KIBYŌSHI

by

Linda Margaret Thompson

A thesis submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Arts (Asian Studies)
in the Australian National
University.

March 1983

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to thank my supervisor, Dr. C. A. Gerstle, Australian National University, for the advice and encouragement he gave so freely during the preparation of this thesis. Thanks also go to Mrs. Gibbons (A.N.U.) and to Professor Ii of the Kokubungaku Kenkyū Shiryōkan (Tokyo) for their invaluable assistance.

INTRODUCTION

The literature of Japan in the Tokugawa period is remarkable both for its quantity and its diversity. Between 1600 and 1868, about 10,000 different titles were published. After the focus of literary activity moved from the Kamigata area of Kyoto and Osaka to Edo around 1750, there was a particularly rapid increase in the number and variety of popular prose genres known collectively as gesaku. However, readers in Japan and the Western world are now more familiar with the classics of the Heian period, Nō, and modern novelists than with popular Edo fiction. Apart from a few connoisseurs, assessments of literary critics until quite recently tended to range from indifference to scorn, and the derogatory term ero guro nansensu has no doubt been a more powerful disincentive to serious study than any linguistic problem of decoding colloquial references to contemporary incidents.

What is gesaku? The term has been defined variously, according to whether it is seen to denote the process or attitude behind the production of a particular work, or to refer to a specific historical period. In its literal sense of 'playful or frivolous writing', the word gesaku could be applied to modern works. However, since it is used most frequently in respect to certain genres of the later Edo period, it has assumed an historical meaning. Thus, even in more recent applications of the term gesaku, the underlying suggestion is that the humour of the work somehow resembles that of Edo period fiction.

Hiraga Gennai (1726-1779) is generally considered the first to have used the term gesaku. Gennai was of samurai status. He may have referred to his fictional works in this

TABLE OF CONTENTS

way as a result of the orthodox Confucian disdain of recreational fiction. This rather disarming, self-derogatory attitude is typical of later upper-class authors of gesaku too, and suggests a certain distance between the educated aloof man of letters and so-called 'second-class literature' written ostensibly as a nagusame, a distraction or an entertainment not to be taken too seriously. However, the definition of gesaku as frivolous literature of the later Edo period is in some ways a misrepresentation, as it falsely suggests that gesaku writers lacked a sense of artistic pride or integrity. While some may have had no more profound inspiration than a ribald joke, the range includes works of considerable wit, satire and erudition. Thus, it would be more correct to say that intellectuals used the term in the mid-eighteenth century to refer in a rather modest way to the new style of novels they were writing, as opposed to 'first-class literature' based on traditional classical studies. The new popular style of writing underwent many changes between 1770 and 1830, but continued to be referred to as gesaku. This classification included even such an immensely long and serious eulogy of Confucian virtues as Nansō satomi hakken-den (Biographies of Eight Dogs), published by Takizawa Bakin (1767-1848) in one hundred and six volumes between 1814 and 1841. Thus, the term gesaku may be seen as a reflection of the attitude of society to commercial fiction. In the Edo period, popular novels were not generally regarded as a suitable vehicle for the expression of the most refined human thoughts and emotions, although this doesn't necessarily prove that the writers were incapable of social or political awareness.

In the historical sense, gesaku refers to novel-like genres such as dangibon, sharebon, kobanashibon, yomihon, kibyōshi and kokkeibon. In the early nineteenth century there were also gōkan and ninjōbon. The same irreverent or non-traditional spirit was evident also in forms of poetry such as kyōka, kyōshi, and senryū. Study of all these genres reveals a predominance of contemporaneity, stereotypes, satirical humour and verbal dexterity, seen by some modern readers as a triumph of form over content. Many gesaku authors wrote in different genres under a variety of pen-names and adjusted their style to the appropriate formula. Some, like Ōta Nampo (1749-1823), also wrote serious philosophical essays, but even they did not seek to challenge underlying assumptions on the nature or status of popular fiction. In fact, the most significant re-assessment of the function of popular fiction came around the time of the Meiji Restoration. After 1868, Japanese writers made dramatic progress towards the creation of their 'modern novel'. In many respects this involved a rejection of past concepts of fiction. Rather than Ihara Saikaku's loosely constructed picaresque novels, Ejima Kiseki's sketches of stereotype characters, kibyōshi fascination with verbal puns and Bakin's unwieldy personifications of abstract virtues, the new breed of writers was attracted by Western depiction of the peculiarities of individual life and the exploration of the human consciousness.

The earliest attempt to promote the new realism was Shōsetsu shinzui (Essence of the Novel), a critical essay published in 1885 by Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859-1935). Tsubouchi applied methods of Western criticism

to Japanese literature in an effort to define the true function and status of the novel. He maintained that the ultimate goal was to portray human emotions and considered this impossible in an inflexibly didactic novel like Nansō satomi hakken-den. He also opposed the gesaku tendency to write works only accessible to a small group of people at a specific time, and concluded that the most effective medium of self-expression was a novel embodying true and universal insights within the framework of a realistic plot. Other outstanding writers like Nagai Kafū (1879-1959), Mori Ōgai (1862-1922), Natsume Sōseki (1867-1916) and Shimazaki Tōson (1872-1943) were all familiar with Western literature and all went abroad during a receptive phase of their artistic development. While fully appreciative of earlier Japanese gesaku, they also inspired confidence in the novel as an acceptable art form. This change in social attitude was reflected in the replacement of the word gesaku by sōsaku. The new term emphasised 'serious' creativity rather than 'playful' satire.

As the criteria of judgements change, it is inevitable that works of the past will undergo major re-evaluations. The Japanese novelist and Edo enthusiast Nagai Kafū is reputed to have said that anyone able to decipher a senryū deserved an immediate doctorate. Research of senryū poetry has since made considerable progress and its unusual style is now more widely appreciated. However, other genres of the period have not fared so well. For example, the fusion of illustration and amusing text in the kibyōshi suffers from comparison and confusion with modern comic books.

Among Western critics, Donald Keene no doubt expresses a common point of view when he says that kyōshi are 'hardly more than the diversion of a pedant', that senryū 'should not be over-rated', and that the writers of kyōka had a 'fascination with trivialities... clearly the result of a disinclination to face the world seriously'.[1] Marleigh Grayer Ryan observes that 'as there was virtually no worthwhile fiction in Tokugawa Japan, neither was there much that can be classified as literary criticism'.[2] Thus, while the worst excesses of moral rigorism of Western critics like W.G. Aston have been overcome, there is still a strong tendency to dismiss a wide range of Edo gesaku as unworthy of serious study, and, significantly, a surprising ignorance of the literary conventions of the period.

A more objective approach can be seen in the numerous critical works of Nakamura Yukihiko, one of Japan's most eminent specialists in Edo period literature. Nakamura stresses the need to represent the social and literary norms of the time, and the dangers of reading through a twentieth-century frame of reference. Encouraged by his scholarly and insightful treatises, Japanese academics have gradually begun to re-examine gesaku literary conventions, and in the process many works have been appreciated as deliberate and carefully crafted pieces of comic satire rather than as capricious nonsense. The enthusiasm of Japanese specialists such as Mizuno Minoru, Mori Senzō and Nakano Mitsutoshi has been supplemented by several theses and articles in English. However, there is still scope for a good deal of research into many aspects of gesaku literature.

The focus of this study is one of the most fascinating and misrepresented of the Edo genres, the kibyōshi or

yellow-cover books. These short, comic, illustrated works won great popularity in Edo after the 1775 publication by Koikawa Harumachi of Kinkin sensei eiga no yume (Mr Glitter's Dream of Glory). The genre underwent several changes due to the effects of public demand and official censorship and had virtually disappeared by 1806. The format of the kibyōshi had been in existence for several decades before 1775 as kusazōshi, which were simple volumes of five doubled pages printed with a black-line illustration and relevant text written within the frame of the picture. However, the more sophisticated standard of works produced in Edo after 1775 led to the recognition by contemporary readers of a new, qualitatively distinct genre, the kibyōshi, which was seen as a unique product of Edo and as a truly adult form of humour.

Several kibyōshi are now available in well-annotated selections.[3] Also, although diaries and correspondence relating to authors, works and the reading public are rare, there are a few modern editions of evaluations of popular eighteenth-century literature written by enthusiasts of the day. These are vastly different from modern Western literary criticism in both concept and execution but are an invaluable aid to understanding eighteenth-century readers' mode of appreciation. One of these, Kikujūsō (Chrysanthemum Notes) was published in 1781 and has been fully translated in the appendix. Also, to provide a more extended demonstration of the wit and extreme concentration of allusions typical of the kibyōshi genre, there is an annotated translation with illustrations of Gozonji no shōbaimono (The Tricks of the Trade), a 1782 work by Santō Kyōden.

Notes to Introduction

1. Keene, Donald, World Within Walls, pp. 512-532.

2. Ryan, Marleigh Grayer, The Development of Realism in the Fiction of Tsubouchi Shōyō, p. 17.

3. All kibyōshi referred to are included in the following annotated collections:

   Hamada Giichirō et al. (ed.), Kibyōshi senryū kyōka.

   Koike Masatane et al. (ed.), Edo no gesaku ehon (4 volumes).

   Mizuno Minoru et al. (ed.), Kibyōshi sharebon-shū

CHAPTER ONE : EDO GESAKU

In the mid-seventeenth century, Edo was hardly more than a military and administrative centre. Whereas Kyoto had enjoyed a long history of gradual artistic development and consolidation, the new capital selected by Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1616 was essentially a rapid-growing village. It was a place of continual unrest as provincial lords came and went in accordance with a cumbersome system of periodic residence in the new capital. Workers came from many different areas, bringing with them a variety of accents and customs. Despite being the shogun's stronghold and centre of political power, Edo was culturally dependent on the Kamigata region of Kyoto and Osaka. However, in the early eighteenth century, the population of Edo had reached one million, easily qualifying it as the biggest city in the world at that time. One of the more tangible signs of the new identity of the city was the special dialect spoken by the Edokko, or person born and bred in Edo. Another was the emergence of a mode of literary expression specific to Edo. This was particularly important, as Kyoto had been the undisputed centre of publishing until the end of the seventeenth century.

In the peaceful atmosphere which followed the period of wars, Tokugawa Ieyasu and his descendents encouraged learning and the classics as part of a policy to consolidate their rule. However, despite the spread of commercial printing, during most of the seventeenth century reading remained the activity of a small elite section of society. It was rare to produce over one hundred copies of one book,

and they were not treated as a marketable commodity for distribution nation-wide. Rather, a bookshop would have a special connection with a temple, school or lending library, or a patron within the bakufu. By 1677, there were about one hundred bookshops in Kyoto, some of which also had special privileges in Edo. Osaka had fewer, around thirty, but the 1672 reform whereby goods were obliged to be sent via Osaka on the sea route instead of overland across Lake Biwa was just one of several factors leading to the emergence of a flourishing commercial centre in Osaka and a demand for new recreational reading matter. Accordingly, there was a remarkable boom in book publication at the end of the seventeenth century. During the seventeenth century there had been a steady increase in the number of kana explanations of Buddhist scriptures and reprints of Japanese classics and Chinese books. There were also kanazōshi, collections of haikai, Jōruri and sermons. A new genre called ukiyozōshi was launched with the publication by the Osaka poet Ihara Saikaku (1642-1693) of Kōshoku ichidai otoko (The Life of an Amorous Man), which made a big impact on the book world in 1682. Two Osaka merchants are said to have seized upon the manuscripts and requested more 'best sellers', with prior payment of three hundred momme of silver.[1] Saikaku died before any such plan could be realised, but book-dealers took up pens themselves and in the next twenty years about two hundred kōshoku (amorous) books appeared. While Kyoto still relied mostly on older customers and reprints of traditional works, popular tastes were also well-catered for by a bookshop called

Hachimonjiya, whose chequered career lasted from around 1650 to 1770, and which specialised in ukiyozōshi. There were also adaptations of current Kabuki-Kyōgen, Jōruri plays and yakusha hyōbanki assessments of actors. Hachimonjiya Jishō made entrepreneurial attempts to promote his goods, and to monopolise popular authors to ensure a constant supply of new manuscripts. One such successful writer, Ejima Kiseki, attempted to set up his own company after a dispute over credits, but was unable to compete with Hachimonjiya's marketing success and returned as house writer to continue the genre with which he is now identified, katagimono or character sketches.

In contrast to the excitement and activity in the Kyoto-Osaka book world, Edo had little to offer at the turn of the century in the way of originality, and relied on what could be obtained from branches of Kyoto bookshops. Also, printing techniques were as yet poorly developed, so Edo copies of kanazōshi and saikakubon were of inferior quality.[2] However, the book market in Edo was expanding rapidly, to the point where after 1716 the volume of sales in Edo branches exceeded the head offices in Kyoto. By 1751, the shift of the genre of literary activity from Kamigata to Edo, known as bun'un tōzen, was well on its way. Whereas Kyoto was struggling to maintain a constant number of publications, Edo was forging ahead. The stagnation in Kyoto may have been due to an inability to provide novelty once a particular formula had succeeded. For example, Hachimonjiya showed no inclination to break away from character sketches and theatre-related books, and received a major set-back with the death of Kiseki in 1736 and Jishō in 1745.

Meanwhile, conditions in Edo were favourable to a great leap forward in publishing autonomy. During

the seventeenth century there had been severe censorship on political or moral grounds, and a 1721 edict by the shogun Yoshimune included popular literature on the list of forbidden 'luxury goods', and directed that there should be no criticism of the government, no eroticism, no reference to lineage, no tell-tale names or dates and no references without permission from the shogunate administration to the Tokugawa family or to the bakufu.[3] The Kyōhō reforms of 1723 restated these orders, and a hollyhock stamp on a work indicated a total ban. With the shogun's sanction, publishers formed groups, and part of the guild's responsibility was to control morally dubious publications. One of the few local genres which could emerge under these conditions was the kyōkunbon, or precept book. These were related to the oral tradition of street corner priests, who had employed comic devices to increase the appeal of their sermons. Tessai Gakusan's simple stories based on Chinese moral teachings were particularly popular and circulated widely. Such stories were written in Kyoto too, but by 1716, Edo definitely led the field.

Kyōkunbon gave way to dangibon which, while still moralistic, placed more emphasis on entertainment, wit and satire. After the death of Yoshimune in 1746, more fashionable and erotic elements were included, and the Edo colloquial style developed even further. This use of events and diction familiar to Edoites meant that the stories had an appeal lacking in earlier 'imports' from Kyoto. The moral element was often little more than a standard formula, or, in the case of the most famous dangibon writer, Hiraga Gennai, a vehicle for wit and

satire. Gennai's excellent powers of description enabled him to depict familiar scenes of everyday life in Edo, and his use of the religious debate form let him a step in the direction of realistic dialogue. As the kyōkun dangibon lost its thin veneer of respectability, it stood revealed as a kōshoku dangibon, but while the proselytising elements may have been reduced drastically, there was a continuing fascination with Edo matters and with the potential of colloquial language. This found its ultimate expression in a distinct Edo genre called sharebon, which, in terms of quantity, dominated the various popular genres for several decades.

Although the form originated in the Kyoto-Osaka area, the conventions of these comic stories of the pleasure quarters were firmly established in Edo around 1770 in Yūshi hōgen (The Playboy's Dialect) by an unknown author using the pen-name Inaka Rōjin Tada no Jijii (Plain Old Codger from the Backwoods). In Gesaku hyōban hanaorishi (Comments on gesaku), a general review of gesaku which was published in 1802, this work is honoured as the archetype of all up-to-date novelettes in the words: tōsei no shōsasshi mo mina kono shiuchi o minaraimashite to miemasu (It is obvious that all modern stories have been influenced by this one).[4] Yūshi hōgen begins with an offer by a self-styled man of the world to initiate a young lad into the modish world of the pleasure quarter. They travel up the Sumida River on a skiff to a boathouse, stroll along the canal embankment to Yoshiwara, visit a tea-house, and then arrive at their destination, a brothel, and during the entire evening the older man continues his series of comic blunders, eventually exposing himself as completely

lacking in finesse. On the contrary, it is the young man who is finally credited with refinement of manner. Short sketches in adjoining rooms introduce a variety of customers and situations. The physical environment depicted would have been familiar to readers, and characters are brought alive by dialogue in the vernacular of the commoner, with natural use of ungrammatical sentences, slang, hesitation particles and even belching. There are descriptive passages, but generally the speaker is identified by name as in play texts. Similarly, entrances, exits and costumes are noted in parentheses, and there is a simple chronological sequence of events.

The preface of Yūshi hōgen is composed in classical Chinese and solemnly invokes past authorities in a comparison of the girls of Yoshiwara to fragrant blossoms:

> There are many beautiful flowers, but there are also many beautiful girls in the pleasure quarter. However lovely the plum or the peony may be, they will never speak, laugh or sing for you. However, the flowers of Yoshiwara will talk, laugh, sing and steal away your very soul should you glance at them, and their perfume will melt your heart. The frost and dew will never wither them, nor will the wind and rain scatter them. You can take them at will, and never exhaust the supply. Unlike other flowers, they bloom at all times of the year. So let us sing the praises of these flowers of Yoshiwara.[5]

This lofty style is an amusing contrast to the extreme contemporaneity of the following passages, which take us through an evening of pleasure in Yoshiwara. First, there is a description of the sophisticate, tōrimono:

> One fine day, a man aged about thirty-five years old was standing near Willow Bridge. His hairline was plucked back in an exaggerated top-knot style. He wore a twill coat, and a narrow striped sash tied chest-high. The hilt of his short sword was a bit soiled, and so were the crests on his black kimono. The pattern of his nether garment didn't match, and his scarlet underwear was faded. His

> broad low clogs seemed awkward to walk in. In his hand he carried a modish hood. Although he didn't appear to have a tissue wallet, a packet of tissues could just be seen in the front fold of his kimono. He surveyed the scene around him with proud glittering eyes, as though to say 'There's no one quite so sophisticated as me'.[6]

Despite such self-esteem, the reader easily detects a certain tarnish in the image of the sophisticate. In contrast, the young man musuko is clean, neatly dressed and reserved. He is persuaded to abandon plans to visit a sick uncle, and sends home his companion. Ostensibly the pair will view the autumn leaves at a famous temple. In fact, they board the ferry to the pleasure quarter. The sophisticate begins his lesson with an explanation of how one should assume the correct pose, with legs crossed, elbow propped and head leaned at a meditative angle while puffing elegantly on a pipe. Although he pompously claims to be a popular habitué of the area, to know all the best wares and to be on intimate terms with famous entertainers, he actually misses the intended stop and is embarrassingly not known or liked by the girls.

The second section evokes the sounds and sights of evening in the pleasure quarter, with many complicated puns, short snatches of lively dialogue, and a montage of brief street images:

> It's hard to choose where to go in Yoshiwara - all the five sections are good. Someone declaims, as though reading from a book of classical poetry, 'Ah, at first sight I was smitten with love for you. Let us meet again at the next moon-viewing'. Someone has stood a broom upside-down to get rid of a tiresome customer, but someone else is counting the woven rows of the floor mat while waiting impatiently for her man. One girl reads a letter she has received, another seals a letter to be sent off. Men look in, girls peek out. Some are angry, some are laughing. Some are melancholy, some whisper together happily. Ah! slim, willowy hips and crimson underskirts!...[7]

The third section describes the beginning of festivities, and the final act has four lively scenes depicting the samurai Hira's annoyance at having to waste his time with a substitute courtesan; a girl trying to trick her blind customer into thinking it is already morning; the unpopularity of the sophisticate and Hira's reconciliation with his regular girl, translated below.

(Adjoining room) Hira: God! What a racket! It looks like that loud-mouth from last night has finally cleared off. I just heard the front door open.

The regular girl, who has replaced the substitute : Well, it'll be quieter when I move up to a better room. But, you know, all that takes a lot of money.

Hira: What's the matter with you? Didn't you listen to what I said last night? I'll cover the expenses when you move up. You just take care of the present, I'll look after the future.

Girl: Oh, I'm so happy. (So saying, they fool around a bit.) You know, if I just had another client like you, I'd be really well set-up.

Hira: Mmm, that's nice to know. (He cuddles up, keen to make love.)

[Presumably some time elapses]

Girl: Really! Lately I haven't been able to sleep night or day but when last night's client went home and I came

to see you, I just felt very relaxed and slept well. But last night, when you were so bad-tempered, I was really scared. From now on, please don't get so angry, will you?

Hira: I won't, I won't. Please forgive me. Hey, it's time I went home.

Girl: Ahh, won't you just stay a little longer?

Hira: But look, it's already morning. Just open up and have a look.

(The girl opens up the lattice window and sees it is morning. She is disappointed.)

Girl: Good heavens! The cock must have crowed a while back, but I didn't hear a thing. (aloud) Boy! Boy! Quickly, get my clothes will you! Damn! I told them at the tea-shop to bring my things over at four o'clock, but they didn't send anyone.

House boy: I came for you a while back.

Hira: Ah well. (As he ties his sash, the cock crows again, Cock-a-doodle-do!)

Girl: We must meet again. I'll be waiting at midday.

Hira: Mm, I'm so late going home I can't promise anything. Anyway, I'll try to come.

Girl: Well, since you're in a hurry, I won't accompany you to Naka-no-chō.

Hira: No way. Oh, I'm really running late!

Girl: Be sure to come, now. (Again, the cock crows.) Ah, who can read people's feelings in the cold light of day?[8]

These four exerpts from Yūshi hōgen indicate four main elements of the sharebon : comic use of Chinese characters and classical references, fine details on fashions and pleasure-quarter etiquette, familiarity with the physical environment of Edo, and a meticulous record of the exact manner of speech of all characters, presented in a dramatic format.

Although the sharebon began in Yoshiwara, it soon moved to the unlicensed okabasho. In mid-1770, the Fukagawa area provided the setting in Tatsumi no sono by Muchū Sanjin Negoto Sensei (Mr. Crazy Night Talk). Tatsumi refers to the south direction, in contrast to northern Yoshiwara, otherwise known as Hokkoku or Hokuri. There is a deliberate attempt to individualise the customs and slang of the area, and to introduce real people. Another setting was Shinagawa, where brothels operated under the pretext of providing inns to service travellers. Late in 1770, Nankō ekiwa by Kitasa no Sanjin exposed the vanity of a self-styled Yoshiwara expert visiting Shinagawa for the first time. A third popular okabasho was another relay station called Shinjuku, whose special features and distinctive clientele were detailed in a 1775 sharebon titled Nōeki shinwa, and its sequel four years later. The author, Yamanote no Bakahito (Uptown Idiot) was probably none other than the respectable man of letters, Ōta Nampo. The boundaries of the sharebon had been expanded in 1774 with Fumiguruma murasaki ga no ko, by Ukiyo Henreki Saidō Raku Sensei (Mr. Religious Pilgrimage in the Pleasure

Quarters), who enumerated seventy Edo brothels, and even included the boat-houses or funa manjū and the street-walkers known as yotaka (hawks of the night). Some sharebon varied convention by moving the setting outside Edo. Also, in 1783, Tōrai Sanna's Sankyōshiki (The Three Teachings of Love) took the liberty of introducing Confucius, Buddha, the Shinto Sun God and Lao-tzu to a brothel in Yoshiwara. Even so, the genre was so narrowly defined that it was quite an innovation when Kyōden situated a 1791 sharebon called Nishiki no ura (The Reverse Side of the Brocade)[9] in the daytime.

What was the reason for this extraordinary fascination with the sharebon, which attracted some of the most intellectual minds of upper-class society? To understand the phenomenon, it is essential to consider the nature of Edo's population. From the time of its inception, Edo had been a city of samurai, priests and small merchants, characterised by a significant imbalance of the sexes. A combination of political and social factors led to the establishment of a red light area officially recognised by the government, and also innumerable other illegal but sanctioned places of prostitution. From the seventeenth century, yūjo hyōbanki had given the names and ranks of brothels and courtesans, and many details on related matters. In Edo, the Yoshiwara saiken brothel guide was published every year by Tsutaya, and its contents were of a largely informative nature. Use of the same setting for the fictional dangibon resulted in a unique genre which dealt exclusively in stories revealing the nuances of etiquette in the pleasure quarters, and satirising fake sophistication. The quarters were not only to provide sexual adventure, but were also the hub of social activity. Far from being equated with degeneracy,

enjoyment of the quarters was an important element in the masculine culture of the day, and even gave rise to aesthetic theories. Thus, the dominating concept of mid-eighteenth century popular Edo literature was incontestably that of tsū (通).

The term tsū is related to an earlier word, sui (粋), used in the Kamigata area, and could be compared to the cult of dandyism in England and France in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Elegant dress, deportment and behaviour appropriate to the situation were all characteristics of the Edo tsūjin, but those who merely copied the outward trappings and lacked true tsū refinement were to be relentlessly exposed as half tsū or fake tsū, and a great deal of literary energy was expended in exploring the fine distinction between the two. An ordinary person could acquire tsū by an interest in something very old or unusual, but must remain essentially a dilettante. In all things he must retain a certain cool aloofness. In particular, sentimental love would be a disqualification. Tsū was closely related to fashionableness, but excessive imitation or misinterpretation of fashion was also fatal. As to the finer points of discrimination, as Santō Kyōden said, only a tsūjin would know.[10]

To a small group of men in the mid-Edo period, the term became a fashion, an aesthetic concept, a way of life and even a literary standard. In the exclusive setting of Edo tea-houses and brothels, the tsū observation or joke was a share, which also had connotations of 'smart'. All sharebon took as point of departure a belief in the validity of tsū, and probed the concept through ugachi or anasagashi, which referred to seeking out or exposing people's weaknesses - less of morals than of etiquette - through wit and satire.

Intellectual life in mid-eighteenth century Kyoto was relatively peaceful and there was a lingering taste for historical romances written in an elegant lofty style which reflected the writers' distant attitude or even denial of the realities of the world around them. While seeking the freedom of expression afforded by zoku (popular) literature, Kamigata intellectuals reflected a definite continuity with ga (elegant) literature of the past, to the extent that after Yosa Buson's death in 1783, Ueda Akinari mourned him as a fine writer of kanagaki no kanshi (Chinese poetry in Japanese kana).[11]

In Edo, there were few ties to classical culture. From the beginning of the bakufu, samurai education had grown steadily, and by the eighteenth century this class was highly literate. However, lower-level samurai were faced with a breakdown of their traditional role as military aristocracy and a lack of real political and economic power. This may well account for the interest in mocking, urbane escapist literature depicting the worldly pleasures of the day. In Edo there was a multiplicity of gesaku genres, which could be interpreted as the diversity of an enriched culture, or conversely as a symptom of trivialism. Most writers adapted their pens to the conventions of a variety of genres, using various different pen-names. Ōta Nampo was one of the more outstanding of such educated men of samurai status who chose to apply their thorough knowledge of Chinese and Japanese classical literature to the

production of comic works. He wrote senryū (humorous haikai) kyōshi (comic poems in solemn-looking Chinese) and kyōka (Japanese poetry which gave a humorous twist to the themes or lines taken from serious poetry of the past).

Around 1770, kyōka parties became extremely popular in Edo, and sometimes collections were published based on these convivial gatherings. There was certainly no commercial reward in either these or in sharebon. According to Kinseimono no hon Edo sakusha burui, a review of novelists published by Takizawa Bakin in 1834, there was no system of manuscript fee until 1795. Instead, the publishers would send a lot of new titles or colour prints as a gift to writers like Hōseidō Kisanji, Koikawa Harumachi and Shiba Zenkō. If the writers had given them a very successful story for the New Year marketing blitz, they could also be treated to an atari furumai, or lavish entertainment in the pleasure quarter, in February or March. It was only after Kyōden and Bakin had produced works selling upwards of ten thousand copies each that they were rewarded with an agreement on fees to be paid by Tsutaya and Tsuruya, and this was not until 1795-6.[12] The early gesaku authors treated writing as a hobby, not as a professional occupation. There was no need to cater to the tastes of a wide commercial marked, as their works were not 'popular' in the sense that they were intended for or comprehensible to the masses.

Reading habits have been revolutionised by mass circulation, and it is difficult to envisage a work of fiction being written specifically for a small circle of people with similar background and tastes, but it is precisely this sort of 'closed world' which gave rise to sharebon, kyōka and kibyōshi. The more specific the reference and the more obscure the allusion, the greater the readers' delight in unravelling the puzzle. Whereas Kyoto bookshops dealt on a national level, gesaku writers of Edo delighted in a narrow field of reference which could only be entered by a privileged or 'initiated' reader. This is what Nakamura Yukihiko terms the 'contract' between the writer and the reader. The readers were assumed to be familiar with Edo down to the finest details. The layout of the city was firmly fixed in their minds. They knew immediately that a particular area was known for cheap street-walkers, that a particular shop sold the best grilled eel in town and that a particular line was a variation on the latest hit song. Thus, gesaku literature of Edo refers constantly to contemporary expressions, songs, fashions, restaurants, shops, events, personalities and ideas. To gain a clearer insight into this gesaku culture, let us examine in some detail the literary devices used in kibyōshi.

A major structural device in kibyōshi is the shukō, original idea or innovation, which is imposed upon the sekai, the familiar setting or theme. In earlier haikai poetry, these terms had already been used to describe the way an individual touch could be achieved within the confines of a traditional pattern. In theatre the terms referred to historical settings (sekai) into which the playwright or actor infused a fresh twist (shukō).

In kibyōshi, the shukō referred primarily to the theme of the whole work when a comic story was superimposed on a familiar place, person or episode. Thus, in Kagekiyo hyakunin isshu, a kibyōshi written by Kisanji in 1781, the sekai is Kamakura, where Yoritomo Hideyoshi orders that a would-be assassin must be apprehended. The man they seek is Kagekiyo, a great Heike general who achieved fame at the battles of Yashima and Dan-no-ura, and who became a popular figure in Nō and Jōruri plays. However, the twist is that the word kagekiyo was also Edo slang for an habitué of the pleasure quarters. Thus, the search takes us through all sorts of fantastic escapades in eighteenth-century Edo before the final comic denouement. Early gesaku writers used all their ingenuity to devise such unusual shukō, on the assumption that their readers were equally familiar with the underlying sekai, whether it was historical or literary. There was no need for the prolix explanations of later more 'popular' gesaku writers like the kokkeibon humorist Jippensha Ikku (1765-1831), or the ninjōbon specialist Tamenaga Shunsui (1790-1843).

The same principle of the shukō was applied in a more specific way in the mitate, which consisted of finding a correspondence between dissimilar things or of looking at something in a new way to give a surprise effect. The mitate was also an old device used in haikai and even included in the shikimoku (rules) of the Teimon school. However, it became a form of humour pervasive in Edo literature and essential in kibyōshi, which could almost be defined as a complicated or extended mitate. Since comparisons are not drawn from objects so much as forced upon them with rather exaggerated ingenuity,

the definition of mitate lies somewhere between the metaphor and the technical joke. For example, let us consider the contents of the first ehon mitate or books of illustrated metaphors, which are analysed in detail by Nakano Mitsutoshi in Gesaku kenkyū.[13] Ehon mitate hyaku kachō was published in 1755. In the preface, the author claims to have been enjoying the cool of the evening in the Ryōgoku pleasure area when he heard a song from one of the boats which contained one hundred 'tree and bird' metaphors, so he hurried home to draw pictures of them. In the epilogue, there is a short passage full of puns on ki and tori, such as hima o tori (to take time off) and kane tsuki (to strike a bell). Thirteen of these puns appear in the main body of the work, among a total of fifty sets of tree-bird illustrations. As can be seen in the two examples below (see fig. 1), Hyaku kachō shows everyday items drawn to look like a tree and a bird. Approximately one-third of the page is a short explanation, and together they create a visual and verbal pun such as ibiki (yawn) and sugagaki (instrumental music). In gesaku terminology, the picture is pure mitate, and the word play is kojitsuke, or sophistry.

Fig. 1

The following year there was a sequel, Zoku hyaku kachō, with another twenty-three sets. Although the volumes were

signed with two different pen-names, the style suggests a single author-illustrator. At the end of Zoku hyaku kachō there is an announcement for a proposed work in three volumes on thirty-six shell mitate. The bird series seems to have been finished by someone else in the same year, 1756. This third publication Ehon ki ni tori contains twenty-four illustrations, which added to the fifty in Hyaku kachō and the twenty-three in Zoku hyaku kachō, approximates the promised one hundred items. However, three mitate are repeated from Zoku hyaku kachō and the format has changed to show a picture and explanation on one side of the folded sheet, and a related poem on the other side, as illustrated in the pun on satori (enlightenment), where a bird is shown flying over some scholarly texts (see fig. 2).

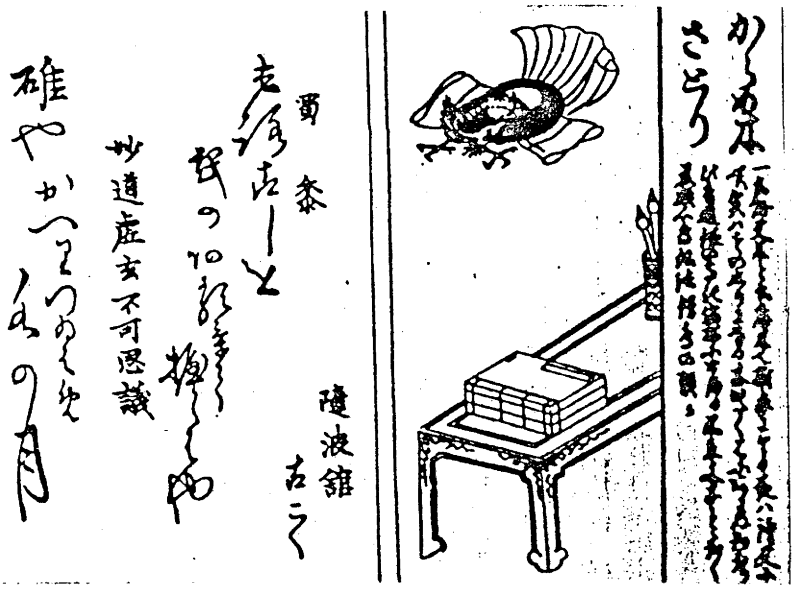


Fig. 2

The twenty-four pen-names which appear at the end of these poems were probably only used in this one context, but Nakano Mitsutoshi postulates that they may represent some of the leading gesaku personalities.

Hyaku kachō was referred to several times by Kyōden, who recognised it as an important influence on gesaku writers and a list of mitate books compiled by Nakano Mitsutoshi contains thirty-five publications dating from 1755 to 1814, and including such reknowned names as Taketsue no Sugaru, Manzōtei, Kisanji and Kyōden.[14]

The mitate device was a vital ingredient in the kibyōshi, and renders certain passages incomprehensible to readers unfamiliar with the 'logic' of the associations. For example, in a 1776 work by Harumachi, Bakemono Ōeyama, there is a scene where Watanabe Orange Peel is whisked away by Midnight Noodle to be chopped up into condiments of the season. The fearless hero hacks off the villain's arm with his Noodle-Cutting knife, and flings it towards the roof of the gallery of the Kitano shrine, but it lands instead on top of an orange-basket. The sekai of this rather extraordinary story is a legend about the four valiant retainers of Minamoto no Yorimitsu, who went to mountainous Tamba province in order to defeat the robber-ogre Shutendōji at Ōe Mountain. This eleventh-century story provided the theme of many Nō, Jōruri, Kabuki and kusazōshi. The shukō was a battle between the type of noodle dish most popular in Edo at the time, and the traditional Kyoto dish. The Edoite Soba Meal's four faithful allies are Grated Radish, Dried Bonito Flakes, Cayenne Pepper and Orange Peel. Their arch-enemy is Midnight Noodle and his gang from Kyoto. In the legend, Shutendōji's henchman, Ibarakidōji had his arm cut off by Watanabe no Tsuna at Rashōmon. In Heike monogatari, the arm was said to have been tossed up onto the roof of the gallery surrounding the courtyard of the Kitano shrine. The mitate compares

the enclosing gallery of the shrine to an orange-basket. Although the objects are vastly different, the name Orange Peel provides a tenuous point of contact. This mitate is developed in the following scene, where Orange Peel's aunt visits to steal back the arm, kicks over the orange-basket and runs away. This is probably why, we are told, all orange-boxes now have cloth covers. In the old legend, Ibarakidōji disguised himself as Watanabe no Tsuna's aunt to retrieve his arm, then burst through the gable to make his escape. Thus, the mitate compares the cloth covering an orange-box to protect against dust and sun with a gable-roof, and also alludes to the lack of gables in the Watanabe residences of old. Furthermore, the aunt's place of origin is given as Kawachi (Osaka) in Heike monogatari, but is changed to Kishū (or Kii) in the story, because the area of Wakayama is famous for its oranges. Such is the nature of the mitate, which invariably brings the past story into the present.[15]

Another device was the share (joke) which was sometimes no more than a dajare (poor joke), and was usually based on a deliberate confusion of words with similar pronunication. Thus, in Harumachi's 1781 Muda iki, a woman takes some nezumi to the fuller's to be re-dyed. Nezumi was a popular gray colour used for garments in the Edo period, but another meaning is 'rat', so of course the illustration shows a woman solemnly dangling a couple of live rats while other rats are neatly packaged to await their owner's return (see fig. 3).

Fig. 3

A more extended joke is possible in the tsukushi or enumeration of related words. While such a device may seem rather superficial to the modern reader, it has a long and respectable tradition in Japanese literature. In Heian times, there had been lists of such things as flowers (kikuawase), but Sei Shōnagon's Makura no sōshi (Pillow Book) was a vastly more imaginative approach, where it could truly be said that the total effect of the classification was more than the sum of its parts. Subsequently many more tsukushi or soroe were written, but the literary value was uneven. There were educational publications for the general public like lists of trades (shōbai ōraimono) or Edo place names (Edo ōraimono). More sophisticated use of the tsukushi can be seen in the celebrated michiyuki in the Jōruri plays of Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1725). These are descriptions of the places an ill-fated couple pass through on their journey to death by suicide, and to subsequent release from the sorrows of the world. They are characterised by a fine web of puns and allusions. In Tamba Yosaku, this takes the form of an

enumeration of post stations along the Tōkaidō Line. In Shinjū Ten no Amijima, the word-play revolves around names of bridges in the north of Osaka. In gesaku literature, such tsukushi are both the delight and the despair of the annotator. Sometimes the catalogue seems to achieve little beyond flattering the ego of those familiar with all of the items. In Atama ten ten ni kuchi ari (1784), Ōta Nampo, under the pen-name Yomo Sannin, writes of a battle between different restaurants. The fifteenth scene shows personified restaurants at a shrine, praying for guidance in the skilful use of their carving knives and in pleasing the palates of their customers. On the same page there are written the names of dozens of rivals or 'combatants', some of them famous eateries or special dishes, some of them now unknown. The readers' pleasure was derived from being able to identify all these places. A more complicated form of tsukushi occurs in Kyōden's Gozonji no shōbaimono (1782), where a story about books contains a short declaration of love which is also a list of dozens of terms related to paper and books. This offered more challenge as it required reading on two different levels, with continual adjustment to the multiple syntactical functions of any one word.

