana* are joined in clusters of no more than two or three. It is as if the calligrapher desired to give each small cluster of *kana* just enough weight to balance it with the nearby Chinese characters.

The format of the texts in *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing* effectively expresses the relaxed cohabitation of immigrant Chinese poetic and calligraphic precedents with the native Japanese artistic forms. The development of a new script form with its own set of aesthetic priorities allowed *waka* to present itself as a literary genre that was both compatible with Chinese verse in poetic sensibilities and comparable to it in emotive power. However, the

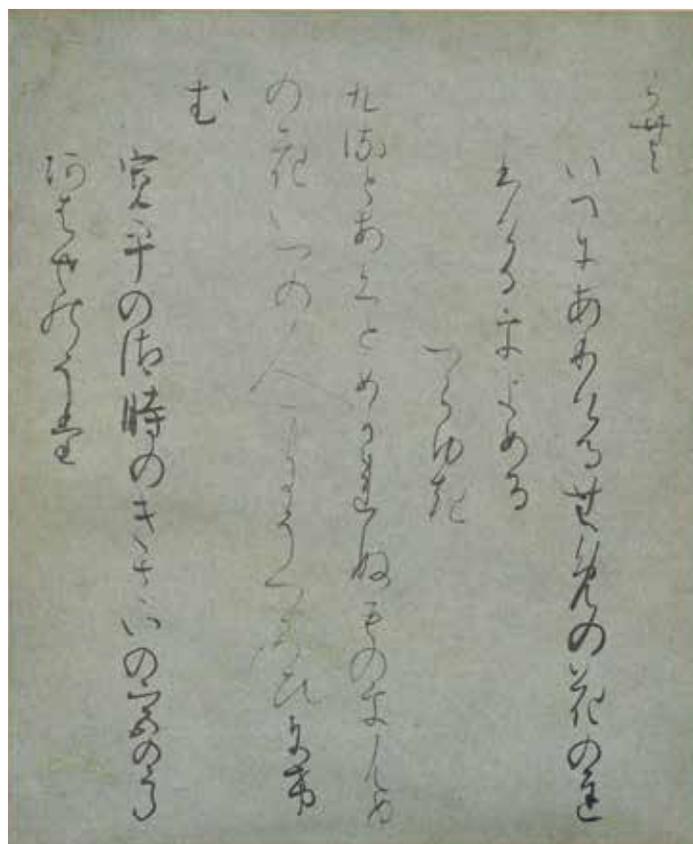


Fig. 2. *Sekido-bon Kokinshū*. Traditionally attributed to Fujiwara no Yukinari (972–1027). Heian period (794–1185), 11th century. Page from a poem anthology, mounted as a hanging scroll; ink on paper; 8¼ x 6¾ in. (20.9 x 17.2 cm). Mary and Cheney Cowles Collection

calligrapher has simply tried to harmonize two distinctive poetic and calligraphic aesthetics, rather than attempting to assert the dominance of either one. *Waka* inscribed in *kana* is placed on equal footing with its Chinese counterpart.

On display here are the sophisticated sensibilities of the elite men and women of the palace. The expert handwriting consorts with the elegantly decorated papers to impart an impression of high refinement.¹⁰ The Chinese verse is inscribed in a mixture of standard, semicursive, and cursive *kanji* scripts, the types sometimes written in side-by-side columns. Aesthetic quality is apparent, too, in the various papers, including “dyed paper” (*somegami*), “cloud paper” (*kumogami*) with undulating dyed patterns in the upper and lower registers, and “flying-cloud paper” (*tobikumogami*), in which dyed paper fibers are spread over the surface. The highly refined brushwork contrasts different tones of *sumi* ink rendered in wet and dry strokes. Handscrolls of similar bound booklets were prepared as wedding presents, in the category of *chōdo tehon*, or

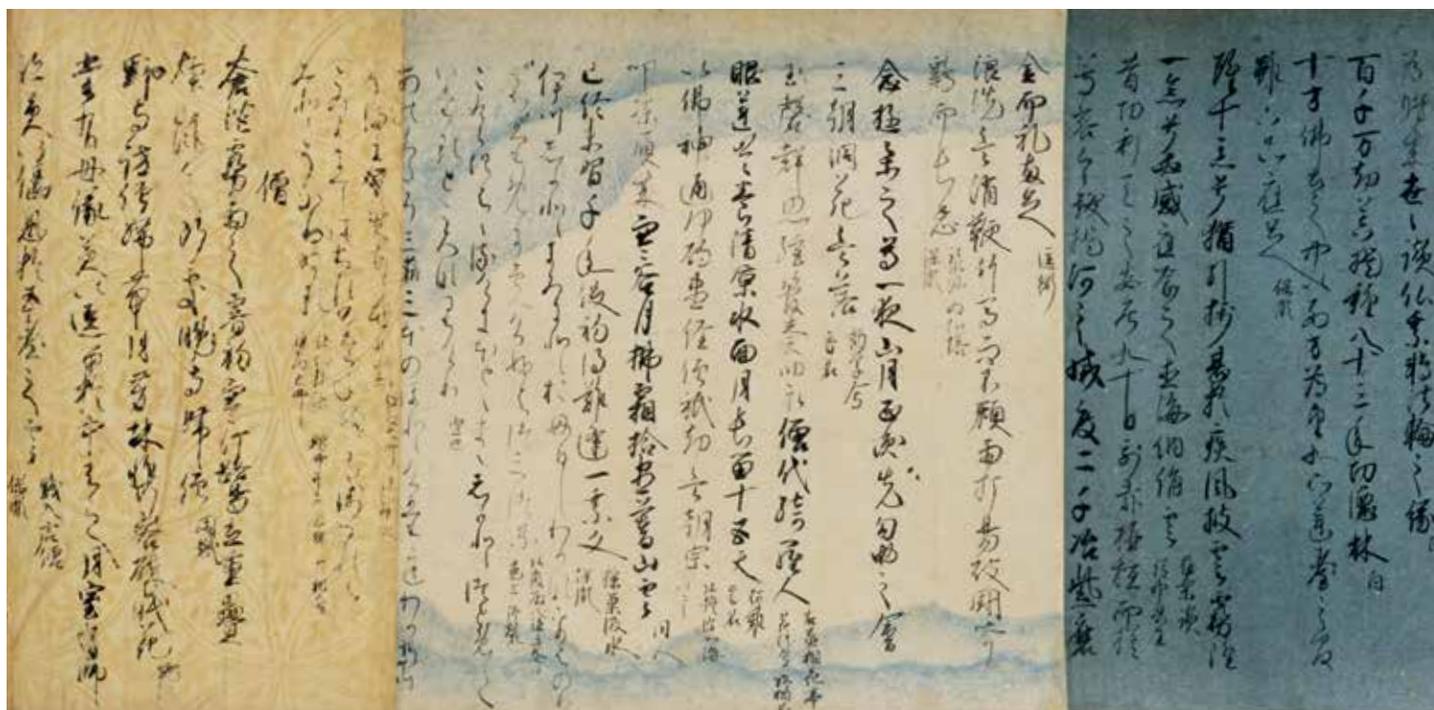


Fig. 3. *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing (Wakan rōeishū)* (detail). Unidentified court calligrapher. Heian period (794–1185), 11th century. Handscroll; ink on dyed paper; 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. x 36 ft. 3 in. (26.3 x 1,105 cm). Tokyo National Museum. Important Cultural Property

works of calligraphy executed on fine decorated paper and stored in elegantly crafted bespoke containers (see the essay by Monika Bincsik in this volume).

Practicing the “Women’s Hand” in the Age of Murasaki

The period of most vigorous innovation and development in Japanese calligraphy coincided with the mid-Heian flowering of court literature, which was marked by the prominence of women whose poetry, diaries, and novels—*Genji* foremost among them—had high literary merit and won lasting popularity.¹¹ Vernacular Japanese was invariably the medium of the elegant compositions by these female authors. In his study of Heian literature, Richard Okada observes, “As *hiragana* [i.e., *onna-de*] became legitimized as a feminine mode, it maintained a contingent and potentially subversive aspect even when employed, as it frequently was, by men.”¹² It is true that *kana* provided both men and women with direct access to a writing system that was decidedly more efficient for communicating the Japanese vernacular than Chinese, the language of officialdom. While claiming that for men to use it was “subversive” (if intended in a political sense) may be overstating the case, *kana* did give men a different register in which to express

themselves, and Okada argues that the *monogatari* (narrative) genre, like *kana*, was more likely to be a place to voice unofficial and subversive ideas. Epigraphic evidence indicates that *onna-de* was practiced—and most certainly codeveloped—by male courtiers and Buddhist clerics during its earliest stages. In counterpoint, a woman learning to read and write Chinese seems to have been considered a “subversive” act and was, in fact, discouraged in both subtle and overt ways.

For instance, Murasaki Shikibu, Sei Shōnagon, and many other women of their time clearly read Chinese poetry in the original, but social convention insisted that women not flaunt their knowledge in this regard.¹³ While reading could be done in private, inscribing texts was harder to conceal. Reflecting on society’s criticism of her “unladylike” penchant for Chinese studies, Murasaki famously gripes (and humbly brags) in her diary:

Father, a most learned man, was always regretting the fact: “Just my luck!” he would say. “What a pity she was not born a man!” But then gradually I realized that people were saying, “It’s bad enough when a man flaunts his learning; she will come to no good,” and ever since then I have avoided writing even the simplest character. My handwriting is appalling.

And as for those classics, or whatever they are called, that I used to read, I gave them up entirely. Still I kept hearing these malicious remarks. Worried what people would think if they heard such rumors, I pretended to be unable to read even the inscriptions on the screens.¹⁴

Although Chinese writing was not the exclusive preserve of male calligraphers, women were not encouraged in their study of *kanji* calligraphy. This tendency is implied by the occasional use of term *otoko-de*, or “men’s hand,” to describe *mana*, Chinese characters written in legible standard or semicursive script.¹⁵ In another passage of her diary, Murasaki accuses Sei Shōnagon of being conceited and derisively notes, “She thought herself so clever, and littered her writings with Chinese characters [*mana*], but if you examined them closely, they left a great deal to be desired.”¹⁶ Not only in the fictional world of *Genji* but in everyday life as well, the criticism of someone’s handwriting was tantamount to an attack on his or her character. Also implicit in Murasaki’s criticism of her colleague may be the insinuation that she should not be writing in Chinese at all. Not surprisingly, when female characters in *Genji* are described as being associated with Chinese writings or customs, they are often presented in a negative light.

Kana calligraphy allowed for the advancement of *waka* and the newly emerging genres of vernacular writing—fostered by female authors—such as diaries and narrative tales (*monogatari*). It also played a crucial role in social intercourse between men and women, including courtship rituals. Just as a courtier’s ability to inscribe Chinese texts in an expert hand could help elevate his position in the court hierarchy, so too the skill to brush a poem or letter in flowing *kana* became de rigueur in high-society circles. Calligraphy revealed a great deal about a person’s upbringing, literary cultivation, and background—perhaps more so than any other aspect of deportment.¹⁷

Young Murasaki Learning to Hold the Brush

The acquisition of handwriting skills, therefore, was crucial to the upbringing of young men and women of the aristocracy. There is perhaps no more thorough account of the calligraphic education of adolescent girls than those by Murasaki Shikibu and Sei Shōnagon. Both women were inducted into the practice (*te-narai*) and connoisseurship of *kana* calligraphy from an early age, and their literary works and diaries are peppered with comments on the handwriting of men and women in elite circles. Specifically, numerous passages in *Genji* seem based on Murasaki’s direct experience of learning to write as a child. While *Genji* is set a generation or two before

Murasaki’s own day and presents a more idealized picture of court life than that found in diaries, it is nonetheless a reliable reflection of the cultural priorities of the time, especially in regard to women’s views of things.

For instance, the entire Chapter 5, “Little Purple Gromwell” (*Wakamurasaki*, literally, “Young Murasaki”), of *The Tale of Genji* may be read as a metaphorical tale of a young girl, about age ten, learning to write. Prince Genji, during a visit to a holy man (the “bishop” in Washburn’s translation) in the mountains outside the capital, espies a young girl through a fence. He is deeply attracted to her because of her resemblance to his father’s consort Fujitsubo, with whom he secretly has an amorous relationship (and who later gives birth to his son). Genji makes arrangements to meet the young girl’s guardians, her brother the bishop and her grandmother (an elderly nun), who live in relative seclusion on the mountainside. Genji presents the grandmother with a note for the girl, asking for a response. Slightly taken aback at what she assumes are untoward amorous advances, the grandmother remarks, “She is not even capable of writing the *Naniwazu* in *kana* yet.”¹⁸ The allusion is to a famous poem included in the *kana* preface to *Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern*:

<i>Naniwazu ni</i>	The trees are in bloom
<i>Saku ya ko no hana</i>	Near Naniwa Bay,
<i>Fuyu gomori</i>	Announcing spring’s arrival
<i>Ima wa harube to</i>	After a long winter’s sleep—
<i>Saku ya ko no hana</i>	The trees are in bloom! ¹⁹

According to legend, this poem was composed by Wani, a scholar of Chinese studies from Korea who visited Japan in the fourth century. It is said to celebrate the accession of Emperor Nintoku (reigned ca. 313–99), which was long delayed because of a dispute between him and his brother over who should assume the throne. Owing to its placement in the front of *Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern*, in ancient times the poem was commonly employed in calligraphy practice, hence the nun’s reference to it.²⁰ Therefore, by using calligraphic development as an indirect way of describing sexual maturity, the elderly nun is suggesting that her granddaughter, who has barely learned to handle a brush or write poetry—and is not at that age yet—is surely incapable of responding to such a distinguished gentleman, whatever his motives might be.

Genji responds to the nun that he “would very much like to see her writing in unconnected characters (*hanachi-gaki*).”²¹ Rather than an example of Japanese poetry in flowing strands, which would be typical of a young girl’s training, he asks for an example in which the characters are written slowly and carefully, with

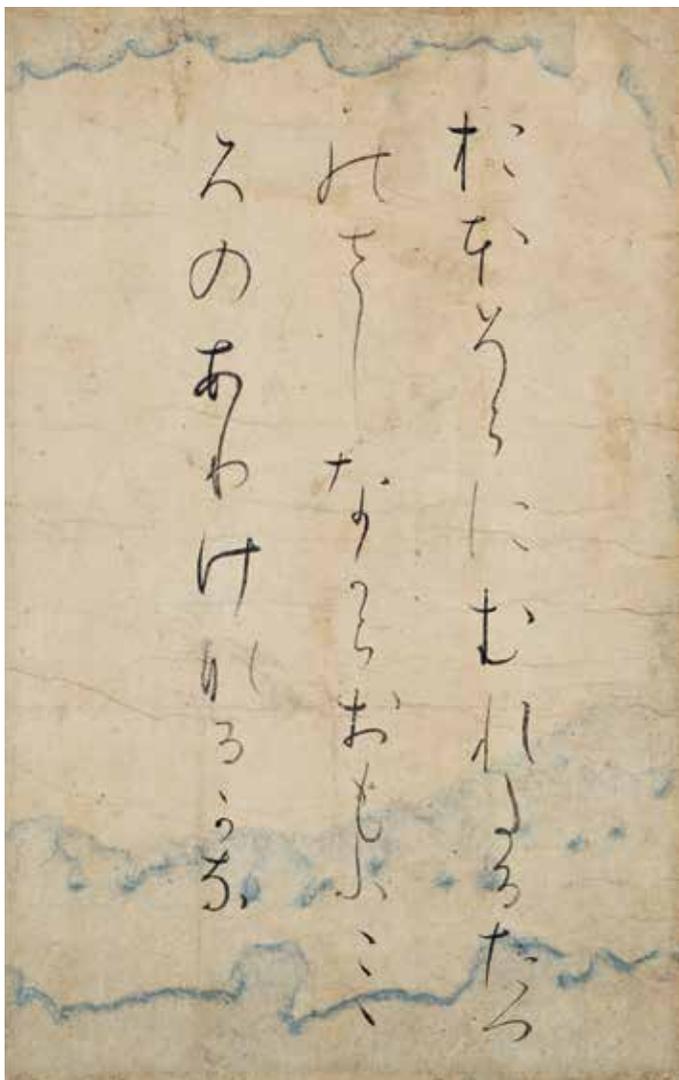


Fig. 4. *Hōrai Fragments (Hōrai-gire)*. Traditionally attributed to Fujiwara no Yukinari (972–1027). Heian period (794–1185), late 11th century. Detached segment of a poem anthology, mounted as a hanging scroll; ink on indigo-dyed paper; 10¼ x 6½ in. (26 x 16.5 cm). The Gotoh Museum, Tokyo. Important Cultural Property

attention to the independent shape of each one. One such excellent example of *hanachi-gaki* from the eleventh century is found in one of the *Hōrai Fragments (Hōrai-gire)*, which includes a single *waka*, written calmly, deliberately, and ever so elegantly, as if purposely for a young woman's calligraphy practice (fig. 4). In the author's subtle metaphor, if gracefully linked *kana* are a sign of a practiced and mature hand, then, conversely, the young girl and her adult suitor are as yet unconnected. Genji's response, however, conveys not an amorous intent but his hopes to assume the role of guardian or surrogate father and to instruct her in the literary arts. In this

passage, therefore, writing practice symbolizes the close relationship of a child to her parent. Genji then makes a plea to see the young girl's first attempts at the brush and attaches a poem stating that his heart is no "shallow spring," alluding to a famous poem by an anonymous female palace attendant in the *Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves (Man'yōshū, ca. 759)*:

<i>Asakayama</i>	My feelings for you
<i>Kage sae miyuru</i>	Are not as shallow
<i>Yama no i no</i>	As the mountain spring,
<i>Asaki kokoro o</i>	Which reflects Mount Asaka,
<i>Waga omowanaku ni</i>	The "shallow mountain." ²²

Though the poem is not quoted in full, any reader of the time would have immediately understood why Genji is citing it, for it too has a connection to calligraphic education. In the *kana* preface to the *Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern*, the "Naniwa Bay" and "Mount Asaka" poems are referred to as the "father and mother of poetry, the first lines we learn in calligraphy practice."²³

After the young Murasaki and her nurse have returned to the capital, Genji makes an unannounced visit to their dilapidated residence. The courtier writes a poem on the theme of a "young crane" (*iwakenaki tazu*), alluding to the standard metaphor for the parent-child relationship), and "Genji deliberately composed his note in a childish hand that was so delightful the women told the girl to imitate it in her copybook."²⁴ It was the responsibility of parents or guardians to provide children with calligraphy models to copy; thus one of the primary means of transmission of calligraphy styles was from one generation to the next within families.

Following the death of her grandmother the nun, Genji insists on bringing Murasaki into his home, and takes an active interest in her calligraphy practice and creates models for her copybook: "He wrote poems and drew pictures, presenting them to her with the thought that they might serve as a model for her own practice."²⁵ At one point, concerned about her progress, he declares that he will become her mentor in calligraphy: "Even if you can't write well, you must at least try. You won't get better if you don't write anything. Let me show you."²⁶ The narrator observes that Genji found the young Murasaki's awkward, childish way of holding the brush charming. The girl is embarrassed to write in front of Genji but reluctantly shows him her poem: "Her writing was quite immature, but [Genji] could see at once that she had the talent to be accomplished in composition. The lines of her brushstrokes were rich and gentle, and they resembled the hand of her late grandmother. If she practiced more modern models, he knew

that she would be able to write very well.”²⁷ Describing Murasaki’s brushwork as “rich and gentle”—literally “plump” (*fukuyoka ni*) in the original—the narrator refers to overly thick lines characteristic of a young person’s writing habits. The mention that her handwriting was very much like her grandmother’s probably alludes to it being written in *onna-de* or *sōgana* (highly cursive Chinese characters used phonetically), or in thick strokes with very little linking between characters. The “modern” style of calligraphy was brushed with greater fluidity, narrower strands, and a greater vertical emphasis.

The subject of calligraphy practice governs each of the poetic exchanges within the chapter and serves as a metaphor for the young Murasaki’s education. In fact, it has been noted that the chapter’s unified theme and self-contained plot structure allow it to be read separately from surrounding chapters.²⁸ It not only provides the first hint that Fujitsubo is carrying Genji’s child—which is, in many ways, the event that generates the unfolding of karmic retribution throughout the novel—but also describes the coming-of-age experiences of a young woman, a character likely based on the author herself. If, as some scholars have suggested, *Wakamurasaki* was the first chapter of the tale written, it seems somehow appropriate that its author, “Murasaki Shikibu”—whose moniker derived from this character—created a portrait of the artist as a young woman who was just learning the rudiments of brush writing.²⁹

In Chapter 32, “A Branch of Plum” (*Umegae*), set some twenty years later, we discover that Murasaki has mastered the art of calligraphy. Genji lavishes praise on her: “Your writing possesses a supple grace and warmth that is exceptional. The more a woman becomes adept at Chinese characters [*manna*], the more she is likely to mix them in among her *kana*, which then tend to become angular and stiff.”³⁰ His assessment is in distinct contrast to Murasaki’s own disparaging comments on Sei Shōnagon’s use of *manna* in her literary manuscripts, cited earlier.

“A Branch of Plum” also provides many valuable insights into the attitudes toward *kana* among members of the middle Heian court, portraying men and women vying to impress each other with their writing skills in a wide variety of scripts. Amid the bustle surrounding an impromptu calligraphy contest organized to celebrate his daughter’s coming-of-age ceremonies, Genji pauses in his mother’s library and reflects nostalgically on the distinguished collection of calligraphy models that he had helped assemble. He comments on the superiority of *onna-de*, the “women’s hand”:

“Everything is corrupted in the latter days of Buddha’s Law,” Genji remarked to Murasaki, “and the arts today are

superficial and inferior to works of the past in every respect save one . . . the writing of *kana* is much better nowadays. The style that predominated in ancient times was fixed and regular, but it tended to always follow the same pattern and showed no creative flair. Calligraphic styles of *kana* have become fresh and intriguing only in recent times. Years ago, when I was learning the female style of writing [*onna-de*], I collected a large number of pertinent copybooks to study different models.”³¹

This passage also makes it clear that, even though Chinese remained the language for official documents circulated by courtiers, men also studied models of exemplary *onna-de* calligraphy.

The Aesthetics of “Scattered Writing”

Among the works of *onna-de* that Genji most cherished were those by Lady Rokujō, his former lover, which he describes as being “written, without deliberation, in a swiftly brushed fashion” (*kokoro ni mo irezu, hashiri kaki tamaerishi*), typical of the relaxed mode of handwriting appropriate for spontaneously composed letters (*shōsoku*) and notes of a personal nature.³² Earlier, in the “Exile to Suma” chapter, the narrator mentions a long letter—inscribed on four or five sheets of white Chinese paper pasted together to make a handscroll—that Lady Rokujō wrote to Genji in exile on the Suma shore, about which he noted: “Her choice of words and her calligraphy were exceptionally refined, and her extraordinary level of training and erudition were obvious. . . . She had set down all her melancholy thoughts and feelings, which ran on and on in graceful brushstrokes of dark and light tones.”³³

Genji’s reference to Rokujō’s writing style being inscribed “without deliberation” does not in any way suggest sloppy handwriting. Rather, it implies that the best examples of letters, whether in *kana* or Chinese characters, achieve an elegance that transcends conscious effort, excessive thought, or slavish adherence to models. Nor should the phrase characterize the output of a calligrapher who, in a mind-set of grief, brushes “calligraphy written in a disarrayed manner” (*midare kaki tamaeru o-te*), a phrase used by Genji to describe the frenetic writing style of a tearfully written verse from Oborozukiyo to Genji as he is about to depart for Suma.³⁴ “Written in a disarrayed manner” also applies to Genji’s inscription of a melancholy poem in response to a note from Utsusemi.³⁵ Poems of sorrow over love were at times inscribed in a manner that reflects their emotional tenor.³⁶

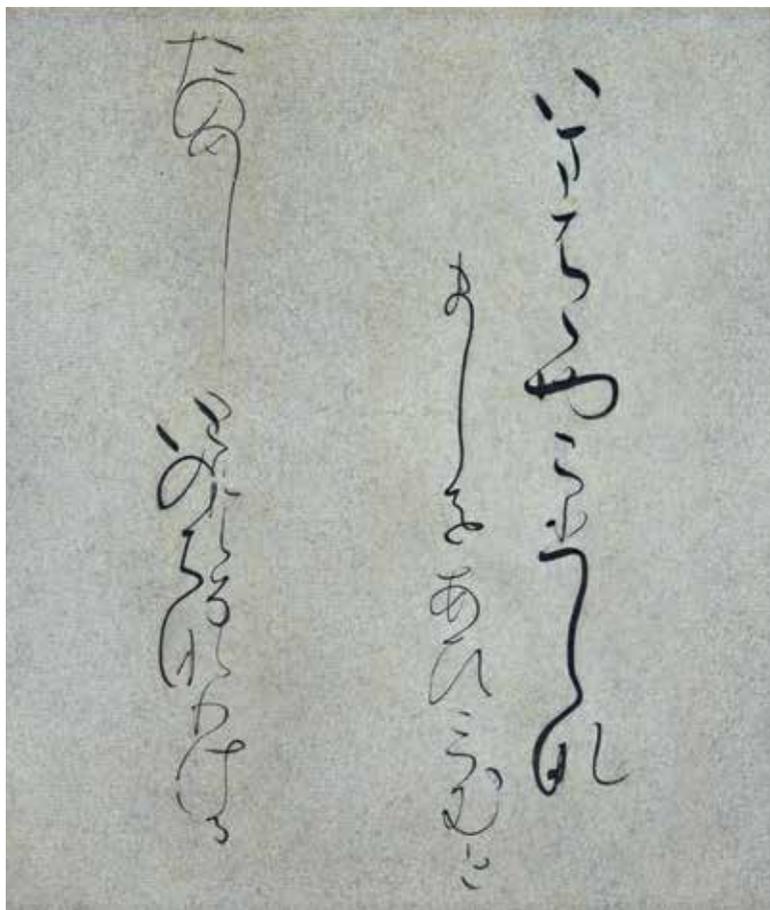


Fig. 5. One of the *Masu Poetry Sheets* (*Masu-shikishi*). Traditionally attributed to Fujiwara no Yukinari (972–1027). Heian period (794–1185), late 11th century. *Shikishi* (poetry paper) mounted as a hanging scroll; ink on paper; 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (13.7 x 11.8 cm). Tokyo National Museum

While *midare-gaki* (“tangled writing”) may be the end result of passages brushed “without deliberation,” we should not conclude that all letters and poems written in an informal mode are frenetically written.³⁷ Lack of artifice should not be confused with absence of natural grace. Kamo no Chōmei (1155?–1216) praised a poem by Monk Nōin, likening it to “a piece of writing in *kana* by a master calligrapher: it shows no special artifice but achieves with a minimum of words an indescribably poetic effect.”³⁸

Related to this phenomenon of “disarrayed” writing is the distinctive convention of *kana* referred to as “scattered writing” (*chirashi-gaki*), which was also closely associated with women’s inscription of personal letters and love poems.³⁹ From its earliest stages, *chirashi-gaki* was practiced by female calligraphers, though it was by no means their exclusive preserve.⁴⁰ The term applies to two related types of calligraphic devices: (i) phrases of

a letter or poem inscribed in normal sequence but with columns or characters divided and spaced in a seemingly random arrangement on the page; (ii) lines and words of a letter or poem (usually a well-known one) arranged out of normal syntax—for example, the two halves of a poem may be reversed. The primary aesthetic motive of *chirashi-gaki* is to create an interesting design of ink lines and space, yet it often has the secondary effect of imposing a new rhythm of reading. Words divided artificially, lines broken at the wrong places, columns overlapping to form entangled phrases: all result in a slower reading process. The eye must linger a bit, or go back and forth, in order to understand the written message. Considering the history of Japanese court calligraphy, which prided itself on stylistic conformity and strictest adherence to convention, the phenomenon of *chirashi-gaki* may strike the modern reader as a curious anomaly, but it is one of the distinctive developments of Japanese brush writing and resulted in many of the most wondrous examples made from the Heian through the Edo period.

Surviving examples of *chirashi-gaki* from the tenth and eleventh centuries help us visualize what some of the poems exchanged between women and men in the age of Murasaki might have looked like. For instance, a calligrapher’s conscious use of space as a means of artistic expression is evident in a hanging scroll of the *Masu Poetry Sheets* (*Masu-shikishi*, literally, “square measuring-box poetry sheets,” because of their small size and shape), dating to the late eleventh century (fig. 5). This work also incorporates, in dramatic fashion, a special type of *chirashi-gaki* that is referred to as *kasane-gaki*, or “overlapped writing.” *Kasane-gaki*, whereby sections or entire columns of *kana* are purposely made to overlap and entangle, is a relatively rare device in court calligraphy, but it can be found in sections of works dating to the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, coinciding with the great age of innovation and refinement in *kana* calligraphy. It also appears, for instance, at the very end of Chapter 40, “Rites of the Sacred Law” (*Minori*), in the twelfth-century *Genji Scrolls*, introduced below. The example here comprises a love poem by Kiyohara Fukayabu that is included in Book 12 of the *Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern*.

たのめしことぞ
 いのちな
 りける
 いまは
 ましをあひみむと
 やこひしな

The slash marks in the transcription below indicate where the columns are actually divided in the original inscription. The phrase *inochi na* is brushed as though a separate column, but it is actually part of the phrase *inochi na rikeru* (“to come to life,” “to be revived”):

<i>Ima wa haya</i>	Just at the moment
<i>Koishina / mashi o</i>	I was ready to die
<i>Aimimu to</i>	From unrequited love,
<i>Tanomeshi koto zo /</i>	Your suggestion that we might meet
<i>Inochi na / rikeru</i>	Gave me new hope to live. ⁴¹

Fukayabu is not noted as an author of love poems, yet this poem effectively captures the poignant emotions of a strained relationship. The calligrapher—however intentionally—added a new level of emotional effect to the poem through the brilliant presentation of scattered writing. The well-inked and forceful opening brushstrokes—*ima wa haya koishina* (“ready to die from unrequited love”)—declare the agony of death from passion. On the far left, conspicuously inscribed in bolder ink tones, are the overlapping characters reading *inochi*, literally, “life.” In this composition, the calligrapher’s conscious spacing of columns and use of a reinked brush to create emphasis are particularly successful scattered-writing techniques.

Female Calligraphers of the Heian Period

In the annals of calligraphy connoisseurship in Japan through the centuries, there was a fashion of simply attributing to a woman any works rendered in a “feminine” hand. For instance, an early bound volume of *Collection of Elegant Flowers* (*Reikashū*, comp. 1005–9), which survives in several sections, has a traditional attribution to the celebrated female poet Koōgimi (or Kodai no kimi), lady-in-waiting first to Emperor Ichijō (reigned 986–1011) and then to Emperor Sanjō (reigned 1011–16) while he was still crown prince (fig. 6). Though we do not know her exact life dates, she would have been active at court precisely when Murasaki Shikibu was writing *The Tale of Genji* and other women of the palace were participating in the literary salon culture. However, no documentary evidence supports this attribution, and, moreover, the style of the volume’s *kana* and its elegant variety of paper suggest a date of the second half of the eleventh century for this calligraphic excerpt, at least a generation or two after Koōgimi’s period of activity. Nonetheless, plenty of literary and documentary evidence demonstrates that women certainly produced many of the great *kana* works.

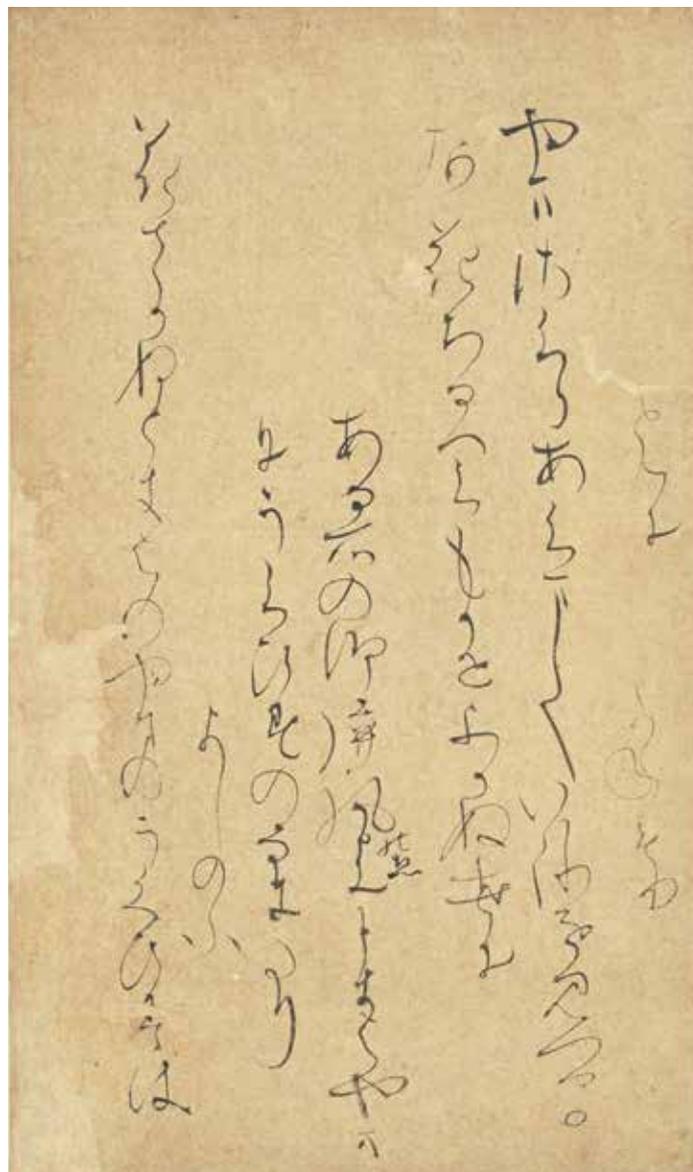


Fig. 6. Poem from the *Collection of Elegant Flowers* (*Reikashū*, comp. 1005–9), one of the *Scented-Paper Fragments* (*Kōshi-gire*). Traditionally attributed to Koōgimi (Kodai no kimi, active late 10th–early 11th century). Heian period (794–1185), mid- to late 11th century. Hanging scroll; ink on paper; 8 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 4 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (20.7 x 12.3 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary and Cheney Cowles Collection, Gift of Mary and Cheney Cowles, 2018

Given that women of the court widely practiced *kana*, one would expect them to have earned recognition as calligraphers in their own right. Yet, even calligraphic treatises written for princesses, such as [*Calligraphy*] *Teachings for a Night-Nesting Crane* (*Yakaku teikinshō*, ca. 1170–75), omit the names of women in their extensive lists of “talented calligraphers” (*nōshoka*).⁴² The reason for this omission is obvious: during the Heian and medieval

periods, the definition of a “talented calligrapher” was restricted to those who had mastered the brush writing of *kanji*, a practice from which even the most skilled women were excluded. Official records were maintained by professional male calligraphers, who believed that mastery in *kana* calligraphy was a lesser accomplishment.

While official calligraphy treatises and courtiers’ diaries may downplay the role of women calligraphers, literature and historical accounts recorded in the vernacular tell another story. For instance, the author of *The Great Mirror* (*Ōkagami*, ca. 1119) refers to the daughter of the eminent tenth-century calligrapher Fujiwara no Sukemasa (944–998) as “a calligrapher of equal rank with her father in the women’s hand [*onna-de*].”⁴³ Sukemasa’s daughter and Murasaki Shikibu were active in the same period, and the women very well could have belonged to the same circles. Clearly Sukemasa had made sure that his daughter learned to write properly, no doubt copying many of the same models that he had used as a youth. Corroborating this account, *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes* (*Eiga monogatari*, ca. 1092) mentions that Sukemasa’s daughter undertook the prestigious commission of transcribing the fair copies of poems on pictures at a court poetry contest in 1056. Despite her venerable age—she was more than ninety years old at the time—“she wrote in a surprisingly fine hand, which showed no diminution of her mastery of brush and ink.”⁴⁴ It is regrettable that no certifiable examples of her *kana* calligraphy were passed down to posterity.

Similarly, there is documentary evidence that Yukinari’s daughter learned to write from her father. In a passage from *The Sarashina Diary* (*Sarashina nikki*, ca. 1060), the author—known only as Takasue no Musume (the daughter of courtier Sugawara no Takasue)—mentions that someone had given her a book of verses inscribed by the famous calligrapher’s daughter as model for her own writing practice. Though she died young, at the age of fifteen, clearly Yukinari’s daughter had acquired a distinctive hand in her short life. Recalling her death, Lady Sarashina notes, “The sight of these verses, which she had copied in a hand of remarkable beauty, brought on a fresh fit of weeping.”⁴⁵ On the same sad occasion, Lady Sarashina’s mother presented her with a copy of chapters of *Genji*, intending to boost her spirit. To the contrary, the calligraphy of the chapter brought back memories of the deceased and included a poem that referred to the transience of life, causing the daughter of Takasue to become only more depressed.⁴⁶

That Yukinari’s daughter learned calligraphy from her father is corroborated by an interesting exchange recorded in *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes*. On their wedding day, Yukinari’s daughter exchanged preuptial poems with Nagaie, the son of Fujiwara no Michinaga (966–1027), the great Heian statesman who ruled over

the palace as regent during the time Murasaki was active. After reciting Nagaie’s poem to his daughter, Yukinari noted that the young man wrote in his father’s handwriting style. Yukinari and his wife urged their daughter to send a reply poem inscribed in her own hand. According to the *Flowering Fortunes* author, “When Michinaga saw the poem, he thought it might have passed for a specimen of Yukinari’s own writing, altered just enough to suggest a youthful brush; and his admiration was beyond description.”⁴⁷ The author also makes a special point about how Yukinari’s daughter on occasion fell asleep during calligraphy practice, brush in hand, and sometimes had to be carried to bed by her attendants.⁴⁸

This short discussion reveals that many women were highly regarded calligraphers in the practice of *kana* script, despite being overtly discouraged from refining their skills in *kanji* calligraphy. In the great unsigned corpus of *kana* calligraphy dating to the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the overwhelming majority of works have gained speculative attributions to famous men, but we may assume that many were created by women.⁴⁹

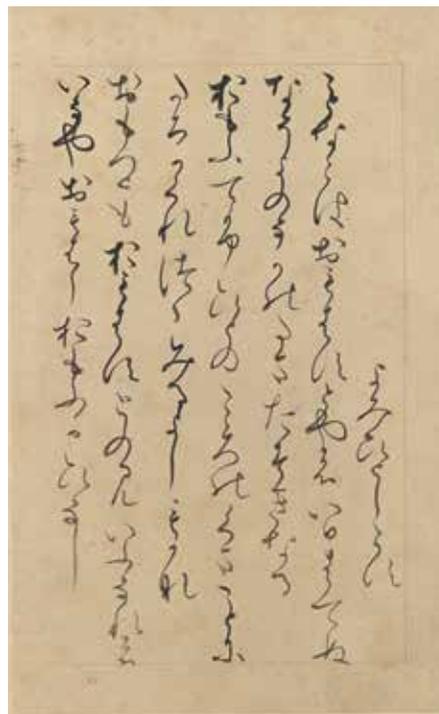


Fig. 7. One of the *Imaki Fragments* (*Imaki-gire*). Traditionally attributed to Fujiwara no Norinaga (1109–1180). Heian period (794–1185), mid-12th century. Page from a book, mounted as a hanging scroll; ink on paper; 9¹⁵/₁₆ x 6¹/₄ in. (25.3 x 15.9 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary Griggs Burke Collection, Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015 (2015.300.234)

Courtly Styles of Kana Calligraphy and the *Genji* Scrolls

During the late Heian period, court *kana* was codified into a limited number of styles, a development that played a pivotal role in the history of Japanese calligraphy. Several of the most important styles of medieval calligraphy—including that of the Sesonji-ryū, the lineage of calligraphers associated with Fujiwara no Yukinari and his descendants—can be traced back to the mid- to late eleventh century. One example, attributed to Fujiwara no Norinaga (1109–1180), is found in the *Imaki Fragments* (*Imaki-gire*), which is inscribed in a fully orthodox, well-balanced style very close to that associated with the Sesonji-ryū (fig. 7). Students learning the poems and calligraphy of the *Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern* no doubt once used this work as a *tehon* (model). Yet, one can discern in the *Imaki-gire* that the strokes are markedly broader than those of the Yukinari style, and many characters reveal they were brushed at an angle. The Hosshōji-ryū, calligraphers associated with Fujiwara no Tadamichi (1097–1164), became firmly established a bit later, in the early twelfth century. In this volume, the rare and early examples of *Genji* manuscripts in the style of Monk

Jien (1155–1225), son of Tadamichi, encapsulate this more assertive style of calligraphy (also represented in cat. 1).⁵⁰

Although Yukinari lived at the height of court domination by the Fujiwara clan and Tadamichi at the end of the Heian period, when the warrior class was usurping control of the capital and court, both were born into a high-ranking courtier families, and both established writing styles that carried prestige and authority in palace circles, not only in their own day but also among their descendants and followers. Changes occurred in court calligraphy styles through the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, some owing to individuals’ scribal idiosyncrasies (for example, Fujiwara no Teika, discussed in cat. 4), others to the inevitable result of a general tendency toward making copies at a more rapid pace, and still others to the outcome of a conscious return to models of the past. These developments all anticipate the emergence of the Shōren’in-ryū, the dominant school of medieval times.

Crucial to understanding not only court calligraphy but perhaps most traditional East Asian arts is an awareness of the ethic of conformity that defines the style of a particular school or lineage. If we try to approach the study of court calligraphy from a traditional



Fig. 8. Calligraphy (Style I) from “The Oak Tree” (*Kashiwagi*), Chapter 36 of *The Tale of Genji* (detail). Heian period (794–1185), second quarter of the 12th century. Third section of a handscroll; ink on dyed paper decorated with gold and silver powder, and cut gold and silver foil; H. approx. 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (21.9 cm). The Tokugawa Art Museum, Nagoya. National Treasure

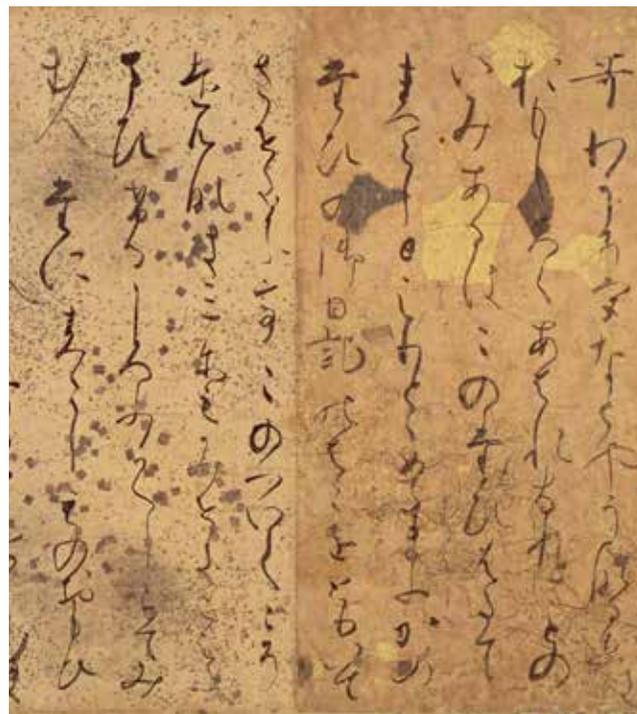
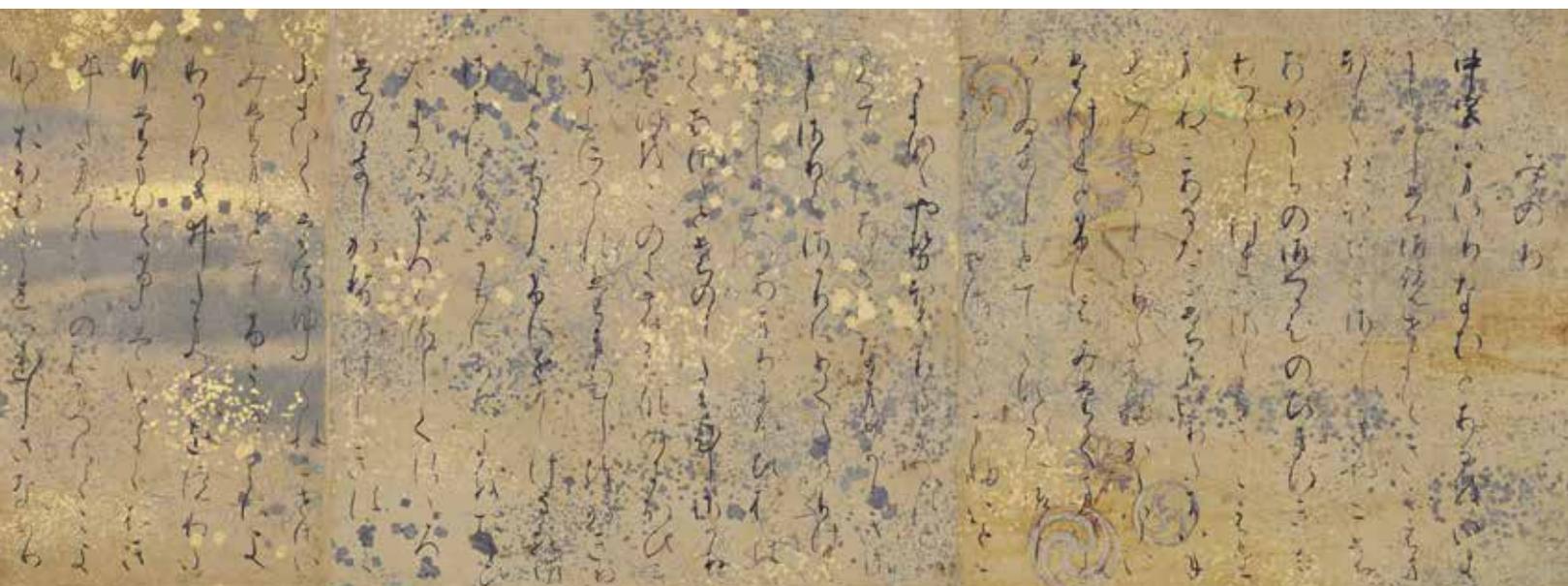


Fig. 9. Calligraphy (Style II) from “A Contest of Illustrations” (*E-awase*), Chapter 17 of *The Tale of Genji* (detail). Heian period (794–1185), second quarter of the 12th century. First section of a handscroll; ink on dyed paper decorated with gold and silver powder, and cut gold and silver foil; H. approx. 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (21.9 cm). The Tokugawa Art Museum, Nagoya. National Treasure



Fig. 10. "Rites of the Sacred Law" (*Minori*), Chapter 40 of *The Tale of Genji*. Heian period (794–1185), second quarter of the 12th century. Sections of a handscroll; painting: ink and color on paper; calligraphy: ink on dyed paper decorated with gold and silver powder, and cut gold and silver foil; H. approx. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (21.9 cm). The Gotoh Museum, Tokyo. National Treasure



Western art-historical trajectory of constant experimentation, innovation, and continuous evolution, we will be very disappointed. Such a model does not apply. It is important to recognize that anti-innovative techniques—such as copying, deliberate archaism, and conformity to a teacher’s model—if taken together are equally essential elements in evolution of “new” calligraphic styles. This is not to say innovation did not occur; it was simply less of a priority.⁵¹

Concrete examples of these issues are admirably represented by surviving text sections of the twelfth-century *Genji monogatari emaki*, commonly referred to in English as the *Genji Scrolls*. The scroll sections are also sometimes collectively referred to as the “Takayoshi *Genji*” because of the set’s traditional attribution to the court artist Fujiwara no Takayoshi (exact dates unknown); the attribution is no longer given credence, but the name has stuck.⁵² Modern scholarship has demonstrated that the surviving painted sections were the collaborative work of four court artists, and the text sections were likewise divided among a group of calligraphers; five different hands have been identified.⁵³ It is now commonly accepted that ten or more, perhaps twelve, scrolls were originally produced and that each calligrapher was responsible for two or more scrolls. Despite the individual writing styles, an overall consistency in the text sections is achieved through their lavishly decorated papers and a general adherence to the conventions of the era’s court calligraphy. The precise dating of the textual and painted sections has been the subject of great debate. Analyzed from the point of view of the writing styles, an attribution of two chapters to Fujiwara no Norinaga has led some scholars to suggest that the date

of execution might be as late as about 1170. However, this seems too late on the basis of art-historical and documentary considerations, and now general consensus has formed that the *Genji Scrolls* probably date to about the second quarter of the twelfth century. The techniques used to create the gorgeous decorated papers align with comparable examples datable to the 1140s.⁵⁴

Of the five calligraphy styles represented in the *Genji Scrolls*, the so-called Style I, also known as the Korefusa or Sesonji-ryū style, is considered the most elegant and sophisticated, as shown in a section from Chapter 36, “The Oak Tree” (*Kashiwagi*) (fig. 8). The individual characters are somewhat smaller than those of the other styles, the strokes are finely delineated, the turns are naturally rounded, and the overall flow of the columns is graceful. The meticulous brushwork argues for a skilled calligrapher in the orthodox lineage of the Sesonji-ryū and demonstrates that works in the *jōdai-yō*, the classical mode associated with the eleventh century, were still being created. No doubt, this is what led Edo-period connoisseurs to ascribe these sections to the calligrapher Fujiwara no Korefusa (1030–1096). Adhering to an ethic of conformity, models of this style were preserved virtually unchanged for several generations. Compare the calligraphy of Style II, as represented with a section of text from Chapter 17, “A Contest of Illustrations” (*E-awase*) (fig. 9)—characterized by slightly larger, brusquely brushed, and generally more assertive characters—with the more conservative approach of Style I.

While the Sesonji-ryū style is the most refined, it also exhibits the greatest degree of manipulation in the spacing between

individual characters and columns. For instance, in the text for Chapter 40, “Rites of the Sacred Law” (*Minori*), the leisurely spaced columns of the opening section give way to a finale inscribed in overlapping writing (*kasane-gaki*), as discussed above, a calligraphic technique in which columns of *kana* overlap and interlock in a complex manner to create an intriguing visual effect (fig. 10). Although court calligraphy, almost by definition, does not display outward changes in form to accord with the content or tone of a particular passage (in contrast to the highly expressive calligraphy of Zen monks and tea masters), *kasane-gaki* seems to be an exception, in that it is usually reserved for texts that state strong emotions or contain love poems. It seems reasonable to assume that its use in this emotional scene was intentional.⁵⁵ Murasaki, Genji’s beloved since her youth, is passing away, and the two engage in what might be considered one of the most poignant poetic exchanges in the tale. She laments to Genji:

<i>Oku to miru</i>	Seated well, they seem,
<i>Hodo zo hakanaki</i>	For a moment, yet how frail
<i>To mo sureba</i>	Is such a clinging—
<i>Kaze ni midaruru</i>	In a trice they throng the wind,
<i>Hagi no uwatsuyu</i>	The dewdrops on bush clover.

To which Genji replies:

<i>Yaya mo seba</i>	Yes, for the moment
<i>Kie o arasou</i>	Of this world of dew each drop
<i>Tsuyu no yo ni</i>	Vies but to vanish . . .
<i>Okure sakidatsu</i>	Ah, may there be no lapse of time
<i>Hodo hezu mogana</i>	Between the first and last to go. ⁵⁶

The emotionally frenzied final section of the text (as shown in the detail on p. 26) is followed by a pictorialization of Murasaki on her deathbed, accompanied by Genji and the Akashi Empress. The metaphor of “dewdrops on bush clover” from the poem is represented in the painting as a metaphor for the evanescence of life.

Conclusion: Transcribing *Genji* through the Ages

As mentioned, no printed edition of the early eleventh-century *Tale of Genji* was produced until the seventeenth century. This is truly remarkable considering that even before the Heian period the technology for mechanical reproduction of texts already existed in East Asia and was being employed, mostly notably, to print religious texts such as sutras and *The Essentials of Rebirth in the Pure Land* (*Ōjō yōshū*, 985) by Monk Genshin. We also know that Regent

Fujiwara no Michinaga, who presided over the court during the time Murasaki Shikibu was active, sought out printed copies of the *Collected Works of Bai Juyi*. But printing technology was never used for the transmission of Japanese literary texts, even revered and widely disseminated works such as *Genji* and *Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern*. Why is that? Of course, if manual copying is the only way to transmit a text, then the owner of the original controls its dissemination, which was an important factor in a culture where certain court families were custodians of literary heritage. We must also assume that these beautifully inscribed recensions on lavishly decorated paper were preserved as valuable objects to be gifted as *chōdo tehon* or included as part of a bride’s dowry, not only in a courtly context but also later among wealthy families of all classes (see the essay by Monika Bincsik in this volume).

Through the centuries, beginning with the twelfth-century illuminated *Genji Scrolls* and continuing to the present day, handscrolls and albums combining texts from the tale and images of selected scenes have been produced. Certain poems or prose passages and the accompanying illustrated vignettes were culled to represent larger sections, and calligraphers felt free to brush just a fragment of the text and to explore all the styles and conventions of writing. During the medieval period, when much of the experimentation of Heian calligraphers was codified, arrangements of scattered writing were given specified names such as “drooping wisteria” (*sakari fuji*), “standing trees” (*tachiki*), and “geese formation” (*kari no tsura*).⁵⁷ During the Momoyama and early Edo periods, however, calligraphers consciously harked back to Heian models in order to experiment with elegant, archaic brush styles and scattered-writing techniques, as seen in the exuberant examples of Konoe Nobutada (1565–1614) and one of his contemporaries, the female calligrapher Ono no Ozū (1559/68–1631) (cats. 10–12).

Even in the modern era, when *The Tale of Genji* began to be reproduced in inexpensive editions, there remained many scholar-calligraphers dedicated to preserving the art of *kana*. *Genji* manuscripts were passed down through the process of freehand copying known as *rinsha* (“copying alongside,” more commonly referred to today as *rinsho*). In this kind of transcription, the calligrapher constantly glances back and forth between the original and the copy while moving the brush down the sheet. Another broad category of copying is *mosha* (tracing copy), which can be carried out with various degrees of precision. The most straightforward method is to put a sheet of semitransparent paper over the model and carefully brush the characters using what shows through as a guide. In modern times, this process is facilitated by photographic projection of the original onto the surface of the copy, but it still requires an expert hand to create the impression of a natural flow



Fig. 11. Five *Tanka* (modern thirty-one-syllable poems). Composed and inscribed by Yosano Akiko (1878–1942); underpainting by unidentified artist (not by Akiko). Shōwa period (1926–89), dated 1933. Hanging scroll; ink on gold- and silver-decorated paper; 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (26.5 x 34.8 cm). Mary and Cheney Cowles Collection

of the brush. Whether done freehand or by tracing, the performative act of copying models plays a central role in the East Asian artistic tradition. If we readjust our art-historical stance and qualitative judgments to accept copies (and the inevitably related category of forgeries) as valuable material for research, we open up possibilities of a more thorough study of the transmission of calligraphy models in specific historical contexts.⁵⁸ For instance, masterly copies of the *Genji Scrolls* by Tanaka Shinbi (1875–1975) contributed to a renewed fascination with the tale and how it was originally transcribed (cat. 60).

Though calligraphers of the modern age trained, as calligraphers of the past had, by studying eminent historical models, it is always interesting to observe how styles and conventions of calligraphy could be marshaled to express a modern sensibility. Yosano Akiko (1878–1942), for example, not only translated *Genji* into modern Japanese (cat. 105) but also immersed herself in the recitation and copying of the earliest recensions of the novel and achieved recognition as a skilled calligrapher in her own right. The

poetry sheet by Akiko with five of her own *tanka* (modern *waka*) recalls classical poetic imagery while demonstrating how she developed her own distinctive style of calligraphy—at once elegant yet marked by sharp turns and an overall angular quality (fig. 11). Furthermore, the use of decorated paper with gold and silver underpainting brings to mind the aesthetic found in *Genji* painting and calligraphy albums of the Momoyama period.

As modern readers, we may wonder about the reception of *The Tale of Genji* in ages past, echoing the sentiment of novelist Kawabata Yasunari cited in the epigraph: “What would it have been like when they read it in those beautiful flowing manuscripts of the age of the Heian Court?” Although it is impossible to put ourselves in the mind-set of readers of a distant time and place, we can surely understand their enjoyment of the creative juxtapositions of text and image in the works illustrated here, spanning some eight hundred years, which evoke a fictional world of courtiers and court ladies whose complex lives and loves, imaginary as they may be, bespeak universal emotions.



Beyond Narrative Illustration: What *Genji* Paintings Do

MELISSA MCCORMICK

WITHIN ONE HUNDRED FIFTY YEARS of its creation, *The Tale of Genji* had been reproduced in a luxurious set of illustrated handscrolls that afforded privileged readers a synesthetic experience of Murasaki Shikibu's tale. Those twelfth-century scrolls, now designated National Treasures, survive in fragmented form today and continue to offer some of the most evocative interpretations of the story ever imagined. Although the *Genji Scrolls* represent a singular moment in the history of depicting the tale, they provide an important starting point for understanding later illustrations. They are relevant to nearly all later *Genji* paintings because of their shared pictorial language, their synergistic relationship between text and image, and the collaborative artistic process that brought them into being. Starting with these earliest scrolls, this essay serves as an introduction to the paintings in the following catalogue, which span the thirteenth to the twentieth century. It also analyzes in detail one famous pair of sixteenth-century screens, the *Battle of the Carriages*, and examines the treatment of the same theme in two later examples to demonstrate how the conventions of *Genji* paintings were not only perpetuated but also subtly modulated in each era in order to envision the prerogatives and aspirations of their patrons.

Golden Clouds and Blown-Off Roofs

Viewers unfamiliar with the conventions of Japanese narrative painting, and *Genji* paintings in particular, often wonder about the opaque clouds that cover large portions of the surface. The juxtaposition of these opaque, metallic forms—sometimes multilayered and inflected with gold dust and square-cut pieces of gold foil—with narrative scenes painted in mineral pigments may seem puzzling. In fact, the rich materiality and apparent lack of naturalism of these clouds, found in many of the paintings in this catalogue, took centuries to develop. The motifs have their origins in the clouds and wafting mist bands in the paintings of the twelfth-century *Genji Scrolls* and the atmospheric effects expressed in silver and

gold found in the paper decoration of their accompanying calligraphic texts (fig. 12).

In this scene from Chapter 38, “Bell Crickets” (*Suzumushi II*), for example, vaporous clouds in the upper right corner overlap directly with the representation of a building's veranda. A large autumn moon appears in thin outline within this dark haze, its brilliant illumination implied by the silver pigment that covers the ground below. The cloud patch here functions as a vehicle for presenting the moon, and, as clouds and mist bands will continue to do in *Genji* paintings for centuries to come, it suggests a conflation of time and space within a limited pictorial field. The impossibility of the moon's position on the veranda untethers the motif from literal representation, allowing it to refer, for example, to a different temporal moment than the one pictured. This unreal juxtaposition, combined with the moon's exaggerated size, indicates that the image is to be viewed in symbolic terms.

Two poems exchanged by Genji and Retired Emperor Reizei, which are included in the textual excerpt to the right of the painting, make these symbolic terms clear. Reizei, Genji's secret son with Fujitsubo, sends a poem to Genji at his Rokujō mansion, where Genji is celebrating the autumn moon with his son Yūgiri and other courtiers. The poem expresses the emperor's yearning for Genji's company, saying that now, as a retired sovereign, he no longer resides in the imperial palace, the realm “above the clouds”:

<i>Kumo no ue o</i>	Once above the clouds,
<i>Kakehanaretaru</i>	Now my dwelling is far off,
<i>Sumika ni mo</i>	But even this abode
<i>Monowasure senu</i>	Receives unforgotten the splendor
<i>Aki no yo no tsuki</i>	Of the moon on an autumn night. ¹

If only Genji, like the moon, would come to this dwelling, implies the poem. Genji responds by praising Reizei, using the “moon's visage” (*tsukikage*) as a metaphor for the emperor and humbly alluding to his own inferior light:



Fig. 12. “Bell Crickets” (*Suzumushi II*), Chapter 38 from the *Genji Scrolls* (*Genji monogatari emaki*). Heian period (794–1185), early 12th century. Section of a handscroll; painting: ink and colors on paper; calligraphy: ink on paper decorated with gold and silver foil and dust on dyed paper; H. approx. 8 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (21.9 cm). The Gotoh Museum, Tokyo. National Treasure

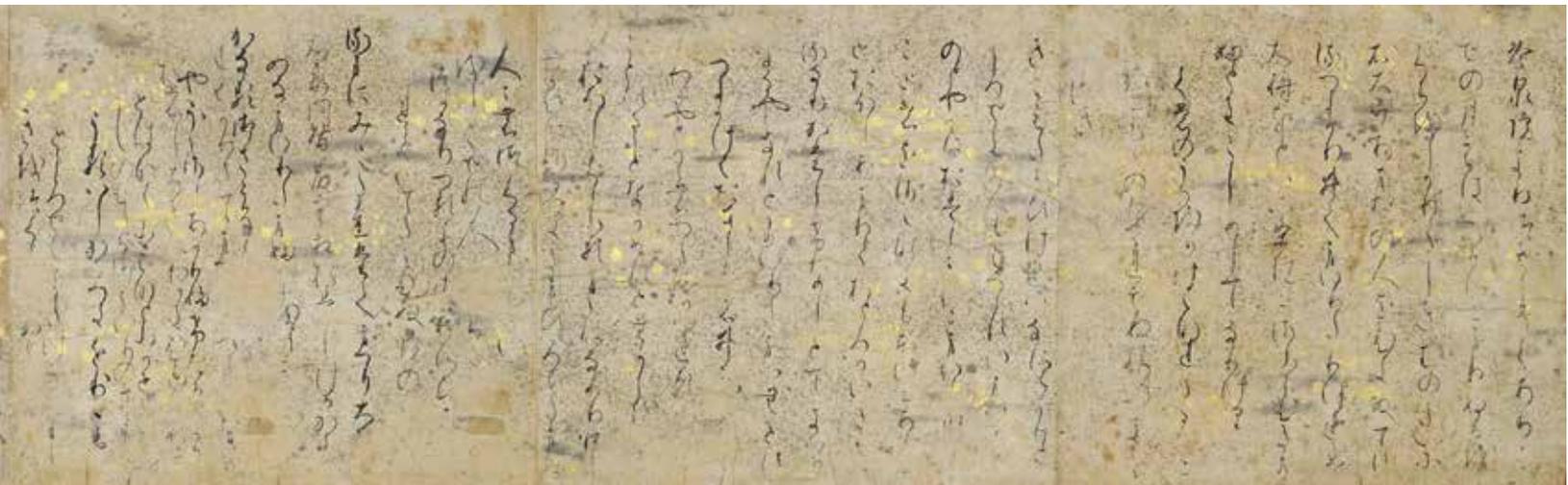
<i>Tsukikage wa</i>	Moonlight as ever
<i>Onaji kumoi ni</i>	In a cloudland not other
<i>Mienagara</i>	Than it was before . . .
<i>Wa ga yado kara no</i>	Yes, the fault lies in my house
<i>[Aki] zo kawareru</i>	That this [autumn] is so changed. ²

After sending this poem, Genji and the men with him at Rokujō make an impromptu visit to Reizei’s residence, which is the scene depicted in the painting. The oversize moon in the clouds functions as a word-image that evokes the specific lines of the related poem and their symbolism of a moment in the narrative outside the temporal frame of the picture. Indeed, the painting might best be considered a “poem-picture,” as Shimizu Fukuko has argued.³ Clouds and mist bands (*suyari gasumi*) were thus used as rhetorical devices in *Genji* paintings, and this function became more pronounced over the ages as their edges hardened when rendered in gold—so much so that they came to be called “*Genji* clouds” (*Genji-gumo*).

Another pictorial device prevalent in *Genji* paintings is the “blown-off roof” (*fukinuki yatai*), an integral means to communicate the poetic and narrative content of a scene.⁴ The term refers to the distinctive architectural framing in Japanese narrative painting that gives viewers access to the interiors of residences from an elevated perspective, allowing them to look down on the interactions taking place within. As historians of Japanese art have long pointed out, the use of strong geometric lines to compartmentalize pictorial space—the strategic placement of tatami mats, columns, and lintels—creates a visual structure that can enhance the emotional and psychological tenor of a scene.⁵ Rather than employ a

framework of illusionistic space, in which characters and motifs decrease in size according to a coherent, if unseen, grid of seemingly quantifiable spatial relationships, as in some familiar forms of Western art, these paintings are organized using different priorities. A figure’s larger size or prominence in any given painted scene often corresponds to an emphasis on their interiority in an accompanying narrative passage or to their centrality in the action of a scene. This visual expression weighted according to narrative content has been described as a system of “psychological perspective,” which emerged from the symbiosis of word and image in Heian-period literature.⁶ Such a pictorial system works in conjunction with the blown-off roofs and provides an appropriate counterpart to the experience of reading *The Tale of Genji*. Like the text, which affords relatively unmediated access to characters’ thoughts, this approach to painting offers a direct view into private interiors. Over the centuries it continued to be the primary mode of *Genji* representation, with modifications in style and format.

Take, for example, the way the composition works in the “Bell Crickets” painting. At this point in the tale, Genji is in middle age, and though he was made a commoner as a boy, he has risen to the unprecedented status of an “honorary” retired emperor (*daijō tennō*). Retired Emperor Reizei knows that his true father is Genji, not the Kiritsubo Emperor, as the world believes. When Reizei first learned the truth of his parentage, he wondered whether the line of succession had ever before gone awry and searched the historical chronicles to find a precedent that might allow him to abdicate the throne to Genji. The complex relationship between Genji and Reizei has a deep secret at its core and is made more complicated by



issues of succession. Pictorial devices proved adept at communicating the nuances of this relationship, beginning with the hierarchical placement of figures within the architecture. Retired Emperor Reizei, the figure of highest status in the scene, is situated in the interior of the room, which because of the orientation of the architecture and the tilted ground plane locates him at the highest point in the composition. He faces out toward the right and casts his gaze downward as he confronts Genji, the figure with his back against a vertical post, bowing his head in deference. Their identical *kanmuri* courtier hats and similar postures, as if reflected in a mirror, recall the final lines of the preceding scroll text that describe Reizei's appearance: "[He] was now thirty-two and, as he matured and grew in dignity, his resemblance to Genji was ever more striking. He had abdicated of his own volition at the very height of a glorious reign, and Genji was deeply touched to see how peaceful he was in retirement."⁷ The original line in the text literally says that there is "no difference" between Genji and Reizei, which may refer to not only their physical resemblance but also their similarity in status, given that both have become retired emperors.⁸ And yet, Genji is not Reizei's equal; he must remain a loyal subject to his own son, as the hierarchy of the painting also makes clear. Therefore, the image is orderly on the surface, with sovereign and subject in the right places, but to the informed reader, aware of the father-son relationship, it presents an inversion of the proper hierarchy. And the blown-off roof serves as a metaphor for this privileged access to the truth.

By way of contrast, a publicly acknowledged father-son relationship appears in the painting through the portrayal of Genji's

son Yūgiri, seated on the veranda and playing a transverse flute. He raises the instrument to his lips and turns his head to the right, as if sending the notes out into the night. When viewing the scroll painting from right to left, as it would have been unrolled, the flute player is the first figure to appear, thus setting the theme and tone for the image before the encounter between Genji and Reizei is glimpsed. Sano Midori sees Genji, flanked by his secret and public sons, as the visual pivot in this diagonal line of three characters, and she proposes that the flute signals the absent presence of yet another son, the newborn Kaoru, to whom Genji's new wife, the Third Princess, has just given birth.⁹ In actual fact, Kaoru is not Genji's son; Kashiwagi, the boy's true father, has cuckolded Genji, echoing the affair between Genji and Fujitsubo that produced Reizei. Kashiwagi has passed away, and he had intended for his beloved flute to be handed down to his son Kaoru, not to Yūgiri (see cat. 39). Suggestive of yet another secret at the heart of the tale, the visually prominent flute in a painting centered on themes of paternity and lineage is as symbolic as the large moon above.

The Meaning of Scene Selection

To understand what a *Genji* image might have meant to its initial viewers, one can begin by considering why a particular scene was selected for illustration. Given the extensive length of *The Tale of Genji*, each of the fifty-four chapters offered countless possibilities. The selection and coordination of text and image in all formats—whether scroll, book, album, or screen—provide insights into how contemporary audiences understood this work of fiction.



Fig. 13. *Battle of the Carriages* (*Kuruma arasoizu byōbu*), episode in Chapter 9, “Leaves of Wild Ginger” (*Aoi*), 1560. Tosa Mitsumochi (active ca. 1517–72). Pair of six-panel screens; colors and gold on paper; each: 64 in. x 12 ft. 2¾ in. (162.6 x 372.6 cm). Ninnaji Temple, Kyoto

The production of a *Genji* painting was almost always a collaborative endeavor, involving a patron, an artist, a calligrapher, and a coordinator overseeing the project. Patrons of *Genji* paintings often made their preferences known, and therefore the inclusion of certain scenes in a set can be indicative of their values, interests, and aspirations. For example, in the case of the “Bell Crickets” scene, the decision to emphasize the face-to-face meeting between Genji and Reizei is telling, perhaps, of the patron’s concern with familial or imperial lineage and social status. Another option might have been to depict Genji at his Rokujō estate, enjoying music and drinking wine beneath the harvest moon, or a more dynamic picture might have shown the men in carriages en route to Reizei’s palace. Instead, the choice was made to highlight a moment of physical stasis; the drama of the scene derives from the unique situation in which these two characters find themselves.

The author of *Genji* began her tale by disenfranchising her protagonist, depriving him of his chance to ever become emperor, and then invented other means to orchestrate his rise. Bolstered by fate and the help of the gods and buddhas, he slowly builds an ersatz imperium at Rokujō and receives the purely fictional status of “honorary” retired emperor while fathering children who become emperor (Reizei), empress (the daughter of the Akashi Lady), and a court minister (Yūgiri), all of which is prognosticated

in the first chapter of the tale. Although Murasaki Shikibu seems to defend her protagonist as someone worthy of rising to the position of retired sovereign, she highlights Genji’s failings and makes him self-reflective and aware of his flaws. The artists and patrons of the twelfth-century painting seem to have understood the multifaceted nature of Murasaki’s characters. The painting not only captures Genji’s odd status as a retired emperor who could never become sovereign but also conveys in subtle ways Reizei’s unease with his own position and his eagerness to connect with his father, as expressed in the poetry exchange. He leans toward Genji, his body extending onto the wood floorboards, and the hems of his robe touch Genji’s mat, as if edging toward the position of subservience. The selection of this scene for the painting, which presents a state of uncanny equilibrium between the two men, may reveal the priorities of its producers, however obliquely.

The analysis of scene selection remains a significant tool for interpreting the works of later periods, even those produced by professionals in great quantities. The 1510 *Genji Album* by Tosa Mitsunobu (active ca. 1462–1525), for example, made for a warrior clan based in Suō province, includes idiosyncratic scenes that seem to reflect the interests of its patrons, including those that emphasize all-male gatherings and one pairing of text and image that embeds within it a homophone for the name of the Sue clan



(cat. 38).¹⁰ Similarly, a *Genji Album* by Tosa Mitsuyoshi (1539–1613) in the Kyoto National Museum includes six additional scenes from chapters already represented in the album with paintings that depict exemplary female characters, leading Inamoto Mariko to argue that the work was intended for a young woman.¹¹ While making albums like these and other medieval and early modern *Genji* works, patrons often had at their disposal manuals and digests that provided menus of text and image options for every chapter in the tale.¹² These manuals, along with troves of sketches and pictorial templates in the possession of the hereditary painting houses, like the Tosa and the Kano, established a readily identifiable iconography of the tale. This iconography also established a set of expectations that artists (and patrons and coordinators) could use as a foil in creating something new. While many works followed convention, examples from every era demonstrate the degree to which *Genji* imagery could be adapted to address contemporary concerns.

Genji Pictures and Imperial Ideology

One pivotal example of *Genji* painting that transformed the conventional iconography of a scene to express the worldview of its patron is a pair of screens commissioned by Emperor Ōgimachi

(1517–1593) and created in 1560. Painted by Tosa Mitsumochi (active ca. 1517–72) and the members of his studio, the screens depict the “Battle of the Carriages” (*Kuruma arasoizu*), an episode from Chapter 9, “Leaves of Wild Ginger” (*Aoi*).¹³ Large folding screens and wall-painting programs depicting single subjects had existed for centuries, but never before had a *Genji* scene been represented in this manner, with one narrative episode extending across all twelve panels of a pair of screens. Ōgimachi’s screens are thought to be the pair now in the collection of the Buddhist temple Ninnaji (fig. 13).¹⁴ Subsequently, in the Edo period, two faithful copies were made, including a set in the Kyoto City Library of Historical Documents (cat. 44). The imposing presence of the screens seems to conform to artistic trends of the late sixteenth century, when artists such as Kano Eitoku (1543–1590) executed bold compositions of varied subjects on folding screens and across the walls of temples and castles.¹⁵ And indeed, Mitsumochi’s screens are believed to have been the model for the wall paintings of the same subject by Kano Sanraku (1559–1635) nearly fifty years later (see fig. 20).¹⁶ It would be wrong, however, to attribute the dramatic enlargement of a *Genji* scene by Mitsumochi solely to artistic bravado or pictorial experimentation. Nor was the screen’s primary purpose to delight its audience with an image from the beloved Heian tale. To the members of this court, *The Tale of Genji* resembled a sacred text.

It was approached with the belief that it contained essential truths about spiritual matters, human nature, and righteous government that, if interpreted properly, could be relevant to contemporary life. The screens exemplify a collaborative production process par excellence, one in which the emperor and the men and women of his court dictated the content of the painting and used the visual imagery of *Genji* to instantiate a particular vision of imperial authority.¹⁷

In the *Battle of the Carriages* screens, what might first be perceived as the representation of a fight by proxy between two jealous female rivals reveals itself to be an assertion of the centrality of the imperial institution. The scene takes place in Chapter 9, titled *Aoi*, the word for “wild ginger” or “heartvine,” a plant with heart-shaped leaves that decorated the carriages and courtier caps of participants in the annual Festival of the Kamo Shrine (*Kamo sai*). It is a few days before the festival proper, and the newly appointed Priestess of the Kamo Shrine, escorted by elite courtiers, must perform purification rituals at the Kamo River. People crowd the procession route for a glimpse of the radiant Genji, who is among the entourage of the priestess. The onlookers include Lady Rokujō, a woman of exalted status and Genji’s neglected former lover. It pains her to view him from a distance like a mere stranger, but she cannot resist the chance to see him again. So she travels incognito in an understated carriage, securing a prime spot along the route. All is well until Genji’s official wife, Aoi, suddenly appears. Pregnant with Genji’s child (his son Yūgiri), she hesitates to venture out but decides at the last minute to watch her husband and the retinue. In the crowded street, Aoi’s (somewhat inebriated) drivers shove Rokujō’s carriage aside to make room. An unruly brawl ensues between the men of the two ladies, insults are traded, and someone yells out a comment about Rokujō’s affair with Genji, exposing her identity. Hemmed in by other vehicles and with her view blocked by Aoi’s carriage, Lady Rokujō can only sit and wait, humiliated and seething with resentment.

The screen paintings divide the scene in half, depicting Genji on the right and the altercation between the carriages on the left. Genji figures prominently on the third panel of the right screen, surrounded by attendants and preceded by palace guards (fig. 14). His face bears white makeup, and his trousers are decorated with a colorful floral pattern. His costume is unusual among *Genji* paintings, which commonly portray him wearing a typical courtier’s robe and an *eboshi* or *kanmuri* hat. This painting clearly shows Genji as a high-ranking member of the imperial palace guard, accessorized with a sword, a bow, a quiver of arrows, and a hat with fanlike wings. At this moment in the narrative, he has just been promoted to Major Captain

of the Right (*udaishō*), and the attendant walking beside him, a symbol of youthful allure, further enhances his apparent status. All of these details communicate pictorially the text’s hyperbolic description of Genji’s radiant beauty, which is said to eclipse that of all the other men and to prompt even grasses and trees to stand at attention.

On the left screen, the focus shifts to the procession and the immediate aftermath of the clash. At the center of the composition, in the middle of the third panel, Aoi’s carriage moves leftward, still hitched to its ox, while Rokujō’s, directly above, is being pushed to the right. Two attendants in *eboshi* hats seem to direct the action, as others among Aoi’s men chase figures away with long sticks. In between the two vehicles lies an upside-down carriage stand with one leg destroyed (fig. 15), a symbol of the indignity suffered by Rokujō. Without a pedestal, Rokujō’s men must rest the shafts of her carriage on the wheel hub of a neighbor’s, lest they lower them to the ground and risk their lady tumbling forward from the resulting incline. Aoi’s attendant, carrying his lady’s intact pedestal, pulls at his collar and looks up at Rokujō’s stand, as if nervously regretting the damage that has been done. The whole episode is unbearable for someone of Rokujō’s status as the widow of an imperial prince and the mother of a princess (*Akikonomu*, the future *Umetsubo* Empress). She had long worried that her affair with the dashing young Genji, seven years her junior, would destroy her reputation and leave her a laughingstock, and her fears have now come to pass. Soon after the incident, Rokujō’s longing for Genji becomes all-consuming, and her emotions take the form of a wrathful spirit that torments her rival. The spirit attacks when Aoi is most vulnerable—as she goes into labor with Genji’s son—and it displays a ferocity that defies the exorcists and spirit mediums who are summoned to help. Somehow Aoi survives and delivers a healthy child, but days later, just when the family assumes she is in the clear, the evil spirit reappears and deals one final, fatal blow. Heart-wrenching scenes of parental grief and spousal mourning follow.

Given the inauspicious nature of the subject matter, why would Emperor Ōgimachi have selected this particular scene for such an outsize representation? The answer lies in a number of confluences between the details of the episode and the historical context of the court in 1560. Most important is the setting for the clash-of-carriages scene—the Kamo Festival, which took place at the start of a new imperial reign and was part of a system of realm-protecting rituals overseen by the emperor. The newly consecrated imperial princess served as Priestess of the Kamo Shrine and performed ritual prayers and offerings to ensure the protection of the capital by the Kamo deities. The procession depicted on the screen thus



Fig. 14. Detail of fig. 13, right screen, third panel from the right



Fig. 15. Detail of fig. 13, left screen, third panel from the right

evokes a belief system in which the emperor, as a descendant of the *kami* and a conduit to the deities, is integral to maintaining the peace and harmony of the capital and the realm. Emperor Ōgimachi's enthronement ceremony in 1560 had occurred just six months before this screen project began. Ōgimachi reigned at a time when a sovereign still maintained the authority of the *tennō*, a sacred ruler perceived as one in an unbroken line of succession from the time of creation, but the imperial institution in his day was financially and politically diminished compared to the idealized polity of the Heian world of *Genji*. Moreover, the emperor shared power with the military government of the shogunate, which in 1560 was fractured. Although the Ashikaga shoguns were nominally at the helm, regional daimyo and military leaders contested their power and took control of the capital on numerous occasions during this era, known as the Warring States period. Ōgimachi had to wait three years for his enthronement because of a lack of funds, and essential components of his ceremonies, such as the Harvest Festival (*daijōsai*), were curtailed; the Kamo Festival, notably, had been discontinued since the Onin War (1467–77).¹⁸

Nevertheless, the enthronement of 1560 was cause for celebration, and this pair of grand *Genji* screens, which depicts the Kamo Festival at the start of a new reign, might have been intended to commemorate the emperor's ascension and as a substitute for the discontinued festival, as Noda Asami argues.¹⁹ Building on this idea, Takamatsu Yoshiyuki has pointed out that Ōgimachi actively attempted to revive suspended court rituals, including the Kamo Festival, suggesting that the *Genji* screens should be seen as both a commemoration of his enthronement and an embodiment of his vision for a new era of imperial power and authority.²⁰ That vision is conveyed not merely by a conventional illustration of a Kamo Festival scene from *Genji* but also through innovative formal devices that enabled the figures and the setting to reflect contemporary life. An enlarged street scene that highlights specific aristocratic residences provided one way to link past and present. In the sixteenth century, a new genre of screen paintings developed that afforded spectacular panoramic vistas of the streets and avenues of the urban grid (*rakuchū rakugai-zu*, which translates to “scenes in and around the capital”) (fig. 16). The clash-of-carriages screens by Mitsumochi can be seen as a creative hybrid of *Genji* painting and

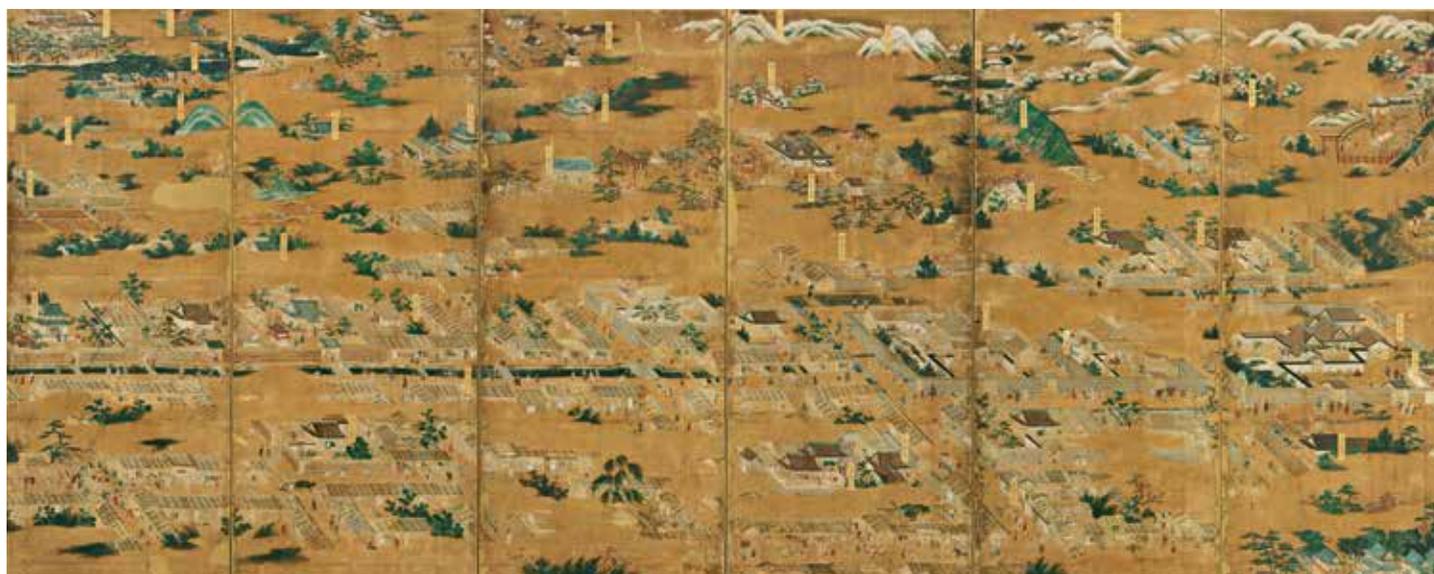


Fig. 16. *Scenes in and around the Capital (Rakuchū rakugai-zu)*. Muromachi period (1392–1573), 16th century. Left screen of a pair of six-panel screens; ink, colors, and gold on paper; 54 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. x 11 ft. 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (138.2 x 341 cm). National Museum of Japanese History, Sakura, Chiba Prefecture. Important Cultural Property

a zoomed-in view of an identifiable street inspired by these new panoramic cityscapes, as Washizu Katsura has suggested.²¹ The street in question is First Avenue (Ichijō), an east-west thoroughfare adjacent to the palace that was occupied by the residences of the very courtiers involved in making these screens for the emperor.²² Therefore, the screens depict a procession symbolic of the sacred imperative of the emperor to protect the realm—in an era when display of that authority could not be exercised—as imagined on a city street familiar to all. The effort behind the production of these screens in part demonstrates the power such paintings were thought to have, as if their imagery could perform a kind of magic, willing a vision of the emperor's reign into existence.

However, I would argue that the screen paintings do more than link the subject matter of *The Tale of Genji* to a contemporary interest in imperial imagery. In fact, the paintings invoke the origin myth of the writing of the tale, which associates its genesis with the imperial line. Near the top of the second panel of the left screen is an image of a seated court lady leaning slightly forward as she peers out from a window at the spectacle below (fig. 17). Her hair extends to great lengths as it flows behind her, over her white patterned robe, which she wears with red trousers. A screen with green grasses and a red border surrounds her, exposing its dark blue patterned backing paper in the window. It is unusual for a noblewoman to be depicted alone, and for that reason she calls to mind images of the solitary Murasaki Shikibu gazing out from the room at Ishiyamadera where, as legend had it, she composed *The Tale of Genji*. The mysterious figure in the window

bears a striking resemblance to the portrait-icon of Murasaki Shikibu by Tosa Mitsumoto (1530–1569) (see the introduction to Chapter 2, fig. 51). In fact, the diary entries that record the making of Ōgimachi's screens mention how this very painting, commissioned by the courtier Kujō Tanemichi in 1560 for a banquet and offering ceremony of *Genji waka* poems, was brought to the palace precisely while the screens were in production.²³ There is a distinct possibility that after seeing the painting the emperor and his courtiers decided to incorporate an image of Murasaki into their *Genji* screens.²⁴ The denizens of the palace were immersed in the tale at that time and were aided in their reading by a *Genji* character chart (*Genji keizu*), created for them by Sanjōnishi Kin'eda (1487–1563).²⁵ Ōgimachi and the members of the court were certainly familiar with the *Genji* origin legend as well. Just four months before the *Battle of the Carriages* screen project began, Madenokōji Fusako (d. 1580), one of the emperor's highest-ranking court ladies and the mother of future crown prince Sanehito (1552–1586), made a pilgrimage to Ishiyamadera.²⁶ There she would have worshipped the temple's beloved Kannon and seen firsthand the legendary *Genji* Room where Murasaki was said to have started writing her tale. She most certainly would have related her experience upon her return, including to her brother, Madenokōji Korefusa (1513–1573), who oversaw the early stages of the screen design at the family residence near the palace. The painting of Murasaki Shikibu by Tosa Mitsumoto, with its inscription explaining the *Genji* origin myth and its vivid image of the author at the moment of her creative inspiration, must have been a revelation.



Fig. 17. Detail of fig. 13



Fig. 18. Detail of fig. 13



Fig. 19. Detail of fig. 13

The representation of the female author in the screens, however, is not such an explicit reference. She lacks the brush, a symbol of authorship, and the attributes of paper and inkstone that would definitively mark her as Murasaki Shikibu, as in later portraits. And yet, it is precisely the subtlety of the image that allows the figure to blend in with the narrative. Including the author's attributes would break the illusion of the fictional world of the chapter. Instead, she is positioned discreetly in between clouds and looks away from the most exciting action, the carriage confrontation. Her inattention to the event differentiates her from the other spectators and suggests that she possesses a different kind of vision.

Rather than watching one single event unfold, she seems to survey the entire episode in her mind's eye, as would an author or omniscient narrator. The gold clouds that surround her facilitate this sense of remove from the narrative and create a dreamlike space in which to present the figure.

At the same time, Mitsumochi and his patrons inserted an image of Murasaki into the composition in a way that conflates the world of the tale with the story of its creation. She sits within one of the luxurious walled residences that line the south side of the street, a site that, in fact, corresponds to the Heian-period residence of Fujiwara no Michinaga (966–1027), the author's patron.



Figs. 20, 21 (detail, opposite). *Battle of the Carriages* (*Kuruma arasoī-zu byōbu*), episode in Chapter 9, “Leaves of Wild Ginger” (*Aoi*). Kano Sanraku (1559–1635). Momoyama period (1573–1615), Keichō era (1596–1615). Sliding-door (*fusuma*) painting, mounted as a four-panel folding screen; ink, color, and gold on paper; 69½ in. x 12 ft. 1⅞ in. (175.5 x 370 cm). Tokyo National Museum. Important Cultural Property

The elegant courtyard on the far right of the right screen, with rocks, a stream, and a wisteria-wrapped pine that symbolizes the Fujiwara, is especially striking (fig. 18). It also marks the general location of the sixteenth-century residence of the Madenokōji, courtiers emulating Michinaga by marrying their daughters to the emperor with hopes for the birth of crown princes. The producers of the screens thus situate the genesis of the tale amid their own world and families in the heart of a capital centered around the imperial institution. Many versions of the origin legend describe how Murasaki was first asked to write the new tale by Empress Shōshi, Michinaga’s daughter, who was, in fact, relaying the request on behalf of Princess Senshi (964–1035), the Great Priestess of the Kamo Shrine for five reigns. Senshi’s presence looms large in the *Genji* origin myth as the ultimate imperial generator of the tale. Interestingly, the woman in the window appears in the same register of the painting as the Kamo Shrine, rendered evocatively in the upper left corner behind its tall shrine gate near the Tadasu Woods (fig. 19). Like the priestess serving the deity who protects the capital against malevolent forces, Murasaki seems to cast an external calm over the ominous scene of chaos below. As if standing in for the

Kamo Priestesses and the imperial line, the image of the female author, elevated and remote, evokes their putative authority over the temporal world. In this way, the *Battle of the Carriages* screens not only project a restored vision of imperial authority to honor a new reign but also reflect an understanding of *Genji* as an integral component of the capital’s imperial cosmology that determines the peace and prosperity of the realm.

Later Versions of the *Battle of the Carriages* Screens

The capacity of the 1560 *Battle of the Carriages* screens to convey nuances of imperial ideology and frame identity may be the primary reason why they served as a master reference for later versions of the subject. In Kano Sanraku’s rendering on sliding-door paintings, the most notable differences from Ōgimachi’s screens are the degree and intensity of the violence represented (fig. 20). On the 1560 screens, the altercation is depicted as chaotic, but not a single figure is shown engaged in combat. In Sanraku’s version, however, the confrontation has been transformed into a brutal fight. Figures stomp on their adversaries, kick them in the head,





Fig. 22. *Battle of the Carriages* (*Kuruma arasoizu byōbu*), episode in Chapter 9, "Leaves of Wild Ginger" (*Aoi*). Studio of Iwasa Matabei (1578–1650). Edo period (1615–1868), mid-17th century. Six-panel folding screen; ink, color, and gold leaf on paper; 60 in. x 11 ft. 10 in. (152.4 x 360.7 cm). John C. Weber Collection

try to gouge out their eyes, and threaten to jab them in the throat (fig. 21). Moreover, several men gang up on others with dark skin and round faces, which are depicted frontally, in contrast to the slender profiles of the aristocrats on the sidelines and others involved in the brawl. This aggression is unusual for *Genji* paintings, which avoid inauspicious or taboo subjects. What could account for such a different approach?

As Kyoko Kinoshita elaborates in her essay in this volume, the sliding-door panels were most likely created in 1604 to adorn the walls of the newly constructed Kyoto residence of the courtier Kujō Yukiie and his new bride, Sadako.²⁷ Sadako was the adopted daughter of Toyotomi Hideyoshi's secondary wife, Yodo-dono (1567–1615), and the Toyotomi at the time were still vying for political relevance in the face of the newly dominant Tokugawa military leaders (the first shogun, Ieyasu, had been appointed in 1603). This marriage, therefore, provided them with the opportunity to solidify their political standing. Sadako's biological mother was married to Tokugawa Hidetada and gave birth to the future shogun Iemitsu the same year that Sadako (at the age of twelve) married Yukiie. It might seem odd to depict such a violent scene for the residence of

a newly married couple; however, given that Ōgimachi's screens employed this theme to suggest the pacification of the capital, it can be assumed that Kano Sanraku's sliding doors functioned similarly. Amid the violence, cool-headed courtiers are shown attempting to calm the crowd, while Tokugawa elders—including one shown seated in the crowd and marked with a Tokugawa crest on his robe—look on. Takamatsu Yoshiyuki has suggested that the courtier procession may be a stand-in for the Toyotomi, with the Tokugawa depicted in a docile position as onlookers to the Toyotomi's grand spectacle and show of force.²⁸ Whatever the case may be, in this historical moment, on the eve of the Edo period, the iconic scene of rivalry between the ladies in their carriages is depicted as if it were a procession into battle.

Whereas both Tosa Mitsumochi's 1560 screens and Kano Sanraku's 1604 panels resonate with the complex political situations of their patrons, a *Battle of the Carriages* screen by the studio of Iwasa Matabei from the mid-seventeenth century forges a new path (figs. 22, 23). In this composition the horizontal row of residences along First Avenue, which held such meaning for Ōgimachi and his courtiers, has been eliminated. Instead, the action is



Fig. 23. Detail of fig. 22

promulgated along a dramatic downward diagonal from the upper left to the lower right. Here, First Avenue appears to extend into the viewer's space, as if the viewer is among the agitated spectators who await the appearance of the radiant Genji. The confrontation between the carriages takes place in the lower left corner, where Aoi's elegant black carriage, decorated with gold phoenixes, charges leftward, as Rokujō's carriage is forced to back up. Aoi's men threaten Rokujō's with their umbrella poles, and one man has been thrown to the ground near her carriage (fig. 23). And yet, the violence of the scene does not match that in Sanraku's paintings.

In Matabei's screen, the battle is exaggeratedly muscular and stylized. The emphasis seems to be on the tale itself and on bringing its emotions to life as viscerally as possible. This quality aligns the work with other *Genji* paintings by the artist that reimagine

traditional compositions and focus in on a figure's countenance to emphasize the emotional intensity of a scene (see cats. 32–34). With such paintings, as here, the viewer is encouraged to linger over the varied, intriguing facial expressions of the figures in the crowd. Even the women are visible inside their carriages, whereas in previous versions of this scene they remain hidden from view. Matabei's screen makes the ancient *Genji* narrative accessible to contemporary viewers and personalizes the tale, anticipating an artistic approach of the modern era. Indeed, from the twelfth-century scrolls onward, the history of *Genji* pictorialization was far from routinized. These works reflect the sophisticated interpretive abilities of communities steeped in Murasaki's tale, communities who sought inspiration and admonitions from *Genji*, and who blurred the boundaries between the tale and their own lives.



Evolving Iconographies of *The Tale of Genji*: Early Modern Interpretations of a Yamato-e Theme

KYOKO KINOSHITA

THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD IN JAPAN, spanning the seventeenth through the nineteenth century, witnessed the greatest flourishing of *Genji* painting in the history of the reception of the tale, when virtually every painting school took up the subject on behalf of patrons from a larger swath of society than ever before. This expansion of *Genji* painting and its audiences developed in part from the all-important technological milestone in early modern cultures across the globe—the adoption and widespread use of printed texts. The introduction of printing with movable type to Japan in 1592 enabled the publication of a variety of tales (including *The Tale of Genji*), histories, and essays and represents a pivotal event in the creation of a broad new class of readership for the Japanese classics. By the early seventeenth century, the wealthy Kyoto merchant and connoisseur Suminokura Soan (1571–1632) was collaborating with calligrapher Hon’ami Kōetsu (1558–1637) to produce deluxe printed editions of classical literature, as well as Kanze-school Noh theater libretti. These so-called Saga editions (*Saga-bon*), named after the locale in Kyoto where they were first produced, employed a typeface that emulated elegant, flowing, brush-written calligraphy and on beautiful papers using techniques such as mica printing to create a luxurious effect.¹

Related to these *Saga-bon* editions were other versions of the classics reproduced using movable type, including *The Tale of Genji Printed in the Saga-bon Style* (*Den Saga-bon Genji monogatari*) (fig. 24).² Its publication in about 1610 enabled the dissemination of this esteemed literary work to a wider audience of readers. The *Saga-bon* edition of *The Tales of Ise*, which had come out a few years earlier, had not only served to deepen readers’ understanding of the tale but also provided a stimulus for connoisseurs who held these deluxe editions in high regard, and in turn influenced the later illustrated editions of *Genji* such as *The Illustrated Tale of Genji* (*E-iri Genji monogatari*) of 1650, produced and illustrated by the lacquer master and poet Yamamoto Shunshō (1610–1682) and featuring 226 illustrations (fig. 25).³ This set of the original fifty-four

chapters, a sequel chapter, and appendices, totaling sixty sections (though bound two or three chapters to a volume)—with both text and illustrations printed from carved woodblocks—may be considered the first fully illustrated, printed edition of the tale.

Knowledge of *The Tale of Genji* and the prestige that came from borrowing its cultural trappings had long been sought, but by the early Edo period such cultural attainment became aspirational for a broader cross section of society. This period saw the reunification of Japan after a long period of civil war and the establishment of the Tokugawa shogunate, with the military capital in Edo (present-day Tokyo). The appreciation of *Genji* culture began at the top, as the shogun’s family and relatives became primary patrons and prioritized the collection of *Genji* texts. The “Inventory of Treasured Household Accessories in the Collection of the Shogunal Family” (*Ryūei ondōgu chō*) lists *The Tale of Genji* manuscripts in



Fig. 24. *The Tale of Genji Printed in the Saga-bon Style* (*Den Saga-bon Genji monogatari*), opening page of Chapter 1, “The Lady of the Paulownia-Courtyard Chambers” (*Kiritsubo*). Momoyama period (1573–1615), ca. 1610 (Keichō 15). One of a set of fifty-four printed volumes; ink on paper; 11¼ x 8¼ in. (28.6 x 21 cm). The Gotoh Museum, Tokyo



Fig. 25. Scene of Genji meeting a holy man in the northern mountains, from Chapter 5, “Little Purple Gromwell” (*Wakamurasaki*), from *The Illustrated Tale of Genji* (*E-iri Genji monogatari*). Compiled and illustrated by Yamamoto Shunshō (1610–1682). Edo period (1615–1868), 1650 (Keian 3). Double-page spread from one of twenty-four woodblock-printed volumes; ink on paper; 10½ x 7¾ in. (26.7 x 18.7 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary Griggs Burke Collection, Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015 (2015.300.39a–x)

the “Poetry” (*onkasho*) section.⁴ For the Tokugawa shogunal family, *Genji* manuscripts not only were read and used but also were potent symbols of the courtly culture of the Heian period (794–1185) and its transmission and assimilation into the shogunal heritage. The desire to engage with the fifty-four chapters of the tale increased dramatically for daimyo on the rise and ambitious members of the elite merchant class. While precious handwritten manuscripts could be difficult for them to obtain, the calligraphy-based printed editions of *The Tale of Genji* provided new access to classical Heian literature and became cherished collectors’ items.

As new audiences for the visual representation of *Genji* emerged, a panoply of artists and painting studios in the early Edo period rose to meet the demand, producing some of the most memorable images of the tale to survive today. This essay focuses on developments in the illustration of *Genji* during the Keichō (1596–1615) and Kan’ei (1624–44) eras by artists such as Tawaraya Sōtatsu (ca. 1570–ca. 1640) and Iwasa Matabei (1578–1650), and then examines the role of *Genji* paintings in the Kano school and the work of Kano Seisen’in Osanobu (1796–1846), official painter of the shogunate in the early nineteenth century.

Sōtatsu and Innovative Interpretations of Japanese Classics

During the Keichō era, artists such as the calligrapher Hon’ami Kōetsu, whose brush-writing style inspired the *Saga-bon* editions of the classics, and painters of virtually every school became involved in the production of artwork related to *The Tale of Genji*. Among the most famous and important paintings were those produced by Kōetsu’s frequent collaborator Tawaraya Sōtatsu.

Though the details of Sōtatsu’s biography remain unclear, judging from his prodigious output of works on classical themes, such as *The Tales of Ise*, *The Tale of the Heike*, and *Genji*, he was clearly conversant in Japanese literature.⁵ Indeed, he and the members of his Tawaraya studio approached classical subject matter with the kind of creativity that suggests great familiarity and confidence. Several factors enabled Sōtatsu’s innovations and fresh approach to *Genji* painting, first among them his identity as an independent artist. Sōtatsu worked out of a painting shop (*e-ya*) that he oversaw, where he catered to a wide clientele. In this context, he was not as constrained as certain painters of the long-standing Tosa and Kano schools, whose creative output was closely tied to certain important patrons, and who needed to maintain a link with their artistic heritages. Sōtatsu was thus free to innovate, but he also became popular enough to garner the patronage base the more established schools enjoyed, such as Buddhist temples and even the imperial court.

Integral to the livelihood of the Tawaraya atelier was the production of small-scale paintings, including fans based on *The Tale of Genji*. Sōtatsu’s painting shop even became associated with *Genji* fans in the popular imagination of his day, judging by a reference in the fictional tale *Chikusai* (1621–23). The protagonist of the story, a country doctor named Chikusai who visits various famous spots in Kyoto, comes into possession of a vibrantly painted fan from the Tawaraya shop depicting a scene from Chapter 4, “The Lady of the Evening Faces” (*Yūgao*).⁶ Numerous *Genji* fan paintings by Sōtatsu survive today pasted onto folding screens, as in the *Scattered Fans* (*Senmen chirashi-zu*) screens in the Tokyo National Museum (fig. 26).⁷ Among the thirty fans of various subjects on this pair of screens are fans depicting scenes from Chapter 5, “Little Purple Gromwell” (*Wakamurasaki*), and Chapter 20, “Bellflowers” (*Asagao*) (figs. 27, 28). From the medieval period, screens such as these had provided a means to preserve cherished fan paintings after use, as with the earliest extant example in the collection of Jōdoji Temple (cat. 36); fan paintings were also newly created for this purpose. The sheer number of extant fans on screens attests to the popularity of these works by Sōtatsu and his studio, and the fan paintings themselves suggest the degree to which *Genji* visual imagery was disseminated among the populace.⁸



Fig. 26. *Scattered fans* (Sanmen chirashi-zu). Iwaraya Sotatsu (ca. 1570–ca. 1640). Edo period (1615–1868), early 17th century. Thirty fans pasted on a six-panel folding screen, two of which feature scenes from *The Tale of Genji*; ink, color, and gold on paper mounted on screen; 65¾ in. x 12 ft. 4 in. (167 x 376 cm). Tokyo National Museum



Fig. 27. Detail of fig. 26, fan painting depicting Chapter 5, “Little Purple Gromwell” (*Wakamurasaki*)

Genji fan paintings had long been a staple of Tosa-school painting (cat. 37), but Sōtatsu applied a unique approach, as seen here, in the use of his characteristic gold clouds encircled in silver that transform the traditional gold “*Genji* clouds” of the Tosa atelier into more abstract and amorphous forms recalling, for example, his landmark work, *Waves at Matsushima*.⁹ And yet, the scenes retain motifs that make them immediately identifiable: in the “Little Purple Gromwell” (*Wakamurasaki*) fan, we find Genji at the far left



Fig. 28. Detail of fig. 26, fan painting depicting Chapter 20, “Bellflowers” (*Asagao*)

and the young Murasaki, the object of his gaze, inside standing on the green tatami as her attendant on the veranda chases after an escaped bird.

The similarity of the composition to Tosa paintings of the same subject suggests that Sōtatsu not only studied works of the past but interacted with the Tosa painters of his day. In this regard, he would not have been alone among early modern independent artists. Take, for example, a scattered-fan folding screen in



Fig. 29. *Scattered Fans* (*Senmen chirashi-zu*). Kaihō Yūshō (1533–1615). Momoyama period (1573–1615), early 17th century. Eighteen fans pasted on a pair of six-panel folding screens, seven of which feature scenes from *The Tale of Genji*; ink, color, and gold on paper; each: 57 in. x 11 ft. 3½ in. (144.7 x 344 cm). Idemitsu Museum of Arts, Tokyo

the collection of the Idemitsu Museum of Arts by Kaihō Yūshō (1533–1615), who apprenticed under Kano Eitoku (1543–1590) before establishing his own studio (fig. 29). Evoking the trope of “fan tossing”—inspired by stories of people throwing fans decorated in gold and silver into the Ōi River to enjoy the spectacle of seeing them float and shimmer on the water—Yūshō depicted fans against a background of waves and shore. Nine of the fans pasted on the screen were by Tosa-school artists, seven of them drawing on themes from *Genji*, and all seem perfectly harmonious with Yūshō’s background painting. A work such as this may have influenced Tawaraya Sōtatsu, and it recalls the fact that the Tawaraya studio was thought to have been located near that of the town-painter descendants of Tosa-school masters.¹⁰ The emerging picture of Sōtatsu’s artistic milieu and the context for *Genji* painting among Kyoto town artists is a vibrant one of interaction among diverse schools of painters.

Sōtatsu’s artistic practice and his familiarity with *Genji* and other classical texts were also indebted to his social networks and collaborations with not only Hon’ami Kōetsu but also the courtier-calligrapher Karasumaru Mitsuhiro (1579–1638).¹¹ One famous work demonstrating how Sōtatsu simplified and expanded narrative moments into oversize imagery is the folding screen of Chapter 16, “The Barrier Gate” (*Sekiya*), which features calligraphy

in Mitsuhiro’s idiosyncratic hand across the top left of the composition (fig. 30). Sōtatsu’s use of pictorial space and his placement of figures—disproportionately large, stylized—in abstracted settings against expansive gold-leaf backgrounds were a radical departure from the meticulously brushed but relatively conventional renditions of *Genji* scenes by Tosa- or Kano-school artists up until that time.

