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“A Matter of Life and Death”: Kawabata on the Value of Art after the Atomic Bombings

ABSTRACT

This article explores the possible interpretations—and the implications of those interpretations—of a comment about the importance of art made by Yasunari Kawabata (1899–1972), later the first Japanese Nobel laureate for literature: that “looking at old works of art is a matter of life and death.” (In 1949, Kawabata visited Hiroshima in his capacity as president of the Japan literary society P.E.N. to inspect the damage caused by the atomic bombing of Hiroshima that helped end World War II. On his way back to his home in Kamakura, he stopped in Kyoto. He came under severe criticism for “sightseeing” at such a time. This comment was his response.) The introduction explains why we should take him seriously as a commentator on art. The body of the article examines why our looking at art might be more, not less, important after the post-War situation, the kinds of art Kawabata might have meant, why some possibilities are more likely than others, and how they differ in what they offer us and the value of art under conditions of trauma and mass trauma.

Shortly after the atomic bombings of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, in 1949, Yasunari Kawabata (1899–1972), later the first Japanese Nobel laureate for literature (1968), visited Hiroshima with twenty or so other writers and journalists from the Japan literary society P.E.N. in his capacity as P.E.N.’s president.¹ On his way back to his home in Kamakura, he stopped in Kyoto for two weeks of “sightseeing” (Donald Keene’s term), “to see Kyoto scenery and old works of art” (*Kyōto no fūkō to kobijutsu to o mi-arukimashita*), which brought harsh criticism in the press. He describes the incident in his literary memoir.² As Keene tells it:

Kawabata seemed impassive before the terrible sights, and this impression of serene tranquility with respect to everything except his own internal problems was confirmed in the eyes of unfriendly observers when Kawabata spent time sightseeing in Kyoto on [his] return. Kawabata later explained his motivation in these terms: “I wondered if I was not guilty of a contradiction in having gone to see the sights and the old art of the ancient capital on my way back from the dreadful ruins left by the atomic bomb in Hiroshima. But I cannot think there

was any contradiction involved. . . . Perhaps Hiroshima and Kyoto are the two extremes of Japan today. I have been examining two such disparate sights at the same time and would like to examine them even more carefully. It goes without saying that looking at old objects of art is not a hobby or a diversion. It is a matter of life and death” [*sekkan na seimei de aru*].³

This surprising statement prompts a number of questions, particularly to those of us like Kawabata’s critics, whether in the West or in Japan, whose thinking about art and the aesthetic has been primarily shaped by Plato, Kant, and Marx—from whose viewpoints Kawabata’s statement may seem preposterous. In the West, where “art” is generally considered an avocation or a preoccupation solely for the educated or sophisticated elite, it may seem unthinkable. Such attitudes spread to Japan during the Meiji period (1868–1912) with the study of Western aesthetics and philosophy of art; Kawabata’s critics, therefore, saw Kawabata’s stop in Kyoto as frivolous, superficial, solipsistic, and selfish and argued that it showed Kawabata as indifferent, cold, even inhuman.⁴

Both Keene and Kawabata himself, in his literary memoir, are deliberately vague as to the identity of these critics, who in any case may well have written without bylines—a common custom then; it would be virtually impossible to identify them all now, and given that the trip was in the company of P.E.N.'s writers and journalists, much of their criticism might well have been oral rather than published and was probably both public and behind his back.

Beyond that, there may well have been a questioning of whether such a stop did not amount to luxuriating in some kind of nostalgic longing for the ersatz comforts of a seemingly simpler time. (See Section III.A, below.) Japan's intelligentsia was well versed in German philosophy and literary theory; many would have been familiar with Theodor W. Adorno's and Walter Benjamin's critiques of nostalgia, if only secondhand. Finally, one may wonder whether the impassivity to which Keene refers might not have been a symptom of what I call "tertiary trauma" on Kawabata's part—the trauma experienced by persons who witness or even hear about especially traumatizing events that happen to other people.⁵ In any event, Kawabata's need to justify himself in his memoirs bespeaks his discomfort with being misunderstood in this incident.

Kawabata's statement is couched in general—not personal—terms, as though to present a universal truth rather than a remedy he himself needed at such a time. This shifts us from his personal psychology to the question of what Kawabata knows about art that we (ordinarily) do not.

Whether Kawabata's observation applies to the arts of other cultures, while well worth exploring, is outside the scope of this article. And it could be a vital question not only for the survival, recovery, and (we hope) eventual flourishing of future victims of catastrophe, but also for policies regarding arts and environmental preservation and for our understanding of the arts—though these questions, too, are beyond the scope of this article—as is the equally provocative question of what art(s) may have to offer victims and witnesses to the Holocaust.⁶

It is not immediately clear what Kawabata meant by calling art "a matter of life and death," for we are used to thinking about art as a diversion, a luxury, a pleasure, something that comes into play only after the basic necessities of life have been met.⁷ This is precisely the view that Kawabata disavows. Kawabata's comment, rather, sug-

gests that art strikes to the heart of what it means to be a person, to face existential crises of life-and-death choices (for one's self and for others), to desire, to decide, to take action on the basis of one's decisions—to stay alive, or not, and on what terms; to help others stay alive, or die, and on what terms. His phrase is "*setsujitsu na seimei*," an "urgency of life."

What has art to do with such urgent matters—with getting people through the mass trauma following atomic bombings? This question is at the crux of any interpretation of Kawabata's own work.⁸ But more importantly, if he is right, it is of the gravest importance for all of us, not only those who want to understand his mind and work, but also for those of us who want to understand the significance of the bombings—and (a distinct question, really) of our (American) political and military decisions and decision making—and, it would seem, according to Kawabata, at any rate, for those of us who want to understand how to survive such events (past or future).

Kawabata's statement leads to a number of interesting questions. First off: Can this claim possibly be true? And if so, under what conditions? What in the world might Kawabata have meant by this statement?

Also, it is a very broad claim—suggesting any kind of old art, any circumstances. Might there be something about the *kinds* of old art he was looking at that made the claim true? What might it be about the circumstances that made art more effective, important, and urgent than usual? Might there be things about Japanese art that made it true, whereas we who had suffered through the carpet bombings of Europe or the Holocaust might not receive the same benefits by looking at *our* old works of art?

Kawabata's assertion may be crucial for a broader and deeper understanding of the meaning of the person, of voice and desire and agency, and for those who need to know how to make decisions—life-and-death decisions—not just according to accepted ethical principles or in an ageless unchanging realm of eternal moral absolutes, but under the crushing crises of the modern era with its seemingly unprecedented calamities.

This article explores the ways in which Kawabata's statement might be true, given the realities of Japanese arts and aesthetics, and of the implications of its truth for all of us. Before we proceed to that, however, I present brief analyses of two preliminary matters: first, the situation in

Japan just after the war and, second, Kawabata himself and his right to be taken seriously in such a claim. I then proceed to the main point: examination of the kinds of art he was talking about and their implications for our thesis.

Before we proceed to these issues, let me draw your attention to the fact that, while as a novelist, writer on art, and friend of artists, Kawabata might well have addressed the need for *making* art at such a time, in fact he was talking specifically about *old* works of art, not those contemporary with his own. And he referred specifically to looking rather than making. I return to this last issue at the end of the article.

