

TŌRAI SANNA AND THE CREATION OF DIFFERENCE

Regine JOHNSON

Reischauer Institute, Harvard University, U.S.A.

Tōrai Sanna was a *gesaku* writer who produced a small but impressive body of work. He is best-known for his lively *sharebon* and *kibyōshi*, which appeared in the 1780s until the Kansei Reforms began to suppress books that could be seen as taking governmental efforts lightly. This paper treats Sanna's first *kibyōshi*: *Dai sen sekai kakine no soto* (1784). The text develops from a pun on the kabuki term *sekai sadame*, a meeting at which the *sekai* for a kabuki performance was chosen. In this work, it is not only the kabuki *sekai* that is established, but also the physical world, and Sanna's textual world as well. The text performs a version of Creation that includes the differentiation of chaos and order, heaven and earth, male and female, and of the Japanese mythos from the myths established in China and India. Sanna is humorously entertaining throughout, but in typical *chakashi* fashion, he continually un.masks and masks his insights into larger philosophical issues.

Keywords: EDO FICTION, TŌRAI SANNA, GESAKU, KIBYŌSHI, KABUKI TERMINOLOGY, CREATION MYTHOLOGY.

The *ukiyo*, that often tipsily floating world of pleasure (and pain), embraced the ephemeral. It was clearly a heady delight to indulge in fashionable but suspect pursuits, to risk indebtedness and instability in celebrating the antitheses of prevailing cultural values. Within that world, the playful *gesaku* 戯作 spirit imbued popular fiction of the latter half of the eighteenth century with a saucy lightness of touch and a penetrating wit. However, the combination of conceptual flexibility and broad-based appeal would prove to be too volatile for the government to tolerate. After playing fast and too loose with taboo subjects, *gesaku* fiction was lobotomized in the Kansei reforms of the late-1780s and early-1790s. *Gesaku* liveliness would, however, linger on in fiction for another century.

The amusing, but not innocent, project of the *gesaku* writers was metaphorically to “pierce the hole” (*ana o ugatsu*) of the body politic in order to expose to view that which was usually hidden. This probing beneath the surface was one of several techniques that gave dimension to a text. The project of the reader is to see with doubled vision, moving smoothly over the thickly patterned surface, yet searching for a disguised substance. Nakamura Yukihiko warns that even an astute reader can be fooled by the deceptive writer. It is necessary to catch the spirit or miss the pleasure and the point. “Not being taken in by a plausible surface, one must peek into the author's shadows.” (Nakamura, 1982: 134-35) This technique of misdirection, or *chakashi*, lies at the heart of *gesaku*.

The piercing gaze of the *gesaku* writer was applied most enthusiastically to the body itself. In many works, this meant a cheerful reliance on scatological pratfalls, a subject that seems never to have loosened its hold on the Japanese imagination. Flatulence figured prominently, even acting as an extended metaphor for academic pontification, a trope that links the otherwise quite distinct worlds of Edo fiction and contemporary academe. The social, and—perhaps to a lesser degree—sexual practices of the pleasure

quarter figured largely in many fictional genres, dominating the *sharebon*. The pleasures and of course potential dangers of erotic adventure inspired texts to deal with romance, sexual etiquette, and sometimes even the salacious.

In fiction, man—and I use the male gender advisedly—was the measure of all things. Animals and even objects were anthropomorphized, endowed with human emotions, including desire, jealousy, and anger. An octopus in the Dragon Lord's kingdom beneath the sea was likely to be shown functioning as a man, but with a *chapeau-like* octopus perched on his head. Even the malice of inanimate objects was rendered human and comic. A rice pot with burly human legs and arms and a tea kettle could gird themselves to battle disgruntled human beings.

With this emphasis on the body and bodily practices, it is not surprising that the limits of the human—and therefore of human qualities—were also explored through variations on the human form. Carnivals made a commercial success of displaying human deformity, both real and cleverly feigned. Monsters inhabited less-travelled outlying areas, but they walked the night everywhere. Comic, grotesque, and on occasion threatening, they sometimes displayed a profusion of extremities, sometimes the excision of critical body parts. Sizes ran the gamut from the miniscule to the gigantic. And the most treacherous of monsters could metamorphose at will, mostly into the form of a beguiling woman. H. P. Lovecraft has noted that breaking down categories is an important component of the horror story, and it is collapsing the category of the human that can provoke the greatest terror. However, despite tales of the bogeyman and shivery summer stories of the outré, the monstrous almost-humans of fiction were most often produced for humorous effect.

In *gesaku* writings, larger social and political issues were also “embodied.” The Japanese were developing a new view of their place in the international, or at least the East Asian, sphere. The focus was shifting from the long-standing emphasis on articulating the similarities between Japan and China, to a new desire to establish the existence and importance of the differences between Japan and other lands. In displacing China as the culture of reference, *kokugaku* scholars of the eighteenth century were attempting to establish an alternative ideological framework and hierarchy of value, one that was adequate to the Japanese social reality, which was fragmented in ways that orthodoxy could not cope with or explain.

