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Author(s): Earl Miner

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THE TRADITIONS AND FORMS OF THE JAPANESE POETIC DIARY

By EARL MINER

Diaries are familiar to us all, and if we were asked to describe the form we would probably say that it is a daily record of one's experience and observations. Beyond that, we would relate it to autobiography on the one side and to history on the other. Autobiographies nominally relate one's life to others and diaries to oneself. Historical annals record part of the history of a nation, and diaries part of a life. Our conceptions do not allow the diary *per se* to be classified as a literary form, except that especially well written or otherwise absorbing examples may find their way to quasi-literary status along with such kindred works as Chesterfield's *Letters* or Boswell's *Life* of Dr. Johnson. Yet Japanese count diaries among their literary classics, and the phrase "diary literature" (*nikki bungaku*) is taken quite literally. Perhaps the crucial difference in assumption can best be typified by two undoubted facts: the classics of Japanese diary literature contain poems, and they often go under such alternative titles as poetic collections (*kashū*) or prose fiction (*monogatari*). Clearly, the common human impulse to keep diaries has led to results in Japan requiring discrimination if we are to understand the artistic achievement of the diary classics.

Two motives seem to impel a diarist: a strong consciousness of time and a desire to memorialize what he has experienced. Such motives are very common throughout the world, although different men and women act upon them differently. Moreover, the proper subjects for memorializing are not everywhere the same. We must distinguish between those diarists who respond more fully to public events such as a war or natural disaster, and those who concern themselves with private events. The public diary, or the journal as it may be called for convenience, was practiced as early as the eighth or ninth century by Japanese men setting down events in Chinese. Such diaries continued to be written for centuries. But the Japanese diaries that move toward literary modes are of another kind, private or diurnal. On balance, the great English diaries, those that have achieved the status of quasi-literature, are journals. Pepys' account of the Great Fire of London, Evelyn's of the execution of Monmouth, or Defoe's mixed form, *The Journal of the Plague-Year* are typical. Of course Pepys details features of his life so personal that he kept his diary in shorthand, but by comparison with the diary literature of Japan, his interests are "journalistic," public. Japanese diarists of the kind I shall consider are more fully engaged with the diurnal experiences that pertain to themselves and to people or matters within their personal ken. Their vision of what is most significant largely filters out those events that men share in a public context. We may say roughly that Japanese diary literature emphasizes love rather than marriage, death rather than mortal battles, the family rather than public life.

Such a general distinction requires a further discrimination, however, if the diary, whether journal or diurnal, is to achieve lasting interest. The English diary, which is in relative emphasis a public journal, requires for our own prizing as readers a strong element of personal, private character. We expect a revelation at least of the diarist's personality if his record is to be of interest beyond that of yarn for the historian's weaving. Pepys, the greatest English diarist, is absorbing to us precisely because his public design is so rich in an underlying personal pattern. The Japanese diurnal diary, which is in its relative emphasis a private record, must correspondingly accommodate matters of wider, more universal interest than those belonging to a purely private individual if we are to read it with interest. The Japanese diarist may seek his universality by articulating common human concerns such as the family, love, death, nature, or time—but it is crucial for his success that he discover in diurnal, private events a universal significance or a thematic order growing above the mere sequence of daily activity.

The different basic emphases, and the differing ways of transcending them for successful appeal to readers, appear to arise from contrasting responses to the passage of time. To an English writer, inheriting the Judaeo-Christian outlook adapted by classical concerns, what is important in time are more or less great events, great actions in which men and women act as moral agents—that is, are responsible figures. To Japanese writers, with their dual inheritance of Shinto animism and Buddhist teaching, time is rather a natural cycle of nature to which man responds on the whole favorably or an immense flux of time in a world caught in transient illusion but determined by the causation of karma. Whether English or Japanese, the writer is less apt to be conscious of these attitudes toward time than merely to accept, along with his readers, most of their features. The Western diarist is aware of time as events, the Japanese of time as a process. To the Japanese time is a flow, an experience of part of the flux of aeons in man's little while. Yet, to be successful, the two traditions must accommodate their basic emphases to each other to some extent. The English diarist must convey something like the Japanese immersion in process; at the least he must give a sense of movement, of development. Contrariwise, the Japanese must seek to arrest, if but for a moment, the transient stream, to catch the moment before the moon fades into the sky at dawn, to recall to life in one's memory the behavior of a child now dead, or recreate with the private imagination the splendors of those who once claimed the attention of the world. To put it crudely, the Westerner interested in setting forth his days is, as it were, in danger of remembering too much. Proust may serve as an example. And the Japanese is in danger of forgetting too much, as the elusive recording of days in Japanese diaries reveals.

