

Murasaki's "Mind Ground"

A Buddhist Theory of the Novel

MELISSA MCCORMICK

Over the course of its roughly millennium-long reception, *The Tale of Genji* was viewed by many readers as a text that was profoundly Buddhist in nature, one that was best understood through the interpretive tools of Tendai Buddhist thought in particular.¹ This means that *The Tale of Genji* was deemed a philosophical text to which one could turn to think through not only issues of morality and ethics, but fundamental metaphysical questions about the nature of truth, our perception of the phenomenal world, and the phenomenal world's relationship to language. Some of the most explicit evidence that readers approached and understood the tale through a Buddhistic

1. In explaining the idea of "original enlightenment" or an inherent buddha nature in Japanese thought, Jacqueline Stone defines Chinese T'ien-t'ai (Tendai in Japanese) as one of "the great totalistic systems of Chinese Buddhist thought . . . which envision the world as a cosmos in which all things, being empty of independent existence, interpenetrate and encompass one another. These systems are both ontological, in explaining all concrete phenomena (*shih* 事) as nondual with truth or principle (*li* 理), and soteriological, in showing liberation to consist of insight into this unity." See Stone, *Original Enlightenment and the Transformation of Medieval Japanese Buddhism*, esp. pp. 6–7.

framework comes by way of *Genji* commentaries, a cumulative tradition of exegesis that continued for more than five hundred years.² This might surprise those accustomed to seeing *The Tale of Genji* examined primarily in secular aesthetic terms and categorized as a courtly romance centered around the amorous exploits of an imperial prince. A Buddhist view of the tale may also seem to be at odds with some of the work's qualities considered most appealing—its compelling plot and affective poetry, its wealth of detail concerning Heian life and court customs, and its vividly drawn characters of all moral persuasions, with their accessible humanity and seemingly lucid psychological interiority. Most of all, instances in the tale of ironic distance, humor, and even anti-Buddhist sentiment suggest an author who scrupulously avoided overt didacticism of any kind, as though the tale were written from a familiar secular humanist perspective. In this way, *The Tale of Genji* satisfies the demands of readers of modern novels, and surely for this reason its Buddhist elements may seem placed there only to “add a dash of melancholy” to the work.³

2. The earliest extant *Genji* commentary, *Genji Explicated* (*Genji shaku*, 1160) by Sesonji Koreyuki (d. 1175), is in fact contemporaneous with the earliest extant text of *The Tale of Genji* (the illustrated scrolls in the Tokugawa and Gotoh Art Museums). There are more than one hundred separate examples of premodern *Genji* commentaries, most which have yet to be studied in detail. One of the earliest to mention Murasaki Shikibu's Tendai Buddhist lineage and how an understanding of Buddhism was key to interpreting the tale was the *Genchū saihishō* (The most secret gleanings from the Suigenshō commentary, ca. 1313 (rev. 1364)). The text purports (as its title indicates) to excerpt the most hidden teachings from the partially lost *Genji* commentary of Minamoto no Chikayuki, the *Suigenshō* (mid-thirteenth century). For the text in Japanese of the *Genchū saihishō* see Ikeda, ed., *Genji monogatari taisei*, vol. 7. See also Tasaka, *Genji monogatari kyōjushi ronkō*. The highly influential *Kakaishō* (River and sea commentary, ca. 1387) by Yotsutsuji Yoshinari (1326–1402) continued in this vein, as did many of the commentaries produced in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, some of which will be referenced below. Lewis D. Cook presents a provocative overview of *Genji* commentaries in “Genre Trouble”; and for an excellent study of the entire history of *Genji* commentary combined with in-depth analysis of several premodern examples, see Kern, “Changing Perspectives on a Classic.” Seminal studies in Japanese include Ii, *Genji monogatari chūshakushi no kenkyū: Muromachi Zenki*.

3. The quote is from Buruma, “The Sensualist,” a review of Dennis Washburn's 2015 English translation of *The Tale of Genji*.

In fact, a backlash against a Buddhist interpretation of the tale started to gain momentum in the early modern period with the distinctive voices of commentators such as Kumazawa Banzan (1619–91). Armed with the philosophical tools of Neo-Confucianism and its inherent pragmatism and clear-cut morality, Banzan made a forceful case against the long tradition of Buddhist-oriented *Genji* commentaries in his own treatise on the tale.⁴ As James McMullen has shown, Banzan was concerned above all with the implications of Buddhist notions of karma, transmigration, and any hint of predeterminism that might contradict the self-motivated morality at the core of his Confucian ethics. No writer was more influential in denying the validity of a Buddhist view of *Genji*, however, than Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801), whose treatise, “*The Tale of Genji*: A Little Jeweled Comb (*Genji monogatari Tama no ogushi*, 1799), incited a tenaciously secular approach to *Genji* criticism for generations to come. Norinaga rightly bristled at the idea that such a sublimely complex work of literature could be reduced to having a single Buddhist aim, a view that he believed the medieval commentaries promoted. He took note of the marked difference between the tale and Buddhist or Confucian moral texts that were intended to “encourage virtue and castigate vice” and criticized theories of the work that did not account for the fullness of its presentation of the human condition and emotion.⁵ Norinaga arrived at his own theory of *mono no aware* (a sensitivity to the nature of things), which in essence gave him a framework for elaborating upon the tale's internal logic, in the process allowing him to create one of Japan's first sustained works of literary criticism. His interpretation took hold, and Norinaga's characterization of medieval

4. The treatise is called the *Discursive Commentary on the “Genji”* (*Genji gaiden*, late seventeenth century) and is Banzan's attempt to view the tale as consistent with Confucian philosophy; see the indispensable volume by McMullen, *Idealism, Protest, and the “Tale of Genji.”*

5. See Thomas Harper's translation and introduction to Norinaga's treatise in Harper and Shirane, eds., *Reading “The Tale of Genji,”* pp. 411–506.

commentaries as steeped in superstition and arcane allegoresis was taken largely at face value from that point forward. On the other hand, annotators of *The Tale of Genji*, including the editors of modern editions of the tale, have always kept the medieval commentaries close at hand. Aside from their Buddhist framing, they constitute the most authoritative sources for understanding the difficult original text and Heian period culture and history and provide interlinear glosses on etymology, word definitions, debates on the meaning of passages, and lengthy citations of the sources of Murasaki's allusions from classical Japanese poetry and Chinese classics to official histories.

Given the level of erudition found in the medieval commentaries and the clear awareness of the text's complexity that they demonstrate, this essay questions whether the Buddhist foundations of the tale that they espoused should not be examined more closely. It suggests, moreover, that these texts in some ways prefigure modern theories of the novel that champion its capacity to elicit from the reader a unique form of empathic understanding.⁶ In this regard, it is worth examining one of the main claims of these commentaries: that the Buddhist discourse on attaining insight into the nonduality of phenomena could be used as a means to illuminate the nature of the tale and to explain its value. The premodern *Genji* commentaries do not elaborate in great detail how the principles they espouse may be applied to the narrative, which may have been reserved for the oral teachings of which the written commentaries are often simply remnants. The analysis that follows therefore will pay close attention to the passages that do treat the topic in the commentaries, but it will also examine a number of largely unstudied pictorial artifacts produced in tandem with those texts for the crucial evidence they provide about

6. The description by Martha Nussbaum, for example, of how novels can function as "vehicles for Aristotelian morality" through their ability to engage the emotions and elicit an empathic response from the reader will be relevant; Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge*, pp. 95–96.