I. PRELIMINARY ISSUES

I.A. *Japan after World War II*

Kawabata made his claim under particular conditions, namely, after being faced with a level and scale of devastation unprecedented in human experience. The atomic bombings were unlike previous massacres of civilians and destructions of whole cities and social life forms in a number of ways. They were also one in a chain of events (including the war, the firebombings of a dozen cities, the surrender to the Allied Powers, and the abdication of divine status by the emperor) that challenged the Japanese sense of who they were on many levels. To the extent that we all get our sense of identity from our relationships and our place in society, when those relationships and that society are destroyed, we—any of us—must, in order to survive, forge new identities.

The Japanese at the time faced two intensifications of this general human need for identity and relationship. First, Japanese survivors at that time were collectively and individually faced with the loss of many—in some cases most or all—of the actual bases for personal and national identity. Families and friends and classmates and colleagues were dead. Homes and neighborhoods, whole cities, were destroyed or unrecognizable. Their government, they now realized, had lied to them and betrayed them. Their emperor, the divine source of the Japanese polity, had just declared himself to be only human.

Second, social scientists argue that the Japanese, rather more than some other cultures, have a shared sense of self. This is partly due to an inheritance from Confucianism, in which there is no such thing as an independent self; the self is in-

herently social and takes its definitions—which are several, and various, and change through time—from its participation in the Five Relationships (parent and child, husband and wife, older brother and younger brother, friend and friend, ruler and subject).⁹ Most importantly perhaps, Japanese sense of self has an important indigenous component based on various forms of Japanese sociality—shaped by socialization practices and by the arts. (After the war, the Japanese government supported the arts—as, indeed, it had during and before, but now as a means of stimulating local economies, among other reasons. Partially as a result, the arts played major roles in the reestablishment of the context of values in Japan after World War II.)

The challenge the war presented to identity, therefore, was not only about the personal sense of loss that individuals felt, formidable as that was, but about the possible erasure of the bases for a sense of collective identity that serves as a foundation both for individuals and for a society as a whole—and especially for the Japanese.

I.B. *Kawabata's Legitimacy as the Maker of Such a Claim*

So just who is this Kawabata and what does he know about this matter of art and survival?

The first Japanese Nobel laureate for literature, Kawabata's reputation is based on his authorship of novels and short stories of extraordinary beauty and penetrating insight. Many of his works, such as the famous novels *Beauty and Sadness* and *A Thousand Cranes*, focus on art and its workings in and on the human psyche and in and on human relationships. They illustrate the ways in which the process of making art, either literary or visual (in the case of *Beauty and Sadness*), and the appreciation of works of art as objects (in the case of *A Thousand Cranes*) illuminate life and make it more meaningful. (In *Beauty and Sadness*, the novelist, his wife, and the two painters all comment explicitly on the workings of art.) Others, such as *The Sound of the Mountain*, use artworks as touchstones for human understanding of the human condition, relationships, and especially ethical action and decision making.¹⁰ Kawabata's Nobel address, "Japan the Beautiful and Myself," is both an explication of Japanese categorical aesthetics and a demonstration of them. He is thus both an artist and, in his writing, a philosopher of art.

Kawabata's theories were not conceived in a vacuum. He was a friend of many of Japan's finest writers, including Shiga Naoya and Nagai Kafu, and the discoverer of more, including Yukio Mishima; for decades he made his living writing essays about literature. He was also a close friend of several artists, including the Nihonga painter Yukihiro Yasuda (1884–1978) and the Surrealist painter Harue Koga (1985–1933).¹¹ After the war, he became a collector of art, especially eighteenth-century painting and calligraphy, such as *The Ten Conveniences (Jūben)*, including "The Convenience of Fishing" (*Chobenzu*), a group of ten paintings by Ike Taiga (1723–1776), one half of the collaboration with Yosa Buson called the *Ten Conveniences and Ten Pleasures (Jūben-Jūgi)*, and a Japanese national treasure.¹²

So Kawabata knew what he was talking about. If anyone was in a position to make such a claim, it was he.

II. THE ARTS KAWABATA WAS REFERRING TO

The next question is, surely, given that Kawabata understood art, what kinds of art was he talking about?

II.A. *Japanese Art*

In context, there's no question he had *Japanese* art in mind. He mentions visits to see Tamba pottery as well as museum exhibits and art dealers, where he saw works by Fujiwara no Utagire and the priest Myoe's *Yume no ki (Dream Diary)* for sale.

But the widespread global fascination with Japanese arts and aesthetics (defined either as categories of experience or as philosophy of art) suggests, first, that there is a general human openness to Japanese art and aesthetics and, second, some sort of broad, almost universal appeal on the part of Japanese arts and aesthetics themselves.¹³ This global fascination raises questions as to whether Japanese arts and aesthetics make special (as opposed to valuable) contributions to living and, if so, how and on what basis.

It might, in fact, turn out to be the case that Kawabata's claim is not true of *all* old art, but is true of (old) *Japanese* art. And this might be true not only for Japanese people but for people of any culture.

II.B. *Arts in Kyoto*

Again, in context, Kawabata was obviously referring especially to the art of Kyoto. He made, in fact, four such visits, on the way there and back in November with Toyoshima Yoshio and Komatsu Kiyoshi at the invitation of the city, staying in Kyoto at least three weeks on his return, and the second trip in the spring, when he stayed in Kyoto a fortnight on his return. His memoir mentions both scenery (he runs into others who were there to see the fresh green foliage at Takao), contrasting his experience in the various trips due to the changes in season, and visits to temples and other sites: Daitoku-ji, half a day at Katsura Detached Imperial Villa, and the grave of the literati artist Uragami Gyokudo, whose work he collected.¹⁴

In one sense—and an important sense it is, given the difficulties of recovery after such massive traumatization (after all, not only had two important cities been destroyed by atomic bombs, but the greater parts of *all* the other major cities had been destroyed by carpet bombing)—he might have been referring to *any* intact environment. Under traumatic circumstances, resumption of a sense of normalcy can be hastened and deepened by an intact physical environment that does not recapitulate the trauma. Such an environment is in itself supportive. It might well be that all that was needed to make a place feel nurturing and supportive was that it was intact.

But if the only (or most important) reason to visit Kyoto was that it had not been bombed, that is not philosophically very interesting, however valuable it might be therapeutically. But the fact that it was Kyoto where Kawabata stopped is significant in and of itself, given that he lived in an area—Kamakura—that to this day is still filled with old temples and shrines, gardens, and significant works of art going back as much as 1,200 years (such as the Sugimoto Temple), which many feel is also worthy of World Heritage status. In other words, if all he wanted was old Japanese art and an intact environment, he could have headed straight home. (Kamakura was not strategically important enough to bother bombing, so many temples and shrines survive from its heydays as the capital of the shogunate from 1180 to 1333.)

But Kyoto's preservation was not fortuitous; it was special for a number of reasons.¹⁵ It had deliberately been spared by Allied bombing precisely

because of its status as a political, religious, and cultural capital of Japan and its consequent artistic heritage.¹⁶ This sparing of Kyoto for this reason and its demonstrated importance in the rebuilding and resurgence of Japan after the war lead us to the larger issue of the importance of cultural and artistic patrimony. Kyoto's value is now recognized worldwide, for the city and its environs were designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1994 on the basis of two criteria from UNESCO's Global Strategy:

2. to exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design; . . .
4. to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.¹⁷

Although the first of these speaks directly to the issue, to anyone who knows Kyoto, of course, this pair nonetheless comprises a rather paltry argument for its value. In my view, at least five additional criteria from the World Heritage Centre's list of ten would also apply to Kyoto:

1. to represent a masterpiece of human creative genius . . . [albeit a collaborative "masterpiece"];
3. to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living . . . ;
5. to be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;
6. to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance;
7. to contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance.

