

The IAFOR Academic Review

Volume 1 | Issue 2

In this edition

Kuki Shūzō's Temporal Aesthetics:
Finding Japanese Identity in Art and
Literature

The Influence and Remaining
Japanese Cultural Elements in Raku
Artworks of Contemporary Non-
Japanese Artists/Potters

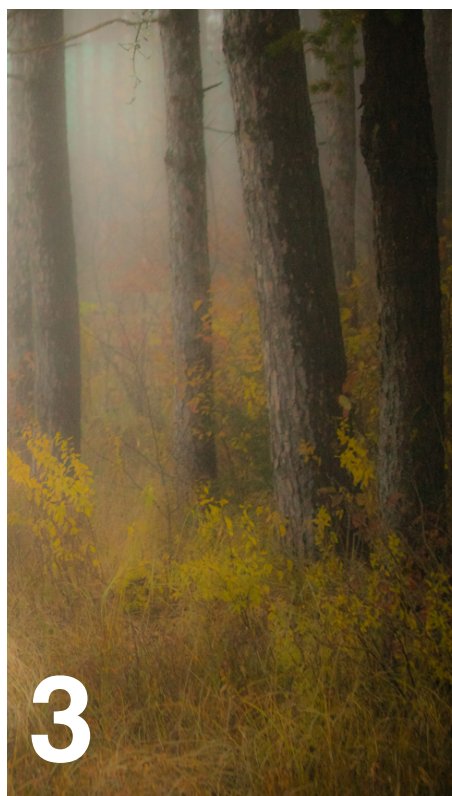
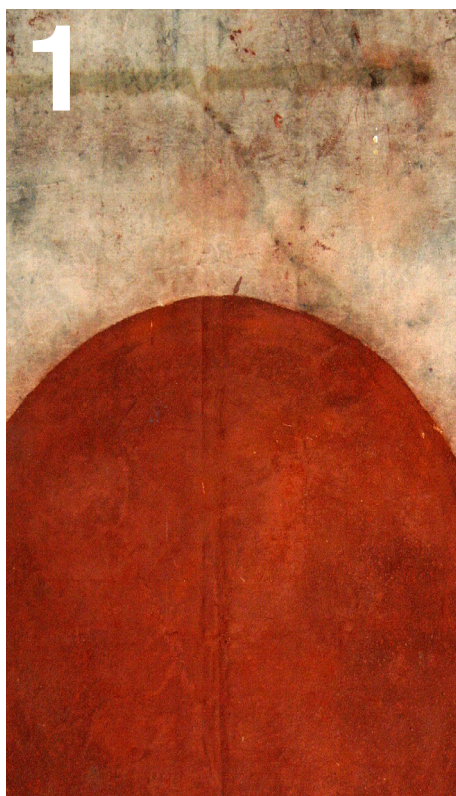
Ikebana to Contemporary Art:
Rosalie Gascoigne

Imagined Innocence Lost: The
Performance of Post-Indigeneity in
Eikoh Hosoe and Tatsumi Hijikata's
Kamaitachi

Common Songs: A Study of the
Saibara Collection and Inquiry into
"Fuzoku" Arts in the Heian Court

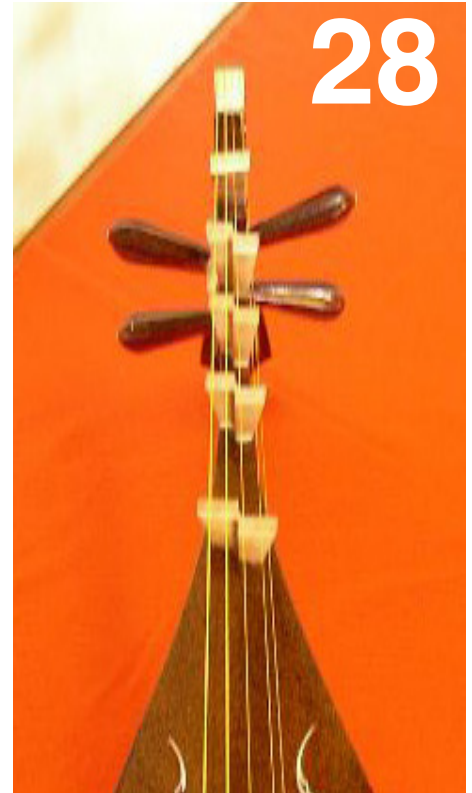
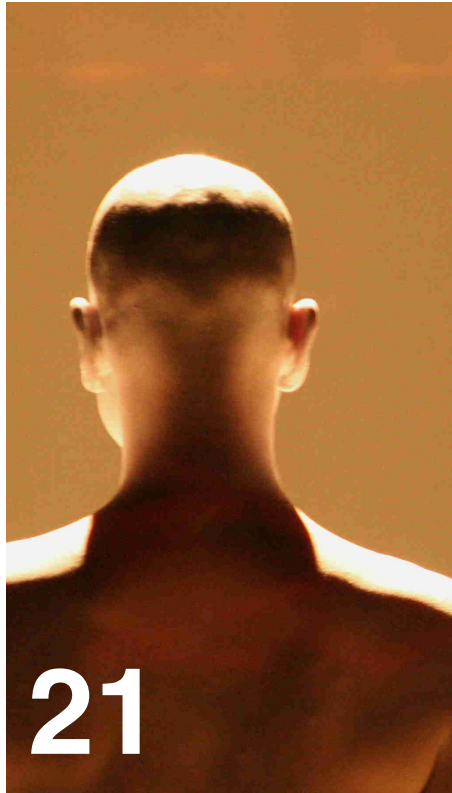
Essays in Japanese Arts
& Culture

ISSN: 2188-9570



CONTENTS

1-2 Editorial Committee Introduction An introduction to the latest edition of The IAFOR Academic Review by Michael Liam Kedzlie	8-15 The Influence and Remaining Japanese Cultural Elements in Raku Artworks of Contemporary Non-Japanese Artists/Potters Khairul Nizan Mohd Aris, Vaughan Rees and Jacqueline Clayton The University of New South Wales, Australia	Art: Rosalie Gascoigne Shoso Shimbo Monash University, Australia
3-7 Kuki Shūzō's Temporal Aesthetics: Finding Japanese Identity in Art and Literature Diogo Cesar Porto da Silva Kyushu University, Japan	16-20 Ikebana to Contemporary	21-27 Imagined Innocence Lost: The Performance of Post-Indigeneity in Eikoh Hosoe and Tatsumi Hijikata's Kamaitachi Michael Sakamoto Goddard College, USA
	28-33 Common Songs: A Study	



**of the Saibara Collection
and Inquiry into “Fuzoku”
Arts in the Heian Court**

James Scalon – Canegata,
University of Hawaii at Manoa,
USA

34-37

Table of References

Cover Image

“*Sans Titre*” (Untitled)
by Vivien Isnard (1987)
Pigment on canvas.
Collection of the MAMAC in
Nice, France.
Image sourced Flickr
Creative Commons
[https://www.flickr.com/
photos/9619972@N08/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/9619972@N08/)

The IAFOR Academic Review

Volume 1 | Issue 2

Editorial Committee

Rev. Professor Stuart Picken – Chairman of the IAB
Dr. Joseph Haldane – IAFOR Executive Director
Mr. Michael Liam Kedzlie – IAFOR Research and
Policy Manager

IAFOR Asian Studies Conference Chairs and Advisory Board

Professor Baden Offord – Director and Professor,
Centre for Human Rights Education, Curtin
University, Australia
Professor Donald E. Hall – Herbert J. and Ann L.
Siegel Dean, Lehigh University, USA
Dr. Thomas French - Ritsumeikan University, Japan

IAFOR Publications © Copyright 2015
ISSN: 2188-9570



Editorial Committee Introduction

The International Academic Forum's (IAFOR) key mission is to provide avenues for academics and researchers to be international, intercultural and interdisciplinary. One of the ways in which we do this is through our in-house Eye magazine, our video and audio interview presentations, the various conference proceedings, the IAFOR Journal series, and now starting in 2015 are our special editions of the IAFOR Academic Review. In this edition of the IAFOR Academic Review the editorial committee brings together a selection of the most interesting contributions from our recent conferences with respect to the Japanese Arts and Culture. The papers selected for this special edition certainly reflect the international, intercultural and interdisciplinary approach that lies at the heart of both IAFOR and Cultural Studies. They reveal the intense passion of both the researchers for their subject but also reveal the artistic soul of Japan as a complex, enigmatic and evolving visual narrative, the site of artistic endeavor, journey and discovery. This Japanese Arts edition provides a taste of the diverse range of topics covered by our conferences and subsequent research papers that have a Japanese context with the Arts, Culture, and Humanities over the last two years. We hope you will enjoy reading and thinking about these selected contributions.

Contributors:

1. Kuki Shūzō's Temporal Aesthetics: Finding Japanese Identity in Art and Literature

Diogo Cesar Porto da Silva, from Kyushu University, Japan deals with Kuki's *Propor sur le temps* and *Metaphysics of Literature* in his paper *Kuki Shūzō's Temporal Aesthetics: Finding Japanese Identity in Art and Literature*. Porto da Silva defines then analyses the notion of Aesthetics in Kuki's text by focusing mainly on the oriental time that he characterizes as transmigration as well as how such a temporality is expressed within Japanese art. Porto da Silva; considers that with Kuki's *Metaphysics of Literature* the constant concern is to support a conception of literature as a pure intuition of the present.

2. The Influence and Remaining Japanese Cultural Elements in Raku Artworks of Contemporary Non-Japanese Artists/Potters

Khairul Nizan Mohd Aris, Vaughan Rees and Jacqueline Clayton, of The University of New South Wales, Australia examine the extent to which Japanese cultural elements –specifically the 'spirit' or philosophy of traditional Japanese Raku– are retained and evidenced in contemporary artworks by non-Japanese artists/potters in Australia. Their research is posited within Aris's own art practice as a ceramic artist/potter who was exposed to the Western/American style of Raku earlier in his career, but then later experienced the making of Raku in its traditional form in Japan. Their research identifies and analyses the extent to which the spirit and philosophy of original Raku artforms as a trace of cultural interaction, either direct or indirectly influence artists/potters in their art practice, finished artworks.

3. Ikebana to Contemporary Art: Rosalie Gascoigne Shoso Shimbo, Monash University, Australia

Rosalie Gascoigne is regarded as one of a few artists for whom Japanese art was "the gateway" to her own art as opposed to many other Australian artists in the 1960s whom were merely influenced. Her career as an artist and the role of Japanese Art in her artistic development is the central focus of Shoso Shimbo's paper *Repositioning Ikebana in Contemporary Art*. Shimbo reveals how Gascoigne who studied Ikebana in the 1960s became frustrated with its limitations, and started making assemblages. Shimbo proposes that the order of composition within her assemblages was inherited from Ikebana traditions and was a bridging between classical Ikebana and contemporary art and that Gascoigne's work is a case study of cultural transformation across borders.

4. "Imagined Innocence Lost: The Performance of Post-Indigeneity in Eikoh Hosoe and Tatsumi Hijikata's *Kamaitachi*" by Michael Sakamoto, Goddard College, USA

Created a half century ago by Hijikata Tatsumi, Butoh was born as a postwar dance form, artistic

movement, and cultural opposition to the mainstream social order. While numerous iterations have developed since then, most Butoh-based forms generally focus on disengaging from oppressive or “over-socialized” behavioral patterns through deconstructing movement, speech, thought, and action. In this essay, **Michael Sakamoto** of Goddard College, USA, asserts that Butoh photo-imagery has contributed to the comprehension, definition, and perceived legitimacy of Butoh-based practices in Japan, and the prime example of this phenomenon was the photo essay, *Kamaitachi*. Sakamoto theorizes that *Kamaitachi* represented a fundamental shift in Hijikata’s artistic identity from anti-Western to post-indigenous and also came to symbolize the very essence of Butoh performance for later generations of both Japanese and transnational practitioners.

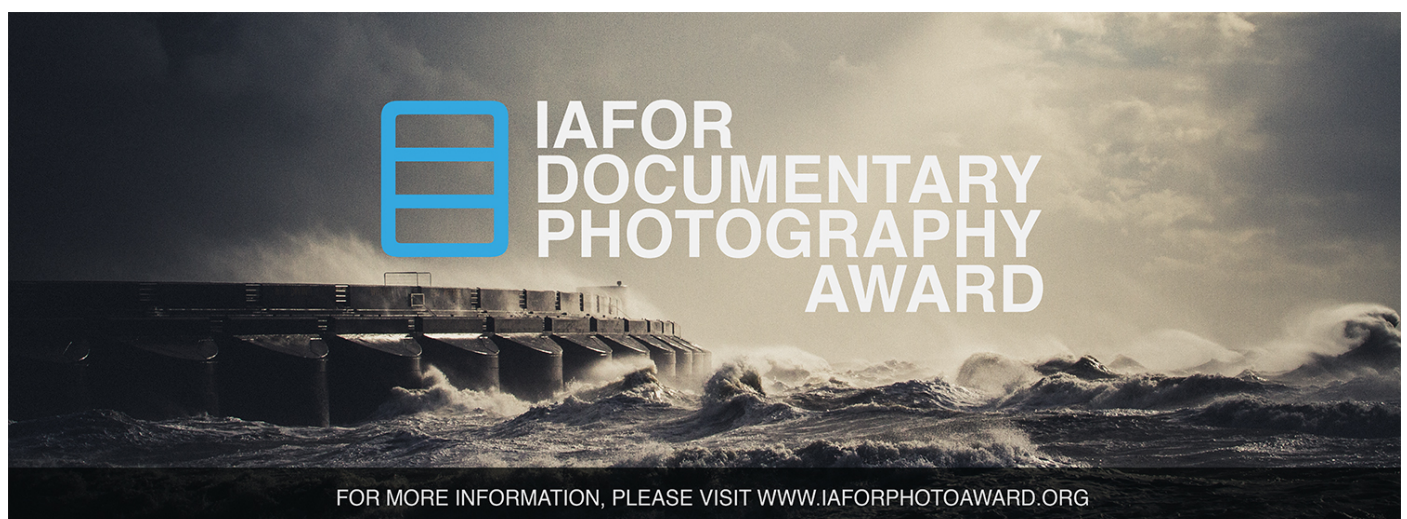
5. Common Songs: A Study of the Saibara Collection and Inquiry into "Fuzoku" Arts in the Heian Court

James Scalon-Canegata, University of Hawaii at Manoa, USA

James Scalon-Canegata, of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, USA looks at the significance of Saibara as a fuzoku collection, which reveals the conceptualization of ‘folk’ or ‘commoner’ within the

Heian court. Specifically, it deals with the treatment of Saibara in Ichijō Kanera’s *Ryōjin guanshō* and the Fujiwara and Minamoto manuscript traditions reveal a distinctly different “handling” of the collection than that of the major literary works of the period. The songs of Saibara grant a unique glimpse into cultural practices of the world beyond the court, and give further insight into the ubiquity of these practices. Many of the songs push the boundaries of (assumed) cultural taboos, but their adoption and apparent pervasiveness in the court suggests a strong affinity for these aesthetically divergent songs. Despite its apparent merit, Saibara as well as archaic *min’yō* have received only moderate attention from Japanese scholars and have been all but completely absent in Western literary scholarship. The adoption and presentation of these songs in the literature reflect the seemingly diametric position of *fuzoku* as both an exotic and arcane practice and as a primordial native art—vis-a-vis socio-cultural class distinctions of commoner and nobility. Scalon-Canegata’s paper ultimately seeks to establish Saibara at the intersection of court refinement and the raw, unpretentious essence of *min’yō* musical culture.

A full reference list for this paper can be found in the Table of References section.



Kuki Shūzō's Temporal Aesthetics: Finding Japanese Identity in Art and Literature

DIOGO CÉSAR PORTO DA SILVA
KYUSHU UNIVERSITY, JAPAN

A Time of Transmigration; An Art of the Infinite

Before talking about time, Kuki has to come all the way back to the origin of time, just then start to talk about the oriental time. His presupposition is that time is will, thus consciousness. The discussion that posits 'will' as the origin of time is quite recent inside Western Philosophy, since from Aristotle's definition of time as the measure of movement, Philosophy seeks for a transpersonal and objective concept of time, a time to which all nature is subjected too. For instance, when was said that the time/duration of one day is the Sun's trajectory in the sky.



Kuki Shuzo (Photo Public Domain)

I believe that the 'will' that Kuki talks about as the origin of time, is this individual subject that lives and encounter others in the present temporality of contingency. In this way, the oriental time is the time of transmigration. "Transmigration is the indefinite reborn, the everlasting repetition of the will, the endless return of time. Or, the most remarkable and impressive that we can conceive about transmigration is that the man become the same man in everlasting repetition." (Kaki, 1980) Such a notion of time, necessarily, raises the question of identity. We know that the well-know idea of Karma works by causality: good deeds lead to a good Karma that will make this same person to reborn as a human, evil deeds lead to a rebirth in the form of an animal or even an insect. How it is possible to sustain the same identity if someone reborn as an animal or insect? Kuki's answer is that if someone reborn as an insect, in her previous life she already lived an inner life of an insect. In this way, nothing is more consequent that this same person reborn as an insect that was already her inner life. The identity is sustained, since the continuity of the same identity is the general case, the contrary is just the exception.

This is the case because the maintenance of identity as the touchstone of the temporality of transmigration goes all the way beyond the individuals to the world. In other words, one will reborn as the same in a world that is the same, because this world is ruled by a periodic time.

We can conceive imagetically the temporality that Kuki describes as a standing spring of which the ends are connected. Each circle of this spring is identical to the other ones and since they are all connected, including the one in the bottom and the other on the top, we cannot tell apart neither the first one nor the last one in the succession. Here, Kuki distinguishes in a very compelling way to the discussion the occidental and the oriental notions of time. In the occident we have three kinds of temporality: past, present and future, they succeed horizontally progressing from the past through the present in direction to the future. According to Kuki this is the phenomenological temporality. Whereas, the oriental time of transmigration, here called mystic, is vertical meaning that each present, even in the past or future, has an infinite deepness. Once again using the

image of the spring, we can just imagine a vertical line passing through all the circles at the same point, these points are identical in every circle and designate the same present that repeats itself indefinitely. Bearing these characteristics in mind, we can trace the differences between the mystical and the phenomenological time. The last one is continuous, whereas the first one is discontinuous. Moreover, the phenomenological time is a pure heterogeneously, thus irreversible, while the mystic time is a pure homogeneity and reversible. "Assuming these essential differences, we can say: the horizontal plane represents the ontological-phenomenological ecstasy, the vertical plane the metaphysical-mystic ecstasy." (Kaki, 1980)

Both notions of time have direct consequences to the understanding of identity. Kuki claims that the will is the origin of time. A will that produces the occidental horizontal temporality resolves the temporal question of identity by means of continuity. There is no doubt that the person who desire, i.e., the willing person is the "I", in a similar way this "I" that produces time insofar he desires, he desires along time. Thus, we are led to conclude that if the will of this I changes through the time, the I also change, however we have the clear conscience that we are the same, our identity is hold together even in the ever-changing streams of time. In a heterogeneous temporality, the beginning (past) and the end (future) are clearly delimited, since time is irreversible, as far its continuity maintain a successive chain. By this, an identity is a question of the chain that initiates in past, works in present and ends in future.

