

A Retiree's Chat (Shin'ya meidan): The Recollections of the *Kyōka* Poet Hezutsu Tōsaku

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In the late 1780s, the renowned *kyōka* poet Hezutsu Tōsaku (1726–1789) looked back at his life and set about notating some of his memorable experiences and the characteristics of his age. The result was a presumably unfinished *zuibitsu* entitled *Shin'ya meidan* (*A Retiree's Chat*). In this piece Tōsaku presents sixteen anecdotes and opinions regarding, among other things, famous writers, poets, thinkers, and artists of the past, renowned kabuki actors, connoisseurs and courtesans in Yoshiwara, rural poets and authors, personal friends, astute monks, conditions in Ezo (Hokkaido), and the benefits of city life. This wealth of subjects supplies not just a rare glimpse into the biography of a late-eighteenth century comic poet but also an unusually personal account of cultural life in Edo.

Keywords: Hezutsu Tōsaku, *kyōka*, Edo, kabuki, Yoshiwara, Ise, Ezo (Hokkaido)

Introduction

A Retiree's Chat (*Shin'ya meidan* 莘野茗談) was written by Hezutsu Tōsaku 平秩東作 (given name: Tatematsu Kaneyuki 立松懷之, 1726–1789; see figure 1), a celebrated Edo man of letters best known for his *kyōka* 狂歌, humorous, parodic, or “wild” verse cast in a thirty-one-syllable *tanka* form.¹ The term *shin'ya* (Ch. shenye) in the title refers to the field that Yi Yin 伊尹, a “wise minister” at the start of the Shang dynasty (c. 1600–1050 BC), cultivated after retiring; *meidan* signifies casual talk over tea.² The compound thus signifies chat arising from a relaxed, productive retirement. In fact, Tōsaku had become a lay monk in An'ei 安永 8 (1779), and *A Retiree's Chat* appears to have been written in installments up to roughly a year preceding his death.

A Retiree's Chat constitutes an example of a *zuibitsu* 隨筆, a genre of fragmentary prose cultivated in both China and Japan, and flourishing with particular vigor during the Edo

1 For English-language discussions and translations of *kyōka*, see Carter 1991, pp. 413–16 (two of Tōsaku's verses are translated on pp. 413–14); Shirane 2002, pp. 528–32 (two of Tōsaku's verses are translated on p. 531); Tanaka 2006; Gill 2009 (two of Tōsaku's verses are translated on pp. 165, 192). The four ideographs “Hezutsu Tōsaku” are taken from the Chinese classic *Shujing* 書經 (Book of documents), “Yao dian” (Canon of Yao). Legge translates them “to adjust and arrange the labours of the spring” (Legge 1879, p. 33).

2 See Legge 1895, p. 362; *Mengzi* (Wang Zhang I), section 7.



Figure 1. Hezutsu Tōsaku, with his monkish shaven pate, glasses dangling from the ear, and a kitten in his lapel. From *Azumaburi kyōka bunko* 吾妻曲狂歌文庫, illustrated by Kitao Masanobu 北尾政演 (Santō Kyōden 山東京伝), Tenmei 天明 6 (1786).

period. In most *zuibitsu* the sections or paragraphs stand in no direct or obvious relation to one another, even if chronological or thematic organization may at times be detected. Tōsaku's piece, too, consists of sixteen short, largely independent segments offering observations, recollections, insights, and judgments regarding a variety of subjects.³ These fragments, some of which are highly autobiographical in nature, are apparently presented in the order in which the topics popped into the author's mind. Tōsaku's friend and *kyōka*-writing junior Ōta Nanpo 大田南畝 (Shokusanjin 蜀山人, 1749–1823) judged *A Retiree's Chat* unfinished (see the comment after no. 16 below), but the sudden swerve at the end, thematizing the plight of the poor, and voicing the prospect that social ills might finally be rectified, supplies room for doubt. Perhaps Tōsaku was here expressing his hope that the reforms of the bakufu “elder” Matsudaira Sadanobu 松平定信 (1759–1829) would lead to a world renewal. If Tōsaku was writing these lines before the late months of Tenmei 7 (1787), he could hardly have foretold that the reforms Sadanobu enacted would also beget draconian forms of censorship. When in the same year the new regime forced Tōsaku to turn on his friend and sponsor, the bakufu official and poet Tsuchiyama Sōjirō 土山宗次郎 (1740–1787+)—of whom more below—he must have understood that the new age of which he had dreamt was unlikely to be a more liberating one.⁴ Perhaps it was exactly at this point that he laid down his writing brush.

3 On Tōsaku's biography and output, see Mori 1970a, 1970b, 1970c. More recently, Inoue (1993) has published an exhaustive chronology of materials relating to the poet's life. Unless otherwise noted, biographical information presented below relies on this study. For a short biographical sketch in English, see also Beerens 2006, p. 66.

4 Here and below I use the sign + to indicate that on the modern calendar the *nengō* 年号 in question had moved to the next Western year.

Hezutsu Tōsaku: A Biographical Sketch

Hezutsu Tōsaku was born and raised in Edo. His childhood appears not to have been overly cheerful, for his father died in Kyōhō 享保 20 (1735), his mother remarried and divorced, and at age fourteen he was sent out as an apprentice of a tobacconist. During the early 1740s, while already running his own small tobacco shop in Shinjuku, he enrolled as a pupil of the poet and scholar of Chinese learning Ban Seizan 坂静山 (1665–1747). Seizan also tutored the poet of serious and comic verse, Uchiyama Chinken 内山椿軒 (Gatei 賀邸, 1723–1788), soon to become Tōsaku's intimate friend. Tōsaku married in Hōreki 宝暦 9 (1759) (his wife died in Tenmei 1 [1781]), and while continuing to manage his tobacco business and support a growing family, he nurtured a wide circle of highly educated and literate acquaintances. Around Meiwa 明和 1 (1764) he met the scholar, poet, and fiction writer Hiraga Gennai 平賀源内 (1728–1779+), under whose influence he began to write light fiction.⁵ This effort resulted in the novella *Mizu no yukue* 水濃往方 (Where waters go), published in Meiwa 2 (1765). Thereafter Tōsaku seems to have concentrated on humorous poetry, but in An'ei 8 (1779) he issued a *sharebon* 洒落本 entitled *Ekisha san'yū* 駅舎三友 (Three friends at a rural station) published under the name Chotto Kinanshi 秩都紀南子, and in An'ei 2 (1780) he published a “comical book” (*kokkeibon* 滑稽本) with the title *Tōsei otafukumen* 当世阿多福仮面 (Modern mask of the deity of mirth).⁶

Around Meiwa 2 (1765; see no. 1 below) Tōsaku was introduced to the young Ōta Nanpo, who would later play such a large role in the development of *kyōka* 狂歌 poetry. Tōsaku immediately recognized his junior's talents and did what he could to foster Nanpo's literary career. At roughly the same time Tōsaku's life was shaken by a far more dramatic event, one to which Suzuki Kyō 鈴木恭 (also Suzuki Hakutō 鈴木白藤, 1767–1851) briefly refers in his postface to *A Retiree's Chat*.⁷ Tōsaku's family adhered to Jōdo Shinshū Buddhism, a sect that spawned a faction known as the Okura *monto* 御蔵門徒, which practiced a secret and unauthorized form of Amida worship. The Okura *monto* had apparently already been active in Kyoto from the 1750s and their influence was spreading to Edo, where dozens of groups were active. The bakufu soon reacted, banning the heterodox faction in the third month of Meiwa 3 (1766). Then on 11.29 of that year, largely thanks to Tōsaku's role as an informer, many Edo members were arrested and ultimately punished or executed. For his connection with the Okura *monto* Tōsaku was at first subject to a severe inquisition, but eventually his role as an informant was recognized and he was rewarded with three pieces of silver.⁸ When in Meiwa 4 (1767).¹² his first daughter was born, he named her “Gin” (silver) in commemoration.

5 When Gennai died in prison in An'ei 8 (1779), it was Tōsaku who received the corpse that, being one of a criminal who in a drunken rage had murdered two men, nobody else wished to accept.

6 The title of *Ekisha san'yū* plays on the homophonous expression from the *Analects* of Confucius, (see *Lunyu*, Book 16, “Shiji”), referring to “three advantageous friendships”: those that are honest, sincere, and wise. The mask of Otafuku お多福 (the name means “much luck/happiness”) usually has large cheeks, a low nose, and an infectious smile.

7 Suzuki Kyō was a Confucian scholar who from Bunka 文化 9 (1812) served as “magistrate of books” (*shomotsu bugyō* 書物奉行) in the Tokugawa bakufu. He spent much of his time copying a vast variety of texts, most of which were later destroyed in a fire. For more biographical information, see *Kokusho jinmei jiten*, vol. 2, p. 614.

8 See Inoue 1993, pp. 56–62, 67–75, 80–81, 86–92. The amount was equivalent to a little more than two *ryō* in gold, hardly a staggering sum.

Selling tobacco did not make Tōsaku a wealthy man, and when his house burned down in Meiwa 1 (1764) he was further impoverished. Perhaps even more vexing, when he looked about, he saw that some of his friends were enjoying lavish lifestyles. It was thus only natural that he should embark on several business schemes that, alas, earned him little more than a reputation as a swindler (see Suzuki Kyō's postface below). First, from An'ei 2 (1773) Tōsaku sought to strike it rich by manufacturing charcoal at Mt. Amagi 天城 in Izu 伊豆 Province (see no. 15 below), a region that had long been a source of lumber, Japanese horseradish (*wasabi*), and various items reserved for bakufu use. He succeeded in obtaining official permission for this venture, but it soon collapsed, leaving Tōsaku with less capital than he had possessed at the outset. Undaunted, in An'ei 4 (1775), after relinquishing the tobacco shop to his fourteen-year-old son, Tōsaku founded a lumberyard at Aioi-chō 相生町 in Edo. Yet again, evidently because he left the running of the business to underlings, it soon proved to be a failure.

During the 1780s, perhaps in the hopes of finally filling his pockets, Tōsaku turned to the earlier mentioned Tsuchiyama Sōjirō. Tsuchiyama, of bannerman (*hatamoto* 旗本) rank, served the bakufu as "group head of the bureau of finance" (*kanjō kumigashira* 勘定組頭), and in Tenmei 6 (1786) was promoted to "clerk of the bakufu treasure house" (*Fujimi hōzō bantō* 富士見宝蔵番頭). Already in Tenmei 3 (1783) he had sensed the necessity of fortifying the north against possible encroachments by the Russians. He consequently dispatched several men, including Tōsaku, to scout out what is now Hokkaido. Tōsaku tarried in this frigid region from Tenmei 3 (1783).¹⁰ and returned to Edo in the fifth month of the following year. Observations resulting from this voyage found their way into the volume *Tōyūki* 東遊記 (A record of a journey to the east, 1784), another piece entitled *Kagichō* 歌戯帳 (Album of amusing verses), and nos. 14–15 of *A Retiree's Chat*.⁹

Things took an unexpected turn when after the fall of the bakufu elder Tanuma Okitsugu 田沼意次 (1719–1788), who had been one of Tsuchiyama's chief supporters, Matsudaira Sadanobu began to enact reforms seeking to sweep away Tanuma's excesses. In Tenmei 7 (1787). 6, Tsuchiyama was dismissed from his post and accused of pocketing five-hundred *ryō* earmarked for rice aid to Echigo 越後 Province. This money had allegedly gone to support Tsuchiyama's profligate lifestyle, which included ransoming a Yoshiwara courtesan as his second wife for the astronomical sum of twelve hundred *ryō* (his first wife, a woman of identical occupational background, had been a relative bargain at seven hundred *ryō*).¹⁰ On Tenmei 7 (1787).9.16, Tsuchiyama, having caught wind of the accusations, absconded. When he apparently begged Tōsaku for help, the latter suggested that Tsuchiyama conceal himself at the Yamaguchi Kannon 山口観音, a temple in Tokorozawa 所沢.¹¹ Shortly thereafter Tōsaku seems to have caved in to bakufu police pressure and revealed his friend's whereabouts (see Suzuki Kyō's postface below). Thanks to this maneuver, Tōsaku escaped with only a severe reprimand, but Tsuchiyama was arrested, tried, and, on Tenmei 7 (1787).12.5, executed. On account of this incident, which led to a government suspicion of *kyōka* coterie in general, Nanpo, too, withdrew from the *kyōka*

9 For an English-language discussion of the *Tōyūki*, see Winkel 2004, pp. 250–67.

10 On the Tsuchiyama Incident see the discussion and documents cited in Inoue 1993, pp. 256–57, 259–64. Tsuchiyama remarried in 1784.

11 This ninth-century Shingon school temple is officially named Hōkōji 放光寺 or Konjōin 金乗院. It is located in what is today Tokorozawa-shi, Kami-yamaguchi 2203, in Saitama Prefecture.

world. Around this time Tōsaku seems to have been working on *A Retiree's Chat*, but a little more than a year later, in Kansei 寛政 1 (1789).3.8, he too breathed his last.

Hezutsu Tōsaku and the World of *Kyōka*

Throughout his career Tōsaku wore many hats, but it was for his *kyōka* creations that he would gain the bulk of his reputation. In particular his Tenmei 5 (1785) collection *Hyakki yakyō* 百鬼夜狂 (Nighttime craze of one-hundred demons; also *Kyōka hyakki yakyō* 狂歌百鬼夜狂 or *Ika Hyakki yakyō* 夷歌百鬼夜狂) rapidly established itself as a classic work of *kyōka* poetry. Tōsaku was of course not the first to write *kyōka*, nor was he to be the last. To understand his position in the world of Edo literature, it is necessary to review in outline the development of *kyōka*, the genre in which he excelled.