how certain readers understood *Genji* as a philosophical text into the early modern period. This volume is, however, concerned with the *Genji* text itself, not its long history of reception and exegesis, which might take us far afield from the Heian period literary and philosophical interests of its author. To be sure there are sections in the *Genji* commentaries that approach the kind of allegorizing and numerical allegoresis so carefully studied by Susan Klein in the context of medieval commentaries on the *Tales of Ise*, which accord with medieval "revelatory" modes of reading and interpretation that are anachronistic to Murasaki Shikibu's era.⁷ Moreover, it is important to keep in mind that the commentators under discussion had religious and political ties to Tendai institutions whose strength post-dates *The Tale of Genji*. But on balance the essence of the Tendai worldview, or "Tendai paradigm,"⁸ advocated by the medieval texts and artifacts to be examined here, would have been familiar to the *Genji* author. Within her tale, which, to be sure, exemplifies the nonsectarian and ecumenical approach to religion characteristic of Heian courtiers, there are prominent references to Tendai texts. As Haruo Shirane and others have pointed out, meditative Tendai Buddhism and its promotion of salvation through one's own efforts, derived from the belief that the buddha nature is inherent in the individual, was one influential form of Buddhism in *The Tale of Genji*.⁹ Examining the ideas of subsequent readers who attempted to understand the novel

7. Klein, *Allegories of Desire*. Later attempts to make the number of *Genji* chapters homologous to the twenty-eight chapters in eight fascicles of the *Lotus Sutra* by grouping certain chapters together, or to expand the chapters from fifty-four to sixty to make them match the sixty foundational texts in Tendai, are examples that suggest this kind of allegorizing approach.

8. Maeda, "Paradaimu to shite no bukkyō," pp. 254–72.

9. Shirane, *The Bridge of Dreams*, pp. 183–84. Also see Misumi, *Genji Monogatari to Tendai Jōdokyō*, 1. The Tendai monk Genshin (942–1017) and his *Essentials of Salvation* (*Ōjōyōshū*, 985) highly influenced Murasaki's thinking. As Robert F. Rhodes has argued, Genshin attempted to make Pure Land Buddhist teaching compatible with Tendai systems of meditation and accessible including the *nenbutsu* invocation, which is best understood as "Buddha contemplation"; see his *Genshin's Ōjōyōshū*, pp. 1–11.

holistically through the lens of Tendai philosophy may thus bring us closer to the intellectual heart of the tale than previously imagined, adding another dimension to our understanding of the relationship between Buddhist philosophy and literature.

BUDDHISM AND THE DEFENSE OF FICTION

More fundamental than Murasaki Shikibu's own affinities to Buddhist ideas, however, is the fact that she did not conceive of her tale from the perspective of a secular, postnaturalist writer. She inevitably sought to connect her characters, their actions, and their lives to the patterns of the universe as they were understood in Heian Japan, whether by Confucian, Buddhist, *kami*-centered, or other beliefs.¹⁰ These were integral components of Murasaki Shikibu's endeavor; indeed it would be impossible to imagine a writer of her time period creating a narrative of this scale and ambition in which characters were merely representations of the particular or the self in a modern novelistic sense. Although *Genji* meets many of the criteria associated with the modern novel—irony, subversion, multivocality—it is fundamentally concerned with what Lukács terms “essences” that structure the tale.¹¹ Literature, and poetry in particular, were understood as more than the personal expression of an individual—rather, in its highest form, as a process by which latent patterns of the universe become

10. The secondary literature on these topics in Japanese is vast, but one recent work of note that demonstrates how the tale is structurally interwoven with beliefs and protocols of *kami* worship is Han, *Genji monogatari ni okeru kami shinkō*. This study and others show the benefit of considering how Murasaki juxtaposed different philosophical systems in the formal construction of the work.

11. See Lukács, *The Theory of the Novel*. Borrowing Lukács's schema of the history of the novel, *Genji* would be more analogous to the hero of an ancient Greek epic than the alienated protagonist of the modern novel because his character is premised on the notion that meaning inheres in the relationship between the individual and the universe.

manifest, filtered through human consciousness.¹² The author of *The Tale of Genji* could not have attempted to elevate the *monogatari* as a genre, which she certainly was doing, by presenting the struggles and triumphs of her characters as unconnected to a larger, unseen order of things. Without the sense of a latent force motivating her characters and events, her *monogatari* would never rise above the pejorative stereotype of tales that circulated in the Heian period. The locus classicus for the belittlement of tales is the preface to a work of true Buddhist didacticism contemporary with *Genji*, *The Three Jewels* (*Sanbōe*, ca. 984). It warns against the frivolous depiction of relations between men and women in *monogatari* and admonishes the reader to “not let your heart get caught up even briefly in these tangled roots of evil, these forests of words.”¹³ But as a preface to a compilation of Buddhist didactic tales with one goal in mind, it also takes issue with the lack of purpose of *monogatari* and the way they are written, describing them as nothing more than “meaningless phrases like so much flotsam in the sea, with no two words together that have any more solid basis than does swamp grass growing by a river bank.”¹⁴ In many ways, *The Tale of Genji* can be seen as one long rebuttal to this notion of the meaningless episodic nature of tales in the way it sustains its plot, which has its own internal consistency, across so many chapters. In other words, there are unifying principles at the heart of Murasaki's tale that many commentators over the centuries chose to articulate in Buddhist terms.

12. See Owen, *Traditional Chinese Poetry and Poetics*, for example, on the nature of the Chinese couplet as pattern and his discussion of analogy and the notion of a correlative cosmos. Also helpful is Tomiko Yoda's analysis of the function of *waka* in the tale and her critique of interpretations that would understand it as pure lyric expression or through the lens of post-Romantic poetry; see her “Fractured Dialogues.”

13. Kamens, *The Three Jewels*, p. 93. In Japanese, Mabuchi et al., eds., *Sanbōe*; *Chūkōsen*, p. 6.

14. Kamens, *The Three Jewels*, p. 93.

Later commentators felt justified in proclaiming the Buddhist intent of *The Tale of Genji* because of specific references to Tendai. A scene in Chapter 10 “Sakaki” for example shows Genji studying the foundational texts of Tendai, among them *The Great Calming and Contemplation* (Ch. *Mohe zhiguan*, J. *Makashikan*) by Zhiyi (538–97), the meditation text in which the practice and doctrine of Tendai were most fully explained.¹⁵ There are also the metanarrative references to Buddhist ideas in the famous “theory of tales” (*monogatari ron*), or “defense of tales,” embedded in Chapter 25 “Hotaru.”¹⁶ There Genji enters into a debate about the value of fiction with the character Tamakazura, the secret daughter of Genji’s rival Tō no Chūjō. Genji has been harboring Tamakazura in his Rokujō mansion under the false pretense that she is his long-lost daughter, thus establishing an ersatz parent and child relationship taken as truth by those around them. The middle-aged Genji finds the young woman Tamakazura alluring, reminiscent as she is of her mother, his deceased lover Yūgao, and Genji’s sexual overtures toward her are relentless. The scenario creates an interesting tension in which Genji’s desire can be viewed as incestuous if interpreted according to the pair’s false projected reality, as opposed to their private truth, of which the reader is aware. The author thus establishes an ingenious and highly charged context for a discussion about the merits of fictional tales, as a conversation between two characters whose situation forces the reader into a heightened awareness of truth, falsity, and representation. This *mise-en-abyme* thus functions as a correlative to the dialogue, which develops into a statement on the link between the perceived reality

15. There are of course literary reasons for depicting Genji perusing this recondite opus, such as demonstrating the depth of the protagonist’s philosophical capabilities, but to later commentators with Tendai affiliations the scene was interpreted as doctrinally significant.

16. The “defense of fiction passage” seems to have been influenced by the rhetorical structure of the *Lotus Sutra*. See Abe Akio, “Murasaki Shikibu no bukkyō shisō,” cited by Shirane, *Bridge of Dreams*, p. 245 n. 4.

of fiction and the nature of truth in the Mahayana Buddhist understanding of phenomenal experience.

