Service Company, became the training centre for chefs from all over China. For the first time schools were opened for professional catering staff. Previously training had been acquired through informal apprenticeship *in situ*. Swislocki relies on previously unexploited material from municipal records to document the stages of this repossession. Obviously the Cultural Revolution brought to a halt the salvage operation; what followed is another story.

This beautiful book represents a huge task, based on the scrutiny of an extensive corpus of varied source material: newspapers, archives, monographs, biographies, literary texts, etc. It is a goldmine for historical specialists on Shanghai, who will find a huge amount of information, suggestions, ideas and trails to follow, sometimes light-years away from food and the culinary arts. Food historians will give it pride of place on their bookshelf because it is seldom that one can gain direct access to the belly of a city. They may however be a little disappointed by the author's focus on Shanghai. Indeed, the intention to limit research to one city is legitimate and praiseworthy, but only on the condition of avoiding provincialism. And the author may not have avoided the snare. Shanghai is singular and unique, but while preoccupied by Shanghai, the author hardly ever offers comparisons with other Chinese locations or other cultural areas. His bibliography and his reasoning betray a lack of interest in works on the history of food apart from the pioneer, but no longer recent, work by K. C. Chang (*Food in Chinese Culture*) published in 1979, from which the author distances himself with a naive and unhelpful critique.

The work published in Europe and in China in the last thirty years that could have nourished his reflection is ignored. The few pages (pp. 6–11) devoted by Swislocki to the contrast between national and regional cuisine, for example, could have benefited from his reading J. Goody (*Cooking, Cuisine and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology*) published in 1982 but still relevant today. Why is there no national cuisine in China in the accepted sense of the term? What is haute cuisine? How can one define a regional cuisine? These questions (there are many others), essential to the subject of this book, have not been effectively addressed. Also, the sinologist reader is likely to be annoyed by the choices made by the publisher. Why is there no index of Chinese characters? Only p. 82 includes four characters corresponding to a transcription! The maps are unattractive and some of them are difficult to read. The illustrations are dull and imperfect; they belie the excellent reputation of works published by American university presses. It is unfortunate to detract in this way from the quality of a work that deserves more attention to such detail.

A word of advice: read this book carefully to extract its *substantive marrow*, as the truculent Rabelais would have said.

Preachers, Poets, Women, and the Way: Izumi Shikibu and the Buddhist Literature of Medieval Japan. By R. Keller Kimbrough. Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan: 2008. Pp. xiii + 374.

ISBN 10: 1929280483; 13: 9781929280483.

Reviewed by Terry Kawashima, Wesleyan University
E-mail tkawashima@wesleyan.edu

doi:10.1017/S1479591409990313

This book explores the many texts supposedly concerning the life of Izumi Shikibu 和泉式部, a famous mid-Heian poet who served at court. The author shows that legendary qualities ascribed to this female figure came to be shaped through the lens of religious discourses in the medieval period, and that these discourses helped popularize Izumi Shikibu into the household name she is today. Expansive in scope, this panoramic investigation covers works from the Heian era into the late medieval and early modern periods, and examines both textual and visual narratives. Copiously footnoted

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1479591409990313 Published online by Cambridge University Press

and including a helpful appendix of translations, the book is clearly a product of much labor, and adds significantly to the study not only of how Izumi Shikibu's specific figure was shaped according to various religious agendas, but of medieval literature more generally. Through the examination of this female icon, Kimbrough shows us the importance of women as producers, performers, and consumers of texts.

The eight chapters are grouped thematically and chronologically. The opening three chapters examine the development of narratives that partner Izumi Shikibu with the priest-poet Dōmyō 道明 (974–1020), the former usually cast as the seducer of the latter. The first chapter traces the earliest possible linkages of these figures, which likely began in the late Heian period and continued in such Kamakura-period works as *Uji shūi monogatari* 宇治拾遺物語, *Kojidan* 古事談, and *Shasekishū* 沙石集. The next chapter focuses on a text called *Kotohara* 琴腹, a mid-fifteenth-century *otogi zōshi* 御伽草子 attributed to Emperor Gohanazono 後花園, which I will address in more detail below. The third chapter turns to another *otogi zōshi* with the title *Izumi Shikibu*; likely a late Muromachi composition, the narrative not only casts Izumi Shikibu and Dōmyō as lovers, but claims that the latter is a long-lost son of the former, adding the issue of incest to the discourse of sexuality and religious enlightenment that is central to the series of stories explored in the three chapters.

