



Cornell University Southeast Asia Program

Mono no Aware : Discussion Questions

- What is Ji-yen the Monk trying to express in the following poem?

*Let us not blame the wind, indiscriminately,
That scatters the flowers so ruthlessly;
I think it is their own desire to pass away before their time has come .*

Ji-yen the Monk (1155-1225)

(In D.T. SUZUKI, *Zen and Japanese Culture* . Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973, p. 390.)

- Besides cherry blossoms, what other examples are there of aesthetic objects whose impermanence is an integral part of their beauty?
- What is the relationship between time and beauty in Western art?

How does the Western dramatic or literary genre of “tragedy” resemble or differ from the Japanese focus on *mono no aware*