Japanese Journal of Religious Studies 51/1: 87–111

dx.doi.org/10.18874/jjrs.51.1.2024.87-111

Katherine G. T. Whatley

Echoes of the Pure Land

The Sonic Imaginary of *Utsuho Monogatari*

In the tenth-century Japanese vernacular tale *Utsuho monogatari*, an envoy to China named Toshikage is shipwrecked in the exotic land of Hashikoku. He encounters ascetics and Buddhist deities who transmit *koto* performance techniques and gift him with magical instruments before his return to Japan. Hashikoku is depicted as a place at the edge of this world close to Sukhāvatī, Amitābha's Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss, and thus near sacredness itself. Toshikage's quest for music guides him to the edge of human knowledge, where music and religion can be directly experienced from devas. This liminal place is deeply Buddhist and filled with *koto* music. Using evidence from both a *koto* housed in Shōsōin and a series of illustrations from woodblock-printed books and handscrolls covering the first chapter of *Utsuho* from the sixteenth through early nineteenth centuries, I examine the textual and visual symbolism of the *koto* itself. I argue that the instrument represents a conduit through which other places and realms can be experienced. These illustrated editions also act as a kind of visual reception history and show how Hashikoku, a place of sonic imaginary and closeness to the Buddhist realm, continued to have symbolic reverberations for nearly a millennium.

keywords: *Utsuho monogatari*—*koto*—Sukhāvatī—Hashikoku—*gagaku*

Katherine G. T. Whatley is a PhD candidate in East Asian languages and cultures at Stanford University.

In the tenth-century Japanese vernacular tale *Utsuho monogatari* うつほ物語 (hereafter, *Utsuho*), a Japanese envoy to China named Toshikage 俊蔭 is shipwrecked in the exotic land of Hashikoku 波斯 somewhere along the coast of the Asian continent. There, he encounters ascetics and devas who transmit performance techniques of the *koto* 箏, a horizontal Japanese harp, and gift him with magical instruments before he returns to Japan. In *Utsuho*, the physical form of the *koto* offers an access point to the "other," allowing Toshikage—and by extension readers in the Heian court—access to the exotic and sacred through playing and listening to the *koto*.

The *koto* and music are closely related to symbolism in premodern Japanese religions, particularly what we might call the Buddhist sonic imaginary. Sonic imaginary brings together theories of religion, sound, embodiment, and the imagination, which cut across several fields and disciplines, including medieval literature (Kelly 1978; Le Goff 1992; Duthie 2014; Palmén 2014), sound studies (Sterne 2012; Grimshaw-Aagaard, Walther-Hansen, and Knakkergaard 2019; Coderre 2021), and Japanese Buddhist studies (Faure 1996; Eubanks 2011; Mross 2022). I use the term "sonic imaginary" to bring together not just sound itself, but how sound is imagined or understood and what sound can tell us about broader social, political, or cultural contexts. This broader perspective allows us to analyze not only the mapping of images in the mind onto the sounds of the world but also that of religious and exotic symbolism onto musical instruments. The circular movement between corporeal form, image, and imagination allows for sound in its many forms to act as an access point to a more expansive world.

In this article, I situate the connection of the *koto* with exoticism and otherness within the Buddhist sonic imaginary to evaluate the ways in which music and sound link the concrete to the abstract and thus enable access to the imaginary and the extraordinary. Through an examination of the religious and musical symbolism presented in *Utsuho* and its legacy, I argue that music, specifically that of the *koto*, granted people from Japan access to different places, realms, and ideas. I begin by considering the extant evidence for possible locations of Hashikoku. I then explore the limits of known geographical knowledge in the tenth century to demonstrate that *Utsuho* depicts Hashikoku as a place positioned at the edge of knowledge and of this world close to Sukhāvatī, Amitābha's Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss, and is thus positioned close to sacredness.

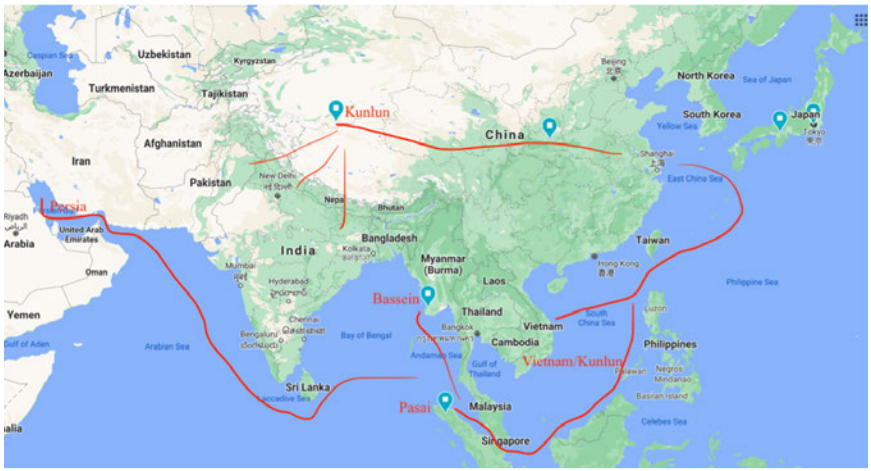

FIGURE 1. Locales mentioned and potential routes for shipwreck. Google Maps image annotated by author.

Though it is impossible to determine the exact site of the shipwreck, this exercise helps to distinguish between details that the author derived from available historical evidence and those that are a product of his imagination. The exotic imagery associated with each of the possible locations for Hashikoku is part of a complex web of metaphors and symbols that imagines a peripheral and deeply Buddhist place filled with music, especially that of the *koto*. Finally, I consider how the *koto*—as both physical instrument and symbol—came to represent a conduit through which other places and realms can be experienced using evidence from a *koto* housed in Shōsōin 正倉院, a series of illustrations from a later *nara ehon* 奈良絵本 (illuminated scroll), and woodblock prints of the first chapter of *Utsuho*. These illustrated editions, dating from the sixteenth through early nineteenth centuries, help us to construct a visual reception history of how Hashikoku, a place of sonic imaginary and closeness to the Buddhist realm, continued to have symbolic reverberations long after the *Utsuho* was written.