Comic verse in a thirty-one-syllable form can already be found in the *Man'yōshū* 万葉集, and the term *kyōka* appears in the twelfth century. Yet the Edo-period *kyōka* movement received its most important impetus from the Kyoto-based poet Matsunaga Teitoku 松永貞徳 (1571–1654), onetime secretary of Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Though lauded as a master of both serious and light verse (*haikai* 俳諧), Teitoku was even more highly regarded as a teacher. One of his disciples, the Edo-born Ishida Mitoku 石田未得 (1587–1669), earned fame for a parody of the *Kokin wakashū* 古今和歌集 he dubbed *Gogin wakashū* 吾吟我集 (My chanting, my collection, 1649), a title that on its own was already likely to raise eyebrows. This opus, like so many other poetry collections of the day, was often copied by hand, but its later repeated publication with woodblocks (in 1757, 1772, and 1776), testifies to its continuing popularity. Similarly, *Bokuyō kyōkashū* 卜養狂歌集 (Bokuyō's collection of *kyōka*, 1669; first published in 1681), by the bakufu physician and Teitoku disciple Nakarai Bokuyō 半井卜養 (1607–1679), also remained standard reading for *kyōka* poets throughout the early modern era. Yet another Teitoku pupil, a Buddhist cleric at the Iwashimizu Hachiman 石清水八幡 Shrine in Kyoto named Hōzōbō Shinkai 豐藏坊信海 (1626–1688), similarly composed verses appreciated by literati throughout the land. His efforts were anthologized in the *Kyōka hato no tsue shū* 狂歌鳩杖集 (*Kyōka* collection: an old man's crutch), a volume published in Edo with woodblocks in 1783, 1784, and 1787. No doubt Tōsaku, like most other urban literati, had carefully studied these and other editions of humorous poetry created in the Kyoto area.

During the first half of the Edo period, Osaka also figured as an important center of *kyōka* composition. Seihakudō Gyōfū 生白堂行風 (?–?), perhaps a monk, perhaps a doctor, was active in the region in the 1660s and 1670s and had issued well-known volumes of verses such as the *Kokon ikyokushū* 古今夷曲集 (Collection of *kyōka* old and new, 1666), which included over a thousand poems by 241 poets, and a sequel entitled *Gosen ikyokushū* 後撰夷曲集 (1672). Yuensai Teiryū 油煙斎貞柳 (Taiya Teiryū 鯛屋貞柳 or Nagata Teiryū 永田貞柳, 1654–1734), whose teacher was the aforementioned Hōzōbō Shinkai, gained a reputation not just as the editor of a *kyōka* collection called *Kyōka iezuto* 狂歌家づと (Souvenirs brought home), but also as the instructor of thousands of *kyōka*-loving disciples in the Osaka region. Teiryū encouraged his pupils to write in a relatively simple style and succeeded in propelling the popularity of *kyōka* to new heights.

Teiryū and his countless students exercised an immense influence on eighteenth-century Edo, where one of the founding fathers of *kyōka* production, Ōya no Urazumi 大屋裏住 (Kusumi Magozaemon 久須美孫左衛門, 1734–1810), had studied with one Bokuryū

卜柳 (?-?), probably a Teiryū disciple. Just as had been the case in Kyoto and Osaka, Edo *kyōka* emerged chiefly from groups led by poets excelling in the creation of serious verse. A particularly well-known Edo figure of this sort, considered one of the city's "six saints" of *waka* poetry, was the earlier-mentioned bakufu retainer Uchiyama Gatei who, during the *kyōka* fad in the 1780s, tutored many of the genre's most brilliant exponents, including Karakoromo Kisshū 唐衣橘洲 (Kojima Gennosuke 小島源之助, 1744–1802), Yomo no Akara 四方赤良 (Ōta Nanpo), and Akera Kankō 朱楽菅江 (Yamazaki Kagetsura 山崎景貫, 1740–1798+). One of the listed men, Kisshū, had already exhibited a *kyōka* creation to his master at age twenty (that is, c. 1763) and the latter was duly impressed by its virtues.¹² Shortly thereafter, as Ōta Nanpo's postface translated below reveals, the teenage Nanpo encountered Tōsaku at one of Gatei's gatherings. A bond that was to last a lifetime was forged, and, as one reads in the first section of *A Retiree's Chat*, in Meiwa 4 (1767), the older Tōsaku (he was already forty) saw to the publication of Nanpo's collection of comic Chinese poetry (*kyōshi*) entitled *Neboke sensei bunshū* 寝惚先生文集 (A collection of writings by Master Groggy).

Two years later, in Meiwa 6 (1769), the first meeting devoted solely to *kyōka* composition was staged at Kisshū's home. As Nanpo later recollected, "The first *kyōka* meeting in Edo was that of Kojima (Karakoromo) Kisshū, who lived at Yotsuya Oshihara Yokochō 四谷押原横町..."¹³ Only four or five people attended this party: Ōne no Futoki 大根太木 (?-?), Batei 馬蹄 (Tobuchiri no Batei 飛塵馬蹄, ?-?), Ōya no Urazumi, (Hezutsu) Tōsaku, and Yomo no Akara (Ōta Nanpo)."¹⁴ Elsewhere Nanpo notes that the following spring several *kyōka* poets begged Gatei and the poet Hagiwara Sōko 萩原宗固 (1703–1784) to serve as adjudicators for a *kyōka* match whose results would be shaped into a volume entitled *Meiwa kyōka awase* 明和狂歌合 (A *kyōka* match of the Meiwa period).¹⁵ Six poets, including Kisshū, Tōsaku, Akara, and the bath house operator Moto no Mokuami 元木阿弥 (1724–1811), each contributed ten verses to this competitive undertaking, whose winner was judged to be Kisshū. Nanpo reminisced that two years later (that is, 1771) Akera Kankō, again a Gatei student, likewise began to take part in Kisshū's *kyōka* parties.¹⁶ As others joined in or founded their own coteries, the popularity of Edo *kyōka* surged. Kisshū named his group the "Yotsuya-ren," Akera Kankō called his the "Akera-ren," and Yomono Akara dubbed his the "Yamanote-ren." All of these groups gained stellar reputations, but none were as heavily populated as Moto no Mokuami's "Ochiguri-ren" to which, according to Tōsaku's *Kyōkashi saiken* 狂歌師細見 (A listing of *kyōka* masters, 1784), "half of Edo" belonged.¹⁷

Although the Edo *kyōka* craze peaked in the 1780s, the genre continued to be supported long thereafter by figures including Shikatsube Magao 鹿津部真顔 (Kitagawa Kahee 北川嘉兵衛, 1753–1829), who also assumed the pseudonym Koikawa Sukimachi 恋川好町, and Yadoya no Meshimori 宿屋飯盛 (Ishikawa Masamochi 石川雅望, 1754–1830),

12 *Yakko-dako*, p. 182.

13 This is today roughly at the border between Samon-chō 左門町 and Suga-chō 須賀町 in Shinjuku-ku.

14 *Yakko-dako*, p. 181.

15 See Ōta Nanpo's Bunka 8 (1811) preface to *Meiwa kyōka awase*, p. 59. *Meiwa kyōka awase* was illustrated by the artist Miwa Kashinsai 三輪花信齋 (also known as Miwa Zaiei 三輪在榮, ?–1797).

16 This is according to the preface of the unpublished *Kyōka rōkashū* 狂歌弄花集 cited in Inoue 1993, p. 104.

17 *Kyōkashi saiken*, p. 93. This booklet parodies guides to Yoshiwara.

son of an *ukiyo-e* artist. Both of these poets had studied with Nanpo, and went on to tutor countless followers of their own.

Kyōka and *zuihitsu*

As the existence of *A Retiree's Chat* indicates, Tōsaku also enjoyed writing *zuihitsu*.¹⁸ In this, too, he was hardly unique among *kyōka* poets. Nanpo, for one, produced numerous specimens of the genre, including the massive *Ichiwa ichigen* 一話一言 (One tale, one word) on which he scribbled away between An'ei 4 (1775) and Bunsei 文政 5 (1822), and which encompasses not just a broad sampling of the author's erudition but plenty of excerpts from the writings of others. Nanpo also drafted a *zuihitsu* entitled *Yakko-dako* 奴師労之 (Servant kite, 1821), which recounts events in the last two decades of the eighteenth century, including many relating to literary history.¹⁹ Yadoya no Meshimori also made a name for himself composing notable *zuihitsu* such as *Koganegusa* こがね草 (Golden grasses), *Nezame no susabi* ねざめのすさび (Entertainment for waking up), and the 1808 *Miyako no teburi* 都の手ぶり (A guide to Edo). It is simple enough to discover plenty of other *zuihitsu* written by lesser poets, for after the late eighteenth century nearly every self-respecting Edo literati dabbled in *kyōka* composition and proudly possessed a *kyōka* name.

Kyōka and *zuihitsu* were natural bedfellows. Both genres thrived in urban areas, showcased one's sophistication, and relied on an ability to let oneself be moved by events and objects in daily life. Moreover, *kyōka* poets and *zuihitsu* writers alike tended to belong to groups that supported their respective efforts.²⁰ One strategy for stimulating creativity in such meetings was to tote along a conversation piece. In the case of *kyōka* groups, this item was usually a funny or fake "treasure," accompanied by a facetious or humorous prosimetric explanation (*kyōbun* 狂文), a genre that maintained the spirit of *kyōka* just as *haibun* 俳文 corresponded to the spirit of *haiku*. One of the first recorded gatherings of this sort was the *takara-awase* (treasure match) of An'ei 2 (1773).^{2.4} sponsored pro forma by Shimada Sanai 島田左内, an Edo ward headman at Ichigaya who also called himself Sakanoue Jukune 酒上熟寝 (Sleeping well after getting drunk), but which was in fact organized by Nanpo.²¹ This lighthearted event was staged at a study room of Ekōji 恵光寺, a temple at Ushigome Haramachi 牛込原町. It was attended mainly by members of the *kyōka* group surrounding Gatei—though not Tōsaku, who had left for Izu Province in order to make a killing in the charcoal business. Each participant introduced an object in a faux-serious, quasi-religious manner by reciting a text replete with farcical verbiage. Then, when all presentations had been heard, a happy banquet ensued. Later, a publication illustrated the offered items and reproduced the words written.²² Again in Tenmei 3 (1783).4.25, when the *kyōka* boom and the reputation of Nanpo, who had just published the famous collection *Manzai kyōkashū* 万載狂歌集, was nearing its zenith, a far grander *kyōka* match with over a hundred

18 Several of Tōsaku's other *zuihitsu* appear to be lost, but some of his prose was later issued as *Tōsaku ikō* 東作遺稿 (Tōsaku's posthumous manuscripts) by Ōta Nanpo.

19 *A yakko-dako* was a kite in the shape of a manservant with outstretched sleeves, but the expression was also a metaphor for someone easily swayed by flattery or slander.

20 On Edo-period *zuihitsu* associations, see Groemer 2019, pp. 30–35.

21 *Yakko-dako*, p. 184, dates the event to An'ei 2 (1773), but in the Tenmei 3 (1783) *Kyōbun takara awase no ki* 狂文宝合記 (see Nobuhiro et al. 2000, p. 282), Ōta Nanpo gives the date as An'ei 2 (1773).2. For a discussion of this and the Tenmei 3 (1783) meeting, see Nobuhiro et al. 2000, pp. 290–94.

22 See *Takara awase no ki*.

participants—this time including Tōsaku, who offered a cloth cord representing a “snake of regret” (*zannen hebi* 残念蛇) relating to his absence at the first match—took place at the Kawachiya 河内屋, a restaurant located between Ryōgoku 両国 and Yanagibashi 柳橋. Once more a detailed chronicle of the occasion, an attractive three-volume illustrated edition to which Tōsaku contributed a preface, was published.²³

Similar gatherings, if perhaps not as merry and dating from a slightly later era, also commonly supplied a cordial environment for *zuihitsu* writers, many of whom also composed *kyōka*. The “Uncha kai” 雲茶会, for instance, though only meeting twice (in Bunka 8 [1811]), adhered to rules drafted by Nanpo. These bylaws stipulated that members supply a maximum of five items, each of which was to be no older than two hundred years.²⁴ In the 1820s the “Toen kai” 兎園会, headed by Takizawa Bakin, also required each participant to donate a tale, anecdote, or interesting piece of information.²⁵ Similar groups existed in abundance, both in Edo and other cities. They too issued publications to which members contributed. Whether Tōsaku’s *A Retiree’s Chat* was encouraged by such an association remains a mystery, but the author no doubt took for granted the interest of precisely the sort of readers that were likely to attend meetings of *kyōka*-composing and *zuihitsu*-writing men and women throughout town.

About the Text

The text of *A Retiree’s Chat* is fairly unproblematic for Tōsaku’s autograph, on which the translation below is based, remains in the possession of the National Diet Library in Tokyo and is available online (see the references). This manuscript contains a Sino-Japanese preface and concluding lines by Ōta Nanpo, as well as a second postface and several marginal and interlinear comments by Suzuki Kyō. Tōsaku’s original was apparently also hand-copied by other readers, and after the early twentieth century several printed editions appeared (see the references).

Since no currently available version of the text contains explanatory notes, I have added annotations where I believed them to be useful or necessary. For convenience’s sake, I have numbered the sections and divided longer segments into paragraphs. Dates of birth and death, alternate names, translated titles, and other unproblematic facts are placed in parentheses. My own emendations, explanations, and conjectures are enclosed in brackets.

Translation

Preface to *A Retiree’s Chat* [*kanbun*, by Ōta Nanpo]

Old man Tōsaku—surname (*sei* 姓) Tatematsu, given name (*na* 名) Kaneyuki, pseudonym (*azana* 字) Shigyoku 子玉, pseudonym (*gō* 号) Tōmō 東蒙, shop name (*hogō* 舗号) Inage-ya 稲毛屋—was a tobacco dealer at Yotsuya Shinjuku in Edo. He read books, devoted himself to prose, and above all cultivated the comic. Even when he composed a thousand words in one sitting, nothing required revision. He authored several books, including the widely read five-volume *Mizu no yukue*. He also sketched many incomplete works and drafts, including

23 For an annotated critical edition, see Nobuhiro et al. 2000.

24 For details, see Groemer 2019, p. 32.

25 See Groemer 2019, p. 33.

A Retiree's Chat. In the last years of his life Tōsaku enjoyed traveling to distant parts. At home I have accumulated several of his marvelous accounts.²⁶

Tōsaku died at his home of an illness on the eighth day of the third month of Kansei 1 (1789) and was buried in the rear of the Jōdo Shinshū temple Zenkyōji 善慶寺, to the west of Edo castle, at Yotsuya Kurayami-zaka 四谷蔵山坂.²⁷

I was fourteen or fifteen years old when I first met Tōsaku at a gathering of [Uchiyama] Gatei. I decided to speak to Tōsaku and we sustained an intimate friendship for three decades. Those thirty years have passed like a flash in a dream.