Also among Sōtatsu’s most famous works on *Genji* themes are the screens representing Chapter 14, “Channel Markers” (*Miotsukushi*), and Chapter 16, “The Barrier Gate” (*Sekiya*), recognized as a National Treasure and preserved in the Seikado Bunko Art Museum (cat. 53). These screens set the tone for future renditions of the subject by followers of Sōtatsu. Evidence of how Sōtatsu-style *Genji* imagery was inherited and transmitted by his followers can also be found in a series of vignettes from the tale that were originally part of a pair of six-panel folding screens illustrating scenes of all fifty-four chapters, each of which was impressed with a circular seal reading “I’nen” 伊年, associated with Sōtatsu’s studio and immediate followers. At some point in the twentieth century, the scenes from these screen paintings were remounted individually as hanging scrolls, as in one example in the Met collection showing Kaoru asleep while a maidservant looks on, from Chapter 49, “Trees Encoiled in Vines of Ivy” (*Yadorigi*).¹²



Fig. 30. Chapter 16, "The Barrier Gate" (*Sekiya*). Tawaraya Sōtatsu (ca. 1570–ca. 1640); inscription by Karasumaru Mitsuhiro (1579–1638). Edo period (1615–1868), early 17th century. Six-panel folding screen; ink and color on paper with gold leaves; 37 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. x 8 ft. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (95.5 x 273 cm). Tokyo National Museum. Important Cultural Property



Fig. 31. Reconstructed facsimile of the *Kanaya Screens (Kanaya byōbu)* by Iwasa Matabei (1578–1650), reproduced from Fukui Fine Arts Museum 2016, p. 62

Matabei's Renditions of Iconic *Genji* Scenes

Among the leading independent artists of the early Edo period who experimented with new types of *Genji* illustration is Iwasa Matabei, the youngest son of the prominent daimyo Araki Murashige (1535–1586). Though his father's Itami Castle was destroyed by the warlord Oda Nobunaga, the infant Matabei was rescued and raised in Kyoto, and he took his mother's family name as an adult. It is not known when and with whom he studied painting, but contemporary records suggest that Matabei was associated with the Nijō family during the time he lived in Kyoto.¹³ We can assume that Matabei would have acquired an excellent education and introduction to the arts, as he was raised under the wing of one of Kyoto's most prestigious families and artistic patrons. During the Kan'ei era, he relocated to Echizen province (present-day Fukui prefecture), where he remained for twenty years, serving the Tokugawa daimyo, Matsudaira Tadamasu (1598–1645). In 1637, at the peak of Matabei's fame, the third shogun, Tokugawa Iemitsu, invited him to Edo. Soon after his arrival, Matabei is thought to have been involved in making preparatory drawings for lacquerware for the wedding dowry set for Iemitsu's daughter, Chiyo-hime (literally "Princess Chiyo," 1637–1699), who was to marry Tokugawa Mitsutomo (1625–1700) two years later, in 1639.¹⁴ The splendid lacquer set known as the "Hatsune" *maki-e*-decorated furnishings (*Hatsune no chōdo*), with designs derived from Chapter 23, "First Song of Spring" (*Hatsune*), from *The Tale of Genji*, was made for Chiyo-hime and is renowned as a masterpiece of lacquer artistry (as discussed in Monika Bincsik's essay in this volume, figs. 41, 42). While there are no contemporary records to document Matabei's

designs for the lacquer, the attribution is not out of the question. Despite the newness of his style of *Genji* painting, it would leave a lasting legacy for the tale's pictorialization.¹⁵

Matabei remained an "independent" artist by working primarily for a regional daimyo in Fukui, but he still enjoyed patronage by some of the most powerful figures of the day. And like Sōtatsu, Matabei is known for his unique and idiosyncratic approach to *Genji* painting.¹⁶ Among Matabei's most original *Genji* images are the paintings executed largely in monochrome ink: *Shrine in the Fields (Nonomiya)* and *Court Ladies Enjoying Wayside Chrysanthemums*, both scenes from Chapter 10, "A Branch of Sacred Evergreen" (*Sakaki*) (cats. 33, 34). They were originally among twelve separate paintings mounted on a pair of six-panel folding screens known as the *Kanaya Screens*, once owned by the Kanaya family in Fukui (fig. 31).¹⁷ Matabei isolated individual motifs from small-scale *Genji* paintings and also enlarged them, giving the standing figure in the *Shrine in the Fields* scene, for example, unprecedented size and stature. Matabei envisioned *Genji* imagery as on par with other subject matter, including those related to Chinese lore, as is apparent in another fascinating work, *Collection of Ancient Chinese and Japanese Stories*. Originally united as a single handscroll of twelve paintings representing scenes from Chinese and Japanese tales, each image is now remounted as a hanging scroll. Three depict scenes from *The Tale of Genji*: Chapter 12, "Exile to Suma" (*Suma*); Chapter 39, "Evening Mist" (*Yūgiri*); and Chapter 51, "A Boat Cast Adrift" (*Ukifune*) (cat. 32). Matabei heightened the emotional tenor of the scene in which Niou and Ukifune float in their boat on the Uji

River, depicting Ukifune with a difficult and suffering expression (cat. 32c). Matabei's approach, like that of Sōtatsu, was distinctive enough and his studio practice large enough for him to have overseen a number of artists working in his style, resulting in a group of excellent works that carried on his innovations. These include *Genji* paintings, such as the *Battle of the Carriages* screen in the John C. Weber Collection, as discussed in Melissa McCormick's essay in this volume in relation to the Tosa version of a century before (figs. 22, 23). Here, the relatively limited altercation in the original tale from Chapter 9, "Leaves of Wild Ginger" (*Aoi*), has been rendered with a highly theatrical quality rarely brought to *Genji* painting. Among Matabei's extant works are several handscrolls that illustrate tales performed in the *jōruri* puppet theater, the melodramatic visualization of which resonates with that of the Weber screens.¹⁸

The innovations of Sōtatsu and Matabei, including the abstraction, isolation of motifs, and enlargement of images, continued with Hasegawa Tōhaku (1539–1610) and artists working in his studio. While many *Genji* paintings of the Edo period are often assumed to be the work of either Tosa or Kano painters, those that do not fit stylistically within either of those schools could have been produced by Tōhaku and others.

Kano Eitoku's Grand *Genji* Paintings for Castles and Palaces

Military rulers in the Momoyama and early Edo periods undertook a number of large-scale painting projects, some of which were based on *Genji* themes. Artists of the Kano school, the official painters of the regime, were put in charge of these projects.¹⁹ First among them was Kano Eitoku, famous for the bold, monumental style that he brought to the massive wall-painting program for the interior of Azuchi Castle for the warlord Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582).²⁰ Depictions of *Genji* remained a mainstay of the Tosa school into the early modern period, but increasingly artists like Eitoku, whose style, like that of other Kano painters, was originally inspired by Chinese painting, were required to execute them. For example, according to seventeenth-century records, when Eitoku produced a pair of screen paintings on the theme of *Scenes in and around the Capital* (*Rakuchū rakugai-zu*) for Nobunaga to give to his former enemy Uesugi Kenshin (1530–1578) in 1574, he made a pair of *Genji* screens for the gift as well.²¹ Unfortunately, the subsequent fate and whereabouts of the *Genji* screens are unknown, but the record indicates that the most prominent Kano artist of the day began taking on prestigious commissions of subject matter usually associated with Tosa artists.

A pair of *Genji* screens (originally sliding-door paintings) attributed to Eitoku demonstrates how the artist and his studio adapted the tale's subject matter to large-scale architectural projects (fig. 32). The paintings may have been the walls of one room in the Kyoto residence of the Hachijō (later Katsura) prince Toshihito (1579–1629).²² Eitoku would have produced the paintings for the prince's palace at the behest of Nobunaga's successor, the military leader Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598), who had commanded the construction of a new palace.²³ Even after Eitoku's death, the subsequent military rulers of the Tokugawa shogunate prized screens by the artist and acquired them at high cost, including those of *Genji* themes.²⁴ Numerous references to *Genji* screens by Eitoku and several extant screens by the artist and members of his studio attest to the degree to which the subject formed a substantial part of his repertoire.

Kano Sanraku and the Patronage of the Kujō Family

After the Tokugawa shogunate was established and the leaders of the Kano studio moved to Edo, Kano Sanraku (1559–1635) stayed in Kyoto, where he established what later became known as the Kyoto Kano school (*Kyō-gano*) and received *Genji* painting commissions. Sanraku had been sent to study under Eitoku by Hideyoshi, in whose retinue he had been a page, and when Eitoku died in 1590 at the age of forty-eight, Sanraku completed painting projects started by his teacher, including the so-called dragon ceiling of the Dharma Hall (*Hattō*) at Tōfukuji Temple in eastern Kyoto. Sanraku's patronage relationship with the Toyotomi family continued after Hideyoshi's death in 1598, but he also developed a deep connection to the nobility, and one family in particular, the Kujō.²⁵ Sanraku no doubt came to the attention of the Kujō after his esteemed work on the dragon ceiling painting at Tōfukuji, their family temple. In 1604, when the young Kujō scion, Yukiie (1586–1665), married Toyotomi Sadako (1592–1658), Sanraku's two patronage bases came together.

Sanraku was commissioned to paint an entire room of *Genji* imagery for a residence newly built for Sadako and Yukiie, funded by Hideyoshi's secondary wife, Yodo-dono (1567–1615), who had adopted Sadako after the girl's mother (Yodo's sister) married the second shogun, Tokugawa Hidetada (1579–1632), in 1595.²⁶ Remarkably, one wall from that *Genji* room survives today, the *Battle of the Carriages* (*Kuruma arasoī-zu*), now mounted as a screen in the collection of the Tokyo National Museum, as mentioned in Melissa McCormick's essay in this volume (figs. 20, 21). This particular painting of the public altercation between Lady Rokujō and *Genji*'s wife, *Aoi*, with carriages in the streets of the



Fig. 32. Scenes from *The Tale of Genji*. Attributed to Kano Eitoku (1543–1590). Momoyama period (1573–1615), late 16th century. Pair of six-panel folding screens, originally sliding doors; ink, color, and gold on paper; each: 66 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. x 11 ft. 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (167.8 x 362.4 cm). Imperial Household Collection, Sannomaru Shōzōkan

capital for what should have been a stately procession to the Kamo Shrine, may have been intended to commemorate the marriage and procession of Yukiie and Sadako, as Kawamoto Keiko has suggested.²⁷ In particular, Kawamoto notes the inclusion of a Tokugawa family crest on the attire of one of the onlookers in the screen. With Sadako's family connection to the Tokugawa (her biological mother was at that moment married to the man who would become shogun the following year), the marriage meant that Yukiie was in effect becoming the son-in-law of the shogun. The Kujō and Toyotomi families thus hoped to place themselves in an advantageous political position through the union, and Yukiie was uniquely situated to mediate between the court in Kyoto and the shogunate in Edo. Indeed, he was thought to have been instrumental in arranging the marriage between the shogun Hidetada's youngest daughter, Tokugawa Masako (later known as Tōfukumon'in, 1607–1678), and Emperor Go-Mizunoo (1596–1680) in 1620.

In addition to the simple appeal of a *Genji* room within a residence serving as a vehicle in which to perhaps embed a reference to marital ties between powerful families, there were other reasons why such rooms would have been meaningful to Kujō Yukiie. Yukiie's grandfather Kujō Tanemichi (1507–1594), one of

the foremost *Genji* scholars of his generation, viewed Murasaki's tale as a seminal Japanese literary masterpiece to which he and his family had unique access.²⁸ Tanemichi was also a descendant of the scholar Sanjōnishi Sanetaka (1455–1537), and had studied the tale with Sanetaka's uncle Sanjōnishi Kin'eda (1487–1563), culminating in his creation of the earliest known portrait-icon of Murasaki Shikibu, in 1560 (see the introduction to Chapter 2, fig. 51). Tanemichi saw the potential of his grandson's literary sophistication and therefore entrusted the official transmission of *Genji* learning to Yukiie.²⁹ As discussed in detail in Melissa McCormick's essay, it is thought that when Sanraku created the *Battle of the Carriages* painting he based his composition on screens now in the collection of the Ninnaji Temple that were painted in 1560 by Tosa Mitsumochi (active ca. 1517–72), a work created with the tangential involvement of Kujō Tanemichi (fig. 13).

Kano Sansetsu and the Phantom *Genji* Handscrolls

The creative partnership between members of the nobility like Kujō Yukiie and Kyoto Kano-school painters—namely, Sanraku and his talented student Kano Sansetsu (1590–1651), as well as members of their atelier—reached a peak with the so-called



Phantom *Genji* Scrolls (*Maboroshi no Genji*), which are thought to have been produced over a protracted period, from 1647 until about 1660. Thirteen handscrolls and several fragments survive (cats. 54–57). Considering that complete transcriptions of the texts of each chapter are believed to have originally accompanied each set of paintings, more than two hundred handscrolls would have been required if all the chapters were executed in the same comprehensive and detailed fashion as the surviving fragments.³⁰ The text section of the scroll for Chapter 1, “The Lady of the Paulownia-Courtyard Chambers” (*Kiritsubo*), was transcribed by Kujō Yukiie, Henjōin Ryōjun (dates unknown), and Nijō Yasumichi (1607–1666), and the text in the first volume of Chapter 6, “The Safflower” (*Suetsumuhana*), was transcribed by Yotsutsuji Suekata (1630–1668) and Kamo (Nishiike) Suemichi (1619–1693); all but Yotsutsuji were known to have had a connection to Yukiie.³¹ Scholars believe that this monumental *Genji* handscroll production was likely helmed by Yukiie, and, given the scale of the project, it seems probable that Emperor Go-Mizunoo was involved as well. Yukiie’s status as both grandson of the celebrated authority on *Genji* studies and son-in-law of a shogun suggests that the scroll set was produced for an elite audience of both palace and samurai aristocrats.³²

The Phantom *Genji* Scrolls are characterized by a compulsively meticulous attention to detail and the inclusion of exhaustive pictorial motifs that bespeak the utmost understanding of Murasaki’s tale on the part of the artists. The expertise reflected in the paintings is no doubt due in part to the erudition of *Genji* scholars in Yukiie’s circle but also of the Kyoto Kano painters, who by this time had become well versed in this subject matter. Kano Sansetsu, notably, had compiled a *Record of Paintings of The Tale of Genji* (*Genji monogatari zuga-ki*), as noted by the Confucian scholar Hayashi Gahō (1618–1680).³³ Sansetsu, it is safe to assume, may have had some level of involvement in the Phantom *Genji* Scrolls, especially considering his tendency to immerse himself in the study of painting history; the stylistic resemblance of these *Genji* paintings, with their geometric rocks and landscape forms, to Sansetsu’s work; and the artist’s strong connections to the Kyoto nobility and Yukiie in particular. At first glance, the depiction of the interior scenes and figures does not seem to reflect Sansetsu’s idiosyncratic style. However, we can assume that the need for legibility, given the subject matter, dictated a more conventional approach. Furthermore, the “picture-within-picture” compositions, such as the sliding-door and screen paintings depicted inside palace rooms, do indeed reflect contemporary Kano conventions.³⁴

The Kano School in Edo: Tan'yū and Seisen'in

As an official artist (*goyō eshi*) of the Tokugawa government in Edo, Kano Tan'yū (1602–1674) catered to the painting needs of his shogun patrons, which in addition to the walls of castles included screens of *The Tale of Genji* (figs. 33, 34). This pair of screens by Tan'yū was thought to have been commissioned by Tōfukumon'in (née Tokugawa Masako) and presented to her niece Tomihime, a daughter of the powerful daimyo Maeda Toshitsune (1594–1658), in 1642, when she married Prince Hachijō Toshitada. Tomihime had been adopted by Masako as an heir of the shogunal family, and Tan'yū's screens were part of the dowry prepared for the occasion of her wedding, which represented a strengthening of blood ties between the Tokugawa and the imperial family.³⁵ For the Kano family, this commission was an extremely significant one in terms of reinforcing their status as official painters to the shogunate. This pair of screens depicts one scene from each of the fifty-four chapters of *The Tale of Genji*, and while Tan'yū skillfully incorporates the delicate Tosa approach, these screens showcase his own rich style of painting. The textile borders of the screens include an alternating embroidered design of an *aoi* (wild ginger, sometimes mistakenly called “hollyhock”) crest (fig. 33), the crest of the Tokugawa shogun family, and a flowering peach, along with a lacquer frame featuring cloisonné fittings of the *aoi* crest. No effort was spared in producing a work of art wholly appropriate for the union of the Tokugawa and Hachijō families.

In screens that depict individual scenes from *Genji*, Tan'yū's refined expressiveness stands out, as in his screens of Chapter 10, “A Branch of Sacred Evergreen” (*Sakaki*), and Chapter 14, “Channel Markers” (*Miotsukushi*), in the Idemitsu Museum of Arts (fig. 35).³⁶ Tan'yū's screens set the direction for *Genji* depictions by later Edo Kano-school artists and was adopted by his youngest brother, Yasunobu (1613–1685), as well as by his favorite student, the female artist Kiyohara Yukinobu (1643–1682).³⁷

Known to have signed her works as “daughter of the Kiyohara clan” (*Kiyohara uji no musume*), Yukinobu mastered traditional Tosa and Kano conventions yet developed her own distinctive touch and worked in diverse styles depending on the requirements of the commission. For instance, her innovative approach to the Tan'yū style of *Genji* painting can be seen in her portrait of Murasaki Shikibu, which follows Tosa precedents in overall compositional approach while instilling the famous writer with a more individualized, less stoic persona (cat. 21).

Characteristic of her mastery of the idiom of *Genji* painting is a triptych of hanging scrolls in which negative space and pale ink washes help to create an evocative moonlit setting for the lovers

Ukifune and Niou in a skiff (fig. 36). The elegant calligraphic strands of the famous “Isle of Orange Trees” (*Tachibana no kojima*) poem visually echo the dangling branches of the willow below. Though this verse from the tale was anonymously inscribed after the painting was finished, the artist no doubt had it in mind as she created the work. Employing a Tosa-infused style, Yukinobu also created a *Tale of Genji* album that would have been appropriate for inclusion in a bridal trousseau, a compendium of brightly colored paintings each accompanied by a relevant text inscribed by a courtier (fig. 37).

Kano Seisen'in and the *Genji* Rooms of Edo Castle

Genji rooms were prevalent in architectural interiors of the elite, as seen in the residences of Prince Toshihito and Kujō Yukiie, and when Edo Castle was rebuilt after the Great Fire of 1657, such rooms were included in its inner quarters. The rooms' paintings, which were executed by Tan'yū and the members of his atelier, did not survive the numerous conflagrations that destroyed the castle over the course of the Edo period. Records kept during one of the final reconstructions of parts of the castle in the nineteenth century, however, provide some sense of what those seventeenth-century spaces would have looked like, while demonstrating that such rooms continued to be painted through the end of the Edo period.³⁸

The official painter to the shogunate at that time, Kano Seisen'in Osanobu, who was both the head of the Kano lineage and in charge of the Kano studios, supervised the artisans who produced the paintings for the reconstruction of the “western palace” for the Retired Shogun (Nishinomaru), from 1838 to 1844, and he worked on the paintings for the “main palace” (Honmaru) within the castle complex. Interestingly, reduced-scale preparatory drawings still survive in handscroll form, each about 18 inches (45–46 centimeters) in height (fig. 38). A total of 264 scrolls, including drawings for every room, remain. Such scrolls were prepared by the studio and presented to the commissioning patron, who would refer to them to suggest changes. Once corrections were made, the patron would approve the drawings, which the studio artists expanded to large-scale images for sliding doors and walls, adding colors after the ink outlines were complete.³⁹

In his meticulous *Official Diary* (*Kōyō nikki*), Seisen'in documented his studio's painting projects at Edo Castle from 1814 (Bunka 11) until the day before he died, the eighteenth day of the third month of 1846 (Kōka 3).⁴⁰ Its 5,692 pages, in fifty-three volumes, provide a comprehensive and detailed record of the execution of paintings, payments and finances, and the duties of

the official painters to the shogunate. Seisen'in's diary also records his work on the later reconstruction of Edo Castle, including the reproduction of the paintings of the "second palace" (Ninomaru) residence, and the conservation of the main palace (Honmaru). There was a previous set of drawings, called *Goyukei no tori*, which closely followed the original painting scheme of 1659 by Tan'yū. Seisen'in relied on a work called the Jochū Memorandum (*Jochū oboegaki*) for the pictorial scheme of the Ninomaru. According to this document, *Genji* images from Chapter 23, "First Song of Spring" (*Hatsune*), and Chapters 34 and 35, "Early Spring Greens: Parts 1 and 2" (*Wakana*), were painted under Tan'yū's supervision in the first residence hall of the shogun's inner palace (Ōoku Ichi no goten) of the main palace.⁴¹

Genji Screens as Wedding Dowry

In Seisen'in's aforementioned diary, there is a section on "Moving of Official Residences" (*Hiki-utsuri goyō*), dedicated to the protocol and preparations for weddings and for moving the households of the shogun's family. Specifically, this section describes the types of items brought by women who have been adopted into or who marry into the shogunal family when they relocate to their new residences. Seisen'in records details of seventeen such household-moving projects, and noteworthy among the items listed are twenty-four paintings on *Genji* themes in various formats, including folding screens, standing screens (*tsuitate*), sliding-door paintings (*fusuma-e*), and hanging scrolls.⁴² For instance, a standing screen owned by Ishiyamadera Temple (cat. 74), which is believed to have been painted by Seisen'in, has fittings with the trefoil *aoi* crest of the Tokugawa family and most probably was designed as dowry furniture. We know that Seisen'in paid a lot of attention to this matter, since his nephew Kano Tomonobu (1843–1912) documents in a biographical essay about Seisen'in that his uncle even went so far as to invite eminent scholars to lecture on *The Tale of Genji* as part of his preparation for painting the subject.⁴³ Other writings indicate that Seisen'in researched the customs and regulations of the nobility as well, providing further evidence of how seriously he treated his *Genji* commissions. Although Seisen'in would have followed the Kano-school precedent in the selection of specific *Genji* scenes to be included on wedding screens for the shogunal household, his engagement in the study of the literary themes suggests that he was open to adjusting iconography based on what he learned.

Iconography from the following chapters of *The Tale of Genji* was selected for decoration of the wedding dowry in Seisen'in's time: Chapter 7, "An Imperial Celebration of Autumn Foliage"

(*Momiji no ga*); Chapter 17, "A Contest of Illustrations" (*E-awase*); Chapter 20, "Bellflowers" (*Asagao*); Chapter 21, "Maidens of the Dance" (*Otome*); Chapter 23, "First Song of Spring" (*Hatsune*); Chapter 24, "Butterflies" (*Kochō*); Chapter 26, "Wild Pinks" (*Tokonatsu*); Chapter 29, "An Imperial Excursion" (*Miyuki*); Chapter 32, "A Branch of Plum" (*Umegae*); Chapter 33, "Shoots of Wisteria Leaves" (*Fuji no uraba*); and Chapter 34, "Early Spring Greens: Part 1" (*Wakana jō*). The specific scenes and motifs from each of these prescribed chapters were those that were deemed appropriately auspicious for a young bride. Among the most popular and frequently requested scenes are that of the boating episode and butterfly dance from the "Butterflies" chapter, the celebration of Genji's fortieth birthday from the "Early Spring Greens: Part 1" chapter (cats. 47, 51), and the young girls rolling a large snowball from the "Bellflowers" chapter.⁴⁴

Owing in part to the objective of creating *Genji* imagery that would be suitable for a dowry, many of the most elaborate and



Fig. 33. Detail of fig. 34, showing the Tokugawa family crest



Fig. 34. Scenes from *The Tale of Genji* (*Genji monogatari-zu byōbu*). Kano Tan'yū (1602–1674). Edo period (1615–1868), 17th century. Pair of six-panel folding screens; ink, color, and gold on paper; each: 69½ in. x 12 ft. 1⅞ in. (176.6 x 370 cm). Imperial Household Collection, Sannomaru Shōzōkan



Fig. 35. Chapter 10, "A Branch of Sacred Evergreen" (*Sakaki*), and Chapter 14, "Channel Markers" (*Miotsukushi*). Kano Tan'yū (1602–1674). Edo period (1615–1868), 1669 (Kanbun 9). Pair of six-panel folding screens; ink, color, and gold on paper; each: 58½ in. x 12 ft. 10 in. (148.7 x 360.6 cm). Idemitsu Museum of Arts, Tokyo





Fig. 36. Chapter 51, "A Boat Cast Adrift" (*Ukifune*). Kiyohara Yukinobu (1643–1682). Edo period (1615–1868), 17th century. One hanging scroll from a triptych; ink and color on silk; each: 44¾ x 17⅜ in. (113.7 x 44 cm). Itabashi Art Museum, Tokyo

gorgeous works on the subject—whether by Kano- or Tosa-school artists—focused on the same seemingly auspicious scenes, and there was a tendency toward standardization of the iconography. In so doing, episodes that were originally infused with heightened feelings—ranging from amorousness and lust to remorse and even revenge—were tamed. Contributing to this development was the role of a rationalist and secular Neo-Confucian ethos underlying the rule of the Tokugawa shogunate. In a society in which filial piety, humanism, and a rational, rather than Buddhist, philosophy prevailed, many of the most emotionally charged episodes from the tale could not be faithfully illustrated, though serious readers, of course, would recall the actual narrative events and extrapolate from subtle visual symbolism the undercurrents of the tale.

The Revival of *Yamato-e* and Seisen'in's Studies of Japanese Classics

As suggested above and well documented in the literature, the Kano school owes its origins to earlier generations of artists who mastered Chinese-style brushwork and painting techniques and who immersed themselves in continental legend, literature, and philosophical themes. Through the diligent pursuit and mastery of *yamato-e* (Japanese-style painting), the Kano greatly expanded their repertoire. Tan'yū, in particular, was skilled at replicating both Japanese and Chinese traditional paintings, a practice that became an essential aspect of the established Kano-studio teaching method. Seisen'in, too, was an ardent student of early painting on *yamato-e* themes, and many examples of his meticulous copies survive. It seems that Seisen'in studied Tosa-school paintings as well and incorporated their techniques into his compositions.⁴⁵ He was particularly enthusiastic about copying works of the Heian (794–1185) and Kamakura (1185–1333) periods, and more than 130 of these copies survive, 76 of which are preserved in the collection of Tokyo National Museum. Among extant copies by Seisen'in are four handscroll paintings reproducing the Heian-period *Tale of Genji* scrolls now housed at the Gotoh Museum, Tokyo (fig. 39), as well as two scrolls of the *Illustrated Diary of Murasaki Shikibu*.⁴⁶ Thus, Seisen'in absorbed painting methods and ideas from not only Kano and classical paintings but also Tosa paintings created over the centuries.

Seisen'in's *Genji* copies have a date corresponding to 1823. Even before he copied *The Tale of Genji* scroll now designated a National Treasure, Seisen'in had completed works such as *Suma* (Chapter 12, "Exile to Suma"), *Miotsukushi* (Chapter 14, "Channel Markers"), and *Akashi* (Chapter 13, "The Lady at Akashi") now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and a pair of screens at



Fig. 37. Chapter 35, “Early Spring Greens: Part 2” (*Wakana ge*), and Chapter 17, “A Contest of Illustrations” (*E-awase*), from *The Tale of Genji Album*. Kiyohara Yukinobu (1643–1682); inscriptions by Nijō Yasumichi (1607–1666). Edo period (1615–1868), 17th century. Two albums; ink, color, and gold on paper; each: 6 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 6 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (17.4 x 15.7 cm). Private collection, Japan

Ishiyamadera.⁴⁷ The three Boston scrolls are signed “Seisen Osanobu hitsu,” and the screens at Ishiyamadera are signed “Seisen Fujiwara Osanobu hitsu.” Osanobu adopted the art name Seisen’in in 1814 and received the honorary title Hōgen (“Eye of the Law”) in 1819, so these works were most likely produced during that five-year period, when he was nineteen through his early twenties. Even at such a young age Osanobu revealed his talents, having inherited the elegant style of his forebear of two centuries earlier, Tan’yū, the founder of the Edo Kano school. Nevertheless, he continued deepening his knowledge through his numerous copies of classical works. Seisen’in succeeded to the leadership of the Edo Kano studios after the death of his father, Isen’in Naganobu, in 1828, and the title Hōin (“Seal of the Law”) was bestowed on him in 1834, solidifying his standing as official painter to the shoguns.

In this formal capacity, Seisen’in received orders to paint following in the brush style of his predecessors, but his influences were not limited to the Kano and Tosa schools; he also absorbed lessons from the *yamato-e* revival and from the many classical works that he studied and copied. In all, Seisen’in created at least ten different *Genji*-themed works, including the National Treasure copies,

which represent the final stage in his development of traditional depictions of the tale.

During the era called the Bakumatsu—literally “the end of the military government” of the Tokugawa shoguns—when Seisen’in was active as official painter of the Kano school, the political, social, and artistic worlds experienced incredible upheaval, anticipating the Meiji Restoration. Against this background of tumult, yet another school of artists seeking to revive the ostensibly calm, conservative, and nostalgic *yamato-e* style was emerging. The so-called *yamato-e* revival (*fukko*, “return to the ancient”) refers to the group of artists around Tanaka Totsugen (1767–1823), such as Ukita Ikkei (1795–1859) and a student of Tanaka, Reizei Tamechika (1823–1864) (see the introduction to Chapter 4 in this volume, fig. 65). They based their copies on originals, avoiding identification with the Tosa or other existing schools, and created their own vibrant interpretations of *yamato-e*. Their attitude toward the study of the classics reflected the tide of national studies (*Kokugaku*) and revivalist philosophy. During the Ansei Purge of 1858–60, when the Tokugawa shogunate was cracking down on loyalists to the emperor, Ikkei was arrested; Tamechika, too, was caught up in the intense rivalry between the shogunate and the loyalists, and was

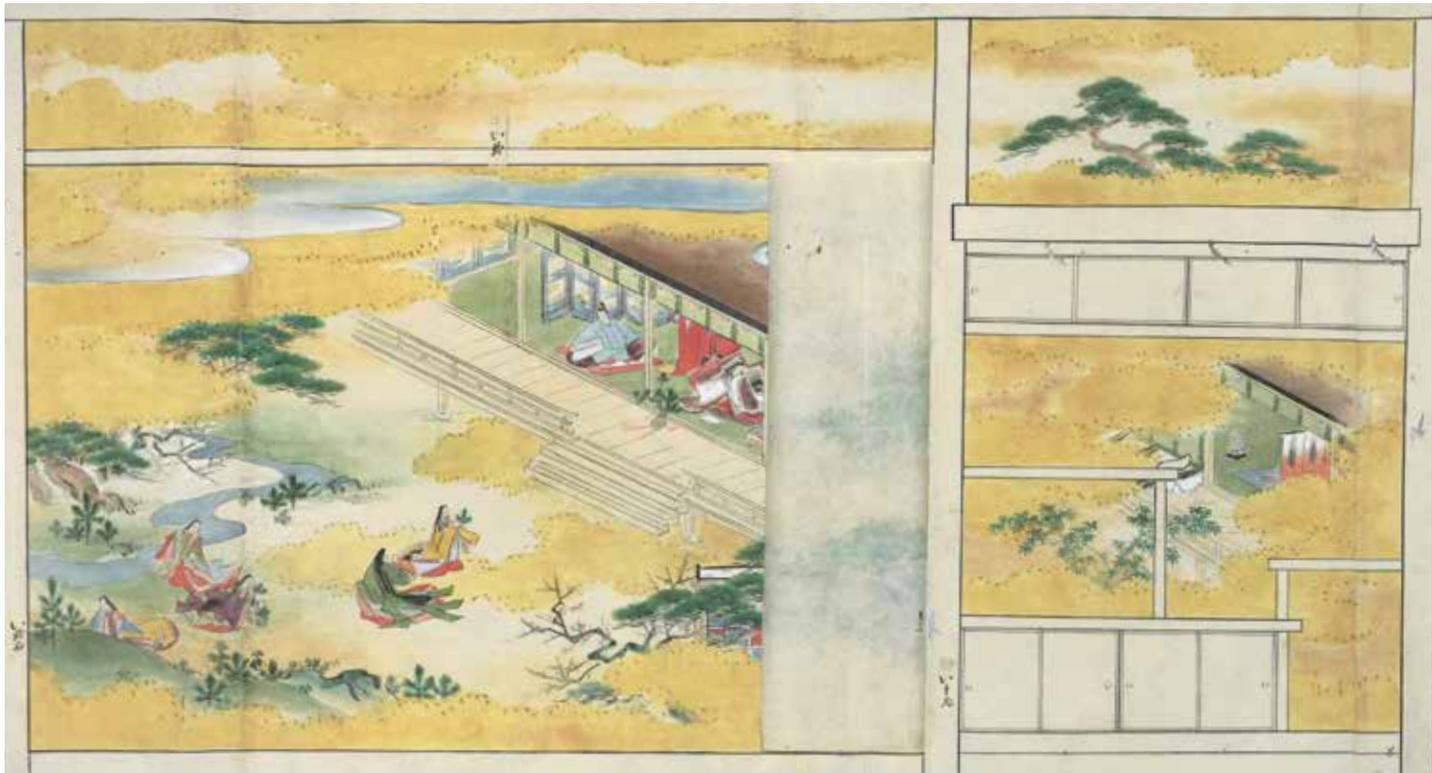
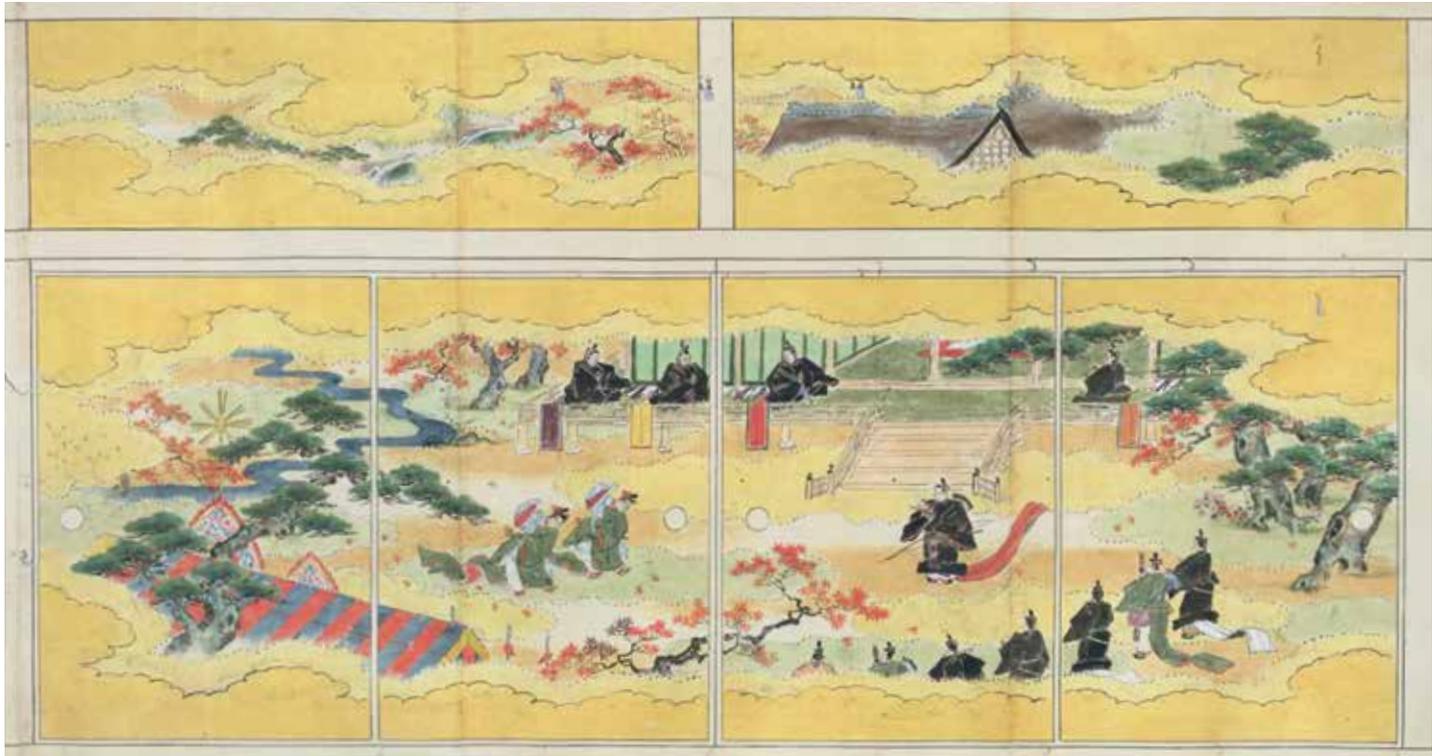


Fig. 38. Preliminary sketches for sliding-door (*fusuma*) paintings for Edo Castle, scenes from Chapter 7, "An Imperial Celebration of Autumn Foliage" (*Momiji no ga*), and Chapter 23, "First Song of Spring" (*Hatsune*). Kano Seisen'in Osanobu (1796–1846). Edo period (1615–1868), 1838 (Tenpō 9) or 1844 (Tenpō 15). Handscroll; ink and color on paper; each: 17½ x 98 in. (44.3 x 248.9 cm). Tokyo National Museum



Fig. 39. Copy of *The Tale of Genji Scrolls*; scene from Chapter 36, "The Oak Tree" (*Kashiwagi*) (original handscroll in collection of The Gotoh Museum, Tokyo, National Treasure). Kano Seisen'in Osanobu (1796–1846). Edo period (1615–1868), 1823 (Bunsei 6). Section of a handscroll; ink and color on paper; H. approx. 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (21.9 cm). Tokyo National Museum

assassinated near Nara by renegade samurai with imperial sympathies. Tamechika was the third son of the Kyoto Kano painter Kano Eitai (died 1842), and, in addition to the Kano-school style, he had studied Tosa painting and the even earlier Heian and Kamakura *yamato-e*, often visiting famous temples such as Kōzanji to assiduously copy famous paintings. As he continued to polish his skills, Tamechika garnered a high reputation at an early age.

In 1843 Kano Seisen'in Osanobu requested that Tamechika make a copy of the *Annual Ceremonies and Events* (*Nenjū gyōji*) handscroll, which preserves a record of court ceremonies held every year in the palace.⁴⁸ In this scroll, a representative event is chosen for each month, resulting in twelve images. Based on the date on the scroll, it seems that the senior, highly regarded Seisen'in commissioned the copy when he was forty-eight years old and Tamechika just twenty-one, a fact that reveals the high

opinion Seisen'in held for the younger artist's talents and knowledge. Tamechika also created paintings of *The Tale of Genji* (MOA Museum of Art, Atami) and a *Portrait of Murasaki Shikibu* (Chiba City Museum of Art).

This revival of *yamato-e* laid a foundation for what would be called *Nihonga*, or traditional Japanese painting (see Chapter 7 in this volume). While *The Tale of Genji* recounts aspects of the elegant life of the nobility during the height of its glory in the Heian period—and is irrefutably and thoroughly immersed in that ethos—its narrative continued to appeal to readers even in the later Edo period, when the military was ascendant and the merchant class rose to prominence. The unparalleled status that the tale occupied in the visual culture of Japan in early modern times is manifested by the brilliant output of artists and artisans described in these pages.



Genji and Good Fortune: Bridal Trousseaux in the Age of the Tokugawa Shoguns

MONIKA BINCSIK

DURING THE EDO PERIOD, weddings among daimyo families, which commemorated the ratification of important political alliances, were stupendously complex undertakings. Negotiations to arrange these marriages often took several years, and the significant expense of the bride's procession, the ceremony, the wedding banquet, and the preparation of the trousseau typically had to be borne mainly by the bride's family. The exception to this rule was that if a daughter of the Tokugawa clan—the family of the shogun—married a daimyo, then that daimyo had to bear the costs of building a new palace (*goshuden*) to receive the princess and furnishing it with beautifully crafted, elaborate necessities, while other daimyo presented gifts to the bride.¹ No matter where the daimyo's provincial domain was located, his principal wife (*seishitsu*) resided permanently in Edo, so the wedding ceremonies always took place there.² The dowry was an essential component of these arranged marriages, and no expense was spared in creating a spectacular array of household accoutrements for the bride's married life.³ This essay documents how imagery from *The Tale of Genji*—the quintessential statement of courtly sensibilities—was adopted in dowry sets of the samurai elite as a demonstration of political and cultural legitimacy. I also explore how the tale and its auspicious iconography used for wedding sets came to influence the production of incense utensils and textiles in the Edo period.

The trousseau for a woman from the highest echelons of society usually encompassed folding screens, illustrated books, luxurious garments, bolts of expensive silks, furniture, and many more household items necessary for the privileged life of a daimyo's wife. The lacquer component, the core of the trousseau, alone consisted of approximately fifty to sixty sets of carefully crafted, refined objects, including *maki-e*-decorated lacquer furniture and a wide array of personal effects, such as cosmetic utensils and boxes, mirror stands and mirrors, a basin, a comb stand, a tooth-blackening set, a writing box and a writing desk, letter boxes, and incense utensils, as well as the “set of three shelves” (*santana: zushi-dana*,

kuro-dana, and *sho-dana*) to display some of these items (cat. 73). And the trousseau was not complete without lacquer implements for amusement: incense-game sets; *go*, *sugoroku*, and *shōgi* game boards; and a shell-matching game, which could be considered a symbol of marriage because of its aim to bring together two halves of a shell in a perfect match. The game was housed in a pair of octagonal lacquer boxes that had a significant role in the wedding ceremony as well (fig. 72). During the wedding the lacquer trousseau was prominently displayed at the groom's residence to dazzle and impress the invited guests of both families.

The preparation of these complex trousseaux took several years. Many artists and craftsmen were involved, including painters of the Kano and Tosa schools (see the essays by Kyoko Kinoshita and Melissa McCormick in this volume), *maki-e* lacquer masters, metal craftsmen, and the artisans of textile workshops, among others. By the mid-Edo period, lacquer items of wedding sets became standardized in content, shape, and size, and the sumptuary laws issued by the Tokugawa shogunate regulated their decoration to reflect the rank, wealth, and social position of the owner.⁴ From the seventeenth century, *The Tale of Genji* became associated with not only these wedding sets but also the education of high-ranking women.⁵

The Political Dimension of Tokugawa Marriages

Even before the establishment of the *bakufu* (military government in Edo), the founder of the lineage of Tokugawa shoguns, Ieyasu (1543–1616), had come to recognize the importance of securing allies and friendships through marriage.⁶ After the death of his rival warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598), Ieyasu started to arrange marriages of his sons and daughters to influential daimyo. As soon as he consolidated power in 1615, Ieyasu issued the *Laws for Military Households* (*Buke shohatto*), which forbade the arrangement of marriages without the shogun's explicit permission,



Fig. 40. *Wedding Procession of Tōfukumon'in*. Edo period (1615–1868), early 17th century. Detail of left screen of a pair of four-panel folding screens; ink, color, gold, and gold leaf on paper; each: 61 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. x 11 ft. 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (157 x 357 cm). Mitsui Memorial Museum, Tokyo. Important Cultural Property

understanding that bloodlines were important political assets.⁷ Ieyasu used the children of his son, the second Tokugawa shogun, Hidetada (1579–1632), to strengthen the support of the shogunate. He created three Tokugawa clans, the houses of Owari, Kii, and Mito, the children of which had the right to succeed as shoguns if the reigning one had no male heir. But the first Tokugawa shogun had even higher aspirations: he apparently began plotting to marry his granddaughter Masako (1607–1678), the fifth daughter of Hidetada, into the imperial lineage as soon as she was born.⁸ The marriage was to secure the uncontested hegemony of the Tokugawa by gaining imperial approval and support, but it also allowed Ieyasu to possibly become the great-grandfather of an emperor, merging the Tokugawa line with the ancient and sacred bloodline of the imperial house.⁹

Such a political move was not unlike what the Fujiwara regents had done centuries before in the age of *Genji*, and one wonders if Ieyasu's reading of the tale helped shape his political goals. In 1615, almost immediately after Ieyasu took power by defeating Toyotomi Hideyori (1593–1615), he summoned a renowned courtier-scholar to Nijō Castle for a reading and lecture on Chapter 23, "First Song of Spring" (*Hatsune*).¹⁰ The chapter was long considered auspicious, being set on New Year's Day amid felicitous imagery. And for Ieyasu, like many warrior rulers before him, such as the Ashikaga shoguns, there was the possibility of seeing oneself in the

character of Genji, especially in this chapter, which depicts him as the master of an idyllic realm at Rokujō, calling on the various women in residence who live in harmony (a similar concept was realized in the Ōoku, the so-called Great Interior of Edo Castle that was the residence of the shogun's mother, wives, concubines, and daughters, as well as their female servants). The *Hatsune* chapter has further important connotations of peace and prosperity, as we shall see.

In 1620, the Tokugawa arranged for the fourteen-year-old Masako (later known as Tōfukumon'in) to marry Emperor Go-Mizunoo.¹¹ Recognized as the sovereign's second legitimate wife, she received the title of empress consort and later became an influential arbiter of court-*bakufu* relations and a prominent patron of the arts from her location in the imperial palace in Kyoto. Even from the start, the marriage allowed the Tokugawa to rise above all other daimyo, and that status was marked first and foremost by a spectacular marriage procession for all to witness. The wedding parade, in which the young woman was transported from the Tokugawa's Nijō Castle in Kyoto to the imperial palace, established a precedent for those of later Tokugawa brides.¹² A visual record of the grand event comes by way of a pair of screens in the Mitsui Memorial Museum collection that depicts the lengthy procession weaving its way through the streets of the capital (fig. 40).

Tōfukumon'in's elaborate bridal trousseau was transported in 260 lacquer chests containing cosmetic boxes, writing and document boxes, musical instruments, picnic boxes, and kimonos, as well as thirty pairs of folding screens, all made by the most talented artists and craftsmen of Kyoto. The lacquer trousseau items made by the Kōami workshop, the premier lacquer artisans of the day and the official lacquer masters of the shogunate (*goyō makie-shi*), are listed in inventory-like fashion on the Mitsui Memorial Museum screens,¹³ demonstrating that these works, richly embellished with gold, were markers of wealth and political power. The only surviving *maki-e* object from her trousseau is an incense box with a “pear-skin” (*nashiji*) ground that is embellished with a design of dewdrops on a chrysanthemum branch (perhaps a presumptuous reference to the imperial line, but more likely an auspicious symbol of longevity and a motif with literary associations).¹⁴ The interior of the lid bears the Tokugawa crest of three wild ginger leaves (*aoi*) in a circle. On the procession screens, the same Tokugawa crest appears prominently on the bride's magnificent ox-drawn carriage, as it does on a renowned lacquer wedding set made for Ieyasu's great-granddaughter, Chiyo-hime.

The “First Song of Spring” (*Hatsune*) Wedding Set

The National Treasure *Hatsune chōdo* (“First Song of Spring” wedding trousseau) was part of the dowry of Chiyo-hime, the eldest daughter of Tokugawa Iemitsu (1604–1651), the third shogun. In 1639, Chiyo-hime (1637–1699, later Reisen'in) at the age of three, was married to Mitsutomo (1625–1700), the second head of the Owari Tokugawa family. The wedding was arranged almost immediately after the birth of the princess, as Iemitsu was deeply concerned about the possibility of not having a male heir, a situation that would have led to the destabilization of the recently unified country. He wanted to create a strong alliance with the Owari branch of the Tokugawa family, hoping that if he died without a son, Mitsutomo would be the next shogun. Accordingly, Chiyo-hime's luxurious trousseau was prepared with the assumption that it might belong to the future shogun's wife (Midaidokoro). The wedding set, which has several groups of lacquer works, gold and silver furniture, and richly embellished robes, is considered the most complete and highest quality trousseau ever produced in Japan.¹⁵

The lacquer component of the set can be divided into three groups. The largest group is decorated with a composition based on the “First Song of Spring” (*Hatsune*) chapter of *The Tale of Genji* (figs. 41, 42); the second is embellished with the subsequent chapter, “Butterflies” (*Kochō*), representing the boats on the pond of

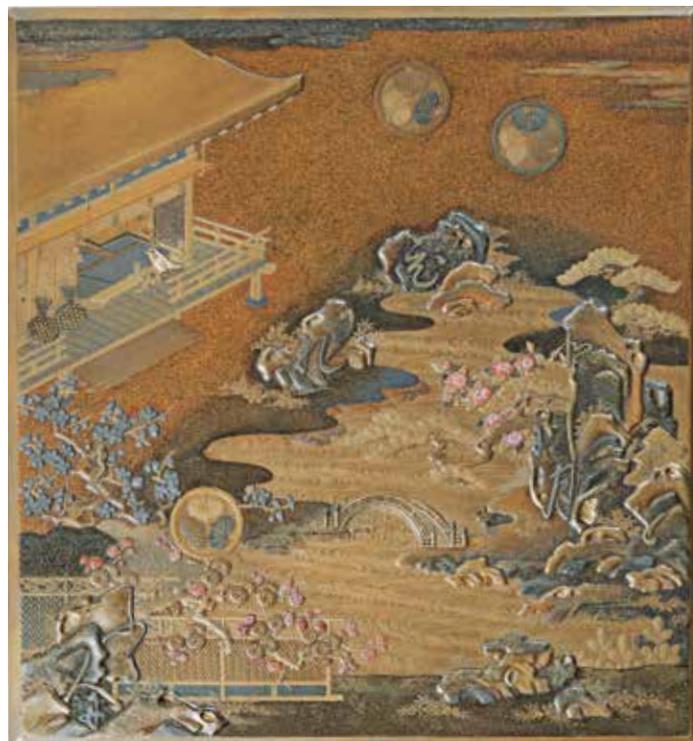


Fig. 41. Lid of a writing box from the “First Song of Spring” wedding trousseau (*Hatsune chōdo*), owned by Chiyo-hime. Edo period (1615–1868), 1639. Lacquered wood with gold and silver *takamaki-e*, *hiramaki-e*, and *togidashimaki-e*, cut-out gold- and silver-foil application, and gold, silver, and coral inlays on *nashiji* (“pear-skin”) ground; H. 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (5.8 cm), W. 9 in. (22.9 cm), D. 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (24.6 cm). The Tokugawa Art Museum, Nagoya. National Treasure

the Rokujō estate; and the third contains items with diverse types of decoration, such as incense-game sets with imagery inspired by famous places (*meisho kōbako*), the Uji River (*Uji kōbako*), ancient and modern poems (*Kokin kōbako*), and so on. The *Hatsune* group includes a pair of boxes for the shell-matching game (see fig. 72) and the three shelves (*santana*) to display, respectively, cosmetic boxes, incense utensils, and writing utensils, as well as books and handscrolls (cat. 73). The smaller items include, among other things, various cosmetic boxes, a mirror stand, comb boxes, a tooth-blackening set, a writing box (fig. 41 and detail on p. 74), a writing desk, and letter boxes. Altogether seventy objects of the trousseau have survived, including forty-seven lacquers in the *Hatsune* group and ten in the *Kochō* group, with many of the boxes containing smaller boxes, accessories, or cosmetic utensils. The large number of incense utensils and incense-game sets deserves attention.¹⁶

The imagery on the *Hatsune* objects derives from the first section of that chapter in the tale, in which Genji exchanges New

Year's greetings and poetry with Murasaki and the women of the Rokujō mansion, and calls on his young daughter, the Akashi Consort (see cats. 51, 74). The girl is being raised by Murasaki while her biological mother, the Akashi Lady, remains at her winter quarters of the mansion (see Appendix 1 in this volume). Unable to hear her daughter's "first song" (*hatsune*) of the New Year, the Lady has sent over delicacies in woven baskets and a beautifully crafted warbler on a pine branch, accompanied by a poem.¹⁷

年月を 松にひかれて ふる人に
今日うぐひすの 初音きかせよ

<i>Toshitsuki o</i>	Through the months and years,
<i>Matsu ni hikarete</i>	Ever drawn to the seedling pine,
<i>Furu hito ni</i>	Waits the aged one:
<i>Kyō uguisu no</i>	Today permit her to listen
<i>Hatsune kikase yo</i>	To the warbler's first spring song. ¹⁸

In the refined *maki-e* composition of the trousseau items, all the significant elements of the above scene are depicted; however, each item's iconography and execution are somewhat different. Almost all of the *maki-e* lacquer techniques of the early Edo period were used to create these extremely precise, three-dimensional compositions, making the wedding set one of the most important lacquerworks produced in the early seventeenth century. The beautiful garden with flowering plum trees and young pines, the open veranda (*sunoko*) of a *shinden*-style building (*tainoya*) with woven bamboo "bearded baskets" (*higeko*), and the pine branch with an artificial warbler are depicted in great detail (see p. 74). Some of the plum flowers are executed in inlaid red coral, while the rocks and trees of the garden are in gold and silver *takamaki-e* relief, and their texture is expressed using both small indents with gold-foil inlay (*kimekomi*) and cut-out gold-foil application (*kirikane*). The waves on the pond are finely drawn with thin lines in *hiramaki-e* (*tsukegaki*). A folding screen and rolled-up bamboo blinds are visible inside the mansion. The artificial warbler on the veranda is rendered boldly in gold inlay and the woven bamboo baskets are executed in tiny gold-foil inlays—a signature technique of the Kōami family. The family crest of the Tokugawa, with its three *aoi* leaves, is repeated in the composition against a thick "pear-skin" (*nashiji*) ground, those on the top creating the illusion of the sun and/or moon and the lower one in the plum tree seeming to be a reflection of the crests in the sky. The placement of the family crests is different on each trousseau item but always prominent. Most wedding sets display the crests of both the bride's and the groom's families to symbolize the union, but in the case of the marriage behind the



Hatsune set, in which both families were of the Tokugawa lineage, only one crest is represented multiple times.

In addition, "hidden" *ashide* characters ("reed-hand script"—referring to cursive characters that are disguised) are worked into the scenes.¹⁹ Several characters from the poem cited above—including 年月を (*toshitsuki o*), ひかれて (*hikarete*), ふる人 に (*furu hito ni*), けふ (今日, *kyō*), 初音 (*hatsune*), and きかせよ (*kikase yo*)—are executed in gold and silver inlay, while other



Fig. 42. “First Song of Spring” wedding trousseau (*Hatsune chōdo*), owned by Chiyo-hime. Edo period (1615–1868), 1639. Lacquered wood with gold and silver *takamaki-e*, *hiramaki-e*, and *togidashimaki-e*, cut-out gold- and silver-foil application, and gold, silver, and coral inlays on *nashiji* (“pear-skin”) ground. The Tokugawa Art Museum, Nagoya. National Treasure

words, such as “pine” and “warbler,” are represented pictorially. For example, in one of the scenes the *kana* 木 (ni) is hidden in the trunk of the *maki-e* pine and should be read *matsu ni*. The inclusion of *ashide* was a reference to calligraphy of the Heian period (794–1185) and to exquisite lacquerworks, such as *tebako* cosmetic

boxes embellished with *ashide*, made for the aristocracy in the Kamakura period (1185–1333).²⁰

Among the beginning-of-spring rituals, on the first day of the New Year pine seedlings were collected to bring longevity. The “first song” of the warbler (*hatsune*) sounds like the word for the first cry

of a newborn baby (*hatsune*); therefore, the bird and the imagery were appropriate symbols for wishing a happy, long marriage and a healthy first male child—crucial to the survival of the Tokugawa shogunate. At the same time, the representation of the Rokujō estate conveys the notion of an ideal marriage. And yet, viewers familiar with the tale would realize that beneath the auspiciousness of the scene is an undertone of sadness on the part of the Akashi Lady, who permitted her daughter to be taken away so that she could be raised with a pedigree that would allow her to eventually rise to the position of empress. Thus, the underlying message for the young bride in the shogunal sphere is one of self-sacrifice for the promotion of the family line.²¹

It is remarkable that such an intricate set of objects, including more than sixty lacquers, was completed within only a three-year period. The *maki-e* was executed by Kōami Chōjū (1604–1651, the tenth Kōami master) and his workshop, the best lacquer artists of the time. The metal fittings were done by Gotō Kenjō (1586–1663), the head of the Gotō school, the finest metal craftsmen of Japan (see cat. 85).²² According to later sources, the overall design of the *maki-e* decoration was conceived by Iwasa Matabei (1578–1650) (cats. 32–34).²³

The Tale of Genji and the Feminine Ideal

In the seventeenth century, some of *Genji*'s characters and even its author came to be seen as role models for exemplary feminine behavior.²⁴ Didactic *kana* books for women (*kanazōshi jokun*) published in Kyoto from about 1640 onward present the ideal of “virtuous women” derived from Shinto, Buddhist, and Confucian ideas and include Murasaki Shikibu to exemplify the importance of studying the classics.²⁵ Murasaki's biography also appears in the *Mirror of Women of Our Land* (*Honchō jōkan*, 1661), where her literary talent is emphasized. At about the same time, painters of hanging scrolls began featuring female writers of the Heian period with new frequency. In Kyoto, Tosa Mitsuoki (1617–1691) and Kiyohara Yukinobu (1643–1682) produced several hanging scrolls portraying Murasaki Shikibu (cats. 20–22) and Sei Shōnagon (ca. 966–ca. 1025) in a manner similar to how they are mentioned in the *Mirror of Women of Our Land*. Murasaki Shikibu's accomplishments as a poet and a prose writer, the sophisticated court life that surrounded her, and the idealized beauty of the women she described in the text made *The Tale of Genji* a basis of education for women and, as such, a felicitous indication of one's literary education and success as a woman and a wife.²⁶

Eighteenth-century wedding trousseaux records sometimes mention a copy of *The Tale of Genji*, along with other important

volumes such as *Chronicle of Great Peace* (*Taiheiki*), *The Tales of Ise* (*Ise monogatari*), *Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern* (*Kokin wakashū*), *The Tale of the Heike* (*Heike monogatari*), *Tale of the Soga Brothers* (*Soga monogatari*), and *One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets* (*Hyakunin isshu*). Decorative lacquer cabinets made to hold illustrated sets of *Genji* were often embellished with designs and motifs related to the tale, such as Ishiyamadera Temple, the site where, according to legend, Murasaki wrote the tale (cat. 66).²⁷

The attention paid to Heian-period court culture and the study of literary classics influenced the new ideals of contemporary womanhood in this period. Pictorial representations of the tale, especially in the context of a wedding trousseau, may have functioned to ensure female success in marriage, motherhood, and all domestic activities. Elite women were expected to be familiar with the tale and to master skills recognized therein, including knowledge of poetry and music. Incense games, shell games, and card games requiring a visual vocabulary of the tale and familiarity with the text were also part of a woman's social education.²⁸ Shell-matching games, involving shells decorated on the interior with scenes related to the tale's fifty-four chapters, were a popular amusement for not only the women of the elite but also those of the samurai and wealthy merchant classes (cat. 76). Later *Genji karuta* cards, like the shell-matching game, were useful as mnemonics for refreshing one's knowledge of each chapter and its representative scenes and poems (cat. 75).²⁹

Incense Culture and The Tale of Genji

Numerous utensils and game sets related to incense were prepared for the wedding trousseau, demonstrating the importance of incense in the life of high-ranking ladies, who used it to perfume their hair and garments, to scent interiors and papers for important letters, to perform ceremonies, and to play incense games. From the end of the Nara period (710–94), the court aristocracy drew inspiration from Buddhist rituals (*sonae-kō*, incense offerings) and began to use incense in their residences. This particular practice was called “burning incense to scent the room” (*soradaki-kō*) and involved a type of incense different from that burned in the Buddhist ceremonies.³⁰ The *soradaki-mono* (also called *taki-mono* in the Heian period) consisted of complex combinations of pulverized herbs and incense woods, sometimes including as many as twenty ingredients, kneaded into balls with honey. An indicator of refined taste, it not only scented the air but also perfumed clothes and hair. *Taki-mono* is featured in Heian-period literature, including *Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern* (*Kokin wakashū*, ca. 905) and *The Pillow Book* (*Makura no sōshi*, by Sei Shōnagon, 1002).

The Tale of Genji is one of the most important sources for studying Heian-period incense culture. For example, *taki-mono* is mentioned in Chapter 5, “Little Purple Gromwell” (*Wakamurasaki*), and a description of an incense contest (*kō-awase*) is included in Chapter 32, “A Branch of Plum” (*Umegae*). These incense contests were similar in concept to poetry contests (*uta-awase*) and painting contests (*e-awase*) and involved enjoying and comparing different combinations of incense, mainly the *taki-mono* type. The kneaded incense balls were placed in closed ceramic vessels and buried in wet ground, sometimes for years, to mature and further develop their fragrance. At the competitions, incense was often associated with poetry.³¹

Specialized lacquer utensils, often decorated with *maki-e*, were created for the preparation of the incense. Storage boxes containing smaller, square boxes were made to house raw incense ingredients, such as agarwood, cloves, sandalwood, deer musk, amber, and herbs. A common incense utensil of the period was a six-lobed lacquer incense burner with a metal netting cover (*hitorimo*) used to perfume garments (fig. 43, cat. 74; see also cat. 51). Common in the Heian period, this type of incense burner is represented in the “Trees Encoiled in Vines of Ivy” (*Yadorigi*) scene of the twelfth-century *Genji Scrolls*. A two-tiered shelf for storing incense utensils, including the *hitorimo*, was a typical furnishing of *shinden-zukuri*-style interiors (fig. 43, cat. 74). For scenting kimono in the Edo period, the garment was laid wide open on a foldable lacquer stand (*fusego*) and an incense burner placed under it (fig. 44).

Zen Buddhism was introduced into Japan from China around the time the Kamakura shogunate (1185–1333) was established. Among high-ranking warriors, the main supporters of Zen, fragrance of agarwood (*jinkō*) became popular. In incense ceremonies, guests took turns enjoying different incense woods (cat. 72); individual pieces of wood, not kneaded incense compositions, were used. The warriors took advantage of direct trade with the continent and imported incense woods in large quantities.³²

The etiquette of the ten-round incense game and the rules of the “way of incense” (*kōdō*) were developed in tandem with those of the tea ceremony (*chadō*, “way of tea”) in the cultural circle of shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa (1436–1490).³³ Sanjōnishi Sanetaka (1455–1537), a leading literary scholar, poet, calligrapher, and authority on *The Tale of Genji*, and Shino Sōshin (1445?–1523), a prominent tea master, laid the foundations of the way of incense and formulated the special tools necessary for the games. Along with the fashion for incense-comparing games connected to literature (*kiki-kō* or *kumi-kō*), the practice of collecting famous named incense wood pieces also flourished.³⁴



Fig. 43. Two-tiered incense shelf with incense burner and metal net. Edo period (1615–1868), mid-19th century. Lacquered wood with gold *hiramaki-e* on *nashiji* (“pear-skin”) ground; shelf: H. 16 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (43 cm), W. 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (85.2 cm), D. 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (39.4 cm). Tokyo National Museum



Fig. 44. Foldable stand for scenting kimono and incense burner with chrysanthemum-branch motifs. Edo period (1615–1868), early 19th century. Lacquered wood with gold *hiramaki-e* on *nashiji* (“pear-skin”) ground; H. 23 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (59.8 cm), W. 23 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (60 cm), D. 12 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (30.9 cm). The Tokugawa Art Museum, Nagoya

Early in the Edo period, when Tōfukumon’in was married to Emperor Go-Mizunoo, the aristocracy in Kyoto realized that the revival of traditional art forms, including those related to incense, was essential for the preservation of their cultural identity, counterbalancing the new rules enforced by the recently established Tokugawa shogunate to restrict the imperial court’s influence and representative power. Yonekawa Jōhaku (1611–1676), an incense master who categorized incense woods into five groups according



Fig. 45. Woodblock-printed *kosode* pattern book (*On-hiinakata*) featuring a *Genji* motif, vol. 2, 1666



Fig. 46. Woodblock-printed, three-volume *Genji*-themed *kosode* pattern book (*Genji hinakata*), "The Third Princess," 1687

to their "tastes" (*gomi*), became Tōfukumon'in's instructor and laid the groundwork for Edo-period incense games, a popular pastime of both high-ranking warriors and the court aristocracy (cat. 68). Incense game sets and utensils began to be incorporated into the wedding sets of the daimyo princesses (cat. 72).³⁵ By the mid-Edo period, the wealthy merchant class also had access to incense, broadening the game culture. Later, the use of incense sticks (*senkō*) and other new forms of enjoying fragrances also became widespread.

The proliferation of woodblock-printed books and prints beginning in the seventeenth century further broadened the incense culture, making it even more accessible among the commoners. In the popular *Genji* incense game (*Genji-kō*), participants had to identify the scents associated with the various chapters of the tale (cat. 72). Incense utensils and the symbols used in playing *Genji-kō* were often depicted in prints (cats. 101, 102). At the same time, complex incense-comparing games associated with poetry (*kumi-kō*) and numerous and varied incense-culture utensils were created (cat. 67).

Wearing the Tale

As demonstrated by Chiyo-hime's "First Song of Spring" (*Hatsune*) wedding set, motifs representing certain chapters of *The Tale of Genji* were regarded as appropriate for dowries and considered to

be auspicious patterns. Accordingly, *Genji* imagery was selected to embellish wedding garments as well (for a later example, see cat. 78). The earliest existing example is the wedding over robe (*uchikake*) owned by Kame-hime (1560–1625, later Seitoku-in), the eldest daughter of Tokugawa Ieyasu, who was married to Okudaira Nobumasa (1555–1615) in 1576. Scenes from the tale, including Chapters 4, "The Lady of the Evening Faces" (*Yūgao*), 28, "An Autumn Tempest" (*Nowaki*), and 51, "A Boat Cast Adrift" (*Ukifune*), are depicted in black ink painting within ten white circles of tie-dyed brown ground, recalling the traditions of Momoyama-period *tsujigahana* silks ("flowers at the crossroads," a unique technique that combines tie-dyeing, ink painting, and sometimes embroidery or gold-leaf application). The style of the scenes probably derives from *Nara-ehon* illustrations (illustrated manuscripts produced from the late Muromachi period to the early Edo period) and can also be associated with the monochrome *Genji* traditions of ink-line drawing (*hakubyō*) (see Chapter 2 in this volume).³⁶

In Kyoto, Tōfukumon'in became a patron of the arts and was well known for commissioning fabrics and garments from textile workshops of the Nishijin district. She also ordered garments from the Kariganeya, a Kyoto textile shop, which are documented in the "Garment Orders from the Retired Empress" (*Nyoin gosho-sama goyō gofuku kakiage cho*, 1678).³⁷ These modernized patterns later became known as Kanbun *kosode* designs, as they were very popular in the Kanbun period (1661–73), and were characterized by

varied iconography and large, stylized compositions placed diagonally, running from the left shoulder to the right side of the waist. However, for formal events she wore the traditional court garment, a twelve-layered robe (*jūnihito-e*) emulating the ideals of feminine beauty in Heian-period Kyoto.³⁸

During the mid-seventeenth century, several illustrated *Genji* books (*E-iri Genjibon*) were published in Kyoto, making the tale and its pictorialization accessible to townspeople. The first such book, *The Illustrated Tale of Genji* (*E-iri Genji monogatari*; cat. 91), was created in 1650 by the poet and lacquer artist Yamamoto Shunshō (1610–1682) on the advice of Matsunaga Teitoku (1571–1654), a literary scholar and well-known poet. For poets and members of literary circles who composed *haikai* (a popular, sometimes humorous, type of linked verse that led to the creation of the seventeen-syllable verse called *haiku*), the poems of the tale were the focus of interest, not the prose, so the book's more than 200 illustrations served to summarize and visualize the content. This publication was followed by several similar books, one of the most popular being the *Osana Genji* (1661), which was reprinted in Edo and illustrated by Hishikawa Moronobu (1618–1694) (see Chapter 7 in this volume). The book's sophisticated illustrations also included textile patterns found on the garments of the represented figures. However, the depiction of detailed *kosode* patterns began a few years later, in 1666.

The first woodblock-printed *kosode* pattern book (*On-hiinakata*) was published in Kyoto to provide fashion ideas to wealthy merchant-class and high-ranking ladies as well as the *kosode* dyers.³⁹ The two volumes include 200 illustrations, four of which refer somewhat loosely to *Genji*. One has the description “white ground” (*ji shiro*) with “ink drawings of [scenes from] *Genji*” (*Genji sumi-e no moyō*) (fig. 45), and another consists of scattered fans with courtly figures. None of these compositions can be easily identified with specific scenes from the tale; rather, they evoke Heian-period court culture with general representations of aristocratic men wearing formal robes (*sokutai*) or hunting garments (*kariginu*), and women in *jūnihito-e* (twelve-layered robes). Bamboo blinds (*misu*) and *shinden-zukuri*-style buildings are also incorporated into the *Genji* imagery.⁴⁰

In 1667, the *On-hiinakata* pattern book was reprinted and slightly revised. The figurative *Genji* compositions and other similar patterns, altogether fifteen, were removed from the book, and dynamic, stylish Kanbun *kosode* patterns were added. The detailed *Genji* scenes were probably too time-consuming to create, and the large-scale, modern patterns were received with more enthusiasm. However, one of the *Genji* compositions—a *rusu-moyō* design (from which human figures are absent)—was reprinted. It



Fig. 47. Woodblock-printed *kosode* pattern book devoted to the *yūzen* technique (*Yūzen hiinagata*), “The Lady at Akashi,” 1688

represents a rolled-up bamboo blind and a frame with two characters, *yūzuyu* 夕露, from a poem in the “Lady of the Evening Faces” (*Yūgao*) chapter.

In 1687, a three-volume *Genji hinakata* pattern book was published. It contains 139 illustrations; however, half of them are actually not directly related to the tale. On the left side of each of the relevant spreads, a heroine from the tale or a famous female poet is depicted with a commentary, and on the right side is an enlarged image of the *kosode* the woman is wearing. For example, the composition associated with the Third Princess (Onna Sannomiya) is a stylized and abbreviated *rusu-moyō* scene from Chapter 34, “Early Spring Greens: Part 1” (*Wakana jō*), including rolled-up bamboo blinds, *Genji* books, and a hare’s foot fern (*shinobukusa*) (fig. 46; see also cat. 51).⁴¹



Fig. 48. *Kosode* robe with *Tale of Genji* design. Edo period (1615–1868), second half 18th century. Paste-resist dyeing, silk- and metallic-thread embroidery on crepe silk; 66½ x 49⅝ in. (169 x 126 cm). Marubeni Collection



Fig. 49. *Kosode* robe with spring and autumn flowers and *Genji* motifs. Edo period (1615–1868), early 19th century. Paste-resist dyeing, silk- and metallic-thread embroidery on crepe silk; 68⅞ x 47¾ in. (173.6 x 121.2 cm). The Tokugawa Art Museum, Nagoya

The talented Kyoto-based fan painter Miyazaki Yūzensai (1654–1736?) perfected *yūzen*, the paste resist-dyeing technique named after him. It was used to create freehand designs with multiple colors and pictorial compositions. As demonstrated in the woodblock-printed *kosode* pattern book *Yūzen hiinagata*, published in 1688, the representation of literary works such as *Genji* was only one of his strengths, another being his affinity for modernizing traditional patterns.⁴²

The development of the new *yūzen* technique revived interest in figural compositions, exemplified by two patterns in the *Yūzen hiinagata* depicting “Exile to Suma” (*Suma*) and “The Lady at Akashi” (*Akashi*), Chapters 12 and 13, respectively (fig. 47). These compositions, rendered with black outlines, were inspired by Tosa-school album-leaf paintings (see cats. 39–41). A mid-eighteenth-century *kosode* in the Marubeni collection is a good example of such figural compositions (fig. 48).⁴³ On the upper half, against a tie-dyed reddish-pink ground, vignettes of various *Genji* scenes—framed in fans, snowflakes, and *matsukawa-bishi* (lozenges)—are

depicted in fine black ink painting on the white resist. Scattered on this surface are mint-green silk-embroidered and gold couched chapter titles, including “Broom Cypress” (*Hahakigi*), “A Molted Cicada Shell” (*Utsusemi*), “Little Purple Gromwell” (*Wakamurasaki*), “The Safflower” (*Suetsumuhana*), and “An Imperial Celebration of Autumn Foliage” (*Momiji no ga*), Chapters 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7, respectively. The undyed white ground of the lower half of the garment is embellished with a detailed, colorful *yūzen* composition of a sea-shore scene, which might refer to Chapter 13, “The Lady at Akashi” (*Akashi*), along with additional auspicious patterns.

The *Yosei hinagata* pattern book, published in 1692 with Yūzensai’s compositions, demonstrates the continuing fashion for *rusu-moyō* motifs. For instance, the *Wakamurasaki* pattern features cherry trees in full bloom, a brushwood fence, and a bamboo blind, and the *Sekiya* pattern has court carriages among Japanese cedar trees. Around the mid-Edo period, *rusu-moyō Genji* patterns were gradually incorporated into landscapes. By the late Edo period, the “imperial court style” (*goshodoki*), characterized by a combination

of seasonal landscapes and *rusu-moyō* scenes from literary classics, was developed for high-ranking samurai ladies (fig. 49, cat. 70).⁴⁴

The close association of certain scenes and motifs from *Genji* with their appropriate seasonal settings influenced the pictorial representation in decorative arts of typical activities performed each month and festivities associated with the New Year, cherry-blossom viewing, Tanabata (seventh-month Star Festival), moon viewing, and the like. Numerous depictions of famous views (*meisho-e*) also derive from the tale. Most of the *Genji*-themed lacquers, garments, and ceramics were designed to re-create the sophisticated lifestyle of the Heian aristocracy or to refresh the user's knowledge of the tale. The literary classic not only transmitted court customs and ceremonies but also guided conventions for leading a respectable, cultured, and elegant life.

Coda: The Wives of the Last Shoguns

Following the fourth shogun, Ietsuna (1641–1680), all the subsequent shoguns married the daughters of emperors, imperial princes, and regents, the latter being a hereditary position among five Kyoto-based noble families, most prominently the Fujiwara.⁴⁵ By the seventeenth century, the Kyoto aristocracy had lost political power and had no significant income; however, it maintained a representative authority and kept alive the traditions of court culture. The samurai elite wanted to be seen as inheritors of this elegant culture—especially that of the Heian period, as idealistically represented in *The Tale of Genji*. Marriages arranged by the Tokugawa shoguns continued to shape the politics of the period until the very end of the regime. And although few wedding-trousseau lacquers were decorated with *Genji*-themed iconography after the mid-seventeenth century,⁴⁶ and none as extensively as the *Hatsune* set of the early Edo period, *Genji* motifs appeared on lacquers and garments used by these wives, and the tale continued to figure prominently in their educations. In the face of a diminished *bakufu*, the two last consorts of the Tokugawa shoguns before the fall of the shogunate in the mid-nineteenth century played important political roles.

In 1856 a marriage was arranged between the shogun family and the Shimazu, one of the most powerful and wealthy daimyo of the time.⁴⁷ The wedding was between Atsu-hime (1835–1883) and the thirteenth shogun, Iesada (1824–1858), who succeeded his father the same year that Commodore Matthew Perry reached Uraga. To mark the occasion a trousseau and an elaborate palanquin were created for the high-ranking samurai bride, with the shogunate contributing certain items, such as the palanquin and the ten-round incense game set (cats. 71, 72).⁴⁸ The paintings on

the interior of Atsu-hime's palanquin feature colorful scenes of felicitous imagery from the “First Song of Spring” and “Butterflies” chapters that was meant to herald an auspicious future, and *Genji* imagery likely greeted her on the walls of the women's quarters at the shogun's castle. But for all of the good fortune wished upon Atsu-hime and Iesada, the marriage lasted only nineteen months.

In another attempt to fortify the power of the shogunate and bridge the gap between the Tokugawa and the court, in 1862 an imperial princess, Kazunomiya (1846–1877, later Seikan'in), the younger sister of Emperor Kōmei (1831–1867), was married to Iemochi (1846–1866), the fourteenth shogun. The wedding ceremony was different from previous ones because Kazunomiya, who also happened to be an excellent calligrapher and *waka* poet, had a higher rank than her groom. Due to political tensions, the wedding procession had to be closely guarded. Iemochi felt the need to demonstrate his loyalty to the emperor, who suddenly became the center of political attention, and visited Kyoto with his retainers—almost 230 years after the previous shogunal visit, by Iemitsu. The foundation of the restoration of the emperor's power was the 1866 Satsuma-Chōshū alliance between the leaders of the reformists in these domains. In the midst of political issues generated by the arrival of the Westerners, these leaders supported Emperor Kōmei and challenged the ruling Tokugawa shogunate. The young shogun died in 1866, leaving Tenshō-in (Atsu-hime) and Seikan'in (Kazunomiya) to be in control of Edo Castle, the Tokugawa residence. According to Iemochi's will, Tokugawa Iesato (1863–1940) was to succeed him, but Tenshō-in and Seikan'in were against the succession of a three-year-old boy as shogun during such turbulent times and instead supported Tokugawa Yoshinobu (1837–1913), who would become the last shogun. At the end of the Boshin War in 1869, Tenshō-in and Seikan'in successfully negotiated the bloodless surrender of the castle (see cat. 71).

In contrast to the women at *Genji*'s idyllic Rokujō estate, as presented in paintings and lacquers, the young Tokugawa brides had to face political unrest and social change, from Tōfukumon'in negotiating delicate relations with the court to Tenshō-in and Seikan'in witnessing the fall of the shogunate. Yet, *The Tale of Genji*, with its complex portrayal of human nature, may have helped prepare these elite women for their roles. As impressionable young brides they were educated in the tale's prose and poetry and were exposed to its iconography, whether on the paintings in their palanquins and residences, on the extraordinary objects in their bridal trousseaux, or on the textiles that they touched and wore.



CATALOGUE



CHAPTER ONE

Heian Court Culture and the Transmission of the Tale

THE SOCIETY SO VIVIDLY represented in *The Tale of Genji* is centered around the imperial institution, which is the physical, political, and spiritual essence of the capital city of Heian, present-day Kyoto (see map on p. 21). The plan of Heian was based on the grid system of the Tang capital of China, and it situated the emperor in the loftiest and most geomantically advantageous position, facing his subjects to the south and with his back to the north. Proximity to the emperor determined the social hierarchy: the highest-ranking aristocrats lived in the upper east side of the capital, while those less advantaged lived farther away from the imperial compound. The palace complex was a virtual city within the city, populated by administrative bureaus and offices, and the setting for the elaborate ceremonies that marked the busy ritual calendar. The center of Heian society, the court was where the most ambitious individuals aspired to be, and Murasaki Shikibu—as the author of *The Tale of Genji* came to be known—was in the middle of things. With her position as a tutor to the young empress Fujiwara no Shōshi (later known as Jōtōmon’in, 988–1074), Murasaki Shikibu, through her tale, diary, and poetry, provided the ultimate insider’s account of life inside the palace and within the residences of courtiers and provincial officials in the capital.

Murasaki Shikibu’s name incorporates a reference to her father’s post in the Ministry of Ceremonials (*Shikibu-shō*). She came by her position, it seems, after word of her literary prowess caught the attention of Empress Shōshi’s father, the powerful statesman and de facto ruler Fujiwara no Michinaga (966–1027). Michinaga’s political ascent was legendary even in his day, and a certain resemblance to the protagonist Genji has not gone unnoticed. As the father of four empresses and the grandfather of three emperors, Michinaga asserted total control over the maternal line of the imperial house. Murasaki Shikibu’s diary begins with a dramatic account of the birth of Shōshi’s first prince and the numerous festivities that followed. A thirteenth-century handscroll illustrating scenes from the diary shows, for example, the celebration that occurred on the baby’s fiftieth day (cat. 3).

Other paintings in the same scroll depict Murasaki Shikibu directly, making them the earliest, although imaginary, representations of the author, as in a scene in which she instructs the young Shōshi on Chinese poetry (fig. 50). *The Tale of Genji* was written in the vernacular Japanese language; as a tale, or *monogatari*, which literally means the “telling of things,” it had its roots in the oral tradition. Although women were socially discouraged from displaying too much learning, particularly a knowledge of the Chinese classics, *Genji* is replete with references to the Chinese canon. Murasaki was rigorously educated by her father, Fujiwara no Tametoki (d. 1029?), and makes it abundantly clear in her diary that she surpassed her brother in her studies. In the scene illustrated here, she tutors the empress in secret, as they read two scrolls of the New Ballads (Chinese: *Xinyuefu*) from the *Collected Works* of the Chinese poet Bai Juyi (772–846) (see cats. 7, 8). No work of Chinese literature had more influence on *The Tale of Genji* than Bai Juyi’s “Song of Everlasting Sorrow,” and his individual poems reproduced in *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing* (*Wakan rōeishū*) proved a lasting source of inspiration.¹

Murasaki Shikibu first referred to *The Tale of Genji* in a diary entry from the prince’s fiftieth-day celebrations in the year 1008, when the work was apparently still in progress. The mention of this date in a contemporaneous record has led many to recognize 1008 as the tale’s date of completion, but we can safely assume that it was still a work in progress at this time. In a flirtatious exchange, the courtier Fujiwara no Kintō intrudes among the female attendants to ask, “Excuse me, but might the young Murasaki be here?” The quick-witted Murasaki Shikibu replies, “I don’t see anyone resembling Genji, so why would that Lady be here?”² By asking for “young Murasaki,” the character introduced in Chapter 5 in *The Tale of Genji*, Kintō’s words suggest that the tale was not only well under way but also already being enjoyed by the men and women of the court. Indeed, during the preparations for Shōshi’s return to court with her newborn son, Murasaki records her overseeing the transcription and binding of a luxurious copy of the tale for the

empress to take with her.³ Shōshi's father, Michinaga, provided exquisite new papers, brushes, ink, and an inkstone for the task. So eager was he for the tale that he even sneaked into Murasaki's quarters and took a draft copy, which he apparently turned over to his second daughter. The idea of having an imperfect draft in circulation caused the author much dismay, as she claims to worry about it "hurting her reputation," but the demand was clearly great.⁴ Indeed, the history of readers obsessed with *Genji* began about a decade later. One such reader was Takasue no Musume, the daughter of Sugawara no Takasue, who was born in 1008 while Murasaki was still writing her tale (cat. 17). The future lady-in-waiting later patterned her memoir, *The Sarashina Diary* (*Sarashina nikki*, ca. 1060), on the tale and recalls likening herself to its female characters, such as Yūgao and Ukifune. She even describes the joy she felt when, as a thirteen-year-old girl, she received a box containing "the fifty-odd chapters" of the tale:

With my heart pounding with excitement, I was able to read, right from the first chapter, the *Tale of Genji*, this tale that had confused me and made me impatient when I had read only a piece of it. With no one bothering me, I just lay down inside my curtains, and the feeling I had as I unrolled scroll after scroll was such that I would not have cared even if I had had the chance to become empress!⁵

The passage is thought to refer to the year 1020, signaling that Murasaki Shikibu had completed her masterpiece by at least the previous year, and thus leading various scholars to hypothesize that 1019 was the most probable date for the tale's completion.

Until the seventeenth century—when movable-type and then woodblock-printed versions entered circulation—every single copy of *The Tale of Genji* was written in manuscript form (see John T. Carpenter's essay in this volume).⁶ No manuscripts survive today in Murasaki Shikibu's hand. Indeed, the only *Genji* texts from the entire Heian period are the lengthy excerpts that accompany the paintings in the twelfth-century *Genji Scrolls* (see figs. 8–10, 12). Aside from those scrolls, the oldest *Genji* texts today date to the Kamakura period (1185–1333), roughly two hundred years after the tale's completion. The oldest manuscript, of which only a small portion survives, is in the hand of the poet Fujiwara no Teika. He and the women in his household copied all fifty-four chapters in the year 1225, according to his diary (see cat. 4).⁷ Teika's calligraphic copies, which came to be known as the Blue-Cover Edition (*Aobyōshi-bon*), were considered authoritative. Nearly contemporary and identical in content was an edition copied in



Fig. 50. Instructing Empress Shōshi on the Chinese classics, from the handscroll of the *Illustrated Diary of Murasaki Shikibu* (*Murasaki Shikibu nikki emaki*) (detail). Kamakura period (1185–1333), 13th century. Section of a handscroll; ink and color on paper; H. 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (21.9 cm). Private collection, Japan

1255 by Minamoto Mitsuyuki and his son Chikayuki, called the Kawachi Edition (*Kawachi-bon*). The fifty-four chapters almost always took form as separate booklets, which could be circulated and exchanged from one household library to another, sometimes to aid in the transcription of a missing chapter. The *Genji* chapter titles often derived from the tale's *waka* poems (composed of thirty-one syllables), and they became a form of shorthand for evoking the narrative worlds of each chapter. The material division of the tale into separate booklets allowed artists to represent the essence of each chapter in pictorial form on the front and back covers, resulting in some of the earliest examples of book-cover design (cat. 9).

— Melissa McCormick

1. For an introduction to the use of Chinese literature in *The Tale of Genji*, see Pollack 1083.
2. *Murasaki Shikibu nikki* (The diary of Murasaki Shikibu); see Murasaki Shikibu 1994, p. 165; translation adapted from Bowring 1985, p. 91.
3. *Murasaki Shikibu nikki*; see Murasaki Shikibu 1994, pp. 167–68. See also Bowring 1985, pp. 93–97.
4. *Murasaki Shikibu nikki*; see Murasaki Shikibu 1994, p. 168; translation adapted from Bowring 1985, p. 95.
5. Arntzen and Itō 2014, p. 112.
6. Shimizu Fukuko 2003, pp. 4–19.
7. Fujiwara no Teika, *Full Moon Diary* (*Meigetsuki*), entry for the sixteenth day of the second month of 1225; see Harper and Shirane 2015, p. 169; translation by Thomas Harper.

1 源氏物語 須磨帖・蜻蛉帖 伝慈円筆

Tale of Genji Chapter Books: “Exile to Suma” (*Suma*) and
“Ephemerids” (*Kagerō*)

Calligraphy in the style of Monk Jien (1155–1225)

Kamakura period (1185–1333), mid-13th century

Two thread-bound manuscript books; ink on decorated paper

Each: 6⁹/₁₆ × 6³/₈ in. (16.6 × 16.2 cm)

Harvard Art Museums / Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Gift of
Mrs. Donald F. Hyde in honor of Karl Kup (1974.89.2)

Most premodern examples of *Genji* divide the fifty-four chapters into separately bound volumes, and these thirteenth-century chapter books are among the oldest manuscripts of the tale in the world.¹ Several pages bear striking decorations that enhance the experience of reading the tale. For example, this double-page spread from Chapter 12, “Exile to Suma” (a), uses the “flowing ink” (*suminagashi*) technique, in which swirling patterns of ink dropped in water are captured on paper laid on the water’s surface, creating patterns that resemble marble, wood grain, or water. The latter seems especially relevant in the case of “Suma,” which refers to the location along the Inland Sea (present-day Kōbe) where Genji retreats in self-imposed exile. He departs the capital to preempt official censure by the rival political faction at court and to protect the young Crown Prince, who is next in line to the throne. This Crown Prince, thought by the public to be the son of the deceased Kiritsubo Emperor and thus Genji’s half brother, is, in fact, Genji’s own secret son with his father’s consort Fujitsubo.

In the pages of text illustrated here, Genji visits Fujitsubo before setting out for the distant shore. Fujitsubo, deeply regretful of their grave transgression against the Kiritsubo Emperor, has taken Buddhist vows. Bound together by a dangerous secret and anxious about their child’s welfare, the characters have a tense and emotional meeting. Genji is overwhelmed by Fujitsubo’s presence:

The sound of her robes rustling, the scent of her perfume . . . these things aroused a warm nostalgia in [him], suggesting that her glorious beauty remained unchanged even after she had taken vows. Though he was tempted to remind her subtly of her cold cruelty toward him, he thought better of it. It would surely displease her if he were to bring up such matters now that she was a nun, and it would bring even greater anguish to his own heart. He thus chose his words carefully.

“I can conceive of only one reason why I am suffering the consequences of these trumped-up charges, and I fear the judgment of the heavens for that sin. Even if I am to lose my life—for which I have no regrets—it doesn’t matter so long as the Crown Prince ascends the throne without incident.”²

A sense of temporality inheres in the “flowing ink” technique, which physically captures a fleeting moment on the surface of the paper; with no two patterns ever the same, it reverberates with notions of life’s mutability. In the context of the passage above, the suggestive pattern complements Genji’s stated nostalgia and the sense of a shared history between the two characters. The ink patterns also resemble an ethereal vapor, reminiscent of the incense smoke with which Fujitsubo, having taken Buddhist vows, becomes associated. More than anything, the reader’s own experience of the text determines the degree to which “flowing ink” patterns appear to be abstract or representational.

A distinctive two-page tableau in the book for Chapter 52, “Ephemerids” (*Kagerō*), uses a different decorating technique, in which yellow-brown granulated pigment is sprinkled over papers to which variously shaped stencils have been applied (b). The pages here include a crescent moon, a dramatic diagonal band that extends across the two pages, paulownia flowers, a line of flying geese, and a stylized sandbar (*suhamu*). In this late chapter, which concerns the next generation of characters after Genji’s death, Kaoru expresses his secret longing for his wife’s half sister, the First Princess, in a poem about the cold autumn evening wind. His thoughts then turn to his deceased love nicknamed the “Princess of the Uji Bridge” (*Hashihime*), whose death he blames for all his sorrows. The symbolism of the pictorial motifs on decorated paper is rarely straightforward; here, however, the bold diagonal band evokes the Uji Bridge, and the geese conjure the melancholy autumn scene of Kaoru’s poem.

A thirteenth-century manuscript of Chapter 38, “Bell Crickets” (*Suzumushi*), in the collection of the National Museum of Japanese History represents yet a third volume from the original set of fifty-four chapters to which these books belonged.³ All are assembled using the so-called section binding (*tetsuyōsō* or *retsujōsō*) technique, in which stacks of several sheets of paper are folded in half and stitched at the crease to create signatures that are then bound together. The soft mulberry paper of such books makes them particularly easy to handle. Indeed, the slightly frayed and darkened edges where the thumb and index finger have touched the pages attest to eager readers over the years. MM

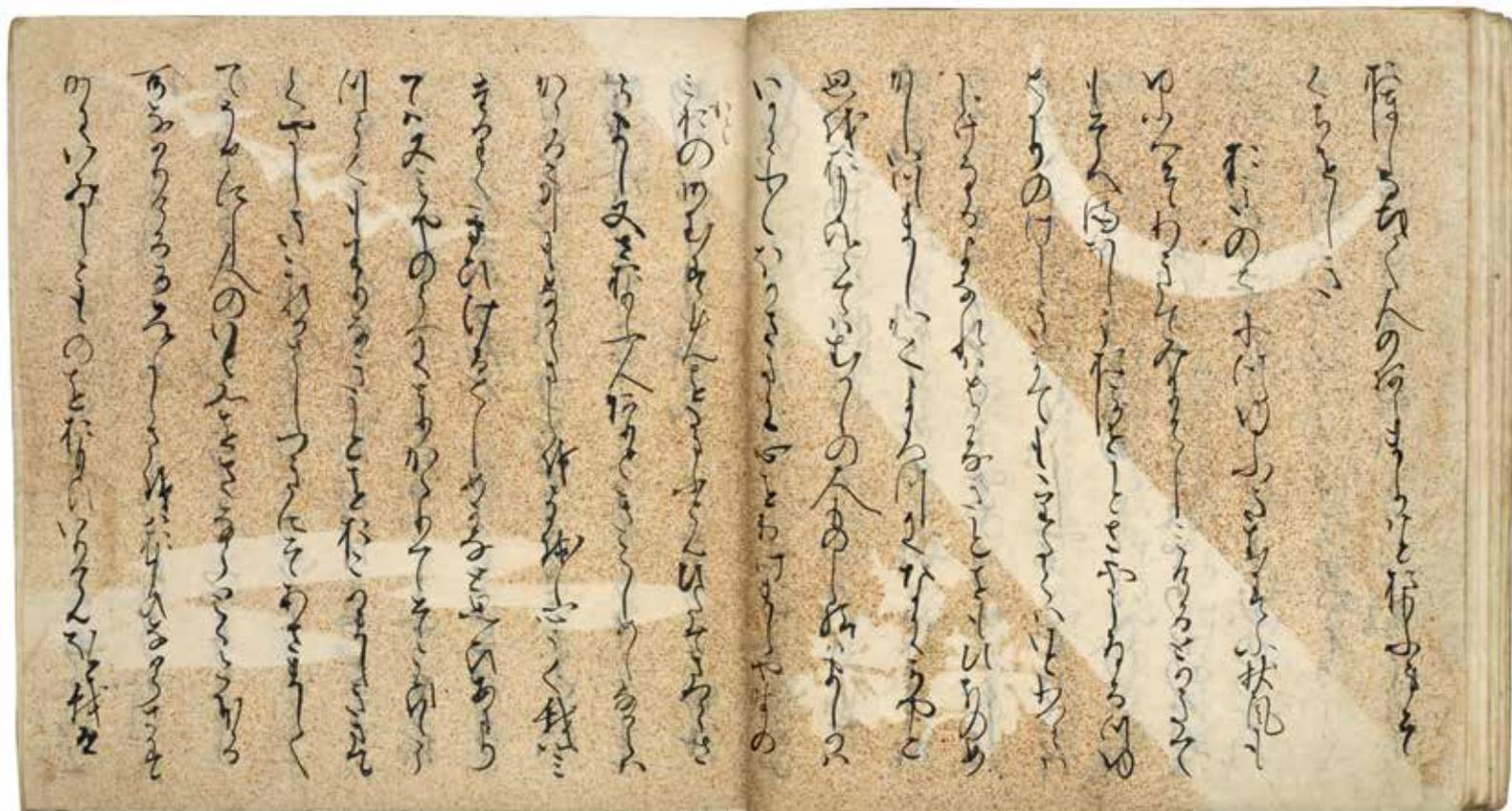
1. Itō 2013; Itō 2014. See also the entry by Fumiko E. Cranston in Rosenfield, F. E. Cranston, and E. A. Cranston 1973, pp. 235–36, no. 78.

2. Washburn 2015, pp. 263–64 (quotation on p. 263).

3. Itō, Abe, and Asakawa 2015.



a. Pages from "Exile to Suma" (*Suma*)



b. Pages from "Ephemerids" (*Kagerō*)



2 住吉物語絵巻

The Tale of Sumiyoshi (Sumiyoshi monogatari emaki)

Kamakura period (1185–1333), late 13th century

Handscroll section mounted as a hanging scroll; ink, colors, and gold on paper

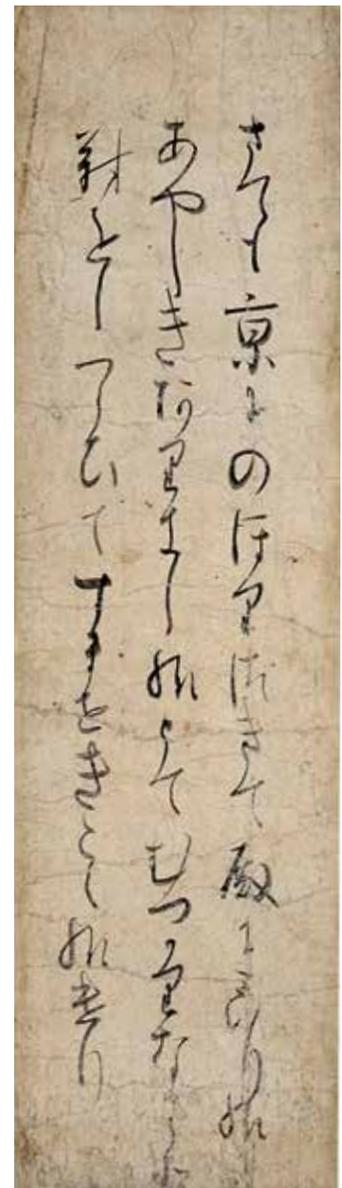
11 3/4 × 28 1/16 in. (29.8 × 71.3 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary Griggs Burke Collection, Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015 (2015.300.19a, b)

Murasaki Shikibu ingeniously transformed familiar plots, character types, and topoi from older works of fiction to construct some of the most memorable parts of her tale. Among these models was *The Tale of Sumiyoshi (Sumiyoshi monogatari)*, a tenth-century story of a motherless girl who overcomes the abuse of a conniving

stepmother. When a dashing courtier falls in love with the young woman, the stepmother fools him into marrying one of her own daughters instead. The heroine is left to fend for herself in the face of aggressive male suitors, in one instance just barely escaping the clutches of a lecherous old man. The girl flees to Sumiyoshi, where she finds protection with her mother's former nurse. Meanwhile, the courtier, having realized that he married the wrong woman, prays to find his true love. Through the benevolent intervention of the bodhisattva Kannon of Hasedera Temple, the man finds the woman in Sumiyoshi and takes her back to the capital, where they eventually live happily ever after.

The handscroll fragment shown here depicts the reunited couple on their return to the city, traveling in a carriage at the front



of a procession that makes its way through an autumnal landscape. Their escort includes three armed men, two with long bows and quivers of arrows at their sides, and a third clutching a long black halberd. The warrior on horseback wears deerskin chaps and a white robe emblazoned with a majestic-looking bird. The large band of pale blue mist that covers the bottom portion of the painting is both atmospheric and strategic; it functions as a pictorial device to propel movement across the vast expanse of narrative picture scrolls.

Unfortunately, very little of the original text that accompanied the illustrations survives. For this example, a small section of the related text has been preserved and remounted as a separate hanging scroll: the three lines of elegantly brushed calligraphy read,

“Then they arrived in the capital and went up to the mansion of Chūjō’s father, who was upset about his son’s secret marriage to an unknown country girl. Nevertheless, he built a special wing of the house for them and there established the newlyweds.”¹

The Tale of Genji artfully references *The Tale of Sumiyoshi* in a famous scene often referred to as “the defense of fiction” from Chapter 25, “Fireflies” (*Hotaru*). Tamakazura, the character whose life most resembles that of the heroine from the earlier tale, studies the story to make sense of her own but finds that her reality is stranger than fiction:

She couldn’t find a single character whose circumstances were similar to her own. It appeared as though the heroine



Princess in *The Tale of Sumiyoshi* experienced many remarkable incidents considered unusual as much in her own day as in the present. She compared the heroine's narrow escape from a forced marriage to the Chief Auditor to her own experience with the loathsome Taifu no Gen.²

Murasaki Shikibu thus acknowledges her debt to past tales by having her own fictional character describe the similarities. But she also implies that her tale surpasses those of the past by creating a character whose situation is unprecedented in literature. While Genji should be playing the role of the dashing courtier who rescues the young woman, for Tamakazura there is no simple happy ending. Genji has created an elaborate fiction himself, letting the world believe that Tamakazura is his long-lost daughter while continuously making advances toward her. Tamakazura eventually emerges unscathed and married to someone else, seemingly having learned the lessons of the fictional heroines who came before her.

MM

1. Translation in Murase 2000, p. 106.

2. Washburn 2015, p. 519.

3 紫式部日記絵巻断簡

Illustrated Diary of Murasaki Shikibu (Murasaki Shikibu nikki emaki dankan)

Kamakura period (1185–1333), 13th century

Handscroll segment mounted as a hanging scroll; ink, colors, gold, and silver on paper

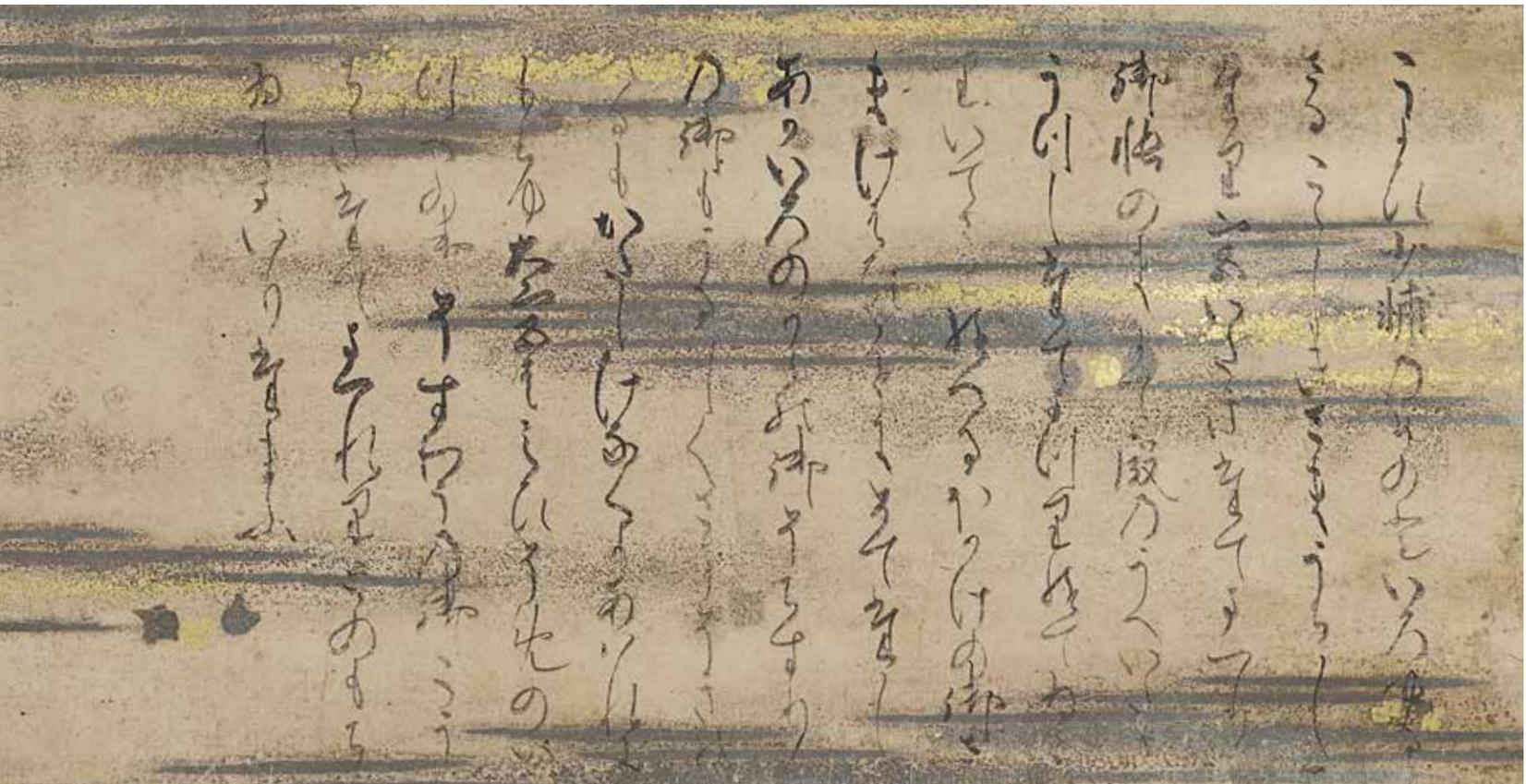
8¼ × 31¾ in. (20.9 × 79.7 cm)

Tokyo National Museum

Important Cultural Property

Not in exhibition

Shimmering, cloudlike patterns of granulated silver and cut gold leaf appear beneath the text of this scroll, which describes the elegant celebrations marking the fiftieth day since the birth of Prince Atsuhira (1008–1036) to Empress Shōshi (988–1074). The text is from the diary of Murasaki Shikibu, who, as the tutor and lady-in-waiting to Shōshi, had privileged access to these events and a vested interest in the success of the empress and her son. For these reasons, her diary was not only a personal memoir but also an unofficial record that bolstered the reputation of Shōshi's father, Fujiwara no Michinaga (966–1027). As regent, Michinaga wielded control over the imperial house and its maternal line by becoming the father of four empresses and the grandfather of three emperors. His success,



therefore, hinged upon his daughters giving birth to crown princes who could ascend to the throne at a young age. Thus, in 1008, when Shōshi gave birth to the first of two sons who would later occupy the throne, Michinaga and his household were overjoyed.

The calligraphy on the scroll reproduces the passage from Murasaki's diary describing the celebration:

That evening wet nurse Shō was allowed the forbidden colors [despite the rules restricting the colors and types of fabrics members of the palace staff could wear]. She looked so young. She carried in the prince to that part of the chamber where the dais was. Her Excellency then took the child from her and moved out into the main area; in the light of the torches she looked quite magnificent. I was also impressed at how formally she had dressed in a red jacket and plain printed train. Her Majesty wore a mantle of light purple with five cuffs, under a somewhat less formal robe of dark red. His Excellency offered the ceremonial rice cakes to the prince.¹

The new mother, Her Majesty Shōshi, is depicted on the right with her back to the viewer, while Her Excellency, Shōshi's mother,

holds the baby prince in her arms. The women's voluminous, multilayered robes with gold details echo the dazzling sartorial display described in the accompanying passage. Michinaga, situated below and between the two women, bows his head slightly as if in deference to the boy, the future Emperor Go-Ichijō. A delightful message of felicity and longevity for the future emperor is embedded in a painting depicted on the sliding door facing the newborn. There, a young boy in Chinese dress pushes up his sleeve as he dips a ladle into a stream. Chrysanthemum flowers bending toward the water suggest that this is the magical stream of ancient Chinese legend, which, being infused with the flowers' life-prolonging dew, extended the lives of all who drank from it.

One final figure of note in the painting is the court lady in the lower right, most likely the diarist herself, Murasaki Shikibu. Like the ubiquitous ladies-in-waiting in *Genji* paintings, she represents the class of women who became the authors and storytellers of courtly tales. Turned slightly toward us, she quietly signals her role as the narrator of these historical events. MM

1. Bowring 1985, pp. 87, 89.

4 紫式部集切 藤原定家書

Page from *The Poetic Memoirs of Murasaki Shikibu* (*Murasaki Shikibu shū-gire*)
Fujiwara no Teika (Sadaie, 1162–1241)
Kamakura period (1185–1333), first half 13th century
Detached leaf of a booklet mounted as a hanging scroll; ink on
decorated paper
7½ × 3⅞ in. (19.2 × 9.9 cm)
Private collection, Japan

The jagged handwriting of Fujiwara no Teika—the courtier-poet and literary arbiter par excellence of his era—stands out against a sedate background of stenciled plum-blossom motifs. Though most famous for compiling poetry anthologies of exemplary *waka*, such as the *New Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern* (*Shin kokin wakashū*) and *One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets* (*Hyakunin isshu*), Teika is also remembered for editing the definitive version of Murasaki Shikibu’s *Tale of Genji* that has been passed down to posterity (see the introduction to this chapter). According to an entry for the second month of 1225 in his personal journal, *Full Moon Diary* (*Meigetsuki*), Teika was concerned about the accuracy of the various versions of *Genji* manuscripts circulating at the time, so he embarked on producing an authoritative recension of the tale, stripping away the additions made after Murasaki’s death.¹ In the same diary entry, Teika had noted that his copy was stolen in the 1190s. The so-called *Abyōshi-bon*, or Blue-Cover Edition, compiled at the time is considered to reflect the tale as transmitted through his hands. Surviving pages in Teika’s hand of *The Poetic Memoirs of Murasaki Shikibu*, including the example here, demonstrate that he admired her poetry as well as her prose. The *Poetic Memoirs*, a compilation by Murasaki of her own *waka*, operates as a kind of fictional autobiography that chronicles the author’s emotional state as she dealt with the often tumultuous interpersonal relations of the palace.²

Having attained celebrity as a poet, editor, and critic, Teika became known to all in palace circles for his bold, idiosyncratic brush writing, which was held in high esteem even though it did not adhere to conventions of orthodox court calligraphy. His handwriting became the foundation for a style of calligraphy admired especially by early modern tea aficionados, who cherished its artless bravado.³ His descendants faithfully emulated his calligraphy; though it is often hard to distinguish Teika’s hand from that of others working in his distinctive style, connoisseurs have reached a consensus that the set of fragments to which this transcription belongs is from the hand of Teika himself.⁴ To assist readers in deciphering the sometimes intractable script, the modern versions of *kana* and *kanji* characters are inserted here.

返し
つれ／＼とながきはる日はあをやぎの
いとゝうき世にみだれてぞふる
かばかり思うしぬべき身をいといた
うも上すめ〔き〕くかなといひける
人をきゝて

Kaeshi (“A response” to the previous poem from Lady Miya no Ben asking when Murasaki Shikibu would be returning to the palace after a prolonged absence):

<i>Tsurezure to</i>	As I idle the time away
<i>Nagaki haru hi wa</i>	On this drawn-out spring day,
<i>Aoyagi no</i>	Strands of the willow
<i>Itodo ukiyo ni</i>	Get all tangled up, like the affairs
<i>Midarete zo furu</i>	Of this sad world of ours. ⁵

This poem is followed by a note mentioning that Murasaki’s companions have been complaining behind her back about her behavior in court circles: “I heard the women have been gossiping about me, saying, ‘she carries on as though she’s high-ranked nobility!’” (“*Kabakari omou shinubeki mi ‘itoitō mo o jōzumekiku [sic] kana’ to iikeru hito o kikite*”).⁶

This note originally served as a segue to Murasaki’s next poem, not included on this page, responding to their criticisms. This poem and note belong to a section of the *Poetic Memoirs* in which Murasaki expresses her disillusionment with palace life, no doubt partly because of inappropriate behavior by courtiers in her circle.