Another fascination with words can be seen in the gesaku writer's interest in the jiguchi (pun). In Oya no katakiuchi hara tsuzumi (1777), Kisanji finishes with an extravagant play on words where a rabbit (usagi) is cut in half. From the upper half flies a cormorant (u) and from the lower half a snowy heron (sagi), giving two news words written with different characters (see fig. 4).

Fig. 4

This type of gesaku humour arose from a verbal mitate, and was also known as shūku, kuchiai or goroawase. In a more extended form, a familiar proverb or phrase would undergo several substitutions of similar-sounding words for a comic effect. For example, toshi no wakai no ni shirage ga mieru (although he is young, you can see some white hairs) becomes oki no kurai no ni shirahō ga mieru (although the sea is dark, you can see some white sails). Such humour can best be appreciated when the words are read aloud, as it depends on sound rather than form.

A humorous device often used by gesaku authors, particularly in the preface, is the mock-serious reflection in difficult Chinese kambun. This can be seen in the introduction to such sharebon as Yūshi hōgen or Tatsumi no sono, and is illustrated in an extreme form in an unusual kibyōshi by Shiba Zenkō called Jorō no makoto tamago no kakumoji (1790). This kibyōshi doesn't have a sustained story line, but is an irreverent re-writing of passages from the Confucian text Daigaku (The Great Learning) which was considered essential reading for all

men with any claim to education during Edo times. Zenkō has taken familiar passages and altered the Chinese characters slightly to make a comment about various situations in the pleasure quarters. The kambun are accompanied by Japanese readings (furigana) and are followed by solemn-looking commentaries on the meaning of the text. These commentaries are pure nonsense, and must have delighted those readers who had both a classical education and worldly experience. The introduction to Daigaku reads:

> My master, the philosopher Ch'ang, says: - 'The Great Learning is a Book transmitted by the Confucian School, and forms the gate by which first learners enter into virtue. That we can now perceive the order in which the ancients pursued their learning is solely owing to the preservation of this work, the Analects and Mencius coming after it. Learners must commence their course with this, and then it may be hoped they will be kept from error'.[16]

Zenkō's version, with a pun on kōshi, which denotes both the name Confucius and 'lattice window' reads:

> The master of the house says: 'The Great Patron hears all sorts of enticements as he stands at the brothel lattice, which forms the gate by which customers enter the girls' beds. We can now perceive clearly that the more one becomes a sophisticated customer, the less the girls can profit, just as they can't make much from men who don't choose to throw their money away. Patrons must commence their course with a study of this, and then it may be hoped they will be kept from making fools of themselves'.[17]

The opening sentence of Daigaku is:

> What the Great Learning teaches, is - to illustrate illustrious virtue; to renovate the people; and to rest in the highest excellence.[18]

Zenkō subjects these words to a few alterations to give:

Fig. 5

> The way to treat a Great Patron is to get to know his nom-de-plume, to do your hair, and to show ignorance.

This is followed by three items of commentary:

> To get to know his nom-de-plume means to remember the name he uses when writing poetry. To do your hair means to brush it out and arrange it nicely every day. To sham ignorance means not to make out you understand everything but just to say, 'Well, gee, I don't know'.[19]

Finally there is an exchange of comments between the girls, who confuse kyōtoku (pen-name) with rōsoku (candle) and with a temple in a Chiba province called Gyōtoku. The entire kibyōshi continues in the same vein, concluding with a parody of the Daigaku epilogue. In another kibyōshi of the same year, Hayariyasu hiwacha Soga, Zenkō compresses the whole Soga legend into three short volumes, with a similar preface, cleverly using, or abusing, Chinese characters for a comic effect.

Current slang was often incorporated in gesaku, and many such expressions are given in Harumachi's 1778 Kotoba tatakai atarashii no ne, where they are in fact personified. Daiboku no kiriguchi futoi no ne means futoi or preposterous, dorayaki-satsumaimo means umai or tasty, yomo no aka, ippai nomikake yama and tai no misozu all refer to drinking, tonda chagama means 'What!' and so on.

To this brief list of elements of gesaku style one should also add muda (nonsense). The attraction of muda may have been in the irresponsible escapism it offered from the limitations of a closed feudal society. Muda aimed less at serious satirical comment on contemporary issues than at all-inclusive mockery. This was especially pronounced in the kibyōshi, for two reasons. One was that whereas the sharebon was an attempt to define and embody tsū, the kibyōshi derided even this concept. The second was that the kibyōshi was not limited exclusively to themes of the pleasure quarters, but could apply its special brand of irreverent wit and upside-down logic to any field whatsoever. Some of these general areas were dreams, animal tales derived from traditional children's stories, tall tales of fantastic events, comic stories of possible future trends, strange occupations, battles between different personified objects and parodies of contemporary issues.

Sekai-shukō, mitate, share, tsukushi, jiguchi, mock-serious use of Chinese characters, slang and muda are the basic ingredients of most forms of gesaku literature. The uniqueness of the kibyōshi lies in their presentation within the format traditionally used for kusazōshi, simple illustrated books produced mainly in Edo. They were

about eighteen centimetres high and five centimetres wide, and each volume contained five sheets of cheap recycled paper folded and bound with the edges to the centre, giving ten pages in all. There was a title-label and picture on the front, and each inside page consisted of a black-line illustration with a short explanation or lines of conversation written mainly in kana in any odd space available within the picture. A complete story could consist of several volumes, in which case they were marked jō, chū and ge, but it was customary to restrict each volume to the standard length of five doubled sheets, the back page often serving as an advertisement for other publications available from the same publisher.

Possibly sōshi (草子) was a variation of sasshi (冊子). In the Heian period, spellings included 草紙, 草子 and 雙紙 (now simplified to 双紙) and denoted short works written in kana. There are various theories regarding the origin of the term kusazōshi.[20] In an 1830 collection of essays called Kiyūshōran, the addition of kusa (草) is seen to distinguish between two words with identical pronunciation, 雙紙 and 草子. The former referred to works used for an educational purpose, whereas the latter was for recreational reading. Both are pronounced sōshi, but the word written with the character 草 could be identified as kusazōshi in the same way that the man's name Akira is even now distinguished by saying 'the Akira spelt using the Mei character from Meiji', or 'the Akira spelt using the Shō character from Shōwa' (明治の明の明、昭和の昭の昭). However, if both terms were used interchangeably in the

Heian period, as Fujioka Sakutarō suggests, then the word kusazōshi would not seem to reflect any recognisable difference in content, but simply a difference in orthography.

In Genkai, a reputable Japanese dictionary published in 1886, kusazōshi are defined as books written in the cursive or kusa style of kana. That is, the term merely relates to the form of the script used. A third explanation is in Takizawa Bakin's Edo sakusha burui, where the famous writer states that the first books were of very poor quality. Even the covers were made from recycled paper, and the strong smell of ink caused them to be known as臭草紙 . The character臭 means kusai or 'bad smelling'. Later, as the format improved, the character was changed to avoid the unpleasant nuance.

Finally, in the introduction to Edo sakusha burui it is suggested that like kusa-sumō and kusa-shibai the term has a pejorative sense of 'non-legitimate' or 'second-rate'. Even in modern Japanese, the term kusa-yakyū is a derisive term for poorly played baseball. It would seem reasonable to see this as due not only to the connotation of playing on a grassy field but also to the traditional nuance of 'second-class'. This theory seems to be most widely accepted today. However, when discussing the etymology of kusa, critics produce a variety of spellings for sōshi, so orthography may now reflect little more than a personal preference or habit.

Publishing details were not usually recorded in early kusazōshi. Instead, the artist designed an attractive paste-

on cover slip with the title, publisher's trademark and a picture suggesting the contents. However, it soon became an unwritten rule to publish new titles at the beginning of the New Year and to incorporate the appropriate sign based on the Japanese sexagenary cycle. One simple reason was the popularity of the cheap colourful books as a New Year gift to children and servants. With the yearly change in design, old and new publications could be easily recognised. As old stock was sold at a discount, this had both advantages and disadvantages. Sometimes the year's sign was alluded to in an artistic way. For example, the mouse figures in a story about the god Daikoku, so the Year of the Rat could be symbolised by a straw bag associated with this god. A jargon word for 'meat' was 'peony', so this flower could represent the Year of the Bull. Similar to Western tales of a man in the moon, there is a Japanese story of a rabbit pounding rice cakes on the moon, so the Year of the Rabbit could be indicated by a pestle and mortar. This system, especially evident from the mid-eighteenth century, assists in dating works. Also, for the sake of unity of design, and so that the customer could identify the publisher at a glance, it became common for a basic cover to be designed for all the titles put out by a particular publisher in a particular year. Appropriate title, illustration and other details were added to the basic design for each individual title. Thus, a re-edition of a title would necessitate a completely new cover appropriate to the New Year. Below are three samples of covers used by various publishers in 1792, the Year of the Rat.

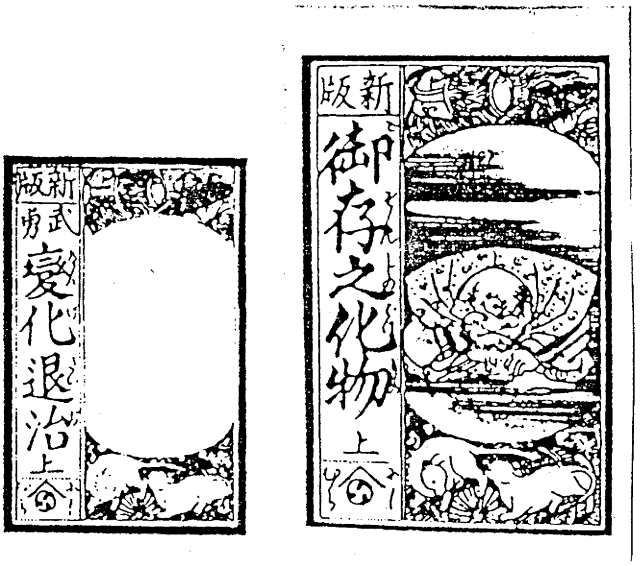


Fig. 6

Nishimura placed the title illustration in a circle, with a straw bag and two mice featured below. The publisher's trade mark was included on all the covers in the lower left-hand corner.

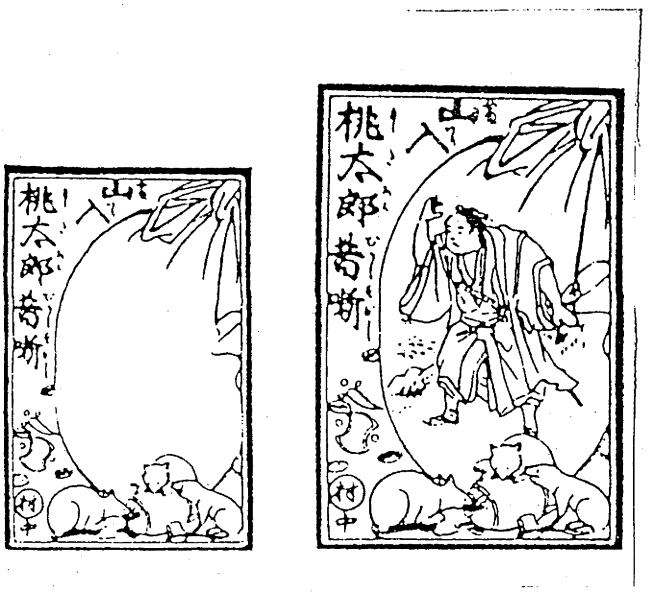


Fig. 7.

Murata gave more prominence to the motif of the god Daikoku's bag of rice, using it as a novel frame for the various title pictures. Below, three mice play around a small hammer also associated with the god.

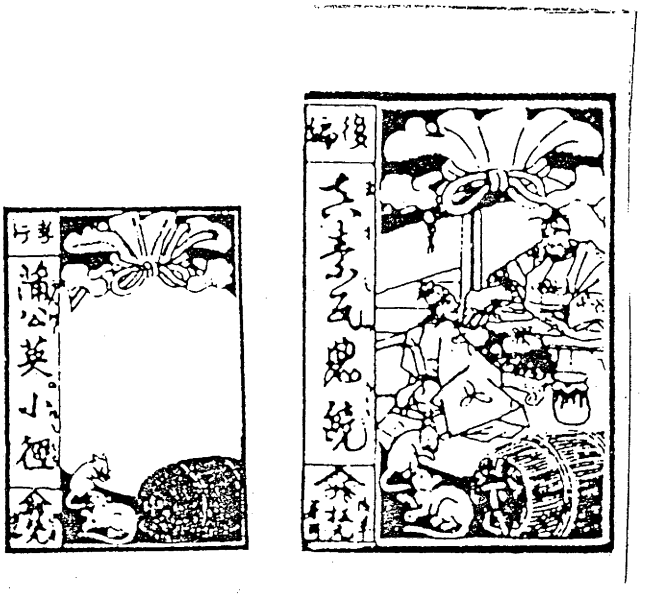


Fig. 8

Chibuya used a fat purse as a picture frame, with two mice and a bag of rice below.[21]

The year of publication or re-issue is not always so easily identifiable. Some book publishers, like Tsutaya, who was reknowned for actors' pictures by Tōshūsai Sharaku, moved away from standard symbols and developed a freer artistic expression for the cover page. While aesthetically pleasing, this makes it difficult to date certain works. Occasionally, however, advance publicity given at the end of a kibyōshi provides useful information about other works, as in the last page of Kinkin sensei eiga no yume, published by Urokogataya (see Fig. 9).

Fig. 9

In the early years, authors' names were rarely recorded as they were considered far less important than the illustrators. A well-known gesaku writer Ōta Nampo observed in his diary that picture books published by Urokogataya were written by someone known as Ojii (Grandpa), which hardly suggests a high professional status. However, in a 1744 publication the names of both the artist and the author were printed, which indicates a gradual move towards artistic recognition of writers.[22]

Another reason for our incomplete knowledge of the identities of authors and illustrators, even in the more sophisticated kibyōshi, is the widespread use of pseudonyms. Gesaku writers often used different names at different times of their lives, or for different genres. Samurai were loathe to risk public opprobrium by signing low-class literature, especially as political surveillance became stronger at the end of the eighteenth century. Also, many of the names were of comic intent.

The kusazōshi's development is usually defined as a progression through akabon (red books), kurobon (black books), aobon (blue books), kibyōshi (yellow covers) and gōkan (several volumes bound together). A general change of content accompanied this change of format, but the distinction is not always easy to recognise. Akabon were largely based on folk tales or traditional children's stories such as Momotarō, Kachikachi yama (Kachikachi Mountain), Nezumi no yomeiri (The Mouse Bride), Saru-kani kassen (The Fight of the Monkey and the Crab) and Shitakiri suzume (Cut-tongue Sparrow). From 1748, the price of red dye increased, and around the same time kurobon were more in evidence. Subjects now included legends, Kabuki

themes and war stories.

The participation of the Torii school of Kabuki illustrators in the field of kusazōshi from 1744 to 1751 may well have influenced the books' contents, which were now directed at an older reader, with an increase in comic or current expressions. Aobon appeared around the same time as kurobon. They were similar but contained less stories of war and more tales of love and the gay quarter. Although aobon dominated kusazōshi literature until the mid 1770s, they remained essentially a picture book with explanatory prose, ostensibly written for a reading public made up of women and children. However, as the content became more relevant to contemporary life, the literary possibilities of the kusazōshi began to be explored.

The landmark in this development was the publication of Kinkin sensei eiga no yume in 1775. The use of the term kibyōshi for this and subsequent kusazōshi is sometimes explained as a gradual move away from stern-looking black covers, and the tendency of blue covers to fade to a yellowish shade. The most outstanding kibyōshi writer, Santō Kyōden (1761-1816) always retained the word aobon, and some modern critics also prefer to do this, with a division into an earlier and a later period. The distinction is largely one of historical convenience, in the same way that prose written before Ihara Saikaku is known as kanazōshi and later prose is called ukiyozōshi. That is, after 1775, there was a general qualitative change in the content and style of the kusazōshi. This change was clearly recognised by Ōta Nampo, who observed that 'with the emergence of the tsūjin Kinkin sensei, the kusazōshi

has completely changed and has become a truly adult form of humour'.[23]

The successful fusion of kusazōshi format and gesaku wit led to a thirty-year burst of kibyōshi publication. New titles were eagerly awaited, read and discussed. Alert readers were quick to pick up allusions and some of the liveliest minds of the time found the genre an excellent vehicle for satire. The fact that it was an extremely local form of humour heightened appreciation. Indeed, the emergence and popularity of kibyōshi is inextricably bound to a growing sense of Edo's cultural identity in the eighteenth century. As in other gesaku genres, the vigour of kibyōshi is in the tension between old and new, traditional Kamigata values and Edo verve, the political establishment and the iconoclastic spirit of the Edokko. Assessments of the day reflect intellectual excitement far in excess of the naive curiosity one might expect from an illustrated comic book, and to understand this excitement, it is necessary to read kibyōshi with a constant awareness of the unique social context in which they were produced and enjoyed.

Notes on Chapter One

1. Konta Yōzō, Edo no honyasan, p.52.
2. Nakano Mitsutoshi, Gesaku kenkyū, p.6.
3. Konta Yōzō, Edo no honyasan, p.72-74.
4. Hasegawa Junsaburō et al. (ed.), Tokugawa bungei ruiju: hyōbanki, vol. 182, p.34.
5. Mizuno Minoru et al. (ed.), Kibyōshi sharebon-shū, p.270. All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.
6. Ibid., p.272.
7. Ibid., p.287.
8. Ibid., pp.293-294.
9. This information on sharebon of the okabasho is based on Mizuno Minoru, Kibyōshi sharebon no sekai, pp.31-47.
10. This definition of tsū is based on Nakamura Yukihiko, Kinsei shosetsu-shi no kenkyū, pp.230-245.
11. Kubota Jun et al. (ed.), Gaisetsu nihon bungaku-shi, p.282.
12. Suwa Haruo, Shuppan shiji - Edo no hon, pp.99-100.
13. Nakano Mitsutoshi, Gesaku kenkyū, pp.296-318.
14. Ibid., p.314.
15. This analysis of the mitate is based on annotations in Koike Masatane (ed.), Edo no gesaku ehon, vol. 1, pp.35-60.
16. Translation by Legge, James, The Chinese Classics, vol. 1, p.355.
17. Hamada Giichirō et al. (ed.), Kibyōshi senryū kyōka, p.180.
18. Translation by Legge, James, The Chinese Classics, vol.1, p.356.

19. Hamada Giichirō et al. (ed.), Kibyōshi senryū kyōka, p.181.

20. This survey of possible etymologies of the word kusazōshi is based on Fujioka Sakutarō, Kindai shōsetsu-shi, pp.276-7,

21. More examples of these delightful cover designs can be seen in Hamada Giichirō et al. (ed.), Kibyōshi senryū kyōka, pp.564-608.

22. This publishing detail is recorded in Ōta Nampo's diary Hannichi kanwa which is available in the third volume of his collected works Shokusanjin zenshū, p.258.

23. Ōta Nampo, Kikujūsō, in Hasegawa Junsaburō et al. (ed.), Tokugawa bungei ruiju: hyōbanki, vol.182, p.41.

CHAPTER TWO : GESAKU HYŌBANKI

The Japanese critical assessments known as hyōbanki must qualify as one of the longest-running regularly published genres in the literary history of the world. For over two hundred years, until the Meiji Restoration, they were on sale every New Year and at the beginning of spring in the three main cities, Kyoto, Osaka and Edo. The earliest ones put out in the 1620s were practical guidebooks consulted by people who frequented the pleasure quarters. Gradually these yūjo hyōbanki or critical assessments of courtesans developed from a prosaic listing of names, places, prices and service to a semi-literary genre. As the theatre world was closely associated with the pleasure quarters, the same format was applied during the 1660s to discussions of Kabuki actors. The famous book store Hachimonjiya also participated during the Genroku period. In fact, a series begun by Ejima Kiseki, Yakusha kuchi jamisen (The Actors Vocal Samisen), was published twice a year from 1699 to 1886, which attests to the outstanding popularity of the genre. Whereas yūjo hyōbanki generally contained three ranks (jō, chū and ge), the yakusha hyōbanki provided finer discrimination by creating divisions within each rank. Thus the top jō rank was graded into jō-no-jō, chū-no-jō, and ge-no-jō. Jō-jō-kichi and goku-jō-jō-kichi provided two extra superlatives, and even more nuances could be achieved by omitting certain strokes of characters, or using an outline only instead of a solid line type. These ratings were used within a system of classification based on role types of Kabuki actors. The general order and meaning of the categories

was:

- tachiyaku - hero
- oyajigata - old man
- katakiyaku - villain
- jitsu-aku - super-villain
- dōkegata - comic character
- onnagata - woman role, divided into three sections:
  - waka-onnagata - young woman
  - keisei - courtesan
  - kashagata - older woman
- wakashugata - young man

In most yakusha hyōbanki a short introduction was followed by a concise table of contents. Each role type heading contained a list of ratings from best to worst. Each actor referred to would be entered under one of the ratings and there would usually be a clever pun incorporating some salient feature of the actor or a reference to a well-known Kabuki character with whom he was somehow associated. The next section would be a more comprehensive description in the form of a collective evaluation by several connoisseurs on the performances of the actors during the previous year, and finally there would be an epilogue. The same format was applied to a myriad of apparently unrelated fields such as restaurants, cake shops or sumō wrestling. In 1780, Utei Emba (1743-1822) turned the focus of attention around from the object to the subject and published the satirical Kyakusha hyōbanki (Critical Assessment of Brothel Patrons). In 1811 this title and general method were also used in a humorous and intriguing work by Shikitei Samba (1776-1822), Kyakusha hyōbanki (Critical Assessment of Theatre Patrons), which is a mine

of information about the audiences who attended Kabuki in the early nineteenth century.[1]

The range of hyōbanki fortunately included a few assessments of dangibon, sharebon and kibyōshi. There are no similar critiques of ninjōbon or other novel forms. It would seem that the hyōbanki format was only applied to witty amusing works. Also, whereas modern literary criticism tends to aim at autonomy and is generically different from the works evaluated, the eighteenth-century hyōbanki was really a sub-genre of gesaku. Borrowed phrases, puns and references to contemporary figures and events create a complicated riddle. This can sometimes be solved by painstaking research of the work being assessed, but on many occasions the vital clue lies outside the field of literature, and may only come to light in a dictionary of Edo place names, or in an event in the author's private life recorded in a contemporary diary.

The earliest literary hyōbanki was Sengoku dōshi (The Winnow), written by Jūmonjiya Tashō in 1754.[2] It deals with dangibon, which were precursors of sharebon. The first section of the black-covered book contains a prologue and a list of the thirteen works to be discussed. There is however, no rank ordering. In the next section, the teishu (host) introduces each of the works and there is a very lively natural exchange of comments within a small circle of friends which includes such standard figures as the hiiki(patron) and waruguchi (critic). The following exerpt is the evaluation of Mizukakeron, a three-volume book

listed fourth in Sengoku dōshi but clearly considered the best new kanahon publication for 1754.

> Number Four. Mizukakeron or The Futile Argument. Four Volumes.
> Host: Well now, this is the big hit of the year. As it says on the cover, it's been a great success. The author Matsu Kakushi must be feeling very pleased with himself. There's never been such a good year for new books and to be chosen best of the lot is a real achievement.
>
> Critic: Well, if it's so great, why have you only given it fourth place?
>
> Host: As I said at the beginning, all the kyōkunbon are put towards the end. It's not that I've got anything against precepts but since they're a bit heavy-going, I've put the other books nearer the front. Even so, I'm sure anyone would say this book is the best of all. Here we've put it in fourth place, but the public will give it top billing.
>
> Critic: Of course, judged from certain aspects it's the best. The style is very good, certainly not as flat as stories like Tsuji dangi or Shinwa, but I'd say the Buddha's discussion is a bit over-long. And don't you think that part about the lotus on the Lake of Forbearance is rather off?
> The one about Zenkōji Temple also goes a bit too far. The argument between people from Edo and Kyoto was treated better in Fubenzetsu and the poet's discussion was too severe. I'd say you could put up a futile argument in reply.
>
> Host: Well, if there weren't a few weak points we'd be hard put to discuss merits and demerits. Anyway on the whole it's well done. If only the writer and publisher thought it was good, and the public disagreed, all the writer's effort would be wasted. The publisher has gone to the trouble of investing his money and any praise of the author will be to his gain. Whichever way you look at it, it's a futile argument. A success, I tell you!
>
> Heckler: I'd like to add that the discussion of the pleasure quarters is very frank. Oka...
>
> Host: Shh! Please keep quiet. Don't talk about that or you'll have the bookshop guild on to us. Anyway, we all agree it deserves the top rank. It really is a good work. He's an outstanding author and we judge this book best for the year.
>
> Everyone: Hear, hear![3]

It is interesting to note the comment against moralistic books. As outlined earlier, dangibon developed from kyōkunbon, which had aimed at presenting precepts in a palatable fashion, but were essentially didactic in tone and intention.

According to Sengoku dōshi, this moral tone has already become out-dated by 1754, although there is also hesitation in referring to the pleasure quarters by name. Several times in Sengoku dōshi there is an oblique reference to the shogun Yoshimune's censorship law of 1722, which forbade the publication of licentious literature detrimental to public morals. Towards the end of the Mizukakeron discussion, one character hints at the frank description of the pleasure quarters, but his next word okabasho (unlicensed brothel area) is cut short to oka... by a hasty interjection of the host, who is afraid of censorship. At this time, investigations were sometimes carried out by a bookshop guild, which operated a system of voluntary restraint by checking an any member who overstepped the bounds. However, reference to such constraints may have been merely for form's sake, as Yoshimune had died in 1751. In fact, the appearance of Sengoku dōshi in 1754 co-incided with the peak of dangibon publications in Edo, an unprecedented thirteen new titles. This was a time when many works came to light after having been restrained or circulated discreetly in manuscript form. The turning point may have been the publication in 1752 of Tōsei heta dangi, a book which commented on modern fashion in a lively and amusing manner. This book had actually been prohibited in 1751 for a short while, passed later in the same year, and then published in the New Year of 1752.[4]

The first Tōsei heta dangi had been very well received, but the ensuing surfeit of sermonising imitations obviously led to a reaction on the part of the readers. Although a few more titles with the words kyōkun or dangibon were published, there was a definite move towards more spirited books like Hanamachi

dangibon, evaluated in Sengoku dōshi as 'informed, well-written and very up-to-date'. Other comments are just as revealing of the literary tastes of the day. For example:

> In general, we're giving top place to funny, interesting, unusual books which get away from the old moralising style, because in the last two years there have been too many such imitations of Tōsei heta dangibon and people are sick of them.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Since last year there's been a surfeit of moralising works and we hope that from next year there'll be more such easy reading books as this one.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Since last year they've been brought out again and again - so many imitations of Tōsei heta dangibon! Please, let's see something a bit lighter next year.[5]

Sengoku dōshi gives valuable incidental information about the private lives of various authors. There are also useful references to conditions in the publishing world, apart from the threat of censorship already mentioned. We learn that 'many books are published from cast-away writings, without any consultation with the author, so naturally there are many errors. Whether these are the publisher's typing errors or the author's mistakes is hard to tell'. Advertising methods are suggested in the remark 'since this book has already appeared on bookshop bill boards no doubt you are familiar with it'.[6]

Nearly thirty years were to pass before the publication of the three critiques which deal directly with the kibyōshi. Kikujūsō was published in 1781, Okame hachimoku (The Onlooker) in 1782 and Edo miyage (Edo Souvenir) in 1784. The first two critiques were by Ōta Nampo (1749-1823), a

low-level retainer of the shogun who wrote widely under such names as Shokusanjin, Yomo no Akara and Nebore Sensei (Mr Sleepyhead). He had a thorough knowledge of Chinese and is best known for his kyōka poetry. He also wrote many excellent sharebon under the name Yamanote no Bakahito (Uptown Idiot). Nampo's diaries contain many references to his social contacts with a wide range of eminent personalities in the Edo literary world.[7] No doubt conversation turned to the latest publications and since they were acquainted with many of the publishers, authors and artists involved, the exchange of opinions would probably have been extremely spirited. Could Nampo's hyōbanki on kibyōshi have arisen from some such social gathering ? Unfortunately there is no specific reference regarding this, but certainly in the kyōka genre it was not unusual to publish a book based on a convivial gathering. For example, on March 24, 1783, Nampo's mother celebrated her sixtieth birthday at the restaurant Ōguraya. Over one hundred of the kyōka poets of the day attended, and in the New Year of 1784, a book was published containing the kyōka and kyōbun which arose from this. The list of contributors in Manzai kyōka-shū included such kibyōshi authors as Harumachi, Kisanji, Manzōtei, Tōrai Sanna and Migaru no Orisuke (a pseudonym used by Santō Kyōden for kyōka). There were also famous actors like Danjūrō, Kikunojō, Sōjirō, Monnosuke, Danzō, Hanjirō, Yaoyazō and Matsumoto Daikichi.[8] Again, there is a note by Nampo at the end of an assessment of kyōka published by Tsutaya in 1785 to the effect that 'on August 7, 1785 there was a gathering at Tsuta Tōmaru's place where Akera Kankō, Karagoromo Kisshū and Yomo no Akara discussed and evaluated these kyōka

and in the five days from the 8th to the 12th they wrote down their opinions'.[9] If five days were enough to complete such a group assessment, it is conceivable that the hyōbanki on kibyōshi were also written in a short time to benefit from their topicality, and were the result of collaboration by a circle of interested friends. Kikujūsō is sometimes said to have been published in 1782, as this is the date recorded in Shōsetsu nenpyō. However, there is mention of 'the Year of the Bull' (1781) and the end of the first volume of the original text gives the completion date as Anei 10, which is 1781. Since the aim of the book was to take newly published kibyōshi, rank them in the manner of the old yakusha hyōbanki and make a few witty remarks about them while they were still a subject of enthusiastic interest, it would have been pointless to allow a year to elapse before publication. By 1782 the next lot of kibyōshi would have come on the market, and the last season's comments would have aroused little curiosity. Possibly Shōsetsu nenpyō recorded the New Year kibyōshi as 1781 and forwarded the slightly later assessment to the next year. At any rate, it is safe to assume that Kikujūsō was published in 1781 at the New Year, and the epilogue together with certain internal evidence allows us to attribute it with confidence to Ōta Nampo.

As a general comment, one could say that the three-volume Kikujūsō is less discriminating than Sengoku dōshi. There is little indication of the criteria for ranking, as all works are described in a complimentary manner. The word tōsei (modern) is synonymous with praise, and any suggestion of being behind the times can be taken as criticism.

Kikujūsō contains a complicated network of illustrations, puns and verbal games which reflects the idiosyncracies of gesaku style and also suggests how kibyōshi were appreciated by contemporary readers. This tone is set in the opening address, a witty enumeration of eight publishing houses, woven into a New Year greeting.[10]

The greeting is followed by a list where forty-seven of the year's sixty new kibyōshi are ranked as in the yakusha hyōbanki. There are seven 'roles' - tachiyaku, jitsu-aku, katakiyaku, dōkegata, waka-onnagata, wakashugata and koyaku. A note explains that the books will be arranged in order with references to the actors of the san shibai or three official theatres, namely Nakamura-za, Morita-za and Ichimura-za, although the ranking of the books does not reflect the grade of the actors. There is a very terse pun for each work alluding to the content of the story and linking it to the name of an actor. Nampo's achievement in maintaining these conundrums throughout the entire list is quite remarkable. After the seven 'roles' there is a tayumoto no bu (producers' section) listing eight publishing houses, a sakusha no bu (authors' section) of eight names and an eshi no bu (artists' section) of six names. This section is followed by a comic history of the kibyōshi in the form of a dream, containing many complicated allusions and far-fetched etymologies which are more fully explained in the annotated translation in the appendix.

The second and third volumes discuss the works in more detail, with a lively exchange of opinions between the tōtori (manager), waruguchi (critic), hiiki (patron) and kenkōsha (connoisseur). Good points are praised, but weaknesses in story, style or printing are also indicated. In the tōtori no bu the Manager defends his special mention of a rather old-fashioned five-volume version of the Momotarō story, claiming that most new kibyōshi neglect precepts for children and are inundated with erotic innuendoes, comments on homosexuals, information about courtesans and overly clever jokes. He also complains that the theatre shows similar signs of degeneration and that striving after tsū has meant the old ways have been neglected, but he ends on an auspicious note by describing some delightful New Year traditions.[11] These comments show how the books originally intended for a naive reading audience had been influenced by the urbane wit of the sharebon and the frequent references to the theatrical world are also clearly indicative of increasing sophistication among the readers.

The second kibyōshi hyōbanki was Okame hachimoku, published a year after Kikujūsō, in 1782. Again, Shōsetsu nenpyō dates it as 1783, but references within the assessments to 'this year' and 'the Year of the Tiger' indicate that it was put out in the spring of 1782. The format is similar to Kikujūsō, but there is only one volume, amounting to half the length of the

earlier hyōbanki. Although the work is not signed, Nampo's seal at the end of the epilogue, the general style and specific autobiographical details all suggest he was the author, probably with the collaboration of close friends. Of the sixty-four kibyōshi published in 1782, Okame hachimoku assesses forty-six. The opening greeting is full of lively images of the bustle and activity of the publishing world at New Year.

> The illustrators look towards the god of the New Year. Writers try out their first words and start their New Year copy on an auspicious note. Publishers throw open their doors for sales. The New Year books have their labels pasted on, and are wearing their fresh new covers. Like the restless horses in the New Year races, we're raring to go and all set to board a New Year pleasure boat. There's archery in the New Year, and we only aim to please. So let's begin![12]

Next, there is a fanciful story of a king from another land (presumably China) who has heard such tales of Japan's pre-eminence in the field of eroticism that he crosses over to Nagasaki (a city with which Nampo was very familiar) and meets an up-to-date dandy who promises to initiate him into the secrets of being a man of the world through the diligent perusal of kibyōshi, which are claimed to be far more useful than any of the ancient Chinese classics.

> Preface
>
> As they say in the opening address of New Year Kabuki plays, 'the world is a vast place'. Certainly it's a whole lot bigger than any public baths you've even seen! So many new places have been discovered that you can now hardly manage to fit the world on the back of the catfish, which is held down firmly by a great stone. There are odd costumes in Korea, sesame crackers in Holland, round purses in India and young men nowadays wear the most extraordinary hair styles. In the land of the giants they put on cutting boards as clogs. In the land of the pygmies they use tooth picks as walking canes. Just think of the inconveniences in the land of long-armed

and long-legged people! Then there's Top-knot Island, a great country where the men's hair styles soar up ten or twenty feet like fishing rods. When they go for a stroll, an attendant walks along behind propping the top-knots up so they won't be blown over by the wind, just as you can see in the Picture Book of Oddities.

Now the king of this land Kōiken put his head and top-knot to one side and reflected: 'They say there's a Jack for every Jill, but just look at me. I was born king of this country and have untold wealth, but we don't seem to have anything to do with other countries and there are no sensual delights here. Now, I've heard that Japan is the most divine place and as for their skill in matters of love, well, even foreigners lose themselves in pleasure if they go to the Maruyama quarters in Nagasaki. Talk about cock and bull stories! It seems there was a sumō wrestler who fell madly in love with a girl called Meisan from the Tōkoku brothel. The Tomimoto style of song is really popular in Japan at the moment and the three stories of young lovers who suicided, that is Ochiyo and Hanbei, Onatsu and Seijūro and Ohan and Chōemon are sung once each in turn every three days. Well, this guy wanted an extra day to be added to make a four-day cycle. As you can imagine, the teachers of the Sanai school weren't at all happy about this plan. I'm just raring to go over to Japan and try my luck at love'.

So saying, he left from the Chinese harbour of Yusankai, and from Meishū set sail for Mikasa Mountain in a little craft like the pleasure-quarter ferry boats. While at sea, a terrible storm blew up and they were cast ashore in the north of Japan at the Yoshiwara Island of Women. The people here attacked them with poles, and then a strong wind blew and rain pounded down, so all they could do was try to reach another port of safety. An old priest came forth from the rice fields. He was called Sumiyoshi. When they poked fun at him for his priestly clothes, they found out that this was where the Chinese god Hakurakuten had been beaten, so they soon changed their tune and put in elsewhere.

They were now in Nagasaki, reknowned for shōbutai singing and a very flourishing place indeed. When they finally got off their boat and called out to ask if they were any interpreters around, their funny accents made it sound as if they were asking if there were any dandies around. Well, one slick chap saw the chance he'd been waiting for. He was wearing an up-to-date Honda hair style and the latest black outfit, and rubbed his hands together with glee at the prospect of doing over such an easy mark. 'What can I do for you?' he asked.

> Kōiken told his story right from the beginning and said he'd been interested in affairs of the heart from an early age and wanted to learn about and practise all the arts of love. However, although he'd earnestly studied tens of thousands of Chinese classics and the twenty-one stories of the thirteen sutras and all the Buddhist scriptures they hadn't helped him at all in the way of love. Although he'd tried so hard, he was still unversed in the relations of the sexes. So, he wanted to find out if there was some special secret in mastering the knack and winning the love of the ladies. The dandy replied: 'Well, now. These days it's absolutely forbidden to read that sort of heavy-going stuff. Every time you read it you drift farther away from being a dandy and closer to being a boor. The women will give you the cold shoulder and think you're downright lousy. You'll lose all your money and never make a go of it. Nowadays, they use such classics as those by the Chou dynasty writers Shichu or Daitei to make tobacco pouches in modern Shinna design. The Four Books and Great Works of Confucius are used to wrap up wild mugwort. As the great Kōbo foresaw long ago, Japan has turned to kana writing. This writing is not simply a matter of the round hiragana symbol の suggested by a wound rope or the katakana sign ヨ left by a bird's foot print. No, it's not so limited as that. Enough of this talk! I'll prove it to you by unfolding all the secret mysteries of becoming a dandy. Love, wooing and so on - it's all written down here in these kibyōshi. All together there are about one hundred and twenty-eight volumes. Even the gods are clamouring to read them!'[13]

The inspiration for this amusing eulogy of the kibyōshi may have derived partly from Wakan sansai zue, an illustrated encyclopaedia of all sorts of matters relating to China and Japan in both the past and the present. It was published in 1712, and contained stories of such odd lands as are mentioned. There is also reference to the old superstition of the world being supported on the back of a catfish, which is weighed down with a heavy stone to prevent earthquakes. This stone, the kaname ishi is supposed to be in the woods east of Kashima shrine in Ibaragi prefecture. Local colour is provided by reference to peddlars in Korean costume who sold their wares in the streets of Edo and to other exotic products actually available in the capital. Real place names include Maruyama

pleasure quarter (Nagasaki), Mikasa Mountain (Nara) and the shrine to Sumiyoshi (Osaka). In a typical fusion of old and new for comic effect, the ancient term for Japan, Toyoashiwara, is followed by a fictional place name in the north, Toyoyoshiwara. Ashi (bad) thus becomes yoshi (good) to give the name of the northern pleasure district, Yoshiwara. The boat puts in at Nyogogashima, which is none other than the fabled Island of Women celebrated by Ihara Saikaku in Ichidai otoko. Here, they are rained upon, but the term furitsukerare also describes a man being given the cold shoulder by a woman. Many other references to respected classics, well-known schools of singing and current fashions combine to create a complicated web of verbal humour, culminating in the image of the one hundred and twenty-eight new kibyōshi of 1782 being seen as essential reading for the modern day sophisticate.