The next two chapters address texts that feature Izumi Shikibu with another religious figure, Shōkū 性空 (910–1007). Chapter 4 concerns a series of Tendai texts in which Izumi Shikibu seeks Buddhist guidance from Shōkū and attains it despite his initial resistance to meet her because of her sex; she succeeds by impressing him with her well-known *waka* poem that begins "from darkness (*kuraki yori* . . .)." These texts, which the author states may have been used to preach to women, are some of the most intriguing; for instance, the Lotus Sutra commentary *Ichijō shūgyokushō* 一乗拾玉抄 (1488), which attempts to explain the concept of nonduality through the use of Izumi Shikibu's poem above. In contrast, Pure Land texts are the focus of Chapter 5, particularly the storytelling tradition at Seiganji 誓願寺. The texts range from a Kamakura-era sermon called *Izumi Shikibu ōjō no koto* 和泉式部往生事, in which Shōkū plays an auxiliary role to the Amida Buddha at Seiganji, to a late medieval hanging scroll utilized for the purpose of *etoki* 絵解き (preaching with the use of visual material) which was presented by priests and also possibly by nuns to female audiences. The author argues convincingly that these texts and their specific depictions of Izumi Shikibu participated in the lively competition between Buddhist schools of thought for worshippers and financial contributions for particular projects such as the restoration of buildings. The discussion of Seiganji segues into Chapter 6, which is devoted to a late sixteenth-century narrative called *Rakuyō Seiganji engi* 洛陽誓願寺縁起. Similar in plot to the earlier Seiganji texts, this work distinguishes itself by presenting the temple's Amida Buddha as manifesting itself as a nun, broadcasting the good news that women, too, can be saved. Kimbrough puts forth the exciting prospect that there was a "thriving cult of Izumi Shikibu at Seishin'in 誠心院/Seiganji throughout the medieval period. The monks and nuns there may have sought to enshrine Izumi Shikibu as a kind of patron saint" (p. 168) – particularly for female devotees. The final two chapters address discourses that center around women's reproductivity and sexuality. Chapter 7 deals with textual and visual narratives that challenge *nyonin kinsei* 女人禁制, the prohibition of women's entering holy mountain grounds, as well as the notion of menstrual impurity that stood in the way of women's desire to worship; such tales were possibly propagated by female religious practitioners like the Kumano *bikuni* 比丘尼. The final chapter examines another *otogi zōshi* called *Jōruri monogatari* 浄瑠璃物語, which may have its roots in medieval performed texts. In this work, Izumi Shikibu atones for her sin of having made countless men fall in love with her by vowing to "love all men"; through this act, her own salvation and that of her parents are guaranteed. The author considers the various potentials for gendered oppression in this narrative, and concludes that in the end, all is *hōben* 方便, or expedient means, for the promotion of Buddhist ideals.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1479591409990313 Published online by Cambridge University Press

It is clear that this book covers a great deal of ground, and the author does so with much attention to the fine points of each text. The meticulous details of the texts are, in fact, what sometimes call out for a more thorough analytical framework that would anchor the painstaking research in a fuller manner. The book overflows with interesting material to such an extent that the discussion occasionally meanders; sections of chapters might better serve as footnotes (for example, some of the details about Chūjōhime 中将姫 and Ippen 一遍 in Chapter 6), clearing the ground for tighter critical argumentation.

In other places, there are missed opportunities for further analysis, such as the discussion of *Kotohara* in Chapter 2. In the first part of the narrative, *a koto* harp belonging to the Empress becomes shelter for a mouse giving birth; in order to eradicate any ominous potential stemming from this event, Emperor Goichijō 後一条 (1008–1036) asks for a poetic composition. Izumi Shikibu steals a poem by Dōmyō and presents it to the emperor as her own; despite the trick, all ends well, and an imperial heir, the future Emperor Goreizei 後冷泉 (1025–1068), is born – from a *kotohara*, which means both "a different womb" and "belly of the *koto*." What struck me about the story is that the term *kotohara* places the focus on the "different womb" from which the prince emerged – that is, it diverts attention from the question of the paternal identity of the heir. Indeed, the future Goreizei is not only born of a womb different from Goichijō's consort's, but also of a different father: he is the son of Emperor Gosuzaku 後朱雀 (1009–1045), the younger brother of Goichijō who takes the throne immediately after Goichijō. In other words, the narrative is remarkable in that it recasts what looks like a routine path of imperial succession – older brother, younger brother, son of younger brother – into a matter of womb identity, in which the narrator makes matters appear as if Goreizei had been fathered by Goichijō; the use of the term *kotohara* is emblematic of this erasure of actual paternity. Furthermore, perhaps most intriguing is the background of the text's author, Gohanazono (1419–1470): his predecessor, Emperor Shōkō 称光 (1401–1428), whose enthronement resurrected the conflict between Northern and Southern courts, had died without an heir; Gohanazono, whose father was an imperial prince, was quickly brought to the throne. This emperor, therefore, is himself a product of *kotohara* and the suppressed difference in paternity.