JTC

1. Fujiwara no Teika, *Full Moon Diary* (*Meigetsuki*), entry for the sixteenth day of the second month of 1225; see Harper and Shirane 2015, p. 169; translation by Thomas Harper.
2. Bowring 1985, pp. 207–74, translates and explicates the *Poetic Memoirs*.
3. For a discussion of Teika’s reception in Momoyama-period tea circles, see Sakomura 2017.
4. A half dozen other detached leaves from the volume are known, including one included in the *Hōōdai* calligraphy album (*tekagami*) at the Tokugawa Art Museum, Nagoya; see Komatsu 1992, pp. 403–4, nos. 144–48, ill. pp. 150–54. For a discussion of the various manuscript versions, see Yokoi 2012.
5. Translation by John T. Carpenter. I thank Hirano Tae of Seikei University, Tokyo, for her assistance interpreting the textual variants of this poem as found in various manuscript recensions. For instance, the phrase *nagaki haru hi* (drawn-out spring day) usually reads *nagame furu hi* (a day of never-ending rain) in standard editions, but other surviving premodern manuscript recensions have it this way, as documented in Sasagawa 2014. Sometimes a copyist’s mistake suggests a forgery, but in this case the way the poem is transcribed could very well represent what Murasaki originally composed more than two hundred years before. Compare Bowring 1985, p. 236.
6. Note that in the transcription by Teika, he accidentally wrote characters that read *jōzumekiku* instead of *jōzumeku* (to deport oneself as high nobility), and when he realized his mistake he added two dots to the left side of the *kana* character *ki*, which serve as “strike-out marks” (*misekechi*).



5 時代不同歌合絵

Competition between Poets of Different Eras (Jidai fudō uta-awase-e)

Muromachi period (1392–1573), 15th century

One of a pair of handscrolls; ink, color, gold, and silver on paper
13³/₁₆ in. × 55 ft. 2¹³/₁₆ in. (33.1 × 1,683.5 cm)

John C. Weber Collection

In this imaginary competition between poets of different eras, Murasaki Shikibu is pitted against the famous poet Ōshikōchi no Mitsune (859–925), one of the compilers of the first imperial poetry anthology, *Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern* (*Kokin wakashū*, ca. 905). Mitsune died well before Murasaki was born

and was, in fact, a contemporary of her great-grandfather Fujiwara no Kanesuke (877–933), himself a prominent poet. Such fanciful competitions had tremendous appeal. An artful selection of anachronistic poems that brought out their associative links could engender novel ways of understanding the poetry. This rare set of handscrolls does just that, depicting one hundred celebrated poets in brilliant color along with their contributions brushed in elegant calligraphy.

In the match here, Mitsune, representing the “Left” team, goes first with a poem about snow that lingers in the Yoshino Mountains despite the radiance of spring in the capital. Murasaki, a member



of the “Right” team, picks up the theme of spring and the famous site of Yoshino, but expresses a tone of disquiet:

<i>Miyoshino wa</i>	Miyoshino now
<i>Haru no keshiki ni</i>	Hazy with the signs
<i>Kasumedomo</i>	Of spring,
<i>Musubohoretaru</i>	But here the matted grass
<i>Yuki no shitakusa</i>	Lies buried under snow. ¹

The second round matches autumn verses by each of the poets. Against Mitsune’s description of the autumn wind blowing

through the Sumiyoshi pines,² Murasaki relates being moved by the chirping of insects before dawn as she bids farewell to a visitor:

<i>Nakiyowaru</i>	As their song fades
<i>Magaki no mushi mo</i>	Do insects in the hedge
<i>Tomegataki</i>	Also find sadness
<i>Aki no wakare ya</i>	In autumn partings
<i>Kanashikaruramu</i>	One cannot prevent? ³

In the third and final round, Mitsune offers a love poem:

<i>Ise no umi ni</i>	On Ise’s shore,
<i>Shio yaku ama no</i>	Saltmakers’ coarse-woven robes
<i>Fujigoromo</i>	Are softened by the brine.
<i>Naru to wa suredo</i>	So, too, your heart seems gentled,
<i>Awanu kimi kana</i>	Yet still you will not meet me. ⁴

Murasaki’s poem links the salt makers of Mitsune’s verse to a place name, Shiogama (which means “salt pans”):

<i>Mishi hito no</i>	The one I loved
<i>Keburi to narishi</i>	Turned that evening into smoke;
<i>Yūbe yori</i>	And from then on
<i>Na zo mutsumashiki</i>	The name is full of memories,
<i>Shiogama no ura</i>	Shiogama Bay. ⁵

Smoke from the salt makers’ fires on the shores of Shiogama is associated with plumes rising from a funeral pyre. Like her other poems in the scroll, this one comes from *The Poetic Memoirs of Murasaki Shikibu* (*Murasaki Shikibu shū*), which presents her poems together with headnotes as a form of autobiography.⁶ This melancholic verse is thought to have been composed after the death of her husband, Fujiwara no Nobutaka (950?–1001), which occurred only two years after the birth of their daughter.

The painting shows Mitsune, dressed in a formal black robe and courtier’s cap, turning away from his opponent as if in mid-thought. Murasaki tilts her head demurely and raises one sleeve to her face. Over red trousers and a flower-patterned robe she wears a white pleated apron, garments that indicate her status as a lady-in-waiting. MM

1. Bowring 1985, p. 236.

2. H. C. McCullough 1985b, pp. 86–87, no. 360.

3. *Gosen wakashū* 1990, p. 217, no. 744; Bowring 1985, p. 217.

4. Bundy 2006, p. 32.

5. Bowring 1985, p. 232.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 207–55.



6 駒競行幸絵巻

Imperial Visitation for the Ceremonial Horserace of 1024 (Komakurabe gyōkō emaki)

Kamakura period (1185–1333), 13th–early 14th century

Handscroll; ink, colors, and gold on paper

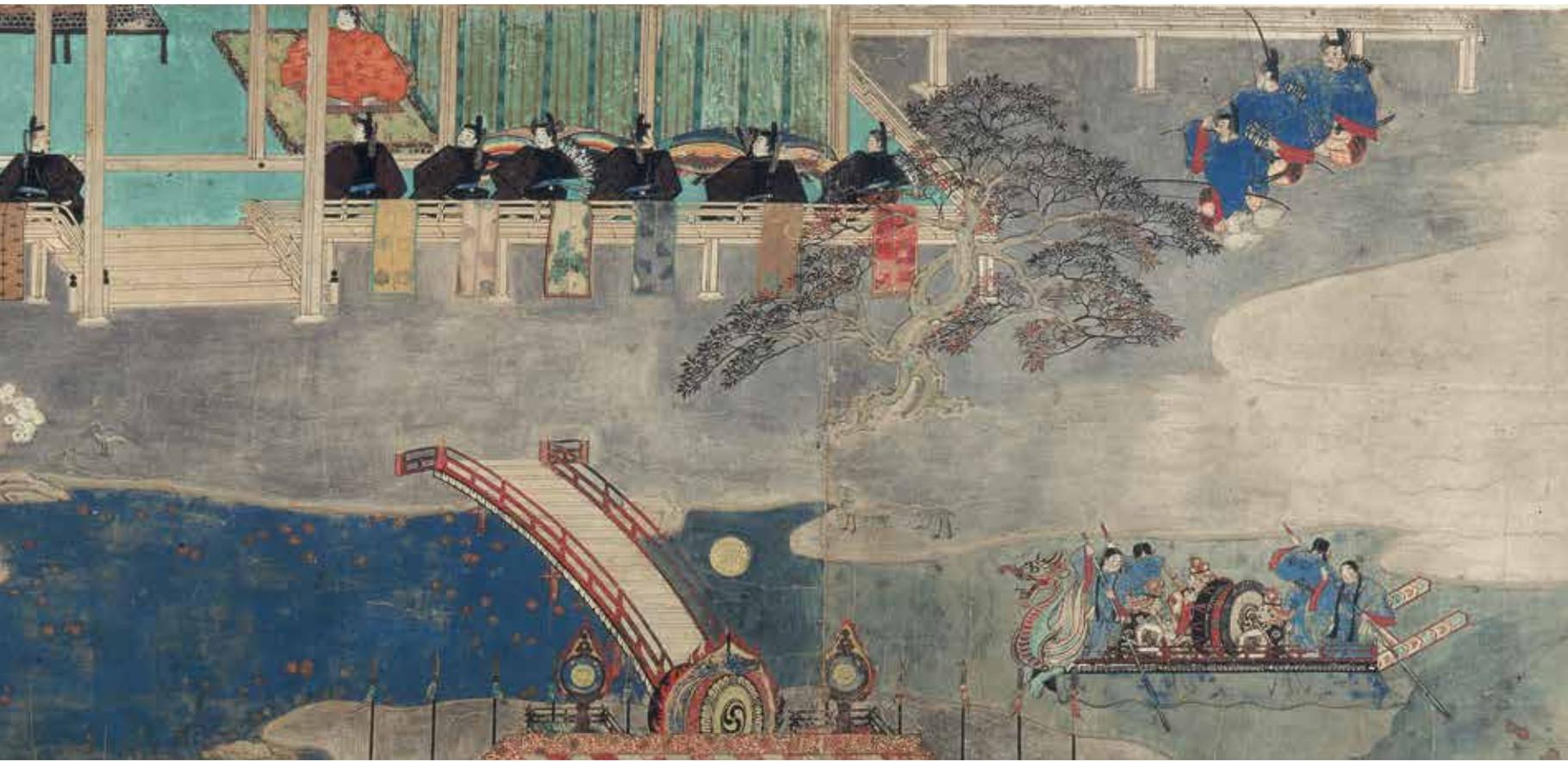
13⁹/₁₆ in. × 12 ft. 6³/₄ in. (34.4 × 381.7 cm)

Kuboso Memorial Museum of Arts, Izumi, Osaka Prefecture
Important Cultural Property

This vibrant handscroll from the Kamakura period illustrates events from *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes* (*Eiga monogatari*, ca. 1092), a panegyric chronicle by Murasaki Shikibu's contemporary Lady Akazome Emon about Fujiwara no Michinaga and his descendants.¹ The painting here conveys Michinaga's good fortune to have daughters who produce heirs to the throne. The setting is Kayanoin, the estate of Michinaga's son, the regent Fujiwara no Yorimichi (992–1074). Yorimichi's sister, Shōshi, is now Senior Grand Empress, and she has come to view the ceremonial autumn horse race along with her first son, Emperor Go-Ichijō (the former

Prince Atsuhira; see cat. 3), and her second son, who has been appointed Crown Prince. The painting highlights Michinaga's two imperial grandsons and exalts his daughter's status as their mother, presenting the figures against a backdrop of the enchanting architectural splendor of Yorimichi's estate.

Even at first glance, the grand scale of the event and the spectacular surroundings signal the Fujiwara clan's material success and aesthetic refinement. Yorimichi's residence is in the style of the palatial mansions of Heian-period aristocrats known as *shinden-zukuri* (see Appendix 1 in this volume), which sat on extensive grounds with artificial lakes. To the left, extending over the lake, is a luxurious fishing pavilion with an exotic carpeted floor and a raised dais covered in brocade for the occasion. An arched bridge connects the main residence to a small island, where a red-and-white-striped curtain, two small stages with drums, and a large central drum with a golden finial connote the *bugaku* court music and dances performed that day. The entertainment on the island may have subsided, but musicians continue to play on the



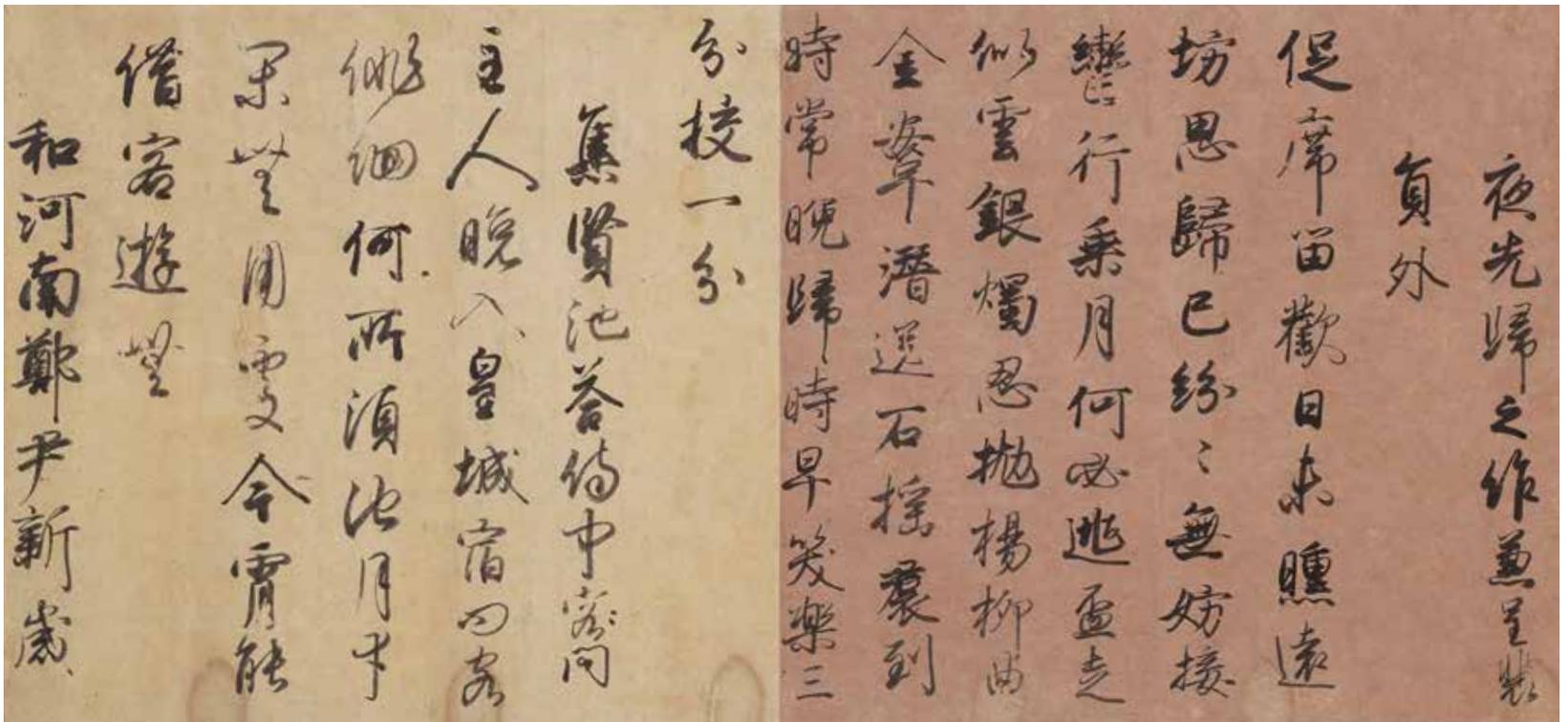
water, carried in mid-performance by boats with elaborate prows carved in the shapes of a water bird and a dragon. The image invites us to imagine the sounds of their wind instruments and drums resonating across the water to their primary audience—the imperial family and the nobility seated in the main hall.

There, nine courtiers in formal black attire line the veranda, their colorful trains hanging over the railing behind them, while the hems of multihued garments poking out from beneath the blinds indicate numerous women observing from within the building. Emperor Go-Ichijō sits inside on an elevated dais, his upper body and face excluded from view out of deference. Shōshi's younger son, the Crown Prince, is shown in full, seated upon an elaborately decorated raised mat with gold accents and a textile with a brocade trim; he wears a bright orange robe adorned with a red phoenix pattern symbolizing his future sovereignty. Although Empress Shōshi is not depicted, her presence is invoked through the symbolism of the chrysanthemum flower, dozens of which line the shore of the garden lake.

As Kawada Masayuki has shown, these motifs correspond to an extraordinary encomium praising the empress in *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes*. Seventeen poems celebrate her role as the mother of emperors, likening her and her children to radiant blooms of chrysanthemums.² The chrysanthemum also symbolizes long life, a meaning reinforced by the cranes and turtles that appear among them, and by the abundant cranes flying amid pines depicted on the wood sliding doors that lead to the fishing pavilion (in the lower left corner). All of these motifs work in concert to proclaim the longevity of the Fujiwara house. This Kamakura-period visualization of past Fujiwara history is not without irony, however. Images of onlookers being beaten away, including a mother and child falling to the ground, seem to demonstrate another side to this fantasy of imperial rule. MM

1. For full illustrations and foundational research on this scroll, see Kuboso Memorial Museum of Arts 2001.

2. Kawada 2015, p. 670; see the translation of all the poems in W. H. McCullough and H. C. McCullough 1980, vol. 2, pp. 636–39.



7 白氏詩卷 藤原行成書

Handscroll of Chinese Poems by Bai Juyi (Hakushi shikan)

Fujiwara no Yukinari (Kōzei, 972–1027)

Heian period (794–1185), 1018

Handscroll; ink on sheets of paper, some dyed

10 in. × 8 ft. 8⁷/₁₆ in. (25.4 × 265.2 cm)

Tokyo National Museum

National Treasure

Not in exhibition

Surveying the surviving works of exemplary calligraphy from the Heian period, one cannot help but be struck by the large proportion of high-quality manuscripts that record poems by the Tang poet Bai Juyi, who was far and away the most popular Chinese poet of the Heian court, not to mention the most cited poet in *The Tale of Genji*. Although Bai was the first poet in history to have his complete corpus published in printed form, editions of which were avidly sought by the regent Fujiwara no Michinaga and members of his court, more prized were transcriptions of his poems by prominent courtier-calligraphers of the day, especially Fujiwara no Yukinari, whose work is seen here (see the essay by John T. Carpenter in this volume). This embrace of manuscript over print parallels the transmission of *Genji* texts through the ages; even though print technology existed, printed versions of Japanese literary classics were not created until the seventeenth century.

The manuscript version of Chinese poems by Bai Juyi here comprises nine sheets of paper joined to make a scroll. Some of the sheets are uncolored, while others are dyed light brown or light purple. The text consists of eight poems—five of regulated verse and three seven-syllable quatrains (*zekku*)—and a column of characters from another poem, all from Book 65 of Bai's *Collected Works*. This work amply illustrates specific characteristics of Yukinari's composition and brush techniques. First, certain characters with a pronounced vertical emphasis are elongated in an exaggerated manner, especially those having a final, freestanding vertical stroke, which breaks from the imaginary rectangular box within which characters are usually constructed. This is a common trait in the writing of talented calligraphers because rendering such long, vertical strokes—whether the tip is hooked, rounded, or pointed—allows one to demonstrate conspicuous mastery of the writing brush. An extended vertical stroke is one of the hardest marks to render effectively. If there is any hesitation, immediately detectable in the wavering borders of the stroke, it may betray the calligrapher as an amateur. Yukinari's work demonstrates that he had complete control of the brush throughout the entire execution of the character, right to the tip of the final stroke. One can imagine how he moved the brush quickly but then brought it to a sudden but sure halt.

JTC

8 白居易作「醉吟先生傳」斷簡 藤原 行成書

Excerpt from Bai Juyi's "Autobiography of a Master of Drunken Poetry Recitation" (*Suigin sensei den*)

Fujiwara no Yukinari (Kōzei, 972–1027)

Heian period (794–1185), early 11th century

Section of a handscroll mounted as a hanging scroll; ink on paper

10¹³/₁₆ × 3³/₈ in. (27.5 × 8.6 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Raymond and Priscilla Vickers, 2016 (2016.745)

Comprising just four columns of Chinese calligraphy removed from a long handscroll, this small but precious fragment from the early eleventh century encapsulates a grand story of how Chinese brush writing, poetry, and cultural priorities were transferred to Japan and assimilated by the Heian court. The calligraphy is reliably attributed to Fujiwara no Yukinari, a highly skilled calligrapher who earned a reputation as the consolidator of *wayō* (Japanese-style) calligraphy, as described in the previous entry.

One of Bai Juyi's poetry names—"Master of Drunken Poetry Recitation" (*Zuiyin Xiansheng* 醉吟先生)—appears in the first column of this fragment. The poet intended the entire autobiographical statement to be used as the inscription on his tomb. The tone of the poem is said to parody conventional biographies of the day.¹ In the text, Bai Juyi constructs the persona of a literatus growing old gracefully while enjoying wine, music, and poetry. The section here reads:

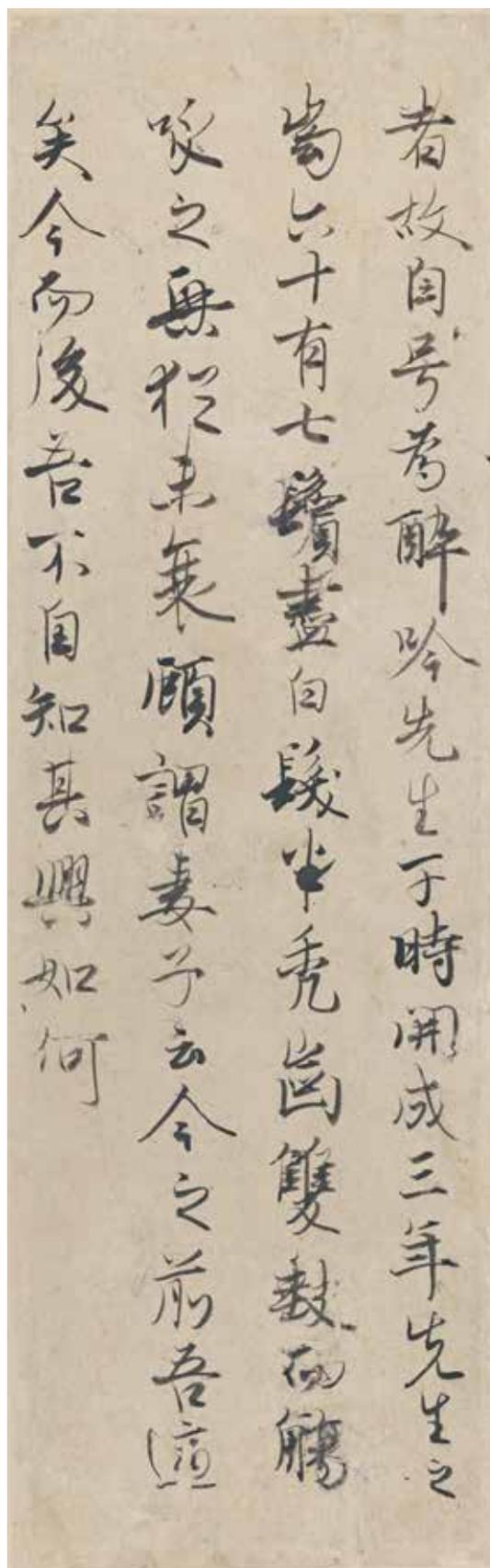
[古所謂得全於酒]者，故自號為醉吟先生。于時開成三年，先生之齒，六十有七，鬚盡白，髮半禿，齒雙缺，而觴詠之興猶未衰。顧謂妻子云：「今之前，吾適矣；今之後，吾不自知其興如何」

Therefore, he called himself the "Master of Drunken Poetry Recitation." Now in the third year of the Kaicheng reign era [838], he has reached the age of sixty-seven. Though his beard has turned white, his head is half bald, and his teeth are falling out, his enjoyment of wine and poetry has not diminished. Turning to his wife, he said, "Before now I have always been at ease, but from now on, I do not know if I can enjoy these pleasures in the same way."²

As discussed in the previous entry, Bai Juyi was the most popular Tang poet among the elite of the Heian court, who admired his clear diction and accessible poetic imagery. The themes and refrains of Bai's most famous poem, "The Song of Everlasting Sorrow"—with its implications of ill-fated love affairs leading to the fall of a dynasty—recur in *The Tale of Genji*. JTC

1. Shinohara 1991.

2. Translation by John T. Carpenter.





a.

9 源氏物語 榊帖・柏木帖 伝土佐光吉筆

Tale of Genji Chapter Books: “A Branch of Sacred Evergreen” (*Sakaki*) and “The Oak Tree” (*Kashiwagi*)

Attributed to Tosa Mitsuyoshi (1539–1613)

Momoyama period (1573–1615), early 17th century

Two thread-bound manuscript books with painted covers; ink, colors, and gold on paper

9¹⁵/₁₆ × 6³/₄ in. (25.3 × 17.1 cm) (*Sakaki*); 9¹⁵/₁₆ × 6¹³/₁₆ in. (25.3 × 17.3 cm) (*Kashiwagi*)

New York Public Library, Spencer Collection

These two chapter books, with hand-painted covers attributed to Tosa Mitsuyoshi (cats. 12, 39–43, 47, 48), demonstrate the sustained demand for deluxe *Genji* manuscripts into the Momoyama and Edo periods.¹ The front cover of “A Branch of Sacred Evergreen” (*Sakaki*) (a) bears the iconic scene that gives Chapter 10 its title. Genji is shown paying a visit to his former lover Lady Rokujō, who is about to depart for distant Ise with her daughter, the High Priestess of the Shrine. He raises a sacred green *sakaki* branch as if extending a peace offering. Atonement is needed on both sides:



Genji wishes to make amends for his long-standing neglect of his lover, but he also wants to pacify Rokujō’s vengeful wandering spirit, whom he suspects caused the death of his wife, Aoi (cats. 56, 82, 106). Rokujō appears through semitransparent bamboo blinds, turning her head away in her initial attempt to rebuff him. By the end of the scene, the pair reaches an understanding, expressed through poems that convey their mutual regret.

The painting on the back cover of this book depicts characters who are grieving over the passing of Genji’s father, the Kiritsubo Emperor. The setting is the late emperor’s villa, where Prince Hyōbu, Fujitsubo’s brother, has come to escort Fujitsubo back to her family home just as Genji arrives. Fujitsubo sits on a curtained dais, as befits her elevated status as an imperial consort and the mother of the Crown Prince. In a poem mourning the passing of the emperor, Prince Hyōbu associates the deceased sovereign with the snow-laden trees in the garden that no longer provide sheltering shade. Genji’s poem, composed in a childlike voice, uses the image of the frozen pond outside to express his sadness over the loss of his father:



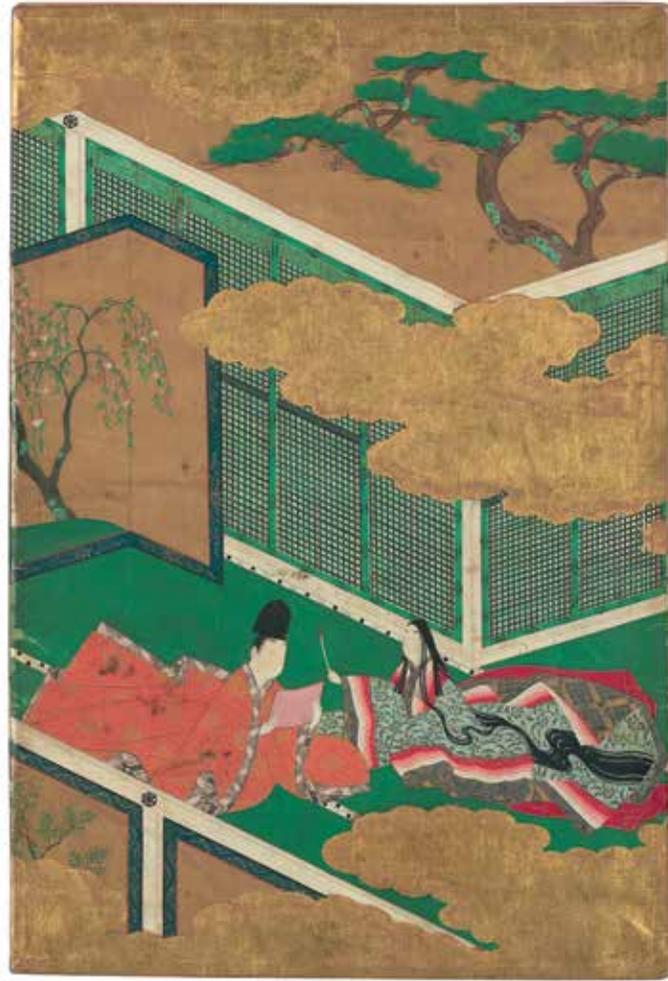
b.

<i>Sawataru</i>	Shining bank to bank
<i>Ike no kagami ni</i>	The pond is a mirror now,
<i>Sayakeki ni</i>	Clear, brilliantly cold;
<i>Minareshi kage o</i>	But how sad we cannot see
<i>Minu zo kanashiki</i>	Reflection of the face we knew.

In lieu of a response by Fujitsubo, her lady-in-waiting, Ōmyōbu, the other woman depicted in the room, composes a verse:

<i>Toshi kurete</i>	Now the year goes dusk,
<i>Iwai no mizu mo</i>	And the water in the rock spring too
<i>Kōri toji</i>	Is closed in ice;
<i>Mishi hitokage no</i>	Faces once reflected there
<i>As emo yuku kana</i>	Fade, ever paler shadows. ²

The cover of Chapter 36, “The Oak Tree” (*Kashiwagi*) (b), depicts Tō no Chūjō, the father of Kashiwagi, asking a mountain ascetic to perform healing rituals for his ailing son. The cause of Kashiwagi’s

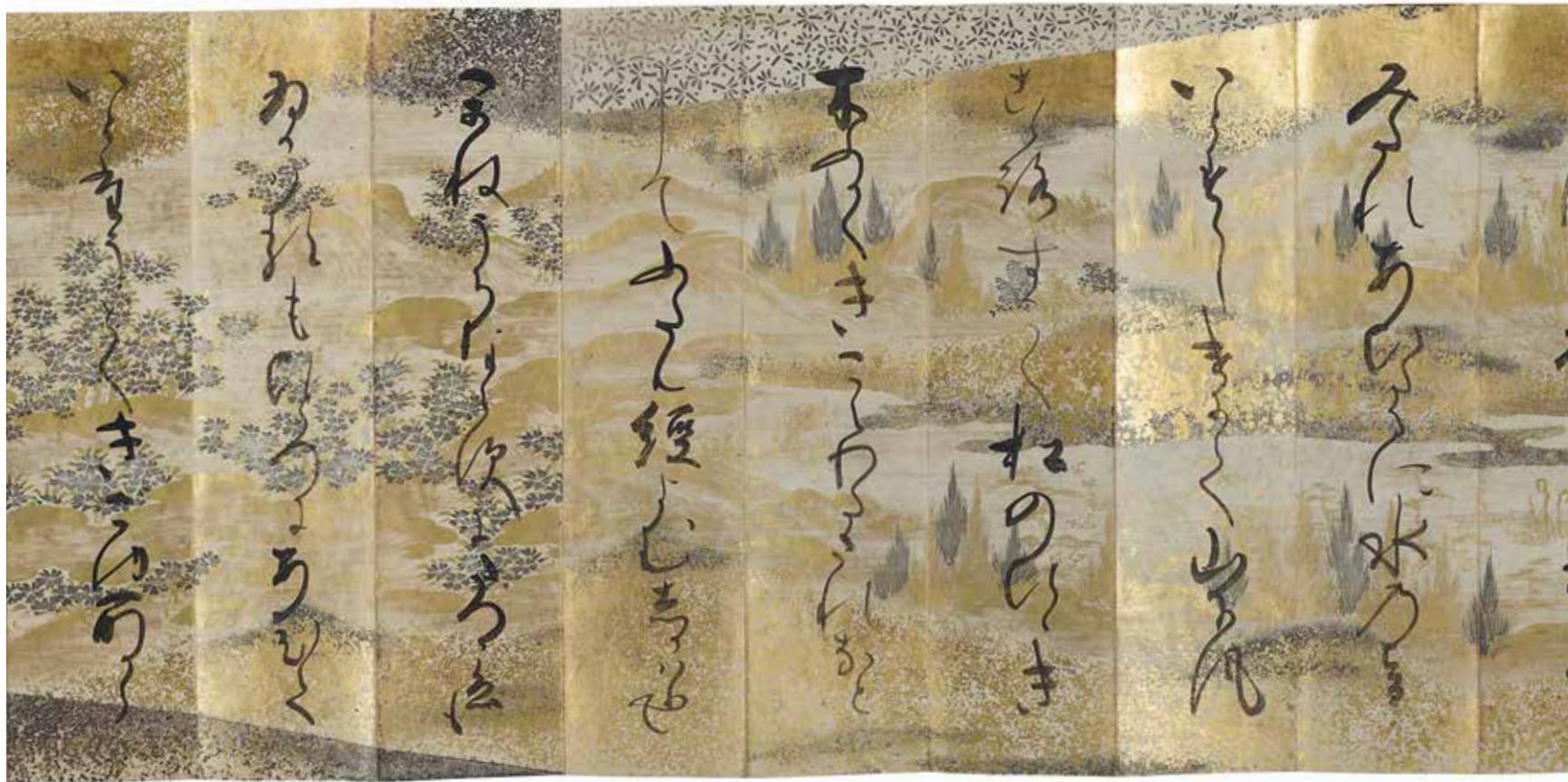


illness is not a malignant spirit, as Tō no Chūjō suspects, but feelings of guilt toward Genji, whose wife, the Third Princess, Kashiwagi has impregnated. The painting on the back cover shows the female attendant Kojijū holding a torch as Kashiwagi reads a letter from the Third Princess. Convinced that his illness is serious, she has sent him a final poem in which she declares that the smoke from her funeral pyre will trail after his. The unfortunate Kashiwagi passes away soon after hearing that the Third Princess has safely given birth to their son, Kaoru, whom the world believes is Genji’s son. As Ryūsawa Aya has suggested, the front and back covers of a book can represent public and private realities, respectively, as in this case, where the public face of Kashiwagi’s illness contrasts with the darker, private truth in his heart.³ MM

1. Both volumes are discussed in Murase 1986, pp. 98–103.

2. E. A. Cranston 2006, p. 745.

3. Ryūsawa 2013a.



10 源氏物語抄 近衛信尹書

Calligraphic excerpts from *The Tale of Genji*

Konoe Nobutada (1565–1614)

Momoyama period (1573–1615), early 17th century

Folded album (*orihon*); ink on decorated paper;

11¹⁵/₁₆ × 49¹/₂ in. (30.3 × 125.8 cm)

Tokyo National Museum

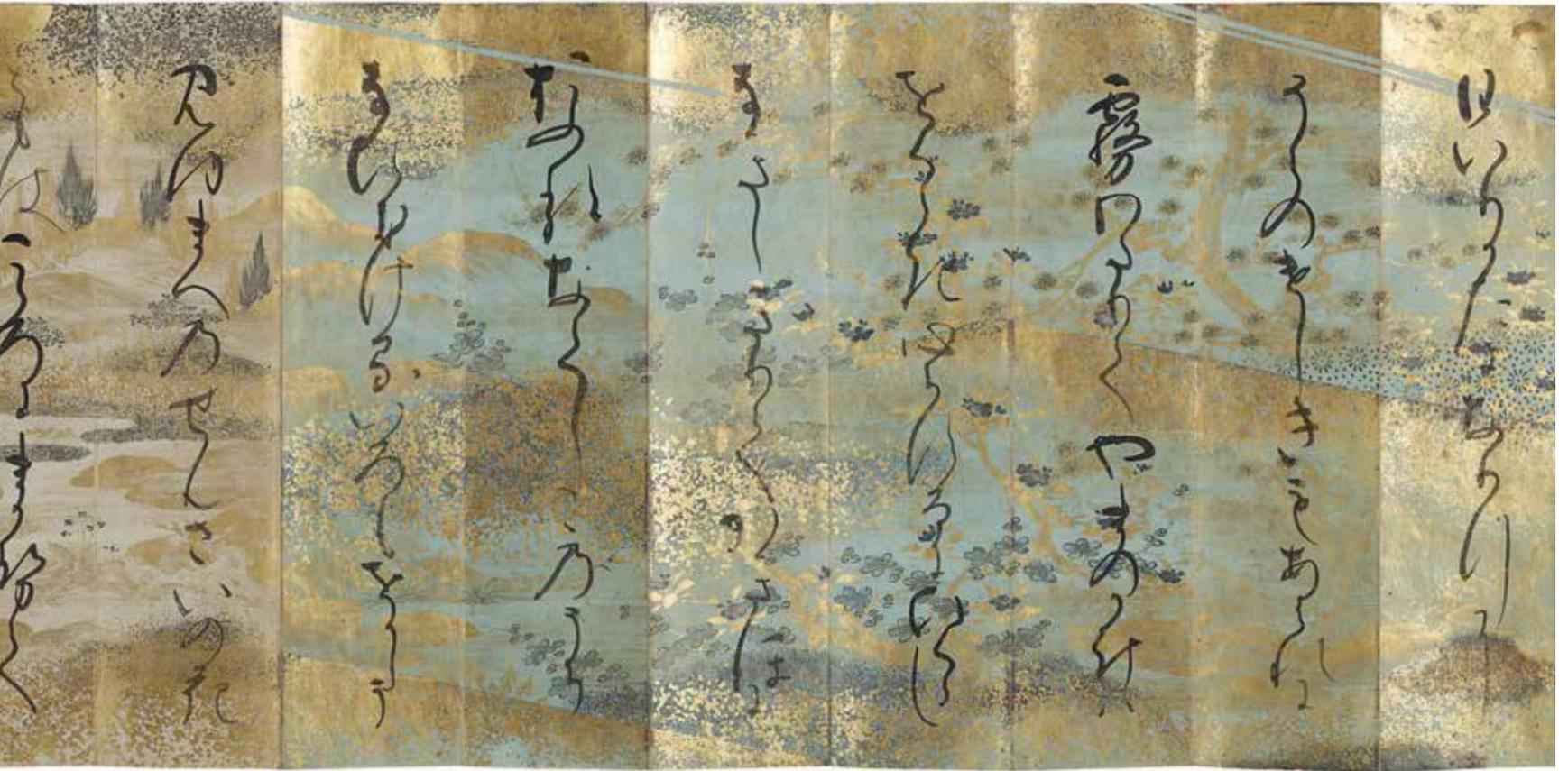
In this folded album, prose excerpts from *The Tale of Genji* are inscribed across a gorgeous abstract landscape. The decoration of the paper, rendered in gold and silver paint highlighted with flecks of gold that create a radiant effect, recalls the luxurious treatments used for deluxe manuscripts in the Heian period. The calligraphy by Konoe Nobutada attests to the high-ranking courtier's mastery of both courtly styles and his own innovative, individualistic, and muscular aesthetic. He wrote each character firmly yet gave the columns an overall elegant, rhythmic flow. The clusters of *kana* connected by ligatures lend an overall coherence to the composition, while the unconnected characters stand out.

Idiosyncrasies of Nobutada's writing are present here. The *kana* character for *na* な appears in different forms in the illustrated

section; for instance, in the middle of the first column or the third character from the top of the sixth column from the right, it is shown with the bold cross-shaped left part balanced by a squashed loop at the bottom. Although a bit unorthodox, this is a trademark of this calligrapher. Also characteristic of Nobutada's handwriting, the character *ya* や has a flat, rounded appearance, as seen in the middle of the third column from the right.

The transcribed passage opens in *medias res*, from an episode in Chapter 39, "Evening Mist" (*Yūgiri*). Genji's son has traveled from the palace precincts deep into the mountains of Ono to visit the Second Princess, with whom he had fallen in love, and her mother, who is now seeking the help of a Buddhist monk to alleviate her mental and physical distress. The first description of natural scenery in the chapter, it is an example of how the author uses nature to represent the emotions of the characters in a particular setting:

The sun was beginning to set, and a lovely mist poignantly veiled the sky. It was the time of day when the shadows of the mountain seemed to recede into the twilight, the evening cicadas sang, and the pinks growing around the hedge showed off their charming colors as they swayed in



the breeze. The flowers in the front garden, each in their own way, bloomed in a wild profusion of various hues. The sound of the flowing water was cool and refreshing. The wind blowing down the mountains made one feel a sublime loneliness. The sighing of the wind echoed deeply through the pine forests. A bell rang, signaling the moment when a monk would come in to take his turn in the continuous reading of a sutra, and the way the murmuring voice of the monk who was finishing his turn overlapped with the voice of the monk who was just beginning was profoundly solemn.¹

As a high-ranking courtier, even serving for a while as regent (*kanpaku*) to Emperor Go-Yōzei, Nobutada had access to the finest decorated papers. He also oversaw the creation of a marvelous set of *shikishi* cards featuring poems from *The Tale of Genji*, inscribed in similar dramatic handwriting, which was possibly created for the bridal trousseau of his daughter.² Konoe Nobutada—also known by his Buddhist title, Sanmyakuin—along with Hon’ami Kōetsu (1558–1637) and the monk-painter Shōkadō Shōjō (1584–1639) came to be widely known in the nineteenth century as the Three [Great] Brushes of the Kan’ei era (*Kan’ei sanpitsu*).³ Although recognized as

the three foremost calligraphers of the early seventeenth century, all of them were active long before the beginning of the Kan’ei era (1624–44). The term seems particularly anachronistic in the case of Nobutada, who died in 1614. Yet, the designation serves as a reminder that although the three calligraphers shaped their stylistic innovations during the Momoyama period, their influence continued. Nobutada’s style was perpetuated by calligraphers of the so-called Sanmyakuin lineage (*Sanmyakuin-ryū*), referring to Nobutada’s Buddhist name. JTC

1. Washburn 2015, p. 811.

2. Discussed in Sakomura 2016, p. 52.

3. For a biography of Nobutada, see Brusckhe-Johnson 2004.

11 『和漢朗詠集』 色紙帖 近衛信尹書

Album of Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing (Wakan rōeishū shikishi-jō)

Calligraphy by Konoe Nobutada (1565–1614)

Momoyama period (1573–1615), early 17th century

Album of thirty-six leaves; calligraphy on decorated paper; ink, gold,
and silver on paper

Each: 8⅜ × 7 in. (21.4 × 17.7 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary and Cheney Cowles
Collection, Gift of Mary and Cheney Cowles, 2018

As suggested by the previous entry discussing his transcription from a chapter of *The Tale of Genji*, the courtier-calligrapher Konoe Nobutada was totally immersed in the study of the Japanese classics. Represented here are decorated sheets from an album with selections from *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing (Wakan rōeishū)*, compiled about 1013 by the courtier-poet Fujiwara no Kintō (966–1041).¹ Among poetry anthologies available around the time Murasaki Shikibu was crafting her complex tale, which is interwoven with 795 *waka* and countless allusions to Chinese poems, this was surely one of the most widely studied and cited.

Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing, composed of 588 Chinese couplets and 216 accompanying *waka* (each with thirty-one syllables), does not separate poems by genre, as might be expected, but rather places them side by side, as if to draw out resonances in poetic imagery and style. Significantly, 140 of the Chinese examples derive from works by Bai Juyi, whose straightforward poetic diction set the tone for Chinese-style verse composed at poetry gatherings hosted by the palace (see cats. 7, 8).

For instance, one of the juxtapositions of Chinese and Japanese poems in Nobutada's selection (opposite, top; not reflecting the original sequence of the anthology) pairs a couplet from a Tang-dynasty verse with an ancient Japanese courtly *waka*. On the left are lines excerpted from "The Mirror of a Hundred Refinings: Distinguishing the Mirror of the Monarch" by Bai Juyi. Included as one of the New Ballads (*Xinyuefu*), Bai Juyi's verse was meant to be an exhortation to the ruler of the nation and suggests that being guided by the lessons of the mirror of history was of greater importance than peering into a mirror to see his own face. In either a Heian- or Momoyama-period context, we can imagine that courtiers reciting these poems would perhaps have had the shogun or Japanese monarch in mind. Bai Juyi's verse reads:

四海安危照掌内。
百王理乱懸心中

Shikai no anki wa tanagokoro The peace or danger within the four seas

No uchi ni terashi He holds in the palm of his hand;

Hakuō no riran wa kokoro The order or chaos of a hundred princes

No uchi ni kaketari Hangs inside his heart.²

The Japanese poem attributed to Wani, on the left, is also included in the *kana* preface to the *Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern*. Since ancient times it was considered to be one of the poems copied in calligraphy practice (see the essay by John T. Carpenter in this volume).

On another pair of sheets (opposite, bottom), Nobutada has juxtaposed a Chinese couplet extracted from a poem by Bai Juyi, from the section called "Autumn Inspirations," with an autumn poem by the mid-Heian courtier-poet Fujiwara no Yoshitaka (active 954–74):

林間煖酒燒紅葉
石上題詩掃綠苔

Rinkan ni sake o atamete In the woods, we warm our wine
Kōyō o taki, Burning the red leaves:
Sekijō ni shi o dai shite On the rocks, we inscribe our poems,
Ryokutai o harau Brushing off green moss.³

To complement Bai Juyi's image of companions in the autumn mountains, enjoying wine, Nobutada selected a *waka* evoking the pathos associated with twilight in autumn. Here the calligrapher opted to render a handful of words in *kanji*—*aki* 秋 (autumn), *kaze* 風 (wind), *hagi* 萩 (bush clover), and *tsuyu* 露 (dew)—each with deep poetic resonance in the East Asian literary tradition:

秋はなほ ゆふまぐれこそ たゞならね
をぎのうは風萩のした露

Aki wa nao Autumn moves us—
Yūmagure koso Especially at dusk we feel things
Tadanaranu Even more deeply,
Ogi no uwa kaze As the wind blows across reeds
Hagi no shitatsuyu And dewdrops cling to bush clover.⁴

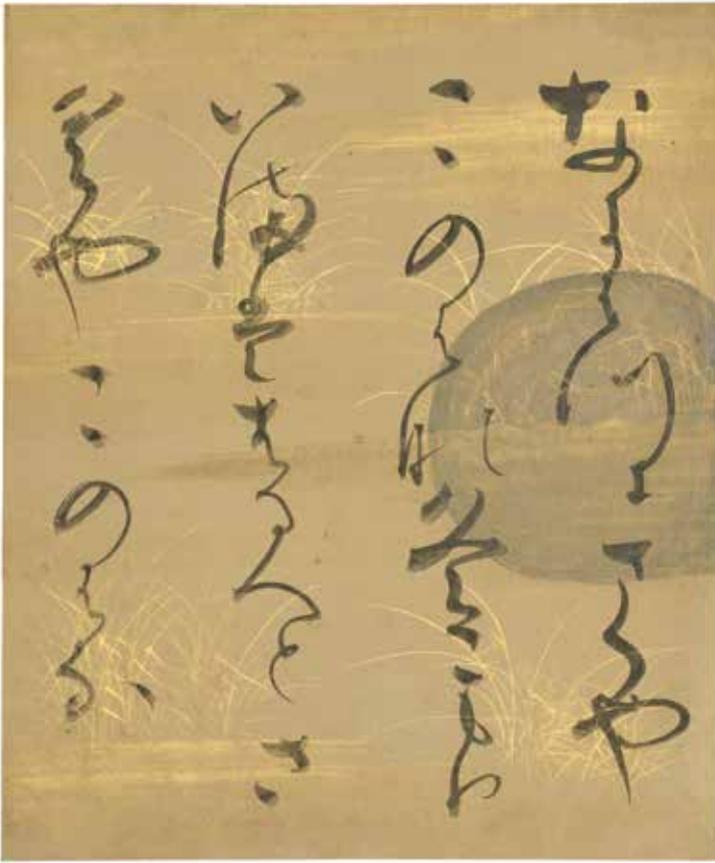
Even though the two poems that Nobutada selected to inscribe do not appear side by side in the original version of *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing*, here they successively cooperate to convey complementary ways of experiencing the autumn season. JTC

1. This set of album leaves is published in National Museum of Japanese History 2007, p. 282. For comparable works, see Takeuchi 1980; Tokyo National Museum 2008, pp. xi, 234–35, nos. 58, 60, ill. pp. 72–73, 75.

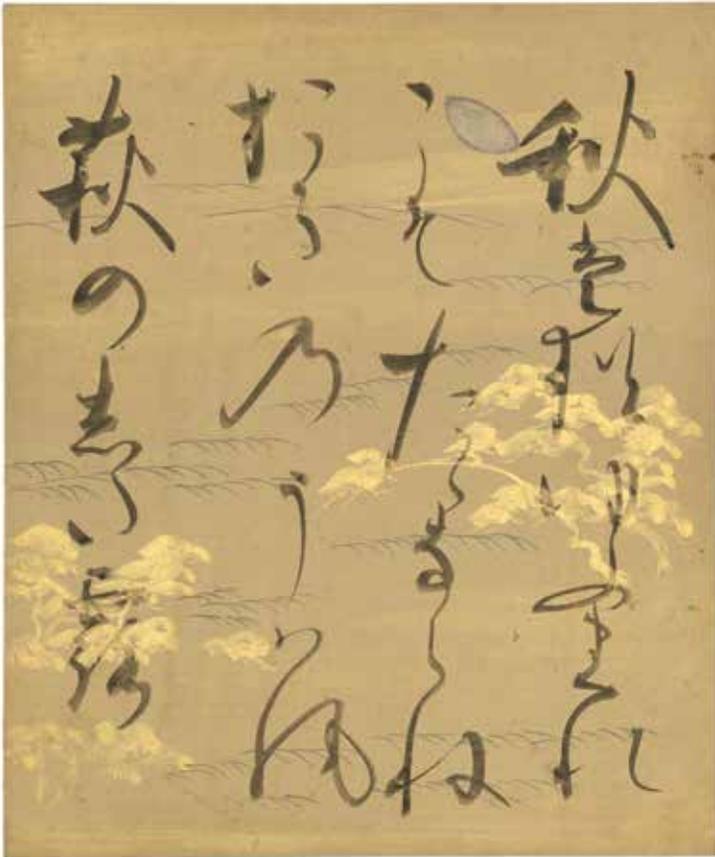
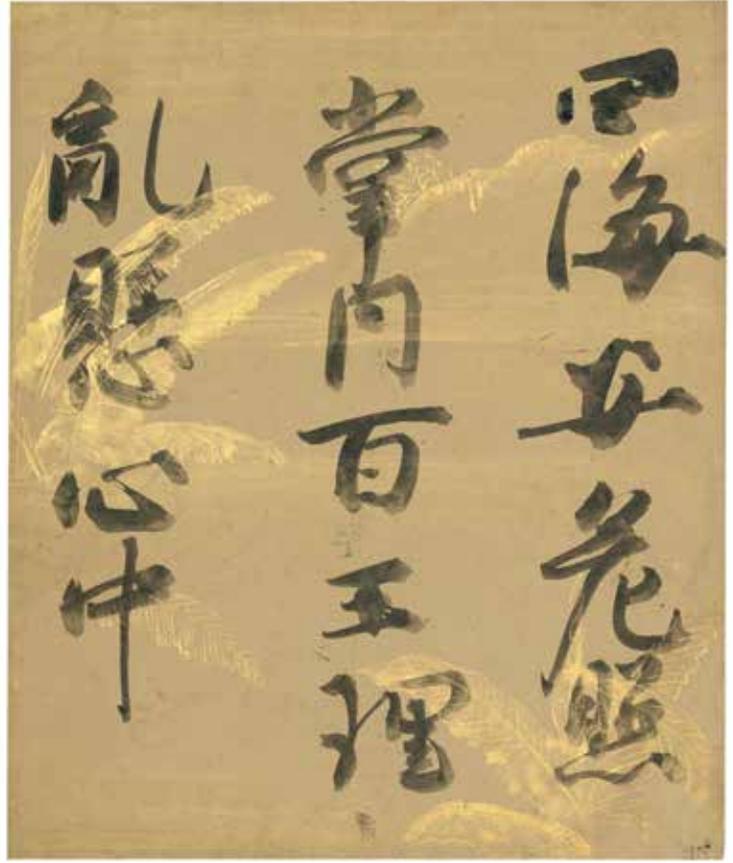
2. All poems in this entry are transcribed directly from Nobutada's manuscript. This Chinese verse is translated in Rimer and Chaves 1997, p. 195, no. 655; see also *Wakan rōeishū* 1965, p. 218, no. 655.

3. Rimer and Chaves 1997, p. 78, no. 221; see also *Wakan rōeishū* 1965, p. 103, no. 221.

4. Translation by John T. Carpenter; see also *Wakan rōeishū* 1965, p. 105, no. 229.



a.



b.



12 源氏物語画帖 伝土佐光吉筆 小野お通書

Scenes and calligraphic excerpts from *The Tale of Genji*

Calligraphy by Ono no Ozū (Ono Otsū, 1559/68–1631)

Paintings attributed to Tosa Mitsuyoshi (1539–1613)

Momoyama period (1573–1615), early 17th century

Two *orihon* albums, each with twenty-four calligraphies and twenty-four paintings

Calligraphies: ink on decorated paper; paintings: ink, color, and gold on paper

Each sheet: 8⅞ × 7¾ in. (22.5 × 19.8 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary and Cheney Cowles Collection, Gift of Mary and Cheney Cowles, 2018

Calligraphy in the distinctive style of Ono no Ozū, one of the most prominent woman calligraphers of premodern Japan, graces sheets of decorated paper in this pair of albums with painted scenes from *The Tale of Genji*. Active at the same time as the influential courtier-calligrapher Konoe Nobutada (discussed in the previous two entries), Ozū wrote mostly in *kana*, though here *kanji* rendered in a flamboyant style was used for poetically evocative words such as *yo* 夜 (evening), *tsuki* 月 (moon), *haru* 春 (spring), and *kaze* 風 (wind). The sometimes subtle, sometimes dramatic variations in the weight of the brushstrokes and the radical spacing between characters and clusters of characters are trademarks of her style, which gave birth to the Ozū lineage (*Ozū-ryū*) of female calligraphers in early modern times.

The person who commissioned the albums, or perhaps the calligrapher herself, selected poems to accompany the paintings of the relevant chapters. Ozū demonstrated her mastery of the “scattered writing” technique, whereby she artfully disposed the registers of the poem across the page and sometimes positioned lines of the poem out of sequence. Most likely the paintings were completed before the calligraphy, but there are cases where Tosa paintings were commissioned to accompany superlative calligraphy.¹ In many examples, the background of the decorated paper echoes a color used to render a garment, a flower, or another feature of the illustration.

The first calligraphy section shown here (opposite, top) responds to the scene from Chapter 8, “A Banquet Celebrating Cherry Blossoms” (*Hana no en*), when Genji meets with Oborozukiyo, the sister of a rival in the palace. The poem that Genji uses to woo Oborozukiyo, whose name means “night of the hazy moon,” evokes the concept of *aware*, the sadness-tinged beauty that one perceives in the transience of things:

ふかき夜の あはれをしるも 入月の
おぼろけならぬ ちぎりとぞおもふ

<i>Fukaki yo no</i>	That you too should know
<i>Aware o shiru mo</i>	The deep beauty of the night
<i>Iru tsuki no</i>	I believe must come
<i>Oboro ke naranu</i>	From a bond not fated to shimmer
<i>Chigiri to zo omou</i>	Away with the setting moon. ²

The second example (opposite, bottom) captures the scene from Chapter 21, “Maidens of the Dance” (*Otome*), when Akikononu (“the one who loves autumn”) composes a poem proclaiming that her preferred season surpasses springtime, favored by Murasaki, in poignancy:

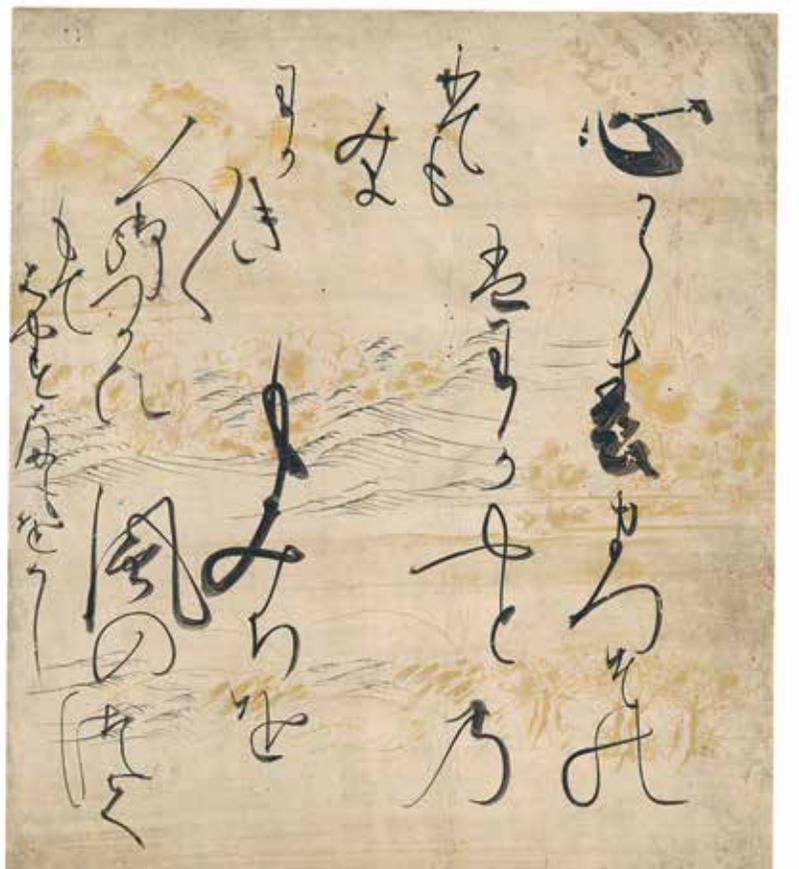
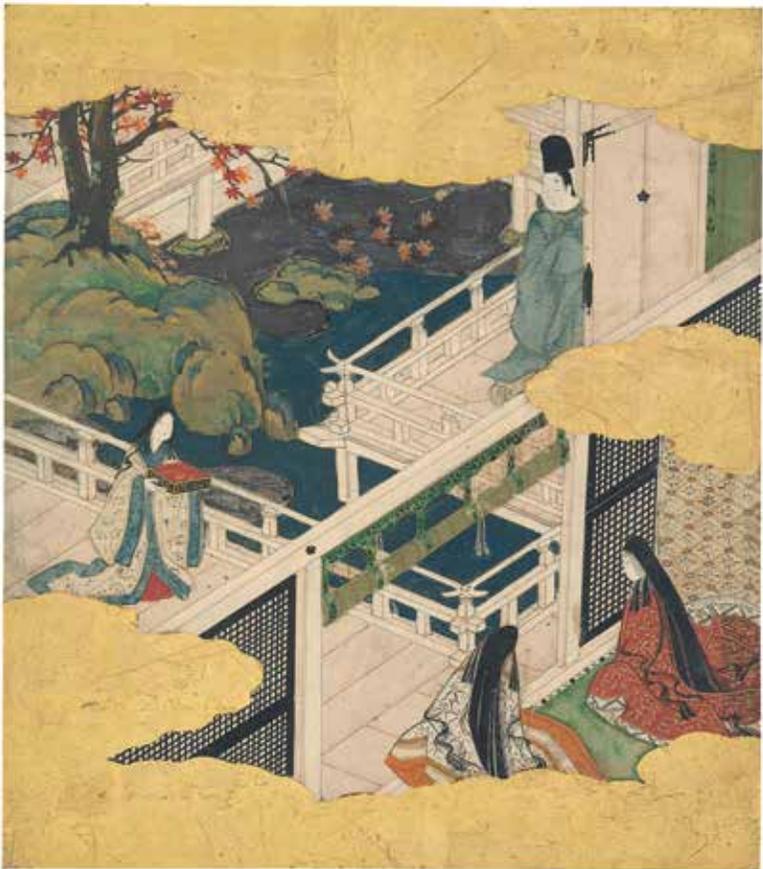
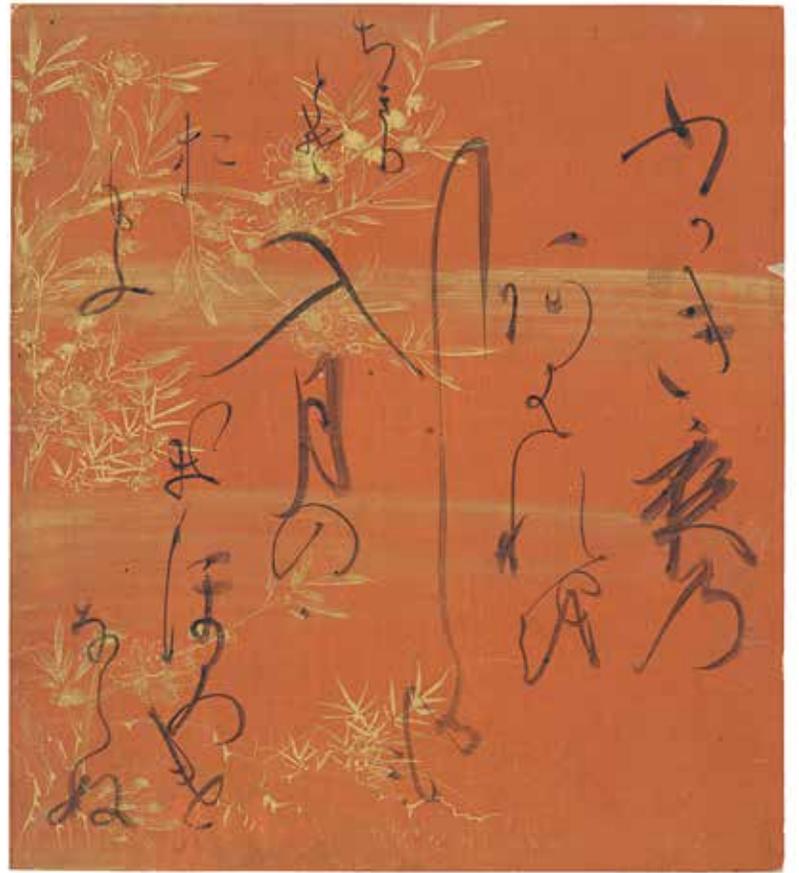
心から 春まつそのは わがやどの
もみちを風の つてだにみよ

<i>Kokoro kara</i>	May the flower garden
<i>Haru matsu sono wa</i>	That awaits with all its heart
<i>Wa ga yado no</i>	The coming spring
<i>Momiji o kaze no</i>	Still regard our crimson leaves
<i>Tsute ni dani miyo</i>	At least as offerings of the wind. ³

The poem proper, inscribed in larger characters, is followed by a more compactly written prose section that reads “younger ladies-in-waiting looked charming as they received the page.”⁴

As an artist, Ono no Ozū also painted Zen subjects in monochrome ink, as seen in a lively painting of the Buddhist monk Hotei with a child in The Metropolitan Museum of Art that exhibits the same kind of exuberant calligraphy shown in these album leaves.⁵ The calligrapher-painter is also known for her *moji-e*, rebuslike pictures formed from highly cursive Chinese and Japanese graphs morphed into pictures, often accompanied by inscriptions in ebullient calligraphy. Her calligraphy gained renown for its graceful fluency and, in many instances, long, drawn-out vertical brushstrokes, which occasionally connect one character to the next, as seen in the examples here.

None of these calligraphies is signed, but an early authentication statement attributes the work to Ono no Ozū. The paintings are likewise unsigned, though in 1916 Ishida Seitarō, the curator of the Kyoto Imperial Museum (Kyoto Teishitsu Hakubutsukan,



now Kyoto National Museum), stated that they were by Tosa Mitsuyoshi. In any case, the colorful style and detailed brushwork suggest an early seventeenth-century adherent of the Tosa studio.

Facts about the life of Ozū are minimal, and discrepancies exist in accounts of her training, family, connections, and employers or patrons.⁶ She is said to have been born in Mino (Gifu prefecture), possibly the daughter of Ono no Masahide, a local daimyo (feudal lord). She may have married a daimyo of Noto (Ishikawa prefecture) and then relocated to Kyoto following the death of her husband in battle. In the capital, she studied *waka* poetry with the nobleman Kujō Tanemichi (1507–1594) and was subsequently welcomed into aristocratic and high-ranking military circles. Conflicting accounts refer to her service in the households of famous personages of the Momoyama period—including Oda Nobunaga; Toyotomi Hideyoshi’s wife, Nene (Kita no Mandokoro); Tokugawa Ieyasu; and the mother of Emperor Go-Yōzei. Some accounts even declare that she served in the retinue of Tōfukumon’in, consort of Emperor Go-Mizunoo. Whatever uncertainty surrounds her biography, there is no doubt that Ozū was a woman of great artistic ability, esteemed for her calligraphy and painting as well as her poetry. She earned lasting recognition in her own day and in subsequent generations as a calligrapher for young women to emulate. JTC

1. For instance, see *The Tale of Genji* album with superlative calligraphy attributed to Shōren’in Sonjun Shinnō (1581–1653) and paintings that seem conspicuously later; The Metropolitan Museum of Art (94.18.1a–xx).

2. E. A. Cranston 2006, p. 729.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 810.

4. Washburn 2015, p. 457.

5. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (2015.300.75).

6. I am indebted to Nakamura Rei of Eisei Bunko Museum, Tokyo, for sharing information and handwriting examples by Ozū.

13 『源氏物語』 「薄雲」 居初津奈筆

Scenes from Chapter 19, “A Thin Veil of Clouds” (*Usugumo*)

Isome Tsuna (b. ca. 1640, active late 17th century)

Edo period (1615–1868), late 17th century

Set of 54 manuscript books with illustrations; ink, colors, and gold on paper
9½ × 7 in. (24.1 × 17.8 cm)

New York Public Library, Spencer Collection

Although *The Tale of Genji* was written by a woman, credit for its transmission from the Heian period to the present day has gone primarily to the prominent male courtiers, poets, and scholars who made complete manuscript copies and authored voluminous commentaries to annotate the text. Recent scholarship, however, continues to show the degree to which female readers, calligraphers, and commentators kept *Genji* alive over the past millennium. One example is the remarkable work of Isome Tsuna, who not only brushed the entire text of this spectacular fifty-four-volume set of *Genji* chapter books but also painted all of its hundred-plus illustrations. Tsuna was based in Kyoto and is best known as the author of numerous etiquette guides, educational books, and calligraphic manuals for women, published between 1688 and 1695. Her illustrated works continue to come to light, however, with at least four handscrolls and more than thirty books of classical narratives and poetry identified so far.¹ Although this set of *Genji* books contains no colophon or signature, its calligraphy and polychrome paintings are undeniably in the same hand as Tsuna’s identifiable artworks.

The volumes in the set are bound between colorful gold brocade textile covers with varied designs, such as patterns of paulownia flowers in green, red, and white interspersed with geometric designs. Rectangular cartouches brushed with gold paint appear on each cover and bear the *Genji* chapter titles in Tsuna’s hand. Tsuna’s paintings employ the pictorial conventions of traditional narrative painting and previous *Genji* volumes produced by the Tosa school, but they have their own distinctive touches. Instead of the rounded and scalloped gold clouds of most Tosa paintings, patches of gold at the top and bottom of the compositions form stylized mist bands seen in handscrolls and illustrated books from earlier periods. Tsuna’s figures are easily recognizable by the circular shape of their heads and their rosy pink cheeks. While the vast majority of *Genji* books, handscrolls, and albums involved a division of labor to copy the text and to design and illustrate the paintings, Isome Tsuna is unique in having accomplished all of these tasks on her own. MM

1. Ishikawa 2013. See also Koizumi 1997.



a. The Akashi Lady sends her three-year-old daughter to live with the child's father, Genji, and to be raised by Lady Murasaki



b. Genji mourns the death of Fujitsubo

CHAPTER TWO

Ishiyamadera and the Buddhist Veneration of Murasaki Shikibu

WHEN THE AUTHOR of the *Sarashina Diary*, Takasue no Musume, recounted her joy at finally being able to read the complete *Tale of Genji*, she expressed her awareness that an immersion in fiction could be problematic from a Buddhist point of view:

I did nothing but read, and I was amazed to find that passages I had somehow naturally learned by heart came floating unbidden into my head. Around the same time, in a dream, I saw a pure-looking monk wearing a surplice of yellow cloth who said to me, “Quickly, memorize roll 5 of the *Lotus Sutra*.” But I told no one, nor did I feel particularly inclined to memorize the *Lotus Sutra*. I just was infatuated with tales.¹

The author’s dream of the monk urging her to cast her tales aside and read the *Lotus Sutra* recalls an admonition found in the preface to *The Three Jewels* (*Sanbō-e*, ca. 984), a work of Buddhist didactic tales that slightly predates *The Tale of Genji*. Directed toward a female reader who had recently become a nun, the preface warns of the frivolous depiction of relations between men and women in fiction and cautions the reader to “not let your heart get caught up even briefly in these tangled roots of evil, these forests of words.”² It is no wonder that notes of anxiety found their way into expressions of narrative immersion. However, many readers paid little heed to such warnings, or, as a number of objects in this section demonstrate, they found creative ways of making one’s love of *The Tale of Genji* entirely compatible with Buddhist beliefs.

One such effort, which exerted an indelible influence on the history of Japanese art, was the creation of a legend describing how Murasaki Shikibu composed *The Tale of Genji* at Ishiyamadera Temple in Ōmi province, present-day Shiga prefecture. The legend changed with each retelling, but basic elements persisted over several centuries. In brief, according to this legend, a request for a new tale came from Princess Senshi, the Great Priestess of the Kamo Shrine, through Jōtōmon’in, Empress Shōshi, whom Murasaki Shikibu served. Buddhist forces divinely inspired Murasaki, posited

as the sole visionary author, at the mystical setting of Ishiyamadera on the night of the full moon, the fifteenth of the eighth month, at which point she allegedly commenced writing the tale with the “Exile to Suma” and “Lady at Akashi” chapters. The earliest extant painting of this creation scene survives in a fourteenth-century handscroll of the *Illustrated Legends of Ishiyamadera* (cat. 18). By the sixteenth century, vertical hanging scrolls depicting the author within the temple landscape began to appear. Dating to 1560, the oldest such “portrait-icon” of the author (fig. 51) combines the rolling green hills and *Genji* subject matter of classical Japanese-style painting (*yamato-e*) with the compositional approach of Sino-Japanese ink landscapes.³ Related to hanging-scroll images of the bodhisattva Kannon gazing at the moon’s reflection, the work hints at identifying Murasaki Shikibu as a manifestation of the bodhisattva Kannon, an idea that began circulating soon after the tale was written. The courtier Kujō Tanemichi (1507–1594) commissioned the painting from the artist Tosa Mitsumoto (1530–1569) for use as the central icon of a dedication of fifty-four *Genji waka* poems commemorating Tanemichi’s informal initiation into the esoteric teachings of *Genji* (*Genji denju*), which he formally received in 1574. During this period an elite group of individuals, most of whom had authored their own exegetical commentaries on *Genji*, became recognized experts on the tale with self-proclaimed access to its deeper meanings and interpretation. The painting remained a treasured heirloom within the Kujō family, and later artists emulated its composition (cats. 20, 21).

However, no matter how instrumental *Genji* scholarship may have been for individuals like Kujō Tanemichi, *Genji* learning and deep-seated spiritual beliefs were often intricately connected. Such an understanding of *Genji* is in part related to the reception of *waka* poetry in the tale and to the practice of poetry as a “Way,” the ritualization of which reached a peak in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. But the narrative, too, imparted valuable lessons. For example, Tanemichi stated, “Like the principle that all that flourishes must fail, the passage of time as it leaves its marks upon the human body is deeply moving. To understand this



Fig. 51. *Murasaki Shikibu at Ishiyamadera*. Tosa Mitsumoto (1530–1569). Muromachi period (1392–1568), dated 1560. Hanging scroll; ink, colors, and gold on paper; 33 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 19 in. (85.4 × 48.2 cm). Archives and Mausolea Department of the Imperial Household Agency, Tokyo



Fig. 52. *Murasaki Shikibu Portrait-Icon*. Attributed to Kano Takanobu (1571–1618). Edo period (1615–1868), 17th century. Hanging scroll; ink and colors on silk; 34⁷/₈ × 21 in. (88.4 × 53.4 cm). Ishiyamadera Temple, Otsu, Shiga Prefecture

truth in the most profound way, nothing compares to reading *The Tale of Genji*.⁴ Another genre of Murasaki Shikibu portrait-icons developed the link between the tale and Buddhist thought in an even more abstract direction (cats. 22, 23) through inscriptions that refer to meditative practices for gaining insight into the nature of phenomena. The earliest of these is a painting by Kano Takanobu (1571–1618) (fig. 52), a replica of which hangs today in the so-called *Genji Room* (*Genji no ma*) at Ishiyamadera, a small space adjacent to the sanctuary of the main hall, where Murasaki was said to have written the tale (figs. 53, 54). Takanobu's scroll likely replaced an existing one when the temple and the *Genji Room* were refurbished in 1602, with funding provided by Yodo-dono (1567–1615), the secondary wife of the warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi.⁵ Murasaki Shikibu



Fig. 53. *Murasaki Shikibu Portrait-Icon* in situ in the *Genji Room* at Ishiyamadera

composing her tale became one of the most frequently depicted subjects in Japanese painting. Artists in every historical era transformed the theme according to the function of their piece, their own vision, and the expectations of their patrons and audiences.

For those engaged in the culture of *Genji*, Ishiyamadera, a Shingon Buddhist temple, became a focal point for religious pilgrimage and worship, and the place to which many literary and pictorial artifacts were dedicated. Situated on a hill overlooking Lake Biwa and the Seta River, it is one of the most scenic Buddhist temples in Japan (fig. 54). It takes its name (literally “stony mountain temple”) from the striking dark gray rocks of wollastonite found on the temple grounds. Numerous pilgrims made the journey from the capital to worship the temple's enshrined deity, a beneficent



Fig. 54. View of the Main Hall of Ishiyamadera Temple showing the pointed-arch window (*katōmado*) of the *Genji* Room

Nyoirin Kannon (Sanskrit: *Cintamani Chakra Avalokiteshvara*). This particular manifestation of Kannon takes its name from the wish-fulfilling jewel (*nyoi hōju*) it was said to possess in combination with the wheel (*rin*) of the dharma, or Buddhist teachings. Ishiyamadera is one of the oldest temples in Japan dedicated to the bodhisattva Kannon, and it housed a sculptural icon of the deity from the time of its founding in the eighth century.

The wish-fulfilling powers of the Nyoirin Kannon were viewed as especially efficacious in granting the prayers of female devotees who turned to the deity for assistance with conception, safe childbirth, and marital harmony. This included women from the highest levels of society and those whose sons might one day occupy the imperial throne. After making the short journey from the capital, women spent more than one night ensconced in the main hall of the temple. If fortunate, they received a symbolic dream heralding conception and a successful birth to follow. For *The Tale of Genji*, a narrative understood to be written by a woman at the behest of imperial women, there could be no more suitable origin myth than one that framed its literary creation in terms of Ishiyamadera

conception narratives. The legend allowed Murasaki's act of authorship, which surpassed all others in its complexity, length, and erudition, and which was widely acknowledged as miraculous, to be notionally circumscribed by a gender-appropriate genesis. The legend neatly aligned Murasaki's literary conception with miraculous Buddhist impregnation stories, but it accomplished substantially more. The myth expanded the capacity of *The Tale of Genji* to function on new aesthetic, political, social, and spiritual registers. It tapped into a history of intertwining the *Genji* text with Buddhist concerns, not merely owing to narrative content but also in terms of debates concerning the value of reading and writing fiction.

—Melissa McCormick

1. Arntzen and Itō 2014, pp. 112, 114.
2. Kamens 1988, p. 93.
3. For more on this painting and its historical context, see McCormick 2015; McCormick 2017.
4. Kujō Tanemichi 1928, p. 670; translation by Melissa McCormick.
5. Katagiri 1991. For a discussion of the patronage of art and architecture by Yodo-dono and her two sisters, see Self 2017.

14 如意輪観音像

Seated Bodhisattva Nyoirin Kannon (Sanskrit: *Cintamani Chakra Avalokiteshvara*)

Heian period (794–1185), 10th century

Wood with lacquer and gold leaf

H. 15⅞ in. (40.3 cm)

Ishiyamadera Temple, Otsu, Shiga Prefecture

Important Cultural Property

This precious Heian-period sculpture of Nyoirin Kannon has long functioned as a “surrogate” (*maedachi*) for Ishiyamadera’s main icon, a large “hidden Buddha” (*hibutsu*) that is concealed in a wood shrine behind the altar except during rare viewings, usually once every thirty-three years. Most scholars date this sculpture to the tenth century based on stylistic characteristics, including its relatively wide shoulders, round face, wide eyes, and enlarged nose, as well as the folds of its drapery.¹ A tenth-century date means that this sculpture predates the main hidden icon now at the temple (fig. 55), which was created to replace the original eighth-century sculpture, lost to fire in 1078.

As a sculpture created to stand in for the original eighth-century main icon, this work may also preserve something of that lost sculpture’s appearance. It is carved from a single block of kaya wood from the crown to the lotus pedestal on which the left foot rests, but the hands are later additions. The body is covered in lacquer and gold leaf. The separate base in the shape of a rugged rock and the lotus pedestal consist of undecorated wood. Whereas many images of Nyoirin have six arms, this sculpture has two, and its pose with one leg pendant is unusual. Shimizu Norie has argued that the original main icon of Ishiyamadera was a Kannon that only later came to be identified as a Nyoirin Kannon, in the late ninth or early tenth century, during a period when the temple became more closely identified with Esoteric Buddhism.²

It seems to reflect a period before the “feminization” of Nyoirin Kannon iconography when sculptures began to be readily associated with images of “jewel-bearing goddesses” in connection with the bodhisattva’s wish-fulfilling jewel (Sanskrit: *cintamani*; Japanese: *nyoi hōju*).³ Neither the main hidden icon at

Ishiyamadera nor this surrogate sculpture holds a jewel. However, the countless pilgrims, especially women, who traveled to the temple seeking assistance with conception, safe childbirth, marital harmony, and other worldly concerns put their faith in the sculptures’ powers. It was to this very sculpture—placed in front of the shrine concealing the main icon—that worshippers throughout history, including those in Murasaki’s day, directed such prayers.

MM

1. Inoue 1992; Ayamura 2008. I am grateful to Daniel Borengasser for his help in researching this entry.
2. Shimizu Norie 2012.
3. Fremerman Aptilon 2008, p. 14.



Fig. 55. Nyoirin Kannon (Sanskrit: *Cintamani Chakra Avalokiteshvara*), sacred hidden icon (*hibutsu*) at Ishiyamadera, Heian period, 11th century



15 源氏講式 八十島助左衛門入道写

Prayer for Genji (*Genji kōshiki*)

Copied by Yasojima Sukezaemon *nyūdō* (dates unknown)

Edo period (1615–1868), early 17th century

Thread-bound book; ink on five-colored paper with mica-printed designs

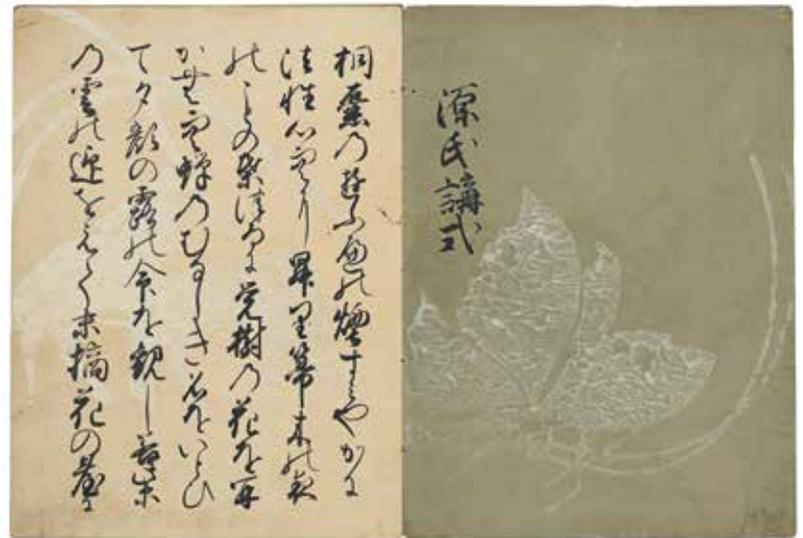
9⅞ × 7¼ in. (25.1 × 18.4 cm)

Harvard Art Museums / Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Bequest of the Hofer Collection of the Arts of Asia (1985.524)

Prayer for Genji (*Genji kōshiki*, more commonly known in Japanese as *Genji hyōbyaku*) has been attributed to the Tendai monk Shōkaku (1167–1235), but the earliest known version of the prayer is embedded within a fourteenth-century tale. Called *A Story of Genji Absolution* (*Genji kuyō sōshi*), it recounts Shōkaku performing an unexpected ritual when asked by a repentant nun to consecrate a copy of the Lotus Sutra that she made from her old manuscripts of *The Tale of Genji*.¹ He not only chants from memory all fifty-four *Genji* chapter titles in order but also alludes to the most salient scenes of each chapter and reveals their inherent Buddhist meaning. In the end the monk prays that Murasaki Shikibu be saved from the pain and suffering of rebirth in the six realms of existence, and that her “fancy words and frivolous phrases” (*kyōgen kigo*) be transformed into hymns of praise for the Buddha, an allusion to a famous prayer by the Tang Chinese poet Bai Juyi.

The *Genji* prayer became so popular that it was incorporated into the Noh play *A Memorial Service for Genji* (*Genji kuyō*, before 1464)² and later appended to the *Moon-Lake Commentary* (*Kogetsushō*, 1673), the most authoritative commentary and reproduction of the *Genji* text in the Edo period.³ The *Prayer* also circulated on its own, as in this single volume. Brushed in striking calligraphy on colorful dyed papers, each page of the book bears large motifs in mica-printed designs reminiscent of paper decorations by Tawaraya Sōtatsu (ca. 1570–ca. 1640). A butterfly appears beneath the title on the first page, where mica-inflected white pigment has been allowed to pool, creating a mottled effect that suggests the pattern of its wings. On the facing page two deer stand amid autumn grasses—one grazing, one raising its head upward as if emitting a forlorn call for its mate—a common trope in Japanese poetry. The motifs are bold, but the subtlety of the mica printing produces an unobtrusive effect; the shimmering designs come in and out of view depending on how the light strikes the pages as they are turned.

The popularity of the *Prayer* surely lies in its evocative language and clever interweaving of *Genji* chapter titles and Buddhist concepts. Take, for example, its treatment of the first two chapter titles of the tale:



The evening smoke from the pyre of “The Lady of the Paulownia-Courtyard Chambers” quickly rises to the dharma realm, the leaves of words in the “Broom Cypress” that night at long last blossom into flowers of the Bodhi Tree.⁴

Chapter 1, “The Lady of the Paulownia-Courtyard Chambers,” refers to *Genji*’s mother, and the *Prayer* begins by invoking her death and funeral, which take place only a few pages into the story. Although there is no mention of her spiritual salvation in the tale, *Prayer for Genji* describes the smoke from her cremation rising to the dharma realm, literally “reaching the ultimate emptiness of Buddhist suchness” (*hossō no kū*). The next line invokes the famous rainy-night scene in Chapter 2, in which several male courtiers evaluate women of various ranks and regale the young *Genji* with stories of past romantic adventures. In the *Prayer*, these vulgar words become the “leaves” (*koto no ha*) of the “Broom Cypress,” a shrub said to be visible from afar but to vanish upon approach and thus linked to Buddhist philosophical ideas about illusive reality. With insight into the true Buddhist nature of all phenomena, therefore, even the mundane words of *Genji* and his companions can become a source of Buddhist awakening. MM

1. Naito 2010, pp. 84–96; English translation by Thomas Harper in Harper and Shirane 2015, pp. 191–201.

2. Goff 1991, pp. 198–209.

3. Yuasa 2009.

4. The translations from *Prayer for Genji* in this entry are by Melissa McCormick, based on text in *ibid.*, pp. 236–38.

16 一字蓮台法華經 「普賢菩薩勸發品」

Lotus Sutra with Each Character on a Lotus, Chapter 28 (*Ichiji rendai*)

Hoke-kyō, Fugen Bosatsu kanbotsuhon)

Heian period (794–1185), 12th century

Handscroll; ink, color, and gold on paper

10¼ in. × 10 ft. 6⅞ in. (26 × 322.2 cm)

The Museum Yamato Bunkakan, Nara

National Treasure

The Lotus Sutra was the most popular Buddhist scripture in the Heian period of Murasaki's day.¹ Its popularity endured because of the worldview it promoted and its promise of salvation for all who committed to reading it, hearing it preached, and writing it out for themselves, the latter act being a way to accrue spiritual merit. The sutra itself demanded that its worshippers lavishly decorate their replications of the text:

In any place whatsoever where this sutra is preached, where it is read, where it is recited, where it is copied, or where a roll of it exists, in all such places there should be erected towers made of the seven kinds of gems, and they should be made very high and broad and well adorned. There is no need to enshrine the relics of the Buddha there. Why? Because in such towers the entire body of the Thus Come One is already present.²

Buddhist devotees with the means were eager to comply, commissioning works like this one. This breathtaking Heian-period Lotus Sutra presents each character of the text like a Buddha icon seated atop a lotus pedestal. The presentation communicates visually a central tenet of the Lotus, that the sutra itself is equivalent to and as sacred as the body of the Buddha. Multicolored blossoms tinged with purple open to reveal circles of green in the center, representing the seedpods of the flowers. To emphasize the sacralization of the text even further, a thin outline of gold ink, resembling a radiant mandorla and reminiscent of the Buddha's golden body, encircles each character and its base. The lines of calligraphy thus become columns of lustrous floating orbs, which, together with the vertical silver lines painted between them, create a shimmering interplay of metals across the paper surface. Borders framing the textual Buddha field at the top and bottom contain cut pieces of silver and gold foil in varying shapes and sizes, which are interspersed with delicately painted cherry blossoms and bright green fronds of bracken or perhaps sea tangles.

The ingenious text presentation is matched by the scroll's extraordinary frontispiece painting. It depicts a group of monastic

and aristocratic figures engaged in a Buddhist service. Two monks with shaved heads appear to chant the contents of the unrolled sutra scrolls that they hold in their hands. Placed before them are portable tables bearing additional scrolls decorated in gold that are nearly identical to the back of this actual sutra. The chanting monks assist the main ritualist in the lower left, who faces an altar supporting the ceremony's main icon, most likely a painting of the bodhisattva Fugen. In Chapter 28 of the Lotus Sutra Fugen promises to materialize before the eyes of true believers, an event visualized in most frontispiece paintings of this chapter with the deity on his white elephant. In contrast, the painting here is remarkably self-referential. It depicts a sutra-offering ceremony, perhaps the very one performed for the scroll at hand.³ The aristocratic figures on the veranda represent the sponsors of the ceremony, including a courtier in a tall *eboshi* cap piously fingering his prayer beads, two women wearing large traveling hats, and a young girl listening intently. Two additional bald monks, one solemnly looking down at his rosary, frame the lay believers on the right and left.

Lotus Sutra dedications were conducted for memorial services, for longevity and healing rites, and to conclude a series of religious lectures. By the late twelfth century, a new kind of Lotus Sutra offering emerged, its aim being to save the author of *The Tale of Genji* and her readers from the tortures of hell for having succumbed to the lure of seductive fictions. In one historical example, referred to as the *One Scroll One Lotus Chapter Genji Offering* (*Genji ippon-kyō*, ca. 1166), participants created sutra frontispieces that took poems and pictorial motifs from chapters of *Genji* and combined them creatively with the content of the Lotus chapters.⁴ Masuki Ryūsuke has argued that this frontispiece could be one such example of a *Genji* sutra.⁵ Whatever the case may be, *Genji* offerings were premised on the idea that the tale could ultimately lead to Buddhist enlightenment, but it required ritual intervention and a reinterpretation of the story within the religious framework of the Lotus. For the elite women and men who sponsored these ceremonies (themselves *Genji* readers), the required religious art provided a powerful reason to bring their knowledge of *Genji* poetry and prose into dialogue with this cherished scripture. MM

1. For a wide-ranging discussion of the seminal importance of the Lotus Sutra in Japanese religious history and culture, see G. J. Tanabe and W. J. Tanabe 1989.

2. Watson 1993, Ch. 10, "The Teacher of the Law," p. 165.

3. Sudō 1992.

4. For a discussion of the *Genji ippon-kyō* and its historical, literary, and religious context, see Bushelle 2015.

5. Masuki 2003.

妙法蓮華經音義卷之九
隨教發品

第二十八

今時普賢菩薩以此自在神通力

威德名聞與大菩薩無量無邊

不可稱數從東方來祇經諸國

普皆震動雨寶蓮華作無量百

千萬億種種妙樂又與無數諸



17 石山寺縁起絵巻 (巻第三) 伝高階隆兼筆
伝杲守詞書

Illustrated Legends of Ishiyamadera (Ishiyamadera engi emaki), Scroll 3
Attributed to Takashina Takakane (active early 14th century)
Calligraphy attributed to Monk Kōshu (1276–1350)
Kamakura period (1185–1333)–Nanbokuchō period (1336–92),
ca. 14th century

One handscroll out of seven; ink and color on paper
13¼ in. × 57 ft. 4⅝ in. (33.6 × 1,749.9 cm)
Ishiyamadera Temple, Otsu, Shiga Prefecture
Important Cultural Property

Illustrated Legends of Ishiyamadera depicts thirty-three separate stories about the miraculous powers of the temple's main icon, the Nyoirin Kannon. The texts and colorful paintings describe the temple's founding in the eighth century and numerous events from the temple's history, but they also emphasize in an unprecedented way stories that concern imperial family members and aristocrats such as Fujiwara no Michinaga and his descendants. Ishiyamadera became a popular destination for female pilgrims, in part because of its wondrous Nyoirin Kannon icon and the deity's wish-fulfilling jewel, with its power to aid in conception and safe childbirth. Among the women who made the journey to Ishiyamadera for this and other reasons were some of Heian Japan's most celebrated female authors.¹

In this scene from the third scroll in the set, the year is 1045 and a woman known as Takasue no Musume (Sugawara no Takasue's daughter) has set out from the capital to pray for both worldly and otherworldly beneficence from the Kannon. She recorded the pilgrimage in her memoir, *The Sarashina Diary (Sarashina nikki)*, ca. 1060, a text shaped by the author's self-professed immersion in *The Tale of Genji*. Takasue no Musume's esteemed poetry and her connection to Murasaki Shikibu's tale must have inspired the fourteenth-century compilers of the *Legends of Ishiyamadera* to include this episode among its thirty-three tales.

The painting shows Takasue no Musume's carriage escorted by twelve men, including four attendants steering the cart and three on horseback armed with bows and arrows for protection on the road. Although the lady herself is likely hidden within the cart, the attendant riding on horseback directly behind her provides a surrogate image for the female pilgrim. She wears a wide-brimmed traveling hat with a transparent veil that offers a glimpse of her plump face, full eyebrows, and cheeks perhaps flushed from the cold. Her expression suggests she is enjoying the trip. Her long hair is cinched in a single ponytail, and her brown pants and green plaid garment are appropriate for travel, allowing her to sit comfortably astride the horse as she confidently holds the reins. Snow is

beginning to fall as the party makes its way past the Ōsaka Barrier, a famous milestone between the capital and Ishiyamadera. In the diary, the lady recalls a time in her youth when she traveled this same road with her father as she reflects on the sites around her, all of which are included in the painting: the gate, the newly refurbished Barrier Temple in the foreground, and the shore of Uchiide Beach.² Rolling green hills capped with snow and groves of pines dusted with white evoke the luminous winter landscape scenes of the artist Takashina Takakane, to whom this scroll has traditionally been attributed.

Horizontal mist bands lead to the next scene, in which Takasue no Musume experiences an auspicious dream while sleeping at the temple, thus attaining the cherished goal of a pilgrim.³ We see both the slumbering woman and the content of her dream: from within the chancel she receives a package of musk incense, shown here in the hand of a mysterious figure in gray robes pulling back a fabric curtain. The figure in the dream says, "Quickly, light it over there!" Believing the dream to be a sign from the Kannon, she spends the remainder of the night in prayer. Although not depicted in the painting, the scroll text also describes the lady's second visit to Ishiyamadera two years later. Awoken by what she mistakenly thinks is the sound of rain, she opens the shutters to find the dawn moon illuminating the entire ravine below the main hall of the temple. She composes:

<i>Tanigawa no</i>	Although I took
<i>Nagare wa ame to</i>	The rush of the ravine's stream
<i>Kikoyuredo</i>	For rain, now I behold,
<i>Hoka yori haruru</i>	The light of this dawn moon,
<i>Ariake no tsuki</i>	Clearer than anywhere else. ⁴

Mistaking the stream for rain can be likened to misunderstanding the illusory nature of phenomena until one is enlightened by the expansive glow of the moon, itself a symbol for the pervasiveness of the dharma. The poem provides an elegant metaphor for an awakening to Buddhist principles and a segue to the episode that comes next: Murasaki Shikibu's famous moon gazing at Ishiyamadera. MM

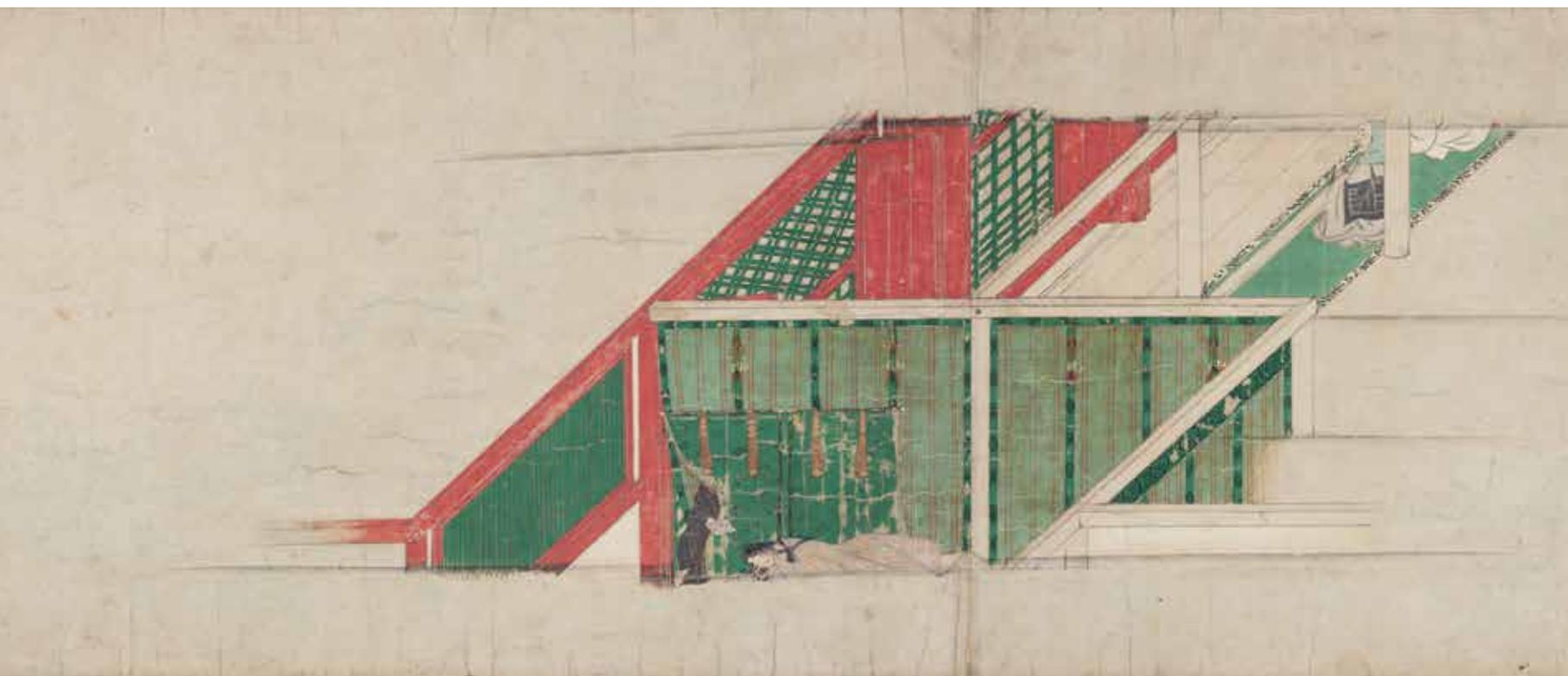
1. On the representation of female pilgrimage in the *Illustrated Legends of Ishiyamadera*, see Ikeda 2013; and for a holistic study of all seven scrolls in the set, see Aizawa and Kuniga 2016; full-color illustrations also appear in Museum of Modern Art, Shiga 2012.

2. Arntzen and Itō 2014, p. 180.

3. See Covaci 2007, p. 228, and the dissertation overall for visual and textual analyses of dream sequences in the scrolls.

4. The poem is rendered as in the handscroll, with the fourth line slightly altered. Translation in Arntzen and Itō 2014, pp. 192, 193, n. 304.









18 石山寺縁起絵巻（巻第四） 伝土佐光信筆
三条西実隆詞書

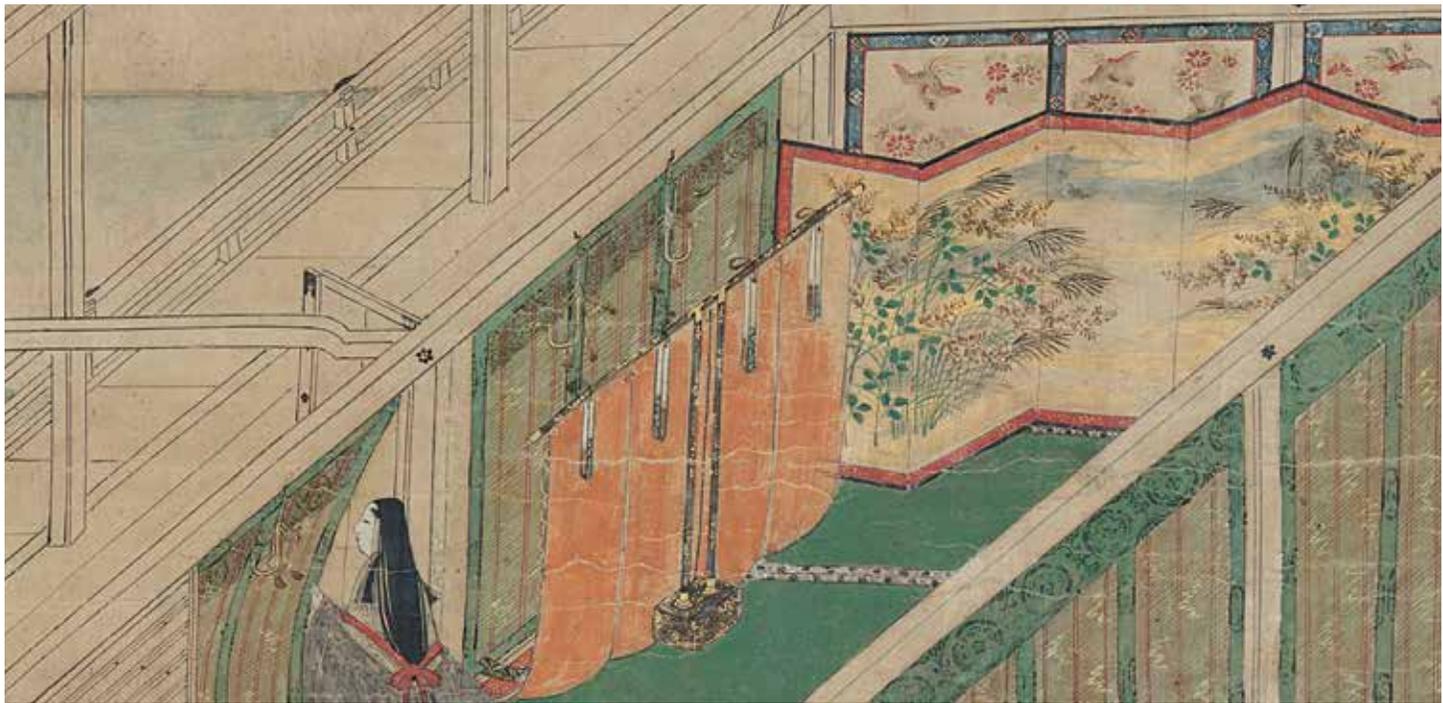
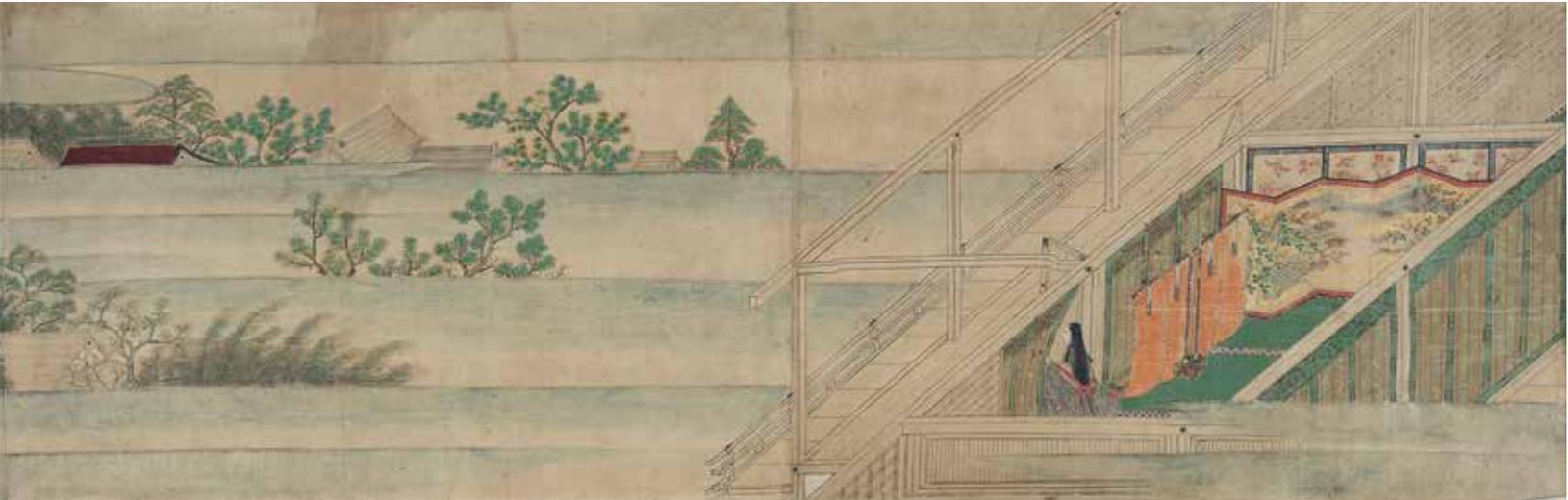
Illustrated Legends of Ishiyamadera (Ishiyamadera engi emaki), Scroll 4
Attributed to Tosa Mitsunobu (active ca. 1462–1525)
Calligraphy by Sanjōnishi Sanetaka (1455–1537)
Muromachi period (1392–1573), 1497
One handscroll out of seven; ink and color on paper
13⁹/₁₆ in. × 63 ft. 3¹/₁₆ in. (34.4 × 1,928.1 cm)
Ishiyamadera Temple, Otsu, Shiga Prefecture
Important Cultural Property

A legend began to take shape by the late twelfth century that Murasaki Shikibu had composed *The Tale of Genji* at Ishiyamadera. The earliest dated image of the author at the temple is that shown here, placed among the thirty-three miraculous stories in the *Illustrated Legends of Ishiyamadera*. The scroll in which this painting appears dates to about 1497; it was created to replace a lost fourteenth-century original. The calligraphy text preceding the painting in the scroll is by the preeminent courtier-scholar Sanjōnishi Sanetaka, and it relates the genesis of the tale:

Murasaki Shikibu was the daughter of Ushōben Fujiwara no Tametoki. She served as a lady-in-waiting to Jōtōmon'in, Empress Shōshi. When the Great Priestess of the Kamo Shrine, Princess Senshi, who was the aunt of Emperor Ichijō, asked the Empress whether she had any exceptional tales, Her Majesty turned to Murasaki and requested that she create one. Replying that she would humbly pray to accomplish the task, Murasaki Shikibu then secluded herself for seven days at this temple. She turned toward the lake and

looked out into the distance. Her mind cleared and various scenes filled her vision and floated into her mind. Without a moment to waste, and without any writing paper prepared, she used the scrolls of the Great Perfection of Transcendent Wisdom Sutra (Sanskrit: *Mahaprajnaparamita Sutra*; Japanese: *Daihannya-kyō*) kept in the inner sanctum. On and on she wrote, capturing those extraordinary scenes with the encouragement of the Kannon in her heart. To atone for her sin, she copied one portion of the Great Perfection of Transcendent Wisdom Sutra and offered it to the temple, where it is preserved to this day. The place where she wrote the tale was designated as the *Genji Room (Genji no ma)* and it remains completely unchanged. Murasaki Shikibu was nicknamed “The Lady of the Chronicles” (*Nihongi no tsubone*), and some say too that she was a manifestation of the bodhisattva Kannon.¹

Starting from right, the scene begins with a view into the so-called *Genji Room*, here beautifully appointed with folding screens that depict autumn grasses and flowers beneath a crescent moon and sliding doors covered in a phoenix and floral design. A brightly colored fabric curtain hung on a gold lacquered stand leads the eye downward toward Murasaki Shikibu, who stands in the lower left corner of the room. She appears in profile and wears the red sash of a religious pilgrim over her robe. Pushing the blinds to the side, she gazes serenely and intently beyond the veranda of the main hall, overlooking the mist-covered trees and the numerous small roofs of the structures that line the approach to the temple. Skillfully orchestrated to suit the horizontal scroll format, the painting keeps



Detail of cat. 18

the viewer in a state of suspense, demanding that one advance leftward to see the object of the author's gaze. There, beyond the red and white walled gate of the temple grounds, the dark blue waters of Lake Biwa come into view, along with an illusory image of the moon floating atop its waves. Suspended between the edges of the shore and the rounded mist bands, the moon is the painting's sole focus, over which the viewer is encouraged to linger. According to legend, Murasaki meditated upon this reflection of

the moon, which inspired the mindful clarity that enabled her writing. Given that the moon is cleverly omitted from the description in the scroll's preceding text passage, its sudden appearance in the painting is a surprise to the reader, echoing Murasaki Shikibu's own revelatory experience. MM

1. Translation by Melissa McCormick, from text in Museum of Modern Art, Shiga 2012, p. 163.

19 紫式部聖像

Sacred Icon of Murasaki Shikibu (*Murasaki Shikibu seizō*)

Momoyama period (1573–1615), 16th century

Hanging scroll; ink, colors, and gold on silk

74 ¾ × 55 ⅞ in. (190 × 140 cm)

Ishiyamadera Temple, Otsu, Shiga Prefecture

In this monumental, life-size painting of Murasaki Shikibu, she sits with brush in hand at a low desk bearing the tools of the writer: inkstone, water dropper, paper, and brushes. With her head tilted downward, she seems lost in contemplation while the scenes and characters of her tale appear before her eyes, as described in the *Illustrated Legends of Ishiyamadera* (cat. 18). This unique painting includes six different scenes from the tale to depict the moment of insight (figs. 56, 57). Executed entirely in a copper-based pigment that resembles metallic ink, the images are difficult to discern. For this reason, however, they appear all the more like figments of the author's imagination. Divided by clouds, the six scenes appear along the left side and at the bottom of the painting. They seem to emerge not only from the author's mind but also from wisps of smoke, perhaps meant to signal incense, rising from a container near the desk. Okuda Isao has tentatively proposed that they represent episodes from the following chapters: Chapter 4, "The Lady of the Evening Faces" (*Yūgao*); Chapter 35, "Early Spring Greens: Part 2" (*Wakana ge*); Chapter 6, "The Safflower" (*Suetsumuhana*); Chapter 8, "A Banquet Celebrating Cherry Blossoms" (*Hana no en*); Chapter 19, "A Thin Veil of Clouds" (*Usugumo*); and Chapter 22, "A Lovely Garland" (*Tamakazura*).¹

A lengthy inscription at the top of the painting, in Chinese characters brushed in the same pigment as the *Genji* scenes, is nearly impossible to decipher because of surface damage. However, Okuda has pointed out some tantalizing clues in the text concerning the

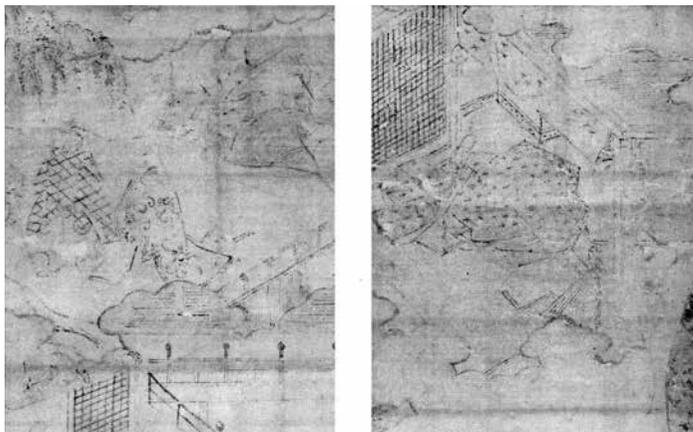


Fig. 57. Chapter 8, "A Banquet Celebrating Cherry Blossoms" (left), and Chapter 35, "Early Spring Greens: Part 2" (right), using infrared photography

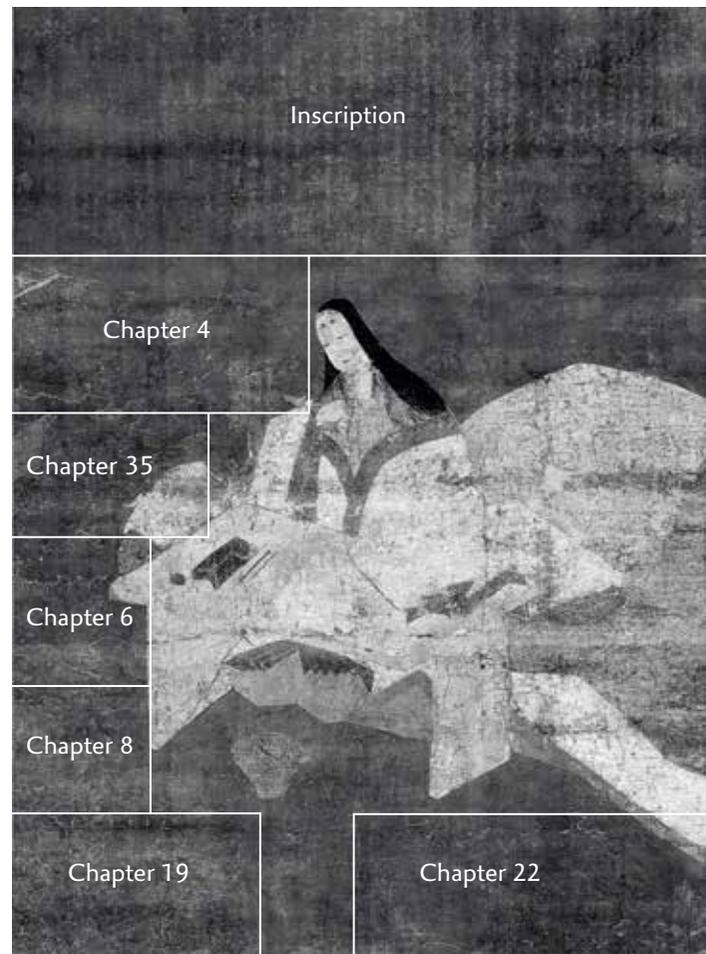
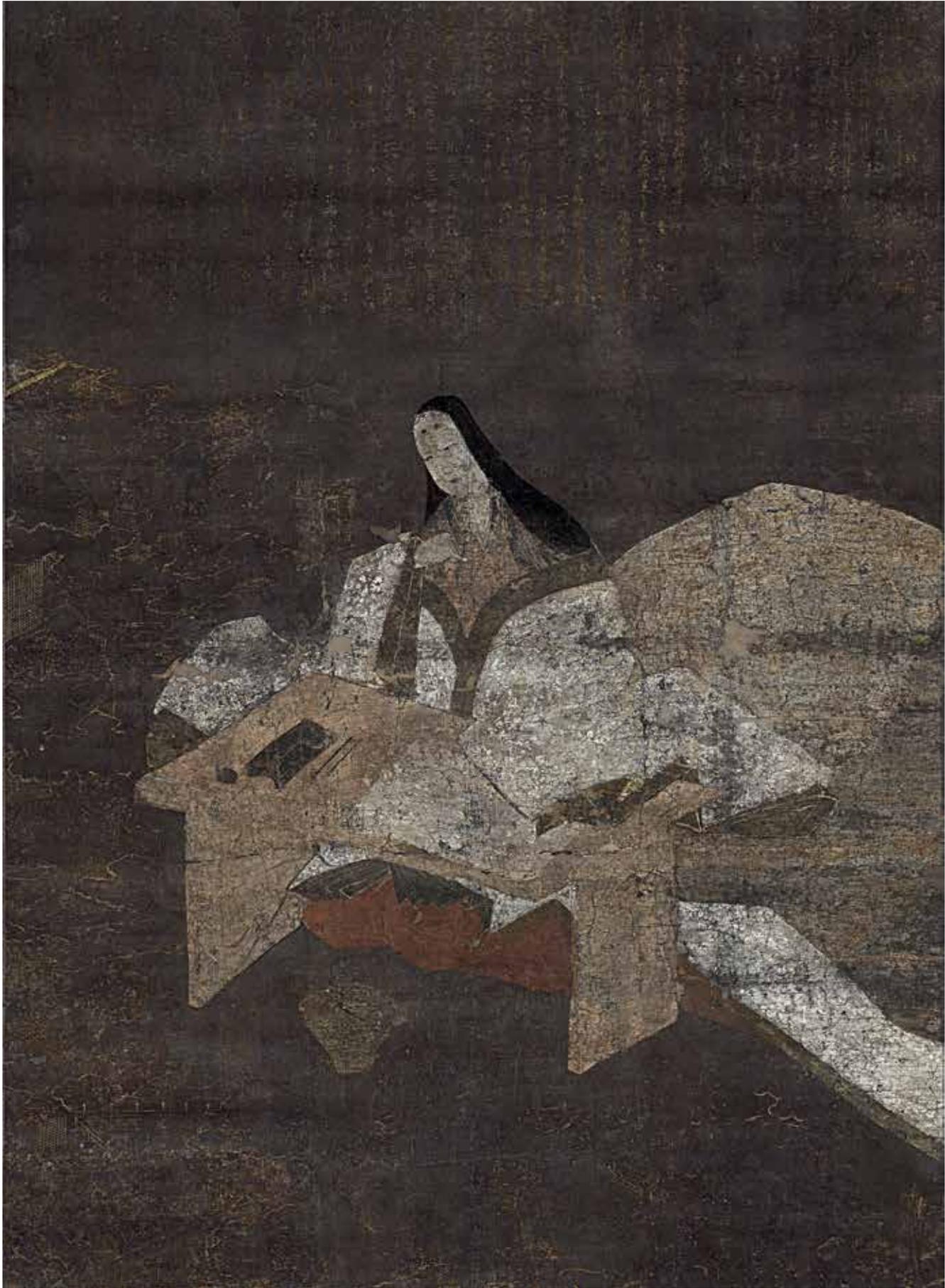


Fig. 56. Diagram of cat. 19 indicating locations of *Tale of Genji* chapters

meaning of the work.² The inscription describes the painting as "an image of contemplating *Genji* on water" (*Genji suisōkan no zu*), a phrase that links Murasaki's moment of creation to the "contemplation of clear water," one of the sixteen ways of visualizing the pure land listed in the Meditation Sutra (*Kanmuryōju-kyō*, pt. 2, sect. 10). This religious framework relates in part to that put forward in the *One Scroll One Lotus Chapter Genji Offering* (*Genji ippon-kyō*), the preface of which was written by the monk Chōken (1126–1203). Elsewhere in the inscription are words referring to *Genji*'s "lasciviousness" (*irogonomi*), followed by what seems to have been the common exculpatory phrase that "the passions are enlightenment" (*bonno soku bodai*). References to the sacredness of *waka* poetry point to a phenomenon during the medieval period of individuals influenced by the rites and principles of Esoteric Buddhism integrating Murasaki icons into poetic practice. MM

1. Okuda 2011.

2. Ibid.



20 紫式部観月図 土佐光起筆

Murasaki Shikibu Gazing at the Moon (*Murasaki Shikibu kangetsu zu*)

Tosa Mitsuoki (1617–1691)

Edo period (1615–1868), 17th century

Hanging scroll; ink and color on silk

33⁷/₈ × 18³/₁₆ in. (86 × 46.5 cm)

Ishiyamadera Temple, Otsu, Shiga Prefecture

In this painting, the large wood doors of a pavilion open to reveal Murasaki Shikibu seated at a desk bearing scrolls of paper and a black lacquered writing box decorated with gold. The work emulates a previous painting of the author dated to 1560 (see fig. 51), which hints at Murasaki's identity as a manifestation of Kannon (Avalokiteshvara). This painting, too, suggests the nature of the female author as a bodhisattva by depicting her in a moment of stillness and contemplation. Her arms are tucked inside her colorful cherry-blossom-patterned robe, and she looks out over the veranda toward the lake. There one finds the object of her gaze, an orb of blank white paper encircled by gray ink wash to illustrate the reflection of the full moon floating on the waves. Ishiyamadera appears between rolling green hills in the distance and rocks in the foreground, the famous granite formations that give the temple its name. The rocks also evoke the idea, as put forth in the *Illustrated Legends of Ishiyamadera* (cats. 17, 18), that the temple is a manifestation in Japan of Mount Potalaka, the mythical rocky-island dwelling of Kannon, making it a fitting home for its main icon (fig. 55) and for Murasaki Shikibu as Kannon.