Hot topics—from the newest fashion in kimono patterns to the latest *kokugaku* concerns—invariably made their way into *gesaku*. It became intellectually fashionable for authors and illustrators to use comical “not-quite-humans” to illustrate the problem of “difference” that preoccupied part of the scholarly community. In texts depicting China as a foreign land like any other, without immediate implications for Japan, the “no-longer-Central” Kingdom often appears as an object of ridicule. An early example appears in Hiraga Gennai's rollicking *Fūryū Shidōken den* (The Dashing Life of Shidōken), which was published in Hōreki 13 (1763). In this text, the Chinese are implicitly compared to foreigners of extremely peculiar body type: to the Giants and Dwarves, the sneaky Long-Arms and Long-Legs, and the doughnut-like people who measure personal worth by the aperture of the hole through their chest. These Barbarians are allowed only a limited repertoire of gestures, and the Chinese are limited as well. Travel in lands other than Japan is, in a phrase borrowed from Roland Barthes, “an

exploration of closure,” not of the “poetics of exploration.” Among this motley cohort, it is the Chinese who prove to be credulous, sexually vulnerable, and imitative. They are conned into setting out for Japan, in order to construct a full-sized papier-mâché Mt. Fuji, so that China will be able to measure up to the Japanese standard of natural beauty. However, a divine wind from Ise, impelled by the outrage of the eight million gods, makes short shrift of the Chinese convoy, and their cargo of paper and glue. Gennai’s language in this piece smacks strongly of the poet and *kokugaku* scholar, Kamo no Mabuchi. (Jōfuku, 1976: 92-94)

To appropriate China for their own purposes—or rather to reappropriate the concept of China that had become accepted in Japan—*kokugaku* scholars were also seeking to legitimize the indigenous order through indigenous ideology. Motoori Norinaga, in his magnum opus *Kojiki den* (begun in 1764 and finally published in 1822) treats the *Kojiki* as a master text from which the uncorrupted language and “original” truth of Japan can be recovered. The source of the corruption that was to be rooted out was, of course, China.

There was also a retooling of Shinto, with an emphasis not only on the mythology of creation, but on its continuous reenactment through natural cycles and agricultural labor. The *kokugaku* emphasis on the interconnectedness of bodily and mental activity is, as H. D. Harootunian has noted, not far from the emphases of the *gesaku* writers. Artificial social divisions were to be bound up by a single fabric of renewed community. With the earth still under the governance of the god Ōkuninushi, whose toil had originally made the earth fit for human beings, the distant, storied past was immanent in the present. This ideological project was a powerful force in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. (Harootunian, 1988)

The text that is the subject of this paper treats the creation mythology, with no innocence about ideological implications. It plays over the issues of bodily form and the principles that create order in the world, focusing on the relationship between man and the myths of the Japanese gods, and ultimately suggesting a connection between the gods of Japan, China, and India. This text was published in Tenmei 4 (1784) as *Dai sen sekai kakine no soto* 大千世界牆の外, which I have translated as “Beyond the Pale-ings of the Billion Worlds.”

The author of this work is Tōrai Sanna 唐來參和 (1744-1810). Although active on the thriving literary scene of the 1780s, little is known about his life. Author and critic Kyokutei Bakin (1767-1848), in his *Kinsei mono no hon Edo sakusha burui*, gives a brief account. Bakin is not always able to distinguish between rumor and fact, but his information does not conflict with other sources on Sanna’s life. “Originally a retainer for a highly-placed family, during the Tenmei era, he had reason to become a *chōnin*. He married into the family that ran the brothel Izumiya in Honjo Matsui-chō. He took over the business and came to be called Izumiya Genzō.” He is said to have been buried at Jōshinji Temple in nearby Fukagawa.” (Kyokutei Bakin, 1834: 34-35)

A thriving area along the Sumida River, Honjo was thronged with peddlers, eateries, carnivals and other entertainments. The now-sleepy temple Ekōin was known for its lively fairs, *sumō* performances, and special showings of travelling Buddhist treasures. Of course, any area that was so successful at hustling customers inevitably offered sexual

enticements as well. Honjo Matsui-chō was an unlicensed but well-known brothel area, or *okabasho*.

Though the steady, likable Sanna may have been an implausible brothel manager, it seems that he also thrived. He is thought to have had a close relationship with his publisher, the prominent Tsutaya Jūzaburō who made a fortune publishing guidebooks to the Yoshiwara. Taking into account certain disputes about authorship, it would seem that Sanna wrote two *sharebon*, about eighteen *kibyōshi*, and perhaps a couple of *gōkan*. The Tōrai of his *gesaku* pen name suggests an author indebted to Chinese culture, one who has “come from T’ang to Japan,” and his works confirm the point. But this *bunjin-like* sobriquet also puns on numbers called out in the popular game of *ken*, which often involved liberal consumption of *sake*. (Mori, 1970: 335; Linhart, 1995: 102, 109)

Despite his small output, Sanna had several extremely successful works. Even the acerbic Bakin grudgingly admits: “Although Sanna is not an accomplished stylist, his innovative plots [*shukō* 趣向] are so skillfully wrought that he has, from time to time, produced hits.” (Kyokutei Bakin, 1834: 34) Sanna established his reputation for intriguing plots and dislocations with his first work, a *sharebon* published in Tenmei 3 (1783). It is entitled, with a bow to the revered Kūkai’s work of a similar name,¹ *Tsūjin kōshaku: Sankyō shiki* 通神孔釋三教色 (The Suave Shinto God, Confucius, and Sakyamuni: Guiding Passions of the Three Creeds). In Kyōwa 2 (1802), this work was reviewed in *Gesaku hyōban: Hana no orikami* (Evaluating the foliate paper flowers of *gesaku*), a *hyōbanki* that follows the format for kabuki reviews. *Sankyō shiki* is awarded the number three position in the category of *tachiyaku* acting and the superior ranking of *jōjō-kichi*, primarily for its clever conversation. Exploiting the teachings of the sages in this comic fashion is applauded: “Eccentric language can also be instructive, since it takes a shortcut to the True Path. This one’s a great hit, a great hit!” (*Hana no orikami*, 1802: 138, 156) Sanna’s crest is shown as two hands with fingers outstretched, presumably to play *ken*.