The importance of art as it is understood and protected by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre attests to the value, on both personal and social levels, of human life that is informed by historical precedent. It stops well short of Kawabata's

claim—that our experience of old art matters to our very *survival*. But these criteria bring us closer to what was probably in Kawabata's mind when he made his startling defense of his layover.

And, in fact, in addition to UNESCO's rationale and our extension of it, there are at least six other reasons Kyoto would have been especially valuable at such a time:

1. Kyoto's general artistic heritage: Kyoto is full of art of all kinds. In addition to its art museums, the temples and shrines are works of art in themselves as well as repositories of paintings, sculpture, textiles, and other works. The Urasenke School of tea ceremony and many other artistic organizations are headquartered there, with their collections and personnel, including Living National Treasures. Homes and gardens of countless artists, writers, and other figures of cultural importance are also located in Kyoto.
2. Kyoto's religious art: Much of Kyoto's art is religious. The city is said to have some 1,800 temples and shrines. It is not only the buildings and their collections but also the configurations of the sites themselves that matter. We will return below to the particular uses of religious art during times of crisis and to the issue of configurations and positioning of sites. It is worth noting, however, that due to the special relationships between specific deities and sites in Japan as well as to Kyoto's associations with the national government and the emperor, Kyoto's religious art might bear specific significance that the same works would not have if moved to a different site, in ways analogous to those of works at Lourdes, Fatima, or the Vatican—even though Kawabata's statement about "old works of art" might be true about any old religious works.
3. Kyoto's associations with the government: Third, for hundreds of years Kyoto was the ancient capital—of the political government during the Heian period (794–1185) and again during the Ashikaga (1336–1573) and Momoyama (1573–1603) periods, and of the imperial court from 784 until the Meiji era (1868–1912) and through today. The imperial family and the Ashikagas are renowned for arts leadership as both patrons and (some of them, at least) artists. After the cataclysmic disruption of government following the end of WWII, when Japan for the first time in its history had been

invaded and was even occupied, reconnection with one of the sites of political legitimacy would have been highly significant.

4. Kyoto's associations with peace: Beyond that, Kyoto as a capital city was associated with peace, particularly when compared with Kamakura and Edo/Tokyo. Tokyo, of course, was the site of the government that had launched the colonizing campaign, while the temples, shrines, and gardens of Kawabata's home city of Kamakura derive, for the most part, from the Kamakura period, where the government had been moved by the new warrior-class leaders (shogun). Although they are multi-valenced, it is possible that not only their familiarity to Kawabata but their connotations of war and therefore suffering made them unsuitable for his needs after Hiroshima. Kyoto historically was less tainted with the stigma of war.
5. Kyoto as an example of the vicissitudes of war and the transience of military victory: Strictly speaking, Kyoto, too, had been not only the site of ferocious fighting a number of times over the centuries, but was also the point of origin for a war of aggression by Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536 or 1537–1598), a military leader who completed the unification of Japan after the Warring States period and launched two unsuccessful invasions against Korea in 1592–1593 and 1594–1596. To someone like Kawabata, the fate of Hideyoshi's Fushimi Castle (*Fushimi-jō*) would have underscored the poignant sense of vicissitudes of life—and especially of gains and losses in war. Located in Kyoto's Fushimi Ward, Hideyoshi's castle was destroyed by an earthquake in 1596, only two years after it was completed. It was soon rebuilt. After Hideyoshi's death, it was transferred to a vassal of the daimyo who became Hideyoshi's successor, Tokugawa Ieyasu. It played a significant role in Ieyasu's victory, although it eventually fell in a siege. In 1623, the castle was dismantled and many of its rooms and buildings dispersed to temples and other castles. The current structure, on a site near that of the original, is a 1964 replica; the original site was used for the tomb of Emperor Meiji in 1912.

This is but one example of a broader Buddhist (but also Daoist) principle: that everything in life is transient; transience is the nature of life. (This is deeply opposed to the Western view that "Art lasts, life is short" [*ars longa, vita brevis*].) On this view, the brevity

of life—however inspirational it has proven to be in the arts—is not truly tragic. A city like Kyoto demonstrates that we can outlast our sorrows and our personal, family, and national tragedies. While full of monuments and graves, it is not noticeably a memorial city; it undermines the memorial impulse (important as that is in Japan, as everywhere in human society). While it has survived countless battles—some memorialized in some of the most amazing art ever seen—the effect is entirely different from visiting battlefields from the American Revolutionary War or the War between the States, where the outcomes of the wars and those individual battles have defined life ever since. Kyoto's history is so long that no victory could prove permanent. It has all passed away. What one lives with is the overall transience of all victory. At a time when Japan had just lost a war, this must in itself have been consoling.

6. Kyoto as environment: In addition to Kyoto's individual works of art, there are the countless *Gesamtkunstwerke* that comprise environments: 1,800 temples and shrines; the Imperial Palace, Goshō; Tokugawa Ieyasu's Nijō Castle and replicas and former sites of other castles; detached imperial villas, Shugaku-in and Katsura; and the homes, studios, and gardens of noted artists, scholars, and craftsmen. Most of these also have gardens that comprise integral components of the site. There are also tombs and cemeteries and market places and bridges of historic and aesthetic significance. We return in the next section to a discussion of some of the ways these environments might prove especially useful in the ways Kawabata might have had in mind.

II.C. *Religious and Secular Art*

The most obvious ways in which "old works of art" might help persons in situations as dire as the aftermath of the atomic bombings of major cities are the varieties of assistance offered by religious art—in this case primarily Shinto (shrines) and Buddhist (temples). Both shrines and temples serve as sites for religious rituals, of course, and might therefore offer the promise of practical help as well as spiritual solace and guidance. But that is in their religious capacity, not as works of art, and we therefore set those aspects aside.

Shinto contributes to an overall sense of participation in the sacred and to a sense of identity

(often more as members of a local community than as Japanese per se). During the war years, Shinto was reinvented specifically to shape a national identity as Japanese—connected to the divine through the emperor. Although much of this reinvention is now considered spurious, there are legitimate, less deliberately ideological connections between Shinto and identity, particularly at the local levels. (Scholars distinguish between shrine, or local, and national Shinto.) And certainly there are connections to ancestors through shrines and festivals (that include performing arts) that contribute to personal and group identity aside from the national war effort.

Buddhism, too, offers community and connection to the sacred. But in addition, Buddhist art might offer special religious capabilities. In ancient times, some Buddhist art offered actual salvation (silk ribbons connecting a dying person to a Bodhisattva in a painting, for instance, or mandalas that move people along the path toward enlightenment). It also provides sources of inspiration, including a sort of aesthetic shock (Pali: *samvega*) capable of jolting people awake into enlightenment, and the inspiration provided by the evidence of enlightenment that can inhere in a master's calligraphy or painting.¹⁸ (The master himself was thought to reside for a short period in the commemorative statues of Zen masters during the middle ages.)

Although he mentions seeing art from the Buddhist temple Tofukuji that was on exhibit and the work of the monk Myoe, it is unlikely that any of these specifically religious dimensions are what Kawabata had in mind; I suspect that with his verbal facility, if he had meant merely or primarily Shinto or Buddhist works he would have said so—in spite of possible political difficulties in 1950s Japan. (Shinto especially was censored by the Occupation.) Kawabata was a humanist, part of the bold modernism that was reinventing Japan both after trade was instituted with the West during the Meiji Restoration and again, with renewed impetus, after the war. None of his fiction suggests an interest, much less a belief, in religion.

