

The Acquisition, Protection, Transfer, and Growth of Cultural Assets in Kamakura Period Japan: Examples from Poetry, Literary Scholarship, and *Kemari*

Christian Ratcliff

Associate Professor, Department of Cross-Cultural Studies, Kanagawa University

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Abstract: In the middle of 1280, a young poet of no great reputation stands on the grounds of a prince's residence, there lying in wait for another far more senior, of whom he hopes to beg a lesson; some months later, this senior poet carefully attempts to interest the prince whom he serves in a project to gather knowledge of poetry possessed in bits and pieces by many aristocratic families, and inscribe it all together in a single text; at around the same time, a relatively obscure group of courtiers decides upon rules for a novel kind of entertainment, one in which participants will match the depth of their own knowledge of *The Tale of Genji* against that of their fellows; a few years later, the head of a family recognized for its hereditary mastery of the ball-kicking game *kemari* sits down to create a secret text that he does not wish to make, forced to do so by the death of his heir.



Poetry contest depicted in *Boki ekotoba* (1351).

(From the 1901 reproduction available at https://colbase.nich.go.jp/collection_items/tnm/A-6866.)

Taken as discrete episodes within the history of cultural activities during Japan's Kamakura period (1185–1333), each of these events has its own interest and provides insights into the history of a field of cultural practice (poetry, literary scholarship, sport). Taken together—along with innumerable other essentially similar events—they serve to trace out the shape of the cultural economy that prevailed in Japan at this time. In this talk, the activities of the individuals presented above will be considered less as cultural endeavors per se, and more as actions taken by persons who—desiring to participate in a social economy within which the possession of cultural knowledge and skills could produce real and necessary results—sought to manage their own asset portfolios, working variously to increase value, preserve currency, execute exchanges, and expand holdings. At issue throughout will be the question not of *how* such persons as poets, literary scholars, and sportsmen carried out their activities, but rather *why*.

To Attend Online (Zoom):

Access the Zoom Meeting via the following Meeting ID and Passcode. **Preregistration is NOT required to attend via Zoom.**

Meeting ID: 959 5252 3649 Passcode: KUMMC

To Attend in Person:

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ご来場の方：神奈川大学関係者は事前登録不要です。学外の方は前日までに QR コードにて事前登録をお願いします。当日は 1F の Information カウンターで

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Inquiries ・ お問い合わせ: James Welker jrwelker@kanagawa-u.ac.jp