On the other hand, in a metaphysical-mystic temporality the identity is sustained in another way. Given the periodicity of time, it is impossible to distinguish a before and an after, i.e., a past and a future, the instant is all that exist and, beyond that the instant is the same instant that repeats itself once more, eternally. Therefore, the will that produces time is condemned to desire always the same, it is an "instant that possess a deep and infinite thickness"¹. The world identity that constructs itself through endless repetition of the Great Year, get mixed up with the identity of the individual subjected to transmigration. "A continuity of the self exists here only in an imaginary way it is a continuity which reveals itself only in mystical moments, the profound moments of a 'profound enlightenment,' moments in which the self takes recognition of itself with an astonishing shudder. 'The self exists' at the same time that the 'self does not exist'." (Light, 1987; Kaki, 1980). That is the reason why together with the metaphysical-mystic we have the question of the liberation from time that Kuki identifies in two forms: the transcendental, intellectual liberation and the immanent voluntarist liberation.

The transcendental, intellectual is about a negation of the will by intellectual means, through knowledge. Kuki identifies such way of liberation in Buddhism, in which the nirvana is the abolition of any will and any desire. Recognizing the self, the source of will, as an illusion, this self is abolished with the will that is produced by it, time is also negated, since is the will that produces time.

The immanent voluntarist liberation is born from the *Bushidō* as an affirmation of the will, i.e., the negation of the negation. Even so this will is fated to always been disillusioned, always failing, the eternal repetition of the same is taken as a good. *Bushidō* pursues the ideal of the will, and even that this ideal is impossible to reach; the eternal and repeated attempt to reach it has an absolute value. "Pursue perfection while maintaining a clear consciousness as to its 'deception.'" Live in perpetual time, in *Endlosigkeit*, to use Hegel's terms. Find *Unendlichkeit* in *Endlosigkeit*, infinity in the indefinite, eternity in succession without end. " (Light, 1987; Kaki, 1980)



Japanese art also would have its ground on this temporal experience marked by the attempt of liberation from both time and space. The Japanese *Bushidō*, Kuki claims, received a double influence and was configured by Indian Buddhism as a religion, what Kuki calls mysticism, and the Chinese philosophy of Daoism which is defined as pantheism. Kuki doesn't go beyond in explaining the mysticism in Buddhism as the search for the ideal of

¹ See Dōgen's formulation of "existential instant".

Nirvana, in the same way, the pantheism inherent to Daoism is explained through the understanding of Dao as the essence and beginning of all things.

The *Bushidō* would harmonize with these two traditions, deepening them regarding art. As we've saw above, *Bushidō* seeks the affirmation of the will until its absolutization, hence in art instance, Kuki will interpret this as a search to express the infinity in the finite. In the same way that a purely Buddhist art would search for liberation from time, and a Daoist art would seek for an expression of the Dao, Japanese art's claim is to express the ideal of infinity in the individual and finite artworks.

We see here Kuki conceiving art as a form of expression of a spiritual reality. This is the point we should stress if our aim is to grasp Kuki's concept of aesthetics. Then, art is pervaded with meaning without which it is hard to understand it in a correct way², such meaning, however, is not inputted on the artwork by its creator like we should expect from a Romantic Aesthetics of the genius. Quite the opposite, it is given from culture. We can clearly notice a certain Hegelian influence for whom art is an already overcome expression of the Spirit. Spirit seems like to be understood by Kuki as culture or, if we wish a closest designation, as a world-view. It is not a coincidence that Kuki claims, following closely Okakura Tenshin, that it is the Japanese art that deepen the Oriental ideal of art. "Its [*Bushidō*'s] ideal consists only in living and dying as the 'cherry blossom, exhaling its perfume in the morning light.' It is from this triple source that the 'inward art' of Yamato is born. It is in this spiritual atmosphere that it attains its full flowering." (Light, 1987; Kuki, 1980).

If our interpretation is correct, inasmuch we grasp *Bushidō* as a world-view, it becomes the very essence of the culture in which it was born, in other words, *Bushidō* becomes the essence of Japanese culture. Kuki's philosophy, then incur in two problems: 1) the correctness of the concept of *Bushidō* we find in Kuki's thought; and 2) if it is possible to attribute to just one trait all the essence of the art of a specific culture.

Kuki Shuzo's Aesthetics

² Kuki stresses very strongly this point as we can notice in the following statement. "It is from this triple source that the "inward art" of Yamato is born. It is in this spiritual atmosphere that it attains its full flowering. Consequently, without knowing something of these conceptions of life and world it becomes almost impossible to understand Japanese art. Its meaning, the idealist expression of the infinite in the finite, will go unexplained. Therefore, there are in Europe very few people who truly understand Japanese art. Does not Japanese art for most Europeans consist in woodblock prints of women and landscapes, or in the tea ceremony with its multicolored porcelain. Yet for the most part these things are rather insignificant. The truly great works of art habitually remain unknown". (Kaki, 1980; Light, 1987)

As we saw above Kuki's aesthetics is based on the expression of a cultural essence through art. Japanese art expresses the temporality of transmigration that, through *Bushidō*, earns the character of the infinity expressed in a finite artwork. The reason being is the affirmation of the will, this one is a continuous effort toward the ideal which in turn would ever be archived. In a temporality, which its features are reversibility and verticality it is impossible to put apart past from future, leaving just a present in an everlasting repetition, which means that this present has an infinite deep. It is in the creation technique we observe in Japanese art where Kuki finds the expression of this infinite present.

In painting, Kuki will first of all analyze the perspective. While in Occidental art we find a geometric perspective, in Oriental art we encounter a perspective that destroys a spatial perspective, replacing it with a spiritual perspective in which it's measures are left for the one before the painting to decide. This perspective is called Metaphysical. The second aspect is an arbitrary composition. The represented in the paint is left incomplete and, hence, according to Kuki, alive, a kind of "form for the form's sake." Such a kind of arbitrary composition, again leave to the spirit of the gazer the task of exercising her spirit to follow the suggestive values there represented, suggestive value that come to replace the aesthetical value. The next point is the line. We are aware that calligraphy became a form of art in the Orient, this because the line, per se, can express movement. According to Kuki, the absolute is dynamic, because what moves do this movement in the present, in a present that doesn't fade away inasmuch there is movement. The forth feature is color. In Oriental art, especially in the ink painting (*Sumie*) tradition we find the black and white, here what Kuki emphasizes is the simplicity and fluidity came "from the nostalgia of the infinity and from the effort to exclude the differences in time" (Kuki, 1980). Hisamatsu Shin'ichi in his study on *Zen and Fine arts* also stresses the dynamics between color and simplicity (this last one he calls No Complexity): "While No Form is thus the simplest form, no color is, likewise, the simplest color; an what is simple in the sense of having no color cannot be anything else but the Formless Self" (Hisamatsu, 1982). Kuki concludes with considerations about the subject in painting. Beauty is painting's main motif, whereas the infinity pervades all that exists, without any exception, and it is the beauty. It is art that expresses and teaches us to see such beauty in that of most "aesthetical" and even in what is morally reprehensible³.

³ It is noteworthy to point out here that Kuki borrows from Aristotle's philosophy his claim that regarding painting mimesis cannot be condemn, by the contrary, it is admirable, since we humans are beings that take pleasure from knowledge we can learn something from an art that mimics something abominable that normally we cannot look at. However, through the mimesis performed by painting this same thing became somewhat pleasant and by looking at it we can learn

Kuki classifies Japanese poetry as a temporal art, thus, distinguishing itself from spatial arts like painting and architecture. Temporal arts have the aim to release not from space, instead to release from time. To argue in favor of this interpretation, Kuki lists seven characteristics of Japanese poetry that provides liberation from time. The smallest thing as well the biggest one contains the infinity. This is the first trace described by Kuki concerning Japanese poetry, here referring to the traditional forms of the Tanka and Haiku. The second one is said from the asymmetric character we find in these poetic forms, since, according to Kuki, the absolute would be impossible to be contained in a rigid form, only in "a form for the form's sake." Turning again to Tanka and Haiku, Kuki emphasizes the first one five-seven-five-seven-seven's and the last one five-seven-five, syllabic structure. Suggestion is the third trace. Japanese poetry leave something of vague about its whereabouts, just suggesting its meaning, "keeping in silence, a silence more eloquent than eloquence itself." We could also add to Japanese poetry suggestive feature its poetical techniques as *makura-kotoba* (pillow word) and *kire* (cut). The fourth one is "the pantheist thought (Daoism), the idea that the essence of Totality is identical." Kuki identifies this in Basho's Haiku. What is said here is that two distinct poetical images reflect each other, one is identified with the small and daily, the other one with the immensurable and transcendent, however both of it ends up mixing themselves in one and same image⁴. The fifth feature reflects the simplicity of color and theme, which is the same case we have saw before when dealing with painting. Such simplicity intermingles with the infinity overcoming multiplicity. The sixth one talks about the negative aspect that is transformed into a positive one, since, like the case of painting, Daoism's pantheism see Dao in everything that exists. Finally, the last one deals with the repetition of time. Clearly, Kuki alludes to the representation of the instant, with which we are used to face when we read a Haiku. Kuki interprets the instant as the temporality of contingency, of the chance or failure, an encounter that constitutes the only real time: the present time.

Literature: An Art of the Present

The temporality of art as the present that repeats itself eternally and vertically reappears in the moment Kuki deals exclusively with Literature from a metaphysical

something about the theme represented. In a similar line of argumentation, the "art for the art's sake" theory claims that art should not be morally or legally condemned, because what is there represented should be aesthetically judge, a sphere apart from moral and law. Following this, Kuki will affirm, in a very enigmatic fashion that "the art for the art's sake theory is a theory of the absolute idealism in art." (Kuki, 1980)

⁴ The most paradigmatic of Basho's Haiku is an example of this: An octopus pot –inside, a short-lived dream under the summer moon (Trans. Ueda)

point of view. Kuki understand metaphysics by a mere contraposition to aesthetics, which means, a search for Literature's philosophical meaning beyond its aesthetic value. It behooves us to ask if he really accomplished his intention.

Following the same line of argumentation that we have saw in the previous section, Kuki attributes to art in general the temporality of present, whereas "When we ask what kind of temporal quality art possess, we can say that so long as it takes intuition as its specific character, art holds a temporal place in the present" (Kuki, 2004). We find here a clear reference to the intuition described by Bergson. In spite of in his philosophy the privileged temporality be the past, Kuki uses Bergson's intuition concept focusing in the idea of inner continuity. Basing his aesthetic in the notion of expression, Kuki cannot avoid giving a place in his thought to the one to whom expression is directed to: the receiver. Art expresses a world-view, the artist seeks to express the infinite in its purest form, insofar the receiver internalizes such expression and elevates her spirit until the point of a liberation of time and/or space⁵. Such spiritualization of art expression in the form of a liberation from time or space it is only possible if art has the temporal quality of intuition as Bergson describes it: "The intuition we are talking about bears, before all, the inner duration [...] Intuition means firstly consciousness, but immediate consciousness, vision that scarcely distinguishes itself from the object saw, knowledge which is contact and even coincidence. [...] The intuition is that that reaches the spirit, the duration and the pure changing" (Bergson, 1946).

Using Bergson's quotation as a basis, we can claim that the present Kuki affirms we find in Literature is not the present of a dot, rather the present understood as duration and extension. In other words, the present of qualitative time. Kuki proves his point taking as an example the syllabic cut in poetry, unit of metrical verse and rhyme, all of them, rather than implying homogeneity similar to that of the quantitative time of the clock, implies a particular fluidity hold by each poem. The poetical accent and rhyme create in the verse a changing and unpredictable temporal impression, howsoever we can count the cuts, poetic syllables and identifies the rhymes, this always happens at a particular duration imposed by the poem's own structure.

⁵ "Doubtless it is his divine hand which unveils eternal beauty and, thereby, gives the spectators vertigo, but the task of the spectators remains intact: it is incumbent upon them to make the great leap, to enter into depthless metaphysical abysses and to be overwhelmed there. Thus, twice is art liberated from time: once in the artist who creates infinity, once in the spectators who participate, as it were, in this creation by their contemplation of works of art" (Light, pp. 62-63).

To admit that Literature possesses a qualitative temporality implies distinguishes it from music, another art in which the qualitative time is evident. Kuki distinguishes them through a classification that places literature as a linguistic art and music as an acoustic art. Which means that the realm of music is the sound: a musical piece is represented in a given duration, which is, by turn, filled entirely by its own temporality. However, in the case of literature, because its realm is imagination and representation, besides filling the duration of the reading of a poem or a romance, for example, it also creates another conceptual temporality. We could read a poem about the entire spring just in thirty seconds, in the same way, take us three days to read a romance about an entire life. The conceptual and meaningful character of language adds to literature's perceptive temporality (i.e., the duration of reading) another temporal layer that Kuki calls conceptual temporality. Thus, literature as a linguistic art's temporality is found in the fact that it possesses a multilayered temporality. Music holds a one-layered qualitative temporality, while literature holds a multilayered qualitative temporality; this is the main distinction between these two forms of art.

We need to make a last observation concerning the division of styles in literature: prose, drama and poetry⁶. Here we will deal only with poetry because it is paradigmatic inside Kuki's aesthetics. Poetry's temporal nature is the present. Thus, by being a form of art its temporality belongs to present, as a linguistic art it also possesses a multilayered temporality and, finally, for being poetry it also has a tendency to present. This happens, because it concentrates in itself the same feature in two ways: as expression of feelings and intuitions of the present⁷ and using its poetical techniques. In short, both the meaningful content as well as the form conducts poetry toward the present. The intensity of feelings with which we are used before the reading of a poem and its short form, almost momentary, like the repetition of the form in rhymes and the alliteration are emphasized by Kuki to prove his argumentation that poetry is an "eternal now." This strengthens Kuki's definition of the

temporality of Japanese art and enlarges it to all poetic forms⁸.



In this way, Kuki's aesthetics consists of the presupposition that the temporality of art is the present; it acquires the form of an eternal present or a deep present through the repetitions we find in poetical techniques. "For this he [Don Juan, the paradigmatic esthete] has no time; for him everything is merely an affair of the moment. In a certain sense it can be said of psychological love that to see her and to love her are the same, but this only suggests a beginning. [...] To see her and to love her are the same; this is in the moment. In the same moment everything is over, and the same thing repeats itself indefinitely". (Kierkegaard, 1987)

Full references of this research paper are found in the Table of References section.

⁶ Kuki classifies the literary forms of prose, drama and poetry regarding the temporal tendency that each one of them possesses. Prose would have a tendency towards past, because Kuki conceives it based in the Japanese term *Monogatari*. *Kataru*, to talk, evokes *noboru*, to tell, that in turn is homophonic with another verb, *noboru*, to stretch. Therefore, to tell a story is to stretch it from its beginning, from the past. In the case of drama, the fact that it is played puts in play human actions. These actions are directed by will, will that is always directed to a future purpose. The most appropriate examples are comedy and tragedy, these classified due the ending that each plot incurs; comedy an unusual ending and tragedy a regrettable ending. In this way, Kuki comes to the conclusion that drama possesses an orientation toward future.

⁷ Here, Kuki evokes Motoori Norinaga's *mono no aware* theory. (Kuki, 2004)

⁸ We have to make a remark, albeit Kuki talks about poetry in general, all of his examples that he uses to base his theory came from Japanese literature, with one exception; to illustrate alliteration in thyme Kuki uses a poem from the Wei dynasty's Emperor Wen.

The Influence and Remaining Japanese Cultural Elements in Raku Artworks of Contemporary Non Japanese Artists/Potters

KHAIRUL NIZAN MOHD ARIS,
UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

Introduction

This research examines the extent to which Japanese cultural elements –specifically the ‘spirit’ or philosophy of traditional Japanese Raku– are retained and evidenced in contemporary artworks by non-Japanese artists/potters in Australia. This research is conducted in reflection of my own art practice as a ceramic artist/potter who was exposed to the Western/American style of Raku in the beginning of my career, but later experienced the making of Raku in its traditional form in Japan. Through analysis and reflection of contemporary Raku artworks together with my own art practice, this research will identify the extent to which the spirit and philosophy of original Raku either direct or indirectly influences artists/potters in their art practices and remains in the artworks. In this approach, the artists’/potters’ artworks will be analyzed as the trace of cultural interaction. This line of critical enquiry develops in relation to a body of creative work, which serves as a practice – led method of research.

Unlike conventional ceramic firing approaches, which may take several days to complete, Raku is a method where work is rapidly (often under an hour in duration) fired and removed from the kiln when glowing hot. Raku has become popular amongst contemporary artists/potters internationally since it was introduced to the West in 1940s. Historically, Raku referred to the spiritual, religious, philosophical, ceremonial and functional characteristics of a specific style of ceramics. First developed in the city of Kyoto, Japan in the late Sixteenth Century during the Momoyama period (1573-1615), in its traditional form, Raku was used to produce ceramic ware for the tea ceremony.

The tradition of Raku in Japan was surrounded by cultural concern that strongly affected the end product. The aesthetic of original Raku is exemplified in the Zen concept of *wabi-sabi*: the idea of an intrinsic humble beauty and ‘thusness’ that transcends individual human

intention.¹ Raku ceramics supported the notion that the simplest object possesses great beauty and great significance.



Figure 1: The traditional Raku firing in Japan²

For four hundreds years, Japanese people have seen Raku as being both simultaneously utilitarian and aesthetic. According to John Dickerson, any attempt to divorce the object from its practical purpose (for instance, by placing it in museum) is inevitably detrimental to both the bowl itself and to its appreciation.³ Such appreciation of the function of Raku ware is very important to the Japanese connoisseurs. The current head of the Raku family in Japan, Raku Kichizaemon XV,⁴ believes that the tea bowl is a ‘living thing’ and should be handled and used continuously, indeed, has been able to reclaim several Raku tea bowls from museums, claiming the gallery case

¹ Margot Osborne, *Jeff Mincham : Ceramics, Living Treasure: Masters of Australian Craft*. Craftman House, 2009 pg. 13.

² Image taken from http://article.wn.com/view/2012/05/12/46000_tecup/

³ John Dickerson, *Raku Handbook- A practical approach to the ceramic art*, Studio Vista, London, 1972, pg. 5.

⁴ The 14th generation of Raku family and the modern representative of his family, his opinions carry a great deal of weight. And he is certainly the closest thing there is today to an "orthodox" Raku voice, as conversation with Morgan Pitelka, 27th June 2012.

to be a 'dusty glass coffin'.⁵ In this sense, the Raku tradition in Japan is rooted in the beauty of utility, not in style or a specific technique or glaze.