This story is followed by a list of forty-six titles, but they are not accompanied by the witticisms so painstakingly devised for Kikujūsō. Under koyaku no bu there are three single volumes in hard-sleeve format, Iroha tanka, Fuku warai and Tama tebako, all published by Murata. These are not discussed in the later section. In accordance with gesaku concepts of classification, they would have been considered a different category to kibyōshi, even if the content was similar. Another work, Niwaka no tanzō, is recorded in the jitsu-aku as a three-volume book, with no special comment. This may be an error, as Shōsetsu nenpyō gives it as a hard-sleeve edition, presumably a single volume. The final roles list eight publishers, fifteen authors and six artists.

Most of the works are then discussed as in Kikujūsō.

As an example of the style of Okame hachimoku, below is the assessment of the best work in the tachiyaku role, Kagekiyo hyakunin isshu, written by Hōseidō Kisanji.

> Very outstanding
> That is Ogura Mountain. This is Kamakura Mountain
> Kagekiyo by the hundred
> Two volumes
>
> All: Well, who tops the list?
>
> Manager: This year we have yet another of Kisanji's great works. It's the story of the executioner Sakae Hyōshichi, whose real name is Kagekiyo Akushichibyōe. The introduction is very good, and Kitao has drawn Kagekiyo well, in the Torii style. One hundred dancing girls and one hundred dandies in black outfits are brought in for investigation.
>
> Connoisseur: The bit about Dairoku from Ebisu House is terrific.
>
> Patron: Are there any particularly good episodes?
>
> Manager: Well, they arrest a beggar called Kameichi who looks just like Kagekiyo, but they find he's carrying a staff instead of a sword. That's a real laugh! Then while they're testing to see who can rip off his neckpiece Mionoya placidly puffs away on his pipe. When the executioner swings his sword around, his 'victim' serenely composes himself for death. There's just no end to all the nonsense! Finally they write the names Kiyomori and Shigemori on trampling boards and Akushichibyōe Kagekiyo reveals that he had falsely assumed the name Sakae Hyōshichi and that the clue to his identity lies in reversing the characters. It's like the Chinese legend of Yojō's revenge, but here it has a Japanese setting, which is more our cup of tea. The hero rips out both his eyes to announce the glorious reign - that is rather unsightly. Nowadays there are quite a few prominent men who fail to see how lucky they are. But we opine that branches and leaves are flourishing on the vine for Tsutajū so let's have a good look at his new publication.
>
> Patron: It's good enough to make into a hard-sleeve edition. Aren't we lucky to have it put out as an aobon.[14]

Close analysis of this commentary reveals how dependent the reader is on familiarity with the original text and other extraneous details. Kisanji used the old story of Yoritomo's search for the potential assassin Akushichibyōe Kagekiyo as a background for a farcical look at high fashion

in contemporary Edo. His delight in verbal humour is evident from the title of his work. As kagekiyo was slang for 'dandy', a hundred fashionable suspects are rounded up from the pleasure quarter of Kamakura, which in kibyōshi invariably refers to Yoshiwara. By association of ideas, the title also refers to the old poetry card game hyakunin isshu. The Ogura Mountain mentioned in the super-title is actually in Kyoto, but the sound is similar to Kamakura and also to Ōkura, a valley in Kamakura mentioned later in the story as the home of Yamato Jirōta, who is assigned to verify whether the hundred detainees are true dandies. Readers would have immediately read this name in reverse as Tarōji, one of the eighteen famous Edo sophisticates celebrated as jūhachi daitsū. Tarōji lived in the Kuramae area around Asakusa, reknowned as the home of the Yamato school of actors.

Kisanji's touch is evident in the alias Sakae Hyōshichi. Sakasa means 'in reverse', and the following syllables do in fact read backwards as Shichibyōe. After admiring the introduction, Manager quotes directly from the text: Kitao ga yokarō. Kore wa Toriimono da. While the literal meaning is that Kitao has done a fine job of illustrating in the Torii style, Kisanji unmistakably intended a pun on tōrimono, which is a synonym for tsūjin, or sophisticate. Also, although the line refers to a sketch of Kagekiyo drawn by one of the retainers to assist their search, it is useful internal evidence to suggest the possible identity of the illustrator of the whole kibyōshi. No name is added at the end, but it may well have been Kitao Shigemasa.

Ebisu was one of the seven Lucky Gods, but here the

suffix ya suggests a brothel in the pleasure quarter. Sōroku was another of the eighteen famous sophisticates of Edo, and was master of a Yoshiwara house called Daikokuya. Daikoku is a very well-known Lucky God, usually depicted carrying a big sack on his left shoulder and a small mallet (kozuchi) in his right hand, while standing on a wheat bag (tawara). Thus Sōroku used the pen-name Tawara Kozuchi when writing kyōka poetry. These elements of Lucky God, Sōroku and Daikoku are all contained in the fictitious name Ebisuya Dairoku. In the story, Ebisuya Dairoku suggests that all dancing girls without husbands should be rounded up, since the mistress of Kagekiyo, Akoya, was reported to have become a dancing girl in Kamakura. This is an oblique reference to the occasional official arrest of prostitutes working without a permit, and their sentence of compulsory service in a licensed Yoshiwara brothel for three years without pay. The fleeting comment by Connoisseur to the excellence of the bit about Dairoku from Ebisu House would thus have triggered off an extraordinary network of associations in the mind of the reader, and it is thus quite impossible to appreciate the full significance of the assessments without careful analysis of the original text and the social and historical details with which it assumes the reader is familiar.

Numerous other comments also depend on recognition of scenes or phrases from the kibyōshi under discussion. Kagekiyo was said to have disguised himself as a beggar, using his sword as a staff. In Kisanji's story, this is amusingly turned inside-out when a beggar is arrested as he does imitations of famous characters, using a staff as a prop for the sword. In a legend of the Yashima

battle, Kagekiyo was said to have grasped hold of Mionoya's helmet neckpiece and pulled until it broke, which proved both the strength of his arms and of Mionoya's neck. In the illustration, the Mionoya character casually draws on his pipe while all the dandies join forces to tug on his neck-piece, but fail the test miserably. Also, whereas the real Kagekiyo would invoke the Goddess of Mercy to shatter the sword if threatened with execution, the Edoites meekly accept their fate. This occurs at Yuigahama, a beach in Kamakura associated with famous lives being spared through divine intervention. In past Japanese history, people suspected of secretly practising Christianity were ordered to walk on holy images. In Kisanji's story it is assumed that a true ally of Yoritomo would feel no compunction in walking over the written names of Kiyomori, Shigemori and Munemori. Faced with such sacrilege, Akushichibyōe reveals his true identity.

The final page in Kagekiyo hyakunin isshu shows him in a dramatic warrior's pose. The text reads: Shin no daisu to yara, yojō to yara no koji nari. Koji means an event of past history, but also sounds like kojitsuke (sophistry). Yojō was a legendary Chinese (shin) character who underwent great suffering in order to avenge his lord's death. The word yojōhan describes the standard four and a half tatami mat size of tea rooms, which permits a pun on shi no daisu, a black lacquered tray on four supports, used in the tea ceremony. This network of allusions is clearly recognised in the Manager's remark in Okame hachimoku: Shin no yojōhan to yara, daisu to yara no koji.

The gouging out of Kagekiyo's eyes (me) is accompanied

in the kibyōshi by a pun on good fortune (medetai). As the young pine (wakamatsu) is often used as a symbol of good luck, and the character tsuta in the publisher's name Tsutaya means 'vine', the Manager ties the final imagery together with an original comment on flourishing branches and leaves, thus using the kibyōshi as a point of departure for a display of his own verbal dexterity.

These remarks on Kagekiyo hyakunin isshu in the Okame hachimoku assessment give some indication of the unique nature of the hyōbanki style of literary criticism. There is a very lively, natural exchange of opinions between the discussants and these is no attempt to achieve an objective distance from the work or to situate it in a wider world of ideas. Jokes from the original text are fully savoured, and in some cases extended even further by the discussants, as in the puns on pine, branches and leaves based on the name of the publisher, Tsutaya.

A final special mention is given to Santō Kyōden's Gozonji no shōbaimono, which is fully translated with notes in the appendix. Although Nampo disapproved of Kyōden's later inclination towards sharebon elements in kibyōshi, his diaries indicate they frequently exchanged social visits. Nampo's epitaph for Kyōden reads yoshiki oki sanjū yo nen (a good friend for over thirty years).[15] Thus, they had been on good terms from around 1780.

It is quite likely that such personal friendships and a common social milieu contributed to the harmless, even flattering nature of the hyōbanki. Certainly, Nampo's high praise of Kyōden's first work would have contributed to his popularity and success.

In the widest sense, Gozonji no shōbaimono is an amusing story about the triumph of the new young Edo culture over Kamigata. Each character represents a literary genre, but is at the same time depicted as a completely believable human being in meticulously realistic scenes of Edo, familiar to any reader of the day. Kyōden not only distils the very essence of each genre, but also includes specific references to contemporary writers and publications. For example, the following exchange takes place at one of Mr Blue Book's monthly literary meetings:

> Mr Blue Book: Last year's Mistaken Treasure Boat was a smash hit.
>
> Mr Pleasure Quarter Book: Zenkō certainly writes well. Kisanji's A Dream Worth Seeing was also popular, although the concept isn't so very original.
>
> Mr One-Leaf Picture: Crazy Chronicle was terribly funny too. Shiran's The Good Oil was interesting and there were some great works by Tsūshō and Kashō.[16]

Kyōden's description of an informal gathering of friends interested in discussing all the latest works suggests the probable method of composition of the kibyōshi hyōbanki. One has the image of a group of close friends writing for or with each other, moving freely between the roles of writer, illustrator, reader and reviewer. Such enjoyment of kibyōshi seems to have been well-suited to the gregarious social life of Edo. It was not a genre to be theorised about in solitude, but rather called for active participation. Discussion of

kibyōshi was essentially a continuation of the pleasure of reading together. Such theatrical phrases as Tōzai!tōzai! (Hear ye!Hear ye!) and heated exchanges between discussants give a sense of immediacy and enthusiasm. This light-hearted approach to literary criticism is also evoked in the epilogue to Okame hachimoku, where Nampo borrows the phrase tsurezure naru mama ni (with nothing better to do) to compare the famous Tsurezuregusa (Essays in Idleness) and the kibyōshi fascination with all manner of odd things. In his preface (c.1330) Yoshida Kenkō wrote: 'With nothing better to do, I spend each day before my inkstone jotting any odd thoughts that come to mind - and what strange fanciful thoughts they are!'[17] Nampo's epilogue suggests a similar harvest of random observations, but ends on a convivial note at odds with Kenkō's lofty seclusion.

> Epilogue
>
> The rankings you've read in the above range from Extremely outstanding and Excellent down to Very good, but you shouldn't necessarily take our word for it. You may not agree with our opinions. There must be good and bad, better and worse in all things... If you're too one-sided, you're bound to a singular failure. So sound the clappers, bang! bang! and welcome the Year of the Tiger, 1782. If you're lucky you may have a New Year dream where you see Mount Fuji and the bird called a kite, and imagine you're drinking New Year soup made from early mushrooms. If your story has such fanciful wit that it seems to make plum trees burst into blossom before season, then it doesn't matter the slightest if you walk out and hear people laughing and saying, 'You call this a story!'
>
> On evenings when the sky is clouded over, with nothing better to do, we sit in front of an inkstone, using up a row of little writing brushes and all the ink to write about an odd assortment of trivia - a strange bird's cry, a coin, a pack of lies, 'Hey, isn't that Seijūrō over there?' a flower shaped like an umbrella, varieties of iris vying in beauty, the wings of a stork...
> And so we write a book. In a hostel at Nara called the Miwa Tea-house, everyone sleeps together in the same room. What a shock to see so many bare bellies! There are just the three

of us, Shima, Kon and Nakanori, and here we must humbly sign off...[18]

This epilogue clearly evokes the facetious convivial nature of hyōbanki composition.

The third kibyōshi hyōbanki, Edo miyage, was published in 1784. After the greeting, it moves directly into evaluations of thirty-eight kibyōshi published in that year. There is no index, ranking or classication by role, and there is only incidental reference to the author, artist or publisher. Also, whereas Nampo creates an active interaction between several discussants, usually reconciled in a way flattering to the work involved, Edo miyage employs a much less dramatic form of criticism and kotae (reply). The author appears less anxious to avoid giving offence than Nampo, and his appraisals are considerably more critical. Sometimes it is difficult to discern whether the most apt opinion is supposed to be that of the critic or of the reply, but this is not odd given the gesaku love of sophistry and parodox.

The title Edo miyage means 'souvenir from Edo', and is a very clear statement of the close identification of the kibyōshi genre with the specific locale of Edo. This is further underscored by the content of the preface.

Preface to Edo Souvenir

Writers of Nara sing the praises of their flowering cherry trees, but here let us strive to show that Edo wit can not be beaten. In Osaka they lack confidence to pass judgement, but, well, anyone can make an error. Anyone can make a slip of the brush, and it is interesting to try to pick up a mistake before someone else can correct it. Here we have no ranking, which may annoy some readers and stick in the throats of others like a slab of rice cake. Now, following the fame of Nara and Osaka, we have a flower from the east titled Edo Souvenir. Of course, there is no need to tell you that it is full of urbane good humour.
New Year in the spring of the Year of the Dragon [1784]
The Fox Den
Lady-Killer[19]

This short passage contains numerous literary puns and allusions to the traditional rivalry between Osaka and Edo in the eighteenth century. Edo is described as the flower of the east, but the connotations are not of the cherry blossoms but rather of the pleasure quarters where so much gesaku literature originated. Thus, apart from the customary inclusion of New Year imagery, the preface to Edo miyage also makes a definite statement about local Edo pride and the budding sense of a unique literary identity.

Unfortunately, space does not permit close analysis of the assessments, so selection will be limited to a few comments indicating confusion and disagreement between the discussants, which is rather more marked than in Kikujūsō and Okame hachimoku. For example, from the concluding remarks in the first assessment of Uso ka makoto onaji kyōdai (Lies or Truth - It's All the Same) it is evident that the general tone is far less conciliatory than with Ōta Nampo.

> ○: At the end of the last volume there's a picture of the author kneeling on the verandah, but it looks like he feels sick and wants to throw up.
>
> △ Reply: That's just a sign of his humility, as if to say: 'Well, I've written this far but it's not much of a book and even I could vomit'.[20]

The fourth assessment of Yoru ga hiru hoshi no sekai (An Afternoon with the Evening Stars) reads:

> ○: At the beginning of the first volume, Lord Eboshi is ordered by the Moon God to send the rabbit as a messenger to give the people a money pestle so they will all become wealthy men.
>
> □ : Now that's a big error of judgement on the Moon's part. If he gave them such a useless thing the pestle would only cause a riot. This is a hopeless concept.
>
> ○: At the end of the final volume, the god's messenger comes and the text reads: 'The idea is no good since it would only cause trouble if we gave them the pestle'.
>
> □ : And the book ends there. The whole concept comes to nothing.
>
> △ Reply: I can understand your criticism, but let's get on with the next story. [21]

The sixteenth story is Mō mō mō kowai hanashi (Mo-o-o-o! A Scarey Story), which receives this short review.

> O: Well, I've heard this sort of story before. On top of that, since it's supposed to be a story about a horse, the title Mō mō mō kowai hanashi is quite unsuitable. Mo mo is the sound a cow makes.
>
> Δ Reply: You seem to know what a cow sounds like, but that's not the way I hear it.[22]

The discussants are unable to follow the story line of the twenty-fourth book, Tenkei wakumon (Guide to the Stars), but the reply insists that logic is not necessary in the kibyōshi, in fact, nonsense and deliberate anachronism are the very life-blood of the genre, 'not at all like a haphazard mixture of bean-paste and horse-radish'.[23] A similar attitude is shown in reply to criticism of the thirty-third story Zensei Daitsū-ki (Zenith of the Dandy): 'Would it be at all interesting if kusazōshi were written seriously?'[24] Moralising elements in the thirty-fifth story Yatsuhashi-chō nōryū (Yatsuhashi style) are defended, which is a reminder of the character of early kusazōshi written partly for the edification of a naive audience.

> Δ Reply: You may find it a bit harsh, but this is a story meant to encourage diligence in women and children, so you can't expect it to be too funny. Also, it's written clearly in the preface that there won't be any nonsense, and I think it's a reasonable book.[25]

The epilogue is of interest in that it indicates the growing prestige of writers as opposed to the previous dominance of artists, and gives an amusing and intimate account of how the kibyōshi were discussed in relaxed social gatherings before assessments were formally recorded as hyōbanki.

Epilogue

What did you receive as an Edo souvenir?
Why, an assessment of writers. Illustrators
have long been famous, but now the writers
are making a real effort not to be beaten.
Until now they've been unable to outshine
the Torii school, but undaunted they've
gathered at the publishers to review works
from all the eight provinces of Kantō.
'How was it written?' 'It was written
like this...'

And so they make all sorts of derogatory
comments among themselves. I was listening
alongside, and the △ mark shows my replies.
'At the evening bell, many a nose has been
put out of joint', but I'll just beat out
a tune on my tummy - Boom! Boom!
Owner of the adjacent den
Recorded at the base of a horse-chestnut tree,
home of a very smart raccoon dog.[26]
Publishers: Maekawa Shōbei

This passage represents the author as little more than an editor, recording the opinions of others and adding an appropriate reply. The final pun refers to poem number 116 in the Shinkokinshū collection, iriai no kane ni hana zo chirikeru (flowers fall down at the sound of the evening bell).[27] The word hana (flower) is written with the character for 'nose', followed by a different verb, giving a typical example of gesaku humour.

By 1784 Ōta Nampo had decided to try his skill at kibyōshi, and enters on the side of the assessed, but his story Atama ten ten ni kuchi ari (From the Mouths of the Gods), written under the pen-name Yomo Sannin, is described and then disparaged in a few sharp phrases in Edo miyage.

Apart from these three hyōbanki, there is also a rather unusual outline of the development of kusazōshi called Kusazōshi kojitsuke nendai-ki (Comic Chronicle of the kusazōshi) written by Shikitei Samba in 1802. Samba is most reknowned for his later works Ukiyoburo (The Up-to-date Bathhouse) and Ukiyodoko (The Up-to-date Barbershop). In 1794, at the age of nineteen, he wrote two kibyōshi, and five years later caused a public scandal by writing a kibyōshi about a quarrel between two fire-fighting groups. The incident became a court case when the people concerned took offence and attacked the homes of both the publisher and of Samba. All parties were severely punished for disorderly behaviour. Such was the price of topicality!

Samba's model for Kusazōshi kojitsuke nendai-ki was a work by Kishida Tōhō illustrated by Kyōden and published in 1783 by Nishinomiya. This was Kusazōshi nendai-ki (Chronicle of the kusazōshi) which outlined the development of the genre through the love story of Komachi, a lieutenant and a man called Kuronushi.[28] The pictures and words imitated the chronicle style, but instead of a chronological table at the beginning, there was a list of famous kusazōshi writers and artists such as Torii, Ginsetsu, Jōi, Harumachi, Kashō, Zenkō, Shiran, Tsūshō and Kisanji. As the first three names were associated with the earlier period of akabon and kurobon, they were represented as solemn lords, whereas the characters from the kibyōshi period were shown in the latest fashions. Tsūshō was noted as a rather moralistic writer. This is evident in comments on the eighth item in Kikujūsō, Machigai tsuki yo ni nabe (A Mistaken Meal by Moonlight), which concludes

'while Tsūshō's works are light-hearted, there is always something instructive as well'.[29] The 1783 kibyōshi 'chronicle' alluded to this characteristic of Tsūshō's writing in an amusing scene where he earnestly advised Komachi not to become jealous.

Samba recognised his indebtedness to this earlier work in the super-title mata yakinaosu, which means 're-working'. Instead of the old story of Komachi he uses the tale of Hachikatsugi Hime (The Pot-head Princess), a young girl whose dying mother placed a pottery bowl on her head. Nothing would remove it until finally, after years of ill-treatment by her step-mother, it finally broke in a shower of treasure, enabling her to marry the man of her choice and live happily ever after. The story is brought up to date by having the girl put on display as a curiosity in the pleasure quarter of Edo. Alongside, but quite independent from this story, there is a good deal of information about the trademarks of Edo bookshops, the names of gesaku authors and illustrators, the change in the format of kusazōshi and a list of what Samba considered the twenty-two best kibyōshi ever published. As in many other rather hastily produced gesaku works, there are several typographical and factual errors. A book by Kisanji is attributed to Harumachi (Hana ga mine kōman otoko) and a book by Namake no Bakahito is attributed to Kisanji (Uso shikkari gantori chō). Even so, Samba's work is of considerable interest for the extraordinary assortment of miscellaneous information relating to kusazōshi and for the attempt at a systematic survey of the genre from its origins to the time of writing.

On the first page there is a song in classical 57577 syllable count listing the names of the most important publishers:

Tsuru Tsutaya

Izumishi Murata

Yamaguchiya

Iwado Enokibon

Nishi wa Mura miya[30]

The last line gives both Nishimura and Nishinomiya. There is also a song to memorise popular expressions of the akabon period. The second page features a list of past and present writers, with copies of the personal seals and pen-names of the most famous personalities. There is also a confused assortment of names of illustrators, with no order of merit or chronological sequence. The body of the work consists of full-page illustrations for the story of Hachikatsugi Hime, accompanied by a total of seventy-three short notes which read like so many instalments of an adventure tale and are a novel way of describing the different stages in the development of the kibyōshi. The first comment is 'long long ago, a peach drifted ashore in Tosa province'.[31] This refers to the story of Momotarō, a popular theme in the earliest akabon. Subsequent entries mention all the well-known children's tales, and trace the development of the more mature kibyōshi style of writing and illustration, ending with a New Year greeting to all. Most pages are supplemented with signatures of various publishers, writers and artists. The final page selects the following six as the most outstanding writers: Kisanji, Harumachi, Manzōtei, Tsūshō, Zenkō and Tōrai Sanna. Neither here nor in the final list of twenty-two masterpieces is there any mention

of Santō Kyōden, although he figures inconspicuously among the artists under the name Kitao Masanobu. This omission can only be understood as due to personal rivalry. Although the most recurrent value judgement relates to modernity, there is no mention whatsoever of the fundamental changes in writing style brought about by censorship after 1789. The selection also reflects Samba's resistance to the type of katakiuchimono (revenge tale) popularised by Nansenshō Somahito in his 1795 story Katakiuchi gijo no hanabusa.He obviously prefers the type of kibyōshi written in the first decade, and this reaction to later developments of kibyōshi is also evident in his regret at the increasing predominance of rikutsu (sophistry) and kōman (arrogance).

While the fleeting references to an enormous variety of works and personalities are useful, there is little of the creative wit and vast general knowledge drawn upon by Ōta Nampo. This can not be attributed purely to inferior ability on the part of Samba, whose two most famous kokkeibon were extraordinarily apt and amusing descriptions of groups of Edo townspeople relaxing and gossiping in the public bath or the barbership. His talent at encapsulating the speech and manners of the common people is not displayed in his survey of kibyōshi. Instead, a single, neutral voice is maintained throughout and the comic interest is provided by the story of Hachikatsugi Hime, with its up-dated Yoshiwara setting and exaggerated pleasure quarter slang.

Given Samba's complete dismissal of the master of kibyōshi, Santō Kyōden, it is interesting to note a vastly different emphasis in Gesaku hyōbanki hanaorishi, published in three volumes in the same year, 1802. This critical work resembled the old yakusha hyōbanki in format, that is, number of volumes,

cover, index, ranking, introduction and assessments. However, unlike the other hyōbanki, it was not restricted to the current year's production, but presented an overview of sharebon from its beginnings. Approximately four hundred sharebon had been published by 1802, so the one hundred and seventy-one chosen were presumably the most popular titles. The ranking indicates the overwhelming popularity of Santō Kyōden. He almost monopolises the tachiyaku and waka-onnagata roles, which would have been considered the most colourful in the original theatre divisions. A total of sixteen of his works are included. Six books, including three which had been banned earlier, had their titles changed, and the author's name was given as gesaku (anonymous). However, the identity of the author is indicated by evidence within the assessments, such as reference to a 1790 sharebon by Kyōden called Shigeshige chiwa and a 1791 sharebon called Nishiki no ura.[32] The second most popular author is Kikyō, with eight works. This demonstrates that Kyōden had lost none of his popularity, despite the censorship applied so severely by the authorities a decade before.

The kibyōshi hyōbanki are important documents for the factual details they contain on publications and are even more fascinating as keys to understanding the eighteenth-century Edo readers idiosyncratic appreciation. Kibyōshi were obviously read in a lively, convivial atmosphere. They invariably contain many situations, words and even whole phrases borrowed from contemporary songs and theatrical pieces; it is only in this social context that the kibyōshi comes to life.

Notes on Chapter Two

1. This information on hyōbanki is based on Raz, Jacob, 'The Audience Evaluated: Shikitei Samba's Kyakusha hyōbanki', in Monumenta Nipponica, vol. 35 (1980), pp.199-221.
2. The following outline and exerpts from Sengoku dōshi are from Nakano Mitsutoshi, 'Gesaku hyōbanki hyōban', in Nakamura Yukihiko et al. (ed.) Sharebon. kibyōshi. kokkeibon, pp.311-329.
3. Ibid., pp.312-313.
4. Ibid., p.317.
5. Ibid., p.318.
6. Ibid., pp.319-320.
7. See Nakamura Yukihiko et al. (ed.), Sharebon. kibyōshi. kokkeibon, p.322.
8. Hamada Giichirō, Shokusanjin, pp.90-91.
9. Nakamura Yukihiko et al. (ed.), Sharebon. kibyōshi. kokkeibon, p.322.
10. Kikujūsō, in Hasegawa Junichirō (ed.), Tokugawa bungei ruiju: hyōbanki, vol. 182, p.35.
11. Ibid., p. 53.
12. Okame hachimoku, in Hasegawa Junichiro (ed.) Tokugawa bungei ruiju: hyōbanki, vol.182, p.55.
13. Ibid., pp.55-56.
14. Ibid., p.59.
15. Tamabayashi Haruo, Shokusanjin no kenkyū, p. 335.
16. Mizuno Minoru et al. (ed.), Kibyōshi sharebon-shū, p.91.
17. Inamura Toku (ed.), Tsurezuregusa yōkai, p. 7.
18. Okame hachimoku in Hasegawa Junichirō (ed.), Tokugawa bungei ruiju: hyōbanki, vol.182, p.60.

19. Edo miyage in Hasegawa Junichirō (ed.), Tokugawa bungei ruiju : hyōbanki, vol. 182, p.67.
20. Ibid., p.67.
21. Ibid., p.68.
22. Ibid., p.72.
23. Ibid., p.73.
24. Ibid., p.76.
25. Ibid., p.77.
26. Ibid., p.78.
27. Hisamatsu Sen'ichi et al. (ed.), Shinkokin waka-shū, p.59. poem no. 116.
28. Kusazōshi nendai-ki is described in Ishikawa Torakichi et al. (ed.), Kibyōshi nijūgo-shū, pp.62-65.
29. Kikujūsō in Hasegawa Junichirō (ed.), Tokugawa bungei ruijū : hyōbanki, vol. 182, p.45.
30. Kusazōshi kojitsuke nendai-ki, in Ishikawa Torakichi et al. (ed.), Kibyōshi nijūgo-shū, p.587.
31. Ibid., p.589.
32. Gesaku hyōban hanaorishi in Hasegawa Junichirō (ed.), Tokugawa bungei ruiju : hyōbanki, vol.182, p.29, line 11-12 (Shigeshige chiwa) and p.30, line 4 (Nishiki no ura).

CHAPTER THREE: KIBYOSHI

Although Nihon shōsetsu shomoku nenpyō lists nearly two thousand kibyōshi published between 1775 and 1806, there is a problem of selection. According to Mori Senzō, some of these qualified mainly on the grounds of their format, and were little more than books of puzzles or simple stories. His definition of a 'real' kibyōshi consists of four minimal requirements, namely that they should be the creation of the author, even if then illustrated by someone else, they should be light literature written for amusement, they should be a frank reflection of Edo city life and they should use current Edo slang, or, to be more specific, they should be books like Koikawa Harumachi's 1775 Kinkin sensei eiga no yume.[1] As contemporary gesaku writers also viewed this work as a landmark in the history of kusazōshi, it is well worth looking closely at the author and his achievements.

Harumachi's real name was Kurahashi Juhei. He was born a member of the samurai class, and in 1762, at the age of eighteen, became the adopted son of his father's brother, who was a retainer of the Matsudaira clan in Suruga. Later, as a retainer of the daimyo Matsudaira Bungo-no-kami of Suruga Province, he was assigned to the Edo residence of his lord. In 1772 he became entitled to a stipend of ten ryō, and seems to have tried to supplement this meagre income as an artist. During his lifetime he held various posts, which meant that writing was sporadic, but altogether he produced over thirty kibyōshi, several sharebon-style works and numerous kyōka under the name Sake-no-ue no Furachi (Disorderly Drunk). His kibyōshi pen-name Koikawa

Harumachi (Love-river Spring-town) was derived from the location of his lord's residence in Koishikawa Kasugachō. Koishi was actually written as 'small stone' and Kasuga as 'spring day', but by a typical gesaku process of word-play, he created a name most fitting to the author of stories involving the pleasure quarters. Also, he is said to have been strongly influenced by the well-known ukiyo-e artist Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792), who departed from Torii formulae to create a more individual style in pictures of samurai, wrestlers and beautiful women. It is quite likely that the characters for kawa and shun (or haru) were borrowed partly in recognition of this teacher.

As early as 1762, Tomikawa Fusanobu (or Ginsetsu) had published a two-volume kusazōshi called Ukiyo Rakusuke ippai no yume (Mr. Hedonist's Dream of Pleasure), followed in 1772 by Ukiyo eigamakura (Dream of Glory in the Pleasure-world). Torii Kiyotsune had also up-dated the kusazōshi genre considerably. However, neither could match the wit, education and contemporaneity evident in the first recognisable kibyōshi.

The two-volume Kinkin sensei eiga no yume is preceded by a scholarly reflective preface, in the style of the sharebon:

> According to one of the classics, 'life is like a dream, but there are few pleasures'. So true! Mr Glitter's life of prosperity and the Kantan pillow dream were both over in the time it takes to cook millet. We do not know exactly who Mr Glitter is. Really, it is as mysterious as the book Three-bird secrets of the Kokinshu. People with money become like Mr Glitter, people without it will never be more than country bumpkins. So Mr Glitter is one person's name and yet he could be anyone. As is observed in Theory of Divine Money, 'people with money get ahead, and those without fall behind'. Well, well! what's all this about?[2]

This short passage contains references to the work of

a Chinese poet of the Tang dynasty, Li Po, to a document on the poems of the tenth-century collection, the Kokinshū, and to a tract criticising people's love of money, written by the Ching dynasty philosopher Lu Pao. Also it establishes the sekai, which is a Chinese legend dating from the Tang period. In the old story, a young man named Lu (Rosei) goes to seek his fortune in the city. On the way, at Hantan (Kantan), he borrows a magical pillow at an inn and has a dream of great wealth. When he wakes up, he discovers that so little time has passed that the millet he had ordered isn't yet cooked. Realising the vanity of worldly ambition, he returns to his home town. This theme of a dream-pillow was used in a fifteenth century Nō play by Zeami, and in other lighter works such as the earlier kusazōshi, Ukiyo eigamakura. However, Harumachi anchors the classical theme firmly in mid-eighteenth century Edo by the milieu, by the comic slang names of the characters - who are all recognisable denizens of the pleasure quarter - and by the details of dress, speech and behaviour. All these elements are present in the illustration and text of the first double page (see fig. 10).

Fig. 10

> Long ago there was a man called Mr Goldsmith from Goldtown, who lived out in the country. He was quite refined by nature, but although he yearned to enjoy the pleasures of life, he couldn't because he was very poor. After thinking about this carefully, he decided to go to the big city, make some money and have fun to his heart's content. So off he went to Edo.
> [Goldsmith] 'Anyway, I'll get to Edo, make my way up to being chief clerk, pocket whatever slips past the accounts, set myself up and live in luxury.'
>
> On the way he stopped to pray at the Fudōson temple of Meguro, which is famous for bringing good luck. It was already late and he was hungry, so he thought he'd eat some of their reknowned millet cakes. Now, the Fudōson of Meguro has produced many miracles, as everyone knows. The main image was made by the great priest Jikaku and the temple is called Ryūsenji. The specialties of this area are millet cakes and also 'rice-cake flowers'. For the latter, bamboo is split and tied in the shape of the big metal flowers which adorn Buddhist temples, and then red, white and yellow rice cakes are attached like blossoms. Thus, they are called 'rice-cake blossoms'.
> [Goldsmith] 'Hello! Could you tell me the time? And I'd like a serving of millet cakes please'.
> [Woman] 'Well, it must be well after midday. Please go on into the inner room'.[3]

In translation, it is sometimes difficult to ascertain the correct sequence of the various snatches of conversation and description, which are squeezed into any available space of kibyōshi. In this case, the two most authorative collections, published by Shōgakkan and Iwanami, place all the conversation at the end of the text. This would not be illogical, in the sense that Meguro would have been 'on the way' to Edo in the eighteenth century, rather than part of the city as it is now. However, there would seem to be a time-gap between the reflection on going to Edo and the greeting to the woman at the cake shop, so the order has been altered slightly in my translation. On some occasions it is difficult in kibyōshi to assign a line to a speaker with absolute confidence, and at other times a name will appear to identify a character,

without any accompanying dialogue. Thus, there are minor variations in different modern editions.

Looking closely at Harumachi's illustration, (see fig. 10) we can see a road sign on the right reading - kore yori migi Meguro-michi (Right: Meguro Street). The name of the shop, Musashiya, is written from right to left on the awning, and the big post advertises meibutsu hon awa-mochi (Specialty of the house: the original millet cake). There are fine details like fields in the background, grass, branches, flower arrangement and a bamboo screen, and the couple are appropriately engaged in making their wares. The cloth tied around the man's head indicates he is at work, and he raises the pounder above his head in a very energetic pose. The woman also has her sleeves tied back for action as she turns over the millet dough. They seem intent on their work, and are certainly not over-awed at the appearance of their customer, whose hairstyle, footwear and clothing all betray his humble station in life. The fine lines and attention to detail marked a qualitative change in the kusazōshi, and the text is also far more developed than previous etoki, or explanations of the pictures. The protagonist's name Kanemuraya Kinbyōe prepares for his transformation to Kinkin sensei. Kin means 'money', but kinkin was pleasure-quarter slang for a glittering sophisticate, and is a comic contrast to the honorific sensei. Although he is a country lad, he aspires to the pleasures of the ukiyo (literally, 'floating world'). Around 1661, a kanazōshi writer from the samurai class, Asai Ryōi, wrote in the preface to his work Ukiyo monogatari that whereas in the past the word ukiyo had connotations of a sad world where everything went contrary to one's desires,

now it meant singing songs, drinking wine, playing around - in short, bobbing along in life like a gourd in the stream, careless of the morrow. The word ukiyo was thus almost a synonymn for the transient delights of the pleasure quarters. The details on Meguro are all historically accurate, but are not so detailed as to detract from the main story. There is a wry comment on clerks whose accounts don't tally with the beads of the abacus, and a slang expression shikotameyama. Shikotama tameru means 'to save a lot'. This is reduced to shikotame, and yama is a very common humorous suffix of the time, seen in such phrases as arigatayama (lucky) or nomikakeyama (to drink).

When the hero dozes off, he immediately slips into a dream where an old man and his elegant entourage summon him to meet their master, who intends to adopt him as son and heir. This is the beginning of nights and days of uninterrupted pleasure-seeking. The new 'sophisticated' Mr Glitter is flattered and deceived by his friends, who are only too anxious to introduce him to all the delights of up-to-date fashions and dissipation on a large scale. Harumachi had the perfect credentials to sketch these scenes, as in 1773 he had completed the illustrations of a fashion book called Tōsei fūzoku tsū (Fashions for the Modern Sophisticate). The clothes and attitudes of the models bear an unmistakable resemblance to the Edo dandy depicted in Kinkin sensei eiga no yume. Below, fig. 11 is a plate from the fashion book, and fig. 12 shows Mr Glitter at the height of his glory.

Fig. 11

Fig. 12

Mr Glitter's new life style is delightfully depicted on the double page in fig. 13 (single-page pictures are generally drawn with a dividing scalloped border).

Fig. 13

His hair is now done up in the popular Honda top-knot, and he sports a black silk haori over his elegant kimono and sash. One of his flatterers is Guichi, a blind man whose name is a pun on a gambling term. Although there is no reference to a massage in the text, this pose is very

appropriate, as it is an occupation traditionally associated in Japan with blind people. Two other parasites hasten to attend Mr Glitter. They are Genshirō (Swindler) and Manbachi (Liar). The girl is obviously rather less impressed, and turns away rather haughtily. A sense of movement is achieved by the varied poses and the serving of warm sake. Details of the room and the repast are meticulously accurate.

Of course, Mr Glitter's behaviour exceeds all bounds, but just as he has been disinherited in favour of Genshirō and sent off in shame (see fig.14) he is amazed to hear the sound of a pestle grinding millet cakes. He wakes up and discovers that the cakes he had ordered at Meguro have not even been prepared yet in the short time he has been dreaming (see fig. 15).

Fig. 15

Fig. 14

Just as becoming Bunzui's adopted child and enjoying a life of luxury hardly lasted the time it takes to grind a mortar full of millet, so the honours of worldly success are no more than fleeting illusions. When he realises this, he decides to go back to the country, while the woman at the cake shop calls out, 'Hey! Your cakes are done!'