Locating Hashikoku

Scholars have offered various theories regarding possible locations of Hashikoku. Some have considered Persia, Southeast Asia, and Central Asia (FIGURE 1), while others argue that the shipwreck is a mere literary device and that the protagonist Toshikage and his journey to acquire the *koto* are meant to represent the Chinese Buddhist monk Xuanzang 玄奘 (602–664) and his overland quest

for Buddhist knowledge in India. As Jeffrey Niedermaier (2023, 379) shows, *Utsuho* represented a place that was neither China nor Japan, and there are many possibilities for such a location. And yet, it was "a virtual terrain which belongs neither to China nor to Japan, but which is nonetheless made out of both." Although it would be an oversimplification to attempt to locate one specific site as Hashikoku, the extant historical record reveals how the author used the available knowledge of the exotic foreign world to imagine a place of deep religious and sonic significance.

Premodern texts often use the name "Hashikoku," which may have been pronounced "Pashikoku," to refer to Persia. For example, Hashikoku is mentioned in records of Persians visiting the capital of Nara in the eighth century. First, the *Shoku Nihongi* mentions that Nakatomi no Nashiro 中臣名代 brought a Persian person, Ri Mitsuei (李 密翳 or 李 密醫) along with three Chinese people, to an audience with the emperor in the eighth month of 736 (*Shoku Nihongi zenpen*, 158; Morris 2020). Second, in a newly discovered *mokkan* 木簡 (wooden tablet) dated to 756, another Persian man called Hashikoku no Kiyomichi 破斯清道 worked at the Imperial University (Daigakuryō 大学寮).[1] These historical documents clearly suggest that these people came from Persia or somewhere in the surrounding region. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that references to "Hashikoku" in *Utsuho* allude to Persia.

Southeast Asia is another possible location of Hashikoku (Uehara and Shōdōji 2005, 31). It is much more feasible for an envoy to be shipwrecked somewhere off the coast of Southeast Asia, as opposed to Persia, which would require passage through the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. In addition, a later chapter of *Utsuho* describes the area where Toshikage was shipwrecked as "farther than China, closer than India" (*Utsuho*, 567). This may refer to the Bay of Bengal and present-day Bangladesh, situated between and below India and China. By the thirteenth century, a Muslim trading post called Pasai was established on the northern Sumatran shores of the Bay of Bengal (Nomura 2001, 5). Meanwhile, "Bassein" is an old name for "Pathein," located in what is now Myanmar. These names bear a phonological resemblance to the "Pashi" of Pashikoku, but it is unclear when these places started to be referred to as such. Furthermore, the *Gōdanshō*, a compendium published around 1104, includes a section which supposedly records the language of Hashikoku (*Gōdanshō*, *Chūgaishō*, *Fukego*, 90). The words included in this short list bear a remarkable likeness to several present-day Bahasa words, antecedents of which would have been spoken at the time in Pasai or other locales near present-day Indonesia and the Malaya Peninsula. This means that Hashikoku was used to refer to Indonesia and the Malaya Peninsula, as well as Persia.

1. "Wooden tablet number 3752," *Mokkanko* 木簡庫, https://mokkanko.nabunken.go.jp/ja/6AAICJ59000021.

Shipwreck records of envoys to China give us a sense of the author's potential inspiration for the narrative of Toshikage's journey in *Utsuho*. Among them are two shipwrecks of interest: the tenth trip in the year 734 and the eighteenth trip in 840. The 840 trip is of interest because one passenger was a famous *koto* player, Yoshimine no Nagamatsu 良岑長松 (814–879), who survived the wreck in the south seas and managed to return to the capital. It is possible that Yoshimine served as a model for Toshikage. The 734 trip is also of interest because the ship was wrecked in Kunlun 崑崙 (Tanaka 1999; *Shoku Nihongi zenpen*, 173). Kunlun is a mystical mountain range—thought to be the dwelling place of many gods and goddesses—typically located along the northern edge of the Tibetan plateau (Yang and An 2005, 180). Though Tibet would be far from any possible shipwreck site, Edward Schaefer (1973, 46) has pointed out that multiple sources from the Tang dynasty use the term "Kunlun" to refer to places southeast of China, including Vietnam and Indonesia; it was also used to refer to people of darker complexion from Southeast Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, and sometimes slaves (Ha 2022; Wilensky 2002). The deep and murky connection between otherness and mystique found in various references to Kunlun thus resonates with similar representations of Hashikoku.

Moreover, Japanese texts from the time such as *Tōdaiwajō tōseiden* 唐大和上東征伝 list Hashikoku and Kunlun together. This suggests that there were times when Hashikoku and Kunlun were thought to be near to each other (Tanaka 1999, 59). In the case of the 734 shipwreck, the Japanese crew probably landed around present-day Vietnam, which is referred to as Kunlun. Taking the complex web of definitions of Kunlun into account, it is very possible the author of *Utsuho* knew of these shipwrecks and decided to embellish the historical record by further mystifying already scant information about the known geographical world.

The parallels between Toshikage and Xuanzang here are significant. The connection between these two figures echoes the relationship between Buddhism and music in *Utsuho* and depicts Hashikoku as a Buddhist and musical imaginary space. Tanaka Takaaki (1999) argues that the shipwreck is a literary device and that the character Toshikage, as well as his journey, are meant to represent the monk Xuanzang and his quest in Asia. Xuanzang traveled to many sacred sites in what is now Pakistan, India, Nepal, and Bangladesh on a nineteen-year overland quest for Buddhist knowledge. There are several key symbolic resonances in *Utsuho* with Xuanzang's tale as written in the seventh-century *Da Tang xiyu ji* and the *Da Ciensi Sanzang fashi zhuan* (Tanaka 1999, 62). The similarities include prayers to Kannon and horses with saddles appearing by a desert in moments of need. In *Utsuho*, a "blue/green horse wearing a saddle" appears on the shores of Hashikoku after Toshikage fervently prays to Kannon (*Utsuho*, 21). For Xuanzang, the same horse with a saddle appears just when he needs to cross

the desert after praying to Kannon (Uehara and Shōdōji 2005, 36). In addition, Xuanzang goes to a place called Pashinashi or Pashishi, described as being located somewhere near Gandhara and the Pamir Mountains, which gives credence to the hypothesis that Hashikoku was located somewhere in Central Asia (T 2053, 50.227a16–17, 230a25–27).

In the first chapter of *Utsuho*, Toshikage learns to play the *koto* from three ascetics while sitting under a sacred sandalwood tree. Here there is another parallel with the transmission of Buddhist knowledge to Xuanzang in South Asia. Xuanzang finds himself under a similarly sacred sandalwood tree and meets with buddhas of the past who give him spiritual guidance; later in this same land, he receives the transmission of four key Buddhist texts (Tanaka 1999, 63). After Toshikage spends three years with the ascetics, he heads further west toward where he can hear the reverberating sound of a tree. He comes upon an asura and seven devas who come down from the heavens and guide him further west over seven mountains, where he is bestowed several magical *koto* so that he can return to Japan with the instruments and *koto* performance knowledge (*Utsuho*, 31). In the case of Xuanzang, he also meets devas who guide him beyond seven mountains (T 2053, 50.240a25; T 2087, 51.869a27), which are just as lusciously described as in *Utsuho*. The imagery of heavenly creatures and perils relates to the number seven in both texts. These descriptions and numerical symbols illustrate the difficulty and great lengths to which the protagonists must go to accomplish their respective religious and musical goals. The descriptions further cement the exotic and imaginary nature of Hashikoku and the *koto*.