Figure 2: The Tea Ceremony (*chanoyu*)⁶

For contemporary non-Japanese artists/potters, Raku is a rapid firing ceramic process that is usually appreciated for its aesthetic, tactile, sensory qualities and non-functional, sculptural application. The 'non-functional' here stands in opposition to 'function' understood as that which is usable (utilitarian).

Non-Japanese/Western artists/potters such as Paul Soldner, Rick Hirsch, and Robert Pipenburg in the 50s and 60s encountered Raku and through their practices have developed alternative approaches that maybe said to give a variety of 'new' meanings and most agreed that indeed, an appraisal of their work indicates that superficially at least, contemporary (American) Raku has been distanced in terms of style, technique and purpose from its traditional form. This research seeks to investigate the extend to which any residue of original, traditional Raku sensibilities have been passed down to non-Japanese artists/potters and still remain/resonate in/with the work of contemporary artists/potters and their practices.

Research Background

From the beginning of the fifteenth century, the practice of drinking tea had assumed an important role in the life of Japanese warrior leaders and the *elites*. At that time they began holding gatherings at which tea was prepared and drunk in a ritualized, performative fashion.⁷ Performative tea practice had gained popularity by the sixteenth century and potters developed the Raku technique to meet the demands of the tea practitioners for objects to be used in the tea ceremony (*chanoyu*). One of these potters, *Sasaki Chojiro* (1516-1595), a

Korean migrant, was selected by the tea master *Sen no Rikyu* (1522-1591) from a group of ceramic tile producers to collaborate on the production of ultimate rustic, *wabi*⁸, teabowls.⁹ Raku wares were popular with a small group of tea practitioners in and around Kyoto, Japan's capital city at that time. The tea ceremony proved to be the vehicle that stimulated the highest level of attainment in many aspects of Japanese culture and Raku certainly owed its development and prestige to the cult of tea.¹⁰



Figure 3: Chojiro's black Raku tea bowl named 'Koto', 16th Century, collection of Mr. Raku Kichizaemon XV, Japan.¹¹

In Japan Raku has been mainly restricted to the traditional forms of those articles used in the tea ceremony, primarily tea bowls, incense boxes and dishes.¹² Tea masters specified certain dictates in design and function in accordance with the Zen ideal for the tea bowl; the qualities admired were the unique, unrepeatable marks and imperfections imparted through hand forming and the consequent irregular, asymmetrical vessel forms. Japanese Raku was made in response to nature and natural forms.

The Raku tradition was transmitted to the West first through the lectures and writings of Bernard Leach (1887-1979) and later through the popularizing or 'fusing' efforts of artists/potters such as Paul Soldner (1921-2011). During the 1960s, Soldner adapted the Raku technique, modifying many aspects including the style, process and even glaze formulae.

⁵ Rick Hirsch, *The Raku Family Tradition*, Studio Potter 7 (2), pg. 28-33.

⁶ Image taken from http://www.singlestravel.com.au/Japan_2013_home.htm

⁷ Morgan Pitelka, *Handmade Culture*, University of Hawaii Press, 2005 pg 5.

⁸ Loosely translated as austerity or simplicity, Wabi is the natural expression of feelings that are neither ostentatious nor imposing, and its spirit is the essence of the tea ceremony.

⁹ Morgan Pitelka, *Flame, Smoke, Clay, Glaze*, Ceramic Review 230 March/ April 2008, pg 38.

¹⁰ John Dickerson, *Raku Handbook- A practical approach to the ceramic art*, Studio Vista, London, 1972, pg. 31.

¹¹ Image taken from <http://www.raku-yaki.or.jp/e/kichizaemon/index.html>

¹² John Dickerson, *Raku Handbook- A practical approach to the ceramic art*, Studio Vista, London, 1972, pg. 5.



Figure 4: Paul Soldner, Pedestal piece, Raku.¹³

Contemporary Raku can be described as encompassing five layers or groups. The first is the Kyoto Raku lineage, early exponents of the Raku process, which continues to operate the wealthiest¹⁴ and most powerful kiln in the Raku tradition. A second layer is made up of a handful of other traditional groups such as Ohi ceramics¹⁵ that operate Raku kilns and are accepted as having some legitimacy within the Japanese tea community. Following that is a group of Raku potters who serve the less sophisticated ceramic consumer in Japan- the potters who make the cheaper, somewhat fake-looking¹⁶ Raku tea bowls that can be bought for a low price. Then we have Western potters who are interested in the tea ceremony and Japanese traditions and make a version of Raku that is close that which is made in Japan. Finally, we have the layer of Western potters who do a version of the so-called American/Soldner style of fusion Raku, which has much less in common, technically speaking, with Japanese Raku.

Raku is not merely a practical technique that involves fire, speed and performance. In the work of Rick Hirsch (one of the first Western/non Japanese potters use Raku in his practice) that was reviewed by David Jones had a strong symbolic and metaphoric resonance that in a way it parallels what happens in *chanoyu*.¹⁷

¹³ Image taken from

<http://artfortheblogofit.blogspot.com.au/2011/01/paul-soldner-this-his-his-technique.html>

¹⁴ The workshop was sponsored by the warlord for gala Raku performances on their estate and is still supported by the tea masters who traced their lineage back to Sen no Rikyu. In the post-war period (world war II), the potters from the Raku family established a non-profit museum in Kyoto and became involved in organizing exhibitions and writing books about Raku.

¹⁵ Ohi Ceramics (*Ohi yaki*) is a pottery with a style unique to Kanazawa, a branch kiln (*waki gama*) that was developed in the Raku tradition founded by the Raku family members or potters.

¹⁶ The design and technique of making the bowl does not exactly follow original Raku bowls.

¹⁷ David Jones, *Raku Alchemy*, Ceramic Review 230 March/April 2008, pg 27-29.



Figure 5: Rick Hirsch, 'Mortar and Pestle', Raku.¹⁸

According to Jones, because Raku is always associated with the *chanoyu* or 'the way of tea', that it is informed by the Zen Buddhist and Taoist attitudes of life and implies an emphasis on a state of being or a state of mind that the words 'ceremony' or 'ritual' do not. He further explained that this refinement of a difficult translation of a foreign cultural concept, which has occurred in the West, is a process that has also informed Rick Hirsch's own recent thinking.

In 2001 I had the opportunity to travel from my birthplace of Malaysia to study ceramics for an extended period in Japan. When I first encountered Raku in Japan, I was instructed in making tea bowls without using a mechanized pottery wheel – the traditional method of crafting tea bowls for the tea ceremony – that were then fast fired in a process unique to Raku. In many ways it was the opposite of what I had known of Raku in the Western context.

Before coming to Japan, I also learned the technique in a way that involved post-reduction¹⁹ in the firing process, and assumed it had been always practised in this way. Later, I discovered that post-reduction was never used in the old tradition of Raku; American potter Paul Soldner, firing in America, introduced this aspect of the process in the 1960s. It should not be assumed, however, that such changes in traditional Raku through culture and time diminish the significance of contemporary Raku. Rather contemporary Raku should be appreciated with respect to the impact of cultural interaction and different understanding towards Japanese culture.

¹⁸ Image taken from <http://cias.rit.edu/faculty-staff/110>

¹⁹ Post-reduction is a process where the fired pieces are placed in a container filled with combustible material for reduction. In the traditional Japanese process, the fired Raku piece is removed from the hot kiln and is allowed to cool in the open air.

My experience in Japan elicited a deep interest in exploring Japanese aesthetics. Although I was exposed to many other Japanese traditional techniques, the aesthetic of Raku and its tradition has always fascinated me. I noticed that after 400 years of continuous practice in Japan, Raku has been given a variety of ‘meanings’ and interpretations among contemporary artists/potters especially when it has been transferred to the West. It is one art form that, I believe, has not suffered in its revival—rather it has been strengthened.²⁰ The strengthening of Raku has involved beyond its technical context. To a certain extent, the spirit and philosophy of original Raku has somehow influenced the way of thinking in making of artworks by the contemporary artists/potters of non-Japanese and ultimately has become the main factor for attracting towards an appreciation.

For some time, I wondered how contemporary non-Japanese artists/potters actually respond to aesthetic elements from foreign cultures. Having been brought up in the multi cultural society in Malaysia, I have had to accept and adapt to elements from other cultures. It is important to understand the ‘meaning’ behind every aesthetic element that is brought into our own culture. Raku artwork has to be appreciated together with the ‘spirit’ and philosophy that accompanies it.

1.2 Raku – The Spiritual Aesthetic

In this section I will discuss the concept of *wabi sabi*, understood from the idea of spirit in aesthetic, while attempting to define them along with Buddhist concept. I consider these as the key elements that compose the “spiritual” meaning in Raku production. To do this I will focus on perhaps the most important of Japanese aesthetic concept – the *wabi sabi*; which consists of two words; *wabi* a concept of beauty found in austerity and simplicity; and *sabi* which also denotes a concept of beauty of antiquity. As defined in a most reliable Japanese English dictionary, *wabi* is “taste for the simple and quiet” and *sabi* is “patina” and “an antique look”.²¹

Wabi sabi is essentially a nature-based aesthetic paradigm that is central to Japanese culture.²² (pg 9) It is a notion of beauty that is linked to the *chanoyu* or the tea ceremony, and it is also associated with the Zen Buddhism. The tea masters, priests and monks who practised Zen were the first people in the Japanese tradition to become involved with the development of the

²⁰ Christopher Tyler and Richard Hirsch, *Raku, Techniques for Contemporary Potters*, (Watson-Guption Publications), 1975, pg 11.

²¹ Masuda, K. (1974). *New Japanese-English Dictionary*. New Japanese-English Dictionary. Tokyo, Kenkyusha Tokyo.

²² Koren, L. (1994). *Wabi-Sabi for Artists, Designers, Poets & Philosophers*. Berkeley California, Stone Bridge Press.

philosophy of *wabi sabi*. Zen practitioners incorporated a sense of appreciation of these concepts and experiences into their life and for some time into their work and teaching.²³ Tea masters of the Momoyama period developed the simple custom of tea drinking into the tea ceremony by synthesizing other artistic activities such as architecture, garden design, crafts, painting and calligraphy, as well as through the cultivation of a religio-philosophical awareness transcending ordinary reality.²⁴ This emphasis on spirituality has continued to be felt in many aspects of Japanese life and culture. It was this art that inspired the appreciation of *wabi sabi* as an aesthetic.

The inspiration for *wabi sabi* metaphysical, spiritual, and more principles came from ideas on simplicity, naturalness, harmony with nature and the acceptance of reality found within Zen, which is a philosophy that developed from Mahayana Buddhism (Koren 1994). According to Leonard Koren, one of the first author who introduced the concept of *wabi sabi* to the West, *wabi sabi* is essentially a nature-based aesthetic paradigm that is central to Japanese culture (Koren 1994). It is a notion of beauty that is linked with the traditional Japanese tea ceremony and also associated with Zen Buddhism.²⁵ In Zen, essential knowledge must be transmitted from mind to mind, and not spoken or written, because its meaning would be both diminished and possibly be misunderstood.²⁶

Zen principles of simplicity, naturalness, harmony with nature and the acceptance of Zen’s notion of reality, all found within the philosophy of *wabi sabi*, were synthesized by the Japanese and fully realized within the context of the tea ceremony (Koren 1994). Koren suggests *wabi sabi* as the “most conspicuous and characteristic feature of what we think of as traditional Japanese beauty”, comparing its importance in Japanese aesthetics to the “Greek ideals of beauty and perfection in the West”.²⁷

Traditional beauty in Japanese culture is composed of various experiences or states of beauty that range from ‘lower levels’ with elaborate ornamentation and vivid colour usage, to the ‘higher levels’ of a simple and

²³ Maxwell, C. *Wabi-Sabi: The Essentials of Japanese Aesthetics*. *Omusubi*, The Japan Foundation, Sydney.

²⁴ Raku, K. (1997). "Raku: A Dynasty of Japanese Ceramists." *Ceramic: Art and Perception*(22).

²⁵ Koren, L. (1994). *Wabi-Sabi for Artists, Designers, Poets & Philosophers*. Berkeley California, Stone Bridge Press.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

subdued elegance that is known in Japanese as *shibumi*.²⁸ The adjective form of the word *shibumi*, that is *shibui*, is a beauty that is represented by the notion of ‘less is more’. This is a beauty that, in a simple word is characterized by the greatly reserved, astringent, sober and quiet.²⁹ It is also a beauty that is in harmony with nature and it has a calming effect on the viewer. When the highest state of the whole beauty is achieved, it becomes *wabi-sabi*.³⁰

While a modern work of art is a finished result, *wabi sabi* is incomplete and imperfect. We are forced to realize that it as a work in progress – not just a finished product for us to look at, but something that we can engage in ourselves. The concept of *wabi sabi* artwork often point to this process. Koren writes “corrosion and contamination make its expressive richer”.³¹

The art of *wabi sabi* is not flamboyant, colourful or spectacular but relatively quiet and assimilated into nature or circumstance. The *wabi* aesthetic is charged with philosophical and religious spiritual unique in the history of Japanese art. Central to the philosophy of *wabi cha* are notions of ‘nothingness’ deriving from Zen Buddhism and the ‘isness’ of Taoism.³² The notion symbolized by the term ‘*wabi*’ lay at the heart of Japanese medieval aesthetics and pervaded literary as well as theatrical fields such as *waka* (31 syllable poetry) *renga* (linked-verse poetry) and Noh theatre.³³

Wabi sabi was systemized and established as an aesthetic of Japan in the Meiji era (1868-1912) and the modern period, the post Meiji era to the present.³⁴ (pg 49) But the word “wabi” and “sabi” first appeared in Heian period (794-1192) and had been used in Kamakura period (1192-1333) and the following period. *Wabi sabi* is composed of two words. “Wabi” originally meant the misery of living alone in nature and “Sabi” originally

meant chill. In the 14th century the meaning evolved to more positive connotations. According to De Mente (2006), *wabi* derived from the Japanese verb *wabu* and the adjective is *wabishii*.³⁵ (pg 33) *Wabu* literally meaning “to languish”, represents a feeling of loneliness and its adjectival form, *wabishii* represents being lonely and comfortless.³⁶

According to De Mente, the notion of *sabi* is related to aspects of the Japanese philosophy of Shinto pertaining to the reverence of nature with its seasonal changes, and especially within the weathering and aging process.³⁷ (pg 31) In comparison to *wabi*, *sabi* is more objective and it generally refers to material things. Put simply, *wabi sabi* can be understood as a way of thinking and living and it is a state of being which needs to be felt, to be evoked rather than to be explained.

Wabi sabi received its artistic and philosophic value in the 16th century when Rikyu established *wabi cha*, a tea ceremony in a simple and austere manner. Rikyu did the *wabi cha* as the countermeasure to the trend of the tea ceremony of the 16th century, which was sponsored by the samurai lords and was completely tawdry. Since Rikyu was deeply steeped in Zen Buddhism, the ostentatious and pretentious display of wealth by Hideyoshi and his aristocratic vassals had always been distasteful to him and was totally contrary to the *wabi* concept of tea teaching. *Wabi* can also mean ‘poverty’, though in this context not lack of food or possession, but state of mind that voluntarily accepts an austere existence. According to Lester (2006), as meritorious way of life, Rikyu advocated man’s return to and living in harmony with nature and finding beauty not in flawless “artificialities” but in the unpretentious, the inspired spontaneity of imperfection.³⁸ For Rikyu the refined tea bowls and thrown to perfection on the potters wheel and tightly controlled glaze were inconsistent with the concept of *wabi*. Instead, explained Lester, he envisioned rustic shapes a man could cradle in his palms to relish the feel of the weight, the undisguised marks left by the potter, the texture of the fired clay and the sensuous flow of the glaze.³⁹ These ideas that were brought to life in

²⁸ Crowley, J. S. (2001). *Wabi Sabi Style*. Salt Lake City, Gibbs Smith.

²⁹ Tierney, L. (1999). *Wabi sabi: A new look at Japanese design*. Layton, Utah, Gibbs Smith.

³⁰ Crowley, J. S. (2001). *Wabi Sabi Style*. Salt Lake City, Gibbs Smith.

³¹ Koren, L. (1994). *Wabi-Sabi for Artists, Designers, Poets & Philosophers*. Berkeley California, Stone Bridge Press.

³² Raku, K. (1997). "Raku: A Dynasty of Japanese Ceramists." *Ceramic: Art and Perception*(22).

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Yoshimatsu, J. (2011). The art in the everyday: A spiritual journey of aesthetic experience within Western and Japanese Context. *Teachers College*. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses; 2011; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (PQDT), Columbia University. **PhD**.

³⁵ De Mente, B. (2006). *Elements of Japanese Design*. Vermont, Tuttle Publishing.

³⁶ Maxwell, C. *Wabi- Sabi: The Essentials of Japanese Aesthetics*. *Omusubi*, The Japan Foundation, Sydney.

³⁷ De Mente, B. (2006). *Elements of Japanese Design*. Vermont, Tuttle Publishing.

³⁸ Lester, G. (2006). "Raku The Beauty of Imperfection." *Arts of Asia* 21(4): 90-96.

³⁹ Ibid.

Raku tradition that played a very significant role in his reform in the tea ceremony.

Apart from the concept of spirit/spiritual in the aesthetics that I have explained before, it is difficult to really define the meaning of spirit/spiritual in traditional Raku in Japan. Looking at its history, it is hard to describe how the different generations of Raku family, say Chojiro, Nonko, and Sanyu- understood the 'spirit' of Raku. To overcome this dilemma, I would rely on the writings of Raku Kichizaemon XV, the current head of the Raku family, who has written extensively about his perspective on the family tradition. Since he is the modern representative of his Raku family, his opinions carry a great deal of weight and certainly the closest things there is today to an "orthodox" Raku voice.



Photo by Sergio Vox (Creative Commons)

For Raku Kichizaemon XV, no tea bowl could be made other than with the same sort of clay and rock as his ancestor Chojiro had dug out of local beds 400 years ago. The tea bowl also could only be formed by the pinch-pot method, which Chojiro had evolved and it should not be shaped other than as a simple functional bowl. The criteria listed by Kichizaemon IV have made Raku exclusively to be associated with the tea ceremony. According to Kichizaemon XV, Chojiro was not satisfied with the tea bowl as an "embodiment of simple and direct expression" but elevated it into a "manifestation of abstract spirituality".⁴⁰ The concept of spiritual and artistic consciousness that was developed by Chojiro is still relevant and valid in the contemporary world. The piece is removed from the kiln while glowing hot has been the significance characteristic of Raku wares all over the world. The interaction of the technique and such spirit led to the preserving of Raku tradition. The admiration for the work of the Raku family is manifold. The late potter and writer Daniel Rhodes, in his book *Pottery Form*, respectfully called Raku tea bowls "unassuming forms that represent the quintessence of

⁴⁰ Raku, K. (1997). "Raku: A Dynasty of Japanese Ceramists." *Ceramic: Art and Perception*(22).