Sanna borrowed the basic premise of *Sankyō shiki* from *Hijiri no yūkaku* (The Holy Men’s Brothel), an early *sharebon* published anonymously in Osaka in Hōreki 7 (1757). One can see why this would have been appealing to someone in Sanna’s line of work. Philosophical rapprochement between the Three Creeds of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism—a theme to which Sanna would return—is played out in this text by featuring Confucius, Sakyamuni, and Laotzu as fellow clients at a brothel run by the bibulous poet Li Po. Historically, the doctrine of the Unity of the Three Creeds has been used to serve many purposes. From the early-eighteenth century, it spread through Ishida Baigan’s popular and syncretic *shingaku* movement, which taught the merchant class that different religious traditions shared the same fundamentals. It provided an excuse to study Taoism when Taoism had come to seem heretical. It was also a platform from which Buddhists and some of those interested in Taoism could attack the Confucianism of the establishment. This *sharebon*, however, treats the three holy men quite evenhandedly. The staff and revellers include classical Chinese poets and historians, Buddhist *arhats* and disciples, and Manjusri [Monju], the Bodhisattva of wisdom. Po Chū-i keeps the clientele plied with *sake* and entertainment. Sakyamuni, who is clearly unwilling or unable to remain detached from the courtesan “Fleeting World” 假世, leaves a suicide note written in Sanskrit characters, which are helpfully glossed in Japanese.

In *Sankyō shiki*, Sanna has interlarded the jokes with hifaluting religious terminology and elevated Japan to an important role. Shinto has temporarily displaced Taoism, and a “great god” of Ise 伊勢の太神 (also, by way of the pun a “big spender”) descends from the High Plain of Heaven to join Confucius and Sakyamuni in a bout of carousing. The three holy men are entertained at the Nagasakiya, as befits clients who have travelled from afar. Courtesans named Three Lands 三國, China 唐土, and Japan 和國 attend to their needs. Confucius is, of course, the least decorous of the revellers.

In Tenmei 5, two years after the success of *Sankyō shiki*, Sanna authored another popular *sharebon*, entitled *Watō chinkai* 和唐珍解, or in the Chinese gloss, *Hōton chinkei* (Curious Sino-Japanese Interpreting). It is set, not in the Nagasakiya, but in the Maruyama quarter in Nagasaki, and features Chinese clients, commercial exchange, and extensive linguistic play. Speech in Chinese is glossed both for Chinese pronunciation and Japanese interpretation.

The prolific, best-selling author Shikitei Sanba 式亭三馬 (1766-1822) was also one of Sanna’s admirers. In selecting a pen name, he is said to have chosen the “San” of “Sanba” out of respect for Sanna and included Sanna’s *kibyōshi*, entitled *Mawari no yoi nadai no ie: Kuru na no ‘ne’ kara kane no naru ki* 順廻能名題家 莫切自根金生木 (Tenmei 5), on his list of twenty-three fictional masterpieces. (Kyokutei Bakin, 1834: 47-48; Hamada, 1952: 20) Translated, the main title means “don’t root out that money tree” or “don’t chop it down; money *does* grow on trees.” Another of Sanna’s *kibyōshi*, entitled *Tenka ichimen kagami no umebachi* 天下一面鏡梅, was an immediate success when it appeared in Kansei 1 (1789). Unfortunately, the timing was a problem. It required no probing beneath the surface to see that Sugawara no Michizane, sage and political advisor to Emperor Daigo, was a barely-veiled likeness of the reform-minded *rōjū* Matsudaira Sananobu. Although the work offered high praise for Michizane, it was deemed politically unacceptable and suppressed, a casualty of the Kansei reforms. Sanna did not suffer additional punishment, but he would not produce any additional *gesaku* for several years. Although Sanna has been relatively neglected by recent scholars, the knowledgeable but idiosyncratic Mori Senzō has ranked Sanna only behind Santō Kyōden and Koikawa Harumachi as a writer of *kibyōshi* and labelled *Daisen sekai kakine no soto* a masterpiece. (Mori, 1970: 333-37) This text is presented, like many *gesaku*, as a kabuki performance. Maeda Kingorō warns that reading Edo fiction requires the investment of at least ten years in the study of kabuki. Though few readers can spare a decade, it is clear to *any* reader that ignorance of the popular drama is a severe handicap, akin to reading popular fiction today without ever having seen a movie or watched television. Much of the fiction of this period is shaped by the drama, by *nō* and *kyōgen*, *jōruri* and kabuki, and even by the supposedly educational renditions of the *kōshaku* story-tellers. The dramatic conventions were of course familiar to the *gesaku* audience. Well-known phrases selected from favored plays provide rhetorical flourishes in the texts. Speeches follow dramatic patterns. And characters are often modelled on the stars of the theatrical world.

In the theatre, dramatists set plays within traditionally defined worlds, or *sekai* 世界. The most important include the worlds of the Soga Brothers, of the Taira and Minamoto, and of Minamoto no Yoshitsune specifically. The *sekai* provided a sense of familiarity. Within a particular cycle of plays, well-known characters would enact time-honored

quasi-historical plots, enlivened by a sprinkling of new characters or plot twists. Temporal dissonance was the norm. There was a doubling of vision by which “historical” plays were assumed to be not-so-covertly commenting on the present. This left to the audience the pleasure of connecting stage events to the contemporary scene. The transpositions and juxtapositions were a source of humor, ranging from the pratfall to the amusing intellectual insight. They could also serve to sidestep censorship.

Modern commentary tends to emphasize the tortured quality of dramatic plots that have been twisted and re-twisted to fit traditional conceptions of history, the idiosyncracies of specific actors, and the interests of contemporary viewers. It is true that some scenes have a peculiar “grab bag” quality, and some plots seem excessively burdened. However, these qualities are common in the world of entertainment, both past and present.

