Abe Kōbō (1924–1993) was one of Japan's greatest postwar writers, widely recognized for his imaginative science fiction and plays of the absurd. However, he also wrote theoretical criticism for which he is lesser known, merging literary, historical, and philosophical perspectives into keen reflections on the nature of creativity, the evolution of the human species, and an impressive range of other subjects. Abe Kōbō tackled contemporary social issues and literary theory with the depth and facility of a visionary thinker. Featuring twelve pieces of work from his prolific career—including “Poetry and Poets (Consciousness and the Unconscious),” written in 1944, and “The Frontier Within, Part II,” written in 1969—this anthology introduces English-speaking readers to Abe Kōbō as critic and intellectual for the first time. Demonstrating the importance of his theoretical work to a broader understanding of his fiction—and a richer portrait of Japan's postwar imagination—the book provides an incisive introduction to Abe Kōbō's achievements and situates his work historically and intellectually.