The passage begins when Genji enters a room in which he sees Tamakazura immersed in reading illustrated stories and he begins criticizing her for allowing her heart to be moved by pointless tales, in which “the truth would be very rare” (g3/210–11; *makoto wa ito sukunakaramu*). His observation echoes the language of previous criticisms of tales, as in the *Sanbōe* preface, as potentially deleterious to women, who tend to be easily swayed by their romantic content. But the passage is constructed to lead to a defense of *monogatari*, and it does so gradually by next having Genji begin to concede the positive aspects of the affective power of fiction: “even among this mass of falsehoods we find some stories that are properly written and exhibit enough sensitivity to make us imagine what really happened” (w519). Yet he still labels fictional tales “falsehoods” (*soragoto*), until Tamakazura rebukes him, calling attention to Genji’s own spinning of lies. After this, Genji’s rhetoric shifts once more and he begins to praise *monogatari*, claiming that tales are in fact better than official histories: “Tales have provided a record of events in the world since the age of the gods, whereas histories of Japan like the *Nihongi* give only partial accounts of the facts. The type of tales you are reading provide detailed descriptions that make more sense and follow the way of history” (w520). Finally, Genji describes how tales are written and the importance of including both good and bad examples in fiction. This allows for an analogy to be drawn between tales and the teachings found in Buddhist sutras:

“For that reason, the narrow-minded conclusion that all tales are falsehoods misses the heart of the matter. Even the Dharma, which was explicated for us through Sakyamuni’s splendidly pure heart, contains ‘expedient means’ (*hōben* 方便), those parables that he told to illustrate the truth of the Law. They may

seem contradictory to parts in the sutras and will raise doubts in the mind of an unenlightened person. However, if you carefully consider the matter, you realize that all have a single aim. The distinction between enlightenment and delusion is really no different from the distinction between the good and the bad in tales such as these. In the end, the correct view of the matter is that nothing is empty.” (w520, modified)

Because of the self-reflexive nature of this paragraph, it was long perceived as the author of *Genji* using Genji the character to mount a Buddhist argument for the relevance of fiction. The claim goes so far as to analogize the use of negative examples, or evildoing characters, with the expedient means found in the teachings of the Buddha. Only the unenlightened would take the expedient means of the sutra, or of the tale, at face value, unable to perceive the single aim of the Dharma, whatever expedient form it may take. The passage paved the way for an understanding of the tale as infused with an awareness of Buddhist nondualism. The final phrase is the most evocative in this regard, for here Murasaki Shikibu invokes the notion that enlightenment, or “Bodhi-wisdom” (*bodai*), is indistinguishable from delusion, or “passionate attachments” (*bonnō*). The seeming paradox comes from the belief that all phenomena are interpenetrating and interdependent. According to this doctrine then, even what one may perceive to be evil acts found in the tale are expedient means to Buddhist liberation, and like everything else, they cannot exist apart from Bodhi-wisdom; both are constitutive of each other.

This may seem to be nothing more than a convenient rationale for depicting as many illicit scenes of romance as possible, or at least enough for Murasaki to keep her readers interested with “the strange and wondrous details of bad behavior,” as Genji also mentions in the defense of fiction. In the lines immediately following the passage cited above, when Tamakazura rejects his advances, Genji presses her

further, accusing of her of being unfilial in a way that contradicts the Buddhist Law. This seems to prefigure works of later medieval literature that put to sardonic use the trope “the passionate attachments are indistinguishable from Bodhi-wisdom” (*bonnō soku bodai*). The “defense of tales” passage is thus complex and contradictory and entertaining, and as Richard Okada argued, it is therefore important that we not “universalize either the ‘critique’ or the ‘defense’ and turn them into self-standing ‘arguments’ or controlling metaphors of the tale. They form arguments, but the intertextual forces keep them pulled in specific directions related to class, gender, and genealogical concerns.”¹⁷ Many of the medieval *Genji* commentary authors, although their multifaceted texts covering all aspects of the tale and its intertexts were far from reductive, continued to promote the Buddhist philosophical framework precisely as a controlling metaphor. Rather than reducing the tale to a pedantic work of overt religious didacticism, as Norinaga and others believed it did, however, the approach had the potential to allow for a holistic appreciation of the tale in all of its multivocality, subversiveness, and self-aware intertextuality, the very techniques and qualities that allow it to transcend the didactic and the straightforward.

ENTERING THE FOUR GATES TOWARD PRAJÑĀ-WISDOM

In the mid-seventeenth century, for example, when the scholar and poet Matsunaga Teitoku (1571–1653) recounted what he had learned about *The Tale of Genji* from his teacher Kujō Tanemichi (1507–94), he began by explaining the tale’s relationship to Tendai

17. Okada, *Figures of Resistance*, p. 231.

Buddhist thought.¹⁸ In the course of his verbal teachings, Tanemichi had explicated *Genji* according to the idea that it contains “profound insights beyond discourse,” a notion that he summed up as the “theory of cessation and insight” (止観の説 *shikan no setsu*), taken from Zhiyi’s treatise and its exegetical legacy.¹⁹ He explained that, “as a story written according to the Buddhist Dharma, it differs from usual tales, with profound insights in its every poem and every word.” According to Tanemichi, *The Tale of Genji* is suffused with insights based on nondualistic thinking, a theory that was significantly premised on the idea that Murasaki Shikibu had mastered Tendai meditative practice.

Nothing crystallizes this Tendai theory of the author and her tale better than a group of portrait icons of Murasaki Shikibu that began to appear by the late sixteenth century and continued into the eighteenth century (Figure 8.1). The genre represents a type of image that was hung as a Buddhist icon in the so-called Genji Room at Ishiyamadera temple, where legend had it that Murasaki Shikibu had conceived of the idea for *The Tale of Genji*.²⁰ Such paintings depict Murasaki Shikibu with brush in hand, usually with ink and paper on her writing desk, and include three square cartouches at the top of the composition.²¹ These cartouches,

18. Teitoku recounts Tanemichi’s words in *Taionki* (Record of a debt of gratitude, ca. 1644–48), p. 35; . This passage is singled out for discussion in Maeda, “Paradaimu to shite no bukyō,” p. 254.

19. The phrasing, a “theory of *shikan*,” seems to be unique to Tanemichi, and perhaps something only communicated verbally in the lectures, exclusive teachings, and transmission of knowledge between teacher and disciple that were an essential part of the culture of *Genji* commentaries. Nevertheless, Tanemichi is drawing upon a long tradition of explicating *Genji* using the ideas in the *Makashikan*. For these ideas in Tanemichi’s own commentary (1575), see also Nomura, ed., *Mōshinshō*.

20. Katagiri, “Tendai shimon no san wo motsu Murasaki Shikibu zu,” pp. 155–60. Also see McCormick, “Ishiyamadera and the Buddhist Veneration of Murasaki Shikibu.”