Fourth month of Kansei 7 (1795), early summer

Nanpo Gaishi 外史²⁸

A Retiree's Chat

1. Many authors have written texts intended for recitation, but none excelled Chikamatsu Monzaemon 近松門左衛門 (1653–1724). Next in line came Namiki Sōsuke 並木宗輔 (1695–1751).²⁹ Many of the expressions used by Chikamatsu in dramas such as *Shinjū yoigōshin* 心中宵庚申 (Love suicides on the eve of the Kōshin festival, 1722), *Shinjū ten no Amijima* 心中天の網島 (Love suicides at Amijima, 1720), *Meido no hikyaku* (The courier of hell, 1711), *Keisei hangonkō* 傾城反魂香 (The courtesan of Hangon incense, 1708), and other plays reveal human emotions in wondrous ways.³⁰

The best author of [kabuki] plays is Tsuuchi Jihē 津打治兵衛 (1679–1760).³¹ Numerous plays by Tsuuchi have become classics of the kabuki repertoire.

[Ihara] Saikaku 井原西鶴 (1642–1693) was the outstanding writer of fictional works (*yomihon*). He was succeeded by [Ejima] Kiseki 江島其磧 (1666–1735), who combined forces with the retiree [and publisher] Hachimonjiya Yazaemon Jishō 八文字屋八左衛門自笑 (?–1745). Kiseki wrote popular books (*sōshi*) including *Keisei kintanki* (Courtesans are forbidden to be short-tempered, 1711), and *Keisei irojamisen* (Erotic shamisen music, 1701),

26 Probably a reference to *Tōyūki*. See also nos. 14–15 below.

27 Zenkyōji (today usually read Zenkeiji) now stands at Tomihisa-chō 2-12 in Shinjuku-ku. Ōta Nanpo incorrectly writes the second ideograph 教.

28 Ōta Nanpo. The term *Gaishi* here suggests not so much a pseudonym as an indication that the author speaks from the position of an unofficial or unauthorized chronicler.

29 Namiki Sōsuke was an author of puppet-theater pieces with *jōruri* 浄瑠璃 recitation, usually written in collaboration with Takeda Izumo and others, such as *Sugawara denju tenarai kagami* (Sugawara and the secrets of calligraphy, 1746), *Yoshitsune senbon-zakura* (Yoshitsune and the thousand cherry trees, 1747), *Kanadehon chūshingura* 仮名手本忠臣蔵 (The Treasury of Loyal Retainers, 1748), and *Ichinotani futaba gunki* (A chronicle of the battle of Ichinotani, 1751). Here and below Tōsaku often presents abbreviated titles of works, but I have given more complete names.

30 For a translation of *Shinjū yoigōshin*, see Gerstle 2001, pp. 278–324. *Shinjū ten no Amijima* and *Meido no hikyaku* have been translated by Donald Keene (Keene 1990, pp. 387–426 and pp. 161–95). A section of the kabuki version of *Keisei hangonkō* can be found in Brandon and Leiter 2002a, pp. 66–93.

31 No doubt the second generation, he was an actor, author, and, after Hōreki 宝暦 5 (1755), a Zen monk. He wrote more than one hundred plays, some of which mix aspects of contemporary life with elements of historical dramas. His *Isshin niga byakudō* 一心二河白道 (The white path to the Western Paradise across the River of Fire and the River of Water) was performed to much acclaim at the Edo Nakamura-za in 1710, and his *Shikirei yawaragi Soga* 式例和曾我 (Ceremonial gentle Soga) was premiered at the same theater in Kyōhō 1 (1716).

and *Ukiyo oyaji katagi* (Characters of fathers of the floating World, 1720).³² No skilled writer [of such fiction] appeared thereafter.

A writer named Jōkanbō [Kōa] 静観房好阿 (?-?) composed a popular book entitled *Imayō beta dangi* (Modern bumbling sermons, 1752).³³ At first he sold a kind of tofu called “fluffy snow” (*awayuki* 淡雪) at the Hinoya 日野屋, a shop near the foot of Ryōgoku bridge. Eventually he had somebody else take over the business, assumed the name Yamamoto Zengorō 山本善五郎, lived next door to the shop, and worked as a calligraphy teacher.

The book *Nenashigusa* (Rootless weeds, 1763) is the work of Hiraga Gennai 平賀源内 (1728–1779).³⁴ I recall that during those days fiction underwent a stylistic transformation. An author named Tanbaya Rihē 丹波屋利兵衛 (?-?) wrote a best-selling volume entitled *Yūshi hōgen* (The rake’s patois, 1770), published by Suharaya Ichibē 須原屋市兵衛.³⁵ In this work Rihē wrote in the style of a “mimic of worldly ways” (*ukiyoshi* 浮世師). Thereafter slender volumes bearing Chinese-style title pages were published.³⁶ These included [*Tōsei*] *kakuchū sōji* ([Modern] brothel cleanup by Fukuwa Dōjin 福輪道人, 1777) and *Tatsumi no sono* (The southeastern garden, that is, the Fukagawa pleasure quarters, by one Muchū Sanjin Negoto Sensei 夢中散人寢言先生, “Useless dreaming master talking in his sleep,” 1770). After several dozen such books were issued, [the older] “large books” (*ōhon* 大本) went out of fashion.³⁷

The collection of comic Chinese-language poetry (*kyōshi* 狂詩) entitled *Neboke sensei bunshū* (1767) was written by my friend [Ōta] Nanpo when he was only seventeen years old (1765). Nanpo visited me and explained that he was amusing himself composing *kyōshi*. I took twenty of the poems he had brought along and showed them to the publisher Shinshōdō 申椒堂 (Suharaya Ichibē). The latter said he much desired [to publish] them, so I fashioned a preface and postface and submitted the volume to Shinshōdō. This book earned great public acclaim, and soon many similar collections of *kyōshi* appeared in succession.

The volume *Taihei gafu* 太平楽府 (Ballads for an age of great tranquility, 1769), which included the widely known ballad-style masterpiece “Hijokō” 婢女行 (The housemaid’s ballad), was published only after *Neboke* [*sensei bun*] *shū* appeared.³⁸ Nanpo is the great *kyōshi* master. In the past, Gion Yoichi[rō] 祇園与一[郎] (Nankai 南海, 1676–1751) seems also to

32 Hachimonjiya Yazaemon Jishō refers to the second or third generation of the Kyoto publisher and bookseller Hachimonjiya who teamed up with the writer Ejima Kiseki from around 1696 and issued many best-selling books. For a discussion and partial translation of two of his books, see Hibbett 1959, pp. 99–152.

33 Jōkanbō Kōa’s volume set off a fad for books of “sermons” in a vernacular tongue critically lampooning the foibles of Edo commoners.

34 For excerpts in translation see “Rootless Grass” in Jones 2013, pp. 113–23.

35 This author used the pseudonym Inaka no rōjin Tadano Jijii 田舎老人多田爺, literally “just a provincial old man.” *Yūshi hōgen* set the standard for much of the content and style of *sharebon*, a genre of popular fiction thematizing visits to the “pleasure quarters.” In English, see Mori 2016. Images of the original are available online at the National Diet Library at <http://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/2534130> (Accessed 20 January 2019).

36 This is a reference to *sharebon*. The first *sharebon* was already issued in 1728, but the genre did not enter its golden age until around 1770.

37 “Large books” were printed on Mino paper folded in half (one page measured c. 26 x 18 cm.). Older *kanazōshi* 仮名草子, the works of Saikaku and the like were printed in this format.

38 *Taihei gafu* is a volume of Chinese-language verse written by the eighteen-year-old Hatakenaka Kansai 畠中観斎 (Dōmyaku sensei 銅脈先生, literally “Master Counterfeit,” 1752–1801). The ballad “Hijokō” recounts the fall of a country girl as she is spoilt by Kyoto ways. See Markus 1998, which includes an annotated translation (pp. 29–36). Jones 2013, pp. 347–48 reproduces the translation but eliminates the explanatory notes that render many sections comprehensible to the non-specialist.

have been considered a skilled *kyōshi* poet. In addition Inoue Randai 井上蘭台 (1705–1761) and others briefly amused themselves by composing a few such verses. All the same, Nanpo is the one properly designated a *kyōshi* specialist. Unfortunately, his reputation as such has overshadowed his rarely equaled, but seldom noted abilities as a poet of [serious] Chinese verse.

The eight-line seven-syllable poem “Sending off a lowly foreign official returning to Korea” (送下官唐人還朝鮮, *gekan no tōjin no chōsen ni kaeru o okuru*) included in the collection [*Neboke sensei bunshū*] is actually my own creation.³⁹ The postface I composed for this collection was not carved [and printed].

2. Many *katōbushi* 河東節 *jōruri* texts were written by the *haikai* poet [Iwamoto] Kenjū 岩本乾什 (1680–1759). Each is a masterpiece of chant. “Matsu no uchi” (New Year’s days, 1717), authored by the late [Tsurumi] Ichigyo 鶴海一漁 (?–1735), is considered the greatest [*katōbushi*] piece of all time.⁴⁰ It seems that during that age many excellent scholars caroused in the Yoshiwara pleasure quarters and earned a reputation for debauchery, but today’s authors cannot even reproduce the flavor of the works those men discarded. This is probably the case because the times have changed so much.

Men of taste included the *haikai* poets Tōsei 桃青 (Matsuo Bashō 松尾芭蕉, 1644–1694) and [Takarai] Kikaku 宝井其角 (1661–1707), the artist [Hanabusa] Itchō 英一蝶 (1652–1724), and the calligrapher, Masumi Ranshū 十寸見蘭洲 (?–1731), though he was the proprietor of the Tsurutsutaya 蔓蔦屋 brothel.⁴¹ Among warrior-class men, Yanagisawa Gondayū 柳沢権太夫 (1703–1758)—a good painter who was also called Yanagi Satotomo 柳里恭, and used the name (*na*) Kōbi 公美 and the pseudonym (*gō*) Kien 淇園—was a notorious profligate, but he too should be considered a renowned man of taste and wisdom.⁴² Of course actors such as Ebizō 海老蔵 (Ichikawa Danjūrō 市川團十郎 II?, 1699–1758), Sawamura Tosshi 澤村訥子 (1685–1756), and Nakamura Kichibē 中村吉兵衛 (1684–1765) can also hardly be thought to resemble today’s men of the stage.

During the Kyōhō period (1716–1736) Confucian scholars such as [Arai] Hakuseki 新井白石 (1657–1725) and [Ogyū] Sorai 荻生徂徠 (1666–1728), the Buddhist priest Hōtan 鳳潭 (1654–1738), and calligraphers such as [Hosoi] Kōtaku 細井広沢 (1658–1736) and [Kitajima] Setsuzan 北島雪山 (*[sic]* 1636–1697) should be considered the revitalizers (*chūkō* 中興) of their respective traditions.

39 See *Neboke sensei bunshū*, p. 351.

40 The origins of *katōbushi* date to a performance by Masumi Katō 十寸見河東 (1684–1725) of “Matsu no uchi” in the kabuki play *Keisei Fuji no takane* (Courtesans and Mt. Fuji) staged at the Ichimura-za in the second month of Kyōhō 2 (1717) (or the first month of Shōtoku 正徳 2 [1712], the date is disputed). The music was composed by the blind Ume-no-ichi, but in the performance the *shamisen* accompaniment was rendered by Yamahiko Genshirō because it was considered inappropriate for a man with a visual disability to appear in kabuki. See *Kabuki nenpyō*, vol. 1, p. 472; and the explanation to “Matsu no uchi,” p. 67.

41 Masumi Ranshū (Tsurutsutaya Shōjirō 蔓蔦屋庄次郎) was also famed as a *katōbushi* reciter and author. For more information, see *Kinsei kiseki kō* 近世奇跡考, pp. 364–65.

42 Yanagisawa Kien was a high-ranking warrior of the Yamato Kōriyama 大和郡山 domain (Nara Prefecture), a painter, and author of Chinese verse. The head of his household called himself Gondayū through many generations and Yanagisawa called himself Kien from about age forty. For more on him, see also no. 10 below. In English, see Brecher 2013, pp. 68–69.

3. Hara Tomigorō 原富五郎 (?-?), an assistant bakufu officer (*yoriki* 与力) who later called himself Budayū 武太夫 (1697–1780s?), lived until he was almost ninety.⁴³ From the Hōei 宝永 period (1704–1711) he gained a reputation as a *shamisen* player. A renowned profligate, he made his home in the Yoshiwara [licensed quarters] and the Sakai-chō [theater quarter], where he lived a life of pleasure. The actors Kakitsu 家橘 (Ichimura Uzaemon 市村羽左衛門 IX, 1724–1785) and Keishi 慶子 (Nakamura Tomijūrō 中村富十郎 I, 1719–1786) lounged about with him whenever they found themselves homeless because the theaters [where they were engaged] had burned down.

Suffice it to say that a genius of Hara's caliber did not behave like an average man. When his uncle, the abbot of the Zuirinji Temple 瑞林寺 in the Yanaka 谷中 area, left him an inheritance of 300 *ryō*, officials summoned Hara to take possession of it, but he refused to do so.⁴⁴ He maintained that as a layman he could not accept it. Instead, he suggested, it should be granted to two temple acolytes who had undertaken a journey to the Kamigata area for study and pleasure. He had them looked up and awarded them the money.

Budayū was utterly destitute, but he was praised by all for maintaining the aura of a samurai. I have just mentioned that he was a master of the *shamisen*, but he also excelled at martial arts and enjoyed composing *waka* poetry. His son still serves at the [Edo] residence of the Ōkusa 大草 house.⁴⁵ Participants at Buddhist services commemorating [Budayū's] death relate that [food] is served in black lacquerware bowls decorated in a manner that [the courtesan] Sendai Takao 仙台高尾 (?–1660) had considered stylish. In his testament Budayū seems to have requested that this be done.