In most versions of the *Genji* origin legend, Murasaki begins writing the tale with the “Exile to Suma” and “The Lady at Akashi,” Chapters 12 and 13, respectively. In this painting, an inscription next to the moon in the upper left quotes directly from the “Suma” chapter, describing Genji moon gazing while in exile:

“That’s right . . . tonight is the fifteenth.” Staring up at the face of the moon, he lovingly imagined the music that would be playing on a night like this at the palace, with all the ladies gazing out at the night sky. When he murmured a line from Bai Juyi—“Feelings for acquaintances of old, now two thousand leagues distant”—his attendants could not restrain their tears. With indescribable yearning he recalled the poem Fujitsubo sent him complaining about how the “ninefold mists” kept her from the palace. As memories of this and other moments came to him, he wept aloud. He heard a voice saying, “The hour is late.” However, he could not bring himself to retire.¹

<i>Miru hodo zo</i>	Only while I watch,
<i>Shibashi nagusamu</i>	For that moment, comes solace,
<i>Meguriawan</i>	But round to meeting
<i>Tsuki no Miyako wa</i>	With the Moon Capital—how far
<i>Haruka naredo mo</i>	Is that circle’s joining still. ²

The moon at Suma is the perfect meditation on the Buddhist notion of nonduality. Shining everywhere at once, it functions as a master metaphor for the way the Buddha nature infuses all.

The artist of this painting, Tosa Mitsuoki, was designated director of the painting bureau (*edokoro azukari*) from 1654 to 1681, a salaried position that gave the Tosa school, which he led, priority for court-sponsored painting commissions. “Painting bureau” was a designation the imperial court bestowed on an existing painting studio, and it had been given exclusively to the Tosa school for roughly a century prior to the premature death of the Tosa’s main heir, Mitsumoto, in 1569. Over the next eighty-five years, Kano-school artists received the most important court commissions, until Mitsuoki finally regained the title for the Tosa. Mitsuoki was responsible for numerous *Genji* paintings over the course of his career (cats. 22, 51), including others depicting Murasaki Shikibu composing the tale at Ishiyamadera. However, only this one closely follows the composition of the 1560 painting by Mitsumoto. It was likely created at the request of a specific patron hoping to emulate the earlier model, which, as a treasured heirloom in the Kujō family during the Edo period, had become an emblem of the family’s claims to expertise in the scholarship of *Genji* and classical poetry.

MM

1. Washburn 2015, p. 277.

2. E. A. Cranston 2006, p. 764.



Detail of cat. 20

21 紫式部観月図 清原雪信筆

Murasaki Shikibu Gazing at the Moon (*Murasaki Shikibu kangetsu zu*)
 Kiyohara Yukinobu (1643–1682)
 Edo period (1615–1868), late 17th century
 Hanging scroll; ink and color on silk
 42 1/8 × 21 3/4 in. (107 × 55.3 cm)
 Ishiyamadera Temple, Otsu, Shiga Prefecture

Kiyohara Yukinobu is one of the first female professional painters in Japan whose work and biography are well documented and who gained recognition in her own lifetime. She had an exalted artistic pedigree within the Kano school. Yukinobu's maternal grandmother was the younger sister of the influential artist Kano Tan'yū (1602–1674), official painter to the Tokugawa shogunate. Both her grandmother and her mother married painter-disciples of Tan'yū, Yukinobu's father being the artist Kusumi Morikage (active 1620–90). Yukinobu chose to use the family name “Kiyohara,” belonging to her maternal grandfather, rather than that of her father or her husband, which affirmed her lineage through her mother's line, as did her official signature, “daughter of the Kiyohara clan” (*Kiyohara uji no musume*).¹ Like the male artists in her family, Yukinobu painted in the style of Tan'yū. She employed his characteristic subdued palette and use of negative space to create an ethereal atmosphere, punctuated by boldly inked outlines on rocks and trees and by touches of vibrant, precisely applied color. Yukinobu's painterly output was diverse, as it catered to patrons' requests, and included landscapes, bird-and-flower compositions, images of Chinese and Japanese figures from history and legend, Buddhist paintings, and abundant depictions of celebrated women from the classical past.

Yukinobu's painting of *Murasaki Shikibu gazing out at the moon's reflection at Ishiyamadera* follows a compositional template handed down within the Tosa school (fig. 51, cat. 20) but departs from it in several ways. For example, *Murasaki* appears not merely in contemplation but in the act of writing, the marks of her brush apparent on the paper. Gone is the complete stillness of her pose, which in the Tosa examples hints at the author's identity as a manifestation of Kannon. Yukinobu seems to place a new emphasis on the author as a human writer. Nevertheless, the distinctive clouds roiling through the midsection of the painting are a conventional way of indicating that something otherworldly is afoot; they signal that Yukinobu understood this to be a scene in which divine inspiration engendered the tale. Unique to this image is the inclusion behind *Murasaki* of a Sino-Japanese-style landscape painting. It depicts a village nestled in the mountains and a solitary figure punting a boat toward the shore. The painting calls to mind Chinese poetry and its use in Japanese literature, as in the “Exile to Suma” chapter of *The Tale of Genji*. According to legend,



Murasaki began writing the “Suma” chapter, with its many allusions to Chinese literature and Bai Juyi's poetry, as she gazed at the moon's reflection. Therefore, Yukinobu's miniature ink landscape provides a fitting complement to the subject matter of this hanging scroll. It helps us envision *Murasaki* as a writer well versed in the Chinese classics and calls attention to Yukinobu's training and skill in Chinese-style painting, leaving us to wonder if Yukinobu felt a special affinity with the Heian-period female author. MM

1. Ōhira 2014, p. 124.



22 紫式部図 土佐光起筆

Portrait-Icon of Murasaki Shikibu (*Murasaki Shikibu zu*)

Tosa Mitsuoki (1617–1691)

Edo period (1615–1868), 17th century

Hanging scroll; ink and color on silk

35 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 20 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (90.5 × 52.7 cm)

Ishiyamadera Temple, Otsu, Shiga Prefecture

Isolated against an entirely blank background, Murasaki Shikibu sits on a raised tatami mat, dressed in the red trousers and colorful robes of a court lady. Resting one elbow on her writing desk and holding her brush between her fingers, with black ink pooled in the well of the inkstone and paper scrolls strewn around her, she is poised to begin composing her masterpiece. In contrast to images of the author gazing at the moon's reflection on the water, here she looks inward. Mitsuoki communicates the figure's interiority in large part through the depiction of her eyes, which are fully articulated with fine lines delineating the lids and dark pupils positioned in a trancelike stare. Her head tilts away from her desk and her gaze is directed slightly upward, toward the orange calligraphy sheet in the upper right corner of the painting. The inscription provides a key to understanding the meaning and function of this painting as more than a simple imaginary portrait of the author and transforms the work into a proclamation of the relationship between *The Tale of Genji* and Buddhist belief.

In addition to seeing Murasaki Shikibu as a reincarnation of the bodhisattva Kannon, medieval and early modern commentators promoted the idea that *The Tale of Genji* was suffused with insights based on nondualistic thinking, a theory premised on the assertion that the author had mastered Tendai meditative practice. As Katagiri Yayoi has pointed out, numerous medieval *Genji* commentaries present her as having attained “three discernments in one mind” (*isshin sangan*).¹ This means that the *Genji* author had contemplated phenomena from the perspectives of “emptiness” (nothingness, or the void; *kū*), “conventional existence” (a temporary acceptance of provisional reality, *kari*), and, ultimately, “the middle” (*chū*). To arrive at the middle is to understand phenomena as simultaneously empty and provisionally existing, thus interdependent and nondual. Therefore, Murasaki was said to have achieved transcendent insight (*kan*) into the ultimate nondualism of all phenomena.

The inscription on the striking orange cartouche in this painting bears the “four gates” (*shimon*), corresponding to four stages of contemplating phenomena. It represents a further parsing of the three truths and the three discernments, presenting the methods of contemplation as a tetralemma:

- a) existence (有門)
- b) nothingness (emptiness, 空門)
- c) both existence and nothingness (亦有亦空門)
- d) neither existence nor nothingness (非有非空門)

In this scheme, the extremes of existence and nothingness (a and b) are similar to the three discernments and the three truths, but the middle, the ultimate synthesis, is broken down more precisely (c and d) to convey the state when “existence and emptiness are ‘simultaneously illumined and simultaneously eradicated.’”² Virtually all of the medieval *Genji* commentaries mention the four gates, and, like this painting, posit a philosophical origin story for the tale that goes well beyond the trope of divine inspiration.

The painting includes inscriptions of two *waka* poems taken from *The Poetic Memoirs of Murasaki Shikibu* (cat. 4), where headnotes contextualize them as grief poems. The first is said to have been written sometime after the death of the author's husband:

<i>Kokoro dani</i>	Is there a fate
<i>Ikanaru mi ni ka</i>	That could at very least
<i>Kanauramu</i>	Bring satisfaction?
<i>Omoishiredomo</i>	The truth I realize
<i>Omoishirarezu</i>	But cannot yet accept. ³

The second poem follows a headnote that explains how Murasaki composed it upon reading through the old letters of a recently deceased female friend at court:

<i>Tare ka yo ni</i>	Who will read it?
<i>Nagaraete mimu</i>	Who will live forever
<i>Kakitomeshi</i>	In this world?
<i>Ato wa kiesenu</i>	A letter left behind
<i>Katami naredomo</i>	In her undying memory. ⁴

One can see why poems that reflect upon the nature and limited temporality of human existence would be selected for portrait-icons of Murasaki Shikibu, the ultimate goal of which was to link *The Tale of Genji* to Buddhist beliefs. The second poem, by positing a future world from which the poet and the poem's readers have departed, emphasizes the mutability of existence (*mujōkan*), an integral part of Buddhist philosophy that some *Genji* commentators considered to be the central point of the tale. MM

1. Katagiri 1991.

2. Donner and Stevenson 2018, p. 11.

3. Bowring 1985, pp. 234–35.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 255.

有門 空門
亦有 空門
非有 非空門

古語をいふは

身は加わらば

松立所

思日志良

誰の世に

天年出

秘事

能見



赤坂清
藤原光起

23 紫式部図 狩野峯信筆 伝近衛家熙書

Portrait-Icon of Murasaki Shikibu (*Murasaki Shikibu zu*)

Kano Minenobu (1662–1709)

Calligraphy attributed to Konoe Iehiro (1667–1736)

Edo period (1615–1868), 17th century

Hanging scroll; ink and color on silk

44⁷/₁₆ × 21⁹/₁₆ in. (112.8 × 54.7 cm)

Ishiyamadera Temple, Otsu, Shiga Prefecture

Like the previous work by Tosa Mitsuoki (cat. 22), this painting by Kano Minenobu, which depicts Murasaki Shikibu alone at her desk and bears a Buddhist inscription above, belongs to a type of portrait-icon that was hung in the *Genji* Room at Ishiyamadera by the late sixteenth century (see the introduction to Chapter 2 in this volume). Rather than render this subject with the meditative pose and countenance favored by Tosa artists (cats. 20, 22), Minenobu, like his Kano-school colleague Yukinobu (cat. 21), shows Murasaki Shikibu in action. She holds her brush in her right hand, steadies the scroll with her left hand, and gazes down at what she has already written wearing an expression that suggests pleasure with her work. Her desk, with its black lacquer finish, bowed legs, and touches of gold, is more ornate than those in other examples. Her garment is bright and lively. Over several layers of colorful robes and red trousers, she wears a pleated apron secured with checkerboard-patterned ties that zigzag behind her. The apron (*mō*), typically worn by ladies-in-waiting, bears a striking pictorial scene of a watery bay, its curving shoreline dotted with pines. The image evokes paintings of the Sumiyoshi shore, whose shrine and resident deity play a pivotal role in *The Tale of Genji*, specifically in the story of the Akashi family whom Genji meets while in exile at Suma. But it also resembles paintings of the Suma shore and Akashi bay specifically (cat. 24). Like Yukinobu, Minenobu seems to have deployed a painting within the painting to call attention to the chapters Murasaki Shikibu was said to have written first—“Exile to Suma” and “The Lady at Akashi.” Minenobu blends the Buddhist message of this type of painting with the origin story of Murasaki at Ishiyamadera, placing slightly more emphasis on the woman’s abilities as a writer than as a meditative practitioner.

In this way, Minenobu’s painting suggests future developments in the genre of Murasaki Shikibu images, which seem to lose their overt connections to Buddhist beliefs and poetic practices modeled after Esoteric lineage transmissions. Son of Kano Tsunenobu (1636–1713), the head of the Kobikichō Kano school in Edo, Minenobu was founder of the Hamachō Kano branch and a painter in attendance to the Tokugawa *bakufu* (military government).

As a Kano artist and thus a proponent of Chinese-style painting and subjects, he took a general approach to depicting Murasaki Shikibu that may be tinged with Confucian notions of the author as a virtuous woman. As Satoko Naito has shown, Confucian and national learning (*kokugaku*) scholar Andō Tameakira (1659–1716) advanced this view in his *Seven Essays on Murasaki* (*Shika Shichiron*, 1703), which extols the instructional nature of her tale and her role as a female exemplar for contemporary women.¹ Therefore, despite the presence of the Buddhist inscription on this painting, Minenobu’s visual characterization of Murasaki Shikibu foreshadows an important change in the reception of the author from the eighteenth century onward.

At the same time, the Buddhist painting inscription referencing Murasaki’s insight and the philosophical nature of her *waka* poems reached an even wider audience in the late Edo period. A printed broadsheet from the nineteenth century (fig. 58) shows the author beneath an identical inscription to that found in the paintings, alongside an image of her famous inkstone (cat. 97) and its precise measurements. The title of the broadsheet reads: “The inscription on the portrait of Murasaki Shikibu in the *Genji* Room at Ishiyamadera Temple” (*Ishiyamadera Genji no ma Murasaki Shikibu eisan* 石山寺源氏間紫式部影讚). The character for “room” has the component for “moon” 月, rather than the usual “sun” 日, a punning reference to the legend that Murasaki started writing the tale beneath the autumn moon.

MM

1. Naito 2010.



Fig. 58. Broadsheet with portrait of Murasaki Shikibu and her inkstone from Ishiyamadera Temple. Edo period (1615–1868), mid-19th century. Woodblock print; ink on paper; 12¹/₄ × 17¹/₈ in. (31.2 × 43.4 cm). Collection of John T. Carpenter

有門空門
亦有尔空門
非有非空門

心あるに
みり
木も
田も
海も
山も
川も
花も
鳥も
虫も
人も
物も
すべて
空しく
なる



大徳
印

24 紫式部・須磨・明石図 土佐光成筆

Murasaki Shikibu (center), *Genji at Suma* (right), and *Genji at Akashi* (left)

(*Murasaki Shikibu, Suma, Akashi zu*)

Tosa Mitsunari (1646–1710)

Edo period (1615–1868), late 17th or early 18th century

Hanging scroll; ink and color on silk

51¾ × 21⅞ in. (131.5 × 54.5 cm)

Ishiyamadera Temple, Otsu, Shiga Prefecture

The familiar image of Murasaki Shikibu at her writing desk with her writing box and scrolls of paper at the ready occupies the center of this large triptych, where the author is flanked by two paintings featuring her protagonist Genji. Murasaki turns away from her desk, apparently in deep concentration, while the flanking scenes from the “Exile at Suma” chapter on the right and the “Lady at Akashi” chapter on the left give painted form to her imagination. This painting of the author visualizes the moment when, according to legend, she began writing her tale as she gazed at the moon’s reflection from Ishiyamadera. The artist makes reference to the famous temple in the soft, rounded hills in the distance, also seen in the painting by his father, Tosa Mitsuoki (cat. 20). The author’s pose and isolation against a blank ground also recall the category of Buddhist icons of Murasaki, which Mitsuoki painted as well (cat. 22). Mitsunari even adopts the captivating trancelike gaze that his father used in his portrayal of the author to suggest her understanding of the ultimate nonduality of phenomena, as described in the exegetical literature. Here she turns away from the large, solitary moon in the sky, apparently having already gained the clarity of mind its reflection on the water was said to bring. The painting suggests that the moon properly resides in her heart-mind, reinforcing the idea that the characters in the flanking paintings, who gaze toward the orb in the center, emerge from her imagination.

The triptych merges the frame story of the tale’s creation with the narrative itself, visualizing the three separate paintings as seamlessly sharing the same moon and the same shoreline. In the image of Suma on the right it is the fifteenth of the eighth month; Genji stands near the veranda of his rustic abode, surrounded by colorful autumn flowers in the garden and slender pines and salt

makers’ huts on the shore. He glimpses small boats in the distance and a line of geese. In the tale, the geese inspire a round of poetry by him and his men in which they are metaphors for themselves, distant from home but finding companionship in one another. The climax of the scene, however, is the appearance of the brilliant moon, which prompts Genji to remember his loved ones back in the capital viewing the same moon (cat. 20). Time and space seem to collapse as we envision the author, her characters, and even Bai Juyi, whom Genji cites in the passage, all contemplating the same moon on the same night.

The painting of Akashi on the left shows Genji setting out on horseback for his first romantic meeting with the Akashi Lady. Several boats docked at the shore recall the miraculous scene when the Akashi Lady’s father, a Buddhist lay monk known as the Novitiate, traveled to Suma in the middle of a raging tempest to bring Genji back to Akashi, in the hopes of Genji marrying his daughter. The Akashi Novitiate had been fervently entreating the gods of Sumiyoshi for the restoration of his family line, and now his prayers are about to be answered. Later in the narrative, Genji’s daughter with the Akashi Lady becomes the empress and gives birth to a crown prince, making Genji, who was never able to ascend the throne himself, the grandfather of an emperor. Because it turns out that the Akashi monk is the cousin of Genji’s deceased mother, the Kiritsubo Consort, the Akashi family’s eventual success recuperates the loss with which *The Tale of Genji* begins.¹

With good reason, therefore, whoever created the origin myth that Murasaki wrote the tale at Ishiyamadera described her as beginning with Chapters 12 and 13, *Suma* and *Akashi*. In these chapters, Genji’s destiny is fully revealed, and many of the events that happen before and after are given deeper meaning. The triptych masterfully links that mythical moment of creation to well-known scenes, framing them in Buddhist terms and hinting at the trope of otherworldly determinism that runs throughout the tale.

MM

1. Okada 1991, pp. 266–86.



CHAPTER THREE

Monochrome *Genji* Pictures and the Conventions of *Hakubyō*

IN “EXILE TO SUMA” (*SUMA*) and “Lady at Akashi” (*Akashi*), Chapters 12 and 13 of the tale, Genji marvels at the exotic seascape as he attempts to capture his melancholy surroundings in a series of ink drawings and poetic compositions. He works solely in black ink on paper, the medium of the amateur artist, unlike the professional who paints with rich mineral pigments, gold, and silver, media that tend to conceal the hand of the creator beneath their many layers. Genji’s drawings represent the expression of his own heart, heightened in intensity due to his status as a political exile, and they recall the tradition of the amateur ideal found across East Asia, which favored individual expressiveness over technical perfection. Murasaki Shikibu no doubt sought to bring out similarities between the aesthetic proclivities of her protagonist and those of amateurs such as the great Chinese artist and poet Gu Kaizhi (ca. 344–ca. 406), whom later practitioners revered as a free-spirited aristocratic painter. As Richard Barnhart explains, the monochrome “plain-ink drawings” (Chinese: *baimiao*) by the Chinese artist Li Gonglin (ca. 1049–1106), for example, were viewed by some of his critics as “an assertion of the philosophy and the aesthetic of the scholar over those of the professional painter.”¹ The skill required and the exposure of the artist’s gesture in line made this technique similar to calligraphy, and yet, as Barnhart states, “[it] was not calligraphy; it was painting reduced to its linear essence—ink lines without color, and with only the merest suggestion of tonality.”²

The amateur ideal was in part grounded on the notion of artistic or literary creation (Chinese: *wen*; Japanese: *bun*) being a vehicle through which the principles of the cosmos were made manifest. Genji’s drawings of Suma and Akashi are characterized in the tale as otherworldly oracles, material objects linked to a destiny that turns on events occurring on those distant shores, and they famously secure his triumph in Chapter 17, “A Contest of Illustrations” (*E-wase*), allowing him to consolidate his political power. In general, ink painting conveyed cultural values such as eremitism, spontaneity, and asceticism, as well as a notion that the

artist is not beholden to any pursuit beyond self-cultivation in tune with universal principles.

In comparison to the protagonist’s fictional drawings, actual paintings of scenes from *The Tale of Genji* done in the ink-line drawing (*hakubyō*) mode demonstrate a vastly different set of representational values.³ The amateurism embodied in most *Genji* images in ink, unlike that of the Chinese monochrome linear tradition, is not based on a deliberate contrast with professional painting. Rather, it incorporates techniques found in polychrome paintings to evoke a classical court-painting idiom.⁴ Examples include a beautiful booklet of Chapter 51, “A Boat Cast Adrift” (*Ukifune*) (fig. 59, cat. 25), and traditional poet portraiture from

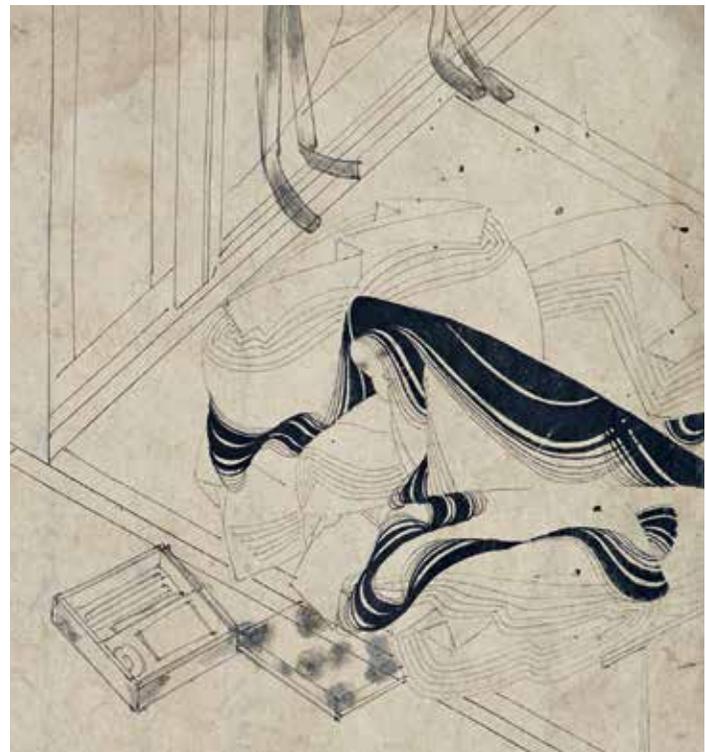


Fig. 59. Detail of cat. 25, booklet of Chapter 51, “A Boat Cast Adrift” (*Ukifune*), Kamakura period (1185–1333), 13th century

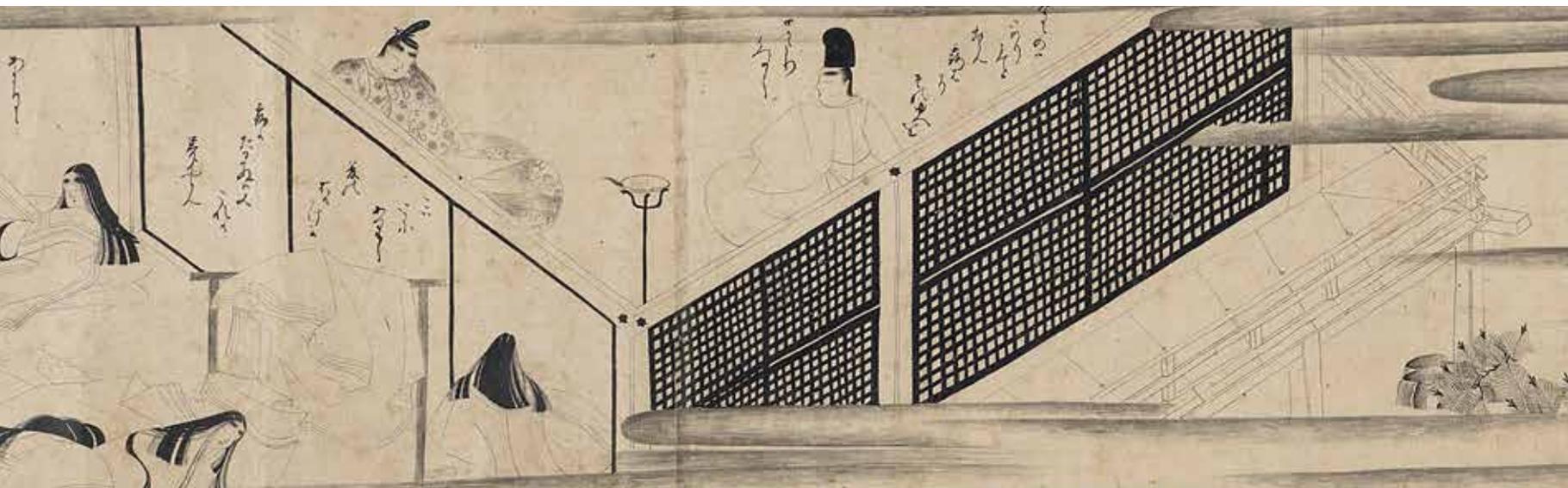


Fig. 60. Scene from *A Tale of Wakeful Sleep* (*Utatane sōshi*), showing the heroine peering into the *Genji* Room at Ishiyamadera Temple. Muromachi period (1392–1568), 16th century. Detail from one of two handscrolls; ink on paper; Scroll II, image: 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. × 17 ft. 2 $\frac{3}{16}$ in. (13.6 × 523.7 cm). Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, William Sturgis Bigelow Collection (11.9457)

the thirteenth century (cats. 26, 27), in which meticulously drawn lines in a consistent tone of ink define the contours of robes and, in the process, transform the blank, negative space of the paper. Possessing tremendous appeal, these early examples of *Genji* and ink-line poet paintings spotlight the rhythmic quality of the line as it thins and thickens, revealing subtle changes in the speed and gesture of the artist's hand. They create quiet, abstract worlds blanching of pattern and texture that focus attention on the essence of the things depicted.

At the other end of the spectrum are monochrome *Genji* paintings by amateur artists that have their roots in drawings referred to as “women’s pictures” (*onna-e*), which were done by female courtiers and attendants as early as the tenth century.⁵ Drawing was one of many courtly accomplishments that individuals were expected to master, along with calligraphy, poetry, and music, but narrative pictures (*monogatari-e*), in particular, were associated with women. A relative abundance of amateur *Genji* paintings survive from the sixteenth century, most often in the format of small scrolls (less than eight inches in height) that fit comfortably in the hand. Some of these Muromachi-period scrolls are copies made by individuals, possibly young ones, educating themselves about *Genji* and its 795 *waka* poems. One can imagine a scenario, however, in which an erudite *Genji* specialist and accomplished artist would create an original that became a model for others to copy (cat. 29). In the process, copyists personalized their scrolls by modifying or inserting scenes, and adding or deleting texts and poems. Dating to

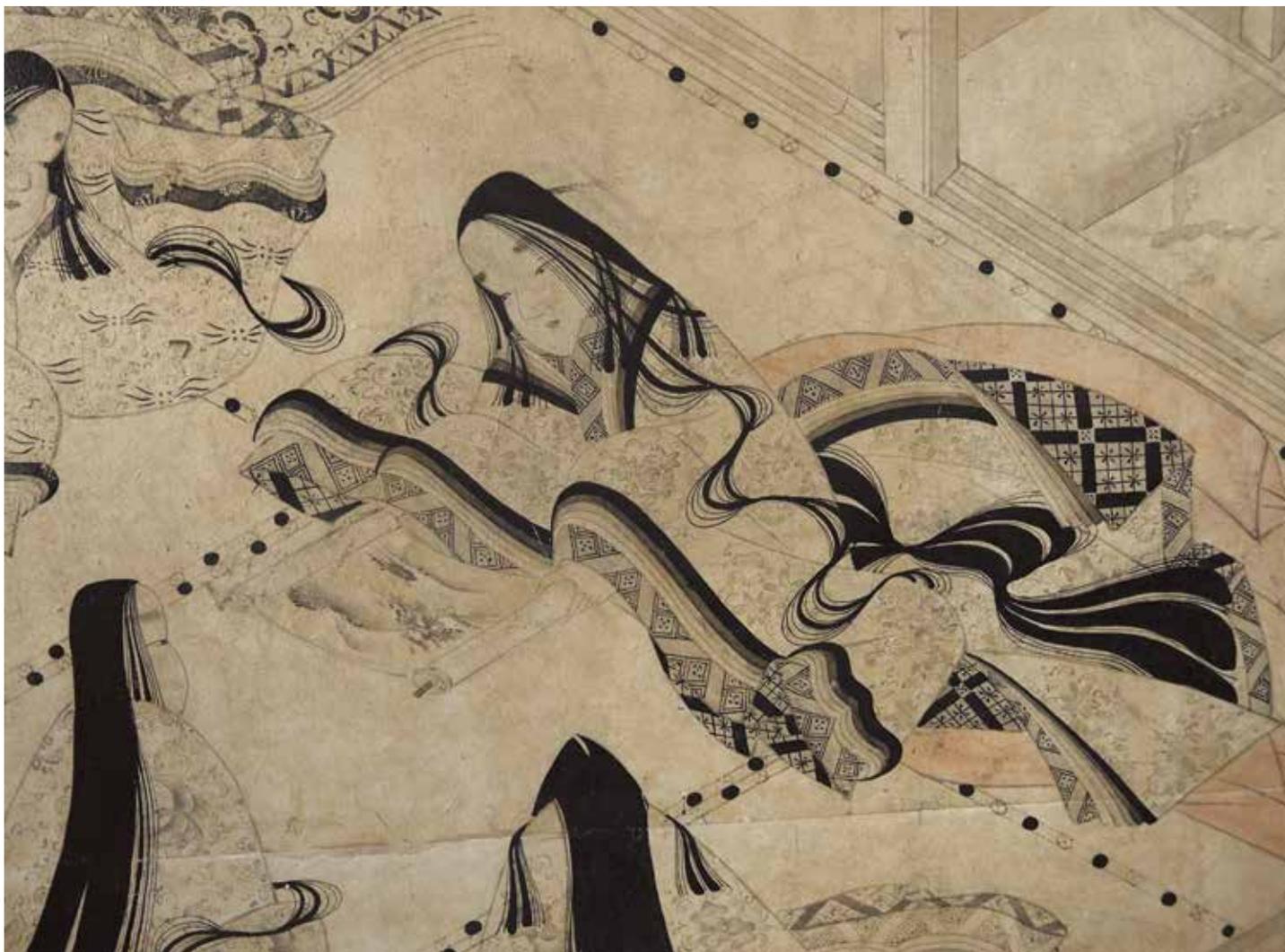
a time from which virtually no signed or securely attributed paintings by women survive, such *Genji* scrolls offer unique insights into female cultural production in the medieval period and how communities of female readers understood the tale.⁶

This activity of manuscript copying was part of a phenomenon that might be called *Genji* fan fiction, epitomized by the *hakubyō* small scroll *A Tale of Wakeful Sleep* (*Utatane sōshi*) (fig. 60). The story focuses on a young girl who has been visited in her dreams by a man as “handsome as the radiant *Genji*.”⁷ One night, while on a pilgrimage to Ishiyamadera Temple, she peeks inside the famous *Genji* Room, where Murasaki Shikibu was said to have written her tale, only to discover her dream lover in real life, telling a friend about a mysterious woman who has appeared in his dreams. The story has some twists and turns, but all ends well for this heroine. The work rewards readers familiar with *Genji* through ample allusions to the tale and a playful approach common to *Genji* small scrolls (cat. 28). The informality of the ink-line mode allows text to be inscribed next to the images, including the names of characters and spoken dialogue, adding to the vitality of these works.

A highly crafted, miniaturized mode of *hakubyō* *Genji* painting emerged during the early Edo period with the work of Tosa Mitsunori (1583–1638), whose idiosyncratic approach is exemplified by a set of two albums in The Metropolitan Museum of Art (cat. 31). Although also small in scale, Mitsunori’s albums represent a striking contrast to the charmingly awkward *Genji* small scrolls of the Muromachi period. For instance, with each



Fig. 61. Ten Scenes from *The Tale of Genji*. Tosa school, Momoyama (1573–1615)–Edo (1615–1868) period, 17th century. Pair of six-panel screens; ink with slight red pigment and gold on paper; each screen: 66½ in. x 11 ft. 5½ in. (168.9 x 349.3 cm). Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Museum purchase funded by Mr. and Mrs. Harris Masterson III, Mr. and Mrs. John R. Moran, Carl Detering, Mr. and Mrs. Gary Levering, Mr. and Mrs. M. S. Stude, Continental Oil Company, Mary Alice Wilson, Mr. and Mrs. William Coates, Jr., Texas Pipe and Supply Company, Barbara K. Sandy, Mr. and Mrs. Lee B. Stone, and Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Thomas (80.149.A, B)



Detail of fig. 61, left screen (bottom), Chapter 50, "A Hut in the Eastern Provinces" (*Azumaya*)

leaf measuring only five by five inches, they call for a virtuosic compression of the composition. The result is a compendium of jewel-like paintings that articulate the smallest of details and combine them with abundant gold. As clear evidence of its popularity, this fine *hakubyō* mode of *Genji* painting did not remain exclusively tied to small-scale formats, such as album leaves, but rather began to be executed on large-scale folding screens (fig. 61).

Yet another approach to depicting the world of *Genji* in monochromatic tones was one in which artists blended the aesthetic sensibility and techniques of Chinese-style painting (*kanga*) with those of Japanese-style painting (*yamato-e*). For artists trained primarily in one or the other tradition, attempts at a fusion of the two could result in innovative forms of expression. Thus, even richly pigmented polychrome images of the tale were infused with Sinitic modes of representation, and artists such as Tosa Mitsumochi

(active ca. 1517–72) and, a century later, Iwasa Matabei (1578–1650) blended ink wash, gold paint, and pigmentation in creative ways to develop a new and powerful mode of *Genji* painting.

—Melissa McCormick

1. Barnhart 1993, pp. 18, 19.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
3. Indispensable recent studies on *hakubyō* narrative painting in Japan include Kawada 1992b; Sano 2007; Sano 2011; Miyazaki 2017; Museum Yamato Bunkakan 2017.
4. Joshua S. Mostow explores the distinction between Chinese *baimiao* and Japanese *hakubyō* in Mostow 2014, pp. 47–49.
5. Ikeda 1985. On women's pictures and *hakubyō* illustrations of *The Tales of Ise*, see Mostow 2014, pp. 39–75.
6. For a fuller discussion of this subject, see McCormick 2006; McCormick 2008.
7. This painting and a polychrome version are analyzed in McCormick 2009, pp. 110–37.



25 源氏物語浮舟帖

Booklet of “A Boat Cast Adrift” from *The Tale of Genji* (*Genji monogatari Ukifune chō*)

Kamakura period (1185–1333), 13th century

Thread-bound book; ink on paper

9 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (23.7 × 19 cm)

The Museum Yamato Bunkakan, Nara

Important Cultural Property

Although copies of Murasaki Shikibu’s tale began circulating soon after its creation in the eleventh century, the earliest surviving full manuscripts of *The Tale of Genji* date to the thirteenth century (see John T. Carpenter’s essay in this volume). The booklet shown here contains only the latter portion of Chapter 51, “A Boat Cast Adrift” (*Ukifune*), but originally included the entire chapter. This precious manuscript consists of not only text but also two exquisite ink paintings, making it the oldest extant example of an illustrated *Genji* book.

The paintings are also the earliest examples of *Genji* images executed in the so-called ink-line (*hakubyō*) mode of narrative illustration, which became one of the most popular forms of

illustrating the tale in later centuries. Most striking in these works is the graphic interplay of the stark white paper, the meticulously drawn lines of the architecture, and the glossy black patches of ink, such as those used here to render the long, flowing hair of Ukifune and her two attendants. Although these ink-line *Genji* images date to the thirteenth century, they retain hallmarks of Heian-period narrative painting, such as the plump, rounded faces and the bushy eyebrows drawn with multiple, thin lines.

This illustration, which depicts a moment of heightened anxiety for the young woman Ukifune, is strategically placed in the book to enhance the reader’s experience of the narrative. Ukifune finds herself entangled in a love triangle when Niou and Kaoru, the two male characters who take over as protagonists in the latter part of the tale, both pursue her independently. In this scene, Kaoru has discovered that Ukifune has been unfaithful to him with Niou and sends her a reproachful letter with a single poem that accuses her of not “pining” (a pun on the Japanese *matsu*, meaning both “pine tree” and “to wait”) for him dutifully, as he had mistakenly assumed she would:

Nami koyuru That waves were washing,
Koro to mo shirazu Splashing over Sue I knew not—
Sue no matsu Pine-till-the-end,
Matsuran to nomi In my innocence I thought,
Omoikeru kana “How the dear thing must be pining!”¹
 “Don’t make me a laughingstock.”²

Reading from right to left, the poem begins at the top of the second column of text on the facing page, indented slightly to set it apart from the surrounding prose. The juxtaposition of text and image in the book allows us to read the content of Kaoru’s letter, held in Ukifune’s hand, while seeing her begin to realize the severity of her dilemma. A decorated writing box with an inkstone and brush goes unused as she nervously considers how to reply.

The first part of this booklet and three more illustrations from the original volume, now remounted as a handscroll, are in the Tokugawa Art Museum. Seven pages from Chapter 52, “Ephemerids” (*Kagerō*), and one sheet from Chapter 48, “Early Fiddlehead Greens” (*Sawarabi*), have also survived from what was most likely a set of all fifty-four chapters.³ This book was assembled with the section-binding (*tetsuyōsō*, or *retsujōsō*) technique, in which stacks of paper sheets are folded in half and stitched at the crease to create signatures that are then bound together. MM

1. E. A. Cranston 2006, p. 959.

2. Washburn 2015, p. 1206.

3. Akiyama Terukazu 1963/2000. For an examination of the booklet in historical context, see Ikeda 2008.

26 為家本時代不同歌合

Poetry Contest with Poets from Various Periods, Tameie Version (*Tameie-bon Jidai fudō uta-awase-e*)

Kamakura period (1185–1333), mid-13th century

Handscroll mounted as a hanging scroll; ink on paper

11¾ × 197/16 in. (29.8 × 49.4 cm)

Harvard Art Museums / Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Bequest of the Hofer Collection of the Arts of Asia (1985.412)

Crucial to the development of a distinctive aesthetic of *Genji* paintings in the ink-line drawing (*hakubyō*) mode was the emergence of the poet-portrait tradition (*kasen-e*), in which imagined portrayals of celebrated male and female poets accompanied transcriptions of their most famous poems.¹ The facial features of each poet are rendered in expressive detail, while the shapes of their garments are suggested by stylized outlines. Commissioned by members of the court, these works usually took the form of extended handscrolls with texts interspersed among the images, as is the case in this

work and that from the scroll described in the next entry. Murasaki Shikibu had mastered the part of the literary canon that included this corpus of *waka* (poetry composed of thirty-one syllables) and made allusions to these poems in *The Tale of Genji*.

A clever twist on the traditional poetry anthology, *Poetry Contest with Poets from Various Periods* pits famous poets of different historical eras against each other in an imaginary competition.² The invention of the genre is attributed to Retired Emperor Go-Toba (1180–1239), who reestablished the imperial Bureau of Poetry (*Wakadokoro*) and who interacted with both Fujiwara no Shunzei and Fujiwara no Teika, individuals crucial to the early reception of *Genji*. As the story goes, Go-Toba dreamed up this literary conceit during his exile on Oki Island in the Japan Sea, where he had been sent for attempting a coup against the newly established Kamakura shogunate. He placed fifty poets on each of the two teams, one representing the ancient past to the end of the tenth century and the other the mid-eleventh century to his own day, selecting three *waka* from each poet’s corpus for the contest. Soon after the emergence of this playful genre, illustrations of the poets engaged in competition began to appear.

This painting, a section of a much longer handscroll in a set of two, depicts the scholar and poet Taira no Sadafun (d. 923), shown on the right, facing off against Fujiwara no Shigeie (1128–1180), Assistant Governor-General of Dazaifu, who lived some two hundred years later. Sadafun is dressed in formal attire accessorized with a sword and a ceremonial baton, as if ready for attendance at the imperial court. Thin lines of ink delineate the folds of his garment, in contrast to the thickly applied, multilayered black used for his *kanmuri* hat, dark hair, and bushy eyebrows. His mouth is slightly open, as if to suggest the vocalization of his poems, and the pupils of his eyes seem fixated on his opponent. The imposing Fujiwara no Shigeie is barefoot and wears informal attire, including a slit-sleeve tunic, pantaloons cinched at the ankle, and an angular *eboshi* hat. Delicate ink lines articulate Shigeie’s clothing and facial features—his sharp eyes, small nose, portly face with its full cheeks, and neck and chin defined by a short, pointy beard.

In the first round of three between these two men, the forty-third in the overall match, Sadafun, representing the Left team, offers a verse from the *Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern* (*Kokin wakashū*):

<i>Makura yori</i>	Beyond our pillow
<i>Mata shiru hito mo</i>	None knows of our love;
<i>Naki koi o</i>	My tears, unstanched,
<i>Namida sekiaezu</i>	Have surely
<i>Morashitsuru kana</i>	Betrayed it.



Matched to Sadafun's love poem is a verse by Shigeie from the *Collection of a Thousand Years* (*Senzai wakashū*):

<i>Ohatsuse no</i>	Gazing afar
<i>Hana no sakari o</i>	At the flowers of Hatsuse
<i>Miwataseba</i>	In full blossom,
<i>Kasumi ni mayou</i>	In the mist I mistake them
<i>Mine no shirakumo</i>	For white clouds at its peak.

The poet in Shigeie's verse realizes that what he has perceived to be fragrant white blossoms are actually white clouds ringing Mount Hatsuse. The contrast between the two poems, one a confession of love and the other an exploration of the senses, can be appreciated as much for the difference in poetic voice as for the change in aesthetic sensibility that occurred in the two centuries that separate them.

MM

1. For more on this genre, see Graybill 1983. See Furukawa 2017 for an examination of how poet-portraits relate to other subject matter in the ink-line mode.

2. The information for this entry and the translations of poems are from an entry by John M. Rosenfield in Rosenfield, F. E. Cranston, and E. A. Cranston 1973, pp. 163–64, no. 52.

27 為家本時代不同歌合

Poetry Contest with Poets from Various Periods, Tameie Version (*Tameie-bon Jidai fudō uta-awase-e*)

Kamakura period (1185–1333), mid-13th century
Handscroll mounted as a hanging scroll; ink on paper
11 × 18¹/₁₆ in. (28 × 47.4 cm)
John C. Weber Collection

Before its remounting as a hanging scroll, this painting belonged to the same handscroll as the one in the previous entry (cat. 26); both were part of an original two-scroll set of the *Poetry Contest with Poets from Various Periods*. A colophon on the first scroll, which survives intact in the Tokyo National Museum, attributes the painting and calligraphy to Fujiwara no Tameie (1198–1275), hence both fragments are designated the “Tameie Version.”¹

In round 103 of the *Poetry Contest with Poets from Various Periods*, Michitsuna's Mother (ca. 937–995), author of the *Kagerō Diary* (*Kagerō nikki*, ca. 971), faces off against the female poet and lady-in-waiting Kojijū (ca. 1121–1201?), depicted on the left. Michitsuna's Mother first presents a famous poem that appeared in her diary and



was later anthologized by Fujiwara no Teika in *One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets* (*Hyakunin isshu*):

<i>Nagekitsutsu</i>	The span of time
<i>Hitori nuru yo no</i>	That I sleep alone, sighing,
<i>Akuru ma wa</i>	Until night lightens—
<i>Ika ni sabishiki</i>	Can you know at all
<i>Mono to ka wa shiru</i>	How lonely that is? ²

According to her diary, the poet sent this verse to her wayward husband, Fujiwara no Kaneie (929–990), after learning of his ongoing affair with another woman and refusing to let him through her gate one night.³ It expresses her regret and loneliness after turning him away, feelings reflected in the figure's downward gaze and worried mien.

In contrast, Kojijū raises a cypress fan in her right hand and lifts her face, as if contemplating the elegant calligraphy above her, which reads:

<i>Iku meguri</i>	How many returning
<i>Suginuru aki wa</i>	And departed autumns
<i>Ainuran</i>	Must I have faced?
<i>Kawaranu tsuki no</i>	Gazing at the light
<i>Kage o nagamete</i>	Of the unchanging moon. . . . ⁴

Kojijū's upward gaze suits the poet's description of looking toward the brilliant light of the moon, which remains undimmed no matter the change around her. MM

1. John M. Rosenfield in Rosenfield, F. E. Cranston, and E. A. Cranston 1973, p. 163.

2. Translation by Joshua S. Mostow, in Trede 2006, p. 86. Note that the standard edition of this poem has the word *hisashiki* instead of *sabishiki*; see Mostow 1996, p. 298.

3. Arntzen 1997, pp. 69–70.

4. Translation by Joshua S. Mostow, in Trede 2006, p. 86.



Kashiwagi no Gondainagon

Agemaki no Ōigimi

28 源氏物語歌合絵巻

The Genji Poetry Match (Genji monogatari uta-awase emaki)
 Muromachi period (1392–1573), first half 16th century
 Handscroll; ink on paper with touches of red color
 6½ in. × 30 ft. 6⅝ in. (15.5 × 931.3 cm)
 John C. Weber Collection

The Genji Poetry Match depicts an imaginary poetry contest between thirty-six well-known characters from *The Tale of Genji* divided into the customary teams of Left and Right. Each opponent participates in three rounds, for a total of 108 poems presented in fifty-four rounds.¹ The result is a delightfully animated compendium of favorite poems from the tale. Most of the 795 *waka* in *Genji* are addressed from one character to another and embedded within dialogic exchanges in the prose. *Genji Poetry Match* instead puts poems from different parts of the story into dialogue, creating associative links between them derived from word usage, imagery, meaning, or sentiment. The work offered students of *Genji waka* and aspiring poets a new approach to understanding these famous poems, using a format that resembled a traditional anachronistic poetry match (cats. 26, 27). The illustrated scroll also inspires a fresh way of looking at the narrative. By matching characters who never meet in the tale, it creates surprising juxtapositions that spark the reader to think about their possible interrelationships.

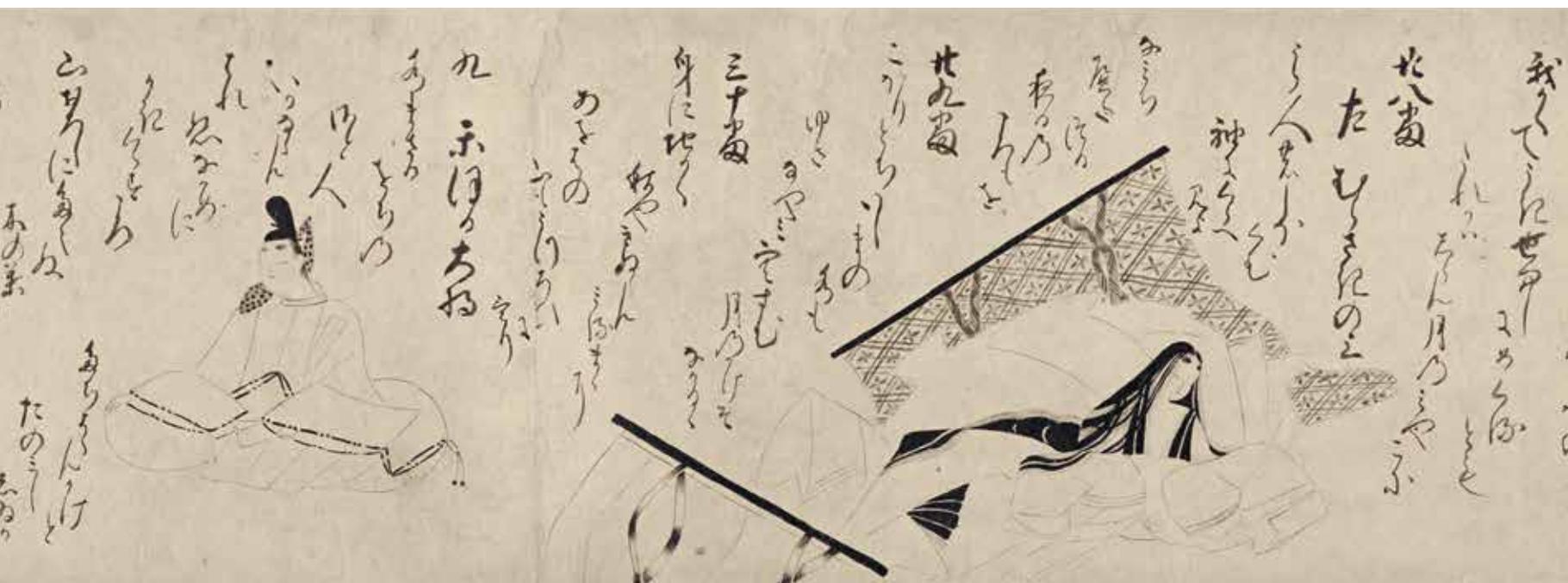
For example, rounds 28–30 pair the character Murasaki, Genji's lifelong companion, with Kaoru, the son of the Third Princess, the

wife Genji took late in life, much to Murasaki's dismay. Murasaki's third poem in the series expresses her concern that Genji's feelings have shifted away from her and toward his young new wife:

<i>Mi ni chikaku</i>	Now the fall has come,
<i>Aki ya kinuran</i>	I can feel it close at hand,
<i>Miru mama ni</i>	For it touches me,
<i>Aoba no yama mo</i>	And I see it on the hills
<i>Utsuroinikeri</i>	Where the greenery is gone. ²

In the accompanying image, Murasaki's luxuriant black hair trails behind her and winds around her voluminous robes. With her head tilted downward, she sits beside a vibrantly decorated fabric curtain of the type found next to many of the female poets in this scroll. Unlike virtually all of the other poets, she turns away from her partner, the son of a rival wife who is still a newborn when Murasaki departs the world in Chapter 40.

The reader and Kaoru himself know that Kaoru's biological father is not Genji but the courtier Kashiwagi, who could not control his obsessive longing for the Third Princess. Here Kaoru turns to the left and away from Murasaki, seemingly intrigued by the characters next in line in the competition: Agemaki no Ōigimi (the elder sister from Uji), Kaoru's unrequited love; and Kashiwagi, Kaoru's biological father. Ōigimi's three poems selected for the scroll were composed in reply to Kaoru, including the final one in



Kaoru no Taishō

Murasaki no Ue

which she denies his request for marriage by citing the frailty of her hold on life:

<i>Nuki mo aezu</i>	They will not bear it,
<i>Moroki namida no</i>	These my weak tears, to be strung
<i>Tama no o ni</i>	On the thread of life;
<i>Nagaki chigiri o</i>	How shall we bind our fates for long
<i>Ikaga musuban</i>	In accord with the soul of love? ³

It is no wonder that Kaoru is shown as if eavesdropping on this exchange, for he would want to hear not only Ōigimi's reply to his proposal but also the words of his father, Kashiwagi, who died soon after Kaoru was born. The final poem by Kashiwagi, matched to Ōigimi's verse above, was composed on his deathbed in a letter to the Third Princess, in which he envisioned his connection to Kaoru's mother continuing beyond the grave:

<i>Ima wa tote</i>	Now it is over,
<i>Moemu keburī mo</i>	But the smoke from the burning
<i>Musubōre</i>	Will not disperse,
<i>Taenu omoi no</i>	For an undying fire remains,
<i>Nao ya nokoramu</i>	Smothered, but lingering on. ⁴

Kashiwagi's presence in the scroll seems ghostly, as he interacts with characters who never knew him in life, and it recalls the

apparitional form he takes in the tale when he visits the dreams of Genji's son Yūgiri (cat. 39).

If many poems selected for *The Genji Poetry Match* seem imbued with the Buddhist sentiment concerning the ephemerality of life, the scroll's intriguing preface provides an explanation. It is written in the voice of a Buddhist nun who confesses to remaining steeped in *The Tale of Genji* despite having cast aside the mundane world. She praises the Buddhist nature of *Genji* and argues for its compatibility with religious practice, addressing specifically readers who "seek the path of the Dragon Girl who achieved Buddhahood." The young Dragon Girl, who appears in the "Devadatta" chapter of the Lotus Sutra, became an exemplar of female Buddhahood in pre-modern Japan, and her inclusion here suggests an assumed female audience. MM

1. The text of the Weber scroll is transcribed in Mori 1970, pp. 109–21. See also Melissa McCormick in Trede 2006, pp. 98–103, no. 23; McCormick 2011.

2. E. A. Cranston 2006, p. 861.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 923–24.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 872.



Akashi Empress

Lady Murasaki

Akashi Lady

Akashi Nun



Nakatsukasa

Akashi Empress's Nurse

29 白描源氏物語絵巻 伝花屋玉栄筆

Scenes Illustrating Poems from *The Tale of Genji*
(*Hakubyō Genji monogatari emaki*)

Traditionally attributed to Kaoku Gyokuei (b. 1526)

Muromachi period (1392–1573), 1554

Fourth handscroll from a set of six; ink on paper

3 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. × 20 ft. 11 in. (9.8 × 637.6 cm)

New York Public Library, Spencer Collection

This handscroll, from a set of six illustrating poems from *The Tale of Genji*, represents the pinnacle of ink-line drawing (*hakubyō*) in the amateur mode.¹ After a brief section of poems on the right, the paintings extend leftward, taking full advantage of the horizontal format.² The scene reproduced here is the longest in the entire set and merits special attention.³ It depicts a pilgrimage to the Sumiyoshi Shrine, echoing an earlier visit by Genji to thank the gods after his release from exile (fig. 35, cats. 35, 53). While that first pilgrimage heralds the rise of Genji's political fortunes, the second marks the triumph of the Akashi family. At this point in the tale, the daughter born to Genji and the Akashi Lady has become an imperial consort and has given birth to a son who will eventually be crowned emperor. The family has achieved everything for which the Akashi Novitiate had prayed to the gods of Sumiyoshi, and following his instructions, Genji, the

Akashi women, and Murasaki join in the celebratory pilgrimage to the shrine.

The painting begins with a glimpse of the festivities performed in homage to the gods. Some shrine maidens bear sake and fish, while others beat a drum, clash small cymbals, and jingle clusters of bells. The women are followed by several male musicians playing flutes and preparing to sound a large drum decorated with phoenixes. A simple fence and torii situate these individuals within the shrine precincts, outside of which are numerous attendants, carriages, and the horses and bull that transported Genji and the women to the site. When the scroll is unrolled leftward, the famous shoreline of Sumiyoshi comes into view, immediately recognizable by the slender pines dotting the curvilinear coast. Genji appears next, facing two courtiers on the veranda of the building housing the traveling party. Following an image of three female pilgrims, the painting culminates with a scene of the Akashi women. They are seated in an interior with food trays before them; labels identify the individual characters. From right to left are the Akashi Nun, the Akashi Lady, Murasaki, and finally the Akashi Consort, referred to as “Empress” (*Chūgū*). Three generations of Akashi women are shown in descending order of age, from the grandmother to the granddaughter. In addition, the painter took care to include the women who nurtured the Akashi Consort:



Murasaki, the adoptive mother, is seated third in line but closest to her, and three female attendants, allotted secondary status at the bottom of the scene, are nevertheless clearly labeled and presented as important figures. They include the nurse of the Akashi Consort and Murasaki's attendant, Nakatsukasa.

This extended scene of the Akashi women's pilgrimage to Sumiyoshi is unusual among *Genji* paintings, and it reflects an interest in and awareness of the Akashi lineage tale as a whole. Because Genji's mother, the Kiritsubo Consort, was the first cousin of the Akashi Novitiate, the success of the Akashi family has been interpreted as recuperating Genji's mother's family from the fall brought on by her death in the first chapter and by Genji's removal from the line of imperial succession. At the end of the tale, the Akashi Consort's offspring are flourishing, a success owed to the matrilineage depicted here.

These scrolls, bearing a dated inscription of 1554, demonstrate more than an interest in the poetry alone. Their unique and elaborate paintings reflect a level of engagement with the tale found in *Genji* commentaries from the same period. In fact, this set of scrolls has been attributed to Kaoku Gyokuei (b. 1526), a rare female author of commentaries and collections of *Genji* poetry in the sixteenth century. Although the attribution cannot be confirmed, Gyokuei is an intriguing candidate as someone who

could have both selected these *Genji* poems and executed paintings intended to serve as models for young women and men to copy.⁴ The six scrolls may have been made with young *Genji* learners in mind, but they reflect the interests and erudition of someone like Gyokuei. For example, in a 1583 collection of *Genji* chapter-title poetry, Gyokuei grouped some of the fifty-four chapters together so that they would correspond to the twenty-eight chapters of the Lotus Sutra, the same approach taken with the chapters in these six scrolls.⁵ Moreover, a preponderance of unusual scenes depicting Buddhist monks, rituals, and exorcisms suggests the tendency to emphasize the Buddhist content of *Genji* (see the introduction to Chapter 2 in this volume). At the same time, the work exhibits an appealing hallmark of ink-line painting: exuberant, charmingly out-of-scale flowers and grasses, depicted with subtle gradations of ink.

MM

1. For an extensive analysis of these scrolls and background on *hakubyō* painting in general, see Thompson 1984.
2. On the relationship between poetry and painting in this set of scrolls, see Katagiri 1989.
3. Also analyzed in McCormick 2006; McCormick 2008.
4. A colophon by the artist at the end of the sixth scroll reads: "I have copied it just like the original. When you look at these pleasing traces of the brush, it is difficult to distinguish between them. Tenmon 23 (1554), the fourth month, an auspicious day." Translation in Thompson 1984, p. 4.
5. Li 2002, pp. 1055–60. For more on Gyokuei, see Rowley 2010; Rowley 2015.

30 須磨図屏風

Genji in Exile at Suma (Suma zu byōbu)

Momoyama period (1573–1615), late 16th century

Six-panel folding screen; ink, color, gold, and silver on paper

58¼ in. × 11 ft. 5 in. (148 × 348 cm)

Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas

This painting of a solitary nobleman gazing out from a seaside abode beautifully captures the description of Genji's exile at Suma. The residence, with its thatched roof, pine-tree columns, and stone steps, is likened in its rustic simplicity to the hut of the Chinese poet Bai Juyi during his own period of exile. Genji is said to have taken with him only the most essential items: the koto (thirteen-string zither) shown at his side and Bai Juyi's collected writings, suggested by the books in the alcove behind him. Wearing an *eboshi* hat and white garments, he sits on a tatami-covered floor near the edge of his quarters, "completely exposed to view from the outside," as described in the tale.¹ It is springtime, and the young cherry trees Genji planted soon after arriving in Suma are blossoming for the first time one year later. Outside, a makeshift fence with a thatched gate has been propped open with a pole, as if beckoning the figure to the left, a man in traveler's garb trudging along the shoreline. His white robes beneath his straw raincoat billow forward as though blown by a wind that propels him in the nobleman's direction. The two men seem to eye each other across the distance, the dramatic diagonal of shoreline and surging waves creating a dynamic connection between them.

The inclusion of a solitary visitor in a raincoat is unusual among the many paintings of Genji at Suma. The man has seemingly just come ashore after docking the boat at the far left. He likely represents the messenger at the start of the Akashi chapter, whom Murasaki sends forth in the middle of a tempest that has wreaked havoc as far as the capital.² As described in the tale, the messenger is of "very humble station," and "soaked to the point of looking weird and unearthly."³ The mysterious visitor also recalls the Akashi Novitiate, who later in the chapter travels by boat to Suma amid the storm, inspired by portentous dreams and the goal of bringing Genji back to Akashi to marry his daughter, which is soon accomplished. At Suma, Genji has been having his own dreams—of the Dragon King of the Sea and of his deceased father, who enjoined him to "Board a boat and leave these shores, following wherever the deity of Sumiyoshi may lead you!"⁴ The painting's suggestiveness and its unorthodox approach to *Genji* subject matter have also led to its identification as an image of either Retired Emperor Go-Toba (reigned 1184–98) or Emperor Go-Daigo (reigned 1318–39) on Oki Island in the Japan Sea.⁵



This screen represents a development in *Genji* painting in which artists envisioned episodes of the tale within the visual idioms of large-scale seascapes, landscapes, and cityscapes, a phenomenon that began by 1560 with Tosa-school painters (fig. 13, cats. 44, 45).⁶ The depiction of architecture, the figure style, and the rendering of rocks and trees align with the techniques developed by Tosa artists and resemble those aspects of paintings by Tosa Mitsumochi (active ca. 1517–72). At first glance, the screen's tumultuous sea, depicted in monochrome ink, recalls works by artists trained in Chinese-style painting (*kanga*), such as *Rocks and Waves* by Hasegawa Tōhaku (1539–1610) at Zenrinji in Kyoto. In place of the *kanga* style's strokes with an "ax-cut" texture and planar brushwork used to suggest sharply faceted rocks, here the artist layered



dark, wet ink onto a dried surface of gold pigment to depict softly rugged rocks worn away by the sea. This ink-wash technique seems to anticipate the “pooling ink” (*tarashikomi*) of Tawaraya Sōtatsu (ca. 1570–ca. 1640), as do the delineation of the waves, the densely applied silver on the shoreline, and the large swaths of sprinkled gold and gold paint for clouds, mist, and ground. It seems likely, therefore, that the work was executed in the third quarter of the sixteenth century by a Tosa artist in Kyoto, the very kind of town painter from whom Sōtatsu would have learned. The painting is indicative of the Momoyama period in its blending of the ink-painting sensibility of *kanga* and the gold and silver refulgence of *yamato-e* (Japanese-style painting), but it does so from the perspective of the Tosa-school tradition. MM

1. Washburn 2015, p. 283.
2. Washizu 2009a convincingly identifies the subject matter of this screen as from this particular scene in the Akashi chapter of *Genji*, developing a suggestion from Estelle Leggeri-Bauer in Leggeri-Bauer 2007, vol. 1, p. 333.
3. Washburn 2015, p. 288.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 291.
5. The screen was previously referred to as *An Exiled Emperor on Oki Island* (*Oki hairu zu byōbu*); see Tanaka 1960.
6. Washizu 2009a.

31 源氏物語画帖 土佐光則筆

Album of Scenes from *The Tale of Genji* (*Genji monogatari gajō*)

Tosa Mitsunori (1583–1638)

Edo period (1615–1868), early 17th century

Two albums, thirty leaves in each; ink, red pigment, and gold on paper

Each: 5⁵/₁₆ × 5³/₈ in. (13.5 × 13 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary Griggs Burke Collection,
Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation (2015.300.34a, b)

A miniaturized version of the *hakubyō* mode emerged during the Momoyama and early Edo periods, marking a turn in the depiction of *The Tale of Genji* in monochrome. This genre is best represented in two albums by the painter Tosa Mitsunori, one leaf of which is illustrated here.¹ Like polychrome examples, these albums contain one or more images for each of the fifty-four chapters of the tale. In this example, there are no accompanying textual excerpts.

Mitsunori's albums present a new and polished manner of monochrome painting that renders original compositions at dramatically reduced scale. The condensing of architectural and landscape detail into such a small leaf (each only five inches square) is nothing short of virtuosic. The paintings reward close inspection because even small motifs are executed with abundant detail. In this scene from Chapter 20, "Bellflowers" (*Asagao*), precisely applied gold paint highlights the rim and corners of a writing box, simulates the sprinkled gold decoration of *maki-e* lacquer, and delineates a tiny water dropper inside the box. A lady-in-waiting

has apparently used the dropper and now grinds ink in the ink-stone, holding an ink stick between the thumb and two fingers of her delicately rendered hand. The exactitude of Mitsunori's brush gave rise to the theory that he used a magnifying glass in his process.

The meticulousness of these details at such a small scale adds to the immediacy and realism of the scene. Princess Asagao (who takes her name from this chapter) reads a letter from Genji, whose advances she has rejected more than once. Now somewhat miffed, Genji has sent a vine of bellflowers, visible on the floor beside the letter, in which he likens the lady to a flower past its prime. The lady responds in agreement, suggesting their time for romance has passed given that they are both in middle age:

<i>Aki hatete</i>	Autumn is ending,
<i>Kiri no magaki ni</i>	And the mist along the fence
<i>Musubōre</i>	Thickens into gloom
<i>Aru ka naki ka ni</i>	For a faded morning glory
<i>Utsuru asagao</i>	Now withered almost away.

"The appropriateness of your metaphor adds a sprinkling of dew."²

MM

1. For these two albums, see Murase 1975, pp. 200–203, no. 59; Murase 2000, pp. 258–61, no. 109. On new ways of interpreting Mitsunori's *Genji* paintings, see Leggeri-Bauer 2013.

2. E. A. Cranston 2006, p. 800.





以勝



a. Chapter 12, "Exile to Suma" (*Suma*)

32 和漢故事說話図 「須磨」「夕霧」「浮舟」
岩佐又兵衛筆

"Exile to Suma" (*Suma*), "Evening Mist" (*Yūgiri*), and "A Boat Cast Adrift"
(*Ukifune*), from *Collection of Ancient Chinese and Japanese Stories (Wakan
koji setsuwa zu)*

Iwasa Matabei (1578–1650)

Edo period (1615–1868), first half 17th century

Sections of a handscroll mounted as hanging scrolls; ink and color on paper
14 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 23 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (36 × 59 cm)

Fukui Fine Arts Museum

These three paintings were originally part of a single handscroll in the collection of Marquis Ikeda, whose family was the former daimyo of Okayama during the Edo period.¹ This handscroll consisted of twelve paintings treating subjects from ancient Chinese and Japanese legend and literature. Among the works with Japanese themes, one was on *The Tales of Ise*, one was on *The Tale of Heiji*, and three were on *The Tale of the Heike*, in addition to these three works pictorializing episodes from *The Tale of Genji*. Iwasa Matabei no doubt intentionally chose to depict these three poignant scenes from the tale's vast iconography because they allowed him to incorporate a dimension of psychological suggestiveness, which became a trademark of his distinctive painting style. Like the *Kanaya Screens* (discussed in the essay by Kyoko Kinoshita in this volume, fig. 31), this handscroll covered a broad range of subjects, ostensibly with no unifying theme except that they alluded to imaginary realms of literature or legend. The twelve paintings are now mounted individually as hanging



b. Chapter 30, "Evening Mist" (*Yūgiri*)

scrolls, and all of them have the same two seals, "Katsumochi" (double-circled red seal) and "Michi" (small circled red seal), indicating that Matabei created them just before he moved to Edo in the early 1630s.

The painting from Chapter 12, "Exile to Suma" (a), illustrates the moment when Genji seeks shelter from a violent thunderstorm. The trembling of the grasses and the fence echoes Genji's psychological state of anxiety in this desolate locale. At dawn, when the storm has calmed down, the Kiritsubo Emperor appears in Genji's dream and tells him to leave Suma, following the guidance of the gods of Sumiyoshi:

When dawn approached, everyone was finally able to fall asleep. Genji was also able to rest a little, but as he dozed off, someone—a person whose features he could not make out very clearly—approached him in a dream. "You have been summoned to the palace," the figure demanded, "so why

have you not made an appearance?" The figure was walking about, apparently searching for him. Seeing this, Genji was startled awake. The Dragon King in the sea was known to be a connoisseur of genuine beauty, and so Genji realized he must have caught the deity's eye. The dream gave him such a horrifying, uncanny sensation that he could no longer stand residing in this abode by the sea.²

The painting from Chapter 39, "Evening Mist" (b), depicts the scene when Kashiwagi's widow, Ochiba no Miya, moves to a mountain cottage in Ono, at the western foot of Mount Hiei, to perform incantations and prayers for the recovery from illness of her mother, Lady Ichijō. Yūgiri, who is in love with Ochiba no Miya, visits her under the pretext of expressing his sympathy for her mother. He asks for lodging in the cottage, using the excuse of thick fog, but Ochiba no Miya denies his request. Until dawn he keeps declaring his strong love, but she continues to refuse him.



c. Chapter 51, "A Boat Cast Adrift" (*Ukifune*)

An empty space separates Yūgiri on the right side of the scene and a deer in the lower left corner, as if expressing Yūgiri's feeling of emptiness. In a poem, he likens himself to the stag, whose cries in autumn were associated with those of a lonesome lover:

<i>Sato tōmi</i>	Far from the homes of men,
<i>Ono no shinohara</i>	Over the Ono bamboo fields,
<i>Wakete kite</i>	I have made my way,
<i>Ware mo shika koso</i>	For I too, O dear one, thus
<i>Koe mo oshimane</i>	Cannot restrain my call. ³

Matabei's third *Genji* painting in the series is inspired by Chapter 51, "A Boat Cast Adrift" (c). Knowing that Ukifune is a lover of Kaoru, Niou impersonates Kaoru and visits Ukifune at Uji against her will. On a snowy day, Niou secretly brings Ukifune to a hiding place on the opposite side of the Uji River. On the way, he swears his unchanging love, comparing it with the evergreen

mandarin orange tree (*Citrus tachibana*) growing on a small island in the river. Ukifune expresses her uncertainty about the outcome of their tryst, comparing it to a boat.

<i>Tachibana no</i>	Though the lovely colors
<i>Kojima no iro wa</i>	Of the Isle of Orange Trees
<i>Kawaraji o</i>	Will never know change,
<i>Kono ukifune zo</i>	Just where this drifting boat
<i>Yukue shirarenu</i>	Will end up is beyond knowing. ⁴

The bowed trees and the small boat running diagonally downward seem to mirror Ukifune's unstable situation. KK

1. Other sections of the original scroll are discussed in Fukui Fine Arts Museum 2016, pp. 225–26, no. 29, ill. pp. 111–31.
2. Washburn 2015, pp. 286–87.
3. E. A. Cranston 2006, p. 885.
4. Murasaki Shikibu 1993–97, vol. 5 (1997), p. 223; translation by John T. Carpenter.



33 官女観菊図 岩佐又兵衛筆

Court Ladies Enjoying Wayside Chrysanthemums (Kanjo kangiku zu)

Iwasa Matabei (1578–1650)

Edo period (1615–1868), early 17th century

Hanging scroll; ink, color, and gold on paper

51⁹/₁₆ × 21⁷/₈ in. (131 × 55.6 cm)

Yamatane Museum of Art, Tokyo

Important Cultural Property

Not in exhibition

In this dramatically composed painting, a classical courtier's carriage with three female passengers is on full display. One woman, wearing the dark trousers and white upper garment typical of a shrine maiden's garb, rolls up the bamboo blinds that would have afforded the riders privacy and some anonymity. From inside the carriage spill forth long, slender scarves and the beautifully patterned sleeve of a young woman who seems fixated on the lush, bending stalks of white chrysanthemums and autumn grasses in the path of the vehicle. Another woman, occupying the central and most prominent position, glances down while bringing a sleeve to her face. The long, portly faces of the figures and the evocative combination of ink and delicate gold pigment signal the unmistakable hand of Iwasa Matabei.

The painting was once one of twelve panels pasted onto a pair of folding screens, three of which depicted scenes from *The Tale of Genji* (see also cat. 34 and Kyoko Kinoshita's essay in this volume). As such, Iijima Sayako has proposed that the painting depicts Lady Rokujō and her daughter on their way to Ise, where the younger woman will serve as the High Priestess of the Shrine, which is dedicated to the goddess Amaterasu.¹ Rokujō's daughter becomes known by the name of Akikonomu, literally "lover of autumn," making the sudden roadside appreciation of autumn flowers depicted in this painting all the more understandable. Considering the position of these women in relation to the throne—Rokujō

being the widow of a crown prince, and Akikonomu being currently Emperor Suzaku's object of affection and a future empress—the chrysanthemum also resonates as a symbol of the imperial line. The tale narrates the women's departure from the palace in an elaborate carriage procession and describes Genji's regret for not being able to see either the event or Rokujō's daughter, who is said to be a great beauty. Later imagining the women on the road, Genji sympathizes with Rokujō, suspecting that her sadness is greater than his as she journeys beneath the traveler's sky:

<i>Yuku kata o</i>	Let me watch the way
<i>Nagame mo yaramu</i>	She has gone across the hills—
<i>Kono aki wa</i>	This year, this autumn,
<i>Ausakayama o</i>	Do not wall away from me,
<i>Kiri na hedate so</i>	O mist, Rendezvous Mountain. ²

In composing this painting and its companion (cat. 34), Matabei took into account their original positions on opposing folding screens. The two contemplative-looking protagonists, Genji on the right and Rokujō on the left, seem to be envisioning each other's plight or experiencing remorse over the failed affair. Rokujō's placement in an oversize carriage is also a commentary on her association with the "Battle of the Carriages" (cat. 44) in Chapter 9, "Leaves of Wild Ginger" (*Aoi*), a defining moment in her reckoning with the fall in status that seems to have unleashed her jealous spirit against Genji's wife. Indeed, the character of Rokujō became associated with imagery of the carriage, and the words "carriage" and "carriage wheel" were hauntingly intoned in Noh plays that visualized the character suffering from her regretful actions (cats. 81, 82).

MM

1. Iijima 2009.

2. E. A. Cranston 2006, p. 744.

34 源氏物語野々宮図 岩佐又兵衛筆

Shrine in the Fields, from “A Branch of Sacred Evergreen” (*Sakaki*),
Chapter 10 of *The Tale of Genji* (*Genji monogatari Nonomiya zu*)
Iwasa Matabei (1578–1650)
Edo period (1615–1868), 17th century
Hanging scroll; ink and touches of red on paper
51⁹/₁₆ × 21⁵/₈ in. (131 × 55 cm)
Idemitsu Museum of Arts, Tokyo
Important Cultural Property
Not in exhibition

Standing tall beneath the rough-hewn gate that marks the entrance to the so-called shrine in the fields, Genji stares off into the distance. In this scene from Chapter 10, “A Branch of Sacred Evergreen” (*Sakaki*), he has arrived at the famous site on the western edge of the capital to bid farewell to his lover, Lady Rokujō, on the eve of her departure to faraway Ise. She has decided to accompany her daughter, who has been appointed the High Priestess of the Shrine, rather than face rejection and humiliation in the capital. Genji’s wife, Aoi, has died, seemingly at the hand of Rokujō’s wandering and possessive spirit, and any chance of Genji officially acknowledging Rokujō has disappeared. If Genji’s face displays any trepidation it would be warranted, for he has witnessed an attack by Rokujō’s vengeful spirit while at the side of his ailing wife. As if to purify the narrative of defilement, the author of the tale contrived a change of setting for the parting of the former lovers to this sacred place of the *kami* (local deity). And, as if to appease Rokujō’s anger, Genji allows her to depart with some dignity by playing the jilted lover in their ensuing poetic exchange. Lady Rokujō asks why he has come without having been beckoned:

<i>Kamigaki wa</i>	The fence of the gods
<i>Shirushi no sugi mo</i>	Has no signpost cedar tree
<i>Naki mono o</i>	Standing by its gate;
<i>Ika ni magaete</i>	How then can you have strayed here
<i>Oreru sakaki zo</i>	To break this <i>sakaki</i> branch? ¹

To which Genji replies:

<i>Otomego ga</i>	When I remembered
<i>Atari to omoeba</i>	Here was where the maiden dwelt,
<i>Sakakiba no</i>	Drawn by my longing
<i>Ka o natsukashimi</i>	I sought and broke the <i>sakaki</i>
<i>Tomete koso are</i>	For the fragrance of its leaves. ²

In this painting, one of the only large-scale images of Genji executed almost entirely in ink, the artist Iwasa Matabei conveys the protagonist’s complicated feelings toward Rokujō through an expression that seems both wistful and apprehensive. The ingenious cropping of the composition to focus on Genji leaves Rokujō as an appropriately haunting, unrepresented presence. Although minimal, motifs connoting the setting—such as the torii made of tree trunks with their bark intact, the white paper streamers marking the shrine as a purified site of the gods, the chrysanthemum flowers and autumn grasses, and, most importantly, the rustic brushwood fence—make the scene immediately recognizable, owing to its popularity in painting (fig. 35, cats. 9, 37). Some of these motifs were also familiar as props on the Noh stage, where “The Shrine in the Fields” had been performed since the mid-fifteenth century.

Matabei painted the brushwood fence far more tangibly and evocatively than had any artist before him. Bunches of thatch bend in on the right and left toward Genji and the boy attendant at his side. The fence zigzags into a hazy background through masterfully created mists of ink wash and the faintest gold paint. It both defines the narrow pathway Genji took through the quiet forest and imbues the painting with a sense of temporality. The painting displays the full range of Matabei’s skills with brush and ink, from the calligraphic outlines of Genji’s voluminous pantaloons to the dizzyingly intricate patterns on his robe, whose fine lines recall the artistry of Matabei’s contemporary Tosa Mitsunori (cat. 31). Now mounted as a hanging scroll, this painting, like the work discussed in the previous entry (see also the essay by Kyoko Kinoshita in this volume), was once one of twelve panels pasted onto a folding screen that depicted a dragon, a tiger, and scenes from *Genji*, *The Tales of Ise*, and ancient Chinese lore.³ MM

1. E. A. Cranston 2006, p. 741.

2. Ibid.

3. For a thorough discussion of this painting and its place in the context of Matabei’s oeuvre, see Hiromi 2014; Idemitsu Museum of Arts 2017.



CHAPTER FOUR

Imagining *Genji* through Tosa-School Paintings

FROM THE MOMENT artists began illustrating *The Tale of Genji* by the early twelfth century, they faced a difficult challenge: how to represent a complex and lengthy work of prose and poetry in a visually powerful manner that suited the demands of their patrons. One approach was to condense the story into discrete, easily digestible units, allowing the fifty-four chapters, each evocatively titled, to be appreciated individually. Artists and patrons together selected which scenes to illustrate, often creating sets of *Genji* paintings that included one image and one text as emblematic of each given chapter.¹ Although an iconography was established fairly early on, over the past millennium *Genji* paintings have evinced tremendous variety, according to artistic vision, the function of the work, and changes in how the tale was read in different eras.

The oldest extant paintings of the tale are in the handscroll medium, represented most famously by the National Treasure *Genji Scrolls* in the Tokugawa and Gotoh Museums (figs. 10, 12). One would expect handscrolls to occupy a prominent place among *Genji* paintings of the medieval period, however, fragments from only one polychrome fourteenth-century *Genji* scroll are currently known, located in The Metropolitan Museum of Art (cat. 35) and the Tenri Library collection in Nara.²

By far, the majority of *Genji* paintings produced during the medieval period took the form of fans and poetry papers (*shikishi*, literally, “colored papers”), which served a variety of purposes. Small-scale paintings were exchanged and appreciated individually or were pasted into albums and onto folding screens as part of larger composites. This was especially true of fans, which were popular New Year’s gifts throughout the medieval period (cat. 37). When assembled as sets, they formed a unified representation of the story. The Jōdoji screens (fig. 62, cat. 36), for example, display the fans against a background painting of kudzu vines, employing a formal device known as “fans afloat” (*senmen nagashi*). This elegant compositional conceit was used to frame and order the fans according to the tale’s narrative or, in the case of the Jōdoji screens, according to season. *Genji* paintings on *shikishi* were also



Fig. 62. Higurekuro’s daughter attaches a farewell poem to a pillar, from Chapter 31, “A Beloved Pillar of Cypress” (*Makibashira*) (detail of cat. 36)

pasted onto screens, such as a pair in the collection of Ishiyamadera Temple (fig. 63) that have colorful backgrounds of purple wisteria clusters, evocative of both the namesake flower of the Fujiwara family and the *Genji* character Fujitsubo, whose name derives from a palace courtyard with just such a wisteria trellis. Such *Genji* paintings and calligraphy sheets were made as album leaves, as seen in examples in this section (cats. 38, 39), and were sometimes repurposed as hanging scrolls (cats. 40–43).

The popularity of small-format *Genji* paintings during the medieval period stemmed from various changes in the tale’s reception. A condensed and accessible form of pictorialization became a counterpart to textual digests of the tale, which readers turned to for assistance in remembering the many characters and plot lines, and sometimes in lieu of reading the tale itself. Small *Genji* paintings also functioned as mnemonic devices related to *waka* poetic composition. Many were, in fact, a form of poem-picture (*uta-e*) meant to visualize the tale’s famous verses, often those related to chapter titles. Finally, these paintings should be understood in the context of the prolific literary gatherings related to *Genji* and its verse. Some of these events were socioreligious in nature (as

described in Chapter 2 in this volume), while others focused on scholarly lectures. Mounted on screens, small-scale *Genji* works presented numerous, if not all, chapters of the tale for appreciation by large groups.

Many of the small-scale *Genji* paintings from the Muromachi period and through the early Edo period were executed by artists of the Tosa school, a hereditary school of painters who monopolized the court-sanctioned position of painting bureau director (*edokoro azukari*) for most of the sixteenth century.³ As the officially designated painting bureau, the Tosa acquired landholdings that provided a regular source of income and were given priority for court-sponsored painting commissions, although their patrons included courtiers, provincial warriors, Buddhist institutions, and socially prominent commoners. The painting bureau directorship was passed down from Tosa Mitsunobu (cat. 38) to his son Mitsumochi (active ca. 1517–72) and then to Mitsumochi's son Mitsumoto (fig. 51, cat. 37).⁴ Together they developed a style of painting that subtly blended the rich mineral pigments and gold of Japanese-style painting (*yamato-e*) with the calligraphic ink-line effects of Chinese-style painting (*kanga*), and they were instrumental in transforming *Genji* pictures from intimate paintings to large-scale works on folding screens and sliding doors.⁵ Such screens might capture only a handful of moments from the tale, unified compositionally by gold clouds (cats. 45–50, 52). One of the earliest examples, the *Battle of the Carriages* by Tosa Mitsumochi from 1560, which gave rise to multiple iterations (figs. 13, 20, cat. 44), enlarges a single episode from the tale across twelve panels.

The Tosa artist who should have developed the style into the Edo period, Mitsumoto, died in battle in 1569, leaving behind three children too young to be appointed head of the school. Instead, Mitsumochi famously turned over the Tosa house assets, including its invaluable archive of painting sketches, to Tosa Mitsuyoshi (1539–1613), his thirty-one-year-old disciple. Although Mitsuyoshi resided in the port city of Sakai (present-day Osaka) and never relocated to the capital, he became the representative *yamato-e* artist of his generation and created a highly refined, technically precise, and elegant style of *Genji* painting that appealed to his elite patrons. He relied on the compositions and motifs of previous Tosa artists, but he eliminated the rough calligraphic line that tempered the rich polychrome *yamato-e* of Mitsunobu, Mitsumochi, and Mitsumoto in favor of pure opulence and fine detail. The style was well suited to intimately scaled *Genji* paintings (cats. 39–43), but Mitsuyoshi also managed to translate his meticulous approach to large screens and wall-painting programs for dedicated *Genji* rooms (cats. 47–49). As a nonhereditary Tosa artist, however, Mitsuyoshi never became painting bureau director, nor did his son Mitsunori



Fig. 63. Paintings and calligraphy from *The Tale of Genji* (*Genji monogatari shikishi harimaze byōbu*) (detail). Edo period (1615–1868), 17th century. Pair of six-panel screens; ink, color, gold, and gold foil on paper; each screen: 5 ft. × 11 ft. 9 in. (152.6 × 359.6 cm). Ishiyamadera Collection

(cat. 31); that recognition would fall to Mitsuyoshi's grandson, Tosa Mitsuoki (1617–1691), who was painting bureau director from 1654 to 1681, and who is responsible for some of the most innovative *Genji* works of the Tosa school in the Edo period (cat. 51).

—Melissa McCormick

1. Murase 1983.

2. Watanabe 2011.

3. Miyajima 1996 is the definitive study on the painting bureau. For a concise and authoritative history of the Tosa school and an argument for how its rise parallels that of the Ashikaga shoguns, see Takagishi 2014; see also Rosenfield 1993.

4. For the early Tosa, see Takagishi 2004. For Mitsunobu's tenure as painting bureau director, see McCormick 2009, and for the activities of Mitsumochi, see Kamei 2003.

5. Aizawa Masahiko has examined this subject and the mutual influence between Kano Motonobu and Tosa Mitsumochi in this period; see Aizawa 2014.



35 源氏物語絵巻 「漣標」

"Channel Markers" (*Miotsukushi*)

Nanbokuchō period (1336–92) or Muromachi period (1392–1573),

late 14th–early 15th century

Handscroll; ink and color on paper

12³/₁₆ in. × 14 ft. 8 in. (31 × 447 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Harry G. C. Packard Collection of Asian Art, Gift of Harry G. C. Packard, and Purchase, Fletcher, Rogers, Harris Brisbane Dick, and Louis V. Bell Funds, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, and The Annenberg Fund Inc. Gift, 1975 (1975.268.33)

This section of a rare medieval polychrome handscroll illustrates a scene from "Channel Markers," Chapter 14 of Murasaki Shikibu's tale. Here Genji visits Sumiyoshi Shrine to thank the local deities for answering his prayers and allowing his safe return from exile at Suma. Without showing any landscape background, the artist nevertheless remains faithful to the author's description: "Genji had arranged for an escort of ten charming page boys, all the same height and outfitted in a most delightful style, their long hair bound in loops at their ears with thin white cords that had been dyed purple at the tips. All in all, they presented a vibrant, refined appearance that was strikingly modern."¹ Genji appears midway through the procession, partially concealed in his ox-driven carriage but with his face visible through the window.



By chance or fate, his pilgrimage occurs on the same autumn day that the Akashi Lady, Genji's lover during his time away from the capital and the mother of his only daughter, the future Akashi Empress, chooses to make her own pilgrimage. Unable to meet, they exchange poems, lending the scene an elegiac feel.

The oldest known illustrated recensions of *The Tale of Genji* are in handscroll format, including the famous late-Heian handscroll fragments in the Tokugawa and Gotoh Museums that are now in precariously fragile condition. One would expect more medieval scrolls to survive, but, in fact, only a handful of *hakubyō* examples are extant (see Chapter 3 in this volume). The striking polychrome *Genji* scroll represented by this section was part of a set that is now almost completely lost, except for another section in the Tenri

Library collection in Nara, which includes scenes from the "Little Purple Gromwell" and "Safflower" chapters.² The pigment in some areas of the section shown here is abraded, revealing ink underdrawings that preceded the application of opaque pigments. The accompanying text is rendered in the orthodox and elegant Sesonji-lineage courtly script that predominated during the medieval period. JTC

1. Washburn 2015, p. 331.

2. *Zaigai hihō* 1969, vol. 1, p. 77, no. 56. Akiyama Terukazu mentions that the Tenri Library copy was formerly in the collection of the Owari Tokugawa clan, and presumably this section was, too; see Akiyama Terukazu 1978, p. 119. See also Komatsu 1979, pp. 127–30, 140–42.

36 源氏物語絵扇面散屏風

Fan Paintings of *The Tale of Genji* (*Genji monogatari-e senmen chirashi byōbu*)
 Muromachi period (1392–1573), late 15th–early 16th century
 Pair of six-panel folding screens; ink, color, and gold on paper
 Each screen: 61 in. × 11 ft. 11 3/4 in. (155 × 365 cm)
 Jōdoji Temple, Onomichi, Hiroshima Prefecture

In this remarkable pair of screens, sixty luminous *Genji* fans are superimposed over a painting of a green kudzu plant that trails across all twelve panels. Each fan is tilted slightly, suggesting golden flowers blossoming on the vine. The green vine background painting, likely made independently of the fans, has its own appeal in the variety of the leaf clusters, the delineation of the leaf veins, and the animated tendrils that extend from behind the fans. The vines enter the pictorial field and wind every which way, evoking the vitality of the fast-growing kudzu plant.

Each one of this vine's "blossoms" presents a single scene from *Genji*, along with a prose excerpt or a *waka* poem from the tale. The arrangement of the fans does not follow the chapter order, as on other screens (cat. 59), but instead aligns with the cycle of the four seasons. Moving from right to left, scenes of spring and then summer are represented on the right screen (top), while episodes

set amid autumn and winter scenery appear on the left screen (bottom). Pronounced creases and signs of wear indicate that these fans were actually used. Each of the twelve panels bears five fans, making for a total of sixty, six more than the number of chapters in the tale. Some chapters are represented by more than one fan, thus not all fifty-four chapters of the tale are included. The consistent painting style of the fans points to their production by a single studio, most likely one contemporary with that of Tosa Mitsunobu in the late fifteenth century, making these screens one of the oldest cycles of *Genji* images to date.

The calligraphy fits perfectly within the opaque gold clouds on each fan and often works synergistically with the image; when it was added remains unclear.¹ In a fan depicting a scene from Chapter 34, "Early Spring Greens: Part 1" (*Wakana jō*) (below), for example, the text begins with the word "warbler" (*uguisu*), prompting the viewer to notice the lively bird with its open beak, "singing cheerfully in the top branches of a nearby red plum tree."² The slender plum tree extends from behind the clouds at the base of the painting and over the frozen pond, its pink and red flower buds clearly visible against the gold ground. Spiky branches point to the lingering snow on the hills. Another cluster of budding



Detail of cat. 36, right screen, Genji contemplates the plum blossoms in Murasaki's garden, from Chapter 34, "Early Spring Greens: Part 1" (*Wakana jō*)



Right screen (spring and summer)



Left screen (autumn and winter)

branches directs our eye toward Genji, who is seated in front of a screen of autumn grasses not unlike the kudzu background painting. At this point in the tale, the middle-aged Genji has just taken the Third Princess as his new official wife, but he prefers to spend his time here, in Murasaki's quarters. Genji quotes a line from an ancient poem: "My sleeves are scented . . .,"³ implying that he, like the warbler, is nevertheless drawn to the plum, a metaphor for the Third Princess, whose imperial lineage sets her apart. The word-image motifs—the warbler, the plum tree, the large boughs of blossoms in Genji's hands—render the specific *Genji* scene identifiable, but they could also more generally inspire the composition of new *waka* on the theme of spring. In this regard, the Jōdoji fan screens engage the culture of *waka* poetry while appealing to the interests of *Genji* readers eager to recall scenes from the narrative.

MM

1. Akiyama Terukazu hypothesized that the calligraphy was written after the fans had been mounted on the screens, judging by the orientation of the writing; Akiyama Terukazu 1985.
2. Washburn 2015, p. 665.
3. *Ibid.*

37 源氏物語図扇面 「榊」 伝土佐光元筆

"A Branch of Sacred Evergreen" (*Sakaki*)
 Attributed to Tosa Mitsumoto (1530–1569)
 Muromachi period (1392–1573), mid-16th century
 Fan; ink, color, and gold on paper
 7³/₁₆ × 16⁵/₈ in. (18.6 × 42.2 cm)
 Tokyo National Museum
 Not in exhibition

This beautifully preserved fan depicts an iconic scene from Chapter 10, when Genji bids farewell to his former lover Lady Rokujō, who has decided to accompany her daughter, the newly appointed High Priestess of the Shrine, to faraway Ise. The famous setting for the encounter is the "shrine in the fields" (*nonomiya*)¹ at the western edge of the capital, immediately recognizable by several motifs: the rustic brushwood fence, the torii shrine gate, and the sacred evergreen tree (*sakaki*) that becomes the basis for a celebrated poetic exchange between Genji and Rokujō. As Genji approaches the lady, bearing a branch of *sakaki* in his hand, she appears fully visible behind transparent bamboo blinds. The figures, details of



Detail of cat. 36, right screen, Genji plays the koto as the Third Princess, now a nun, faces her Buddhist altar, from Chapter 38, "Bell Crickets" (*Suzumushi*)



the architecture, and style of the tree bear a resemblance to those aspects found in the portrait-icon of Murasaki Shikibu by Tosa Mitsumoto, which suggests this painting's possible attribution (see the introduction to Chapter 2 in this volume).

Genji fan paintings were part of the pervasive culture of fans in premodern Japan. By the medieval period, the considerable demand for folding fans depicting the tale, among other subjects, resulted in a bustling business for fan shops and town painters in the capital. The studios of the Tosa and Kano schools also regularly produced fans for the highest echelons of society. These personal accoutrements had long been incorporated into the conventions of dress and decorum and were part of the gestural language of social interaction. Fans were required New Year's gifts among members of the court and military aristocracy, and they were displayed at fan-matching contests, where innovative designs were highly prized.

Genji fans not only depicted scenes from the tale but also sometimes emulated fans described in the story. The courtier-scholar Sanjōnishi Sanetaka, for example, owned a fan identical to

one wielded by the character Naishi in a bawdy exchange from Chapter 7, "An Imperial Celebration of Autumn Foliage."² Naishi, an elderly lady-in-waiting, propositions the young Genji by giving him a fan inscribed with a less-than-subtle poetic invitation for a dalliance. Sanetaka apparently so prized his fan, with its dark red paper and painted forest just like Naishi's, that he asked the linked-verse (*renga*) poet and *Genji* scholar Sōgi (1421–1502) to inscribe it for him. The poet obliged, returning the fan the next day inscribed with Genji's poetic response to Naishi, in which he declines the lady's overtures and brashly alludes to her promiscuity as inappropriate for someone her age. Sanetaka's fan, which, like this example, was intended to be held and used, must have functioned as an intriguing conversation piece among aficionados of Murasaki's tale.

MM

1. *Nonomiya*, literally "shrine in the fields," refers to the description of the "temporary shrine on the plains of Sagano," as described in Chapter 10, "A Branch of Sacred Evergreen" (*Sakaki*); see Washburn 2015, pp. 216–17. *Nonomiya* later served as the title of a Noh play inspired by the opening scene of "A Branch of Sacred Evergreen."

2. Sanjōnishi Sanetaka 2000, vol. 2, p. 687, entry for the nineteenth day of the sixth month of the eighteenth year of the Bunmei era (1489); cited in Miyajima 1993, p. 41.

38 源氏物語画帖 土佐光信筆

The Tale of Genji Album (Genji monogatari gajō)

Tosa Mitsunobu (active ca. 1462–1525)

Muromachi period (1392–1573), 1510

Album of 54 paired paintings and calligraphic texts; ink, color, and gold on paper

Each chapter pair: 9⁹/₁₆ × 14¹/₄ in. (24.3 × 36.2 cm)

Harvard Art Museums / Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Bequest of the Hofer Collection of the Arts of Asia (1985.352)

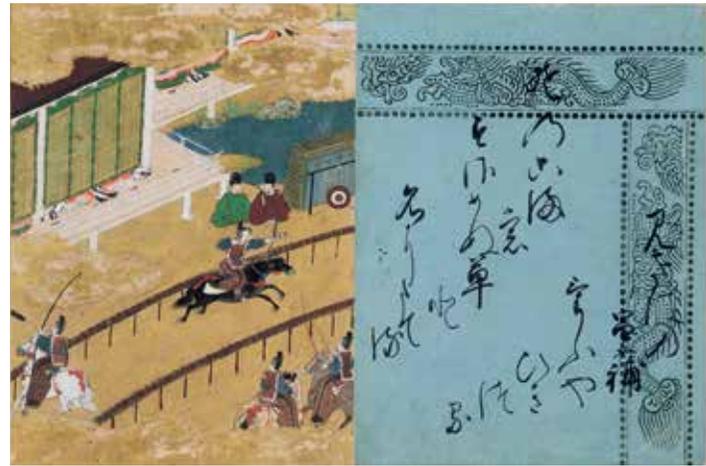
The album of fifty-four pairs of paintings and calligraphic excerpts in which these leaves appear is the oldest extant complete *Genji* album. It was commissioned by Sue Saburō (dates unknown) and his father, Sue Hiroaki (1461–1523), members of a warrior clan based in the western province of Suō (present-day Yamaguchi prefecture). Hiroaki, known for creating an authoritative edition of the historical chronicle *Mirror of the East* (*Azuma kagami*, 1266),

was also a *Genji* aficionado who owned a complete manuscript copy of the tale and who hosted lectures and poetry gatherings at his residence. He and his son enlisted the scholar-courtier Sanjōnishi Sanetaka to help procure the calligraphy for the album.¹ Six different noblemen, including Sanetaka, contributed their distinctive calligraphy, each responsible for nine leaves. They brushed their assigned texts on colorful papers (*shikishi*) that were painted in five different hues and adorned with stenciled borders of dragons in emulation of imported paper from China. The paintings were executed by the renowned artist Tosa Mitsunobu, the court-appointed painting bureau director (*edokoro azukari*), who made *Genji* paintings a cornerstone of his studio practice. The highly collaborative endeavor produced evocative pairings of word and image and a compelling compendium of Murasaki's tale.