Japanese sensibility."⁴¹ Rhodes honoured the Raku family and their genius for investing a simple object with an inner mystical spirit.

For more than 400 years the Raku family has preserved a unique ceramic tradition yet the issue of spirituality and artistic consciousness addressed by Chojiro are as valid as ever. For Kichizaemon XV, this tradition has not been a matter of recycling traditional forms but a "process of constant reinvigoration and invention".⁴² For him tradition is not simply something to be preserved and inherited but how we perceive the tradition and traditional techniques. It is our viewpoint that determines what we create and give rise within the realm of the traditional work to something completely new and fresh.⁴³

The issues brought up by Raku Kichizaemon XV on the inheritance of tradition are important in understanding not only Raku and the culture of tea in Japan, but as Pitelka said, the "apprehension of cultural change and continuity across a broad temporal and geographic spectrum".⁴⁴ It is not understatement to claim that the Japanese culture that includes Raku tradition has survived by the bestowing of traditional technique through family legacies. The lineage of Raku potters has remained basically unbroken for fifteen generations since Chojiro. Kichizaemon XV is seen on a transcendental path that awakens not only his own creative energies but also directly connects him with the cosmic essence of Chojiro's *chawan* or tea bowl.⁴⁵

Like I have described earlier on, the aesthetics of a Raku tea bowl is centered around the foundation of *wabi* and *sabi*. *Wabi* forms are quiet, simple, imperfect yet absolutely suitable for their function and accordance with nature, while *sabi* represents the quality of mellowing with age. To Kichizaemon IV, Raku bowls in their most aesthetic sense, must be judged and ultimately appreciate through use. The following aesthetic preferences are found in Dickerson's, *A Raku Handbook*.⁴⁶

⁴¹ Rhodes, D.-. (1976). *Pottery form*, Radnor, Pa. : Chilton Book Co.

⁴² Raku, K. (1997). "Raku: A Dynasty of Japanese Ceramists." *Ceramic: Art and Perception*(22).

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Pitelka, M. (2005). *Handmade Culture*, University of Hawaii Press.

⁴⁵ Yellin, R. (2005). Raku's Hand-Held Universes, Unseen Pots of Kamoda Shoji, & Kiln Firing by Mori Togaku. *The Japan Times*. Tokyo, Japan.

⁴⁶ Dickerson, J. (1972). *Raku Handbook- A Practical Approach to The Ceramic art*. London, Studio Vista.

A suitable tea bowl, or the *chawan*, should have the quality of *kesbiki*, a slight dampness that remains during and right after use. The material used to create *chawan* is porous and poor conductor of heat. Its slight roughness-*zangurishita*, produce a soft sensation to the touch. The sound the *chawan* conducts is dull and natural due to its crackle glaze and porous composition. Its form should include slight irregularities that offer tactile and visual 'happening'. The visual aesthetic is a direct relationship between what the *chawan* appears to be and what qualities it actually has. It means if it appears heavy it should be heavy. A *chawan* should feel comfortable when held in the palm of the hands and when tilted for drinking. The undulating lip contains five to seven hills or waves, known as *gaku*. A drinking point is placed opposite the front of the *chawan*. The inside of the bowl contains a spiral *cha-damari*, or tea pool representing the depressions in rock that collect rainwater.

In Japanese ceramics particularly within the Raku tradition, the idea of 'spirit' plays a crucial role in explaining artistic beauty. The beauty of Raku work and tradition lies in its 'spirit'. Raku should not be seen as merely a ceramic technique that has been passed on for more than 400 years. Beside the complex technical parts of Raku, it is important to underline that if technique is not linked to an exact idea, or what Claudia Sugliano terms as an 'interior preparation', it may appear satisfactory but it will always remain superficial.⁴⁷ In this context I will explain the idea of 'spirit' on the basis of Japanese aesthetics and review concepts of 'spirit' in the Western context.



Photo by Will Travel (Creative Commons)

⁴⁷ Sugliano, C. (2006). Raku by Fausto Gervasi. *Ceramics Technical*. 23.



Photo by Pyromaniac (Creative Commons)

The intimate and spiritual aspect of the tradition of Raku is the most complex. This aspect forces an intimacy with the Raku tradition and its philosophy that lies in the Zen culture and *wabi sabi*, "a lifestyle, an aesthetic ideal and a way of thinking that covers every aspect of existence itself".⁴⁸ The tea bowls created by *Rikyū* and *Chōjiro* as a collaborative venture for the tea ceremony was designed to suit the highly sophisticated spirit of *wabi*. It was developed on the two Zen aesthetic foundations of *wabi* and *sabi* that has been explained in this chapter. The hand-formed Raku bowl increases the potential for sculpting and allows the spirit of the maker to express through the finished work with particular directness and intimacy. Raku pottery is fired in such a way to leave the object appearing irregular and rough, its colours simple and muted, typically shades of brown and cream. The glaze that is applied on Raku pottery fades and loses its lustre over time and rather than attempting to retain the colours and polished sheen of its initial firing, eventually transforms into an entirely new set of objects. The elements of Raku pottery described above participate in both irregularity and the simple beauty. In this, Raku pottery and other utensils used in the tea ceremony become expressive elements that draw the sensitivity of the participants heart thus inviting the participants to look beyond the objects that they used in the tea

⁴⁸ Ibid.

ceremony and towards an aesthetic that encapsulates the unlimited potential for an objective feeling to reveal.

The concept of *wabi sabi* is different from the Western concept of beauty that is/was always intended as something 'big', 'monumental' and 'long lasting'. While seen as a philosophy in the Western world, the concept of aesthetic in Japan, in this scope, *wabi sabi*, is seen as an integral part of daily life. Thus, the concept of *wabi sabi* is a question of not seeking or pursuing the perfect or materialistic result but instead, the beauty of imperfection and the balance to be found in the imperfection that lies behind it. Contemporary artists/potters can create works with highly technical quality, but they are not necessarily understand its fundamental and inexorable element, which is the spirituality.⁴⁹ Raku encapsulates a centuries old tradition of spiritual and materiality, creativity and dexterity, rites and customs.⁵⁰

Raku wares invented by *Chojiro* reflect more directly than any other kind of ceramics the ideals of *Wabi cha*, the form of tea ceremony based on the aesthetic of *wabi* advocated by *Rikyu*.⁵¹ To understand the aesthetic of

Raku ware for the tea ceremony, first we have to look into the concept of *Wabi Sabi*. However, in order to have the appreciation on the concept of *wabi sabi*, one may need cognitive ability, open and flexible mind as well as spiritual maturity.

The beauty and aesthetic of ancient Raku were based on symbolic reference to *chanoyu*. *Chanoyu* or the tea ceremony was a reflection of the Zen philosophy and teaching of Rikyu. According to Okakura, the old sixteenth century Raku tea bowl may be considered crude to the Western people, but in the eyes of an early Japanese elites, the same bowl would be considered a rare work of art to be treasured through use and valued above a large grant of land as a reward for victory.⁵²

A full reference list for this paper can be found in the Table of References section.



ACLL2015
The Asian Conference on
Language Learning
www.acll.iafor.org

ACTC2015
The Asian Conference on
Technology in the Classroom
www.actc.iafor.org

**Thursday, April 30 -
Sunday, May 3, 2015**

Art Center of Kobe, Kobe,
Kansai Region, Japan

Submission Deadline:
January 1, 2015

Registration Deadline:
April 1, 2015

iafor

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Raku, K. (1997). "Raku: A Dynasty of Japanese Ceramists." *Ceramic: Art and Perception*(22).

⁵² Kakuzo, O. (1964). *The Book of Tea*. New York, Dover Publications.

Ikebana to Contemporary Art: Rosalie Gascoigne

SHOSO KUNINORI SHIMBO, MONASH UNIVERSITY, AUSTRALIA

Ikebana in the Expanded Field

Since the Meiji Restoration (1868) Ikebana, the Japanese art of flower arrangement has experienced various transformations with the influences of the Western art. The influence has been so strong that the distinction between some current Ikebana work and the broader arena of contemporary art has become blurred (Singer 1994: 46). At the centre of the transformations was the development of a free style Ikebana since 1920's, which went against the traditional design principles, sites and material combinations. In advocating the free style Ikebana, the modern and postmodern Ikebana artists have had to deal with two specific issues.

The one is related to seeing an Ikebana work as a three dimensional art form, which ultimately stimulated the investigation of Ikebana as installation. Hiroshi Teshigahara (1927 - 2001) was one of the artists who investigated this aspect of Ikebana. The other concern involves the fact that Ikebana artists now have to rely on their inner sense to organize their forms. This process has become similar to the larger processes of assemblage. This direction was explored in an extreme form by Rosalie Gascoigne (1917-1999). In this context the significance of Gascoigne's work lies not only in contemporary art but also in contemporary Ikebana.



Gascoigne and Ikebana

The Australian artist, Rosalie Gascoigne was not known as a sculptor until 1975, when she was aged 58. However, she was well known in Canberra for her floral skills which were further refined through her study of Ikebana between 1962 and 1970. In the investigation of connections between Ikebana and

contemporary art, Gascoigne's work presents an important case study. While many critics agree that Ikebana played a significant part in her training and development as a sculptor (North 1982; MacDonald 1998), there are some disagreements about how much influence Ikebana had on her art work.

If her temporary immersion in the modern Sogetsu school of Ikebana was profoundly influential as her only art training, it suggests that her vision has a direct source in the principles of this meditative discipline, since in it the process of selection is as fundamental and as spiritually charged as that of contemplation and arrangement. (Edwards 1998, 11)

Although Edwards (1998) suggested the general and conditional influence of Ikebana as above, Gellatly (2008) pointed out, following Gascoigne's comments on Ikebana, more specific aspects that Ikebana provided her with:

- i. a sense of discipline
- ii. the importance upon line and form (over colour)
- iii. a sense of order and strong sculptural properties
- iv. an affinity to its immersion in and response to the natural world

More importantly, it is notable that many critics as well as Gascoigne herself regarded Ikebana as a passing point in her career. They seem to agree that she graduated from "the limited realm of flower arrangement and Ikebana" (Kirker 1989, 54) to enter the larger art world. Jacobs (2006) noted that Gascoigne began to chafe at the restrictions of form in Ikebana, quoting the following comment.

I knew I had the awareness of nature that is inherent in ikebana. My eye was starting to travel — I was using found objects in my work. I made a piece out of blue devil weed and rusted reinforcing wire, but when it was exhibited it had been sprayed black. That was all wrong to me — as I'd made it, I spoke of the sun and wind and rain. Finally, there were more things that I wanted to explore about the Australian countryside than I could say with ikebana. It also troubled me that it was a foreign art. I thought that was too limiting. My work was becoming very Australian.

Similar perceptions of Ikebana by Gascoigne were also pointed out by MacDonald (1998), Kirker (1989) and Gellatly (2008). MacDonald noted that Gascoigne found Ikebana limiting at a certain stage, quoting her comment, "It was going so far, but not far enough; the thing that I wanted to say was out in the middle of the grasslands" (1989, 21). Gellatly stated that Gascoigne eventually became disillusioned "with its

hierarchical approach and deference to ‘all things Japanese,’ particularly with regard to the selection and use of materials” (2008, 11).

It has to be noted, however, that the dissatisfaction Gascoigne experienced with Ikebana was historically and culturally specific. Gascoigne’s Ikebana teacher was Norman Sparnon (1913 - 1995), who was regarded as the best-qualified and leading master of Ikebana in the Western world (MacDonald 1998). It is thought to be Sparnon who sprayed Gascoigne’s work black at the Ikebana exhibition. Sparnon started teaching Ikebana in Sydney in 1960 and Gascoigne became his student in 1962. Sparnon’s attitudes to Ikebana at that time might have been limited in terms of the contemporary definitions of Ikebana, which have been extended by more recent Ikebana artists including Hiroshi Teshigahara. However judging from some of his last Ikebana works in 1990s’ (Fig. 1), Sparnon was aware of the expanding nature of Ikebana and he contributed to such a trend rather than preserving the traditional forms of Ikebana.

Despite Gascoigne’s departure from Ikebana, some critics have noted that there is a certain Japanese taste in her art work (Eagle 2007; MacDonald 1998). There might have been some lasting influence of Ikebana throughout her aesthetic development.

Gascoigne’s art practice moved through several phases: iron assemblages (1964 - 74), bone works (1971 - 72), boxed works (early 1970s’ - early 1980s’), and assemblages using segmented found objects (since early 1980s). It is the last category of her works that are often pointed out as containing references to Ikebana or Japanese aesthetics. Gascoigne’s earlier assemblages were made of recognizable objects that retain their associations with their earlier lives including Australian icons (beer cans, dolls, etc.). Since 1984, however, she started to use drink-crate wood, road signs and building materials. Generally pictorial imagery ceased in these late works and Gascoigne described her shift as a switch from “things to materials” (MacDonald 1998, 32).

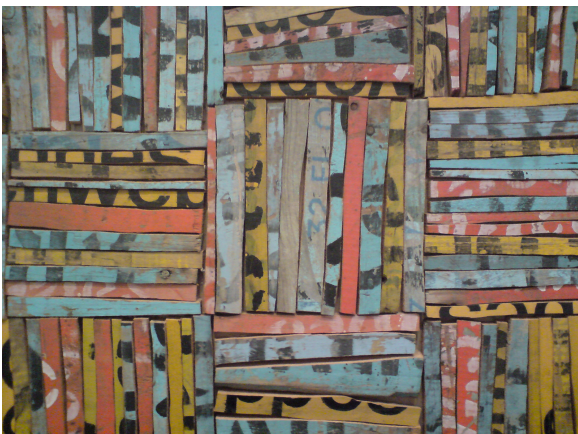


Photo by Simon (Creative Commons)

Assemblage

Before further looking into the assemblage works by Gascoigne, it is necessary to clarify the general nature of assemblage. Seitz (1961) pointed out a couple of simple characteristics of the collages, objects and constructions that comprised his book, “The Art of Assemblage” and the

exhibition he curated at the New York Museum of Modern Art in 1961.

- i. They are predominantly assembled rather than painted, drawn, modeled, or carved.
- ii. Entirely or in part, their constituent elements are preformed natural or manufactured materials, objects, or fragments not intended as art materials (Seitz 1961, 6).

Another simple definition is given by Waldman (1992). While collage involves “the pasting together of various materials on a flat surface,” assemblage involves “the process of joining two- and three-dimensional organic or prefabricated materials that project out from the surface plane” (Waldman 1992, 8). Obviously one of the most important concerns is what happens when two conflicting items are juxtaposed in a work of assemblage. These technical definitions, however, do not provide us with sufficient insights into those crucial issues of assemblage as art work. Focusing on how collage can produce meanings, Waldman (1992) pointed out that collage makes it possible to layer into a work of art several levels of meaning: “the original identity of the fragment or objects and all of the history it brings with it; the new meaning it gains in association with other objects or elements; and the meaning it acquires as the result of its metamorphosis into a new entity” (Waldman 1992, 11).

Based on the three levels specified by Waldman, Gascoigne’s works will be looked at to analyze how found materials gained context and became fine art objects. As the following discussion reveals, however, it is impossible to discuss these layers separately. When we focus on one layer, our discussion often involves other layers at the same time. Therefore, the distinction of the three layers is tentative in nature.



Photo by Mal Booth (Creative Commons)

The First Layer: The Original Identity of the Fragments

One aspect of Gascoigne’s assemblages as well as in general arts and science involves the systematic division of a subject into units. Breaking down of material into units has the effect of “reconfiguring older relations of subject and object, time and

place, inspiration from inside and refraction from outside” (Eagle 2007, 201). In this process, new poetic conjectures were sought.

In addition, Edward precisely described Gascoigne’s process of slicing, tearing and sawing material into almost identical units as “a means of intensifying a quality or an essence, of referencing the recurring rhythms of nature, of creating new form” (Edward 1998, 13).

Interestingly, this aspect of assemblage resembles Hiroshi Teshigahara’s creative processing of natural materials, in particular bamboo. He noted that the initial breaking down of bamboo was to remove its familiar notions and to gain its essence. The divided units are free from their old meanings and contexts and so can be more easily assembled into new configurations.

Another aspect of Gascoigne’s works that requires special attention is that from early in her career she preferred using weathered materials such as wooden boxes rather than fresh materials. Materials lose their original color and their usage over time. When they became obsolete, they were matured and were ready for Gascoigne’s creative process. Her preference for aged materials can be seen as similar to the Japanese aesthetics of Wabi. It is one of the most important aesthetic principles in Japanese culture, but its characteristics have developed and changed throughout history. Consequently, it is not easy to define it concisely. In relation to Gascoigne’s works, however, it would be beneficial to look at the most influential notion of Wabi proposed by the greatest tea master, Rikyu (1522 - 1591), who developed it under the influence of Zen Buddhism and incorporated it into the tea ceremony.

Haga (1995) pointed out three characteristics of Wabi as simple, unpretentious beauty, imperfect, irregular beauty and austere, stark beauty. He argues that these three characteristics mutually blended to create a single aesthetic sensibility. Regarding Rikyu’s idea of Wabi, Haga concludes as follow:

Rikyu’s wabi, viewed externally, is impoverished, cold, and withered. At the same time, internally, it has a beauty, which brims with vitality. While it may appear to be the faded beauty of the passive recluse, or the remnant beauty of old age, it has within it the beauty of non-being, latent with unlimited energy and change. (Haga 1995, 250)

Wabi sensibility allows viewers to recognize aesthetic qualities beyond the weathered surface of objects. Gascoigne’s late works such as Earth (1999) consist of segments of such materials (Fig. 2). Each segment potentially has not only the external but also, beyond surface, the internal aspects of Wabi. This effect seems to be further emphasized by her compositions, which will be looked into in the following sections.

The Second Layer: In Association with Other Materials

A fragment within an assemblage work gains new meaning in association with other objects or elements in the work. This aspect of assemblage was well exemplified in one of Gascoigne’s earlier assemblage works, Pink window

(1975)(Fig. 3). It combined painted wood and corrugated iron. The weathered iron was transformed into a curtain attached to the window frame. The blown curtain evokes a strong drying wind due to the red surface and rough edges forcefully cut off. The work suggests the harsh natural environment of the Australian countryside.

Piece to walk around (1981) (Fig. 4), Crop 2 (1982) (Fig. 5), Turn of the tide (1983) (Fig. 6) and Red beach (1984) (Fig. 7) are situated in her transition from “things to materials.” These works, in essence, all consist of massed natural materials and geometrical grid like forms. The contrast is closely related to the major characteristics of her assemblages including order and randomness (Gellatly 2008, 20) and massing and repetition (Gellatly 2008, 15).