This does not suggest, however, that he would have found Japanese religious art banal, irrelevant, or pointless. Rather, it suggests that he had in mind such works as the Kamakura period scrolls of hells and diseases, which confront the depths of human misery in an amazingly direct, courageous way and which can show us a great deal not only about suffering but also about our at-

titudes toward it. I am thinking here of William La Fleur's point about the *Hungry Ghosts* (*Gaki Zoshi*) scroll, showing one of many types of hell, which La Fleur argues shows that suffering is invisible to those who are not suffering.¹⁹ Another type of example would be the paintings of retired scholars who have chosen to retire rather than serve an unjust and corrupt official elite, such as those depicted in Taiga's aforementioned *Ten Conveniences* illustrating this theme in Kawabata's collection.²⁰

II.D. *Environmental and Landscape Arts*

Kyoto's temples, shrines, palaces, and castles are not simply art *objects*, but aesthetic *environments*—a fact that carries profound implications and ramifications, especially for the particular situation in which Kawabata found himself after the war. As landscapes, they are multi-sensual, interactive, and engaging. As Marc Treib and I have pointed out, gardens can give comfort, safety, and pleasure (as opposed to threats to survival) for the viewer.²¹ Japanese temples and shrines are often clustered together in different parts of the city, relatively isolated with other eccentric spaces, and walled off; they are, therefore, relatively more peaceful and quiet (as compared with, say, an otherwise delicious hotel garden in Chartres, adjacent to a parking lot). Of course, some Japanese gardens, such as Kinkaku-ji, the Temple of the Golden Pavilion, are so famous and frequently visited as to approach theme park scale, but brouhaha of the tour buses manages to be constrained by the fencing and kept outside the garden.

This peace and quiet is comforting and pleasurable in and of itself (especially compared to the madness of war and its aftermath). The peace and quiet also allows us to hear other comforting and pleasurable sounds, such as birdsong, as well as, often, the sound of chanting or a flute that temples and shrines may also provide. Such sites may, in addition, function as symbols of these values, especially when they have survived over hundreds of years, as so many of Kyoto's sites had.

I, David R. Coffin, and Ismay Barwell and John Powell all point out that gardens signify and thematize temporality and present the passing of time. They remind us—indeed they show us—history.²² But more than that, they also put us in the literal positions and situations of predecessors

so we can have the same perceptions and sensations as they—they therefore can set us within a historical context.²³ Finally, Japanese environments have special uses of stone, of terrain, and of the surrounding landscape that can put us in touch with geological time and with the prehistoric forms and values of the culture.

In ways analogous to works of art, though arguably more strongly, given these various factors, environments can affect who we are and the kinds of selves we are.²⁴

If Japanese environments are different from those of some other cultures, then Kawabata's claims may apply better to these than to old works of art that are not environments or that are environments from different traditions.

III. HOW IS "LOOKING AT OLD OBJECTS OF ART . . . A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH"?

Let us now return to our question: what might Kawabata have meant by his statement? How is "looking at old works of art . . . a matter of life and death"?

III.A. *Inspiration*

Kawabata may have meant nothing more than that looking at art, at what our predecessors achieved, is inspiring. Looking at old works of art gives us the courage to go on, to make sure we do not let this, our glorious tradition, end with us however events may have discouraged or disabled us.

Beyond this, we may also find in such looking that we feel we owe these ancestors something. This would be the least interesting interpretation because in a Confucian or East Asian interpretation it is the tritest (do we not *always* owe our ancestors?) and because it circumvents the realities of mass trauma. This is an aspect that Jewish thinking about the Holocaust has deliberately resisted in terms of refusing the consolations and especially the "transcendent" possibilities of art as a response to such conditions.

But "inspiring" here may mean that we are able to reinstate ourselves within a system we reconstitute—or are motivated to reconstitute—by means of or by virtue of getting back in touch with ideals—ideals that may have been lost in the catastrophe. This system of values may no longer exist (destroyed by the war, by the Occupation's

imposition of democracy, or by grief and forgetting). Or if it is a recapitulation of the previous system that was so problematic and destructive, then it must be refused. This is the challenge faced by countless aristocracies and upper classes during and after revolutions, civil wars, and other remakings of the social order—which literature has shown to be so painful and even hard to understand. In other words, there can be a structure here that is similar to that of nostalgia, one that turns away from harsh realities for the spurious pleasures of comfort and is unrealistic and irrational. Aside from the simple refusal to comprehend or accept the situation that we call denial, just what is the situation (often changing almost daily)? How do we function, carry on, when we do not even know if our society is gone forever? How do we decide which (recoverable) aspects of the past we can or should retain? (The experience of old art may at least show us some of what they experienced for purposes of comparison; it may also revivify us through its arousal of pleasure and (pleasurable) imagination (both of which are savaged by trauma). To whom do we retain loyalties?

And, of course, it is not necessarily the ideals of our collective past with which we want to connect (through arts or other means). It may well be the physical sensations, the life forms, or types of identity or identification.

One question that arises is: who are these predecessors? Depending on circumstances, they may be either our biological ancestors or our human or local, regional, or national predecessors with whom we identify. The very act of recognizing them—perhaps resuscitated by the art—may enjoin us to identify with them.

Does it matter that they be *our* (in this case *his*, Kawabata's, Japanese) predecessors? Maybe—but I suppose that if you are the sort of person whose survival will depend upon taking inspiration from the achievements of only your personal ancestors, you are more likely to die prematurely than if you can take courage (and adopt methods) from the common inheritance of humanity, which comprises a larger group with, presumably, more good ideas to borrow from. (Social scientists have now shown, for instance, that people with more and more varied *kinds* of social connections live longer. If this is true, any people after a war would be expected to suffer from increased mortality due to their impoverished social connections as a result of war casualties.)

In my own case, I don't believe it makes a difference. I have often found the examples of forebears from other traditions to be as or more valuable, even necessary, to my sense of being able to continue in the world as is knowledge of my own family.

III.B. *Pleasure: Alexithymia and the Rebirth of Pleasure*

Freud knew that psychological symptoms of experiences not only of physical but also of psychological or emotional trauma may be devastating and long-lasting, interfering with people's abilities to go on with life—crucial insights that have inspired a vast literature both inside and outside psychoanalysis over the past forty years. We now know from psychological and psychoanalytic studies done since the Holocaust that while there is wide variability in people's responses, there are factors that help predict the severity of responses—how long or severe the trauma is, for instance, as well as previous traumatic experience(s)—and that factoring in those predictors, people's responses are largely the same regardless of type of trauma (rape, capture in war, kidnapping, abuse, attack, and so on). We also know now that in many cases symptoms are passed on to subsequent generations, especially by parents; recent research suggests that some of this transmission occurs biochemically from mothers and even affects children's genes.

