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One of the aspects of Galliano's *Yōgaku* that I think is most significant is the balance it gives to international scholarship on Japanese composers. For a variety of reasons, Takemitsu Tōru has dominated attention to an extent that seriously skews receptivity to the music of other composers worldwide. It is my hope that Galliano's superb study will help to bring serious attention to the wealth of creativity in contemporary Japanese music.

Allegories of Desire: Esoteric Literary Commentaries of Medieval Japan.

By Susan Blakeley Klein. Harvard University Asia Center, Cambridge, Mass., 2002. xvi, 351 pages. \$42.50.

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"Japanese poetry and the Way of the Buddha are one whole not two." This book will be of great interest to anyone wishing to know more about the beliefs, practices, texts, and other productions founded upon or justified by this potent notion. One of the cardinal tenets that shaped or explained many literary and cultural phenomena in *chūsei* Japan, it is here expressed in the oracular utterance of the Sumiyoshi deity, who appeared in a dream to the poet Shunzei while he was on a retreat at the Sumiyoshi shrine, according to a story quoted by Susan Klein from *Shōtetsu monogatari* (p. 195). In particular, *Allegories of Desire* focuses on a group of texts attributed to the Kamakura-era poet Fujiwara no Tameaki ("ca. 1230s-after 1295," p. 1) which featured a variety of allegorical (and thus, for the time, rather unorthodox) interpretations of two key Heian-era literary classics, *Kokin wakashū* and *Ise monogatari*. These texts apparently served as the basis for a tradition of esoteric ordination and transmission of closely held interpretations in cross-generational lineages modeled on the practices of ordination (*kanjō*) and secret transmission of the Shingon school of Buddhism.

Klein calls the production of these texts and the invention of these practices "one of the more intriguing developments within medieval Japanese poetic culture" (p. 1), but notes that it has been overlooked in the "standard narrative history of Japanese literature," perhaps because of the tendency to "emphasize those texts that are easiest to assimilate into the discourses . . . contemporaneous to the critic" (p. 6). Many of the allegorical readings proposed in Tameaki's commentaries do indeed seem far-fetched and "'irrational' or 'gnostic'" (ibid.), at least from contemporaneous points of view, and might for that reason be easily dismissed. These modes of interpretation also seem to have been quite limited in their influence upon others, and the

range of their reception was of course confined to the members of the properly initiated circle and perhaps a bit beyond; but certain readings and identifications did find their way, for example, into the texts and subtexts of plays of the *nō* theater.

As Klein argues, however, “it is simply untenable to assume that readers from the Heian period to the present have always drawn the exclusionary line that binds the text as an object of interpretation in exactly the same way” (p. 300). She has therefore grappled with the “historical specificity” of these texts in an extremely thorough and cogent study, which also eschews the assumption that “the only way to unbind that text is by means of the very latest critical theory or that we have nothing to learn from the very different ways that medieval Japanese readers themselves approached those same texts” (pp. 300–301). This is good justification for a historically conscientious approach to virtually any text; in this book, Klein uses it to guide her exhaustive study of Tameaki’s commentaries and their milieu, and thus makes a good case for adopting a similar approach to other hermeneutic tasks and issues in literary history. Because of the relatively limited impact of the commentaries she discusses, some readers may find it difficult to share her degree of intense, probing interest in them, but in many ways her study provides a good model of scholarship that steers a careful path between the extremes of excessively literal historicism, on the one hand, and the “temptation [to] turn Heian and Kamakura literature into a kind of avant-garde *écriture* . . . without grounding . . . in the historical specificity of classical and medieval strategies of reading and writing” (p. 301) on the other.