To such numerous contrasts and distinctions we must add a further discrimination of the utmost importance to Japanese literature. So far the diaries considered have been what may be called natural diaries, the day-to-day jottings of events as they more or less actually occurred. But among Japanese diarists there are also those who wrote art diaries in which fiction or a shaping along lines other than mere fact determines the nature of the creation and which, indeed, most readily allows the development of those larger themes that are essential for interest. The discrimination between Japanese natural and art diaries also sets the latter apart from Western diaries, because although

what Pepys wrote may be more interesting than a given novel, although he may have spent care in shaping his events, we assume that he wrote fact and so react to his diary as a real record, not as a fiction. (It may well be that Pepys should be studied as an art diarist, but the fact is that he has not been so read.) In Japan, on the other hand, there are many diaries so far fictional that they are considered to be literary works along with poems, plays, or novels.

It is certain that the Japanese believe that they have fictional or art diaries, and that we do not. But this is due less to any inherently superior sense of fiction among Japanese than to their less rigid sense of what fiction is. When the dramatist Chikamatsu Monzaemon wrote of the "narrow margin between truth and fiction," he spoke (though specifically about the drama) of a central feature of Japanese assumptions about literature. In the West, especially in the last half century or so, we have come to think of a literary work as something existing autonomously apart from its author, as a free creation untied to its circumstances of composition. The margin between truth and fiction we have supposed to be a very wide border. Japanese have so far not assumed that a work is divorced from its author or its circumstances that their first work of prose fiction, *The Tosa Diary* of the early tenth century, is assumed to be an accurate record of weather and events in the voyage of Ki no Tsurayuki home to the capital from Tosa. A glance at Masaoka Shiki's *Verse Record of My Peonies* from the turn of this century would reveal that the homeliest, most convincingly factual details about an illness are included. Such assumptions are by no means confined to the diary. They apply to poetry, as a number of remarks in *The Tosa Diary* make clear. On the 9th of the Second Month the woman who is the fictional diarist comments:

I do not set down these words, nor did I compose the poem, out of mere love of writing. Surely both in China and Japan art is that which is created when we are unable to suppress our feelings.

Art is very clearly conceived of as a spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling—about specific events in one's own life. For the reader, the corollary is that on reading certain kinds of literary works he will learn what has actually happened to someone and how the happenings struck the person involved in them. Such a conception is especially appropriate to Japanese art diaries, because most of them are based more wholly upon actual autobiographical events than any important Western literary work before this century. Yet the conception is far from being confined to the diary. There is a famous passage on the art of fiction in *The Tale of Genji* (*Genji Monogatari*). Prince Genji begins his discussion with a significant linking of the diary to prose fiction. He says to Tamakazura: "these diaries and romances which I see piled around you contain, I am sure, the most minute information about all sorts of people's private affairs." As if that were not enough, he continues in words very like, and no doubt intended to be like, Tsurayaki's. Fiction is written, he says,

because the storyteller's own experience of men and things, whether for good or ill—not only what he has passed through himself, but even events which he has only witnessed or been told of—has moved him to an emotion so passionate that he can no longer keep it shut up in his heart. Again and again something in his own life or in that

around him will seem to the writer so important that he cannot bear to let it pass into oblivion. There must never come a time, he feels, when men do not know about it.¹

The interesting fact about this description of how literature comes to be written is that it is not used, as by itself it would seem to be, to describe a diary but a tale or romance (*monogatari*) and is included as part of a defense of *The Tale of Genji* itself, a work that, as far as we know, is un-autobiographical. There is a clear assumption that the work is true to one's life and times in a degree that is very Japanese, and very un-Western.