In *Utsuho*, Hashikoku and the land beyond represent the westernmost edges of the known world for a Japanese audience. At one point along his journey closer to Sukhāvatī, Toshikage meets seven devas who have been banished from the heavens. They tell him to go "further west from here, east of the buddha land" in order to learn from other devas who play the music of *gokuraku jōdo* 極楽浄土, that is, Sukhāvatī (*Utsuho*, 30). This means Toshikage must go to a place that is closer to Sukhāvatī but not quite within Sukhāvatī. It is further west from Hashikoku and the lands around it, but is not as far west as Sukhāvatī. This suggests that, in *Utsuho*, Hashikoku and the area around it are located geographically far to the west, next to the unknown. It is a liminal place where one may draw close to Sukhāvati. Toshikage's quest for music guides him to the edge of human knowledge, where music and religion can be directly experienced from Buddhist divinities.

The Exotic Koto

The *koto* features prominently in the first chapter of *Utsuho* as a medium through which Toshikage engages with foreign places and people as well as sacred realms.

FIGURE 2. Haniwa statue playing the *koto* from the Tadehara 蓼原 tumulus. Kofun period. © Yokosuka City Museum. All rights reserved.

By exploring the origins of the *koto* and its symbolism, we can better understand the connections between the instrument and its music in the Buddhist sonic imaginary of *Utsuho* and beyond.

The *koto*'s origins are obscure, with researchers hypothesizing continental and indigenous origins. Influenced by archaeological finds, much of postwar scholarship suggests that the instrument has both foreign and domestic ancestors (UEHARA and SHŌDŌJI 2005; 2016). On the continent there is historical evidence of stringed transverse instruments (*qin* 琴) dating back approximately 2,500 years (SUGINO 2009, 1). Various forms of transverse harps proliferated across Asia from Turkey to Japan and Indonesia, probably through the Silk Roads (HIROSHIMA KENRITSU REKISHI HAKUBUTSUKAN 1994). The Japanese *koto* (*wagon* 和琴 or *yamato koto* 倭琴) has existed since at least the Kofun period in various forms.[2] *Haniwa* 埴輪 statues from this period also feature a transverse plucked stringed instrument (FIGURE 2).

However, there is much debate over whether native antecedents to the family of *koto* zither instruments exist and whether or not there was continuity between

2. In general, *sou* 箏 referred to the longer instrument similar in shape to *koto*; *kin* 琴 referred to the smaller instrument much like the *guqin* 古琴 still played in China today.

older zither forms and the current *koto*. Archeologist Arayama Chie (2014, 248) outlines the debate around "spatula-shaped wooden objects" (*kanejō mokuseihin* 鐘状木製品) from the middle Jōmon period. According to Arayama, these wooden objects were either stringed plucked instruments or weaving implements. However, based on the limited evidence available, it is impossible to know for sure whether or not such objects were in fact used as instruments. Even if they were musical instruments, Arayama notes that there is no evidence that these objects survived multiple centuries, later morphing into differently shaped zithers that existed in the Kofun period. Rather, she suggests, these later instruments must have come from the many waves of continental influence.

Multiple sources focus on a few specific examples from the Kofun period to argue that there were indigenous, as well as continental, origins to the *koto* played in the Nara court (Miyazaki 1995, 63; Hirano 1989, 261). This line of argument, however, does not consider the possibility that earlier *koto* played before the Nara period also had continental origins. It is impossible to determine the native origins and continental influence of the *koto*. The evidence suggests that there were multiple waves of continental influence, and those in turn influenced native instruments already being played in Japan. Steven Nelson (2016, 49) states that the *koto* as we know it in *gagaku* 雅楽 today is likely based on an older Korean model. Furthermore, sometimes the character 和 or 倭 was used to describe the *koto*, as in *wagon* 和琴 or *Yamato koto* 倭琴, suggesting that a distinction was made between Japanese and non-Japanese zithers even in the premodern era.

Much analysis of premodern Japanese music tends to be colored by later nationalist or imperialist tendencies and a desire to construct a continuous Japanese history (Whatley 2024, 262). John Lie (2001, 67) and Bonnie Wade (2014, 19) have studied how the creation of the category of Japanese traditional music, and the subsequent analysis of the music therein, was created in the wake of interactions with the West during the Meiji era and colored by nationalist and colonialist tendencies. Shuhei Hosokawa (1998, 19) analyzes how Tanabe Hisao 田辺尚雄 (1883–1984), arguably the most influential figure in prewar Japanese musicology, both acknowledged the continental origins of Japanese traditional music and was an active participant in Japan's colonial project through his "repatriation" efforts of *gagaku*, cementing Japan's superiority.

Still, we can begin to understand how the author of *Utsuho* viewed the history of the *koto*, allowing us to see what kind of symbolic lineages the author envisioned. Certainly by the eighth century and even earlier, the *koto* had become a common instrument in the court, thanks to its use in *gagaku* and religious rituals (Miyazaki 1995, 63; Nelson 2016, 49). It was also used in private settings, as featured in countless scenes in various tales such as *Genji monogatari* 源氏物語. In *Utsuho*, the author plays up the religious—that is, Buddhist—side of the

instrument, as well as its exotic foreignness. The possible indigenous roots of the *koto* are nowhere to be seen in the tale, and the instrument is, by contrast, imbued with a sacred and exotic otherness. It is possible that even if there were indigenous origins of the instrument, they may have been entirely forgotten by the tenth century due to the subsequent influx of continental instruments influencing the *koto*.

Despite its exotic signification, the *koto* also functions as a conduit for personal connection between Japan and the otherworld. In *Utsuho*, Toshikage approaches a giant Indian sandalwood tree, where he meets three people who will teach him how to play the *koto* for the next three years.