When [the retired bakufu doctor] Takeda Chōshun'in 武田長春院 formed a club he called Shōshikai 尚齒会 (Association honoring the aged), its members included Teramachi Hyakuan 寺町百庵 (1695–1781), Matsuya Shōhē 松屋庄兵衛 (?–?) of Naka-no-chō [the central boulevard of Yoshiwara; see figure 2], and Budayū.⁴⁶ Yorozyua Kichiemon 万屋吉右衛門 (?–1798) of the [theater quarter at] Fukiya-chō had a menial and cook over a hundred years old who was invited to a Shōshikai meeting and introduced as an old acquaintance.⁴⁷ The servant possessed no proper attire, so Kichiemon lent him his own father's crested *kosode* kimono of *habutae* 羽二重 silk.⁴⁸ This servant once related his memories of the olden days. "Today," he said, "the theater quarters at Sakai-chō and Fukiya-chō have much declined. From the start, I was merely a menial and cook in Yorozyua Kichiemon's house,

43 Around Tenmei 8 (1788), when this was written, the author evidently takes Budayū as deceased and speaks of his funeral. Various dates for Budayū's death have been suggested. If Tōsaku is right, the commonly asserted date of Kansei 4 (1792) may be several years too late. Budayū was probably an assistant (*yoriki*) of the Edo castle representatives known as *rusui* 留守居. For more on him, see Seigle 1993, pp. 205–206.

44 Zuirinji is a Nichiren-school temple that today stands at Yanaka 4-2-5 in Taitō-ku.

45 This may have been located at Kanda Ogawa-machi 神田小川町 in the vicinity of Suidōbashi 水道橋. Several Ōkusa or Ōgusa houses existed. At the time in question the wealthiest one, rated at 3,500 *koku*, was headed by Ōkusa Takakata 大草高方 (1741–1790).

46 The club's name refers to a term found in the Confucian *Rites* (*Liji* [Jiyi]; see Legge 1885, p. 229). When the club met in Meiwa 6 (1769) at Chōshun'in's Sendaigashi villa, Budayū was seventy-three years old, the *haikai* poet and scholar Teramachi seventy-four, and Chōshun'in seventy. Matsuya Shōhē was the proprietor of a tea house in Yoshiwara whose specialties included *kanrobai* 甘露梅, a candied plum wrapped in *shiso* leaves. This sweet was evidently also a popular souvenir taken home after a brothel visit. As a *senryū* from Tenmei 5 (1785) had it, "Resentfully the wife munches on *kanrobai*" (*Yanagidaru* 柳多留, vol. 20; see *Kinsei bungei sōsho*, vol. 8, p. 354).

47 Yorozyua Kichiemon was the *jōruri* author and tea-house operator better known as Matsu Kanshi 松貫四.

48 *Habutae* is a soft, lightweight, lustrous plain-weave silk similar to taffeta.



Figure 2. Naka-no-chō in Yoshiwara during the mid-eighteenth century. In the right panel (center left) stands the Owariya, and next to it the Matsuya (left panel, center right). Fushimi-chō is located to the right; the entrance to Edo-chō is visible in the left panel. From *Ehon Edo miyage* 絵本江戸土産, vol. 1 (1753) illustrated by Suzuki Harunobu 鈴木春信 (1725–1770).

but time and again I received a gratuity from the guests. On one occasion, important visitors arrived and I worked in the parlor well into the night. The next day I looked to see what I had been awarded and discovered that it was more than forty *ryō*! I did not own as much as a change of clothes, but my bedclothes were of silk and so was my futon. In the old days when we received a windfall, we purchased that sort of thing.”

Budayū once explained that, “Today a ceremonial ‘first spreading of the bedding’ (*yagu no shikizome* 夜具の敷ぞめ, see figure 3) is celebrated at Yoshiwara, but in the days of my youth the ‘first spreading of the bedding’ meant that a customer paid for a new set of bedding for his favorite woman.⁴⁹ In those days, however, bedding did not feature the brocade or embroidered Phoenix birds one sees today. Instead, a so-called bed fee (*toko hana* 床花) was given to the woman in her boudoir. This fee was set at one hundred *ryō* wrapped in paper.”

4. Even the plots of “miscellaneous dramas” (*zatsugeki* 雑劇) derive from old sources. The *Tale of Genji*, too, is fiction, but much of it relies on a framework based on reality. The wasting away and death of the Kiritsubo consort draws on the Chinese poem “Changhen ge” (Song of everlasting regret, Jp. *Chōgonka*).⁵⁰ [The last section of] the chapter “Suma” [in

49 Such a celebration usually marked the promotion of a young apprentice or attendant to the status of a full-fledged courtesan. On Yoshiwara bedding, see Seigle 1993, pp. 187–88.

50 See *Genji monogatari*, vol. 1, pp. 30–41; Waley 1925, pp. 9–14. The famous Tang-dynasty poem “Changhen ge” by Bo Juyi 白居易 (or Bai Juyi, 772–846) is a lament for the imperial concubine and legendary beauty Yang Guifei 楊貴妃 (719–756).

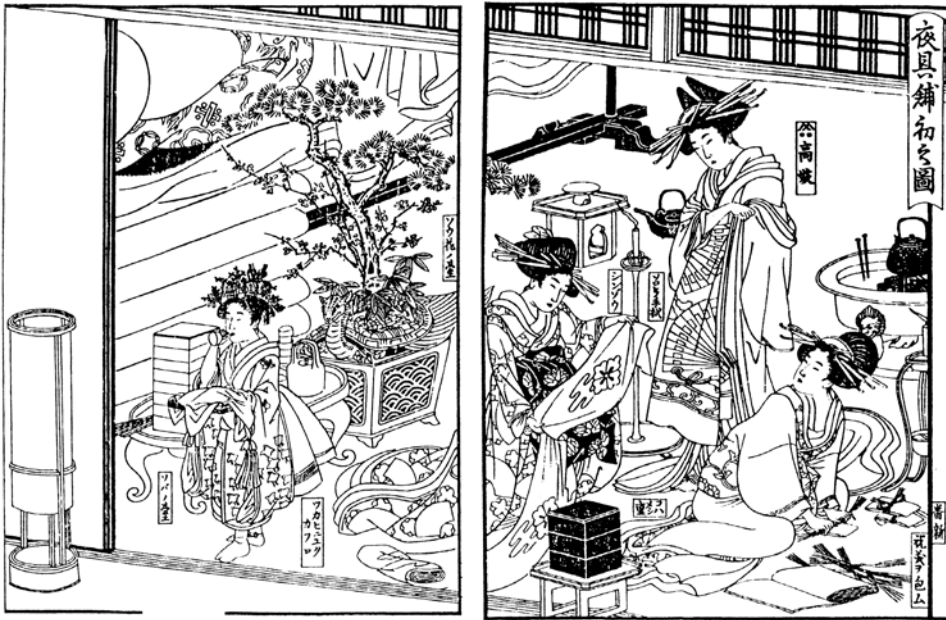


Figure 3. Activities surrounding the ceremonial “first spreading of the bedding” in Yoshiwara. From *Seirō nenjū gyōji*, 1804, illustrated by Kitagawa Utamaro 喜田川歌麿. The high-ranking courtesan stands at right center. Her junior (*shinzō* 新造, right) wraps gifts while her young helper (*kaburo* 禿, left bottom) is sent off on an errand.

the *Tale of Genji*] shares significances with the story “Jin Teng” 金騰 (The golden coffer).⁵¹ In recent *jōruri* plots, too, the de rigeur substitution of one person for another finds its origins in “The Orphan of Zhao.”⁵² Another source of such tales is the narrative of the Duke of Wei 衛 (Hui 惠, r. 699–697 BC) in which a younger brother substitutes himself for an older half-brother who is to be murdered.⁵³ Plays treating a shrewd old mother seem to take their cue from the Han dynasty (206 BC–220 AD) tale of the constancy of

51 *Genji monogatari*, vol. 2, pp. 52–54; Waley 1925, p. 254. The tale “Jin Teng,” included in the last book (*Zhoushu*) of the *Shujing* (or *Shangshu* 尚書, Book of documents), counts as one of the “five classics” of Chinese literature. It is attributed to various historical and legendary figures in ancient Chinese history. For a translation, see de Bary 2000, vol. 1, pp. 32–35.

52 Tōsaku calls this story “Cheng Ying Chujiu” 程嬰杵臼. It is a tale of Gongsun Chujiu’s substitution of the imperial physician Cheng Ying’s child for his master’s baby boy, while Cheng Ying raises the master’s true offspring. The source of the tale is in the fourth book (*Shijia*) of *Shiji* 史記 (*Zhao shijia* 趙世家). The plot reappears in thirteenth-century China as a drama attributed to Ji Junxiang 紀君祥 (fl. thirteenth century), and was recounted in the late fourteenth-century *Taiheiki* 太平記 in Japan.

53 Wei (sometimes written “Wey” to distinguish it from the later Wei state) was a state founded in the early Western Zhou period (1046–771 BC). It flourished during the Spring and Autumn period (771–476 BC). According to the *Shiji* (*Wei Kangshu shijia*), Prince Ji 伋 (?–701 BC), the heir apparent, was to be murdered by assassins hired by his father and Prince Zishuo 子朔. After warnings by Zishuo’s half-brother proved futile, the latter himself carried the white banner that identified him to assassins.

Wang Ling's 王陵 mother.⁵⁴ [In *jōruri* puppet plays] when in a show of strength [the Taira general] Akushichibiyōe Kagekiyo 悪七兵衛景清 (?–1196) parts ways with the Chichibu clan's [Hatakeyama] Shigetada 畠山重忠 (1164–1205), who seeks to protect [Minamoto no] Yoritomo (1147–1199) and avenge the wrongs against his clan, this scheme relies on a historical event in which Wu Yun 伍員 told [Shen] Baoxu 申包胥, “I will overturn and defeat Chu at all costs,” and Shen Baoxu retorted, “I will support Chu at all costs.”⁵⁵

The kabuki actor Ōtani Hiroji [I] 大谷広治 (1696–1747), three generations before the current bearer of that name, had a very dark complexion and was nick-named “black Jitchō” (黒十町). He excelled in the delivery of his lines. Although he could not read a word, he related historical events and used ancient phrases without sounding as if he were repeating what others had read out for him. When he spoke of the wrestling match of Matano [Kagehisa] 股野景久 (?–1183), he raised his voice with the lines, “And lo! He was thrown three inches deep into the black earth of Mt. Akazawa 赤沢,” and then, in a lower and softer voice, he continued, “Ah! He felt as if he had lived his life in vain!”⁵⁶ Listeners were deeply moved and shouted their approval. This manner was devised by Jitchō himself.

5. When the previous Ichikawa Danzō 市川團藏 [probably Danzō III, 1719–1772] acted the role of the warrior Kumagai Naozane, a certain child who played [the young Taira no] Atsumori (1169–1184) fell ill and died two months into the run of performances.⁵⁷ Danzō keenly sensed that even in the frivolous world of the theater the universal vanity of life had revealed itself. He vowed to live up to the standard set by Renshō 蓮生 [=Kumagai], shaved his head, and became a mendicant monk (*dōshinja* 道心者).⁵⁸ This must have been the result of karma, but it was a humbling aspiration indeed.

Sawamura Tosshi (Sōjūrō [I] 宗十郎, 1685–1756) was later known as Sukedakaya Takasuke [I] 助高屋高助. In a kabuki play staged at a time I cannot quite recall, Hakuen 栢蓮 (Ichikawa Danjūrō II, 1688–1758) played [Soga] Tokimune, while Nakamura Kichitarō 中村吉太郎 portrayed [Soga] Sukenari, and Ogawa Zengorō 小川善五郎

54 In this famous tale, the mother commits suicide to strengthen her son's resolve to serve the Han ruler. It is found in the tenth entry in the biographies section of the *History of the Han Dynasty* (*Hanshu: Zhang Chen Wang Zhou zhuan*), a work completed in 111 AD and covering the era from 206 BC to 25 AD. An English summary of the story can be found in Mair 1989, pp. 19–20.

55 According to the *Shiji* (*Wu Zixu liezhuan*), Wu Yun (Wu Zixu 伍子胥, died 484 BC) was a general and politician of the Wu kingdom during the Spring and Autumn Period (771–476 BC). Shen Baoxu, originally his friend, was a Chu minister. In 506 BC, King Helü of Wu invaded Chu with an army commanded in part by Wu Zixu, and decisively defeated the Chu army at the Battle of Boju. Shen Baoxu went to Qin to plead for assistance, which he received after a seven-day hunger strike outside the Qin palace. The tale of Kagekiyo and Shigetada was most famously recounted in Chikamatsu Monzaemon's *jōruri* piece, *Shusse Kagekiyo* 出世景清 (Kagekiyo Victorious, 1685).

56 According to the *Soga monogatari* 曾我物語 (The tale of the Soga) Matano Gorō Kagehisa supposedly wrestled with Kawazu Sukeyasu 河津祐泰 (1146–1176), the father of the Soga brothers, and was subject to a leg entanglement throw known as *kawazu-gake* 河津掛 (*Soga monogatari*, pp. 80–88). Mt. Akazawa in today's Shizuoka Prefecture is the spot where Kawazu Sukeyasu was murdered by his nemesis, Kudō Suketsune. The incident was commonly related in New Year's “Soga plays” such as the one staged from the spring of Kyōhō 6 (1721) at the Edo Nakamura-za (*Kichijō naotori Soga*) in which Ōtani Hiroji played the role of Asahina (see *Kabuki nenpyō*, vol. 2, p. 3).

57 No doubt this refers to the play *Kumagai jin'ya*, based on the latter half of the third act of Namiki Sōsuke's (1695–1751) *jōruri* piece *Ichinotani futaba gunki* (premiered in Osaka in Hōreki 1 [1751]). For an English translation of the puppet play, see Shirane 2002, pp. 410–34.

58 After retiring, Kumagai Naozane wished to atone for having killed so many men, so he became a devoted follower of Hōnen's Pure Land Buddhism. Renshō was the name Kumagai assumed after taking the tonsure.

(1682–1737) acted the part of Kudō Saemon [Suketsune].⁵⁹ Kichitarō suddenly took ill and withdrew, so the troupe head consulted Zengorō regarding a replacement. Zengorō asked, “Don’t we have a low-ranking actor named Sōjūrō? Confer with Hakuen and see if Sōjūrō can play the part.” When Hakuen was consulted, he laughed and opposed the idea, saying, “Sōjūrō ought to play a role proper for him.” Zengorō countered with, “I have my reasons for this request.” Hakuen replied, “My, my, aren’t you playing favorites! It must be because you performed together with Sōjūrō at the [Morita] theater at Kobiki-chō until the previous year’s [eleventh-month] ‘face showing play.’ But anybody will do, so just hurry up and get someone.”