The "narrow margin between truth and fiction" is presumed to be much narrower, one can see, in Japanese literature. What, we may well ask, then distinguishes a Japanese art diary from a natural diary? The question is one only recently raised by Japanese scholars, and the very concept of diary literature or literary diaries (*nikki bungaku*) is only about fifty years old.² So strong had the assumption been that the "diaries" were actual records of events. Yet it is a marked fact that most of the important classical diaries avoid daily entries and obviously recall what has happened with great freedom. The most recent Japanese conclusion about the difference is, therefore, that although the natural diary is a record of fact, the art diary has in addition a "literary element"—more feeling, technique, style.³ In short, even if there is a lesser degree of fiction in Japanese diary literature than in Western literature, there is an artistic reconstitution of fact participating in or paralleling fiction. So little is known about the authors of the earlier diaries that we are unable to ascertain how considerable is the degree of artistic reshaping. By the seventeenth century, or at least with *The Narrow Road Through the Provinces* of Matsuo Bashō, we are however in a position to judge, because there still exists the *Diary* of his fellow-traveller, Iwanami Sora, which is a natural diary that may be compared with Bashō's art diary. Bashō is shown to have fictionalized, altered, and later revised.

However narrow the artistic margin, it proves to be very critical, and it can be most conveniently represented by the fact that, almost without exception, the literary diaries from Heian to Muromachi times (in practice from *The Tosa Diary*, ca. 935, to ca. 1370) contain poems. One reason that the diaries include poems is because poems were in fact exchanged or written by the nobility to an extent unbelievable in any period in the West. Rapid, apposite composition was a necessary grace, as famous passages in *The Diary of Murasaki Shikibu* show. The powerful Fujiwara Michinaga from time to time pursued her at the court, and each of the adventures required a poem, often composed on the spot.⁴ It was, therefore, much more natural—much more true to life—to include poems in a diary than it ever would have been in the West. And yet, the effect of the poems is to heighten the sense of fiction, the air of art, the presumption of literature. When a work averages two or three poems per page, the prose *continuo* must necessarily be in some degree answerable, and so it is likely to take on a more heightened artistic quality than prose without poems.

The frequent use of poems, the breaking away from the daily entry as a formal device, and a stylistic heightening—these are the chief symptoms of Japanese diary literature from classical to modern times. Not all diaries conform in all three respects, however, and some have the feel of being more

fully determined by art—or by fact—than others. It must be said again that we simply lack sufficient evidence about the authors of most diaries to assess with assurance the preponderance of art and fact. But from what Japanese scholars feel as a conviction, it may be said that the art diary is at once related to fact and freed by art, to the extent of a balloon whipping about high in the air but still attached to firm ground by a cable. Since the image is Henry James's for some of his own fiction, it may be used to stress both the attachment to fact and, more strongly, the free floating of art in the Japanese poetic diary.

A further distinction is possible among art diaries. There are those relatively faithful to the immediate events they set forth, and there are others that so far loosen the Jamesian cable tied to fact that they float with considerable freedom above. The former may be called recording diaries (*jiroku nikki*), the latter narrative diaries (*tsukuri nikki*), and the distinction is the more natural for being one that Japanese scholars make among tales (*monogatari*). In this way, the *Okagami* (ca. 1115) is called a recording tale (*jiroku monogatari*), dealing, albeit with the art of a fictional dialogue, with actual historical events. By contrast, *The Tale of Genji* is termed a narrative tale (*tsukuri monogatari*), borrowing from history and real social custom but dedicated to a fully developed fiction. So for the art diaries. *The Diary of Murasaki Shikibu* is beautifully written and ordered by poems and such devices as galleries of character-portraits, but it is a recording diary by virtue of its fidelity to actual events and personalities. *The Tosa Diary*, on the other hand, however accurately it may mirror the experience of an actual voyage, is committed to a narrative freed from fact by its creation of fictional characters. Significantly, the preponderance of poems is greater—and their quality usually higher—in the narrative diary. It will be quickly seen that such a distinction between kinds of diaries implies that the materials treated, the situation delineated, and the narrative point of view are apt to differ in the two kinds. It is not necessary to pursue such differences here, however, partly because they require minute analysis of numerous works, and more especially because the diaries I am concerned with are narrative diaries.