Whereas the original sekai illustrated the transience of worldly fame and possessions, the shukō exposes the pretentiousness of a would-be sophisticate. However, unlike the sharebon formula, there is no alternative model of a truly refined tsūjin. In kibyōshi, nothing is sacrosanct. Everything is subject to anasagashi, that is, all pretensions are humorously exposed. For this reason, it is difficult to take the moral so frequently tagged on the end of kibyōshi as anything more than a convention providing a token justification for satirical writings. The life-blood of the genre lay not in proselytising, but in witty parodies of aspects of contemporary society through exaggeration or reversal of actual trends.

Harumachi's second kibyōshi was Kōmansai angyō nikki (Diary of Kōmansai's Pilgrimage), published in 1776. The sekai is Kamakura in the days of Hōjō Tokiyori (1227-1263), who appears in such Japanese classics as the Nō play Hachinoki, where he travels around all the provinces of Japan to observe the mind of the people and the state of the nation. The shukō is the dissipation that flourishes in the Kōmansai school after their great teacher leaves on a pilgrimage to practise haikai poetry. Seeing that the teacher is very virtuous and able to protect his soul by repeating endless sutras, the goblins lurking around his door, who have wings and big noses but in all other respects are perfect models of up-to-date fashion, decide that they will enter the souls of the students. Soon the students abandon the proper study of poetry, knowing that if they pay their fees they will receive a good assessment. Then they alter their appearance, thankful not to have to spend the rest

of their lives 'with heads looking like scrubbing-brushes', and begin their new study of elegance. Their tea teacher, also possessed by the devils, explains that the tea ceremony is all about wabi (rustic simplicity). He then proceeds to patch up old bowls and pass them off as quality imports. He carves a famous name on the tea dipper, and scribbles imitations of works by famous Chinese calligraphers. The students also pay astronomical prices for ostentatious vases and flowers blossoming out of season. They are rather inept at kemari court football, but console themselves with their gorgeous costumes embroidered with gold and silver. After indulging extravagantly in samisen music, singing and endless pleasure-seeking with geisha girls, they exhaust both their money and their parents' patience. One father berates them soundly (see fig. 16).

Fig. 16

'You dissolute wretches! Commoners shouldn't fool around and chase women like that. And what's the meaning of that hair style? You've deliberately thinned out your hair until now you look like you're suffering from some sort of disease. Especially you, Hot-stuff. You're old enough to know better. It makes me sick to look at that Honda style. All those gray hairs! Go on! Get out! Clear off!'[4]

The wastrels are brought before the court and severely scolded in Confucian terms by the judge (see fig. 17).

Fig. 17

'Even if we live under a peaceful reign, soldiers must never carelessly forget the military arts. Such clothes may look unsightly today, but it is a sign of the warrior to wear armour. Instead of which, you have sold off your military and equestrian equipment to pay for your self-indulgence. Instead of dagger and sword, you carry a fine rosewood samisen. Instead of mastering the art of horse-riding, you board pleasure-quarter boats and sedan chairs. Your hair should be dressed to carry a helmet, but instead you have shaved it back in the height of fashion. Your swords are no stronger than fire-tongs. If something drastic happened, how on earth would you cut people down?'[5]

The students are chased away, and are reduced to living as yamabushi (itinerant priests) or robbers. However, their teacher is aware of the works of the devils, and devises a sure remedy for the disease of pride and profligacy. He collects sagacious writings such as the Four Books and the Five Classics. When the students drink long draughts of this infusion, smoke issues from their mouths in the form of demons, and they are fully cured, although one of the poor demons complains that the opening phrase of the Analects of Confucius stuck to his forehead and gave him quite a nasty burn (see fig. 18).

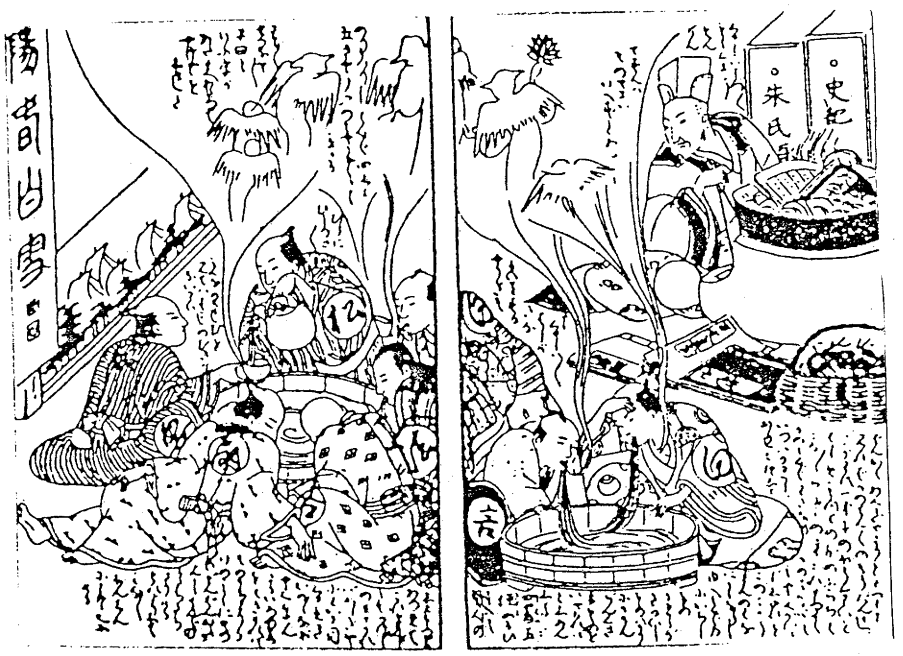


Fig. 18

Lord Hōjō is suitably impressed by the teacher's wisdom and wit and rewards him well, saying, 'No-one with a virtuous heart need fear the curse of the devils'. Yet no doubt, this moralistic generalisation held far less interest for the readers of the day than the humorous combination of fine illustrations and countless references to classics, history, proverbs and upper-class life in Edo. Such early kibyōshi were remarkably specific to Edo, written by and for a relatively small group of educated, leisured men proud of their Edo identity.

This loyalty is reflected in Harumachi's 1776 Bakemono Ōeyama (The Ogres of Ōe Mountain). As far back as the Muromachi period there had been iruigassen or stories of battles between different varieties of things, where vegetable dishes were set up in opposition to fish, or different types of birds waged war. In the early eighteenth century, sake and mochi were personified and waged war, assisted by fruit, vegetables and fish. Gradually the technique was refined by attributing human characteristics and mannerisms to the items. In Harumachi's story there is a definite antagonism between Edo and Kyoto in the shukō of a battle between the favourite style of noodle of each city. This is achieved through a series of mitate giving human bodies to the ingredients used in noodle dishes. Their heads are drawn in the shape of a radish, an orange, a stick of dried bonito, a pepper, a noodle and so on, and certainly lack the delicacy of other illustrations by Harumachi. However, the sekai is very cleverly adapted throughout. It is the well-known legend of Ōe Mountain, where four valiant retainers of Minamoto Yorimitsu successfully overwhelmed a robber gang led by Shutendōji. This is the literary framework for a battle between soba (buckwheat noodle) which even now is the specialty of the east, and udon (white noodle) which was more closely associated with the west. For convenience, we will refer to the dishes as 'noodle' and 'spaghetti' respectively.

The preface begins with a standard appeal to authority, in this case, to a famous herbalist. We are informed that noodles are an excellent remedy for a great

variety of intestinal disorders. There is a long list of ailments all written in scholarly Chinese characters. 'However', it continues, 'without the addition of condiments like grated radish, orange peel, red pepper, and dried bonito flakes, noodles are rather tasteless. The two are inseparable, like a master and servant. Which brings us to the old legend of Ōe Mountain, so this should wake you all up!'[6] These are all the ingredients for a typical kibyōshi flight of imagination, the tone being well set by the final pun on harusame no nemuke which means 'feeling sleepy on a drizzly spring day', but also contains the word harusame, a fine transparent type of noodle.

The main mitate or personifications are amusingly presented on the first double page, as the protagonists attend a solemn war council. There are five names written next to the appropriate characters: Lord of Sesshū Minamoto Noodle-Cake (Minamoto Yorimitsu), Usui Radish (Usui Sadamitsu), Urabe Dried Bonito-Flakes (Urabe Suetake), Watanabe Orange-Peel (Watanabe no Tsuna) and Sakata Pepper (Sakata Kintoki). The story begins on a heroic note (see fig. 19).

Fig. 19

> It was in the reign of Emperor Noodle-Cake. The dreaded itinerant noodle peddlers stalked the city's streets late at night seizing money from passers-by. Now, General Minamoto Noodle-Flour heard about this and said, 'What outrageous goings-on'. He summoned his four noble allies and explained the situation. The outstanding warrior Watanabe Orange-Peel came forth and saying 'How terrible! Let's go and annihilate them', he took the money-bill proferred by his lord, took the Noodle-Cutting knife made by his lord's finest swordsmith and strode forth into the city.[7]

Battle rages around the back-streets of the pleasure quarters of Edo, with a constant intermingling of legendary and contemporary detail, but finally, in the presence of Lord Pasta, the General orders an expedition to pursue the enemy into the mountains. The noble four set off disguised as itinerant priests. They slip kitchen knives into their portable bookcases, and provision themselves with cutting boards, pestles, horseradish and so on. It is a terrible path of soaring precipices and deep ravines, like in old China, but they cling to vines and wistaria and forge ahead. On the way they meet an old man, Eight-Penny (hachimon was the price of a dish of noodles and Hachiman Daibosatsu was the tutelary diety of the Minamoto clan), who warns them of all the forms Spaghetti Kid can take. He gives them an excellent rolling-pin bought at Asakusa, with which they are finally able to assault and flatten the enemy. And that is why, we conclude, there are so many noodle shops in Edo, and so few itinerant noodle peddlars or spaghetti shops. The last page contains the names of some of the most reknowned shops. Kibyōshi often promote a particular publisher or shop in this way, and may even have been devised sometimes as an extended comic advertisement.

Two years later, Harumachi used the same iruigassen technique in Kotoba tatakai atarashii no ne (The New War of

the Words), where he opposed old and new styles of slang. In the final scene, the old hackneyed expressions disappear in smoke, leaving the title of the book traced in the air. In all such contests, it was inevitable for the new Edo side to emerge triumphant. Far from seeking to express universal truths and eternal values, the kibyōshi writers viewed life through a contemporary Edo optic, and related the past, by logical or not so logical means, to the present.

Stories of the future also became popular, but only as a means of taking present situations to their most outlandish extreme. One of the most amusing of these is Harumachi's 1788 Muda iki (Crazy Chronicle). The title Muda iki is derived from Miraiki, a record of future events supposed to have been written by Shōtoku Taishi and left in the Shitennōji temple of Osaka. It is stated in the Taiheiki that Kusunoki Masanori went to worship at the temple and read the record. He was thus able to see into the future. In Harumachi's hands, it becomes an enumeration of crazy situations which might arise if fashions, customs and seasons should change. Shōtoku Taishi becomes Kentoku Taishi. Kentoku was a term meaning a good omen of success in lotteries. Kusunoki becomes Kusunokita Monhyōe no Kami Yorimasa, a comic amalgamation of two historical names, Kusunoki Masanari and Minamoto (Genzanmi) Yorimasa. The latter was involved in a plot against the Taira clan, as a result of which he was obliged to commit seppuku at the Byodōin temple at Uji. All these allusions are contained in a few short lines in the preface. Local Edo touches are added by naming Emperor Hey-Hey after the street-cry of peddlars selling pictures of the Bull-Headed God ('Hey! Hey! Here's

a picture of your favourite god'). Also, the Uji temple is renamed Shōtōji, a real place near the Yoshiwara area. Never behind the times, Harumachi refers to an Oranda saiku no kage-e (Dutch shadow lamp). Old and new, fact and fiction are all delightfully confused from the opening address.

> Kusunokita Monhyōe no Kami Yorimasa had been involved in a plot against Emperor Hey-Hey and was thus imprisoned in the Shotōji temple at Uji for nine years. Thinking deeply about the state of the world, he realized how changeable it was, just like one of those Dutch shadow lamps. One day everyone is wearing their fancy Hakata sashes way up over their chest, and then suddenly they wind them way down over their backsides. Sons become thrifty and fathers toss their money around. Especially now there's no stopping this changing world. And so he opened up the well-known Crazy Chronicle to read what the Prince of Aces had written about the future.[8]

Harumachi's skilful fashion illustration in Tōsei fūzoku tsū obviously stood him in good stead, even to the extent of an unusual Shinna character design on the back of a bonito seller's costume in the opening plate (see fig. 20).

Fig. 20

There are seventeen different 'situations' in Muda iki. The first line is a parody of the opening words of Miraiki, which warns of chaos and confusion in the ninety-fifth Imperial reign.

> In the 33,333rd Imperial dynasty, the first bonito will appear on the twentieth of December. The price will be a staggering 880 ryō. No-one will even bother answering if you offer only 500 ryō, and your dinner will be in the balance.
>
> [Bonito seller] 'Bonito-o-o. Bonito-o-o. Bonito-o-o. Why, it's worth 100 ryō just to hear me call Bonito!' The sophisticates will be wearing haori a metre or so long. The cord will reach to their heels. Their collar lining will be white, their top-knot will stick up like a fishing pole and their sashes will be as wide as the hoops of a bath tub. [Sophisticate] 'Wouldn't it be great if the pimps would come all the way from the tea-houses to fetch us!' (Right: Yoshiwara Road).[9]

In the future, Harumachi continues, people will take their mice (popular shade of gray material called nezumi) to be dyed, the Yoshiwara brothel guide will become a public notice-board, such cold weather will set in during summer that sweat will turn to icicles, and priests will go to the pleasure-quarter houses freely instead of masquerading as doctors. For the sake of economy, pine torches will be set up at the entrance to Yoshiwara. All the year's festivities will come at once, so the chanters will entertain with happy dirges such as 'May your house prosper and fall. May you have a happy life and a short one'.

The captions to Muda iki are short and simple. As the entire situation must be presented in one single or double page illustration, there is no scope for development of a story line. In fact, the work is a collection of illustrated jokes, as in the following example (see fig. 21).

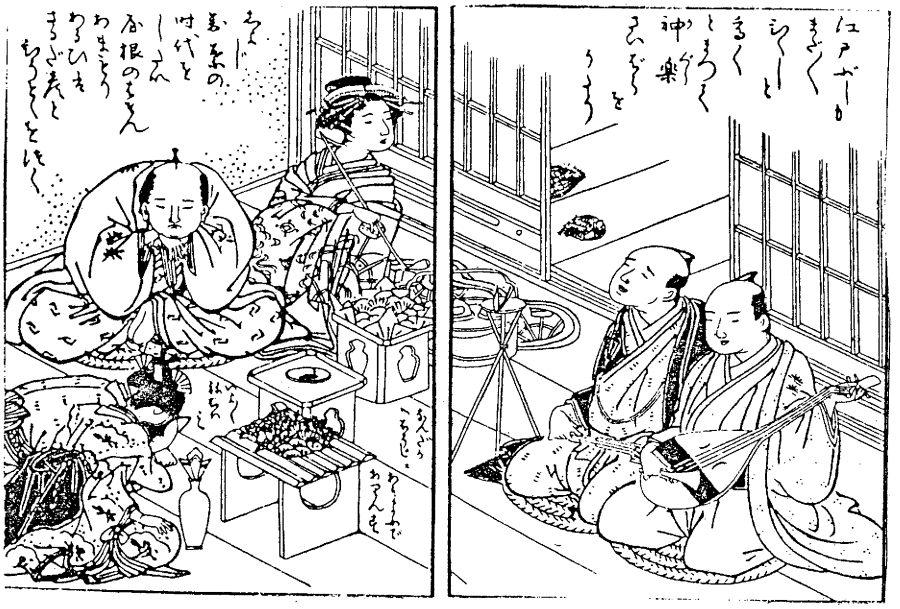


Fig. 21

> The popular Edo tunes will fall out of favour, and people with any pretensions to good breeding will sing music from the shrines and court. As in the days of Manyō poetry, people will use pen-names like Leaky Roof or Monkey Face.
> [Courtesan] 'My God! This is as exciting as a funeral service!'
> [Junior courtesan] 'Ho-hum! I'm so-o-o sleepy!'[10]

Boredom is written on the faces of the participants, while the junior courtesan, considered to be just at the growing stage and therefore always sleepy, seems about to doze off. Readers of the day would have quickly deciphered yane no hason amamori (Leaky Roof) as a pun on Ami no hason harigane, one of the earlier pen-names of a leading contemporary kyōka poet, Moto no Mokuami. Similarly, they would have picked up Saruda Hiko (Monkey Face) as referring to the leader of the annual Kanda festival in Edo, who traditionally donned a goblin mask. Mention of the ancient Manyō poetry in this context is an amusing anachronism, but obviously there is no attempt to create a continuous story line.

The remaining sketches refer mostly to reversals in the role, age and sex of pleasure-seekers, and the final scene shows the young man of the future who will on no account go

roaming the streets at night, but will sit snugly at home reading Confucian classics.

This image hardly fits the gregarious Edoite whose presence one becomes aware of while reading kibyōshi. Unfortunately there is practically no information about how the works were read and enjoyed. Numerous lines lifted directly from popular Kabuki and symbols showing lengthened syllables (ひ hiku) suggest that kibyōshi may have been read aloud in a group as entertainment similar to kowairo vocal imitations. Within such a small, closed world of writers-readers, it would not be surprising to find references to specific personalities, events or relationships within the group. This is the gakuya-ochi (literally, 'dressing-room joke'), and was the inspiration for a 1784 work by Harumachi titled Manzaishū chobi raireki (A Little History of Manzaishū), which deals with rivalry between different schools of kyōka poets.

By 1780, interest in kyōka had reached fever pitch in Edo. One of the leading personalities was Karagoromo Kisshū (1749-89), who published a collection in 1783 called Kyōka wakana shū (Kyōka Seedlings). In the same year, Ōta Nampo and Akera Kankō (1740-1800) put out a rival collection far superior in quality, titled Manzai kyōka-shū (Kyōka for Ten Thousand Years). The title and organisation was a clever parody of an Imperial anthology of the Kamakura period called Senzai Waka-shū (Waka for One Thousand Years). According to legend, the exiled Taira no Tadanori risked death to have his poem included in this collection, only to have it inserted under yomibito shirazu (anonymous). Such are the basic ingredients of Harumachi's story, where the rivalry between Nampo and Kisshū is parodied as the Genpei wars. However,

the scenes of the battle are not shown as historical fact but as niwaka kyōgen, amateur theatrical performances performed in the pleasure quarters and private residences. There is a costume shop where the characters can buy armour, heads, severed arms and so on for the Dan-no-ura battle scenes. Conflict at sea is represented with a push-along boat and a wavy piece of rope, and a big pillow is substituted for the child emperor Antoku in the famous death by drowning. The point of the story is that all the defeated Kisshū group are desperately anxious to have their poems included in Nampo's victorious Manzai kyōka-shū. Quite a few poets are mentioned by pen-name, and the final reconciliation scene at a restaurant kyōka gathering would no doubt have shown identifiable faces.

Although the samurai class was not traditionally encouraged to write light literature purely for their own amusement, the selection of stories by Harumachi examined thus far has concerned fairly inocuous subjects such as food, culture, language, comic speculations on the future and in-group antagonisms, and were never the object of official censure. It has been suggested that Harumachi's Yorokonbu hiiki no ezōshi (1788), which was illustrated by Kitao Masami, may contain elements of satire directed at contemporary political figures, but this interpretation could be a case of the wisdom of hindsight. The story is basically a crazy up-dating of the legend of Yoshitsune (1159-1189), according to which he really escaped death with Benkei at Koromo River in Northern Ōshū, and successfully penetrated into Ezo (Hokkaido), Karafuto (Sakhalin Peninsula) and North China.

At the time, the undeveloped Ezo area was becoming an object of interest in Edo, and a prominent gesaku writer Hezutsu Tōsaku (1726-89) even went on a secret mission to observe and report the situation. The daimyo of south Ezo, Matsumae, received a substantial income from the tax on konbu (seaweed). Russian interest was expressed in trade with the Kurile Islands, and by 1788 it was natural for Edo intellectuals to be aware and curious about the distant frontier areas. The title Yorokonbu hiiki no ezōshi is a typical amalgamation of several words - yorokobu (to rejoice), konbu (seaweed), hiiki (supporters of the defeated Yoshitsune were called Hōganbiiki), Ezo'oshi (subjugation of Ezo) and ezōshi (picture story book). In the story, Yoshitsune is criticised for his extravagance by the bakufu, and exiled to Ezo by Hatakeyama Shigetada. He conquers Ezo, trades in konbu, converts the locals to the modern fashions of Edo and finally returns to the capital. There is an amusing combination of unfamiliar customs of the north and the up-to-date appearance of Yoshitsune's party.It may be possible to read Shigetada as representing Matsudaira Sadanobu and the exiled Yoshitsune as Tanuma Okitsugu. However, Koike Masatane finds this an over-reading of the text, and limits his interpretation of the story to the sekai of the Yoshitsune legend overlaid with a shukō of curosity in an area of current interest.[11] At any rate, neither Harumachi nor the other successful writers had yet been affected by the rigorous censorship which was soon to place severe limitations on their freedom of expression.

One of Harumachi's close personal friends was Hōseidō Kisanji (1735-1813). Kisanji's real name was Hirasawa

Heikaku, and like Harumachi, he was of samurai status and was assigned to administer the Edo mansion of his lord, a daimyo from northern Akita. It is generally believed that he was responsible for the written passages in the 1783 Tōsei fūzoku tsū, and he composed kyōka under the names Tegara no Okamochi and Kisanjin. On the personal levels, the friendship of the two men is indicated by the fact that Kisanji was go-between for Harumachi's second marriage. On the literary level, they collaborated on several occasions, as Kisanji was not a gifted illustrator, and relied on several other gesaku artists. The two qualities one associates with the works of Kisanji are tsū and muda. Muda describes the nonsensical character of the puns, mitate and comic etymologies in which he delighted. However, these jokes were qualitatively different from the humour of earlier children's books, although often based on a sekai drawn from traditional tales.

Kisanji's first kibyōshi, illustrated by Harumachi, was Oya no katakiuchi hara tsuzumi (Avenging the Parent's Death), published in 1777, two years after Kinkin sensei eiga no yume. In the old children's tale Kachikachi yama, a raccoon dog steals dumplings from a farmer. The farmer catches the raccoon dog and ties him up, but he escapes and kills the farmer's wife. When the rabbit hears of this, he takes pity on the old man and offers to avenge the atrocity. He tries to burn the raccoon alive, offers him a salve mixed with cayenne pepper and finally entices him aboard a mud boat, which sinks. The rabbit then finishes off the raccoon dog with a few blows of the oar, thus fulfilling his vow to avenge the old woman's death. Kisanji's story is a sequel where the farmer's son has left home and hopes to be

promoted by finding a fresh rabbit liver to cure his sick lord, and the raccoon dog's son seeks to kill the rabbit to avenge his own father's death. Pursued from two directions, the rabbit runs into a seafood restaurant called Nakataya. The proprietor, Kassai Tarō, hides him in an eel barrel, but eventually the rabbit decides to commit seppuku with a kitchen knife to satisfy the honour of the two parties.Fig. 22 shows the solemn scene of revenge for the parent's death (oya no katakiuchi). The raccoon dog is seated in a balcony above watching the proceedings with the farmer's son, for all the world like an Edo theatre-goer, and he beats a tattoo on his fat belly (hara tsuzumi).

Fig. 22

The text repeats the sound ki in an amusing play of words which means, in defiance of historical fact, that 'the Heike perished by boat at Sanuki, the tanuki (raccoon dog) died in a mud boat and the usagi (rabbit) met his end in a unagi boat (eel barrow), and became a measles medicine like the insect in the kusagi bush'. The entire situation thus makes a mockery of the high-minded code of samurai ethics, and the serious literature which derived from it. The raccoon dog and the farmer's son are in turn destroyed by

the foxes to avenge the earlier murder of the old fox. This is despite the raccoon dog's deployment of his redoubtable hidden weapon - grossly enlarged testicles which even now are a sine qua non of tanuki statuary. Later, the restaurant runs short of fish during a drought, but is saved by the u (cormorant) and the sagi (snowy heron) which had arisen from the severed body of the usagi (rabbit). In gratitude for past help, they fetch up fresh eel and loach (see fig. 23).

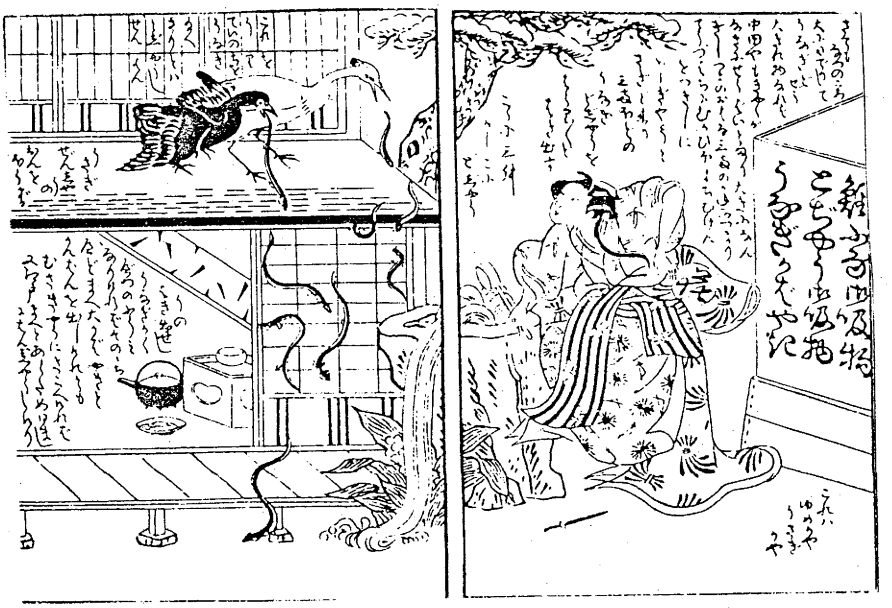


Fig. 23

This typical Kisanji twist gives the origin of the name of a shop reknowned for broiled eel dishes, Edo mae no unagi no kabayaki. We are informed that the name derives from Hedo mae (hedo means 'vomit').

Kisanji and Harumachi also collaborated on another 1777 version of a traditional children's tale. This was Momotarō gonichibanashi, a sequel to the famous story of Momotarō's assault on Devils Island. In Kisanji's story, the son of Red Devil has been brought back to Edo, where he comes of age, has his horns clipped off and is re-named Kishichi (Seven Devils). As an elegant man about town, he

marries the maid Ofuku (Ugly Woman), but complications set in when his promised bride arrives from Devils Island. The monkey, who is enamoured of Ofuku, deliberately stirs up trouble. In the final climax, there is a parody of the well-known Dōjōji story, as Kishichi hides in a bell to escape Ofuku, who has been transformed by jealousy into a huge serpent. Although kibyōshi always retained the formula of greeting child readers, this mixture of animal characters and human eroticism was scarcely devised with an eye to the education of children. The formula was no more than an 'escape', and permitted the writer to indulge in absurd flights of imagination which would have been frowned on by Confucian moral tenets. This duality is evident on the last page of Momotarō gonichibanashi (see fig. 24).

Fig. 24

The bowed figure in formal dress represents the publisher Urokogataya, as can be judged from the 'three scales' crest. He greets the okosama (children) in Kabuki fashion, and invites them to read the preceding story. However, the bell above his head is written entirely in Chinese characters or Manyōgana, an imitation or mitate

of the inscriptions found on temple bells. This message, to the effect that the author is unknown, is obviously a joke which would be lost on children.

Apart from direct collaboration, there is also considerable evidence to suggest Harumachi and Kisanji had a reciprocal effect on each other's work through re-handling of themes. One of the most successful examples of this was Kisanji's treatment of the dream theme in his 1781 Miru ga toku issui no yume (A Dream Well Worth Seeing). From the first line he sets the stage for nonsense - mukashi mukashi no koto nareba uso kamoshiranedo... (it happened long ago and maybe it's a lie...). The role of Rosei is played by Seitarō (Young Man). He dreams of going to Prosperity Store, where the proprietor Dream Boy hires out magical pillows. The theme of odd occupations became very common in kibyōshi, but in this case it is presented in a dream within a dream. The length of dreams varies with the price.

Fig. 26

Fig. 25

The man in Fig. 25 pays thirty-two pence to visit a floating brothel. He thinks he can see one of the most famous courtesans of Yoshiwara beckoning to him, but just as he is about to leap aboard the boat moves and he tumbles into the water with

a splash, which is a cold awakening to his dream of pleasure. The man in fig. 26 pays sixteen pence to see one act of a play, which is recognisable as Kurumabiki (The Carriage Scene) from Sugawara denju tenarai kagami (Secrets of Calligraphy). However, he is unable to make out what is happening or who is acting, and is very disappointed. Other dreams find their anticipated pleasures in the houses of Yoshiwara cut short, so to avoid any such disappointment, the hero steals a full one thousand ryō of gold from his father's house and invests it all in a dream of fifty years of extravagant living. He travels all over Japan, samples all the delights of the pleasure quarters, and even travels to China. However, the day of reckoning comes when he makes a nostalgic trip back home and discovers that he has an inheritance of one million ryō of gold - plus accumulated debts of one million and a half ryō of gold and a few ounces of silver. Realising the vanity of worldly possessions, both he and his chief clerk take the tonsure, and at that point he awakes from his dream of a dream in time to enjoy his dish of buckwheat noodles. There is endless light-hearted wit in the series of amusements indulged in by the hero, and this was Ōta Nampo's choice as best kibyōshi of the year in his 1781 critical assessment Kikujūsō.

Another of Kisanji's works of the same year was also highly praised. This was Ichiryū mankindan, (The Perfect Panacea) illustrated by Santō Kyōden under the name Kitao Masanobu. The search for the elixir of eternal life is a universal theme, but here it is stripped of all allegorical intention and becomes a typical light-hearted romp involving a search for all sorts of weird and wonderful ingredients. In the final scene, the father reveals how he has tricked

his son to bring him to his senses. For example, the lion's eyeballs were actually poppy seeds covered with gold and the shark skin bumps were corn. Kisanji's popularity was further attested to by Ōta Nampo's top billing the following year in Okame hachimoku, for a kibyōshi titled Kagekiyo hyakunin isshu (Kagekiyo by the Hundred). This time, the illustrator was Kitao Shigemasa.

Although we have mentioned that there was no established system of manuscript fees for writers, and that they wrote for personal enjoyment rather than for commercial profit, it is reasonable to assume that a writer as popular as Kisanji would be eagerly approached by publishers. In fact, this is precisely the situation presented in the preface of a kibyōshi written in 1787 by Kisanji and illustrated by Kitao Shigemasa. This was Kisanjin no ie bakemono (Kisanjin's Bogies). The first page shows the owner of the Tsutaya bookshop thanking Kisanji for past efforts and encouraging him to write a best-seller for the coming year. The author simply can't think of anything, but Jūsaburō shows him a publicity sheet prepared with the names of various works. All these details are realistic, and would have been familiar to the readers. At a loss, Kisanji agrees to have himself written down for a three-volume story on the rather hackneyed theme of bakemono (bogies). He then falls asleep and literally dreams up a story. Apart from the appearance of the author as a character in his own book, which became a popular device in later kibyōshi, this is interesting for the account of how the publishers secured writers and of the writers' never-ending search for new angles and novel themes.

No discussion of kibyōshi would be complete without

mention of one of the most prolific, popular and commercially successful of the gesaku writers, Santō Kyōden (1761-1816). Unlike Harumachi, Kisanji and many other leading members of the gesaku circle, he was a townsman, and therefore not quite so vulnerable to official censure for his light-hearted writings. He exercised his talents in a variety of genres, including kyōka, sharebon and kibyōshi. His involvement in kibyōshi began as early as 1778-81, when, as a student of Kitao Shigemasa, he illustrated under the name of Kitao Masanobu. However, his triumphant debut was in 1782, with Gozonji no shōbaimono (The Tricks of the Trade), which is translated in the appendix. By means of delightfully appropriate personification, the book presents all the main genres, in the framework of a conspiracy by the old-fashioned Kyoto books against the up and coming Edo best-sellers. Naturally, Edo emerges triumphant. Ōta Nampo was twelve years older than Kyōden, and certainly helped him on his way to fame with generous praise of this kibyōshi in Okame hachimoku. They were both closely involved in kyōka circles, and were together at such social gatherings as a big birthday celebration for Nampo's mother in 1783. The publisher Tsutaya asked Nampo to write a preface to a 1784 work by Kyōden called Shinbijin jihitsu kagami (Writings by the Latest Beauties. The book consisted of seven big pages of nishiki-e, each depicting two of the reigning beauties of the day, with what purported to be samples of their brushwork written above. However, despite this friendship and Nampo's clear preference for a more 'innocent' style of kibyōshi, Kyōden's work increasingly reflected his interest in pleasure-quarter themes. Thus in 1784 Tenkei wakumon makes comic use of

theories of astronomy to depict Kaguyahime (Moon Princess) as the courtesan of Tsukisama (Moon). In the same year, Kabuchū uses the device of a dream to depict Yoshiwara girls. In the preface to a third kibyōshi of the same year, Fuanbai, a character representing Kyōden's sister speaks of sōshi (stories) being used to explore ana (pretentiousness Thus it is evident that his kibyōshi deliberately employ sharebon concepts like anasagashi. This is not surprising given his popularity as a sharebon writer after 1785. However, whereas the sharebon implies the basic validity of the concept of tsū, the kibyōshi is much more all-embracing in its mockery. Indeed, Kyōden's 1785 Edo umare uwaki no kabayaki (Embroilments of a True Edo Play-boy) was a masterpiece of comic satire in its merciless exposure of the stereotypes of the tsū aesthetic. The 'hero' is Enjirō (Lover-Boy), the pampered son of a wealthy family. Although ugly, he is very conceited, and has an outlandish ambition to astound the public with his amatory prowess. Regardless of the expense, he goes to great lengths to act the part of the complete tsūjin, aided by two friends Kitarinosuke (Yoshiwara Lover) and Warushian (Naughty Boy). They inform him he should know popular songs, and cite an enormous list of current romantic ballads. Then they explain the etiquette of writing love letters and the importance of tattoes, which leads to the absurd situation below (see fig. 27).

Fig. 27

> Lover-Boy, deciding that tattoing was the true mark of a playboy, had himself tattoed on both arms and even between his fingers with the names of some twenty or thirty imaginary sweethearts. He cheerfully endured the pain thinking, 'Ah, this is the life!'
> [Yoshiwara Lover] 'You should blot a few out too, so we'll apply a moxa here and there'.
> [Lover-Boy] 'You certainly have to go through agony to become a great lover!'[12]

Lover-Boy next pays a courtesan Oen (Lovely) fifty pieces of gold to run after him. As she declares her undying love in a comic version of a Katōbushi ballad called Dōjōji, both maids and family are rather unflattering in their amazement (see fig. 28).

Fig. 28

The house-maids peeped in and whispered, 'Falling in love with our young master - that's just crazy!'
[Lovely] 'I'm just a cheap girl from the back streets, a dancing girl leading the men on. I saw Mr Lover-Boy behind the bushes at the evening fair at Yakushi temple and fell in love. If he won't take me for his wife, I'll gladly be his scullery-maid. If he won't allow me to do that, I've made up my mind to kill myself'.
She said everything just as she had been asked to.
[Lover-Boy] 'No-one knows what we playboys have to go through. Hey, I'll pay you another ten gold pieces if you'll raise your voice a bit so the neighbours can hear'.
[Chief Clerk] 'Well, with a face like that, I hardly expected the young master to be mixed up in anything like this. Hey, girl! Sure you haven't come to the wrong house?'
Lover-Boy's father Pops didn't know the girl had been hired. He felt really upset, gave all sorts of advice, and sent her off.[13]

The ploy is hardly successful, but he perseveres (see fig.29).

Fig. 29

He thought everyone would get to know about this, but not even the neighbours knew, so feeling a bit discouraged he hired town criers and paid them a gold piece each to sell specially-made broadsheets throughout Edo.
[Crier] 'Extra! Extra! Beautiful geisha falls madly in love with that unparalleled man about town, Lover-Boy. Special feature! Read all about it! Paper and printing free of charge. Get your free copy!'
[Girl looking out of window] 'What! That's a load of rubbish. What a put-up job! Even free, who'd bother to read it!'[14]

Although Lover-Boy thinks his reputation is spreading every time someone sneezes, no-one takes the slightest notice. He pays the girl Ukina (Flighty) to play the part of a loving mistress, and sets up another woman at home to greet him with tirades of passionate jealousy. She fulfils her promise by saying, 'If you didn't want me to love you so much, you shouldn't have been born so handsome', but insists on a bonus of Hachijō silk and striped crepe before carrying on. His plan to be beaten up at the theatre nearly costs him his life, and he gets terrible blisters when he walks around all day trying to imitate dandies who sell fans (of course, it is well before summer). Finally, he asks to be temporarily disinherited, although actually his parents still finance him, and he elopes with Flighty. They are to go on the time-honoured lovers' suicide, although it is only a sham to provide material for a puppet play on the subject. However, the best-laid plans go astray when they are set upon and stripped by two robbers, and must pursue their lovers' journey clad only in the barest underwear (see fig. 30).

Fig. 30

Most of the word-play of the kibyōshi is contained in this michiyuki kyō ga samehada (Lovers' journey - spoilt fun and goose-bumps). The text is in the conventional seven-five syllable pattern of the Jōruri, and the opening line, 'it suffices to die in the evening, having enjoyed love in the morning', is a parody of the lines by Confucius in The Analects, 'it suffices to die in the evening, having learned the way in the morning'. This is the most 'absurd' of the illustrations. Kyōden's technique, as in Gozonji no shōbaimono is to depict quite believable people and settings in order to extract the full comic potential from each incongruous situation. Apart from the amusing 'Kyōden nose', previous illustrations would not seem at all odd on a first glance. It is only when viewed through the text that the full impact is realised, the text including in this case the humorous scrolls and notices often incorporated within the picture.

The popularity of the character Enjirō was such that the name became an Edo synonymn for a conceited self-styled sophisticate. Although his pug-shaped nose didn't figure

so prominently on the cover of the first publication, the success of the work influenced the cover designs of subsequent re-prints. Kyōden even wrote of a second-generation Enjirō called Unutarō (Conceited Ass) in Himonya Rishō no Yotsudakebushi (1789). The hero is an unprepossessing character who prays to the gods, receives the mask of a tsūjin and enjoys great social success until the mask falls off. Like Edo umare uwaki no kabayaki, the story ends on a proselytising note as he realises the shallowness of such a frivolous life and goes back home to settle down and work hard. Kyōden also transferred the original characters to a sharebon in Sōmagaki (The Palace, name of a famous Yoshiwara brothel) in 1787. The popular appeal of Kyōden's characters and the publication of sequels reflect one aspect of the 'book revolution'. That is, the relation between supply and demand, writer and reader, had become far more close than a few decades before. Earlier gesaku writers, partly due to the constraints of their samurai status, treated kibyōshi as a recreation to be enjoyed within a fairly narrow circle of connoisseurs. Kyōden's success among a wider band of readers was such that by 1785 he could confidently describe himself as kibyōshi sakusha Kyōden (Kyōden, writer of kibyōshi).