In Turn of the tide (1983) (Fig. 6) and Red beach (1984) (Fig. 7), she used shells that she had found. Almost identical organic segments were gathered and arranged in a grid or near grid format. In both works, Gascoigne created empty spaces and frame-like lines outside the rectangular forms consisting of the massed shells, suggesting the significance of the contrast between newly emerged patterns on the shells and weathered geometrical orders. In Turn of the tide (1983) putting the shells together in the grid structure makes clear the subtle differences between them. The random pattern on the surface of the shells, when seen together, looks like a part of a larger whole. This may be Gascoigne’s interpretation of the Ikebana concept of a second nature, a purified or idealized representation of nature using natural materials.

Her assemblages after this period gained greater abstract strength. Grid or geometrical compositions were frequently used, and Gascoigne started to work with segmented weathered materials instead of natural materials. Due to their weathered nature, however, those materials reveal their sense of passing time, in this way Gascoigne treated weathered objects as if they were natural materials. The contrast between organic disorder and artificial order that was apparent in her assemblages in early 1980s became the most profound theme in Gascoigne’s works.

The Third Layer: As the Result of Metamorphosis

The other aspect of Gascoigne’s works that needs to be discussed is that of unexpected associations. Eagle referred to the fact that for the Cubists, Futurists, Dadaists and others, collage and assemblage were devices for disrupting the logic of picture making (2007, 201). It is this aspect of assemblage or collage that fascinated Picasso. He used the fragments of collage paradoxically, turning one substance into another and extracting unexpected meaning out of forms by combining them in new ways (Golding 1994, 63). Golding quoted the following comment by Picasso regarding collage.

If a piece of newspaper can become a bottle that gives us something to think about in connection with both newspapers and bottles, too. This displaced object has entered a universe for which it was not made and where it retains, in a measure, its strangeness. And this strangeness was what we wanted to make people think about because we were quite aware that

our world was becoming very strange and not exactly reassuring (Gilot and Carlton, 1965, 70).

Also, Eagle (2007) in discussing the third layer of assemblage refers to Saussure's dualistic analysis of signs. Saussure states that the linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound-image (1959, 66). Then, he replaced concept and sound-image respectively by signified and signifier. By this renaming he was able to clearly indicate the opposition that separates them from each other and from the whole (sign) of which they are parts. What appears to happen in assemblage is that a signifier is transposed from its original context to another but still retains its original features. Eagle describes a feature of Gascoigne's assemblages as 'the jostling together of displaced signifiers' (2007).

It is in this aspect that both Lipsey (1988) and O'Brien (2004) recognized the affinity between assemblage and Ikebana. Noting that Gascoigne made a number of collages between 1972 and 74, O'Brien (2004) sees the significance of the association between assemblage and Ikebana. Her collage works can be located between her Ikebana study and her assemblages.

Collage is a Western ikebana, an art of arrangement, and like Japanese flower arrangement its aesthetic impact can go far beyond the separate impacts of the materials it employs (Lipsey 1988, 358).

Ikebana generally consists of various plant materials and display containers to hold them. Modern Ikebana artists such as Sofu Teshigahara (1900 - 79) started to incorporate artificial materials such as metal and paper into Ikebana (Fig. 8). He also made Ikebana works without containers or with containers hidden from the viewers' gaze. Combinations of different types of natural materials as well as combinations of natural and artificial materials, including their containers, can be seen as juxtapositions of displaced objects, or as assemblages. Further, regarding a flower for Ikebana as a displaced object played an important role for some contemporary Ikebana artists in developing their practices. In particular, Hiroshi Teshigahara emphasized the difference between a cut flower in Ikebana and a flower in the field, as a part of nature (Teshigahara, 1992). That difference is similar to that between a piece of newspaper in a collage and newspapers.

The Grid in Gascoigne

Gascoigne's works such as Flash art (1987) (Fig. 9) and Party piece (1988) (Fig. 10) reveal strong contrasts between the order of the grid and the disorder of the found and processed materials, the segmented reflective traffic signs. Eagle relates the contrast to the aesthetic impact of Gascoigne's works, stating, "an underlying grid or cell-like structure serves as a ground for deviations" (Eagle 2007).

It is notable, however, that the deviations in these works using letters or words are so much greater than her previous works using natural materials such as shells (e.g. Turn of tide, 1983;

Red beach, 1984, Fig. 6 and 7) and demonstrate a deeper understanding of the grid.

Party piece (1988) (Fig. 10), for instance, consists of about fourteen square or rectangular units, many of which contain some recognizable parts of letters. Each segment has a different visual weight and strength, although their colors are unified, yellow and black. When they are united into a single piece of work, however, there is a kind of dynamic harmony that emerges out of such chaotic unbalance.

Assuming that this harmony, which is the manifestation of what Edward called "will to order" (1998, 13), is similar to the harmony that contemporary Ikebana artists often seek through using several different flower materials, it is worth considering how it is actualized in the art work. Although we have already noted the affinity between assemblage and Ikebana, there might be more fundamental similarities between them in Gascoigne's works.

The harmony in Gascoigne's assemblages seems to be heavily dependent on the function of the grid. It functions not just as a contrast to the haphazardness that segmented units bring, but also as an allusion for more profound contradictions. Krauss argued the mythic power of the grid that could deal with and repress a contradiction between the values of science and those of spiritualism (1985, 13).

In the cultist space of modern art, the grid serves not only as emblem but also as myth. For like all myths, it deals with paradox or contradiction not by dissolving the paradox or resolving the contradiction, but by covering them over so that they seem (but only seem) to go away. The grid's mythic power is that it makes us able to think we are dealing with materialism (or sometimes science, or logic) while at the same time it provides us with a release into belief (or illusion, or fiction). (Krauss 1985)

If it is possible to see something similar to the grid in Ikebana, which was defined as the symbolic representation of nature in the 16th century (Shimbo 2013), it would be certain guiding principles including the basic golden ratio. For instance, the three main branches used to form a basic style are set in the ratio of 7: 5: 3. The Sogetsu School starts teaching beginners with these principles. Following these principles, Ikebana artists seek to actualize in their works an internally perceived natural harmony or sense of order. Like the grid, these principles would have a mythic function to symbolically deal with contradictions, in this case, between the transient natural materials and the permanent, the order of nature.

As to Gascoigne's last series of works, Earth (1999) (Fig. 2), Gellatly noted the contrast between deviations (the scratches, accretions, pockmarks, wood grain and nail holes) and their grounds (rough-hewn, irregular grids), and interpreted each deviation as "a meditative reflection of an artist in possession of an innate knowledge of the country in which she travelled and fossicked, developed over a period of some fifty years" (2008, 23). Considering the potential function of the grid, Gascoigne's meditative reflections in this work may have involved an awareness of more fundamental contradictions of being and the order of universe. It is, for Edward, the contradiction between ephemeral and permanent.

In her 'will to order' she uses the techniques of accentuation, compression, and repetition (the process of mass production and of nature) with an almost unerring eye, to draw out the allusive potential of materials. The process is one of exactitude, of refining and distilling both ephemeral experience and actively decaying material, into an essential permanent form, which Gascoigne has described in terms of an aesthetic 're-possession' of the land. (Edward 1998)

It is evident that Gascoigne inherited some qualities from Ikebana particularly in her attitudes toward segmented found objects, which she treated as quasi-organic materials. Eagle makes this point powerfully.

The weight Gascoigne gave to the found materials was uncharacteristic of Western art. She found the endorsement she needed in Ikebana. Japanese art (including Ikebana)

featured strongly in exhibitions and art reviews in Australia in the 1960s' and influenced a number of artists, though Gascoigne was, I think, the only one for whom Japanese art was the gateway to her own art. She studied the Sogetsu school of Ikebana for its formal grammar, after she recognized an appreciation of the visual and a sustained quality of metaphor that were congruent with her own deeply felt delight. (Eagle 2007)

The visual and sustained metaphor Gascoigne recognized in Ikebana places her assemblages at an extreme end of the expanded field of contemporary Ikebana.

Conclusion

Through indirect collaboration with nature, Rosalie Gascoigne pursued its essence symbolically in her works. Although the influence of Ikebana on Gascoigne's works is generally regarded as limited, this study suggests that it is crucial for her artwork. Unlike factors such as perspective that Monet and other impressionists learned from Japanese prints (Spate 2001), the sense of order that she inherited from Ikebana is harder to recognize. Seeking an order in her works, Gascoigne investigated the mythic function of grids that could deal with the contradiction between ephemeral and permanent. This attitude is parallel to that of modern Ikebana artists seeking harmony in their free style works through challenging the restrictions of traditional rules.

While Gascoigne's works reveal that some common attitudes exist between the current practice of Ikebana and contemporary art, in terms of a historical perspective of Ikebana it can be seen as extreme example of the investigation of contemporary Ikebana as assemblage. In addition, her work can be regarded as a unique example of cross-cultural transformation.

Full references for this article can be found in the Table of References section.



Photo by Twofortokyo (Creative Commons)

Imagined Innocence Lost: The Performance of Post-Indigeneity in Eikoh Hosoe and Tatsumi Hijikata's Kamaitachi

MICHAEL SAKAMOTO, GODDARD COLLEGE, UNITED STATES

Preface

We live in an age where mass media has overwhelmed our daily lives. Beyond the broadcast saturation and packaged, audio-visual experiences of the late 20th Century, dominant ideologies constantly invade our very bodies through socio-economic dependence on personal communication and computing devices. The post-industrial, service-oriented, commodified body literally consumes its virtual self. We are eating our "selves" alive.



(Creative Commons)

It is for this reason that, for me, butoh performance is an attempt to save lives. It is a legislative bill put forward in a congress of mind, body, and spirit. It is a call to arms against our "selves," the ones that we are not.

Created a half-century ago by Hijikata Tatsumi with the aid of Ohno Kazuo, two modern dancers searching for a

new mode of expressing matter and spirit, butoh was born as a postwar dance form, artistic movement, philosophy, and cultural opposition to the mainstream social order. While developed in numerous forms over the decades, most butoh-based training in some way works to disengage the body from oppressive or domesticated behavior through deconstructing movement, speech, thought, and action. Image-based exercises are designed to literally "break" such patterns, offer a wider view on human nature, and empower practitioners to embody vulnerable, practically "disabled" versions of themselves in order to reclaim their identities in a process of cyclical self-destruction and reintegration. For audiences, these transformed, "broken" beings serve as partially readable signs of socialization, assembled from damaged codes and presented as disturbing, semi-unconsumable commodities, yet somehow remaining knowable and human.

But where do the forms, the structures, the *inspirations*, for such signs and codes, for such *selves*, come from? Throughout the history of butoh, repeated references have been made to life, death, innate memory, primal states of being, and spirits. People have also taken photographs. A lot of them! So many, in fact, that it's almost impossible to think of butoh without the way it's been visually imagined, captured, and expressed. In my experience, I find that photo-representation is one of the most common yet least-discussed influences on butoh practice, specifically how early butoh photo-imagery has contributed to the comprehension, definition, and perceived legitimacy of butoh-based practices.

With this in mind, let's take a flashback to the beginning. My beginning...

Kinokuniya Bookstore, Downtown Los Angeles. Fall 1991

All I can think is that this man is in pain. There's a large book in my hands with a cover photo that I don't understand. An old Japanese man holds a flower, twisted and bent, petals shriveled. His arms and hands curl inward to his concave chest. His shoulder droops low, withering. Twisted, asymmetrical, near to chaos, his body struggles to stay upright. Patchy white makeup covers every inch of his body, as if lived

in too long. Bright red lipstick and yellowed teeth, mouth only half-open but somehow feeling agape, as if he has something to say, but instead of coming out through his tongue, the words are oozing, bleeding through pores all over his body.

Over the eyelids, smears of sky blue, desperate for attention, not rooted in attraction, but rather in pity, a long-lost desire to be someone's queen for a day, or an hour, a minute even, an inexorable slide into decay. And those eyes! Surrounded by pure black, thick and messy streaks trailing off to the side, simultaneously hopeful and despairing. He's looking upward, longing, resigned, saintly.

It's obvious. He's dying. You're not supposed to watch this kind of thing happening. I can't keep my eyes off of him. Other customers in the store are beginning to stare at me staring at this book. I've never seen anything so beautiful...

That's what I felt, then. I look at this photo now, and I notice how staged it is. The curve of the flower petals, perfectly matching the arc of the lips, the fall of the hair, and the center point in the frame. No tension in the large hands. The dancer's pose seems static, as if tailored and held for the camera. There is still, however, that expression.

Ohno Kazuo sees something. Heaven or God, since he is a devout Christian, opening wide to take in the breath of angels? Or maybe a ghost, a lost or kindred soul that fills him with childlike awe and aged exhaustion. Even after 20 years, I feel a liminal space opening up every time I see this photo. Ohno appears to me intimidated by and anxious for what comes next, and its effect is visceral even now, just as it was when I first stood staring at it in that bookstore. For me, the photo *itself* engenders a sense of liminality. I look at it and have no idea what just happened or what is about to happen.

The image could also be simply a stimulating composition that the photographer, Ethan Hoffman, artfully captured, an instant when cosmic vision was activated in glass, metal, and silver halides. In considering whether a photo is acting upon us or we are acting upon it, we might remember that among the first photographers in history were the competing desires to either frame or depict reality. Passive or active? After 172 years, we assume it's a conscious decision made by every photographer, but, in reality, it's a existential question that may never be resolved, just as after three millennia, most God-fearing worshippers have never reached consensus on whether to live their lives submitting to God's will or doing his bidding.

This supposed binary between passive and active in any engagement with photography is at the core of Roland Barthes's final text, *Camera Lucida*, in which he defines the experience of viewing a photo in terms of the binary

of *studium* and *punctum*. *Studium* is the effect of a photo based on its generalizable criteria, references within its place and time, and its supposed facts on cultural, political, aesthetic, or otherwise objective levels. Moreover, because the *studium* is external, it imposes itself upon us: "The Photograph is violent: not because it shows violent things, but because on each occasion *it fills the sight by force*, and because in it nothing can be refused or transformed." (Barthes 1981: 91)

Punctum, however, arises out of the workings of our imagination:

Nothing surprising, then, if sometimes, despite its clarity, the *punctum* should be revealed only after the fact, when the photograph is no longer in front of me and I think back on it. I may know better a photograph I remember than a photograph I am looking at, as if direct vision oriented its language wrongly, engaging it in an effort of description which will always miss its point of effect, the *punctum*. (Barthes 1981: 53)

Punctum relies on an image working within one's self over time as a template within memory upon which one may reflect desires, anxieties, or other emotions. This potential for particular effects within particular viewers makes it idiosyncratic and subjective.

While ostensibly a meditation on photography's meaning and function, *Camera Lucida* is ultimately driven by Barthes's nostalgia, loss, and pain around the death of his mother, making the text an intricately reasoned and deeply sorrowful exploration of *subjective truth* as a way to deal with objective reality.

Within the context of the prevalence of subjective forms of expression in the postwar Japanese avant-garde, a similar tension arose in the formative years of *butoh*. The first *butoh* artists are like the early jazz artists; they had something to reclaim and a struggle worth fighting because they had been handed a false liberty. In the midst of Japan's rapid postwar westernization, this reclamation took the form of retooling and reinvention of the body itself. Hijikata led an archaeological expedition to excavate and salvage a damaged, broken, dying, yet still breathing, pre-modern, nativist body and then turn it into something that, in reality, it already was – a myth.

Kinjiki, Hijikata's now-legendary, sexually violent, duet performance with Ohno Yoshito, the declaration of independence and forbidden fruit of the *butoh* movement, premiered in 1959.¹ Legendary not because it

¹ Titled after the Mishima novel of the same name, *Kinjiki* featured a teenage male dancer (Yoshito Ohno, 14 year-old son of *Butoh* co-founder, Kazuo Ohno) virtually strangling a

was scandalous. Scandal doesn't reserve a place for you in the pantheon; it only means you exist. To become a legend, it takes settling into a collective imaginary that the members of that collective sooner or later take for granted. It takes myth.

Notorious for proffering contradictory evidence about himself, Hijikata spent most of his adult life spinning a tale that fed his public persona.² In the decade following *Kinjiki*, he became either who he wanted to be or needed to be, what others wanted from him, or, perhaps, all of the above. Hijikata and other trickster figures of the period, such as Terayama, Dylan, or Warhol, spent the late 1950s through mid-1960s dissecting and rejecting the totalizing authority of their late modernist forefathers and were finally forced to make a positive statement, to actually *say* something, by the late 1960s, when, after exploding onto their respective scenes, they took turns imploding within a scene of their own making.

Of course, looking back, to a time when I was barely born in a culture once removed and a country an ocean away, is like staring into a magic lantern, or straining your ear to a broken harmonium, devices for communicating with the beyond to find out where and how the past and future live in the here and now. But you can only perceive faded colors or faint whispers. In other words, *You weren't there, Michael. How could you possibly know what you're talking about?* I don't. That's the point.³

chicken between his legs and another adult dancer (Hijikata) attempting to molest him.

² Some stories are told in a line, but myths are spun, i.e. eternally generated and transformed in a circular process, with no beginning or end point, no highs or lows, no inherent hierarchy. Such stories are also in constant self-reflexive dialogue, turning in on themselves at every moment, but with an unchanging radius, each at a uniform distance from itself, never any further or closer, so never hiding but never revealing, always simply what it is, has been, and will be.

³ "Have you ever dreamed of a place...you don't really recall ever having been to...a place that probably doesn't even exist except in your imagination...somewhere far away, half-remembered when you wake up...but when you were there you spoke the language, you knew your way around... That was the 60's. No, it wasn't. Wasn't either. It was '66...early '67. That was all." - Peter Fonda in the film, *The Limey* (1998), written by Lem Dobbs and directed by Stephen Soderbergh

Though I was adopted in 1968, I was born in 1967, which means my birth parents conceived me in Fall 1966 as living proof of this thesis. I was born in the Summer of Love but after the love had already moved on.



(Creative Commons)

Kamaitachi

On numerous occasions between 1965 and 1968, two men made their way from Tokyo to the cold, windswept farm plains of the Tohoku region of northern Japan armed with a 35mm Nikon F and black-and-white Kodak film, distant childhood memories, and a vast, improvisational facility for invoking searing, subconscious imagery. One was Hosoe Eikoh, a young photographer freshly minted into the upper echelon of contemporary visual arts after a now legendary photo book collaboration with novelist Mishima Yukio, in which the latter was literally wrapped, laid, lifted, and enthralled within a gorgeous and deathly fantasy world sprung from Hosoe's mind and Mishima's soul.⁴ The other was Hijikata, who, in 1959, had resigned in protest from Japan's National Dance Association after the uproar surrounding *Kinjiki*, and had begun to stake out a career expressly independent of mainstream legitimacy.

The resulting photo essay came to be called *Kamaitachi* (*Sickle-Weasel*), after a mythical, invisible beast that hid in wind flurries and attacked unsuspecting passersby on lone roads, cutting and quickly sealing them up before bleeding, so that the injury and pain lay underneath, mysteriously fomenting, agitating, and eating away from within. Since their first exhibition and publication in the late 1960s, the photos have become iconic in art history and served to further shape the careers of both collaborators.