> Toshikage came to the base of the trees. The three men asked: "What kind of man are you?" Toshikage responded: "I am Kiyohara no Toshikage, an envoy from the King of Japan. Let me tell you how I got here." To which the three men responded: "Ah, how horrible. You seem to be a traveler from a far country. We will give you lodging for a while," and laid out another [animal] skin under the shade of the same tree and had Toshikage sit down.[3] Though when Toshikage was in his home country he had put his heart into playing *koto*, these three men devoted themselves solely to playing the *koto*. While playing with them and learning from him, he learned all their pieces, bar none. (*Utsuho*, 22)

This passage describes an encounter between Toshikage and foreign people, but its purpose is not to highlight their strangeness. Rather, it is to show that Toshikage, himself a devoted *koto* player back at home, is eager to learn. Although Toshikage has long practiced the instrument, he learns from these men who devote their entire lives to only playing the *koto*. Toshikage and the hermits presumably speak different languages, but the linguistic barrier is not presented as something impenetrable. Instead, the hermits share their makeshift lodgings with the wayward man from Japan and teach him their *koto* techniques. Echoing Buddhist teaching methods, there is direct and perfect transmission here: Toshikage learns their complete repertoire of *koto* pieces. Transmission and teaching have always been at the core of poetic tradition in Japan, and thus there is a connection between the transmission of *koto* knowledge and of poetic knowledge.

Examining extant *koto* from the tenth century clarifies possible antecedents for the exotic imagery of three men playing *koto* in *Utsuho*. The historical association of *koto* with exoticism is exemplified by a Tang-dynasty artifact, the Kin Gin Hyōmon Kin 金銀平文琴 (Gold-Silver Lacquered Koto; FIGURE 3), which was originally gifted by the Tang court to the Japanese court in the year 735 and stored at the Shōsōin Imperial Storehouse (UEHARA and SHŌDŌJI 2005, 41). This

3. Later illuminated versions of *Utsuho* depict Toshikage and the ascetics sitting on tiger skins, heightening the exotic imagery of the scene.

FIGURE 3. Kin Gin Hyōmon Kin 金銀平文琴. The Shōsōin Treasures, courtesy of the Imperial Household Agency.

FIGURE 4. Detail of the Kin Gin Hyōmon Kin instrument.

instrument would have been strung with seven strings and played horizontally while sitting on the floor.

A closer view of the top of the instrument reveals a golden illustration of three men under a tree (FIGURE 4). The man on the far left plays a small kind of *koto*, the one in the middle plays a plucked instrument, and the one on the right enjoys a drink. They sit on what appear to be tiger skins, and they are surrounded by heavenly creatures, clouds, and exotic wildlife. Nearby trees offer us a clear sense of place: a grove or forest. This imagery is almost identical to that of the scene in *Utsuho* in which Toshikage comes upon three ascetics, sitting under trees and on animal skins. Though it seems unlikely that the author of *Utsuho* had access to this specific *koto*, he likely intended to reference the exotic and sacred symbolism, which were born of, and borne by, instruments like it.

This scene in which the hermits and Toshikage meet highlights a central paradox in *Utsuho* and its *koto* imagery. On the one hand, the text characterizes the *koto* as exotic and fanciful. On the other hand, the text also concerns connections with those faraway places and objects. The *koto* serves as a conduit, which allows for closeness between those from Japan and the outside world.

Ethnomusicology scholars have long emphasized the importance of "place" wherein music is created. A place is where music is made, listened to, consumed, and bought; it is where the process of music happens. Christopher SMALL (1998) coined the term "musicking" to convey just this meaning: music is a process that literally and figuratively takes place among people. This moment under the trees in *Utsuho* is a moment of musicking. Toshikage and the ascetics are in the same place together, navigating their relationships with each other through the playing of the *koto*. Toshikage learns from the ascetics and is impressed by their commitment to the *koto*, the instrument that he loves. Rather than composing a scene in which distance and foreignness are amplified, the author utilizes the symbolism of the *koto* to create a moment of connection through musicking. The exotic imagery employs the *koto* as a medium for connecting with those foreign places.

The author's use of the *koto* as a conduit is replete with imaginings of an exotic past, now far away. The last mission from Japan to Tang China was conducted in 839, more than a hundred years before the late tenth century when *Utsuho* was probably written. The symbolism of the hermits under a tree playing *koto* is the same as an image found on an instrument hundreds of years old from the eighth century. Thus, the tale is set in a romantic time of the exotic past, when foreign people, places, ideas, realms, and instruments were more available.

The Koto and Buddhism in Utsuho

The first book of *Utsuho* uses musical and religious imagery, including of *gagaku*, a musical form closely related to Buddhism. In this book, Toshikage's pursuit

of music mirrors his religious journey, as he receives instruments and musical transmission along the way. The *koto* also becomes a material manifestation of the role music plays between this work and Sukhāvatī, a symbol of the complex relationship between Buddhism and music.[4]

Utsuho begins with a focus on the foreign people of Hashikoku and their music, but soon Toshikage wanders into the realm of the sacred. Initially, Toshikage departs from the ascetics because he hears the beautiful reverberation of a tree being cut down and wants to make *koto* from its wood. As Laurence Coderre (2021, 28) writes, sound is a physical thing, a wave that connects objects, people, and spaces through reverberations. Here, the sound waves emanating from the tree beckon Toshikage, illustrating the physicality of sound.

Next, our protagonist comes upon an asura. The being has been forced to pay for past sins by working in the paulownia grove.[5] After divine intervention, the asura gives in to Toshikage's request to make *koto* from the trees being cut down: "At the reverberations caused by asura taking and cutting apart the trees, a heavenly prince came down [from the heavens], made thirty *koto*, and ascended. Then, a heavenly woman and a maiden weaver descended to the accompaniment of orchestral *gagaku*, lacquered and strung the *koto*, and ascended [to the heavens]" (*Utsuho*, 28). In this scene, heavenly beings descend to assist Toshikage on the path toward the source of the *koto* he has just received, as well as further toward Sukhāvatī.

Toshikage continues his journey westward. First, he is led by his *koto*—carried on a gust of wind—to a garden, where he "was strumming the *koto* and singing; from the heavens sounded orchestral *gagaku*, and seven devas riding on a purple cloud descended" (*Utsuho*, 29). The divine beings descend to the sounds of *onjō gaku* 音声楽. Although *onjō gaku* was a general term used up to the late nineteenth century to describe a variety of orchestral *gagaku* pieces, we do not know for certain what repertoire it described in the tenth century (Hosokawa 1914, 50). Orchestral *gagaku* with no vocals is more common in the twenty-first century than pieces with singing, but the characters used here (音 for sound from instruments, and 声 for singing or vocalization) suggest that the author imagined a type of orchestral music that included singing and instru-

4. *Gagaku* developed as a genre of music from the eighth to the twelfth century and has continued to be performed to the present, although there are debates about the degree of continuity. The genre of orchestral court music influenced by Chinese and Korean musics was in great flux, and *gagaku* superseded the foregoing genre of *gigaku* 伎楽 during this time. More research needs to be conducted into how the genre stabilized and how it was perceived during the tenth century (Shiba 2009).

