

# CAMELLIAS & CULTURE:

## Examining the Connections



**Daiki:** Huh? There's nothing particularly "Japanese" about camellia flowers. . .

**An-Yi:** Ah, but they have existed in Asia for centuries. Some species of camelia are integral parts of many Asian cultures.

**Tim:** Every cultural association we create is but a fiction. The randomness of many things often seems terrifying, so we imagine patterns to preserve the illusion of a coherent narrative.

**Daiki:** No doubt. A clear and compelling coherent narrative - even if it is false - often trumps complex and convoluted series of statements that are true.

**An-Yi:** (laughing) Ah, how easily we become suckers for compelling stories! However logical we pretend to be, deep down we are very emotional and all too easily fooled. Moreover, we are continually inventing stories to share with others.

**Bhāraté:** (nodding) Yep! As Frank Herbert reminded us, civilizations require shared beliefs and values. Never underestimate the power of myth.

- T Newfields

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