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

1. Translations (arranged in chronological order of publication)

I am indebted to Dr. H. C. Li for up-to-date information on the Chinese translations of Genji.

   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).


   Reprinted with critical essays, indices, etc. in the Norton Critical Editions series, 2021.
   The first volume of this translation into Esperanto contains the 20 chapters “Kiritsubo” through “Asagao.” See: [http://esperas.info](http://esperas.info)
   A Vietnamese translation by Thi Lam Anh Nguyen is currently underway.

2. **On Translators and Translations**

   See especially chapter 2, “Classical Japanese Texts.”
   __________. “On *The Tale of Genji* and the Art of Translation.” *The Hiyoshi Review of
“Glimpses of Genji through the Looking-Glass of Language.” 
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).

“Du Côté de Chez Murasaki: Desultory Ramblings on the Art of Translation.” 
A review article that assesses Dennis Washburn’s 2015 translation of Genji.

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).

“Genji at the Limits of Translation.” 

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

“Going to Bed with Waley: How Murasaki Shikibu Does and Does Not Become World Literature.” 

“A Creditable Performance under the Circumstances? Suematsu Kenchō and the Pre-Waley Tale of Genji.” 

“Chiefly on Translating the Genji.” 

“Trollope and Murasaki: Impressions of an Orientalist.” 


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).

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


3. Secondary Sources


A collection of previously published essays by Donald Keene (Seeds in the Heart), Doris Bargen (HJAS), Richard Bowring (see below), Norma Field (The Splendor of Longing), Amy Heinrich (Ukifune: Love in the Tale of Genji), Amanda Stinchecum (MN), Ivan Morris (The World of the Shining Prince), Richard Okada (Crossing the Bridge), Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen (Ukifune: Love in the Tale of Genji), Royall Tyler (MN), Haruo Shirane (The Bridge of Dreams), and John Wallace (MN).

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.


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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.


Revised edition published as A Reading of The Tale of Genji by CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014:
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


Nise Murasaki inaka Genji (1829-1842)


Twentieth-century responses

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


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


6. Film, Musical, and Manga Versions


Contains a full list of postwar films complete with detailed production notes.

