The Tale of Genji: A Bibliography of Translations and Studies

This is intended to be a comprehensive list and thus contains some items that I would not recommend to my students. I should be glad to remedy any errors or omissions. Except for foreign-language translations, the bibliography is restricted to publications in English and I apologize for this limitation. It is divided into the following sub-sections:
1. Translations
2. On Translators and Translations
3. Secondary Sources
4. Genji Art
5. Genji Reception (Nō Drama; Nise Murasaki inaka Genji; Twentieth-century Responses; Secondary Sources)
6. Film, Musical, and Manga Versions

GGR, September 2019

1. Translations (arranged in chronological order of publication)
   A translation of the first seventeen chapters (“Kiritsubo” through “Eawase”).
   Yamata’s version covers the same nine chapters as Waley’s first volume: “Kiritsubo” through “Aoi.”
   Based on Yosano Akiko’s Shin-shin’yaku Genji monogatari (1938-1939).
2. On Translators and Translations


See especially chapter 2, “Classical Japanese Texts.”


A wide-ranging discussion of “the peculiar problems that confront those who render [Genji] into other languages, including Modern Japanese, and the art of literary translation in general” (p. 4).


A review article that assesses Dennis Washburn’s 2015 translation of Genji.


A transcription of the full texts of fifteen reviews of Suematsu Kenchō’s 1882 translation of *Genji*.


McCullough concludes that “the real world of the shining prince is...a considerably more somber place than Waley would have us believe, and the contradictions it embraces lend new poignance to the familiar atmosphere of melancholy beauty. Thanks to Edward Seidensticker, Western readers are now in a position to appreciate the complexity of that world and the full achievement of its great historian.” (p. 110)


A comparison of the Seidensticker translation with the Waley and Benl versions, pointing out Seidensticker’s fondness for irony, briskness, and brightness, “often...because [he] has reproduced the Japanese with almost word-for-word fidelity” (p. 198).


__________. “Some Notes Toward a Life of Beryl de Zoete.” *Journal of the Rutgers

My thanks to Machiko Midorikawa for directing me to this essay.


3. Secondary Sources


Bowring’s useful chart of characters in The Tale of Genji may be viewed/downloaded at: http://www.meijigakuin.ac.jp/~pmjs/resources/genji/genji-chart.html


Part B of volume 2 comprises Cranston’s translations of the 795 poems in Genji with a running commentary on the tale itself.


“Speaking For: Surrogates and *The Tale of Genji*.” In *Crossing the Bridge:


A collection aimed at the Japanese library market: volumes 1-3 reprint more than forty articles and book chapters on Genji originally published in English between 1967 (McCullough’s “Japanese Marriage Institutions in the Heian Period”) and 2008 (several chapters from Shirane’s Envisioning The Tale of Genji collection); the fourth volume consists of explanatory material in Japanese.


Contains two essays about Genji: “The Tale of Genji: Two Cranes Flying Wing to Wing,” about Genji and Tō no Chūjō; and “The Uji Chapters: Maidens of the Bridge,” about Kaoru and the Eighth Prince.


4. Genji Art


Lippitt, Yukio. “Figure and Facture in the Genji Scrolls: Text, Calligraphy, Paper, and Painting.” In Shirane 2008, pp. 49-80.


5. Genji Reception

Nō Drama

https://www.amazon.com/Hallow-Genji-Tribute-Noh/dp/0994571550/

Nise Murasaki inaka Genji (1829-1842)

Twentieth-century responses
Yosano Akiko (1878-1942). “Genji monogatari risan,” 1922.


Roger K. Thomas, trans., Aoi no ue, 1951.
Genji Reception: Secondary Sources


For a thorough review in Japanese, by Araki Hiroshi of the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken), see: http://doi.org/10.15055/00006937


__________. Idealism, Protest, and the Tale of Genji: The Confucianism of Kumazawa


6. Film, Musical, and Manga Versions
Contains a full list of postwar films complete with detailed production notes.