It should not be assumed from the above selection of works by Harumachi, Kisanji and Kyōden that they completely dominated the world of kibyōshi. There were also excellent stories by Manzōtei, Tsūshō, Ōta Nampo, Tōrai Sanna, Zenkō Shiba and many others. Nor should it be assumed that all, or even most of the two thousand or so kibyōshi were of the same standard as those discussed here. Many works

which are considered kibyōshi on the basis of their format lack the sustained wit and contemporaneity now generally associated with the genre. Some works are more like hanashibon, or folk tales. For example, Uso happyaku manbachi-den (Liars' Story), whose authorship is unclear, but which was published in 1781, bears resemblance to stories like the German Incredible Adventures of Baron Munchhausen. The three volumes contain a handful of unconnected stories mainly describing outlandish ways to catch animals, as in the following (see fig. 31).

Fig. 31

> According to Liar, the way to catch sparrows is to sprinkle wine in little hollows in the garden, or scatter around a lot of rice cooked in wine. The sparrows will mistake the wine for water, and as they drink they'll gradually get tipsy and start to stagger around. When you see they can't stand up, you scatter around miscanthus seeds or date seeds. The sparrows will use these as pillows and fall asleep happily. When they all begin to snore, you sweep them all up with a garden broom, and pop them into a basket.[15]

There are also stories of cold countries where wine is sold by the icicle, where whipped green tea freezes and is used as a pumice stone, and calls to dinner cannot be heard until they thaw out in the following spring. In this

kibyōshi, the illustrations don't significantly add to the text, there is little continuity except for the extravagance of the imagination, and the inspiration is in past folk tales rather than in contemporary life.

Also, our selection does not include erotic kibyōshi, although copies have survived of about twenty such works, including Isei sensei yumemakura (Mr Wetdream's Dream-Pillow) written by Koikawa Harumachi around 1789. After an amazing succession of uninhibited orgies, the hero finally snaps out of his dream and, needless to say, lives for ever more enlightened, prosperous and monogamous...[16]

Even so, the selection does give a general idea of the content and flavour of early kibyōshi. Local, topical, witty, satirical and irreverent, the genre allowed free reign to the imagination of both writers and illustrators, and was thoroughly enjoyed by the readers. Didactic comments were usually no more than an additional source of humour. Even serious topics such as economic insecurity were turned upside-down and inside-out. Thus in a 1785 work with a fully-reversible title Kiru na no ne kara kane no naru ki (Don't Cut the Roots of the Gold-bearing Tree), Tōrai Sanna amusingly depicts a couple who go to desperate lengths to get rid of their wealth, but are finally forced to reconcile themselves to their fate. The servants of the household try desperately to beat back the treasure flying to their storage room from all the corners of the world (see fig. 32).

Fig. 32

In gesaku literature, no subject was too sacred to escape the satirist's wit. Classics, culture, religion and current fashions all underwent a comic transformation, so it was only natural that political events should also become a source of kibyōshi humour. In 1784, the son of Senior Councillor Tanuma Okitsugu (1719-88) was assassinated, and in 1786 Tanuma resigned following the death of his patron, the shogun Tokugawa Ieharu. These events provided excellent material for political lampoons, as did the appointment of Matsudaira Sadanobu (1758-1829) as new chief of the Senior Councillors in 1787. Matsudaira soon initiated a series of edicts aimed at the spiritual mobilisation of the samurai class, and the preservation and control of a hierarchical society. Under the shogun Yoshimune, there had been similar attempts made during the Kyōhō era (1716-36), but these had not been administered consistently. Matsudaira's efforts to promote bunbu (the scholarly and the military) were much more severe and far-reaching. It would have been unthinkable for these events to have gone unchallenged and unsung by the gesaku writers, so they were immediately

parodied in numerous kibyōshi, usually with a thin historical camouflage. Kyōden's 1788 Jidai sewa nichō tsuzumi (Past and Present, a Double-barreled Play) was a fairly cautious treatment of the political theme. The sekai is an old legend of the rebel Masakado, who had the ability to appear in seven forms. The hero Hidesato is assigned to overcome him, and there all historical verisimilitude ends. The battle between the two men takes the form of a series of contests involving contemporary amusements and the numbers seven and eight.

Fig. 33

Masakado, aided by his six other ghostly forms, slices up seven serves of namasu (raw fish mixed with vegetables in vinegar). Hidesato counters with lightning speed, using a superior quality knife from a local Edo shop, and presents eight serves (see fig. 33).

Fig. 34

Masakado masquerades in the seven character roles of a well-known Kabuki dance, so Hidesato puts on a one-man show using eight different musical instruments (see fig. 34).

Fig. 35

Masakado writes out the forty-eight sounds of the phonetic system, following each symbol with six commonly used Chinese characters of similar pronunciation, so Hidesato spins eight hoops at once (see fig. 35). Even when all of Masakado's seven forms become visible, Hidesato is saved by a contemporary plaything, an eight-angled glass which multiplies his image. With the help of the thousand-armed Goddess of Mercy, he captures Masakado and beheads him. Seven spirits

fly out of the wound and it is said they can still be seen as seven stars in the evening sky over Kanda (see fig. 36).

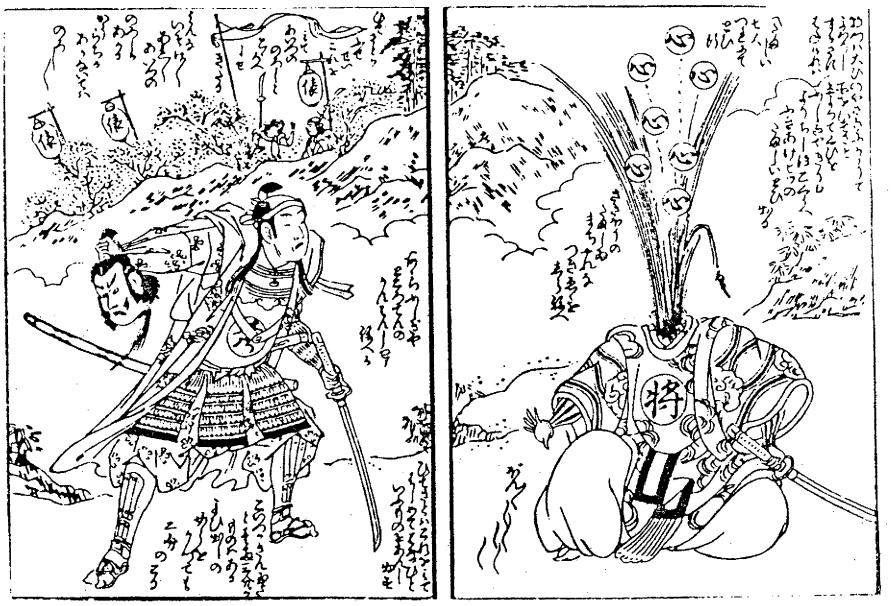


Fig. 36

The allusion to Tanuma's house in Kanda and the parallel suggested between Masakado's seven forms and the seven-star design of Tanuma's insignia would have been obvious to any reader of the time. In the final scene, Hidesato makes an offering for the repose of Masakado's soul, and strikes an actor's pose in full hakama dress. Despite the legend and the period costume, current slang and amusements underscore the metaphorical intention in an amusing way. However the work would hardly seem to present a concerted attack on any particular aspect of the new power of Matsudaira Sadanobu.

Kisanji was less cautious in Bunbu nidō mangoku-tōshi. The title refers to the two paths of the Scholarly and the Military, and to a winnow used by farmers to separate rice from bran. Illustrations were by a student of Utamaro, Yukimaro, who had also collaborated with Kyōden in Jidai sewa nichō tsuzumi. As direct mention of contemporary officials and events was prohibited in popular literature, Kisanji uses the sekai of a Kamakura story of Minamoto

Yoriie's desire to have caves at the foot of Mount Fuji searched. The shogun Yoritomo orders lords to be divided into bun or bu. Minamoto Shigetade (i.e. Matsudaira) achieves this by sending them into a cave in search of the elixir of life. They must chose entrances marked 'Military' or 'Scholarly'. A third way is reserved for the undecided, who slip on yam soup and are sent to Hakone to wash in the hot springs and be subjected to various other humorous sorting devices. A second printing of the work deleted several references in the text and tell-tale insignia in the illustrations, but the author was forbidden by his lord to write any more kibyōshi.

Harumachi continued the controversial trend of the kibyōshi in 1789 with Ōmugaeshi bunbu no futamichi. Ōmu means 'parrot', so the title indicates a re-handling of Kisanji's theme of the previous year. However, it also refers to Ōmu no kotoba, a moralising tract written by Matsudaira in 1786 on the role of the government in the life of the people. The setting is ostensibly in the Engi period (901-923). Sugawara no Michizane (i.e. Matsudaira Sadanobu) attempts to revive the martial arts. However, some samurai run not with swords and others with bows and arrows. Still others disport themselves with courtesans and homosexuals under the pretext of horse-riding practice (see fig. 37).

Fig. 37

In order to rectify this, with typical anachronistic abandon, the Heian scholar Ōe no Masafusa is called in to instruct them on the way of the Saints and the Scholars, using a 'Mina-bird Book' which suggests Matsudaira's tract. Soon all the citizens are deeply engrossed in classical studies of morality (see fig. 38, 39).

Fig. 39

Fig. 38

In the end the phoenix descends, symbol of a peaceful reign. Harumachi was not so fortunate. He was summoned to answer charges relating to this mockery of the proclamations, pleaded illness, and died, or committed suicide, before the case could be examined.

Kisanji and Harumachi were not the only victims of official censure. A 1789 kibyōshi by Ishibe Kinkō treating the Sano assassination incident and Tanuma corruption was banned. The author was punished and then banished from Edo. The illustrator of this work, Kokubyaku mizukagami (The Black and White Water-Mirror) was none other than Kyōden, and he was also fined. It is generally believed that Kyōden considered giving up writing popular fiction around this time, but was dissuaded by the publisher Tsutaya Jūzaburō. His 1789 work Kōshijima toki ni aizome (Confucian Stripes, Timely Dyes of Blue) was inspired by the Kansei Reform encouragement of Confucianism, but whereas Kisanji and Harumachi wrote of samurai, Kyōden wrote of commoners. Using the miraiki style of story set in the future, he shows a world so throughly reformed that people despise money, obey the moral tenets literally and accept government rule wholeheartedly. At a time when the country had been plagued with economic instability, diseases, fire, famine, volcanic eruptions and peasant rebellion, it must have caused many a wry smile to see a thug tie a traveller to a tree, surround him with swords, clothes and money, and run off in nothing but a loin cloth (see fig. 40).

Fig. 40

Due to an excess of virtue, the sky rains gold coins, at which the citizens put up their umbrellas and complain about the bad weather! (see fig. 41).

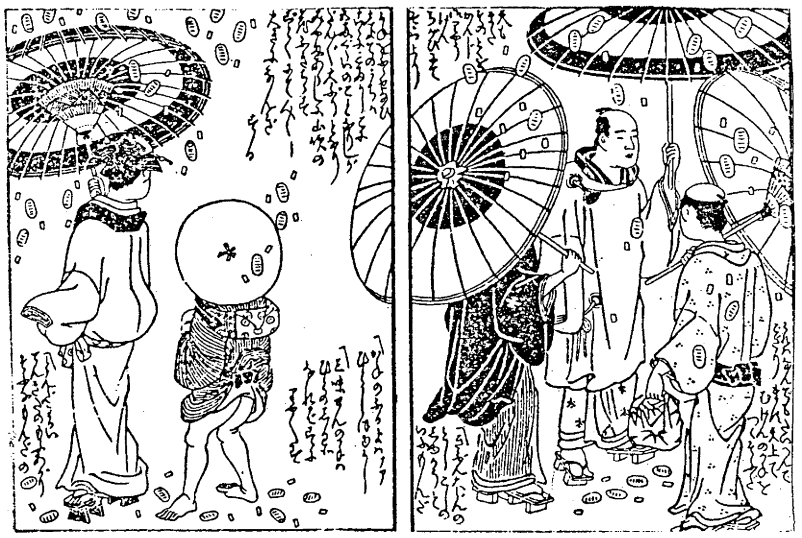


Fig. 41

A very similar theme had been treated in a very similar way by Tōrai Sanna in the same year. Although his Tenka ichimen kagami no umebachi was not particularly different from the reversed logic of his 1785 Kiru na no ne kara kane no naru ki, the work was banned. Kyōden's escape from censure may have been due to a more subtle handling of the theme, or from his popularity, but the most convincing reason would be that he did not share Tōrai's samurai status. Even so, Kyōden was obviously affected by such severe enforcements of censorship, and his work became increasingly moralistic intone. Such caution is understandable given the tenor of the 1790 edict. After referring to the legislation of the Kyōhō era as a standard in the suppression of depraved, unorthodox or useless books, Matsudaira noted:

> There have been books since times long past and no more are necessary, so there ought to be no more new books. If the necessity does arise, inquiries must be made at the City Commissioner's office and his instructions followed.

> Recently some wicked children's books have appeared which are ostensibly set in ancient times; henceforth these are to be regarded as undesirable....
>
> Nobody may make baseless rumors into kana books and lend them to anyone who will pay the fee....
>
> No book may be put on sale if the author is not known.[17]

It may be difficult for modern readers to understand the severity of punishment meted out to writers and publishers of 'wicked children's books', although political censorship is hardly unknown to the twentieth century. If censorship implies fear, what possible threat did the kibyōshi pose for the established order? One possible reason is official disapproval of frivolous writing by men of samurai status, who were expected to maintain carefully defined standards of behaviour in the eyes of a society organised on rather rigid hierarchical lines. However, it is also possible that the type of exaggeration, paradox and fantasy so prevalent in kibyōshi was seen as a challenge to the authorities. Early kyōkunbon were a popular vehicle for presenting the moral and social tenets of the times. Sharebon were bound harmlessly to the narrow world of the pleasure quarters. Kibyōshi differed in their imaginative power to reverse the present real world order and to create an imaginary scenario where the rules were amusingly distorted or reversed, and may therefore have been suspected of nurturing a spirit of rebellion. Laughter can be a powerful weapon, and in the centre of absurdity there is often a hard kernel of truth, such that the humour depends on the reader's awareness of a dialectic between what is said and what is implied. In Harumachi's Ōmugaeshi bunbu no futamichi, the miraculous effect of the moral tract upon the behaviour and demeanour of the people is an absurdity, and

provides a very obvious comment on those who seek to enforce such a rigid code. By taking the present situation to its extreme or by looking at it from a completely different point of view, it is possible to suggest an alternative. In one form or another, such inversion of the accepted norms has been a great source of humour and social comment in the literature of many countries throughout the ages.

The relation between 'symbolic inversion' in art and social or political unrest has been discussed in an interesting essay on European broadsheets by David Kunzle.[18] The sixty broadsheets he examined dated from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, and nearly all carried the title World Upside Down, or its equivalent in another language. They were sheets printed in a regular grid pattern, and were covered with amusing, sometimes grotesque illustrations of reversals in the natural or social world. For example, the cart would go before the horse, women would wage war, ships would travel over land or men would serve animals at the table. Such prints stood halfway between nonsense and protest, particularly in Germany, where increasing social disorder following the peasant revolt in 1525 was reflected in broadsheets showing peasants attacking members of the Church or aristocracy. The relation between disorder in nature and disruption in society is also quite overtly alluded to in a verse on the title page of a satirical work by the German writer Christoph von Grimmelshauser, The Topsy-turvy World of the Adventurous Simplicissimus (1672). The book deals with tne horror of the Thirty Years War,

and the following verse describes the frontispiece:

> The stag lays low the bold hunter,
> the ox may kill the butcher, the poor man
> carries taxes to the rich, the soldier
> bestirs himself to labor, the peasant takes
> up arms, Such things the world may bring
> about.[19]

In English chapbooks of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,the subversive potential of the broadsheet was largely emasculated in collections of proverbs and moral observations. Although often cleverly devised and illustrated, the English chapbooks were far less revolutionary than their continental counterparts.

The political threat of the European broadsheets was reflected in occasional censorship and punishment. An awareness of a similar danger is evident in the deliberate alterations to some kibyōshi wood-blocks for reprinting. For example, in Bunbu nidō mangoku-tōshi, an offending plum design crest (five blocked-in circles around a central circle) was simply effaced for the third reprinting. In the same work, there was originally a group of four men whose clothes clearly carried the key symbols 田 (Tanuma Okitsugu), 松 (Matsumoto Izu-no-kami), 伊 (Ii Kamon-no-kami), and 三 (Saegusa Tosa-no-kami). These crests were all altered in subsequent reprinting to avoid offence to important political personalities.

It is difficult to gauge just how subversive kibyōshi were intended to be. Reputable Japanese scholars like Nakamura Yukihiko and Mizuno Minoru deny that the genre was ever intended to make any serious comment on life or society. However it is highly unlikely that such severe repression would have been administered unless there was fear of a pernicious effect on public behaviour or morale. At

the very least, one could say that kibyōshi provided an outlet for laughter over points of disagreement with the authorities. And, as Nietzsche remarked so succinctly: 'Objections, digressions, gay mistrust, the delight in mockery are signs of health: everything unconditional belongs in pathology'.[20]

Unfortunately, such 'gay mistrust' was not to be tolerated by those in power in Edo, as was most emphatically and unambiguously stated in the 1790 edict against 'wicked children's books'. In the same year Kyōden's illustrations in Shingaku hayasomekusa (Very Excellent Shingaku Dye) showed small men whose heads are simply circles containing the character 善 zen (good) or 悪 aku (bad). The forces of evil plot to corrupt the pure heart of the hero, Ritarō (see fig. 42).

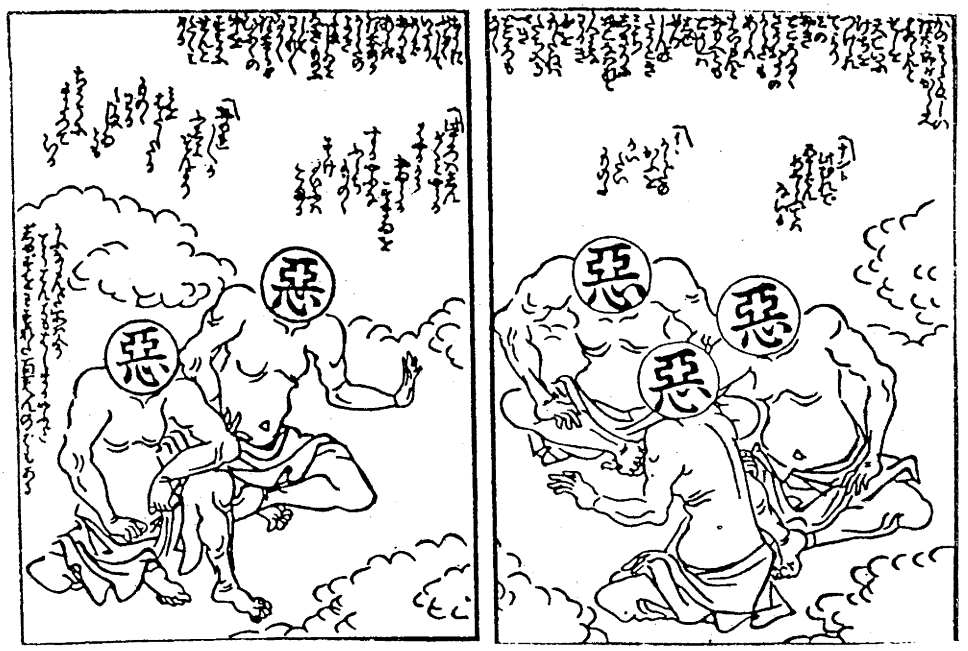


Fig. 42

The subtleties of past kibyōshi here succumb to a personified battle between the warring elements of man's conscience. Of course, good triumphs over evil. Shingaku was a school of moral philosophy strong at

the time. It fused Shintoism, Buddhism and Confucianism and used simple explanations and metaphors to educate the common people. Even so, a third printing of Shingaku hayasomekusa was refused. Possibly there was a fear that the akudama ('bad guy') would become too popular. More likely, Kyōden's numerous disclaimers of satirical intent were viewed with some suspicion. After all, even moral precepts could be titillating, as the following scene reveals! (see fig. 43).

Fig. 43.

> Everyone retired for the evening, and soon a courtesan came in. Those bad spirits took the girl's hand and unloosened Ritarō's sash. They fitted the two snugly together, then took Ritarō's hand and shoved it way down the girl's collar. Ritaro felt he'd completely dissolve and...
> [Girl] Won't you come a little closer? Ooh! You're so cold.
> [Bad Spirit 1] Yes, ma'am!
> [Bad Spirit 2] What'll we do if his father disinherits him?
> [Bad Spirit 3] Well, that's all for tonight, folks. Da-da-a-a-a! [21]

Ritarō's behaviour vacillates according to the dominating moral force within him. This is clearly schematised in the scene where he debates whether or not to return home

from a house of pleasure (see fig. 44).

Fig. 44

Although Kyōden's kibyōshi still retained a good deal of his typical wit and charm, the imposition of a layer of didacticism set some constraints on the free range of his imagination after 1790.

A decisive blow to the kibyōshi came in a 1792 incident concerning three of Kyōden's sharebon. Despite the words Kyōkun yomihon (Didactic Reading-matter) being rather incongruously printed on their covers, all three were banned. Kyōden received fifty days house arrest, the publisher Tsutaya Jūzaburō had half his wealth confiscated, and three book-dealers were banished from Edo. Censorship was strict indeed, and it was becoming difficult to escape the eyes of the law by simply tagging on a moralistic aside. Considering this, it is interesting to compare Harumachi's 1775 dream story to Kyōden's 1794 Kinkin sensei zōka no yume (Mr Glitter's Dream of Creation). It begins with a reference to the first kibyōshi of two decades before, and continues in this vein:

Long, long ago, a man called Mr Glitter had a dream like Rosei. Then he realised that the world of pleasure is like a dream, so he gave up business and lived an aimless life day and night. However, one day he thought he'd eat some green tea over rice, and had another dream while the tea was brewing. In this dream, he was led by a child to meet a fairy being, who had decided to show him the error of his judgement. First, the fairy offered him green tea over rice. This was no simple process. Trees had to be cut down and hewn into chopsticks, and myriads of people were involved in producing the bowl and the vegetable accompaniment. Busy little fairies had to tug on the roots of the rice seedlings to encourage their growth. Inspired by such industry, Mr Glitter awoke with strengthened resolve and went out to seek his fortune.

Kyōden's work was increasingly weighed down by precept and mannerism as the satirical wit of earlier kibyōshi gave way to an explicatory style based on double structure.[22] In a 1796 work, Hitogokoro kagami no utsushi-e (True Hearts in a Mirror Image), the author is shown holding a mirror which will reflect the true feelings behind people's actions. A severe father chasing away his wastrel son is sorrowing inwardly, an old woman devoutly at prayer is dreaming of pulling her daughter-in-law's hair, and so on. With minor variations, this form of moral allegory was repeated by Kyōden in many works written between 1799 and 1803, and became a rather hackneyed device.
Similarly, he wrote several kibyōshi comparing life to a journey, and whereas the moralistic 'happy endings' of early kibyōshi had not really affected the overall structure, these were sustained representations of shingaku themes.

Also, they implied a moral stance and a basic foundation of reason or logic, qualities inimical to the muda of the 'true' kibyōshi. Although Kyōden's works were still very entertaining, the threat of censorship had successfully dampened the free-wheeling irreverent wit of earlier days. In 1804, Sakusha tainai totsuki no zu (The Author's Ten-month Pregnancy) depicted the author, complete with 'Kyōden nose', suffering through the gestation of a new work. There is a recipe giving the necessary ingredients, and top of the list is kyōkun (moral precept). Such a change in emphasis from muda and tsū to kyōkun, cannot be attributed solely to political pressure. Commercial factors were no doubt also a contributing factor. From 1795, Kyōden was receiving manuscript fees from Tsutaya. The wider the reading public, the more lucrative it would be, so it is hardly surprising to see a tendency towards a more accessible, if prosaic, form of humour. Early kibyōshi had made a mockery of samurai ethics and tales of revenge. By contrast, a 1795 work by Nansensho Somahito called Katakiuchi gijo no hanabusa (A Dutiful Woman's Revenge) tells the completely humourless story of a girl who sacrifices herself to save her father, who is her lover's sworn enemy (see fig. 45).

Fig. 45

Such stories completely lacked the satirical element so fundamental to early kibyōshi, but since they were not dependent on an intimate knowledge of Edo mores, they were very suitable for nation-wide distribution.

Stories became more involved, so up to five volumes were bound together as gōkan. Illustrations were now inadequate to express the complexities of situation and character, and from being vital to an understanding of the text they were reduced to a largely decorative role. The new demand was for more complicated themes of true love and sincerity, stories which have been referred to slightingly as nakibon ('sob stories'). While writers like Shikitei Samba may have held a nostalgic preference for the succinct, satirical kibyōshi of earlier times, the literature of the dilettante was replaced by that of the professional. Samba was one of many writers who recognised this and adapted his pen to the times. In 1806 he wrote a gōkan of ten volumes published in two books, Ikazuchi Tarō gōaku monogatari, which can be seen as marking the end of the kibyōshi, both in form and in style. Even so, he consciously differentiated between sharebon, kibyōshi and yomihon, which were togashi (superior quality cakes) and later commercial genres of the nineteenth century, kokkeibon, gōkan and ninjōbon, which were dagashi (cheap candy).

In a 1802 sharebon titled Seirō konabedate, one of the characters says: 'Overseas or in Japan, past or present, people's nature is the same everywhere. If you write about such human realities your book will never become outdated'.[23] It was precisely the lack of such universality

which had originally attracted intellectuals to the kibyōshi. While possessing far more variety of subject than the sharebon, the kibyōshi was closely dependent on topical events, current fashions and gakuya ochi. Deciphering these references was an essential part of the reader's enjoyment. Nowadays there is a need for more detailed knowledge of the literary devices and mental attitude of the gesaku culture. Once this has been acquired, kibyōshi provide a fascinating insight into eighteenth-century Edo society, language,illustration, fashion, etiquette, literature, entertainment, politics and, above all, satirical humour.

Notes on Chapter Three

1. Mori Senzō, Kibyōshi kaidai, pp.14-15.
2. Mizuno Mori et al. (ed.), Kibyōshi sharebon-shū, p.34.
3. Ibid., pp.35-36.
4. Ibid., p.61.
5. Ibid., p.62.
6. Koike Masatane et al. (ed.), Edo no gesaku ehon, vol.1, p.37.
7. Ibid., p.38.
8. Hamada Giichirō et al. (ed.), Kibyōshi senryū kyōka, p.70.
9. Ibid., p.71.
10. Ibid., p.78.
11. Koike Masatane et al. (ed.), Edo no gesaku ehon, vol.3, p.44.
12. Hamada Giichirō et al. (ed.), Kibyōshi senryū kyōka, p.120.
13. Ibid., pp.121-122.
14. Ibid., pp.122-123.
15. Ibid., p.89.
16. See Araki, James I., 'The Dream Pillow in Edo Fiction, 1772-81' in Monumenta Nipponica, vol.25, pp.98-105.
17. Translated by Kornicki, Peter F. in 'Nishiki no ura an Instance of Censorship and the Structure of a sharebon', in Monumenta Nipponica, vol.32, p.156.
18. Kunzle, David, 'World Upside Down: The Iconography of a European Broadsheet Type', in Babcock Barbara A. (ed.), The Reversible World - Symbolic Inversion of Art and Society.
19. Ibid., translated on p.82.
20. Ibid., translated on p.29.
21. Mizuno Minoru, Kibyōshi sharebon-shū, pp.207-208.
22. This description of later allegorical works by Kyōden is based on Mizuno Minoru, Santō Kyōden no kibyōshi, pp.39-52.
23. Quoted in Mizuno Minoru, Kibyōshi sharebon no sekai, p.205.

APPENDIX ONE

Kikujūsō (Chryanthemum Notes)

Kikujūsō was published in three volumes early in 1781 by Urokogataya and contains assessments of forty-seven kibyōshi available to the public in the New Year. It was written by Ōta Nampo under the pen-name Yomo Sannin. He may have incorporated opinions of a circle of friends, but moulded them together through skilful use of puns and allusions to create a unified semi-fictional work. The following translation is based on the version in Hasegawa Junichirō (ed.), Tokugawa bungei ruiju (vol.182), pp.35-54.

A general description of Kikujūsō is in the chapter on eighteenth-century gesaku assessments (pp.51-53). The greeting is followed by a list of new publications containing a rating, the title (sometimes preceded by a super-title), the publisher, a witty comment and the name of an actor. One or more syllables act as a pivot for a pun linking the comment with the name of the actor, and this pivot will be indicated in square brackets directly after each title. Next there is a comic story of the genesis of the kibyōshi and detailed assessments of each new title. To assist the reader I have given these titles in Romanized script, and notes on the greeting and the 'history of the kibyōshi' follow the translation.

Picture storybook assessments

Kikujūsō

Volume One

The New Year has arrived, the stork takes flight, doorways are gaily decorated and the entrance to the god's cavern is suddenly thrown open. People give way to each other on the rice-field paths, and peace reigns from east to west. Yet, most extraordinary things can happen, especially when you pass through the gateway to the pleasure quarter, where vines grow on the woven bamboo fences.[1]

[This greeting is analysed in detail in the notes. Apart from images of New Year, peace and the pleasure quarter, it also contains the names of the eight main publishing houses, Tsuruya, Matsumura, Iwadoya, Murata, Nishimura, Iseji, Okumura and Tsutaya, woven into the text through word play. These are subsequently written with the suffix za in imitation of theatres mentioned in traditional assessments of actors].

The Year of the Bull [1781]

General list of new publications of picture storybooks.

Hero role

The works are listed with reference to the names of actors from the three official theatres [Nakamura-za, Morita-za and Ichimura-za] but the order is no reflection on the rank of the actors.

1. Most extremely outstanding

   50 years of prosperity for 50 penn'orth of noodles

   A Dream Worth Seeing

   Tsutaya-za

   A New Year dream for 1,000 farthings is the best value in the world.

   Ichikawa Danjūrō

   [Sankoku ichikawa danjūrō

   Sankoku ichi means the best in the three countries India, China and Japan, and therefore in the whole world.]

2. Very outstanding

   Passing the Ataka Barrier

   Iseji-za

   The joker Benkei leads his troupe with all the wisdom of age

   Kōjirō

   [Sūnen no kōjirō

   Sūnen no kō means the wisdom which comes with age.]

3. Outstanding

   Abracadabra

   The Treasure

   Okumura-za

We have never yet seen someone lending money to a pawnbroker

Mittsugorō

[ima da mizugorō

Mizu is a negative form of miru, to see.]

4. Outstanding

The Devil's Child

Iseji-za

When even the devil loses his horns, we all give up

Danzō

[rokudanme no danzō

The rokudanme or sixth act of the play Kanadehon Chūshingura was particularly famous for the seppuku scene of Kampei, a role here associated with the actor Danzō. There is also a pun on dame, or no good.]

5. Outstanding

A New Year Dream of Golden Wealth

Iwado-za

He was one of the five men

Ishikawa no Monnotsuke

[sono ichikawa no monnotsuke

Sono ichi means one of a group.]

6. Outstanding

Is it Fuji or is it Asama?

The Noodle-shop Competition

Tsuruya-za

Fuji is challenged by Asama

Sōjūrō

[sōjūrō

Sōrō is an old verb ending equivalent to desu.]

7. Very very very good

Outstanding success

Okumura-za

The money came out from under the mat. Gosh!

Yaozō

[oyaozō

Oya is an expression of suprise.]

8. Very very very good

A Mistaken Meal by Moonlight

Okumura-za

There's a reference to Kakkyo, the filial son in the old Chinese legend

Hikusaburō

[koji o hikusaburō

Koji o hiku means to quote or refer to a past event.]

9. Very very good

Modern Picture of Seven Smiling Faces

Iseji-za

The seven Lucky Gods seek alms from house to house

Yodogorō

[mizuguruma no yodogorō

Both the expression for begging and the name of the actor contain characters relating to water, namely mizu 水 and yodo 淀].

10. Very very good

Asahina Plays with the Children

Nishimura-za

Instead of the Hotei [God of Prosperity] let it be known that it is really Asahina

Shirōjūrō

[shirōjūrō

Shirō is an imperative form of the verb shiru, to know. Asahina was one of Yoritomo's men, reknowned for his great strength, and is likened to the plump god Hotei. Presumably the actor Shirōjūrō was of a similar build.]

11. Good

The Suruga Revenge

Iwado-za

12. Good

The Fish-sword Revenge

Iseji-za

13. Very outstanding

The Devil's Heir

Iwado-za

The devil's son is still just a child

Hinatsuke

[bakemono no hinatsuke

Hina means a young bird, and here denotes the offspring of the bakemono, or devil.]

Villain role

14. Extremely outstanding

Mistaken Treasure-boat

Tsuruya-za

One of the best among the works from Tsuruya

Nakazō

[ōku no nakazō

Ōi means many, so ōku no naka is one of the many.]

15. Very outstanding

You won't find anything like it elsewhere

The Origin of the Ultimate Dandy

Iwado-za

It's bad to walk off the main path

Tomoemon

[Warutomoemon

Tomo is a suffix used for emphasis, and here follows the adjective warui, or bad.]

16. Outstanding

A Modern Dandy's View of Buddha Image

Tsuruya-za

What a small world where people talk about borrowing money even in front of the reclining Buddha

Hiroemon

[Semai sekai no hiroemon

Semai sekai means a narrow or small world. This gives a pun on hiroi, or wide.]

17. Outstanding

People and places

The Essential Dandy

Matsumura-za

The finger-cutting sword is hidden in the lake

Nakamura Tsukegorō

[ike no nakamura tsukegorō

Ike no naka means within the lake.]

18. Very excellent

The sparrow's revenge

The Careless Gray Cat

Tsuruya-za

Cats just love catnip

Matataro

[mata tabi no matataro

Matatabi means catnip, and the initial sound is repeated to give the actor's name.]

19. Outstanding

Is the god at home?

The Crab Caught Hold of the Burdock Root

Okumura-za

The monkey decided to go on a pilgrimage around Shikoku to turn into a human

Miurazaemon

[mawatte miura zaemon

Mawatta miru means to go around and see something. There was a story of a monkey whose piety led to promotion to manhood.]

20. Outstanding

Good fortune

The God Daitoku Daydreams of Silver

Iwadō-za

Even Daitoku borrows money and waits for inspiration

Matsutsuke

[saikaku o matsu tsuke

Saikaku means ready wit or resourcefulness and matsu means to wait.]

Enemy role

21. Outstanding

A Collection of Proverbs

Okumura-za

So much nonsense

Kaneimon

[Karasu to kaneimon

The title contains the expression karasu no gyōsui 烏行水, which means to take a quick bath, like a crow which flits in and out of water. The same

three characters are repeated in a different order in the comment to give two phrases meaning 'nonsense tale'. The first is mizukakeron, or futile argument. The second is sagi to karasu, literally 'the heron and the crow', which suggests someone trying to argue white black. Also, there was a popular slang expression, ippai nomikakeyama no kangarasu, meaning to drink a lot. The reversal of the last two characters give karasu to kan, which provides the link with the actor's name.

22. Outstanding

Mixed-up Tales of Old

Tsuruya-za

Stories about Saimyōji Temple and Flower-blossom Grandpa are all confused

Kojirō

[mazekojirō

Mazekoze means mixed-up or confused.]

23. Excellent

Bunbuku's inexhaustible tea urn

Tarō's New Moustache

Nishimura-za

Waiting for the Ryōgoku pleasure-quarter druggist's miracle hair restorant to work

Matsumoto Daishichi

[hige no haeru matsumoto daishichi

Matsu means to wait, and refers back to hige no haeru, the beard or moustache which should grow.]

24. Very very good

The Engagement and the Catfish

Murata-za

The bad woman's determination turns him into a catfish

Sōsaburō

[sōsaburō

Sō is a variation of sō desu, used to report information. Namazu to natta sō thus means that it seems or has been heard that he turned into a catfish.]

25. Very good

And Then What a Surprise!

Tsutaya-za

He clearly wants to become a dandy

Miurazō

[tsū nomiurazō

Tsū is a term for sophistication, frequently used in relation to the world of the pleasure quarters, and nomi is an adverbial emphasis meaning only.]

26. Good

Add a Touch of Parody

Nishimura-za

27. Good

Twisting the Devil's Nose

Okumura-za

28. Good

A comic story

The Goblet

Murata-za

Comic role

29. Very outstanding

The son's miracle cure

An Efficacious Medicine

Tsutaya-za

Having money is better than an elixir of life

Tokuji

[okane o motsu ga ōki ni tokuji

Okane o motsu means to have money

This is considered ōki ni toku, or a considerable advantage.]

30. Very good

The Story of Stupid Tarōzaemon

Iseji-za

Whatever you say, he's no idiot

Sengoku Hikotsuke

[untsuku ni sengoku hikotsuke

Untsuku is a pejorative adjective meaning idiotic, and sen is a colloquial form of shimasen]

31. Very outstanding

The dance of the seven costume changes

The Mad Woman

Tsutaya-za

However many times we see it we never tire of the story of the bell at Dōjōji temple

Kikunojō

[Kane o kikunojō

This refers to the famous Kabuki story of Dōjōji with a pun on kane o kiku, or listening to the bell.]

32. Outstanding

A foreign land

The Goods on Display in Yoshiwara

Matsumura-za

The girls are as beautiful as Yōkihi

Iwai Hanshirō

[nantomo iwaihanshirō

Nantomo iwanai means something is beyond description, and is often used at the end of a sentence as an exclamation.

Here the phrase is changed to nantomo iwaihanshirō to give the actor's name. Yōkihi was a high-born Chinese princess.]

33. Excellent

Buying Girls on the Cheap

Matsumura-za

So often the girl you buy is just a slut

Tokoyo

[Jorōkai no tokoyo

Jorōkai refers to buying women, that is, sleeping with prostitutes, and tokoyo no kuni means paradise.]

34. Excellent

Ah! The World doesn't go as you'd like it to.

Tsutaya-za

Advice to the client - please understand my woman's heart

Kumejirō

[onnagokoro o kumejirō

Onnagokoro means a woman's feelings and kume is an imperative form of kumu, to understand something correctly.

