

Title	Kusazoshi : Edo illustrated books -reading for pleasure : how should we read Gozonji no shobaimono?
Sub Title	江戸絵本の遊び : 草双紙『御存商売物』をどう読むか
Author	津田, 真弓(Tsuda, Mayumi) Anketell, Mary
Publisher	慶應義塾大学日吉紀要刊行委員会
Publication year	2015
Jtitle	慶應義塾大学日吉紀要. 人文科学 (The Hiyoshi review of the humanities). No.30 (2015.) ,p.85- 117
JaLC DOI	
Abstract	
Notes	
Genre	Departmental Bulletin Paper
URL	https://koara.lib.keio.ac.jp/xoonips/modules/xoonips/detail.php?koara_id=AN10065043-20150630-0085

慶應義塾大学学術情報リポジトリ(KOARA)に掲載されているコンテンツの著作権は、それぞれの著作者、学会または出版社/発行者に帰属し、その権利は著作権法によって保護されています。引用にあたっては、著作権法を遵守してご利用ください。

The copyrights of content available on the KeiO Associated Repository of Academic resources (KOARA) belong to the respective authors, academic societies, or publishers/issuers, and these rights are protected by the Japanese Copyright Act. When quoting the content, please follow the Japanese copyright act.

Kusazōshi: Edo Illustrated Books – Reading for Pleasure How should we read *Gozonji no shōbaimono*?

Mayumi Tsuda
Translated by Mary Anketell

The following lecture was presented on 26 November 2014 at the University of Zurich and was sponsored by the Swiss Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Zurich to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Switzerland and Japan.⁽¹⁾

I am very happy to be here with you today to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Switzerland and Japan. In October this year, a large international symposium was held at Keio University in Japan to celebrate this anniversary.⁽²⁾ I heard that many people attended and it was a great success. Unfortunately I was unable to be there because I was in England, but I believe its success shows that many Japanese people have a great interest in Switzerland. It is my sincere hope that relations between our two countries will continue to develop and flourish in the future.

One hundred and fifty-five years ago, Rudolph Lindau prepared the way for

(1) The official title of the lecture was ‘Considering the essence of Japanese culture: Publishing in the Edo period.’

(2) Keio Research Center for Liberal Arts 慶應義塾大学教養研究センター「日本ス
イス国交樹立 150 周年記念国際シンポジウム——フランス語圏スイス再考」at
the Hiyoshi campus, Kanagawa, on 11 October 2014.

diplomatic relations to be established between our two countries when he went to Japan as head of the first Swiss delegation. He made the following observation about the people that he met there.

“I very much doubt that there is a race of people who become merry as easily as the Japanese. They fall about laughing at any joke, regardless of whether it’s a good or a bad one. And, like children, once they begin laughing, they just can’t stop.”⁽³⁾

I think you would agree that Lindau’s impression of Japanese people is a little different from the one that most people have today. So what were these people like that Lindau met all those years ago in Edo-period Japan? I believe that by learning about them, we can gain a new perspective on Japan and its fascinating culture – because it was these jovial people of the Edo period who produced and developed many of the traditional elements of Japanese culture and cuisine that are most loved by people overseas today, such as sushi, tempura, kabuki, geisha and ukiyo-e. Today, I would like us to take a journey back to Edo through the books that they enjoyed reading.

What can we learn from the study of Edo popular books?

I specialise in the literature of the Edo period and particularly in the illustrated woodblock-printed books known as kusazōshi 草双紙. Today I would like to introduce one particular kusazōshi, the *Gozonji no shōbaimono* 御存商売物. Adam Kern has translated this title as “Those Familiar Bestsellers”.⁽⁴⁾ “Gozonji 御存じ” means “familiar” or “well-known”, and “shōbaimono 商売物” means products that are for sale.

Gozonji no shōbaimono was published in Edo as an item for sale to celebrate

(3) Rudolf Lindau, *Un Voyage Autour du Japon* (Paris, 1864), 288

(4) Adam Kern, *Manga from the Floating World: Comicbook Culture and the Kibyōshi of Edo Japan*, (Boston, 2006) 312

the New Year of 1782 (Tenmei 天明 2). The author was the young ukiyo-e artist Kitao Masanobu 北尾政演 and both the written text and the illustrations are his work. He later achieved great popularity under the name of Santō Kyōden 山東京伝 and this is the name I will use in my lecture. The book was published by Tsuruya Kiemon 鶴屋喜右衛門, a long-established publisher in Edo.