Alexithymia, the inability to feel pleasure and to enjoy life, is one response to severe and prolonged trauma and has been documented in survivors of the Holocaust and concentration camps. Henry Krystal, the pioneering psychoanalyst of this topic, lists as the symptoms:

lack of wish-fulfillment fantasy, i.e. impoverished self-representation, operative thinking, psychosomatic symptoms, anhedonia, repudiation of fantasy, "apathy"—devaluing feelings (their own and in general), lack of self-caring, a sense that nurturance can come only from the outside (mother, god, the analyst, the doctor . . .), a sense that they don't deserve to live and enjoy life; diagnostic criteria are: fact orientation, inability to describe one's feelings, cessation of fantasies (including sexual), dreams—little association, lots of boring dry details, lists of what they did, boring the analyst.²⁵

While old art may have no advantage over contemporary art in respect to conveying or arous-

ing pleasure, the examples old art provides of predecessors finding enjoyment in life under circumstances of mass trauma (of which there are quite a few in Japanese art) may help to legitimize pleasure for those who are either traumatized or afflicted with survivor's guilt. (Of course, Modern and contemporary art may in fact be deficient in regard to arousing pleasure, given that they have adopted different tasks than providing experiences of beauty and sublimity—and in fact some post-War Japanese art can only be described as painful—though also more than adequate to its times, probably because of this very characteristic.)

If arts and aesthetics have to do with the experience of pleasure, then they might well be especially important for the recovery of the ability to enjoy life—especially given that they are *sanc-tioned* pleasure and especially given the important role of arts of everyday life in Japan.²⁶

Such pleasures can be the experience of the work of art itself (regardless of subject matter). Or they can be the pleasures the art reminds us of, as when we enjoy looking at people in artwork (such as the Ukiyo-e prints of the pleasure quarters, theater, and everyday life) enjoying themselves. Art can thus also legitimate enjoyment among those who find themselves unable to feel pleasure or who are experiencing survivor guilt.

Beyond the revitalization of the sense of enjoyment of life that may be necessary to survival, several post-War Japanese works about the war suggest that under experiences of extreme duress and trauma, positive aesthetic experience may also prompt revival of one's sense of self—leading to increased sense of agency, confidence, and ability to ameliorate the horror around one.²⁷

III.C. *Knowledge*

Kawabata may, on the other hand, have had in mind the knowledge that art can impart—even though aesthetic theory usually does not give art credit for imparting much knowledge.²⁸ Let me explain a little what I mean by knowledge. Roger Bohn differentiates data, information, and knowledge:

Data are what come directly from sensors, reporting on the measured level of some variable. Information is data that have been organized or given structure—that is, placed in context—and thus endowed with meaning. . . .

Knowledge goes further; it allows the making of predictions, causal associations, or predictive decisions about what to do.²⁹

Such would be the point (or at least the starting point) of Goya's *The Disasters of War*, for instance, or of paintings and sculpture of the lives of the saints and scenes from the Bible. The fuller implications of the relations between art and knowledge after trauma would require more explication than there is room for here.

What kind of knowledge is provided by arts in Japan? The history is especially rich; I would suggest there are at least five kinds of knowledge that are directly relevant:

1. Knowledge (as historical facts) of suffering people have gone through ("You are not the only one!"), of the unbearable suffering people have endured in the past—and survived (or did not), such as we see in the illustrated handscroll of the *Burning of the Sanjo Palace* from the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston; medieval Japanese art has notable paintings realistically depicting both diseases and the effects of war.
2. Knowledge of some of the means by which they survived, illustrated by and in art. In the case of Buddhist art, for instance, a work may provide knowledge of a sustaining ideal, knowledge of how to attain that ideal, and (for some believers) actual help in reaching that ideal, such as is seen in sculpture and painting from the Buddhist canon or a Nirvana of the Buddha.
3. Knowledge that people felt like this before—felt, that is, that everything they loved was gone, their form of living, their whole culture. From our later vantage point, of course, they may be seen to have been mistaken in their belief, but whether they were justified or not is another matter. Some of them were right, at least in thinking that their whole society as they knew it was gone. Can we take solace in our knowledge that somehow, in some sense, that did not matter, that *something*—and some people—survived, and that therefore something will survive this time too, and in some sense it does not matter that we and our loved ones and our beloved home and homeland and ways of life will be gone? This is pretty grim solace. Still within the context of Buddhism, we can see that that might provoke the ultimate realization and even bring us to enlightenment,

although I do not think that is what Kawabata had primarily in mind.

4. Knowledge of our place in the landscape is brought home to us by architecture, painting, poetry (calligraphic versions of which Kawabata would have looked at), and other arts. Japanese architecture acutely sensitizes people to their surrounding landscape and only rarely offers a complete escape from it (a major value in Western architecture). *Feng shui*, which is apparent (if only subtly to the nonexpert) in much city planning and architecture, assigns the place and its persons a place with regard to the surrounding mountains and water and (depending on the system of *feng shui*) to cosmological principles. (The entire city of Kyoto was set up within *feng shui* guidelines.) Japanese gardens exploit rocks' natural shape and place them in ways similar to their positions in nature.³⁰ There are quite a few distinct genres of Japanese landscape painting, including pictures of famous places (*meisho-e*), a thousand-year-old genre that focuses on sites made famous by poetry (and other paintings); Shinto mandalas (which, unlike the geometric Buddhist mandalas derived from Chinese and Indian prototypes of ideal realms, are accurate representations of the actual sites of particular shrines); "ideal" landscapes in Japanese ink (*sumi-e*) in the Zen or later literati traditions; eighteenth-century true views (*shinkei-zu*) and the wood-block printed scenes of actual stops along highways, and so on.

And the Japanese landscape is always experienced in temporal terms—there is no history of aspiring toward the eternal or timeless absolute. Rather, there is a long history of nearly all literature and landscape representing a specific time of year. (Time of day is much less salient.) As a result, there are always deliberate indications of the season (in addition to the personal sense of temporality discussed above). Finally, the Japanese landscape was felt to be sacred, not merely the dwelling place of innumerable gods (*kami*), but in many cases to *be* those *kami* themselves (rocks, waterfalls, and so on). Japanese philosopher Tetsuro Watsuji (1889–1960) argued for geography and climate as the principal determining forces in creating Japanese identity.³¹

Not only philosophers but social scientists such as anthropologist Tim Ingold and geogra-

pher Yi-fu Tuan and even students of landscape architecture have increasingly been impressed by the impact of landscape and environment on the sense of identity of persons and communities even in cultures less intimately concerned with landscape and the seasons than Japan.³² Works of art that transmit knowledge of our place in the landscape tell us, therefore, not only about that landscape, but about who we are, who our communities are, and how we as individuals fit into those communities.

5. Knowledge of our place in history is also transmitted by such artworks. Those artworks tell us where we come from, who our predecessors were, what were the realities that they faced and were defeated by or triumphed over, how they lived, and what resources they had available. As discussed above, after a catastrophe, such knowledge—which may include not only what people did but how happy or sad they were—may be particularly vital.

III.D. *Wisdom*

The fifth possibility is that we might get wisdom from art. It is useful here to differentiate between knowledge, as defined above, and wisdom, which I define as the ability to relate objective knowledge to subjective situations, whether one's own or another's.³³ This might happen when we are reminded of models of wisdom, as by paintings of Daoist immortals and Zen patriarchs—or, indeed, of Jacques-Louis David's 1787 painting *The Death of Socrates*.

This is one of the great strengths of both the Western and the Japanese literary traditions, of course. It was crucial to Aristotle's ideas about the value of tragedy, and it is one of the great accomplishments of the modern novel and a source of its ethical force. Through imagination, one comes to understand the experience of someone other than oneself and applies it to oneself or to one's doings with others. (Lady Murasaki's *Tale of Genji*, which certainly provides both an emotional and an ethical education, also offers wisdom in this sense, wisdom that is developed further in the early eleventh-century "Illustrated Handscroll of *The Tale of Genji*," with its scenes of the Illness of the Third Princess with her father and her husband Genji after she has had an illegitimate child by another man and of Genji

cradling that baby when he decides to treat it as his own.)