5. Another Buddhist text, the *Da zhidu lun*, also depicts asura as making *koto*, suggesting a source for the *Utsuho* symbolism, and further cementing the connection between Buddhism, asura, and *koto* (T 1509, 25.188c19–23).

mental performance. Nevertheless, given that the term *onjō gaku* was used to describe orchestral *gagaku* pieces, *gagaku* was used in religious rituals, and its antecedents had come from the continent not too many generations earlier, we can infer that the author envisioned a kind of *gagaku* orchestra when thinking about heavenly, exotic, ritual music. This cements our understanding of *gagaku* as a genre of music that was thought to be sacred and used in religious rites (Ono 2018). Thus, *Utsuho* depicts Sukhāvatī as filled with—and heavenly deities to be associated with—music, specifically *gagaku*.

Toshikage's sacred musical journey into a distinctly Buddhist sonic imaginary culminates in the protagonist meeting the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī and Amitābha Buddha. To encounter them, Toshikage must first traverse seven mountains, where he meets seven masters who accompany him to the boundary of Sukhāvatī. This trip leads him deeper into the sacred realm. In the context of Buddhism, mountains are associated with sacred realms and hence are considered prime places to worship (Wei 2018). In *Utsuho*, Toshikage is led ever deeper into the mountains and thus the sacred realm and the climax of his pilgrimage takes place on the peak of the seventh mountain.

At the top of this sacred mountain, Toshikage chants the *nenbutsu* 念仏 to *koto* accompaniment: "[Toshikage] played with perfect absorption, reciting Amitābha Buddha's name with *koto* music and prayed for seven days and seven nights when the Buddha appeared" (*Utsuho*, 35). By the tenth century, *nenbutsu* was a popular Buddhist ritual form as worship of Amitābha Buddha became more prominent. *Gagaku* also played a crucial role in such ritual worship of Amitābha (Nelson 2016, 43). Within *Utsuho*, the use of only the *koto* in ritual recitation is particularly intriguing (as opposed to *nenbutsu* with a *gagaku* ensemble or to chanting without accompaniment), as *nenbutsu* is performed without *koto* accompaniment in its standard contemporary forms. In the story, Toshikage's chants match the *koto* with the Buddha's name, elevating the instrument to sacred status.

The combination of the *koto* and chanting with clearness of mind is effective, and Amitābha Buddha descends from the heavens with several bodhisattvas. Afterward, the protagonist offers some of his sacred *koto* received from the asura to Amitābha Buddha and the bodhisattvas: "Toshikage offered these *koto* one by one, starting with the Buddha and then the bodhisattvas. Thus, they rode on the cloud, the wind fluttered them home and heaven and earth shook" (*Utsuho*, 37). Here, the *koto*, as an instrument, is an offering to the Buddha. While previously music acts to call and honor the Buddha, here the instruments themselves are given as offerings.

The narrative of the first chapter of *Utsuho* is imbued with religious and musical symbolism. As such it sheds light on the relationship between Buddhism and music, highlighting the many roles that music plays in Japanese

Buddhism. However, this relationship has always been rather complicated. As Cuilan Liu (2018, 714) writes, many scholars of music are unaware of the "general prohibition against instrumental music and the more complex subdivision of vocal music into reciting, chanting, and singing. This lack of awareness has prevented them from explaining the apparent discrepancy between the precept and the practice of music in Buddhism." Furthermore, as Fabio Rambelli (2021b) has pointed out, although Theravāda Buddhism follows the monastic codes and explicitly bans monks, nuns, and laypeople from participating in or watching musical performances, Mahāyāna Buddhism's position is more nuanced. Rambelli argues that monks incorporated certain forms of musical performance deemed acceptable for having a basis in the sutras.

In addition, due to their shared continental origins, Buddhism and *gagaku* instruments such as the *koto* have intertwined histories in Japan. *Gagaku* made its way to Japan via Korea and China starting in the sixth century along with Buddhist chants and Buddhism in general (Nelson 2016, 38). *Gagaku* music was a part of many forms of Buddhist ritual from the eighth century onward (Nelson 2016, 39; Rambelli 2021a, 48). One key example of this is the Tōdaiji 東大寺 eye-opening ceremony held in 752, when some ten thousand monks took part, including several international monks. The event featured chanting and *gigaku* 伎楽, a masked dance performance with musical accompaniment that was superseded by *gagaku* (de Ferranti 2001; Shiba 2009). Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the musical performance of *gagaku* was deeply interwoven into Buddhist culture and ritual practice due to their similar continental origins.

Music in *Utsuho* also reflects the many roles music played in premodern Buddhism. Within Japanese Buddhism, music acted as a form of religious practice, as cosmological symbolism, as ritual framework, and as religious offering (Mabbett 1993). Within *Utsuho*, these valences overlap to illustrate the nuanced role that music played in the medieval Japanese Buddhist imaginary. Toshikage and the masters play, offering the sounds of *nenbutsu* and *koto* accompaniment—and ultimately the *koto* themselves—to Amitābha and his retinue. Their playing ritualizes both meditative recitation and reverential giving.

Music is also significant to the cosmological symbolism of *Utsuho*. As objects within the cosmology of the story, the agency of *koto* cannot be discounted. First, Toshikage receives these *koto* from asura, a ubiquitous entity in Buddhist mythology. Though the instruments are made from paulownia of this earth, they are touched by a deity and finished by devas who descend from the heavens. Then, Toshikage returns some of the *koto* to the heavens in the form of an offering to Amitābha Buddha and Mañjuśrī. The *koto*, therefore, moves from the sacred realm to the earth and back to the sacred realm, physically mirroring the sacred blessings and divine intervention that are sprinkled throughout this first chapter. Within this text, the *koto* are material manifestations of the role

that music plays between this world and Sukhāvatī, between buddhas and mere humans. They act as a material cosmological symbol, reflecting the physical connection between the sacred realm and the earth.

Visual Receptions: Echoes of the Sonic Imaginary

Just as the author of *Utsuho* created their sonic Buddhist imaginary from layers of symbolism and available information about the world, *Utsuho* became part of a complex musical and religious imaginary in Japan. Tracing the visual-reception history of the text in later illustrated editions suggests how the sonic imaginary of the narrative changed over time. Though the original's syncretic descriptions of foreignness, music, and Buddhism were depicted with striking similarities, key stylistic differences emerged as well. Through these variations on the theme of *Utsuho*, the sonic imaginary of Hashikoku, that mellifluous place close to Amitābha's Pure Land, continued to reverberate throughout these later editions.