In this lecture, I will try to show that we can learn about the following areas from this short work. Firstly, it vividly portrays the contemporary world of book publishing in Edo. Secondly, it is representative of the style of popular books in the late 18th century known as kibyōshi 黄表紙 and therefore helps us to understand this particular genre. Thirdly, it demonstrates the cultural knowledge of the general population at the time. And finally, I will focus on the humour in this book so that you can enjoy it for yourselves.

Kusazōshi: shape and form

Imagine that you are holding in your hand some sheets of thin paper, bound together and measuring about 19cm long and 13cm wide, with a somewhat floppy cover. The inside uses low-quality, greyish recycled paper. Five sheets are folded in half and bound together with thread. This counted as one volume in this genre. Our book is made up of three volumes; in other words, it is made up of 15 sheets, that is 30 pages.

By the 19th century, many such books had beautifully coloured nishiki-e 錦絵 (multi-coloured ukiyo-e) on their covers, but at the time that *Gozonji no shōbaimono* was produced, covers were still plain with just an illustrated title label known as an e-daisen 絵題簽 stuck on the front. [Figure 1]

These kusazōshi were cheap. For instance, *Gozonji no shōbaimono* would have cost just 27 mon – not much more than a bowl of plain *kakesoba* かけ蕎麦 noodles priced at 16 mon. Kusazōshi were traditionally produced as commercial items to be given to children as presents at New Year, so they were created with



Figure 1: The cover of the 3rd volume of *Gozonji no shōbaimono* (Katei bunko 霞亭文庫, Tokyo University Library), Tokyo.

purchase in mind. Other types of books were usually just borrowed from book lenders.

This illustration shows a typical scene of readers of this genre.⁽⁵⁾ A family is gathered around the kotatsu 炬燵 stove, reading the kusazōshi that have been given to the children by guests on a New Year's visit. We can see that kusazōshi were enjoyed by the whole family, in a similar way to anime, manga or a television drama today. [Figure 2]

Kusazōshi originated in the mid-17th century. Over time, styles changed to reflect various trends, but the basic format of these books remained popular for a period of more than 200 years. No other genre in the history of Japanese

(5) Santō Kyōzan 山東京山, *Murosodachi muko no irifune* 室育婿入船 (Edo, 1814, Bunka 文化 4)

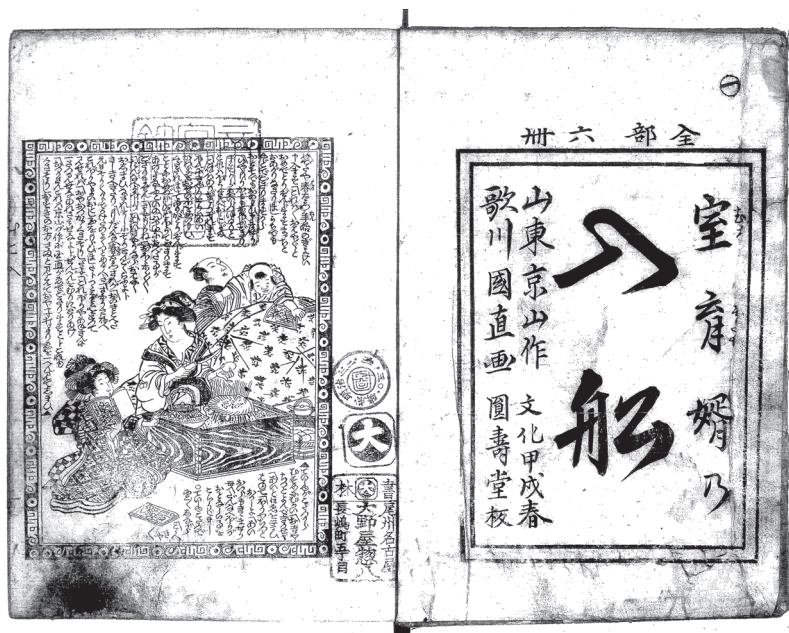


Figure 2: Santō Kyōzan's *Murosodachi muko no irifune*, 1st page(left, 一丁表), National Diet Library, Tokyo.

