

[HJAS 66.1]

Article Abstracts

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Examining the opening passage of *Sonezaki shinjū* (Love suicides at Sonezaki, 1703), Chikamatsu Monzaemon's first "contemporary-life play" (*sewamono*) for the puppet theater (*jōruri*), MICHAEL BROWNSTEIN explores issues related to the development of and historical context for *jōruri*. The passage describes the heroine, Ohatsu, making a pilgrimage, commonly referred to as the Kannon-meguri, to thirty-three temples of Kannon in Osaka. The Kannon-meguri was characteristic of many urban pilgrimage routes that appeared in the larger cities of Japan during the early modern period, routes that also came to be called "women's pilgrimages." Brownstein discusses the pilgrimage itself and how the Kannon-meguri in Chikamatsu's play was performed. He thus reveals the importance of the passage for understanding the play as a whole.

To investigate the relationship between Liang Wudi (r. 502-549), "a Chinese King Aśoka," and Buddhism, JINHUA CHEN focuses on a Buddhist palace chapel installed within Wudi's palace complex and various politico-religious activities held there. Chen pays particular attention to those dharma-assemblies that represented the Chinese version of the Indian and Central Asian institution known as *pañcavārṣika* ("a feast held every five years and opened to the public"). By reconstructing the form, layout, and history of the palace chapel, and by analyzing the religious, political, and economic functions of the *pañcavārṣika*, Chen illuminates the sharp tensions between different sociopolitical and

religious forces of that period. Identifying a common paradigm underlying the dharma-assemblies, he further looks at the *pañcavārṣika*'s impact on Empress Wu (r. 690-705).

Comparing four ninth-century versions of a Tang-dynasty story about a woman who takes revenge for her father's death, SARAH M.ALLEN analyzes the distinct choices each writer made in narrating the story. The divergence and overlap among the narratives, Allen argues, indicate that the written texts were derived from the casual oral storytelling popular among the educated elite. Modern scholarship often treats Tang dynasty stories (*xiaoshuo* 小說) as "fiction," but Allen finds this term, with its connotations of authorial inventiveness, inadequate for stories that probably originated in oral gossip. Rather, she concludes that creativity in these texts occurred when their writers embellished and interpreted inherited stories and shaped them to their own needs.

HILDE DE WEERDT analyzes the non-official, semi-official, and pseudo-official uses of official news and archival materials and the place of these materials in the late imperial information order. Tracing changes in access to state documents, she shows that interest in current affairs grew across broad sectors of the literati class during the Song dynasty. To assess the impact of print on the circulation of court archival records, De Weerdts first reviews the different types of archival and historical collections along with associated processes of compilation. She then discusses state policies on access to materials and contrasts legal regulations with actual access.

BRUCE RUSK examines the place of the forged *Shijing daxue* (Stone Classics Great Learning) in the development of *Great Learning* studies in the Ming dynasty. The forger, Feng Fang (1493–1566?), was, argues Rusk, responding to debates about the *Great Learning*, which in the mid-sixteenth century had polarized around Wang Yangming's call for a return to the Old Text versus wide support for Zhu Xi's revised version. The career of the forgery, which was initially accepted, also depended on the particulars of its circulation through manuscript copies, oral reports, and printed editions. The publisher, the forger, and subsequent readers all used the forgery toward their own ends, and, Rusk shows, the forgery did more to destabilize than to unify readings of the *Great Learning*.

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