21. This type of Murasaki icon is still hung with a small altar before it in the Genji Room adjacent to the main hall at Ishiyamadera. For more historical detail on the function of Murasaki

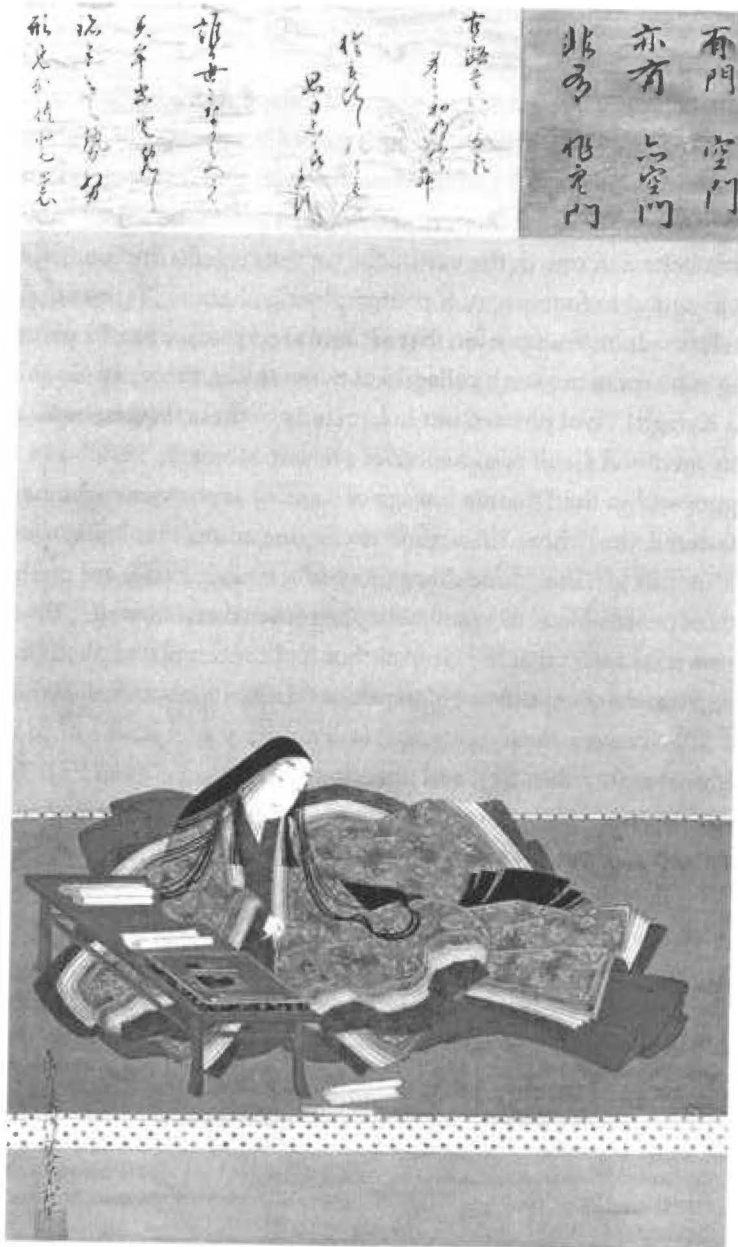


Figure 8.1 Tosa Mitsuoki (1617–91). *Portrait Icon of Murasaki Shikibu*. Edo period, seventeenth century. Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, 90.5 × 52.7 cm. Ishiyamadera Collection, Shiga.

called *shikishi*, bear striking calligraphic inscriptions beginning on the far right with the so-called four gates (“four stages of contemplation,” *shimon* 四門) of Tendai, followed by two *waka* poems from Murasaki Shikibu’s personal poetry collection in the central cartouche and one in the cartouche on the far left. The four gates correspond to four stages of contemplating phenomena, and their inclusion here in a position that amounts to a preface for the painting announces the work’s allegiance to the *shikan* theory of *Genji*.²² As Katagiri Yayoi pointed out in her study of these images, numerous medieval *Genji* commentaries present Murasaki Shikibu as a figure within the Dharma lineage of Tendai, as someone who had mastered the “three discernments in one mind” (*isshin sangan* 一心三觀).²³ The “three discernments” (*sankan* 三觀) are methods of contemplation from within phenomenal experience.²⁴ Thus, these texts assert that the *Genji* author had contemplated phenomena from the perspective of “emptiness” (nothingness, or the void, *kū* 空), “conventional existence” (a temporary acceptance of provisional reality, *kari* 假), and ultimately “the middle” (*chū* 中). To arrive at the middle is to understand simultaneously phenomena as both empty and provisionally existing and thus interdependent

Shikibu icons, see McCormick, “Purple Displaces Crimson”; and “Murasaki Shikibu Ishiyamadera mode-zu.”

22. Although many *Genji* commentators were affiliated with Tendai institutions, the four gates were not exclusive to Tendai, and the *shikan* theory of *Genji* could be understood as a general expression of nonduality, making the paintings appropriate for installation at Ishiyamadera, a Shingon Buddhist temple.

23. Katagiri, “Tendai shimon no san o motsu Murasaki Shikibu zu,” pp. 156–58. In addition to the *Genchū saihishō* (ca. 1313), the *Kakaishō* (ca. 1387), the *Rōkashō* (1504), and *Mōshinshō* (1575) mentioned above, other medieval *Genji* commentaries that mention Murasaki’s Tendai credentials include *Genji monogatari teiyō* (1432) by Imagawa Norimasa, which provides commentary on all 795 *waka* in the tale as well as summaries of the chapters.

24. As described by Neil Donner and Daniel B. Stevenson in their “Introduction” to the recent complete translation of the *Makashikan*. See Zhiyi, *Clear Serenity, Quiet Insight*, tr. Swanson, p. 8.

and nondual. Thus having calmed her mind to a state of cessation (*shi* 止), fixated on Prajñā-wisdom and free from delusional thinking, Murasaki achieved transcendent insight (*kan* 觀) into an ultimate nondualism between subject and object, self and other, and all phenomena.

The calligraphy inscription of the four gates on the painting cites a further parsing of the three truths and the three discernments, presenting the methods of contemplation as a tetralemma (Figure 8.2):

- (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



Figure 8.2 Detail of Figure 8.1.

the middle, the ultimate synthesis, is broken down more precisely, as (c) and (d), to convey the state when “existence and emptiness are ‘simultaneously illumined and simultaneously eradicated.’ When all vestiges of dualism (that is, root nescience) vanish, the transcendent and unalloyed middle—the third and absolute truth—is revealed.”²⁵ Virtually all of the medieval *Genji* commentaries mention the four gates, with the most detailed explication of the philosophy found in the opening section of *Genji monogatari teiyō* (1432).²⁶ The painting of Murasaki Shikibu at work writing her masterpiece paired with a textual expression of what is achieved through “cessation and insight” thus posits for *The Tale of Genji* a philosophical origin story that goes well beyond the general trope of divine inspiration.

If *The Tale of Genji* was to be posited by later commentators as an embodiment of the principle of nondualism, that means its words had to be understood as functioning symbolically, as a manifestation of the ultimate truth. The first person to theorize this notion in relation to Japanese literature was the twelfth-century figure Fujiwara no Shunzei (1114–1204), who explicitly linked Zhiyi’s “cessation and insight” to poetic composition. In his poetic treatise *Korai fūteishō* (Poetic styles from antiquity the present, 1197), Shunzei cites the opening passage of the *Makashikan* and goes on to draw an analogy between the ineffable state of *shikan* and the “deep mind” (*fukaki kokoro*) of poetry. As Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen has argued, Shunzei implies that the “poetic experience is essentially similar to the religious state of meditation and that the ontological existence of the poem is best conceived

25. Donner and Stevenson, “Introduction,” p. 11.

26. Inaga, ed., *Imagawa Norimasa, Genji monogatari teiyō*, pp. 10–12. As a cumulative tradition of exegesis, the commentaries necessarily cite previous commentaries, including statements about the four gates, which might make the repetition seem rote.

in terms of Tendai’s three-dimensional view of reality.”²⁷ Although space limitations do not allow for elaboration here, commentators like Tanemichi, quoted above, were very much the inheritors of Shunzei’s rhetoric.²⁸

The tetralemma on the painting of Murasaki Shikibu is best seen as providing a means of understanding Murasaki Shikibu’s writing, like Shunzei’s use of *Makashikan* in articulating a method for composing and evaluating Japanese poetry. It does this by asking the viewer metaphorically to pass through the four gates on the right cartouche and then, with the mind prepared, to read the subsequent two *waka* poems by the author to the left. Both *waka* come from the collection of Murasaki Shikibu’s verse where they are presented with headnotes and between other verses that contextualize them to a certain extent as grief poems, the first said to have been written sometime after the death of her husband:

<i>Kokoro dani</i>	Is there a fate
<i>Ikanaru mi ni ka</i>	That could at very least
<i>Kanau ramu</i>	Bring satisfaction?
<i>Omoishiredomo</i>	The truth I realize
<i>Omoishirarezu</i>	But cannot yet accept. ²⁹

27. The translations of Shunzei’s treatise are from Ramirez-Christensen, *Emptiness and Temporality*, p. 88. See Bushelle, “The Joy of the Dharma,” p. 222, for the correspondence between Shunzei’s *kokoro*, *kotoba*, and *sugata* and the threefold truth.