commercial publishing has continued for such a length of time.⁽⁶⁾ And in terms of the number of publications and quantity produced, they significantly outranked all other forms of literature in this period.⁽⁷⁾

According to a letter written in the 19th century by the author Santō Kyōzan 山東京山, who was the younger brother of Kyōden, it was common for 5,000 copies of a new work by a popular author to be produced at the first printing. If the book was a hit and sold well, a total of 7,000 copies would be produced.⁽⁸⁾

(6) Gen Takagi 高木元, 'Researching kusazōshi 草双紙を研究すること', *Edo bungaku* 江戸文学 35, (Tokyo, January 2006) 1

(7) Jūzō Suzuki 鈴木重三, 'A graph of different types of fiction in the late Edo period', *Ehon to ukiyoe* 絵本と浮世絵 (Bijutu shupansha 美術出版社 Tokyo, 1979) 15.

(8) Letter from Santō Kyōzan to Suzuki Bokushi, dated 19 September 1830, *Suzuki*

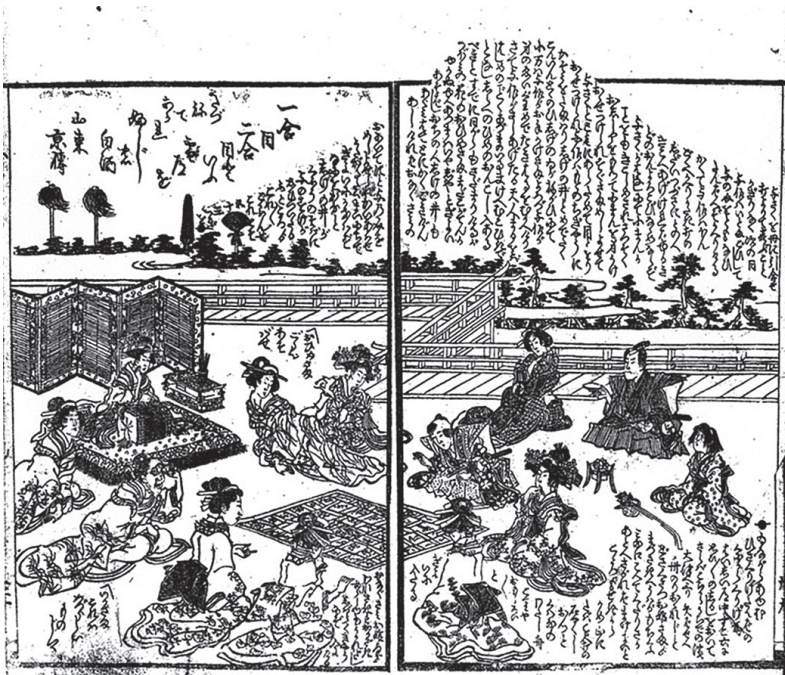


Figure 3: Santō Kyōzan's *Somewake tazuna* 染和解手綱 (Edo, 1811 文化 8), pages 58–59 (二十九丁裏・三十丁表), National Diet Library, Tokyo.

If we compare this with the several hundred copies that would appear in the first printing of a work by a well-known author in the more serious yomihon 読本 (historical novel) genre, we can appreciate the difference in scale. The main reason for this difference was that it was common practice for people to buy kusazōshi rather than borrow them from a book lender.

In the beginning, commercial publishers in Japan used movable type.

Bokushi zenshū ge 鈴木牧之全集 下, (Chūō kōron sha 中央公論社, Tokyo, 1983) 282. 「曲亭・柳亭・京山などの作、五千部はあたりまへ、当れば七千も売れ申候。雪談などすべて随筆物、読本の類、何程妙作にても、出板の歳、千部の上に出る事なし」

However, as the readership increased in the mid-17th century, movable-type printing was replaced by woodblock printing. This enabled reprinting to be carried out much more easily without the bother of having to reset the type. Movable-type printing may seem more enlightened and advanced to us today, but the freedom of layout offered by woodblocks is similar to the flexibility and creativity offered by computers. For example, letters can be arranged in the shape of Mount Fuji so as to create both pictures and words. People in the Edo period refused to be restricted by movable-type in their page design, and kusazōshi made full use of the advantages of woodblock printing. One main characteristic of this genre is the way that a mixture of illustration and text are used on the same page. Although other types of Edo-period fiction include illustrations, the pictures and text are usually on separate pages. [Figure 3]

Transitions in kusazōshi – akahon, kurohon, aohon⁽⁹⁾ and kibyōshi

In the history of Japanese literature from the mid-17th century to the beginning of the 19th century, we distinguish the genres of kusazōshi by the colour of their covers.