In the scene from Chapter 31, “A Beloved Pillar of Cypress” (e), the wife of the character Blackbeard (Higekuro) calmly watches



a. Chapter 22, “A Lovely Garland” (*Tamakazura*)



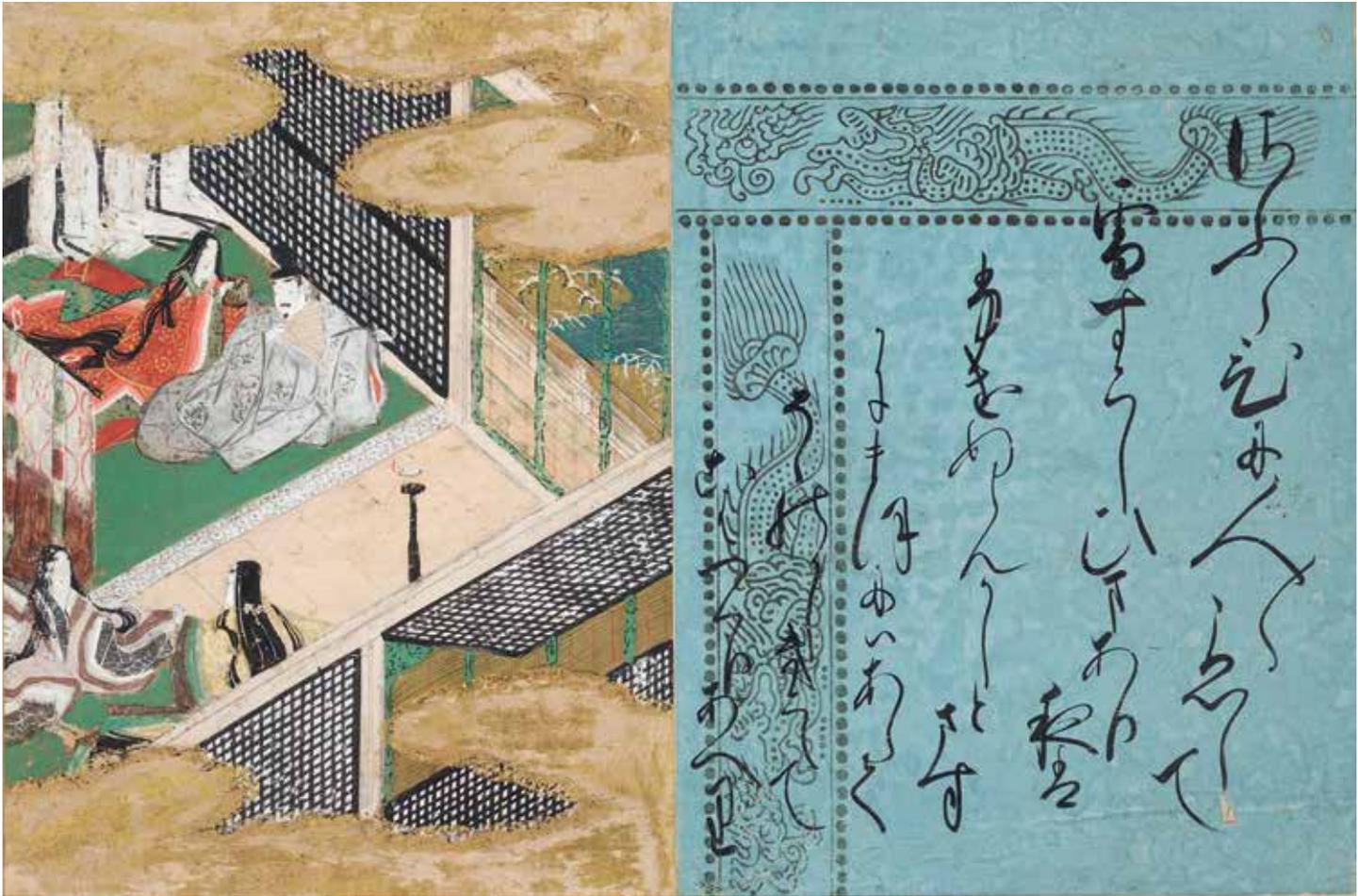
b. Chapter 25, “Fireflies” (*Hotaru*)



c. Chapter 35, “Early Spring Greens: Part 2” (*Wakana ge*)



d. Chapter 46, “At the Foot of the Oak Tree” (*Shiigamoto*)



e. Chapter 31, "A Beloved Pillar of Cypress" (*Makibashira*)

as her husband readies himself to visit his new second wife, Tamakazura, and then suddenly dumps gray ash all over the well-groomed man. Noblewomen are almost always shown seated in *Genji* paintings, but here, to convey the woman's unusual display of pique, Mitsunobu portrays her standing and taking action. The inclusion of a corner of the curtained bed (*michō*) in the upper left of the painting may also allude to the husband's betrayal of his wife.

Working within the conventions of courtly narrative painting, Mitsunobu nonetheless infused the images in the *Genji* album with his own style. One highlight of his work is the ability to convey the hibernal beauty of snow scenes. For example, in the painting for Chapter 46, "At the Foot of the Oak Tree" (d), glistening white snow covers zigzagging hills and a bridge in the distance, contrasting dramatically with bodies of water depicted in a rich blue

mineral pigment. Other scenes, such as that for Chapter 22, "A Lovely Garland" (a), which shows Tamakazura on a pilgrimage to the soaring temple of Hasedera, resemble scenes from Mitsunobu's many handscrolls illustrating temple-origin tales (*engi-e*). The painting for Chapter 35, "Early Spring Greens: Part 2" (c), is the most gemlike picture in the album, showing Genji and Murasaki beside a pond of vibrantly painted lotus plants limned in gold and glistening with dabs of silver to represent the delicate dewdrops on their leaves. Still other album leaves seem deliberately painted to appeal to the warrior patrons of the album, such as Chapter 25, "Fireflies" (b), which features four men in deerskin chaps at a mounted archery competition, a relatively unusual iconographic choice to represent that chapter.

MM

1. For historical background, previous research and bibliography, and full illustrations and analysis of the album leaves, see McCormick 2018.

39 源氏物語手鑑 土佐光吉筆

Scenes from *The Tale of Genji*

Painting by Tosa Mitsuyoshi (1539–1613)

Momoyama period (1573–1615), 1612

Album of 80 paired paintings and calligraphic texts; ink, color, and gold on paper

a) calligraphy: $5\frac{7}{8} \times 9\frac{1}{2}$ in. (14.8 × 24 cm); painting: $7\frac{7}{8} \times 10\frac{1}{4}$ in. (19.9 × 26.1 cm)

b) calligraphy: $7\frac{7}{8} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ in. (20 × 14.1 cm); painting: $7\frac{7}{8} \times 10\frac{1}{4}$ in. (19.8 × 26 cm)

c) calligraphy: $6\frac{5}{8} \times 13\frac{3}{4}$ in. (16.9 × 35 cm); painting: $7\frac{7}{8} \times 10\frac{3}{8}$ in. (20 × 26.2 cm)

Kuboso Memorial Museum of Arts, Izumi, Osaka Prefecture

Important Cultural Property

This beautifully preserved album of eighty pairs of *Genji* painting and calligraphy leaves represents a benchmark for the artistry of the painter Tosa Mitsuyoshi. One painting from the album that epitomizes the refinement and precision of his style (a) depicts the ghost of the deceased Kashiwagi hovering over his friend in life, *Genji's* son Yūgiri, who is fast asleep. Mitsuyoshi rendered this apparition of a deceased character in an unprecedented way, using a fine brush and gold pigment alone to paint only the intricate patterns on the surface of the figure's robes, in effect draining the body of its corporeality. The lightest shades of gray are used for the head, hair, and courtier's hat to convey the ethereal quality of the figure, in contrast to Yūgiri's fleshed-out appearance and vibrantly patterned, colorful robes. By Yūgiri's side is Kashiwagi's beloved transverse flute (*yokobue*), finely rendered in a gold-flecked case tied with a tasseled red cord. The phantom Kashiwagi has come to inform his friend in a dream that the flute should be given to Kashiwagi's own son, Kaoru.

This album is also highly valued for its calligraphy, presented with the utmost variety in the hands of eighteen different noblemen. Represented are some of the foremost calligraphers of the day, such as Karasumaru Mitsuhiro (1579–1638), whose contribution illustrated here, “A Molted Cicada Shell,” is one of the briefest in the album but also one of the most dynamic, in terms of composition (b). The scholar Kawada Masayuki has identified nine different types of stencils used to create the basic decorative backgrounds of the calligraphy papers.¹ Diverse pictorial motifs in gold and silver paint and cut pieces of gold foil were added to these stenciled backgrounds, resulting in eighty entirely unique calligraphy leaves. On the leaf for “The Transverse Flute,” gold pigment depicts the large leaves of an arching banana plant. Clusters of powdered gold and silver pigment (now dark from oxidation) anchor the composition in the lower right and upper left corners, while a swath of small gold-foil squares trails across the center, a decorative and more

abstract version of the gold clouds and mist bands typical of *Genji* paintings. The paper decoration was likely completed by a specialized craftsman. Tosa Mitsuyoshi's paintings, with their attention to pattern and texture and use of similar techniques, convey a comparable, sophisticated craft aesthetic. In contrast to the gold clouds in an earlier *Genji* album (1510) by Tosa Mitsunobu (cat. 38), Mitsuyoshi's are rimmed with dense clusters of gold particles enclosing small squares of gold foil. Cut gold squares and thin slivers of foil are even included in the representations of wall paintings and folding screens found within these paintings, as in the scene from “A Molted Cicada Shell.” Mitsuyoshi's *Genji* paintings thus herald a turn toward more highly crafted, sumptuous objects, which came to characterize the majority of Tosa *Genji* albums in the Edo period.

The unprecedented scale and opulence of this album reflect the luxuriousness of artworks and architectural projects produced in the milieu of the Tokugawa shoguns. The new military regime had begun to solidify its political and military power with cultural endeavors after its victory in the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600, twelve years before this album was made. As the research of Yamane Yūzō first showed, Ishikawa Tadafusa (1582–1650), a daimyo in service to the first and second Tokugawa shoguns, Ieyasu (1543–1616) and Hidetada (1579–1632), commissioned this album with the help of the courtier and *Genji* scholar Nakanoin Michimura (1588–1653).² Like the warrior patrons of the 1510 *Genji* album by Mitsunobu, Ishikawa participated in *waka* gatherings alongside some of the noblemen who executed the calligraphy for his album, and he was a *Genji* reader and scholar who possessed manuscripts of exegetical texts on the tale. The standard for engagement with *Genji* had been set by Ishikawa's lords, the Tokugawa shoguns, who collected *Genji* manuscripts and integrated the symbolism of the tale into objects of material culture, such as the Tokugawa bridal trousseau (see the essay by Monika Bincsik in this volume). Although Ishikawa's motivations for creating this work are unknown, the album would not have been out of place in a bridal trousseau, given the abundance of scenes that conform to *Genji* pictures made for that purpose. Those include paintings that epitomize the idyllic setting of the Rokujō estate, where *Genji* is master of his domain and his ladies live in harmony, as well as scenes of childbirth (c) that, in the Tokugawa political context, present the aspirational goal for brides to produce male heirs.

MM

1. Kawada 1992a, pp. 94–97.

2. Yamane 1954.



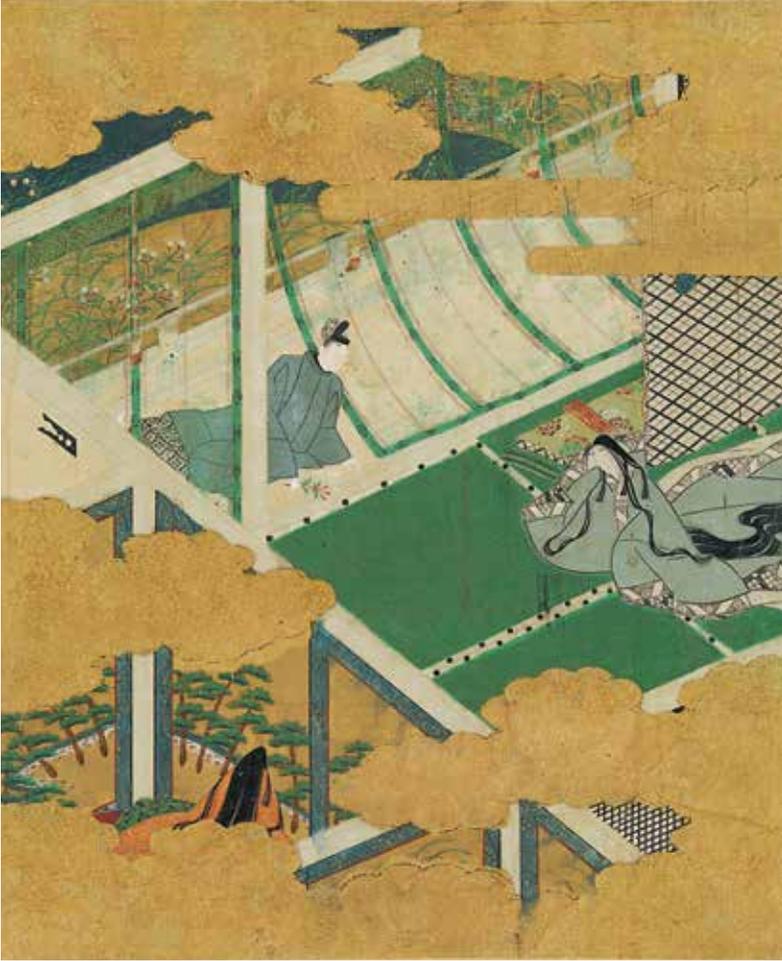
a. Chapter 37, "The Transverse Flute" (Yokobue); calligraphy by Asukai Masatsune 飛鳥井雅庸 (1569–1615)



b. Chapter 3, "A Molted Cicada Shell" (*Utsusemi*); calligraphy by Karasumaru Mitsuhiro 烏丸光広 (1579–1638)



c. Chapter 35, "Early Spring Greens: Part 2" (*Wakana ge*); calligraphy by Tokudaiji Sanehisa 徳大寺実久 (1583–1616)



40 源氏物語図色紙 「藤袴」 土佐光吉筆

“Mistflowers” (*Fujibakama*)

Tosa Mitsuyoshi (1539–1613)

Momoyama period (1573–1615), late 16th–early 17th century

Album leaf mounted as a hanging scroll; ink, color, and gold on paper

Image: 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (25.7 × 21.2 cm); overall with mounting:
54 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 15 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (138.7 × 38.7 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary Griggs Burke Collection,
Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015 (2015.300.30)

In this scene from Chapter 30, “Mistflowers,” Yūgiri, Genji’s son, visits Tamakazura upon the death of Ōmiya, their grandmother. Ōmiya was the mother of Aoi (Yūgiri’s mother) and Tō no Chūjō (Tamakazura’s true father). Yūgiri has learned that Tamakazura is not his sister, as he had thought, but his cousin, thus opening up the possibility of courtship. He takes the opportunity to bring not only a message of condolence but also a love poem accompanied by a bouquet of mistflowers (*fujibakama*), which gives the chapter its name. Having spent the last few years living at the Rokujō estate,

Tamakazura has honed her skills in fending off Genji’s advances, and in this scene, she artfully sidesteps Yūgiri’s overtures as well.

A round seal reading “Tosa Kyūyoku,” which scholars believe Tosa Mitsuyoshi used toward the end of his career, was originally stamped on the back of the painting and is now reattached on the mounting. The same seal was found behind paintings in two other *Genji* albums by Mitsuyoshi, one in the collection of the Kuboso Memorial Museum of Arts, Izumi (cat. 39), and the other in the Kyoto National Museum, making these works important benchmarks for understanding the artist’s style and his sphere of activity. Mitsuyoshi had likely been a pupil of Tosa Mitsumochi, and he took control of the Tosa school of painting when Mitsumochi’s rightful heir, his son Mitsumoto, died young. Mitsuyoshi established what came to be the signature style of the Tosa family line during the Edo period, continued by his son Mitsunori and his grandson Mitsuoki.

MM

41 源氏物語図色紙 「柏木」 土佐光吉筆

“The Oak Tree” (*Kashiwagi*)

Tosa Mitsuyoshi (1539–1613)

Momoyama period (1573–1615), late 16th–early 17th century

Album leaf mounted as a hanging scroll; ink, color, and gold on paper

Image: 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 8 $\frac{3}{16}$ in. (24.7 × 20.8 cm); overall with mounting: 54 $\frac{5}{16}$ × 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (138 × 39.4 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary Griggs Burke Collection,
Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015 (2015.300.31)

This scene from Chapter 36, “The Oak Tree,” shows Tō no Chūjō conferring with an ascetic whom he has summoned to heal his ailing son, Kashiwagi, lying in the adjacent room. Unbeknownst to his father, Kashiwagi’s illness derives from the severe anguish he feels over his illicit affair with Genji’s wife, the Third Princess. Kashiwagi succumbs to his illness soon after the Third Princess gives birth to Kashiwagi’s son, Kaoru, who is subsequently raised as Genji’s child.

Delicately rendered, meticulously detailed, and executed in rich colors and gold, this painting bears all of the hallmarks of *Genji* paintings by Tosa Mitsuyoshi. Of great visual interest are the paintings within the painting: wood sliding doors depicting a willow in snow, interior sliding doors that present a vista of pines along a shoreline resembling Sumiyoshi, and two gold-ground folding screens, which appear in the upper right and lower left of the composition. The open screen adjacent to Kashiwagi’s sickbed reveals a flowering kudzu vine, the undulating shape of which echoes the prone figure of the ailing young man.

MM





42 源氏物語図色紙 「紅葉賀」 伝土佐光吉筆

“An Imperial Celebration of Autumn Foliage” (*Momiji no ga*)

Attributed to Tosa Mitsuyoshi (1539–1613)

Album leaves mounted as a pair of hanging scrolls; ink, color, and gold on paper

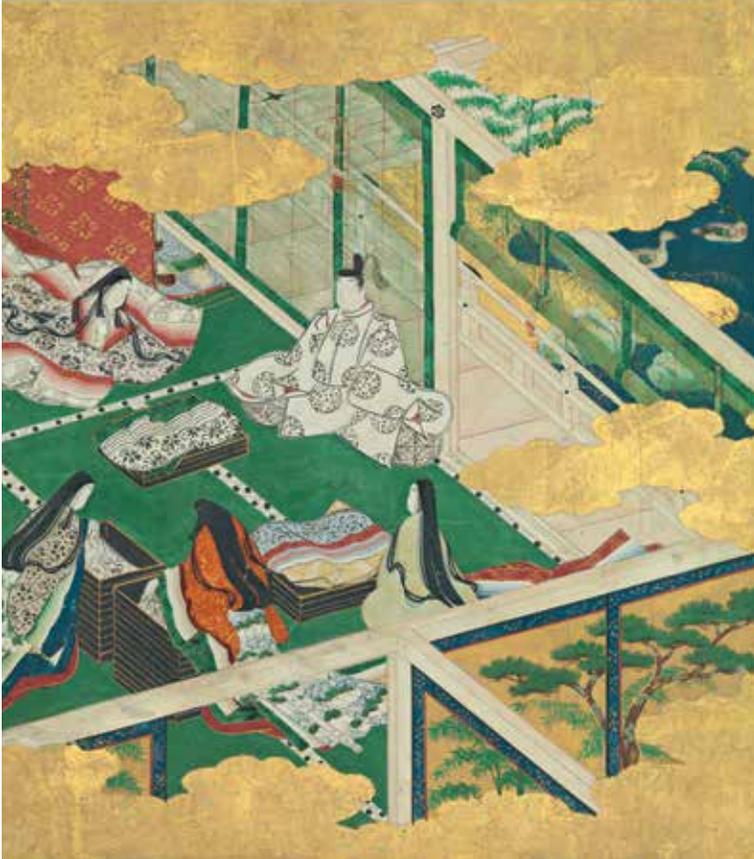
Each leaf: $9\frac{3}{4} \times 8\frac{7}{16}$ in. (24.7 × 21.4 cm)

Harvard Art Museums / Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Gift of the Hofer Collection of the Printed and Graphic Arts of Asia in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Robert T. Paine (1973. 72.1, .2)

Album leaves of *Genji* paintings and calligraphy were sometimes separated from their original contexts and mounted in other formats such as hanging scrolls, which were hung for a variety of events or to match a given season, such as this pair featuring autumn foliage. Fall leaves appear not only in the painting but also in the decoration of the calligraphy paper, where a large maple tree executed in gold pigment extends its branches upward as its fallen leaves drift on a body of water below.

The calligraphic excerpt includes the title of Chapter 7, “An Imperial Celebration of Autumn Foliage,” as the first line of text, but the content of the inscription concerns a different episode in the tale from that shown in the painting. In the picture, Genji and Tō no Chūjō perform the “Dance of the Blue Waves,” whereas in the text excerpt Naishi, an older lady-in-waiting, addresses the young Genji. Naishi has been singing a folk song (*saibara*) while playing on the *biwa* lute, and Genji begins singing another folk song, leading to an exchange of poetry between the two. The mismatched leaves of text and image might have resulted from the calligrapher and painter working independently, or they might have had different accompanying leaves that are now lost. Whatever the case may be, these examples demonstrate the flexibility of the square paper *shikishi* as a medium and its potential for reuse on different formats.

MM



43 源氏物語画帖 「玉鬘」 土佐光吉周辺作
伝近衛前久書

“A Lovely Garland” (*Tamakazura*)

Circle of Tosa Mitsuyoshi (1539–1613)

Calligraphy attributed to Konoe Sakihisa (1536–1612)

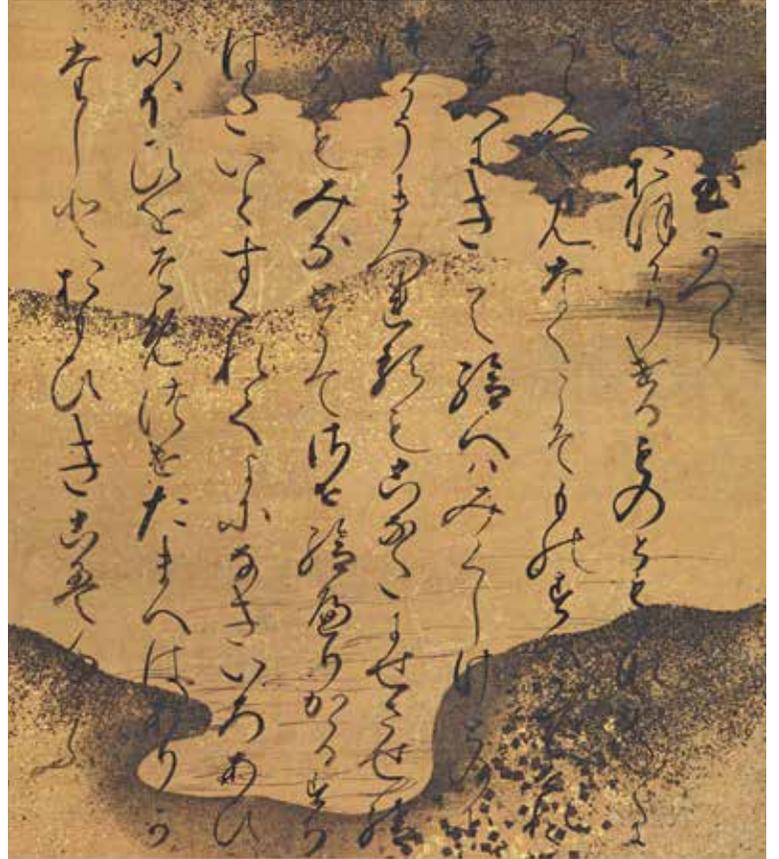
Momoyama period (1573–1615), early 17th century

Album leaves mounted as a pair of hanging scrolls; ink, gold, silver,
and color on paper

Each leaf: 9½ × 8¾ in. (24.1 × 21.4 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary Griggs Burke Collection,
Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015 (2015.300.33a, b)

In this winter scene from Chapter 22, “A Lovely Garland,” snow covers bamboo and rocks in the garden beyond rolled-up blinds. As the New Year approaches, new robes are distributed to the ladies in Genji’s household. Genji sits near his favorite consort, Murasaki, while the women put garments into black lacquered boxes and chests. A pair of mandarin ducks, symbolic of both the winter season and marital harmony, swim in the garden pond. Interior details are exposed through the pictorial convention known as the “blown-off roof” (*fukinuki yatai*), a device first used by *yamato-e* artists during the Heian period. The overall jewel-like, miniaturist quality of the painting marks the hand of a Tosa-school master.



This work and the corresponding leaf of text once formed facing pages of an album, from which they were removed and mounted separately as hanging scrolls. The individual sheet of calligraphy is not signed but is attributed by an inscription on the storage box to Konoe Ryūzan, better known as Konoe Sakihisa, who took that name in 1582. One of the most powerful court nobles of his day, Sakihisa was skilled in poetry and calligraphy, and the father of the noted courtier-calligrapher Konoe Nobutada (cats. 10, 11). The title of the chapter, *Tamakazura* (here written in an admixture of *kanji* and *kana*: 玉かつら), and eight lines of text were inscribed in a fluid hand on paper decorated with flakes of gold and silver to complement the courtly quality of the illustration.

A *Genji* album in the Kyoto National Museum contains leaves painted by both Tosa Mitsuyoshi and Chōjirō (active early seventeenth century), an artist whose work closely resembles Mitsuyoshi’s. Although this album leaf was once attributed to Chōjirō,¹ slight stylistic inconsistencies with the Kyoto album suggest that it was created by an unidentified painter of the Tosa studio who was a contemporary of both masters. SW

1. Tokyo National Museum 1985, no. 38.



44 車争図屏風

Battle of the Carriages (*Kuruma arasoi-zu byōbu*)

Edo period (1615–1868), 17th-century copy of a pair of 1560 screens

by Tosa Mitsumochi (active ca. 1517–72)

Pair of six-panel folding screens; ink, color, and gold on paper

Each screen: 62¼ in. × 11 ft. 6¹³/₁₆ in. (158.1 × 352.6 cm)

Kyoto City Library of Historical Documents

While small-scale *Genji* fans and *shikishi* had been mounted on screen paintings since the early medieval period, the earliest known example of a single episode from the tale extending across two folding screens is a 1560 work by Tosa Mitsumochi. Mitsumochi's screens, which survive today in the Ninnaji Temple in Kyoto (see the essay by Melissa McCormick in this volume), were considered so important that at least two identical copies were created in the seventeenth century. The screens shown here are one such example (the other pair is in the Tokyo Fuji Art Museum), and they depict the famous scene known as the "Battle of the Carriages" from Chapter 9, "Leaves of Wild Ginger" (*Aoi*).¹

The narrative unfolds from right to left, beginning on the right screen with Genji riding a brightly caparisoned horse in a procession that accompanies the newly appointed Priestess of the Kamo Shrine to the Kamo River, where she performs purifying rites. Floating gold clouds direct our gaze toward Genji, the only figure of many on horseback with a white powdered face and a page in attendance. Throngs of onlookers watch the grand spectacle, their carriages lining First Avenue (*Ichijō*). Some have come specifically to witness the radiant Genji in all his finery, among them Lady Rokujō, Genji's former lover. She longs to see him, if not in person, then at least from a distance in the anonymity of her carriage. All is well until an altercation occurs between the men escorting the carriage of Aoi, Genji's official wife, and the men employed by Rokujō, depicted on the left screen. Aoi's men have pushed their lady's carriage into the position occupied by Rokujō's vehicle and, in the process, have destroyed the stool on which her carriage shafts would have rested, as pictured prominently in the third panel. During the scuffle Rokujō's identity is revealed, causing her



unbearable embarrassment. Hemmed in by the other carriages, she is forced to wait out the procession and is humiliated further as she watches Genji's men bow in deference to his wife as they pass by. Rokujō's anger and resentment mount after this episode, leading her vengeful spirit to wander from her body and attack Aoi just after she has given birth to Genji's son Yūgiri.

The impetus to compose a single large-scale scene across a pair of folding screens might have been the rise in the sixteenth century of a genre of painted screens known as "scenes in and around the capital" (*rakuchū rakugai-zu*).² This particular *Genji* episode takes place on First Avenue, which would have been well known to viewers, and by enlarging it to the scale of these screens, *Genji* is envisioned as vital and relevant to contemporary life. The original screens were commissioned by Emperor Ōgimachi (1517–1593) and the men and women of his court, who had political reasons for wanting to represent a capital in which imperial family members were as central as they were in Murasaki's narrative. This seventeenth-century copy is faithful to the original, down to

the inclusion of what might be an embedded image of Murasaki Shikibu at the top of the second panel in the left screen. It differs, however, in the variety and specificity of the patterns on robes and carriages, as well as in its opulent use of gold, a characteristic of Tosa painting in the Edo period.

MM

1. These screens were previously published in an entry by Noguchi Takeshi in *Museum of Kyoto* 2008a, pp. 96–97, no. 27.

2. Washizu 2009b.



45 源氏物語図屏風 「須磨」 「浮舟」

“Exile to Suma” (*Suma*) and “A Boat Cast Adrift” (*Ukifune*)
 Momoyama period (1573–1615), 16th century
 Pair of six-panel folding screens; ink, color, and gold on paper
 Each screen: 64 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. × 11 ft. 10 $\frac{13}{16}$ in. (162.9 × 362.4 cm)
 Imabari City Kono Museum of Art, Ehime Prefecture

In a scene from Chapter 12, “Exile to Suma,” on the right screen, Genji stands in the aisle room of his abode at Suma while the loyal men who accompanied him in exile, most likely Yoshiaki and Koremitsu, kneel on the veranda. The residence, with its large and dramatically upturned cypress roof, anchors the right side of the composition. Some of its features are typical of the aristocratic *shinden* architecture one would find in Kyoto, including black lattice shutters and hinged wood doors, while other elements connote a rustic dwelling, such as the thatched roof of the walkway that extends from the building and the bamboo-and-straw garden fence. To the left, a makeshift wattle fence surrounds two huts containing stoves, wood for fuel, and wood tubs, the tools of the salt makers of Suma, who are absent from the painting. Details in the painting call to mind poetic motifs associated with

the place—seaweed (*mirume*), brine (*shio*), and wind-swept pines (*matsu*). Midway up the painting, roiling waves crash against blue-green rocks before reaching the shore. With his powdered face and regal pose, Genji stands out almost eerily against the muted palette of a desolate seascape, looking out to sea surrounded by a spring garden of cherry blossoms, peonies, camellias, and azaleas. He spots something unexpected in the distance: a small boat rowed by two men with three passengers, the identity of whom is difficult to determine. During his year in exile, Genji is visited by several characters, including Tō no Chūjō, and this may indeed be his friend and rival making his way to shore. The iconography is idiosyncratic, however, suggesting that the painter and patron of the screen were well versed in the tale and able to imagine a moment never explicitly described in the narrative.

The scene from Chapter 51, “A Boat Cast Adrift,” on the left screen might be mistaken for the famous episode of Genji first visiting the Akashi Lady. However, the bridge in the upper right corner makes it clear that this is not Akashi but Uji, and the figure on horseback is not Genji but his grandson, Prince Niou. At this point in the tale, Niou has visited Ukifune in Uji on multiple



occasions. Kaoru, who hid Ukifune away at Uji in part to keep her away from Niou, suspects that his rival may be pursuing her and increases the number of watchmen at her residence. On the night depicted in the painting, Niou is prevented from entering and forced to wait outside, a humiliating state of affairs for a prince. The painting is unusual for its emphasis on the surly watchman on the veranda plucking his bow, a man who is said to speak in a vulgar voice that unsettles Niou and his men. A pack of dogs, shown here as three rather small canines, charges out from the property, growling and barking ferociously. Although it illustrates a disparate part of the tale, the left screen complements the right with its rustic, thatched-roof cottages amid a dense thicket of bamboo. Both screens feature a courtly protagonist who is in a precarious position and conspicuously out of place in rural surroundings.

An inscription on each screen by the artist Tosa Mitsuyoshi (1539–1613) attributes the work to Tosa Mitsunobu (active ca. 1462–1525).¹ Although the rocks and hills drawn with wavy outlines and the facial features of the lower-ranking figures resemble those same elements in works by Mitsunobu and by his son Mitsumochi (active ca. 1517–72), a more likely possibility is that these screens

are by a descendant of Tosa Mitsumoto (1530–1569), who amalgamated the style of his grandfather (Mitsunobu) and father (Mitsumochi).² Mitsumoto died young, ending the Tosa bloodline. Thought to have died in battle, Mitsumoto seems to exemplify an artist of the Warring States period, and these screens, which depict the watchman so prominently and exclude female figures, evince a sensibility appropriate to that age (see the essay by Melissa McCormick in this volume). These rare screens in the style of Tosa Mitsumoto are among the earliest and most innovative of the extant monumental *Genji* paintings, and they hint at how Tosa painting might have developed had the main line continued. MM

1. Miyajima 1995.

2. Aizawa 2018.

46 源氏物語図屏風 「若紫」 「浮舟」

“Little Purple Gromwell” (*Wakamurasaki*) and “A Boat Cast Adrift” (*Ukifune*)
 Edo period (1615–1868), 17th century
 Pair of six-panel folding screens; ink, color, and gold on paper
 Each screen: 58 ¾ in. × 11 ft. ⅞ in. (149.2 × 335.6 cm)
 Sidney and Lois Eskenazi Museum of Art, University of Indiana,
 Bloomington (66.11, 66.12)

Although the two screens in this pair depict disparate moments from the beginning and end of the tale, they are unified visually and thematically. Both illustrate scenes of “peeking through the fence” (*kaimami*), a trope found throughout the tale in which male characters spy on seemingly unsuspecting women who become objects of desire.

The episode on the right screen, from Chapter 5, “Little Purple Gromwell,” introduces the character Murasaki as Genji, who stands behind a tall brushwood fence, glimpses her for the first time. The small standing figure in dark robes, Murasaki is facing in Genji’s direction and is joined by her grandmother, who wears the shoulder-length hair of a nun and is leaning on an armrest in front of a screen painting of bamboo, a sutra scroll and prayer book on a desk by her side. On the veranda, a tall female attendant calls after Murasaki’s pet sparrow, which has been set free by another attendant. One of the most iconic scenes in the history of *Genji* painting, it usually includes the sparrow, although barely discernible here, perched atop a branch of a cherry tree. Unlike many paintings of this scene, however, this screen includes a second image of Genji, here resting on a mat with a square pillow before him. His presence reminds us that he has come to these mountains north of the capital in search of an ascetic to heal a sudden illness, and his expression suggests that he might be contemplating several serious events that have recently transpired, such as the death of his lover Yūgao and, most importantly, his affair with his father’s consort Fujitsubo, whose pregnancy is revealed in this

chapter. In fact, what mesmerizes Genji most about the young Murasaki is her resemblance to Fujitsubo, her paternal aunt. Genji discovers Murasaki living with her grandmother, the nun, in the residence of the bishop (the grandmother’s brother) adjoined to a Buddhist temple. The evocative landscape descriptions are tinged with Buddhist references, one prominent motif being the roaring waterfall whose sound mingles with the voices of monks chanting the Lotus Sutra. The rich literary imagery is also conveyed through a vibrant mountain landscape with large, rugged boulders and a canopy of pines and cherry trees in bloom.

On the left screen, from Chapter 51, “A Boat Cast Adrift,” Niou first visits the villa in Uji where Ukifune has been hidden away by Niou’s rival, Kaoru. The prominent Uji Bridge in the upper right corner (as in cat. 45) announces the setting. Inside the residence, Ukifune’s attendants prepare her robes and garments for a pilgrimage to Ishiyamadera the next day. The women work diligently by lamplight, sewing red trousers, pleating robes, and cutting fabric, as Ukifune sits between a folding screen and a standing curtain in the room’s interior. In the tale, Niou is said to notice her long, beautiful hair framing her face and her aura of elegance and nobility. As the daughter of the Eighth Prince (Hachinomiya), Ukifune is of royal lineage, but her identity has not yet been discovered by Niou; he simply marvels at her resemblance to his wife, Nakanokimi, unaware that they are half sisters. On these two screens, Genji and his grandson Niou, respectively, are drawn to women who remind them of others. The auditory landscape of the waterfall on the right is comparably evoked on the left by the Uji River, which swirls amid the large boulders near the residence. The roar of these rapids becomes an ominous sound as Ukifune contemplates casting herself into the river as a way to resolve the impossible situation of being both in love with her sister’s husband and sought after by Kaoru.

MM

TOSA-SCHOOL PAINTINGS



47 源氏物語図屏風 「胡蝶」 土佐光吉筆

“Butterflies” (*Kochō*)

Tosa Mitsuyoshi (1539–1613)

Momoyama period (1573–1615), late 16th–early 17th century

Six-panel folding screen; ink, color, gold, and gold leaf on paper

65 in. × 12 ft. ¾ in. (165.1 × 367.7 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary Griggs Burke Collection,
Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015 (2015.300.32)

This six-panel screen is one of only a few large-scale works firmly attributed to Tosa Mitsuyoshi (see cat. 48).¹ The single composition encapsulates the imagined visual splendor of Genji’s Rokujō estate and demonstrates why the subject was deemed appropriate to mark auspicious events and to decorate objects in the bridal trousseau. In Chapter 24, “Butterflies,” the Rokujōin is likened to a paradisiacal realm that rivals even that of the immortals on Mount Hōrai. That declaration is made by one of several ladies-in-waiting whom Genji has invited to view Murasaki’s garden. Acting as surrogates for the Umetsubo Empress (Akikonomu), whose elevated position precludes a visit, the women travel in Chinese-style wood boats that Genji has had constructed to navigate the vast pond connecting the empress’s autumn quarters to the spring quarters of his estate (see Appendix 1 in this volume). The prows of the boats are carved in the shapes of mythical animals, a water bird (*geki*) and a dragon (*ryū*).

The women temporarily dock at an islet in the center of the pond, shown here as a green hillock in the two leftmost panels of the screen. In the tale they are described as viewing Murasaki’s grounds from this very distance, glimpsing the blossoming cherries through veils of spring mist and noting the purple wisteria that wraps around the covered walkways. As if conforming to this passage in the tale, clusters of pendulous wisteria blossoms are suspended from a trellis obscured by gold clouds. An enigmatic vignette shows a duck with a cluster of the wisteria blossoms in its beak flying above the roof of the women’s boat. Having left its mate in the water, it flies conspicuously leftward, suggesting perhaps

that this screen may once have been part of a pair. Cherry blossoms, emblematic of spring, fill nearly every panel of this screen. The pages rowing the boat are dressed in intricately patterned robes, their tresses tied into two loops. The women will disembark from their boat and enter the mansion through the fishing pavilion of the southeastern residence, shown here at the top of the third panel from the right. A square opening in the floorboards of this structure, just visible between the gold clouds, enables access to the water below. The guests are treated to performances of music and dance said to continue until morning.

The lower portion of the painting depicts the events of the next day, when Murasaki sends her own messengers across the pond to give the empress a hint at the splendors of her spring garden. She seems to be discreetly watching the festivities from behind closed blinds, inside a building located near the top of the second panel. The woman in the apartments in the lower right corner of the painting may represent the empress. Seated beside a fabric curtain with a design of chrysanthemums on a stream and in front of a screen painting of two cranes beneath a large pine, she gazes out from behind lowered bamboo blinds in the company of two attendants, identifiable by the pleated aprons affixed to their garments. The empress has sponsored a grand sutra reading this day, attended by the entire court and officiated by numerous Buddhist priests. Murasaki uses the exotic boats to transport eight page girls to the ceremony. Spectacularly costumed as paradisiacal *kalavinka* birds and butterflies of court *bugaku* dance (detail), the girls wear feathered capes, headdresses, and multicolored wings, and they hold silver and gold vessels of cherry blossoms and yellow kerria flowers to be offered to the Buddha. The screen’s otherworldly tableau thus conflates the events of two days and two different female audiences to present the Rokujō estate as a site that rivals the glory of the imperial palace.

MM

1. The screen and more details on its attribution are discussed in Murase 2000, pp. 206–7, no. 81. See also Emura 2011, pp. 52–55, for a discussion of this screen in the context of Mitsuyoshi’s other large-format paintings.









48 源氏物語図屏風 「御幸」「浮舟」「関屋」
土佐光吉筆

“An Imperial Excursion” (*Miyuki*), “A Boat Cast Adrift” (*Ukifune*),
and “The Barrier Gate” (*Sekiya*)

Tosa Mitsuyoshi (1539–1613)

Momoyama period (1573–1615)

Painted sliding doors (*fusuma-e*) remounted as a pair of four-panel folding
screens; ink, color, and gold leaf on paper

65½ in. × 11 ft. 8 in. (166.4 × 355.6 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Fletcher Fund, 1955
(55.94.1, .2)

Originally mounted on sliding-door panels, these screens once formed two of the walls of a *Genji* room. Like the “Butterflies” screen (cat. 47), they are among only a handful of large-scale works securely attributed to Tosa Mitsuyoshi.¹ They demonstrate how *Genji* paintings, with their origins in small formats, were transformed into panoramic architectural programs, here depicting three outdoor scenes set within an expansive landscape. The dynamic composition and the lavish use of gold epitomize the spectacular large-scale works commonly associated with Momoyama painting, while Mitsuyoshi’s fine craftsmanship and decorative tendencies are evident in the elaborate gold clouds, some of which contain the small squares of gold foil and gold dust characteristic of his miniature works.

The scene from Chapter 29, “An Imperial Excursion,” in fact, follows the composition of Mitsuyoshi’s small-scale versions of this theme, but when enlarged to this scale it acquires new valences.

The episode is a falconry expedition by Emperor Reizei in Oharano. Three main groups of figures in the royal procession run downhill toward the lower right, while a striking figure in red on horseback charges in the opposite direction and halts the flow of movement, redirecting the eye leftward across the bottom of the composition to *Ukifune* and *Niou* in the boat in the lower left corner, a scene from Chapter 51, “A Boat Cast Adrift.” Mitsuyoshi paints the figures’ garments in rich detail, from the patterned robes and thick deerskin glove of the falconer to the elaborate dress of the royal guardsmen. At the center of the screen twelve men support the emperor in his palanquin, a symbol of imperial splendor with its elaborate roof of lacquer and gold, bird finials at the corners, and central finial consisting of a regal phoenix atop a jewel. Following convention, the emperor is barely shown; only the edges of his gold patterned robes, the red underlining of his garment, and his checkered trousers are visible (detail). In the Heian period, the royal falcon hunt was an official event on the imperial calendar. Its show of sovereign authority was deemed threatening enough that the first shogun, Tokugawa Ieyasu, prohibited it when he came to power in 1615.² The prominent display of imperial prestige in this painting



suggests that these panels are not straightforward illustrations of *Genji* but rather a visualization of courtly authority made in an era when the military overseers of the government were ascendant.

One achievement of these paintings is how Mitsuyoshi weaves together three disparate scenes into one seamless panorama. Shared seasonal motifs, such as the snow-capped hills between the scenes, unify the tableau, as does the single crescent moon in the upper left corner, which illuminates both the hunting party at Oharano and the lovers in their boat. Moreover, Mitsuyoshi matches the strong diagonal of the falconry scene with a similar composition illustrating a scene from Chapter 16, “The Barrier Gate,” which slopes downward in the opposite direction. It is not hard to imagine how the painted wall panels in the original room would have directed the eye around the space. The boldness of this design seems to foreshadow the version of the same scene by Tawaraya Sōtatsu (cat. 53). Although the main characters in this scene, Genji and Utsusemi, remain hidden in their respective carriages, Mitsuyoshi holds the viewer’s attention with his meticulous rendering of the details of each character’s entourage. MM



Detail of cat. 48

1. An inscription on the leftmost panel of this screen attributes the work to Tosa Mitsuyoshi and identifies the final panel as a replacement painted by Mitsuyoshi’s grandson Tosa Mitsuoki (1617–1691).

2. Mitamura 2006.

49 源氏物語図屏風 「若紫」 伝土佐光吉筆

“Little Purple Gromwell” (*Wakamurasaki*)

In the style of Tosa Mitsuyoshi (1539–1613)

Momoyama period (1573–1615), early 17th century

Two-panel folding screen; ink, color, gold, and gold leaf on paper

64½ × 73½ in. (163.8 × 186.7 cm)

Honolulu Museum of Art, Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Ray R. Reeves, 1960 (2785.1)

Genji’s time in the northern hills, where he sought a cure to his bouts of fever, has come to an end, as the healer’s spells and incantations have proven effective. Tō no Chūjō, Genji’s brother-in-law, arrives with several young men to accompany him back to the palace, where everyone has lamented his absence. They rest for a while before returning, and a musical interlude ensues:

They all sat down on the moss in the shade of some craggy outcroppings and passed around the winecups. The cascading waterfall behind them made an elegant backdrop.

Tō no Chūjō pulled a flute from the breastfold of his robe and began to play clear, dulcet notes. Sachūben kept time by tapping a fan on the palm of his left hand and sang the line “West of the temple at Toyora” from the *saibara* “Kazuraki.” The men in the party were all extraordinarily handsome, but Genji, still listless from his fever and leaning against a boulder, was incomparable. His looks were so awesomely superior that no one could take their eyes off him. Tō no Chūjō was gifted at playing the flute, so he had made certain to bring with him attendants who could accompany him on the double-reed *hichiriki* and the seventeen-pipe *shō*.

The bishop brought out his own seven-string koto and insisted that Genji play it: “Please, just one song for us. I’d like to give the birds in the mountains a surprise.”¹

The bamboo-pipe mouth organ (*shō*) and small oboe (*hichiriki*) appear in the painting, held by two figures in the lower left, but the central instrument in this scene is the koto. It is depicted with great

detail, including the seven strings painted in gold, all supported by V-shaped bridges and looped at the end of the instrument. The koto lies between Genji and the bishop, who seems to be waiting for Genji’s response to his invitation to play. To convey Genji’s beauty, so lauded in this passage of the tale, the artist makes him a focal point. Genji leans nonchalantly against a moss-covered rock, his face framed by colorful red azaleas and the curving gold ground behind him. The bishop’s residence, with its distinctive architectural overhang, appears in the upper left corner. It is partially obscured by a profusion of blossoming mountain cherry trees, which form a distant floral canopy over Genji’s head. A zigzagging waterfall rushes down toward Genji.

The bishop, another focal point, wears gray monk’s robes and a white surplice (*kesa*). The artist depicts the wrinkles on his face and the shaded portions of his bald head in detail. In this scene, Genji has already asked for and been denied the bishop’s permission to take the young Murasaki to live with him. The bishop and his sister (Murasaki’s grandmother) believe she is much too young and find the request audacious. And yet, the bishop succumbs to Genji’s radiant beauty, likening him in verse to the *udumbara* flower of Buddhist lore that blooms only once every three thousand years.

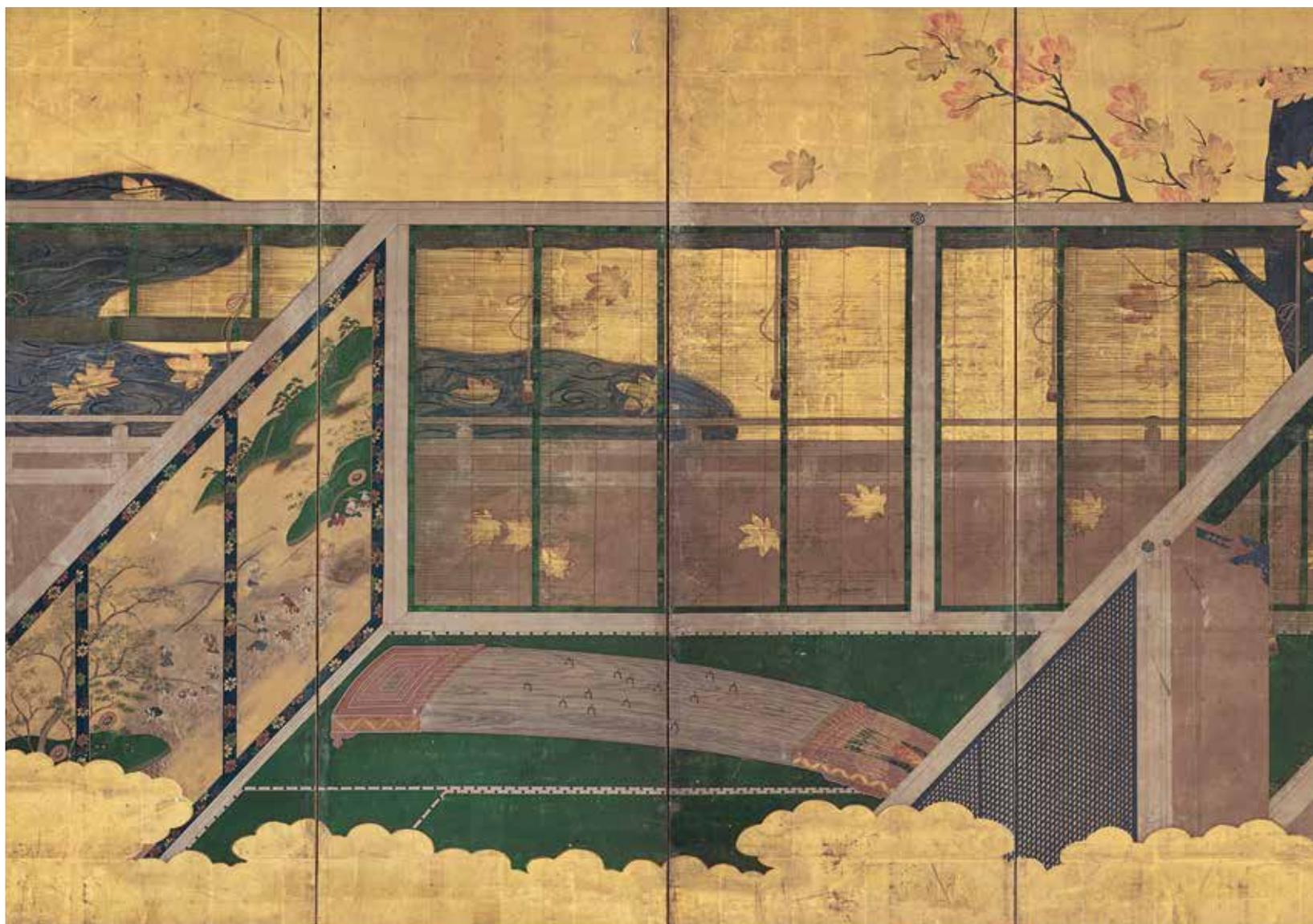
This screen bears a striking resemblance to works by Tosa Mitsuyoshi, in particular to the former sliding-door paintings in The Metropolitan Museum of Art (cat. 48), which have an outdoor setting, sloping green hills, and similar dimensions. While this painting does not seem to be in Mitsuyoshi’s hand, the possibility remains that it is a slightly later copy by a Tosa artist based on a Mitsuyoshi original or sketches in his studio,² and that the composition may have once been part of the *Genji* room adorned by the Metropolitan Museum’s screens.

MM

1. Washburn 2015, p. 107.

2. Emura 2011, p. 54, fig. 85.





50 源氏物語図屏風 「帚木」

"Broom Cypress" (*Hahakigi*)

Momoyama period (1573–1615)

Six-panel folding screen; ink, color, gold, and gold leaf on paper

58 $\frac{1}{16}$ in. × 10 ft. 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (147.5 × 324.5 cm)

Private collection, Japan

One rainy evening at court, two older and more experienced men expound on the various types of women in the world before the captive audience of seventeen-year-old Genji and his brother-in-law Tō no Chūjō. The men use vivid anecdotes to make their points, and one man recounts how he came to realize the brazen

nature of a woman he had been seeing, reaching the conclusion that in some cases a woman can simply be too alluring. Inspired by Chapter 2, "Broom Cypress," this remarkable screen depicts a scene from that courtier's account, thus presenting a story within a story. However, it does not include a single figure, relying instead on the pictured objects and the room that contains them to communicate the tale.

The courtier tells the story of how one autumn evening he accompanied an acquaintance on a rendezvous, only to find that the woman his friend was meeting was his own lover. His account includes an evocative description of the woman's residence, which



he glimpses over a crumbling portion of the perimeter wall. Just such a wall and the building's wide-open doors beckon the viewer into the scene depicted on the screen. Inside the wall, chrysanthemum flowers, faded from the autumn frost, grow around the base of a sinewy maple tree that has lost nearly all of its red-tinged leaves. The curving trunk and branches direct the eye upward toward a full autumn moon, which casts a shimmering reflection on the surface of a garden pond. The courtier notices how the maple leaves rustle in the wind, conveyed here by leaves that seem to quiver on the branch, dance across the veranda, and land on the pond; this view is rendered in the painting with a spectacular

trompe l'oeil effect, as if seen through bamboo blinds that enclose a nearly life-size room. As a voyeur of the tryst, the man observes his friend enticing the woman by playing his flute and singing a folk song (*saibara*) called "Asukai" that is full of innuendo. The woman responds by accompanying him flawlessly on a six-string koto (*wagon*) tuned to a "folksy minor key." The artist expresses the combination of the setting's refined elegance and the folk song's subdued earthiness described in the tale by including vignettes of annual agricultural observances (*tsukinami-e*) on sliding doors in the depicted room. Paintings of rice planting in watery fields appear on the doors, which are bordered by a colorful brocade and fitted with paulownia-crest door handles. Figures pouring and receiving sacred sake suggest prayers to the gods and rice-planting songs (*taue uta*) offered in the hope of a rich harvest. Meanwhile, women rest by a hill, one of them nursing an infant, a common image in sixteenth-century Japanese genre painting.

The episode comes to an end after the courtier recounts hearing a seductive poetic exchange between the man and his lover, his displeasure made even worse by the woman's excessive display of musical sophistication when she switches to playing a thirteen-string koto (*sō no koto*). This instrument takes center stage in the composition, where it stands in metonymically for the seductive woman. The realistic depiction simulates an instrument crafted at the highest level. The wood grain is rendered in detail, as are the thirteen bridges and their notched tops that secure the delicate gold strings. The precise positioning of the bridges here implies the touch of the absent woman, who, in the tale, deliberately slides the bridges up and down to tune her koto to the *banshiki* mode, suitable for the autumn season. The reddish-colored end of the instrument is decorated with bands of concentric squares, the outer two containing motifs of miniature sandbars and flying geese, suggesting inlaid mother-of-pearl, while the sides have abstract patterns in gold. The mottled appearance of the dark square at the center calls to mind an exotic material, perhaps similar to the tortoiseshell found on the koto in The Metropolitan Museum of Art (cat. 85). A detailed drawing of a similar koto was found among the Tosa school's archived sketches bearing the name of Tosa Mitsuyoshi, suggesting that this screen was painted by him or within his circle.¹ At the same time, an inscription on the screen by Tosa Mitsuoki attributes the work to Tosa Mitsumochi, placing it more squarely in the late sixteenth century. MM

1. Washizu 2010.



51 源氏物語図屏風 「初音」「若菜上」 土佐光起筆

“First Song of Spring” (*Hatsune*) and “Early Spring Greens: Part 1”

(*Wakana jō*)

Tosa Mitsuoki (1617–1691)

Edo period (1615–1868), 17th century

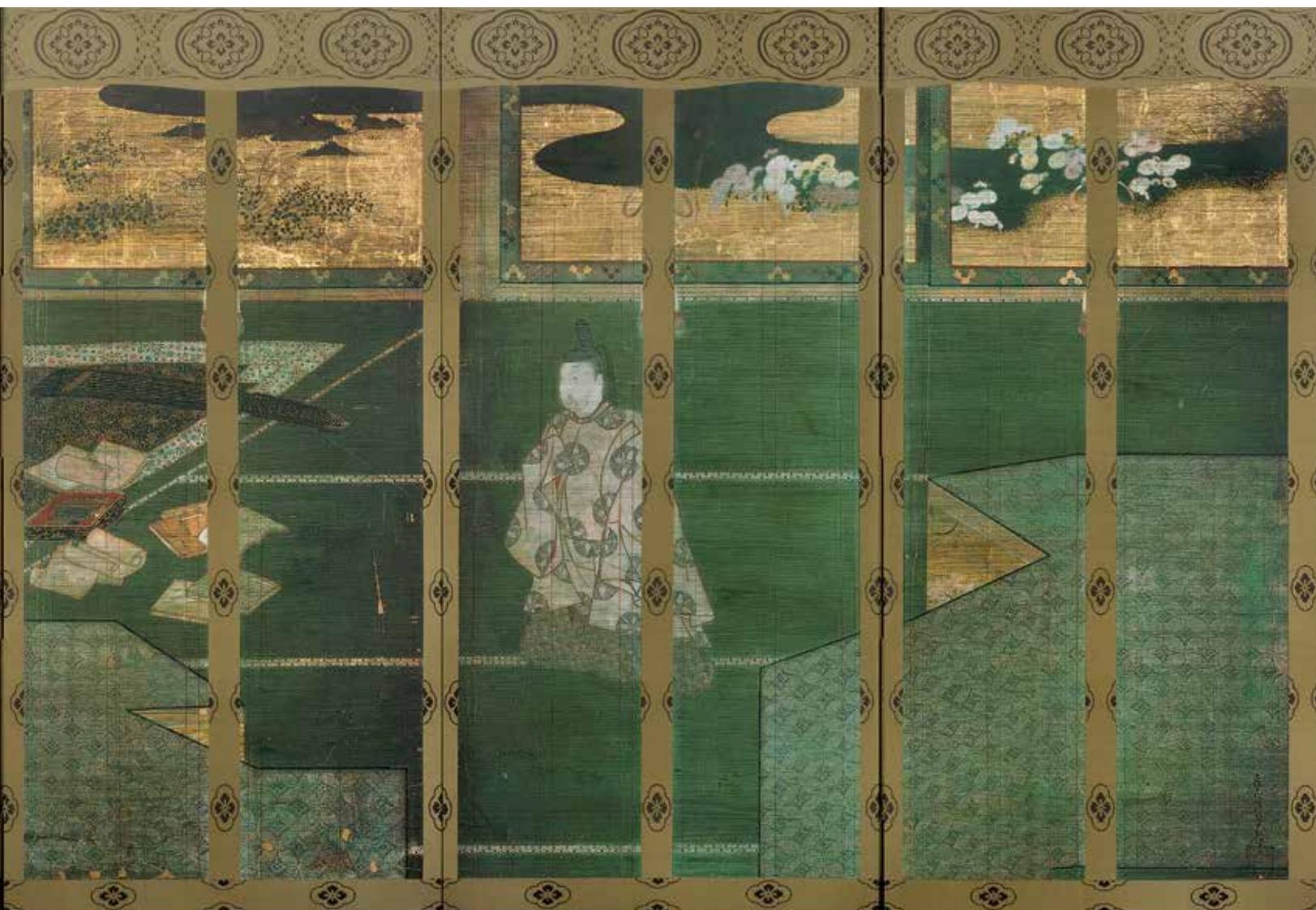
Pair of six-panel folding screens; ink, color, and gold on paper

33½ in. × 8 ft. 3¼ in. (85.1 × 252.1 cm)

Tokyo National Museum

These unique folding screens by Tosa Mitsuoki place the viewer in the position of a voyeur peering through drawn bamboo blinds into rooms where scenes from *The Tale of Genji* are taking place. Mitsuoki painted hundreds of fine green horizontal lines across

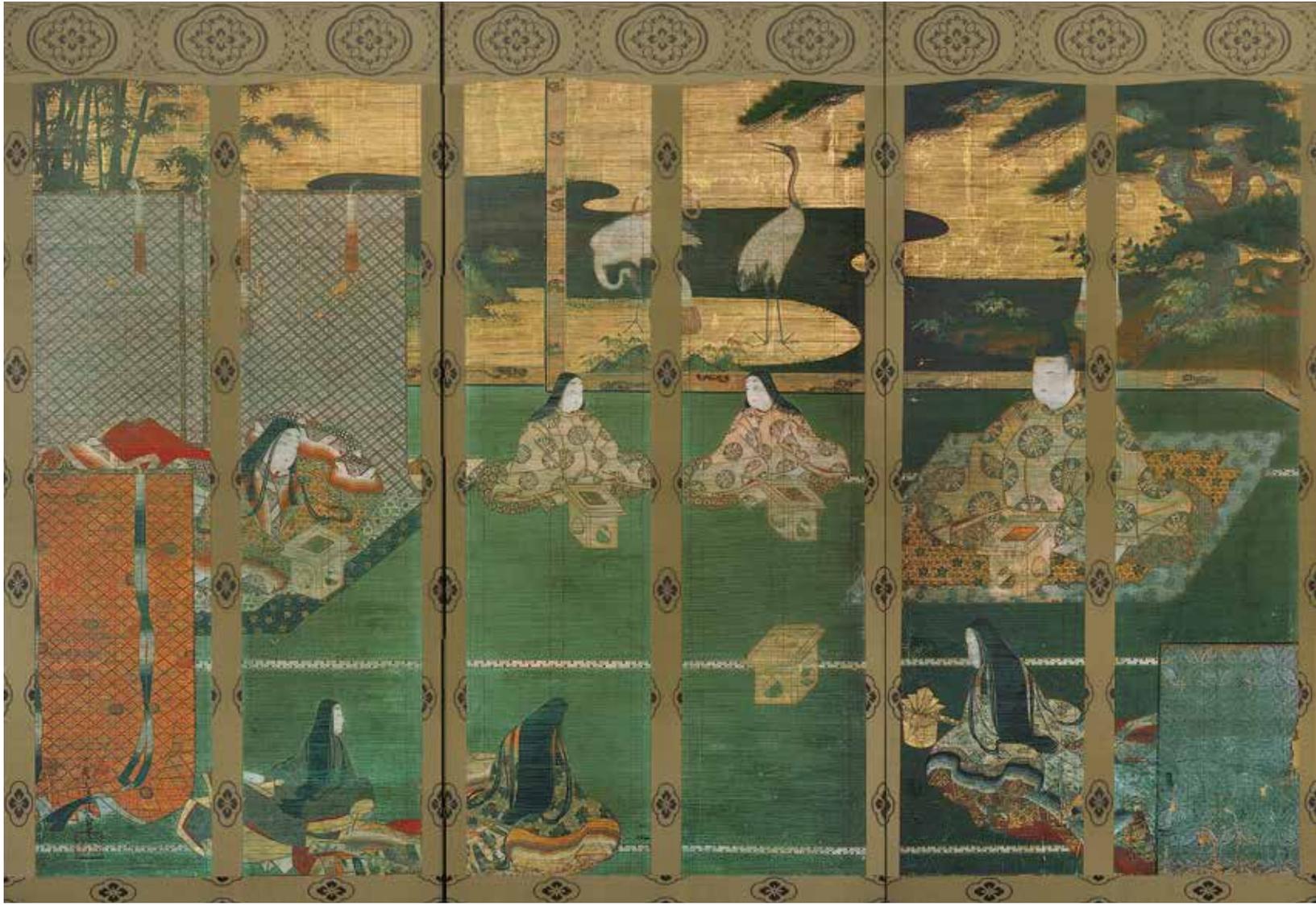
the surface to create the effect of the bamboo slats and thin red vertical lines to simulate the threads that bind the slats together. To further carry out the conceit, he adhered actual textile strips down the center and along the edges of each of the twelve panels.¹ The decision to superimpose the blinds, and thus potentially obscure the exquisite painted scenes beneath, demonstrates an artistic confidence that befits Mitsuoki, the director of the painting bureau and head of the Tosa school. While artists had long played with the semitransparency of blinds in album-leaf paintings, especially Mitsuoki’s forebears in the Tosa school, Mitsuyoshi and Mitsunori, this scale of experimentation was unprecedented. Mitsuoki intensifies the *trompe l’oeil* effect, as seen in the previous screen



(cat. 50), by depicting the room interiors at nearly eye level, which places the viewer closer to the scene. Gone are the conventional framing devices, such as posts and exposed beams from blown-off roofs, which provide visual access to interior space but keep the viewer at a distance. However, Mitsuoki's paintings do not abandon traditional perspective entirely; the ground plane is tilted, and the viewer looks down from a slightly elevated position. Interestingly, several folding screens are rendered in the foreground of each screen, recalling scenes in the tale in which a peeking voyeur encounters barriers that must be overcome for a view into a room. Here the painted screens stand open in various configurations, bending at odd angles and self-reflexively mimicking the

undulating folds of the actual screens on which they appear. Along with the depictions of interior walls and paintings, the screens create a clearly defined architectural space for the narrative action to occur.

Although the paintings evince the trope of voyeurism, they do not depict women as objects of desire, as found in such scenes in the tale, but instead present tableaux that convey an ideal of female propriety, domestic harmony, and auspicious symbolism.² On the screen from Chapter 23, "First Song of Spring," Genji is in the midst of visiting his female companions in their respective seasonal residences during the New Year's Day festivities. In the evening he goes to the winter quarters of the Akashi Lady and is greeted by



the alluring scent of exotic incense, but the lady is nowhere to be seen. In her absence, Genji contemplates her numerous possessions: a seven-string koto lying on a patterned silk mat with an embroidered border of continental brocade, papers and books with jottings of her calligraphy and poetry, thread-bound books with richly decorated covers, a *maki-e* lacquered incense burner, and a *maki-e* lacquer shelf bearing more precious items. Laden with meaning, the objects evoke Genji's time in exile, his relationship with the Akashi Lady, and her crucial role in his political success by providing him with his only daughter. Wall paintings within the room may even allude to her position as the biological mother of the future Akashi Empress through their imagery of chrysanthemums, symbolic of imperial offspring. The lady herself appears

in this painting, seated beside a fabric curtain near the left edge. A snow scene in a shimmering golden wall painting behind her signals her association with the winter season. Paired herons on a snowy tree trunk and mandarin ducks, the latter a well-known symbol of conjugal union, also suggest her ability to promote harmony within the Rokujō estate. Sadly, the Akashi Lady must live apart from her daughter, who is being raised by Murasaki, but her sacrifice ensures Genji's rise. Perhaps for this reason the luxurious lacquer sets of bridal trousseaux of the early modern period are emblazoned with the pictorial symbols of this chapter (see the essay by Monika Bincsik in this volume).

The second screen is inspired by Chapter 34, "Early Spring Greens: Part 1," the title of which refers to the plants symbolizing



youthful vitality that are offered at celebrations commemorating Genji's fortieth year. Tamakazura, who lived as Genji's daughter at Rokujō for a time, sponsors the celebrations, readies the room in an elegant way, and presents him with the spring greens. She uses the occasion to introduce Genji to her two sons with her husband, Hige-kuro. The boys are seated between Genji and Tamakazura and dressed identically, their loose hair hanging down to their shoulders. The painting of two cranes behind them offers an auspicious symbol that further points to the dual function of these screens. They are not only *Genji* paintings but also objects of wishful thinking, expressing their patrons' hopes for powerful and successful marital unions.

MM

1. Mitsuoki's painting process and the findings of the most recent conservation of these screens are discussed in Honda 2013.
2. Laura W. Allen examines these screens in the context of Edo-period interpretations of *Genji* as a source for exemplary female behavior and suggests they may have been part of a bridal trousseau; see Allen 2004.



52 源氏物語図屏風・鳥屋図屏風

Nine Scenes from *The Tale of Genji* and *An Aviary* (*Genji monogatari zu byōbu*; *Toriya zu byōbu*)

Edo period (1615–1868), early 17th century

Pair of six-panel folding screens; ink, color, and gold on paper

Each screen: 41¾ in. × 9 ft. 2⅝ in. (106 × 280.2 cm)

Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, Gift and Purchase from the Harry G. C. Packard Collection Charitable Trust in honor of Dr. Shujiro Shimada; The Avery Brundage Collection (1991.65.1–2)

In this unusual pair of screens, nine scenes from *The Tale of Genji* are matched with a depiction of a nearly life-size aviary. The screens' identical dimensions, mountings, and gold clouds, all with the same embossed pattern, as well as their shared artistic style strongly suggest that they were originally intended as a pair.

The screen of nine scenes follows a loose chronological order from right to left, with Chapter 1, “The Lady of the Paulownia-Courtyard Chambers,” appearing at the top of the first panel.¹ There the young Genji's destiny is foretold by a Korean physiognomist. Immediately to the left, at the top of the second panel, is a scene from Chapter 14, “Channel Markers,” in which Genji offers prayers to the gods of Sumiyoshi after his return from exile and the Akashi Lady, pregnant with Genji's daughter (the future Akashi Empress), appears in a small boat. The lady's proximity to the fortune-teller seems deliberate, as the content of his prognostication involved the fate of Genji's children. Below and to the left, across the first and second panels, Genji peeks in on the young stepmother of the Governor of Kii as she plays a game of Go with her stepdaughter (Chapter 3, “A Molted Cicada Shell”). Running

along the bottom of these two panels, Genji's son Yūgiri catches his first glimpse of Murasaki in the chaos following a typhoon that has ravaged her garden (Chapter 28, “An Autumn Tempest”). Across the top of the third and fifth panels is a scene in which Genji first visits the Akashi Lady on horseback and hears the sound of her koto as her sleeve brushes across its strings (Chapter 13, “The Lady at Akashi”). A New Year's scene in which Genji selects robes for his ladies at Rokujō appears in the middle of the third and fourth panels (Chapter 22, “A Lovely Garland”), below which is the famous scene of Genji visiting Lady Rokujō at the shrine in the fields (Chapter 10, “A Branch of Sacred Evergreen”). The scene at the top of the sixth panel seems to illustrate Kaoru visiting one of the princesses at Uji (Chapter 46, “At the Foot of the Oak Tree”). The final scene on the screen, in the lower left corner, depicts Murasaki just before her death as she watches the dedicatory dance of the Warrior King, part of the Buddhist ceremonies she has sponsored on her behalf (Chapter 40, “Rites of the Sacred Law”).

One of the only renditions of an aviary in the history of Japanese painting, the companion screen demonstrates the kind of pictorial experimentation with scale and trompe l'oeil effects seen in the two previous examples (cats. 50, 51).² Built on a rock formation at the edge of a pond, the elaborate aviary (*tori-ya*) is constructed with white wood posts and a roof that appears partially in the leftmost panel. At least one of its walls is made of bamboo, here rendered in shimmering gold, while the front of the structure is open to the outside. Similar to the way in which Mitsuoki layered bamboo blinds over his screens in a previous example (cat. 51), here he applied fine diagonal lines over the surface of the painting to



represent the netting that kept the birds from escaping. Consistent with *Genji* paintings that functioned as auspicious objects for wedding dowries or as displays of wealth, this aviary was a symbol of prestige. The birds include wild mallard ducks (*kamo*), mandarin ducks (*oshidori*), sparrows (*suzume*), the Japanese tit (*shijūkara*), longtail birds (*onaga*), quail (*uzura*), and turtledoves (*yamabato*).³ Almost all of the birds are shown in pairs; some, like the mandarin ducks, are clearly symbols of fidelity, and others are reminiscent of felicitous bird-and-flower rebus images of Chinese and Korean tradition. Seedling pines inside the cage, a symbol of long life, round out the auspicious imagery. The names of the particular birds may have had semantic value as words that appear in poetry, including poems from *Genji*. Nevertheless, at least two types of birds represented, quail and turtledoves, make no appearance in the tale. The aviary's relationship to *Genji* may be more general in nature, calling to mind the opulence of the Rokujō estate and its extensive waterways, implied by the aviary's waterside location and its elaborate interior pond for the birds. The patrons of these screens may have hoped to acquire *Genji*'s good fortune by virtue of association, expressed by a rare menagerie that might have emulated actual aviaries of the Edo period.

MM

1. All of the chapters are identified in Y. Shimizu and Nelson 1982, pp. 29–33.
2. The only other well-known example of a painting of an aviary is a much smaller one, depicted within the scrolls of the *Miraculous Legends of the Kasuga Deity* (*Kasuga gongen genki-e*, dated 1309, Imperial Household Collection, Tokyo) in a scene showing the elegant grounds of a nobleman's residence. See Komatsu 1982, vol. 1, p. 32.
3. Several of the birds are identified in Takeda 1980, p. 140.



Detail of cat. 52

CHAPTER FIVE

Innovations and Interventions in Later *Genji* Painting

BY THE LATE SIXTEENTH CENTURY, Kano-school artists and town painters (*machi eshi*, unaffiliated with the main studios) began executing *Genji* pictures in large numbers, encroaching on a field previously dominated by Tosa artists (see the essay by Kyoko Kinoshita in this volume). Early examples in the style of Kano Eitoku (1543–1590) and Kano Sōshū (1551–1601) (fig. 64) rely on the general Tosa approach but create new compositions that seem only tangentially related to the tale.¹ Other artists relied on Tosa *Genji* iconography but integrated it into highly original landscape designs, as in the pair of screens in The Metropolitan Museum of Art (cat. 59) that depicts scenes from all fifty-four chapters. Even town painters such as Tawaraya Sōtatsu utilized

Tosa-school sketches and models (*funpon*), but like other non-Tosa artists he was unencumbered by the long tradition of *Genji* painting and brought a new degree of artistic agency and personal style to the subject.² This resulted in highly innovative *Genji* paintings, such as Sōtatsu's masterpiece, the pair of screens with scenes from the "Channel Markers" and "Barrier Gate" chapters (cat. 53).

Alongside spectacular and creative developments in *Genji* imagery in the media of woodblock prints and illustrated books from the seventeenth century onward (see Chapter 7 in this volume), *Genji* paintings continued to be produced in traditional formats for the duration of the Edo period. These paintings remained the cornerstone of studios specializing in *yamato-e*, such as the Sumiyoshi



Fig. 64. Scene from Chapter 21, "Maidens of the Dance" (*Otome*), of *The Tale of Genji*. Momoyama period (1573–1615). Six-panel folding screen; ink, color, and gold on paper; 67 in. x 11 ft. 9 in. (170.2 x 358.1 cm). Detroit Institute of Arts, City of Detroit Purchase (27.541)

school, a branch of the Tosa founded by Sumiyoshi Hiromichi (later Jokei) (1598–1670). Between the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries there emerged a new *yamato-e* revival (*fukko yamato-e*) practiced, for instance, by the Kano-trained Reizei Tamechika (1823–1864). Tamechika turned away from his Kano roots in Sinitic painting and immersed himself in the study of early *yamato-e* (fig. 65). He represents the emergence of an artist whose deliberate choice of subject matter and style became a form of personal expression, as Chelsea Foxwell has described it, and a statement of political allegiance as well.³ For Tamechika, a pro-imperialist during a time of court-*bakufu* tumult, who was eventually assassinated for his beliefs, *yamato-e* functioned as a vehicle for communicating not only aesthetic values but also classical learning and antiquarianism.⁴ While the political content of *Genji* paintings throughout history should be clear from the numerous examples in this catalogue—from their instantiation of marriage politics to the promotion of imperial ideology—in the late Edo period that content became qualitatively different and expressed on the part of the artist as an individual.

Amid the massive modernization and Westernization efforts of the Meiji period (1868–1912) and developments in modern Western-style painting (*yōga*), paintings of classical literary subjects, such as *Genji*, came under a new category called Nihonga.⁵ By definition, Nihonga artists wanted to ensure the relevance of traditional Japanese painting in the modern era, which meant that they were trained in using conventional materials (mineral pigments, shell white, ink) and media (scrolls and screens on silk and paper) but sought ways to revitalize the style. For example, they subtly infused their paintings with Western-style shading and volume or heightened to a new level the effects of texture and transparency seen in earlier *Genji* paintings. Innovation also occurred in painting formats, which became monumental in the modern era, resulting in part from the demands for public display at the official exhibitions that were initiated in the late nineteenth century. As with *Genji* painting throughout history, these modern works engage with *The Tale of Genji* as a literary epic and reflect the new ways that it was being read and politicized in the twentieth century.

—Melissa McCormick

1. Watanabe 2014a.

2. See Yamane 1977 on the similarities between Sōtatsu's *Genji* screens in the Seikado Bunko Art Museum, Tokyo (cat. 53), and Tosa Mitsuyoshi's *Genji* screens in The Metropolitan Museum of Art (cat. 47); see also Honda 2014 on the physical proximity between Sōtatsu's Tawarayaya shop and the Tosa studios.

3. Foxwell 2015.

4. Nakabe 2005.

5. See Conant 1995.



Fig. 65. *Kemari* Scene from Chapter 34 of *The Tale of Genji*. Reizei Tamechika (1823–1864). Edo period (1615–1868), 1850–55. Hanging scroll; ink and color on silk; $40\frac{1}{2} \times 19\frac{7}{8}$ in. (102.8 × 50.5 cm). Freer/Sackler, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., Purchase—funds provided by the Friends of the Freer and Sackler Galleries (F2002.2a–h)

53 源氏物語関屋漣標図屏風 俵屋宗達筆

“Channel Markers” (*Miotsukushi*) and “The Barrier Gate” (*Sekiya*)

Tawaraya Sōtatsu (ca. 1570–ca. 1640)

Edo period (1615–1868), 1631

Pair of six-panel folding screens; ink, color, and gold on paper

Each screen: 60¹/₁₆ in. × 11 ft. 8 in. (152.6 × 355.6 cm)

Seikado Bunko Art Museum, Tokyo

National Treasure

This pair of screens by Tawaraya Sōtatsu has long been considered a masterpiece within the history of Japanese art and of *Genji* painting in particular. The Nihonga artist Hayami Gyoshū (1894–1935) was so affected by the screens when he saw them in 1913—at the first public exhibition of Sōtatsu’s work—that he took his artistic sobriquet, Gyoshū (“noble boat”), from the image of the Akashi Lady’s vessel floating in the upper corner of the “Channel Markers” screen.¹ Recent research shows that the screens were made in 1631, making them one of only two securely dated works by Sōtatsu and thus crucial for understanding the artist’s still relatively enigmatic biography.² Most notably, they reveal an artist freely reinterpreting the tradition of *Genji* painting, not merely by enlarging miniature-style paintings across large-format screens but also by dramatically transforming the visual language of *Genji* illustration through simplification, clear-cut geometry, and an emphasis on materiality.

Each of the two episodes represents a chance encounter between Genji and a former lover, and both scenes employ gates related to travel and pilgrimage, which perhaps led to their pairing on these screens.³ In the painting from Chapter 14, “Channel Markers,” the Akashi Lady travels by boat to offer prayers to the deities of Sumiyoshi, unaware that Genji is conducting a pilgrimage on the same day. In the painting from Chapter 16, “The Barrier Gate,” Utsusemi, returning to the capital from the eastern provinces, encounters Genji passing through the gate at the “slope of meeting” (*ausaka*) on his way to Ishiyamadera. While Sōtatsu clearly referenced the conventional iconography for these specific scenes, he also drew explicitly from non-*Genji* paintings and early handscrolls, mixing and matching motifs to create a pair of innovative images.⁴

Depictions of the “Channel Markers” scene are almost always interpreted as epitomizing the Akashi Lady’s sense of alienation as she watches the magnificent pageantry of Genji’s pilgrimage from afar, but Sōtatsu’s painting integrates her into the scene. He eliminates the gold clouds that usually compartmentalize space in *Genji* paintings and puts Akashi’s boat in direct contact with the motifs on the shore, rather than isolating her to suggest spatial or temporal distance.⁵ In this way, the two lovers—Akashi in her boat

and Genji still hidden in his carriage—seem to commune across the waves, each figure occupying a numinous ground. Genji’s carriage stands on an undulating shoreline textured with dabs of shell white to emulate grains of sand, while the Akashi Lady’s boat bobs on waves composed of strokes of black ink interspersed with slender gold lines to evoke a sparkling, shimmering sea. Motifs such as the group of onlookers on the lower right, the straining bull, and the bent pine tree with tufts of green needles gesture toward the lady’s vessel. The red shrine gate and pines on the other side of Genji’s carriage function similarly. A solitary figure in formal black court robes (*sokutai*) faces not only Genji’s carriage but also the Akashi Lady, as if acknowledging her presence. Finally, the gray boat echoes the color of a bowed bridge that marks the entrance to the sacred precincts of Sumiyoshi Shrine. In this way, the painting reflects the role of the Akashi family in facilitating Genji’s rise, which is presented in the tale as predestined and aided by the Sumiyoshi deities.

“The Barrier Gate” also depicts two former lovers hidden in their vehicles, here against a dramatic backdrop of vibrant green hills. Genji’s carriage makes its way toward the open gate, while Utsusemi’s appears at the far left, its ox unhitched, as she cedes the road to Genji and waits for him to pass. Linking the characters across the screen is Kogimi, Utsusemi’s younger brother, who approaches Genji’s carriage to retrieve a letter for his sister. Sōtatsu shows the letter, along with the edge of a sleeve emerging from behind the blinds of Genji’s carriage (detail). Innovations in this painting include, among other motifs, the unusual gatehouse, with its highly articulated roof and yet simplified structure of soft-edged geometric forms drawn from a variety of non-*Genji* sources.⁶ Together these two screens achieve a perfect contrastive synergy, visually and in terms of subject matter.⁷ They juxtapose sea and mountains, and they pair a site of *kami* worship with a barrier gate, a portal to Buddhist temples such as Ishiyamadera, Genji’s destination in this scene.

For the majority of their history the screens were in the collection of the Buddhist temple Daigoji, and most likely they had been commissioned by Kakujō (1607–1661), the head priest (*monzeki*) of the Sanbōin subtemple.⁸ In 1895, Daigoji lent the screens to the Heian Jingū Shrine in Kyoto for an exhibition, after which they were given to Iwasaki Yanosuke (1851–1908), the founder of the Seikado Bunko Art Museum, who then donated them to the Seikado Foundation in 1946.⁹ The pair was designated a National Treasure in 1940 and registered again in 1951, after the enactment in 1950 of the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties. Their exhibition at The Metropolitan Museum of Art marks the first time they have been shown outside of Japan.

MM



Detail of cat. 53

1. Japan Fine Arts Association 1913. The exhibition in 1913 commemorated the enthronement of the Taishō emperor; see Tamamushi 2004, pp. 67–69. Hayami Gyoshū's full name can also be translated as "steering a boat on rapid waters" (*hayai mizu ni fune o gyosuru*).
2. Igarashi 2005. The only other extant dated work by Sōtatsu is *Life of Saigyō* (*Saigyō monogatari emaki*) in the Idemitsu Museum of Arts, Tokyo, which includes calligraphy by Karasumaru Mitsuhiro (1579–1638) and a colophon dating from 1630 that refers to Sōtatsu with the honorific painterly title of Hokkyō (Dharma Bridge), also seen in Sōtatsu's signature on his *Genji* screens. For recent research and an overview of Sōtatsu's oeuvre, see Lippit and Ulak 2015.
3. Yamane 1977.
4. *Ibid.* Yamane painstakingly identified the individual earlier works from which Sōtatsu took his motifs.
5. Nakamachi 1990, pp. 135–36.
6. Nakamachi Keiko connects Sōtatsu's craft sensibility in these screens, his study of Heian-period paper decoration, and his use of lacquerware designs motifs; *ibid.*, pp. 142–44. The gatehouse motif is examined in Seikado Bunko Art Museum 2006, p. 53.
7. A debate continues over the original right–left placement of the screens; for a synopsis of the arguments and a summary of previous research, see Seikado Bunko Art Museum 2006, pp. 10–11.
8. Igarashi 2005, p. 32.
9. Tamamushi 2004, pp. 67–69.









54 源氏物語絵巻 「帚木」

“Broom Cypress” (*Hahakigi*), from the Phantom *Genji* Scrolls

(*Maboroshi no Genji monogatari emaki*)

Edo period (1615–1868), mid-17th century

Handscroll; ink, color, and gold on paper

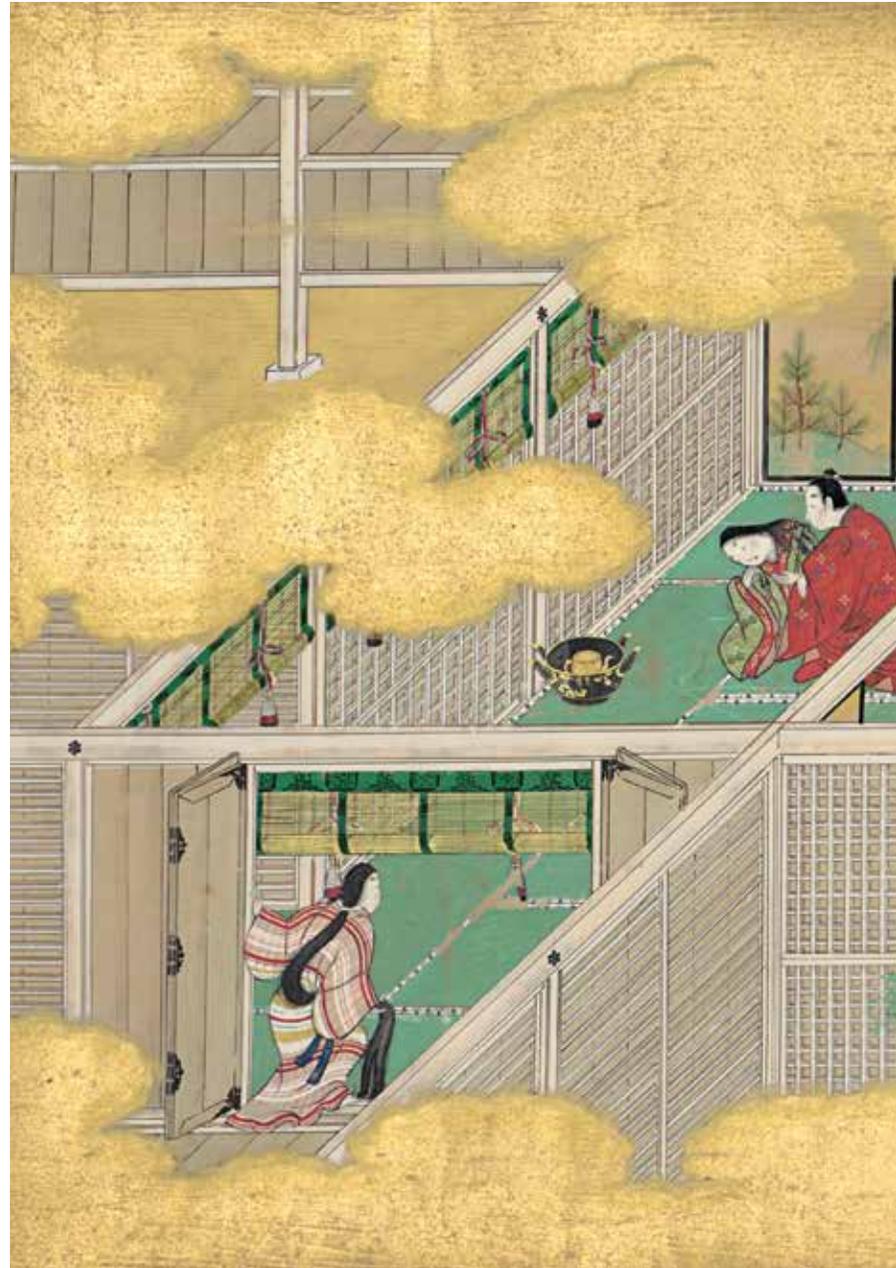
14 in. × 36 ft. 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (35.4 × 1,123.1 cm)

New York Public Library, Spencer Collection

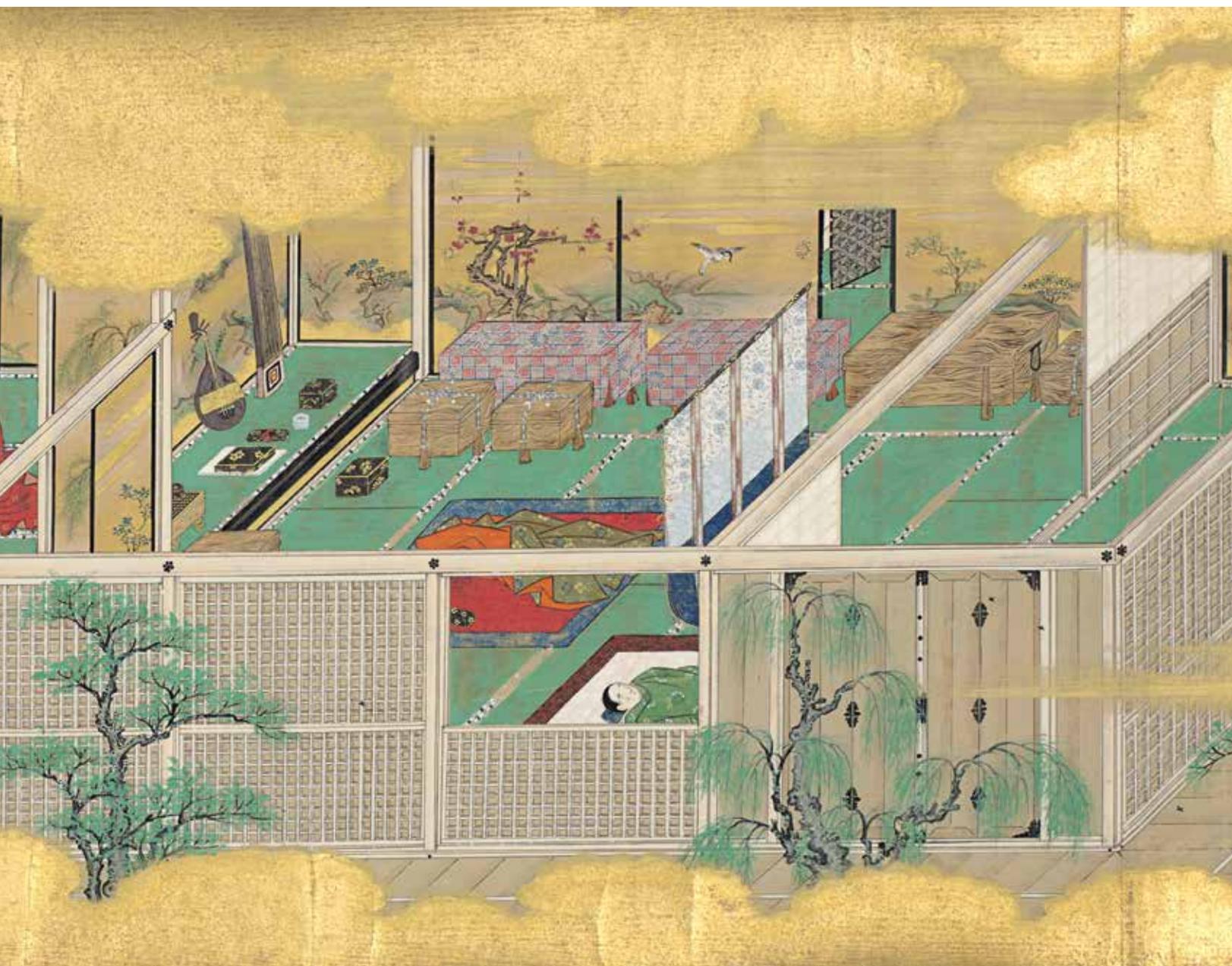
One of the most important works for our understanding of the early modern reception of *The Tale of Genji* is a remarkable seventeenth-century set of illustrated scrolls that together represent five of the first ten chapters.¹ In contrast to other *Genji* scrolls and albums, this set is uniquely inscribed with the full text of the tale alongside sprawling painted compositions; the extent ranges between one and six scrolls per chapter. Had all fifty-four chapters of the tale been completed, the total output would have exceeded two hundred scrolls and one thousand individual paintings, making it perhaps the largest set of Japanese illustrated handscrolls. Scholars only recently became aware that these scrolls—now dispersed across multiple collections in Japan, Europe, and the United States—once constituted a single large set, which has come to be nicknamed the Phantom *Genji* Scrolls (*Maboroshi no Genji monogatari emaki*).

The enormous scale of the project allowed the scrolls’ designers to envision the tale as a fully immersive and realized world that is grounded in both the aesthetic traditions of polychrome narrative painting and the visual culture of Kyoto’s contemporary court society. In this example, the single extant scroll from Chapter 2, “Broom Cypress,” the “blown-off roof” technique (*fukinuki yatai*) is employed to full effect across four sprawling compositions that illustrate Genji’s visit to the Governor of Kii’s residence. As he pursues the governor’s young stepmother, Utsusemi, Genji is portrayed in the third and fourth paintings dressed only in under robes with no courtier’s cap (*eboshi*), his topknot fully exposed. This remarkable break from both established *Genji* iconography and broader conventions for depicting male courtiers in Japanese painting speaks to this scroll’s unique interpretation of the tale’s titular protagonist that may have sought to shape the fictional character to the known realities of seventeenth-century viewers.

The *shinden* residence is portrayed from a different vantage point in each of the four scenes. Through manipulation of spatial structures and elements, the expansive palatial residence is rendered as a fully realized architectural setting populated by dozens of figures in a variety of costumes. The vivid coloration and fine patterning on the figures’ robes and the boldly colored Kano-style paintings on gold backgrounds that decorate the sliding doors and



folding screens throughout the residence resonate more closely with seventeenth-century Kyoto than with the world of Murasaki’s eleventh-century tale. Reflecting the visual culture of the early Edo court, the expansive compositions must have functioned as psychologically immersive spaces that not only supported the tale’s narrative but also asserted the reality of the fictional world into the lives of their elite seventeenth-century viewers. The remarkable creative energy exhibited in these fully colored narrative handscrolls reflects a countertrend to the new culture of mass-produced printed versions of the tale in the early Edo period.



According to the scroll's colophon, the calligrapher was Yano Toshinaga 矢野利長 (1611–1677), a steward for the Kujō family, who likely collaborated with Kujō Yukiie's (1586–1685) fourth son, Egon (1622–1664), former abbot of Zuishin'in, for the inscription of the "Broom Cypress" and "A Branch of Sacred Evergreen" scrolls (cat. 57).² The connections between the calligraphers of the Phantom *Genji* Scrolls and the Kujō family have led scholars to the conclusion that the project must have been orchestrated within a network of high-ranking Kyoto aristocrats centered around Yukiie, whose name, along with the date Meireki 1 (1655), appears

at the end of the scroll for Chapter 1, "The Lady of the Paulownia-Courtyard Chambers." Following on Yukiie's long involvement in *Genji* painting projects and his initiation into a distinguished lineage of *Genji* learning by his grandfather Tanemichi (1507–1594) (see the essay by Kyoko Kinoshita in this volume), the expansive project must have been informed by generations of accumulated knowledge of Murasaki's tale, to which the Kujō family held privileged access. DB

1. Stephanie Wada in Murase 1993, pp. 146–50; Inamoto 2010.

2. Inamoto 2010, p. 209.

55 源氏物語絵巻 「末摘花」

“The Safflower” (*Suetsumuhana*), from the Phantom *Genji* Scrolls

(*Maboroshi no Genji monogatari emaki*)

Edo period (1615–1868), mid-17th century

Two handscrolls; ink, color, and gold on paper

Scrolls 2 and 3 from a set of three

Scroll 2: 13⁷/₈ in. × 48 ft. 4¹¹/₁₆ in. (35.3 × 1,475.1 cm)

Scroll 3: 13⁷/₈ in. × 56 ft. 11⁵/₁₆ in. (35.2 × 1,735.5 cm)

New York Public Library, Spencer Collection

The story of Genji’s encounter with the character known as Suetsumuhana (the Safflower Princess) in Chapter 6 of the tale unfolds luxuriously across three separate scrolls in the Phantom *Genji* set.¹ After the death of her father, the Hitachi Prince, Suetsumuhana has been eking out a meager existence in her father’s dilapidated mansion, which she refuses to leave, in part out of loyalty to her father’s memory. While *Genji* paintings had previously shown the run-down quality of Suetsumuhana’s residence, the artist of these scrolls, in keeping with the set’s meticulous attention to narrative detail, elaborates the decay. Moss and green plants sprout from the cypress roof of the house, which should have been refurbished to prevent it from going to seed, while dirt and wear on the plaster wall are indicated with streaks of watery ink (a). The bamboo blinds are in a state of disrepair, their brocade green borders in tatters, as are the tatami mats inside the woman’s house.

Genji is intrigued by the woman, however, impressed by her royal lineage, and he continues to pursue her despite several signs that she might disappoint him in the end. Although he has not yet gotten a good look at her, in a scene depicting an early encounter, the artist reveals what Genji will soon discover: the young woman has a strikingly red nose, shown here with the slightest bit of color around the edge, as the figure raises her sleeve to conceal her face (b). After finally seeing Suetsumuhana’s full appearance, Genji conjures up her image in a poem, privately scribbled to himself. He laments his association with the “safflower,” known for being picked by its bulbous red blossom:

<i>Natsukashiki</i>	Not for this color
<i>Iro to mo nashi ni</i>	Do I yearn, remembering
<i>Nani ni kono</i>	Some cozy love;
<i>Suetsumuhana o</i>	Why did I brush against my sleeve
<i>Sode ni furekemu</i>	The pinch-bright safflower bloom? ²

Later he returns home to the young Murasaki and playfully joins her in drawing pictures (c). With the Safflower Princess still on his mind, he brushes an image of a woman with long hair and gives her a red nose. This scene in the Phantom *Genji* Scrolls includes a remarkably detailed rendition of Genji’s drawing, even down to the bit of red coloring on the figure’s nose. The room is finely appointed with a number of *maki-e* lacquer objects, including a mirror, which Genji will peer into as he dabs his own nose with red, amusing Murasaki, who is still a child. Despite the ridicule to which Suetsumuhana is subjected in this early chapter, she eventually earns Genji’s respect as one of his most loyal companions.

The attention to narrative detail in these scrolls makes sense in light of their connection to the courtier Kujō Yukiie and his position as the grandson of Kujō Tanemichi, who by the sixteenth century was viewed as one of the foremost experts on *Genji*. Yukiie inherited Tanemichi’s 1560 portrait-icon of Murasaki Shikibu (fig. 51), which functioned as a pictorial embodiment of the family’s claim on *Genji* scholarship. The production of the scrolls, however, seems to have been coordinated by one Sugihara Moriyasu (active mid-seventeenth century), whose seals reading “Sugihara,” “Moriyasu” (also pronounced “Seian”), and “Suigihara Izumo” appear throughout all the extant colophons except that of Chapter 9, “Leaves of Wild Ginger.” Much concerning Moriyasu remains unknown, although he appears to have been a modestly ranked member of a branch of the Taira clan who played a central role in the production of multiple illustrated handscroll projects during the middle of the seventeenth century.³ The text sections of these scrolls were inscribed by the courtier-calligrapher Kamo no Agatanushi (Nishiike) Suemichi 賀茂縣主西池季通 (1619–1693).

MM

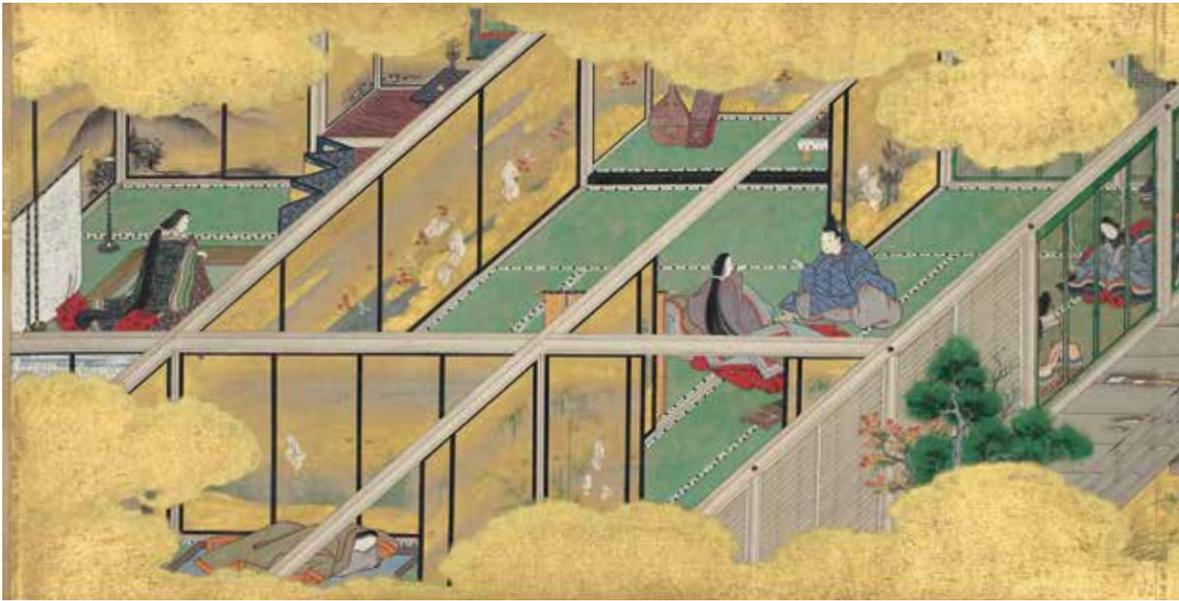
1. The first of the three scrolls that illustrate this chapter is in the Ishiyamadera collection, with calligraphy by Yotsutsuji Suekata (1630–1668) and Kamo (Nishiike) Suemichi (1619–1693). On the Spencer Collection scrolls in particular, see Watanabe forthcoming.

2. E. A. Cranston 2006, pp. 720–21.

3. Koida 2008, pp. 308–13; see also Sano, Kojima, and Takahashi forthcoming.



a. Detail of Scroll 2



b. Detail of Scroll 2



c. Detail of Scroll 3



56 源氏物語絵巻 「葵」

"Leaves of Wild Ginger" (Aoi), from the Phantom *Genji* Scrolls

(*Maboroshi no Genji monogatari emaki*)

Edo period (1615–1868), mid-17th century

Handscroll; ink, color, and gold on paper

13 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 89 in. (35.2 × 226.1 cm) (overall with mounting)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1912 (12.134.11)

The elaborate illustration of a funeral represents a rare subject in the history of *Genji* painting. Apart from this fragment, from Chapter 9, "Leaves of Wild Ginger," three recently discovered scrolls of Chapter 1, "The Lady of the Paulownia-Courtyard Chambers," contain a scene of a funeral, that of Genji's mother, the Kiritsubo Intimate. Lacking iconographic precedent, these

funerary scenes are striking for their reliance on a close reading of the text that was further enriched by knowledge of recent imperial funerals.¹ Because of this fragment's unusual iconography and its detachment from accompanying text, identification of its subject proved elusive until the discovery of the original scrolls from which it was removed. Analysis of visual and textual clues revealed the scene to be the funeral of Genji's wife, Aoi.²

Aoi's death follows a brief convalescence from a spirit possession that was treated by the abbot of the temple complex Enryakuji. In an episode wrought with grief and lamentations, her body is taken to the mortuary grounds of Toribeno. The painting depicts a large number of "priests from various temples" who gather to chant the Buddha's name,³ arranged hierarchically in a circle



around a prelate performing rites before a richly ornamented altar. Wearing the orange robes and light blue mantle of a high-ranking Tendai monk, this figure likely represents the abbot of Enryakuji, who is not specified in the original text but was logically included here, given his role prior to Aoi's death. The final frame of the scroll fragment presents the cremation, a moment rendered in bold clarity, with sculptural crimson flames enveloping a brilliant jeweled casket.

The iconography of seventeenth-century imperial funerals seen in this painting developed from medieval rites for abbots of Buddhist monasteries that emphasized the postmortem transformation of the deceased into a Buddha. The design of Aoi's casket originates from Buddhist image shrines, while the hanging canopy

and streaming banners traditionally ornament altars for Buddhist icons. The flower vase, incense burner, and candleholder in the shape of a crane-atop-tortoise were used for private altar worship, symbolizing the offerings of flowers, incense, and light to the Buddha. By casting Aoi's funeral in the style of the highest levels of contemporary imperial funerary practice, the painting elevates the tragedy of her death to that of a reign-altering event, and in doing so perhaps emphasizes Genji's position as a figure on par with the emperor himself. DB

1. Yoshikawa 2010; Matsuoka 2014.
2. Matsuoka 2014.
3. Washburn 2015, p. 198.

57 源氏物語絵巻 「榊」

“A Branch of Sacred Evergreen” (*Sakaki*), from the Phantom *Genji* Scrolls
(*Maboroshi no Genji monogatari emaki*)

Edo period (1615–1868), mid-17th century

Two handscroll sections mounted on board; ink, color, and gold on paper
14 × 54⁷/₁₆ in. (35.5 × 138 cm); 14 × 53⁷/₁₆ in. (35.5 × 136 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum Art, New York, Mary Griggs Burke Collection,
Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015 (2015.300.36a, b)

These two fragments from the so-called Phantom *Genji* Scrolls illustrate scenes from Chapter 10, “A Branch of Sacred Evergreen.”¹ Now dispersed in multiple collections, the chapter originally consisted of six scrolls with approximately thirty paintings.² The first segment captures the dramatic tonsure of Genji’s stepmother, Fujitsubo, following an elaborate multiday ceremony of Eight Lectures on the Lotus Sutra (*hokke hakkō*), performed in commemoration of the one-year anniversary of the death of the Kiritsubo Emperor. The second painting depicts a verse-guessing contest held at Genji’s residence, during which Genji and his companions demonstrate their knowledge of Chinese poetry. As seen in other illustrations from the Phantom *Genji* Scrolls, the designers employed sophisticated architectural compositions and visual juxtapositions to emphasize themes drawn from a close reading of the tale.

In the first painting, an elaborate *mise-en-scène* highlights a pivotal display of female agency. On the final day of the ceremony, sponsored by the deceased emperor’s beloved consort, Fujitsubo, the former empress announces her decision to take holy orders, calling on her uncle, the Bishop of Yokawa, to perform the tonsure. Fujitsubo’s Sanjō palace sets the stage for a gathering of Buddhist clergy in sumptuous, multicolored vestments seated around a central room. The eight scrolls of the Lotus Sutra sit on an offering table that is placed before an altar ornamented in luxurious crimson and gold damask. The palace’s ancillary rooms and verandas are populated with courtiers of varying ranks. The work’s original handscroll format obliges the viewer’s leftward progression through the painting that begins with the ritual space of the now-completed Lotus Sutra ceremony and climaxes with the

portrayal of Fujitsubo’s tonsure. Partially concealed behind lowered bamboo curtains, in a room filled with weeping court ladies and a few male courtiers, an abbot in pale orange robes prepares to cut the seated empress’s hair. The spatial segregation of the clergy from the courtiers in the preceding portion emphasizes the poignancy of Fujitsubo’s symbolic transition from the secular realm to the realm of the sacred, an act of singular importance in the lifecycles of Heian women and one through which Fujitsubo seeks to reclaim her own agency, following Genji’s illicit advances and the death of her husband, the retired emperor.

The second fragment clearly displays the intention to recast the tale in the visual language of the early Edo-period elite. The tale’s brief scene of a Chinese poetry recitation contest is rendered in an architectural space composed of sliding-door paintings (*fusuma-e*) that depict Chinese figures amid rocky ink landscapes, engaging in activities associated with the scholar-gentleman. The mostly monochrome ink painting, which would have been unrecognizable to the tale’s original Heian readers, exemplifies a practice of the early modern period that closely reflects the styles of Kano-school artists who produced large-scale painting programs for elite residences throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The resemblance of these scroll paintings to works by Kyoto-based painters such as Kano Sanraku (1559–1635) and Kano Sansetsu (1590–1651) have contributed to the belief that they were likely painted by artists working in the style of the Kyoto Kano school, who maintained a strong patronage relationship with Yukiie and the Kujō family.³ The artists’ dexterity in multiple visual modes is employed to great effect in the contrast between the richly polychrome Japanese garden that opens the scene and the muted monochrome landscapes of the interior screens, which function metaphorically to emphasize Genji’s erudition in classical Chinese culture. DB

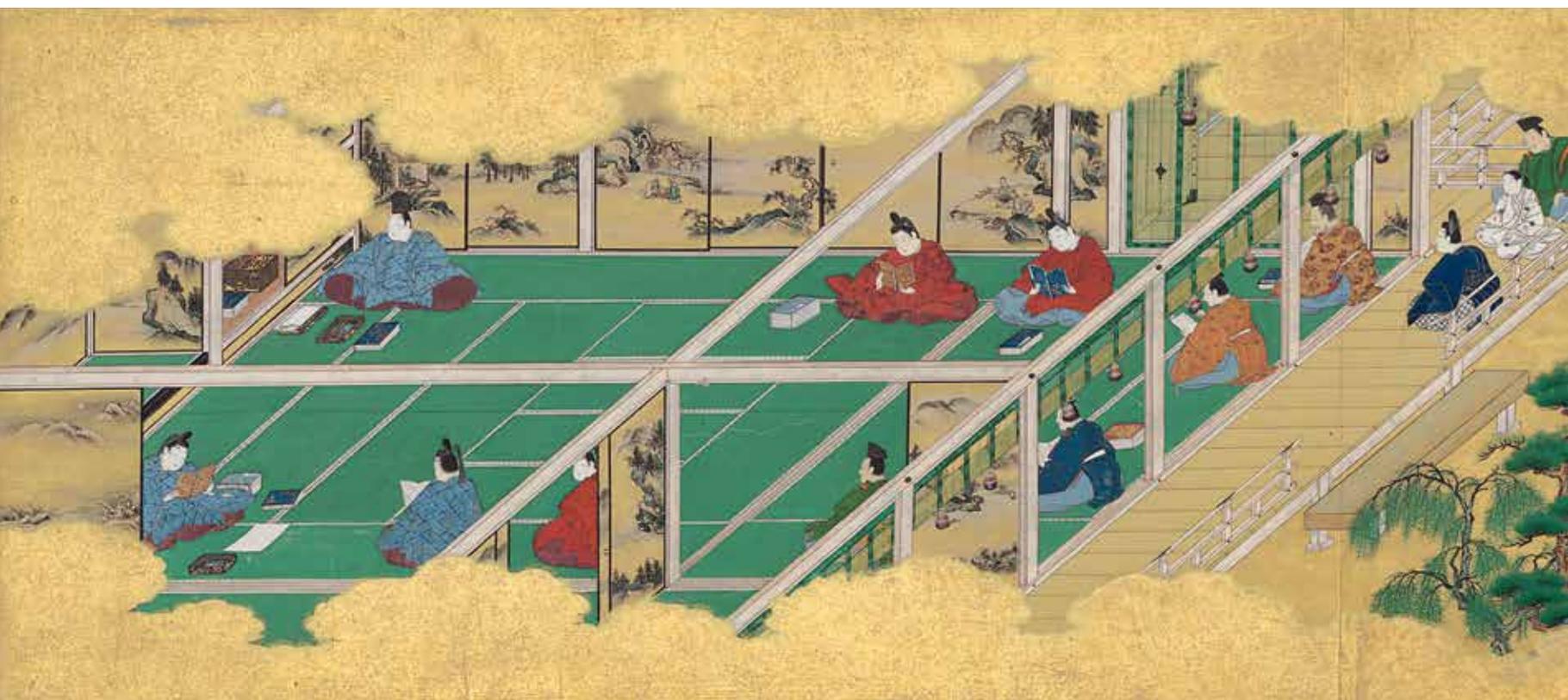
1. Stephanie Wada in Murase 1993, pp. 146–50; Inamoto 2011. On these fragments and ones now in Belgium, see also Inamoto, Leggeri-Bauer, and Kojima 2008.