28. Tanemichi and others traced their *Genji* scholarly lineage back to Shunzei through his son, the famous poet, calligrapher, and scholar Fujiwara no Teika (1162–1241). It is important to stress, however, that Shunzei’s poetics were not exclusively Buddhist, as discussed in Riley Soles, “The Ecstasy of the Text,” while investigating more fully the ritual context for Shunzei’s Buddhist understanding of *Genji*, as undertaken by Bushelle in “The Joy of the Dharma.”

29. Translated by Bowring, *Murasaki Shikibu, Her Diary and Poetic Memoirs*, p. 234. The poem (no. 56 in the collection) has no preface and follows directly from no. 55, which was said to have been written after the mourning period for her husband had ended.

The second poem follows a headnote that explains how Murasaki composed upon reading through the old letters of a recently deceased female friend, also a serving lady 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. ³⁰

Within the narrativized frame of the anthologized collection, which presents the poems in chronological order, the two verses can be interpreted as personal reactions to specific circumstances. But as poems that reflect upon the nature and limited temporality of human existence, one can see how they would be selected and repurposed for use on Murasaki Shikibu portrait icons, the ultimate goal of which was to link *The Tale of Genji* to Tendai Buddhist beliefs. The poems are decontextualized from the facts of Shikibu's life as presented in the poetry collection, but the preface cartouche of the four gates gives them a new context, asking that they be read as metaphors for the Tendai approach to understanding reality.

When viewed through the frame of the four gates, which asks that one attempt to see an ultimate reality beyond the phenomenal world, each word in the first poem may be perceived as Buddhist in meaning. Rather than questioning her worldly "fate" and whether it will bring "satisfaction," the poet in the first poem may therefore be asking more abstractly if there is no "body"

30. Ibid., p. 255.

(*mi*) that can be brought into alignment (*kanau*) with "mind" (*kokoro*). The second half of the first poem shows that the verse focuses entirely on a perceiving subject who paradoxically states that, though she may "contemplate and reach understanding" (*omoishiredomo*), she "cannot contemplate and reach understanding" (*omoishirarezu*). The repetition of the compound verb "to contemplate and know" (*omoishiru*) in positive and negative form recalls the affirmative-negative dialectic between existence and nonexistence (or nothingness) in the four gates. Read this way, the first poem could be taken to describe contemplative practice and the process of moving through the different levels of discernment. Or more abstractly, the poem's implied thinking subject cancels itself out through the parallelism of the phrasing, poetically rehearsing the negation of the conventional self that must precede a discernment of the middle.

The second poem on the painting relates to *mujōkan*, the awareness of the impermanence of existence, through the voice of a poet who notes the irony of the written word enduring beyond the evanescent life of the writer. Although this poem has been interpreted as expressing the author's anxiety over making a mark in the world and leaving a name for herself as a writer, the application of the Tendai filter to the verse can produce a very different interpretation. The poem also calls attention to the lack of inherent meaning of the written word and its dependency on the perceiving subject to imbue it with value. The poem asks if "anyone will live on in this world to read" (literally "see," *mimu*) these letters, these "traces that do not disappear" (*ato wa kiesenu*), thus imagining a future in which the letters have become empty signifiers, meaningless until they are interpreted by a reader. The idea that the written word is contingent accords with notions about

the provisional nature of language, as found in the preface to the *Makashikan*:

Through great compassion [the Buddha] has pity on all who have not heard [the Dharma, and therefore expounds the Dharma with provisional indicators such as words]. It is as if by raising a [round] fan you replicate [the image of] the moon that is hidden behind a range of mountains, or by [artificially] shaking a tree you can teach about [the nature of] air when the wind has stopped.³¹

The passage goes on to warn about becoming trapped and too reliant upon texts, and calls for reading with insight, to see beyond the literal. By using the image of the round fan that stands in for the hidden moon, it shows the central place of metaphor as a mechanism for perceiving the ultimate reality of which the written word can be a manifestation.

This second poem by Murasaki, by envisioning a future world from which the poet and the poem's readers have also departed, emphasizes the mutability of existence, which was an integral part of Buddhist philosophy and which some commentators considered to be the central point of *The Tale of Genji*. It is this awareness of impermanence (*mujōkan*) that allows an individual to emulate the compassion of the Buddha, the radical empathy that comes from understanding the indivisibility of self and other. And it was the ability of *The Tale of Genji* to spark a profound understanding of impermanence in its readers through a narrative that traces an entire arc of a human life that made it essential to those who posited the author's enlightened mind. Kujō Tanemichi, whose belief in a "shikan theory" of reading *Genji* was described above, wrote elsewhere that "to understand the principle (*kotowari* 理) [that all that flourishes must fade] in the most profound

31. Zhiyi, *Clear Serenity*, tr. Swanson, vol. 1, p. 126.

way, nothing compares to reading *The Tale of Genji*."³² For Tanemichi and others, Buddhism and literature were thus mutually reinforcing; fiction could be an effective and worthy vehicle for conveying Buddhist truth, but to understand the deeper meanings of the text one needed to grasp the philosophical apparatus of *shikan*. The portrait icon of Murasaki thus provides a model for understanding how to use *shikan* to understand her fiction as well, modeling a mode of reading and interpretation beneath the surface level of the text.

MOONLIGHT AND METAPHYSICS: SUMA AND AKASHI

The question remains as to how Buddhist philosophy could be used to interpret specific narrative moments in *The Tale of Genji* itself. Some hints in the commentaries appear in sections devoted to explaining the mysterious absent chapter, "Kumogakure," blank for all but its title. The chapter comes after Genji's final appearance in the tale in Chapter 41 "Maboroshi" and is thought to have stood in for a depiction of Genji's death, which many believed would have been beyond expression in words.³³ Medieval commentators used this chapter as an opportunity to expound upon the Tendai paradigm, and in the process, a nascent theory of fiction based on the "three truths" began to emerge. The author of the *Genji monogatari teiyō* for example explains how reading the fictional tale (*tsukuri monogatari*) relates to the three truths: to consider the deaths of characters is to contemplate phenomena through "emptiness"; understanding the character of the Kiritsubo Emperor as a symbol for, or analogous to, the historical figure of the

32. See Kujō, *Genji monogatari kyōenki*, p. 670.

33. In a translator's note (w881-82) Washburn succinctly outlines the debates about the original existence of this chapter.

Daigo Emperor (r. 897–930) is said to be akin to contemplating “provisional” reality; and finally, the wordless “Kumogakure” chapter is a perfect expression of the ultimate truth of “the middle,” an expression of the void that encompasses both emptiness and contingent reality. The scheme of the three truths could thus facilitate an understanding of the tale as a whole, and its details, while enriching the experience of literary symbolism—essentially holding two things in one’s mind at once. The experience of reading literature could therefore be linked to the so-called provisional gate, one that Tendai teachings enjoined disciples to undertake as one step on the path to enlightenment.