But how is *Kamaitachi*, in Hosoe's words, a "subjective documentary?" How was a sense of both men's childhoods in Tohoku mined and reconstructed in order to create a contemporary, visual-performative expression

⁴ The photo essay was entitled, *Barakei* (*Ordeal by Roses*), and originally published in book form by Shueisha in 1963.

of folk mythology that also resulted in propagating an iconic mythology around Hijikata himself? What might we say the photos actually show us? Do the photos themselves possess immanence or does such a quality reside in the eye of beholder?

Looking at the images, we see over three dozen monochrome photos⁵ of Hijikata in various states of embodiment and action. The first handful are in an urban setting, and then, except for a short foray into a photo studio, the images move to an unnamed series of rural villages and farmlands. In all the photos, Hijikata's character lies within the full continuum of the gaze. In interaction with both villagers and city-dwellers, he is alternately depicted as watching, watched, and in implicit observational ("othering") competition with those around him. He is inspected, mocked, kowtowed to, embraced, mourned. He threatens, lurks, ingratiates, seduces, molests, flees, attacks, struggles. He flares devil horns in broad daylight. He hibernates like a hidden demon, or incipient plague, on a shelf in an old barn. He marries a farmgirl child and initiates her eroticism in a field of zinnias. He chases another bride – older, fat, toothless, drunk – who matches his maddened state, step by disjunctive step. He repeatedly flies through the air, the panels of his kimono flaring in every direction, as if transformed into chaos itself. In one of the final images, he careens through a rice paddy with a screaming baby in one arm, the other outstretched, as if clawing the very air that constitutes *and* conceals his uncontrollable, unnamable nature.

Born in the north, but growing up in Tokyo and only living in the countryside for one year as a 12 year-old evacuee during the Tokyo firebombings of 1944-1945, Hosoe recalled, "I liked the landscapes... but I hated the country itself...children playing around the corner would watch me with old, cold eyes...we from the city were thin from hunger. Their laughing expressions were awful...The dark, snowy country seemed to be full of ghosts." (cited in Viala/Masson-Sekine 1988: 191) His impetus for the project was also quite personal:

"I had the strange feeling...that I should not hate the land where my mother was born. If I hated it, I would hate my own mother. *Kamaitachi*, then, is a very personal record of my own memory from boyhood, with all the complex feelings of love and hate from those days in the countryside." (cited in Viala/Masson-Sekine 1988: 192)

Starting in the late 50s, both Hosoe and Hijikata had joined in the avant-garde zeitgeist of questioning their

⁵ In 2009, Aperture produced a new trade edition in book form with an additional eight photos never before published. Eikoh Hosoe, *Kamaitachi* (New York: Aperture Foundation, 2009).

new modern Japanese identity, rooted as it was in the façade and trappings of social commodification and late Modernist individualism. Hijikata came to an upending ethos, what is dark, grotesque, and death-like (i.e. what is rejected and marginalized by a psychically-compromised society) is actually beautiful and full of life.⁶ Among a new breed of Japanese photographers dedicated to personalized images, Hosoe also found his aesthetic voice in stark contrasts of light and dark, especially after witnessing Hijikata's *Kinjiki* premiere, whereupon the two men became collaborators and lifelong friends. Both artists delved into the alienation of late capitalism, Hosoe by forging a visceral style of tenuous self-identity poised between tradition, modernity, and fetishization of the body,⁷ and Hijikata by reveling, vaccine-like, in its tragic schizophrenia as a form of ritualized affliction and cure.

Hijikata, especially, plied the murky waters on society's fringes to find a working method and ready source of material, coming of age through both avant-garde dance and a marginalized economic subculture, working variously as a longshoreman, junk dealer, and other lowly vocations. Unlike Hosoe, Hijikata had only moved to Tokyo full-time in 1952, when he was 24 years old. At this point, his lack of high-level training and asymmetrical physique (one leg was shorter than the other) prevented him from obtaining the career in mainstream modern dance that he aspired to, thus driving him to turn inward and forge new aesthetic criteria. (Kurihara 1996: 17-18) In his early career, he did not publicly consider his rural background as inspiration. In published statements, his surreal references were more urban, anti-capitalist, and criminal:

Eyes intervene in the current generation whose soul too is unable to live merely through the succession of property. I eventually arrive at my material by carefully walking around Tokyo where the generation whose hands made eyes has not altogether died out. (Hijikata 2000: 41)

My dance...is behavior that explicitly flaunts its aimlessness in the face of a production-oriented society. (Hijikata 2000: 44)

I wager reality on a nonsensical vitality that has purged the echo of logic from my body and I dream of the day when I am sent to prison. (Hijikata 2000: 45)

⁶ Jean Genet was Hijikata's favorite writer: "Genet, rejected by society, affirms himself as he is, rejecting society in turn, and constructing his own paradoxical ethos (see Genet [1949] 1964). This paradoxical conversion became Hijikata's guiding aesthetic throughout his life: the ugly is the beautiful; death is life (Kurihara 2000: 18)."

⁷ See *Barakei*, *Man and Woman*, *Kimono*, *Kamaitachi*, and other works from the 1960s.

Hijikata created an urban-centric, mental landscape representative of the clash between the dual images of a pre-war, intuitive corporeality and a postwar, industrialized, domesticated body. He spent the period from 1959 to 1968 performing themes of socio-cultural marginalization, with Western-style modernization on one side and, on the other, a dissipating, indigenous, “Japanese” body, newly defined as obsolete at best and criminal at worst. Just as Crapanzano speaks of “imaginative horizons” that feed liminal, dialectic states of being that act as “determinants of...social imaginaries” (Crapanzano 2004: 1-15), so Hijikata’s imagined Tokyo was redolent with subliminal, embodied conflict in all directions, upon which he cast his insecurity, hatred, obsession, and desire, a kind of perfect imperfection, lush with rich metaphors for subverting social norms of beauty, quality, and morality.

By the late 1960s, however, Hijikata was reaching the outer limits of this imaginary, which, after all, had been expressly designed to eventually break down under the weight of its own increasing lack of definition. Thus, 15 years after moving to Tokyo and after three years of work on *Kamaitachi*, Hijikata began explicitly utilizing Tohoku references in his work. One might guess that when Hosoe and Hijikata returned to northern Japan together, they arrived with varied agendas: ostensibly, nostalgic excavation and filial reconciliation for Hosoe, and, perhaps, reimagination and re-purposing of visual-corporeal memory for Hijikata.

Thus, the period around *Kamaitachi* represented a bodily shift in Hijikata’s festering and fertile hinterland of social marginality from external, typed, and male to internal, biographical, and female. His seminal 1968 performance, *Hijikata Tatsumi to Nihonjin: Nikutai no Hanran (Hijikata Tatsumi and the Japanese: Revolt of the Flesh)*, was his last to depict a predominantly masculine universe replete with Western dance stereotypes and transgressive behavior. After this and the publication of *Kamaitachi* in 1969, Hijikata moved into an intense period of many years where he developed a lexicon of body imagery and mental states ostensibly inspired by his childhood and also began choreographing women, one of whom, Ashikawa Yoko, became his leading protégé until his death in 1986. Stories of crawling through rice fields, playing with deadly farming tools, fearing mythical beasts, drunken singing by his father, and alleged sale into prostitution of his sister all contributed to the eventual formation of a loosely codified *Butoh-fu* (Butoh language) inspired by a highly idiosyncratic Tohoku imaginary. By the premiere in 1972 of *27 Nights for Four Seasons*, a month of new Tohoku-inspired performances by his dance company, Hijikata was defining himself less by what he was not and did not have and increasingly by what he alleged to have experienced and become. This focus on his indigenous imaginary continued until his death in 1986, when he had just completed a new

choreography entitled, *Tohoku Kabuki*, which ostensibly combined fantastic childhood memories with the raw aesthetic of pre-Meiji kabuki, a working class entertainment until appropriation by the government as a late 19th Century, bourgeois reconstruction.

Hijikata’s gendered duality may have been foreshadowed in 1960 by his first collaborations with Hosoe, the photo essay, *Man and Woman*. High-contrast, monochrome photos of Hijikata and two female dancers show them mostly in body fragments, with faces, limbs, and torsos forcibly juxtaposed in order to reveal an instinctive sense of gender-based tensions and harmonies. From their first work together, the two men searched intensely for ways to express a wide range of internalized, domesticated, and intuitive subjectivities.⁸ *Kamaitachi*, therefore, was a midpoint of sorts in their mutual progression from rebellion against conventional typologies of physicality, gender, and sexuality to eventual creation of self-styled cosmologies rooted in highly subjectivized body vocabularies.⁹

So is there evidence for these aesthetic shifts in the images themselves? Or do the photos simply stand on their own as powerful works of art, the direct efficacy of which is dependent on the viewer? My own opinion is that both factors are at play. On the one hand, while there is nothing in the photos that specifically communicates the idea that Hosoe and Hijikata are working through childhood traumas, I believe they also contain a clear sense of presencing directly influenced by the environment in each photo. In the city, Hijikata is shown clearly at odds with the other inhabitants and surroundings: under a microscope, fleeing through concrete gardens, alone with children’s toys, a devil in the marketplace. In every image, he is at odds with the people and places around him. In the countryside, however, he transforms into practically an elemental force: crawling through shadows, hurtling with the wind, melting into the mud. Villagers alternately mock and then fete him. He eventually joins with two brides in absurd and obsessive matrimony rituals. He dies in captivity, appears again in harvested, denuded fields, and becomes as one with the air and earth, light and darkness.

⁸ Hosoe, for instance, in working with Mishima on the first photos for *Barakei*, wrapped the novelist in a garden hose and made him stand in place while he shot two entire rolls of film in order to “destroy the preconceived ideas about Mishima’s image in order to create a *new* Mishima.” (Hosoe 2009) Hosoe took credit for all of the image details in the project, which he said evolved entirely from his own imagination, and he took “whole responsibility for everything that is presented in them.” (Hosoe 1991: 25)

⁹ For Hosoe, the apotheosis of this work was the photo essay, *Embrace*, published in 1970 and featuring the bodies of many of Hijikata’s dancers.

These gestures, stances, and movements are manufactured entry points, ways of performing, of being, in and of an *imagined, post-indigenous body* that ostensibly cannot help itself from transcending both its rural foundations and urbanized filters to resolve into a tensile, spontaneous lexicon of memory, subjectivity, and presence. I say this body is *imagined* because of its semi-fictional basis and *post-indigenous* because Hijikata posited a nativist, essentialist identity off of its moorings in an early postmodern world not of its own making. Through Hosoe's biographical framework and aesthetic, Hijikata unveiled his own potential for realizing a larger and fuller artistic vision than he had previously attempted. *Kamaitachi* allowed him the freedom to revisualize his roots into a fantastic yet also practical working method that would last until his death two decades later.¹⁰

The commercially and critically successful photos also provided the additional benefit of greater social validation for Hijikata, raising his profile from *enfant terrible* of the Japanese dance world to legitimate cultural practitioner. From the late 1960s onward, Hijikata became not only a respected artist, but a cultural icon as well. His aesthetic principles and choreographic forms pronounced and practiced within this period became the visual basis of the stereotypical Butoh *style* that continues modishly through the present day, both within much of the Japanese and international performance communities and, unfortunately, in the minds of most critics as well.

Hosoe continued onward after *Kamaitachi* to devise both highly-stylized, studio-based abstractions as well as subjective documentaries with other willing subjects. However, this seminal work with Hijikata continues to inspire butoh-based practitioners around the globe and stands, as one longtime, American student described to me, as "image words that tell me everything I need to know about dance."¹¹

For most practitioners, it is primarily their perception of Hijikata's Tohoku identity, not Hosoe's, that defines *Kamaitachi*. For them, the photos are not so much designed images with *aesthetic* immanence, but rather a source of knowledge, full of *psychic* immanence; a window into the very roots of butoh practice itself. While Hijikata did write down a great deal of working notes, imagery, and poetic, surreal essays, he never

published his *butoh-fu* himself or publicly defined butoh in terms of a set and determined training method. Butoh practice is, by definition, an ever-fluid space of individual, idiosyncratic engagement between the psychic and corporeal selves, between mind and body, typically more concerned with the nature of presence and identity than clear formation of artistic expression. Thus, a few dozen photos, a handful of short film clips, and a number of largely oblique public statements are all most butoh practitioners have ever witnessed of Hijikata in the 24 years since his death. This has made *Kamaitachi* a standard reference by default for the self-definition of butoh, mentally repeated by countless students and dancers who accept it as a fundamental part of their collective definition of *who and what* Hijikata was.

In analyzing butoh photos, especially seminal 1960s images, one might surmise that later generation practitioners often look to these in their desire for gnosis from the roots of butoh itself represented by its founding generation of artists. This desire drives many practitioners to bestow a proto-spiritual legitimacy on such photos as a kind of predominant, sacred text, replete as all sacred texts are with alluring, obfuscative surfaces, infinite, undefinable depths, and an aching, unresolving physicality.

Returning to *Camera Lucida*, the act of looking to the past in this manner sits between Barthes's contrast of the amateur and professional photographer's gaze: "...it is the amateur...who is the assumption of the professional: for it is he who stands closer to the *noeme* of photography," (Barthes 1981: 99) which Barthes defines as "that-has-been," or "the Intractable" (Barthes 1981: 77), a past existential state in a photo, which he equates with his personal truth. (Barthes 1981: 98) Amateurs look to the past, what exists apart from and despite themselves, and are therefore sentimental, subjective. Professionals look to the future, what can or will exist because of them, and are therefore rational, objective. John Berger states:

Certainty may be instantaneous; doubt requires duration; meaning is born of the two. An instant photographed can only acquire meaning insofar as the viewer can read into it a duration extending beyond itself. When we find a photograph meaningful, we are lending it a past and a future. (Berger/ Mohr 1982)

I believe this is a function of our second nature tendency to interpret and assign a place in our cosmology to everything we see. Thus, butoh practitioners often look to the past in order create their futures, making their relationship with viewed photos a binary between objective and subjective perception. Further, such a binary in photography is representative of, on the one hand, killing and death and, on the other, birth and life. By perceiving facts (Barthes's

¹⁰ For example, Natsu Nakajima, one of Hijikata's first students, stated, "Hijikata would tell us: 'Make the face of an old devil woman, with the right hand in the shape of a horn, and the left hand holding her long hair'...then comes the light of the sun, and the eyes become smaller; then comes the wind, and the eyelids quiver; then you must feel like a stone." (cited in Viala/Masson-Sekine 1988: 135)

¹¹ Interview with Rosemary Candelario, Los Angeles, CA, 10/23/09.

studium), i.e. stasis, we destroy what's there, by nature actually mutable and impermanent. By perceiving idiosyncratic impressions (Barthes's punctum), i.e. ambiguous, unstable reality, we generate meaning and even immanence, which arises in the fertile liminal space between the image and our desires.

Jay Hirabayashi, Co-Artistic Director of Kokoro Dance in Vancouver, Canada, recalls such an experience during his early practice in the 1980s:

I had a book of pictures of butoh stuff, and I read Jean Viala, who put out a book, and I read what he said butoh was. The first book was in Japanese, so I couldn't read the text, but the pictures were amazing. So we would look at the pictures, and I had done one workshop. We just decided we would try to do what we imagined butoh was. So I shaved my head, we painted ourselves white. I made some dances where I was moving very slowly. And after, when I finally did get to take Kazuo Ohno's class, he said don't imitate me, and don't use any technique. So I thought that actually when we started we were doing the right thing.¹²

Heyward Bracey, a Los Angeles-based dancer, reveals a similar connection to early photos of Hijikata after hearing a story from his teacher about Hijikata's supposed bodily epiphanies upon returning to his home village:

In sharing Hijikata's story he managed to include me somehow in a "lineage" of cultural transmission that had begun barely 40 years ago when Hijikata encountered something more substantial than he had previously known in his work and training as a dancer in the body of his father on the roads of his village. My teacher's way of framing it was that Hijikata had "found his own country.".... Having a rather direct personal connection to a pivotal experience of Hijikata's puts the photographs in a whole other category of experience. When viewing them I'm looking at images that on some level tap into my connection with Hijikata's epiphany, which has had an impact on my own personal and artistic life.¹³

In the conclusion to *Camera Lucida*, Barthes makes a clarion call for subjective truth as the ultimate mode of knowledge production and comprehension of reality when he states, "let us abolish the images, let us save immediate desire...Such are the two ways of the Photograph. The choice is mine: to subject its spectacle to the civilized code of perfect illusions, or to confront it in the wakening of intractable reality." (Barthes 1981: 119) In other words, if photos really are what we make of them, then, in Barthes's words, what we make, what we produce with the labor of

our "loving and terrified consciousness," is "ecstasy." (Barthes 1981: 119)

Thus, without consideration of a source like *Kamaitachi* as a sacred text, from where would practitioners draw essential and ongoing inspiration for the endless redefinition and renewal of their practice? As Csordas has postulated, people's active imagination of the sacred in their lives "is defined not by the capacity to have such experiences, but by the human propensity to thematize them as radically other." (Csordas 1988: 34) In other words, our experience of the sacred is often defined by our desire for it in others. Just as diasporic Tibetan Buddhist nationals find immanence (Benjamin's "aura") in any reproduction of the Dalai Lama's photo (Harris 2004: 142), so many butoh-based practitioners find inherent inspiration in *Kamaitachi* photos in books, magazines, museum exhibits, and documentary films. In this way, we "know" Hijikata in the context of *our own* imaginary of his life within his memory space and butoh's postwar roots. For, if Hijikata did not come from his invented, post-indigenous, Tohoku imaginary, how else might we know where we come from?

Full references to this article are available in the Table of References section.

¹² Hirabayashi, Jay, from an interview with the author, 3/21/10.

¹³ Bracey, Heyward. Interview with the author, February 2010.

Common Songs: A Study of the Saibara Collection and Inquiry into “Fuzoku” Arts in the Heian Court

JAMES SCANLON-CANEGATA, UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA, USA

Introduction

Even a cursory glance at the obscure *saibara* song collection reveals a deep and prevalent intertextual relationship with the canonical Nara period poetic anthologies, the *Man'yōshū* (万葉集) and *Nihon shoki kayō* (日本書紀歌謠). This intertextuality is, in some cases, near identical duplicates of poems. They offer an intriguing perspective into the semiotic construction of the songs, as well as offer insight into what aesthetic elements separate *saibara* from the collections that help construct its subtext.

Saibara is usually treated as a Heian period text (Konishi 1957, Usuda 2000, Kimura 2006, Ikeda 2006) with archaic but untenable roots in traditional oral songs of commoners and regional ballads from outside the capitol (Fujiwara 2011, 43 - 50; Usuda 2000, 116 - 17). This widely held assertion about *saibara's* provenance is the most persistent element in studies and commentaries on the songs. This paper will look at *saibara* in the historical records, as well as at its intertexts, in order to illuminate elements of its historical construction as a *fuzoku* (風俗) “folk” text.