35. Very very good

Edo-style Flowering Kimono Sleeves

Murata-za

The young girl becomes one with her lover Kichisaburō

Kichisaburō

[In Ihara Saikaku's 1686 collection of stories, Kōshoku gonin onna, or Five Women Who Loved Love, there is a story of Yaoya Oshichi, the greengrocer's daughter who was sentenced to death for the fires she lit in order to be reunited with her lover Kichisaburō.]

36. Very very good

Disguise of the field mouse

The Quail Dancing Girl

Iseji-za

For a courtesan, the most important thing is knowing how to take a tumble.

Daimangiku

[daiichi daimangiku

Daiichi means the most essential thing.

The sound dai is repeated to give the actor's name.]

37. Very very good

Southern states, northern states

A Pleasure-quarter Parody of the Taiheiki Chronicle

Matsumura-za

If only the parody of the Taiheiki had been a little better, we'd have given this a Very outstanding rating

Kichiji

[mo chitto de jōjōkichiji

Jōjōkichi was a high rating, but for this kibyōshi the character for kichi shows only the top half, in outline ( ). This sound also provides the link for the actor's name, Kichiji.]

38. Good

Lipstick saucer, broken saucer

A Story from Ōshū Province

Nishimura-za

39. Good

Good luck

Peppery Miso Soup

Nishimura-za

40. Very outstanding

Perfect vows, perfect dandies

Good Luck Spreads Wide like a Fan

Tsutaya-za

His forte is affairs with the girls from the Hanaogi House

Rikō

[etemono no rikō

Etemono means one's speciality or strong point and Rikō means clever.]

41. Outstanding

The Theatre Role of onna shibaraku

Tsuruya-za

Let's stop all this nonsense. There's some kind of iris in the swamp

Yoshizawa

[muda wa yoshizawa de ... ayame

Muda is nonsense and yoshi is a familiar imperative of yosu, to stop.

Sawa is the swamp or marsh where the ayame grows.

Thus, a division of the actor's name gives two syntactical functions.]

Young man role

42. Outstanding

The era of the dandy

The Dog's Wedding

Matsumura-za

Even the dog has his day

Sanokawa Ichimatsu

[ureshisa no kawa ichimatsu

Ureshisa means happiness, expressed by the dog wagging

its tail. There also seems to be a pun on kawa, meaning river and kao, meaning face, as one can describe a person's feelings by the look on their face.]

43. Outstanding

Proverb

For Rice Cakes go to a Rice-cake Shop

Matsumura-za

There's a long list of rice cake puns which we could have done without

Komazō

[satte mo yoi Komazō

Satte mo yoi means something could well be omitted and yoi is also used to qualify the actor's name.]

Child role

44. Fairly good

A gift from Edo

A Speciality of Ōtsu Province

Iwado-ya

45. Fairly good

The Devil's Cherished Daughter

Nishimura-za

46. So-so

The Lucky Bran-shop Mouse

Murata-za

47. Also extraordinary outstanding

The First Momotarō

Murata-za

Devils Island is really quite big

Hiroji

[Onigashima wa satte mo hiroji

Satte mo means very, with an exclamatory nuance.

Thus, even Devils Island is hiroi, or wide.]

Chanter role [publishers]

Tsuruya

Murataya

Okumura

Matsumura

Nishimura

Iseji

Iwadoya

Tsutaya

Writer role

Kisanji

Shiba Zenkō

Tsūshō

Kashō

Nandaka Shiran [literally, I dunno what it is!]

Zewasai

Fūsha

Fujin Kiyū

Illustrator role

Kitao Shigemasa

Torii Kiyonaga

Kitao Masanobu [i.e. Santō Kyōden]

Kitao Masami

Katsukawa Shunshō

Kitao Sanjirō

Borrowing the Hōjō Treasure - Who Can Carp at Kassai Tarō's New Year Bill of Fare?[2]: Hear ye! Hear ye! The New Year's curtain raiser is set in the world of the Soga brothers, in Kamakura's seven busy valleys[3]. There you can see the roads leading to Wada and Chichibu province, the rows of eaves along Yuki-no-shita town and the water conduits of Hoshi-no-ido well. The old earth prisons are now used as warehouses and there is a bridge over the Nameri River. It was here that the daimyo Aota dropped his purse and at great expense made everyone search for it[4]. Now the money is exacted as a toll from passers-by. At Yuigahama beach there's a board walk where you can hire rooms in tea-houses such as Sumiya or Shikian. In Ōgi-ga-yatsu valley there's singing and dancing[5] and in Hiki-ga-yatsu valley you can hear sounds of the koto and samisen[6]. On Kobukuro slope in Yuki-no-shita, a little girl tumbled over into the sea[7], but bobbed up again clinging to a shell at Miura beach[8]. There's a lot of noisy drinking and the banner of the theatre group waves in the shade of the gingko trees. There are avenues of mandarin trees[9], and rows of people come from afar early in the morning to see the shows, seated on raised platforms, or to visit temples[10]. Kewaizaka slope is a scene of bustling activity. Flowers are planted along Naka-no-chō in spring, and in autumn the lanterns are set adrift for the bon festival, giving the city an indescribable air of prosperity[11]. Years ago, horses used to set out from here on hunting trips to the foot of Mount Fuji[12]. Nearby, there lived a good merchant called Uroko[13]. For a long time he had many business dealings with the daimyo of Kamakura. One day

he'd be serving Lord Kajiwara and the next he'd be organising a banquet for Lord Wada[14]. He also enjoyed special favour in Lord Hōjō's estate. Taking the character masa from the name of Lord Tokimasa, he called himself Masabei and was often involved in preparing festivities. Now, there was another retainer called Sano Genzaemon who had once been very poor, but suddenly became extremely wealthy under the Hōjō's special patronage[15]. At one luxurious feast, Sano summoned all the most celebrated beauties of Kewaizaka - Umegae from Kaga House, Sakurai from Etchū House and Matsueda from Ueno House. They all drank and caroused together, but afterwards Sano went to Hōjō's house and stole the family treasure. Then he asked Uroko to place it in pawn for him. Now, with regard to this treasure - in his young days, Hōjō had visited the unveiling of a Buddha image at Benten shrine on Enoshima Island[16]. He took a lantern marked with the first character of his name, and set off very early in the morning to pray. Benzaiten appeared in female form, and they had a brief affair in the dark rooms of a tea-house[17]. As a pledge that Hōjō's prayers of victory would be answered, instead of the finger nail usually offered by a courtesan, the goddess gave three dragon scales, which were no doubt the source of Hōjō's later wealth. But even a valuable thing like this ended up being handed over to the pawn shop[18], where it stayed for eight months. The agreed term came to an end at the time of last year's summer floods. The clerk's notification came when the water level of the Tone River was at its highest[19], and unfortunately the treasure was washed away[20]. When the lord heard of this, he reduced

Genzaemon to his former rank of masterless samurai and Uroko was refused admittance to the house. Like an itinerant fishmonger offering his wares outside the famous fish shop at Uotoridome, he saw no prospect of success. He wanted to trace the treasure and be reinstated in his former position of wealth but even if he knew where the treasure was he didn't have any money to redeem it. In recent years, copies of the Mugen bell have been set up here and there[21]. People say that the shrine for the God of Commerce gives little return, and that the image of the God of Six Desires is a fake. In this busy grasping world, the hundreds of people who visit the shrines have no interest to spare for the subtle beauty of the evening bells, flowers or fruit[22]. It seemed there was no way out, but one night he had a strange dream. He thought he could see some insignia in the black cloak of darkness before him[23]. They were the horns of a bull which had suddenly loomed up out of the night. Ah! How strange! It was the Year of the Bull, and the Hour of the Bull. Could the appearance of the bull be true? Or was it a delusion?[24]. While he stood there wondering, the bull set off, its horns weaving in and out like wasps, and its tail gently swishing behind. Thinking it might give him a clue to the whereabouts of the treasure, Urcko followed along behind. On they went, and farther on[25]. They were about thirteen miles from Kamakura when they finally arrived at a temple. In an old story, a woman was led by a bull to the Zenkōji temple in Shinano prefecture but in this case it was Kōfukuji temple in Musashi province[26]. In front of the Gate of the

Bull, that huge bull suddenly disappeared with a splash into the pool[27]. Water gushed up and fell back down several thousand feet like the waterfall at Dragon Gate[28]. A carp emerged from the water, flapping its tail and waving its fins[29]. Suddenly it changed into a flying dragon and said:

> Hey! Just listen to this, Uroko! I'm a carp from Taro's restaurant in Kassai-ga-yatsu valley, Kamakura. I lived in the fish pond for a long time. Just as they put me on a cutting board and I thought my last day had come, you went into the pawnshop and handed over the treasure, thanks to which my life was miraculously saved. They say three more hairs would make a man of a monkey. Well, three more scales made a dragon of this carp. I heard that my mother helped Hojo at the Benten shrine in Enoshima. It seems she gave him three scales, but that wretch Sano Genzaemon played around with wine, women and song, and ended up stealing the treasure, which he asked you to pawn. When it was swept away in that flood, I assumed the name Koikawa Harumachi[30], changed to human form, climbed onto a floating old tree and easily got hold of the three scales. However it seemed rather selfish that you should suffer so I thought I'd help you too. I made a request at the Shrine of the Bull over there, and that's how you were summoned. Now, the Japanese word for scale, koke, sounds the same as the word for stupid, and the last thing anyone needs in the present day of elegance is stupidity of any sort[31]. At the top there are great people like Hojo, and below there are townspeople like you. High and low, great and small, everyone wants to be elegant, so the scales are best left in my possession. Your house has a long history. Long ago, you were permitted into the closest confidence of Minamoto no Yorinobu. You also served Taketsura Kimpira and in the time of Flower-blossom Grandpa outfitted Momotaro for his assault on Devils Island. You were a faithfully retainer of Cut-tongue Sparrow and assisted the rabbit in his exploits countless times[32]. Throughout the ages you've kept your records, and now that the Blue Book is enjoying a popularity boom, you've settled down next to the Torii gateway at Kamakura where you join forces with people like Kiyonobu, Kiyomasa and Kyomitsu to spread New Year publications throughout the land[33]. Some time ago, in Horeki 10, the Year of the Dragon [1762], the publisher Marusho was the first to add the name of the author Joi in a book, and to print the front title page in red ink[34]. Since multi-

> coloured pictures hadn't been introduced at that time, everyone considered it a great novelty, and here and there other books used the same style of coloured title. You were the only one to stick to the old custom of a green title-slip on a red cover, and to preserve the old slang jokes. Thinking about it, when the dandy Mr Glitter appeared with his dream of twenty years of prosperity, the Kamakura storybooks completely changed. They really got off the ground and became fun reading for adults[35]. Nowadays there are many books in the new style, and even you print the titles in red, unlike before. Now, in exchange for the scales, I'm going to teach you the secrets of true elegance[36]. With this little volume, you'll be master of all arts, more witty than any street story-teller, able to go anywhere and do anything. You'll be the dandy of all dandies. I'll tell you more secrets than could be written on a fancy long sash[37]. From now on you must take the name Komansai, but don't go off on a pilgrimage[38]. Instead, take a good look at today's picture storybooks. For years now they've been fairly similar. Now you'll be able to praise the good and laugh at the bad. You'll know if they'll appeal to folks at the hairdressers', the barbers' or the public baths and whether they'll meet with the approval of high lords and ladies or people from the far provinces. This guide to sophistication will act as a magnifying glass, so that like the manager of a theatre you'll be able to judge good and bad points for praise or censure. Even if you're only talking about picture storybooks, mention a lot of titles so people will know what to come and buy. That would really please the publisher. Such a good deed will no doubt be rewarded and you'll return victoriously to Kamakura.

Just as he imagined the dragon had said that, Uroko awoke from his dream. Alongside him was a scroll. 'Ah! that must be the guide to elegance. How wonderful to have all my prayers answered!' So saying, he stretched his arms out wide, gave a big yawn, and opened his eyes to find that this also was a dream. A millet cake was roasting in the fireplace, and before it was quite done a voice called out from the lending bookshop 'Hey! Has the hyōbanki begun yet?'[39]

Anei 10 [1781] Early spring

Picture story book assessments

Kikujūsō End of first volume.

Picture storybook assessments

Kikujūsō

Volume Two

Hero role

1. Most extremely outstanding

Eiga hodo gojūnen soba atai gojūseni:

Miru ga toku issui no yune

Three volumes

Manager - Hear ye! Hear ye! Excuse me for talking down to you from way up here, but this is the story of a thousand-dollar dream, based on the old tale of Kantan's pillow.

Tōrimachi group - Hey, what's this? You'd think there were no other publishers around, the way Tsutaya is given top billing.

Patron - Shut up! Haven't you ever been to the pleasure quarter? Haven't you ever read one of Tsutaya's guide books?

Manager - Ahem! Ahem! There's no need to start squabbling so early in the New Year. As Koikawa hasn't produced anything this year, we present a story written by the latest star, Kisanji, and very nicely printed by the publisher. Won't you pay attention now to the whole story!

Tsuta group - Don't take any notice of those creeps. Let's get on with it!

Manager - Now this is a story about Seitarō from the Ashinoya shop. The curtain-raiser is a clever variation of the familiar opening lines 'this is a story of long ago, and maybe it's not true'. Then we pass to the tree-lined streets of Asakusa, where the owner of Prosperity Emporium, Dream-boy, rents out Kantan's pillow. His prices range from a half-hour dream for sixteen cents to fifty years for a thousand

dollars. There's never been a story like that yet! A young retainer Kokuzaeman, pays thirty-two cents for a one-hour dream of being with one of the boat prostitutes. The foot-man Oriuchi pays sixteen cents to see one scene of a play. The audience all split their sides laughing when Buzaemon says in his dream that it'd really be great to have a hundred measures of silver per month. Anyway, the illustration where Seitarō decides to pay a thousand dollars for a dream and settles down on three soft quilts is really good. From there he sets out to Enoshima, Kamakura, Kyoto and all the provinces of Japan, and it's fascinating to watch him enjoy himself.

Critic - When Rosei awoke from his dream, he realised what had happened....

Manager - Wait until I finish, won't you! Seitarō goes back to his home town where his place has been taken by the clerk Stand-in. His inheritance comes to one million dollars but his debts amount to one million dollars and a few cents. The bit where they generously knock off a couple of cents is very funny. Next he decides to become a priest, wakes from his fifty-year dream and finds his order of sixteen penn'orth of noodles waiting. He hoes into it with great gusto. Tsutaya's story of the gay life starts the New Year off with a big laugh. Kisanji's light-hearted story has far more substance than the dream. It's an outstanding hit!

Patron - O.K. Tsutajū, let's close off there. Da-da-a-a!

2. Very outstanding

Tōrimasu Ataka seki

Two volumes

Manager - This book was given a high rating because it made clever use of the story of the man from Kaga province who got by the Ataka barrier by imitating the cock's crow.

Patron - That's good enough to have classed it as Extremely outstanding. Quick, let's hear the joke of how they got through.

Manager - It starts off with the priest Benkei from Musashi province, who is dressed in priest's travelling garb, and deliberates in Nō style about Suruga and about the lord's real intentions. Then he wins over one of the barrier guard's men, Tsukami Shimenojō with a barrel of Sumida River sake and a parcel of left-over items from the goldsmith Kichiji. The bit where he apologises for not having much to offer is funny. It's also very amusing that the words he recites from the subscription list are from the song Ainoyama.

Critics - That must have sounded very funny for a subscription list.

Watchman - Go on, go on!

Manager - Anyway, they got past the Ataka barrier, and were so happy they danced with glee. There's a clever song about one side being good but the other side having even better plans. Then Shizuka uses all her wiles on Shimenojō, they get through the confrontation between Yoshitsune and Kajiwara safely and Kajiwara turns to Benkei saying, 'Since you're the leader of this troupe, we'll give you a tip. You're going to bow out at Koromo River'. From start to

finish it's all very up-to-date.

3. Outstanding

Chichin pui pui:

Goyo no ontakara

Three volumes

Manager - Well, this story is quite incredible. Amazing wit, and a clever, lively style. It's about Mr Moneybags, who suffers from the strange disease of having too much money. What a strange business to be lending to a pawn broker. He is wasting away, so the pawnbrokers come quickly from Ōgi-ga-yatsu valley in Kamakura.

Connoisseur - The scenes where Mr Moneybags turns over his ledger and where the thieves slip under the fence are well-drawn.

Manager - Mr Moneybags recovers completely from his sickness but loses his fortune. His wife is quite nonplussed by this odd behaviour, but she is tolerant and doesn't make a fuss. This is a good lesson for women and children to observe. Fortunately the god Bishamonten next appears and there are clever jokes about walls having ears and bottles having necks. Finally, they invoke the magic formula Abracadabra and Mr Moneybags gets back all his fortune. Thank heavens for that!

4. Outstanding

Oni no ko dakara

Three volumes

Manager - This is about Little Devil, the orphaned child of that monster Shutendōji. It is set in the present peaceful era, which makes it all the more amusing to see the

picture of the devil having his horns cut off, coming of age, and looking in the water at the reflection of the two little stumps left.

Critic - It says 'deep mountains and dark valleys'. Is that supposed to read 'steep mountains and dark valleys'?

Manager - That must have been a careless slip in the printing. Then there's a devilishly clever bit of punning about the hide-and-seek devil, according to the devil, while the devil's away, the devil's luck, even the devil has his day, the devil's pledge... There's a funny bit where the devil has an argument with his wife, saying that the boiled pumpkin and tuna fish isn't fit for the devil to eat. Peace is restored by calling out 'Good luck inside, devils inside!' Finally, the clever joke about the devil doing no wrong earned this story a hero role.

5. Outstanding

Hatsuyume no takara yamabuki no iro

Three volumes

Iwa group - Hey, manager! what's happening in Asakusa?

Manager - I was held up a bit in Kaya town. You know, lately there are more doctors in Edo than there are antique dealers and tea-houses, as Kashō so cleverly remarked. In this story there's a good illustration showing Dr. Brag's patients all giving big yawns. Then the doctor is snatched away by a goblin in such a whirlwind that he catches a cold and it's funny to see the way his nose drips if he doesn't take care to blow it in the evening. The goblin teaches him well and he sets himself up as an interpreter of dreams.

Critic - You'd never really see a priest with someone carrying his medicine box.

- It's too good for a New Year dream.

- There are all sorts of crazy puns on the sound sususu.

Manager - Then he strips off his wings just as one might cut away a turtle's shell. It ends with self-introduction by the five men. Well done!

6. Outstanding

Fuji ya Asama ya:

Keburi kurabe sobaya no maki

Three volumes

Manager - This is about Fuji Tarō. Zenkō has cleverly adapted the rivalry between Fuji and Asama mountains to a tale about home-made noodles. There's a funny bit where Asama fumes that he won't stand any nonsense. Then Onatsu recites a poem written on a paper screen: ' Allaround me is the world of pleasure. Sumida River flows by. How long must I stay here gazing at it?' I wonder if her lines are a variation on the play about a Yoshiwara girl from Nishida House called Kokonoe. 'I'm so far away here in the east. Sumida River flows by endlessly. How long must I stay here gazing at it?' Anyway, the figures look like Osaka puppets and the writing is very refined, so this book has been well received by good households.

7. Very very very good

Tottemo erai Sakae

Three volumes

Manager - Here a masterless samurai called Suekichi Kanai plays Japanese chess with a friend Nari Gihei. Winning and losing, losing and winning, getting angry and bursting into laughter - it works out just right.

Critic - There was a prisoner called Kanai too. Is that what one of the jokes refers to?

Manager - That's right! Next, Gihei lost some money, and Kanai was under suspicion. However, after he'd got the full amount together, the money turned up during spring-cleaning and his innocence was proved. There was a good bit where Gihei redeemed the courtesan Yoshino from a house in Shimabara.

Critic - Yoshino is a place famous for its snow but even the silhouettes showing through the screen look white.

Patron - That's due to a carelessly made wood block.

8. Very very very good

Machigai tsuki yo ni nabe

Two volumes

Manager - This is the story of the Chinese Kakkyo's grandson Fujibei. They say you'll be hard up if you're filial, and even nowadays it costs a pretty penny. Now we all know that there's nothing so good, no blessing from heaven so fine as a pot of gold. But on this moonlit night, the kama [pot] is stolen and an okama [gay] turns up instead. If you think that's bad, there's worse to come. Anyway, we are told that it's bad to do evil on a holy day, it's good to be virtuous on an unlucky day and that a melon can also be an auspicious offering to use instead of eggplant. So much useful advice.

Recluse - While Tsūshō's works are light-hearted, there is always something instructive as well.

9. very very good

Nana egao tōsei sugata

Three volumes

Manager - A new publication let out in the Year of the Bull.It's a crazy tale set in flowery Edo. The story is about Nishinomiya Saburōbei, a tenth generation descendant of Hoteiichieimon. That gives a pun about Eimon being hotei no ichi - one of the Lucky Gods. Then the Buddha goes to throw some bamboo spears but they turn out to be dried noodles.

Critic - The bit about Benten would have been more appropriate in a sharebon.

Patron and Critic - Comparisons are odious.

Manager - The disguise of the seven Gods of Good Fortune at the end is well-done.

10. Very very good

Asahina karako asobi

Three volumes

Manager - While Hotei is away, Kobayashi Asahina is in charge. There's an amusing tug-of-war. If only the children will amuse themselves a little longer, he'll be able to warm up some sake. A tour of hell, breaking and entering - and then he gives a big yawn and wakes up. Well done!

11. Good

Katakiuchi Suruga no hana

Three volumes

12. Good

Katakiuchi uona tsurugi

Three volumes

Manager - Both these stories are unusual. There's a good fight in the first one, and they cross swords very well in the second.

Critic - Uona tsurugi is a book from the old fashioned Chinese-Cover period. 'What must be must be'. The language used comes right out of the ark!

Manager - Yes, but if it wasn't for books like this we'd be stuck for presents to take back to the country.

13. Very outstanding

Bakemono yotsugi hachi no ki

Three volumes

Manager - This is about Kō Mitsudō, the son of the bogy Mikoshi Nyūdō. There's the river bogy, the sea devil, and the old cat from Shinagawa. They disguise themselves as courtesans, and it's very well illustrated by Kiyonaga, who's a great Torii school artist.

Critic - The character in the title for tsugi [継] is hard to read. It looks more like hitsu [櫃].

Manager - Even Homer nods. But come on, listen to the assessment. Mitsudō went on a pilgrimage all around the country. When he got to Momonga, his old nurse said, 'My! You've grown so big. You know, it's funny that we don't often disguise ourselves as humans these days'. Well, there are some excellent parodies such as the snow scene at Saimyōji temple, the three chickens in the western bamboo grove, the carp from the south seas and the old raccoon

from the northern provinces. We've given the story a special place because the monsters are so well done.

Villain role

14. Extremely outstanding

Ōchigai takarabune

Three volumes

Manager - This story is not set in the reclaimed area, but it is by Shiba. The pictures are by none other than Shigemasa. North, south, east or west, he's the best around, and naturally we've given the book top billing.

Patron - Well, come on, hurry up! We want to hear the assessment.

Manager - This time it's about the great lord Fujiwara Kamatari's retainer Tankō, who received a precious jewel from Benten but had it stolen from the boat by a crocodile. There's a good joke about the moat. Then there's the secondary role of Tawara no Tōta who is so jealous of a love pledge between Urashima Tarō and the princess that he burns it, although actually he'd made a mistake and it was only a play guide. He sees the chanter Sanshō and the greengrocer's girl Oshichi come out and good heavens! there's a crazy bit where he talks in Katō style to Oshichi and the chanter Sanshō doesn't understand, and he talks in Geki-bushi style to the chanter Sanshō and Oshichi doesn't understand. He ends up blinding Oshichi with shichi sanshō pepper, and she asks the monkey to obtain a cure made from the fresh liver of a red skate fish. There's a love scene between Tankō and Bikuni, who is dressed as a Buddhist priestess. They all meet at a tea-house in the Ryōgoku pleasure quarter , and set off flourishing an amusing flag marked 'Dragons

Castle Group'. The priestess stands at the helm, the monkey plays his usual monkey tricks, the turtle rows and Tawara no Tōta fusses around like an old priest.

Old man - What a ridiculous story! It sounds like the ravings of a lunatic!

Patron - Look, if you don't like it you can lump it.

Critic - What a pity that the ink looks like it's been rubbed through a sieve. It's very hard to read.

Patron - In that case old fogies like you had better not try to read it.

Manager - Next there's the assault on Dragons Castle. The seven become the seven Gods of Good Fortune. It's so nice of Tsuruya to invite the monkey, the princess and the turtle to a feast. Well done! Congratulations!

15. Very outstanding

Hoka ni nai zo ya:

Goku tsūjin no yurai

Two volumes

Manager - This story is about Amano Kōtsuke, who wants to become a celebrated man about town. There's a good bit where he has a long talk at the place of his friend Bunri. Bunri's wife is Otose, who is supposed to be a match for Hanaaogi from Ogiya House and just as good as Hamamuraya. Well, as Kōtsuke is on his way back from Yoshiwara, he thinks people coming from behind might be laughing at his lantern, and puts it out. That's cleverly done! At Shinjuku he sees a young man being fussed over, and says something funny about how that'll only lead to trouble again.

Country man - These stories are supposed to be for

children to look at. I disapprove when Bunri doesn't care about the servant's adultery and even sends off his own wife.

Manager - Well, it's like Bishamon said - 'You needn't become a "man of the world". You should just become a normal human being'.

16. Outstanding

Tōsei daitsū bukkai-chō

Three volumes

Manager - This is about the Jizō of Shinshū. The six paths of life are reduced by four to just two, namely, the paths to Meguro and Shinagawa. There's a good bit about the Jizō's sutras, and the parody of the Momotarō story where he gives millet cakes to the Meguro dog, the pheasant from Kijinomiya and the monkey from Sarumachi is very funny indeed. So is the part where he decides to drop in and have a look around the Shinagawa pleasure houses. The goblin steals away the Jizō girl, which is a laugh. The sleeping Buddha takes a secondary role. The scene where he dies in the middle of the holy trees, mourned by fifty-two different sorts of flying birds, is one of the best things of all time. This is the biggest hit since Osaka's Hijiri yūkaku.

17. Outstanding

Honjō meishō:

Arigatai tsū no ichiji

Manager - This is about Tsūta, who is a real boor. He steals the Finger-cutting sword and calls himself Tomozaemon. But then he thinks he's much too fine to have a name like Tomozaemon, and that people won't be properly

impressed. That's very amusing. So is the next bit about a visit to hell, and Gojūzō's pleasure-quarter slang.

18. Very excellent

Susume katakiuchi:

Hiyamizu heigen neko

Two volumes

Manager - The story tells about an ice-seller called Seiemon. The bit where the gray cat becomes a priest is good. Then the sparrow is sold to Yoshiwara, and there's an amusing picture of her being carried off in a cage. The sparrow goes into the sea, becomes a clam, and fights with the cat in a funny parody of Kokusenya. The picture of the wild cat gazing out at the spring rain from the balcony of Hiyamizu is well done.

19. Outstanding

Kamisama uchi ni ka?:

Kani ga gobo hasanda

Three volumes

Manager - Here we have a new conflict between your old friends the monkey and the crab. The bit where the crab meets the pestle and mortar is good. So is the bit about if it lived to be three hundred and fifty years old, the crab would be senior even to the great Takeshiuchi. Then there's a picture of a pleasure boat enjoying the cool in the Ryōgoku area, and a joke about even if a monkey should become a man he'd still have a monkey face.

Critic - The bit at the end about the crab being unjustly accused and gods shall/shell protect honest people is far too complicated.

Manager - Yes, that's true.

20. Outstanding

Fukutoku :

Musō no Daikoku gin

Manager - This is about Raisuke. He's a bit stingy. You think he's going to put on a spread, but all he's good for is a cup of tea. Then there's a very apt comment about the impoverished doctor who can never get out of pawn and is reduced to mending winter sandals. Then Daikoku runs out of money and wants to borrow some from the God of Poverty. Daikoku gets into a sedan-chair and goes to see Yōichibei. Well! All there is in his sack is a little rice and two silver coins!

Critic - The way Raitsuke disappears in the middle of the story is like the tale of the devils at Adachigahara.

Manager - Oh no. It's all explained at the end. Finally there's a really up-to-date joke when he returns the three hundred dollars to the God of Poverty, but first borrows out of it another two hundred dollars.

Picture storybook assessments

Kikujūsō End of second volume

Picture storybook assessments

Kikujūsō

Volume Three

Enemy role

21. Outstanding

Karasu no gyōsui kotowasa-gusa

Three volumes

Manager - This is a story about Kanzaemon's son, who is disinherited, and earns a living as a loan shark. He can really crow about his skill in feathering his nest at the expense of the gulls in the embankment area. With eagle eye he stalks his prey...

Critic - The cuckoo and the nightingale seem to pop up from nowhere.

Patron - Who asked your opinion, sticky-beak? If a fledgling like you flaps around too noisily, we'll give you a bird-bath in cayenne pepper.

Manager - Mm, yes. The cuckoo, nightingale and phoenix seem odd, but since it's meant for the birds, you'll just have to put up with it. Finally, there are some clever puns about the word for marriage go-betweens, torimochi, which also means bird lime, and the fire fighting gear left in the crows nest.

22. Outstanding

Mazekoze mukashi-banashi

Two volumes

Manager - This is a real mix-up of the stories of Flower-blossom Grandpa, Saimyōji temple, and the monkey and the crab. There's a clever bit about the koto-playing test. The monkey goes on a pilgrimage in the guise of Sajihei, and meets up with Kanikiyo. There's a funny parody of

Dōjōji temple where a worm wraps itself around a wind chime.

Critic - The illustration is a real guessing-game.

Manager - Next, the crab commits suicide, and there's an amusing description of his brains spilling out!

23. Excellent

Bunbuku chagama :

Ke ga haeta Tarō tsuki

Three volumes

Manager - This is the story of Bunbuku. There's nothing particularly novel about him falling in love with Hamaaogi from Ōgiya House. Then he saw the god Shinnō in a dream, and received the talents of music and medicine in the form of a flute and a blade of grass. Back at Honkyō san chō-me, he had the blade of grass plastered over and placed in the mouth of the god Shinnō. There's a senryū poem about Shinnō fixing his eyes on a water plantain.

Connoisseur - Talking about drugs - I needed a ringworm cure, and on the medicine bag was written Heiroku.

Manager - Well, you know those Ryōgoku druggists. They're rascals - just a lot of good-for-nothings.

24. Very very good

Engumi renri namazu

Three volumes

Manager - This is about that evil woman Otō. When the groom looks at her, she turns her head and plays on the samisen 'it must be our destiny to be together'. The number 135 is written on the student's gift offering. It looks like it has something to do with a lottery. Then the rice-cake wife runs away to Mangan temple, and there's an absurd

bit where a catfish appears out of the bell.

25. Very good

Sono nochi hyon na mono

Two volumes

Manager - This is about a boorish man. The illustrations of behind the box seats and the place where actors are hoisted on stage are good. This vulgarian is only interested in trivial details such as whether the actors Mangiku and Komazō and Kansaburō are the same age. It's a really good warning to the true connoisseurs. Excellent!

26. Good

Kojitsuke no saji kagen

Three volumes

27. Good

Bakemono hana ga hishige

Two volumes

28. Good

Otoshi-banashi:

Kikujū no sakazuki

Three volumes

Manager - Kojitsuke no saji kagen has the flavour of the play Sugawara denju, of Onui's love-suicide journey, and also of the play Chūshingura. Motanchii meets up with Kimpira and gets his nose twisted. Kikujū no sakazuki is the usual funny story. They're all very good.

Comic role

29. Very outstanding

Musuko myōyaku:

Mankintan

Two volumes

Manager - In this story Rokujūjirō receives ten thousand dollars from his father and tries to find the elixir of youth. It's amusing to read on the screen the names of medicines such as Russian ginger.

Patron - Unfortunately they aren't written in kana, so I can't really understand them at all.

Manager - There's an up-to-date joke about a single phial of Dragon River water costing one new silver coin, and it's very funny at the end when the boy's father reveals his little deception, saying that the fabulous courtesan Takao was really his mother, and the ginger was nothing other than left-over boiled soy-bean curd.

30. Very good

Untsuku:

Tarōzaemon-banashi

Three volumes

Manager - In this story about stupid Tarōzaemon, there's a good illustration of an antique shop. When they look for antiques, they find two of the god Shinnō's horns, a pair of wooden sandals belonging to a pilgrim, a long-handled oiled umbrella of Komachi's and the fan shot to pieces by Nasu no Yoichi. Very interesting! Then there's an oracle from Daimyōji temple, the proberb that the gods will protect honest people and other self-evident nonsense. Odd and interesting.

Young woman role

31. Very outstanding

Kaneiri shichinin-geshō:

Sukigaeshi yanagi no kurogami

Three volumes

All - Who's top of the woman's role list?

Manager - Well, it may seem old-fashioned, but it's the well-known story of the Dōjōji bell dance brought up-to-date in Sukigaeshi yanagi no kurogami.

Critic - Ah, yes! This one appeared last year in a sleeve edition. I know it's near the path to New Yoshiwara, but why does a re-vamped story of Asakusa top the list?

Manager - That's why I haven't given an Extremely outstanding rating. Anyway, it's about the millionaire Tawara's daughter Ohide and her love affair with Anchin. There's a mix-up between a heron and a fox, there's a big fight between a dragon and a snake, and a heron uses fire to put a stop to it. In the final scene, the old woman prays at the bell to become a young country girl, meets up with some other ghostly accomplices, and there's a clever song when the seven of them all go in to the women's baths, as though all the seven guises were occurring at once. The final touch is the appearance of the seven-faced Daimyōjin god. Bravo!

32. Outstanding

Ikoku:

Demise no Yoshiwara

Manager - This is about the courtesan Sumaginu. When she leaves Yoshiwara with Yūtsuke, there's the biggest stir since that business with Sukeroku. The bit about it

being a nuisance to guests who happened to be putting up there for the night is funny. Then there's a humorous sequel to the Dragons Castle story. The Emperor massages his shoulders while eating sponge cake containing aphrodisiac from the Yottsume druggist, and there's another joke about the water in the stone garden basin at Ōgi House. Nowadays the jokes are a bit of a pain - there was no need to bring in Kōrai's name.

33. Excellent

Jorōkai no nuka misoshiru

Manager - According to Jizai's poem, he saw a girl too beautiful to be true, so he gave her up. Well, here we have the story of the girl Karasaki from the Matsuwaya House, and her love affair with Kujūrō. There's a funny bit where a passer-by calls out to them as they come back in a sedan-chair - 'Hey, you two! Pull down the blind. It's embarrassing to watch you'. It's like the hundred dollar lottery. Will he buy her, won't he buy her?

Critic - When she sticks her head out and calls 'Kujūrō! Kujūrō! Kujūrō!' even Bunkichi is amazed.

Moralist - Bunkichi egged on Kujūrō and then betrayed his trust and came out on top. That's not fair.

Manager - Well, maybe that's the moral of the story.

34. Excellent

Aa! Mama naranu:

Yo no tsuke-banashi

Three volumes

Manager - First of all, we'd like to present Kisanji's student, Fujin Kiyū, in his first stage performance. It is about a young country girl, Okiku, who is sold to Yoshiwara

and becomes the courtesan Kinugawa. As in an earlier story the secondary character Okane is murdered by her lover Yonotsuke. It's too terrible even to see in a dream.

Connoisseur - Okane's face is so horribly covered in blood.

Manager - But it's funny when she bites on her sash. It looks as though she's munching on a rice cracker! Kinugawa is redeemed by a wealthy man. Well, if all courtesans were like that, it'd be no good for the young men to fall head over heels in love with them. This is a really good story by Fujin. He's got talent and this'll give him quite a few fans.

35. Very very good

Furisode Edo murasaki

Three volumes

Manager - This is the story of the greengrocer's daughter Oshichi. There's a good illustration of her love affair with Kichisaburō at the tea-house. The secondary character of a courtesan called Umegawa is also excellent. Also, there's a fine picture of the fight between Kichisaburō and Denkichi. Really, it's just like a Kabuki synopsis, with no verbal wit worth mentioning. We'll wait for the next spring publication.

Critic - That joke about Oshichi's fire precautions was clever.

Patron - And I really enjoyed that sexy love scene.

36. Very very good

Tanezumi bakete:

Uzura no shirabyōshi

Two volumes

Manager - This is about Otane, the field-mouse's daughter. She turned into a quail and became a dancing girl.

Critic - There are a lot of black mice - it's a pity the printing is so bad.

37. Very very good

Nanshū Hokushū :

Yūkaku kojitsuke Taiheiki

Three volumes

Manager - From way back the standard length of a picture storybook preface has been half a page. This long preface of one and a half pages shows how talkative the Tōriabura town publishers can be. In this story Nagaōmiya becomes the Naga chanter and there's a parody of the Taiheiki. The depiction of the Yoshiwara theatre scene is good and lively, but the following debate between Yoshiwara and Shinagawa is a bit old-fashioned.

38. Good

Benizara Kakezara:

Oshū- banashi

Three volumes

39. Good

Omedetai :

Korori sanshō miso

Two volumes

Manager - Let's look at the two of these together.

There's a good picture in Benizara kakezara showing the ladies-in-waiting with very elegant hair-styles, sitting in box-seats to watch the festival. Korori sanshō miso is not so good but the bit about Oshō, the daughter of the wind god is well done.

40. Very outstanding

Entsū chikai Daitsūkō:

Un wa hiraku ōgi no hana

Patron - Why haven't you given this a top ranking?

Manager - It's not as though I simply forgot to, as you well know.

Critic - I've got a feeling I've seen a book like this before about a courtesan.

Manager - Well, let's get on with the appraisal. In the story there's something about the courtesan Hamaogi, an enumeration of famous places in Asakusa, the old woman from Hag Pond, jokes about Shidōken, a bit where Keshinotsuke throws beans and sake bottles at the flatterers lying in wait, and a story about a tiny arrow and shooting at a five-foot target from only seven feet away. Last spring this appeared as a gold-patterned sleeve edition, and it's great that we can now include it in the kibyōshi category.

41. Outstanding

Tsū no hitogoe onna shibaraku

Three volumes

Manager - This spring gives us a woman role from Tsuruya. One line from them is worth a thousand from others, so just wait for it, girls. It's about Himenotsuke from the Hatsuba House. The theatrical opening of 'Hear ye! Hear ye! Excuse me for talking down to you from up here...' is

well done and there's a funny parody about an inspection of a finger [yubi = finger. kubi = head]. Everyone quietened down to enjoy the 'Hold it!' scene. Now, the secondary character, Eguchi, has her arm cut off, and the old woman from the Fukagawa quarter gets it back. Eguchi is actually an incarnation of Buddha, and the old woman is really a white elephant. What a crazy story! In fact, it's a bit over-done, but if we asked for a little more substance, the fans wouldn't be pleased, would they now?