Let us return to the moment in which Toshikage sits with the ascetics under the trees for an example. The protagonist has just ridden his horse from the shore into Hashikoku to receive the transmission of *koto* performance from the foreign masters for three years. The Hachijō *nara ehon* from the sixteenth century (FIGURE 5) and a woodblock print from 1661 (FIGURE 6) both depict the moment right after Toshikage's horse departs. In an 1806 woodblock print (FIGURE 7), Toshikage appears to have just arrived on his horse and come upon the ascetics. There are striking similarities among these three depictions. For example, the merry scene in each illustration closely resembles the scene depicted on the Kin Gin Hyōmon Kin instrument gifted by the Tang dynasty (FIGURES 3 and 4). Three men sit on tiger skins, playing music under exotic flora. Yet, these illustrations depict Toshikage as sitting apart from the ascetics. Unlike the original tale, which emphasizes the closeness and free flow of conversation or transmission of knowledge between them, these images depict the moment before this closeness is achieved in which Toshikage remains aloof and remote from the local inhabitants. The illustrators could have chosen to portray the moment after this scene when Toshikage is seated among the hermits to play and learn from them. Yet, all three emphasize the moment of encounter, distance, and mutual alterity.

There is also one key difference in these three illustrations: that of costume. In the two earlier editions, FIGURES 5 and 6, the hermits wear what appear to be *langshan* 襴衫, a robe with long flowing sleeves worn during the Tang dynasty. Toshikage also wears a *langshan* in FIGURE 6, but he is clothed in Japanese imperial court garb (*sokutai* 束帯) in FIGURE 5. In FIGURE 7, the hermits and Toshikage all wear *sokutai*. The illustrator of FIGURE 5 likely dressed Toshikage in Japanese court wear because he was an envoy from the Japanese imperial court;

FIGURE 5. Toshikage meets the *koto* masters in the Hachijō *nara ehon*. Sixteenth century. Courtesy of the National Institute of Japanese Literature. CC BY-SA 4.0.

FIGURE 6. Toshikage meets the *koto* masters. *Utsuho monogatari*, 1661. Woodblock print. Courtesy of the National Institute of Japanese Literature. CC BY-SA 4.0.

FIGURE 7. Toshikage meets the *koto* masters. *Utsuho monogatari*, 1806. Woodblock print. Courtesy of Kyushu University Library Collections. Public domain.

in this rendition, the hermits wear Tang robes to signal foreignness and even historical exoticism. Perhaps in FIGURE 6 Toshikage wears a *langshan* to signal that he is returning from the Tang court or that he has been gone from the Heian court for several years. However, FIGURE 7 dresses all the men in *sokutai*. Though one might argue the men wearing the same clothes makes them all seem closer or less differentiated, I interpret this choice as an erasure of foreignness. That is, these hermits no longer register as foreign, exotic, or other. They are merely characters in a folktale set somewhere among the Japanese isles or in an ambiguous ancient place. It could be that by the nineteenth century, *sokutai* was sufficiently removed from standard sartorial practice so that it registered as distinctly folkloresque or mystical. The erasure of visible marks of foreignness from such visual representations served to naturalize Hashikoku and its related sonic imaginary, transforming it into an extension of the classical Japanese imaginary.

FIGURE 8. Deva on purple clouds playing music in the *nara ehon*. Courtesy of the National Institute of Japanese Literature. CC BY-SA 4.0.

FIGURE 9. Toshikage offers *koto* to Amitābha Buddha in the Hachijō *nara ehon*. Courtesy of the National Institute of Japanese Literature. CC BY-SA 4.0.

Finally, comparison of the depiction of instruments, particularly *koto*, and their connection to Sukhāvatī and deities demonstrates that the Buddhist sonic imaginary continued to hold significance long after *Utsuho* was written. A second version of the *nara ehon* (FIGURE 8) portrays the scene in which the seven devas descend from the heavens on a purple cloud to the sound of *gagaku*. This illustration is significant for three reasons. First, FIGURES 8 and 9 are reminiscent of *raigō* 来迎 paintings, which depict Amitābha Buddha descending on purple clouds to greet and guide the deceased person to his Pure Land at the moment of death. This iconography reinforces a connection between Sukhāvatī and the *koto*. Second, the representation of devas playing these instruments shows us that music was understood to be played by devas in Sukhāvatī. While the *Utsuho* narrative does clearly state that the devas play the accompanying music—and in fact, other illustrations of this scene from the Hachijō *nara ehon* do not feature them playing—the devas themselves make up the orchestra in the second *nara ehon* (FIGURE 8). Finally, we know from the illustration that the music was imagined to be *gagaku*, not only from the description in the narrative but also now through the images. Though the orchestral configuration differs a little from contemporary *gagaku* ensembles, all the mainstay instruments are included: *shō* 笙 (mouth organ); *biwa* 琵琶 (lute); *koto*, sometimes referred to as *sō* or *gakusō* 楽箏 to distinguish from more recently established forms of *koto* now played outside of *gagaku*; *ryūteki* 龍笛 (flute); *kakko* 鞨鼓 (a small round drum with long thin stick); and *dadaiko* 大太鼓 (a decorated large drum used in religious ceremonies).

However, the *koto* is one key point of difference between contemporary *gagaku* practice and these depictions. Illustrations and material objects show us that while the symbolism of the exotic and sacred *koto* may not have changed over time, the instrument itself and ways of playing it have. In FIGURE 8, the *koto* is played standing up and appears to have no movable bridges for tuning. It appears to have five or seven strings. A scene from the sixteenth-century Hachijō *nara ehon* (FIGURE 9) shows Toshikage offering up the *koto* to the Buddha. Here, the instrument appears to be slightly larger than that in FIGURE 8 and very clearly has brown, triangular movable bridges to tune the instrument, which are used to this day. The number of bridges varies across the different instruments, but there are at least eight, suggesting the size of the instrument is closer in size to the standard thirteen-string *koto* used today. These two illustrations suggest that at least two different sizes of instruments within the transverse zither family provided inspiration for *Utsuho* illustrations.

