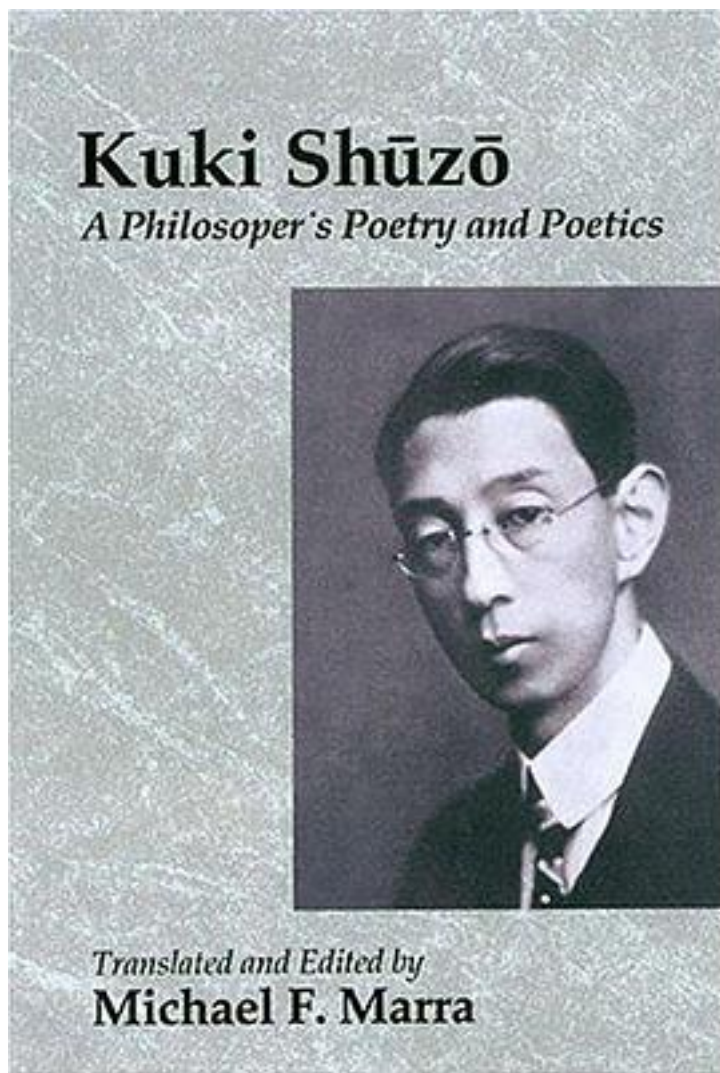


Kuki Shuzo



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出版者:University of Hawaii Press

出版时间:2004-04

装帧:Hardcover

isbn:9780824827557

Kuki Shuzo (1888-1941), one of Japan's most original thinkers of the twentieth century, is best known for his interpretations of Western Continental philosophy. His works on and of poetry are less well known but equally illuminating. During his eight years studying in Europe in the 1920s, Kuki spent time in Paris, where he wrote several collections of poetry: *Paris Mindscapes* (1925), *Fragments* (1927), *Sleep Talking in Paris* (1926), *Windows of Paris* (1925), and many short poems in the tanka style. Included in this volume are these Paris poems as well as other verses that Kuki appended to a long essay on poetry, "Rhymes in Japanese Poetry," written in 1931. Included as well are translations of two of Kuki's major critical essays on poetry, "The Genealogy of Feelings: A Guide to Poetry" (1938) and "The Metaphysics of Literature" (1940). In addition to being a brilliant philosopher, a gifted scholar, and a remarkable poet, Kuki was also well known for his skill as a writer, whose pungent wit is particularly evident in his most personal essays, a selection of which appears here. Michael Marra, one of the West's foremost authorities on modern Japanese aesthetics, prefaces his translations with an important essay that gives an account of the current state of Kuki studies in English and presents an intriguing and original interpretation of Kuki's writings. Marra argues that there is an unresolved tension in Kuki's thought between a desire to overcome the rigid schemes of metaphysics, garnered from his knowledge of French and German philosophy, on the one hand, and a constant hesitation to let those schemes go, which is expressed in his verse. *Kuki Shuzo: A Philosopher's Poetry and Poetics* will be eagerly welcomed by anyone interested in Japan's literary and intellectual life during the first half of the twentieth century.

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