Background

Saibara (催馬楽) “horse urging music” refers to a genre of accompanied vocal court songs from the Heian period. It consists of 61 songs that were ultimately preserved in the late Heian and early Kamakura periods. These songs were likely part of a much larger repertoire that was performed in accompaniment with music and dance in the Heian court (Konishi 1957, 267). *Saibara* was formalized as a genre of *gagaku* (雅楽) “elegant music” during the *Engi* period (901 - 923), but there are several early attestations, beginning with the *Sandai Jitsuroku* (三代実録) “True History of Three Reigns of Japan” (901 CE), *Wamyō ruijushō* (倭名類聚鈔) “Annotated Classification of Japanese Taxonomies” (ca. 935), *Makura no sōshi* (枕草子) “Pillow Book” (1002), *Genji monogatari* (源氏物語) “Tale of Genji” (1021), and *Taiheiki* (太平記) “Record of Tranquility” (ca. 1368).

Almost nothing is known of the provenance of the songs, however they are frequently attributed to traditional regional songs of the peasantry that were brought to the

court through tribute and traveling performers (Fujiwara 2011; Konishi 1957; Usuda 2000).

The history of the songs is illustrated first by Go-Shirakawa in *Ryōjin hishō* (梁塵秘抄) “Secret Collection of Rafter Dust” (ca. 1180) and later by Ichijō Kanera in *Rōjin guanshō* (梁塵愚案抄) “Secret Collection of Rafter Dust Folly” (ca. 15 c.). In *Ryōjin hishō: Kudenshū* (梁塵秘抄口伝集) “Secret Selections of Rafter Dust: Collection of Oral Transmissions,” Go-Shirakawa writes,

From ancient times to the present, these songs have been learned and passed down. These [songs] are known as *kagura*, *saibara*, and *fuzoku*... *Saibara* was born from the oral traditions of commoners from various provinces who came offering tribute in the Ministry of Finance

古より今にいたるまで、習ひ伝へたるうたあり。これを神楽催馬楽風俗といふ。かぐらは天照おほん神の、天の岩戸をおし開かせたまひける代に始まり、催馬楽は、大蔵の省の国々の貢物おさめける民の口遊におこれり。(Ryōjin hishō: Kudenshū 1)

Among the theories of *saibara's* origins, this early description by retired emperor Go-Shirakawa has held the attention of most modern scholars on the subject. In a recent study, Fujiwara notes the difficulty in substantiating this version of *saibara's* history, but yields to the possibility of a refining process that may have taken place after the early adoption of the songs in the court (Fujiwara 2001, 47, 45).

Saibara was ultimately preserved in two family manuscripts, *Tenji-bon* (天治本) (1125) of the Fujiwara (藤原) family (referred to in the literature as the *Tōke* 藤原家 manuscript) and *Nabeshimake-bon* (鍋島家本) (ca. late 12 c.) of the Minamoto family (referred to in the literature as *Genke* 源家). Despite the late dates of these manuscripts, both are written in *man'yōgana*, which would have almost certainly been an obsolete script by the eleventh or even mid-late tenth century. This, in corroboration with other evidence suggests that the

collection itself may be much older than their extant copies reveal.¹ The first appearance of “*saibara*” in text is the *Sandai Jitsuroku* (三代実録) “True History of Three Reigns of Japan,” part of the *Rikkokushi* (六国史) Six National Histories. It is recorded that a lady-in-waiting who had risen to the rank of *Naishi no kami* (尚侍) or Fourth Rank court official, *Hiroi no joō* (広井女王), was proficient at and instructed in *saibara* song and dance:

Fourth Rank court official Third Subordinate Lady Hiroi passed. At the time of her death she had surpassed eighty years. Hiroi cultivated a virtuous character. She had etiquette. She thusly was known to be a talented singer. She was especially perfected in *saibara* song. (Tenth month, twenty-third day of *Jōgan* 1 [859 CE])

尚侍従三位広井女王薨。薨時年八十有余。広井少修徳操。挙動有礼。以能歌見称。特善催馬楽歌。

Thus, it is clear that as part of a performance tradition, *saibara* songs were already being enjoyed by the court aristocracy since at least the ninth century. This allows for some firm grounding when considering the historical context of *saibara* being preserved some time in the Nara period. However, tenuous speculation turns to serious consideration in light of other textual and historical connections, beginning with Hiroi no joō and the *Nihon shoki*.

While very little is known about Hiroi no Joō, it is likely that she came from a family with a tradition of some performative and / or poetic achievement in the Nara period. In the *Sandai jitsuroku* it states that Hiroi is the descendant of Nihin no nagashinnō (二品長親皇) “Prince Nagashin of the Second Princely rank.” This is likely Naga no miko (長皇子) “Prince Naga” (ca. 715) who was the fourth son of Emperor Tenmu (天武天皇) (631-686). Poems authored by Naga no Miko can be found in *Man'yōshū* volume I and III (*Ise to Tsukushi no tabi*) (MYS 1.60, 1.65, 1.73, 2.130). Additionally, Nagata no Miko’s² father, Kurusu Ō (来栖王) “Lord Kurusu”³ (681-758) was charged with the duty of heading the bureau of court *gagaku* in 733. Concurrently

¹ Comparative evidence of these manuscripts with early Chinese music transcriptions suggest a “received precedent” (Markham 1983, 17). The statistical preservation of *kō-otsu* distinctions in the *man'yōgana* graphs used also point to scribal conservatism in the orthography, strongly suggesting that the manuscripts are copies or edits of earlier ones (For details, please refer to Scanlon-Canegata, unpublished MA thesis, 2014).

² Nagata no Miko is Prince Naga’s grandson

³ For details on the controversial dates and records regarding Prince Naga and the imperial line, see <http://www7a.biglobe.ne.jp/~kamiya1/mypage441.htm>

he organized an *utagaki* at the *Suzakumon* 朱雀門 “Vermillion Bird Gate” at the capitol *Heijō kyō* (平城京) (Nara). In the *Shoku nihongi* (続日本紀), in the second month, first day of the thirtieth year of the sexagenary cycle, *Tenpyō* (天平) six (734), it is written:

At the *Suzakumon* gate, before the imperial palace of the emperor, an *utagaki* with more than 200 men and women in attendance was viewed. Among them were talented individuals of special distinction. Lord Nagata of the Lower Fourth rank,⁴ Lord Kurusu⁵ of the Fourth Rank, Prince Kadobe,⁶ Lord Nonaka of the Fifth Rank⁷ and others were the event leaders. Everyone sang verses in chorus. And in this way, they performed in the scales (*ne* 音) of the song Naniwa (難波), the song Yamatobe (倭部), the song Asaji no hara (浅茅原), the song Hirose (広瀬), and the song *Ya mo sashi* (八裳刺)². As decreed, men and women in the capitol were seen indulging there. They enjoyed thoroughly until they became fatigued. The men and women who (honorably) [performed] *utagaki* received a small reward (for their performances).

二月癸巳朔。天皇御朱雀門、覽歌垣。男女二百余人。五品已上有風流者、皆交雜其中。正四位下長田王。從四位下栗栖王。門部王。從五位下野中王等為頭。以本末唱和。為難波曲。倭部曲。浅茅原曲。広瀬曲。八裳刺曲之音。令都中士女縱觀。極歡而罷。賜奉歌垣男女等祿有差。

Kurusu’s son, Ōhara Ō (大原王) (ca. 742), who is also found in the *Man’yōsū* (17.3952), would have been Hiroi’s paternal uncle and elder. Furthermore, the similarities between the songs performed at the above mentioned *utagaki* and the *saibara* songs *Asamuzu* 浅水 “shallow water,” *Asamidori* 浅緑 “shallow (pale) green,” and *Namuba no umi* 難波海 “sea of Nanba” cannot be ignored. What is clear is that Hiroi and her family had deep ties with practitioners and offices dealing with Nara period *gagaku*, and *saibara* in particular. Fujiwara suggests that Hiroi was the first to learn and pass on the *Genke saibara* tradition from Emperor Saga (嵯峨天皇) (r. 809-823) (Fujiwara 2011, 131). If this is accurate, it puts into

⁴ Nagata Ō Seishi (正四位下長田王) (*Nagata-no-Miko* 長田皇)

⁵ Kurusu Ō Jushi (来栖王從四)

⁶ Kadobe-no-Ōkami (門部王)

⁷ Nonaka Ō jugo (從五位下野中王)

question the assertion that allusions to poems in the *Man'yōshū* and other Nara period texts are in fact 'allusions.' These instances would have almost certainly been viewed as borrowed elements by later literati, but in reality it may be something much more indirect and unintentional. Haruo Shirane reminds us that intertextuality is a "collective unconscious" that "dispenses with the classical criteria of authorial consciousness or contact" (Shirane 1990, 76). In line with this definition, *saibara* is a prime candidate for this kind of unconscious and authorless ubiquity. What's more, the composite of textual elements present in these *songs* speaks to a possible parallelism between folk traditions and early court poetry.

On the character and venues where the *saibara* songs enjoyed their greatest popularity in the court, the *Gyōyūshō* (御遊抄) (1485) documents it in excerpts dated from 906 to 1200 CE. The context of the songs is further documented in the *Genji monogatari* 源氏物語 (1021) and *Saibara ryakufu* (催馬楽略譜) (1738). These entries describe songs from the *saibara* repertoire as sung typically with musical accompaniment at various events through all four seasons. They were especially prevalent at *kōen* (公宴) "court banquets." The lyrics were not fixed and are described as being flexible, with ample room for spontaneous alterations, without strict rules or guidelines for performance (Fujiwara 2011, 20 - 21). Lyrics and phrases would often be altered spontaneously and many times deliberately in order to adjust the content to a particular event taking place, i.e. adjusting to appropriate seasonal metaphors or physical locales, etc. (Harich-Schneider 1952, 403; Fujiwara 2011, 43). An excerpt from the *Gyōyūshō* confirms the casual singing of *saibara* songs at a banquet:

On the occasion of the imperial visitation to *Tōhokuin*. Record of Minister Sukefusa. At the residence of the Imperial Consort.

There was no musical performance, however the adjutant minister who was in attendance at the banquet initiated the singing of miscellaneous songs. A certain Saibara [song], a certain miscellaneous song, and, again, a certain Kusha⁸ hymn, which were said to be quite unorthodox.

幸東北院資房記。女院御在所。無奏音楽。但於饗座丞相及戸部発雜芸事。或催馬楽。或雜哥。或又俱舍頌。奇怪云々。

⁸ Kusha (俱舍) (Sanskrit *Kośa*) is probably referring to *Kushashū* (俱舍宗), a sect of Hinayana Buddhism brought to Japan some time in the Nara period from India via a continental intermediary. The sign 頌 *jō* can refer to a gatha or hymn (also those found in the *shijing* (Jp. *shikyō* 詩經 "Classic of Poetry")

(*Gyōyūshō*, *Chōkin gyōkō*, *Eisho* 6) (cited in Fujiwara 2011, 44)

This excerpt dated 1086 and describes the unfixed nature of the songs. Konishi draws a parallel between *saibara* and *min'yō* (民謡) via its relationship to *gagaku* (Konishi 1957, 167). The term *minyō* is a calque derived from German *volkslied* "folk song." This is an interesting parallel considering the character of the songs as described in the literature. The definition of folk music is an elusive one. Ronald Cohen defines folk music as a musical tradition with unknown origins (Cohen 2006). Another definition given by the International Folk Music Council is based on an evolutionary process of oral transmission (Latham 2002). Other definitions have folk music as constituting any musical tradition associated with the underclass, or that is culturally and linguistically regional in nature (as opposed to central or standard speech), and being passed through oral tradition. Within the study of folklore, the folk process is the operation by which songs are adapted, re-interpreted, and altered over time in order to better suit changing environments (ibid). In consideration of this process, *saibara* can be viewed in this way. While it is likely the original melodies were lost early into its induction into the *gagaku* repertoire, the songs likely had considerable dialectal and melodic variation (Tachibana 1967; Fujiwara 2011). Each song chosen was inevitably representative of whatever region they hailed from. As is the case in the folk process, lyrics were altered and adapted to fit the court environment and the events where they were sung. Moribe asserts that the songs were not altered from their original state as regional folk ballads (Tachibana 1967, 102). This disputable assertion notwithstanding, *saibara* offers ample connection with late Nara period courtiers, as seen above, as well as an intriguing correlation with excerpts from the *Nihon shoki*.

Geography of the songs and *Nihon shoki* records

Thirty-five of the *saibara* songs contain references to specific geographic locations in Japan. The majority of songs indicate provinces in or around the capital *Heijōkyō* (平城京) modern Kyoto, most in the areas along the *Tōkaidō* (東海道) "Eastern Sea Road." *Tōkaidō* encompasses the *Goki shichidō* (五畿七道) "Five Capital Provinces and Seven Districts (lit: roads)." *Tōsandō* (東山道) "Eastern Mountain Road" stretches through the center of *Honshū* from as far west as modern day *Shiga* prefecture and northeast to modern *Ibaraki* prefecture. However, *saibara* does not indicate anything farther than modern day *Aichi*. *Saibara's* geographical distribution can only be put into perspective when compared with textual evidence from the *Nihon shoki*.

"With no limitation as to the distance or proximity of their provinces, [they] invited able

singers.”⁹

The above excerpt is from the *Ryō no shūge* (令集解), a ninth century commentary on the *yōrō* code (養老律令) originally written in 718 CE. The full excerpt describes the *utamai no tsukasa* (樂官) the governmental management system of song and dance under the *ritsu ryō* (律令) system. This early description of the office's origins corroborate those of court *saibara*'s genesis as *fuzoku uta* (風俗歌) “folk / commoner song” in *Ryōjin hishō* and *Ryōjin guanshō*. In an entry dated 675, an excerpt from *Nihon shoki* lists the provinces where song, dance, and other talent were collected under the auspices of the imperial academy of music, to perform and instruct within the confines of the court.

There are a total of 9 corresponding locations out of a total 12 cited in *Tenmuki* and 16 in *saibara*. Furthermore, all 13 locations are referenced in the *Engishiki* (延喜式) (927) with the exception of *Awaji*. This evidence is cause for speculation and is considered by Konishi (1957) and Fujiwara (2011) in their assessment of *saibara* as having genuine *fuzoku* origins. With other sources agreeing with this analysis, it is likely that, at the very least, these were the areas where many of the *saibara* songs originated, some time in the Nara period. Fujiwara views these statistics as supporting the idea that the songs collected as *saibara* were not limited to outlying provincial areas but also represent *fuzoku uta* from the capitol (Fujiwara 2011, 53 - 55). Furthermore, he cites the intertextuality and phrasing that is reflected in poems from the *Man'yōshū* and the *Nihon shoki kayō* (日本書紀歌謠) “Archaic songs of the *Nihon shoki*.”

Despite this correlation, there is only one identifiable textual allusion to the *Nihon shoki kayō* in *saibara*. It is dated *Tenchi* 9 (ca. 635) and occurs in a song that contains comparable elements from other intertexts as well:

Saibara: Takekawa (竹河)

太介加波乃 波之乃川女名留也 波之乃川
女名留也 波名曾乃尔 波礼 波名曾乃尔
和礼乎波波名天也 和礼乎波波奈天也 女
左之太久戸天
*take kafa no / fasi no tume naru ya / fasi no tume
naru ya / fanazono ni fare / fanazono ni / ware
woba fanate ya ware woba fanate ya / mezasi
tagufete*

By the bridge of Takekawa, [it is] by the bridge
of Takekawa

At that flower garden *fare!*

Let [me] go at the flower garden, put me with
those girls and let me go! (*Saibara: Takekawa*)

Nihon shoki 124

于知波志能 都梅能阿素弭爾 伊提摩栖古
utipasi no₂ / tume₂ no₂ / aso₁bi₁ ni / ide-mase ko₂

Come out girls, to the amusement by the bridge
(NSK 124)

There are no precisely corresponding full lines, just the phrases *fasi ~ pasi* “bridge,” and *tume* “edge; vicinity” However, the description and context is similar, both are anticipating the company of young girls at the foot of a bridge. In part following Moribe, Usuda suggests that the *saibara* song is a fragment of an old tale involving sexual temptation of the imperial princess serving at *Ise Shrine* (*Saigū* 齋宮), for which the punishment was death (Usuda 2000, 147). Tsuchihashi views the *Nihon shoki* poem as a description of *utagaki*, which commonly took place at the foot of a bridge (Tsuchihashi 1957, 206). This *saibara* song is also compared with the following *Man'yōshū* poem:

墨江之 小集樂尔出而 寤尔毛 己妻尚乎 鏡登
見津藻
*SUMI₁NO₂YE NO₂ / WODUME₂ ni IDETE /
UTUTU ni mo / ONO₂-DUMA SURA wo /
KAGAMI₁to₂MI₁tu mo*

Going out to the small gathering at Sumiyoshi
It is not a dream

That my spouse appears as a transient beauty, as
if [looking] in a mirror (MYS 16.3808)

This *Man'yōshū* poem has a commentary following:

[Regarding this poem], it is said there was a man from outside the capitol. His name is not known. On an occasion, the townspeople gathered in great numbers and for field amusement (*utagaki*). Among the people who attended there was a couple of provincial peasant stock. The woman's countenance was handsome and supreme to everyone who gathered there. And that provincial peasant felt increasingly endeared towards his wife. This was when he made the song and praised her with it.

右傳云 昔者鄙人 姓名未詳也 于時鄉里男女衆
集野遊 是會集之中有鄙人 夫婦 其婦容姿端正
秀於衆諸 乃彼鄙人之意 弥增愛妻之情 而作斯
歌 贊嘆美兒也

The commentary identifies this poem as composed by a man of regional peasantry stock (*tohoto* 鄙人) during an *utagaki*. The above *Nihon shoki* poem also has a clear reference to *utagaki*. These intertexts necessitate a

⁹Original excerpt: 不限国遠近取能歌人耳。

reevaluation of Usuda's interpretation of the *saibara* song and immediately tie the song into a subtextual theme of *utagaki*, romantic encounters and feminine beauty. They are further tied together by their *fuzoku* provenance (explicitly in MYS 16.3808) and topic. It is difficult to say whether these songs were included consciously or as an unconscious bricolage of poetic elements accessible to anyone within the sphere of oral ballads in this period. Suffice it to say that the intertextuality between *saibara* and *Man'yōshū* is considerable, and begs many more questions about the literary or pre-literary relationship they reveal.