To understand the instruments that influenced these illustrations, let us look farther afield from *Utsuho*. In FIGURE 10, a statue at Byōdōin 平等院 dated to 1053 depicts a bodhisattva with what appears to be a stringed instrument. The way this bodhisattva plays this instrument—on the lap and strumming without

FIGURE 10. Jōchō Kōbō 定朝工房 (d. 1057), Unchū Kuyō Bosatsu, 1053. Statue. Courtesy of Byōdōin. ©Byōdōin. All rights reserved.

any bridges—is very similar to that of the illustration of the man playing under the trees on the Kin Gin Hyōmon Kin. The construction of the instruments, the *koto* and what is now called *guqin* in China, are close as well. Though now most frequently played on a surface, the *guqin* was previously played on the lap or floor. Within Japan, however, this form of *koto* has been entirely superseded by the larger instrument with bridges, played on the ground and now sometimes with a seat and stand (MIYAZAKI 2015, 230). The instruments featured in FIGURE 8 are larger and meant to be played on the ground, as is evidenced by the little feet attached to the bottom of the instrument to raise it. It is entirely different in shape, size, and construction. These three illustrations, with the addition of the Kin Gin Hyōmon Kin illustration and the object itself, help us to trace the evolution of the shape of the *koto* from the eighth through nineteenth centuries.

Though its appearance may have changed, the exotic and Buddhist imaginary surrounding the *koto* was consistent in these illustrations. The Kin Gin Hyōmon Kin depicts men making music in an exotic locale, drinking, and enjoying the good life. A few hundred years later, *Utsuho* picks up on both this form of continental entertainment and the Buddhist connotations of the *koto*, depicting the instrument as a conduit to connect with both exotic locales and other heavenly realms. The statue from Byōdōin of a bodhisattva playing the *koto* suggests that the sacred nature of music in general and of the *koto* in particular had become commonplace by the eleventh century. The sacredness of the instrument is most

apparent in the scene depicted in FIGURE 9, in which Toshikage bows and offers up the physical *koto* as offerings to Amitābha Buddha. Although these images were created centuries apart, the *koto* remains in its many forms a medium for accessing the Buddhist sonic imaginary.

Conclusion

In the first chapter of *Utsuho*, the author imagines a distant locale where religion and music are intertwined. In this article, I have explored the possible locations of Hashikoku, including Persia, Southeast Asia, and Kunlun. Using the knowledge of geography, religion, music, and philosophy available at the time, the author depicts a place situated at the limits of the known world, wherever it might be. In this imaginary land, the material object of the *koto* is mapped onto religious and musical symbolism. I call this mapping of object onto symbolism—of imagination onto the sounds of the world—sonic imaginary.

Hashikoku is a place of sonic imaginary where both music and Buddhism are transmitted simultaneously. Furthermore, as I argue above, and as TANAKA (1999) explains, the author draws a parallel between the *koto* and religion by alluding to Xuanzang's trip to India to gain Buddhist knowledge through direct transmission. The *koto* is thus imbued with a transcendent sense of religious and mystical otherness. Musical and religious transmission resonate with each other, as Toshikage learns the entire musical repertoire from the ascetics, receives *koto* from devas, and in later chapters transmits this knowledge to his daughter, and she to her son and granddaughter.

The author of the *Utsuho* utilizes the *koto* as a conduit between Japan, exotic other countries, and Sukhāvatī. In addition, the *koto* may grant access not only to other lands but also to other realms. In *Utsuho*, the physical form of the instrument, strings, reverberations of the wood, and trees that make the instruments all act as material manifestations of the role that music plays between this world and Sukhāvatī, between deities and mere humans. The *koto* reflects the connection between the heavens and the earth, a tool for communication and prayer, and a reverberating cosmological symbol.

REFERENCES

ABBREVIATION

T *The SAT Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō Text Database*. Version 2018. SAT Daizōkyō Text Database Committee with the approval of Daizō Shuppan. Web resource maintained by the University of Tokyo. https://21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT/index.html.

PRIMARY SOURCES

Da Ciensi Sanzang fashi zhuan 大慈恩寺三蔵法師伝. Huili 慧立 (b. 615). T 2053, 50.

Da Tang xiyu ji 大唐西域記. Xuanzang 玄奘 (602–664). T 2087, 51.

Da zhidu lun 大智度論. 100 fascs. Translated by Kumārajīva (344–413). T 1509, 25.

Gōdanshō, *Chūgaishō*, *Fukego* 江談抄、中外抄、富家語. Ōe Masafusa 大江匡房 (1041–1111). In *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 新日本古典文学大系 32. Iwanami Shoten, 1997.

Shoku Nihongi zenpen 続日本紀前編. In *Kokushi daikei* 国史大系, vol. 2, Kuroita Katsumi 黒板勝美 and Kokushi Daikei Henshūkai 国史大系編集会, eds. Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1979.

Utsuho monogatari うつほ物語 (*Utsuho*). In Nakano 1999.

Utsuho monogatari (Hachijō *nara ehon*). Copied by Hachijō Toshihito 八條智仁 (1579–1629). Kokusho Database ID 200015505. doi.org/10.20730/200015505

Utsuho monogatari (*nara ehon*). Copy date unknown. Kokusho Database ID 200017526. doi.org/10.20730/200017526

Utsuho monogatari. Copied by Hayashi Izumijō 林和泉掾 (mid-seventeenth century). Kokusho Database ID 200019766. doi.org/10.20730/200019766

Utsuho monogatari 宇津保物語. Copyist and publisher unknown, dated to 1806. Kyushu University Library ID 1001427555. http://hdl.handle.net/2324/1001427555

SECONDARY SOURCES

Arayama Chie 荒山千恵

2014 *Oto no kōkogaku* 音の考古学. Hokkaidō Daigaku Shuppankai.

Coderre, Laurence

2021 *Newborn Socialist Things: Materiality in Maoist China*. Duke University Press.

de Ferranti, Hugh, et al.

2001 Japan. In *Grove Music Online*, vol. 1. Oxford University Press. doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.43335

Dodd, Stephen

2004 *Writing Home: Representations of the Native Place in Modern Japanese Literature*. Brill. doi.org/10.1163/9781684174041_002

Duthie, Torquil

2014 *Man'yōshū and the Imperial Imagination in Early Japan*. Brill's Japanese Studies Library. Brill.

Eubanks, Charlotte

2011 *Miracles of Book and Body*. University of California Press.

FAURE, Bernard
1996 *Visions of Power: Imagining Medieval Japanese Buddhism*. Princeton University Press.

GRIMSHAW-AAGAARD, Mark, Mads WALTHER-HANSEN, and Martin KNAKKERGAARD, eds.
2019 *The Oxford Handbook of Sound and Imagination*, *Volume 1*. Oxford University Press. doi-org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190460167.013.40

HA, Guangtian
2022 From Bhagdād to Baghpūr: Sailors and Slaves in Global Asia. In *Who Is the Asianist? The Politics of Representation in Asian Studies*, Will Bridges, Nitasha Tamar Sharma, and Marvin D. Sterling, eds., 91–124. Association for Asian Studies.