Western fiction and drama also traditionally featured cycles of works set in a specific world. However, it is not necessary to search the past for a comparable case; the Star Trek phenomenon hits much closer to home. A television program based on ideas from the intellectual but critically undervalued science fiction genre caught the public imagination. The series spawned books, fan conventions, tie-in products, movies, and an ever-expanding number of new television series. Star Trek in all its many manifestations has become a huge multimedia commercial success. Familiar characters move between television, the movies, and the pages of fiction. Plots set in the distant future are assumed to have relevance to contemporary social issues, and conceptual clarity is applauded. But inconsistencies and technical glitches abound and are often the source of both intended and unintended humor. Generic separations are ignored.

To the intellectually and commercially savvy writers of *gesaku*, this phenomenon would undoubtedly ring true. Entertaining and stimulating, *gesaku* was often evaluated on the same terms as drama, and had a similar audience. The readers’ familiarity with the frame of reference, characters, and basic plot made possible a type of brevity for which many of the Japanese literary arts are known. The theatre format supplies a convenient way to mediate the initial shock of entry into an unusual textual world. It was expected that there would be tinkering with familiar plots and characters to fit a required schema. It was for these dramatic twists—often humorous, but also conceptual—that Sanna’s fiction was praised. Entertainment was key; stimulating ideas were a bonus.

In *Dai sen sekai kakine no soto*, the *shukō* is specifically dramatic and essentially conceptual. Although the visual representation draws the first laugh, the humor resides in the provocative probes at myth-making. It all begins with a pun on a theatrical event. The most spectacular kabuki performance of the theatrical year was the *kaomise*, held in the eleventh month. *Shibai nenjū gyōji*, a text dating from An’ei 6 (1777), states: “Patrons send gifts to display, and all the teahouses put up decorations... Truly, there is nothing comparable to the full flower of Edo kabuki.” (Shōkadō Hajō, 1777: 27) The contractual year ran from the eleventh month through the tenth month. Thus each actor who had signed on with a particular theatre would “show his face” in their *kaomise*. Decisions about staging were of weighty commercial importance. These decisions were made in the ninth month at a meeting called the *sekai sadame* 世界定め, or “establishing the world.” A small group including theatre management and actors would convene to make

preliminary decisions about the *kaomise* performance. “Sometimes the world is decided upon easily, but when there is no clear preference, lots are drawn. Either way, the selected world is written up and placed on the altar to the gods with an offering of *sake*.” (Shōkadō Hajō, 1777: 24)

For Sanna, the term *sekai sadame* suggested more than a choice between a play set, for example, in the world of the *Taiheiki* or in the *Izu nikki*, the world of Yoritomo’s exile. It suggested both the establishment of a (theatrical) world and the establishment of *the* world. With this choice of theme, Sanna sets his *textual* world as that of the Creation and himself as the Creator of the text. The pun upon which the text pivots directs the reader toward the parallels between levels of artistic creation, and Sanna provides frequent textual reminders of the textual interplay.

Since *Dai sen sekai kakine no soto* sets the stage for Creation, it is located outside of linear time and known space, “beyond the boundaries of the billion Worlds.” The *dai sen sekai* are the 1000³ worlds that constitute the domain of one Buddha. Each world is divided according to the presence or absence of form 色 and desire 欲. There are formless realms (*mushikikai*), realms of form (*shikikai*) where the inhabitants have no desire or appetite, and realms of desire (*yokkai*), which include, of course, the human world, and hell.

Sanna’s text examines the creation of myth, with a nod to ideology. It plays with the importance of form, by posing questions: What should a god look like? In what form should a world be cast? What principles should order a world? How is difference—and therefore the possibility of desire—created? And without desire, how can one motivate action? But to begin, it is the hitherto-undiscovered Age of the *Henjin* 變神, the “Strange” or “Changing Gods,” which precedes the Age of the Heavenly Deities and the Age of the Earthly Deities. This places the reader at the beginning of *Nihon shoki*. The curtain is about to rise on the creation of the Gods of Japan. Sanna writes:

As I praise the occasion and raise the curtain, the great drum of world order kabooms east, west, north, and south, through the three worlds of form and formlessness, and of desire. The naked strings of the *samisen* of heaven and earth throb. The opening performance of the Heavenly and Earthly deities is about to begin. Out of the clouds of darkness before you, I let my brush offer you a peek beyond the pale-ings. “This here’s Japan, on the ‘Pangaeaia’ stage for your viewing pleasure, as the New Year of the Dragon springs forth.” (Sanna, f. 1 a)²

On felicitous occasions, including New Year’s and the beginning of *kaomise*, a special slate of performances began at sunrise, signalled by the pounding of the drum in the theatre tower. These included the celebratory dancing of *sanbasō* and the *waki kyōgen* or “god play” featured by the theatre. It would be hours before the main acts would begin. In his text, Sanna is offering the reader a peek at this early action before the stars of the mythological drama take the stage. The first visual image depicts a slice of the cosmic egg from which the world will be born girdled round by a fire-breathing dragon. Within the egg, the ten figures of the Strange Gods face the reader. It is clear that they are not yet ready for leading roles. The illustrator depicts them as amoebalike, scrambled creatures,

who seem to be unsure where to situate their orifices and extremities. The principles of form and order have yet to be established.