The curtain opened. After the love scene of Tokimune and [the courtesan] Shōshō, [Sōjūrō in the role of] Sukenari thoughtfully adjusted himself [to Hakuen]. The play ended magnificently and Hakuen asked Zengorō, “Today, as you suggested, Jūrō [Sukenari]’s replacement acted quite confidently. I agreed to your proposal with no deep thoughts at the time, but this actor hardly seems inexperienced. Did you pick him as a substitute because you saw something in him?” Zengorō answered, “Indeed. Once, when I played the role of Kudō Suketsune at the Morita-za, Sōjūrō acted the part of Kudō’s young son, Inubōmaru 犬房丸.⁶⁰ In my formal kimono and courtier’s hat, I had climbed the edge of the railing next to the center-stage gable and after the curtain closed had to descend by a ladder. Sōjūrō positioned himself at the base of the ladder and warned me to be careful. He remained there and aided me until I had fully descended. He must have taken this to be a kindness properly shown to the elderly. I thought him an unusually upright young man, and he always continued to aid me thereafter. When I considered his actions, I realized that even though we were in a play, I was after all Inubōmaru’s father. Sōjūrō’s display of feeling for his ‘father’ seemed to me a sign that he held great promise as a skilled actor. As luck would have it, I could use him for the role of Sukenari and see if he had indeed become skillful.” He thus lavished praise on Sōjūrō, who in later years would become a major star. Later Hakuen remarked that he stood in awe of the discernment of a master [such as Zengorō]. These events were related to me by Yorozyua Shōjirō よろづや莊次郎 (?–?).

In the puppet theater, too, men with high aspirations become proficient. When [Yoshida] Bunza[burō] [II] 吉田文三郎 (1732–1791) handled the puppet depicting Matsuemon [that is, the disguised warrior Higuchi] in the third act of the play *Hiragana seisuiki* ひらがな盛衰記 (A simply worded record of the rise and fall of the Heike and Genji clans), others puzzled over how he managed to make the puppet look so crestfallen

59 In 1193, the two brothers Soga Tokimune and Sukenari supposedly avenged the slaying of their father by Kudō Suketsune eighteen years earlier. The vendetta is recounted in the *Azusa kagami* and is developed at length in the *Soga monogatari*. It was treated in later theatrical and musical genres such as *kōwaka mai* 幸若舞 and kabuki. For a synopsis and discussion, see Araki 1964, pp. 133–39. For a translation of *Kotobuki Soga no taimen* (The felicitous Soga encounter), a kabuki play treating this theme, see Brandon and Leiter 2002a, pp. 24–40. Perhaps the play referred to here was the one staged at the Nakamura-za on the fifteenth day of the seventh month of Kyōhō 享保 9 (1724) where Danjūrō indeed played Soga Tokimune and Zengorō played Kudō Suketsune. The role of Soga Sukenari at the opening is listed as having been played by Sukejūrō, perhaps Mimasuya Sukejūrō 三升屋助十郎 I, who died in Kyōhō 10 (1725) (see *Kabuki nenpyō*, vol. 2, p. 65).

60 Zengorō played Kudō Suketsune at the Morita-za in a play starting from the first month of Kyōhō 5 (1720) and Sōjūrō did indeed play Inubō maru. Again, Sukenari was played by Mimasuya Sukejūrō I (see *Kabuki nenpyō*, vol. 1, p. 542).

and despondent when it begged farewell to the puppet of the lady-in-waiting, Ofude.⁶¹ Bunza[burō] explained that, “At this moment in the play everything depends on making Higuchi appear humiliated. This is because Higuchi has not yet succeeded in avenging the enemy of his erstwhile lord and has survived as a boatman. Ofude, on the other hand, even though she is a woman, has journeyed to distant Fukushima to make inquiries. She can relax, because the young lord is in Higuchi’s hands and she will locate the enemy of her father, [Kamada] Haito. By contrast Higuchi is naturally quite mortified. When [Higuchi’s master and father-in-law] Gonshirō at first scolds Ofude with, ‘Shame on you!’ Higuchi would like to crawl into a hole and disappear.”

Skill means, first and foremost, distinguishing between affectations and realities.⁶²

6. [Utei] Enba 烏亭焉馬 (1743–1822, see figure 4) scored a great success when he wrote the “Miyagino scene” of *Go-taiheiki Shiroishibanashi* 碁太平記白石噺 (The tale of Shiroishi and the Taihei chronicles).⁶³ Later [the puppeteer Yoshida] Bunza[burō] [II] ran into his own younger brother [Yoshida] Bungo [II] 吉田文吾 (?–1789) at the theater and, in the course of a conversation, laughed and said, “Enba committed a great blunder in the narrative when he has Miyagino ask, ‘Is it a lie or fabrication that those who display filial piety toward parents are blessed by heaven?’⁶⁴ In fact, those who display the virtue of filial piety never think themselves virtuous. If they do so, they are no longer virtuous. Truly virtuous individuals always think of themselves as lacking virtue and lament how unbearably sorry they are for possessing this fault. Enba did not grasp this while writing.” Bungo was greatly impressed by this observation. [Note by Suzuki Kyō]: “Enba was entirely unlettered, so he should not be censured too strongly.”

7. The statement “with the momentum of a man riding a tiger” in the *jōruri* piece [Shinrei] *Yaguchi no watashi* 神靈矢口渡 (Miracle at the Yaguchi ferry) is a blunder on the part of the playwright [Hiraga Gennai].⁶⁵ The phrase “the momentum of riding a tiger” (*kiko no ikioi* 騎虎の勢い) signifies a great predicament. It is hardly appropriate to use this expression for boasting of the victorious exploits of [Nitta] Yoshioki 新田義興 (1331–1358). In the play *Chūshingura*, the ingenious pun “a *shakuhachi* (= *hyakuhachi*, 108) of suffering” is also extremely disagreeable to the ear.⁶⁶

61 *Hiragana Seisuiiki* is a five-act historical puppet *jōruri* piece written for the puppet theater by Takeda Izumo and his assistants; premiered at the Osaka Takemoto-za 竹本座 in Genbun 元文 4 (1739). Matsuemon is actually Higuchi Kanemitsu, a high-ranking warrior disguised as a boatman. Several of the best-known scenes of a kabuki version are translated in Brandon and Leiter 2002a, pp. 164–95.

62 This line contains the problematic term *mite suru* 見てする (“see and do”?). I conjecture it should read *miwakeru* 見分ける (“to distinguish”) or something of the sort.

63 A puppet *jōruri* piece in eleven acts by Kinojō Tarō 紀上太郎, Utei (also Tarekawa 立川) Enba, and Yō Yōtai 容楊黛 (?–?); first staged in the first month of An’ei 9 (1780) at the Edo Gekiza. Two sisters, Miyagino and Shinobu, age eighteen and eleven respectively, avenge the murder of their peasant-class father. Sections of a kabuki version are translated in Brandon and Leiter 2002b, pp. 82–104.

64 From *Go-taiheiki Shiroishibanashi*, p. 578 (act 7). Miyagino is both a popular prostitute in Yoshiwara and the paragon of virtue in the play.

65 This was a puppet *jōruri* piece in five acts first staged in the first month of Meiwa 7 (1770) at the Edo Gekiza. The words in question are found on p. 364. *Kiko no ikioi* refers to the fact that once one rides a tiger, it is impossible to dismount. The phrase is found in chapter 24 (Tangchen zhuan 12, “Biographies of Tang subject, part 12”) of the *Xin wudai shi* (New history of the five dynasties, 974).

66 *Kanadehon chūshingura*, p. 131. Donald Keene renders the phrase “the flute tells of the 108 sources of suffering in this dream life.” See Keene 1981, p. 149. The number 108 is read *hyaku-hachi* and thus serves as a (bad) pun on *shakuhachi* (bamboo flute).



Figure 4. Utei Enba. From *Shin zôho ukiyo-e ruikô* 新增補浮世絵類考 (completed 1868).

[Ihara] Saikaku thoroughly read and digested many old narratives and put them to use when writing of his times. As a consequence, his diction is elevated. The felicitous phrases that [Ejima] Kiseki used throughout his life are all lifted from Saikaku. In his writing, Saikaku was a master at using the syllable “*te*” and the suffix “*keru*.”⁶⁷ When I wrote my five-volume *Mizu no yukue*, I imitated Saikaku’s style.

8. Many of the texts of the [folk song] “Ise ondo” 伊勢音頭 were composed by the *haikai* poet Bairo 梅露 (?-?), who belonged to the Jinbūkan 神風館 (or Jinpūkan) [group of Ise-based *haikai* poets]. Bairo was originally a lowly fish peddler who sold his wares tramping through the Yamada 山田 area.⁶⁸ Whenever he attended a [Jinbūkan] *haikai* meeting, he became so engrossed that he forgot to return home. He wanted to try his hand at composing some verses and after begging to participate was admitted. Bairo was a natural genius, so many of the poems he composed are now known to all. Since he was entirely unlettered, he enrolled as a pupil of [the *haikai* poet] Kaga Chiyojo 加賀千代女 (1703–1775).⁶⁹ After studying much Japanese literature (*washo* 和書), he was finally admitted into the Jinbūkan group. Clearly, he possessed extraordinary literary abilities, but unfortunately his lack of scholarly breadth seems to have kept him from writing as well as he could have.

67 *Te* is the conjunctive form (*ren'yōkei* 連用形) of the temporal auxiliary verb (perfective/continuation) *tsu*; *keru* is the attributive form (*rentaikei* 連体形) of *keri*, a suffix often indicating the past or signaling a poetic emphasis.

68 Yamada is today in Ise City, Mie Prefecture, the location of Ise’s Outer Shrine (*gekū*).

69 Kaga Chiyo or Kaga no Chiyojo, literally “Chiyo, the woman from Kaga,” stemmed from what is now Hakusan-shi 白山市 in Ishikawa Prefecture (the old Kaga domain). Nationally renowned as a *haiku* poet, she took the tonsure at age fifty-two. For a brief entry regarding her in *Kinsei kijinden* 近世畸人伝 by Ban Kōkei 伴蒿蹊, see Carter 2014, pp. 325–28.

Nothing is as surprising as human abilities. It is impossible to guess who will eventually display what sort of innate talents. In this regard, Confucius's saying that "Youth is to be regarded with respect" supplies a valuable message.⁷⁰ Even today someone may possess the genius of the Duke of Zhou (Zhou Gong 周公, 11 c. BC), but one will hardly be able to assess such a person correctly unless one knows oneself. That the Duke of Zhou tirelessly solicited the wisdom of others supplies a model for political advisors of later ages. [Note by Suzuki Kyō]: "strong arguments and vigilant eyes." Guo Wei's 郭隗 request [to King Zhao 昭王] to "begin with me" in recruiting talent is also counsel of unparalleled, timeless value.⁷¹ Even a loyal retainer wishing only to benefit his lord will find it difficult to succeed if he relies on nothing but his own wisdom. While the lord scours the land in search of talent, men of ability may well lie unrecognized at his feet. The discretion of refusing to suggest, "There are no others, so just leave it to me," led to the appearance of great generals such as Yue Yi 樂毅 (?-?), who took more than seventy castles in battle.⁷² What a victory this was for the wise elders of his house!

9. When one year I lived in Ise 伊勢 Province I sometimes visited Kyoto.⁷³ I had more chance encounters during that year than in any other period of my life. On one occasion I decided to go to Nijō in Kyoto to call on [Tejima] Toan 手島堵庵 (1718–1786), who had recently become quite famous.⁷⁴ At the Aogaiya 青貝屋 bookshop I saw a sign advertising a printed book of the Tejima school. I asked for Tejima's address and was told that I would not be able to meet him for he was ill. While purchasing two or three volumes I chatted a bit with a young man there. Our conversation drifted to hearsay about virtuous and loyal persons, and the man told me that an indigent woman named Soyo そよ who lived in Owari 尾張 Province at a village named Toriganji Shinden 鳥ヶ地新田 had apparently served her father so selflessly that she was granted an award by lord (*ryōshu*) Shimizu Kai no kami 志水甲斐守.⁷⁵ I remarked to the man, evidently a clerk, "My, you seem very well informed about Owari!" He explained that it was his father's province of origin. We talked about various things regarding the area, and when I finally asked the clerk his name, it turned out he was

70 See the *Analects* of Confucius (*Lunyu*, Book 9, "Zi Han").

71 According to a legend in the *Strategies of the Warring States* (*Zhan Guo Ce* 戦国策; *Yan Ce*, *Yan* 1), a historical work compiled between the third to first centuries BC, King Zhao of Yan 燕 (r. 311–279 BC) wished to attract talent to his state. Guo Wei, an advisor of the king, presented a parable regarding a king who wished to purchase a "thousand-mile steed" for 1,000 gold pieces, but nobody answered his offer. A minister volunteered to find such a horse but came back with nothing but a bag of bones procured for 500 gold pieces. The king was at first infuriated, but soon the rumor of this purchase moved many persons to offer their prize horses to the king. Guo Wei asked to be the king's bag of bones, thereby indicating that a strong ruler could attract talent by first esteeming those who were readily available. The king built a palace for Guo Wei and the state of Yan attracted many men of talent. The point of the phrase to "begin with Wei" is that if the king would treat well men like Wei—nearby and convenient, if mediocre—men of ability would also soon assemble.

72 Yue Yi of the state of Yan is discussed in the *Shiji* ("Yue Yi liezhuan").

73 This journey took place in Tenmei 天明 2 (1782). Inoue (1993, p. 194) suspects it was undertaken at the behest of Tsuchiyama Sōjirō.

74 Tejima Toan contributed to the religious/moral movement of *shingaku* (literally "heart learning") founded by Ishida Baigan 石田梅岩 (1685–1744). *Shingaku* was a syncretic teaching combining elements of neo-Confucianism and Buddhism.

75 Shimizu Kai no kami, whose name Tōsaku writes with an incorrect first ideograph (清), refers to a family that yielded important elders of the Owari domain. The region the clan controlled was located in Ōdaka Village 大高村 in Chita County 知多郡. See Kajikawa 1989. Toriganji Shinden is in today's Yatomi-shi 弥富市 in Aichi Prefecture.

the younger brother of Yajima Kihē 矢島喜兵衛 (?-?).⁷⁶ Kihē was a pupil of Okada Sentarō 岡田千太郎 (1737–1799), who was a relation of mine.⁷⁷ I had just stopped by there on my way back to Owari and we laughed over how fortuitous our meeting had been.