While elaboration of a Buddhist theory of the tale in the commentaries is minimal, another type of Murasaki portrait icon showing the author at the temple of Ishiyamadera composing her tale is useful in this regard because of its citation of a passage from Chapter 12 “Suma” (Figure 8.3). The painting depicts the popular genesis story for *The Tale of Genji* in which Murasaki’s initial writing of her tale occurs not within the environs of the imperial court, but at the Buddhist temple just outside the capital:

Charged by her highness the Imperial Consort with the task of writing *The Tale of Genji*, Lady Murasaki travelled to the temple of Ishiyamadera to pray for inspiration. On the fifteenth night of the eighth month she looked out over Lake Biwa, calmed her mind and gazed upon the moon’s glowing orb reflected on the surface of the water, and suddenly the idea was born. She picked up her brush, but with no paper at hand, she reached for the scrolls of the *Great Perfection of Transcendent Wisdom Sutra* (S. *Prajñāpāramitā*, J. *Daihannyakyō*) resting on the Buddhist altar, and turning them over wrote the Suma and Akashi chapters.³⁴



Figure 8.3 Tosa Mitsuoki (1617–91). *Murasaki Shikibu at Ishiyamadera*. Edo period, seventeenth century. Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, 86.0 × 46.5 cm. Ishiyamadera Collection, Shiga.

34. These are key elements of the legend found in medieval texts and painting inscriptions; see McCormick, “Purple Displaces Crimson.”

Such passages claim for *Genji* an originary moment rooted in meditative practice and further wrap the tale's authorship in spiritual imagery, by among other things depicting it as having been inscribed upon the back of a Buddhist sutra. Other versions of the legend suggested that Murasaki Shikibu was herself an incarnation of the bodhisattva Kannon sent into the world to set her readers on the righteous path of Buddhist devotion. In much the same way that Murasaki and Kannon are two and yet one, the temple of Ishiyamadera was said to be indistinguishable from the bodhisattva realm of Potalaka. The artist has composed a painting that on the surface appears to depict a straightforward image of a court lady writing at her desk, but for the initiated it functions as a visual metaphor for an enlightened being, at the moment of achieving stillness and insight by clearing her mind and meditating on the reflection of the moon.

The legendary date of the tale's creation is also important, as the increasing illumination in the course of the lunar cycle is a simile in the *Makashikan* for gradual enlightenment, which achieves perfection on the night when the moon is at its fullest, the fifteenth of the eighth month. It is on that night, which Zhiyi likened to have an expression of complete and perfect Buddhahood, that Murasaki Shikibu meditates on the moon and is enlightened. According to a *shikan* theory of the novel, that achievement of Buddhist insight merges with the writing of the tale, which is said to begin with a scene from "Suma." That scene describes Genji seeing the brilliant moon shining over the sea at Suma, where he has been living in self-imposed exile, and he recalls that it is the fifteenth of the eighth month. The painting explicitly connects the full moon that Murasaki gazed upon at Ishiyamadera to the moon gazed upon by her protagonist through the inscription that floats above the temple to the left of the moon in the upper register of the painting. It cites several lines and verse from the "Suma" chapter:

The full moon rose vivid and bright, bringing back memories to Genji. "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"³⁵—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. (w277)

<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. ³⁶

Genji longs for the music at the palace and imagines those in the capital gazing up at the same moon. He recites a line by Bai Juyi (772–846) also composed on the fifteenth night of the eighth month in which the poet longs for his friend far away and remembers those he has left behind. The moon at Suma functions as a pivot mentally transporting Genji and the reader back to the capital and emphasizing his isolation on the coast. It is at once a melancholic and a beautiful device that allows the reader to briefly embody the perspective of Genji, of Fujitsubo and others in the capital, and of Murasaki the author—all sharing this vision of the moon.

35. *Baishi wenji* (*Hakushi monjū*) juan 14, no. 724, cited with commentary in g2/516.

36. Here quoted in the translation of Cranston, *A Waka Anthology*, p. 764.

The invocation of the “Suma” chapter in the *Genji* origin myth thus creates the perfect meditation on the Buddhist notion of nonduality. The moon is of course everywhere at once, and thus functions as a master metaphor for the way the buddha nature infuses every particle in the universe. The motif of the moon in the narrative creates a focal point for the switching of subject positions and enables a narrativized example of intersubjectivity between fictional characters and between the author and her protagonist contemplating the same moon on the same night. The *shikan* theory of the novel seems to say that the flash of insight that poetry has the capacity to engender may also arise from such moments in fiction like *The Tale of Genji*. The theory hinges upon a sensitivity to language and seeing within the figural moon (or in other characters such as the word for sky/void) the potential for metaphysical meaning. It allows for a reading of the tale in which a moon is never merely a moon, but might always be a metaphor for enlightenment, and in which nothing should ever be taken too literally.

When such intersubjectivity is linked with empathy, literary allusion can be tinged with Buddhist morality. The citation of a poem by Bai Juyi in the “Suma” passage, for example, composed on the same night of the year and thus beneath the same full moon, seems to collapse time and space in a way that accords with the nondualistic ideal. It frames Genji’s own sorrow as a sentiment that had been felt in the past by the ancient poet and that would be felt again in the future, suggesting the continuous mind and delusional notion of short-term temporal divisions. Intertextuality thus becomes an expression of Buddhist belief and its attendant morality. What therefore might be taken as a lyrical expression of personal loneliness and longing in fact recalls Shunzei’s comments on how poetic grace or beauty (*yūgen*) should reflect an achieved state of “insight into the profoundly moving character of things (*aware no fukaki koto*),” rooted in “human feeling” (*hito no nasake*). Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen

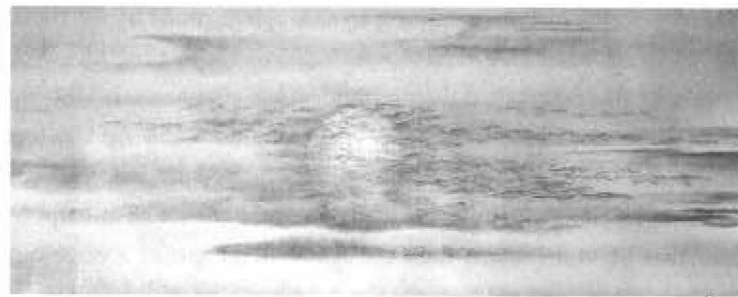


Figure 8.4 Tosa Mitsusada (1738–1806). *Scenes from the Suma Chapter of The Tale of Genji*. Edo period, eighteenth century. Handscroll, ink and light colors on paper, 38.1 × 949.9 cm. Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge, MA.

has explained Shunzei’s understanding of “human feeling” as not “feeling as individual subjective emotion, but rather invoked in the context of an interpersonal, or dialogical, reciprocal relation—of a compassion extended by the one eliciting a profound response in the other,” which he linked to an awareness of and sorrow for the human condition (*mujōkan*).³⁷ That the image of the moon on the water in the “Suma” passage becomes an emblem for the eradication of dualist thinking and the fixation point for the luminous quiescence of cessation and contemplation of *shikan* was undoubtedly grasped by certain readers. When the artist Tosa Mitsusada illustrated the scene of Genji contemplating the moon in exile (Figure 8.4), for example, he chose to depict nothing but a softly glowing orb merging with the blue waves and the white clouds, a ghostly image that comes in and out of focus, at once a moon above the clouds and a shimmering reflection on the water, casting the light of a metaphysical moon on the shores of Suma.