Knowing our place in the world is wisdom conveyed by countless Japanese landscape paintings, such as the Heian-period landscape screens with a picture of Chinese poet Bo Juyi (772–846).³⁴ The ninth-century esoteric Buddhist Diamond and Womb Mandalas, such as those found at Toji in Kyoto, facilitate wisdom by presenting knowledge of our place in the spiritual cosmos. The rituals performed by Esoteric Buddhists using mandala paintings are thought also to give knowledge of the relation of the performer to those spiritual realities represented.

Here we are on very important ground and well within Kawabata's compass.

III.E. *Knowledge How*

I would propose that, in addition, Japanese arts—perhaps especially Japanese arts—offer other kinds of knowledge that are more far-reaching and more important than those offered by other kinds of arts, especially under such circumstances. We might think of this as "knowledge how" rather than "knowledge that"—as a set of skills, cognitive, emotional, social, and so on. These skills include, as I see it, abilities to meditate, to concentrate and focus, to face death with equanimity (as one does in tea ceremony), and to act in balance.

But there is a whole range of them, skills of what we now call self-cultivation: the development, along an almost infinite path, of an individual's artistic, physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and psychological capabilities, usually within integrated (and integrating) methods: calligraphy, martial arts, visual and performing arts, religious arts or rituals, and so on.

In other words, Japanese arts and the aesthetic values that underlie them and that describe their ways of working constitute (and have for at least 1,000 to 1,500 years) something analogous to what are now being called "cognitive prostheses," those extensions of human cognitive capabilities through artificial means.³⁵

IV. ARTS IN THE POST—WORLD WAR II CONTEXT

In the post-atomic context, the arts, both ancient and modern, played major roles in the reestab-

ishment of the context of values. Ancient arts could replace the modern nation that had betrayed them—now destroyed—with a concrete, dynamic, and living sense of who the Japanese—or indeed human beings—are, *independent* of government and polity. They did this, first, by stimulating new artists to repetition, reinvention, and development and, second, by reminding artists and audiences what it is to be human, by helping them establish new connections with life—if only with those whom they saw in the pictures (people like themselves or those whom they have lost), people who walked in these gardens before them and felt as they do now. Arts and aesthetics counter the overwhelming sense of isolation and loneliness. (I draw here on personal experience as a preadolescent visiting American colonial sites and especially gardens.)

In a related way, artworks set up actual ongoing new relationships with their dead makers and audiences. (Many readers will no doubt feel they have personal relationships with authors long dead.)

These may be general capacities of art. But it may be that Japanese arts and aesthetics do this more or better than the arts and aesthetics of many other traditions. Three possible reasons immediately suggest themselves: the high potency of allusion, the fact that calligraphy as an art brings the body and breath as well as the spirit of the calligrapher into our presence even after death, and the prevalence of art environments allow us to recreate the perceptions and physical movements of our predecessors there. (I will not explore these further here.)

If this hypothesis is true, it could be important, because the visual, tactile, and kinesthetic are more primal than language. I mean this literally—they come first in our individual development as young children (as they did, of course, phylogenetically as well). While the value of talk and cognitive therapies is undeniable, therapists report that, especially under conditions of severe trauma, they can often get better results with other kinds of therapy that take the patient back to prelinguistic development.³⁶ (In one survey of effective treatments for PTSD, the authors report that while “the efficacy of the creative arts therapies has not yet been established through empirical research [and] the implementation of rigorous empirical research studies . . . is a primary priority for the field,” there is “a clinical con-

sensus that the use of the creative arts therapies may be helpful as an adjunct to the treatment of PTSD under [certain conditions].”³⁷) Japanese environments are especially multi-sensual (cultivating sound and smell in architecture, for instance) and exceptionally sensitive to the evocation of kinesthetic experience (deliberately orchestrating positionings of the stroller’s body along uneven paving stones, for instance). As a result, we may speculate, they would be especially effective therapeutically.

The special nature of environment, such a significant part of the artistic heritage of Kyoto—its ability to constitute us as persons; its demands upon us to be multi-sensually aware, interactive, and engaged; its implications of survival value and refusal of distance; its propensity to put us in the literal positions and situations of predecessors so we can have the same perceptions and sensations as they had and thereby be set within a historical context—all these make Kawabata’s claim more plausible.

Finally, certain aspects of Japanese environments in particular both embed us in this world and put us in active communication with forebears and with the environment itself. They include the facts that (unlike cathedrals, for example) they do not appeal to realities construed as transcendent, objective, otherworldly (divine), or geometric, but remain embedded in this reality; their emphasis on the inherent divinity of environments and natural “objects”; and the fact that they are especially allusive.

V. CONCLUSION: THE IMPLICATIONS OF KAWABATA’S THEORY

In conclusion, while Kawabata’s claim may be surprising, it is true. Art may make the literal difference between life and death under circumstances of trauma or disaster, even for victims of tertiary trauma, especially if we understand life to include not simply physical existence but its emotional, spiritual, psychological, and moral dimensions, but even if we take life as merely physical. There are three reasons for this: the pleasure art may provide those still suffering or experiencing alexithymia along with the ways it may reignite their sense of pleasure and fantasy and thus strengthen their will to live, the sense of connection with the artists (with whose views, feelings,

perceptions, and intended messages one may be brought into contact) and with other members of its audience, and the knowledge art can convey. This does not mean, of course, that this is true of all art. I have not addressed in this article the question of whether it is true of any non-Japanese art, although I would argue that it is. Certainly Harold Schweizer and Gregg M. Horowitz argue that literature and art have powerful roles to play.³⁸ They, my own experience, as well as remarks such as Hawaii playwright and director Taurie Kinoshita's comment that "the theatre saved my life" all support a far wider interpretation of the kinds of art for which this claim may be made.³⁹ Kawabata asserts that it is true of Japanese art for at least one Japanese person, with phrasing that strongly implies universality. I suspect he meant it would apply equally to all people, with regard to at least some Japanese art. Whether it would apply to all art seems a stretch; whether it applies to at least some art of every (or any given) tradition remains to be explored.

If Kawabata's thesis is correct, it has important implications. With regard to artistic patrimony, for instance, it underscores the importance of returning stolen work to its original culture (even if the owner cannot be located). It would mandate access—physical and economic access, but also emotional and psychological access, which means the work must be afforded respect. It suggests, further, that art could—indeed should—be used to help people with the process of recovering from trauma.⁴⁰

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1. Following common practice, Japanese names for twentieth-century persons are given in Western order; their Japanese characters and the names of historical persons are given in Japanese order, surname first.

2. *Kawabata Yasunari Zenshu (Collected Works of Kawabata Yasunari)*, vol. 33 (Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1982), p. 457. Description of the two trips through Kyoto comprises the entirety of chapter X, pp. 456–457.

3. Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature in the Modern Era: Fiction* (History of Japanese Literature, Vol. 3) (Columbia University Press, 1998), p. 827. Translations for the term *sekkon* include "poignancy," which seems to be the very opposite of what Keene and I believe Kawabata was getting at, as poignancy implies a distance from the pain of the sort that might make the pain into an aesthetic

experience. Certainly this latter transformation is precisely what Kawabata was not doing, as his requirement for aesthetic experience provoked the search for art and landscape in Kyoto.