On another occasion, while passing through the town of Matsusaka 松坂 in Ise Province, I encountered a squall. I sought shelter at a nearby shop and was taking out my oil-cloth raincoat, when a man some twenty-two or twenty-three years old appeared from inside the shop and called me by my common name. I had never seen him before. When I asked him who he was, he answered that he was a clerk of [the tobacco wholesaler] Inui Kyūbē 乾九兵衛 (?-?) of Horidome-chō 堀留町 [in Edo]. He recognized me because in my youth I had frequented that shop. He told me that nothing had changed at the Edo branch and we traded childhood memories. At this distant spot, I thus heard tales of my home town. I told him that I would soon be returning to Edo, and we bade each other farewell.

Some time thereafter before reaching Yamada I met a man who seemed to be a priest (*oshi* 御師) of the Ise shrines. He was walking single-file with an attendant who looked like a clerk. When I stopped at a *sake* shop the two also entered, and we began to chat. When the shrine priest asked me where I was headed, I answered, “I am going to the home of a student named Tsuji Kiichi 辻喜一 (?-?). I don’t know if he lives in Uji 宇治 or Yamada, but I’d like to find out how he is doing.” The shrine priest answered, “He lives in Yamada. And you must be an acquaintance of Sugita Genpaku 杉田玄白 (1733–1817). After going to Edo, Kiichi became Genpaku’s disciple and has no doubt befriended you and benefited much from your kindness.” He explained that the attendant was in fact a friend of Kiichi’s named Ōgide Kandayū 扇館館太夫, a student of Shibano [Ritsuzan] 柴野栗山 (1736–1807) of the Awa 阿波 domain.⁷⁸ He was on his way to Kyoto to see how his teacher was faring. Thus, I quickly discovered where Kiichi lived. During my stay, we became friends and engaged in pleasant conversation.

Each of these three meetings was entirely fortuitous.

10. Many sophisticated gentlemen (*kōzu no shi* 好事の士) live in Ise Province. One such man is Nishimura Shōemon 西村荘右衛門, (1746?–1801?), a wholesaler of Yokkaichi 四日市. He calls himself Hyōtoku Basō 表徳馬曹, has literary talents, and maintains a lively interest in many concerns. Once when he came to Edo for a year, he begged me for assistance, so we stood in close contact. He was a disciple of my friend [Katō] Umaki 加藤美樹 (1721–1777).⁷⁹ Shōemon possessed a copy of *Hitori-ne* (Sleeping alone, written c. 1724), a fascinating

⁷⁶ Or Yashima. See Inoue 1993, p. 193.

⁷⁷ Okada Sentarō, better known as Okada Shinsen 岡田新川, was a retainer of the Owari domain who taught at the domianial Confucian academy. He was a scholar of Chinese learning and poetry, and author of many books. Owari was the province of origin both of Tōsaku’s father and teacher, Ban Seizan.

⁷⁸ The Confucianist Shibano Ritsuzan was born in Sanuki 讃岐 Province (Kagawa Prefecture) and served the Awa domain in Edo from Meiwa 4 (1767) to Tenmei 7 (1787). Later he was employed by the bakufu and became one of the chief architects of the bakufu’s Kansei 2 (1790) “ban on heterodox teachings.” For a short biographical sketch, see Beerens 2006, pp. 139–40. Records from Keiō 慶応 3 (1867) list an Ōgide Tayū 扇館太夫 (see *Jingū oshi shiryō, naikū-hen*, p. 45; see also *Jingū oshi shiryō, gekū-hen*, vol. 3, p. 18). Other documents suggest that an Ōgide Handayū 扇館半太夫 was from a house of *oshi* located at what is now Toyokawa-chō near Ise (see *Jingū oshi shiryō, gekū-hen*, vol. 1, p. 42; vol. 3, pp. 17, 18, 23). Perhaps Kandayū is an error for Handayū; or else the ideograph 館 has been erroneously repeated.

⁷⁹ The scholar of national learning and poet Katō Umaki was active mainly in Kyoto and Osaka. For a brief biographical sketch in English, see Beerens 2006, pp. 86–87.

volume by Yanagisawa Godayū 柳沢権太夫 (1703–1758).⁸⁰ I wonder if he still has it. [Note by Suzuki Kyō]: “I have [a copy of] the book *Hitori-ne* at home.”

Hitori-ne treats a variety of subjects. It begins with a description of matters relating to bordellos but includes discussions of more elegant matters. I remember that [Yanagisawa] notes that [the calligrapher and interpreter Hayashi] Dōei 林道栄 (1640–1708) of Nagasaki once declared that he would trade all the knowledge he had acquired since age thirteen for the *obi* of the courtesan he adored.⁸¹ The author refers to [the Confucian scholar, painter, and poet Hattori] Nankaku 服部南郭 (1683–1759) as Shōhachi, and writes with understanding about the ideas of [Ogyū] Sorai, whom he refers to [by his “common name”] Sōemon 惣右衛門, and whose senior he seems to be.⁸² The book also treats events during the time when the Owariya 尾張屋 [house of assignment], located at Ageya-chō [in Yoshiwara, see figure 2], still flourished.⁸³

11. A clerk named Shōhē 莊兵衛 worked for the tobacco wholesaler Inui Kyūbē at Horidome-chō. Whenever I went to that shop, Shōhē, who evinced high ambitions from childhood, paid close attention to my remarks on literature. The main office of the shop was located in Ise, and since the operation of the Edo branch was relegated to the Edo clerks, they wielded considerable authority. [In Ise] the accounts were checked only by scanning the ledgers, and the finances were otherwise left up to the [Edo] clerks in charge. Moreover, during [the previous] two years the father and son heading the business had died in succession, so a young male successor was selected from the extended family and adopted as a future husband for a daughter who was only four or five years old. Thus, little attention was paid to the head’s authority, and the clerks’ influence increased proportionally.

Shōhē found this situation lamentable and had for some time consulted with Tōemon 藤右衛門 (?–?), the Ise shop manager, regarding what to do. When Shōhē became the manager of the Edo branch, he invested in oil and cotton when prices were low and sold the shares at a profit when prices rose. Because of this, the Edo clerks who were his inferiors convened and sent a letter to the Ise headquarters stating that Shōhē was disregarding the head’s house rules and embarking on selfish business schemes. In their joint missive, they demanded that Ise clerks be dispatched to Edo to take inventory. Shōhē had already discussed his true intentions with Tōemon and the latter soon arrived in Edo to check the finances and to transport the Edo shop deeds and other materials back to Ise. Even though Shōhē had not behaved properly, the business had experienced no losses. Since service on delayed loan repayments had increased, Shōhē was ordered not to engage in anything resembling short-term transactions. Then an inspection of the Edo branch’s finances commenced. Shōhē gleefully told me that everything had gone just as planned. Even in warrior-class households, elders rarely downgrade their own authority in order to uphold archaic house rules. Shōhē acted like a capable vassal representing an inept lord.

80 For a brief discussion of *Hitori-ne*, see Nakamura and Uetani 1965. On Godayū, see note 42 above.

81 *Hitori-ne*, p. 33.

82 Hattori Nankaku’s “common names” (*tsūshō* 通称) were in fact Kōhachi 幸八 and later Shōemon 小右衛門. On Ogyū Sorai, see *Hitori-ne*, pp. 50, 139, and elsewhere; Hattori Nankaku (Fuku Genkyō) is mentioned on p. 192. Sorai served the daimyo Yanagisawa Yoshiyasu 柳沢吉保 (1658–1714), who headed the Yamato Kōriyama domain. Kien was the second son of a house elder of this domain.

83 The Owariya is mentioned in *Hitori-ne*, p. 80.

Inui Kyūbē was a wealthy merchant based in Shimizu of Ise Province.⁸⁴ An Edo-branch clerk named Shōhē 小兵衛 was once to undertake a pilgrimage to the Great Ise shrines. Kyūbē told the clerk, “Before the gate of the so-and-so temple in Ise stands a small stone statue of the deity Jizō. Please offer two or three sprigs of *shikimi* 柾 for me to the Jizō there.”⁸⁵ When the clerk returned from the trip, he asked his master, “Whose grave does that Jizō mark?” The master answered, “It is the grave of a fool named Ichibē 市兵衛 from the local village. When I was seventeen years old, I was asked to help re-thatch the roof of my parental home. All the villagers turned out to lend a hand, and like everyone else that fool assisted in lugging thatch. My father directed the roofers by pointing here and there with a stick. When Ichibē was standing next to my father, he casually remarked, ‘Sir, even though you are troubling yourself re-thatching the roof, the son’s generation will probably just sell the house.’ My father listened, grinned, and answered, ‘That’s right, I think so too.’ Thereafter every time my father scolded me, he would say, ‘Even that fool Ichibē thinks you are the sort of fellow who will just sell our house, so be more prudent!’ This became his pet phrase. On reflection, these words turned out to be a good lesson for me, so I had a grave marker built in Ichibē’s honor, and every month pilgrims visit the temple and offer flowers and prayers.”

What an unusual, upright man Inui Kyūbē was! On occasion I met him at the Edo shop, and found that he was by nature a gentle and humble person. Whenever he checked the petty cash books and found that the returns had amounted to less than usual, he was cross and grumbled, “It is because we have treated the customers poorly!” At the Ise shop he would have extra rice cooked every day. This was formed into balls and when the needy came around, they would be called to the rear entrance and given some to eat. He demonstrated compassion in countless ways.

On consideration, it seems to me that Shōhē’s loyalty was also the beneficial result of having such a master. Today Shōhē lives at a spot called Hinaga-mura 日永村.⁸⁶ He sometimes comes to Edo.

[In China, the king] Pan Geng 盤庚 held that, “In men we seek those of old families.”⁸⁷ This is because when persons of average abilities, to say nothing of wise and able ones, repeatedly gain experience, encounter hardships, humiliate themselves, unwittingly judge erroneously, and are remorseful, they tend to make fewer mistakes. Spirited and gifted youths cannot remain silent when they detect the shortcomings of others. At every opportunity, they attack and ridicule others for faults that are in fact their own. It is thus laudable when youths speak little.

That reminds me of the time when I was in Owari Province while traveling on business to Kyoto. I passed through the town of Kuwana 桑名 and came out at Hinaga 日長. There I dropped in at the house of the aforementioned Shōhē. Shōhē was delighted, had much to report, and did everything he could to fête me. At that moment a child, twelve or thirteen years old, informed us of a schedule by announcing, “Shōhē, the guests are all present!” Wheat noodles to be shared with neighbors were being made at the house of

84 This is present-day Shimizu-chō, Matsusaka-shi, Mie Prefecture.

85 *Shikimi* is a star anise that is often placed on Buddhist altars.

86 Present-day Hinaga, Yokkaichi-shi, Mie Prefecture.

87 In the *Shujing* (Book of documents), in the first chapter regarding the Shang dynasty (c. 1600–1050 BC), Pan Geng cites Chi Ren 遲任: “In men we seek those of old families; in vessels, we do not seek old ones, but new.” See *Shujing*, “Pan Geng I.”

Shōhē's father-in-law. Shōhē seemed hesitant to go, since I had unexpectedly arrived from Edo, so I proposed we walk there together. While chatting we hiked down the country road for half a mile or so, and he was truly delighted when I told him of my visits to his old shop. A doctor was present at Shōhē's house, and I was introduced as "the venerable Tōsaku about whom I have spoken." [When I arrived] the doctor remained there and conversed with me. When I asked for his name, he answered, "I am called Gen'ya." I questioned him about the ideographs he used to write this name. He explained that "*gen*" was written with the character meaning "black" (玄), and "*ya*" was the character used in the name "Yahē" (弥, also read *bi*, *mi*, or *iya*). A saying has it that "reading *bi* as *ya* is *iya* (disagreeable)," but I thought that since this man was an unlearned provincial, he believed *ya* to be the correct reading for the name "Gen'ya." In my wanderings far and wide, I had, however, encountered and befriended persons who seemed unlettered but were in fact quite well read. So I held my tongue, and when I later mentioned his name to Edo residents familiar with him, they all told me he was a renowned figure, highly literate, and an outstanding man. Gen'ya subsequently explained that he had used the hereditary character *gen* with the intention of having his name read Genbi or Genmi, but all the villagers only knew the second character as *ya*, so he was now always called Gen'ya. He laughed, saying that as an old and decrepit provincial he now left it up to the locals to decide how to call him. On this account, he was passing as Gen'ya. It was a good thing indeed that when he had at first spoken to me I had remained mum while judging him unlearned. If I had allowed myself to express a nasty opinion, he would surely have resented it.⁸⁸ I had gained in age, so I had gained a corresponding amount of discretion.

Gen'ya talked in detail about [the Confucian scholar Inoue] Kinga 井上金峨 (1732–1784) in Edo, and commended the writings of [calligrapher, author, and Confucian scholar Sawada] Tōkō 沢田東江 (1732–1796). He was truly a rare sort of provincial doctor.

12. When I visited the hot springs at Tōnosawa 塔ノ澤 in Hakone of Sagami 相模 Province I met an Ōbaku 黄檗 sect monk named Mokudō 黙堂, the abbot of Kirinji 亀林寺, a temple at Anryū-chō 安立町 in the town of Sakai in Izumi 和泉 Province (Osaka Prefecture).⁸⁹ He was an expert on Chinese rhyme schemes and mentioned that he had spoken at length to the Chinese while on a visit to the harbor of Nagasaki.⁹⁰ He explained that the interpreters there are well versed in the parlance of merchants, but many of them do not comprehend much of the language used for official matters.

Mokudō had gone to Edo because of business in Mito and was lodging at the house of the saké wholesaler Kajimaya Seibē 鹿島屋清兵衛 (?–?).⁹¹ He had come to the hot springs of Tōnosawa with a monk from Kōfukuji 弘福寺, a temple in the Ushijima 牛島 area of

88 In order to make sense of this passage, I have read the character *sō* 惣 found in all printed versions of the text as the two characters *jashin* 邪心 (nasty or malicious opinions).