HIRANO Kenji 平野健次, ed.
1989 *Nihon ongaku daijiten* 日本音楽大辞典. Heibonsha.

HIROSHIMA KENRITSU REKISHI HAKUBUTSUKAN 広島県立歴史博物館, ed.
1994 *Nihon kotohajime: Fukuyama koto e no nagare* 日本琴始め—福山琴への流れ. Hiroshima Kenritsu Rekishi Hakubutsukan.

HOSOKAWA Junjirō 細川潤次郎, ed.
1914 *Kojiruien* 古事類苑, vol, 1. Jingū Shichō.

HOSOKAWA, Shuhei
1998 In search of the sound of empire: Tanabe Hisao and the foundation of Japanese ethnomusicology. *Japanese Studies* 18: 5–19. doi.org/10.1080/10371399808727638

KELLY, Douglas
1978 *Medieval Imagination: Rhetoric and the Poetry of Courtly Love*. University of Wisconsin Press.

LE GOFF, Jacques
1992 *The Medieval Imagination*. Trans. Arthur Goldhammer. The University of Chicago Press.

LIE, John
2001 *Multiethnic Japan*. Harvard University Press.

LIU, Culian
2018 Reciting, chanting, and singing: The codification of vocal music in Buddhist canon law. *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 46: 713–752. doi.org/10.1007/s10781-018-9360-8.

MABBETT, Ian W.
1993 Buddhism and music. *Asian Music* 25: 9–28. doi.org/10.2307/834188

MIYAZAKI Mayumi 宮崎まゆみ
1995 Koto no keifu 箏の系譜. In *Nihon gakki no genryū: Koto, fue, tsuzumi,*

dōtaku 日本楽器の源流—コト・フエ・ツヅミ・銅鐸, ed. Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsukan 国立歴史民俗博物館, 61–96. Daiichi Shobō.

2015 *Koto to kotokyoku o shiru jiten* 箏と箏曲を知る事典. Tōkyōdō Shuppan.

Morris, James Harry

2020 A new analysis of Persian visits to Japan in the 7th and 8th centuries. *Journal of International and Advanced Japanese Studies* 12: 105–120.

Mross, Michaela

2022 *Memory, Music, Manuscripts: The Ritual Dynamics of Kōshiki in Japanese Sōtō Zen*. Kuroda Studies in East Asian Buddhism. University of Hawai'i Press.

Nakano Kōichi 中野幸一, ed.

1999 *Shinhen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū* 新編日本古典文学全集, vol. 14. Shogakkan.

Nelson, Steven

2016 Court and religious music. In *The Ashgate Research Companion to Japanese Music*, Alison McQueen Tokita and David W. Hughes eds., 35–76. Routledge.

Niedermaier, Jeffrey

2023 La Chine, le Japon et l'« étoffe » de Perse: Une géopoétique transfrontalière du Japon classique. *Asiatische Studien-Études Asiatiques*, 77: 379–407. doi.org/10.1515/asia-2022-0033

Nomura Tōru 野村 徹, ed.

2001 *Pasai ōkoku monogatari—Saiko no marē rekishi bungaku* パサイ王国物語—最古のマレー歴史文学. Tōyō Bunko 東洋文庫 690. Heibonsha.

Ono Matatsu 小野真龍

2018 Shinbutsu no kosumorojī toshite no gagaku 神仏のコスモロジーとしての雅楽. *Nihon tetsugakushi kenkyū* 15: 69–96.

Palmén, Ritva

2014 *Richard of St. Victor's Theory of Imagination*. Investigating Medieval Philosophy, vol. 8. Brill.

Rambelli, Fabio

2021a The dharma of music: *Gagaku* and Buddhist salvation in medieval Japan. *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 48: 45–71. doi.org/gn5w

2021b The sutra of Druma, king of the Kinnara and the Buddhist philosophy of music. *Ca' Foscari Japanese Studies* 14: 181–197. doi.org/10.30687/978-88-6969-527-8/009

Schaefer, Edward H.

1973 *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand: A Study of T'ang Exotics*. University of California Press.

SHIBA Sukeyasu 芝 祐靖
2009 *Ōsaki Hachimangū to gagaku* 大崎八幡神社と雅楽. Kokuhō Ōsaki Hachimangū Sendai Edo 国宝大崎八幡宮仙台江戸 25. Ōsaki Hachimangū Sendai Edo Kenkyū Jikō Iinkai.

SMALL, Christopher
1998 *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening*. University Press of New England.

STERNE, Jonathan
2012 Sonic Imagination. In *The Sound Studies Reader*, ed. Jonathan Sterne, 1–18. Routledge.

SUGINO Yūka 杉野友香
2009 Nihon no genshi, kodai no koto 日本の原始・古代の琴. *Tenri Daigaku Kōkogaku Kenkyūshitsu kiyō* 2: 1–18.

TANAKA Takaaki 田中隆明
1999 *Utsuho monogatari*: Toshikage no Pashikoku kara no tabi うつほ物語—俊蔭の波斯国からの旅. *Ajia yūgaku* 3: 55–69.

UEHARA Sakukazu 上原作和 and SHŌDŌJI Yasuko 正道寺康子, eds.
2005 *Utsuho monogatari inyo kanseki chūso Dōchū Saihisho* うつほ物語引用漢籍注疏洞中最秘鈔. Shintensha.
2016 *Nihon kingakushi* 日本琴學史. Bensei Shuppan.

WADE, Bonnie C.
2014 *Composing Japanese Musical Modernity*. Chicago Studies in Ethnomusicology. The University of Chicago Press.

WEI Bin
2018 The sacred imagination of mountains and its spatial influence in early medieval China: The case of Mount Tiantai. *Social Sciences in China* 39: 132–164. doi.org/10.1080/02529203.2018.1414415

WHATLEY, Katherine G. T.
2024 Between Koenji and Brooklyn: Tokyo, New York, and the circulations of experimental musics in a global world. *Positions* 32: 259–285. doi.org/10.1215/10679847-11024306

WILENSKY, Julie
2002 The magical Kunlun and "devil slaves": Chinese perceptions of dark-skinned people and Africa before 1500. *Sino-Plantonic Papers* 122: 1–51.

YANG, Lihui, and Deming AN
2005 *Handbook of Chinese Mythology*. ABC-CLIO.