PREFACE

I am gratified to be able to bring the breadth and depth of the works of the Japanese novelist Ishikawa Jun to a non-Japanese speaking public. Ishikawa is a seminal figure in Japanese letters: an important modernist, an early existentialist, a resistance writer, and a superb stylist. That he has not been more accessible can be attributed in part to the complexity of his prose and in part to fixed notions concerning the canon of modern Japanese literature.

Several years ago I published *The Bodhisattva, or Samantabhadra* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), a translation and critical study of *Fugen,* a novella that Ishikawa wrote in 1936. *Fugen* is representative of Ishikawa's earliest works, and it received the Akutagawa Prize, Japan's most distinguished literary award, in 1937. Here I present four stories and a novella, published from 1938 to 1953, that belong to what might be called the second phase of Ishikawa's long career, namely, his response to the tumultuous events of Japan's war, defeat, occupation, and return to peace. Meanwhile, Donald Keene's translation of *Shion monogatari,* a novella of 1956 (which appeared as *Asters* in *The Old Woman, the Wife, and the Archer* [New York: The Viking Press, 1961]), anticipates the long "fictional constructions" that Ishikawa wrote after the chaos of the early postwar period subsided. Alas, it has been out of print for many years and is difficult to obtain. Moreover, of the novels that Ishikawa wrote between 1956 and his death in 1987, none is available in translation. Given their considerable length, I suspect we shall have to wait yet awhile for them to appear in English. But that is another day's story.

I wish to express my appreciation to the late Ishikawa Iku, who granted permission to translate the works included here and who was generous with her time and hospitality whenever I traveled to Tokyo; to Ishikawa Maki, who now represents the estate of Ishikawa Jun; to Komai Yoshiko, for special per-

mission to use the illustration by Komai Tetsurō that appears on the cover; and to Katō Yūya of Chikuma Shobō Publishing Company, for many kindnesses.

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Steve Rabson was instrumental in encouraging me to translate "Mars' Song," and this led to translation of the other works. Mildred Tahara, Doris G. Bargen, and the late E. Dale Saunders read and commented on early versions of the translations; and Doris Bargen as well as Alan Kennedy made a number of helpful comments when it came time to revise the penultimate draft of the critical essays. Ōmori Kyōko and Junko Ikezu Williams assisted with checking the translations against the original Japanese, as did Suzuki Akiyoshi with "Mars' Song." I am especially grateful for the care and alacrity with which Sharon F. Yamamoto, my editor, and Susan Stone and Ann Ludeman of the University of Hawai'i Press have seen this book into print.

Responsibility for translation strategies and interpretation of the works is mine and mine alone. Diction and tone are especially important concerns in conveying Ishikawa's style. Occasionally I have taken liberties (such as "Turn it off!" for *"Yamero"* in "Mars' Song") and given additional emphasis ("No more 'Mars'!"). I have introduced considerably more paragraphing than is found in the original texts in order to make Ishikawa's penchant for reversals in argumentation, or what the grammarian calls adversative correlations ("yes, but . . . no, but"), read smoothly in English. I have sought to retain the commingling of past and present tenses, especially in those passages where Ishikawa slides between chronological and psychological time. I have highlighted the storyteller's voice (*"Sate":* "Now, where were we?"); and in the case of the stories in the garrulous style, I have used apposition and amplification to handle Ishikawa's use of compound verbs and thereby to make explicit what is doubly implied (for example, "even now, when times have changed and his intermediary here on earth has been *separated like chaff* from the grain and *driven out* as an impostor" for *"hatsuho wo . . . kamigakari ga* tatakidasareta *ato demo"*). I have also sought to make the cinematographic qualities of the original equally visual in English.

Early on, work on the manuscript would have been far more difficult had it not been for a summer at "The Field," thanks to Hank and Jean Dunbar, or access to word processing facilities through the kindness of Betty Romer, director, Academic Computing Center, Amherst College. Susan Todd of the Voter Computer Center, Middlebury College, was also helpful in getting the final draft into suitable computer format. I also appreciate the help of Frank Hsueh, Tom Kasulis, and Jim Unger, chairs, and Nikki Bado and Debbie Knicely, administrative assistants, Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures, The Ohio State University.

Masao "Shigeru" Shimozato has been unfailing in his support, and Robert Wallace provided a sanctuary in Vermont for final stretches of work. Xiaomei Chen, DB, Gene Fortunato, Marilyn Greenfield, Charles Klopp, Adelaide Miller, Thomas Randleman, Thomas Rimer, Hiroaki Sato, Tajima Takashi, Richard Torrance, and Warren Watanabe have all been enthusiastic supporters of this project.

Dale Saunders, Ishikawa Iku, Sumner Greenfield, Shimozato Maki, Ohki Kyūbei, and Mary Watanabe also gave it their benediction, but in two years that were oftimes dolorous, they passed away one after the other. Now there is no means, save this publication, to thank them.

To be vouchsafed a time and a place in which to write and translate is both a necessity and a luxury. Indeed, one can never predict when life will surprise us with its moments of serendipity. One afternoon late in a golden summer when my work was nearly done and I had put finishing touches to the translation of *The Raptor,* I stepped into the garden at Green Mountain Place. There had been reports of raptors in the area, and suddenly I caught sight overhead of what I knew only from books or the news. Mirabile dictu, a lone peregrine falcon swept down from a flawless sea of blue, and making a long, grand arc, it sailed serenely through the air. It seemed to hover, however briefly, and in that instant to tender a look of hawk-eyed approbation. Such are the epiphanies of life, and it is by the poetry of the wings of raptors that we are uplifted.

Can we not say that heretofore modernity has been an understudy in the drama of history, and it has been anxiously awaiting its chance to appear on the stage? Until now it has been made to stand in the wings, unheard and unseen, its potential cloaked in the heavy curtains of possibility. As of this moment, however, suddenly there has been an opening, and it has stepped into the limelight to take its place on center stage.

"The Legend of Gold" (1946)

. . . He could feel the beat as it was transmitted from one thick wall of the prison to the next and as it traveled along the floor. Surely it was the rhythm of all human beings who, extracting every ounce of energy that can be squeezed from the human frame, take to their feet in revolt even if they are repulsed time and again. It was the beat of the movement of all who continually hurl themselves against an undefined and inexplicable force.

The Raptor (1953)