Young man role

42. Outstanding

Iki jidai:

Chin no yomeiri

Manager - Well, in the past we've read about the Mouse Bride, and the Marriage of the Monkey, but here we have the unheard-of tale of the Dog's Marriage. There's a clever use of a crest design, and also a bit about the dogs piddling as they trot along together. The marriage goes off well and the wife is so happy, just as though she were gazing at snow drifting down. Pretty soon, the midwife Heizan holds a little puppy up by its tail and says 'It's a boy!' They celebrate with a flowery box of fancy cakes. How about such a take-off of the groom for the young man role!

43. Outstanding

Rigen:

Mochi wa mochiya

Three volumes

Manager - For a start, there's a good preface addressed to the children and non-drinkers [women].

Critic - I've got a feeling I've heard something similar called out by the Kiyomizu cake-sellers in front of Ekōin temple.

Patron - Hey! You've got a good memory, haven't you! I guess you mean 'However many times they try it, women never get sick of it'.

Manager - The first scene has an enumeration of words to do with rice-cakes. The real story starts in the second and third sections. There's a good joke about there having been no people burning with jealousy in the Tale of Genji and the Tale of Ise, and the pun about red bean rice really takes the cake. The role of Oyone was good too. As for the children's roles, they are all listed in the front table of contents. [there is no assessment of the next three stories, as they were probably considered to be in the category of hanashibon rather than kibyōshi.]

Manager's role

47. Also extraordinarily outstanding

Momotarō ichidai-ki

Five volumes

Manager - Ahem! Ahem! This is the well-known story of Momotarō. You've heard of the best millet dumplings in Japan, there've already been one or two red books for kids, and some think green books are also good reading for the buffs. The eighteen famous dandies brought the winds of change, but this spring's new publication breezes back to the original story. This is my choice for a special mention. There won't be another opening, so read on while you can! Come one, come all, gather around and have a close look at

this!

Critic - Hey, come off it! We can't understand any of the weak jokes in this story, and a long tedious five-volume book about Momotarō has no place in our up-to-date world. Have you gone crazy, Manager?

Manager - Well, I can quite understand your surprise. But picture storybooks are very popular light reading, and should be suitable for children. Lately there's been too much emphasis on being with-it and up-to-date. There's nothing but guides to adultery, hints how to buy women, witty remarks about the theatre and unpleasant jokes. The leading roles have been played in such a nasty way you'd think they were the villains. There's too much tomfoolery in the enemy roles, and it's unbearable to see the way they let themselves be roundly abused by the woman role. The original manuscript is perfectly O.K., so why should all these changes be made? People often say that times have changed, but, after all, old things should be honoured however modern the world may have become. Nowadays we don't pluck the foreheads of young boys and you never see the ceremony for the first time they wear a sash. Now it's time to decorate the roadside with New Year pine ornaments. People go busily to and fro greeting each other. If you want to eat rock candy, you won't find it very tasty. You sit down to a serving of rice cakes boiled with vegetables. You drink Sumida River brand sake in a crystal glass, and cool spiced sake from an earthenware cup. Chewing on caviar, reaching for burdock root delicacies. Ah! This is a real New Year! The entertainers come from the country area of Mikawa. Hey! Just look at their funny pranks! And what about old Momotarō? Isn't

he good too? Ah, come on now, say he's O.K. too!

Picture storybook assessments

Kikujūsō. End of third volume

Epilogue

Stories should have some basis on fact and there should be compassion in everyday conversation. My friend Urin has received forty-seven stories written by eight different authors and newly published this spring, 1781, in Edo. All together, there were one hundred and twenty-eight volumes. His assessments are very amusing, and present both good and bad points impartially. I received and read his review. People often stay up late chatting about the New Year publications, but Urin was the first to write it all down.

Yomo Sannin [Ōta Nampo]

Notes on Kikujūsō

1. The opening address is in fact a witty enumeration of eight publishing houses, woven into a New Year greeting, as can be seen at a glance in the Romanized script:

Tsuruya no hane o nosu hatsuhikage
kadomatsu mura no shimekazari
satto hirakeba
ama no iwadoya
Murata no aze o yuzuriau
miyo wa higashi mo
nishimura mo
tomo ni osamaru
iseji no kamikaze
Okumura no hyōtan kara
koma ga isameba
hana no kuruwa
sono ōmon no
magaki no tsutaya

Images relating to the hatsuhi (New Year) are the auspicious stork and the ornate kadomatsu decorations placed before entrances to shops and houses. There is an atmosphere of peace, order and general prosperity. Ama no iwayado figures in the old legend of the sun goddess Amaterasu, who had been insulted by her brother and caused darkness and dismay on earth by shutting herself up in a cavern. The other gods discussed the problem and finally managed to entice her out by having one god play music while another goddess performed a ribald dance. In the greeting, the last two characters of this phrase have been reversed to give the publisher's name Iwadoya. Kamikaze (divine wind) is a makura kotoba (set descriptive phrase) used for the shrine at Ise. Ise Jingu is similar in sound to the name of the publisher Iseji, so this is a deliberate pun which also relates to the divine order over the land. The phrase hyōtan kara koma ga isameba is a standard expression for a very unlikely

occurrence - literally, a horse leaping out of a gourd. However, an inspection of the trademarks used by the various publishers for kibyōshi reveals that Okumura was symbolised by a simple gourd-design stamp. The phrase also suggests the content of kibyōshi, which were usually absurd or irreverent tales. The final image evokes the area of interest implicit in most of the stories, namely, the pleasure quarter. The Ōmon was the entrance through which all patrons had to pass to reach Yoshiwara, and became a synonymn for the whole area. Magaki are woven bamboo or brushwood fences closely associated with the architecture of the brothel houses. Sometimes they were used as a lattice between the earthern entrance and the main area of the house. A sharebon written by Santō Kyōden in 1787 was titled Sōmagaki and uses the image of morning glory flowering on the lattice to suggest the early morning face of a courtesan. Here, the lattice introduces the name of the publisher Tsutaya, the first character of which means 'vine'. This is not an exhaustive list of the possible word play. For example, the word nosu in the first line has the primary meaning of 'to stretch', referring to the wings of the publisher Tsuruya's trademark, the stork. However, another meaning is 'to print', which would certainly be an appropriate pun in this context. The onyomi or Chinese readings for east and west are used in Kabuki opening addresses to call everyone to attention (Tōzai! tōzai!) and this phrase also heads the first critical assessment in Volume Two of Kikujūsō.

The aze probably refers to a path leading through rice fields to the entrance of Yoshiwara. Santō Kyōden's 1782 kibyōshi, Gozonji no shōbaimono

shows one character standing next to the public notice board which listed the prohibitions of the pleasure quarter. In the distance, two clients can be seen leaving Yoshiwara. They come across the fields on a path, listening to the sounds of the frogs, and will presumably make way to people going in the other direction (see fig. 1).

Fig. 1

Such dextrous use of words holding two or more associations is one of the salient features of gesaku style. However, whereas many gesaku puns on proper nouns seem rather gratuitous, Nampo here incorporates the names of the publishers very tightly into a greeting dominated by images of an auspicious New Year in the pleasure quarters of Edo.

2. The title contains a complicated network of puns, as follows:

Hōjō is a name associated with the Taira clan.

Hōjō Shirō Tokimasa (1138-1215) was a descendant in the fifth generation who became father-in-law to Yoritomo. He was extremely powerful in the Kamakura bakufu.

Kassai Tarō was the name of a restaurant in Edo which specialised in koi arai - a dish of chilled slices of raw carp. Ōta Nampo often patronised this restaurant, and mentions it in a volume of his diary titled Hajinshū.

Kassai also has a meaning of 'to borrow'.

Tarōtsuki is a word for January, thus appropriate for a New Year publication.

Tarō became a slang word for carp, possibly due to the restaurant connotation.

Kassai ryō is a place name.

3. Soga monogatari tells the story of two brothers who undergo eighteen years of hardship but finally succeed in avenging their father's death by killing his treacherous cousin Kudō Suketsune in 1193. The Soga vendetta was based on historical facts, and was a source of inspiration to many authors, both of that period and later. There were various cycles of Soga pieces in the Nō, Jōruri and Kabuki plays. In Kabuki it became a tradition to stage a sogamono in the month of January every year. As this assessment was inspired by the yakusha hyōbanki, the opening

lines echo a typical Kabuki greeting. The sekai is the familiar setting and the shukō is an innovation, drawn from a modern situation.

Here, the world of Kamakura in the past becomes fused with the pleasure quarters of contemporary Edo.

4. The story of Lord Aota is referred to in classical literature, and here illustrates the change from a world based on military values to one of commerce.

5. Ōgiya House was a famous brothel in Edo.

6. Hiki-ga-yatsu is a place name, but also provides the pun koto o hiku, 'to play the koto'. Hiki Tōnai Tomomune was a Yoritomo deputy sent to win control of the Hokuriku area. His forbears had been defeated by the Hōjō, which provides another association of ideas.

7. Kobukurozaka is a place name.
There is also a saying kobukuro to komusume wa yūdan ga naranai. This means that just as a purse which seems full can really hold a great deal, so a girl who may not appear to require a lot of expense may actually end up costing a fortune. Yūdan no naranu musume no ko suggests a little girl who should not be left unsupervised, but the term korobu, 'to tumble', also has sexual connotations.

8. Miura Yoshizumi (1127-1200) and his son Miura Yoshimura (d.1239) were outstanding military commanders who served Yoritomo. There is also a story about Kagekiyo of the Taira clan, who was an enemy of Yoritomo's and was defeated and blinded.

His daughter tried to find him, but was sent back safely.

9. The tachibana is a mandarin tree, but tachibanaya also denotes the famous Kabuki actor family of Ichimura Uzaemon.

10. Sajiki no dan are theatre box seats, and dankazura means a slightly raised path leading to a shrine, and particularly refers to the Tsurugaoka shrine in Kamakura.

11. Kewaizaka was a place in the Fukagawa pleasure quarter of Edo. Naka-no-chō was in Yoshiwara, and it was a custom to plant cherry blossoms along the streets to give a festive appearance. This is further evidence of the fusion of images of Kamakura and Edo.

12. The Soga brothers saw an excellent opportunity to destroy their foe at a hunting party Yoritomo organised at the foot of Mount Fuji, but found it difficult to keep watch on him in the confusion of the crowds.

13. The word uroko means 'fish scale'. Mitsuuroko is the crest of the Hōjō family, shown as three small triangles [△ / △△] and by extension of meaning refers to their family treasure. Urokogataya was one of the leading publishers, whose history is briefly surveyed later in the story.

14. Kajiwara and Wada were both historical characters of the Kamakura period.

15. This refers to Hachi no ki, one of the most popular pieces in the Nō repertoire. Some scholars attribute it to Zeami, but it could well be the work of Kan'ami. The hero, Genzaemon Tsuneyo lives in a poor cottage in Sano. One cold winter evening, an itinerant priest begs for shelter, so Tsuneyo does the best he can, even to the extent of burning his prized dwarf trees to provide warmth. The priest is actually the shogun Hōjō Tokiyori(1227-1263) in disguise. (The historical character became a lay brother at the Saimyōji temple.) The poor samurai is later richly rewarded for his humanity. In place of the three dwarf trees he had sacrificed, he is awarded three fiefs - the fief of Umeda in Kaga (ume is the plum), of Sakurai in Etchū (sakura is the cherry) and of Matsueda in Kōzuke (matsu is the pine). The characters for Kōzuke also give the reading Ueno. This explains the names of the girls and houses involved in Sano's evening of debauchery.

16. Enoshima is a small island near Kanagawa prefecture famous for its shrine to the goddess Benten, or Benzaiten, who is one of the seven Gods of Good Fortune. This shrine is said to have been built by Yoritomo to promote his own worldly success.

17. The phrase Chon no ma no deai is a standard Edo pleasure-quarter expression meaning 'a brief affair'. Other elements, such as the tea-house, the love pledge, and the offering of a finger nail also relate the story amusingly to a modern pleasure-quarter setting.

18. Nanatsuya is a pun for shichiya, or pawnshop. Although shichi is represented with a different character the pronunciation is the same as the word for 'seven', which is also called nanatsu. A similar modern version is the term ichi roku ginkō, or 'one-six bank'. The numbers add up to shichi, and thus give 'pawnshop'.

19. The Tone River has many tributaries, one of which passes near Yoshiwara. The names given to sons in order of birth are Tarō, Jirō, Saburō and so on. Bandō refers to Kantō, or the eastern provinces. Bandō Tarō thus means the biggest river in the east, and is another name for the Tone River. Here, the reference to Tone River is followed by mention of a clerk, or bantō, which is clearly a pun based on the name of the river.

20. Nagasu means 'to wash away', but also refers to an unredeemed item in pawn.

21. It was said that if you struck the Mugen bell you would receive wealth, but your soul would be forever damned in the next world.

22. The iriai no kane is rung in the evening.
hana mo mi mo ari means 'to have both form and substance'.
Poem number 116 in the Shinkokinshū collection of poetry reads iriai no kane ni hana zo chirikeru (flowers fall down at the sound of the evening bell). Here the different connotations combine to suggest a crowd of very literal-minded and mercenary holiday makers.

23. As early as the sharebon Yūshi hōgen (c. 1764), we can read tokaku Yoshiwara wa kurojitate ga yoi ('a black outfit is certainly the smartest thing to wear to Yoshiwara'). Here, the shining horns of the bull in the dark are compared to white crests on a black garment. Around 1330, a priest now known as Yoshida Kenkō composed an intriguing collection of essays called Tsurezuregusa (Essays in Idleness). Essay number 62 contains the poem:

futatsu moji — The letter with two strokes
ushi no tsuno moji — The letter like a bull's horns
sugu no moji — The straight letter
yugamu moji to zo — And then the crooked letter
kimi wa oboyuru — Together they spell how much I miss you.

This poem describes the hiragana characters of the word koishiku (こいしく), meaning 'beloved'. Similarly, Nampo likens the horns of the bull to written characters.

24. The Year of the Bull, according to the sexagenary calendar, would be 1781, and the Hour of the Bull is around two o'clock in the morning. Ushi no toki mairi refers to an odd custom whereby jealous women would go to a shrine in the middle of the night and stamp on a straw doll to harm their rival in love. The Ichihara no danmari is a pantomine dance originally performed in semi-darkness. It was created by Sakurada Jisuke (1734-1806), whose family enjoyed great popularity for several generations on the Edo stage, and it deals with a battle between Yoritomo and his foes on the Ichihara fields. The first section has images

of a bull and darkness, the second of play-acting and darkness. Together, they suggest that he may be seeing an illusion.

25. The literal translation would be 'the bull left a trail of urine for a good eighteen blocks'.

26. Ushi ni hikarete Zenkōji ni mairi refers to a story about an unbelieving, greedy old woman whose washing was caught on the horns of a bull. She ran after it as far as the Zenkōji temple in Nagano, and became enlightened. The expression is used when someone is led on the right path through quite unrelated means. Here, Uroko is led to Kōfukuji temple in Saitama. Although there are innumerable temples with this name, one of the entries in a volume of Nampo's diary called Hannichi kanwa describes the lively bustle and confusion that attended the unveiling of a Buddhist image from Zenkōji temple at Ekōin, a Jōdo (Pure Land) sect temple located in the Ryōgoku pleasure district of Edo. Huge crowds of people thronged to the area late at night, carrying lanterns and intoning prayers. Among the attractions was a 'devil woman', and speciality cakes were sold in cow-design boxes. The diary records that because of this, there was a popular joke about 'ushi ni hikarete Zenkōji mairi'. On a different occasion, Nampo mentions a visit to the Kōfukuji temple in the Fukagawa pleasure district. Inside the temple was a gyūtō san, or bull-headed image and a gyōban, or fish-shaped board, which is usually carved in the shape of a carp. Kōfukuji was in Ishijima, which was once included

in the Hōjō estate, and is now known as Mukōjima. Near to the temple was a shrine called Ushi-no-omae or Ushijima-jinja. In front of the shrine was a statue of a bull lying down. This nadeushi was supposed to bring good fortune to those who stroked it, especially with regard to commerce. It seems Nampo often went there to write, and even now one can still see a memorial tablet dedicated to him. One of his favourite restaurants, Kassai Tarō, was located near the bull shrine, and is mentioned in Hajinshū. Carp dishes were a speciality of the restaurant. All these personal associations are combined in the rather bizarre sequence of a bull messenger leading Uroko to a temple, and being transformed into a carp.

27. Donburako was an amusing onomatapoeic word often used to describe the peach splashing down the river in the children's story, Momotarō.

28. Ryūmon (Dragon Gate) is a particularly precipitous place in the middle reaches of the Yellow River in China. It was said that a fish which could swim up this would be changed into a dragon. This would also suggest the episode in Taiheiki where a woman turns into a dragon and offers three scales to Hōjō, the mitsuuroko which became the family crest.

29. A collection of stories by Ueda Akinari, Ugetsu monogatari, was published in 1776, and contained Muō no rigyo, a tale about a man who dreamed he was transformed by the God of the Sea into a gleaming carp which flapped its tail, moved its fins and

swam everywhere in perfect freedom. In Nampo's story. the situation is reversed, as the carp temporarily becomes a man.

30. In this humorous reference to the writer of the first kibyōshi, Koikawa Harumachi, the first character koi has been written as 'carp' instead of 'love'.

31. 鱗 is the character for 'fish-scale', and can be pronounced either uroko or koke. 虚仮 is also read as koke, and means 'stupid'. This was a quality to be assiduously avoided by Edoites in pursuit of the refined ideal of elegance known as tsū (通). Nampo here lists some of the traditional subjects of early kusazōshi published by Urokogataya.

32. Minamoto no Yorinobu (968-1048) was an outstanding military commander in the mid-Heian period. His exploits were probably a subject for early kusazōshi Kimpira was the hero of many Jōruri and early kusazōshi, and his name is synonymous with strength and bravery. He was the son of Sakata Kintoki, a samurai of the late Heian period who was known in childhood as Kintarō and became one of the four famous retainers of Minamoto Yorimitsu.
Hanasaki Jijii was a kind old man in a traditional children's tale who was able to sprinkle dust on trees and make them flower out of season. The subject occurred in early kusazōshi.
Momotarō's early childhood and challenge to the devils on Onigashima provided an endless source of inspiration for early kusazōshi writers, and was also used in an original way in numerous kibyōshi

'sequels' such as Kisanji's 1777 Momotarō gonichibanashi Shitakiri suzume is about a kind old man who visits an injured sparrow and chooses the lighter of two baskets offered to him. It contains treasure, so the neighbouring spiteful old woman tries to profit in the same way, even though she was responsible for cutting the sparrow's tongue in the first place. Snakes, lizards and other horrible creatures pour out of the heavy basket she chooses. This was a popular subject for early children's akabon. The rabbit figures in many akabon, and kibyōshi authors also described his vendetta with the racoon dog in such works as Kisanji's 1777 Oya no katakiuchi hara tsuzumi.

33. The torii or shrine gateway of Kamakura suggests the ōmon or principal entrance leading to Yoshiwara. Also, the Torii school of ukiyo-e artist achieved great popularity with Torii Kiyonobu (1664-1729). From the early eighteenth century they became reknowned for portraits used on theatre billboards and programmes. Kiyonobu's son Torii Kiyomasu (1694-1716?) was equally talented, and his grandson Torii Kiyomitsu (1735-1785) continued the tradition of actors' portraits while also creating a new style of portraits of beautiful women. The most successful of the Torii Kiyomitsu students was Torii Kiyonaga, who specialised in pictures of beautiful women. The influence of the Torii school on kibyōshi illustration was considerable. Here, the name

Kiyonobu is repeated twice, but the second name was probably meant to be the second generation Kiyomasu.

34. Nampo refers to publishing matters in considerable detail in his diaries. One entry describes the change of format of books put out by Urokogataya, with specific details regarding the colour of title pages and cover illustrations, and observes that 'in Hōreki 10, the Year of the Dragon [1762], Yamamoto Kyūbei from the publishing house of Marushō in Tōriabura was the first to add the name of the author Jōi in a book...' This is almost identical to the comments in the hyōbanki.

35. Kinkin sensei eiga no yume, published by Urokogataya in 1776, established Koikawa Harumachi as a popular writer, and marked a significant stage in the development of the new kibyōshi genre.

36. Okugi usually refers to the secret traditions of art or warfare, but here the word applies to far more worldly matters. Maki means 'scroll', but can also be read kan, or 'volume'.

37. Tsū (通) means 'sophisticated' and the antonymn is futsū (不通). Fūtsū (風通) was a type of weave using different coloured threads in such a way that the back and front of the material showed reverse designs. It is mentioned in Kinkin sensei eiga no yume as being a very fashionable weave for a sash (obi wa birōdo mata wa hakataori fūtsū mōru nada to dekake). Ittsū (一通) means 'one letter' and refers to the mysteries, while continuing the list of puns using

the word tsū (tsūtatsu, kantsū, tsūyō, tsūkutsu, all meaning to master a skill). The same sound is echoed in the word tsuji hōshi (storyteller).

38. Kōmansai angyo nikki was the title of a kibyōshi written by Koikawa Harumachi in 1776. A scholar practised all sorts of traditional arts in a retreat he called Kōmansai. While he was away on a Poetry Pilgrimage, his students led a corrupt and dissolute life, so he cured them with a heavy dose of Chinese philosophy from the Four Books and the Five Classics. He was rewarded for his virtue and wisdom by Lord Saimyōji of Kamakura. This was a reference to Hōjō Tokiyori (1227-1263) who was a very powerful man in Kamakura before taking the tonsure and becoming known as Saimyōjidono (Lord of Saimyō temple). He was said to have gone on a pilgrimage to the provinces to observe the state of the nation, and on the way took shelter with an impoverished samurai. This was the theme of the famous Nō play Hachi no ki, mentioned earlier in the episode concerning Sano Genzaemon's promotion.

39. This is a reference to Kantan's dream, a recurrent motif in kibyōshi. At the end of the dream in Kinkin sensei eiga no yume, the girl in the shop calls out moshi moshi mochi ga dekimashita. ('Hey, you! The rice cakes are ready!') The sound is similar to akimashita, which forms part of a New Year greeting, but which is used here to signify the beginning of the assessments.

APPENDIX TWO

Gozonji no shōbaimono (The Tricks of the Trade)

Gozonji no shōbaimono was written and illustrated by Santō Kyōden under the pen-name Kitao Masanobu and was published in three volumes by Tsuruya in 1782. It received a special mention in Okame hachimoku, the 1782 kibyōshi assessment by Ōta Nampo, and was extremely popular with the reading public. The entire thirty illustrated pages are reproduced here, organised as eighteen complete scenes, with accompanying text. Notes dealing with the verbal and pictorial content of each scene follow, and are based largely on entries in Mizuno Minoru et al. (ed.), Kibyōshi sharebon-shū in the Nihon koten bungaku taikei series by Iwanami shoten.

The Tricks of the Trade

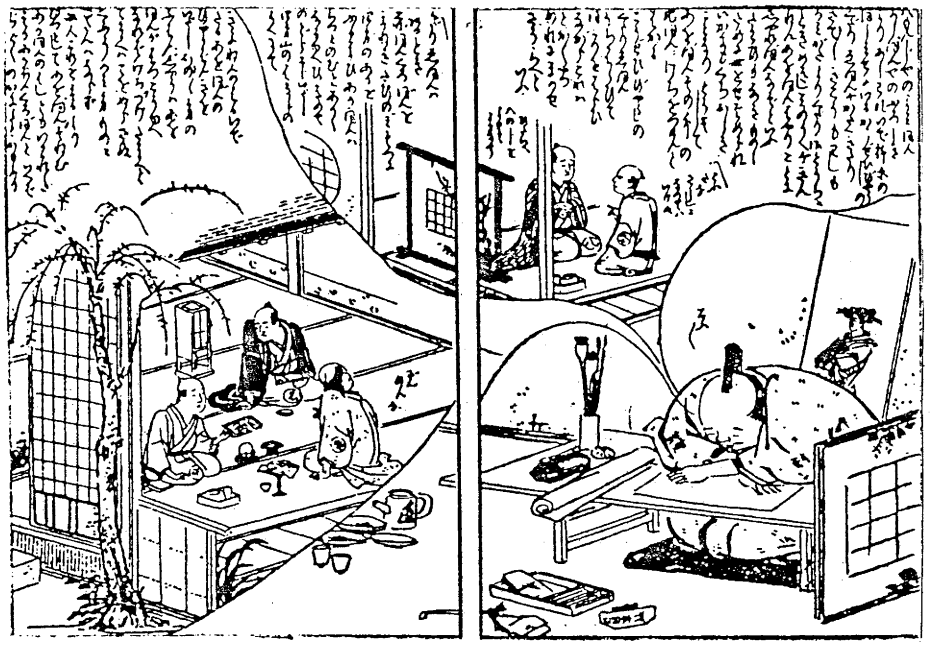
1.

I should like to introduce myself. I am a sometime illustrator of New Year storybooks. Since I am still unknown to women and children readers, I was wondering if I could present something which would really appeal to you, when I had a very strange New Year's dream. Therefore, I decided to go to tell a certain publisher all about it, and immediately set out, soon arriving at his gate.

'Hello there! Could I discuss a particular matter with you?'

'Hurry! Hurry! Let's begin the show!'

2.



Mr. Hachimonjiya Fiction came out of a lending-library wrapper and visited Mr Kōzei Picture Book, who had come from Kyoto to Edo and was on sale in the open-air Yanagiwara Market. 'Well now', he began to plot. 'You and I are both from Kamigata. We used to be most highly regarded here, but since Mr. Blue Book has become very popular lately along with silly things like Mr. Pleasure-Quarter Book, life has become hard, which is a real shame. Let's try to take Mr. Blue Book and all the other local Edo Books down a notch'. Mr. Kōzei Picture Book from Kyoto burst out laughing, dusted off his jacket, and said, 'Just leave it all to me!' Then he continued with a frown, 'We can't just let ourselves be left to rot on the shelf like this'.

[Masanobu] Zzzzz.....

One day Mr. Picture Book from Kyoto invited Mr. Red Book and Mr. Black Book to dinner. Since Mr. Red Book soon got flushed when he drank even a little, they ate some gong-shaped cakes from Hikinoya and talked about reams of things, including Mr. Blue Book's assessments, published the year before.

[Mr. Picture Book] 'The reason we're so depressed at the moment is that Mr. Blue Book is so popular. Let's get him!' And so he tried to think of a way of doing this without getting ink on his own hands. There's no trusting those Kamigata Books. Both of them were green with envy over Mr. Blue Book.

[Mr. Black Book] 'When you think that he was once considered just an offshoot of Mr. Red Book! Does he think we're just a couple of little red and black devils?'

[Mr. Red Book] 'Isn't it awful!'

3.

Mr. Blue Book is enjoyed by both rich and poor. He is pleasant, smart, witty and impeccably up-to-date. On

a rainy day indoors he is good company along with roasted nuts, and is a great favourite with the women and children. He is always on the look-out for new ideas for publications, but is not at all showy. Rather, in his recycled clothes, he goes off to regular monthly meetings to discuss all the latest ideas with his modern bookish friends, Mr. Pleasure-Quarter Book, Mr. Sleeve Edition, Mr. One-Leaf Picture and others.

[Mr. Blue Book] 'Last year's Mistaken Treasure Boat was a smash hit'.

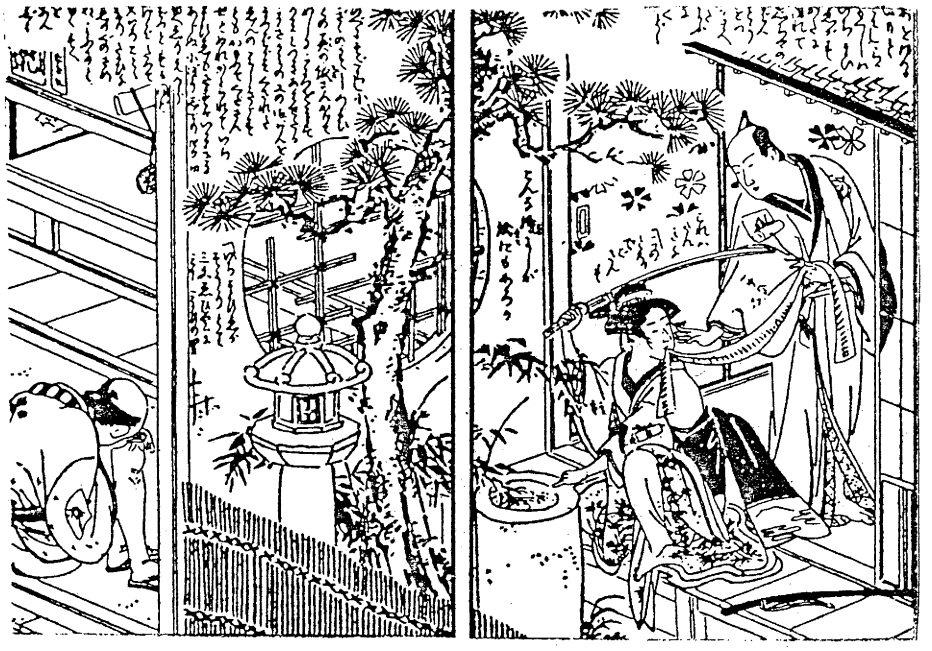
[Mr. Pleasure-Quarter Book] 'Zenkō certainly writes well. Kisanji's A Dream Worth Seeing was also popular, although the concept isn't very original'.

[Mr. One-Leaf Picture] 'Koikawa's Crazy Chronicle was terribly funny too. Shiran's The Good Oil was interesting and there were some great works by Tsūshō and Kashō'.

Miss Framed Portrait was Mr. Blue Book's young sister, and not at all of the tomboy style.

[Miss Framed Portrait] 'In my great-grandpa's day, Momotarō crossed over to the island and I've heard that Mr Lacquer Picture was a great favourite in the days of Urashimataro's youth'.

4.



Mr. Blue Book's young sister Framed Portrait fell in love with One-Leaf Picture's good looks, and she wooed him as earnestly as someone determined to wheedle money out of a pawnbroker's clerk.

[Miss Framed Portrait] 'I'm just a little daisy brought up in the fields. Oh, how I suffer from this passion I feel for you! I pray to God I can show you my true love, and long for our next meeting. Think of me as a woman destined never to be torn from your side'.

Mr. One-Leaf Picture wasn't made of stone or wood, so of course when he heard these passionate words his whole frame tingled with pleasure and soon they were wildly in love. Both of them felt a little anxious about their future, and hoped their colourful romance would never fade away.

[Miss Framed Portrait, severing her little finger]. 'This is the depth of my love'.

[Mr. One-Leaf Picture] 'That's a bit impetuous. I wonder if papers elsewhere could ever report such a picture of passion'.

Mr. One-Leaf Picture had a servant called Threepenny Daub.

Such men come a dime a dozen.

5.

That evening Mr. Blue Book invited some friends to a banquet to celebrate the break of day. Mr Story Book stayed behind and made everyone laugh with his jokes and gags. As the proverb says: 'If you have a story, save it for the daybreak celebration'. Mr. Black Book and Mr. Red Book weren't among the guests, and Mr. Blue Book wondered why.

[Written on the screen behind Mr. Story Book]

If this book should chance to roam

Box it up and send it home

6.

Mr. Blue Book realised that his young sister Framed Portrait and One-Leaf Picture were in love. He thought he'd bless their union and set off to speak privately to his long-term friend, Mr. Pleasure-Quarter Book. On the way he met Mr. Stone Rubbing. They decided to go along together to pray to the Goddess of Mercy, but ended up in the Yoshiwara pleasure quarter.

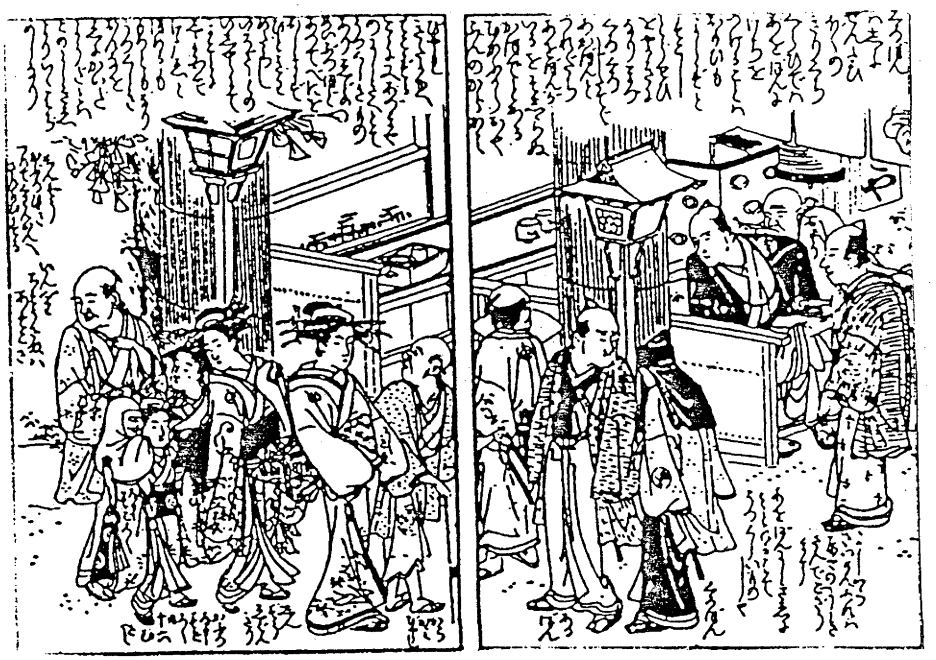
7.

Master Peep Show called out: 'Come and see the scene

of people enjoying the evening cool along Shijo and Kawara streets in Kyoto. Now it's night-time, with rows and rows of lanterns burning. When it's all over, everyone is sorry to part, I know, but all good things must come to an end. Da-daaa!'

Actor-Crest Paper. Mini Pictures.

8.



For all Mr. Black Book wanted to bring down Mr. Blue Book by hook or by crook, he wasn't having any luck, so instead he dressed up fashionably and set off all in black with Mr. Red Book. They pretended not to see Mr. Blue Book and walked on by, but were a bit nonplussed to see old man Chinese Book coming towards them. There was also a gorgeous courtesan called Miss Multi-Colour Print from Azumaya House. She was a famous item in Edo, with her generous use of rouge and her extravagant taste in outfits. It was no wonder she was admired throughout the country as the very picture of Edo.

Indeed, this Multi-Colour Print was the origin of the expression 'as pretty as a picture'. She was leading her junior courtesan and her attendants to pray at the temple of the Goddess of Mercy.

Mr. Yoshiwara Guidebook: 'That's Miss Multi-Colour Print from Azumaya House'.

Mr. Blue Book gazed enraptured at Multi-Colour Print. 'Oh! Isn't she beautiful!'

Mr. Brown Book: 'Over there is Inga Jizō, the God of Destiny'.

Mr. Black Book, Mr. Red Book, Mr Chinese Book, Landscape (the junior courtesan), Sugoroku Highway Game and Sixteen-Stone Game (the attendants).

9.

Mr. Blue Book really fell for Miss Multi-Colour Print's loveliness, and threw a grand party for his friends, Song Book, Chanters' Selections, Theatrical Imitations and others. It wasn't as though Miss Multi-Colour Print was particularly smitten with Blue Book, but he looked like he might be a good customer. She really dealt him a line,

and that's the origin of the expression 'pictures tell lies'.

[Mr. Blue Book]'Hey, let's act out this bit about the son'.

[Miss Multi-Colour Print]'I'd like to call for a book of amateur Kabuki skits'.

[Mr. Theatrical Imitations]'What a lot of nonsense! Ping! Ping!'

[Mr. Song Book]'Bring on the wine!'

[Mr. Chanters' Selections]'Since you're called Sixteen-Stone Game, you must be old enough for a bit of fun'.

[Sixteen-Stone Game]'Hey, you! Let go!'

10.

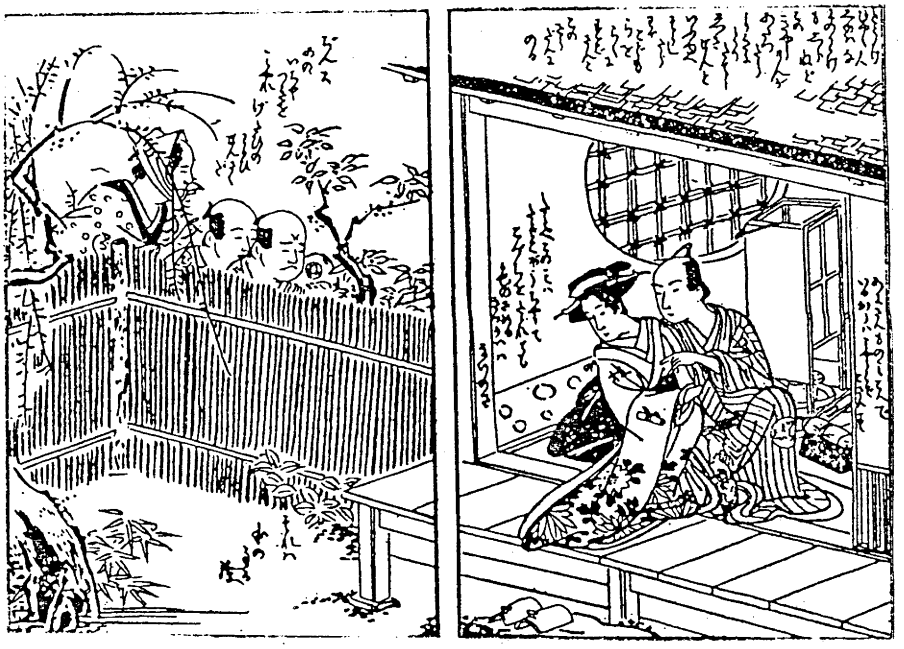
Black Book and Red Book were determined to bring down Blue Book whatever the cost, so they talked to Basic Maths, Chronicle and Comic Poems and plotted to kidnap Framed Picture and thus cause a fall-out between One-Leaf Picture and Blue Book. In recent years Ōtsu Picture had fallen on bad times, so he slipped out of Ōtsu under cover of darkness and went to see Black Book. There he pacified Black Book's son Little Book so that he wouldn't cry all night.

'Now, now, don't be naughty or the devil at prayer on grandpa's crest will jump right out and get you. Oooh! Isn't that scary! He'll write it all down in his big ledger, and if there are too many black marks against your name, he'll really give you hell-fire. So just as quickly as you strike a bell, Ding! stop this noise right now. My, what a tantrum!'

And so he patiently humoured the child, casting a spell like a fond parent, as they say.

[Mr. Red Book]'Hey, Basic Maths, just check that there are no mistakes in this account'.

11.