As if in dramatic aside, the characters face the reader and speak: “Isn’t it silly for us to be in here and so serious.” (Sanna, f. 1b) The tone is light, but it immediately foregrounds the question of interpretation; the reader is reminded to consider how seriously the text should be read. This of course is the difficulty of the text, and a problem with which contemporary interpreters still grapple. Speaking to stereotype is a comfortable critical posture. It requires little thought for readers to laud works of serious tone and dismiss works with popular appeal, especially those that probe deftly but not definitively and whose authors are too slippery to pin down. This, however, is the realm of *gesaku*, in which the apparently silly and the apparently serious co-exist, creating and exploding comedic tension, masking and unmasking conceptual depth.

These motley gods may have a serious function, but their behavior is as unregulated as their form, as wild as a heated monobloc before the Big Bang. The narrator tells us:

This was before the “great catfish” grew large enough to manage earthquakes, and before the god of Kashima had appeared to take control of thunder. So the gods would, on occasion, become rambunctious, causing the world to capsize ... like a topsy-turvy palanquin. (Sanna, f. 2a)

It is difficult to conceptualize true chaos; a sense of order always intrudes. Clearly, a foundering palanquin is a mundane image, but it invokes the theatre-goer who may have rented a palanquin to take him to the outlying theatre district. As is typical of a utopian tale, the weather is also confused. Time does not pass; so there are no seasons. The blossoms of spring, flowers of summer, and leaves of autumn coexist in a simultaneous thunderstorm and snowfall. The directions of up and down have not been established, and the gods appear to walk on air with sandals atop their heads (an appalling breach of etiquette) and straw hats on their feet. A torch flames downward, posing a problem in the world of darkness before the advent of the sun. A waterfall falls up. And a beast that is “neither dog, nor lion, nor tiger” pounces up the torrent. It is clear that the assignment of names is as unsettled as decisions about form.

These conditions are discomfiting to the gods themselves, so they convene a meeting to “establish the world.”

We don’t want to be stuck as monsters, which will cause problems for future illustrators. If we settle things now, it will be taken as an indication of divine benevolence toward the illustrators of ages to come. I’m sure they’ll be grateful. (Sanna, f. 4a)

The text continues to comment on its own construction, as it comments on the Creation of all things. It also suggests that there is little to choose between the representation of gods and of monsters. Any perusal of the pantheon of gods will confirm that many would fit comfortably into a *hyakki yagyō*, the night procession of “a hundred” demons.

Historically, as mythologies travelled between cultures, the gods of one culture were often interpreted as monsters in the next. The stamp of Otherness renders dividing lines ambiguous. The result of the deliberations by Sanna's "Strange Gods" is that they select the human form. "Yesterday they looked like monsters. But they had the freedom to choose, and today they have a human visage. Strange are the ways of the gods." (Sanna, f. 4b) Man is not being created in the image of god; god is being created in the image of man.

With the rectification of form, there is also a rectification of action. Function follows form. The gods are depicted hard at work in the fields. In the *kokugaku* scheme, work is a form of worship, a part of the reenactment of creation. The *Nihon shoki* provides this account of the creation of the heavens and earth:

The purer and clearer part was thinly drawn out, and formed Heaven, while the heavier and grosser element settled down and became Earth. The finer element easily became a united body, but the consolidation of the heavy and gross element was accomplished with difficulty. (Aston, 1924: 2)

The gods are performing what appear to be agricultural labors, busily collecting and placing the lighter element above, to form the heaven, and collecting the heavier elements in a strainer to be used to firm up the earth. (They are, however, having some problems with the northwest sky and earth in the southeast.)

Throughout the work, Sanna is careful to distinguish his role as writer of the text from the role of the illustrator, suggesting the coordinated effort that is also required to establish a textual world.³ "If you count very, very carefully, there are eleven figures here, not ten. I guess it's a busy time for the illustrator, so he must have hired a part-time god to fill in." (Sanna, f. 5a) Of course, with the spate of publishing for the New Year, authors, illustrators, and carvers would have been particularly busy. The joking about their cooperative creative endeavor is actually a means of valorizing their efforts, and reinforcing a triple-layered construction with low-ranking gods at work creating a world, theatre staff setting the stage for performance, and authors and illustrators at work preparing texts for publication.

Despite the creation of the firmament, the gods are still in the dark. Prior to the appearance of the Sun Goddess, the "once-strange gods" are setting the stage by painstakingly stringing up the sun, moon, and stars. The sun is proving to be too hot to handle. One of the gods suggests "rais[ing] the moon just a bit," and interpolates "Do you know, I've heard that Kyōden's moon is quite something." (Sanna, f. 5b) The reference is to *Tenkei waku mon* a recently -published *kibyōshi* by Santō Kyōden featuring the moon as one of the characters. The reader is reminded that the contemporary world ultimately (re-)shapes the past. The spectacularly productive Kyōden is a creative inspiration to both authors and gods. Kyōden's moon may be a great success, but the first fascicle ends with a god wishing that he had never tried to make pesky clouds in the first place.

By the second fascicle, the stage is nearly set for the more familiar dramas of the gods. The sun is shown suspended from a pulley that moves the heavenly bodies into a cave and back out again, thereby regulating light and dark. This is of course the storied cave in

which Amaterasu would blockade herself and from which she would be lured only by the raucous reactions to Ame-no-uzume's heavenly striptease.⁴

Meanwhile, in the foreground, there is depicted a tiny eight-headed serpent. One of the gods warns, "Don't kill it. In *later ages*, they'll write plays about it." (Sanna, f. 6a) This creature will grow into the great eight-forked serpent (*yamata no orochi*), with eight heads and sometimes eight tails, that will be slain by the unruly god Susanoo for the crime of devouring too many young girls. According to *Nihon shoki*: "Its eyes were red, like the winter-cherry; and on its back firs and cypresses were growing. As it crawled it extended over a space of eight hills and eight valleys." (Aston, 1924: 53)