4. Michele (later Michael) Marra explored the terrain of this transition in *Modern Japanese Aesthetics* (University of Hawaii Press, 1999), in which he translated a number of early (late nineteenth and early twentieth century) Japanese aesthetics texts dealing with Western philosophy, and in *A History of Modern Japanese Aesthetics* (University of Hawaii Press, 2001).

5. One version of tertiary trauma is recognized in the therapeutic literature as "vicarious trauma," although that tends to refer to trauma experienced by someone close to the primary victim. Tertiary trauma is experienced by someone exposed to the traumatizing events through the mediation of witnesses' accounts, texts, photographs, and so on. Babette Rothschild groups secondary and tertiary trauma together under the rubric "vicarious trauma," but for pedagogical and philosophical purposes it is useful to separate them. Mara Miller, "Terrible Knowledge and Tertiary Trauma, Part I: Japanese Nuclear Trauma and Resistance to the Atomic Bomb in the Classroom," *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas* 86 (2013): 157–163, at p. 159; Rothschild's discussion is in Babette Rothschild, with Marjorie Rand, *Help for the Helper: The Psychophysiology of Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Trauma* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2006), at pp. 12–13, 15. See also Mara Miller, "Terrible Knowledge and Tertiary Trauma, Part II: Suggestions for Teaching about the Atomic Bombings, with Particular Attention to Middle School," *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas* 86 (2013): 164–173.

6. For primary, secondary, and tertiary victims or witnesses, the relations of the atomic bombings and the Holocaust are important and profound—but I regard them as too problematic to insert into this short discussion. I address them in my book, *Terrible Knowledge*, under review.

7. Consider Abraham Maslow's "hierarchy of needs." A. H. Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation," *Psychological Review* (1943): 370–396.

8. Miller, "Terrible Knowledge," Parts I and II.

9. Nancy R. Rosenberger, *Japanese Sense of Self* (Cambridge University Press, 1992); Takie Lebra, "Migawari: The Cultural Idiom of Self–Other Exchange in Japan," in *Self as Person in Asian Theory and Practice*, ed. Roger T. Ames with Wimal Dissanayake and Thomas P. Kasulis (State University of New York Press, 1994), pp. 107–124; Takie Lebra, *Japanese Patterns of Behavior* (University of Hawaii Press, 1994); Takie Sugiyama Lebra and William P. Lebra, eds., *Japanese Culture and Behavior: Selected Readings*, rev. ed. (University of Hawaii Press, 1986).

While acknowledging the overall validity of this conceptualization, I have also argued for a strong version of independent self on the basis of visual art and literature; see "Art and the Construction of Self and Subject in Japan," in *Self as Image in Asian Theory and Practice*, ed. Roger T. Ames with Thomas P. Kasulis and Wimal Dissanayake (State University of New York Press, 1998), pp. 421–460; and "Ethics in the Female Voice: Murasaki Shikibu and the Framing of Ethics for Japan," in *Varieties of Ethical Reflection: New Directions for Ethics in a Global Context*, ed. Michael

Barnhart (Oxford and Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2002), pp. 175–202.

There is also an extensive literature on the varieties of self as evinced by Japanese literature. See, for example, Masao Miyoshi, *Accomplices of Silence: The Modern Japanese Novel* (University of California Press, 1975), where he counters arguments that works such as Futabatei's *Floating Cloud* (1887) present an emerging Western-style autonomous self for Meiji-era and twentieth-century fiction. The literature on female selfhood in classical literature (ca. 1000 CE) also contradicts a completely merged self. See Tomiko Yoda, *Gender and National Literature: Heian Texts in the Constructions of Japanese Modernity* (Duke University Press, 2004).

Japanese sense of self is also shaped by the Buddhist teaching that the notion that there is a self (collective/relational or more individual, Confucianist or of any other kind) is an illusion. This view is probably more useful under such circumstances, but few hold it in its strict form.

10. Mara Miller, "Aesthetics as Investigation of Self, Subject, and Ethical Agency under Trauma in Kawabata's Post-War Novel *The Sound of the Mountain*," *Philosophy and Literature* (2014). *The Sound of the Mountain* was originally published as *Yama no Oto* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1954); trans. Edward M. Seidensticker (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970; New York: Perigee Books/G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1981).

11. These friendships and his collection are documented in *Yamatoshi Uruhashi: Kawabata Yasunari to Yasuda Yukihiko (Japan Is Beautiful: Kawabata Yasunari and Yasuda Yukihiko: Commemorating Ryokan's 250th Birthday, Commemorating Kawabata Yasunari's 110th Birthday)*, eds. Sonohiro Mizuhara et al. (Tokyo: Kyuryudo Art Publishing, 2008).

12. Illustrated in Felice Fischer and Kyoko Kinoshita, eds., *Ike Taiga and Tokuyama Gyokuran: Japanese Masters of the Brush* (Philadelphia Museum of Art in association with Yale University Press, 2007), Plate 208, *Ten Conveniences*.

13. There was no Japanese concept analogous to the European eighteenth-century coinage 'aesthetic' until the late nineteenth-century introduction of the European concept; see Mara Miller, "Japanese Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art," in *The Oxford Handbook of World Philosophy*, ed. Jay L. Garfield and William Edelglass (Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 317–333. I use the plural to reflect the fact that the Japanese terms are various and often mutually exclusive. I use 'universal' in the linguists' sense as denoting a pool of total features available for use by any language; no language uses all of them, and no single feature need be used by all languages, but there are no features used by any language that fall outside of the pool of universals.

14. Mizuhara, *Yamatoshi Uruhashi*.

15. For a sense of this specialness, see Diane Durston's *Kyoto: Seven Paths to the Heart of the City* (Kyoto: Mitsumura Suiko Shoin, 1987). For a good sense of one beloved site, the Shisendo, see J. Thomas Rimer et al., *Shisendō: Hall of the Poetry Immortals* (New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1991). For a sense of how the city can play in the minds and lives of contemporary Japanese, one might read Kawabata's novel *Beauty and Sadness*, trans. Howard Hibbett (New York: Knopf, 1975), or Fumiko Enchi's novel *Masks*, trans. Juliet Winters Carpenter (New York: Knopf, 1983).

16. On the role of Secretary of War Henry Stimson in preserving Kyoto from incendiary and atomic bombing, see Otis Cary, "The Sparing of Kyoto, Mr. Stimson's 'Pet City,'" *Japan Quarterly* 11 (1975): 337–347; Ronald Shaffer, *Wings of Judgment: American Bombing in World War II* (Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 143–146; Max Hasting, *Retribution: The Battle for Japan, 1944–45* (New York: Knopf, 2008), pp. 455–456 and 467–468.

17. UNESCO's Criteria for Selection are listed on its website: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/criteria/>.

18. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *Why Exhibit Works of Art?* (London: Luzac and Co., 1943), republished as *Christian and Oriental Philosophy of Art* (New York: Dover, 1956) and *Coomaraswamy I: Selected Papers Traditional Art and Symbolism* (Princeton University Press, Bollingen Series LXXXIX, 1977).

19. This scroll is illustrated in Sherman E. Lee, *A History of Far Eastern Art*, 4th ed. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1982), figure 416, and Miyeko Murase, *Emaki: Narrative Scrolls from Japan* (New York: Asia Society, 1983), plate 6.