Klein’s title, *Allegories of Desire*, refers to the tendency of some of Tameaki’s commentaries, and other related exegeses of *Kokin wakashū* and *Ise monogatari* in this esoteric tradition, to interpret all things within the texts under scrutiny as coded messages justifying various ritual sexual practices and to reading their subject matter and many of their details as erotic. This is accomplished through a process of interpretation that depends heavily on allegorical readings, more properly identified in many cases as “allegoresis”—the teasing out of overdetermined allegorical meanings and messages from texts that clearly were not written with the intention of eliciting such allegorical interpretations in the first place. Readers of this book will learn far more about how allegory and allegoresis work as reading practices in general and in the specific case of these esoteric commentaries than they will about “desire” or the erotic interests of Tameaki and his circle. However, Klein does as much as she can to show the relationship between Tameaki’s approach and interests and the contemporaneous ideas and practices of the heterodox Tachikawa movement within Shingon Buddhism, which was strongly associated with secretive and rather extreme sexual practices, or at least a lot of talk about them. The book’s title recalls perhaps a few too many others in relatively recent Japanese studies: Ken Kenneth

Ito's *Visions of Desire: Tanizaki's Fictional Worlds* (1991); Noriko Mizuta Lippit and Eiichi Sekine, eds., *The Desire for Monogatari* (1994); and Etsuko Terasaki's *Figures of Desire: Wordplay, Spirit Possession, Fantasy, Madness and Mourning in Japanese Noh Plays* (2002), not to mention a host of others in which this hot-button word appears on the subtitle side of the colon. But, if anything, the word here is most apropos in reference to the allegorically inclined reader/commentator's "desire" for a text to mean a host of things other than what it may appear to mean on the surface or radically different from what others have assumed or claimed that it means.

What does it mean to interpret *Kokin wakashū* poems or passages from *Ise monogatari* as allegories, whether of "desire" or of other topics or concerns? It means, for example, to insist, as several of these commentaries do, that a phrase such as "omou koto iwade" ("I shall not say what I think," which occurs in a poem in *Ise monogatari dan* 124) does not bespeak a disinclination to express one's feelings of romantic longing, as might conventionally be supposed, but means, rather, "remain silent and do not reveal the deep secrets of Shingon." In other words, this "esoteric" interpretation uncovers the poem's "hidden religious subtext" (p. 243). "Etymological allegoresis" likewise produces an interpretation of the word *I-se* in the title *Ise monogatari* as male-female, Yin-Yang, Izanami and Izanagi, etc., in several of these commentaries. In one quite extreme example of highly creative "etymological analysis," the various elements of the graphs used to write the place name "Ise" are deconstructed to produce an acrostic reading showing that "Narihira was actually Kakinomoto no Hitomaro reborn" (that is, parts of these two graphs are rearranged so as to be read "Hitomaro umarete masa ni tsutome ari," which leads to the commentator's revelation of their true meaning: "Hitomaro was born as Narihira and propagated the Way of Poetry, leading living beings to the profound secret of Yin and Yang" [p. 36]). In another case, every word and syllable of the very well-known "Akashi no ura" poem, "Honobono to" (*Kokin wakashū* 409, traditionally attributed to Hitomaro), is shown to have multiple religious meanings related to the notion of "spiritual embryology"—that is, the poem's subtext is an implied narrative of the birth of a being predestined for the full attainment of Buddhahood (p. 255). Other esoteric commentaries are more interested in uncovering "hidden historical truth" than in unearthing religious subtexts. The Reizei-ke *Ise monogatari shō*, one of the later commentaries discussed by Klein, is one of these, given to rereading phrases such as "Azuma ni ikikeru ni, Owari no awai no umizura o yuku ni . . ." (in *Ise monogatari dan* 7) as truly intended to inform the reader not that the *Ise monogatari* protagonist was "traveling along the border of Owari province" but that this was the locale of the "final meeting" (*owari no awai*) between Narihira (whom every one of these commentaries identifies as the protagonist) and his paramour, the Nijō Consort (pp. 271–72).