89 The Ōbaku sect was a branch of Rinzai sect Zen Buddhism. In fact, Kirinji seems to have been a Sōtō sect Zen temple in Sumiyoshi Village (today Anryū-chō in Osaka Prefecture). It was abolished in Meiji 7 (1874).

90 Tōsaku writes only "Saki minato" (Saki harbor), but since no such place exists, I have assumed that an ideograph is abbreviated or missing.

91 Kajimaya Seibē was the hereditary name of a saké wholesaler (and later money exchanger and pawn broker) at Shinkawa in Edo, a canal in what is today Chūō-ku Shinkawa 1. He was a member of the powerful "ten wholesalers' guild" (*tokumi-doiya* 十組問屋).

Edo.⁹² Mokudō wore a white summer cotton kimono and tied a three-foot hand towel dyed blue around his waist, and continued to wear this even after he left the hot springs. He had brought along *The Private Records of Morinaga*, which he was constantly reading.⁹³ One finds no mention of this work in scholarly books. He explained that he was well acquainted with [the priest] Daichō [Genkō] 大潮元皓 (1676–1768) of Higo 肥後 Province, and from his words seemed to be adept at writing Chinese verse.⁹⁴ As the days passed, he too gradually turned out to be far superior to my initial impression.

13. In Sunpu 駿府 (present-day Shizuoka City) stands a Zen temple whose name I cannot recall. It is the headquarters of its sect and has its own real estate holdings. Once, the retired abbot of this temple visited the hot springs at Atami 熱海. The lodge next to him was occupied by a party of seven or eight Edo travelers. Since the old priest wore tattered clothing, they took him to be something of a tramp and did not even bother to ask his name. They just called him “the beggar monk” (*o-dōshin* お同心) and even had him cook their rice. The priest was a joker and affably answered with, “Sir, yes sir!” One day when they had procured a flounder, they asked, “Hey, you beggar monk, won’t you fix it for us?” Now he was in trouble and did not know what to do. He announced that he would give it a try, picked up a cooking knife, fell to work in the scullery, and began to make a complete mess of it. Since the fish would be ruined, the others ended up slicing it themselves. They turned it into *sashimi* and ate it with their saké.

At that point two or three boys with a basket of seasonal fruit appeared, evidently wishing to pay a visit to someone at the hot springs. They asked, “Where is the room of the retired abbot of the so-and-so temple?” but the owner answered that there was no such priest here, only a monk in his thirties in a back room. They went to check, but he was not the one they were looking for, since they were searching for someone around sixty years old. They wondered if they had come to the wrong spot and said they would look elsewhere and then return home. At that point, I joined them and informed them that the man for whom they were hunting was in fact present. We looked far and wide, offering profuse apologies to the guests we bothered. When we reached the lodge of the Edo travelers, we detected the priest’s bundle of belongings. Just as we realized he was here, he came out of the bath. We exclaimed, “Ah, there he is!” but he replied, “It’s a secret!” and knowingly gestured and winked for us to keep quiet. But the truth was out, and the Edo travelers were utterly mortified. They all scurried off to the bath and stayed inside for a long time. The priest laughed and scolded the boys with the fruit, telling them that if they had only come a bit later, he could have had some more fun. Now all the guests honored him, for they realized they had encountered a venerable retired Zen master from a great temple.

14. Some years ago a man named Murakami 村上 (Yasobē 弥惣兵衛, 1726–1784) from the harbor town of Esashi in the Matsumae 松前 area [of Ezo, present-day Hokkaido]

92 Tōsaku writes the first character of the temple name incorrectly, using the name of the homonymous temple in Nagasaki 興福寺. The temple intended, founded in Kanbun 寛文 13 (1673), is indeed of the Ōbaku sect and stands at Mukōjima 5-3-2 in Sumida-ku.

93 Tōsaku identifies the book as *Morinaga nikki* 盛長日記, but he is probably referring to the *Morinaga shiki* 盛長私記, a forgery allegedly written by the general Adachi Morinaga 安達盛長 (1135–1200). It comprises more than fifty volumes recounting events from 1180 to 1225. No complete modern edition seems to exist.

94 Daichō Genkō was an Ōbaku sect priest from Hizen 肥前 Province (Saga Prefecture), not Higo. He was also renowned as a Confucianist and as a poet of Chinese verse. He knew enough Chinese to serve as an interpreter, and while in Edo consorted with Ogyū Sorai 荻生徂徠 and Hattori Nankaku 服部南郭.

became my close friend. [Note by Suzuki Kyō]: “When this man came to Edo for commercial dealings he met Tōsaku and became his friend.” [In 1783–1784] I stayed at his house for six or seven months, and we enjoyed ourselves visiting various places [in Ezo]. [Note by Suzuki Kyō]: “I think that this was the first time that Tōsaku visited Ezo. It was the first time an Edo man ventured to this region.”⁹⁵

A retired priest named Nisshō 日正 of a temple called Hokkeji 法華寺 excelled in both scholarship and Buddhist practice and was a highly cultured man.⁹⁶ He was a disciple of Nitchō 日潮 (1674–1748), who would later become the abbot of Kuonji 久遠寺.⁹⁷ Nitchō in turn was a great pupil of Saint Gensei 元政上人 (Nissei 日政, 1623–1668).⁹⁸ Near Hokkeji stood a Zen temple called Shōgakuin 正覚院.⁹⁹ Its previous abbot too had been an interesting fellow, and Nisshō spoke of him on many occasions. During a year of famines, when impoverished residents experienced great hardship, the abbot of Shōgakuin had handed out as much food to the starving as he could spare. When his provisions ran low and he could no longer aid them, he sought help from a wealthy local man named Shibata Yojihē 柴田与次兵衛 (?–?), whom he begged for three bales of rice. Yojihē asked the abbot of Shōgakuin what he was up to, and the latter answered that he was seeking to aid the poor, though three bales of rice would hardly suffice. Yojihē retorted that the abbot was wasting his time requesting something from one man in order to save others. Such a priest, he maintained, was no man of virtue and should not claim to be. But the abbot of Shōgakuin fired back, “You shameless scoundrel! What are three bales of rice to you? I am working for your sake by helping you accumulate good karma!” Then he pulled out a log smoldering in the fireplace and tried to strike Yojihē with it, but the latter beat a hasty retreat. Thereafter a servant appeared, handed over three bales of rice, and apparently apologized.

[The abbot of Shōgakuin] often summoned mothers and grannies in order to award them sweet saké and dumplings, and to lecture to them.¹⁰⁰ He fervently preached that high and low within a household should seek to live in harmony, that nobody should neglect the duties of loyalty and filial piety, and that everyone ought to be polite and humble. Thanks to his efforts, many evildoers supposedly repented and became virtuous. Now and again he practiced medical quackery (*chikusai ryōji* 竹斎療治), but he also contributed rice to the poor and even purchased bonito flakes for them to eat with their meals. When I met him, he merrily remembered that as a young acolyte he was much troubled when ordered to go out and buy bonito flakes.

95 Writer-explorers who had preceded Tōsaku include Arai Hakuseki 新井白石 (1657–1725), who had produced a volume entitled *Ezo-shi* 蝦夷志 (Records of Ezo, 1720), and Sakakura Genjirō 坂倉源次郎 (?–?), who searched for gold mines in 1737 and presents information on the north in his *Hokkai zuibitsu* 北海隨筆 (A northern miscellany, 1739). Numerous travel diaries and gazetteers treating northern areas and their inhabitants appeared in the 1780s and thereafter. For more information on Murakami, see the documents cited in Inoue 1993, pp. 212–13.

96 The Hokkeji in question here is probably the Nichiren school temple in Matsumae (Esashi-chō Honchō 71), whose main hall was built in 1721.

97 Nitchō was a Nichiren school priest born in Yamashiro 山城 Province (Kyoto Prefecture). In 1736, he assumed the headship of the Kuonji (Minobu-san 身延山, in Kai 甲斐 Province, Yamanashi Prefecture), the headquarters of the Nichiren school.

98 Nissei was a famed Nichiren monk and poet of Chinese verse.

99 Tōsaku writes “Shōgakuji” 正覚寺, but the temple intended is no doubt the one called Shōgakuin. I have also corrected this error below. Shōgakuin was a Sōtō sect temple standing some four hundred meters to the southeast of Hokkeji. Its main hall was built in Genroku 元禄 2 (1689).

100 Sweet saké (*amazake*) is a low-alcohol or non-alcoholic beverage made from fermented rice.

The retired abbot of Shōgakuin was particularly hard on guests who did not rinse the bowl of the sweet saké they had been offered, but just left it empty as is. He granted sweet saké to peasants from Assabu 厚沢部, when they brought him firewood.¹⁰¹ Whenever someone ceded the drinking bowl unrinsed and started for home, he chased the offender beyond the temple gate, grabbed him by the collar and cried, “You, who labor as a peasant, don’t you know the blessing of grain? You are nothing but an out-and-out thief!” Then he dragged him back, and commanded, “Rinse the bowl and drink the liquid!” and held the bowl under the delinquent’s nose.

On another occasion, when this priest had ascended onto his pulpit and begun to lecture, his memory failed him. After spending some time in incomprehensible mumbling, he simply exclaimed, “I think that might have been from Mencius—in any case, Shibata Yojihee knows the passage well, so I’ll go ask him about it tomorrow.” This was typical of his candor. He seems to have been distantly related to someone in the Satake 佐竹 clan.¹⁰² Although he knew his Buddhist scriptures, he avoided fame and fortune. Instead he remained secluded in the wilds of Ezo until the end of his life. He was truly an estimable fellow.

15. Matsumae lies some eight *ri* (thirty-two kilometers) from Minmaya 三厩 in the Tsugaru 津軽 domain. Near Cape Tappi 竜飛岬 an ocean current known as the “Shirakami tide” flows rapidly at three spots. Small boats from Tsugaru constantly ply the sea there.

The name of the domanian castle town is Matsumae. The harbor to the east is called Hakodate 函館, the one to the west Esashi 江差. At these three harbors merchants from Hachiman 八幡 and Yanagase 柳が瀬, both in Ōmi 近江 Province, operate branches of their enormous businesses by hiring fishermen to work for them.¹⁰³

Kelp is exported from Hakodate. Herring, called *nishin* and resembling gizzard shad (*konoshiro*), is a product of Esashi. The fish converge [to spawn] in the sea—this is known as *kukiru*—about a week after the [vernal] equinox. Herring known as “bodyless herring” has flesh on the back that is eaten.¹⁰⁴ The rest is dried and used as fertilizer in the fields and paddies of southern, western, and northern regions [of Japan]. Legend has it that at one spot in Esashi herring worth ten thousand *ryō* were caught in a single day. Boats from throughout the land arrive at Esashi to tender competitive bids for herring.

Large quantities of salmon, trout, abalone, and sea cucumber are also netted here and purchased by wholesalers from the town of Nagasaki. Thus, although no rice is produced in the region, plenty of grain can be procured from other provinces, so shortages do not occur. Even during crop failures sufficient rice is stored in granaries to ensure that nobody dies of starvation. Vegetables are of high quality and yellow millet flourishes too. Additional details may be found in my *Tōyūki*.

101 Assabu-chō in Hokkaido belonged to the Matsumae domain, which valued the location chiefly for its lumber.

102 The Satake clan headed the Kubota domain in what is today Akita Prefecture. The house traced its lineage to the Genji clan of Kai Province (Yamanashi Prefecture).

103 Hachiman is today Ōmi-hachiman-shi 近江八幡市, and Yanagase is now Nagahama-shi 長浜市, both in Shiga Prefecture.

104 “Bodyless” (*migaki* 身欠き) because the gills, guts, and spine were removed, leaving only the flesh on the back.

The recently published *Sangoku tsūran* 三国通覧 (A survey of three countries, 1785–1786) notes that much gold is to be found in the Matsumae domain of Ezo.¹⁰⁵ Murakami Yasobē, who has lived in Ezo for years and knows the area well, says that in the past productive gold and silver mines existed at Shiriuchi 知内 (present-day Shiriuchi-chō). But today they have closed or are no longer profitable. Gold is still mined at places such as Yūroppu 遊楽部 (present-day Yakumo-chō 八雲町) and Kunnuī 国縫 (present-day Oshamanbe-chō 長万部町), but earnings hardly cover costs. In fact, no spot worth mining for gold exists anywhere in Ezo. Yasobē says that even plenty of manpower and effort would not render it worthwhile. Although the metal is present in diverse locations, if one discovers nothing after digging a shaft, the effort is wasted and no reward ensues. The claim [in the *Sangoku tsūran*] that gold is found in Ezo is probably merely based on hearsay.

The *Sangoku tsūran* also introduces verses from the Ryūkyū kingdom. Some years ago, a boat with thirteen castaways from Nishi-Magiri 西間切 on the island of [Amami] Ōshima 奄美大島 drifted to the island of Hachijōjima 八丈島.¹⁰⁶ From there the ship proceeded to the island of Miyakejima 三宅島, from where it was summoned to Edo. There the passengers were questioned at the office of the inspector of finance (*kanjō bugyō* 勘定奉行), Matsumoto Izu no kami [Hidemochi] 松本伊豆守秀持 (1730–1797). In Edo they lodged with San'emon 三右衛門 at the Ōshimaya 大島屋 in the Teppōzu 鉄砲洲 area. They frequently paid visits to Egawa [Tarōzaemon] 江川太郎左衛門, the intendant in Izu Province.¹⁰⁷ On one such occasion, when I was involved in business at Mt. Amagi [in Izu Province, under the control of Egawa] and also visited the same office, I asked a Ryūkyū man named Nakaei 中栄 for a verse. He wrote down the following and handed it to me:

Because our boat was adrift
we prayed to the deities.
Their commands favored us—
ah, how moved we were!¹⁰⁸

Ōta Nanpo wished to see what the man had written, so I gave it to him. Since the writer was a merchant, it was scrawled in a poor hand. I wonder who composed and transmitted this verse, which is also reproduced in the *Sangoku tsūran*.¹⁰⁹

105 The book and maps more fully known as *Sangoku tsūran zusetsu* 三国通覧図説 (An illustrated survey of three countries) were drafted by Hayashi Shihei 林子平 (1738–1793), who had traveled far and wide within Japan and warned the Tokugawa regime of the Russian threat. The “three countries” in question are Korea, Ryūkyū, and Ezo. The book was subject to a ban during Matsudaira Sadanobu’s earlier mentioned Kansei reforms (1787–1793). The reference to gold can be found on p. 36 (in the Tenmei 天明 6 [1786] version, f. 23v). For a detailed English-language discussion, see Winkel 2004, pp. 233–50. For online images of the 1786 edition in 6 vols. (the first printing was by Suharaya Ichibē in 1785) see http://www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kotenseki/html/ru03/ru03_01547 (Accessed 20 January 2019).