20. Also reproduced in Lee, *A History of Far Eastern Art*, figures 657 and 658, and in Yoshiho Yonezawa and Chu Yoshizawa, *Japanese Painting in the Literati Style* (New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill/Helbonsha, 1974), plates 48 and 55.

21. Mara Miller, *The Garden as an Art* (State University of New York Press, 1993), chaps. 3 and 6 on survival value; Marc Treib, ed., *Meaning in Landscape Architecture and Gardens* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011). For criticism of several of the views expressed in Treib, *Meaning in Landscape Architecture and Gardens*, see the review by William S. Saunders, "How Does Landscape Architecture Mean? A Review Essay on *Meaning in Landscape Architecture and Gardens*," *Landscape Architecture Magazine* 102 (2012): 152–163.

22. Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, passim; Mara Miller, "Time and Temporality in the Garden," in *Gardening: Philosophy for Everyone: Cultivating Wisdom*, ed. Dan O'Brien (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), pp. 178–191; David R. Coffin, *The English Garden: Meditation and Memorial* (Princeton University Press, 1994); Ismay Barwell and John Powell, "Gardens, Music, and Time," in *Gardening: Philosophy for Everyone*, pp. 135–147, at p. 140.

23. Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, p. 166 and passim.

24. Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, pp. 110–120 and passim.

25. Henry Krystal, M.D., *Integration and Self-Healing: Affect, Trauma, Alexithymia* (New York: Routledge, 1988), passim, but especially pp. 28, 280, 289.

26. Yuriko Saito, *Everyday Aesthetics* (Oxford University Press, 2008); Crispin Sartwell, *The Art of Living: Aesthetics of the Ordinary in World Spiritual Traditions* (State University of New York Press, 1995).

27. "Aesthetic pleasure nourishes the individual consciousness—the same individual consciousness that must continue to rise to the occasion if s/he and others are to survive. This suggests a crucially important logical/psychological/phenomenological sequence: from aesthetic experience to the relief of the exhausted and/or traumatized person, her refreshment, the reinstatement of the awareness of the possible joys of life. But second, beyond that ability to counter our negative feelings, aesthetic pleasure reminds us (or informs us) who we are, what it

means to be 'me.' This ability to be oneself and to recognize oneself may be foundational, even essential, to ethical agency and autonomous selfhood. 'Sentio ergo sum. Or 'Sentio ergo ego sum'" (Mara Miller, "On Kawabata, Kishida, and Barefoot Gen: Agency, Identity, and Aesthetic Experience in Post-Atomic Japanese Narratives," in *New Essays in Japanese Aesthetics*, ed. Minh Nguyen [Lanham, MD: Lexington Press, in press]).

28. For discussion of some Japanese views on art and knowledge, see Mara Miller, "Japanese Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art," in *The Oxford Handbook of World Philosophy*, ed. Jay L. Garfield and William Edelglass (Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 317–333.

29. Roger E. Bohn, "Measuring and Managing Technical Knowledge," *Sloan Management Review* 36 (1994): 61–73.

30. David A. Slawson, *Secret Teachings in the Art of Japanese Gardens: Design Principles, Aesthetic Values* (Tokyo and New York: Kodansha International, 1987); Jiro Takei and Marc P. Keane, *Sakuteiki Visions of the Japanese Garden: A Modern Translation of Japan's Gardening Classic* (Boston: Tuttle, 2001); Francois Berthier and Graham Parkes, *Reading Zen in the Rocks* (University of Chicago Press, 2000).

31. Tetsuro Watsuji, *Climate and Culture: A Philosophical Study*, trans. from *Fūdo* by Geoffrey Bownas (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1961). See also Thorsten Botz-Bornstein, *Aesthetics and Politics of Space in Russia and Japan: A Comparative Philosophical Study* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), who discusses Watsuji and others, and Robert N. Bellah, "Japan's Cultural Identity: Some Reflections on the Work of Watsuji Tetsurō," *Journal of Asian Studies* 24 (1965): 573–594.

32. Tim Ingold, *The Perception of the Environment: Essays in Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill* (New York: Routledge, 2000); Yi-fu Tuan, *Landscapes of Fear* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972). See, for example, the discussions by Shenglin Elijah Chang, "Homes across the Waters: The Construction of Gender and Landscape within a Trans-Pacific Life," and Sophie Nichol Sauve, "Constructing Gender[ed] Outdoor Public Space," in *Women in Landscape Architecture: Essays in History and Practice*, eds. Louise A. Mazingo and Linda Jewell (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2012), pp. 181–194 and 195–216.

33. For a more complex definition of wisdom as it applies to Japanese post-War visual arts, see Mara Miller, "Re-Creating History and Memory: The Visual Records," in *Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Memory after the Atomic Bombings to the Present*, ed. Kenya Davis-Hayes and Roger Chapman (forthcoming).

34. Detail of the anonymous eleventh-century Senzui Byōbu (landscape screen, originally from Tōji [Kyōō-gokokuji]) now at the Kyoto National Museum, reproduced in Penelope Mason, *History of Japanese Art*, rev. ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 2005), pl. 139, p. 114.

35. *The Oxford Dictionary (British and World English)* defines it as "an electronic computational device that ex-

tends the capability of human cognition or sense perception" (<http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/cognitive-prosthesis>). It originated with NASA engineers and is now being used metaphorically, as here.

36. On art therapy, see Kate Collie, Amy Backos, Cathy Malchiodi, and David Spiegel, "Art Therapy for Combat-Related PTSD: Recommendations for Research and Practice," *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association* 23 (2006): 157–164; <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ777008.pdf>; Enari, "The Importance of the Self-Body Image in Survivors of Sexual Assault with PTSD Using Art Therapy Techniques," Pandora's Project: Support and Resources for Survivors of Rape and Sexual Abuse, <http://www.pandys.org/articles/PTSDarttherapy.html>. On music therapy, see Catherine Carr et al., "Group Music Therapy for Patients with Persistent Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder—An Exploratory Randomized Controlled Trial with Mixed Methods Evaluation," *Psychology and Psychotherapy* 85 (2012): 179–202; "Music Therapy: Helps Soothe PTSD Symptoms," United States Department of Veterans Affairs, VA MidSouth Healthcare Network, http://www.visn9.va.gov/VISN9/news/vcl/Fall2013/Music_Therapy.asp.

37. David Read Johnson, Mooli Lahad, and Amber Gray, "Creative Therapies for Adults," in *Effective Treatments for PTSD: Practice Guidelines from the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies*, 2nd ed., eds. Edna B. Foa, Terence M. Keane, Matthew J. Friedman, and Judith A. Cohen (New York: Guilford Press, 2009), pp. 479–490, at p. 486. See also Robin F. Goodman, Linda M. Chapman, and Linda Gantt, "Creative Therapies for Children," in *Effective Treatments for PTSD*, pp. 491–507, and the additional bibliographies at pp. 600–605.

38. Harold Schweizer, *Suffering and the Remedy of Art* (State University of New York Press, 1997); Gregg M. Horowitz, *Sustaining Loss: Art and Mournful Life* (Stanford University Press, 2001).

39. Scott Robertson, "Acting Saved My Life, Act II—The Taurie Kinoshita Interview," *Hitting the Stage* (August 14, 2012), http://www.hittingthestage.com/taurie_kinoshita_interview_ii/. This quotation is the sort of thing one hears rather frequently, although it is rarely taken literally. Kawabata's remark and this article suggest it bears a literal interpretation.

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