While the words of Shunzei noted above referred specifically to poetry, a fictional work like *Genji* could have evoked the existential

37. Ramirez-Christensen, *Emptiness and Temporality*, p. 82.

intersubjectivity of Zhiyi's philosophy through its mode of narration. *The Tale of Genji* has long been characterized as a psychological novel, earning its title because of the preponderance of characters who are "always thinking about what other characters are thinking."³⁸ A few paragraphs before the passage from "Suma" quoted on the paintings, for example, Genji's actions toward his men stem from an attempt to show that he understands their thoughts. Genji speaks a verse out loud to himself that reflects upon the sadness of those dependent on him and lamenting his absence in the capital:

<i>Koiwabite</i>	Weary with yearning,
<i>Naku ne ni magau</i>	Weeping, now the cries that come
<i>Uranami wa</i>	Mingle with the waves . . .
<i>Omou kata yori</i>	Waves that break before the wind
<i>Kaze ya fukuran</i>	That blows for the longed-for land? ³⁹

Hearing his poem, his attendants were startled awake. Seeing how splendid Genji looked, they were overcome by emotion, and as they arose unsteadily they were quietly wiping their noses to disguise their tears.

Genji wondered, *How must my attendants feel? For my sake alone they have come wandering with me to this sorry existence, having left behind their comfortable, familiar homes and parted with parents and siblings from whom even the briefest absence would be hard to bear.*⁴⁰

38. See, for example, Raymond Mortimer's 1925 review of Waley's translation of *Genji*, "A New Planet"; and recent work on *Genji* and theory of mind. See Vincent, "Sex on the Mind: Queer Theory Meets Cognitive Theory."

39. Here quoted in the translation of Cranston, *A Waka Anthology*, pp. 762–63.

40. The italics are from the Washburn translation, where they are used to indicate a character's interior monologue.

Such musings made him miserable, but then he realized that it must make his attendants feel forlorn to see him so downhearted like this. And so, during the days that followed, he diverted them with playful banter, and in moments of idle leisure he would make scrolls with poems. He also drew remarkable-looking sketches and paintings. . . . Before coming to Suma he had heard about the views of the sea and mountains here . . . he depicted those rocky shores—their incomparable beauty truly surpassed anything he had imagined—in charcoal sketches of unrivalled skill. (w275)

Certainly, the poems in the *Genji* can reflect the tropes of post-language thinking prized in Tendai Buddhist aesthetics, but they are also situated within an established narrative world that enables a reader to see the morality of nonduality in practice. Genji's experience of exile as a nadir in his personal and political trajectory functions in many ways in the novel, but from a spiritual point of view, it creates an isolated meditative environment for the character in which he can be shown to exhibit a new awareness for the pain and suffering of others. And the author makes sure to show that he does not wallow in his grief but, as in the passage above, understands that he must ease the suffering of his loyal men. He subsequently distracts them with banter and marvelous paintings and drawings that capture the awesome physical landscape around them. Genji thus acts dutifully, engaging in moral behavior (easing the pain of his men) derived from a projection of thought that is itself a simulation of nondualistic thinking. Genji's morality is not derived from a higher power, but from an autonomous self that uses the power of the mind to determine proper action. In this particular example Genji's morality accords with the Middle Way of emptiness. Moreover, Genji comforts his men by aesthetic means: recognizing the sublimity of the landscape around him, he captures its beauty in

images to uplift them. In so doing he becomes an artist whose creations are motivated by human feeling, showing the moral dimension of beauty. The paintings, because of their inherent affective power, will help Genji to emerge victorious in the overall trajectory of the novel; these are the very paintings created in Suma and Akashi that in the famous “picture contest” of Chapter 17 “Eawase” help his team win Emperor Reizei’s favor, and later they symbolically affirm the ascendancy of Genji’s daughter as empress. This daughter, whose mother is the woman Genji meets in Akashi, will in time make Genji the grandfather of an emperor, and it is her rise and that of her family that stands as the most important subplot of the tale. The author thus links her protagonist’s moral actions to a plot structured with the force of Buddhist causality.

This essay has attempted to explore how figures in history who engendered the notion of a Buddhist philosophical foundation for *The Tale of Genji* might have actually applied a “theory of *shikan*” to reading the tale. Two different types of Murasaki Shikibu portrait icons produced in the milieu of Tendai *Genji* commentaries were used as models for reading and interpretation. With explicit references to Buddhist philosophy in their inscriptions in one type, and a key passage from the “Suma” chapter of the narrative in the other, the paintings provide an impetus for thinking about how essential ideas about nonduality, and by extension the morality of empathy, were applied to the *Genji*. The commentaries and paintings, although dating from the medieval to the early modern period, represent a strain of thought and a Buddhist relationship to language that was familiar to the *Genji* author herself. The commentaries were never solely Buddhist in focus, and even the patrons of the Murasaki Shikibu portrait icons were not single-minded in their approach to the tale. When Genji empathizes with his men in Suma and gazes out at the moon over the water, he does not achieve Buddhist insight, but goes on to struggle with his own self-professed sexual proclivities and lapses in

judgement and morality. *The Tale of Genji* contains no perfectly virtuous Buddhist exemplars, and even the question of whether Genji successfully manages to renounce the world in the Buddhist manner after he apparently determines to do so remains ambiguous at the end of the chapter in which he makes his last appearance. In fact, the author of *Genji* often makes a point of matching seemingly serious Buddhist references with subsequent passages that appear to undercut any possibility of a didactic message. The *shikan* or Buddhist theory of the tale, however, accommodates these contradictions, even embraces them. And while the theory was constructed upon the idea of the perfect Buddha mind ground of Murasaki Shikibu, in actuality it hinges upon the response of the reader, who is given the power to envision her text as more than words.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank Ryūichi Abe, Ethan Bushelle, Edward Kamens, James McMullen, and Riley Soles for their invaluable comments on drafts of this manuscript.

WORKS CITED

- Abe, Akio. “Murasaki Shikibu no bukkyō shisō.” In *Genji monogatari kenkyū josetsu*, vol. 1. Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1959.
- Buruma, Ian. “The Sensualist.” *New Yorker* 91, no. 20 (2015): 64.
- Bushelle, Ethan. “The Joy of the Dharma: Esoteric Buddhism and the Early Medieval Transformation of Japanese Literature.” Dissertation, Harvard University, 2015.
- Cook, Lewis D. “Genre Trouble: Medieval Commentaries and Canonization of *The Tale of Genji*.” In *Reading “The Tale of Genji”: Sources from the First Millennium*, edited by Thomas J. Harper and Haruo Shirane. New York: Columbia University Press, 2015.
- Cranston, Edwin A. *A Waka Anthology*, vol. 2: *Grasses of Remembrance*, Part B. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006.