2. Galerie Janette Ostier 1980.

3. Stephanie Wada in Murase 1993, p. 147. See also the essay by Kyoko Kinoshita in this volume.



a.



b.



a.

58 源氏物語絵巻 伝海北友雪筆

Illustrated Handscrolls of *The Tale of Genji*

Attributed to Kaihō Yūsetsu (1598–1677)

Edo period (1615–1868), mid-17th century

Two handscrolls; ink and color on paper

Scroll I: 9³/₈ in. × 63 ft. 7¹/₈ in. (23.7 × 1,938.3 cm)

Scroll II: 9³/₈ in. × 62 ft. 9³/₄ in. (23.7 × 1,914.6 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary Griggs Burke Collection,
Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015 (2015.300.38a, b)

These handscrolls represent all fifty-four chapters of Murasaki Shikibu's literary masterpiece, with each scroll containing twenty-seven paintings and sections of text. Most of the scenes belong to the canon for *Genji* imagery established in the sixteenth century, but unlike the polished and finely crafted *Genji* paintings of the Edo period, with their doll-like figures and stylized courtly interiors, these illustrations feature varied landscape elements painted with a fluid brush and figures that move, gesture, and interact.

Scroll I includes an iconic scene from Chapter 5, “Little Purple Gromwell,” in which Genji, his friends, and his attendants have paused to admire the spring cherry blossoms before returning to the capital from a temple in the northern hills (a). Sitting beside a stream, they drink wine and break into an impromptu concert with a flute and a set of *shō* pipes. The temple bishop brings a Chinese koto for Genji to play, as he leans against a rock. The lighthearted scene is painted in the clear colors of spring, its landscape of rolling hillocks rendered in a combination of ink and color washes.

A number of the images in Scroll II foretell or depict tragedies in the lives of characters. A dark application of ink wash and colors characterizes an episode from Chapter 53, “Practicing Calligraphy,” in which the beautiful Ukifune—beloved of both Niou, Genji's grandson, and Kaoru, regarded by all as Genji's son but actually the child of his young wife and Kashiwagi—has attempted suicide (b). In despair at being torn between two handsome and aristocratic lovers, she had planned to drown herself in the Uji River but is



b.

discovered, forlorn and disheveled, by a bishop from Mount Hiei who is visiting the region. At first, the bishop and his disciples take her for a malevolent fox-spirit, but they soon realize that she is human and carry her to shelter. In this nighttime scene, one monk holds a torch aloft as he, another monk, and the bishop approach Ukifune's crumpled, supine form. Ink wash dominates the palette, against which the green of foliage and moss stands out.

With their skillful brushwork, occasional touches of gold and silver, and distinctive landscape elements, these works are clearly from the hand of an artist well versed in both ink painting and polychrome narrative illustration. An exception is the scene for Chapter 45, "The Divine Princess at Uji Bridge," which was executed by a different, less-skilled artist, perhaps an apprentice. The paintings in these scrolls are most probably early works by Kaihō Yūsetsu, son of ink-painting master Kaihō Yūshō (1533–1615). Having lost his father while young, he is known to have operated a shop selling ready-made pictures (*e-ya*), in spite of his descent from a samurai family. His fortunes improved following his

introduction to the third Tokugawa shogun, Iemitsu (1604–1651), and artists of the Kano school, which led to commissions from courtiers and the shogun himself. An attribution to Yūsetsu is strongly supported by comparison to a set of handscrolls in the Suntory Museum of Art that vividly illustrates *Essays in Idleness* (*Tsurezuregusa*) by the priest Yoshida Kenkō (1284–1350).¹ It has been suggested that Yūsetsu created these handscrolls while still an artist at the *e-ya*, at which time he, being the scion of a samurai family, might have felt too humbled or humiliated by circumstances to have signed them.² An accompanying document gives the names of twenty-seven calligraphers, identified by court post, who were purportedly responsible for the text in the handscrolls; these remain to be researched. SW

1. Suntory Museum of Art 2014.

2. Murase 1975, p. 194.



59 源氏物語図屏風

Fifty-Four Scenes from *The Tale of Genji* (*Genji monogatari zu byōbu*)
 Kano-school style
 Edo period (1615–1868), late 17th century
 Pair of six-panel folding screens; ink, color, gold, and gold leaf on paper
 Each: 66¹⁵/₁₆ in. × 12 ft. 5³/₁₆ in. (170 × 379 cm)
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary Griggs Burke Collection,
 Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015 (2015.300.37.1, .2)

These two screens bring together iconic scenes from all of *The Tale of Genji*'s fifty-four chapters, each screen representing half of the tale. The complex but coherent composition transcends shifts in seasons, the distances between different settings, and discrepancies in characters' ages to present a unified arrangement. Mountains and hills serve as natural boundaries between the scenes. On the right screen, a large body of water creates a continuous shoreline in the foreground, while the upper registers have rivers and seaside settings. The *yamato-e* convention of "blown-off roofs" (*fukinuki yatai*) allows for views into architectural interiors. From up close, viewers familiar with the iconography of *Genji* paintings can enjoy the challenge of identifying the characters, episodes, and turns of plot, aided by the fact that the chapters are depicted in sequence, from the upper right corner of the right screen and proceeding from top to bottom of each panel.

Though unsigned, this pair of screens was no doubt the work of a painter trained in the Kano school and at least one assistant (since there is evidence of at least two different hands). Five scenes in the upper register of the left screen (illustrating Chapters 28, 29, 32, 36, and 41) have figures handled in a stiffer manner.¹ As pointed out in Kyoko Kinoshita's essay in this volume, there is a long and distinguished tradition of Kano artists painting the tale, from Eitoku (1543–1590) to Sanraku (1559–1635). The miniature painted screens within the interiors, mostly ink landscapes, betray a Kano hand. Similarly, the rendering of the hilltop pagodas in wet ink and without outlines recalls the style of Kano Yasunobu (1613–1685) and his followers.

For brief synopses of the tale's fifty-four chapters, illustrated by these screens, see Appendix 2, "Genji at a Glance," in this volume.

JTC

1. Murase 1975, p. 195, no. 158.

60 源氏物語絵巻 田中親美筆

The Tale of Genji Handscrolls
 Tanaka Shinbi (1875–1975)
 Taishō (1912–26)–Shōwa (1926–89) periods, 1926–35
 Handscroll; paintings: ink and color on paper; calligraphy: ink on paper
 with gold and silver decoration
 H. approx. 8³/₈ in. (21.8 cm)
 The Tokugawa Art Museum, Nagoya

The practice of copying exemplary recensions from the past has been central to the survival and dissemination of *The Tale of Genji* throughout the history of its transmission. While the basic motive for transcribing the text was to have a copy to read (or at least possess), certain manuscripts transcended their narrative function to become works of art treasured for both calligraphic style and illumination. Before the age of mechanical reproduction, the only way to accomplish this was through manual copying.

Among the oldest and most revered manuscripts of the tale is that of the *Illustrated Tale of Genji Scrolls*, the National Treasure now preserved at the Tokugawa Art Museum in Nagoya and the Gotoh Museum in Tokyo (another small fragment without text is in the collection of the Tokyo National Museum). With the aim of assuring the preservation of the scrolls for posterity, early in the twentieth century they were mounted on plaques, which fit into paulownia wood boxes. However, in recent years, the Tokugawa Art Museum has decided to restore the works to the original handscroll format, which is now considered by curatorial and conservation specialists to be the optimum means for preserving the works.

One of the greatest endeavors to copy the original *Genji Scrolls* was carried out by Tanaka Shinbi, who was renowned for his meticulous hand-painted reproductions of various National Treasures (*Kokuhō*) of Japanese painting and calligraphy.¹ On and off between 1900 and 1911 he studied and copied the Masudabon version (now in the Gotoh Museum), and between 1926 and 1935 he worked on a meticulous copy of the Tokugawa scrolls. Furthermore, he attracted accolades for his revival and mastery of ancient paper-decoration and painting techniques, long thought to be lost.

Shinbi first studied with his father, the Nihonga artist Tanaka Yūbi (1840–1933), who was officially named imperial court painter in 1884 and is now best remembered for meticulously detailed paintings in the handscroll format documenting the careers of government officials and Emperor Meiji. Also, as a student of the noted Meiji-period calligrapher Tada Shin'ai (1839–1905), Shinbi was instructed in the methods of studying and copying ancient and medieval calligraphic masterpieces. Recognized in his day as one of the great connoisseurs of ancient and medieval Japanese



a. Chapter 36, "The Oak Tree" (*Kashiwagi*), scene 2, copied by Tanaka Shinbi



Fig. 66. Chapter 36, "The Oak Tree" (*Kashiwagi*), scene 2, from *The Tale of Genji* (the *Genji Scrolls*). Heian period (794–1185), second quarter of the 12th century. Section of a handscroll; ink on dyed paper decorated with gold and silver powder, and cut gold and silver foil; H. approx. 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (21.9 cm). The Tokugawa Art Museum, Nagoya. National Treasure

calligraphy, he played a central role in the revival of *kana* epigraphy research and copying in the early twentieth century.

Through concentrated study and trial-and-error experimentation, Shinbi was also able to reproduce exactly decorated writing papers in the style of the Heian period. Between the ages of eighteen and eighty, he copied more than three thousand paintings and calligraphies. Among his initial endeavors, in 1898 he worked on a careful reproduction of both the calligraphy and paintings from the thirteenth-century illustrated handscrolls of *The Diary of Murasaki Shikibu* (*Murasaki Shikibu nikki emaki*). Soon thereafter, he created a replica of two volumes from the early twelfth-century *Thirty-Six Poetic Immortals Collection at Nishi Honganji* (*Nishi Honganji sanjū-rokunin kashū*). In the 1920s, with the backing of businessman and art collector Baron Masuda Takashi (1848–1938), he created a perfect facsimile edition of the twelfth-century scrolls of the Lotus Sutra Dedicated to the Taira Family (*Heike nōkyō*), which is often on view at Itsukushima Shrine in place of the delicate originals.

One of many artists who copied the *Genji Scrolls*, Shinbi is arguably the most successful in re-creating the visual details and tactile quality of the original.² As pointed out in Kyoko Kinoshita's essay in this volume, Kano Seisen'in Osanobu (1796–1846) also undertook this endeavor (fig. 39). Reproduced here are sections from Chapters 36 and 44, "The Oak Tree" and "Bamboo River," which are preserved, along with the originals that inspired them, at the Tokugawa Art Museum. Remarkably, Shinbi managed to reproduce not only the nearly exact forms of the handwriting of the manuscript sections but also the variation in the paper decoration. Sometimes copyists reconstruct missing sections, "restore" damaged areas, or try to reinvent the vivid colors of the original, but Shinbi made a conscious choice to replicate as faithfully as possible the existing appearance of the manuscripts. JTC

1. Tanaka Shinbi's long career as a scholar and copyist is described in Meihō Kankōkai 1985.

2. For a good representation of other copies of the *Genji Scrolls*, see Tokugawa Art Museum 2015, pp. 151–79.



b. Chapter 36, "The Oak Tree" (*Kashiwagi*), scene 1



c. Chapter 36, "The Oak Tree" (*Kashiwagi*), scene 3



d. Chapter 44, "Bamboo River" (*Takekawa*), scene 2



61 『宇治の宮の姫君たち』 松岡映丘筆

The Uji Princesses (Uji no Miya no himegimitachi)

Matsuoka Eikyū (1881–1938)

Taishō period (1912–26), 1912

Pair of six-panel folding screens; color on silk

Each screen: 64⁵/₁₆ in. × 11 ft. 1¹/₄ in. (163.3 × 338.4 cm)

Himeji City Museum of Art

As a Nihonga artist who studied and taught at the Tokyo Art School (now Tokyo University of Fine Arts), Matsuoka Eikyū aimed to revitalize *yamato-e* for the modern era. In these screens he depicts scenes from *The Tale of Genji* with arresting clarity. For the nearly life-size figures, Eikyū used shell white for the faces, as artists of earlier *Genji* paintings had done, but only on certain areas, such as the forehead and nose, for a realistic effect. The monumental scale, in part prescribed by the new modern venue of the public art exhibition, humanizes the characters, not unlike the literary effect of Yosano Akiko's translation of *Genji* into colloquial Japanese, published in the same year (cat. 105).¹

Eikyū based the right screen on the painting from Chapter 45, “The Divine Princess at Uji Bridge,” of the twelfth-century *Genji Scrolls* (Tokugawa Art Museum), in which Kaoru glimpses the daughters of the Eighth Prince (Hachinomiya) in Uji. Of the two

second-generation protagonists in the tale—Kaoru and Niou—Kaoru is the introspective one, existentially adrift as Genji's son, born of the affair between Kashiwagi and the Third Princess. As if to capture these character traits, Eikyū moves Kaoru out from behind the fence, the typical voyeur's spot, and places him on the veranda of the Uji villa, where he appears to prefer the moon (on the left screen) to the women inside.² The painting evokes Kaoru's ongoing search for spiritual guidance, with the moon serving as a Buddhist metaphor. The striking red fan in his hand references the decorated paper and pictorially embedded script (*ashide*) of the Lotus Sutra scrolls dedicated by the Taira clan (1164).³

The subject matter of the left screen is unclear, but Akiyama Terukazu has posited that the regal-looking courtier on the veranda represents Prince Niou.⁴ Following this scheme, the pair of screens juxtaposes the spiritually oriented Kaoru, ersatz son of Genji, and Prince Niou, Genji's grandson and inheritor of his amatory ways. In contrast to Kaoru, the outward-facing Niou, in luminous white robes, does not contemplate the moon but instead looks past it, toward the women on the right screen.

The work's rich potential for narrative interpretation is owing to Eikyū's understanding of the tale and his knowledge of historical customs and Heian-period artworks. His education began at home,

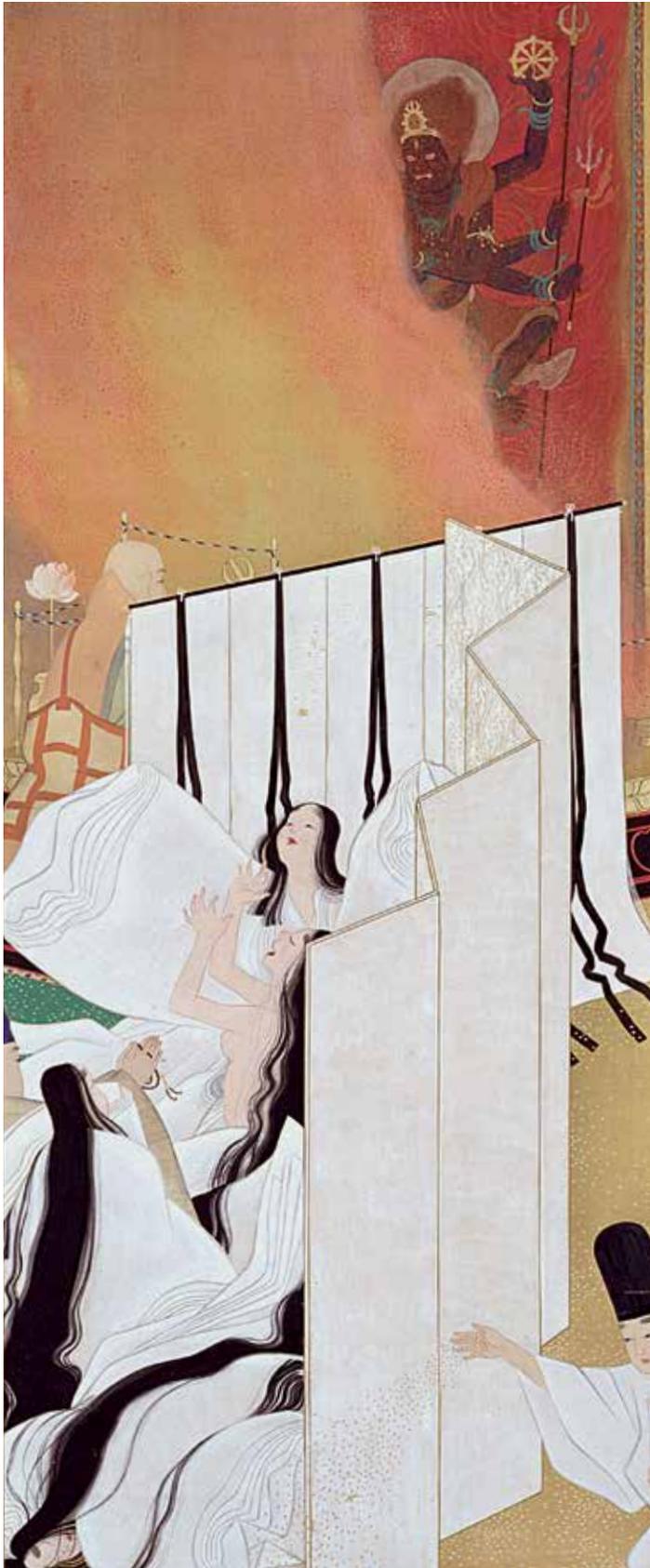


where he was the youngest of eight successful brothers, among them the celebrated ethnologist Yanagita Kunio (1875–1962). The *Genji Scrolls* now in the Tokugawa collection were not shown publicly until 1915, but Eikyū studied copies owned by his teacher Yamana Tsurayoshi (1838–1902) and plates published in Japan’s first art-history journal, *Kokka* (started in 1889).⁵ MM

1. Only the right half of the pair was displayed at the sixth Bunten exhibition (Ministry of Education), held in 1912; see Katagiri 2006.
2. Katagiri 2006. Katagiri notes how Eikyū conflates the painting of “The Divine Princess at Uji Bridge” with a painting of Chapter 50, “A Hut in the Eastern Provinces” (*Azumaya*), in the *Genji Scrolls* (Gotoh Museum) to create a new composition.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 203.
4. Akiyama Terukazu 1991, cited in Katagiri 2006, p. 192.
5. The two paintings of the *Genji Scrolls* that inspired these screens appeared in *Kokka*, issue nos. 17 and 18, respectively, published in 1891; see Katagiri 2006, pp. 202–3.



Detail of cat. 61



62 「御産の禱り」 安田靫彦筆

Prayer for Safe Birth
 Yasuda Yukihiro (1884–1978)
 Taishō period (1912–26), 1914
 Hanging scroll; ink and color on silk
 79¾ × 33¾ in. (202.7 × 85.4 cm)
 Tokyo National Museum
 Not in exhibition

The first pages of Murasaki Shikibu's diary, recounting her two years in court service to Fujiwara no Michinaga's daughter, Shōshi, begin with a vivid account of childbirth, which is the subject of this painting. As the title implies, the work does not depict the birth itself but the prayers for a safe delivery. The diary describes how exorcists and mediums are summoned, and priests and laymen alike chant sutras through the night to dispel the spirits that seem to be afflicting Her Majesty. As the diary says, "The women acting as mediums sat in isolation to the west of the dais, each surrounded by a wall of screens. An exorcist assigned to each sat in front of the curtains that were placed at the entrance to these small enclosures, praying loudly."¹ At the moment of birth, one spirit was said to be of such force that it flung an exorcist to the ground, causing another to come to his aid and to chant spells until his voice almost gave out.

Capturing the tumult, tension, and life-or-death stakes of the scene, Yasuda fills the picture with frenetic activity. Four women in white robes pray frantically, as indicated by their bodily gestures and facial expressions that show them in trancelike states. Among them is a male ritualist to the left who rubs his prayer beads together in between his palms. The group is enclosed by a white curtain and a white damask folding screen (*shiroaya byōbu*), furnishings specifically created for parturition.² In the lower right corner, a figure in an *eboshi* hat and white garb scatters rice to keep away malevolent forces. The grains, which can be seen on the ground and on the tatami mat to the left, evoke Murasaki's description of rice "falling on our heads like snow" during the ritual.³ In the upper portion of the painting, a Buddhist priest wields a golden *vajra* (club) as he performs a *goma* fire rite before an image of a Wisdom King (Daiitoku Myōō), visible through a cloud of flames.⁴

Exhibited at the first Inten exhibition in 1915, Yasuda's painting represents a new height of artistic achievement in terms of its technical mastery over traditional materials, and it demonstrates how Nihonga artists infused the world of *Genji* with an intensity of emotion to give the distant past a sense of immediacy.

1. Bowring 1985, p. 51.

2. Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Cultural History 2014.

3. Bowring 1985, p. 55.

4. Manabe 1976.

63 「焰」 上村松園筆

Flame (Honoo)

Uemura Shōen (1875–1949)

Taisho period (1912–26), 1918

Hanging scroll; color on silk

75½ × 36½ in. (190.9 × 91.8 cm)

Tokyo National Museum

Not in exhibition

Painted in 1918 and exhibited in the fall of that year at the Bunten exhibition, the monumental painting titled *Flame* is one of Shōen's most famous works and considered a masterpiece within her oeuvre. In the artist's own words,

Among all of my works, "Flame" is the only single piece that is a bewitching painting. It expresses the fire of a middle-aged woman's jealousy—a single-minded devotion that once ignited burns like a flame.

In the Noh play *Lady Aoi* (*Aoi no Ue*), Rokujō Miyasudokoro's living spirit (*ikiryō*) appears, and I took my inspiration from that. At first, I titled the work "Living Spirit" but came to think that was too straightforward and tried to consider better alternatives. Finally, I consulted my Noh teacher, Kongō Iwao [1886–1951], who said that "living spirits can also be called *ikisudama*," but that has the same meaning and nuance as *ikiryō*, and suggested "flames of passion" (*honoo*). Realizing that the character for "flames" fit the concept and style of the painting perfectly, I decided on that.¹

Shōen knew the Noh play *Lady Aoi* (cat. 82) well, having chanted the lines of its libretto (*utaibon*) under the direction of her teacher, following the trajectory of the Rokujō character as she transforms from jealous woman to demonic spirit, until she finally achieves Buddhist salvation at the play's conclusion.

To paint a spectral figure, the artist must give material form to the immaterial. This challenge is made more difficult for the Nihonga painter, who employs not an ethereal wash of watery ink but the thick mineral colors, shimmery shell white, and embossed gold of *yamato-e*. In Shōen's work, the image of Lady Rokujō's spirit is especially materialistic.² The wisteria flowers on the robe are rendered in purple and gold pigment, while gold paint delicately articulates the veins of the flower leaves, themselves painted with granular malachite green. The threads of the spider web on the robe appear to be a light black, but were actually executed with metallic silver that would have shimmered before oxidizing, while other lines employ shell white to cast a gossamer net over the entire surface of the garment. Painted to demand the attention of the viewing public, the work also expresses its materiality in its scale. More than six feet tall, it is larger than life size.



Shōen also challenged herself to create an image of Rokujō's split personality, as found in the original text, where the character grapples with the uncontrollable spirit that wanders from her body. She thus uses the conventions of the "beautiful woman picture" (*bijinga*) in the demure, feminine pose of the woman; however, the figure crouches over a little too much, and she touches her hair not in the conventional way, but bites it between her blackened teeth. The teeth are depicted with just enough white to make them read as teeth and not blank space, adding a kind of threatening ferocity to her being.

In this way, the figure's visage recalls the Noh mask. Shōen's Noh teacher was a mask carver himself, whose work the artist had praised for its vitality and uncanny ability to convey a range of expressions and to fuse with the life force of the actor. As images in her sketchbooks make clear, Shōen copied masks. At her teacher's suggestion, she took inspiration from the *deigan* mask, which replaces the white portion of the eyes with gold that glows eerily on stage when it catches the light (cat. 83). To create a similar effect in the painting, Shōen applied gold to the back of the silk (*urazai-shiki*), a technique well known in Japanese Buddhist painting. "The eyes of the female living spirit strangely lit up, creating an effect that I hadn't anticipated," Shōen explains in her memoir.³

Shōen tried to express *yūgen* (mystery), an integral aspect of the aesthetic theory of Noh, by endowing this female figure with a face that separated her from reality. She also managed to portray not only Rokujō wearing the *deigan* mask in the first part of the play but also her demonic phase, when she strikes Aoi and appears in the *hannya* mask (cat. 84). Shōen suggests the mask's telltale horns in a fairly subtle way with ends of white cloth twisted around the figure's hair. She thus captures in one image three different sides of Rokujō: the elegant noblewoman, the jealous woman, and the demonic, vengeful spirit.

Shōen professes in her memoir that she does not know why she painted this bewitching (*seien*) painting. She says that at the time she was experiencing the anguish of a creative nadir, and throwing herself wholeheartedly into this painting empowered her to break new ground.⁴ She describes the process as a kind of purge, through which she sensed the awesome power (*osoroshisa*) of the figure in the painting.

MM

1. Uemura 1995, pp. 121–22; translation by Melissa McCormick.

2. For a more thorough analysis, including the Momoyama-period painting sources that Shōen used, the symbolism of the motifs, and the contemporary response to the painting, see Yoshimura 2009.

3. Uemura 1995, pp. 198–99; translation by Melissa McCormick.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 123. For background on the paintings Shōen created before and after this work, see Yamada and Merritt 1992–93.

64 「浮舟」 佐多芳郎筆

"A Boat Cast Adrift" (*Ukifune*)

Sata Yoshirō (1922–1997)

Shōwa period (1926–89), 1966

Two-panel folding screen; ink, color, and gold on paper

55 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 83 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (140 × 213 cm)

Osaragi Jiro Memorial Museum, Yokohama

Sata Yoshirō's long engagement with copying sections of the National Treasure *Genji Scrolls*—though this particular scene is not included—no doubt inspired him to create this screen of Chapter 51, "A Boat Cast Adrift." The most common depiction of this episode, established by the seventeenth century, shows Ukifune and Niou in a small boat on the Uji River, near a small island in the snow. Sata eliminates the landscape details and focuses on the couple drifting along with the current under the reflection of the moon. The Uji River is shown as white, its current captured with ink lines, and the figures glow in white under the golden moonlight. Close examination of Ukifune's striking long hair reveals the subtle yet effective accents of ultramarine mineral pigment in the black ink.

The artist was born in Tokyo, the eldest son of a doctor, and began studying with the great Nihonga artist Yasuda Yukihiro (1884–1978; see cat. 62) in 1940, at the age of eighteen. According to Sata's memoir, Yasuda gave him one-on-one instruction once every two months or so for a period of nearly forty years.¹ For the first six years, Sata focused on copying illustrated handscroll paintings, particularly National Treasures such as the *Genji Scrolls* and the *Illustrated Tale of the Courtier Ban Dainagon*, and the frontispiece illustrations of the Lotus Sutra Dedicated to the Taira Family (*Heike nōkyō*). At times, however, Sata had doubts about being a professional painter.

After World War II, Yasuda encouraged Sata to enter his work in exhibitions. In 1950 Sata won first prize at the thirty-fifth Inten exhibition, and his work came to the attention of the well-known novelist Osaragi Jirō (1897–1973), in whose collection it is still preserved. Sata was commissioned to illustrate a novel by Osaragi that was published as a serial in 1951. Sata went on to gain fame as an illustrator of historical novels rather than as a painter. In fact, he illustrated a children's abridged edition of *The Tale of Genji* that focused on the story of young Murasaki from ages ten to eighteen.²

KK

1. Sata 1992.

2. Satō Ichiei and Sata 1960.



CHAPTER SIX

An Elegant Lifestyle Inspired by Genji: Lacquers, Garments, and Games

BEGINNING IN THE EARLY TWELFTH CENTURY, paintings illustrating chapters of *The Tale of Genji* often meticulously depicted beautifully crafted objects, such as black and red lacquer writing boxes, incense burners, lacquer furniture with *maki-e* (“sprinkled picture”) decoration, and exquisite twelve-layer silk robes (*jūnihito-e*). However, the actual representation of vignettes from Murasaki Shikibu’s tale on objects in lacquer and metal did not begin in earnest until the Muromachi period (1392–1573).

One of the earliest surviving examples of a lacquer object with *Genji* imagery is a fifteenth-century cosmetic box (*tebako*) designed to hold the accessories and cosmetic items of a high-ranking lady (fig. 67). This *tebako*, embellished with a court carriage (*gosho kuruma*) and a fence with moonflowers (*yūgao*), alludes to Chapter 4, “The Lady of the Evening Faces” (*Yūgao*), while the inside of the lid is decorated with an auspicious landscape that includes pines, cranes, turtles, chrysanthemums, autumn grasses, and the moon, demonstrating the close association of *Genji* motifs with good fortune. The pictorial composition on this *maki-e*-decorated lacquer box is representative of the way well-known scenes from the tale were rendered on three-dimensional artworks. The key objects or elements of the scenes, as established in paintings, were isolated and enlarged, usually without the inclusion of human figures, an iconographic device characterized as a “motif of absence” (*rusu-moyō*). Accentuating certain iconic motifs made the composition easily identifiable for those who were familiar with the pictorialization of the narrative, and subsequently this technique provided the foundation for the development of stylized *Genji* designs for decorative arts. Such labor-intensive, carefully crafted, and exceedingly expensive lacquerworks were made for aristocrats and high-ranking samurai who also likely owned luxurious, hand-copied, and illustrated versions of the tale. Therefore, the identification of *Genji* motifs on lacquer objects was seen as a form of intellectual amusement. Motifs central to the “Lady of the Evening Faces” chapter, for instance, are regularly found in Muromachi-period

lacquers. Other examples feature scenes from Chapter 23, “First Song of Spring” (*Hatsune*)—an incense burner, supposedly the oldest work of lacquer embellished with motifs from the tale—and Chapter 18, “Wind in the Pines” (*Matsukaze*).¹ Moreover, iron kettles for the tea ceremony were made in Ashiya (in Fukuoka prefecture) during the Muromachi period; these so-called *Genji* kettles (*Genji-gama*) are cast with motifs from the tale, several examples referring to the “Lady of the Evening Faces” chapter.

During the Momoyama period (1573–1615), the “Lady of the Evening Faces” motif remained popular on lacquers, most of them created in the Kōdaiji style (noted for bold designs associated with Toyotomi Hideyoshi and his memorial shrine in the Kōdaiji temple in Kyoto) with somewhat conventionalized motifs executed in gold in the *hiramaki-e* (flat “sprinkled picture”) technique. Also during this era, the calligrapher, potter, and lacquer artist Hon’ami Kōetsu (1558–1637) created highly stylized, graphic representations of *Genji* chapters, such as those on the *Ne no hi* (New Year’s Day of the Rat) lacquer shelf (fig. 68) featuring motifs from “First Song of Spring” and “The Lady of the Evening Faces,” as well as from Chapter 16, “The Barrier Gate” (*Sekiya*) (see cat. 53), and Chapter 45, “The Divine Princess at Uji Bridge” (*Hashihime*), on the doors. Kōetsu’s groundbreaking works established the fashion for Rinpa-style *Genji*-themed lacquers.

The Edo period (1615–1868) is considered to be the golden age for lacquers, textiles, and metalwork with *Genji* decoration, reflecting also the important role the tale played in the bridal trousseaux of daimyo weddings (see the essay by Monika Bincsik in this volume). For example, a trousseau often included an elegant, portable lacquer book cabinet designed to house a full set of the fifty-four volumes of *The Tale of Genji*, often richly illustrated in brilliant colors and embellished with gold pigment and leaf (cat. 9). Given that Ishiyamadera earned legendary renown as the place where Murasaki Shikibu was said to have started writing the tale, painterly details of the temple surroundings were a suitable



Fig. 67. Cosmetic Box (*Tebako*) with a scene from Chapter 4, “The Lady of the Evening Faces” (*Yūgao*). Outside of the lid, Muromachi period (1392–1573), 15th century. Lacquered wood with gold and silver *takamaki-e*, *hiramaki-e*, and *togidashimaki-e*, and cut-out gold- and silver-foil application on *nashiji* (“pear-skin”) ground; H. 6 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (17.5 cm), W. 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (31 cm), D. 9 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (24.5 cm). Shōkokuji Temple, Kyoto. Important Cultural Property

choice to decorate such cabinets (cat. 66). Daimyo lacquer wedding sets made after the mid-seventeenth century rarely feature *maki-e* *Genji* designs; rather, most of them are decorated with auspicious motifs such as chrysanthemums, bamboo, plum, pines, peonies, phoenixes, and the relevant family crests (cat. 73).² These motifs are often accompanied by arabesque foliage (*karakusa*), as seen in the exquisite, *maki-e*-decorated lacquer bridal palanquin and incense-game set created in 1856 to celebrate the wedding of Atsu-hime (1835–1883), a daughter of the wealthy and powerful Shimazu family, to the short-lived thirteenth shogun, Tokugawa Iesada (1824–1858) (cats. 71, 72). The palanquin, however, does have a *Genji* theme; the interior walls feature auspicious scenes

from “First Song of Spring” and Chapter 24, “Butterflies” (*Kochō*). Another *Genji*-themed example that was most likely part of a dowry is a painted *tsuitate* (freestanding screen) attributed to Kano Seisen in Osanobu inspired by the “First Song of Spring” (cat. 74).

A special characteristic of Japanese textile art is that literary works are represented on *kosode* (robes with small sleeve openings) and over robes (*uchikake*). Beginning in the second half of the seventeenth century, *Genji* motifs appeared on garments for aristocrats and high-ranking samurai ladies as well as wealthy merchant-class women. Most of these depict prominent scenes or the tale’s key motifs using freehand ink painting or paste resist-dyeing (*yūzen*) techniques, sometimes with embroidery.



Fig. 68. *Ne no hi* (New Year's Day of the Rat) Lacquer Shelf. Attributed to Hon'ami Kōetsu (1558–1637). Edo period (1615–1868), early 17th century. Lacquered wood with gold and silver *takamaki-e* and *hiramaki-e*, mother-of-pearl and tin inlays, and cut-out gold- and silver-foil application; H. 25¾ in. (65.5 cm), W. 28½ in. (72.5 cm), D. 13 in. (33 cm). Tokyo National Museum. Important Cultural Property

Woodblock-printed *hinagata-bon* (pattern books), the fashion magazines of the day, also contain *Genji* motifs; a volume that included numerous designs associated with the tale (*Genji hinakata*) was published in 1687. Most *kosode* designs feature a single chapter (cat. 69), while others, especially eighteenth-century examples, evoke several chapters. Book patterns were used to symbolize the tale in its entirety (cat. 65). *Genji moyō* (*Genji* motifs) evolved to include not only the most representative chapters and scenes but also scattered fans, courtier's hats, and even a sandy beach with pines. From the late eighteenth century, the new "imperial court style" of *kosode* design, characterized by scenes from *Genji* and other classics hidden in stylized landscapes, became popular among high-ranking samurai ladies (cat. 70).³ Auspicious *Genji* motifs and related patterns evoking Heian-period court life were used on wedding over robes as well (cat. 78).

Scenes from *Genji* are seldom seen on ceramics. A rare exception, the "Moonflower" tea bowl by Ogata Kenzan (1663–1743) (cat. 79), includes a poem inspired by the "Lady of the Evening

Faces" chapter. While it does not have a *Genji* theme per se, an exquisite Nabeshima celadon incense burner evokes the ambiance of a golden age of court culture by replicating a courtier's cap (cat. 68).

Genji impacted every imaginable art form, from those associated with elegant pursuits to parlor games borrowing imagery from the tale.⁴ For instance, a *Genji* school (*Genji-ryū*) was established for the practice of ikebana by Ashikaga Yoshimasa (1436–1490), the eighth shogun of the Ashikaga shogunate and a patron of *Genji* studies. The Kyoto-based Kanze school composed Noh plays featuring allusions to episodes of the tale (cats. 82–84), and subsequently all the major Noh schools published such plays and designed costumes with suggestively derived motifs (cats. 80, 81).

Fragrances are frequently described in the tale as if they were an additional garment, inspiring numerous *Genji*-themed incense utensils (cat. 67) and complex games of comparing incense woods identified with specific chapters or other literary works (fig. 69, cat. 72). Similarly, music and the sounds of the koto (cat. 85), *biwa*,



Fig. 69. Ten-Round Incense Game Set (*Jisshukō-bako*) with Autumn Grasses and Tokugawa Family Crests. Edo period (1615–1868), 18th century. Lacquered wood with gold and silver *takamaki-e* and *hiramaki-e*, and cut-out gold- and silver-foil application on *nashiji* (“pear-skin”) ground; H. 7 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (18.2 cm), W. 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (21.8 cm), D. 11 $\frac{3}{16}$ in. (30 cm). The Tokugawa Art Museum, Nagoya

and flute are evoked throughout the tale. Musical instruments were not only embellished with *Genji* imagery but also pictorialized on lacquers and textiles.

In response to a longing for refined courtly diversions and the imagined slower pace of life among Heian-period aristocrats, amusements inspired by the tale became popular, including doll (*hina*) plays, snowball making, and board games (*sugoroku*). Elaborate shell-matching games (*kai-awase*; cat. 76) and card games (*karuta*) (cat. 75) featuring each of the fifty-four chapters were closely connected to the traditions of poetry contests (*uta-awase*) and painting competitions (*e-awase*).⁵

With the publication of woodblock-printed abridged versions of the tale and *Genji* commentaries beginning in the late seventeenth century, the tale became available to a broader audience, including commoners. Beginning in the eighteenth century, a great variety of *Genji* motifs and highly detailed figural compositions derived from the tale proliferated on lacquers, textiles, and metalwork, especially on lacquer cosmetic boxes, mirror boxes and mirror stands, incense game sets and incense containers, and document

boxes. These objects were associated with the beauty and cultural sophistication of the tale’s Heian-period court ladies and with writing poetry and elegant prose in general. Imagery from the tale appeared as well on sword fittings; in miniature *Genji* books (*mame-hon*), which could be carried in the sleeve of a kimono; and in sweets with *Genji* patterns. By the end of the Edo period, *Genji* motifs extensively embellished lacquers (cat. 89) and kimonos and developed into auspicious patterns representing good fortune. With the popularization of the tale, its representation and reception gradually drifted away from the original text and merged into the aesthetic ideal of *miyabi*, or courtly elegance, marked by refined artistic taste. This era saw the birth of a new *Genji* culture, which led to the modern interpretation of the story in Japanese art.

—Monika Binčsik

1. Kyoto National Museum 1980; on lacquers, see especially pp. 298–307.

2. Arakawa Hirokazu, Komatsu, and Haino 1986.

3. Kawakami 2010.

4. Museum of Kyoto 2008b.

5. Kirihata et al. 1992.

65 白紵地草紙文字模様小袖

Robe (*Kosode*) with Volumes of *The Tale of Genji* and a Chinese Verse
from *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing (Wakan rōishū)*
Edo period (1615–1868), 18th century
White silk satin with tie-dyeing, silk-thread embroidery,
and gold-thread couching
H. 62 in. (157.5 cm), sleeve length 23¼ in. (59 cm)
National Museum of Japanese History, Sakura, Chiba Prefecture

This *kosode* (robe with small sleeve openings) is embellished with images of chapter books of *The Tale of Genji* in red and dark navy blue, created with tie-dyeing (*nui-* and *kanoko-shibori*). It is one of the few surviving examples of a garment made for women in shiny white satin (*nume*), as this material was typically reserved for Noh costumes (*nuihaku*). Judging from the quality of the silk and the style of the embroidery, the robe was most likely owned by a high-ranking samurai lady. The titles of the books are indicated on the title slips—including *Kiritsubo* (Chapter 1, “The Lady of the Paulownia-Courtyard Chambers”), *Hahakigi* (Chapter 2, “Broom Cypress”), *Wakamurasaki* (Chapter 5, “Little Purple Gromwell”), *Hana no en* (Chapter 8, “A Banquet Celebrating Cherry Blossoms”), *Suma* (Chapter 12, “Exile to Suma”), *Sekiya* (Chapter 16, “The Barrier Gate”), and *Hashihime* (Chapter 45, “The Divine Princess at Uji Bridge”)—seven of the most popular and most referenced chapters of the tale.¹ This rare garment was in the collection of Nomura Shōjirō (1879–1943), a textile connoisseur and dealer in Japan.

The surface of the robe is further decorated with scattered characters executed in gold-thread couching, which, if read in the proper order, form a Chinese verse from *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing (Wakan rōishū*, ca. 1013), compiled by Fujiwara no Kintō (966–1041) (see fig. 3, cat. 11).² The author of *Genji* must have known Kintō’s selection while she was writing the tale because so many of the same poems are cited there. The poem referenced on this robe was written in Chinese by the Heian courtier-poet Ōe no Koretoki (888–963):

大庾嶺之梅早落 誰問粉粧
匡廬山之杏未開 豈趁紅艷

The plum blossoms at Dayu Ridge

Have already fallen;

Who comes to ask of their powdered makeup?

And the apricot blossoms of Mount Kuanglu

Have not yet opened;

Why should anyone hasten to their red elegance?³

Located in Jiangxi province, Mount Lushan, also known as Mount Kuanglu (Japanese: Rozan), is one of the most renowned

mountains in China. Moreover, the reference to the name of the mountain on the *kosode* might, in fact, be an implication of the Kyoto temple Rozanji, which was named after Lushan and is said to have once been the residence of Murasaki Shikibu. Her great-grandfather Fujiwara no Kanesuke (Tsutsumi Chūnagon, 877–933) had earlier built a mansion in the precincts of the temple and Murasaki is thought to have been brought up there, as mentioned in *The Diary of Murasaki Shikibu (Murasaki Shikibu nikki)*.

In the Edo period, books were often represented on *kosode* and other garments as auspicious symbols, a tradition probably originating in China, where images of handscrolls, manuscripts, and sometimes books were included in the “Eight Auspicious Treasures” (Chinese: *Babao*), symbolizing knowledge and wisdom. The representation of books on *kosode* became fashionable also due to the development of woodblock-printing technologies, which made printed books accessible to a wide audience.

In China and Korea there is a long tradition of decorating garments with specific flowers, flora and fauna, geometric patterns, and auspicious symbols, especially designs representing longevity. Some of these patterns reflect religious ideas and myths.⁴ The same trends exist in Japanese textile art, however, with the unique addition of patterns inspired by literary classics. Based on literary evidence, such as *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes (Eiga monogatari*, ca. 1092), the fashion for robes decorated with literary designs began sometime during the second half of the Heian period, and from that time Japanese women enjoyed “wrapping their bodies in literature.”⁵ Literary *kosode* patterns became especially popular beginning in the late seventeenth century with the publication of woodblock-printed *kosode* pattern books (*hinagata-bon*). *The Tale of Genji* inspired numerous fashionable designs.⁶ However, in the second half of the seventeenth century, *The Tales of Ise*, *The Tale of the Heike*, and other poetry anthologies were featured most frequently; it was not until the late seventeenth century that *Genji* became increasingly dominant. Certain chapters were particularly popular, such as Chapter 1, “The Lady of the Paulownia-Courtyard Chambers” (*Kiritsubo*); Chapter 2, “Broom Cypress” (*Hahakigi*); and Chapter 5, “Little Purple Gromwell” (*Wakamurasaki*), but poems by female poets such as Ono no Komachi (ca. 825–ca. 900), Izumi Shikibu (b. ca. 978), and Murasaki Shikibu also often inspired *kosode* compositions. MB

1. National Museum of History 1999, p. 284, no. 219.

2. Sugama Sachiko in Museum of Kyoto 2008a, p. 236, no. 155.

3. Translation adapted from Rimer and Chaves 1997, p. 52, no. 106; see also *Wakan rōishū* 1965, p. 73, no. 106.

4. Kirihata 2004.

5. Ibid.

6. Kawakami 2010; Satō Ryōko 2011.



66 石山寺蒔絵源氏筆筒

Book Cabinet (*Tansu*) for *The Tale of Genji* with Ishiyamadera Temple Design
Edo period (1615–1868), 18th century

Lacquered wood with gold and silver *takamaki-e*, *hiramaki-e*, and
togidashimaki-e, and cut-out gold-foil application on *nashiji* (“pear-skin”
ground; gilt-bronze fittings

H. 7¾ in. (19.7 cm), W. 14⅞ in. (37.9 cm), D. 8⅝ in. (22 cm)

Tokyo National Museum

This luxurious portable book cabinet was designed to house a now lost set of the fifty-four volumes of *The Tale of Genji*. Its structure is quite unusual as it opens in the middle, the two halves secured at the back with two butterfly-shaped hinges. Each half contains three drawers, the fronts of which are inscribed with the titles of the volumes that belonged within, in gold *hiramaki-e* (flat “sprinkled picture”) on a ground of gold *nashiji* (“pear-skin”) lacquer. The front, top, sides, and back of the cabinet are decorated with a landscape of the surroundings of Ishiyamadera and the Seta River

area (Shiga prefecture) in relief *takamaki-e* and *hiramaki-e* with additional cut-out gold-foil details. There are several Edo-period lacquer cabinets made for *The Tale of Genji* (*Genji tansu*) having six drawers and a removable front, often decorated with *Genji*-related iconography, but this one is a rare example because of its unique “butterfly” construction.¹ There are a few other *Genji* book cabinets with an Ishiyamadera design; the earliest example, made in the seventeenth century as a wedding trousseau item (Nezu Museum, Important Cultural Property), is decorated with the family crest of the Tokugawa.²

As Ishiyamadera was well known as the place where Murasaki Shikibu wrote *Genji*, it was an appropriate choice of decoration for the book cabinet. The front is embellished with the gate of the temple and the stairs leading up to the Main Hall (Hondō) on the exposed wollastonite ground, a large, rare natural rock monument after which the temple took its name, Stony Mountain Temple. The characteristic wood pillars supporting the building are easily





Top view of the cabinet

recognizable on the top of the cabinet. The Main Hall is depicted in detail, including the representation of the *Genji Room* (*Genji no ma*), where, according to legend, Murasaki started to write the tale. In front of the *Genji Room* is a large stone lantern. To the right we can see the moon-viewing pavilion, and farther still is the moon in silver among clouds.

The left side of the cabinet is decorated with a scene of the Seta River and a bridge, while on the right side there is an embankment fortified with rocks. The back is embellished with a river landscape of the Setagawa area. The composition is designed to imitate the

actual process of arriving at Ishiyamadera and climbing up to the Main Hall, represented on the top of the cabinet. This refined lacquerwork could have been owned by a high-ranking samurai lady. It was given to the Tokyo National Museum by Minoda Chōjirō (b. 1840), one of the most well-known dealers of antique and contemporary lacquerwork, ivory, and metalwork in Yokohama and Tokyo in the Meiji period (1868–1912). MB

1. Noguchi Takeshi in Museum of Kyoto 2008a, p. 193, no. 91; Museum of Kyoto 2008b, p. 30, no. 11.

2. Koike 2009.

67 源氏物語草紙蒔絵香箱

Incense Box in the Shape of Five Volumes of *The Tale of Genji*

Meiji period (1868–1912), second half of 19th century

Lacquered wood with gold and silver *takamaki-e*, *hiramaki-e*, and *togidashimaki-e*, cut-out gold- and silver-foil application, and red and green lacquer

H. 1½ in. (3.8 cm), W. 3⅞ in. (8 cm), D. 4⅜ in. (11.1 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Mrs. George A. Crocker (Elizabeth Masten), 1937 (38.25.165a, b)

This diminutive but elaborately decorated incense box demonstrates the continuing popularity of *The Tale of Genji* in the Meiji period.

The box was created to emulate five books in the bound-pocket (*fukuro-toji*) style, held together by a rich brocade cover, with a title slip inscribed with the tale's title in Japanese, *Genji monogatari*. The brocade design is executed on a gold ground. The medallion-shaped Chinese lions (*kara-shishi*), peonies, and scattered "auspicious treasures" are slightly raised, and the artist used various colors and different gold powders as well as geometric cut-out gold-foil particles (*kirikane*) to create a rich, three-dimensional texture.

The box has a tray for presenting the incense that would have been stored within. The tray is embellished with the image of a rolled-up bamboo blind (*misu*) and an attached "medicine ball" (*kusudama*), a hanging ornament that in the Heian period served as an amulet.

The main component of the *kusudama* was a silk pouch filled with a mixture of various incense woods and cloves kneaded into a

ball; the pouch was decorated with folded paper (origami) flowers, or sometimes with irises and aromatic mugwort, and long silk cords of five different colors—blue, red, white, black, and green—were attached to the bottom of the amulet. A *kusudama* was sent as a present on the fifth day of the fifth month (the iris festival, or *Tango no sekku*) and was attached to the pillar of a house or hung from bamboo blinds to protect the occupants from illness and bad luck as well as to bring longevity. The *kusudama* here might refer to Chapter 25, "Fireflies" (*Hotaru*), of the tale, in which Tamakazura mentions medicine-ball presents; there are references to the incense as well. As the lacquer box was designed for incense, the visual citation of the "Fireflies" chapter served as a reminder of the Heian-period roots and traditions of the incense culture; the box also follows the style of similar book-shaped incense boxes made in the Edo period. After the 1868 Meiji Restoration, Westernization, and modernization of Japan, the incense practice lost its popularity, and with the disenfranchisement of the ruling samurai elite the incense schools lost their traditional patrons. However, beginning in the 1890s the appreciation for incense was revitalized. At the same time, lacquer incense boxes such as this one were sold by curio shops and art dealers to Westerners as popular collectibles.¹

MB

1. Watanabe 2014b.





68 青磁花唐草牡丹文冠形香炉

Incense Burner in the Shape of a Courtier's Hat with Scrolling Peonies

Edo period (1615–1868), ca. 1690–1750

Porcelain with celadon glaze (Hizen ware, Nabeshima type)

H. 9¼ in. (23.5 cm), W. 9½ in. (24.1 cm),

D. (incl. two rods) 9¾ in. (24.8 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of

Charles Stewart Smith, 1893 (93.3.17)

The complex form of this incense burner is based on the Heian-period courtier hat (*kanmuri* or *kōburi*) that was part of the formal court dress (*sokutai*) worn by aristocrats. The black-lacquered hat consists of a flat, low cap (*hitai*), a tall knob at the back (*koji*) for the topknot (*motodori*), two crossbars (*kanzashi*) attached to the back of the knob from the sides to stabilize the hat (for the courtiers of the top five ranks), and a long, flat tail (*ei*) attached to the back, made of lacquered gauze.

Courtier hats are prominent in the iconography of various chapters of *The Tale of Genji*. For instance, in Chapter 9, “Leaves of Wild Ginger” (*Aoi*), we read that after the death of his first wife, Lady Aoi, Genji wears the tail of his hat rolled up in the military style as a gesture of mourning: “He was still dressed in mourning—a gray train over a plain uncrested robe, the cords of his headdress rolled up—but he looked more elegant now than he did when dressed in his most gorgeous robes.”¹ Other depictions of the *kanmuri* in *Genji* pictures show the tail hanging down the back straight, or folded with a slight curve as here. As incense culture and incense burning are mentioned frequently throughout the tale (see the essay by Monika Bincsik in this volume), it was an ingenious artistic idea to create an incense burner in the shape of a *kanmuri*. In the example here, the top of the knob is openwork, so that the smoke of burning incense can emerge. The body of the censer is decorated with relief peonies and scrolling vines. This unique work is one of the highlights of The Met’s extensive collection of Nabeshima wares.

Nabeshima porcelain is well known for its high-quality, milky white bodies and elaborate designs executed in underglaze blue and polychrome overglaze enamels. The first dishes using polychrome overglaze, a technique transmitted from China to Hizen province in Kyūshū, were successfully fired about 1650 in the Iwayagawachi kiln, controlled by the daimyo Nabeshima Katsushige (1580–1657). Many of the porcelains were created as luxurious presents to be offered to the third shogun, Tokugawa Iemitsu (1604–1651).

The Nabeshima potters also made celadon incense burners and whimsical ornaments (*okimono*) embellished with underglaze relief decoration, such as this tour-de-force courtier’s hat censer.²

Celadon-glazed ware was not produced in Japan until the early seventeenth century, but Chinese celadons were already being imported from as early as the twelfth century, and Longquan ware became especially treasured during the Kamakura period (1185–1333). The popularity of imported celadons continued to grow during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and the aristocracy and the military elite favored small dishes, bowls, incense burners, and wine jars. In Arita, Hizen province, celadon production started in about the 1630s and 1640s, when Takahara Goroshichi, a famed Japanese potter, moved to Iwayagawachi. At the same time, in nearby Hasami (Nagasaki prefecture), potters developed good-quality celadon that had a more transparent, lighter green hue, featuring patterns with mold impressions and chisel incisions. Chinese techniques of celadon production reached Japan in the 1650s. The Hizen kilns used white-burning porcelain clay for their bodies. Compared with private kilns that produced celadons, the Nabeshima kiln covered its vessels with a thick layer of glaze, sometimes two thick layers, creating high-quality, elegant wares.

MB

1. Washburn 2015, p. 209.

2. Bincsik 2016, pp. 45–48.



69 白紵地楓竹矢来文字模様振袖

Robe (*Furisode*) with Maple Tree, Bamboo Fence, and Characters from Chapter 5, “Little Purple Gromwell” (*Wakamurasaki*)
Edo period (1615–1868), late 17th century
White silk satin with silk-thread embroidery and gold-thread couching
H. 62 7/8 in. (159 cm), sleeve length 24 1/4 in. (61.5 cm)
Tokyo National Museum

This elegant, long-sleeved silk robe (*furisode*) is fashioned from a shiny white satin (*nume*) on which the rich design is executed solely in embroidery and gold-thread couching. On the sleeves and the upper half of the garment (both at the front and the back) is a maple tree with red, green, purple, white, and gold leaves, its trunk light brown. A bamboo fence is depicted in vivid green with gold accents on the lower half. Two large characters that read *wakamurasaki* 若紫 are incorporated into the design, the first character on the shoulder area in black and the second, *murasaki* (purple), embroidered in purple silk below the waistline. Chapter 5 of the tale, “Little Purple Gromwell” (*Wakamurasaki*), relates the story of Genji falling in love with the young Murasaki.

This robe at some point was reconfigured and its long sleeves shortened into the *tomesode* style, later to be restored to its original long-sleeved shape.¹ White satin robes made for women are rare, as this material was usually reserved for Noh costumes (*nuihaku*). Commoners, including wealthy merchant-class women, were forbidden by sumptuary laws issued by the Tokugawa shogunate in 1683 to wear garments with such luxurious embroidered decoration, so it is likely that this robe was made for an aristocrat or a high-ranking samurai lady. Judging from the embroidery style and stitching techniques, it can be assumed that the robe was probably made in the Genroku era (1688–1704) by a *nuihaku* master working for the shogunate or a high-ranking samurai.

An almost exact duplicate design with a maple tree, bamboo fence, and *Wakamurasaki* characters is published in a woodblock-printed pattern book (*hinagata-bon*) devoted to *kosode* (robes with small sleeve openings), titled *Moon through the Pines Pattern Book* (*Hinagata matsu no tsuki*, dated 1697) (fig. 70). There are eighty designs in the book, including nineteen examples with incorporated characters, but the *Wakamurasaki* composition is the only one associated with *The Tale of Genji*. What makes this composition even more intriguing is that the imagery of the maple tree and bamboo fence does not seem to have any obvious connection to the “Little Purple Gromwell” (*Wakamurasaki*) chapter, which is typically depicted as a spring scene with blossoming cherry trees.

The use of stylized, large characters as decorative motifs on garments in the Edo period began in about the 1620s. In the first half of the seventeenth century and during the Kanbun era (1661–73),

there were two types of this composition: one included large characters linked to poems or describing flora and fauna, and the other incorporated smaller characters into a landscape or a background design imitating the *chirashi-gaki* (“scattered writing”) calligraphy style. There were favored designs inspired by classics, such as the irises and eight bridges associated with *The Tales of Ise* (*Ise monogatari*), but patterns with characters related to *The Tale of Genji* started to appear only in about the late 1670s. The first *kosode* pattern book dedicated mainly to *Genji*, titled *Genji hinakata*, was published in 1687. The author created the designs through loose connections to the tale. For example, a composition associated with *Wakamurasaki* includes the characters 若紫 juxtaposed with irises and snowflakes that are not mentioned in the chapter. However, *Wakamurasaki* might evoke the author Murasaki Shikibu, as Fujiwara no Kintō called her flirtatiously the “young Murasaki” (*waka* means “young” in Japanese), and purple irises can also be associated with her. The snowflakes probably refer to the beauty of a woman’s white skin. All of the composition’s elements are auspicious, intended to bring long life, success, and beauty to its owner.

The maple tree depicted in the present *furisode* would be more appropriate to represent Chapter 7, “An Imperial Celebration of Autumn Foliage” (*Momiji no ga*), and one possible connection of *Wakamurasaki* to the image would be the fact that it was autumn when Genji brought young Murasaki to his residence. However, both the maple and the bamboo are auspicious symbols of longevity, so this might be another explanation for the combination of the patterns, conveying more about the aspirations of the owner of the garment than the content of the tale. MB

1. Oyama 2006.

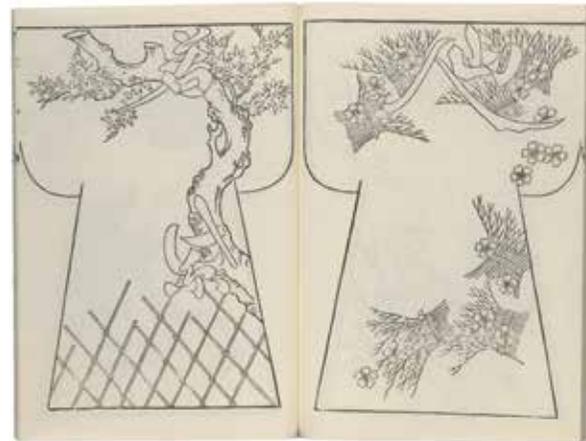


Fig. 70. Page from *Moon through the Pines Pattern Book* (*Hinagata matsu no tsuki*, 1697)



70 御所解源氏物語模様帷子

Summer Robe (*Katabira*) with Seasonal Landscapes and Scenes from *The Tale of Genji*

Edo period (1615–1868), second half 18th century

Plain-weave ramie with paste resist-dyeing, silk-thread embroidery, and gold-thread couching

H. 65³/₄ in. (167 cm), sleeve length 27⁵/₈ in. (70.3 cm)

Tokyo National Museum

Unlined, thin summer robes (*katabira*) made of light fabrics such as silk or ramie were worn by women of both the elite samurai and wealthy commoner classes. However, a special type of such exquisitely embroidered and dyed robes made in the late Edo period came to be referred to as being fashioned in the “imperial court style” (*goshodoki*). This designation arose because most of the garments’ representations of landscapes, seasonal plant motifs, and patterns referring to Noh plays, poems, or classical literature such as *Genji* evoke the Heian-period aristocratic life and an idealized presentation of court culture, as shown in this example. The white ramie fabric is decorated with paste resist-dyed patterns, including freehand-painted and stencil-printed motifs and rich embroidery, as well as gold-thread couching—techniques reserved for garments worn by women of the elite samurai class, especially those of shogunal and daimyo households. The literary designs also refer to the cultural pretension of the garments’ owners.¹

This summer robe is decorated with an overall composition of delicately executed cherry blossoms, pines, chrysanthemums, bamboo grass, clouds, rocks, and streams.² The stylized landscapes include mainly spring patterns in the upper half of the garment and autumn flowers and grasses in the lower section. On the right

sleeve, at the back, among stylized mountains with blossoming cherry trees, there is a building with rolled-up bamboo blinds; on its veranda is an open birdcage, and nearby a small sparrow is flying away.

This scene was inspired by Chapter 5, “Little Purple Gromwell” (*Wakamurasaki*), as was the seventeenth-century *furisode* in the previous entry (cat. 69); however, the iconography and the style of the representation are completely different. In this chapter Genji visits a temple in the hills north of the capital to have prayers said for his recovery from a bout of fever. When he looked through a brushwood fence, he saw a young girl, Murasaki, who was crying over the escape of her pet sparrow. Murasaki reminded Genji of Fujitsubo, with whom he had a secret affair—and indeed, the young girl turned out to be her niece. Six months later Genji took Murasaki to his residence to raise her himself. As a symbol of the starting point of their amorous liaison, “the escaped sparrow scene” is frequently represented. A river flowing in front of the building connects this motif to the brushwood fence represented at the waist of the garment. Farther down is a thatched hut and a court carriage, which evoke chapters of the tale pivotal to Murasaki. The thatched hut might refer to Chapter 12, “Exile to Suma” (*Suma*), and the carriage to the one Genji and Murasaki share as they view the Kamo Shrine festival in Chapter 9, “Leaves of Wild Ginger” (*Aoi*), but such motifs also became generally associated with court culture.³

MB

1. Kirihata Ken in Kyoto National Museum 1980, p. 266, no. 101.

2. Sugama Sachiko in Museum of Kyoto 2008a, p. 237, no. 156.

3. Kirihata 2004.



71 黒塗二葉葵唐草葵牡丹紋散蒔絵女乗物

Bridal Palanquin (*Onna norimono*) with Arabesque Foliage, Wild Ginger Leaves, and Family Crests (Owned by Princess Atsu-hime)

Edo period (1615–1868), 1856

Lacquered wood with gold and silver *hiramaki-e*; gilt and silvered copper fittings; interior paintings: ink, color, and gold on paper; blinds: bamboo and silk; window screens: silk

Compartment: H. 50 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (128.9 cm), W. 54 $\frac{1}{16}$ in. (138.1 cm), D. 38 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (96.8 cm); carrying beam: H. 7 in. (17.8 cm), W. 15 ft. 8 in. (477.5 cm), D. 2 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (7.3 cm)

Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., Museum purchase, Smithsonian Collections Acquisition Fund (S85.0001)

In the life of a daughter of a high-ranking samurai or daimyo, no event was more momentous for its personal and political implications than her marriage, and accordingly no expenses were spared in the preparation of her wedding trousseau. This palanquin was commissioned to transport Atsu-hime, wife of the thirteenth Tokugawa shogun, and its gloriously ornate decoration not only reflects her high status but also gives visual form to the aspirations of the union—the merging of the two houses, but with the Tokugawa family crest in the prominent position. Both the exterior of the palanquin’s carriage compartment and its long beam are embellished with arabesque foliage (*karakusa*) designs that interweave two wild ginger leaves (*aoi*) and a roundel comprising six wild ginger leaves, the family crest of the Kishū Tokugawa clan. The family crest of the Tokugawa, consisting of three wild ginger leaves in a circle, and the flowering-peony crest of the Konoe family are executed on a black lacquer ground with a very fine gold and silver *hiramaki-e* (flat “sprinkled picture”) application. The Konoe family is a branch of the aristocratic Fujiwara clan, who dominated the court in the Heian period by marrying their daughters to the emperor and thus controlling the position of regent. The elaborate gilt fittings are embellished with arabesque foliage and the two family crests against a finely granulated background, while the large Tokugawa crest on the front and the back under the roof is surrounded by a pair of butterflies, symbols of longevity and a happy marriage. The long beam inserted through metal brackets on the roof of the palanquin would have been carried by six men when the princess was traveling in the carriage, three in the front and three at the back. The iconography follows both tradition and the strict Tokugawa-era rules, which limited the *maki-e* decoration to a combination of *karakusa* patterns and family crests. Even the colors of the brocaded silk depicting the seven auspicious treasures on a red ground, which was used to decorate the bamboo window blinds, were regulated. The doors of the palanquin can be opened on

both sides by sliding them to the right, and the roof can be folded back to give the princess more space when emerging from the carriage.

The inside of the carriage features elaborate, colorful paintings on a gold background, which would have been the focus of the bride’s attention as she made her way to the groom’s residence. As the twenty-one-year-old Atsu-hime faced forward inside the small chamber, she would have stared at the front panel, which, below the window, is embellished with a scene from Chapter 23, “First Song of Spring” (*Hatsune*), depicting Genji and Lady Murasaki, the ideal couple, in front of *kichō* curtains and a folding screen (see detail, opposite). It is a festive scene of a New Year’s celebration, with blossoming plum trees and young pines in the garden. Another scene set at the idyllic Rokujō estate, from Chapter 24, “Butterflies” (*Kochō*), appears on the panel of the sliding door on the left side; it shows the phoenix boat transporting court ladies on the pond. On the opposite side is a subsequent scene from the same chapter, in which young girls dressed as butterflies perform a *bugaku* dance (see cat. 47). The rear panel, to the back of the sitting princess, is embellished with an auspicious Mount Hōrai (Chinese: Penglai) composition, including an old pine tree, blossoming plum trees, bamboo, cranes, and turtles surrounded by gold clouds. The combination of these scenes from *Genji* and the Hōrai design was a standard decoration for palanquins prepared for brides of the shoguns. The Rokujō estate was likened to Penglai in the “Butterflies” chapter, and the decorative program of the paintings in the palanquin seem to present the bride with an image of Rokujō as an ideal, imagined realm where several women live together harmoniously in Genji’s pseudo-imperial court.

The ceiling of the palanquin is decorated with an auspicious geometric pattern on dark blue ground and the family crests executed in gold relief (*moriage*), with the Tokugawa crest depicted on gold, green, and orange ground in between black lacquered wood crosspieces. In contrast to the publicly exposed, sumptuous exterior, the interior was a private space adorned with paintings and gold decoration recalling luxurious folding-screen paintings or album leaves; the small chamber was intended to re-create the feeling of the interior of an opulent mansion, and the gold reflected the limited natural light entering the vehicle.

The scenes from the tale celebrated the marriage, conveyed pleasure and happiness, and carried auspicious meaning. In addition, in their very reference to the tale as a source and symbol of erudition and as a guide to proper behavior, these scenes were associated with ideal womanhood, suitable female conduct, and cultivation of literary skills. As such, they were important to the education of young brides, often referring to Murasaki Shikibu as



a role model (see the essay by Monika Bincsik in this volume), and had a special place in bridal trousseaux, assuring female success in marriage.

The procession of the bride could have taken several days depending on the distance between her family home and the groom's residence. These elaborate processions were watched by samurai and commoners alike, and all could admire the beautifully decorated, shiny lacquer palanquins, portable lacquer chests, and other implements that were otherwise inaccessible to them. The processions of the princesses from the shogun family were especially elaborate, as all the luxurious trousseau items reiterated the clan's power and wealth. Gorgeously decorated lacquer palanquins were so closely associated with the weddings of daimyo and aristocracy that the term "entrance of the bride's palanquin" (*koshi-ire*) was used to indicate the marriage of the bride to her husband.¹ To signify the high rank of the bride, *naginata* (a pole arm), decorative chests, and large, red lacquered umbrellas accompanied the palanquin in the procession to its destination, the Ōoku in Edo Castle. The institution of the "Great Interior," or Ōoku, was the residence for the Tokugawa shoguns' mothers, wives, concubines, and daughters, as well as their female servants. The term also referred to the network of its residents. Run by and for women, yet situated at the top of the Japanese social order, where the samurai warrior class and its ruling shogun positioned themselves, it was a unique organization.



Detail of cat. 71, interior painting, "First Song of Spring"

Ann Yonemura, curator of Japanese art at the Freer and Sackler Galleries, Washington, D.C., discovered this palanquin at an auction in 1984. She concluded that the palanquin was commissioned for the bride of a top-ranking descendant of the Tokugawa shogun family.² Noting the importance of the piece, the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery acquired it in 1985 as the first object purchased for its collections. In 2008, Saitō Shin'ichi, curator at the Edo-Tokyo Museum, identified the original owner of this ceremonial palanquin and confirmed that it was made in 1856 for the wedding procession of Princess Atsu-hime.³ The arabesque foliage with two wild ginger leaves (*futaba aoi karakusa*) is depicted in the under-drawings of Atsu-hime's wedding set (*Atsu-hime onkata omachiuke narabi ni gokonrei goyōdome*), a very important document that served as the key to the identification.⁴ Other lacquer implements



Front view of the Bridal Palanquin

from the wedding trousseau, such as an incense game set, were also recognized (cat. 72). This palanquin is one of the very few surviving examples made for brides of shoguns during the Edo period. Another palanquin, in the collection of the Edo-Tokyo Museum, is decorated with gold *maki-e* plum blossoms, *karakusa*, and triple-lozenge crests on a black lacquer ground; used by Honju-in (1807–1885), the secondary wife (*sokushitsu*) of the twelfth shogun, Tokugawa Ieyoshi (1793–1853), it is very similar to Atsu-hime's palanquin, and both were probably made in the same workshop.

Atsu-hime, originally named Okatsu and the daughter of Shimazu Tadatake (1806–1854), was born in 1835 in Satsuma province.⁵ In 1853, the daimyo Shimazu Nariakira (1809–1858), head of the Shimazu family, adopted her; she was given the name Atsu and was brought to Kagoshima. Atsu-hime soon moved to Kyoto, and then to the Shimazu mansion in Edo, in 1855. Nariakira intended to marry her to the shogun Tokugawa Iesada (1824–1858) in order to influence the selection of the next shogun. Iesada's cousin, the young lord of Kii, Tokugawa Iemochi (1846–1866), was considered to succeed him. However, Tokugawa Yoshinobu (1837–1913), adopted by the Hitotsubashi-Tokugawa clan, was also

a strong candidate and supported by those, including Nariakira, who believed that the shogunate needed a leader who could not only execute the necessary political and economic reforms but also successfully handle the foreign threat represented by the arrival of Commodore Matthew Perry in 1853. Nariakira hoped that Atsu-hime could influence the nomination of Yoshinobu as successor and create a strong alliance between the weakening, economically unstable shogunate and his powerful, wealthy clan. Given that the wife of the shogun was supposed to be from the imperial family or the nobility, Atsu was adopted by the Minister of the Right, Konoe Tadahiro (1808–1898), and named Fujiwara no Sumiko, hence the Konoe crest on her palanquin.

In the eleventh month of 1856, Atsu-hime entered Edo Castle as the wife of the thirteenth Tokugawa shogun, Iesada, and the next year she was formally given the title Midaidokoro.⁶ She was carried from the Shimazu mansion in Edo to Edo Castle in this ceremonial palanquin. However, Tokugawa Iesada died in 1858, naming Iemochi as his heir, and Shimazu Nariakira also died less than two weeks later. Two months after her husband's death, Atsu-hime became a Buddhist nun and took the name Tenshō-in, but she continued living in Edo Castle throughout the reign of Iemochi and that of Tokugawa Yoshinobu, who succeeded Iemochi as shogun in 1866. During this time, the Shimazu clan joined forces with the Mōri family to support the imperial restoration against the shogunate, and the resulting Boshin War (1868–69) ended with the overthrow of the Tokugawa regime. At the end of the war, Tenshō-in (Atsu-hime) successfully interceded with both sides for the bloodless surrender of Edo Castle. After the fall of the castle, the Tokugawa family, including Tenshō-in, were deprived of their privileges. Later, Tenshō-in moved to the mansion of the Kii Tokugawa in Tokyo and helped supervise the education of Yoshinobu's heir, Tokugawa Iesato (1863–1940). Tenshō-in died in Tokyo in 1883, and her court rank, Junior Third Rank, was restored upon her death. Atsu-hime's life story is the focus of a novel by Tomiko Miyao, *Tenshō-in Atsu-hime* (1984), and a fifty-episode drama series (2008) created by the Japanese broadcasting network NHK. MB

1. For more information on the wedding ceremonies and bridal processions, see Museum of Kyoto 1997; Takahashi Akemi 2000.

2. Yonemura 1989.

3. Saitō 2008, p. 141, no. 71, ill. pp. 100–104.

4. The underdrawings of Atsu-hime's wedding set are preserved in the National Archives of Japan, Tokyo; see *ibid.*, p. 141, under no. 72.

5. Hata Hisako 2007.

6. Tokugawa Art Museum 2017, pp. 9–22, nos. 5–37; Yoshikawa 2017. The drawings indicate that the palanquin and other trousseau items with the same decoration were ordered by the shogunate and executed in a lacquer workshop working for the shogunate.



72 梨子地葵牡丹紋散二葉葵唐草蒔絵十種香箱

Ten-Round Incense Game Set (*Jisshukō-bako*) with Arabesque Foliage and Family Crests (Owned by Princess Atsu-hime)

Edo period (1615–1868), 1856

Lacquered wood with gold and silver *hiramaki-e* on *nashiji* (“pear-skin”) ground

H. 6⅞ in. (17.6 cm), W. 8⅜ in. (21.4 cm), D. 10½ in. (26.7 cm)

Osaka Aoyama University Museum of History and Literature, Kawanishi, Hyogo Prefecture

This incense game set was part of Princess Atsu-hime’s elaborate wedding trousseau, along with the precious surviving bridal palanquin (cat. 71). The lacquer component of this wedding set might have included as many as fifty or sixty objects. The tiered storage box of the incense set and all the utensils are decorated with a design of arabesque foliage (*karakusa*) that includes two wild ginger leaves (*aoi*), a plant featured in the family crest of the Tokugawa. The family crests of the Tokugawa and Konoe families, as rendered here, reflect the preparatory drawings for Atsu-hime’s wedding set.¹

From the early Edo period, high-ranking daimyo, especially the shogun’s family, wanted to present themselves as legitimate

heirs of Heian-period aristocratic culture. Female members of these elite samurai families studied the classics, including *The Tale of Genji*, *The Tales of Ise*, and *waka* poetry, as part of their education. The expensive and luxurious wedding trousseaux prepared for the princesses and high-ranking samurai ladies reflected the elegance and the refined taste of the Heian period. *Genji* is replete with references to fragrances, including burning incense, kneaded incense, and incense sachets, and also to the making of incense. The fragrance of a garment or a perfumed letter is suggestive of its owner’s personality and discernment.

Despite the fascination with fragrances and the elaborate protocol of mixing incense during the Heian period, incense games were not formulated until medieval times.² Finely crafted incense utensils and various intricate lacquer incense boxes were commissioned as part of the trousseau in the Edo period (see the essay by Monika Bincsik in this volume). One of these was the box to house the “ten-round incense game,” one of the earliest incense games, whose history can be traced back to the Muromachi period (1392–1573).³ The game involved four different incense woods, three scents identified and passed around in a trial round, and one unrevealed. The



Detail of the *Genji-kō* album, part of the incense game set

gathered players had to memorize the three known woods, which were again each passed around in an incense heater three times in a certain order, and be able to detect the fourth wood, which was passed around only once. All the necessary utensils of the game fit into a richly embellished tiered storage box (*jisshukō-bako*). Atsu-hime's box contains incense-wood cutting tools, metal implements to prepare the incense heaters and handle the hot charcoal, two blue-and-white porcelain incense heaters (*kikikōro*), a tiered incense box, several trays for the used mica plates on which the incense wood rested in the heater, wooden cards for players to submit their answers to the game master, two answer-card boxes, and a writing box to record the game. The set also includes a "Genji incense" (*Genji-kō*) folding album, in which each chapter is represented by a well-known scene and its incense symbol.

In the "Genji incense" game, five packages of five kinds of incense wood are prepared. The twenty-five packages are shuffled, and they are picked randomly in sets of five. The five woods are passed around in heaters and the participants try to identify the scents, guessing the names of the woods and recording the order in which they circulated. It is a complex game that requires excellent olfactory memory. The answer consists of five vertical lines, each line representing a scent. Identical incense woods are indicated by connecting the respective vertical lines with a horizontal line. Altogether there are fifty-two different combinations, each identified with a crest (*Genji-mon*) that is associated with a chapter of the tale. Later, the *Genji-mon* became widely used to refer to the chapters or as independent design elements. MB

1. The underdrawings of Atsu-hime's wedding set (*Atsu-hime onkata omachiuke narabi ni gokonrei goyōdome*) are preserved in the National Archives of Japan, Tokyo; see Saitō 2008, p. 141, under no. 72.

2. Koike 1996; Satō Toyozō 1996, pp. 125–30.

3. Hata Masataka 1992.

73 松竹桜紋散蒔絵黒棚

Shelf for Cosmetic Boxes (*Kuro-dana*) with Pine, Bamboo, Cherry Blossoms, and Crests of the Matsudaira and Shimazu Families

Edo period (1615–1868), early 19th century

Lacquered wood with gold and silver *takamaki-e*, *hiramaki-e*, and *togidashimaki-e*, and cut-out gold- and silver-foil application on gold *nashiji* ("pear-skin") ground

H. 27⁹/₁₆ in. (70 cm), W. (top shelf) 30⁵/₁₆ in. (77 cm),

D. (top shelf) 14¹⁵/₁₆ in. (38 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, John and Pauline Gandel Gift, 2015 Benefit Fund, Brooke Russell Astor Bequest and Acquisitions Fund, 2016 (2016.167)

The golden age of the *maki-e* wedding sets was the Kan'ei era (1624–44), when the Kōami family's lacquer workshop prepared the highest-quality trousseaux for the Tokugawa family. A wedding set's main function was to decorate the dressing room at the time of a wedding; otherwise they were preserved in storage and maybe used again on special occasions. A wedding trousseau typically would have included a complete set of *The Tale of Genji*, album or folding screen paintings with *Genji* iconography, and numerous lacquers, including cosmetic boxes, writing implements, incense utensils, and so on (see the essay by Monika Bincsik in this volume). Relatively few wedding sets have survived in their entirety from that early period; there are more complete daimyo wedding sets from the eighteenth century. These lacquer sets with standardized items and regulated designs were typically prepared by specialized workshops in Kyoto and Edo.¹

This sumptuously decorated display shelf was created as one of the centerpieces of a spectacular wedding trousseau that probably included more than fifty lacquered accessories and pieces of furniture, of which thirty-one were acquired in 1910 by The Metropolitan Museum of Art (fig. 71). Created in the early nineteenth century, it was commissioned to celebrate the marriage of a daughter of one of the wealthiest and most influential daimyo families of the time, the Shimazu clan from Kyūshū, and a son of the Matsudaira clan, which ruled over the Kuwana domain of Ise province (present Mie prefecture) in central Japan. This wedding set encapsulates the historical context of powerful families using art as a symbol of political reconciliation.

Commonly, the dowry included three shelves (*santana*) that were used to display lacquer boxes with various purposes. The *kuro-dana* shelf held cosmetic boxes and toiletries, including the utensils necessary for tooth blackening (*haguro*), a custom high-ranking women followed after their weddings. The shelf has a richly embellished top surface, three open shelves, and a small cabinet enclosed by a pair of hinged doors. The finely decorated silver fittings feature *karakusa* (arabesque foliage)



patterns and the two family crests. The pattern of pine, bamboo, and cherry blossoms that decorates the shelf includes an unusual combination of auspicious symbols. The classic grouping is the “Three Friends of Winter” (pine, bamboo, and plum), a felicitous motif associated with celebration and representing longevity. While cherry blossoms have long been admired in Japan, their combination with pine and bamboo is rarely seen. The explanation for it might be related to the Matsudaira family crest, which is a stylized plum flower in a circle. Perhaps to avoid depicting plum blossoms twice within the same composition, the person

who ordered the wedding set decided to add another propitious motif representing spring and beauty. The shelf is executed using the most expensive combination of a thick *nashiji* (“pear skin”) background and several kinds of *maki-e* (“sprinkled picture”) decoration, as well as other fine decorative details, including finely cut-out gold and silver foil. The style and the flat, slightly formal structure of the composition suggest a late Edo-period dating. At the same time, the work follows a conservative, eighteenth-century *maki-e* trousseau tradition and indicates the highest social status, close to that of the shogun family.



Fig. 71. Trousseau Items with Pine, Bamboo, Cherry Blossoms, and Crests of the Matsudaira and Shimazu Families. Edo period (1615–1868), early 19th century. Lacquered wood with gold and silver *takamaki-e*, *hiramaki-e*, and *togidashimaki-e*, and cut-out gold- and silver-foil application on gold *nashiji* (“pear-skin”) ground. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Hewitt Fund, 1910 (10.7.1–.31)



Two family crests are represented on the shelf. The first, a cross shape in a circle, is the crest of the Shimazu family, lords of Satsuma province; the other consists of six circles forming a stylized plum-flower motif in a thin circle and represents the Hisamatsu Matsudaira family, lords of Kuwana, in Ise province. Kuwana, with Kuwana Castle, was the property of the Hisamatsu Matsudaira family from 1617 until 1710, and then from 1823 until 1871.² In the Edo period, the Matsudaira clan belonged to the *fudai* daimyo (hereditary vassals who were allied with the Tokugawa clan and were actually relatives) before the Sekigahara victory of 1600, and the Shimazu family to the *tozama* daimyo (vassals who were not allied with the Tokugawa family before the latter's rise to power). However, as the Shimazu were the most powerful and wealthy *tozama* lords, they were able to establish family relations with the shoguns through marriages, as seen in the wedding of Atsu-hime (see cat. 71).

The daughter of Shimazu Shigehide (1745–1833), Taka-hime (1809–1862) became the principal wife (*seishitsu*) of Matsudaira Sadakazu (1812–1841), the sixteenth lord of Ise Kuwana. The latter was the grandson of a Tokugawa relative, the influential chief senior councillor Matsudaira Sadanobu (1759–1829). After the wedding, Taka-hime lived in the Edo residence of the Kuwana lords. The couple's first child was the next heir of Kuwana, Matsudaira Sadamichi (1834–1859). The "engagement agreement" (the formal proposal) as well as the list of presents exchanged between the two families and presented by other family members have survived in the *Miscellaneous Records of Satsuma Province* (1644–1895).³ According to this invaluable source, on the first day of the fourth month of 1826, the Satsuma family received a formal proposal from the Matsudaira family. From the birth date of Matsudaira Sadamichi, the couple's first son, in 1834, we might assume a wedding took place in the early 1830s, so the preparations for the wedding, including the execution of the wedding set, may have been carried out between 1826 and the early 1830s. Given the important familial and political relations with the influential Matsudaira clan, a luxurious trousseau, recalling an earlier style and representing the importance of the event, was ordered. MB

1. Arakawa Hirokazu, Komatsu, and Haino 1986; Koike 1991; Tokugawa Art Museum 1993; Museum of Kyoto 1997.

2. Bincsik 2009.

3. *Sappan kyūki zatsuroku* (Miscellaneous records of Satsuma province), *Tsuiroku* (Addendum), vol. 156; see Sueyoshi, Suemichi, and Kagoshima-ken Ishin Shiryō Hensanjo 1971–78, vol. 7 (1976), pp. 750–54.

74 源氏物語図衝立 「初音」 伝狩野晴川院養信筆

“First Song of Spring” (*Hatsune*)

Attributed to Kano Seisen'in Osanobu (1796–1846)

Edo period (1615–1868), early 19th century

Freestanding (partitioning) screen; ink, color, gold, and silver
on paper

H. 39 ¾ in. (101 cm), W. 31 ¼ in. (79.5 cm)

Ishiyamadera Temple, Otsu, Shiga Prefecture

This freestanding screen (*tsuitate*) demonstrates how *Genji* imagery was used on interior furnishings. The Tokugawa family crest on its metal fittings suggests that this piece of painted furniture was created for a prestigious wedding dowry set (discussed in the essays by Kyoko Kinoshita and Monika Bincsik in this volume). Usually a *tsuitate* screen would be painted on both sides; in this one-sided example, perhaps one of the paintings was removed during remounting or repair.

Inspired by Chapter 23, “First Song of Spring,” the painted scene shows Genji paying a visit to his daughter, the Akashi Princess, who has received from her mother, the Akashi Lady, gifts of New Year’s mochi (rice cakes) and pine seedlings to which a cage with a mechanical warbler (not shown) has been attached. She reads a poem also sent from her mother, who reveals her sadness at their separation:

Toshitsuki o

Matsu ni hikarete

Furu hito ni

Kyō uguisu no

Hatsune kikase yo

Through the months and years,

Ever drawn to the seedling pine,

Waits the aged one:

Today permit her to listen

To the warbler’s first spring song.¹

Genji had requested an inkstone-and-brush set to be brought so that the Akashi Princess could respond to her mother.

Kano Seisen'in Osanobu was the lead Kano painter serving the Tokugawa shogunate. Remarkably, he kept a diary recording all the *Genji* screens he and his studio created for the Tokugawa princesses’ trousseaux. While this screen does not have Osanobu’s signature or seal—as was often the case on commissions for high-ranking patrons—its rendering of facial features and interior details, including the *kichō* curtains and lacquer furnishings, nevertheless bespeak the hand of Osanobu, based on comparison with signed works by the artist.² If not by Osanobu himself, the screen was painted by someone in the studio of the mainstream Kano under his supervision. KK

1. E. A. Cranston 2006, p. 816.

2. For instance, compare the figures on the right screen of *A Contest of Illustrations* in the collection of Tokyo National Museum (A-12373) or on the left screen of *Maidens of the Dance* in the collection of Ishiyamadera; Ishiyamadera Temple 2008, p. 209, no. 73, ill. pp. 174–75.



Detail of cat. 74



75 肉筆源氏物語かるた

Tale of Genji Poem-Matching Cards

Edo period (1615–1868), 18th century

108 cards; ink, color, gold, and gold and silver leaf on paper

Each: 3¼ × 2½ in. (8.2 × 5.3 cm)

John C. Weber Collection

Playing cards (*karuta*) were introduced to Japan by the Portuguese merchants during the second half of the sixteenth century, and soon thereafter the Japanese began to make their own versions. *Karuta* can be classified into two types: Portuguese-style cards and those derived from traditional Japanese “picture contests” (*e-awase*). The latter probably originated from the shell-matching game (*kai-awase*), which was played with painted shells (cat. 76). The basic idea of any picture-matching card game is to be able to quickly determine which card matches its pair mixed into an array of cards, and then pick it up before one’s opponents. In the Edo period, due to the increasing number of publications, the revived interest in imperial court culture, and the numerous artistic interpretations of *Genji*, including inexpensive woodblock prints, the tale became well known among the commoners as well as the elite. With the popularization of the classic, various types of entertainment were developed that in one way or another reference the fifty-four chapters, including card games (*karuta*), board games (*sugoroku*), and incense games. However, hand-painted and richly embellished *karuta* versions, such as this one, were typically created for high-ranking women’s wedding trousseaux (cats. 71–73).

“Poem-card games” (*uta-karuta*) were already in vogue by the 1630s; the *Hyakunin isshu* matching game, based on the famous *One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets* (*Hyakunin isshu*, first half of the 13th century) anthology, was the most popular, but others featured *The Tales of Ise* (*Ise monogatari*) or the *Thirty-Six Poetic Immortals* (*Sanjūrokkasen*).

The Tale of Genji card game seems to have evolved later, and the selection of inscriptions and illustrations was necessarily a

more complex process than for the *Hyakunin isshu* matching game, which involved simply matching halves of famous poems (with one card featuring an imaginary poet portrait). *Genji* cards include a single *waka* poem and a miniature painting associated with each of the tale’s fifty-four chapters. When possible, a poem in which the chapter’s title is included was selected—with some exceptions, however, since some of the titles are not featured in a particular chapter’s poems.¹

This complete set of 108 luxurious, hand-painted cards contains two decks of fifty-four cards, one card per chapter in each deck. The poems are each divided into two halves, the first lines (*kami no ku*) and the second half (*shimo no ku*).² The cards in the first deck, each with a scene from the chapter, the title, and the first part of one verse, were to be read aloud (*yomifuda* or *e-fuda*). The other deck, called the “picking cards” (*torifuda* or *moji-fuda*), had the poems’ second halves and was spread out on the floor. After the caller read the beginning of the poem, the players rushed to find the card with the second half. The *yomifuda* cards are inscribed in *kana* calligraphy against a decoration of sprinkled gold-leaf particles, and below the text is a colorful, vivid composition depicting a representative scene from the chapter.³ The scenes are easily recognizable to those who have read the tale and are executed with lots of attention to the details, using gold and silver pigments and “picture-within-the-picture” compositions. The *torifuda* are also inscribed in *kana* calligraphy against a background decorated with seasonal motifs and gold-leaf application. *Genji* card play was an entertaining way to refresh one’s knowledge of the classic, learn the iconography associated with each chapter, and at the same time encourage competition. MB

1. Ueno 2008.

2. Sakomura 2004.

3. Takagaki Yukie in Miho Museum 2015, pp. 168–69.

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76 源氏物語合貝

Shells from a Shell-Matching Game Set (*Awase-gai*)

Edo period (1615–1868), 18th century

Ink, color, *gofun* (ground shell pigment), and gold on clamshell halves

Each: approx. H. 1¾ in. (4.5 cm), W. 3⅜ in. (8.5 cm), D. 2½ in. (6.5 cm)

The Tokugawa Art Museum, Nagoya

The shell-matching game became a popular courtly parlor pastime in the late Heian period. As only the two halves of a clamshell (*hamaguri*) can be perfectly matched, the competition's goal was to identify as many matching shells as possible. The game was played with 180 or 360 shells. The left half of the shell—the “male side”—was called the “ground shell” (*jigai*), and at the beginning of the game all of the *jigai* were spread out in concentric circles on a red fabric floor covering or a tatami mat. The players sat around the shells. The right half of the shell—the “female side”—was referred to as the “calling shell” (*dashigai*).¹ To begin the game of *kaiooi*, a single calling shell was placed upside down in the center of the ground shells, and then the competitors had to find the matching half among the ground shells, which were also spread out upside down. Later, from the early Edo period, the inside surface of the shells was often decorated with flower patterns, elegantly inscribed poems, or scenes from *The Tales of Ise* or *The Tale of Genji*, as seen in these gorgeous examples for the shell-matching (*kai-awase*) contest. The two matching halves had the same pattern, but following the traditions of the early stage of the game, the upside-down shells had to be identified based on their shape, color, and pattern; the painting on the inside served only to confirm the match and to refresh one's knowledge of the story. There were ceremonial ways of putting the two halves together, but only the matching “couple” would click together along the natural grooves of the shell. The winner of the game was the player who managed to collect the most matching shells.²

From the late Muromachi period (1392–1573), decorative, octagonal boxes (*kaioke*), typically made of lacquered wood decorated with *maki-e* designs, were prepared for the shells, always in pairs (fig. 72). Shell-matching game boxes later became very important elements of wedding sets, symbolizing a happy and successful marriage. They were carried prominently in the procession and presented in a ceremony to the groom's family upon the arrival of the procession. The shells also became symbols of the “perfect couple” and were often represented as an auspicious motif.

Elaborately painted shells, often with scenes from *Genji*, were made for the wives of daimyo and high-ranking samurai.

References to the great literary classic indicated the bride's cultural refinement and represented the ideal conduct of a woman and the attributes of a successful wife. Some of the scenes represented in the shells of this set cannot be easily identified, but several chapters are recognizable, including, from left to right, top to bottom: Chapter 1, “The Lady of the Paulownia-Courtyard Chambers” (*Kiritsubo*); Chapter 4, “The Lady of the Evening Faces” (*Yūgao*); Chapter 11, “The Lady at the Villa of Scattering Orange Blossoms” (*Hanachirusato*); Chapter 13, “The Lady at Akashi” (*Akashi*); Chapter 14, “Channel Markers” (*Miotsukushi*); Chapter 16, “The Barrier Gate” (*Sekiya*); Chapter 17, “A Contest of Illustrations” (*E-awase*); Chapter 23, “First Song of Spring” (*Hatsune*); Chapter 34, “Early Spring Greens: Part 1” (*Wakana jō*), and Chapter 51, “A Boat Cast Adrift” (*Ukifune*). The costly, time-consuming preparation of these finely crafted shells required training in *yamato-e* style painting. The miniature compositions are rich in detail, and the painter clearly followed conventions of Tosa-school *Genji* pictures, especially as manifested in miniaturist album leaves. The vivid green, blue, and red hues are applied on a gold background, and details of the composition are rendered in relief (*moriage*). MB

1. Museum of Kyoto 2008b, pp. 130–31, nos. 166, 167.

2. Shirahata 1992.



Fig. 72. Pair of Shell-Game Boxes (*Kaioke*) from the “First Song of Spring” Wedding Trousseau (*Hatsune chōdo*), Owned by Princess Chiyo. Edo period (1615–1868), 1639. Lacquered wood with gold and silver *takamaki-e*, *hiramaki-e*, and *togidashimaki-e*, cut-out gold- and silver-foil application, and gold and silver inlays on *nashiji* (“pear-skin”) ground; H. including stand 18¾ in. (47.5 cm), D. 14½ in. (36.3 cm). The Tokugawa Art Museum, Nagoya. National Treasure



77 紅地貝桶桔梗松皮菱模様唐織

Noh Costume (*Karaori*) with Shell-Matching Game Boxes and Shells
 Meiji period (1868–1912), second half 19th century
 Twill-weave silk ground with discontinuous supplementary-weft patterning
 in silk and gilt-paper strips
 65¼ (with collar) × 58¾ in. (165.7 × 148 cm)
 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, William Sturgis Bigelow Collection (21.1149)

This impressive Noh theater robe (*karaori*) was designed for a female role. The minute design of painted shells and shell-matching game lacquer boxes (*kaioke*) is executed in green, beige, purple, and orange silk discontinuous supplementary-weft patterning. The background to these motifs is a pine bark lozenge-grid (*matsukawa-bishi*) in gilt-paper strip supplementary-weft patterning on a reddish orange twill-weave silk ground.

The shell-matching game lacquer boxes, decorated in *maki-e*, had an important role in both the Edo-period wedding ceremony and the bridal trousseau. Each shell consists of two parts, and only the two matching halves fit together; the complete shell exemplifies a perfect married couple and symbolizes a happy and successful union. As auspicious symbols, the shell-matching boxes (always in pairs) and the beautifully embellished shells (see

cat. 76) were popular design elements on *kosode* robes, lacquers, and even woodblock prints and illustrated books in the Edo period (cats. 94, 100). The shell-matching game is actually not featured in *The Tale of Genji*, as it was developed later, but the classic tale, with the *Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern* (*Kokin wakashū*, ca. 905) and *New Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern* (*Shin kokin wakashū*, 1205) anthologies, became a source of imagery for the shells.

Shell boxes and shells were represented on *kosode* and long-sleeved robes (*furisode*) from about the late seventeenth century. However, the shell-game design was not common on Edo-period Noh robes. It is likely that the pattern was transferred from *kosode* to Noh robes in the Meiji period owing to its popularity. In the present garment, the depiction of the lacquer boxes decorated with pine branches, a symbol of longevity, and the rendering of the shells with painterly compositions are quite similar to the *kosode* patterns of the same subject; however, on the Noh robe the distribution of the boxes and shells is symmetrical and linear, not scattered and dynamic as it was on *kosode*. Colorful balloon flowers (*kikyō*) are depicted between the shell boxes, and the gold lozenge-grid in the background makes the composition even more formal. MB



78 白綸子地几帳模様打掛

Over Robe (*Uchikake*) with Curtain of State Design

Edo period (1615–1868), early 19th century

Figured silk damask with paste resist-dyeing, tie-dyeing, silk-thread embroidery, and gold-thread couching

67½ × 48½ in. (171.5 × 123.2 cm)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, William Sturgis Bigelow Collection (11.3860)

This elegant and bold over robe (*uchikake*, a garment to be worn over a kimono without an obi sash) was designed for the wedding of its owner. The robe has long sleeves appropriate for a young lady, it is lined with red crepe silk, and the hem is padded. The white, figured silk damask (*rinzu*) has a woven pattern of mandarin oranges (*tachibana*), an auspicious symbol representing longevity, and is embellished with so-called curtains of state (*kichō*). The robe was probably made for a wealthy merchant-class woman. Against the white ground, the length of fabrics that constitute the curtains were created by applying bright red, green, and dark blue dyes; the small patterns were created with fine tie-dyeing (*kanoko-shibori*) and embroidery as well as gold-thread couching on the colorful strips. The curtain designs include auspicious symbols, such as chrysanthemum, paulownia, camellia, plum, and clematis flowers; phoenixes, turtles, and cranes (associated with longevity); butterflies and shells (symbolizing marriage); and spring and autumn motifs, as well as scattered “auspicious treasures.” Red, green, blue, light brown, pink, and yellow silk threads were used for the embroidery. The movement of the textile hangings and the decorative cords with their tassels creates a dynamic, playful composition. Wedding *uchikake*, such as this example, were often made in sets of three, including a white, a red, and a black garment. The red robe of this set is also in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, but the black one is lost.¹

The main design motif, the curtain of state, is a piece of furniture that played an important role in Heian-period *shinden-zukuri* interiors (see Appendix 1 in this volume). It has a portable, T-shaped lacquer frame, composed of two slim, vertical poles

inserted into a stand with a crossbar on the top, from which decorative textile hangings were suspended. The curtains were sometimes made of expensive silk and came in varying sizes; the tallest were approximately four feet high, while the smallest were only two feet. They provided privacy for aristocratic women, who were not supposed to be seen, and were often placed in rooms behind bamboo blinds (*misu*), creating a semitransparent barrier between the veranda passageway and the interior. The *kichō* could be used as a room divider as well (see cat. 51). The color and decoration of the *kichō* reflected the seasons; for summer and autumn, colorful bird-and-flower compositions were depicted. In the Heian period, the beginning of a love affair was often indicated by the moment when a courtier could peek into a room through the opening of the bamboo blinds or the curtains and glimpse the lady sitting within (see cat. 40). Such curtains are prominently mentioned in *The Tale of Genji*, in Chapter 2, “Broom Cypress” (*Hahakigi*); Chapter 3, “A Molted Cicada Shell” (*Utsusemi*); Chapter 9, “Leaves of Wild Ginger” (*Aoi*); Chapter 21, “Maidens of the Dance” (*Otome*); Chapter 29, “An Imperial Excursion” (*Miyuki*); Chapter 30, “Mistflowers” (*Fujibakama*); and Chapter 36, “The Oak Tree” (*Kashiwagi*). In paintings a *kichō* is frequently positioned between Genji and a lady with whom he is engaged in conversation.²

In the late Edo period, textile designs associated with *Genji* included objects such as curtains of state, shell-matching game boxes, and shells (see cat. 76), which were identified not only with the elegant and refined court culture of the Heian period but also with a happy and long marriage, as the tale had a significant role in wedding trousseaux. Patterns inspired by *Genji* suggested female success in marriage, motherhood, and other domestic relationships, and also implied that the bride was well educated, talented, and beautiful—almost as perfect as Murasaki Shikibu was perceived to be in the nineteenth century, when this garment was made. MB

1. Nagasaki 1995, p. 303, ill. p. 130; Nagasaki 2013, pp. 16–17.

2. Kurata 2015.



79 色絵夕顔図黒茶碗 尾形乾山作

Tea Bowl with Moonflower (*Yūgao*) and Poem
 Ogata Kenzan (1663–1743)
 Edo period (1615–1868), first half 18th century
 Stoneware with polychrome overglaze enamels
 H. 3⁹/₁₆ in. (9 cm), Diam. 5¹/₈ in. (13 cm)
 The Museum Yamato Bunkakan, Nara

The “Moonflower” tea bowl is one of the most striking ceramic works in the oeuvre of the potter, painter, and calligrapher Ogata Kenzan and probably dates from late in his career, sometime after he moved from Kyoto to Edo in 1731.¹ The bowl is coated overall with a black slip, over which were added slightly raised white flowers with yellow pistils and large green leaves—all representing new, vibrant colors in the artist’s palette. After applying the thick polychrome overglazes, including white slip, he covered the surface with a thin layer of a whitish translucent glaze, creating a faint white glow in the black glaze that evokes the shadows of dusk or moonlight. The calligraphy is executed in white slip, with characters in various sizes, some of which are distributed around the stems of the moonflowers. The signature of the artist is in white on the outside of the foot ring. Though its shape is similar to that of a hand-shaped Raku tea bowl, the vessel was actually thrown on the potter’s wheel.

The moonflower motif and the content of the poem refer to Chapter 4, “The Lady of the Evening Faces” (*Yūgao*), of *The Tale of Genji*. The *waka* Kenzan selected is not from the tale itself but rather a verse included in the *Jewels of Snow* (*Setsugyokushū*, sixteenth century), a personal collection of poems by the courtier-poet and literary scholar Sanjōnishi Sanetaka (1455–1537). It also appears among the fifty-five poems from *Genji* chapter titles (*Ei Genji monogatari makimaki no waka*) that Sanetaka dedicated to Ishiyamadera in 1533.² Sanetaka was one of the great scholars of classic literature of his day and taught the poetry of *Genji* to other poets in his circle. Kenzan had great admiration for Sanetaka’s work and often inscribed the poet’s *waka* on his ceramics and paintings, as seen here. The verse reads:

夕	花	思	い	露	よ
ほ	の	ひ	か	の	り
か		も	に		て
		わ		光	た
		か		り	に
		ぬ		や	

<i>Yorite dani</i>	Upon approaching
<i>Tsuyu no hikari ya</i>	In the glistening dew;
<i>Ika ni tomo</i>	How unexpected,
<i>Omoi mo wakanu</i>	The blossoming
<i>Hana no yūgao</i>	Of the evening face. ³

In the tale, *Yūgao* inscribes a poem on a fan and has it delivered to Genji along with a spray of moonflowers. Genji responds:

<i>Yorite koso</i>	By coming closer
<i>Sore ka to mo mime</i>	Might you see, indeed, what face
<i>Tasogare ni</i>	That flower may have,
<i>Honobono mitsuru</i>	Whom in the glimmering of dusk
<i>Hana no yūgao</i>	You glimpsed so faintly faint. ⁴

Combining poetry, painting, calligraphy, and pottery, Kenzan achieved an innovative style with a potent visual effect. Against a black background suggesting a nocturnal scene, the white flowers and deep green leaves glisten vividly. As the name “moonflower” suggests, the flowers open only at night. Long white petals slowly unfurl as the evening comes, eventually becoming trumpet-shaped blooms. Once morning arrives the flowers curl up, reverting back to their closed form. The flower refers to the mysterious character of Lady *Yūgao* and symbolizes her tragic and untimely death at the hands of Lady *Rokujō*’s jealous spirit. MB

1. Wilson 1991, pp. 144–45; Hatanaka Akiyoshi in Miho Museum 2004, p. 261. For recent research on Kenzan, see Arakawa Masaaki 2018.

2. Okuda 1999, p. 304.

3. Translation in Wilson 1991, p. 145.

4. E. A. Cranston 2006, p. 701.





80 白地檜扇夕顔模様唐織

Noh Costume (*Karaori*) with Cypress Fans
and Moonflower (*Yūgao*) Blossoms
Edo period (1615–1868), late 18th–early 19th century
Twill-weave silk with brocading in silk and supplementary-weft
patterning in silk and metallic thread
67 × 56 in. (170.2 × 142.2 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Dorothy F. Rolph,
in memory of her sister, Helen L. Belousoff, 1961 (61.151.6)

Various shades of red-orange, brown, light and dark blue, purple, green, and yellow threads are used to weave the small but refined cypress fans and moonflowers against the white background of this Noh costume. The patterns almost cover the entire surface, leaving only small areas of white visible. The composition is well balanced despite the dense patterning, as the application of the gold is kept to a minimum and the colors are carefully distributed. A moonflower leaning against an open cypress fan is a pattern associated with Chapter 4, “The Lady of the Evening Faces” (*Yūgao*), of *The Tale of Genji*.¹ In the Edo period, with the increasing education of samurai ladies and wealthy merchant women in Japanese classics, designs inspired by poems and tales such as *Genji* became popular on Noh costumes. However, on Noh robes only a limited number of literary works were featured.

The pattern on this Noh costume is a reference to Genji’s tragic love affair with the mistress of his wife’s elder brother, Tō no Chūjō. The woman comes to Genji’s attention when he notices moonflowers, or literally “evening faces” (*yūgao*), growing on the vine outside her humble abode—the same scene Kenzan depicted on his tea bowl (cat. 79). She sends out a spray of the white flower and a poem alluding to the blossom, giving her character the name Yūgao. One day Genji takes the woman to an unoccupied mansion and during the night she is attacked and killed by the jealous spirit of Genji’s neglected lover, Lady Rokujō. The episode inspired a Noh play titled *Yūgao*, attributed to Zeami (ca. 1364–ca. 1443). In the play, several priests visiting Kyoto hear a woman reciting poetry in a house in the Fifth Ward, the location of Yūgao’s residence in the tale. When they question her, she reveals that it is the house where the woman known as Yūgao died while having an affair with Genji. That night the priests recite the Lotus Sutra (*Hoke-kyō*) and the ghost of Yūgao appears. After receiving the priests’ prayers, she is filled with the joy of the dharma, and the chorus describes in poetic terms her attainment of Buddhist salvation.²

MB

1. Nagasaki 1995, p. 295, ill. p. 36.

2. Goff 1991, pp. 115–19.

81 紅地御所車桜蒲公英模様唐織

Noh Costume (*Karaori*) with Court Carriages
and Cherry Blossoms
Edo period (1615–1868), late 18th–first half 19th century
Twill-weave silk brocaded with supplementary-weft patterning
in metallic thread
68 × 57½ in. (172.7 × 146.1 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Howard Mansfield
Collection, Gift of Howard Mansfield, 1936 (36.120.689)

This Noh costume, shown on the following spread, has unusually large pictorial motifs of courtly ox carriages (*gosho kuruma*), dandelions, and cherry blossoms depicted on a red-orange ground. The woven design of white, purple, green, blue, brown, and gold patterns is repeated only twice in the full length of the fabric.¹ The ox cart is depicted under a cherry tree that is partially covered by gold clouds, a compositional element inspired by folding-screen and album-leaf paintings, as is the addition of large-scale dandelions to the ground of the design. During the Heian period, carriages were the vehicles of the aristocracy and figured in many works of literature, such as *The Tale of Genji*.