Other features of the art diary can be explained by discussion of the history of its development and its relation to other forms. The earliest Japanese diaries were natural diaries, kept by men and written in Chinese. It was by turning from Chinese as the medium and from a concern with public events that the art diary, and indeed with it prose fiction, were born in Japan. Although this development took place much earlier in Japan than in England—in the tenth rather than the eighteenth century—it bears a striking resemblance to the sudden growth of the English novel once an epistolary convention was established. The Japanese transition from fact to art is of course in the diary rather than the letter, and it is made very explicitly in the first sentence of *The Tosa Diary*: “It is said that diaries are kept by men, but I shall see if a woman cannot also keep one.” From Chinese to Japanese, from male to female diarists—and from fact to fiction, because the author is a man using the narrative point of view of a woman. This pose of Tsurayuki's was remarkably prescient. Throughout the eleventh century, diaries and other successful literary forms in Japanese were, at least in terms of highest quality, the property of women.

The Tosa Diary maintained the daily-entry form of the Chinese diaries kept by men—or by modern natural diaries.⁵ Subsequent diaries gave up the daily-entry form and, instead, might pass over long periods of time with a phrase or, on the other hand, devote to a single night the most detailed description. (The question how a work called a diary can be based upon any form other than that of daily-entry must be deferred.) Such a manipulation of time required some other plot or wholeness to take the place of the regular sequence that had been displaced. One common form is the travel record such as is found in *The Tosa Diary* or *The Diary of the Waning Moon*.⁶ Another form approaches plot by relating an action such as a love affair, using its development as a basis of wholeness. *The Diary of Izumi Shikibu* and *The Tale of Takamura* (also called *The Diary of Takamura*) are examples of this form.⁷ Yet another form seeks to give the tenor of a lifetime, even if the time span is shorter than a whole life. There are three major examples of this form: *The Diary of Murasaki Shikibu*, telling of life at court; *The Sarashina Diary*, recounting the maturation and adult life of a girl from the provinces; and *The Gossamer Diary*, describing “what the life of a well-placed lady is really like.”⁸ It can be seen that, having given up the daily-entry form, the art diary moved to forms not unlike those of the short story or novel.

Japanese studies of “diary literature” end with the fourteenth century, although Japanese scholars are well aware of such later works as *The Diary of Masahiro* of Ichijō Kaneyoshi (1402-81). What complicates the matter is that the sub-genre of the travel diary or travel record (*kikō*), which emerged to dominance in the mid-thirteenth century, assumed such importance that the larger class of diary so-called (*nikki*) gradually yielded to its sub-class. But the evidence does not make the conventional limits of date inevitable. There appear to be several reasons for the conventional terminal date for diary literature. The period during which most of the classical works were written and either then or later given the name “diary” in their title was the period from the tenth to the fourteenth century. The dominance by women of prose fiction did not survive even to the fourteenth century. From the fifteenth or sixteenth century authors come from new social groups, and they compose in new poetic forms. Whereas earlier diarists had written in the *waka*, or *tanka*, form diarists gradually come to use *haikai* poetry, and by the modern period, *haiku*. It is by reason of such social and literary changes that formal Japanese accounts of diary literature end where they do, omitting to follow the conception into feudal or modern times. New terms are apt to be invented. The minglings of prose and *haikai* by Bashō and other feudal writers are usually characterized as *haibun*—that is, “*haikai* prose,” “*haikai* literature.” Or commonly, works following natural chronology and so making some sort of record are designated by a word ending in *-ki*, “record” (so *nikki*, “daily record” or diary).

Yet to insist more strongly than Japanese scholars upon the continuity of diary literature is not to introduce Western ingenuity into study of Japanese literature. In a very significant passage, Bashō wrote of a continuing tradition from Tsurayuki to his own time, a tradition he designated as “diaries of the road” (*michi no nikki*).⁹ Moreover, in recent years certain Japanese scholars have started to relate art diaries of various periods. The first attempt to relate early with much later diaries was apparently that of Professor Konishi