- Donner, Neil, and Daniel B. Stevenson. "Introduction." In Zhiyi, *Clear Serenity, Quiet Insight: T'ien-t'ai Chih-i Mo-ho chih-kuan*, vol. 1. Translated with commentary by Paul L. Swanson. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2018.
- Han Jonmi [Han Chong-mi]. *Genji monogatari ni okeru kami shinkō*. Tokyo: Musashino Shoin, 2015.
- Ii Haruki. *Genji monogatari chūshakushi no kenkyū: Muromachi Zenki*. Tokyo: Ōfūsha, 1980.
- Ikeda Kikan, ed. *Genji monogatari taisei*. 8 vols. Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1956.
- Imagawa Norimasa. *Genji monogatari teiyō*. Edited by Inaga Keiji. Vol. 2 of *Genji monogatari kochū shūsei*. Tokyo: Ōfūsha, 1978.
- Kamens, Edward. *The Three Jewels: A Study and Translation of Minamoto Tamenori's "Sanbōe"*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, Center for Japanese Studies, 1988.
- Katagiri Yayoi. "Tendai shimon no san o motsu Murasaki Shikibu zu: den Kano Takanobu hitsu-bon o chūshin ni." In *Ishiyamadera to Murasaki Shikibu: Genji monogatari no sekai*, edited by Reizei Katsuhiko, Iwama Kaori, and Katagiri Yayoi. Ōtsu-shi: Daihonzan Ishiyamadera, 1991.
- Kern, J. Christopher. "Changing Perspectives on a Classic: Pre-Modern Commentaries on the First Chapter of the *Tale of Genji*." PhD diss., Ohio State University, 2014.
- Klein, Susan Blakeley. *Allegories of Desire: Esoteric Literary Commentaries of Medieval Japan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003.
- Kujō Tanemichi. *Genji monogatari kyōenki*, no. 319. *Monogatariibu of Gunsho ruijū*, vol. 17. Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1993.
- Kujō Tanemichi. *Mōshinshō*. Edited by Nomura Seiichi. *Genji monogatari kochū shūsei*, vols. 4–6. Tokyo: Ōfūsha, 1980–81.
- Lukács, Georg. *The Theory of the Novel: A Historico-Philosophical Essay on the Forms of Great Epic Literature*. Translated by Anna Bostock. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1971.
- Maeda Masayuki. "Paradaimu to shite no bukkyō: Genji monogatari to tendai kyōgaku." In *Sawarabi, Genji monogatari no kanshō to kiso chishiki*, vol. 39, edited by Suzuki Kazuo, Kansaku Kōichi, et al. Tokyo: Shibundō, 1998–2005.
- Matsunaga Teitoku. *Taionki*. Edited by Kodaka Toshio. *Nihon koten bungaku taikai*, vol. 95. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1964.
- McCormick, Melissa. "'Murasaki Shikibu Ishiyamadera mōde-zu' ni okeru shomon-dai: Wa to kan no sakai ni aru Murasaki Shikibu zō." *Kokka* 1434 (April 2015).
- McCormick, Melissa. "Purple Displaces Crimson: The *Wakan* Dialectic as Polemic." In *Around Chigusa: Tea and the Arts of Sixteenth-Century Japan*, ed. Dora Ching, Louise Cort, and Andrew Watsky. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017.
- McCormick, Melissa. "Ishiyamadera and the Buddhist Veneration of Murasaki Shikibu." In John C. Carpenter and Melissa McCormick, eds. *The Tale of Genji: A Japanese Classic Illuminated*. Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2019.
- McMullen, James. *Idealism, Protest, and the Tale of Genji: The Confucianism of Kumazawa Banzan (1619–91)*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999.
- Minamoto Tamenori. *Sanbōe; Chūkōsen*. Edited by Mabuchi Kazuo, Koizumi Hiroshi, and Konno Tōru. *Shin nihon koten bungaku taikai*, vol. 31. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1997.
- Misumi Yōichi. *Genji monogatari to tendai jōdokyō*. Tokyo: Wakakusa Shobō, 1996.
- Mortimer, Raymond. "A New Planet." *The Nation and the Athenaeum* 37, no. 12 (1925).
- Motoori, Norinaga. "*The Tale of Genji*": *A Little Jeweled Comb*. Translated by Thomas Harper. In *Reading "The Tale of Genji": Sources from the First Millennium*, edited by Thomas Harper and Haruo Shirane. New York: Columbia University Press, 2015.
- Murasaki Shikibu. *Genji monogatari*. Edited by Abe Akio, et al. *Shinpen nihon koten bungaku zenshū*, vols. 20–25. Tōkyō: Shōgakkan, 1994–98.
- Murasaki Shikibu. *Murasaki Shikibu, Her Diary and Poetic Memoirs: A Translation and Study*. Translated by Richard Bowring. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982.
- Nussbaum, Martha. *Love's Knowledge: Essays on Philosophy and Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Okada, H. Richard. *Figures of Resistance: Language, Poetry, and Narrating in "The Tale of Genji" and Other Mid-Heian Texts*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991.
- Owen, Stephen. *Traditional Chinese Poetry and Poetics: Omen of the World*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985.
- Ramirez-Christensen, Esperanza. *Emptiness and Temporality: Buddhism and Medieval Japanese Poetics*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008.
- Rhodes, Robert F. *Genshin's Ōjōyōshū and the Construction of Pure Land Discourse in Heian Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2017.
- Shirane, Haruo. *The Bridge of Dreams: A Poetics of the "Tale of Genji"*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1987.
- Soles, Riley. "The Ecstasy of the Text." Dissertation, Yale University, 2018.
- Stone, Jacqueline Ilyse. *Original Enlightenment and the Transformation of Medieval Japanese Buddhism*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999.
- Tasaka Kenji. *Genji monogatari kyōjūshi ronkō*. Tokyo: Kazama Shobō, 2009.
- Yoda, Tomiko. "Fractured Dialogues: Mono No Aware and Poetic Communication in *The Tale of Genji*." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 59, no. 2 (1999).
- Vincent, J. Keith. "Sex on the Mind: Queer Theory Meets Cognitive Theory." In *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Literary Studies*, edited by Lisa Zunshine. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Zhiyi. *Clear Serenity, Quiet Insight: T'ien-t'ai Chih-i's Mo-ho chih-kuan*. 3 vols. Translated with commentary by Paul L. Swanson. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2018.

OXFORD STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY AND LITERATURE

Richard Eldridge, Philosophy, Swarthmore College

EDITORIAL BOARD

Anthony J. Cascardi, Comparative Literature, Romance, Languages, and Rhetoric,
University of California, Berkeley

David Damrosch, Comparative Literature, Harvard University

Maira Gatens, Philosophy, University of Sydney

Garry Hagberg, Philosophy, Bard College

Philip Kitcher, Philosophy, Columbia University

Joshua Landy, French and Comparative Literature, Stanford University

Toril Moi, Literature, Romance Studies, Philosophy, and Theater Studies, Duke University

Martha C. Nussbaum, Philosophy and Law School, University of Chicago

Bernard Rhie, English, Williams College

David Wellbery, Germanic Studies, Comparative Literature, and Committee on Social
Thought, University of Chicago

Paul Woodruff, Philosophy and Classics, University of Texas at Austin

PUBLISHED IN THE SERIES:

Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*: Philosophical Perspectives

Edited by Kristin Gjesdal

Shakespeare's *Hamlet*: Philosophical Perspectives

Edited by Tzachi Zamir

Kafka's *The Trial*: Philosophical Perspectives

Edited by Espen Hammer

Austen's *Emma*: Philosophical Perspectives

Edited by E.M. Dadlez

The Oedipus Plays of Sophocles: Philosophical Perspectives

Edited by Paul Woodruff

Murasaki Shikibu's *The Tale of Genji*: Philosophical Perspectives

Edited by James McMullen

**MURASAKI SHIKIBU'S
THE TALE OF GENJI**

Philosophical Perspectives

Edited by James McMullen

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford. It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship, and education by publishing worldwide. Oxford is a registered trade mark of Oxford University Press in the UK and certain other countries.

Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America.

© Oxford University Press 2019

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior permission in writing of Oxford University Press, or as expressly permitted by law, by license, or under terms agreed with the appropriate reproduction rights organization. Inquiries concerning reproduction outside the scope of the above should be sent to the Rights Department, Oxford University Press, at the address above.

You must not circulate this work in any other form
and you must impose this same condition on any acquirer.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: McMullen, James, 1939– editor.

Title: Murasaki Shikibu's *The tale of Genji* : philosophical perspectives /
edited by James McMullen.

Description: New York : Oxford University Press, 2019. |

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2018038471 (print) | LCCN 2018048448 (ebook) |
ISBN 9780190655013 (online content) | ISBN 9780190654993 (updf) |
ISBN 9780190655006 (epub) | ISBN 9780190654986 (pbk. : alk. paper) |
ISBN 9780190654979 (cloth : alk. paper)

Subjects: LCSH: Murasaki Shikibu, 978?– Genji monogatari. | Philosophy in literature.

Classification: LCC PL788.4.G43 (ebook) | LCC PL788.4.G43 M68 2019 (print) |
DDC 895.63/14—dc23

1 3 5 7 9 8 6 4 2

Paperback printed by Sheridan Books, Inc., United States of America
Hardback printed by Bridgeport National Bindery, Inc., United States of America