As these primordial forms are set in place, the time for rehearsal has arrived. And to put in a little much-needed practice are Izanami and Izanagi on the Floating Bridge of Heaven. These procreating gods will give birth to the islands of Japan and many generations of gods. In Edo texts, they frolic through *ukiyō zōshi*, *gesaku*, and of course, on into pornography. The appearance of these gods in a text signals sexual adventures to come; they may stand in as a code for undepicted sexual behavior, or they may warn of an explicit tonal change to come. As the *Kojiki* describes this moment:

The two deities stood on the Heavenly Floating Bridge and, lowering the jeweled spear, stirred with it. They stirred the brine with a churning-churning sound [*kōworō kōworō*], and when they lifted up [the spear] again, the brine dripping down from the tip of the spear piled up and became an island. This was the island of Onōgōrō. (Philippi, 1968: 49)

Once they have stirred the deep, however, they are still unclear about what they should do. In Sanna's text, Izanagi suggests:

With you and me here on the bridge, honey, this is what they call—in the pleasure quarters—a momentary diversion. We haven't yet reached the point where man and woman come together, but if you joke around and say "Please stop... You really mustn't!" heaven and earth will shape up naturally hereafter. (Sanna, f. 6b)

Izanami and Izanagi need help. As in the Yoshiwara, sexual connection requires significant stage managing. The stagehand-gods are winding a winch (and complaining that the mechanism is rather old-fashioned), so that an island will seem to rise in response to the stirring of the jeweled spear. Presumably this will give Izanagi confidence in his prowess. In addition, the Gods are manipulating a wagtail bird as if it were a puppet, and coaxing the somewhat obtuse couple: "Now take a look at the wagtail. What does it make you think of?" (Sanna, f. 7a) Although they have discovered that the forms of their bodies can be fit together, there is no desire to motivate action. The wagtail bird is supposed to encourage them to move their lower bodies, and they will eventually figure it out. But they will not get it right until they have also learned that a female can ruin the results when *she* tries to initiate events.

More prominent than the gods, however, is the massive island that is rising from the sea. As one god notes "This island has the shape of the *katakana* character *ki* キ." (Sanna,

f. 7a) The visual representation foregrounds the Kinojiya 喜の字屋, famed caterers to the Shin-Yoshiwara. In the Meiwa 5 (1768) account offered in *Yoshiwara taizen*, a skilled cook named Kiemon set up shop as a caterer in the Quarter during the Kyōho era. His novel presentations, involving large quantities of splendidly arranged food were extremely popular. His shop would be called the Kinojiya, which eventually become a generic term for a caterer of gourmet cuisine.⁵ Then, as now, visually appealing food was a necessary accompaniment to all types of pleasurable behavior. However, the term would develop the extended meaning of “being overcome or infatuated,” which also informs this scene of gods courting.

In the upper corner, there is a reference that captures Sanna’s humorous yet erudite style. Three fish are flying through the air escaping toward the edge of the text. “It would appear that the world has been established, but in all the excitement over the island some fish are flying off. There are still some rough spots!” (Sanna, f. 7b) Though this can pass as a narratorial quip, it is also playing off the *Nihon shoki* passage: “when the world began to be created, the soil of which lands were composed floated about in a manner which might be compared to the floating of a fish sporting on the surface of the water.” (Aston, 1924: 2) These metaphorical fish have taken off in a flight of Sanna’s fancy.

From the construction of mythology, Sanna proceeds to the physical construction of a god. Artisan-gods carve, glue, and paint. A costume is being fitted and make-up touches applied. The second eye is about to be drawn in. This is the decisive moment at which life enters a work of art, but the narrator kibitzes: “The workmanship is good, but I wonder why it isn’t as good as Takeda’s.” (Sanna, f. 7b) The standard for excellence in god-construction is being set by Takeda Izumo, the name of several generations of dramatist-managers of the popular Takemoto *jōruri* theatre in Ōsaka. In the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries, through the rivalry between the Takemoto and Toyotake Theatres, numerous technical improvements were made in puppet construction and movement. By the time this text was written, however, *jōruri* had lost out in its battle for popularity with kabuki.

This particular god-under-construction is Kuni-no-tokotachi no mikoto. In the *Nihon shoki*, he is the first deity to be formed: “At this time a certain thing was produced between Heaven and Earth. It was in form like a reed-shoot. Now this became transformed into a God, and was called Kuni-toko-tachi no Mikoto.” (Aston, 1924: 2-3) As the character for “kuni” 國 on his clothing suggests, he is the embodiment of the land of Japan. As one of the invisible gods, however, he will *not* play the prominent role that will be assigned to the later god of similar name, Ōkuninushi.

With the creation of this god, the Ten Generations of Strange Gods has drawn to an end. Their labors are complete, and the actors are ready to take their part on the just-erected mythological stage. The gods sip a cup of ambrosia in farewell, and leave for parts unknown, slipping into a deep lacuna in the original account. The depiction of their departure is a *mitate* inversion of the *raigō* paintings, in which Amitabha [Amida] and attendant Bodhisattvas descend on clouds to welcome to the Pure Land a believer who has just died. As in the *sekai sadame* of the kabuki theatre, this world has been written up and readied for performance. It is being offered with a cup of *sake* to the gods.

The beautifully-crafted Kuni-no-tokotachi is left weeping in a clump of reeds, but he recovers from his abandonment quickly. “Well, from now on, I’m on my own... I guess I’ll make up a *kyōka* and be on my way.” (Sanna, f. 9a) This is a tip of the hat to the Tenmei fad for comic poetry borrowing the *tanka* form. Sanna himself studied *kyōka* under the name of 質草少々 with the talented Ōta Nanpo.