In the “Battle of the Carriages” episode in Chapter 9, “Leaves of Wild Ginger” (*Aoi*), Lady Rokujō, feeling neglected by her lover Genji, goes to watch him participate in the procession of the Kamo Festival. However, the grooms of Genji’s wife, Lady Aoi, force Lady Rokujō’s carriage aside in order to gain a better viewing position for their mistress (cat. 44; see also Melissa McCormick’s essay in this volume). This event leads eventually to Lady Aoi’s spiritual possession and death after giving birth to Genji’s son Yūgiri. The carriages on this *karaori* costume are decorated following the festival tradition of adorning headdresses and carriages with the heart-shaped leaves of the wild ginger plant (*aoi*), which is sacred to the Kamo Shrine. The “Battle of the Carriages” is also referenced in the Noh play *Lady Aoi* (*Aoi no Ue*) by Zeami (cats. 82–84), in a scene in which Lady Rokujō states that her life is unstable, like the wheel on a broken carriage, and that the wheel of her karma turns round and round in anguish due to sins from a previous life. MB

1. Nagasaki 1995, p. 296, ill. p. 37.





82 謡曲五十番 「葵の上」 土佐光起画

Lady Aoi, from *Fifty Noh Plays, Illustrated* (*Yōkyoku gojū-ban, Aoi no Ue*)
Paintings by Tosa Mitsuoki (1617–1691)

Edo period (1615–1868), 17th century

Sixth of a ten-volume set of thread-bound books; ink and color on
gold-decorated paper

13⁷/₁₆ × 9³/₄ in. (33.8 × 24.8 cm)

Harvard Art Museums / Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Bequest of the
Hofer Collection of the Arts of Asia (1985.586.8)

In his treatise called *The Three Paths* (*Sandō*, 1423), the great playwright Zeami identifies *The Tale of Genji* as a uniquely important source for creating plays with *yūgen* (mystery or profound grace), Zeami's highest aesthetic ideal.¹ Certain female characters from the tale proved to be the best vehicles for this endeavor, given their aristocratic elegance and their dramatic arcs involving great suffering and emotional turmoil that offer the potential for personal and Buddhist redemption. At least fifteen premodern plays are based on *Genji*, and in all but one of them female characters—such as Utsusemi, Yūgao, Tamakazura, Lady Akashi, and Ukifune—and even the author Murasaki Shikibu take center stage. Perhaps the most popular of all, however, is Lady Rokujō, whose struggle with her murderous wandering spirit is featured in the play titled *Lady Aoi* (*Aoi no Ue*), named for her rival and victim, Genji's wife. In this deluxe edition of the play's libretto (*utaibon*), Tosa Mitsuoki's paintings of two scenes provide a glimpse of what audiences might have seen on the stage in the early modern period.

When the play begins, Lady Aoi has just given birth to Genji's son Yūgiri and is in the throes of an illness seemingly caused by a possessive spirit that cannot be subdued, despite the efforts of numerous exorcists. A folded robe lying on the stage represents the ailing Aoi during the entire play, shown here as a reddish-orange kimono with a diamond pattern in gold, signifying brocade. A court official, the male figure in an *eboshi* cap, has asked the shaman Teruhi for assistance in divining the identity of the spirit. Holding a long strand of prayer beads, Teruhi kneels beside the robe wearing the Noh mask that designates a young woman (*ko-omote*) and summons the spirit.² Lady Rokujō appears and begins to describe her uncontrollable desire for retribution against Aoi for the humiliation she suffered at the “Battle of the Carriages” (see cat. 44). Rokujō's colorful, flowery robe recalls the rarefied world of the court that she once inhabited, but the serpentine pattern of triangles on her inner robe connotes the demonic spirit about to



Detail of cat. 82

emerge. And indeed, as the tension builds, Rokujō strikes the flat robe (Aoi) with her fan before retreating. The *deigan* (“gilded eyes”) mask for this role is that of a beautiful woman whose golden eyes provide a hint of the supernatural. The second illustration depicts the climax in the second half of the play when the vengeful spirit in a horned *hannya* demon mask, her serpent robe fully revealed, battles a holy man from Yokawa who has been called in to subdue her. As drums and a flute play at a frenzied tempo, the spirit struggles against the exorcism and attempts to attack the holy man with a long wand (detail, above). The Buddhist incantations prove too powerful, however, and the spirit acknowledges defeat. The play ends with the chorus describing the compassion of the bodhisattvas who descend and offer salvation. MM

1. Goff 1991, pp. 33–34; see also pp. 125–39 for a thorough introduction to and translation of the play *Lady Aoi* on which this description relies.

2. On the costumes, masks, and stage directions for this play, see Bethe and Emmert 1997.



地清淨内外清淨六根清淨
 一人一人今
 一人一人今



本長生の事の内々を清くして
 ひろくはやくはやくの事 東方小塔二世の事
 下 暴謀二尊陀縛日羅南 入 系行者々々地
 法(神)千ゆく一法(神)千ゆく だといふ事
 ありきうなるも 行老乃は力強く願取とまて
 三ゆす故行主人て



Cat. 83

83 能面 『泥眼』*Deigan* Noh Mask

Momoyama period (1573–1615), early 17th century
 Wood, gesso, polychrome pigments, and gold accents
 H. 8 in. (20.3 cm), W. 5 in. (12.7 cm)
 Collection of Allen Rosenbaum

84 能面 『般若』 友閑満庸作*Hannya* Noh Mask

Yūkan Mitsuyasu (1577–1652)
 Edo period (1615–1868), first half 17th century
 Wood, gesso, polychrome pigments, and brass and gold accents
 H. 9 in. (22.9 cm), W. 6 in. (15.2 cm)
 Collection of Stephen Marvin, on long-term loan to Wakayama Prefectural
 Museum

As explained in the previous entry, the Noh play titled *Lady Aoi* (*Aoi no Ue*) by Zeami is based on Chapter 9, “Leaves of Wild Ginger” (*Aoi*), of *The Tale of Genji*. Lady Aoi, Genji’s first wife, has been possessed by a spirit and is seriously ill.¹ In order to identify and expel the demon, a courtier (an attendant of her family) invites Priestess Teruhi, an expert in *azusa*, a Shinto ritual performed with a Japanese catalpa-wood bow (*azusa-yumi*). The demon appears to be the vengeful spirit of Lady Rokujō, a former lover of Genji, who fell out of favor with him and was further humiliated at the Kamo Festival when her carriage was pushed aside to allow space for Aoi’s carriage (see the essay by Melissa McCormick in this volume). She suffers incurable, growing agony.

In the first half of the play, a Noh actor (the main protagonist, *Mae-shite*) wears a *deigan* (“gilded” or “golden eyes”) mask (cat. 83), which represents a mature woman who carries within her the seeds of supernatural transformation, while at the same time signals a demonic spirit that will manifest itself soon. The *deigan* mask was originally created for the role of a woman who has attained Buddhist spiritual enlightenment.² The oval face, with a firm jaw, has an off-white or pale ivory complexion and is framed by stylized locks of black hair. The large, prominent forehead and gilded eyes are the most distinctive features of this mask. Its expression of tension made this mask appropriate for the first part of the *Aoi no Ue* play, as it also evokes an image of controlled jealousy and anger. The character of Lady Aoi is embodied solely by a *kosode* placed at the center front of the stage.

In the second part of the play, a mountain monk, Yokawa no Kohijiri, is summoned to perform a ritual to exorcise the vengeful spirit from Lady Rokujō, but the jealousy in her heart embodies



Cat. 84

itself as a female ogre, played by a *Nochi-shite* actor wearing a *hannya* mask, representing a female serpent-demon (cat. 84; see also cat. 82). The ogre threatens the praying monk, and a battle rages between them. Eventually, a Buddhist scripture reaches the lady’s heart and her ogre aspect is calmed. Through the mercy of Buddha she attains an enlightened state.

The dramatic moment of the transformation of Lady Rokujō’s spirit to a female ogre is signaled by the *hannya* mask, which has an open mouth, a strong jaw, sharp teeth, golden eyes, and two horns, all features that magnify the extreme emotional tension. The mask is created with a center line that runs along its full length, and for the role of Lady Rokujō the pale ivory color is appropriate (*Shirohannya*). It represents female rage and pain, a woman obsessed or taking a devil form of being. The mask’s expression is demonic, angry, frightening, tormented, and sorrowful—all at the same time. MB

1. The relationship between *The Tale of Genji* and the Noh play is explicated in Bargaen 1988 and Goff 1991.

2. For a discussion of the use and history of Noh masks, see Marvin 2010.



85 紋散象嵌箏 装剣金工後藤程乗作

Koto

Metalwork by Gotō Teijō (1603–1673)

Edo period (1615–1868), early 17th century

Various woods, ivory and tortoiseshell inlays, gold and silver inlays, metalwork, cloth, lacquer, and paper; case: lacquered wood with gold *hiramaki-e*

H. 5 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (13 cm), W. 74 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (189.5 cm), D. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (24.2 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Amati Gifts, 2007 (2007.194a–f)

Heian-period courtly refinement (*miyabi*) included performing and appreciating music, particularly the koto, a type of zither derived from the Chinese *zheng*. Music also served as a medium for spiritual attunement with the cosmos, was linked to religious beliefs, and carried political connotations, for example, in the transmission of skills within a lineage.

The instrument had twelve strings when it was introduced to Japan in the early Nara period (710–94) and later thirteen strings. In *The Tale of Genji* two types of koto are mentioned, the *sō no koto*, which has thirteen strings (similar to the present koto), and the *kin no koto*, with seven strings. Most of the characters in the tale are

gifted musicians, and music often represents attraction, friendship, romance, joy, guilt, or sadness among Genji and his companions. The enjoyment of performances occurs in several chapters. The choice of instrument and one's level of skill provide insights into the characters' personalities, and virtuosity always expresses status or beauty.¹ The koto is featured prominently in Chapter 2, "Broom Cypress" (*Hahakigi*) (see cat. 50). Genji reveals his sadness and nostalgia by playing the koto in Chapter 13, "The Lady at Akashi" (*Akashi*). Having been exiled to Suma, he later reaches the shores of Akashi after an adventurous journey and subsequently expresses his attraction to the Akashi Lady, a masterful *biwa* lute player, by playing music with her (see cat. 51). When Genji is finally allowed to return to the court, his farewell presents to her are a koto and one of his robes.

The Met's koto, with its copious inlay and remarkable metalwork by Gotō Teijō, ninth master and perhaps the most skilled member of the well-known Gotō family of metalwork artists, is an excellent example of an instrument that was endowed with great prestige in Edo-period Japan.² In 1600, during a series of battles that led to the unification of Japan, Tanabe Castle in



Detail of cat. 85

Maizuru was under siege by the Toyotomi Hideyoshi loyalists. Hosokawa Yūsai (also known as Fujitaka, 1534–1610), a well-known scholar of classical literature and an ally of Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616), defended the castle with five hundred samurai against an army of fifteen thousand. To save the precious manuscripts he owned, Yūsai sent the most prestigious ones to the imperial court, including the *Secret Commentary on The Tale of Genji* (*Genji wahishō*, 1449). To save him, Emperor Go-Yōzei issued a decree and dispatched three poet-warriors, including Yūsai's son-in-law, Karasumaru Mitsuhiro (1579–1638). Yūsai's son, daimyo Hosokawa Tadaoki (1563–1646), is said to have presented this koto to Mitsuhiro in gratitude for the rescue of his father.

All but the instrument's playing areas are decorated. Gold crane medallions, the family crest of the Karasumaru family, are set against a finely carved diaper pattern adorning the sides, which are framed in a delicate rendering of inlaid woods, horn, ivory, and silver wire that extends to both the upper and lower surfaces. The ends, of *tagayasan* and *shitan* wood, are embellished with geometric inlaid patterns and metalwork lions and peonies in ivory frames. The elaborate black lacquer outer case, dating from the early nineteenth century, is decorated with gold *hiramaki-e* (flat “sprinkled picture”) cranes and flying geese. MB

1. Kobayashi 1990.

2. Moore, Dobney, and Strauchen-Scherer 2015, pp. 15–16, 60–61, ill.



86 藤松蒔絵鏡台

Mirror Stand (*Kyōdai*) with Wisteria and Pine
 Edo period (1615–1868), second half 18th century
 Lacquered wood with gold and silver *hiramaki-e*, *e-nashiji*; gilt-copper fittings
 Bronze mirror with handle; cast and incised decoration
 Stand: H. 25 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (64.5 cm), W. 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (27 cm), D. approx. 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (26 cm)
 John C. Weber Collection

Complex mirror stands such as this one, designed to combine a cosmetic box with a mirror, were produced from the Muromachi period (1392–1573), but the earliest surviving examples date to the Momoyama period (1573–1615). The box-shaped body has two drawers, which would have contained numerous items such as square facial powder boxes, a round mirror box, an incense box, toilet water containers, several brushes, spatulas, eyebrow cosmetic items, a tiered hair-oil container, and combs. The mirror stand has two short, curved arms to hold a round mirror; its two removable pillars can be inserted into the body. Early round mirrors were only about four inches in diameter, but they increased in size to about four and three-quarters to seven inches during the Edo period; mirrors with attached handles also became popular during this time. From the end of the seventeenth century, large mirrors with a diameter of nearly nine and a half inches were also produced. To accommodate the larger and heavier mirrors, an additional cross-panel was inserted between the feet of the two vertical pillars of the mirror stand. The center panel on the top of the stand and the cross-panel are decorated with an openwork gilt-bronze crest. Elaborately embellished mirror stands bearing the family crests of the bride and the groom were part of the wedding trousseau (see the essay by Monika Bincsik in this volume). Less luxurious ones were made as stand-alone cosmetic furniture with standardized measurements and structure, indicating that hair dressing and makeup application were important daily activities of both high-ranking ladies and commoners.

The mirror stand in the Weber Collection is decorated with wisteria flowers and pine trees but no family crests, which suggests that this item was not part of a wedding dowry set.¹ As an ever-green, the pine is a symbol of longevity, while the wisteria has multiple associations in Japanese culture. Its beautiful purple flowers are mentioned in poems included in the earliest anthology of Japanese poetry, *Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves* (*Man'yōshū*,

ca. 759), and given its strong fecundity it was considered a symbol of longevity and fertility. Furthermore, *fuji* (the Japanese word for wisteria) was connected to the word for immortality (*fushi*) and became an auspicious motif. Because the Fujiwara family had the wisteria included in their name and family crest, it was always associated with Heian-period court culture and the aristocracy; the combination of wisteria and pine is also a symbol of the Fujiwara. The Weber mirror stand is further embellished with two gilded openwork paulownia (*kiri*) crests, which we often see on Edo-period mirror stands. The round, handled mirror (*e-kagami*) is decorated on the back with the auspicious Mount Hōrai motif (cranes, a turtle, pine, and bamboo, but no plum blossoms), and it bears the signature “Tenka-ichi Fujiwara no Iesato,” that of a late Edo-period mirror master from Osaka.

Mirrors are mentioned in several chapters of *The Tale of Genji*. In Chapter 12, “Exile to Suma” (*Suma*), Genji prepares to leave for exile, where he will be apart from Murasaki for more than two years. Gazing in the mirror combing his sidelocks, he tells Murasaki that she should console herself with the image of his face, which will remain in the mirror—the mirror echoing the moon, which they can view together:

<i>Mi wa kakute</i>	Though in this fashion
<i>Sasuraenu to mo</i>	Have been exiled flesh and blood,
<i>Kimi ga atari</i>	My shadow-image
<i>Saranu kagami no</i>	In the mirror at your side
<i>Kage wa hanareji</i>	Shall never depart where you dwell.

Murasaki responds to Genji in agreement:

<i>Wakarete mo</i>	If although we part
<i>Kage dani tomaru</i>	Something of you yet remains,
<i>Mono naraba</i>	A shadow-image,
<i>Kagami o mite mo</i>	Then indeed I'll find solace
<i>Nagusametemashi</i>	By looking in my mirror. ²

MB

1. Laura W. Allen, with Kristopher Reeves, in Allen 2015, pp. 180–81, no. 48; Kuwabara Yasuo in Miho Museum 2015, pp. 292–93, no. 105.

2. E. A. Cranston 2006, p. 754.

87 「神橋」 志野橋文茶碗

Shino Tea Bowl with Bridge and Shrine, Known as “Bridge of the Gods”
(*Shinkyō*)

Momoyama period (1573–1615), late 16th century

Glazed stoneware with design painted in iron oxide (Mino ware, Shino type)

H. 4 1/8 in. (10.5 cm), Diam. 5 1/2 in. (14 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary Griggs Burke Collection,
Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015 (2015.300.271)

This Shino-ware tea bowl is decorated with a simple, linear design of a bridge and a Sumiyoshi-*zukuri*-style shrine (an ancient Shinto architectural style) or gateway to a Shinto shrine (*torii*), painted in iron oxide under a thick white glaze. There are numerous named Shino tea bowls with similar stylized representations of a bridge and a shrine. In the Keichō era (1596–1615) the bridge was a favored design element, as seen in *kosode* motifs depicted on folding screens showing various indoor and outdoor amusements (*yūrakuzu byōbu*).¹ Some of these bridge motifs came to be associated with Chapter 45, “The Divine Princess at Uji Bridge” (*Hashihime*), of *The Tale of Genji*. There are other Momoyama-early Edo-period tea bowls as well with names borrowed from the chapters of the tale.

Shino ware, produced at the Mino kilns during the Momoyama period, is characterized by a heavy body and a coarse, cracked feldspathic glaze, qualities appreciated by the tea master Sen no Rikyū (1522–1591). The Met’s Shino tea bowl was produced before the introduction of the improved multichambered climbing kiln (*noborigama*). Pieces such as this one, after preliminary shaping on the potter’s wheel, were subtly altered by pressing them gently with the hands while the clay was still soft. Here, the rim undulates slightly as it flares outward, and the finished object feels comfortable in the hands despite its quite large size. It has the standard, late sixteenth-century double-ringed low foot under a wide, flat base, so that it would sit securely on a tatami mat when in use. Because the potter held the foot in his hand as he dipped the vessel into the liquid glaze, that area was left unglazed; on this bowl, the potter’s thumb mark can be seen under the image of the bridge.²

Among the famous Shino tea bowls with bridge designs created in the early seventeenth century, some are referred to as “Sumiyoshi-de,” the one owned by the Tokyo National Museum is known as “Hashihime” (“Princess of the Bridge”),³ and The Met’s example is “Bridge of the Gods.” Another tea bowl with a similar bridge design is called “Benkei” (Hosomi Museum, Kyoto) in reference to the famous bridge fights of Musashibō Benkei (1155–1189), the warrior monk. In these examples, the arched bridge is drawn with two parallel lines and its pillars are indicated by two vertical strokes, while the guardrails are just short lines emerging from the body of the bridge. The design shows the bridge in a close-up, and the application of the rich iron oxide under the thick white glaze creates the illusion of a misty or foggy landscape. The Sumiyoshi Grand Shrine in Osaka houses deities of war at sea and had an important role in protecting the ships of the imperial embassies to China in addition to sailors, fishermen, and travelers. The shrine later became dedicated to poetry as well and was often represented in paintings and decorative arts. Leading to the entrance of the main shrine grounds is a red bridge, one of the most famous landmarks of the site. It is built with an exceptionally high arch to call to mind the rainbow that bridges the earth and sky.

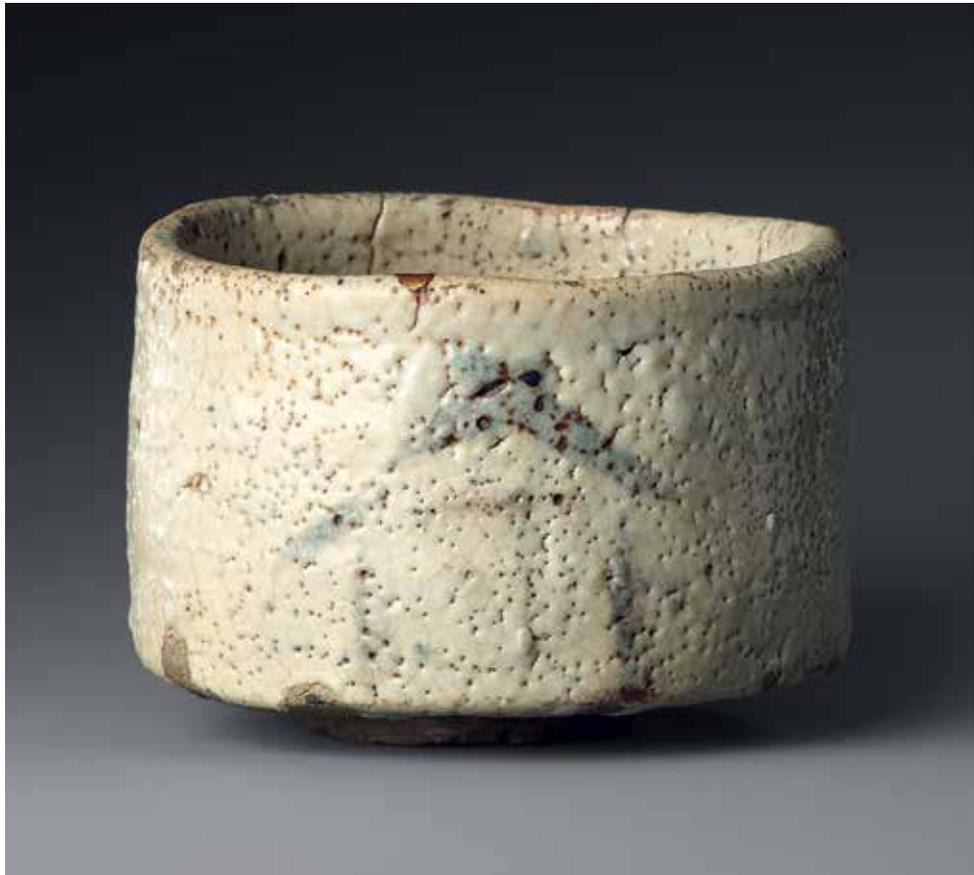
The Tokyo National Museum’s “Princess of the Bridge” tea bowl was probably named after a female deity protecting the Uji Bridge, enshrined in the Hashihime Shrine on the west side of the bridge, and figuring in Chapter 45, as mentioned above. The Uji Bridge is a legendary span over the Uji River, near Kyoto. Originally built in 646, it has been rebuilt numerous times and has appeared in countless works of art and literature. In “The Ten Books of Uji” (*Uji-jūjō*), as the last ten chapters of *Genji* are known, the bridge is one of the key elements. The Met’s “Bridge of the Gods” tea bowl can also be associated with either the Sumiyoshi iconography or the Uji Bridge.

MB

1. Kawakami 2010, pp. 229–32.

2. Murase 2000, pp. 239–40, no. 100.

3. Tokyo National Museum (G-4830).



88 橋姫蒔絵硯箱

Writing Box (*Suzuribako*) with “The Lady of the Bridge” Design
Edo period (1615–1868), 18th century

Lacquered wood with gold and silver *takamaki-e* and *hiramaki-e*,
and silver inlay on gold *nashiji* (“pear-skin”) ground

H. 1 in. (2.5 cm), W. 5 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (14.3 cm), D. 6 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (15.6 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary Griggs Burke
Collection, Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015
(2015.300.284a–d)

The exterior of this small writing box, probably made for a woman, is decorated with a scene of two aristocratic ladies reading a poem or a letter on a veranda, surrounded by a garden with autumn grasses, while a high-ranking person is listening inside, partially hidden by bamboo blinds. The scene was inspired by Tosa-style album leaves, which often depict scenes of figures seated in a room overlooking a garden (cats. 38–43). The *maki-e* artist very precisely executed the fine details, including the delicate lines of the patterns on the garments, the inlaid silver dewdrops on the chrysanthemums and pampas grass, and the mist covering parts of the scenery. The calligraphy incorporated into the composition is a poem from the *Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern* (*Kokin wakashū*, ca. 905), which is inscribed in silver-inlaid characters on the exterior of the lid and then continued on the interior. The first two lines of the *waka* are given, and then readers are left to complete the poem for themselves, with hints from the pictorial motifs in the *maki-e* decoration of the lid:

Exterior of lid: 小薙に 衣
Interior lid: かたしき 今宵もや われを
Not inscribed: まつらむ 宇治の橋姫

<i>Samushiro ni</i>	Does she wait for me
<i>Koromo katashiki</i>	Again tonight, having spread
<i>Koyoi mo ya</i>	But a single robe
<i>Ware o matsuramu</i>	On her woven rush matting—
<i>Uji no Hashihime</i>	The maiden at Uji Bridge? ¹

The interior of the lid depicts a court carriage and two courtiers accompanied by a young boy attendant.

The poem is a reference to Hashihime, or “The Lady of the Bridge,” a woman who spends her nights waiting for her lover. It might also be a reference to a chapter of *The Tale of Genji*, whose last ten chapters are known as “The Ten Books of Uji” (*Uji-jūjō*). Chapter 45, “The Divine Princess at Uji Bridge” (*Hashihime*), the first of the ten, introduces Hachinomiya, a half brother of Genji, and his two daughters, Ōigimi and Nakanokimi, who live with him at Uji (south of Kyoto) after he was rejected by the court for attempting to supplant the crown prince. Hachinomiya devotes himself to Buddhist studies, and Kaoru (son of the Third Princess), who has deep misgivings about his paternity, begins to study under him. This chapter is also often associated with the Hashihime Shrine situated on the west side of the Uji Bridge. It is dedicated to the Shinto deity Hashihime, who safeguards the bridge (cat. 87).

MB

1. H. C. McCullough 1985b, p. 153, no. 689.



Interior of the lid and box





89 誰ヶ袖蒔絵重箱

Stacked Food Box (*Jūbako*) with “Whose Sleeves?” (*Tagasode*) Design
Edo period (1615–1868), 18th century

Lacquered wood with gold and silver *hiramaki-e*, gold- and silver-foil application, and mother-of-pearl inlay on gold *nashiji* (“pear-skin”) ground

H. 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (27 cm), W. 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (22.5 cm), D. 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (21 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary Griggs Burke Collection,
Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015 (2015.300.288a–e)

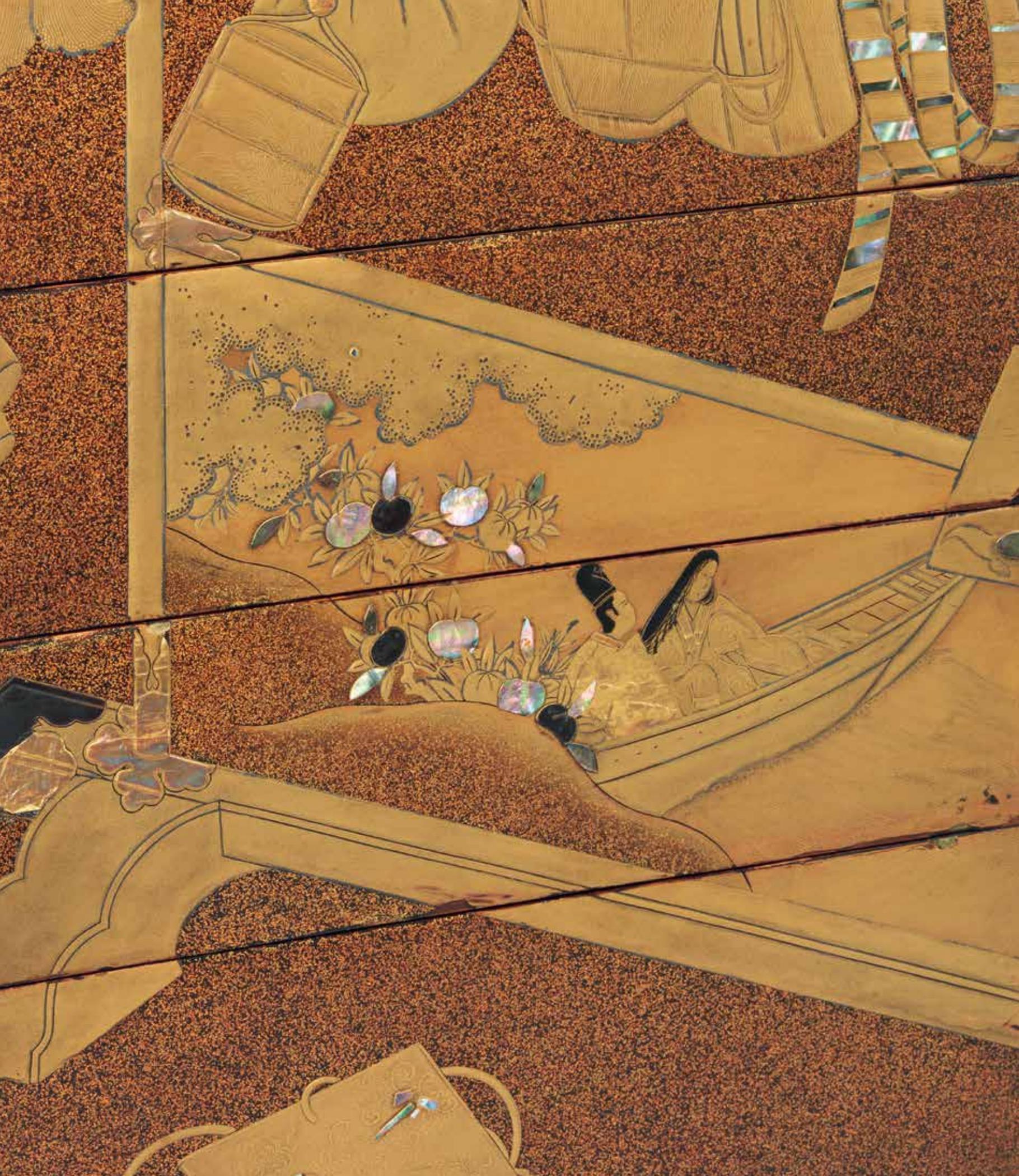
The design of this elegant food box, created for a celebratory meal such as a New Year’s feast or a lavish picnic, features garment racks with draped-over kimonos and accessories, including amulets, perfume bags, and even an *inrō* (portable medicine case for a man). This composition, known as “Whose Sleeves?” (*Tagasode*), was a popular pictorial subject represented on folding screens and on decorative arts from the late sixteenth century onward.

The Japanese term refers to the beautiful owner of these garments, who is absent. It was used in *waka*, including poems in *Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern* (*Kokin wakashū*, ca. 905), but the design on this food box also refers to *The Tale of*

Genji through a “picture-within-the-picture” composition, as the depicted kimono rack is embellished with a scene from the story.¹

The pictorial composition on the lower panel of the robe stand shows a young man and a woman in a boat, easily recognizable as a reference to Chapter 51, “A Boat Cast Adrift” (*Ukifune*), in which a young girl called Ukifune (literally, “Floating Boat”) is taken away on a cold, early spring day, after a heavy snowfall, by the amorous Prince Niou and carried by boat to a mansion across the Uji River (cat. 64). On the way, they stop at the Isle of Orange Trees (*Tachibana no kojima*) and exchange poetry, the moment captured on the box. Despondent over her predicament—for she is also romantically involved with Kaoru (the son of Genji’s wife, the Third Princess)—she later attempts to drown herself. The mandarin oranges (*tachibana*) in this “picture-within-the-picture” composition are executed in shiny pink-and-white mother-of-pearl. The hill and waterfall depicted on the small screen reflect the painting style of the Kano school, which suggests that a Kano-trained artist could have supplied the preliminary design for the box. MB

1. Murase 2000, pp. 297–98, no. 126.



CHAPTER SEVEN

Genji and Print Culture: From Ukiyo-e to Manga

THE POPULARIZATION OF *GENJI* IMAGERY went hand in hand with the increased availability of cheaper and more widely accessible woodblock-printed versions of the text in the seventeenth century. The iconography of each chapter, which had for the most part been firmly established by artists of the Tosa school (as described in Chapter 4 in this volume), was reproduced, sometimes with additional new and idiosyncratic scenes, in illustrated volumes such as Yamamoto Shunshō's foundational printed edition (cat. 91, fig. 25). By the end of the seventeenth century, print artists who specialized in *ukiyo-e* ("pictures of the floating world"—referring to the realms of Kabuki actors and courtesans of the licensed brothel districts) took the aristocratic subject matter and made it their own. They also created illustrated versions, both conventional and parodic, of the Japanese prose classics, and often depicted characters from fictional worlds of the past in the guise of contemporary figures. *Ukiyo-e* artists, in fact, saw themselves as modern heirs in the lineage of *yamato-e* (traditional "Japanese painting") and often incorporated that designation into their signatures (see cat. 92). The experiments of *ukiyo-e* artists played a crucial role in translating the iconography of the classical tradition into the new visual language of early modern times. One of the defining characteristics of *ukiyo-e* from the outset was the playful juxtaposition of traditional aristocratic culture and contemporary popular culture.

Not surprisingly, the types of literary works adopted by *ukiyo-e* artists are the same ones appropriated by artists working in the Rinpa tradition—represented by Tawaraya Sōtatsu (ca. 1570–ca. 1640; cat. 53) and being formulated by Ogata Kōrin (1658–1716) in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries—but in different ways. Among the most popular works to be subjected to playful manipulation by *ukiyo-e* artists were classics such as *The Tales of Ise*, the tenth-century compendium of short tales built around love poems, and, of course, *The Tale of Genji*—both of which have plots centering on protagonists who are amorous courtiers. The erotic adventures in the narratives thus provided the perfect grist for imaginative transformation by *ukiyo-e* artists. Conveniently,



Fig. 73. Illustrations of *All Kinds of Beautiful Women (Bijin e-zukushi)*. Hishikawa Moronobu (1618–1694). Edo period (1615–1868), 1683. Spread from a set of three woodblock-printed books; ink and color on paper; each: 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 7 $\frac{1}{16}$ in. (26.4 × 18.6 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1918 (JIB67a–c)

a widely known iconography for various chapters of both tales was already well on its way to being established by the production in the early seventeenth century of printed illustrated versions of both classics, not to mention *Genji* digests and spin-offs.

The artist Hishikawa Moronobu (1618–1694), viewed retrospectively as the founder of what might be retroactively called the Ukiyo-e school (though others prepared the way), took the iconography of the Tosa school and played with it to create an entirely new repertory of imagery inspired by *Genji*. See, for instance, how he transformed the episode of the Third Princess (Onna Sannomiya), from Chapter 34, "Early Spring Greens: Part 1" (*Wakana jō*), which became one of the most parodied scenes in *ukiyo-e* prints and paintings—no doubt due to its clever use of the tropes of voyeurism and seduction, not to mention the general association of cats with casual promiscuity (fig. 73).¹ Here there is an indirect reference to the episode: the princess, standing behind

a reed curtain, is unexpectedly revealed when the leash of her cat gets tangled in the cord and the curtain is pulled aside. Kashiwagi, who has been playing *kemari* (aristocratic kickball) with courtiers nearby, receives a fleeting glimpse of her. As related by the narrator of the original text, when the cat starts to mew the Third Princess turns to look, and “at that moment her youthful beauty—the open simplicity of her expression and deportment—was suddenly and completely exposed to Kashiwagi.”² In her analysis of this episode, Nakamachi Keiko observes, “In short, Moronobu took the compositional format used for genre paintings of *kabuki-mono* (young men dressed in provocative fashion) and courtesans in the mid-seventeenth century and applied them to *Genji* pictures.”³ The long association of beautiful women, cats, and voyeurism was established in *Genji* iconography (created by artists of the orthodox Tosa and Kano schools), but over time it was fully absorbed into the *ukiyo-e* repertory, where it could be adapted into contemporary settings.

For instance, Nishikawa Sukenobu (1671–1750), based in the imperial capital of Kyoto, was a celebrated and prolific illustrator of woodblock-printed illustrated books, including erotica. He established a reputation as a dedicated chronicler of women and their role in Japanese society and, furthermore, created what can be seen as a distinctive early eighteenth-century “Kyoto style” *bijin* (beautiful woman), which had a profound effect on subsequent *ukiyo-e* artists, especially Suzuki Harunobu (1725–1770) up in Edo. Though artists were not allowed to openly criticize the establishment, Sukenobu in subtle but pointed symbolism in his works expressed his disenchantment with the *bakufu* (military government) authorities. In response to the Kyōhō reforms of 1722, he completely abandoned his designs for erotic books (he had already illustrated some fifty titles before then), and refocused his artistic energy on versions of classics and poetic texts, but rendered in up-to-date styles. Jennifer Preston, in an important study of the artist’s work, argues that Sukenobu was engaged in an anti-*bakufu* and pro-imperialist political agenda.⁴ It is a reminder that seemingly innocuous imagery of the world of *Genji* and its author, by evoking a long-ago era when the military class held no sway, could in fact be statements of political resistance.⁵

In the preface to his *Picture Book of Everlasting Flowers* (*Ehon tokiwagusa*, 1731)—a compilation of images of women of all walks of life, past and present—Sukenobu declares that the volume is meant as a guide for aspiring painters. The use in the title of *tokiwagusa*, which literally means “eternal grasses” or “eternal flowers,” is a way of referring to youthful and beautiful women who are the focus of his attention. For courtesans and other commoners he suggests following a realistic style.⁶ In fact, rather than creating

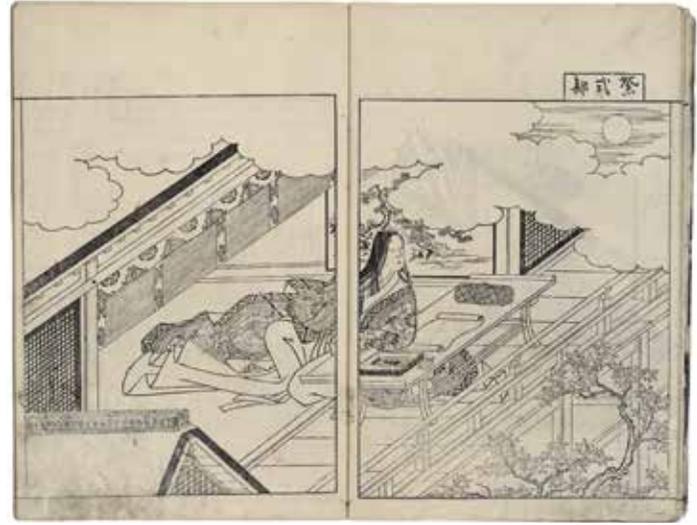


Fig. 74. Murasaki Shikibu Seated at Her Desk, from *Picture Book of Everlasting Flowers* (*Ehon tokiwagusa*). Nishikawa Sukenobu (1671–1750). Published by Morita Shotarō. Edo period (1615–1868), 1731. Woodblock-printed book; ink on paper; 10¾ × 7½ in. (27.3 × 19 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Mary and James G. Wallach Foundation Gift, 2013 (2013.832a–c)

a separate manner of depicting the women, Sukenobu adheres throughout to the style of women of so-called Kamigata *ukiyo-e*, which he solidified through his prolific output. Not surprisingly, for rendering court ladies he advocates that one follows the style of Tosa Mitsunobu (see cats. 18, 38), reminding us once again of the intertwining of various painting traditions during the Edo period. In *Everlasting Flowers*, each of the women is placed within an architectural setting reflecting her status in society. Borrowing from Tosa precedents for his imaginary portrait of Murasaki Shikibu, the artist re-creates the setting of the veranda of Ishiyamadera Temple and places the author of *Genji* at her desk, with the accoutrements of writing at hand (fig. 74). The moon shines through the stylized “*Genji* clouds” (*Genji-gumo*), which connote that the scene is situated in a fantastical, fictional past.

It should be emphasized that even as *ukiyo-e* grew in popularity there was no diminution of *Genji* paintings by Kano or Tosa artists, or by painters of the Tosa offshoot schools such as the Sumiyoshi or Itaya in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Nor were deluxe paintings in any way supplanted by the print material described below. Rather, single-sheet prints and woodblock prints represent the expanding dissemination of *Genji* imagery to a wide swath of the public, including the elite, and allowed for experimentation with radically innovative compositions. Paintings by *ukiyo-e* artists, executed in ink and mineral pigments on traditional hanging scrolls and handscrolls, often took up the same subjects as prints, but they were unique works of art aimed at a well-heeled



Fig. 75. *Courtesan and Attendant Playing with a Dog: Parody of the Third Princess*, from Chapter 34, “Early Spring Greens: Part 1” (*Wakana jō*). Nishikawa Sukenobu (1671–1750). Edo period (1615–1868), ca. 1716–36. Hanging scroll; ink and color on silk, 23 × 32¾ in. (58.4 × 83.2 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Florence and Herbert Irving, 2015 (2015.500.9.49)

clientele. Most of these artists created woodblock prints and book illustrations as well as paintings, but some specialized in one or the other medium.

Demonstrating how an Ukiyo-e school painter dealt with the subject of *Genji* is a deluxe painting by Sukenobu that shows a gorgeously arrayed young courtesan stepping out on a veranda with a little dog on a long red leash (fig. 75).⁷ Her young attendant tosses a ball to the dog, who is eager to play. Viewers of the day would have immediately recognized the image as a parodic representation of the scene involving the Third Princess and Kashiwagi, described above. Sukenobu replaced the princess with a courtesan of the Kyoto pleasure quarters, the cat with a dog, and the courtiers playing *kemari* with a young woman and a thread ball. This reinterpretation of the scene from the early eleventh-century tale removes the usual male voyeur depicted in earlier renditions in favor of a privileged view into a woman’s quarters, a common perspective in *ukiyo-e*: one that turns the viewer into the voyeur.

As suggested by Sukenobu’s book illustration (fig. 74), the enduring popularity of the original version of *The Tale of Genji* also meant that imaginary portraits of the author, Murasaki Shikibu,

composing her tale at Ishiyamadera Temple would be a favorite subject for *ukiyo-e* artists, since it coupled the idea of a beautiful court lady with the inherent erotic suggestiveness of the tale. She is a fiction writer, weaving a tale, and we share in her literary wistfulness. Images of solitary courtesans seated at desks with literary accoutrements can be traced to this source. Okumura Masanobu (1686–1764) was another early *ukiyo-e* artist who played with the themes associated with *Genji*, including a parodic update of the iconic image of Murasaki sitting at her writing table at Ishiyamadera Temple (cat. 92). The same artist created more than thirty-five prints, including multiprint *ōban*-format series on the theme of *Genji* in which he transposed Murasaki or one of her characters into modern garb, often building in other levels of literary allusiveness (fig. 76).⁸

Working in an environment that from the start was infused with literary motives, *ukiyo-e* artists naturally turned their imaginations to themes related to famous poets and writers or legendary figures of ancient times. The complex but playful transformative process—whether of *mitate* (juxtaposition or overlapping of disparate phenomena) or *yatsushi* (transposition of characters from the

past into present-day situations, usually involving a drop in social status)—was both inspired and reinforced by the image-making machine of the brothel culture of the Edo period. This process of *mitate* and *yatsushi* became ever more prevalent and complex in the course of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, which coincided with the period when the technical precision and elaborateness of woodblock printing reached their pinnacle in the *nishiki-e* (polychrome prints) of the 1760s and after.⁹

The wide use of classical imagery by Moronobu, Masanobu, Sukenobu, Harunobu, and other early *ukiyo-e* artists guaranteed that such themes would become permanently embedded in the tradition. In the wake of their work, the erudite *ukiyo-e* artist Isoda Kōryūsai honed the mechanics of how techniques of *yatsushi* and *mitate* operated in popular prints, and his series of more than twenty prints known as *Stylish Genji Parodies* (*Fūryū yatsushi Genji*) triggered a whole new approach to *Genji* pictures.¹⁰ Even *bijinga* (paintings or prints of “beauties”) that at first glance seem to be simply contemporary vignettes of brothel life may embody allusions to the classics. Chōbunsai Eishi (1756–1829), an artist born into a samurai household and well educated in the Japanese classics, was inspired by Kōryūsai and frequently alluded to *Genji* in his works, often with titles borrowed from the original novel. In his various series of the 1790s—comprising more than twenty-five different compositions, including many triptychs—Eishi did more than any other *ukiyo-e* artist to lay the foundation for complex *Genji* prints in the nineteenth century (cats. 93–95).¹¹

In the late Edo period, *Genji* pictures evolved in entirely new directions as a result of the publication of a sprawling parodic version of the original classic mischievously titled *A Fraudulent Murasaki's Rustic Genji* (*Nise Murasaki inaka Genji*). Utagawa Kunisada (1786–1864) created his own imaginary rendering of Lady Murasaki as a frontispiece for a series of thirty-eight print diptychs based on the book illustrations he did for Ryūtei Tanehiko's *Rustic Genji* (cat. 96).¹² Tanehiko and Kunisada's *Rustic Genji* creations also inspired popular plays on *Genji* themes and a new genre of prints called *Genji-e* that were popular in the 1840s and early 1850s. But this was just part of a boom that also saw *Genji*-inspired kimonos, *Genji* rice crackers, and *Genji* noodles, and which led to many of Kunisada's clever designs being reproduced as motifs on household products, combs, fans, and the like. Ironically, all of this revisiting of the recent and distant past was occurring just as the Japanese public was beginning its historic encounter with Western intellectual, political, and material culture.

The fascination with the story and imagery of *Genji* never diminished, even though the Edo-period commentaries and illustrated editions became harder to read as the Japanese language

evolved and the syllabary was simplified. As photography, lithography, and other forms of mechanical reproduction displaced woodblock printing, the final generations of Utagawa-school *ukiyo-e* artists, including Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797–1861) and his pupil Tsukioka Yoshitoshi (1839–1892), took inspiration from the tale in new and diverse ways (cats. 101–4).

In modern times, the translations into colloquial Japanese by Yosano Akiko (1878–1942)—she did three of them—made the ancient tale accessible to a new generation of readers. Following in the distinguished tradition of illuminated texts already firmly established by the twelfth century, Yosano's translations were accompanied by illustrations by Nakazawa Hiromitsu (1874–1964) in a thoroughly modern style (cat. 105). Though surely by no means the end of the story of *Genji* imagery, more than twenty *manga* versions of *Genji* have been created in the postwar period. Among them, the multivolume series by woman artist Yamato Waki (b. 1948) titled *Fleeting Dreams* (*Asaki yumemishi*) became a best seller among readers of all ages (cat. 106). Yamato's adaptation of the tale and dreamlike imagery have brought an ancient tale to a contemporary audience who, like generations of their predecessors, enjoy the opportunity to escape into the fantasy world of love, intrigue, and poetry created by Murasaki Shikibu a thousand years ago.

—John T. Carpenter

1. For a discussion on the trope of voyeurism and *kaimami* (peeking) as it relates to this scene, see Croissant 2005, pp. 109–14. See also Nakamachi 2008a, pp. 178–83.
2. Washburn 2015, p. 697.
3. Nakamachi 2008a, p. 180.
4. Preston 2012.
5. McMullen 1999.
6. Coats 2012a, pp. 24–25.
7. This painting was formerly in the William Sturgis Bigelow Collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. It was sold at auction in 1933 and entered the collection of the Nihonga painter Yasuda Yukihiko before returning to the United States after World War II.
8. Nakamachi 2008a, p. 184, summarizes Masanobu's output on *Genji* themes.
9. For an excellent explication of the complex and overlapping categories of *mitate*, *yatsushi*, and *fūryū* (in a contemporary style) in the works of Harunobu and his successors, see Haft 2013. See also Iwata 1993, which is summarized and expanded on in Clark 1997.
10. Hockley 2003.
11. Nakamachi 2008a, pp. 197–201, briefly discusses the development of *Genji* pictures by late eighteenth-century *ukiyo-e* artists Kitao Shigemasa, Torii Kiyonaga, and Chōbunsai Eishi, noting that the former two created their works in bound-book form (often with only oblique ties to the tale) and Eishi pioneered the use of the triptych for this subject.
12. For an English translation, see Richardson and Tanonaka 1985; for a critical study, see Emmerich 2013. See also Chris Drake's lively translations of excerpts from the novel, in Drake 2002. For an extended discussion of Tanehiko's literary career, consult Markus 1992. Kunisada's output on the *Rustic* (or *Bumpkin*) *Genji* theme is discussed in Carpenter 1993, pp. 13–14; Izzard 1993, pp. 31–35, 166–71. See also Marks 2012b.

90 文使い図屏風

Messenger Delivering a Letter

Edo period (1615–1868), second quarter 17th century

Two-panel folding screen; ink, color, and gold on paper

56½ × 60⅞ in. (143.5 × 154.5 cm)

Princeton University Art Museum, Museum purchase with funds given by William R. McAlpin, Class of 1926 (y1964–50)

Deluxe genre paintings of this variety, dating to the early 1600s and showing courtesans of the Kyoto pleasure quarter at Shimabara, represent the first stage in the development of *ukiyo-e* painting and woodblock-printed single-sheet designs and illustrated books that became popular by the later seventeenth century.¹ A high-ranking courtesan with an elaborate coiffure and gorgeous raiment leans on an ornate armrest. In one hand she casually holds a long-stemmed tobacco pipe (*kiseru*), a visual symbol of leisure and passing time in the pleasure quarters. Lounging in front of her, seen only from behind, is a young apprentice courtesan (*shinzō*). To her left, a girl attendant (*kamuro*) has just arrived with a letter, folded and tied into a knot as was customary, which we may assume contains New Year's greetings from a client of the courtesan. At the far left of the scene is an ornately decorated lacquer mirror stand, signaling in this case that this is a private chamber of the courtesan (see cat. 86).

Above the sliding panels in the background is a ceremonial twisted rope (*shimenawa*), intertwined with fronds of ferns, indicating that the room is adorned for the New Year's season. The sliding doors are festooned with fans arrayed in a variation of the scattered-fan motif (*senmen chirashi*) seen on various screens of this era (see figs. 26–29). On one of the panels is attached an actual squarish cut-paper *shikishi* (poetry paper) with a painting in the

Tosa style showing the famous scene from Chapter 51, “A Boat Cast Adrift,” in which Ukifune and Niou are together in a skiff on the Uji River. The season of the scene in the novel is that of the New Year, echoing and reinforcing the interpretation of the setting depicted here.

The presence of this scene in the painting injects a level of literary allusiveness when we recall that the entire *Ukifune* chapter is punctuated by accounts of letters and poems being exchanged by Ukifune and her young suitors Kaoru and Niou. Furthermore, the momentous rendezvous of Ukifune and Niou is prefaced with a description of how messages are sent ahead by Niou from the capital and delivered to Ukon (Ukifune's young attendant). By inserting a painting-within-a-painting, the artist of this screen consciously created a level of overlapping suggestiveness of the scene from *Genji* with the genre scene from the Kyoto pleasure quarters. A courtesan looking at an image of Ukifune could imply that she herself may be involved in a love triangle, like the heroine in the tale.² As Julia Meech eloquently observes, “The time-honored, classical narrative theme, ‘a boat upon the waters,’ archetype of the unsettled love affair, has been cleverly utilized to enrich a more mundane love story set in the contemporary *ukiyo*, the ‘floating world’ of transient pleasures.”³ This kind of allusive visual play would become a foundation for the emergence of the innovative new form of painting called *ukiyo-e*, literally “pictures of the floating world,” outlined in the following entries. JTC

1. See Carpenter 1998 for an overview of how early seventeenth-century genre painting established the foundation for *ukiyo-e*.

2. Okudaira 1996, p. 105.

3. Meech 1982, p. 206. In the same essay, Meech explicates the variable iconography of the Ukifune boat scene from its earliest appearance in medieval manuscripts through *ukiyo-e* versions.



91 『絵入源氏物語』 山本春正画

The Illustrated Tale of Genji (E-iri Genji monogatari)

Yamamoto Shunshō (1610–1682)

Edo period (1615–1868), 1650

24 woodblock-printed volumes; ink on paper

Each: 10½ × 7⅜ in. (26.7 × 18.7 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Mary Griggs Burke Collection,
Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015 (2015.300.39a–x)

For centuries, *The Tale of Genji* circulated only in manuscript copies to a restricted aristocratic audience. The great classic of Japanese literature became more widely known starting only in the early Edo period (1615–1868), as texts of the entire tale, digests, and handbook-style synopses were printed, first in movable-type editions and then in more affordable woodblock-printed versions.¹ One of the earliest mass-produced editions to include woodblock-printed illustrations was this multivolume version, first published about 1650. The Kyoto- and sometimes Edo-based Yamamoto Shunshō, best known as a *waka* poet and lacquer artist, produced the designs for the woodblock prints, which in many cases adhere to the standardized Tosa canon for *Genji* pictures, but in others diverged from traditional iconography to create remarkably idiosyncratic scenes. One reason for this is the sheer number of images per chapter, and another is that they seem to be actually illustrating the tale, like the so-called Phantom *Genji* Scrolls (cats. 54–57), whose artists were clearly reading the tale and attempting to envision every notable scene. Moreover, many of the images are not auspicious, and thus some of the previous taboo elements such as spirit possession (*mononoke*), dream visions of ghosts, and the like can be represented (a, b).

This popular edition of the tale is bound in twenty-four volumes comprising the full text and illustrations of all fifty-four chapters.² Each chapter is usually represented by just a few single-page illustrations, though certain iconic scenes in the tale merit a double-page spread, such as the scene from “A Boat Cast Adrift” showing Prince Niou waiting outside the Uji residence (c). The set also includes three volumes of commentary on vocabulary and distinctive phrases used in the narrative (*Genji meyasu*); a genealogy chart (*Genji keizu*) to help readers keep track of the bewildering number of characters in the tale; a “sequel” to the final chapter of the original novel by a later author, entitled “Dew on the Mountain Path” (*Yamaji no tsuyu*); and an index of all the poems in the tale arranged by chapter (*Genji monogatari hikiuta*).³ These appendices demonstrate how a more systematic study of the tale was no longer privy to aristocratic scholars.

Though *The Tale of Genji* had been published in movable-type editions earlier in the century, these editions had relatively limited

distribution. The publication of this set of illuminated volumes was a key turning point in the popularization of the tale and the codification of the iconography of each chapter. In the two decades following its initial publication, it was reissued in various editions in various sizes and formats.⁴ Along with these popular editions of the whole text, digests and commentaries appeared in rapid succession, the most famous of these being the *Kogetsushō*, compiled in 1673 by the poet and scholar Kitamura Kigin (1624–1705).⁵ There was backlash from Confucian scholars, however, who felt that vernacular classics such as *The Tale of Genji* and *The Tales of Ise* were not suitable reading for women and children. Sinologist Kaibara Ekiken (1630–1714) pronounced:

One must be selective in what one allows young women to read. There is no harm in those books depicting the events of the past. . . . Moreover, one should not readily allow them to read such books as *Ise monogatari* [*The Tales of Ise*], *Genji monogatari* [*The Tale of Genji*] and their ilk, which, although possessed of a literary elegance, depict licentious behavior.⁶

The noted calligrapher Hon’ami Kōetsu (1558–1637), who collaborated with Tawaraya Sōtatsu on numerous projects related to Japanese literary classics, sagely observed that it was “laughable that scholars continue to consider that the monogatari [classical tales] of Japan are conducive to vice and make depressing reading.”⁷

In 1673 Kumazawa Banzan opened his commentary on the great tale with a positive assessment: “A certain woman said, ‘. . . The *Genji monogatari* depicts the most indecent doings. But it was written by such a brilliant woman, and in such lovely language, and moreover it appeals to a woman’s heart, and there are so many things to be learnt from reading it that—well, it seems to me that in spite of the sort of book it is, it could not but be edifying for an ignorant woman.’”⁸ Appropriately, in the postscript to the *Illustrated Genji*, Shunshō opined that even though the tale was deemed inappropriate for female consumption by male scholars of the so-called Confucian tradition, it was eminently suitable reading matter for women of all ages. JTC

1. For an overview of the reception of *The Tale of Genji* in the seventeenth century, see Kornicki 2005; Kornicki 2007.

2. The copy of this edition in the Library of Congress has been completely digitized: <http://lcweb4.loc.gov/service/asian/asian0001/2005/2005html/20050415toc.html>.

3. Thomas Harper discusses issues of authorship of *Yamaji no tsuyu* and gives a translation of the chapter in Harper and Shirane 2015, pp. 282–311.

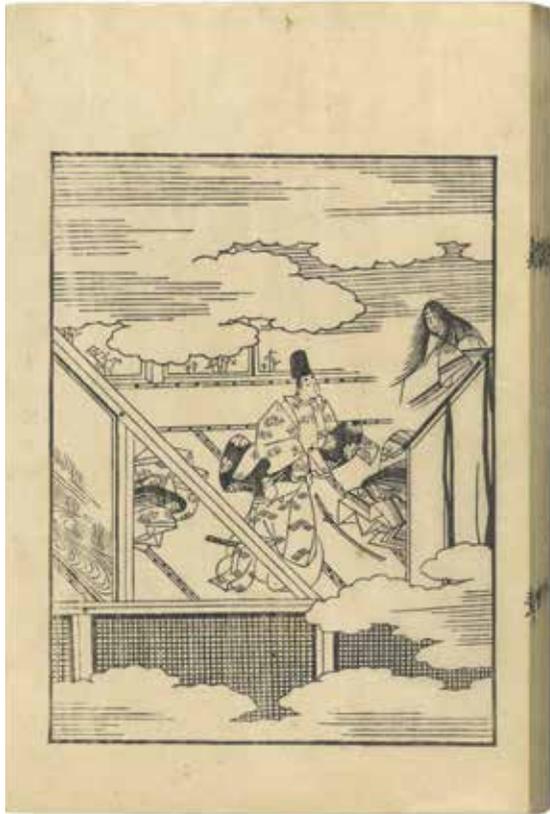
4. Kornicki 2005, p. 149.

5. Caddeau 2006, pp. 22–23.

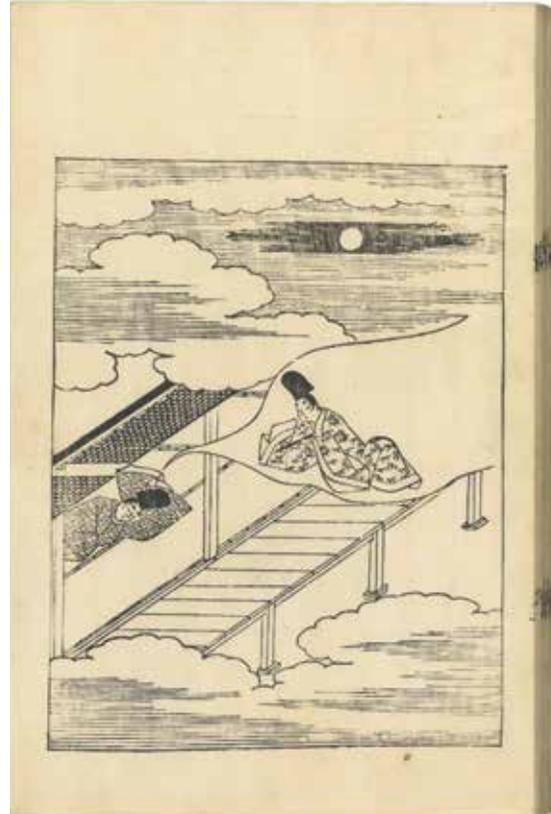
6. Kaibara Ekiken, *Wazoku dōjūkun* (Precepts, 1710); translation in Rowley 2000, p. 31; cited in Kornicki 2005, p. 158.

7. Cited and translated in Kornicki 2005, p. 163.

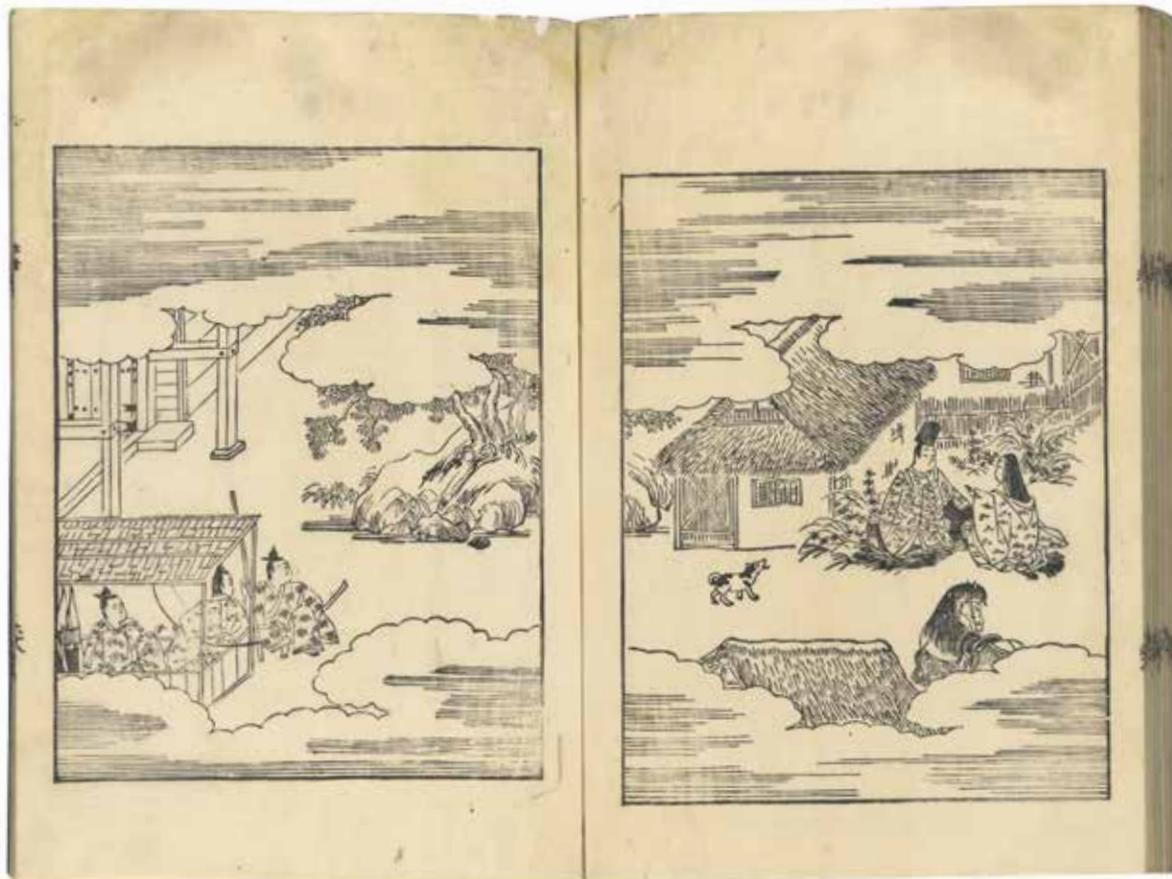
8. Translation in Harper 1971, p. 84, cited in Kornicki 2005, p. 165.



a. Scene of Yūgao's spirit possession, from Chapter 4, "The Lady of the Evening Faces" (*Yūgao*)



b. Scene of the ghost of Kashiwagi appearing in Yūgiri's dream, from Chapter 37, "The Transverse Flute" (*Yokobue*)



c. Scene of Prince Niou at the Uji residence, from Chapter 51, "A Boat Cast Adrift" (*Ukifune*)

92 見立紫式部図 奥村政信画

Parody of Murasaki Shikibu at Her Desk

Okumura Masanobu (1686–1764)

Edo period (1615–1868), ca. 1710

Monochrome woodblock print (*sumizuri-e*); ink on paper

10 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 14 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (26.4 × 35.9 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Francis Lathrop Collection, Purchase, Frederick C. Hewitt Fund, 1911 (JP682)

What appears at first glance to be a depiction of an Edo-period courtesan leaning on a lacquered writing table near a veranda is actually a parodic image of the author of *The Tale of Genji*, Murasaki Shikibu, referencing a long tradition of such images (cats. 19–24). According to one of the many legends connected with her, Murasaki once secluded herself at Ishiyamadera Temple, overlooking Lake Biwa, where the beauty of a moonlit night inspired her to develop the long, romantic narrative of courtly life and fictional princes. While most paintings and imaginary portraits of the author showed her in Heian-period (794–1185) dress, she appears here with a hairstyle, complete with combs and elaborate ties, and a robe, decorated with pine branches and flowers, of the artist's own day. Murasaki's writing implements sit on the table before her, as in traditional pictures of this scene, but the book she holds open in one hand already bears the *Genji* title on its cover. Okumura Masanobu was among the early *ukiyo-e* artists who depicted famous female writers and their fictional characters in the guise of commoners.¹



Fig. 76. *Murasaki Shikibu in Modern Dress*, from the series *Suma of the Floating World (Ukiyo Suma)*. Okumura Masanobu (1686–1764). Edo period (1615–1868), early 1720s. Woodblock print; ink on paper; 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (29.2 × 44.2 cm). Honolulu Museum of Art, Gift of James A. Michener

One of the principal figures among early *ukiyo-e* print artists, Masanobu was also a painter, author, and book publisher. He studied *haikai* poetry under Tachiba Fukaku (aka Shōgetsudō Sen'ō, 1662–1753), and established his own print and bookshop, the Okumuraya, in the Nihonbashi area of Edo, where he published his own prints and illustrated books. Among the first print artists to produce two-color prints, known as *benizuri-e*, as well as the more common *sumizuri-e* (prints in black ink alone, as here) and *tan-e* (prints hand-colored with a cinnabar red pigment), Masanobu labeled himself a “Yamato picture artist” (*Yamato eshi*)—the name included as a signature on this print—and unabashedly promoted his own work, sometimes on the prints themselves. His themes included beauties of the demimonde and Kabuki actors in their most famous roles, the *bunraku* puppet theater (then known as *ningyō jōruri*), and parody prints, including two different series of *sumizuri-e* prints spoofing *The Tale of Genji*.² This image of Murasaki Shikibu takes an approach similar to that of prints in the artist's *Genji* series, the subject dressed in eighteenth-century garb and placed in an architectural setting, in close-up view.

In a slightly later print by Masanobu, titled *Suma of the Floating World (Ukiyo-e Suma)*, the artist suggests that Murasaki imagines the episode of *Genji* in exile by the Bay of Suma as she gazes over Lake Biwa from the veranda at Ishiyamadera (fig. 76). She is seated at her desk in the usual fashion, with an anachronistic *shamisen* (three-stringed instrument used in Edo-period Kabuki performances and brothel entertainment) behind her. Her robe is dyed with the “calligraphy scrap paper” (*hogozone*) design, in which a medley of different Japanese and Chinese characters are randomly arrayed—a technique that did not become popular until the 1710s and 1720s. One may imagine that Murasaki is recalling the legend of the courtier-poet Ariwara no Yukihira (818–893), whose own exile to Suma is thought to have inspired the episode of *Genji* in exile. While in exile Yukihira met the beautiful salt maidens Matsukaze and Murasame, who are represented with him on the far shore of the “lake.” In prints such as this one, Masanobu set the stage for layering multiple, disparate literary references while incorporating the device of *yatsushi* (the transposition of characters from the past into the present), which becomes ever-more complex in succeeding generations of woodblock print design. SW / JTC

1. For a fuller discussion of Masanobu's corpus, see Clark 2001; Clark, Morse, and Virgin 2001, pp. 138–201, nos. 39–77; Chiba City Museum of Art 2016, pp. 187–223.

2. See the discussion in Nakamachi 2008a, pp. 184–97, figs. 27–33; see also Chiba City Museum of Art 2016, pp. 192–97, nos. 131–33, 135, 136.

大唄畫世
奥村親政信



93 「風流やつし 源氏朝顔」 鳥文齋 栄之画

Bellflowers (Asagao), from the series *Genji in Fashionable Modern Guise*
(*Fūryū yatsushi Genji*)

Chōbunsai Eishi (1756–1829)

Published by Izumiya Ichibei (Kansendō)

Edo period (1615–1868), 1789–92

Triptych of polychrome woodblock *ōban* prints; ink and color on paper

From the right: 14 ⁷/₈ × 9 ⁷/₈ in. (37.8 × 25.1 cm); 14 ⁷/₈ × 9 ³/₄ in.

(37.8 × 24.8 cm); 15 × 10 in. (38.1 × 25.4 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Fletcher Fund, 1929 (JP1569)

After the comparative simplicity of *ukiyo-e* compositions of the 1690s and early eighteenth century, usually featuring but a small array of figures—as represented by illustrations of works by Hishikawa Moronobu, Okumura Masanobu, Nishikawa Sukenobu, and Kawamata Tsunemasa—the daunting complexity and tantalizing suggestiveness of the compositions of the *ukiyo-e* artist Chōbunsai Eishi strike us as a radical new departure in the treatment of literary themes of the past. Yet it is only the beginning of a process that will see increasing and more sophisticated use of *mitate* (involving the playful juxtaposition of usually unrelated figures or objects) and *yatsushi* (the transposition of a person of higher social status with one of lower rank).¹ Eishi was a master of both types of visual parody.

In this “modernization” of Chapter 20, “Bellflowers,” Genji’s unsuccessful pursuit of Princess Asagao, former Priestess of the Kamo Shrine, is depicted in an Edo-period setting meant to represent the Momozono Palace, home of her deceased father, who was also Genji’s uncle. The interior is teeming with figures; the chapter describes a number of waiting women at the residence, some of them elderly (and one even toothless), but here all of the ladies appear to be youthful and stylish. In the central print Genji and Asagao exchange poems—in the novel they do so through intermediaries—and writing utensils are laid out on the floor. Genji rubs an inkstick against an inkstone with one hand, a roll of paper in his other. A bellflower or morning glory vine in bloom appears in the left-hand print.

The figures, tall and slender, with small heads and refined features, are characteristic of Eishi’s output of prints and paintings. Architectural details abound, including depictions of sliding doors, single-panel standing screens called *tsuitate*, rolled-up bamboo blinds, ceilings with crisscross beams, latticework, and verandas with railings ornamented with metal fittings.

As in other prints from this series of ten triptychs, the colors are limited, in this case to grayish blue, yellow, and a small amount of green. In this respect they conform to the technique of *beni-girai*, or “avoiding red” painting fashionable in the late eighteenth



century.² Eishi’s paintings as well as his prints were often characterized by a *beni-girai* palette, and it has been theorized that his favoring of nearly monochromatic compositions was a reflection of his early training in ink painting by Kano Michinobu (1730–1790), a master of the Kano school.³

Born to a well-to-do samurai family, Eishi often used this technique to subtly decorative effect. He specialized in depictions of *bijin*—beautiful women—and, like his contemporaries and some-time rivals, Kitagawa Utamaro (1753–1806) and Torii Kiyonaga (1752–1815), created images of tall, slim, graceful women, often in stylish garb. He produced two series of parodic prints depicting *Genji*-related scenes with modernized settings and dress: *Genji in Fashionable Modern Guise (Fūryū yatsushi Genji)*, to which this



triptych belongs, and *Eight Views of The Tale of Genji in the Floating World* (*Ukiyo Genji hakkei*, ca. 1797–99), comprising four sets of print diptychs (cat. 95).

Eishi's high-ranking social status—his samurai family produced several government officials, and he himself served the Tokugawa shogun Ieharu (1737–1786) for several years—was unusual for an artist of *ukiyo-e*. Having been released from his service to Ieharu in 1783, on the grounds of ill health, he became renowned in his own lifetime as both a prolific painter and a print designer. Although his principal subject matter was the courtesans of the pleasure quarters, he also produced prints on literary themes, including illustrations for a poetry album of the Thirty-Six Immortal Women Poets (*Onna Sanjūrokkasen*), a classical grouping of female poets

from the Heian (794–1185) and Kamakura (1185–1333) periods.⁴ His interests extended to the literature of his own era, and he was well acquainted with the *kyōka* (satiric verse) poet Shokusanjin (Ōta Nanpo, 1749–1823), also from a samurai family, who was similarly drawn to *ukiyo-e* and contributed inscriptions to a number of Eishi's paintings. Eishi's broad literary knowledge and elevated social standing made *The Tale of Genji* (refashioned “in modern guise”) a fitting subject for him. SW / JTC

1. Haft 2013.

2. See the discussion of the aesthetic dimension of the *beni-girai* convention in the context of Eishi's contemporary Kubo Shunman, in Carpenter 2004, pp. 79–80.

3. Murase 2000, p. 367.

4. Pekarik 1991.

94 「略六花撰喜撰法師」 鳥文齋栄之画

Matching Shells (Kai-awase), from the series *Modern Parodies of the Six Poetic Immortals (Yatsushi rokkasen)*

Chōbunsai Eishi (1756–1829)

Published by Nishimuraya Yohachi (*Eijudō*)

Edo period (1615–1868), ca. 1796–98

Polychrome woodblock print; ink and color on paper

14¹⁵/₁₆ × 9³/₄ in. (37.9 × 24.8 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, H. O. Havemeyer Collection,
Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 (JP1786)

This bust portrait (*okubi-e*) of a courtesan magnificently captures the new vogue for half-length portraits of beauties, which became a trademark of Eishi's contemporary Kitagawa Utamaro, seen especially in the latter's series *Ten Types in the Physiognomic Study of Women (Fujin sōgaku juttai)* of the early 1790s.¹ Though Utamaro often made *mitate-e*, or parody prints that juxtapose disparate motifs in a single composition, and *yatsushi* prints that drew on classical literary motifs, to this author's knowledge Utamaro did not produce any series directly related to *The Tale of Genji*. At first glance this print by Eishi does not seem to be directly related to the tale either, as it is part of a series devoted to poets. According with *Yatsushi* in the title, the series employs the parodic device by which exalted personages of the past are represented in a contemporary guise, sometimes portrayed as of a lower social status or a different gender. Here, a wizened monk of the past is represented by a young courtesan. The only convergence of appearances might be their black outer robes.

In her right hand the courtesan holds a shell bearing a miniature painting, which one may infer matches in subject matter the image painted on the shell half in her left hand. For a reader

familiar with any of the illustrated editions of *The Tale of Genji*, it immediately calls to mind Chapter 45, "The Divine Princess at Uji Bridge." In the scene Kaoru, the illegitimate son of Genji's wife, the Third Princess, visits a young woman in the hills of Uji, the setting of the last ten chapters of the tale. In the upper left corner of the print, a pair of cards for a poetry-matching contest is shown. The lower card incorporates the title of the print series, and the topmost card displays a poem by Kisen Hōshi (active early Heian period), one of the Six Poetic Immortals. The text is transcribed in minuscule cursive characters, but any literate reader of the day would have recognized it after deciphering just a few words, since it is Kisen Hōshi's famous poem from the anthology *One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets (Hyakunin isshu)*:

<i>Wa ga io wa</i>	In my hermitage
<i>Miyako no tatsumi</i>	Southeast of the capital
<i>Shika zo sumu</i>	I live as you see;
<i>Yo o Ujiyama to</i>	There's a rumor, though, men call
<i>Hito wa iu nari</i>	This retreat a Mount of Gloom. ²

The poem's reference to Ujiyama, the Mount of Gloom, evokes the remote hills of Uji, the site of Kaoru's liaison, but more than a clever juxtaposition of *Genji*-inspired imagery and *waka* citation is at play. Readers who delve deeper will realize that the poem ascribed to Kaoru in the tale was almost certainly inspired by Kisen Hōshi's verse. *Ukiyo-e* catered to a broader public, but artists such as Eishi clearly targeted a well-read clientele. JTC

1. Asano and Clark 1995, [vol. 1], pp. 100–103, nos. 56–64.

2. E. A. Cranston 2006, p. 913. Originally included in the *Kokin wakashū* 1989, p. 295, no. 983. For commentary on *Hyakunin isshu*, see Mostow 1996, pp. 165–67.



95 「浮世源氏八景 幻 落雁 薄雲 晴嵐」
鳥文齋栄之画

Spirit Summoner; Wild Geese Returning Home (Maboroshi; Rakugan) (right) and *A Thin Veil of Clouds; Clearing Weather (Usugumo; Seiran)* (left), from the series *Eight Views of The Tale of Genji in the Floating World (Ukiyo Genji hakkei)*

Chōbunsai Eishi (1756–1829)

Published by Nishimuraya Yohachi (Eijudō)

Edo period (1615–1868), ca. 1797–99

Diptych of polychrome woodblock *ōban* prints; ink and color on paper

Each: 14 3/8 × 9 1/2 in. (36.5 × 24.1 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1921 (JP1222)

In addition to his series of parodic prints *Genji in Fashionable Modern Guise (Fūryū yatsushi Genji)* (cat. 93), Chōbunsai Eishi created a set of eight vertical *ōban* prints in a diptych format alluding to episodes from chapters of *The Tale of Genji*. Each image in this pair displays two beautiful young women with pictorial elements referencing the famous “Eight Views of Ōmi” (*Ōmi hakkei*) landscapes in the province of Ōmi (modern Shiga prefecture), which in turn is based on an ancient Chinese poetic and artistic theme of the “Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers.”¹ These small landscape details, enclosed in circular and oblong fan-shaped insets, correspond to passages from the related *Genji* chapter’s original text. For example, in the image representing Chapter 41, “Spirit Summoner,” on the right, the women are examining several *tanzaku*, or poem strips, and the related image, encircled, shows an autumn landscape representing a place called Katada, in Ōmi province, with geese flying above a stream and autumn grasses. This is also a visual reference to a poem composed by the Akashi Lady in the “Spirit Summoner” chapter, which takes place after Murasaki’s death. The poem is written in response to the grieving Genji’s “next-morning” poem after their non-amorous encounter of the night before:

<i>Kari ga ishi</i>	From the seedling bed
<i>Nawashiromizu no</i>	Where the wild goose used to stay
<i>Taeshi yori</i>	The water is gone,
<i>Utsurishi hana no</i>	Whence of one reflected bloom
<i>Kage o dani mizu</i>	I see no shadow now. ²

The Akashi Lady, while expressing her own dejection over her seeming loss of Genji’s attention, uses natural metaphors to describe the new emotional terrain. The wild goose is Genji, and

the watery “seedling bed” refers to the deceased Murasaki, without whom the goose has no reason to stay, and thus has flown away. Genji is a shell of his former self without Murasaki, and Akashi understands this—she is sad at being rebuffed at first, but there’s an acceptance of the phase, and she too mourns Murasaki’s death.

The composition continues onto the print on the left, with the hanging bamboo blind and the low red table serving as linking elements to Chapter 19, “A Thin Veil of Clouds.” The two women, like their counterparts, are dressed in the height of fashion, with the varied patterns of their garments beautifully detailed. The landscape above them depicts a pine-dotted coastline, with distant sails of fishing boats, an image of Awazu, one of the “Eight Views” that includes Lake Biwa. The place-name Awazu is homonymous with the phrase meaning “not meeting,” wordplay that links the landscape to an episode in *The Tale of Genji* that recounts the prince’s unrequited interest in Akikonomu, Rokujō’s daughter, who becomes empress and whom Genji supports as a kind of daughter. Her name refers to her fondness for the beauty of the autumn season; thus, in the print, the kimono of the woman beneath the hanging lamp features a design of autumn grasses. Another connection may be the poetic exchange between Genji and the Akashi Lady at the close of the chapter, which includes the metaphor of floating boats (*ukifune*) used for fishing with cormorants by torchlight at night:

<i>Isari seshi</i>	Still unforgotten
<i>Kage wasurarenu</i>	Are the lights of the fishers,
<i>Kagaribi wa</i>	Those torches on the sea—
<i>Mi no ukifune ya</i>	Can their boats have followed me,
<i>Shitaikinikemu</i>	Drawn on by the tides of pain? ³

Each of the prints bears a vertical cartouche containing the series title, *Ukiyo Genji hakkei*, with the related chapter name and related scene of the “Eight Views” beneath it. Each is signed “Eishi zu” and has a publisher’s seal and a *kiwame* (approved) censor’s seal. The small, circular red seal was (regrettably) impressed by the Metropolitan Museum when the object was accessioned in 1921.

SW / JTC

1. For a fascinating discussion of the theme of the “Eight Views of Ōmi,” see Kamens 2017, especially Ch. 4, “Eight Views of Ōmi: Waka and the Translation of Place,” pp. 113–58, 257–67.

2. E. A. Cranston 2006, p. 896.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 798.





a.



b.

96 『修紫田舎源氏』 柳亭種彦作 歌川國貞画

A Fraudulent Murasaki's Rustic Genji (Nise Murasaki inaka Genji)

Ryūtei Tanehiko (1783–1842)

Illustrated by Utagawa Kunisada (Toyokuni III) (1786–1864)

Published by Tsuruya Kiemon

Edo period (1615–1868), 1829–42

19 bound booklets (each with two chapters); woodblock printed; ink on paper, with color-printed covers

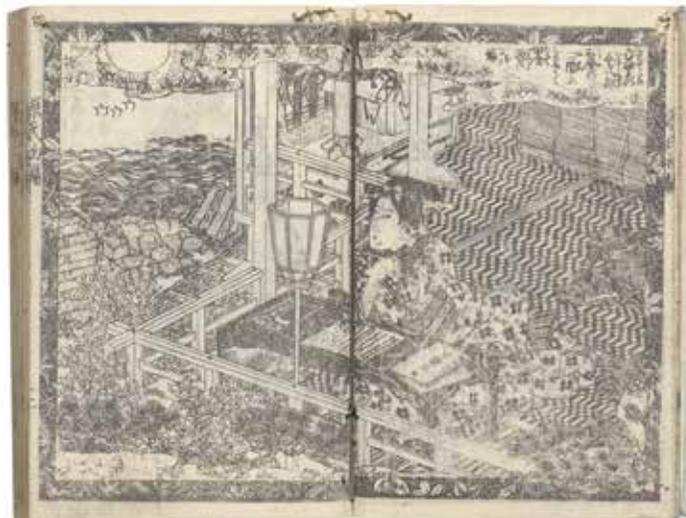
Each: 6 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 4 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (17.5 × 11.8 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Miki and Sebastian Izzard, 2018

Genji themes remained popular right through the end of the Edo period. Much of the stimulus for the late Edo *Genji* pictures (*Genji-e*) was due to the literary efforts of Ryūtei Tanehiko, who undertook a complete rewriting of *The Tale of Genji*, playfully titled *A Fraudulent Murasaki's Rustic Genji (Nise Murasaki inaka Genji)*.¹

Beginning in 1829 Tanehiko wrote two or three volumes a year for the rest of his life (cut short by suicide, probably triggered by official censorship of this series). It was published as *gōkan* (popular serial romances published in bound volumes) in thirty-eight chapters—a monumental enterprise on par with the early eleventh-century original. The colorful covers for each volume (a, b) and black-and-white illustrations by Utagawa Kunisada abetted its success, and it was the first book in Japanese history to sell over ten thousand copies.

The novel is set not at the early Heian (794–1185) court but rather at the end of the fifteenth century, when the Ashikaga shoguns ruled the country, a setting often seen in Kabuki plays and other popular novels of the day. Mitsuuji—based on the model of the courtier Genji, the “Shining Prince”—is a son of the shogun; he poses as a philanderer in the licensed quarters in an attempt to



c.



d.

uncover those who have stolen his father's sword and other official regalia and who wish to usurp the power of the clan. Despite the implausible juxtaposition of characters, Tanehiko's version follows the original Heian classic rather closely, though he felt no compunction about rewriting scenes of subplots. The author attempted to pack the representative features of every historical period into one story: the courtliness of the Heian, the bravery of the Ashikaga, and the wit of the Edo.

"Rustic" in the title refers not to the protagonist—for a warrior, Mitsuuiji is rather debonair—but to the deliberately self-deprecating language of the tale, which, though not the vernacular, is a step down in elegance from traditional classical Japanese and is peppered with Edo slang. The amorous adventures of Prince Mitsuuiji, apparently thought by many readers to be inspired by the infamous harem of Tokugawa shogun Ienari (reigned 1786–1837), greatly appealed to Edo audiences, especially young women readers. The author's close collaboration with Kunisada meant that there was an effective text-image interaction throughout. A number of scenes, though rendered according to contemporary conventions, are taken directly from the traditional iconography of Murasaki Shikibu's tale. The Edo reader would have been delighted at discovering a witty pastiche of a familiar scene, and might have been inspired to purchase one of the artist's more elaborate prints representing *Genji* themes, or even deluxe paintings (for instance, the exquisite set on *Rustic Genji* themes in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston).²

The publication of this immensely popular work of *gōkan* fiction—issued in the previously unprecedented print runs of fifteen thousand per volume—was summarily cut off in 1842 after the issue of thirty-eight chapters, as a result of the Tenpō Reforms,

which imposed sumptuary laws and censorship. At that time, Tanehiko was summoned by the authorities for interrogation and is thought to have committed suicide out of fear of further persecution.

The frontispiece illustration of the opening volume shows the famous inkstone that Murasaki Shikibu purportedly used to begin writing the tale at Ishiyamadera Temple (see the next entry). Subsequent images show Murasaki writing at the temple and then, illustrated here, the "fraudulent Murasaki," or Ima Shikibu, writing the *Rustic Genji* on the second floor of the Ishiya (c).

Volume 9 (part II) shows the abduction of young Murasaki (d, e). Intriguingly, the artist and printer collaborated to create a trompe l'oeil effect of a page being folded over by printing into the normal margin of the page, with even the volume and page numbers printed on the folded edges. It is a clever visual and narrative device to suggest to readers that they have missed out on some secret details of the kidnapping. A retainer reveals himself to be loyal to Mitsuuiji in attempting to ward off the villain Yamana Sōzen's abduction of young Murasaki (in order to force her father to join forces with him to overthrow the Ashikaga shogunate). The retainer, Chōdayu (with the character Chō 調 on his sleeve), attempts to play an elaborate trick on Yamana in order to get young Murasaki to Mitsuuiji, but Mitsuuiji upstages his plans by abducting her in the middle of the night anyway. The left part of the image is women bustling about the gardens, as seen through the perspective of young Murasaki, who has just woken up in Mitsuuiji's mansion in Saga.³

Kunisada, also known as Toyokuni III, was a pupil of Utagawa Toyokuni I (1769–1825) and studied the painting style of Hanabusa



e.

Itchō (1652–1724). Like other *ukiyo-e* artists of the era, he designed actor and *bijin*—beautiful women—prints and illustrations for printed books, but his most notable achievements include his *Genji*-themed woodblock prints; between them he and his followers turned out some thirty-seven print series with *Genji*-related subject matter.

As described above, he collaborated with Ryūtei Tanehiko in the creation of *A Rustic Genji*, producing illustrations to accompany Tanehiko’s serialized text, and the best-selling narrative was the primary impetus behind the “*Genji* boom” that flourished in the final decades of the Edo period. New Kabuki plays were based on episodes from both the original *Genji* tale and *A Rustic Genji*, and woodblock prints, designs for playing cards, and knickknacks of all sorts sported images of *A Rustic Genji*’s beloved hero, Mitsuuji. Kunisada himself, about 1838, produced a series of single prints based on the illustrations he had made for Tanehiko’s *Rustic Genji*.⁴ Over the years he followed this up with several print series featuring characters from the novel.

JTC / SW

1. See Chris Drake’s lively translations of excerpts from the novel, in Drake 2002. For an extended discussion of Tanehiko’s literary career, consult Markus 1992.
2. Kunisada’s output on the *Rustic Genji* theme, including deluxe paintings, is discussed in Carpenter 1993, pp. 13–14; Izzard 1993, pp. 31–35, 166–71. See also Marks 2012b most recently and comprehensively.
3. We thank Leah Justin-Jinich, a graduate student at Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., for bringing these illustrations to our attention, and explaining their content. The English translation is in Richardson and Tanonaka 1985, pp. 88–89.
4. The late Edo *Genji* print phenomenon instigated by *Rustic Genji* is described in detail in Marks 2012b.

97 伝紫式部料 古硯

Murasaki Shikibu’s Inkstone

Traditionally dated to Heian period (794–1185)

Purple agate

H. 7½ in. (19 cm), W. 10 in. (25.4 cm), D. 1¾ in. (4.5 cm)

Ishiyamadera Temple, Otsu, Shiga Prefecture

According to legend, Murasaki Shikibu used this very inkstone (*suzuri*) to create the ink with which she brushed *The Tale of Genji*. The quite large inkstone is made from Chinese purple agate and embellished with two incised roundels representing the sun and the moon. Above these are two four-lobed inkwells for the dissolved ink; the one on the right features a carved decoration of a bull, while the left one has a carp. The edges and the sides of the inkstone are decorated with an engraved foliage design. By the late Edo period, the inkstone had taken on iconic status, and was even depicted in the opening frontispiece of the woodblock-printed *A Fraudulent Murasaki’s Rustic Genji (Nise Murasaki inaka Genji)*, illustrated by Utagawa Kunisada, as discussed in the previous entry and illustrated here (fig. 77). The design cleverly alludes to the different tones of ink used for brushing calligraphy and drawings: the sun and moon refer to light and dark, respectively. The metaphor is continued by suggested wordplay: the “bull” (*ushi*) inkwell was for light, diluted (*usui*) ink, while the “carp” (*koi*) inkwell had dark, thick (*koi*) ink.

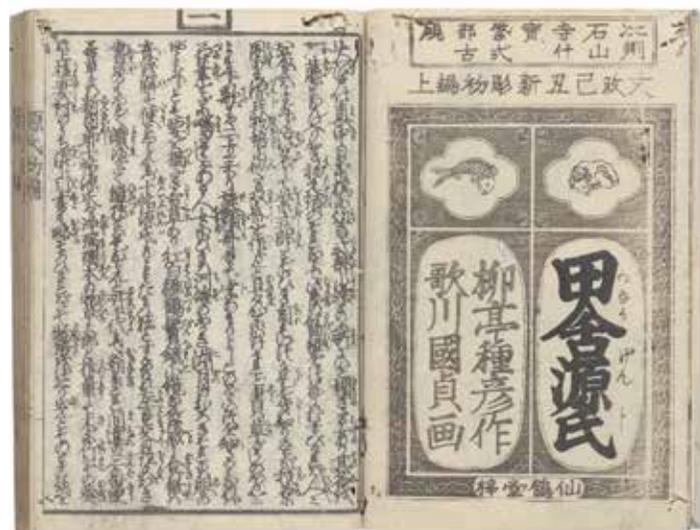


Fig. 77. Murasaki Shikibu’s inkstone, title page of *A Fraudulent Murasaki’s Rustic Genji (Nise Murasaki inaka Genji)*, vol. 1. Utagawa Kunisada (1786–1864). 1829. Woodblock-printed book. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Miki and Sebastian Izzard, 2018



Inkstones were made of earthenware, porcelain, or natural stone that has a slightly abrasive surface to facilitate the grinding of solid inksticks (*sumi*) with water while preparing liquid ink. These solid inksticks are fashioned from soot (usually that of pine trees) and animal glue, and often scented with cloves or sandalwood. The dissolved ink accumulates in the well of the inkstone, and the calligrapher or painter can control the density of the ink by adjusting the amount of water used and how long the inkstick is ground. Inkstones can be divided into two groups: those imported from China and domestic Japanese-style stones, which can be further grouped according to material or production technique. Inkstones were made in various shapes, most commonly rectangular, but

round, oval, figurative, or richly decorated carved variations were also favored. This example was designed to be placed on a low writing desk, probably behind a small screen, and not to be stored in a lacquer writing box as was a common practice. A writing desk with a lacquer writing box including an inkstone, an inkstick, brushes, and calligraphy paper or books is often included in Edo-period portraits of Murasaki Shikibu. The inkstone supposedly used by her came to symbolize the successful creation of a literary masterpiece. A woodblock-printed broadsheet from the Edo period shows a portrait of the author with an inscription related to Buddhist philosophy along with the inkstone (fig. 58).

MB



98 「源氏後集余情 五十のまき あづまや」
歌川国貞（三代歌川豊国）画

Parody of the Third Princess and Kashiwagi: "Chapter 50: A Hut in the Eastern Provinces," from the series *Lasting Impressions of a Late Genji Collection* (*Genji goshū yojō / Gojū no maki; Azumaya*)

Utagawa Kunisada (Toyokuni III) (1786–1864)

Published by Wakasaya Yoichi

Edo period (1615–1868), 1858, second month

Diptych of polychrome woodblock *ōban* prints; ink and color on paper

Each: 14 3/4 × 9 3/4 in. (36.2 × 24.8 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Lincoln Kirstein, 1985 (JP3683a, b)

Through his illustrations of the volumes of *A Fraudulent Murasaki's Rustic Genji* (*Nise Murasaki inaka Genji*) (cat. 96) and single-sheet prints, as well as triptychs and diptychs, Utagawa Kunisada was more prolific than any other *ukiyo-e* artist in the creation of *Genji*-themed prints.¹ The scholar Andreas Marks lists more than three hundred *Genji*-related prints by Kunisada: at least 150 independent prints, and twice that if prints in series are counted.²

This pair of prints is the thirty-seventh in a group of thirty-eight diptychs from the series *Lasting Impressions of a Late Genji Collection* (*Genji goshū yojō*), published between 1857 and 1861. This

series of diptychs, the most complex and visually satisfying of all of Kunisada's *Genji* images, was lavishly printed on thick paper that would allow special printing effects such as blind printing (*karazuri*) or textile-weave printing (*nunomezuri*). Furthermore, the use of metallic pigments, burnishing (*shōmenzuri*), and overall luxurious presentation are all characteristics usually associated with deluxe privately published prints called *surimono*, produced in the previous generation.

As mentioned above, this print series was among those based on Ryūtei Tanehiko's *Rustic Genji*, published 1829–42 in thirty-eight chapters, and its sequel, *A Related Rustic Visage* (*Sono yukari hina no omokage*), comprising chapters 39–61 (published 1847–64 by followers of Tanehiko). Both novels were illustrated by Kunisada, and the right-hand print in fact closely resembles the cover to Chapter 50 of *A Related Rustic Visage*.³ SW / JTC

1. For a discussion of the overall phenomenon of Kunisada's *Genji*-themed prints, see Kondo 1982; Marks 2012b.

2. See the "Index of *Genji* Prints" in Marks 2012b, app. 1, pp. 261–71.

3. Marks 2005–6. From Chapter 39 onward the images correspond to the volume numbers of the sequel parody novel *Sono yukari hina no omokage* of 1847–64, and the illustrations are based on Kunisada's cover and frontispiece illustrations.

99 「六玉顔」 山吹を持つ光氏
歌川国貞 (三代歌川豊国)画

Mitsuuji with Mountain Roses (Yamabuki), from the series *Six Jewel Faces*
(*Mu tama-gao*)

Utagawa Kunisada (Toyokuni III) (1786–1864)

Edo period (1615–1868), mid- to late 1830s

Uncut fan print; ink and color on paper

9 × 11 ¾ in. (22.9 × 29.8 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Alan and Barbara Medaugh Gift, 2018

Mitsuuji, the samurai protagonist of *A Fraudulent Murasaki's Rustic Genji*, as described in the previous entries, is depicted here in a half-bust portrait on a fan print. His distinctive “lobster-tail” topknot, flipped forward and split in the front—not a way in which elite samurai actually wore their hair—became a trademark feature of depictions by Utagawa Kunisada I and his disciples. The colorful background, with fabulous explosions of tie-dyed floral motifs, is a reminder of how Kunisada made each and every one of his thousands of *Genji*-print designs a visual record of different textile patterns of the day.

Yet this series goes one step farther in the complex process of transposing imagery of the *Rustic Genji* onto that associated with the original classical tale. The title *Six Jewel Faces* (*Mu tama-gao*) suggests that this set of fan prints captures the appearance of a half dozen attractive individuals, and, indeed, the other five works in the set show images of beautiful women, mostly courtesans of the pleasure quarters. The title also calls to mind the famous grouping of poetry-inspired imagery called “Six Jewel Rivers” (*Mu tamagawa*). The theme refers to six rivers in various parts of Japan that are named Tamagawa, or Jewel River. The Tamagawa referred to here is the Jewel River of Ide, south of Kyoto, since Mitsuuji holds a spray of yellow *yamabuki* (mountain roses), the flower traditionally associated with Ide, as well as with the character Murasaki’s garden at Rokujō in the tale. The theme of six beautiful rivers enjoyed great popularity in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, especially among *ukiyo-e* printmakers of the Utagawa school.

JTC



100 『艶色品定女』 二代歌川国盛画

Judgments on the Erotic Charms of Women (Enshoku shina sadame)

Utagawa Kunimori II (active 1830–61)

Authored by Miyagi Gengyo (1817–1880)

Edo period (1615–1868), ca. 1852

Set of three woodblock-printed books (*hanshibon*); ink and color on paper

Each: 10¹/₁₆ × 7⁵/₁₆ in. (25.5 × 18.5 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Mary and James G.

Wallach Foundation Gift, 2013 (2013.758a–c)

The Fraudulent Murasaki's Rustic Genji, as pointed out earlier, was a best seller of its day and engendered a boom in the popularity of woodblock prints on the subject, right from the time such works started to be published on a widespread basis in the late seventeenth century. Less well known perhaps is that *Rustic Genji* also triggered a flood of erotic illustrated books (*shunpon*) on the subject, some directly spoofing the original *Tale of Genji*, others riffing off characters and themes from the nineteenth-century version by Ryūtei Tanehiko (see cat. 96). There had always been *Genji*-related erotica, even in medieval times, based on records of a set created for Emperor Go-Hanazono in the early fifteenth century.¹ By the mid-1670s, Hishikawa Moronobu had already produced two *Genji*-inspired erotic books, and in the 1710s Okumura Masanobu published *Genji of the Floating World (Ukiyo Genji)*. Yet, in terms of lavishness of printing, sheer gorgeousness, and sophistication of literary allusion, nothing rivals the *Genji*-inspired erotica of the mid-nineteenth century, especially those produced by Utagawa Kunisada I and his pupils.² Periodically the Tokugawa shogunate, informed by Neo-Confucian morality, tried to crack down on erotic publications, but the bans were short lived, arbitrarily enforced (though there were some tragic stories of imprisonment and suicide), and generally ineffective. Often authors and illustrators used pseudonyms to avoid persecution.

One of the most outrageous erotic versions of *The Tale of Genji* is by Utagawa Kunisada's pupil Utagawa Kunimori, with the text by print artist cum writer Miyagi Gengyo, who signs himself Inraku Sanjin 姪楽山人, "Gentleman of Bawdy Pleasures." The punning title refers to the "judgments on women" (*shina sadame*) episode in Chapter 2, "Broom Cypress," in the original *Tale of Genji*, the phrase *enshoku* suggesting that not only are their personal virtues being judged but their "voluptuous" qualities as well. So accomplished is the illustration in both wit and sophistication, it was traditionally assumed Kunisada, the master himself, was the illustrator, but specialists concur that it is by his lesser-known pupil Kunimori.³ The first scene illustrated here shows the *Rustic Genji* protagonist Mitsuuji, identified by his "lobster-tail" topknot, cavorting with a courtesan in a lavishly appointed brothel room

(a). The inscription on the clamshell painting informs the reader that this elaborate composition was inspired by Chapter 34, "Early Spring Greens: Part 1" (*Wakana jō*). The poem in the *tanzaku* (poem-card) cartouche is the one Genji wrote when Tamakazura, accompanied by her two young boys, made a New Year's visit.

In this chapter, Genji has just turned forty, and the arrival of the children is a reminder of the passage of time and the changing of generations. In subsequent episodes of the first volume, Mitsuuji and his courtesan lovers are captured in flagrante delicto, though similarly juxtaposed with elegant poems and clamshell paintings inspired by the original tale.

The next scene shown here (b), from the second volume, shows a samurai (not Mitsuuji in this case) having seduced a fisherwoman who has just returned to the shore with a basket of fish.⁴ Their arms and legs are intertwined in a rapturous tangle.

Once again, the composition plays with traditional motifs such as *kai-awase*, the shell-matching game (explained in cat. 76), which in the illustration here shows Genji looking out over the sea at Suma. The red *tanzaku* poetry slip is reminiscent of the way poems in ancient times were inscribed, and the poem is taken verbatim from *The Tale of Genji*, from one of the poetic responses Rokujō sent to Genji while he was in exile:

<i>Ukime karu</i>	Whose bitter harvest
<i>Iseo no ama o</i>	Is Iseo's floating weed . . .
<i>Omoiyare</i>	Oh, think of her,
<i>Moshio taru chō</i>	You other shoresman at Suma
<i>Suma no ura nite</i>	With your sea wrack spilt over with brine. ⁵

While original wording of the episode from Chapter 12, "Exile to Suma," is maintained, the juxtaposition of a poem with the erotically charged imagery imposes double entendres in the context; *ukime* refers to seaweed, yet also suggests a "bitter experience." *Ama* in the original can refer to fisherwomen or a woman who dives for abalone or oysters, but by the Edo period it also had the additional slang connotation of a woman of dissolute behavior. JTC

1. Discussed in Brock 1995.

2. See Paget 2012 for an erudite and entertaining treatment of the subject of *Genji* erotica. For a broader discussion of the subject of Edo-period erotica, see Clark et al. 2013.

3. There is still disagreement over whether the volumes are illustrated by Utagawa Kunimori I or Kunimori II, and whether there was actually only one artist who went by this name. See Paget 2012, pp. 65, 67, n. 46. I have followed the attribution and dating given in Hayakawa 2013, p. 116.

4. See also Washburn 2015, p. 43, n. 13, where Genji jests that the Kii Governor is not serving him treats (women/fish).

5. E. A. Cranston 2006, p. 761.



a. Mitsuji in a brothel, scene inspired by Chapter 34, "Early Spring Greens: Part 1" (*Wakana jō*)



b. A samurai seducing a fisherwoman, scene inspired by Chapter 12, "Exile to Suma" (*Suma*)

101 「源氏雲浮世画合 夕顔 矢間氏の室織江」
歌川國芳画

Yūgao: Yazama's Wife Orië, from the series Scenes amid Genji Clouds Matched with Ukiyo-e Pictures (Genji-gumo ukiyo-e awase: Yūgao)

Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797–1861)

Published by Iseya Ichibei

Edo period (1615–1868), 1845–46

Woodblock *ōban* print (*nishiki-e*); ink and color on paper

14 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 9 $\frac{13}{16}$ in. (37.8 × 25 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Ronin Gallery, 2018

This vibrantly colored print from a set of sixty (see also the next entry) confoundingly combines references from a chapter from *The Tale of Genji*—Chapter 4, “The Lady of the Evening Faces (*Yūgao*)—with scenes based on seemingly unrelated imagery derived from war tales and Kabuki plays.¹ The remarkable textual and pictorial complexity of prints in this series represents the absolute culmination of the experimentation with parodic imagery dating back to the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, as represented by Hishikawa Moronobu, Okumura Masanobu, and other early innovators of the *ukiyo-e* tradition. Even if at first glance the scenes and figures depicted in the prints appear to have little if anything to do with *Genji*, a bit of cogitation will allow connections, however tenuous, to be made. This kind of brain-teasing game was the intention of the artist, and such complex parody prints became a distinctive genre of mid-nineteenth-century *ukiyo-e*.

Kuniyoshi and his contemporary Utagawa Kunisada were the two great pupils of Utagawa Toyokuni I, and they excelled in all the subjects the Ukiyo-e school was known for such as Kabuki actors, beautiful women, and landscapes.² Kuniyoshi also received special acclaim for his depictions of cats and mythical animals, as well as for dynamic tableaux of famous battles of legendary samurai heroes. As demonstrated in this print series, Kuniyoshi was thoroughly conversant in the literature and legends of Japanese and Chinese military heroes. Beginning in the 1820s, his exuberant triptychs of these heroes helped establish his reputation, and later in the same decade he started work on the series *One Hundred and Eight Heroes of the Popular Suikoden* (*Tsūzoku Suikoden gōketsu hyakuhachinin no hitori*), based on the popular Chinese martial tale *The Water Margin* (*Shuihu Zhuan*). Kuniyoshi’s distinctive warrior prints— notable for their elaborately tattooed heroes—earned him entrée in art and literary circles of the day, as well as lasting fame.

While drawing inspiration from war tales such as *The Tale of the Heike* (*Heike monogatari*) and *The Rise and Fall of the Minamoto and the Taira* (*Genpei seisūki*), the artist also incorporated bizarre details into his compositions, including ghostly apparitions, dreams, omens, and superhuman feats. This *Genji Clouds* series similarly

takes an innocent theme of the courtly tale and infuses it with a new layer of intrigue, vendetta plots, and subliminal violence.

For instance, in this case, what does a streetwalker with a dog surrounded by fluttering birds on a snowy night have to do with *Genji*? As with other prints in the series, the artist is engaging in a kind of parodic conflation of two totally unrelated episodes from Japanese literary tradition. The reader can see the *yūgao* (moon-flower) blossom featured on the scroll that gives the chapter its title, and the evocative poem transcribed there is a famous one from the chapter that *Genji* presents to *Yūgao*:

<i>Yorite koso</i>	By coming closer
<i>Sore ka to mo mime</i>	Might you see, indeed, what face
<i>Tasogare ni</i>	That flower may have,
<i>Honobono mitsuru</i>	Whom in the glimmering of dusk
<i>Hana no yūgao</i>	You glimpsed so faintly faint. ³

The inclusion of this poem invites the nocturnal setting. The longer inscription by Hanagasa Gaishi on the left gives more hints and identifies the woman as Orië, the estranged wife of Yamada Jūtarō, one of the Forty-Seven Rōnin, as represented in puppet and Kabuki plays related to *The Treasury of Loyal Retainers* (*Kanadehon Chūshingura*, first staged in 1748). The extremely popular play, based on actual events of 1703, relates the story of forty-seven masterless samurai forced to commit ritual suicide after avenging their lord. *Chūshingura* became one of the most famous Kabuki stories, and numerous plays were produced about it. The play being referenced here is likely one of the later adaptations, probably *The Loyal Samurai* (*Taiheiki chūshin kōshaku*), created as a puppet play in 1766 and reworked as a Kabuki play the following year.⁴ As depicted here, and mentioned in the tribute by Gaishi, Orië had been reduced to the status of streetwalker (*yotaka*, literally, “night hawk”) in order to support her family and in-laws because her husband, Yamada Jūtarō, has joined the campaign to avenge the death of his lord, En’ya Hangan, which ends in the death of all involved. In the play the estranged couple do have a poignant chance meeting at Ukibashi Bridge on a snowy evening, but they know that it will be their last meeting.

It remains for the viewer to make the connections between the two stories. Ultimately, we can observe that the nocturnal setting, the foreboding nature of the relationship, and the tragic outcome of the rendezvous all resonate in both episodes. SW / JTC

1. We are deeply indebted to the thorough investigation of several prints from this series by Leah Justin-Jinich, a graduate student at Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.; see Justin-Jinich 2017.

2. For a study of Kuniyoshi, see Clark 2009.

3. E. A. Cranston 2006, p. 701.

4. Explicated in Justin-Jinich 2017.

102 「源氏雲浮世画合 浮舟 おまつ 赤堀水右衛門」
歌川國芳画

“A Boat Cast Adrift” (*Ukifune*): *Omatsu and Akabori Mizuemon*, from the series *Scenes amid Genji Clouds Matched with Ukiyo-e Pictures (Genji-gumo ukiyo-e awase)*

Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797–1861)

Published by Iseya Ichibei

Edo period (1615–1868), 1845–46

Woodblock *ōban* print (*nishiki-e*); ink and color on paper

14⁷/₈ × 9¹³/₁₆ in. (37.8 × 25 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Ronin Gallery, 2018

Kuniyoshi’s unexpected scene layers various historical and literary references. The composition draws on Chapter 51, “A Boat Cast Adrift,” which is overlaid by a scene of a violent battle taking place on a boat between the villainous samurai Akabori Mizuemon and the female warrior Omatsu. The source for this dynamic image might have been derived from a scene from a popular Kabuki play by Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653–1725). At first glance, the only correlation between this print and the *Genji* chapter is the shared setting, which in the case of *Genji* refers to the commonly depicted image of Ukifune and Prince Niou in a boat headed toward the Isle of Orange Trees (see fig. 36, cats. 32c, 64, 89). Amid an Edo visual culture that is saturated with images of Ukifune as a demure, helpless woman, it is humorous and refreshing to see a similar figure rise up and attack the man in the boat.

As with other prints from this series, the upper register contains an unfurled handscroll with a relevant poem from the chapter and an abbreviated image. Here the poem is one often used to encapsulate the scene:

<i>Tachibana no</i>	Though the lovely colors
<i>Kojima no iro wa</i>	Of the Isle of Orange Trees
<i>Kawaraji o</i>	Will never know change,
<i>Kono ukifune zo</i>	Just where this drifting boat
<i>Yukue shirarenu</i>	Will end up is beyond knowing. ¹

A man and woman in a dynamic pose of combat do battle.