If these examples seem arcane, Klein's own explanations of how these readings come about, what cultural assumptions and inclinations they reflect, what place they take in Tameaki's and other commentators' discourses, and their various implications are generally very clear and will reward the attentive reader. She shows, among other things, that the "polysemic play" (p. 16) that is so widespread in Japanese poetry becomes the exegetic *métier* of the esoteric commentators as well: they carry punning to new extremes, devising new polysemic schemes and schemes-within-schemes, all in order to establish alternative, unorthodox but highly compelling readings that serve their particular ideological agendas and form the basis of what they could then harbor and preserve as a secret and closely guarded but supreme new orthodoxy. Underlying Tameaki's approach to texts is a particular form of the assumption—with which contemporary readers can certainly sympathize—that texts, even those that have attained the status of canonical classics, are wide open to interpretation and reinterpretation. But these esoteric, allegorical commentaries ultimately insist, as do many others that proceed according to different agendas, that there is in fact only one true meaning contained within the target texts, that it has awaited or defied revelation heretofore, but that now, in the right circumstances, these true meanings will be revealed, if only to a select, well-prepared few, who must also be enjoined to keep these revelations "secret" within the circle of the initiated. Klein opens this once-hidden world of interpretation up to the reader and does a fine job of putting what might seem to be extreme, off-the-wall, and eccentric readings of the classics into contexts that render them historically comprehensible. She thus succeeds in her goal of coming to terms with these particular manifestations of what she calls "the alterity of the medieval Japanese" (p. 300).

This book would be even more commendable if it were not marred by a few minor but somewhat glaring errors. Some of these are probably simple typographical oversights: for example, the well-known opening sentence of *dan 1* of *Ise monogatari* is mistranscribed with *shiru yoshite* in place of *shiru yoshi shite* (p. 260). But Klein makes a few other kinds of mistakes. *Sangō shiiki* is the correct (if, to the uninitiated, unexpected) reading of the title of Kūkai's famous treatise, not *Sangyo shiki* (p. 206). The two poems quoted (on p. 197) from Teika's account of Retired Emperor Gotoba's 1201 pilgrimage to Kumano are attributed in reverse: the first, "aioi no . . ." is actually by Teika, not Gotoba, and the second, "kakute nao . . ." is by Gotoba, not Teika. (This is logical, since Gotoba would not refer to his own reign with the phrase "kimi ga yo," misread here by Klein as "kimi ga dai"; for confirmation, see the text of *Gotoba-in Kumano gokō-ki* in *Dai Nihon shiryō*, Vol. 4, Part 7, pp. 152–53.) And the puzzling title of an admittedly obscure text that Klein cites as *Sengen menju* (p. 210) may be less so if correctly read as *Sangen menju*, which can be found listed in *Bussho*

kaisetsu daijiten (Vol. 4, p. 151), *Kokusho sōmokuoku* (1989 edition, Vol. 3, p. 772), and elsewhere as a work containing the teachings of the Shingon monk Shōken (1138–96) as transcribed by his disciple Jōken (1162–1231).

This reviewer was mildly distracted by glitches such as these, but they do not detract in any truly significant way from what is otherwise an impressive and convincing book demonstrating the results of Klein's many years of painstaking research in an almost overwhelming number of dauntingly difficult texts. While some of the results of that research have previously appeared in articles, this book represents the full fruition of her determined and tireless effort to give these "intriguing" esoteric commentaries, and their authors, their due. *Allegories of Desire* will take its rightful place alongside a small number of choice studies of comparable scholarly depth and ambition that have documented, in English, the endlessly fascinating story of what happened in *chūsei* Japan when the way of poetry and the way of Buddhism were perceived and pursued as one.

The Japanese Copula: Forms and Functions. By Tomiko Narahara. Palgrave Macmillan, Houndmills, 2002. x, 219 pages. \$55.00.

Reviewed by

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While "copula" is not a term that figures prominently in English grammar, it is commonly mentioned in Japanese linguistics, and students of the Japanese language encounter forms of the Japanese copula at a very early stage in their study. Although there can be differences of opinion as to the contours of what is included under the heading "copula" in Japanese, the term would generally embrace the forms *da* and *desu*, which occur in sentence-final position following a noun phrase in sentences such as *Naomi wa amerikajin da* "Naomi is an American," and *Ken wa kyoo yasumi desu* "Ken is off today," or following an "adjectival nominal," as in *Mizu ga kirei da* "Water is beautiful."

Narahara analyzes the copula from a number of perspectives, from traditional Japanese grammatical studies that employ descriptive terms such as *dantei-shi* ("judgement category, assertion category"), *shitei-shi* ("specifying category"), and *hantei-shi* (no specific translation given by the author) to the European philosophical analysis of the verb "to be" from Aristotle to Aquinas.

After these preliminaries (part one of the book), the author embarks on a morphological analysis of the copular forms at issue (part two), together