Jin'ichi, who must have startled readers by declaring flatly in the opening sentence of the Introduction to his edition of *The Tosa Diary*: "*The Tosa Diary* is *haikai* literature."¹⁰ By this he implies more detailed resemblance than need be examined here, but the association of two works previously thought to be wholly distinct in genre set an important precedent. Professor Tamai Kōsuke refers to that comment, but seems to me to miss the major point of it, thinking that all that is meant is that *The Tosa Diary* shows wit and humor. Still Professor Tamai remarks on his own that diary literature has continued to be written past the fourteenth century to the present.¹¹ He ends at the conventional date only because he feels that insufficient research has been done on the subject in the period after the fourteenth century. At all events, if we define for ourselves the poetic diary as a form allowing for use of *waka*, *haikai*, *haiku*, or free verse, and if we allow for as much freedom in the handling of time as is traditionally allowed to the early diary literature, then we can indeed trace the form without effort from *The Tosa Diary* of about 935 to the present. Therefore, although the definition implied by this paper is radical, it follows both Bashō and recent scholarship sufficiently to arouse no objection from Japanese scholars.

Perhaps the chief reason why Japanese scholars have not followed the development of the diary beyond the fourteenth century is that so many problems of definition affect the earlier diary itself. It will quickly be understood that, once writers left the daily entry form of the natural diary and wrote with seeming indifference to the regular passage of time, they were likely to end with forms of ambiguous connection with the diary mode as it is generally understood. It is in fact no simple task to answer the question, What did Japanese themselves think a literary diary is? *The Tosa Diary* is a simple case: it was never called anything but a diary, and it maintained the daily-entry form. There are, however, those other works called by altogether different names. Still other titles were devised and used alternatively.¹² In addition to prose fiction (*monogatari*) and poetic collections (*kashū*), there are collections (*-shū*), records (*-ki*), travels (*michiyuki*, *michiyukiburi*), and yet other names. One can go farther. There were diaries of poetry matches (*utaawase*), which were themselves a distinct form. The historical tales (*rekishi-monogatari*) such as *Okagami* (*The Great Mirror*) were sometimes called diaries and, like the other forms mentioned, contained poems. Finally, there are numerous resemblances between the diary and such Japanese pensées (*zuihitsu*) as *The Pillow Book* (*Makura no Sōshi*) of Sei Shōnagon or the modern "I novel" (*shishōsetsu*).

Two conclusions stand out clearly from this description. Any classical work called a diary—that is, which is an art diary—or even works associated with it but given a different generic name—contains poems. And the conception of the diary, however dim, is the basic literary conception of prose fiction from 935 to 1370. The poems vary in number and importance with the individual work, depending in considerable part on whether it is a narrative or recording diary, but it seems clear that poetry is conceived of as the most basic or purest literary form and that its presence, almost alone, is enough to change a journal of one's life to an art diary. More than that, to a writer of the court period, prose fiction appears to have been impossible without poetry. The evidence is too consistent for one to argue that by in-

cluding poems the authors were merely reflecting the customs of the day. It is poetry that proves the artistic nature of the whole, distinguishing it from a natural diary or other factual record, whether the distinction be as simple as that in *The Tosa Diary* or as complex as the nearly eight hundred poems of *The Tale of Genji*, the nearly one hundred of *The Tale of the Heike*, or the approximately 150 of *The Mirror of the Present*, all of these being works which are often considered in wholly prosaic terms. Such a view of the importance of poetry is demonstrated, moreover, by examination of the diaries and related works. Whether we accept the view of one scholar that the intent of *The Tosa Diary* is to teach the art of poetry,¹³ it is eloquent itself on the importance of the art. Or again, in *The Diary of Izumi Shikibu*, we notice that repeatedly it is the Lady's responsiveness in verse to the world about her that brings back her Prince's wandering affection. Throughout this earlier period of Japanese literature, poetry defines classic literature of all important genres. There are not the adequate scholarly aids to study of subsequent fiction that there are for works in the earlier period, so that it is more difficult to generalize about such matters as the proportion of poetry and prose in feudal and modern diaries, but examination of such later works as *The Narrow Road Through the Provinces* or of *The Verse Record of My Peonies* also suggests that, however beautiful or pedestrian the diary prose may become, in the seventeenth or late nineteenth centuries the poems remain as central as in the earlier diaries.