We begin with akahon 赤本 that had plain red “aka” covers (the actual colour was closer to scarlet) and were illustrated stories for children based on old tales and traditions. They first appeared around the 1760s and 1770s and were produced in one or two volumes. They reached the height of their popularity during the first half of the 18th century. [Figure 4]

In the mid 18th century, these books became known as kurohon 黒本 as black “kuro” covers replaced the red ones. The books also increased in length,

(9) In the Edo period, these words were pronounced “akabon”, “kurobon” and “aobon”, but they are not usually transcribed in this form today. In this article, I will use the Edo-period pronunciation and a capital letter for the names of characters in *Gozonji no shōbaimono* but the more usual current form in my discussion of literary genre.

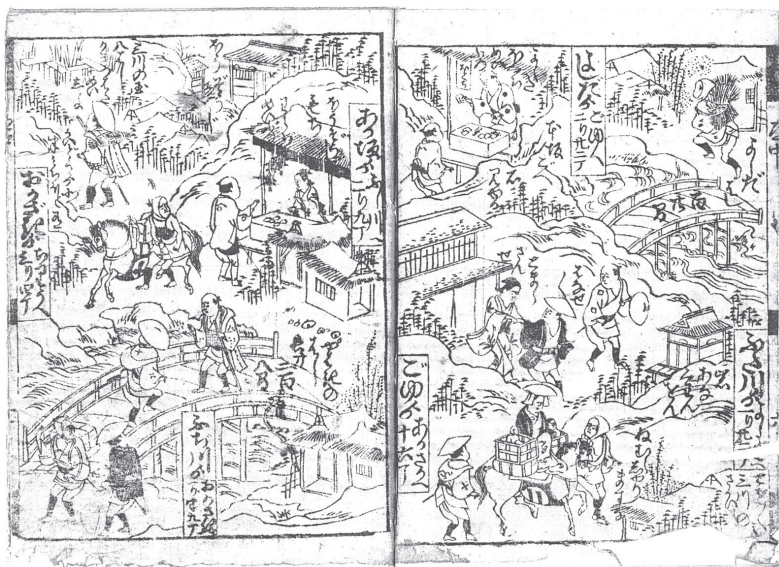


Figure 4: *Ehon tōkaidō* (Edo, author and date of publication unknown), pages 12–13 (六丁裏・七丁表), Keio University, Tokyo.

often being made up of two or three volumes, and the content expanded to include the retelling of stage plays and legends, and summaries of other works of fiction. [Figure 5]

A little later, aohon 青本 also appeared with yellowish-green covers. The word “ao 青” was used in the past to describe quite a wide range of colours, so it is a shame that these books are often referred to in English as “blue books”.

Next came the age of the kibyōshi 黄表紙. *Gozonji no shōbaimono* is a typical example of this genre. However, at the time of its production this was a new category of books and the term was not yet in common use, so it was originally referred to as an aohon.

Historically, kibyōshi are generally regarded as having begun with *Kinkin sensei eiga no yume* (Kinkin-sensei’s dream of splendor) 金々先生栄花夢 by Koikawa Harumachi 恋川春町 in 1775. Its form is the same as that of an aohon,