106 Ōshima lies c. 380 kilometers south of the southern tip of Kyushu; Hachijōjima lies c. 287 kilometers south of Tokyo; Miyakejima lies some 175 kilometers south of Tokyo. This incident occurred in An’ei 3 (1774). See Inoue 1993, pp. 173–74.

107 Egawa was the so-called Nirayama *daikan* 葦山代官 of this province.

108 *Nagare-bune yoe* [=yue] *ni, onkami-sama ogade* [=ogamite], *oyose* [probably *ofuse*, i.e., *ōse*]-*uru koto nō, natsukashu-yan*. The poem is in an 8-8-8 [or 9]-6 syllabic meter and reproduces some words in a southern Japanese pronunciation.

109 See p. 31 (6r of the 1786 text) of *Sangoku tsūran zusetsu*.

Perhaps [the author of the *Sangoku tsūran*] did not know Ezo well, for many things differ from what he writes.

The *Nihongi* (*Nihon shoki* 日本書紀, “Chronicles of Japan,” compiled 720) mention an Ezo mountain spelled with the ideographs [read in Japanese as] *kō hō yō tei* 後方羊蹄.¹¹⁰ The natives call it Shiribeshi. The character *kō* was read *shiri*, the character *hō* was read *be*, and in ancient times the characters *yō* and *tei* were pronounced *shi*. Ezo natives [that is, the Ainu people] call a river *beshi*.¹¹¹

Little bamboo is found in Ezo. Spotted bamboo grows in a place called Shakodan.¹¹² The word *shakodan* may be an erroneous pronunciation of the [Sino-Japanese] term *shako-han* 鸛鳩斑.¹¹³ Ezo natives call ginseng (*Panax ginseng*) [by its Sino-Japanese name] *goyōsō* 五葉草 (literally, “five-leaf plant”; *Panax japonicus*), which is of the three-forked five-leaf variety (*mitsumata goyō* 三桮五葉). Thus, it is difficult to insist that no word of Chinese has ever been transmitted to Ezo.

When someone dies, [Ezo natives] strictly maintain a three-year mourning period and even have special mourning outfits. The corpse is buried [wrapped] in woven rush matting known as “patterned matting” (*aya-mushiro* あやむしろ). They bury the body in woven rush mats instead of a casket, saying that one never knows [when the matting will be needed by the dead], and that it cannot be taken [from the deceased] for even a moment.

In ancient times the Japanese government seems to have maintained an administrative office in Ezo, so old customs must have been transmitted to the region. After the Ōnin 応仁 Wars (1467–1477), however, nobody crossed the ocean to visit Ezo anymore, since it was unsuited for rice production. Thus, the land must have become truly barbarian.

The current Matsumae clan evidently stems from Wakasa 若狭 Province. The family descended from the kings of Silla and is related by blood to the Takeda clan. In time, the family arrived at Kakizaki 蠣崎 in Tsugaru and from there it crossed over to Matsumae. Little by little it captured local castles until it finally gained control of all Ezo. During the days of Hideyoshi’s Korean campaign (1592–1598) the lord of Matsumae dispatched couriers with a congratulatory message. At the siege of Osaka castle (1614–1615), he apparently also sent delegates to acknowledge the victory.

When at Setanai せたない (present-day Setana-chō せたな町) the hairy people [that is, the Ainu people] excavated an old grave and found a sizable skull, items that appeared to be rusty swords, *magatama* 勾玉 beads, and a whetstone. Several dozen man-made objects of a bluish stone in the shape of a broad-axe were also unearthed. These articles were fashioned from an extremely delicate stone not found locally. When one tries to sharpen such an item with the aforementioned whetstone one discovers that the stone of the object is soft. Each object appears to have a sharp blade, which feels like the edge of a sword when touched with the fingertips. The retired priest of Hokkeji possessed five of these axes and I obtained one of them. I used a red whetstone to try to hone it, but at first I was too hasty and some of the blade broke off. “Thunder axes” or “thunder hammers” reputedly fall to earth from heaven, but the objects in question here appear to be man-made.¹¹⁴ Murakami related that last year he argued

110 See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 2, p. 338; in English, Aston 1972, vol. 2, p. 260.

111 In the Ainu language, *bet* is more accurate.

112 This no doubt refers to the Shakotan Peninsula, some two hundred kilometers north of Matsumae.

113 *Shako-han* is a pottery glaze producing spot resembling the coat of a Francolin partridge (*shako*).

114 It was believed that stone-age tools found after thunderstorms had been placed there by the thunder god.

this point with Hiraga Gennai, whose pseudonym [as an artist] is Kyūkei 鳩溪. Murakami and Gennai became friends through [their mutual interest] in natural products (*bussan* 物産).

Murakami was an unusual, sincere man. He died on the twenty-second day of the eighth month of Tenmei 4 (1784), after I returned from Ezo. We must have been bound by deep karmic ties. From the tenth month of Tenmei 3 (1783) to the fourth month of Tenmei 4 (1784), we sat around a hearth surrounded by snow and talked through the night. We were of the same age and fellows in [the Jōdo Shinshū] faith (*dōgyō* 同行), who never wearied of the other's company. [Suzuki Kyō comments]: "Fellows in faith are those called *dōbō* 同奉 ("serving the same") in Pure Land and Shingon Buddhism." Even when we were thousands of miles apart, our spirits always stayed in touch. With his death, I lost a true friend.

16. It must be considered a piece of good luck to have been born in a flourishing area like Edo. Being born in the city of the nation's ruler (*ōjō* 王城) ought to be estimated one of the "three comforts" of life.¹¹⁵

When I was in Matsumae, I beheld a picture expertly painted by a woman named Yone 米女 from the town of Niigata in Echigo 越後 Province. In Matsumae I had seen her screen and scroll paintings at the homes of many persons, and I inquired if she had been called away to Niigata to paint. I was told, however, that in fact she was desperately poor and had to work as a prostitute in [one of] the three provinces of the eastern seaboard (Echigo, Etchū 越中, Echizen 越前). She was apparently also an accomplished calligrapher. How unfortunate that she was not born in Edo, where she could have become a respectable attendant of a daimyo's daughter. Alas, she instead had to become a prostitute in a remote province.

Incidentally, in Edo not a few daughters of outcastes (*kawaramono* 河原者) and similar sorts serve noble families as performers of indecent vocal music. Many such girls chant Edo *jōruri* in the style of [Tokiwazu] Mojitayū 常磐津文字太夫 (1709–1781) or [Tomimoto] Buzen no jō 富本豊前掾 (1716–1764), dance in the style of Nakamura Denji[rō] 中村伝次郎 (I, 1673–1729) or Fujima Kanbē 藤間勘兵衛 of Hatchōbori (?–1769), or sing *nagauta* in the style of Fujita Fūkō 富士田楓江 (Kichiji 吉治, 1714–1771) or Ogie Royū 荻江露友 (?–1787). Those who learn to chant *gidayū* from Shi[ba]masu 芝枡 call themselves "Oden" おでん or "Toyo" 豊 or use the characters "Moji" 文字 in their names.¹¹⁶ The ones whose names

115 According to the Daoist text *Liezi* 列子 (attributed to a writer from the fifth century BC, but probably compiled around the fourth century AD) Confucius considered the "three comforts" (or "three pleasures," *san yue* 三樂) as being born human, being born male, and living to old age. See the "Tian-rui" chapter of *Liezi*.

116 Tōsaku writes "Shimasu" 紫枡, but this is doubtless an error for Shibamasu (?–1816.5). A character read "Shiba" 柴, though not the correct ideograph in this case, closely resembles "Shi" 紫 (also read *murasaki*, "purple") when written by hand. Perhaps Tōsaku was thinking of Shibamasu's nickname "Edo murasaki." According to *Gidayū shūshin-roku* (p. 75), a record written around Bunsei 文政 2 (1819), from Hōreki 宝暦 4 (1754) a female reciter from Shiba named Oden had studied with an old man named Kawachi-dayū 川内大夫 [*sic*] who lived in Ginza. After her teacher died, she became a pupil of one Masutayū 升大夫 [*sic*] (Takemoto Tango-no-jō 竹本丹後掾 II) and received the ideograph "Masu" from him. This was added to the "Shiba" (homophonous to 芝, the area of Edo where she lived), resulting in the name Shibamasu. She was considered the "originator" of women's *jōruri* and gained national renown as a chanter and especially as a virtuoso *shamisen* player. Already on the eleventh day of the fourth month of An'ei 2 (1773) *En'yū nikki* 宴遊日記, the diary of the daimyo Yanagisawa Yoshitoki 柳沢信鴻, who often summoned performers to his residence, recorded the performance of Kayo, "student of Oden," and Kiyō, "[student of] Den" (*En'yū nikki*, pp. 15–16). *Gaidan bunbun shūyō* (p. 443) later notes that one of Shibamasu's best pupils was awarded the name "Oden." *Morisada mankō* 守貞謄稿, from the mid-nineteenth century, explains that in *tomimoto*-style *jōruri*, female reciters were granted names beginning with "Toyo"; in *tokiwazu*-style *jōruri*, their names began with "Moji" (*Morisada mankō*, vol. 3, p. 252).

begin with the character “Kane” 兼 are students of [Tokiwazu] Kanetayū 常磐津兼太夫 (1731–1799). Okuni of Kōjimachi is a student of [the *kabuki* actor Nakamura] Nakazō 中村仲藏 (1736–1790). Even though she is already thirty, she does not shave her eyebrows and still behaves like a girl. It seems she is now a well-established teacher of dance.

Kamigata musicians in Edo are particularly clever at earning money. [The *jōruri* chanter] Miyakoji Kagatayū 宮古路加賀太夫 (Fujimatsu Satsuma-no-jō 富士松薩摩掾, 1686–1757), who ran a pawn shop, was so wealthy that when several years ago someone stole fifteen or sixteen hundred *ryō* from him, he experienced no hardship. [Tokiwazu] Mojitayū (I, 1709–1781) became a farmer at Sunamura 砂村 and lives in grand style.¹¹⁷ When [Takemoto] Sumitayū 竹本住大夫 I (?–1810) held a *jōruri* recital at [the restaurant of] Kawachiya Hanjirō 河内屋半次郎 (?–?) at Ryōgoku Bridge, he earned five hundred *ryō* in a single day. He is an acquaintance of mine, so I was invited to the event. The advertisements, made of two connected sheets of paper, were bigger than what fits between two wall beams.

Such things are possible only in Edo. Gold and silver are handled like bricks. It is an age in which idlers succeed. Farmers in distant provinces, woodsmen, or fishermen, all of whom live under the selfsame heaven, must spend their days like the damned wasting away in hell. They must pay their taxes and perform corvée, can wear no decent clothing, consume mere chaff even during bumper years, chap their hands and feet red, and enjoy at best the view of cherry blossoms in spring or maple leaves in fall. As the old phrase has it, all must taste the “bitter grains of hardship.”¹¹⁸ Every time I read the poem “Yesterday I went into the city with its castle,” I am moved to tears.¹¹⁹

Today able advisors are appearing in rapid succession. The time has arrived when rural inhabitants will be released from their plight and barren ground will again be rendered fertile. For this we must all be very grateful.

Unfortunately, the above manuscript, left behind by the aged Tōsaku, seems to be incomplete.

Summer, Kansei 7 (1795), Kyōkaen Shujin 杏花園主人 [Ōta Nanpo]

[Postface by Suzuki Kyō]

Tōsaku was a man of great talents and a so-called swindler (*yamashi* 山師). He was a close friend of Tsuchiyama Sōjirō. During the Tenmei period (1781–1789) he was the first Edo man to venture into Ezo. When [Tōsaku] went to Ezo, Tsuchiyama composed the following Chinese-language verse: .

117 Sunamura is perhaps Sunamura Shinden, in what is today Kōtō-ku in Tokyo.

118 From the last line of the famous two-stanza poem “Minnong” 憫農 (Pitying the peasant) by Li Shen 李紳 (772–846), a Tang-dynasty poet and official. The poet asks whether people understand that every grain of rice is the product of a farmer’s toil. This line generated the common Japanese expression for hardship, *ryūryū shinku* 粒々辛苦.

119 The reference is to a famous poem, entitled “Can Fu” 蚕婦 (The silk woman), by Zhang Yu 張俞 (?–?), a literary figure of the Northern Song period active around 1039: “Yesterday I went into the city with its castle, and when I returned my handkerchief was drenched with tears. Those swathed in beautiful silk robes, they were not the silk workers” (昨日入城市，歸來淚滿巾，遍身羅綺者，不是養蠶人). Tōsaku writes 到 instead of 入, and 城郭 instead of 城市, but I take the purport to be the same.

At the lofty pavilion in moonlight,
 wine flows as if gushing from a spring.
 Before the wine jug
 obscure men of talent sing their songs
 here, alone, far from home,
 as the fall wind sweeps over the foaming river.

Tōsaku went to Ezo at Tsuchiyama's behest. Later, when Tsuchiyama became a fugitive, Tōsaku schemed to have him make his way to the "Yamaguchi Kannon," where officials caught him, tortured him, and forced him into a confession.¹²⁰ Tōsaku also served as an informer when several years ago [1766] the Okura *monto* were captured.

I often met Tōsaku at Tsuchiyama's house. He was a skilled *kyōka* poet and wrote under the name of Hezutsu Tōsaku. He had the volume *Hika rakuyō* 飛花落葉 (Blossoms fall, leaves scatter) printed, and wrote a book entitled *Mizu no yukue*.¹²¹ He was no ordinary man.

Third month of Bunsei 7 (1824)

Suzuki Kyō

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EKHS *Edo kyōka hon senshū* 江戸狂歌本選集

NKBT *Nihon koten bungaku taikai* 日本古典文学大系

NZT *Nihon zuibitsu taisei* 日本随筆大成

SGR *Shin gunsho ruijū* 新群書類従

SNKBZ *Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū* 新編日本古典文学全集

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