The other significant inference—that the diary is the representative and indeed normative form of classical prose fiction—is one that suggests the extent to which literature was regarded as an expression of the flow of experience of an individual author. The defense of the art of fiction in *The Tale of Genji* has already been shown to be closely related to the diary and indeed to echo the ideas of Tsurayuki in *The Tosa Nikki* and, it may be added, in his celebrated Preface to the *Kokinshū*.¹⁴ If the diary has such importance to prose fiction of several kinds, that is because it gave most significant expression to the Japanese obsession with time. In this respect, the diary is to prose fiction what seasonal poems are to the imperial poetic collections: the most characteristic and important—not necessarily in quality, but in conveying the kind of experience felt to be significant. The seasonal poems were themselves organized on a temporal progression from the beginning to the end of the year, arranging the order of poems both by observed sequence in the occurrence of natural phenomena and by the sequence of social events in the *Annual Ceremonial* (*Nenchū Gyōji*). The diary is likewise bound to temporal progression—whether of the hours of the day, the days of the week, the months of the year, or even the years of a lifetime. As a form, however, it was not thought to need to bind itself to daily entries. The higher ripples and waves in the stream of time were more important to diary literature than lesser units, because they gave shape to the felt pressure of the stream.

Later classics of diary literature show not only the same primacy of poetry as the earlier but also the same sense of temporal flow. Bashō begins his *Narrow Road Through the Provinces* with a prose poem on time, and his most profound passages are those resonant with the music of time. In so recent a work as *The Verse Record of My Peonies*, Masaoka Shiki is con-

scious of each moment of his life, knowing that he is close to death. In such a state he notices changes of light or the number of petals of flowers, and he imagines his last moments. There are again the dominant features of the earlier diaries: a normative role for poetry and an awareness of time.

The significance of those two elements is such that without an appreciation of them we are unlikely to gain any adequate feel for Japanese diary literature. Compared with Western fiction, the diary is seemingly episodic and formless. Closely ordered plots are not to be found in the diaries—or in other forms of earlier Japanese prose fiction, or in drama, or in most modern fiction.¹⁵ Japanese conceptions of form are in some important respects different from Western, and what the differences are can be understood in considerable measure from the diary. One of the significant differences between Western and Japanese prose fiction (as represented by the diary) is that the Japanese is formulated in close relationship to poetry, which both affects its principles of coherence and has meant that it did not need to go through the stage of the well-made novel or play before it could seek out freer forms. To attempt generalization of a large number of works, the diaries combine, or poise, two formal energies: the ceaseless pressure of time implied by the diary form itself and the enhancement of the moment, or related moments, usually demonstrated in poetry. It is the flow of time rather than the concatenation of events that is important, and it is the sudden glowing of poetic experience rather than the order of a well-lighted city that gives the diaries their sense of depth of experience.

Poetry and time are also the two chief thematic bases of the diaries. After prose has said all it can, or all that it is decent for it to attempt, poems rise to have their say. It is as though Tsurayuki was merely factual in saying that Japanese were spontaneously given to song and that poetry rose from particularly strong feeling. With the exception of the unsatisfactory conclusion of *The Diary of Izumi Shikibu* (which violates the narrative point of view and the major concern of the work), each of the finest diaries can be as well understood as a poetic whole joined by prose as a prose work interspersed with poems. The prose of the diary is not merely an excuse for the poems; but the poems are not also a mere decoration. It is their canons of taste, their associations and assumptions, and their themes that the diaries develop. So much can be shown by comparison of the diaries with the imperial collections, or more easily by concern with the basic themes of the works. Not a few of the great diaries are concerned with death, and an exception like *The Diary of Izumi Shikibu* describes life as a dream. The connection between time and death needs no special explanation. But dream is the central metaphor for the essential experience of Japanese courtly love, and it is related to Buddhist ideas about the illusory nature of experience in this world.¹⁶ The sense of annihilation or desolation, of dream, and of celebration of life are basic to Japanese poetic responses, and basic as well to these diaries. Both the joy and the deprivation, like the essentially poetic disposition of the works, give the diaries an appeal that is no less human for taking forms of expression in some ways at variance from those of other literatures.