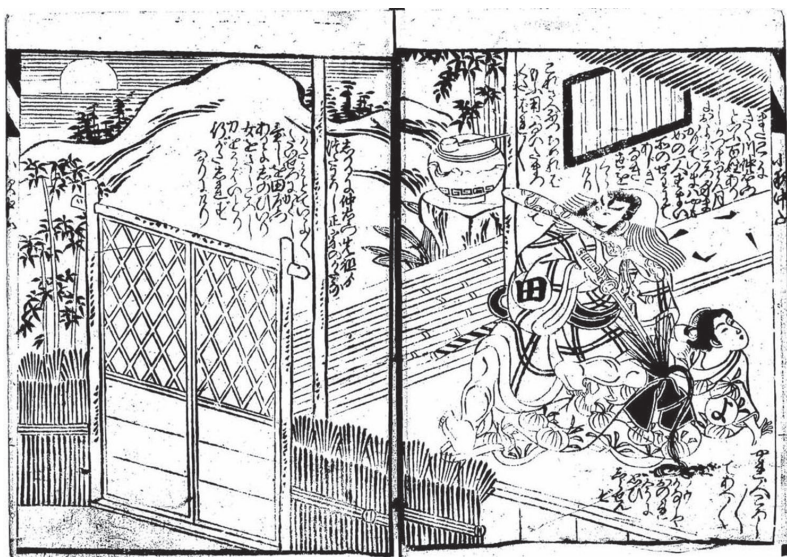


Figure 5: *Sayo no nakayama jashō monogatari* 小夜中山邪正物語 (Edo, author and publication date unknown), pages 2-3 (一丁裏・二丁表), Katei bunko 霞亭文庫, Tokyo University Library, Tokyo.

but its content leads us to draw a clear line that marks the beginning of a new type of a fiction. Toshiyuki Suzuki 鈴木俊幸 describes this change in the following way: “Kibyōshi were a frivolous take (戯作化 *gesakuka*) on the kusazōshi genre of *aohon*”.⁽¹⁰⁾ It became popular for adults with a certain level of education to use their scholarly knowledge to create a playful take on the classics and publish them for others to enjoy. The word *gesaku* means literally to “make in jest” and the main purpose of these works was to make people laugh.

For example, *Kinkin sensei eiga no yume* is based on *Zhen Zhong Ji* 枕中記, a Chinese Tang-period classic. It describes a country youth who, while waiting for his lunch at an inn, falls asleep and has a dream that leads him to understand

(10) Toshiyuki Suzuki 鈴木俊幸, *The world of Edo books* 江戸の本づくし, (Heibonsha shinsho 平凡社新書, Tokyo, 2011) 10. 「乱暴な言い方をすれば黄表紙は青本という草双紙を戯作化したものである」



Figure 6: Koikawa Harumachi's *Kinkin sensei eiga no yume*, (Edo, 1775 Anei 安永 4), pages 8-9 (四丁裏・五丁表), Katei bunko 霞亭文庫, Tokyo University Library, Tokyo.

the illusory and transient nature of the world. In the original, he dreams that he achieves great success in the world, only to lose everything when he falls ill and dies. [Figure 6]

In the gesaku version, however, Kinkin-sensei dreams about the Edo pleasure quarters and treads a path of ruin as he frequents increasingly cheaper districts. This provides the author with the opportunity of describing the different features of the districts of Yoshiwara 吉原, Fukagawa 深川 and Shinagawa 品川.

As Toshiyuki Suzuki has commented, Harumachi “had the idea of creating a parody of an aohon” and “by inserting the gesaku feature of adult humour into the framework of a child’s aohon, he created humour by playing on the amusing discrepancy between the framework and its content.”⁽¹¹⁾ As a result, this work

(11) Suzuki(2011)10. 「青本のパロディとして発想」し、「幼童向けの青本という器に戯作的なもの、大人の笑いを盛り込んでその器と中身とのギャップをおも

marked the birth of kibyōshi as a new genre.

After the Kansei Reforms 寛政改革 led by Matsudaira Sadanobu 松平定信 in the late 18th century, kibyōshi adopted an increasingly didactic style. Storylines became increasingly important and tragic vendettas were particularly popular. The length of books increased with several volumes being bound together. As a result, from the year 1807 (Bunka 文化4) onwards, such books became known as “gōkan 合巻”, literally “joined volumes”. Their bindings became increasingly lavish, influenced by the popularity of yomihon 読本, whose wide market they aimed to share. Thus, they underwent great changes in their development from humorous works suitable only for the Edo market to a product aimed at readers throughout Japan.