Comic Poems didn't really have an inkling about what was going on, but they promised that if they could pull off this act, they'd improve his lot in the world, so he joined forces with them, thinking that it would be good for his children's sake.

[Miss Framed Portrait]'Since my older brother agrees to it, we are now man and wife'.

[Mr. One-Leaf Picture]'Even if I were to be chopped to pieces with a tobacco knife, you need never worry that my

passion will fade'.

[Miss Framed Portrait] 'Really?'

[Mr. Chronicle] 'Basic Maths, just look at those two carrying on. It's a bad sign'.

12.

Black Book asked the other three to help him and they successfully kidnapped Framed Portrait and took her home. However Black Book's wife Mrs. ABC didn't know what it was all about, got very jealous and started an almighty row. So he beat her with the pestle, as usual.

[Mr. Black Book] 'Look, you haven't a clue what's happening, so don't go reading the riot act on me. Stop glaring like that!'

Mr. Comic Poems tried to stop him, saying: 'It's just because she's so short-tempered'.

Mr. Black Book gave him a black look and replied: 'Fool! Get out of my way!'

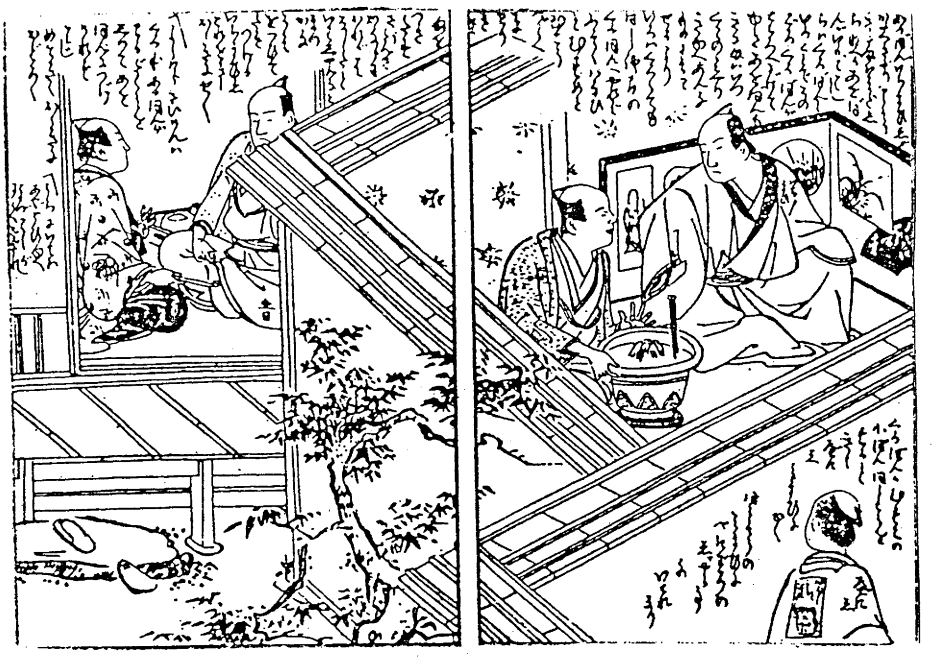
13.

Blue Book turned pale worrying both about his young sister's whereabouts, and the breaking of his promise to One-Leaf Picture. He never dreamed it was all the doing of Black Book and Red Book and feared that she might have been spirited away by a demon, or sold off as a present to the country. He called for Mr. Fortune-Telling Book to see what lay ahead.

[Mr. Blue Book] 'I've been to the busy areas around Yokkaichi and Ryōgoku, I prayed for luck and I even drew a fortune-stick which said all will be well in the end '.

[Mr. Fortune-Telling Book] 'Well, I can't get a clear reading on this at all. Anyway, go and search the stalls over in Yashima or in front of Shimei shrine'.

14.



Red Book visited One-Leaf Picture and said: 'Didn't you know? Blue Book's young sister Framed Portrait is having an affair with Black Book. She has run off to Black Book's place. Blue Book says he doesn't want her to have anything to do with you, since your fortune is as flimsy as the paper it is written on. He thinks it would be better after all to give her to Black Book. Despite his colour at least he is in the same genre. So they've changed their minds and are plotting to get rid of you. Whatever you do, don't let them know I told you'. And so he told a brazen lie and stirred up trouble. One-Leaf Picture was very angry after hearing about all this.

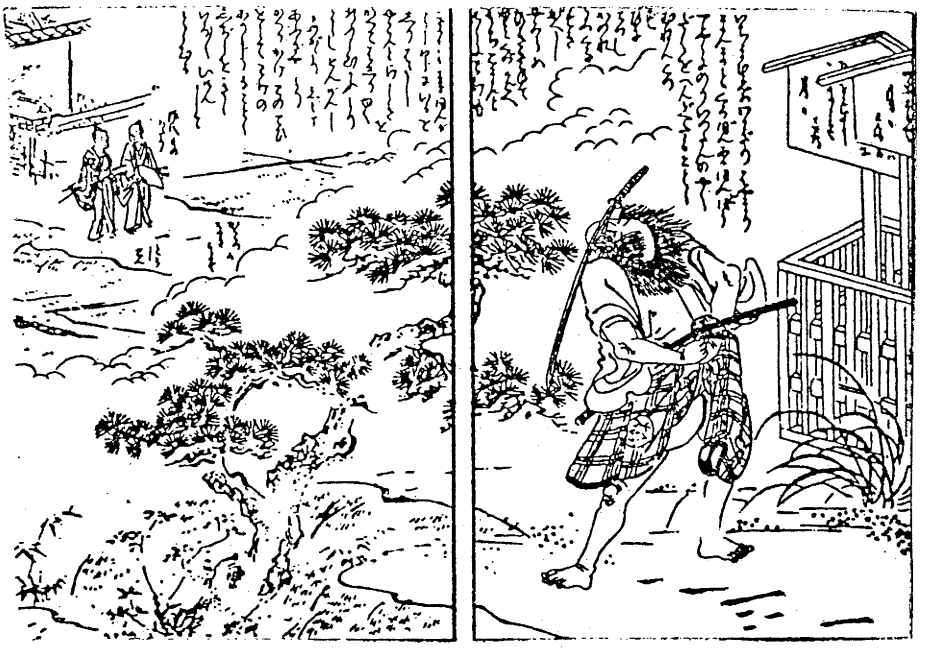
When Red Print heard that Black Book's son Little Book had come down with the measles, he paid a visit, and that is the origin of giving people a red print nowadays when they have the measles.

Yoshiwara Guidebook knew about the diabolical plot hatched by Black Book and Red Book. When he told Blue Book he was

shocked to find out about it for the first time.

[Mr. Yoshiwara Guidebook] 'It's dangerous for you to stay at home, so come on over to my place'.

15.



With the impetuosity of youth, One-Leaf Picture had been completely taken in by the plot of Black Book and Red Book, and now believed that Blue Book had betrayed his promise. Rage swept through him to the very marrow of his bones.

'That wretched scrap of recycled rubbish! I'll rip him to shreds and toss him in the waste-paper basket!' Completely ignoring all advice, he raced over to Yoshiwara when he heard that Blue Book was there, and was determined to fight it out. Just at that moment, Lord Chinese Poetry and Prince Tale of Genji were coming back from Ōgiya House in Yoshiwara. Seeing that something was amiss, they inquired about the situation and managed to dissuade the young fellow.

Prince Tale of Genji and Lord Chinese Poetry: 'Hark! The frogs are croaking'.

16. 

After Lord Chinese Poetry and Prince Tale of Genji heard explanations from both One-Leaf Picture and Blue Book, they realized it was the doing of Black Book and Red Book, and the prince gave sound advice to both parties: 'There may be certain differences between Picture Books and Illustrated Story Books but after all, you are still Books and therefore still belong to the same family. Now, we two are given pride of place in alcoves or on reading desks and we consider the behaviour of Red Book and Black Book most unseemly. As for worldly success or the lack of it, that is for each reader to judge for himself. The solemn teachings of the Yamazaki school have given place to the elegance of the Sorai school. The refined Yatsuhashi style of koto playing has been replaced by the modern Ikuta style. In fashion, beautiful lilac tones have been replaced by the old-style yellowish-green. In this ever-changing world, let Mr. Blue Book ride the fashion of the times. People will not always regularly frequent the pleasure quarters. It would never do to dissipate oneself buying the favours

of courtesans. Such amorous vows come to naught, so sever these illicit relationships and give your mothers tranquillity of mind. You should take cognizance of the fact that this earthly life is no more than a floating bridge in a dream, and in order to find favour with the readers, you must exercise all your ingenuity to devise new themes. Messieurs Black Book, Red Book and One-Leaf Picture, I beseech you to become harmonious companions from this time forth'.

He spoke gently, and Lord Chinese Poetry added his views too in classical Chinese measures: 'Furthermore, Mr One-Leaf Picture's rejection of all advice and brash determination to spill blood was behaviour hardly appropriate to the name of a handsome Picture'.

From the time of this severe scolding onward, we have the term Relief Picture.

[Prince Tale of Genji] 'However, you mustn't think of me as Whining Genji'.

[Mr. Blue Book] 'You high-quality desk books stand a class above most others'.

Mr. Harmonious Japanese Poetry soothed everyone's nerves and they all said 'Hear! Hear!' to the sensible admonition given by Prince Tale of Genji and Lord Chinese Poetry. Then they decided to clear off home before they got their ears boxed.

17.

So Framed Portrait and One-Leaf Picture were bound in marriage and their story ended happily. However, the diabolical plot by Red Book and Black Book was put down to their untidy appearance, which had caused serious warps in their nature, so a ruler was applied and they were trimmed back into good shape. Then they were given the drill and bound over to turn a new leaf. The place was as busy as end-of-year preparations for the New Year publications, and in the middle of all this confusion the conspiracy by Hachimonjiya Book and Kōzei Picture Book was uncovered. Since there was no point wasting paper on old fogies like that, they were literally taken apart and used to plaster the walls. The faces of the Kyoto Books were scribbled on, mice nibbled their fastenings and in conclusion they became under-paper for decorative screens. Since Black Book and Red Book had been reformed, they prospered like before.

[Mr. Word Usage] 'I'll give him a taste of the brush'.

[Mr. Model Correspondence] 'While you're at it, let's paint Kōzei Book too'.

This story of the Red Book is the origin of the phrase 'go scarlet with shame'.

Mr. Black Book: 'I've mended my ways!'

Sir Essays in Idleness took orders from Lord Chinese Poetry and Prince Tale of Genji and gave directions to the local Edo Books.

Mr. Reading Book. Mr. Concise Dictionary.

18.

From then on, all the different types of Illustrated Story Books got on well together, and flourished for many long years. The demise of old Vendetta Book must be due to this peaceful reign.

Just then I was surprised to hear a street hawker calling out as he walked by: One-leaf pictures, illustrated story books, treasure-boat pictures, sugoroku highway games!

As I got up to have a look, I heard: 'Greetings from Tsuruya Kizaemon! Happy New Year!'

By a student of Kōsuisai, Masanobu [Santō Kyōden].

Notes on The Tricks of the Trade

1. The opening lines resemble the typical Nō-Kyōgen greeting, and the illustration shows Kyōden in the costume traditionally used by Tarō Kaja, the main comic servant role in Kyōgen farces. His hakama trousers are covered with a design made up of publishers' trademarks such as Tsuruya, Marushō, Okumura, Iseji, Matsumura, Murata, Iwadoya and Izumishi.

Kibyōshi followed the custom of akabon and kurobon with the inclusion of a preface by the author or publisher, and by addressing themselves to children, although their reading public was mainly adults of some education.

The publisher referred to is Tsuruya Kizaemon, who put out this and many other works by Kyōden.

2. The author is hard-pressed to provide a New Year best-seller, and dozes off over his neatly arranged writing equipment. This dream motif recurs frequently in kibyōshi. Hachimonjiya was a famous publisher in Kyoto at the beginning of the eighteenth century, but by 1781 they had gone bankrupt and most titles were being re-issued by publishers in Osaka and elsewhere. The word yomihon (reading book) distinguished their ukiyozōshi stories from ehon picture books or Jōruri puppet plays.

Lending libraries were an extremely important aspect of the book world in Edo, and enabled wide circulation of relatively expensive printed matter.

Kōzeibyōshi (Kōzei Picture Book) was a type of binding popular in the Kamigata area. The name derives

from a celebrated writer of the mid-Heian period, Fujiwara no Yukinari (or Kōzei) who used a particularly colourful, stamped design of writing paper.

The Yanagiwara area extended along the south bank of Kanda River in Edo, from Sujichigai Bridge (near the present Mansei bridge) to Asakusa Bridge, and was noted for the numerous stalls selling second-hand books, clothing and other goods.

Kyōden always used the term aobon (Blue Book) although it is now more usual to term the new style of book written after 1776 as kibyōshi, or yellow-cover book.

Sharebon (Pleasure-Quarter Book) was a genre dealing exclusively with the etiquette and affairs of the pleasure quarter area.

Hitai ni hachi moji o yoseru (to frown) contains a pun on Hachimonjiya, which is also written with the character hachi (八), meaning 'eight'.

Akabon (Red Book) were popular with an unsophisticated reading public early in the eighteenth century, and drew their themes mainly from traditional tales. Kurobon (Black Book) developed slightly later, and placed more emphasis on stories of military exploits, although the division is by no means clear-cut.

Such phrases as tai no misozu ni yomo no aka and ippai nomikake yama were rather old-fashioned slang terms for drinking, and are included in Kotoba tatakai atarashii no ne (The New War of the Words), written by Koikawa Harumachi in 1778. The choice of words, and the illustration, give the impression that the books are rather out-of-date.

Yomo yama means 'many things', but is also a pun on

the subject of the conversation, the 1781 hyōbanki Kikujūsō, written by Ōta Nampo under the pen-name Yomo Sannin.

Akabon and kurobon provide the puns akabō (red devil) and kurobō (black devil).

3. The description of Mr. Blue Book applies equally well to the literary genre and to the elegant Edoite depicted in the illustration with the latest Honda hair style, a modish long haori coat and a long-stemmed pipe.

Anasagashi was a literary concept popular in the pleasure quarters, and meant 'to seek out faults'. That is, urbane wit was used to expose the short-comings of people with pretensions or pseudo-sophistication.

Sukigaeshi means 'recycled paper', and was the material used for kusazōshi.

Fukurozasshi (Sleeve Edition) were in many cases not different from kibyōshi except for their presentation in a separate special 'pocket'. The books and authors discussed are all factual. Ōchigai takarabune, Issui no yume and Muda iki were recent kibyōshi, whereas Aburatsūe was a sharebon.

Hashirakakushi (Framed Portrait) were simply mounted pictures of beautiful women or actors.

Kimpirabon were stories about a strong and valiant hero, Kimpira. As the illustration amply suggests, Framed Portrait has a much more feminine alluring style. Her rather naive chatter refers to two traditional tales of Momotarō and Urashimataro, and also to urushi-e (Lacquer Picture), which were popular until a more advanced technique of colour printing was introduced around 1742. After various

colours had been applied, a picture was drawn in black ink mixed with glue, thus giving a lacquered effect. There is also a pun on ureshii (happy).

4. The illustration depicts a passionate declaration of love, and Framed Picture is raising her lover's sword to cut off her little finger. In the promiscuous world of the Edo pleasure quarters, this was considered the penultimate demonstration of sincerity and love, the ultimate being a double-suicide. There is an extraordinary concentration of puns relating to paper and books, a veritable kami-tsukushi. The Romanized text is:

> Nobe ni sodachi shi kogiku no watashi,
> tsurai kono mi no kamisan kakete, nushi
> ni kokoro o misugami to, tsugiawasetaru
> makigami no mata no gogen o matsubagami,
> kusareta en no hashi kirazu tomo, omote
> kudasanse.

Nobe no sodachi means 'country bred'.

Nobegami was tissue paper made from mulberry-wood, and considered a luxury item in Edo times.

Kogiku means 'daisy' but was also an inferior quality of Japanese paper used under the kettle in the tea ceremony to protect the tatami mat, or as a tissue.

Mi is 'myself' and kami is 'gods', but Minogami was a high quality paper from Mino (Gifu) province. It was thick and strong, and was popular for writing, wrapping or papering sliding doors.

Misu is 'to show' and misugami was a high quality paper from Yoshino in Nara province.

Tsugiawasetaru suggests both pulling oneself together and patching something together, namely, a makigami or scroll.

Hankirigami is Japanese paper used for letter-writing. As it has been cut in half, it is short and wide. From Genroku times, these half sheets, usually of good Sugihara or mulberry paper, were joined edge to edge to make a long continuous strip known as a tsugiawasete makigami, and so scroll paper (makigami) is also known as hankiri, hankire, or kirikami. Enumeration of all these types of writing paper leads to a conventional epistolary phrase mata no gogen o matsu (looking forward to hearing from you again). Matsubagami was a type of paper where impurities were deliberately added during the manufacturing process to give a 'pine-needle' design. Kusareta en means 'a mismatched couple'.

Hashikirazu is Japanese mulberry-paper left in big sheets as it was manufactured, without being cut to size, and used mainly in account books. It is also known as Hosokawa paper. The linking phrase en no hashi refers to the rotting boards of a verandah that need to be cut back (the illustration shows the girl kneeling on the engawa). A final and important permutation is en o kirazu, or 'not to terminate a relationship'.

Kyōden continues his many-layered network of allusions in the deceptively simple observation that One-Leaf Picture is not made of stone or wood. In fact, he is made of Hōshogami, a smooth, fine-textured mulberry-paper of good quality produced in Fukui and used in replies to a superior, or to give orders to subordinates. The prefix ko means 'small', and this is made more precise

in yottsugiri, where a full sheet is cut into four quarters, each measuring about seventeen cms by twelve cms. Ko is also contained in the word koyubi or 'little finger'. Combined with the reference to cutting paper, this prepares for the girl's love pledge of cutting off her little finger.

One-Leaf Picture is so excited his hair stands on end. Kebatta means 'shaggy' and could also refer to the distinctly fibrous texture of Japanese paper.

There is a line in a popular song, Yukari no tsuki (The Moon of Love) which goes: konna enishi ga kara ni mo arō ka (I wonder if such deep love could be found even in China). Here, enishi (love) becomes e and kara (China) becomes kami to give 'I wonder if such a picture could even be shown on paper'.

One-Leaf Picture's servant can be seen dozing outside. He is a sanmon-e (Threepenny Daub). As low denomination coins were strung together in lots of one hundred by means of the hole in the centre, you could buy thirty-two of these cheap pictures for one string of coins, and still have four coins change. Hyaku ni sanjūnimai was therefore a colloquial way of saying something was very cheap and presumably worthless.

5. At New Year, in May and in September, a particularly auspicuous day was chosen, and friends gathered on the preceding evening for purification rites, offerings and prayers, while waiting for the day to break. This was the himachi (waiting for day) celebration, and could become very lively.

Hanashibon (Story Book) were collections of short

tales, bound together in a format similar to sharebon.

Kuchiai and jiguchi were jokes or puns, often made to rhyme or with repetition of a certain sound.

As usual, Kyōden's illustration contains meticulous realistic detail, even to the extent of a door being left slightly ajar. The characters convey a sense of dramatic interaction by the convergence of their attention on the storyteller and the variety of their poses. The standing screen relates amusingly to the book theme, and is a supplement to the main text. After the words 'If this book goes astray, please return it quickly', there is even a note kono nushi sora, where the owner or lending library would usually add his own name to encourage prompt return.

6. Ishizuri (Stone Rubbing) were obtained from words carved in stone or wood by great masters of calligraphy. They were usually reproduced in oribon (accordion-opening format) with a separate cover of wood or board at the front and back. They were useful aids in learning calligraphy. The heavy bald-headed old man is a particularly apt personification.

The use of pilgrimages as a pretext for amorous adventures is a common device in popular Japanese literature, for example, the story of Osen, the barrelmaker's wife in Ihara Saikaku's 1686 Koshoku gonin onna (Five Women Who Loved Love). In Edo, the physical proximity of many temples to brothels made this even easier.

7. Uki-e (Peep Show) were pictures influenced by western techniques of depicting perspective. Often, they were viewed in a special box known as a nozoki karakuri. As the customer peered through the viewer, the pictures were

turned over in sequence. As can be seen in the illustration, this was accompanied by a certain fanfare and salesmanship. The sales-patter here may well be based on what could be heard in Edo streets.

Montsuke no kami (Actor Crest Paper) were sheets of thick paper printed all over with the family crests of famous actors. A single crest was printed on another slip, and players could bet money on which actor's crest it matched.

Mame no e (Mini Pictures) were pages of small pictures in separate squares. Actor Crest Paper and Mini Pictures are wittily personified as two lively little boys fascinated by the peep show. One of them calls out to a friend beyond the frame of the picture, while an unidentified man strolls by in casual kimono and wooden sandals.

8. Daiboku no kiriguchi futoi no ne, meaning futoi, tondemonai or 'nonsense' was by 1782 rather out-dated slang, in contrast to Black Book's determinedly rakish new attire.

Karakami is a Chinese-style pattern achieved through the use of mica. Karakamibyōshi (Chinese Book) were illustrated Jōruri texts published in Edo from around 1660 to 1720. These stories were the source of many later kusazōshi, such as kurobon, so they are here referred to as the oyabun (old master).

Nishiki-e (Multi-Colour Print) were developed by Suzuki Harunobu around 1765. They were a type of ukiyo-e but since they were produced in Edo, the prefix azuma (east) was often added. The phrase azumaya no nishiki-e here suggests a lovely courtesan from a pleasure house. This explanation of e ni kaita yō da (as pretty as a picture) is a typical kibyōshi pun.

Yoshiwara saiken (Yoshiwara Guidebook) were small books put out every year by the publisher Tsutaya. They contained names and ranks of brothels and girls, and details on entertainers, tea-houses, boat brothels, prices, holidays and special features. Thus it is apt that this character should draw Blue Book's attention to the courtesan.

Chabyōshi (Brown Book) was a Chinese-style brown-cover book. Here, he points out the Inga Jizō (God of Destiny), which was in fact a stone statue in front of the main gateway to the temple of the Asakusa Kannon, or Goddess of Mercy.

Hankiri were sheets of paper cut in two. The best quality paper was lightly decorated with pictures of landscape, birds or flowers.

Ebankiri (Landscape) plays the role of a lower-rank courtesan attending on her mistress. The two little girls are also instantly recognizable as kamuro or kaburo (apprentices). Dōchū sugoroku (Sugoroku Highway Game) is a kind of backgammon played with a map showing the fifty-three stages of the Tokkaido Line and Jūroku musashi (Sixteen-Stone Game) is a type of draughts using sixteen small pieces and one large piece. This name prepares for a pun on the age of the apprentice in the next scene, another example of Kyōden's skill in consistency of personification.

The exactness of dress, hair and deportment indicates the author's close familiarity with the milieu he is depicting. While the text introduces many characters under their genre names, this does not intrude upon the illustration beyond the use of identifying crests. As in other domestic

interiors, street scenes and tea-houses, the scene depicted is faultlessly realistic, with a wealth of fine detail, such as the gingko tree, the rolled-back bamboo blinds, lamps, tobacco and tea utensils and even a glimpse of the name-sign. Mr. Stone Rubbing sits in the front booth of an Asakusa tea-house with Mr. Blue Book, watching the passing parade. Next to them, Yoshiwara Guidebook points out the entourage of lovely Miss Multi-Colour Print. Brown Book looks out of the frame of the picture at a stone image of the God of Destiny. Another dramatic interaction is the deliberate slight by Black Book and Red Book to Mr. Blue Book. They also do not seem too anxious to be seen by their old predecessor Chinese Book, who is completely absorbed in the lovely courtesan. Thus the tableau is rendered lively by the implied interest shown by the characters in each other, and there is a masterly balance of realistic and representational detail.

9. The illustration shows in fine detail a scene of entertainment in a pleasure-house. Outside there is a glimpse of the neighbouring roof-top. Inside, the paraphernalia includes a wide range of everyday items such as a wooden pillow in the alcove, serving trays, a candle-holder and straw sandals on the right. One of the courtesans tunes her samisen, ignoring the struggle between the apprentice and a client who thinks that 'sixteen should be old enough'. Mr. Blue Book's guests are personifications of books of selections taken from various popular genres. Nagauta is a song, gidayū refers to puppet-theatre chanting and the sanshibai, or three official theatres, were Morita-za, Nakamura-za and Ichimura-za. Ōmu

means 'parrot', and the sanshibai ōmu seki was a collection of passages suitable for vocal imitations known as kowairo. During the discussion over which skit to perform, Theatrical Imitations says tsugamonē (Nonsense!) which was actually an expression often used by the outstandingly popular Kabuki actor, Ichikawa Danjūrō. This suggests that kibyōshi were themselves a form of kowairo, meant to be read aloud and enjoyed with all the appropriate intonations and expression. Chin chin chin even gives an imitation of the samisen.

10. Jinkōki (Basic Maths) were simple instructional books derived from a text written by Yoshida Mitsuyoshi in 1627. He applied mathematics to practical situations in everyday life.

Nendaiki (Chronicle) gave details on important events. Yoshida Mitsuyoshi wrote one of the earliest popular versions.

Hyakunin isshu (here simply written shu) was a collection of poetry by one hundred poets. The best known was Ogura hyakunin isshu, compiled by the prolific writer Fujiwara no Teika (1162-1241), but there were many imitations. The dōke hyakunin shu (Comic Poems) was probably a parody written and illustrated by Kondō Kiyonobu in the early eighteenth century.

Ōtsu-e were rough cheap drawings sold from around 1700 at the Tokkaido Line station of Ōtsu.
From simple line sketches of Buddha, they diversified to comic or satirical themes such as Oni nembutsu (The Devil at Prayer), Yarimochi Yatsu (The Spear-carrier), Fujimusume (The Lilac Girl) and Hyōtan namazu (The Gourd

and the Catfish). The devil in Oni nembutsu usually wore priest's clothing and carried a clapper, a bell and a temple subscription list.

Shōhon or kobon (Little Book) were any book less than quarto size, and there is a pun on ko (child) and kobonnō (an indulgent parent). Also there is a clever tie-in between the kindly Ōtsu Picture's threat that the devil will jump out and 'apply a moxa', and the yonaki no majinai, a spell to stop children crying at night by fixing pictures of Oni nembutsu around the room.

11. The line waga kodomora o raku ni sugosan (I'll provide well for my children) is taken from the second half of one of the poems in Kondō Kiyonobu's Dōke hyakunin isshu: aki no ta no karihosu made ni hiyori yoku waga kodomora o raku ni sugosan. This was in turn a parody of a serious poem by the emperor Tenchi Tennō (626-671), aki no ta no kariho no io no toma o arami waga koromode ni tsuyu wa nure tsu tsu (autumn winds buffet the roof of my little hut in the rice field and tears of dew fall on my sleeve).

The three unbound edges of a book were collectively called koguchi, and were trimmed as part of the book-binding process. Here this is envisaged to be done with an amusingly domestic instrument, the tabako bōchō (tobacco knife).

Hon no koto kae (Is that true?) is a pun on hon (book) and e (picture).

Ketai refers to the pattern obtained when a fortune-teller shuffles six sticks which are about eight centimetres long and marked with various designs. Good or bad fortune

is foretold according to the way they fall. The illustration juxtaposes the intimate love scene with unpleasant figures lurking behind a fence in the background.

12. Iroha (ABC) is a mnemonic device for the forty-seven kana signs. Each sign appears just once in a poem beginning iro ha. Books were also written listing the forty-seven signs and the character kyō (capital city), with each sign commencing a different proverb. One of the best known was published by Kondō Kiyonobu around 1736. It enumerated all the reasons why a husband wanted to get rid of his wife, and then gave the reply by the wife's mother. This domestic argument is dramatically portrayed in the picture. The wife, ABC, is half obscured by a shadowy screen, but her dishevelled hair and comic features resemble a standard theatrical character, Otafuku (ugly woman).

Black Book adapts a proverb from one of the twenty-four Chinese classical histories, Shiki which, translated literally, means 'however many little sparrows there might be, they still wouldn't be able to see into the heart of the mighty phoenix'. (i.e. small-minded people can't understand a great man.)

Yoake no pinzoro was current slang for women who glared angrily. Yoake is 'daybreak' and pinzoro was a gambling term for number one appearing on two dice at the same throw. Presumably the women were jealous when their husbands returned home late.

Tanka is the 57577 poetic form, and is a pun on tanki (short tempered).

Dōke (comic) suggests doke (clear off!)

13. Hashira kakushi (Framed Picture) literally means 'to hide the pillar'. Here it provides a pun on kami kakushi, or 'hidden by the gods', a term used when children disappeared inexplicably.

Kusazōshi were popular souvenirs of Edo bought by people returning to the country, so Blue Book fears his sister may have met this fate.

Yokkaichi and Ryōgoku were very lively areas of Edo, the latter being a reknowned pleasure area.

There is a pun on praying for divination (hakke) and praying for one's own selfish desires (katte no koto). A similar pun comes from sate (well!). At this time the temple in Ueno was particularly famous for its fortune lotteries, which were expressed in very elliptical form such as sue kichi (all will be well in the end). The illustration shows various items used in telling fortunes.

14. Makka na uso denotes a downright lie, but makka, or scarlet, is a pun on Red Book.

Takitsukeru here means to stir up trouble, but also relates to the colour red and to the fact that all the characters are seated around a brazier.

It was evidently a custom to give something coloured red to sufferers of the measles. Beni-e (Red Print) were simple coloured pictures popular before the advent of nishiki-e.

15. Tōshisen (Chinese Poetry) was a collection of the poems of 127 Tang dynasty poets. It was available in Japan from the early Edo period and was widely used as an introduction to Chinese poetry.

Genji monogatari (Tale of Genji) was Murasaki Shikibu's elegant long novel of the Heian period.

A senryū of the time said Ōgiya e iku node Tōshisen narai (If you are going to Ōgiya House, you'd better study the classical Chinese poems). As Ōgiya was reputed to provide a high standard of entertainment, it is appropriate that their two customers should be of such a literary character. The illustration can be identified as the approach to Yoshiwara, which led past a public notice-board warning of prohibitions within the pleasure quarter and through a rice-field area.

16. Yamazaki Ansai (1618-1682) was a leading neo-Confucian scholar in Kyoto. Ogyū Sorai (1666-1728) was a later Edo philosopher. The blind musician Yatsuhashi Kengyō (1614-1685) led a koto school in Kyoto. Another blind musician Ikuta Kengyō (1656-1715) achieved nation-wide success with his more modern innovations.

Fuchi wa se to naru yo no naka (this changing world) is based on the eighteenth poem in the imperial collection, Kokinshū:

yo no naka wa	In this world
nani ka tsune naru	Is nothing permanent?
Asukagawa	See Asuka River
Kinō no fuchi zo	Yesterday's still depths
kyō wa se ni naru	Today's raging torrent

Tale of Genji's elegant speech is saturated with allusions to chapters of the famous Japanese classic, as follows:

mi o utsu (to ruin oneself) gives Utsusemi, a lady who resisted the hero's advances in Genji monogatari and eventually retired as a nun.

Sumanu (it shouldn't be done) gives Suma, where Genji lived in temporary exile, and Akashi, the name of the girl whose love consoled him.

Usui chikai no hashi (a short-lived promise) gives Hashihime, the maiden of Uji bridge whose love affair with Kaoru was ill-fated and led to her early death.

En o kiri (to break off a relationship) gives Kiritsubo, the mother of Genji.

Haha (mother) gives Hahakigi, a chapter devoted to a discussion of various types of women.

Yume no ukihashi (the floating bridge of dreams) concerns Ukifune, another ill-starred lady who would no doubt have agreed that yo wa yume (life is a dream).

Similarly, Chinese Poetry speaks in gogon sekku, a form of poetry popular in the Tang period, consisting of four lines containing five characters each.

Nigao-e means 'portrait', but in this case One-Leaf Picture's behaviour didn't live up to his appearance. Reversal of the characters gives kao ni niawanai (unbecoming), an example of rather frivolous word play.

Kimeru (to scold) gives kimedashi, a ukiyo-e technique whereby lines were set deep and the coloured portions raised in relief to give a three-dimensional effect.

Shikaru (to scold) suggests Hikaru Genji (Shining Genji).

Elegant works read off special stands were obviously more highly-regarded than popular literature.

The peace-making role of Japanese Song is appropriate in view of the preface to the Kokinshū, where the opening definition of yamato-uta says:

Chikara o mo irezu shite ame tsuchi o ugokashi
me ni mienu onigami o mo aware to omowase
otoko onna no naka o mo yawarage takeki mononofu
no kokoro o mo nagusamuru wa uta nari

[Our song can move heaven and earth effortlessly, it can touch the hearts of unseen devils and gods, it can bring love to flower between men and women, it can soften the hearts of mighty warriors.]

After these erudite allusions, there is a comic use of baby-language, atama ten ten (bang! bang! on your head!) The illustration lacks the vitality of other pictures (although one character has his hand held to his forehead!) This is appropriate to the text, which consists mainly of precepts and classical allusions.

19. The wild melee depicted is the 'come-uppance' of the conspirators. In Kabuki terms it could be called an ōie sōdō (domestic uproar), finally resolved by the punishment of the malefactors and the reinstatement of the heroes. Most of the puns refer to book-binding processes. For example, Red Book and Black Book are re-cut and new holes are drilled for re-binding. Other books are used to re-paper the lower parts of screens and sliding doors.

Yōbunshō (Word Usage) was a practical reference book useful in writing letters.

Teikin ōrai (Model Correspondence) was an early Muromachi period collection of twenty-five pairs of letters written in kambun style. The contents were instructive, and also provided an epistolary model. Many other such semi-fictional works were published, occasionally as examples of love-letters.

Tsurezuregusa (Essays in Idleness) was a collection of miscellaneous essays by Yoshida Kenkō (1283-1350).

Kittari hattari no kusazōshi refers to the early type of blood-thirsty kurobon

18. Takarabune depict the seven Gods of Good Fortune aboard a boat loaded up with bags of rice and treasure. A completely reversible caption printed on them reads:

> nagaki yo no too no neburi no mina
> mezame naminoribune no oto no yoki
> kana.
>
> [Awaken from this long dream of life and
> listen to the sweet sounds of waves lapping
> against the treasure-boat.]

Such pictures, are supposed to ensure a good New Year dream if placed under one's pillow on the second of January.

The author wakes up in surprise to hear the call of a vendor bringing New Year publications and a greeting from Tsuruya. Thus Kyōden cleverly brings the story back to the opening scene where he was dozing over his blank writing paper, and his dream about books provides a new work for his publisher.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Araki, James T. 'Sharebon: Books for Men of Mode', in Monumenta Nipponica, vol. 24. Tokyo: Sophia University, 1969.

Araki, James T. 'The Dream Pillow in Edo Fiction, 1772-81', in Monumenta Nipponica, vol. 25. Tokyo: Sophia University, 1970.

Asao Isoji. Kinsei shōsetsu-shi, in Nihon bungaku kyōyō koza series, no. 9. Tokyo: Shibundō, 1951.

Babcock, Barbara A. (ed.). 'The Reversible World - Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1978.

Fujioka Sakutarō. Kindai shōsetsu-shi. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1955.

Hamada Giichirō. Shokusanjin. Tokyo: Seigodō, 1942.

Hamada Giichirō et al. (ed.) Kibyōshi senryū kyōka, in Nihon koten bungaku zenshū series, no. 56. Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1971.

Hasegawa Junsaburō et al. (ed.). Tokugawa bungei ruiju: hyōbanki, vol. 182. Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōsha, 1914.

Hibbett, Howard. The Floating World in Japanese Fiction. London: Oxford University Press, 1959.

Hino Tatsuo. Edojin to yūtopia. Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha 1977.

Hisamatsu Sen'ichi et al. (ed.). Shinkokin waka-shū in Nihon koten bungaku taikei series. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1958.

Inamura Toku. Tsurezuregusa yōkai. Tokyo: Yūseidō, 1978.

Ishikawa Torakichi et al. (ed.). Kibyōshi nijūgo-shū in Nihon meichō zenshū series, vol. 11. Tokyo: Nihon Meichō Zenshū Kankōsha, 1926.

Keene, Donald. World Within Walls. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976.

Koike Masatane et al. (ed.). Edo no gesaku ehon (4 vols.). Tokyo: Kyōyō Bunkō, 1980-1982.

Konta Yōzō. Edo no honyasan. Tokyo: Nihon Hōsō Shuppan Kyōkai, 1977.

Kornicki, Peter F. 'Nishiki no ura an Instance of Censorship and the Structure of a sharebon', in Monumenta Nipponica, vol. 32. Tokyo: Sophia University, 1977.

Kubota Jun et al. (ed.). Gaisetsu nihon bungaku-shi. Tokyo: Yūhikaku, 1979.

Legge, James. The Chinese Classics (vol. 1). Taipei: 1971 reprint.

Mizuno Minoru. Edo shōsetsu ronsō. Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1974.

Mizuno Minoru. Kibyōshi sharebon no sekai. Tokyo: Iwanami Shinso, 1976.

Mizuno Minoru. Santō Kyōden no kibyōshi. Tokyo: Arimitsu Shobō, 1976.

Mizuno Minoru et al. (ed.). Kibyōshi sharebon-shū, in Nihon koten bungaku taikei series, no. 59. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1958.

Mori Senzō. Kibyōshi kaidai. Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1972.

Nakamura Yukihiko. Gesakuron. Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1966.

Nakamura Yukihiko. Kinsei bungei shichōko. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1975.

Nakamura Yukihiko. Kinsei shōsetsu-shi no kenkyū. Tokyo: Ōfusha, 1961.

Nakano Mitsutoshi. Gesaku kenkyū. Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1981.

Nakano Mitsutoshi et al. (ed.). Sharebon kokkeibon ninjōbon, in Nihon koten bungaka zenshū series, no. 47. Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1971.

Ogata Tsutomu et al. (ed.). Kinsei no bungaku, part 2, in Nihon bungaku-shi series, no. 5. Tokyo: Yūhikaku, 1977.

Raz, Jacob. 'The Audience Evaluated: Shikitei Samba's Kyakusha hyōbanki', in Monumenta Nipponica, vol. 35. Tokyo: Sophia University, 1980.

Ryan, Marleigh Grayer. The Development of Realism in the Fiction of Tsubouchi Shōyō. Seattle and London University of Washington Press, 1975.

Suwa Haruo. Shuppan shiji - Edo no hon. Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1978.

Tamabayashi Haruo. Shokusanjin no kenkyū. Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha , 1944.

Tsuchida Mitsufumi et al. (ed.). Tokyo bungaku chimei jiten. Tokyo: Tokyodō, 1978.

Umegaki Minora et al. (ed.). Ingo jiten. Tokyo: Tokyodō, 1956.

Yoshikawa Hanshichi. Shokusanjin zenshū (6 vols.). Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1908.