At this point, we are prepared to witness Kuni-no-tokotachi’s labors on behalf of the land that would become Japan: However, Sanna sidesteps into a previously-established textual world: “I would like to warn you that this is a little like *Sankyō shiki*.” (Sanna, f. 10a) Sanna is pointing out a critical lack in the Japanese tales of creation: they are centered only on Japan. But even Japan of the Edo period did not exist in a vacuum. Religiously, intellectually, commercially, and diplomatically, Japan existed within an international world. And while Japan was being created, there must have been parallel acts of creation, engendering parallel myths of nation-building, occurring elsewhere.

Therefore, Sanna provides the Japanese gods with companions: “While Kuni-no-tokotachi was idling alone, who should appear in China but P’an-ku. And in India, it was the Maitreya. They both have come to consult about the Creation of the 10,000 things.” (Sanna, f. 10a) Seated with Kuni-no-tokotachi is a rough-looking fellow smoking a pipe who exclaims that they need to get to work on the roof. This is P’an-ku [Bankoshi], the “Great Architect of the Universe.” In Chinese mythology, he is the creator of the world, which arose out of chaos in the form of a chicken’s egg. When P’an-ku died his eyes became the sun and moon, and his hair and beard became vegetation. He is usually depicted as a primitive, clothed in fur or leaves. Like Kuni-no-tokotachi, his work was completed early, and he has a low profile among the Chinese pantheon.

The two gods of Japan and China seem to be comfortable together. But they have qualms about the other fellow: “Uh-oh, here comes the priest. I won’t say anything if you won’t.” Clearly they think he is a bit pushy. Over the water from the west comes the Maitreya [Miroku]. He carries a blazing halo to light his way. His head and footgear are lotus flowers. As in *Sankyō shiki*, much of the fun comes in the representation of the Three Creeds. And P’an-ku is certainly correct in suggesting that the Maitreya will outshine both Kuni-no-tokotachi and himself.

At this intriguing point, where the cosmos has come into being and the relative positions of the Indian, Chinese, and Japanese creeds are being established, Sanna closes the book on *his* creation story: “I only have one page left. It’s too bad I have to put down my brush.” (Sanna, f.10a) This text commences with the voice of the author describing the Beginning of all things. The author-narrator is a lively self-referential presence throughout the work. And it is a representation of the author that concludes the work. He appears in a rounded frame, not unlike the initial depiction of the unbroken cosmic egg. And Sanna jokes that he, too, like the Strange Gods, has been changed: “I appear before you as the *illustrator* portrayed me. But I don’t really look so sexy. I’m just a middling sort of fellow.” (Sanna, f. 10b) The final words open the text up to the main acts to follow: “Here begins the second play (*dai-nibanme*): The Seven Generations of Heavenly Deities and the Five Generations of Earthly Gods.” (Sanna, f. 10b)

Sanna was clearly a well-read, thoughtful man. In the *gesaku* manner, his text is self-reflexive, performative, and conceptually suggestive. Its playful tone and treatment tend to disrupt established meanings. He presents the reader with the image of *home faber*, of man the ultimate constructor of texts and tales and perhaps of mythologies as well. In this text, Sanna's world is implicated in the construction of the storied past. Mythologies are depicted as long-running national dramas within a set *sekai* that has meaning for that culture, but that ultimately must take account of other cultures as well. Gods are rather hapless creatures walking through preordained roles. It is left to the reader to decide how accurate a picture this is of the establishment of a world.

In the Renaissance concept of the *theatrum mundi*, the world was seen as God's stage. This allowed the contemporary theatre a certain reflected glory. In Sanna's text, however, meaning is not established by the prior existence of God's theatre of the world. Rather it is the writer of *gesaku* who playfully suggests an alternate reading for the drama of Creation.

References Cited

- Aston, W. G., tr.(1924, rpt. 1972): *Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697*. Tuttle, Rutland Vermont and Tokyo, I: 407 pp., II: 443 pp.
- Chamberlain, Basil Hall, tr. (1932): *Translation of "ko-ji-ki" (古事記) or "Records of Ancient Matters"*, 2nd ed. J. L. Thompson, Kobe, 495 pp. (1802) *Gesaku hyōban: Hana no orikami* (Evaluating the foliate paper flowers of *gesaku*). In (1982) *Sharebon taisei 22* (A compilation of *sharebon*), Chūō Kōronsha, Tokyo, pp. 135-82. (1802) 「戯作評判花折紙」. In 『洒落本大成』 22, 中央公論社, pp. 135-82.
- Hakeda, Yoshito S.(1972): *Kūkai: Major Works translated, with an account of his life and a study of his thought*, Columbia University Press, New York, 303 pp.
- Hamada Giichirō (1952): Shimizu Enjū to Tōrai Sanna. *Kokugo to kokubungaku* (November 1952). 浜田義一郎 「志水燕十と唐来三和」 『国語と国文学』, 昭和27年11月号.
- Harootunian, H. D. (1988): *Things Seen and Unseen: Discourse and Ideology in Tokugawa Nativism*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 494 pp.
- Jōfuku Isamu (1976): *Hiraga Gennai no kenkyū* (A study of Hiraga Gennai). Sōgensha, Osaka, 471 pp. 城福勇 (1976): 『平賀源内の研究』 創元社, 大阪, 471 pp.
- Kyokutei Bakin (1834): *Kinsei mono no hon: Edo sakusha burui* (Works of recent times: Categorizing Edo authors), ed. Kimura Miyogo (1971). n.p., 458 pp. 曲亭馬琴 (1834): 『近世物之本 江戸作者部類』, ed. 木村三四吾 (1971). n.p., 458 pp.
- Linhart, Sepp (1995): Some Thoughts on the Ken Game in Japan: From the Viewpoint of Comparative Civilization Studies. Rpt. from Tadao Umesao, Brian Powell, and Isao Kumakura, eds., *Japanese Civilization in the Modern World XI: Amusement*, *Senri Ethnological Studies* 40: 101-24.
- Mori Senzō (1970): *kibyōshi sakka to shite no Tōrai Sanna* (Tōrai Sanna as an author of *kibyōshi*). Revised in *Mori Senzō chosaku shū 1* (The collected works of Mori Senzō). Chūō Kōronsha, Tokyo, pp. 333-65. 森銑三 (1970): 「黄表紙作家としての唐来三和」. In 『森銑三著作集』 1, 中央公論社, pp. 333-65.