Such a peculiarly Japanese and yet universal understanding of the human condition is to be found in all the important diaries and is characteristic of much that is most profound in Japanese literature. It involves a deep aware-

ness of certain dualities peculiar to the national civilization and yet accessible to all readers. From tendencies that may most conveniently be traced to Shinto animism, the poetic diarists were led to prize the purity and preciousness of the world men are born to, and yet to feel the rigor of change and evanescence. Japanese versions of Buddhism offered a contrary challenge to all appeals, however strong or natural, that lessened man's devotion to otherworldly Law and eternal reality. Yet Buddhism also invested the human predicament with a metaphysical significance, an importance throughout the innumerable centuries in which might be realized the ascent to felicity in the Law or to Buddhahood. The significance of the greatest Japanese poetic diaries lies in their realization of such timelessness within the continuous pressure of daily life, and in the comfort to human imperfection given by the irresistible attractions discoverable in the very transience of mortal life.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

NOTES

¹*The Tale of Genji*, trans. Arthur Waley (London, 1935), III, vii, 501.

²See Tamai Kosuke, *Nikki Bungaku no Kenkyu* (Tokyo, 1965), p. 71.

³Tamai, *Nikki Bungaku no Kenkyu*, pp. 5-6. 70.

⁴See the quotations from *The Diary of Murasaki Shikibu* in Waley's Introduction to *The Tale of Genji*, pp. x-xi.

⁵The comparisons are drawn by Imai Takauji, *Heian Jidai Nikki Bungaku no Kenkyu* (Tokyo, 1957), pp. 151-52.

⁶The latter, *Isayoi Nikki*, ca. 1280, is by the Nun Abutsu (d. 1283) and tells of her journey to the shogunate in Kamakura. It is included in Edwin O. Reischauer and Joseph K. Yamagiwa, *Translations from Early Japanese Literature* (Cambridge, Mass., 1951), pp. 52-119.

⁷The date and authorship of *The Diary of Izumi Shikibu* are much disputed, but Japanese scholars have lately come to a majority view that it probably was composed by Izumi Shikibu (ca. 970-ca. 1030). It was translated by Annie Shepley Omori and Kochi Doi, *Diaries of Court Ladies of Old Japan* (Tokyo, 1935, 1961), which also includes *The Sarashina Diary* and *The Diary of Murasaki Shikibu*. An every way better translation is contained in an unpublished doctoral dissertation, Edwin Augustus Cranston, "The *Izumi Shikibu Nikki*: A Study and Translation" (Stanford, 1966). There is no translation of *Takamura Monogatari* (also *Takamura Nikki*). Ono no Takamura (802-52) was a poet of some consequence, and fourteen of the thirty-two poems in the work are known to be by him. Its character can be conveyed by its opening: "There once was a young woman who had been reared by her parents with great care."

⁸*The Gossamer Diary (Kagero Nikki)* is very ably translated by Edward Seidensticker (Tokyo, 1964). For the other two, see the preceding note.

⁹*Oi no Kobumi* in Sugiura Shoichiro, et al., ed., *Basho Bunshu* (Tokyo, 1959; *Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei*, vol. XLVI), p. 53.

¹⁰Konishi Jin'ichi, *Tosa Nikki Hyokai* (Tokyo, 1951, often reprinted), p. 1. Professor Konishi is preparing a new edition of this work and has very kindly discussed both it and the genre with me.

¹¹Tamai, *Nikki Bungaku no Kenkyu*, pp. 105-106 and 70.

¹²The rest of the paragraph is greatly indebted to Tamai, *Nikki Bungaku no Kenkyu*, pp. 50-70.

¹³The view is Tamai's, *Nikki Bungaku no Kenkyu*, p. 104.

¹⁴The *Kokinshu* is the first of the imperial anthologies, compiled Tsurayuki and others about 905. His Japanese Preface therefore antedates *The Tosa Diary* and of course *The Tale of Genji* and may be taken as a source for the attitudes toward literature held by many critics of the earlier period.

¹⁵In recent years Japanese scholars of diary literature have drawn the comparison between art diaries and the so-called "I novel" (*shishosetsu*) of modern Japanese fiction, which usually presents veiled autobiographical detail as fiction. The comparison is just, and no less because it shows the difference made by the poetry included in poetic diaries.

¹⁶See my "Japanese and Western Images of Courtly Love," *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature*, XV (1966), 174-79.