Saibara and *Man'yōshū*

Man'yōshū is the major (known) intertext of *saibara*. There are 26 references to the *Man'yōshū* occurring across eight books. This is probably one of the most intriguing and evocative aspects of the *saibara* songs, an aspect that has them stand out considerably from the other Heian period *fuzoku* song collections. Interestingly, with the exception of one poem *Man'yōshū* 11.2362, and *saibara*: *Yama shiro* (山城), all the songs with *Man'yōshū-saibara* parallels are from unknown authors (Fujiwara 2011, 41). While these parallels are not numerous, it is important to keep in mind the size of the *saibara* corpus. Furthermore, the putative origins, venue, content, and composition of the majority of songs in the *Saibara* collection are, for the most part, vastly divergent from those selected for inclusion in the *Man'yōshū*. This makes for a perplexing qualitative contradiction in the inclusion of *Man'yōshū* poems in the collection. In order to better understand what these resemblances reveal, it is necessary to briefly outline the *Man'yōshū* books wherein they appear.

It is clear that of all 26 instances, there is particular density in Book VII, XII, and XIV. The concentration of intertextual references to poems in Book XIV is interesting, considering the association of *Azuma uta* with *fuzoku* artistry in general. The relatively high number of occurrences in Book VII and XI is also interesting for different reasons, which I will elucidate below. However, a compositional breakdown of the books that have the highest number of poems with intertextual references in *saibara* is necessary to understand what, if any, connections they may have to better understand its historical context.

Man'yōshū Book VII contains the highest number of intertextual references in *saibara*, occurring in six songs (five poems from Book VII). Book VII's compiler is not known. It contains 350 poems in the *zōka* (雑歌), *hiyuka* (比喩歌), and *banka* (挽歌) genres. Though the majority of poems are not dated, they are likely from the late seventh or early eighth century. Along with the *zōka* and *hiyuka* genres are a series of themed poems such as *mondō* (問答) "question and answer" poems involving a hypothetical addressee (i.e. MYS 7.1251), and

yamatokoto (大和琴) "songs on the Japanese zither," which include songs applied to the *kagura* and other *gagaku* repertoires.

The majority of poems have anonymous authors. However, among those attributed to an individual, Book VII contains a small pool of various authors. The vast majority of poems, however, are attributed to *Kakinomoto no Hitomaro*, 56 in total. These poems are from the collection *Kakinomoto no ason Hitomaro kashū* (柿本朝臣人麻呂歌集) "*Kakinomoto no ason Hitomaro* Poetry Collection" (abbr. *Hitomaro Collection*). This largest cluster of references in *Man'yōshū* Books VII, XI, and XII statistically reflect the distribution of poems from the *Hitomaro Collection* in *Man'yōshū*. The highest density of *Hitomaro Collection* poems is found in Book XI with 161 poems. The full distribution is found on page xx.

With the exception of one reference appearing in Book XIV, the *saibara-Man'yōshū* intertextual references correlate exclusively with poems from *Hitomaro Collection*. It is clear from the conspicuous appearance of these poems that they were held in high esteem by the compilers of *Man'yōshū*. Commons notes that this is especially true in Book VII, where the poems are indeed heading most of the *zōka* 雑歌 sections, thus reflecting veneration paid to Hitomaro as one of the great and respected poets of the age (Commons 2009, 34). There are 84 poems attributed directly to Hitomaro himself, but these are distinct from those quoted from the *Hitomaro Collection*. The recitation of Hitomaro's songs before travel poems in some *Man'yōshū* books further suggests that Hitomaro's name was at least superstitiously associated with safety in travel (Commons 2009, 1). While this does point to some connection between Hitomaro and the *saibara*, or perhaps more aptly, early oral songs and poetic traditions of travelling entertainers and regional commoners, more investigation is necessary to substantiate this.

It is not known whether these songs were actually composed by him or not. There is a theory that Hitomaro did, in fact, not author the bulk of these poems, but that he collected them in his travels.

These lines of inquiry may bring about more questions than answers. The connections between *saibara* and Nara period poetic collections and its historical provenance, may turn out to be a phantasm—a construction, of a vision of *saibara* as nostalgic ballads, imbuing them with a certain curiosity and raw flavor that would have appealed to the bored and isolated court aristocracy. Or there may be a genuine underlying history threading them together. However, the implications for both of these scenarios is significant for our understanding of the development of oracular traditions and literacy in Japan, as well as the way in which song and poetry and native traditions of the populace was conceptualized in the

minds of early Japanese courtiers. is one of several collections included throughout the *Man'yōshū* as *kokashū* 古歌集 “old song collection” (Commons 2003: 34).

Man'yōshū Book XI contains four poems referenced in four *saibara* songs. Of these, MYS 11:2362 is identified as a *Hitomaro Collection* poem. This book in its entirety is identified as having a distinctly folk flavor (Takagi 1972: 9-11). It is also dominated by logographic writing, especially in the case of the *Hitomaro Collection* poems.

These *Man'yōshū* books share a few commonalities: (1) the spelling system; all the books apply semantographic

spelling with very few exceptions. (2) The general composition of the poems: Books XI and XII have distinctly folk-style poems reminiscent of some *gagaku* and *kagura* song varieties. (3) Anonymous authorship; the majority of poems in Book VII, XI, and XII have anonymous authors. (4) Kakinomoto no Hitomaro; *Kakinomoto no Ason Hitomaro Kashū* (柿本朝人麻呂歌集) poems appear frequently in Book VII, XI, and XII. These three books specifically contain poems from the *Hitomaro Collection*. The

References are found in the Table of References section.



Photo by Wally Gobetz (Creative Commons)



Table of References

Kuki Shūzō's Temporal Aesthetics: Finding Japanese Identity in Art and Literature

Diogo Cesar Porto da Silva, from Kyushu University, Japan

Kuki, Shūzō. *Kuki Shūzō Zenshū (Obras Completas de Kuki Shūzō)*. Vol 1. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1980.

Kuki, Shūzō. *The Metaphysics of Literature*. IN: Marra, Michael F. *Kuki Shūzō: A Philosopher's Poetry and Poetics*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004.

_____. *Iki y Fūryū: Ensayos de estética y hermenéutica*. Trad.: Falero, Alfonso J. Valencia: Institució Alfons el Magnànim, 2007.

_____. *Reflections on Japanese Taste: The Structure of Iki*. Trans.: Clark, John. Sydney: Power Publications, 1997.

Bergson, Henri. *La Pensée et le mouvant. Essais et conférences*. Presses Universitaires De France, Paris, 1946.

Kierkegaard, Soren. *Either/Or, Part I (Kierkegaard's Writings, 3)*. Trans.: Hong, Edna; Hong, Howard. Princeton University Press, 1987

Hisamatsu, Shin'ichi. *Zen and the Fine Arts*. Trans.: Tokiwa, Gishin. Tokyo; New York. Kodansha International, 1982.

Light, Stephen. *Shuzo Kuki and Jean-Paul Sartre: Influence And Counter-Influence In The Early History Of Existential Phenomenology*. Southern Illinois University Press, 1987.

The Influence and Remaining Japanese Cultural Elements in Raku Artworks of Contemporary Non-Japanese Artists/Potters

Khairul Nizan Mohd Aris, Vaughan Rees and Jacqueline Clayton, of The University of New South Wales, Australia

Morgan Pitelka, *Handmade Culture*, University of Hawaii Press, 2005

Morgan Pitelka, *Flame, Smoke, Clay, Glaze, Ceramic Review* 230 March/ April 2008

Nicholas Lees, *Under Fire*, *Ceramic Review* 178, Jul-Aug, 1999

Christopher Tyler and Richard Hirsch, *Raku, Techniques for Contemporary Potters*, (Watson-Guptill Publications), 1975

Martha Drexler Lynn, *Useful Misunderstandings Japanese and Western Mingei*, *Ceramics: Art and Perception* No 70 2007

Tim Andrews, *Raku*, Second Edition (2005), A@C Black. London, KP Books. Wisconsin

David Jones, *Raku Alchemy*, *Ceramic Review* 230 March/April 2008,

Morgan Pitelka (2001), *Raku Ceramics: Tradition and Cultural Reproduction in Japanese Tea Practice, 1574-1942*, PhD Dissertation, Princeton University.

Robert Piepenburg (1991), *Raku Pottery*, (Pebble Press, Ann arbor,) Michigan,

Robert Piepenburg (1972) *Raku Pottery*, Macmillan Publishing Company,

James C. Watkins & Paul Andrew Wandless (2004). *Alternative Kilns & Firing techniques*, Lark Books, New York 2004

Dick Lehman (2001). *Wood Firing Journeys and Techniques*, The American Ceramic Society USA.

David Jones (2007). *Firing Philosophies within contemporary ceramic practice*, The Crowood Press, UK 2007

Nils Lou (1998). *The Art of Firing*, A&C Black London 1998

Doug Wensley (2002). *Pottery, the essential manual*, Crowood Press, UK 2002

Hiromi Itabashi, Roppo Tamura, Naoki Kawabuchi (2003) *Building Your Own Kiln*, Kodansha International Tokyo, 2003

Steve Branfman (1991). *Raku A. Practical Approach*, Chilton Book Company, Radnor, Pennsylvania 1991.

Frederick L. Olsen (2001). *The Kiln Book materials, specifications and construction*, Krause Publication, 2001.

- Hugo Munsterberg (2000) *The Ceramic Art of Japan*, Charles E. Tuttle Co., Rutland, Vermont & Tokyo, Japan (2000).
- Ian Gregory (2005) *Alternative kilns*, A&C Black London 2005.
- Vicky Ramakka (2009), *Clay Times*, Volume 15, Issue 84.
- Cynthia Mc Dowell (2009), *Clay Times*, Volume 15, Issue 84
- Leon I. Nigrosh (1980), *Low fire—other ways to work in clay*, Davis Publications, Inc/ Worcester, Massachusetts.
- Ian Gregory (1992), *Sculptural Ceramic*, A&C Black, London
- Ken Matsuzaki (2008), *Burning Tradition*, Pucker Art Publications.
- Jo Lauria (2000), *Color and Fire – Defining Moments in Studio Ceramics, 1990 – 2000*. Los Angeles County Museum of Art.
- Andreas Marks (2011), *Fukami – Purity of Form*. The Clark Centre for Japanese Art and Culture.
- Richard L. Wilson (1995). *Inside Japanese Ceramics – A Primer of Materials, Techniques, and Traditions*, Weatherhill New York & Tokyo.
- Tim Andrews (1994). *Raku – A Review of Contemporary Work*. Craftsman House.
- Garth Clark, (1987), *American Ceramics 1876 to the present*, Cross River Ltd Press, New York.
- Elaine Levin, (1979), Paul Soldner, *Ceramic Monthly*.
- Paul Soldner, (1968), *Raku As I Know It*, The National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts.
- Emmanuel Cooper, (2002), *Leach- The Biography*, Ceramic review, 195, May/June
- H.H. Sanders, (1982), *The World of Japanese Ceramics*, Kodansha International Ltd., Tokyo.
- Malcom Waters, (1995), *Globalisation*, Routledge London and New York.
- Edward W Said (1995), *Orientalism*, Penguin Books, London.
- James P. Thompson, (1987) *Raku: Sixteenth Century Japan/Twentieth Century America*, PhD Dissertation, Illinois State University.
- Margot Osborne, (2009) *Jeff Mincham : Ceramics, Living Treasure: Masters of Australian Craft*. Craftman House.
- Peter Dormer, (1991) *The New Ceramics Trends and Traditions*, Thames and Hudson, London.
- Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (eds.) (2000), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Second Edition, Sage Publications, California.
- John Dickerson, (1972) *Raku Handbook- A practical approach to the ceramic art*, Studio Vista, London.
- Kakuzo, O. (1964). *The Book of Tea*. New York, Dover Publications.
- Raku, K. (1997). "Raku: A Dynasty of Japanese Ceramists." *Ceramic: Art and Perception*
- Sugliano, C. (2006). *Raku by Fausto Gervasi*. Ceramics Technical. 23.
- Yellin, R. (2005). *Raku's Hand-Held Universes, Unseen Pots of Kamoda Shoji, & Kiln Firing by Mori Togaku*. The Japan Times. Tokyo, Japan
- Lester, G. (2006). "Raku The Beauty of Imperfection." *Arts of Asia*
- Ikebana to Contemporary Art: Rosalie Gascoigne*
Shoso Shimbo of Monash University, Australia
- Eagle, Mary. 2007. Rosalie Gascoigne's lyrical derailments. In *Brought to light II: contemporary Australian Art 1966-2006*, eds. Seear, Lynne and Julie Ewington, 198-205. Brisbane: Queensland Art Gallery.
- Edwards, Deborah. 1998. Material as landscape. In *From the studio of Rosalie Gascoigne*, ed. Mary Eagle, 10-17. Canberra: ANU Drill Hall Gallery.
- Gellatly, Kelly. 2008. Rosalie Gascoigne: Making poetry of the commonplace. In *Rosalie Gascoigne*, 9-28. Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria.

- Gilot, Françoise, and Carlton Lake. 1965. *Life with Picasso*. London: Nelson.
- Golding, John. 1994. Cubism. In *Concepts of modern art: From Fauvism to Postmodernism*, ed. Nikos Stangos, 50-78. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Haga, Koshiro. 1995. The wabi aesthetic through the ages. In *Japanese aesthetics and culture: A reader*, ed. Nancy. G. Hume, 245-78. NY: State University of New York Press.
- Jacobs, Genevieve. 2006. In the garden. *Art and Australia* 44, no.1, 110-13.
- Kirker, Anne. 1989. The sculpture as beachcomber: An appraisal of Rosalie Gascoigne's assemblages. *Art New Zealand* 50, 52-5.
- Krauss, Rosalind. 1985. *The originality of the Avant-garde and other Modernist myths*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.
- Lipsey, Roger. 1988. *An art of our own: The spiritual in twentieth century art*. Boston: Shambhala.
- MacDonald, Vicki. 1998. *Rosalie Gascoigne*. Paddington, NSW: Regaro Pty Ltd.
- North, Ian. 1982. Rosalie Gascoigne. In *Australia: Venice biennale 1982*, 47-54. Sydney: The Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council.
- O'Brien, Gregory. 2004. Plain air / plain song. In *Rosalie Gascoigne: Plain Air*, 20-53. Wellington: City Gallery Wellington and Victoria University Press.
- Saussure, Ferdinand De. 1959. *Course in general linguistics*. Glasgow: Fontana/Collins.
- Seitz, William C. 1961. *The art of assemblage*. NY: Museum of Modern Art and Doubleday distributor.
- Shimbo, Shoso. 2013. *Ikebana in the Expanded Field* (1):
- Hiroshi Teshigahara and Contemporary Art. *International Journal of Ikebana Studies* 1 (In print).
- Singer, Jane. 1994. The organic, sensual art of contemporary ikebana. *Japan Quarterly* 41, issue 1, 44-56.
- Spate, Virginia. 2001. Monet & Japan. *Artonview* 25, 4-11.
- Teshigahara, Hiroshi. 1992. *Furuta Oribe*. Tokyo: NHK.
- Waldman, Diane. 1992. *Collage, assemblage, and the found object*. NY: Harry N. Abrams Inc.
- "Imagined Innocence Lost: The Performance of Post-Indigeneity in Eikoh Hosoe and Tatsumi Hijikata's Kamaitachi"*
Michael Sakamoto, Goddard College, USA
- Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1981.
- John Berger and Jean Mohr, *Another Way of Telling*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1982.
- Vincent Crapanzano, *Imaginative Horizons*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004.
- Thomas J. Csordas, "Embodiment as a Paradigm for Anthropology," *Ethos* 18.1 (1988): 5-47.
- Clare Harris, "The Photograph Reincarnate" in *Photographs, Objects, Histories: On the Materiality of Images*, ed. Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart (New York: Routledge. 2004), 132-147.
- Hijikata Tatsumi, "Inner Material/Material" in *The Drama Review* 44.3 (2000): 36-42.
- Hijikata Tatsumi, "To Prison" in *The Drama Review* 44.3 (2000): 43-48.
- Kurihara Nanako, "The Words of Butoh" in *The Drama Review* 44.3 (2000): 12-28.
- Kurihara Nanako, "The Most Remote Thing in the Universe: Critical Analysis of Hijikata Tatsumi's Butoh Dance," PhD diss., New York University, 1996.
- Jean Viala and Nourit Masson-Sekine. *Butoh: Shades of Darkness*, Tokyo: Shufunomoto Co. Ltd., 1988.
- Common Songs: A Study of the Saibara Collection and Inquiry into "Fuzoku" Arts in the Heian Court*
James Scalon – Canegata, University of Hawaii at Manoa, USA

Baxter, W. 1984. *Middle Chinese: A study in historical phonology* British Columbia: University of British Columbia Press.

monogatari volume 6: Kakaishō, Kachōyosei] Tokyo: Seishinsha.

Brazell, K. 1980. Blossoms: A medieval Song Journal of Japanese Studies, 6 (2), 243-266.

Cohen, R. 2006. *Folk music: The basics*. New York: Routledge.

Commons, A. 2009. *Hitomaro: Poet as God (Vol. 31)*. Boston: Brill.

Fujiwara, S. 2011. *Saibara Kenkyū [A Study of Saibara]*: Kasama Shoin.

Ichijō, K. 1689. *Ryōjin guanshō*. Kyōto: Rakuyō.
Konishi, Jingorō. Tsuchihashi, Yutaka ed. 1957.

Nihon koten bungaku taikai: Kodai kayōshū [Large Compendium of Classical Japanese Literature: Collection of Ancient Songs (Vol. 3)]. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten.

Lurie, D. 2004. On the Inscription of the Hitomaro Poetry Collection: Between Literary History and the History of Writing. *Man'yoshu kenkyu*, 26.

_____. 2011. *Realms of Literacy: Early Japan and the History of Writing*. Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Markham, E. J. 1983. *Saibara: Japanese court songs of the Heian period*: Cambridge University Press.

Scanlon-Canegata, James. 2014 (forthcoming). "Saibara: Study and Analysis of a Heian Period Court Music Manuscript" (unpublished MA thesis, Hawaii University, 2014)

Shirane, H. 1990. Lyricism and intertextuality: An approach to Shunzei's Poetics. *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 50(1), 71-85.

_____. 2007. *Traditional Japanese literature*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Tachibana, M. 1967. *Kagura Saibara Iriaya [Introduction to the Kagura and Saibara Songs]* In *Tachibana Moribe zenshū [Complete Collection of Tachibana Moribe Writing]* (Vol. 4). Tōkyō: Tokyo Bijutsu.

Usuda, J. 2000. *Kagura Saibara Ryōjinhishō Kanginshū*: Kogakukan.

Yoshitsuji, Yutaka 1978. *Genji monogatari kochūshaku taisei dai 6 kan: Kakaishō, Kachōyosei [Complete ancient studies and commentaries on Genji*

The IAFOR **Academic Review**

Issue 1 | Volume 2

Essays in Japanese Arts
& Culture

Published by The International Academic Forum
(IAFOR), Japan

IAFOR Publications. Sakae 1-16-26-201, Naka-ward,
Aichi, Japan 460-0008

IAFOR Publications © Copyright 2015
ISSN: 2188-9570

Design: Michael Liam Kedzlie and Thaddeus Pope