The woman, her sleeves rolled to the elbows, brandishes a sword, which the man attempts to dislodge with a kick from his left foot. Mizuemon, also known as Fujikawa Mizuemon, is the villain of a number of Kabuki plays; the character of Omatsu, a bandit as well as a warrior and sometime villainess, was also featured in several Kabuki plays, and in *ukiyo-e* prints she is often depicted, as here, with a signature “messy bun,” and sometimes with a weapon. The dramatic episode is possibly from a scene in the play *Tale of an Encounter on Fujikawa’s Boat (Fujikawa bune no riai banashi)*, known for the performance of the renowned actor Ichikawa Danjūrō VII in the role of Mizuemon. The names of the two characters appear in yellow cartouches next to their figures, but in the open handscroll above, the small image of an empty, moored boat and the name “Ukifune,” as well as the poem, indicate that the scene is meant to reference “A Boat Cast Adrift” (*Ukifune*). The only genuine parallel between the animated, violent encounter in the print and the chapter from the *Genji* tale is the presence of the small boat in which the male and female antagonists do battle. In most paintings and prints illustrating the *Genji* chapter, Genji’s grandson Prince Niou is shown taking his lover, the beautiful Ukifune, by boat to the Isle of Orange Trees; Ukifune’s name also means “a boat upon the waters.” The timid, conflicted Ukifune, torn between two high-born lovers, and the courtly Niou are a far cry from the warlike Omatsu and the villainous Mizuemon, but the setting of the latter pair’s conflict does recall the famous episode from the literary classic. SW / JTC

1. The version of the poem on the print follows the original Japanese text; see Murasaki Shikibu 1993–97, vol. 5 (1997), p. 223; translation by John T. Carpenter.

源氏雪隠世風合

浮舟

あつらひの
あつらひの
あつらひの
あつらひの
あつらひの



水鏡... 源氏... 雪隠... 世風... 合...
花笠外史

赤堀水右門

一三齋
國子

あまの



元伊勢市



103 「月百姿 源氏夕顔巻」 月岡芳年筆

The spirit of the deceased Yūgao entwined in moonflower vines, based on the print “The Lady of the Evening Faces,” from the series *One Hundred Aspects of the Moon* (*Tsuki hyakushi: Genji Yūgao no maki*)

Tsukioka Yoshitoshi (1839–1892)

Meiji period (1868–1912), ca. 1892

Hanging scroll; ink and color on silk

Image: 41 ¼ × 16 in. (104.8 × 40.6 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Friends of Asian Art Gifts, 2018

As witnessed in Kuniyoshi’s prints introduced in the previous entries, a fascination with memorializing famous scenes from Japanese literature that capture the supernatural, macabre, or violent episodes continued in the late nineteenth century. Though Tsukioka Yoshitoshi was a pupil of Kuniyoshi’s, he set off in new artistic directions, instigated in part by the modernization of Japan and by modern media—including photography and lithography—but ultimately he acquired a nostalgia for the disappearing world of traditional Japanese culture, including the art of woodblock printing and painting in the *ukiyo-e* style to which he devoted his career.

He achieved notoriety beginning in the 1860s for his prints capturing scenes of extreme violence and gore from Japanese history, including gruesome scenes of women suffering or enduring torture. Although he was in poor health toward the end of his life and diagnosed with mental illness, his final years can be considered his most successful based on his spectacular triptychs of Kabuki actors and scenes from plays, not to mention his two greatest series, *New Forms of Thirty-Six Ghosts* (1889–92) and *One Hundred Aspects of the Moon* (1885–92), the latter being the inspiration for the paintings here.¹

In this painting, the spirit of the recently deceased Yūgao—who had been attacked in her sleep by the vengeful spirit of Lady Rokujō—takes on wraithlike form, with frazzled long hair and tendrils of “evening faces” (*yūgao*), or moonflowers, wrapped around her, illuminated by a full moon. Yoshitoshi captures the effect of transparency—the vine appears over and under her garment—and the ghost is shown with blue lips. The eerily transfixing vignette recalls the ill-fated romantic liaison of Yūgao and Genji, which is among the most tragic and poignant episodes of *The Tale of Genji*, told in Chapter 4, “The Lady of the Evening Faces.” Because of the dramatic turn of events, rivalries in love, and the spirit possession, the *Yūgao* chapter—usually the scene of their initial encounter and the exchange of poems—is often depicted with *yūgao* flowers presented on a fan.

JTC

1. Both series are engagingly explicated in Stevenson 1983; Stevenson 1992.

104 「月百姿 石山の月」 月岡芳年筆

Murasaki Shikibu at Ishiyamadera Temple, based on the print “The Moon at Ishiyama,” from the series *One Hundred Aspects of the Moon* (*Tsuki hyakushi: Ishiyama no tsuki*)

Tsukioka Yoshitoshi (1839–1892)

Meiji period (1868–1912), ca. 1892

Hanging scroll; ink and color on silk

Image: 41 ¼ × 16 in. (104.8 × 40.6 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Ryo Toyonaga and Alvin E. Friedman-Kien Gift, 2018

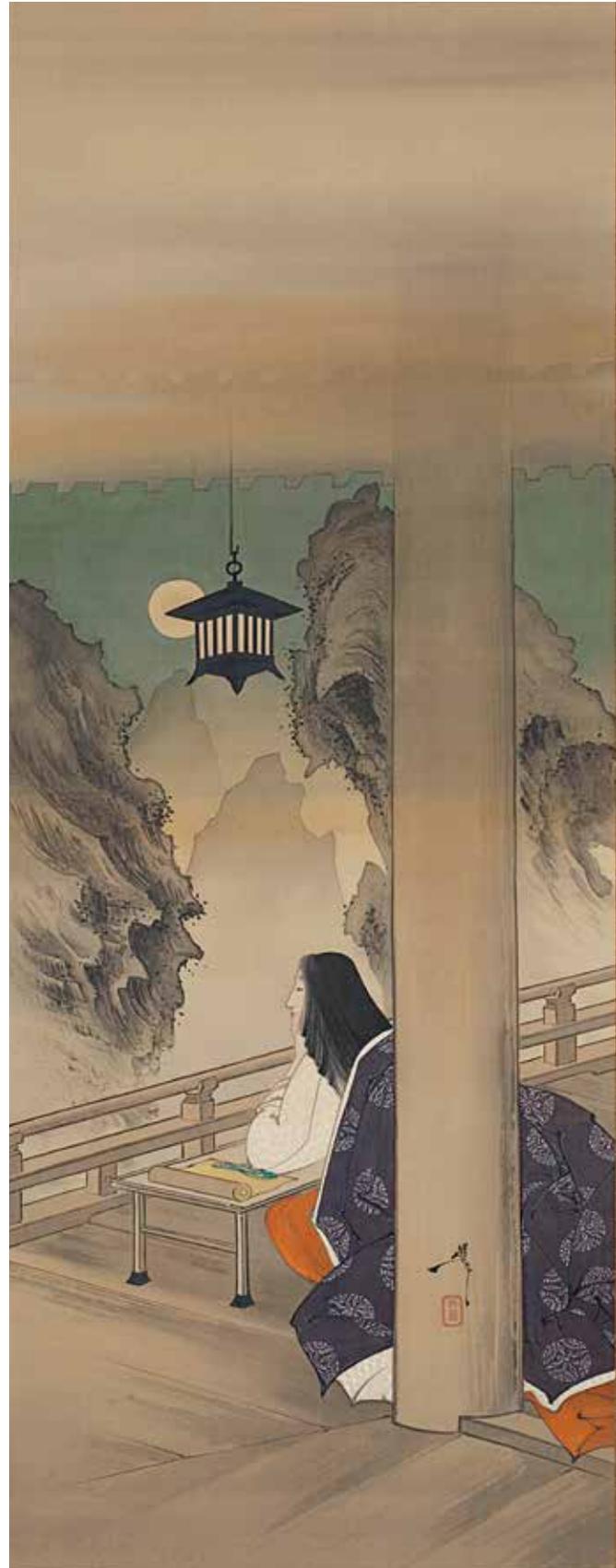
It seems appropriate to conclude this section on *ukiyo-e* paintings, prints, and book illustrations with an image of Murasaki Shikibu, the woman whose remarkable tale inaugurated a visual tradition that remains unrivaled in its remarkable diversity compared to any other work of Japanese literature, if not world literature. To create the incredible compendium of one hundred images of famous moonlit scenes that inspired the original print series, Tsukioka Yoshitoshi had combed East Asian literature and legend for inspiration. The iconic scene of Murasaki seated at her desk, about to embark on writing the monumental novel, was an obvious choice for the artist, since it had been depicted so many times through history in works by artists of every school, including parodic *ukiyo-e* images (cats. 19–24, 92).

Yoshitoshi’s rendition of the setting, however, diverges from those of his predecessors. The thick wood column, wide-planked veranda, and wooden railing suggest the main hall of Ishiyamadera Temple. A suspended metal lantern partially obscures the moon. Murasaki is seated at her desk, leaning over a spread-out handscroll, not writing but lost in reverie. Her capacious robes, purple (*murasaki*) in color, cover her orange-red undergarment. Rather than show a vista over Lake Biwa, the artist depicts the outcrops of wollastonite stone surrounding Ishiyamadera, the “Stony Mountain Temple.” There is no vantage point at the temple with such craggy features, but the references are clear. Thirteen years earlier, in 1876, Yoshitoshi had created a startling imaginary close-up portrait in a pose similar to that seen here for his series *Mirror of Women, Ancient and Modern* (*Kokin hime kagami*).¹ He created only a handful of prints over the years on the theme of *Genji*, mostly on the *Rustic Genji* theme.

These two works are from a set of a dozen privately commissioned paintings based on the popular print series. The artist elongated the compositions to accommodate the hanging-scroll format.

JTC

1. An impression is in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (11.45575).



105 『新訳源氏物語』 与謝野晶子訳 中澤弘光画

A New Translation of The Tale of Genji (Shin'yaku Genji monogatari)

Translation by Yosano Akiko (1878–1942)

Book cover designs and illustrations by Nakazawa Hiromitsu (1874–1964)

Meiji period (1868–1912), 1912 (vols. 1, 2), and Taishō period (1912–26), 1913 (vols. 3, 4)

Woodblock-printed illustrations; ink and color on paper

Each: approx. 6 × 3³/₈ in. (15.2 × 9.2 cm)

Michael Emmerich

In 1911, at the request of the Tokyo publisher Kanao Bun'endō, the prolific poet, fiction writer, and essayist Yosano Akiko began translating *The Tale of Genji* into vernacular Japanese. Efforts had been made for centuries to make Murasaki's tale accessible to a wider readership, through digests, commentaries, and annotated editions, but never before had anyone reinterpreted the tale in the modern language for readers to enjoy free of detailed notes and explanatory texts.¹ Akiko's translation was rendered into a modernized form of written Japanese called *genbun itchi*, which was adopted in the Meiji period to unify the written and colloquial language and reached maturity during the first decade of the twentieth century. By the time she started her *Genji* translation, Akiko had already mastered this form and was a literary celebrity in her own right. Her single-authored volume of 399 *tanka* poems, *Tangled Hair (Midaregami)*, had been published a decade earlier, in 1901, and was widely recognized for its bold poetic voice that, among other things, gave newfound expression to female sensuality and desire. *Tangled Hair* appeared shortly after Akiko moved to Tokyo at the age of twenty-three to join her future husband, the poet and editor Yosano Hiroshi (1873–1935), also known as Tekkan. From that point on she found herself at the center of new movements in Tokyo that drew on Western literature and art with outlets such as the magazine *Myōjō* (Morning Star), edited by Tekkan. Akiko's literary talent and her experience as a well-published fiction writer and poet on the cutting edge of Japanese Romanticism positioned her well to make Murasaki's classical tale fresh and new for twentieth-century readers.

What qualified Akiko for this task even more, however, was her expertise on *The Tale of Genji*, which by 1904 was in great demand. Her lectures and tutorials on the subject provided a needed source of income.² Like other women in history, such as Takasue no Musume, the author of *The Sarashina Diary (Sarashina nikki, ca. 1060)* (see cat. 17), Akiko had been immersed in the work since she was young and had even owned a copy of the seventeenth-century *Illustrated Tale of Genji (E-iri Genji monogatari, cat. 91)*.³ This deep familiarity with the tale gave her the confidence

to translate freely, taking liberties that allowed her to transform Murasaki's tale into a modern "novel" (*shōsetsu*).⁴ The translation was completed in four volumes over three years, during which time she gave birth to three children (her seventh, eighth, and ninth of thirteen).⁵ Published in 1912 and 1913, the new translation met with tremendous success spurred on by an energetic advertising campaign that posited Akiko as a modern-day Murasaki Shikibu.⁶ Another draw was the sheer appeal of the books themselves, brimming with visual interest through vibrant cover designs and illustrations by the Western-style painter and print artist Nakazawa Hiromitsu.

From the beginning, Akiko's poetry was presented alongside the avant-garde visual art of the day, starting with the Art Nouveau color illustrations and book-cover design of *Tangled Hair* by Fujishima Takeji (1867–1943).⁷ Some have even argued that the imagery of tangled or long black hair in her poetry bears some relationship to the reception in Japan of the art of the Pre-Raphaelites, such as the painting of Ophelia by John Everett Millais (1829–1896).⁸ Nakazawa Hiromitsu's illustrations for Akiko's *Genji* translation were a source of pride for the author. She recounted how on a trip to Paris in 1913 she presented the first two volumes of her translation to the sculptor Auguste Rodin, who lamented his inability to read Japanese but marveled over the beauty of Nakazawa's woodblock prints.⁹ Nakazawa had trained under the oil painter Kuroda Seiki (1866–1924) and was a proponent of the *shin-hanga* ("new woodblock print") movement that sought to preserve the Edo-period printing tradition while infusing it with an aesthetic sensibility attuned to Western art. He was perfectly situated to conceptualize the visual presentation of Akiko's new *Genji* and seamlessly blended old and new.

MM

1. Rowley 2000, p. 91.

2. Ibid., p. 76. Rowley demonstrates Akiko's lifelong scholarly engagement with *Genji* and other classical texts, showing how they helped shaped Akiko's oeuvre as much as literary modernism. She had come close to completing a full commentary on the tale but lost the manuscript in the fires following the 1923 Tokyo earthquake. In 1938–39 Akiko went on to publish a second fuller translation of *The Tale of Genji (Shin shinyaku Genji monogatari)*.

3. Suzuki 2008, p. 282, n. 50.

4. The subtle ways in which Akiko personalized the tale and transformed the persona of the protagonist by minimizing Genji's flaws are carefully analyzed in Rowley 2000, pp. 112–31.

5. Akiko's candid essays and stirring poetry on the struggles of pregnancy, childbirth, and motherhood are discussed in Morton 2009, pp. 73–96.

6. Emmerich 2013, pp. 336–37; see also Rowley 2000, pp. 72–89.

7. See Beichman 2002, p. 174, for an illustration and compelling visual analysis of Fujishima's cover design.

8. Morton 2009, pp. 67–68.

9. Rowley 2000, p. 188.



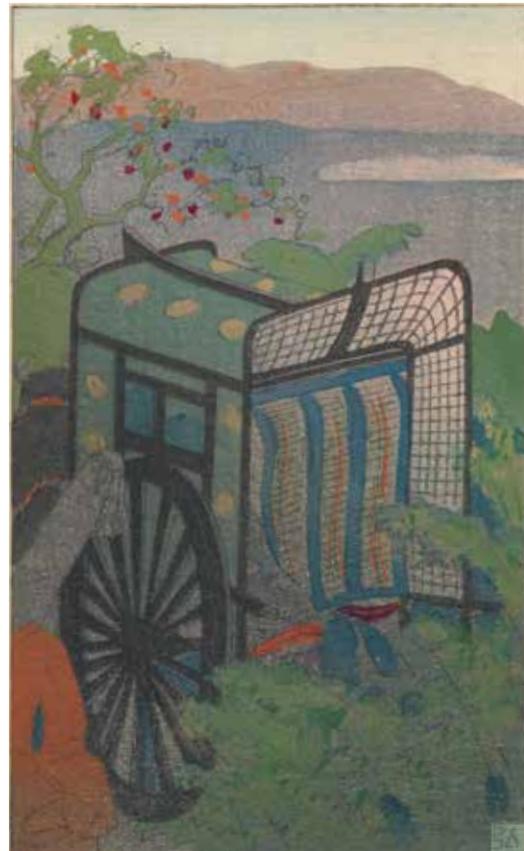
a. Chapter 23, "First Song of Spring" (*Hatsune*)



b. Chapter 35, "Early Spring Greens: Part 2" (*Wakana ge*)



c. Chapter 42, "The Fragrant Prince" (*Niou miya*)



d. Chapter 50, "A Hut in the Eastern Provinces" (*Azumaya*)



a. Genji and Murasaki at Nijō on a snowy, moonlit night

106 『源氏物語 あさきゆめみし』 大和和紀作

The Tale of Genji: Fleeting Dreams (*Genji monogatari: Asaki yumemishi*)
Yamato Waki (b. 1948)

Shōwa period (1926–1989), Heisei period (1989–2019):

a) 1984; b) 1981; c) 1992; d) 1989

Matted paintings; ink and color on paper

a) $13\frac{3}{8} \times 22\frac{13}{16}$ in. (33.9 × 58 cm)

b) $14\frac{3}{4} \times 20\frac{5}{8}$ in. (36.2 × 52.4 cm)

c) $14\frac{1}{2} \times 20\frac{11}{16}$ in. (36.8 × 52.5 cm)

d) $13\frac{3}{4} \times 10\frac{1}{4}$ in. (34.9 × 25.9 cm)

Collection of the artist

Asaki yumemishi © Yamato Waki

As this catalogue's survey of nearly a millennium of transcriptions and illustrations of the venerable *Tale of Genji* demonstrates, at every stage of history writers and artists have responded to the original narrative with remarkable creativity in order to make the complex plotline and dauntingly large roster of characters more accessible and appealing to audiences. One of the most remarkable

developments in contemporary times is the emergence of *manga* versions of the tale—more than twenty series have been created to date.¹ Among these, *Fleeting Dreams* (*Asaki yumemishi*), a multi-volume interpretation of the entire *Tale of Genji* in serialized form by Yamato Waki, has risen above the others for its artistry and its attention to the historical details and literary features of the original.

Yamato began illustrating her best-selling magnum opus in 1979 for the monthly magazine *Mimi* and continued working on it for fourteen years, until 1993.² With *Fleeting Dreams* Yamato reconceptualized *The Tale of Genji* as a *shōjo manga*, or “girl’s comic.” She used the visual idiom of that genre—such as figures characterized by slender physiques, sharp features, and large eyes—as well as the full panoply of storytelling strategies of the comic form. In terms of narrative content, *shōjo manga* emphasize romantic relationships and heightened emotions in stories told from a woman’s perspective. While such scenes abound in *The Tale of Genji*, in the



b. The wandering spirit of Lady Rokujō attacking Genji's wife, Lady Aoi

Heian-period text they are expressed in an understated manner, with feelings and opinions communicated obliquely, often through poetic allusion, and sexual encounters are implied rather than described. Yamato expanded on the inner thoughts, outward expressions of emotion, and psychological motivations of the characters. She also visualized romantic liaisons, leading to a certain degree of eroticism conventional to the genre. These traits are epitomized in the vibrant frontispieces she made for each volume of her work, for which she created original paintings in color and ink, of which four are reproduced here, including a youthful, handsome Genji with Murasaki beneath a spectacularly clear moon on a winter night (a).

By the time Yamato began working on this monumental project, she had read translations of *Genji* into modern Japanese by the writers Enchi Fumiko (1905–1986), Tanizaki Junichirō (1886–1965), and the novelist Tanabe Seiko (b. 1928), who wrote the freest translation yet, *The New Tale of Genji*, first serialized in

1974.³ Yamato also read the Heian original, aloud, which enabled her to fully absorb Murasaki's tale, giving her the confidence and mastery over the material to create her own work while remaining true to the original and its historical detail. The research required to begin drawing the architecture, furnishings, and clothing of the period was substantial, and Yamato frequently credits her team of assistants who gathered this information and made explanatory sketches at a time before the wealth of *Genji* and Heian-period (794–1185) didactic materials was so readily available. The research and investment of time paid off, resulting in exquisite drawings and a graphic novel in which each frame is thoughtfully conceived. To open the pages of *Asaki yumemishi* is to enter into one of the most fully realized worlds of *Genji* in the history of its reception.

Among the modifications that Yamato made, she expanded the portrayal of Genji's childhood and pitiable loss of his mother in an attempt to make the character more sympathetic. Instead of the famous first line of the tale describing Genji's mother by



Fig. 78. Images of Genji's mother, the Kiritsubo Consort



Fig. 79. Lady Rokujō and Genji in a passionate embrace



Fig. 80. Ukifune and Niou crossing the Uji River near the Isle of Orange Trees



c. Ukifune's attempt to drown herself, inspired by the painting *Ophelia* by John Everett Millais

the narrator, Yamato begins with Genji's voice, establishing his tremendous sorrow and the romantic tone of the *manga*. His words above two images of his mother (fig. 78) read, "I never knew my mother. They say she had the ephemeral appearance of a young girl, a translucent beauty. She lived for love alone, and it was love that cut her life short."⁴ Yamato even attempts to humanize the mysterious Lady Rokujō, fleshing out her backstory and visually depicting her passionate affair with the young Genji (fig. 79) to make the later wrath of her jealous spirit (b) more understandable to the contemporary reader.

Fleeting Dreams is not all melancholy and melodrama, however, as Yamato deftly switches her drawing style to visualize humorous asides found in the original tale, usually involving characters described as uncouth or unattractive. Among her visual techniques

are compositions that may derive from the bird's-eye perspective of premodern *Genji* paintings but are better described as cinematic, as in the overheard shot of the famous boat scene of Niou and Ukifune (fig. 80). Evocative "establishing shots" of distant landscapes and buildings shown from an aerial view often appear at the start of sections. Elsewhere, breathtaking panoramas of locations like the Uji villa surrounded by intricately rendered landscapes provide readers with a realistic view of these famous settings like never before.

Yamato has explained how she was interested in exploring the ways in which the women of *Genji* assert themselves. Her depiction of Chapter 51, "A Boat Cast Adrift," is a case in point as she depicts Ukifune's willful attempts to evade her two suitors, Niou and Kaoru, beginning with her attempt to drown herself in the Uji

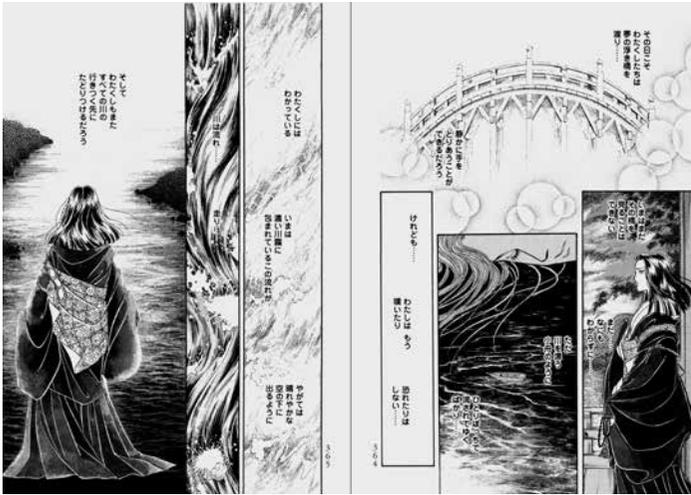


Fig. 81. Ukifune gazing toward the “floating bridge of dreams”

River, an act only implied in the original. In a frontispiece to this final section of the tale, Yamato’s depiction of Ukifune was inspired by the painting *Ophelia* by John Everett Millais (1829–1896) (c). Yamato vividly portrays Ukifune’s determination to cut her long hair and become a nun, and, in perhaps the most radical departure from Murasaki’s text, she concludes her *manga* not with Kaoru, but with Ukifune, giving this character the final word. Ukifune has written to Kaoru suggesting that they meet again as disciples of the Buddha, together crossing the “floating bridge of dreams” (fig. 81). She states how she is at peace with being alone, then stares out over the water toward a distant horizon, her short locks blowing in the breeze, as the words say, “perhaps I too may reach the point where the entirety of the river ends . . . like the flowing current emptying into the great ocean full of light.” This last phrase appears only after one has turned the final page (fig. 82), where Ukifune’s words hover above a vast ocean, the voice of the heroine becoming one with her surroundings and suggesting her spiritual awakening.

The radiant Genji makes his final appearance in the tale in Chapter 41, “The Spirit Summoner” (*Maboroshi*), which ends with a poem that only alludes to his demise, while his actual death goes unrepresented, symbolized by a blank chapter consisting of nothing but the title “Hidden by the Clouds” (*Kumogakure*).⁵ In keeping with Yamato’s tendencies to lay bare the emotions of such events, she instead continues the narrative and dramatizes the reaction to Genji’s death, inserting a scene in which the Akashi Lady views mysterious clouds in the distance and suddenly realizes in horror that they signify Genji’s passing. Yamato presents two pages of

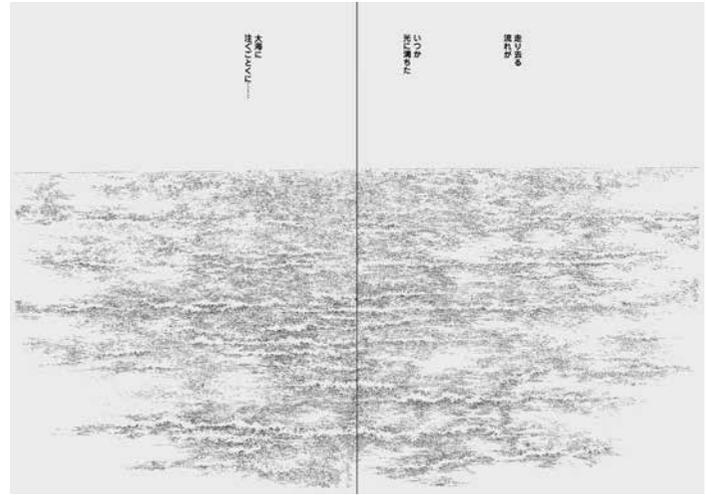


Fig. 82. The final scene of *Fleeting Dreams*, with Ukifune’s soliloquy

cloud-covered mountains along with the lines of an ancient poem from which the *manga* takes its name: “Even brilliant colors end up fading. In this world, who lives on forever? Today crossing over the distant mountain of illusion, no longer will I see fleeting dreams.”⁶ In a stunning painting visualizing Genji’s exit from the world (d), Yamato Waki depicts Genji looking weary from having mourned the loss of his greatest love and life partner, Murasaki, rising to a celestial realm. He holds a red fan and gazes onto a world below cast into darkness, where, against a purple-tinged crepuscular sky, dark clouds appear to move across and obscure the glowing moon. In the subsequent chapters of the tale, the world without Genji is described as one in which a radiant light had been extinguished, and yet, as in this rendition by Yamato Waki, his presence will continue to be felt, hovering over the narrative through his descendants and in the karmic return of his actions. MM

1. Miyake 2008 discusses six *Genji manga* and historically contextualizes the genre. The author is grateful to Mariko O’Neil for her research assistance on this entry.
2. Kitamura 2008; see also Miyake 2008. The first portion of *Asaki yumemishi* was translated into English by Stuart Atkin and Yoko Toyozaki; see Yamato 2000–2001.
3. For information on Yamato Waki’s creative process and the history of the project, see the interview with the artist included in Kamiya 2016.
4. All of the translations from *Asaki yumemishi* in this entry are by Melissa McCormick.
5. See the translator’s note in Washburn 2015, pp. 881–82, for a concise explanation of this empty chapter.
6. Translation based on the parsing of the poem in Shirane 2005, pp. 22–23. The original is called the *Iroha* poem, because it incorporates all forty-eight characters of the Japanese syllabary (*iroha*) exactly once. Traditionally attributed to the monk Kūkai, it is now thought to have originated later in the Heian period. Discussed in Abé 1999, pp. 392, 398.



d. The death of Genji

APPENDIX ONE

Shinden Architecture and *The Tale of Genji*

AKAZAWA MARI

It is difficult to truly understand *The Tale of Genji* and its illustrations without understanding the residential architecture within which some of the tale's most memorable scenes were staged. During the Heian period (794–1185), when *Genji* was written, the nobility constructed mansions in the *shinden* style of architecture (*shinden-zukuri*). However, existing structures from the time are virtually nonexistent. Scholars and architectural historians have used descriptions in *The Tale of Genji* and other texts, as well as premodern paintings set in the Heian period, as the basis for diagrams and models to reconstruct what *shinden* residential architecture looked like and how its spaces functioned. This essay outlines some of the most important features of these structures and analyzes their significance within Genji's grand Rokujō estate.¹

Shinden Architecture on the Outside

Annual Ceremonies and Events (Nenjū gyōji emaki), a copy of a twelfth-century handscroll painting depicting official ceremonies of the courtly calendar and seasonal observances, provides a good introduction to some of the exterior features of *shinden* architecture (fig. 83). The scene illustrated depicts

a cockfight, an event associated with the third month, taking place in the southern courtyard of the south-facing main building of a nobleman's residence. The grounds of the mansion are surrounded on four sides by a perimeter wall, with access allowed through a gate on the eastern (or western) side. Inside the perimeter is an "interior corridor" (*chūmonrō*) with its own gated doors that open onto the southern courtyard. Entering the southern courtyard thus requires passing through two boundaries, the outer gate and the inner gate.

The space between the outer gate and the interior corridor functioned as a waiting area for the attendants who were not of high enough status to enter the courtyard. The hall in the center of the courtyard itself is the *shinden*, the main residential building, in this style of architecture. In the illustration, several men watch the festivities on the eastern side of the building, while women occupy the western side, observing the events from behind drawn blinds and through the spaces between curtains. High-ranking noblewomen largely remained hidden behind blinds, curtains, and furnishings, out of the sight of men (see also cats. 74, 78). To the left of the building, a woman holding a folding fan stands on a covered walkway (*watadono*) at the western side of the *shinden*. Such bridges connected the

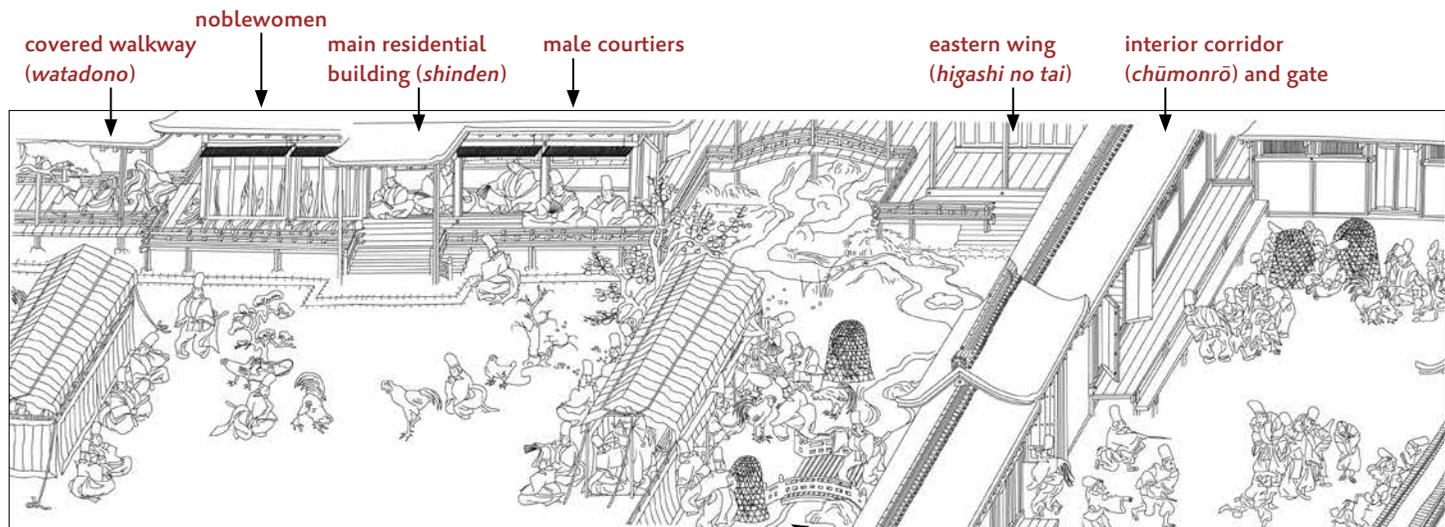


Fig. 83. Line-drawn copy of a scene from *Annual Ceremonies and Events (Nenjū gyōji emaki)*, 12th century. Tanaka Collection

narrow stream (*yarimizu*)

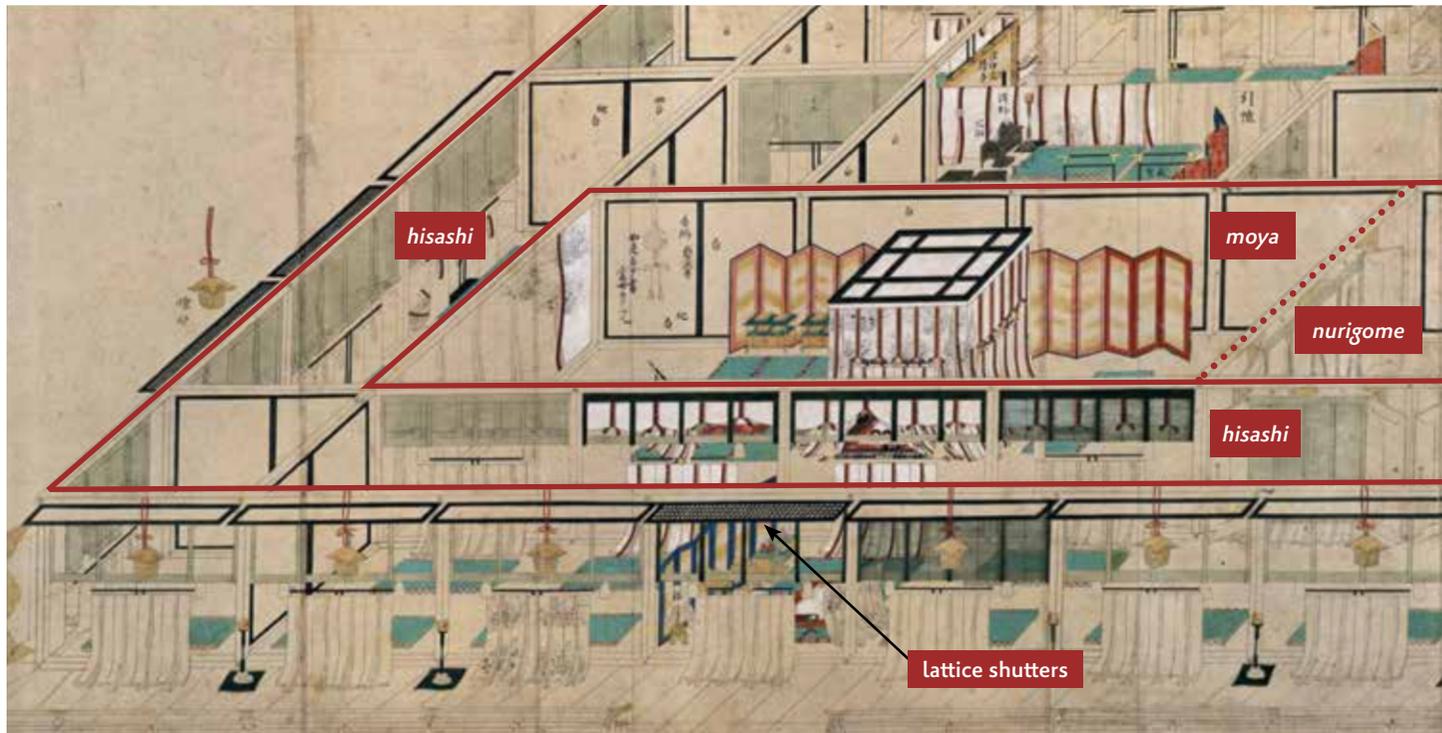


Fig. 84. *A Miscellany of Essential Household Accessories (Ruijū zōyōshō)*, Scroll 2. Edo period (1615–1868). Handscroll; ink and color on paper. Tokyo National Museum (QA-4001)

main building to separate wings (*tai*) of the residential complex. In some cases, the main building was the residence of parents, while an adult daughter occupied a residential wing, the place to which her husband would return from his own residence, in accordance with the Heian-period system of uxorilocal marriage. Narrow streams (*yarimizu*) flowing beneath the covered walkways and bridges fed into the man-made ponds and lakes that were often part of the landscaped grounds of these properties. Seated on a walkway or veranda (*sunoko*), composing poetry while listening to a babbling brook or gazing out at the courtyard garden, Heian-period occupants of *shinden*-style architecture experienced all four seasons.

Shinden Architecture on the Inside

The interior spaces of *shinden*-style architecture are composed of a central core, the *moya*, surrounded by aisles (*hisashi*) and outer aisles called *magobisashi* (literally, “grandchild aisles”) (fig. 84). As with other forms of Japanese timber-frame architecture, *shinden* buildings consisted of round vertical posts, horizontal beams, and non-load-bearing walls. This resulted in buildings with open plans and no fixed walls or permanent barriers. Individual living spaces were created by partitioning spaces with furnishings and fixtures: portable standing curtains

(*kichō*), folding screens (*byōbu*), blinds (*misu*), freestanding wood screens (*tsuitate*, see cat. 74), and paper sliding doors (*shōji*). Even areas of the wood floor could be reconfigured with movable tatami mats for sleeping or sitting. All of these items were changed out for those in different materials and colors according to seasonal and ceremonial needs, which conformed to a strict set of rules (*shitsurai*) that dictated their use.

Exterior-facing features included black-lacquered lattice shutters (*kōshi*) that were raised open from the inside to create a flow between interior and exterior space. By the late medieval period, these black-lacquered shutters had largely disappeared from residential buildings, replaced by external horizontal sliding doors. Their presence in paintings of the early modern period came to signify an archaic form that symbolized the residential architecture of the nobility in the classical and medieval eras.

In the late Edo period (1615–1868), designs were created in an attempt to reconstruct the imperial palace of the Heian period (fig. 85). The Seiryōden, the emperor’s residence within the Imperial Residential Compound (Dairi), was centered on the Imperial Daytime Chamber (Hi no Omashi), surrounded by sliding-door paintings depicting celebrated sites throughout the Japanese archipelago. Unlike the rest of the building, the Imperial Nighttime Chamber (Yon no Otodo) was a special

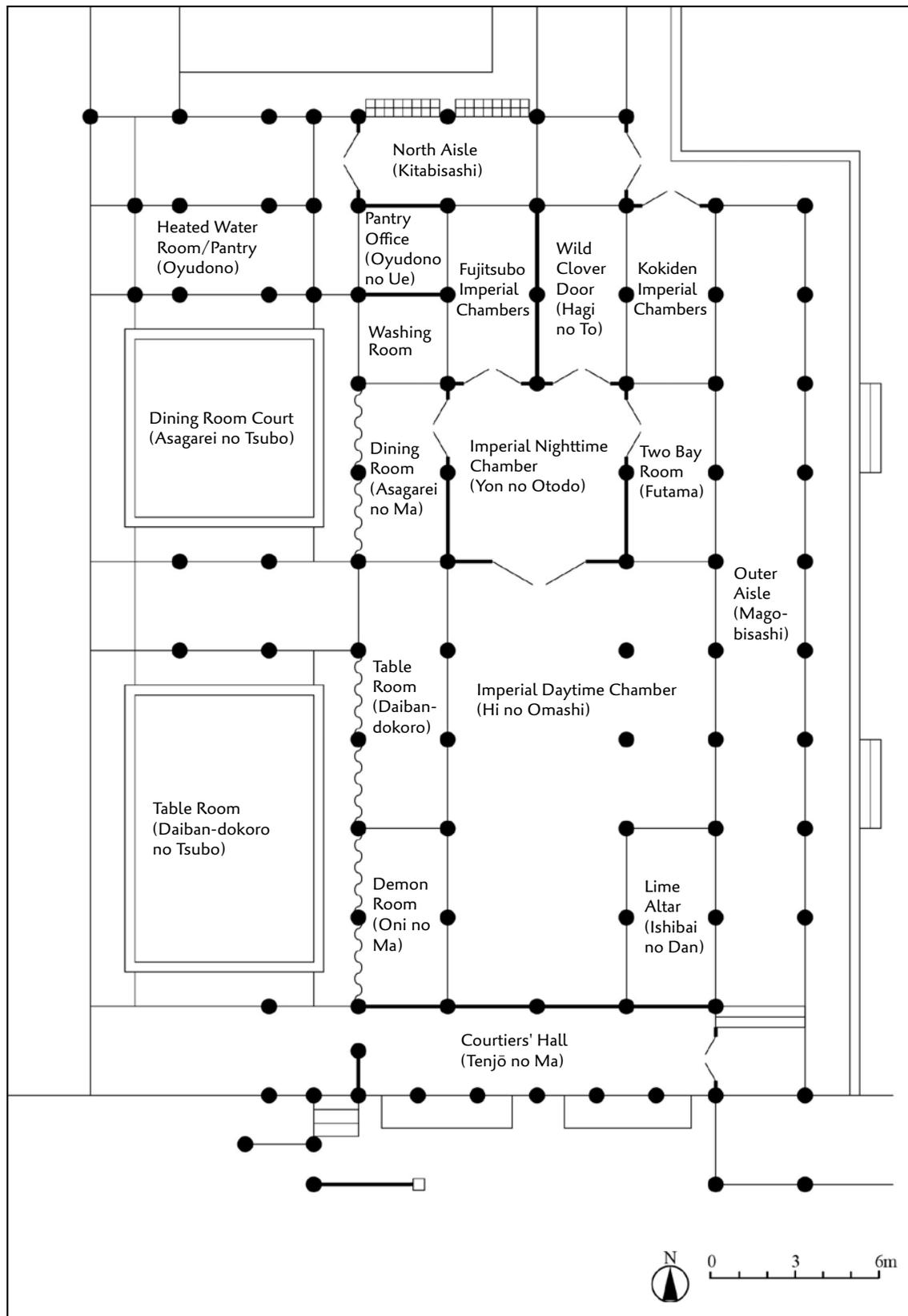


Fig. 85. Plan of the Seiryōden (literally “Hall of Cool and Refreshing Breezes”), the emperor’s residence, based on a nineteenth-century reconstruction of the Kyoto Imperial Palace. After Nihon Kenchiku Gakkai 2007

enclosed room with plastered walls (*nurigome*), adjacent to the designated chambers of the Fujitsubo and Kokiden Imperial Consorts in the north; the Rear Court (*Kōkyū densha*) of the imperial consorts and wives consisted of separate buildings to the north of the Seiryōden, but the chambers of these two highest-ranking ladies were constructed within the interior of the emperor's residence. Rooms enclosed by white plaster walls and accessed by hinged wood doors (*tsumado*), like the imperial bedchamber, often served the purifying function of a sacred space, and were used as nuptial chambers or funerary spaces, specifically for the laying out of a corpse. An important furnishing occasionally placed within such a chamber was the curtained platform (*chōdai, michō*) (fig. 86). It was constructed by inserting vertical posts into a low wood dais (*hamayuka*) and suspending a layer of fabric above to enclose all four sides. These curtained platform beds, when placed within a room with plaster walls, created a separate space demarcated for auspicious or special events, including childbirth, marriage rites, and imperial funerals.

Residential Architecture in *The Tale of Genji*: The Rokujō Estate and Its Garden of the Four Seasons

By Chapter 21 of the tale, "Maidens of the Dance" (*Otome*), Genji, age thirty-five, is flourishing, having been exonerated after exile and having risen to the position of chancellor. He begins constructing a grand palatial estate in the capital, partly on land that once belonged to Lady Rokujō. The entire compound encompasses four parcels of land joined together, with each quadrant dedicated to one of the four seasons and within which Genji installs his various women (fig. 87). Genji lives in the main building (*shinden*) of the southeast (spring) quadrant, along with Lady Murasaki, who occupies the eastern wing (*higashi no tai*), and her adopted daughter, the Akashi Princess, who lives in the eastern rooms of the *shinden*. After Genji's death, his grandson the Second Prince, Niou, calls the main building of this quadrant his home, while his granddaughter, the First Princess, claims the eastern wing, all of which is appropriate since both of them are children of the Akashi Empress (the former Akashi Princess). To create the landscape of the spring quarter of the property, Genji constructed tall hills and planted the quintessential flowering trees and plants of that season: red plum, cherry, wisteria, azalea, and mountain rose, along with five-needle pines.

The northeast (summer) quadrant is home to the character known as Hanachirusato and to Genji's son Yūgiri before he marries. Later, the western wing becomes the living quarters of Tamakazura, and after Genji's death, Yūgiri takes over this portion of the estate, installing there one of his wives, the Second



Fig. 86. Curtained platform (*michō*), from a copy of the *Miraculous Origins of the Kasuga Deity (Kasuga Gongen genki-e)*. Edo period (1615–1868), 19th century. Ink and color on paper. Tokyo National Museum (A-1662)

Princess, known as Ochiba. The summer grounds are characterized by a natural water spring (*izumi*), bamboo (*kuretake*), hedges of deutzia, flowering orange trees, pinks or gillyflowers (*nadeshiko*), and roses, along with a track for horse racing and mounted archery events.

The Umetsubo Empress, also known as Akikonomu, literally "one who loves autumn," resides in the southwest (autumn) quadrant of Rokujō when not at the palace. In this section, sited on what was originally a slightly elevated plot of land, Genji enlarged the hills, planted trees that would give forth brilliant crimson leaves in the fall, and erected a waterfall.

The northwest (winter) quadrant of the estate is where the Akashi Lady resides, surrounded by a perimeter of pines, a fence full of chrysanthemum flowers, and trees found deep in the mountains. This is the only residential complex among the four quadrants without a main building (*shinden*); instead, there are two large wings (*tai*) side by side, and the northernmost portion of the property is occupied by storehouses.

The Nijō Residences

Genji also inherited the residence of his mother, the Kiritsubo Consort, which is called the Nijō mansion (*Nijō'in*), where he lived before the construction of the Rokujō estate. It is to the western wing of this residence that Genji first brings the young Murasaki to live with him, and even after Rokujō is built this remains Murasaki's second home. After her death it is inherited by Prince Niou, a son of the Akashi Empress, and he welcomes



Fig. 87. Model of Genji's Rokujō estate. The Tale of Genji Museum, Uji City

into its western wing the Uji Princess Nakanokimi, whom he takes as a wife. At a separate compound called Nijō Tōin, which Genji received from his father and renovated, Hanachirusato occupies the west wing, while the north wing eventually becomes the home of Suetsumuhana and Utsusemi. All the while, the main building is left open for Genji to use as his residence; Hanachirusato inherits the residence after Genji's death.

It is useful to consider which character occupies the *shinden* in Genji's Rokujō estate. As a structure with a special status, the *shinden* is expected to be the living quarters of an official wife. Murasaki is Genji's greatest love, but she has no strong parental backing and is raised by Genji himself, and because she never becomes his primary official wife, she resides in the east wing of his spring residence. When Genji marries the daughter of the Suzaku Emperor, the character known as the Third Princess, he welcomes her into the spring quarter of Rokujō as his official wife, and she occupies the *shinden*, as Murasaki never could.

Similarly, the residence of the Akashi Lady in the winter quadrant has symbolic significance by having no *shinden* at

all. As the daughter of a member of the provincial governing class (*zuryō*), her status is so low that it is deemed best for the daughter she has with Genji, the Akashi Princess, to be raised by Murasaki. The specific spaces of a *shinden* complex within which someone resides are thus strictly determined by their rank and status, and in *The Tale of Genji* those spaces reveal much about a given character.

The female attendants who served high-ranking ladies lived in specially designated apartments (*tsubone*) or, at the imperial palace, in the large room called the Table Room (Daibandokoro). The author of *The Tale of Genji*, Murasaki Shikibu, was a female attendant and at one time resided in the palace of Emperor Ichijō (980–1011). There her room was located near the eastern door on the northern walkway that bridged the *shinden* and the east wing. She shared her chambers with a fellow lady-in-waiting named Koshōshō. They merged their two rooms into one, and when both were in service at the same time, portable standing curtains divided their living areas. When one returned home the other occupied the whole space.



Fig. 88. Re-creation of one portion of a model of Genji's spring quadrant at Rokujō. The Costume Museum, Kyoto

The Tale of Genji and Research on the History of Residential Architecture

The first systematic and large-scale inquiry into the history of residential architecture in Japan began in the late eighteenth century with the compilation of massive collections of old documents and pictorial materials related to the Heian palace and the homes of the nobility. As research developed, scholars of architecture and Japanese literature began investigating the residences described in *The Tale of Genji*. The twentieth century witnessed the construction of actual models that re-created these fictional structures, most important among them being those made by the literary scholar Tamagami Takuya and the architectural historian Ike Kōzō.² Ike's plans became the basis for the remarkable one-quarter-scale model of Genji's palace in the spring quarter of the Rokujō estate, constructed at the Costume Museum in Kyoto, under Ike's supervision (fig. 88). That model contains all of the interior furnishings of *shinden* architecture explained above, created

by expert craftsmen, as well as dolls with robes and textiles informed by historical research and the descriptions in the tale. The model that belongs to The Tale of Genji Museum in the city of Uji re-creates all four quadrants of the Rokujō estate at 1/100 scale (fig. 87). Life-size models based on scenes from the twelfth-century *Genji Scrolls* have also been built, providing an immersive experience of Heian-period architecture.

—Translated by Melissa McCormick

1. For a more comprehensive study of this subject in English, see Akazawa 2018. For a broader examination of architecture as represented in *The Tale of Genji* and Heian architecture in general, see *Genji monogatari zuten* 1997; Hinata 2004; Kawamoto Shigeo 2005; Nihon Kenchiku Gakkai 2007; Akazawa 2010. The layout of Heian-kyō, present-day Kyoto, as well as the residential architectural style of the capital elite, is discussed in chapters 1 and 2 of Stavros 2014.
2. Ike 1989. Schematic diagrams and digital reconstructions prepared for a project headed by Professor Tamagami are included in a website hosted by the Obayashi Corporation, *Genji monogatari/The Tale of Genji: Hikaru Genji Rokujōin no kōshō fukugen (The Tale of Genji: A reconstruction of the Shining Prince's Rokujō estate based on historical evidence)*, accessed Nov. 6, 2018, https://www.obayashi.co.jp/kikan_obayashi/genji.



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Genji at a Glance: Fifty-Four Scenes from the Tale

MELISSA McCORMICK

Note: The images in this section, each showing two panels, reproduce a pair of late seventeenth-century screens that feature scenes from all fifty-four chapters of the *The Tale of Genji* (see cat. 59). Beginning at the top of Panel 1 on the right screen, the sequence of scenes proceeds from right to left, top to bottom.

RIGHT SCREEN: PANELS 1 AND 2

1. *Kiritsubo* 桐壺

The Lady of the Paulownia-Courtyard Chambers

At the Kōrokan Hall for Foreign Missions, a Korean physiognomist divines that Genji (age seven) is meant to be sovereign but predicts chaos should he ever reign. The prophecy leads the Kiritsubo Emperor to remove his son from the line of succession and make him a commoner. He gives him the “Genji” surname, which was reserved for princes so demoted from the status of a nameless royal.

2. *Hahakigi* 帚木

Broom Cypress

On a rainy night at the palace, two older courtiers instruct Genji (age seventeen) and his brother-in-law, Tō no Chūjō, on the types of women that make the best wives. Tō no Chūjō tells his own story about his lost love Yūgao and the daughter born of their affair. (See also cats. 50, 54.)

3. *Utsusemi* 空蟬

A Molted Cicada Shell

Genji attempts to sleep with the young stepmother of the Governor of Kii, but she evades him, leaving behind her stepdaughter and a thin robe, which earns her the nickname Utsusemi, or “Lady of the Molted Cicada Shell.” (See also cat. 39b.)

4. *Yūgao* 夕顔

The Lady of the Evening Faces

While waiting in his carriage outside the gate of his ailing old nurse, Genji spots a humble abode next door that piques his interest. This is the temporary residence of Yūgao, Tō no Chūjō’s long-lost lover. In what appears to be a case of mistaken identity, Yūgao sends out a fan inscribed with a coquettish poem and a white flower that blooms in the evening (*yūgao*). (See also fig. 67, cats. 79, 80, 91a, 103.)

5. *Wakamurasaki* 若紫

Little Purple Gromwell

Suffering from an illness, grieving over the death of Yūgao, and tormented over his affair with his father’s consort Fujitsubo, Genji (age eighteen) visits a healer in the northern hills, where he first glimpses Murasaki (age ten). He is so captivated by Murasaki’s resemblance to Fujitsubo (her paternal aunt) that when the girl’s grandmother guardian dies, he forcibly takes her into his own home. (See also figs. 25, 27, cats. 46, 49, 58, 69, 70.)

6. *Suetsumuhana* 末摘花

The Safflower

Genji courts a princess but ultimately discovers that her appearance is less than ideal, especially her nose, which resembles the bulbous red tip of a safflower blossom (*suetsumuhana*). Leaving her villa, he sees a servant brushing the snow from an orange tree and composes a poem. (See also cat. 55.)

7. *Momiji no ga* 紅葉賀

An Imperial Celebration of Autumn Foliage

Genji and Tō no Chūjō dance “Waves of the Blue Sea” for the Retired Emperor, the Kiritsubo Emperor, and the Crown Prince (future Emperor Suzaku), seated behind the blinds. Genji’s beauty and talent are said to outshine those of his friend and rival. (See also fig. 38, cat. 42.)

8. *Hana no en* 花宴

A Banquet Celebrating Cherry Blossoms

Genji (age twenty) meets Oborozukiyo on a spring night cherry blossom banquet at the palace. Their affair angers her father, the Minister of the Right, who has promised her to the next emperor, and it eventually leads to Genji’s self-imposed exile.

9. *Aoi* 葵

Leaves of Wild Ginger

Lady Rokujō waits to glimpse her former lover, Genji (age twenty-two), in a procession for the new Kamo Priestess. Genji’s wife, Aoi, arrives, and her men force Rokujō’s carriage back, damaging the vehicle and humiliating the lady, unleashing a jealous spirit that seems responsible for Aoi’s death after she gives birth to Genji’s son Yūgiri. (See also figs. 13–15, 17–23, cats. 44, 56.)

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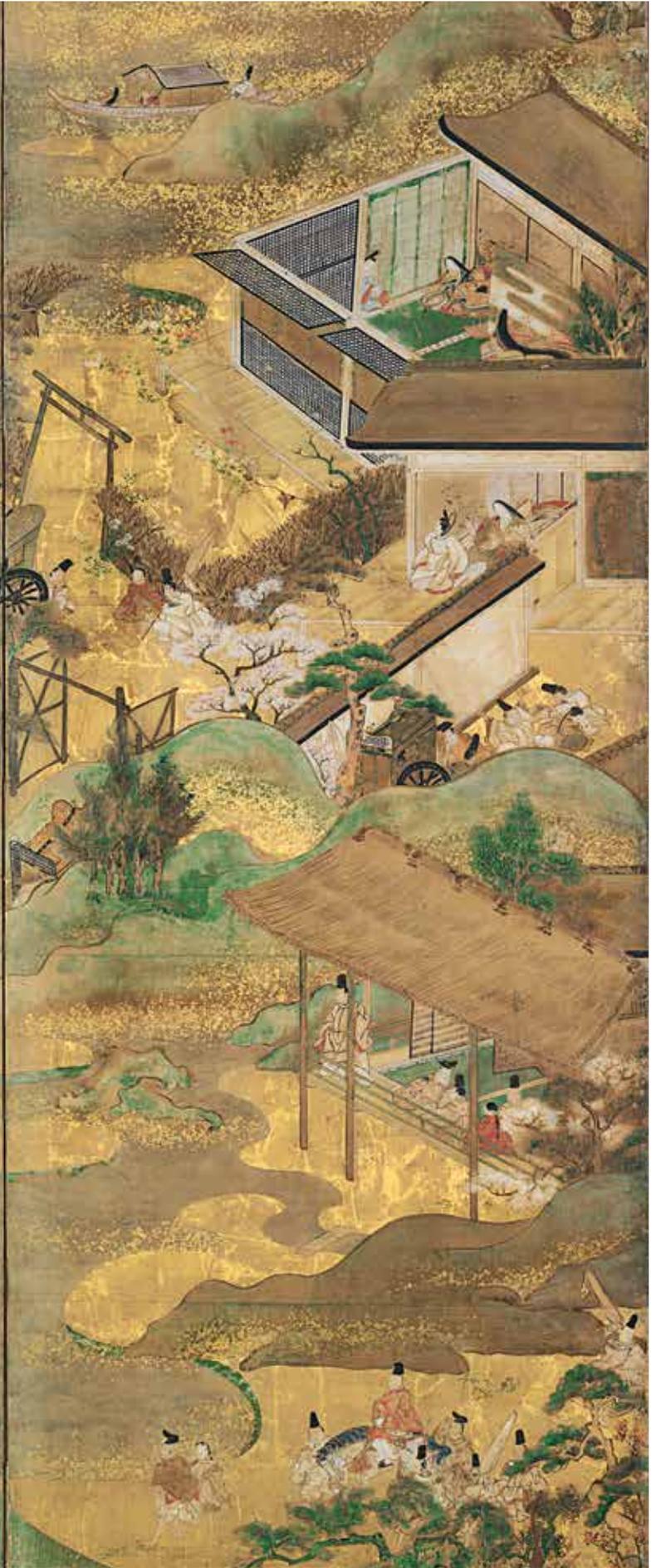


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RIGHT SCREEN: PANELS 3 AND 4

10. *Sakaki* 賢木 (榊)

A Branch of Sacred Evergreen

Lady Rokujō is residing at the so-called shrine in the fields (*nonomiya*) as she prepares to leave the capital to accompany her daughter, the newly appointed High Priestess of the Shrine at Ise. Genji visits his former lover, offering her a branch of *sakaki* and a sorrowful parting poem. (See also fig. 35, cats. 9, 34, 37, 57.)

11. *Hanachirusato* 花散里

The Lady at the Villa of Scattering Orange Blossoms

Genji (age twenty-five) visits the Reikeiden Lady, a consort of his recently deceased father, the Kiritsubo Emperor. They speak wistfully about the previous reign and exchange poetry about the scent of the orange blossom (*tachibana*) and the cry of the cuckoo (*hototogisu*), both shown in the painting. Genji then spends the night with the lady's younger sister, a former lover of his known as Hanachirusato.

12. *Suma* 須磨

Exile to Suma

Preempting official exile by his political rivals, Genji leaves his loved ones in the capital and takes up residence at the Suma shore with several loyal retainers. From his rustic but elegant abode he looks out over the waves. (See also cats. 24, 30, 32a, 45.)

13. *Akashi* 明石

The Lady at Akashi

Amid a raging tempest at Suma, the Akashi Novitiate sails down the shore to retrieve Genji and bring him back to his residence at Akashi Bay in the hopes of marrying the nobleman to his daughter. After a brief courtship orchestrated by the Novitiate, Genji (age twenty-seven) goes to meet the Akashi Lady for the first time, traveling by horseback. (See also cat. 24.)

14. *Miotsukushi* 漣標

Channel Markers

Back from exile, Genji (age twenty-eight) gives thanks at the Sumiyoshi Shrine. Unaware of his plans, the Akashi Lady, who has given birth to Genji's daughter, makes a pilgrimage by boat on the same day (she appears in the roofed boat at the top of the previous panel). When she sees Genji's grand entourage from afar, she is humbled and quickly retreats. (See also fig. 35, cats. 35, 53.)

15. *Yomogiu* 蓬生

A Ruined Villa of Tangled Gardens

Genji visits the Safflower Princess, who remained loyal to him during his exile, but barely recognizes her house, which is now in disrepair. Koremitsu leads the way as Genji treads through the garden overgrown with tangles of wormwood (*yomogi*).

16. *Sekiya* 関屋

The Barrier Gate

Genji and Utsusemi meet again after twelve years, she returning to the capital from the eastern provinces, and he en route to Ishiyamadera. Her party cedes the road to Genji's carriage to pass through the barrier gate located at the famous "slope of meeting" (*ausaka*). (See also fig. 30, cats. 48, 53.)

17. *E-awase* 絵合

A Contest of Illustrations

At a contest comparing illustrated tales between Tō no Chūjō on one side and Genji (age thirty-one) and Fujitsubo on the other, each team vying for Emperor Reizei's favor, Genji wins the day with ink scrolls in his own hand depicting his life in exile. (See also fig. 37.)

18. *Matsukaze* 松風

Wind in the Pines

The Akashi Lady has moved to Ōi, in the western part of the capital, where her koto music still recalls "the wind in the pines" at Akashi. Genji has quietly built a villa in Katsura for when he visits her and the Akashi Princess, but several courtiers have learned of his whereabouts and visit him, engaging in revelry and bearing gifts of game fowl. (The boat above belongs to the scene of Chapter 22 on the next panel.)

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RIGHT SCREEN: PANELS 5 AND 6

19. *Usugumo* 薄雲

A Thin Veil of Clouds

Genji visits Murasaki's quarters at Nijō, where she is raising the Akashi Princess (age three), who playfully clings to her father's robes. He is off to visit the girl's mother, the Akashi Lady, who is still residing in Ōi, to ease her loneliness now that she has been separated from her only child.

20. *Asagao* 朝顔

Bellflowers

Genji (age thirty-two) has returned home after another failed attempt to court his cousin Princess Asagao and tries to lavish attention on Murasaki. They compose poetry and contemplate the snowy scene outside: a frozen pond, a pair of mandarin ducks, and page girls with long black tresses rolling a snowball too large to push any farther. (See also fig. 28, cats. 31, 106a.)

21. *Otome* 乙女

Maidens of the Dance

Genji and several other courtiers sponsor young women to be among the five "maidens of the dance" at the imperial Gosechi Festival, who will then go on to serve Emperor Reizei as ladies-in-waiting. The woman supported by Genji is the daughter of his loyal attendant Koremitsu, who is now a governor. She becomes an object of affection for Genji's son Yūgiri (age twelve). (See also fig. 64, cat. 12.)

22. *Tamakazura* 玉鬘

A Lovely Garland

Tō no Chūjō's long-lost daughter Tamakazura (born to Yūgao) has been secretly raised in Kyūshū by her nurse, and has now come of age. To protect Tamakazura from an aggressive warrior named Taifu no Gen, who is trying to force her to marry him against her will, the nurse and her family escape to the capital with the young woman by fast boat, as the warrior follows them in hot pursuit. (See also cats. 38a, 43.)

23. *Hatsune* 初音

First Song of Spring

On New Year's Day at the Rokujō estate, Genji (age thirty-six) visits Murasaki (and the Akashi Princess) in her spring quarters. The Akashi Lady, from her residence in the winter quadrant, has sent her daughter woven baskets full of fruit and flowers, and an artificial warbler on a pine branch with a poem about auspicious first seedling pines (*hatsune*), which are also being pulled up in the garden by page girls outside. (See also figs. 38, 41, cats. 51, 71, 74.)

24. *Kochō* 胡蝶

Butterflies

Murasaki sends page girls costumed as *kalavinka* birds and butterflies of court *bugaku* dance to the autumn quarters of the Umetsubo Empress (Akikonomu) for a grand sutra reading. They travel by the water bird (*geki*) and dragon (*ryū*) boats built to navigate the vast pond connecting the autumn and spring quarters at Rokujō. (See also cat. 47.)

25. *Hotaru* 螢

Fireflies

Genji has installed Tamakazura (age twenty-two) at Rokujō, telling everyone she is his long-lost daughter. He desires her himself but lines up suitors like Sochinomiya (Prince Hotaru), who gets a dramatic glimpse of her as he peers into the room from the veranda while Genji releases fireflies, illuminating Tamakazura in a flash of light. (See also cat. 38b.)

26. *Tokonatsu* 常夏

Wild Pinks

Genji, Yūgiri, and Tō no Chūjō's sons rest in the fishing pavilion at Rokujō to escape the summer heat. Sake and ice water chill on a rock in the water below as fish is prepared. Later Tamakazura and Genji exchange poems about the "wild pink" (*tokonatsu*), a nickname for Yūgao, Genji's deceased lover and Tamakazura's mother.

27. *Kagaribi* 篝火

Cresset Fires

A "cresset fire" (*kagaribi*) lantern in Tamakazura's garden inspires a poem by Genji in which the word is used as a metaphor for his smoldering passion for his pretend daughter. In an extremely intimate pose for a Genji painting, Genji reaches his right arm around the young woman, his body enveloping hers, as they play the koto together.

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LEFT SCREEN: PANELS 1 AND 2

28. *Nowaki* 野分

An Autumn Tempest

An autumn typhoon has wreaked havoc on the seasonal gardens at Rokujō, and Genji sends Yūgiri (age fifteen) to check on the Umetsubo Empress. He arrives to find an enchanting scene of page girls in the autumn garden, collecting dew for the bell crickets in the cages they carry and picking flowers for the empress.

29. *Miyuki* 行幸

An Imperial Excursion

Emperor Reizei (age eighteen), in an elaborate palanquin topped by a golden phoenix finial and supported by nine men, participates in the official imperial falconry expedition in the hills of Ōharano. (See also cat. 48.)

30. *Fujibakama* 藤袴

Mistflowers

The identity of Tamakazura's father, Tō no Chūjō, has been revealed, and Kashiwagi, who had been an ardent suitor, accepts her as his half sister. He visits with a message from their father, but Tamakazura, ever wary, keeps him on the veranda, and speaks to him through an intermediary as she sits in the adjacent room. (See also cat. 40.)

31. *Makibashira* 真木柱

A Beloved Pillar of Cypress

A Major Captain nicknamed Hige-kuro (Blackbeard) has forced a marriage with Tamakazura. His first wife is so upset that she leaves him, but their only daughter, called Makibashira, is reluctant to separate from her beloved father and attaches a parting poem for him to her favorite "cypress pillar" (*makibashira*) in their home. (See also fig. 62, cat. 38e.)

32. *Umegae* 梅枝

A Branch of Plum

Genji (age thirty-nine) amasses and newly commissions exemplary calligraphy for the trousseau of the Akashi Princess (age eleven), who is about to enter the imperial court, where she will become the new Kiritsubo Consort. Genji sets to work himself, making copybooks in various calligraphic styles. He sits with his brush in hand and an open book on his armrest, as three women make ink and offer critical advice.

33. *Fuji no Uraba* 藤裏葉

Shoots of Wisteria Leaves

Now with a title equivalent to that of retired emperor, Genji receives the honor of an imperial visit to Rokujō by Retired Emperor Suzaku and Emperor Reizei. He prepares his estate magnificently, even equipping the pond with cormorant fishermen for the viewing pleasure of his guests as they traverse the passageways.

34. *Wakana jō* 若菜上

Early Spring Greens: Part 1

Amid the spring blossoms at Rokujō, Kashiwagi plays *kemari* football with three other courtiers, including Yūgiri. When an untamed cat runs out from the beneath the blinds and exposes Genji's new wife, the Third Princess, Kashiwagi sees her and becomes obsessed with the young woman. (See also figs. 65, 73, 75, cats. 36, 51, 98, 105b.)

35. *Wakana ge* 若菜下

Early Spring Greens: Part 2

Genji arranges for a musical concert at Rokujō with his son Yūgiri in attendance. The Third Princess plays the thirteen-string koto, the Akashi Lady the *biwa* lute, and Murasaki the Japanese-style six-string koto. Beyond the blinds, Tamakazura's oldest son with Hige-kuro plays the pipes, and Yūgiri's son plays a flute to accompany the women. (See also fig. 37, cats. 38c, 39c.)

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LEFT SCREEN: PANELS 3 AND 4

36. *Kashiwagi* 柏木
The Oak Tree

Distraught after giving birth to her son Kaoru, whose father is the recently deceased Kashiwagi, the Third Princess undergoes a partial Buddhist tonsure. Genji, aware that the boy is not his, holds the child in his arms and addresses the Third Princess. (See also fig. 39, cats. 9, 41, 60.)

37. *Yokobue* 横笛
The Transverse Flute

Yūgiri visits the Second Princess, called Ochiba no Miya, the widow of his late friend Kashiwagi. She has been pensively playing her thirteen-string koto. The princess's mother gives Yūgiri a precious flute that belonged to Kashiwagi and asks him to play. (See also cats. 39a, 91b.)

38. *Suzumushi* 鈴虫
Bell Crickets

Genji visits the Third Princess, now a nun, in her quarters, which have been outfitted as a Buddhist chapel. He calls for a seven-string koto and plays, while the Third Princess interrupts her prayers to listen. (See also fig. 12, cat. 36.)

39. *Yūgiri* 夕霧
Evening Mist

Yūgiri courts Ochiba no Miya at Ono, where she has moved, using the thick "evening mist" (*yūgiri*) covering the foothills as an excuse to stay the night. Standing on the veranda, he raises a fan to shade his eyes from the setting sun as he spots a stag and doe amid the rice fields. (See also cat. 32b.)

40. *Minori* 御法
Rites of the Sacred Law

In preparation for her own death (which occurs in this chapter), Murasaki (age forty-three) sponsors an elaborate Buddhist ceremony at Nijō to dedicate one thousand copies of the Lotus Sutra (*Hoke-kyō*). The event culminates in offerings of music and a dragon-masked dancer performing the "Warrior King" (*Ryōō*) *bugaku* dance. (See also fig. 10.)

41. *Maboroshi* 幻
Spirit Summoner

Genji (age fifty-two) mourns Murasaki's death, longing in a poem for a "summoner" (*maboroshi*) to seek her in the afterworld. After a year of grieving, Genji appears at the court's annual chanting of the Sutra on the Names of the Buddhas (*Butsumyō-kyō*) and speaks privately with the Buddhist officiant, composing his final poem, which alludes to his own passing.

42. *Niou miya* 匂宮
The Fragrant Prince

Yūgiri, now a Minister, leads a procession of courtiers in ox-drawn carts from the palace to a banquet at Rokujō. The young men in attendance are potential suitors for his sixth and youngest daughter, Rokunokimi. Yūgiri is especially interested in having Prince Niou as a son-in-law, Niou being Genji's grandson by the Akashi Consort, who is now Empress. (See also cat. 105c.)

43. *Kōbai* 紅梅
Red Plum

Kōbai, a son of Tō no Chūjō, writes a letter to Prince Niou to entice him into courting his second daughter, seated in the next room. In a poem he refers suggestively to the fragrant plum tree in his garden (his daughter) waiting for the warbler (Niou) to land on its branches.

44. *Takekawa* 竹河
Bamboo River

Tamakazura (age forty-seven), now a widow, is preoccupied with the marriage prospects of her two daughters. One spring evening, Yūgiri's youngest son, the Lesser Captain, gets a glimpse of the sisters playing *go* and falls for the older sister. Tamakazura ends up sending her, however, to Retired Emperor Reizei. (See also cat. 60.)

45. *Hashihime* 橋姫
The Divine Princess at Uji Bridge

Kaoru, believed by the world to be Genji's son, but really the biological son of Kashiwagi by the Third Princess, has been receiving spiritual guidance from Prince Hachinomiya (the eighth son of the Kiritsubo Emperor), who resides in Uji. One night, while the prince is away, Kaoru peeks through the fence and observes the prince's two daughters as they play the *biwa* and the koto and banter about the moon. (See also cats. 61, 87, 88.)



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LEFT SCREEN: PANELS 5 AND 6

46. *Shiigamoto* 椎本

At the Foot of the Oak Tree

Having asked Kaoru to look after his daughters, Hachinomiya (age sixty-one) sets off on a retreat to a Buddhist temple in the mountains. He cautions the Princesses to avoid scandal, and to live out their lives at the Uji villa if necessary. They watch their father depart into the hills for what turns out to be the last time, as they get word soon afterward of his illness and death. (See also cats. 38d, 46d.)

47. *Agemaki* 総角

A Bowknot Tied in Maiden's Loops

Prince Niou has married Nakanokimi at Uji but has kept it a secret from the court and the Akashi Empress, making it difficult for him to visit. Finally, under the pretense of an autumn excursion, he arrives by a boat decorated with fall leaves and full of musicians. The women at the Uji villa gaze at the spectacle.

48. *Sawarabi* 早蕨

Early Fiddlehead Greens

Nakanokimi, mourning her older sister Ōigimi, sits reading a letter from the Buddhist priest who had been her late father's religious guide. A basket from the priest filled with spring greens sits on the veranda. In a reply poem, she speaks of the "early fiddleheads" (*sawarabi*), in reference to her sister, who died too young.

49. *Yadorigi* (or *Yadoriki*) 宿木

Trees Encoiled in Vines of Ivy

With his many children by the Akashi Empress flourishing, the Emperor focuses on his Second Princess, a daughter by a recently deceased consort. He summons Kaoru for a *go* match, with marriage to his daughter as the wager. Kaoru wins and takes his prize from the garden, a stalk of chrysanthemum symbolizing the Princess. He does so reluctantly, however, as he still mourns Ōigimi and remains averse to romantic commitment.

50. *Azumaya* 東屋

A Hut in the Eastern Provinces

Ukifune, a long-lost sister of the Uji Princesses, has been discovered. Her mother moves her to a small house in the capital to avoid Niou's advances. Kaoru finds the house, which he refers to as Ukifune's "eastern abode" (*azumaya*) after hearing the sounds of peddlers at dawn and the "vulgar eastern accents" of the watchmen. He soon whisks Ukifune away to the Uji villa. (See also fig. 61, cat. 105d.)

51. *Ukifune* 浮舟

A Boat Cast Adrift

Niou finds Ukifune in Uji and takes her by boat to an empty house across the river. On the way, he proclaims his love to be as reliable as the evergreens on the isle of orange trees, while Ukifune likens herself to a "boat adrift" (*ukifune*), unmoored and without a home. The Uji Bridge and its accompanying motifs of willow, waterwheel, and stone-filled baskets appear above. (See also figs. 36, 59, cats. 25, 32c, 45, 46, 48, 64, 80, 89, 90, 91c.)

52. *Kagerō* 蜻蛉

Ephemerals

Thinking Ukifune has died, Kaoru fixates on the First Princess, the Akashi Empress's firstborn daughter. On a warm summer morning at Rokujō, he peeks into the Princess's quarters and observes her with a group of women cooling themselves with ice chips (in the middle of the right panel). Later his thoughts turn to Ōigimi and Ukifune, whose lives were as fleeting as ephemerals (*kagerō*).

53. *Tenarai* 手習

Practicing Calligraphy

Ukifune, now living a quiet life among nuns in Ono, contemplates her past and practices calligraphy while composing poetry. The rustic residence overlooks rice paddies and peasants harvesting grain. Ukifune has had only a partial tonsure, and thus the painting shows her with long tresses. (See also cat. 58.)

54. *Yume no ukihashi* 夢浮橋

A Floating Bridge in a Dream

Kaoru visits the Bishop at Yokawa and confirms that Ukifune is alive and living as a nun in Ono. Hearing the shouts and seeing the torches of a large group of men coming down the mountain road, Ukifune, now a full nun with a cloth covering her shaven head, anxiously surmises that the party belongs to Kaoru and worries that her peaceful existence may soon come to an end. (See also figs. 81, 82.)

Notes to the Essays

Learning the “Women’s Hand” in Heian Japan: Kana Calligraphy and *The Tale of Genji*

1. Kawabata 1996, p. 34.
2. The *Kawachi-bon*, completed in 1255, represents a different textual lineage for *Genji* manuscripts than the *Aobyōshi-bon*, created by Teika and his coterie thirty years before. The *Kawachi-bon* is thus called because both its primary compilers, Minamoto no Mitsuyuki and his son Chikayuki, served as governors of Kawachi; see Shirane 2008b, p. 24; Thomas Harper in Harper and Shirane 2015, p. 211.
3. Excerpt from Fujiwara no Teika, *Full Moon Diary (Meigetsuki)*, entry for the sixteenth day of the second month of 1225; see Harper and Shirane 2015, p. 169; translation by Thomas Harper.
4. The earliest surviving source of the legend can be found in the fourteenth-century *Genji* commentary *Kakaishō*; see *Kakaishō* 1968, pp. 186–87. See also Melissa McCormick’s discussion of this account in her essay and her introduction to Chapter 2 in this volume. See Naito 2010 on legends of Murasaki Shikibu.
5. For a more detailed survey of early *kana* texts, see Seeley 1991, pp. 70–74. The earliest form of *kana* is usually referred to as *man’yōgana*, since it was the system used to transcribe Japanese poems of the *Man’yōshū*, a poetry anthology compiled in the eighth century. Because there was no real attempt to limit the number of characters representing each phonetic syllable of the vernacular, *man’yōgana* was (from a modern viewpoint, at least) a notoriously unwieldy system of notation. Nearly one thousand different Chinese characters were used to represent the eighty-eight syllables of eighth-century Japanese. *Man’yōgana*, as complex as it was, survived as the primary mode of transcribing the sounds of the spoken language through the eighth and ninth centuries.
At first used primarily to assist in the reading of Buddhist texts, *katakana*, or “cut-off names,” developed in tandem with *kana* but was rarely viewed as a medium for calligraphic expression in premodern times.
6. For surveys of the evolution of *kana* from the perspective of the history of Japanese calligraphy, see Nagoya 1991; Kasashima 2013; Beppu 2014.
7. The earliest surviving example of a text written entirely in *onna-de* (rather than in a mixture of *kana* and *kanji*) is, in fact, a fragment of a private letter most probably written by a woman. The text of the letter is found on the reverse of a copy of an official document concerning the transfer of a parcel of land, originally drafted by the governor of Inaba province in 905. See Tsukishima 1981, p. 105; see also Amino 1988, p. 25. In the same article, Amino also briefly discusses the central role women had in the shaping of the Japanese written language (pp. 36–40).
8. For a discussion of exemplary manuscript versions of *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing*, see Yonemura 1997.
9. The scroll illustrated here is the second half of the *Wakan rōeishū*. Sections of the first half, sometimes remounted in hanging-scroll format, are preserved in several public and private collections. This scroll is known to have been in the collection of Matano Taku (Randen, 1839–1921), director of the Tokyo Imperial Museum (now Tokyo National Museum), and was later owned by the industrialist-collector Masuda Takashi (Don’ō, 1848–1938) before it was presented to the Tokyo National Museum after World War II. This scroll also has the nicknames “Matano Rōei” or “Masuda Rōei” because of its former owners.
10. See the discussion in Lippit 2008, pp. 60–63.
11. For an engaging study of poetry and calligraphy of the Heian court that views the complementary phenomena of *waka* and Chinese poetry and the styles of their transcription reflected in the development of calligraphy of the day, see LaMarre 2000.
12. Okada 1991, p. 160.
13. See Kamens 2007, pp. 133–36.
14. Bowring 1985, p. 139.
15. For instance, a distinction is made between *onna-de* and *otoko-de* in a passage of *Tale of the Hollow Tree (Utsubo monogatari)*, late tenth century; English translation in Seeley 1991, p. 77.
16. Bowring 1985, p. 131.
17. For a discussion of calligraphy and social status as related to *Genji*, see Sakomura 2019.
18. Washburn 2015, p. 110.
19. See *Kokin wakashū* 1989, *Kana* preface (*Kana jo*), p. 7; translation by John T. Carpenter.
20. The entire episode is provided in H. C. McCullough 1985a, pp. 319–20.
21. Chapter 5, “Little Purple Gromwell” (*Wakamurasaki*); Murasaki Shikibu 1993–97, vol. 1 (1993), p. 175; translation by John T. Carpenter; see also Washburn 2015, pp. 110–11: “I know that you do not yet write in cursive style, but still I long to see those characters.”
22. *Man’yōshū* 1999–2003, vol. 4 (2003), p. 25, no. 3807; translation by John T. Carpenter.
23. H. C. McCullough 1985b, p. 3.
24. Washburn 2015, p. 115.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 125.
26. *Ibid.*
27. *Ibid.*, p. 126. Royall Tyler translates the same passage: “The generous lines of her letters were certainly immature, but they showed great promise. Her hand closely resembled the late nun’s. It seemed to him that she would soon write beautifully, as long as she had an up-to-date copybook.” Tyler 2001, vol. 1, p. 108.
28. See Shirane 1987, p. 61.
29. For a discussion of the theories that *Wakamurasaki* and related chapters were written before others, see Gatten 1981, pp. 30–33, who cites and discusses Aoyagi 1969.
30. Washburn 2015, p. 616. In early texts such as *The Tale of Genji*, *mana* and *kana* are often rendered *manna* and *kanna*. For a discussion of the discrepancy in the pronunciation of these terms, see Seeley 1991, p. 76, n. 46.
31. Washburn 2015, p. 615. The original text may be found in Murasaki Shikibu 1993–97, vol. 3 (1995), p. 161. Incidentally, the term *onna-de* occurs only three times in the entire *Tale of Genji*, all in Chapter 32, “A Branch of Plum” (*Umegae*); see Murasaki Shikibu 1993–97, vol. 3 (1995), pp. 162–64.
32. Chapter 32, “A Branch of Plum” (*Umegae*); Murasaki Shikibu 1993–97, vol. 3 (1995), p. 161; translation by John T. Carpenter. Washburn 2015, p. 615, translates this phrase as “lines dashed off.”
33. Washburn 2015, p. 272.
34. Chapter 12, “Exile to Suma” (*Suma*); Murasaki Shikibu 1993–97, vol. 2 (1994), p. 16; translation by John T. Carpenter. Washburn 2015, p. 263, translates this passage as “Her calligraphy, produced at a moment of great distress, was exceptionally lovely.” See also the translation in Seidensticker 1976, vol. 1, p. 226: “There was something very fine about the hand disordered by grief.”
35. “Still weak from his illness, his hands trembled, making his brushstrokes a little wild [*midare kaki tamaeru*]. They were quite exquisite all the same, and she found it delightful and poignant that he had not forgotten her.” Chapter 4, “The

- Lady of the Evening Faces” (*Yūgao*); Washburn 2015, p. 90.
36. For a broader discussion of the relationship between the act of mourning (or dying) and modes of inscription in *Genji*, see the thought-provoking work of Jackson 2018.
 37. For further discussion of *midaregaki*, see Y. Shimizu 1988, p. 61.
 38. Summarized by Keene 1993, p. 304. For the original quotation, see Kamo no Chōmei 1961, p. 89.
 39. Kasashima 2013, pp. 145–87.
 40. Fujiwara no Norinaga in *Ways of Handling the Brush* (*Hippō saiyōshū*)—an expanded version of his calligraphic treatise *Saiyōshō*—notes that *chirashi-gaki* is most appropriate for letters to and from women and young people; see Fujiwara no Norinaga 1914, p. 91. The conventions of *chirashi-gaki* are also discussed in another medieval calligraphic treatise titled the *Unicorn Treatise* (*Kirinshō*), traditionally attributed to the Heian calligrapher Fujiwara no Yukinari but more likely compiled by an anonymous fourteenth-century calligraphy teacher; see *Kirinshō* 1914, pp. 35–37.
 41. *Kokin wakashū* 1989, p. 189, no. 613; translation by John T. Carpenter.
 42. See *Yakaku teikinshō* 1982. Note that this treatise, based on the teachings of Sesonji Yukiyoishi (1179–1251?), the grandson of Fujiwara no Koreyuki, is close in content to the similarly entitled *Yakaku shosatsushō* (Night-nesting crane treatise on letter writing, mid-13th century).
 43. Adapted from the translation in H. C. McCullough 1980, p. 109.
 44. Cited in Haruna 1963, p. 27. The mention of Suke-masa’s daughter is found in the “Neawase” chapter of *Eiga monogatari*, one of the later chapters, which was not included in William H. McCullough and Helen Craig McCullough’s translation (W. H. McCullough and H. C. McCullough 1980).
 45. Morris 1971a, p. 54.
 46. Sugawara no Takasue no Musume 1989, p. 385; Morris 1971a, pp. 54, 131, n. 54.
 47. W. H. McCullough and H. C. McCullough 1980, vol. 2, p. 483.
 48. *Ibid.*, p. 484.
 49. For further discussion of female painters and calligraphers, see Akiyama Terukazu 1979; adapted and translated by Maribeth Graybill in Akiyama Terukazu 1990.
 50. Scholars have proposed that the so-called Masatsune (named for Asukai Masatsune [1170–1221]) or Norinaga style of the *Imaki-gire* also manifests evidence of the influence of the Hosshōji-ryū style; see Carpenter 1994, pp. 72–73. It is true that even while Norinaga and other adherents of the Sesonji-ryū wrote criticisms of Tadamichi, their own brushwork betrayed the trend of the times. Furthermore, by the mid-twelfth century, we have adequate evidence that many calligraphers of the Sesonji-ryū, including some direct descendants of Yukinari, were writing in a style that is nearly identical to that of the Hosshōji-ryū.
 51. The literary critic Konishi Jin’ichi discussed this concept in a seminal essay written some sixty years ago (Konishi 1956), in which he introduced the term “restriction” (*kōsokusei*) to describe the attitude and process that encourage an artist or artisan to create a work of art or craft object according to specifications provided by a preexisting model or a teacher. A concern with individual creativity is dispensed with, or “restricted,” in order to create something that adheres to an established form. From a modern point of view, or at least from one that exalts the new and different, the “restriction” of individual expression may be thought to have negative implications. As Konishi points out, however, this was not the case in Heian and medieval Japan. Quite the opposite: there was a belief that true “freedom” in a traditional artistic vocation, or *Way* (*michi* 道), could only be acquired through restriction of individual, idiosyncratic expression. In a more extended study of artistic vocations of the medieval period published several years later (Konishi 1975; translated by Aileen Gatten in Konishi 1985), Konishi revised his terminology slightly, replacing *kōsokusei* with *kihansai*, which has been aptly translated as “conforming ethic.” The principle remains the same, but the latter term has a less pejorative connotation.
 52. It should be pointed out that, until recently, all of the sections of the *Genji Scrolls* were remounted on plaques to save the works, in frightfully fragile condition, from suffering further from rolling and unrolling. In recent years, it was felt that restoring the works to the original handscroll format and removing the later borders would not only be a safer way to preserve the scrolls for posterity but would also restore the original aesthetic effect. As this manuscript was being prepared, the Tokugawa *Genji Scrolls* were at a conservation studio in Kyoto. The Gotoh sections will undergo conservation in the coming years.
 53. Lippit 2008, pp. 49–60.
 54. For a discussion of the various styles of the sections of the *Genji Scrolls*, see Carpenter 1994; see also Lippit 2008, pp. 56–60. During the mid-Edo period, when connoisseurs of calligraphy gave attributions to a wide array of unsigned specimens of calligraphy from the Heian and medieval periods, the texts of the *Genji Scrolls* acquired attributions to three noted calligraphers of the late Heian–early Kamakura period: the high-ranking courtier Fujiwara no Korefusa; the monk-poet Jakuren (1139?–1202); and the courtier-poet Asukai Masatsune. These traditional attributions, for both stylistic and dating considerations, no longer hold validity.
- Although the hands of five individual calligraphers can be discerned, the division into three broad styles still applies. For convenience, scholars today usually simply use numbers to identify the five handwriting styles displayed in the *Genji Scrolls*. Summarized here, they are: Style I: Korefusa or Sesonji-ryū style; Style II: Jakuren A style; Style III: Jakuren B style; Style IV: Masatsune or Norinaga style; Style V: only fragments survive, resembling the two Jakuren styles.
55. The expressive aspects of the calligraphy of Chapter 40, “Rites of the Sacred Law” (*Minori*), are discussed in detail in Y. Shimizu 1988.
 56. E. A. Cranston 2006, p. 891.
 57. Discussed, for example, in *Kirinshō* (Unicorn treatise); see *Kirinshō* 1914, pp. 35–37.
 58. For more detailed discussion of East Asian calligraphic copying techniques, see Carpenter 2007.
- Beyond Narrative Illustration: What *Genji* Paintings Do**
1. E. A. Cranston 2006, p. 880.
 2. *Ibid.* The brackets here are mine to indicate that the text of the handscrolls differs, using the word *tsuma* (space under the eaves) instead of *aki*.
 3. Shimizu Fukuko 2011, pp. 212–14. The primacy of *waka* (thirty-one-syllable verse) in conceptualizing *Genji* pictures provides a through line from these early twelfth-century scrolls to the vast majority of later *Genji* paintings. Most serious readers of *Genji* in premodern Japan would have been involved in the composition, recitation, and appreciation of *waka*, for which the 795 examples in the tale were an invaluable source.
 4. Masako Watanabe introduces the history of *fukinuki yatai* and its possible Chinese precedents in the context of analyzing the twelfth-century *Genji Scrolls* in Watanabe 1998.
 5. One of the earliest articles to take this approach is Soper 1955; and later Watanabe 1998. Yukio Lippit combines a close reading of the conventions in a number of paintings in the scrolls, along with textual and calligraphic analysis; see Lippit 2008.
 6. Takahashi Tōru 2007.
 7. Washburn 2015, p. 805.
 8. Shimizu Fukuko 2011, p. 214.
 9. Sano 2000, pp. 30–31.
 10. Chino, Kamei, and Ikeda 1997; McCormick 2003; McCormick 2018.
 11. Specifically, Inamoto speculates that the album was intended for the daughter of one of the album’s calligraphers, Konoe Nobutada (1565–1614); Inamoto 1997.
 12. One such manual thought to have been created in the medieval period is translated and discussed in Murase 1983.

13. For important findings on these screens that identified them as by Tosa Mitsumochi and linked them to period diary entries, see Miyajima 1986; Kawamoto Keiko 1989. Another artist likely involved in the project was Tosa Mitsumoto, Mitsumochi's son, who at the time held the title of Tosa Shōgen and was heir to the Tosa school; see McCormick 2015.
14. Noticing that the right and left screens of the pair at Ninnaji show subtle differences in painting approach, Aizawa Masahiko has proposed that while Mitsumochi likely painted the right screen, a later artist must have executed the left, based on either the original or sketches by Mitsumochi; see Aizawa 1995. More recently Takamatsu Yoshiyuki has convincingly argued that the difference in appearance is due to over-painting on damaged areas of the left screen; Takamatsu 2015. Whatever the case may be, it seems most likely that the composition emerged from the Mitsumochi-era Tosa studio, and therefore both extant screens reflect the content of those approved by Emperor Ōgimachi.
15. Aizawa Masahiko, departing from conventional scholarship, has emphasized the importance of integrating the work of Tosa-school artists, alongside Kano masters such as Eitoku, into the history of the development of the Momoyama grand style; see Aizawa 2008; Aizawa 2011; Aizawa 2018.
16. Kawamoto Keiko 1989.
17. The unusually detailed process of how these screens were made appears in the diary of the female attendants to the emperor, the *Daily Records of the Female Palace Attendants* (*Oyudono no ue no nikki*) cited below. The relevant entries are listed in Aizawa 1995, and again with additional entries pertaining to Mitsumoto and his Murasaki Shikibu painting in McCormick 2015.
18. Ōgimachi's two imperial predecessors were forced to wait twenty-one years and ten years, respectively, for their official enthronement ceremonies due to lack of funds.
19. Noda 2009.
20. Takamatsu 2015.
21. Washizu 2009b.
22. Ibid. Especially important is the residence of Madenokōji Korefusa (1513–1537), provisional Major Counselor. He acted as the intermediary between the artist and the court, and his own residence, located directly across from the palace, served as the location where the screens were constructed and sketches from the artist were brought. Interestingly, he also served as the official in charge of the enthronement ceremonies.
23. The painting, described as a “*Genji* picture” (*Genji-e*) hanging scroll by Tosa Shōgen (Mitsumoto), was brought to the palace by the courtier Sanjōnishi Kin'eda. Kin'eda, Tanemichi's maternal uncle, had inscribed Tanemichi's painting and had been advising the court on the iconography of their *Genji* screens. The painting was returned the next day. See *Oyudono no ue no nikki* 1933, p. 147, entry for the twelfth and thirteenth days of the eleventh month of the third year of the Eiroku era (1560); cited in McCormick 2015.
24. The painting was on view several weeks before the final underdrawings for the left-hand screen, in which the court lady in the window appears, were completed.
25. During the third year of the Eiroku era (1560), Kin'eda brought to court manuscripts of Chapters 51–54 (on the sixth and eighteenth days of the tenth month) and Chapter 19 (on the tenth day of the eleventh month), as well as a Kawachi Edition manuscript (on the sixth day of the eleventh month); *Oyudono no ue no nikki* 1933, pp. 141, 143, 146. He supplied his *Genji* character chart on the twelfth day of the eighth month, presumably as they were just starting to read the tale; *Oyudono no ue no nikki* 1933, p. 134. In the following year the court began creating a new *Genji* manuscript, asking various individuals to contribute by writing separate chapters. As soon as the manuscript was completed, *Genji* lectures by Sanjōnishi Kin'eda began on the thirteenth day of the tenth month of the fifth year of the Eiroku era (1562); *Oyudono no ue no nikki* 1933, p. 240.
26. Fusako's pilgrimage is mentioned on the tenth day of the third month of the third year of the Eiroku era (1560); *Oyudono no ue no nikki* 1933, p. 110. The audience at Sanjōnishi Kin'eda's *Genji* lectures (see note 25) included the palace ladies, specifically Fusako, who attended on the twenty-first day of the tenth month of the fifth year of the Eiroku era (1562); *Oyudono no ue no nikki* 1933, p. 242.
27. Kawamoto Keiko drew this conclusion, suggesting that the procession in this painting represents an allusion to the marriage procession of Yukiie and Sadako; see Kawamoto Keiko 1989.
28. Takamatsu points out that at the time Kano Sanraku was an official painter to the Toyotomi and that the Toyotomi paid for construction of the residence, concluding that the painting may reflect the alliance being forged between the Kujō and the Toyotomi, with the Tokugawa represented as subordinate; Takamatsu 2015, pp. xv–xvi, n. 27.
- Evolving Iconographies of *The Tale of Genji*: Early Modern Interpretations of a *Yamato-e* Theme**
1. Kinoshita 2000.
 2. Kawase 1967, pp. 510–15; Shimizu Fukuko 2003, pp. 6–8; Shimizu Fukuko in Museum of Kyoto 2008a, p. 204, no. 97. Kawase Kazuma observes that while the printing technology is similar, *Saga-bon Genji monogatari* was not published by the same group of individuals as the other *Saga-bon* printed versions of Japanese classics, such as *The Tales of Ise* published by Suminokura Soan, and thus refers to it as *Den Saga-bon Genji monogatari*. Furthermore, there is another version of *The Tale of Genji* printed with wooden movable-type settings during the early seventeenth century, in fifty-three volumes, a set of which is in the library of Jissen Women's University, Tokyo (it is lacking vol. 15, *Yomogiu*).
 3. On Shunshō's illustrations, see Shimizu Fukuko 2003, pp. 58–62.
 4. Takagi 1933, pp. 100–129.
 5. For the most recent research on the artist in English, consult Lippit and Ulak 2015.
 6. For the passage in Japanese, see *Chikusai monogatari* 1970, p. 101; see also Putzar 1960, especially p. 176. On Sōtatsu's fan paintings, see Murase 1973.
 7. Outstanding examples of scattered fan painting screens with the “I'nen” seal are also in the collection of Okura Shukokan Museum of Fine Arts, Tokyo.
 8. For more on Tawaraya fan painting of themes other than *Genji*, and research on new documentation concerning members of Sōtatsu's atelier, see Ōta 2015b.
 9. Pair of six-panel folding screens from the early 1600s in the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. (F1906.231–232). Discussed in Lippit and Ulak 2015, pp. 174–77, no. 1.
 10. The location of the Tawaraya studio is given in the above-mentioned fictional tale *Chikusai*, and its proximity to the sixteenth-century Tosa-related artists is pointed out in Honda 2014.
 11. Evidence of Mitsuhiro's connections to Sōtatsu is given in Nakamachi 2015, pp. 93–94.
 12. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2006.570). The set of screens from which these scenes were excised belonged to Dan Takuma (1858–1932), a wealthy businessman and well-known collector. Among identified *Genji* paintings by Sōtatsu and his immediate followers, these ex-Dan collection screens were the only examples that had images of all fifty-four chapters of the tale and became a template for subsequent works by Rinpa-school artists.
 13. See *The Record of Travel through the Provinces* (*Kaikoku michi no ki*); cited in Toda 2016, p. 9. In English, see Kita 1997, p. 329 and n. 50, where the identification of Regent Nijō Akizane is discussed.
 14. For a discussion of the preparations of the bridal dowry for this momentous wedding, see the essay by Monika Bincsik in this volume.
 15. Abiko 2017.
 16. For a discussion of the distinctive quality of Matabei's paintings on *Genji* themes, see, for instance, Hiromi 2017. See also McKelway 2015 on Matabei's more traditional *Genji* paintings and his connections to the Tosa school.

17. These screens came to be called the *Kanaya Screens* (*Kanaya byōbu*), after the Kanaya family, wealthy Fukui merchants who were believed to have received the screens from Matsudaira Naomasa (1601–1666), the daimyo of Fukui. Ten of the twelve individual paintings survive as individually mounted hanging scrolls; the location of the two others is unknown. The only photographic image of the intact *Kanaya byōbu*, illustrated here, was published in the Japanese art journal *Kokka* (no. 686, June 1949), and from this we can glean its original appearance, in which Chinese and Japanese painting subjects are intermixed, although it is impossible to know if this arrangement was made by Matabei.
18. For illustrations, see Fukui Fine Arts Museum 2016, nos. 17, 18, 20.
19. For a comprehensive survey of Kano-school artists, see Fischer and Kinoshita 2015.
20. The castle was built over a period of four years, beginning in 1576, and the subject matter of its paintings, which did not include *Genji*, were recorded in the Chronicle of Oda Nobunaga (*Shinchō kōki*); each of the castle's seven stories was decorated with a different theme, such as Buddhist subjects, figures from Chinese history, and bird-and-flower motifs. See *Shinchō kōki* 1997, pp. 202–5; see also Wheelwright 1981; Nakamachi 2008b, pp. 69–70.
21. The gift is recorded in *A Chronology of the Uesugi* (*Uesugi nenpu*); see Takahashi Yoshihiko 1971, vol. 5, p. 220. The screens of Kyoto are thought to correspond to those handed down in the Uesugi family, now in the collection of the Yonezawa City Uesugi Museum.
22. Prince Toshihito was the grandson of Emperor Ōgimachi (1517–1593), who abdicated in 1586. Discussed as well in the essay by Melissa McCormick in this volume, he was famous for, among other things, commissioning the construction of Katsura Imperial Villa, modeled on descriptions of Genji's villa in the locale of Katsura in Chapter 18, "Wind in the Pines" (*Matsukaze*). Eitoku's famous *Cypress Tree* screen (originally a sliding-door painting), a National Treasure in the Tokyo National Museum, was handed down in the Katsura (Hachijōnomiya) family and may have adorned the walls of the same residence as the *Genji* screens illustrated here. See Takeda 1977, pp. 44, 73, ill. pp. 66–69, pls. 23, 24.
23. Hideyoshi adopted the prince in 1586 but absolved the relationship in 1589 after the birth of his own male heir. He subsequently urged the creation of a new princely line for Toshihito, the Hachijōnomiya, and compensated the prince with a large tract of land and a stipend.
24. Records such as the *Tokugawa jikki* (True chronicle of the Tokugawa) and *Ryūei ondōgu chō* (Inventory of treasured household accessories in the collection of the shogunal family) that itemize possessions of the shogunal family during the course of the Edo period note that no fewer than eleven screens said to be by Kano Eitoku were kept at Edo Castle at one time or another. Of those, three were on *Genji* themes. Two *Genji* screens said to be by Eitoku were presented to Tokugawa Tsunayoshi, the fifth shogun, by two powerful daimyo, Okabe Naizen Yukitaka (1617–1687) and Matsudaira Minonokami Norimasa (1637–1684). See "Ryūei zue mokuroku" 1992, p. 57. Records state that Tokugawa Ietsugu (1709–1716), the seventh shogun, purchased yet another *Genji* screen by or attributed to Eitoku for the princely sum of 5,000 *ryō* (gold coins); see *Tokugawa jikki* 1904, p. 474, entry for the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month of the first year of the Kyōhō era (1716).
25. An example of continuing Toyotomi patronage is the order Sanraku received to depict the illustrated biography of Prince Shōtoku (*Shōtokutaishi-eden*) on the walls of the temple Shitennōji in Osaka during the fifth year of the Keichō era (1600), which had been rebuilt by Hideyoshi's heir, Toyotomi Hideyori (1593–1615).
26. Other family connections are also important to note: Toyotomi Sadako's biological mother was Oeyo (Azai Gō, 1573–1626), and her father was Toyotomi Hideyoshi's nephew, Hidekatsu (1569–1592). Sanraku's father, Kimura Nagamitsu, had been a retainer of Sadako's father, the daimyo Azai Nagamasa (1545–1573).
27. Kawamoto Keiko 1989.
28. McCormick 2017.
29. Igarashi 2012, pp. 18–19.
30. Inamoto 2008, p. 60; Inamoto 2010.
31. Inamoto 2008, pp. 49–51; Inamoto 2017.
32. Sugimoto 2010. For the most up-to-date research on these scrolls, see Sano, Kojima, and Takahashi forthcoming.
33. Gahō's statement comes by way of his *Preface of Paintings of the Kano Einō Family Record* (*Kano Einō kaden gajiku jo*); see Yamashita 2013, p. 19.
34. Sansetsu was commissioned by Yukiie to produce two paintings to supplement two lost scrolls among the thirty-three Kannon paintings by the artist-monk Kichizan Minchō (1352–1431) in the collection of the Tōfukuji Temple.
35. Matsushima 2011, p. 136.
36. Ōta 2015a, pp. 40–41.
37. For Kano Yasunobu, see Noda Asami in Sasaki and Noda 2014, p. 208, no. 68; for Kiyohara Yukinobu, see Kyoko Kinoshita in Fischer and Kinoshita 2015, p. 258, no. 35, ill. p. 125, pp. 278–79, nos. 94–97, ill. pp. 214–17; Kinoshita 2015, pp. 50, 51.
38. See Chino Kaori's several publications from 1988 on this topic: Chino 1988a; Chino 1988b; Chino 1988c; see also Tokyo National Museum 1988, pp. 59–124. For a summary in English of this body of material, see Mason 1988.
39. Takeda 1988, pp. 12–13.
40. Matsubara 1988, pp. 395–96.
41. Takeda 1988, p. 22.
42. Matsubara 1988, pp. 398–400.
43. Kano 1907.
44. Yoshikawa 2005, pp. 125–26.
45. In 1820 Kano Seisen'in Osanobu copied two handscrolls attributed to Tosa Mitsunobu (active ca. 1462–1525) on the theme of *bugaku* dancers, now in the collection of the Tokyo National Museum (A-2416, A-2422).
46. Matsubara 1979/1988, pp. 374–89.
47. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (11.6630, 11.6631, 11.6632); Ishiyamadera Temple 2008, p. 209, no. 73, ill. pp. 174–75. For a discussion of *Genji* screens by Seisen'in in the context of the Edo Kano school, see Kinoshita 2018.
48. Matsubara 1979/1988, p. 390.

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- The designation *hime* (literally "princess") generally refers to a high-ranking person's unmarried or young daughter. The high-ranking samurai daughters were *hime*; the aristocrat's daughters were *gimi* or *miya*. The shogun's daughter was often *himegimi*. For example, Atsu-hime became well known with the *hime* title, but after being adopted by the aristocratic Konoe family, she became Atsu-gimi.
- During the Edo period, the Tokugawa shogunate required daimyo to spend one year in Edo and one year in their home domains, a system called "alternate attendance" (*sankin-kōtai*). The daimyo's principal wife and heir remained in Edo as "hostages" in his absence. The expenses necessary to maintain residences in both locales, and the costly processions to and from Edo, placed financial constraints on the daimyo that prevented them from building powerful military bases in the provinces and thus helped maintain the peace.
- Takahashi Akemi 2000.
- Regarding changes in the number and content of the wedding-set items and their decoration throughout the Edo period, see Okayama Art Museum 1984; Arakawa Hirokazu, Komatsu, and Haino 1986.
- Rowley 2010.
- Chaiklin 2016.
- Butler 1994.
- Lillehoj 2011, p. 126.
- Ibid.*, pp. 121–47.
- See Li 2008, pp. 163–64.
- For an in-depth account of this marriage, the artworks made in its wake, and its political context, see Lillehoj 2011, pp. 121–53.
- Museum of Kyoto 1997.

NOTES

13. The records of the Kōami family, the appointed *maki-e* masters of the shogunate (*goyō maki-eshi*), are important documents of the wedding-set production; see “Kōami-kadensho” 1940.
14. The wedding set is documented in the Kōami family’s records (*Kōami-kadensho*); see “Kōami-kadensho” 1940, p. 23. The surviving incense box is in the Tokugawa Art Museum; Haino 1995, p. 194, pl. 160. Chrysanthemum branches were popular on lacquer objects as symbols of longevity, referencing the legend of Kikujidō and classical poems. The box was originally designed for a mirror.
15. Koike 1991.
16. Tokugawa Art Museum 1985.
17. Yoshikawa 2005.
18. E. A. Cranston 2006, p. 816.
19. For more on the phenomenon of the *ashide-e*, see Mostow 1992.
20. Tokugawa Art Museum 1993.
21. For more details about the life of the Tokugawa princesses, see Tokugawa Art Museum 2004.
22. Koike 1985, p. 113.
23. In seventeenth-century sources only the *maki-e* artist’s name is confirmed; see “Kōami-kadensho” 1940. The record mentioning the name of Iwasa Matabei as the designer of the *maki-e* compositions is dated to the Meiji period, 1873, when the *Hatsune* set was transferred to the Owari Tokugawa family from the Kenchūji Temple. See Koike 1985, pp. 113, 116; see also “Kōami-kadensho” 1940, p. 23.
24. Naito 2014.
25. Allen 2004.
26. Lillehoj 2016.
27. Museum of Kyoto 1997.
28. Sakomura 2004; Thompson 2013.
29. Museum of Kyoto 2008b.
30. Satō Toyozō 1996.
31. Hata Masataka 1992.
32. Satō Toyozō 1996.
33. For more on the history of incense, see Morita 2015. On the history of tea, see Varley and Kumakura 1989; Ohki 2009.
34. Koike 1996; Satō Toyozō 1996.
35. Koike 2005.
36. Kawakami 2009; Kawakami 2010.
37. Order book in the Konishi family archives (*Konishi-ke monjo*) at the Kyoto National Museum (H-29.2 W-21). The orders from Tōfukumon in provide an important link between the fashion of a high-ranking samurai lady and that of the wealthy merchant-class ladies.
38. Lillehoj 2011, pp. 148–49. For Heian-period color combinations, see Dalby 2001, pp. 217–69.
39. Satō Ryōko 2011.
40. Kawakami 2010.
41. Kawakami 2009; Kawakami 2010.
42. Kirihata 2004.
43. Seiji Togo Memorial Sompō Japan Nipponkoa Museum of Art 2008, no. 219.
44. Nagasaki 2008.
45. Ōishi 2008.
46. Arakawa Hirokazu, Komatsu, and Haino 1986.
47. Tokugawa Art Museum 2017.
48. In the sixth month of 1856, the shogunate entrusted Umeda Sanemon and Yamada Seinosuke with arranging the wedding set; see *ibid.*, p. 20. However, because it was Iesada’s third wedding, and there were serious financial issues, existing lacquer items were used with the addition of the peony crest of the Konoe family. As a result, Atsu-hime had three types of lacquers: the style represented by the richly decorated palanquin, the incense-game set, and an incense burner in the collection of the Tokugawa Art Museum; simple black lacquer utensils embellished only with the two family crests; and doll furniture with *maki-e* pine and arabesque foliage decoration.

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