

## BOOK REVIEWS

Such observations aside, *Religions of the Silk Road* brilliantly captures the complexity of contact along the Silk Road: peoples from Asia to Europe traveled and traded along this commercial and cultural highway. This “conversation of cultures” (144), as Foltz puts it, depended upon individuals with economic savvy and religious conviction, and individuals committed to demanding journeys and participation in networks of various kinds. Also, Foltz innovatively covers a broad range of history and expertly examines a wide swath of individuals and cultures, reflecting a multidisciplinary aim representative of new directions in the writing of world history.

With a helpful introductory lecture or two, students (advanced secondary and undergraduate) will most likely find the chapters “The Silk Road and Its Travelers” and “The Islamization of the Silk Road” most intriguing as the former uncovers the humanity of Silk Road travel while the latter demonstrates the fluidity with which Islam moved along spectrums of trade.

The following quote not only captures the experiences of ancient travelers along the Silk Road, it also describes ones encounter with Foltz’s important book: “The Silk Road was more than just a conduit along which religions hitched rides East; it constituted a formative and transformative rite of passage” (8). ■


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## Music in Japan

### *Expressing Music, Expressing Culture*

BY BONNIE C. WADE

GLOBAL MUSIC SERIES, GENERAL EDITORS: BONNIE C. WADE AND PATRICIA SHEHAN CAMPBELL

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184 PAGES, 45 FIGURES, ONE INDEX, ONE RESOURCES LISTING, GLOSSARY, CD TRACK LIST, ISBN 0-19-514488-0

**Y**oung American students today have more exposure to Japanese culture than ever before. The rising popularity of Japanese animation, comic books, and video games is introducing Japanese culture to the entire world. Because of this increased exposure, more young Americans are becoming fascinated by Japanese culture, both traditional and modern. Teachers at all levels may use this new fascination to introduce the study of Japanese culture in a more academic context. *Music in Japan: Expressing Music, Expressing Culture* is extremely useful for this purpose because of its interdisciplinary approach and the many activities intended to spark further research and discussion. Although the book focuses on music, it also discusses other aspects of Japanese culture such as theatre, literature, and film.

Wade uses three main themes to discuss music and culture in Japan today. She focuses on Japanese interaction with other cultures, the integration of Japanese music and other music to create a new tradition, and music in relation to other art forms in Japanese culture. For example, a large portion of the book is dedicated to tracing the evolution of the *Tale of Heike*, a medieval Japanese tale, from its origins as an epic story through its many incarnations as a theatrical work. This tale was presented as a Noh drama (a style originating in the fifteenth century), and then was adapted into a Kabuki play and a twentieth-century film. This one example demonstrates the interactions she discusses throughout the book.

Perhaps the most useful aspect for teachers is the accompanying CD, which contains examples of all music discussed in the book. She has also provided suggestions for listening activities and classroom discussion topics that will expand on the themes of the book by encouraging further study. All in all, Wade has provided an exceptionally well-balanced book that will prove useful both in the music classroom and beyond. ■

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