- Mori Senzō (1972): *Kibyōshi kaidai* (Bibliographical notes on *kibyōshi*). Chūō Kōronsha, Tokyo, pp. 367-75. 森銑三 (1972): 『黄表紙解題』中央公論社, pp. 367-75.
- Nakamura Yukihiko (1982): *Zōho Gesaku ron* (A study of *gesaku*, expanded). In *Nakamura Yukihiko chojutsu shū* 8 (The collected works of Nakamura Yukihiko), Chūō Kōronsha, Tokyo, 401 pp. 中村幸彦 (1982): 『増補 戯作論』. In 『中村幸彦著述集』 8, 中央公論社, 401 pp.
- Philippi, Donald L., tr. (1968): *Kojiki*, University of Tokyo Press, Tokyo, 655 pp.
- [Shōkadō] Hajō (1777): *Shibai nenjū gyōji* (A calendar of events of the theatrical year), in *Zoku Nihon zuihitsu taisei, Bekkan 12: Minkan fūzoku nenjū gyōji 2* (A compilation of Japanese essays, Supplement 12: A calendar of popular events 2), Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, Tokyo, pp. 17-28. [松下堂浪静] (1777): 「芝居年中行事」. In 『続日本隨筆大成』別卷12: 『民間風俗年中行事』 2, 吉川弘文館, pp. 17-28. Also in (1974) *Kabuki no bunken 6: Kyōgen sakusha shiryō shū* 1 (Kabuki documents 6: Collected sources for playwrights 1). Kokuritsu Gekijō, Tokyo, pp. 85-98. In 『歌舞伎の文獻』 6: 『狂言作者資料集』 1, 国立劇場, pp. 85-98.
- [Sawada Tōkō] (1768): *Yoshiwara taizen* (A collection of works on the Yoshiwara). In (1930) *Yoshiwara fūzoku shiryō* (Sources on the customs of the Yoshiwara), a volume in *Nihon fūzoku sōsho* (Series on Japanese customs). Nihon Toshō Center, pp. 123-84. [沢田東江] (1768): 「吉原大全」. In 『吉原風俗資料』, 日本風俗叢書, 日本図書センター, pp. 123-84.
- Tōrai Sanna (1784): *Dai sen sekai kakine no soto* (Beyond the paleings of the billion worlds). Woodblock printed editions at the Harvard-Yenching Library and the Kaga Bunko of the Tōkyō Toritsu Hibiya Toshokan, ff. 10. 唐來參和 (1784): 「大千世界牆の外」, at Harvard-Yenching Library, ff. 10. Also at 東京都立日比谷図書館, 加賀文庫.

Notes

- 1 Kūkai's 空海 work is *Sangō shiki* 三教指帰 (797), which has been translated as *Indications of the Goals of the Three Teachings* by Yoshito S. Hakeda (1972).
- 2 There is no modern transcription of *Dai sen sekai kakine no soto* and no annotation. I have been working from a woodblock edition in the Harvard-Yenching Library. I cite from this text Sanna. For purposes of comparison, I have also referred to an edition at the Kaga Bunko of the Tōkyō Toritsu Hibiya Toshokan. Mori Senzō (1972) discusses the text in *Kibyōshi kaidai*, pp. 367-75. He provides helpful but partial renderings of sections of the *kibyōshi*; he was hampered by lacunae in his text.
- 3 The Harvard-Yenching text does not give the name of the illustrator, but according to Mori it is Kitao Shigemasa 北尾重政, for whom he has little praise. (Mori, 1970: 336).
- 4 Basil Hall Chamberlain, an early translator of the *Kojiki*, found the description of this scene so potent he suddenly reverted to Latin: "[she was] stamping till she made [the sounding-board] resound and doing as if possessed by a Deity, and pulling out the nipples of her breasts, pushing down her skirt-string usque ad privatas partes." (Chamberlain, 1932: 68).
- 5 It was Maeda Kingorō who first suggested to me that the island shaped like a *ki no ji* is a reference to the Kinōjiya.

唐来三和と違いの創造

レジン・ジョンソン

要旨：戯作者の唐来三和は、小品とはいえ、夥しい数の作品を創り出した。彼は、生き生きとした洒落本と黄表紙の作家として知られる。洒落本や黄表紙は、1780年代に出現し、幕府の政策を真剣に受け止めていないと見なされた書物の刊行を寛政の改革が禁止しはじめるまで出版され続けた。この小論は、唐来三和の最初の黄表紙である『大千世界牆の外』(1784)を取り扱っている。この作品は、歌舞伎の用語である「世界定め(?)」と語呂合わせの洒落を行っている。

この作品の中においては、たんに歌舞伎の世界のみならず、物理的な世界や三和の世界が確立されている。同作品は、混沌と秩序、天と地、女性と男性の相違、中国やインドにおける神話と日本の神話の差異を創りだしている。三和は、一貫してユーモアに富むが、写楽にその典型をみる手法で、より深遠な諸問題にたいする彼の深い洞察を露わにしたり、秘匿したりしている。