

3-Volume Set



The Tale of Genji

Edited and with a new introduction by **Richard H. Okada**, Princeton University, USA

The monumental Japanese fictional narrative known as *The Tale of Genji* (Genji monogatari) appeared during the first decade or so of the eleventh century, CE. This vast narrative—which spans three-quarters of a century, and is made up of fifty-four chapters and 795 poems—has been attributed to a woman known only as Murasaki Shikibu. It has often been celebrated as ‘the world’s oldest novel’.

The Tale of Genji has generated a huge scholarly literature, and this new collection, co-published by Routledge and Edition Synapse, meets the need for an authoritative reference work to help researchers and students navigate and make sense of it. The collection is made up of three volumes which bring together the best and most influential canonical and cutting-edge research.

The first volume (‘Cultures of Reading *The Tale of Genji*’) assembles the key work in narratology, aesthetics, and poetics. A narrative that can—and has—been read primarily as a ‘romance’ has much to say about the history, culture, and society of its time, and Volume II (‘Sexual Politics in *The Tale of Genji*’) is organized around often contested themes such as gender, genre, and politics. The scholarship in the final volume (‘*The Tale of Genji* and its Others’), meanwhile, gathers the best work on topics including Noh, visual art, ‘China’, and later literature.

With a comprehensive introduction, newly written by the editor, which places the material in its historical and intellectual context, this Major Work is an essential work of reference and is destined to be valued by scholars and students as a vital one-stop research resource.

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1. Richard Bowring, 'The Cultural Background', *Murasaki Shikibu: The Tale of Genji* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 1–21.
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