Given these circumstances, it would be interesting to consider more fully the various possible implications of this text. Might Gohanazono be trying to legitimize his own genealogical status within the imperial line through a motivated recasting of Goreizei's origins – that is, by masking issues of paternity and focusing exclusively on maternity, is he implying a more direct patrilineal descent for both himself and Goreizei? That Izumi Shikibu is shown to have stolen Dōmyō's poem is equally intriguing: she does not plagiarize outright, as she coaxes him into telling her only the first line of the *waka*, whereupon she coincidentally composes a poem that is identical to his based only on that line. We might consider how this textual production might be analogous to imperial biological production: though the wombs (the poets) are different, the legitimacy of the emperor (the poem itself, which is deemed as excellent and powerful) remains constant. Finally, the issue of lineage might be contextualized within Gohanazono's era; given that the years surrounding his emperorship refueled tensions that remained from the dispute between the Northern and Southern courts, the relationship between quasi-plagiarism, legitimacy, and rightful lineage seems to be ripe for further consideration.

The second part of *Kotohara* tells of the union between Izumi Shikibu and Dōmyō, which had been popularized by the circulation of similar narratives in the texts Kimbrough describes in Chapter 1. He notes the ways in which this work differs from its predecessors: whereas in the earlier tale collections, a deity expresses appreciation for the protagonist monk's chanting of the Lotus Sutra despite his not having purified himself after sexual union, the later text presents a different deity who shuns the monk's sutra recitation because of the monk's impure act. The author offers potential answers to this change in tone over two centuries, such as confused transmission, but it seems that in light

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1479591409990313 Published online by Cambridge University Press

of the prominence of the figure of the womb in this text, we could try to understand the condemnatory overtone regarding sexuality in relation to the question of imperial lineage that was a significant focus of the first part of the tale. If Izumi Shikibu is shown to have masqueraded as a "lurid" *yūjo* 遊女 (translated by Kimbrough as "courtesan") who then begins a torrid affair with Dōmyō, the female reproductive organ becomes a dangerous object within the patrilineal rubric: women's wanton sexuality compromises definitive paternity, and it is a quality that should thus be disparaged and discouraged. Read together, the two seemingly distinct parts of *Kotohara* weave a complex web in which female sexuality, reproductivity, and the imperial line converge.

Indeed, another arena for further consideration is the question of gender itself. The book does not engage in a theorization of gender, and although critical reflection on discourses of gender may not be necessary in every book that investigates female figures in texts, lack of attention to these complicated questions can sometimes lead to oversights and assumptions that dilute the strength of an otherwise strong volume. For example, Kimbrough notes in Chapter 3 that the text *Izumi Shikibu* is "a tale both of and for women," popularized by a male bookseller who specialized in publishing texts aimed at educating women. He asserts that the text, which concerns an accidental incestuous relationship between Izumi Shikibu and her purported son, shows that she was able to achieve enlightenment "in spite of (or as a result of) sleeping with her son" – a fascinating point. Kimbrough, though, claims that the text is "told from a woman's point of view" (p. 94), which is a difficult argument to substantiate: its author is unknown, the narrator's gender is unmarked, and the publisher who promoted the text's popularization is male. Given these factors, on what basis can one discern or define a "woman's point of view"? If the text had been a didactic work aimed at women, and if men might have been involved in some stage of its production, how then should we reframe the reading of incest and salvation? Why might Shibukawa Seiemon 渋川清右衛門, the publisher, have been interested in generating this particular religious message?

This book considers a vast collection of texts with which women likely engaged in different ways – as listeners, viewers, or readers; as performers; or as editors or authors – yet the distinctions between these different modes of involvement are not highlighted in a fashion that would help the reader understand the implications of such differences. For instance, the author suggests that "pro-woman content" can indicate female authorship (p. 193), yet we are also given examples of texts attributed to men that promote women's religious achievements in powerful ways. The Kumano poem-story series discussed in Chapter 7, in which a female figure's menstrual taboo is removed by the Kumano deity, may possibly have been produced as well as performed by the female Kumano *bikuni* and is celebrated as "proto-feminist"; however, the Lotus Sutra-related narratives discussed in Chapter 4, all penned by men, seem to offer an equally redemptive discourse for women, with their Five Obstructions removed or deemed fundamentally unproblematic. In attempting to ascribe gendered agency, it is difficult to avoid biological essentialism; in walking this slippery tightrope, a more direct engagement with the many theorists of gender who have struggled with this question might be productive.

Nevertheless, *Preachers, Poets, Women, and the Way* represents an important contribution to the field of premodern Japanese literature. It sheds light on numerous works that have received less attention than they deserve, and encourages us to think thoroughly about the genealogy of figures whose fame and supposed life stories we tend to take for granted.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1479591409990313 Published online by Cambridge University Press