Viewed in the context of this history of kusazōshi, *Gozonji no shōbaimono* belongs to the period during which such works most vividly portrayed the unique life and characteristics of Edo. In this book, we will see what Edo looked like through the author’s eyes and how publishing helped such a culture to flourish.

When I examine books such as *Gozonji no shōbaimono*, I use two main methods of analysis. Firstly, a quantitative content analysis using Excel software to count elements within the work and secondly, a qualitative analysis of the illustrations and text carried out independently of each other. It is common in kusazōshi for the illustrations and the text to create their own different worlds. By focusing on them separately, you can discover much more about them and the author’s intent than by a general approach of reading them together. I draw my conclusions by combining the results of these two methods of analysis.

Gozonji no shōbaimono: the storyline

Let us take a look at our book. On opening the cover, the author greets us,

しろがった」



Figure 7: *Gozonji no shōbaimono*, page 1 (一丁表)

dressed as if appearing in a *kyōgen* 狂言 play (traditional comic theatre). The writing is also suggestive of this style of entertainment. [Figure 7]

“You see before you an illustrator of those silly books that appear every New Year. まかり出たる者は、春ごとのたはれぞうしの^{はる}画をたくみする、なに^{ぐわ}がしにて候”

If we look closely, we can see that the patterns on his hakama 袴 are the publishing marks of the publishing houses of the time. This first page is the preface to the story. The main story begins on the next page where the ukiyo-e illustrator Kyōden is asleep at his desk and is dreaming. In his dream he sees the characters of various types of books and literary works depicted in human form and the feud that takes place between them. The following is a synopsis of the story that ensues.

The illustrated books that came to Edo from the Kamigata 上方 region



Figure 8: *Gozonji no shōbaimono*, pages 4-5 (二丁裏・一丁表)

around Kyoto 京都 were once popular in Edo (Hachimonjiya no yomihon 八文字屋の読本 and Kudari ehon 下り絵本). But recently their popularity has been overtaken by “たわいなきもの” (cheap items) – namely, the character Aobon 青本 and his friend Gesaku 戯作. The books from Kyoto persuade the old-fashioned Edo books Akabon 赤本 and Kurobon 黒本 (the precursors of aohon) to get their own back on 青本 Aobon, as their demise is due to the way that he has grabbed the market.

The fashionable Aobon and his companions amuse themselves every day by holding “plot discussions” for new works and enjoying themselves in the Yoshiwara pleasure district. Within this group, Aobon’s younger sister, Hashira kakushi 柱隠し (a long, narrow ukiyo-e) becomes the lover of his friend Ichimai-e 一枚絵 (an actor print). [Figure 8]

Kurobon, Akabon and their friends kidnap Hashira kakushi, and Akabon

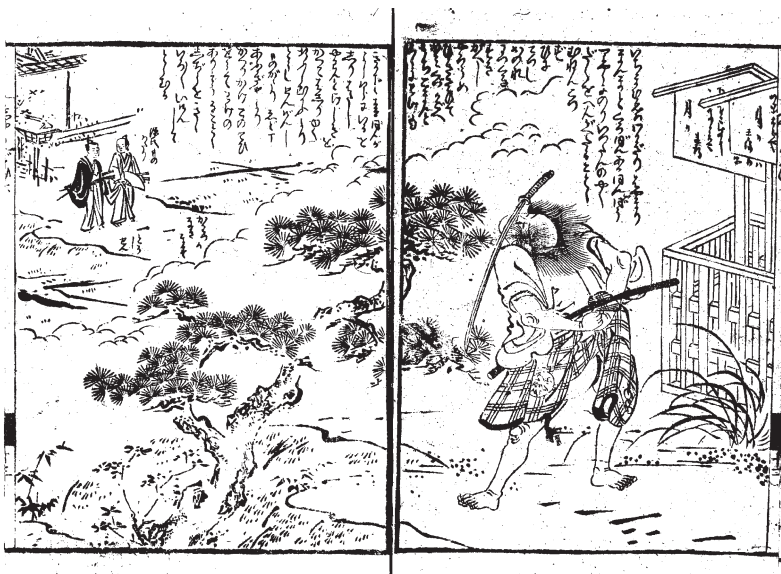


Figure 9: *Gozonji no shōbaimono*, pages 24–25 (十二丁裏・十三丁裏)

deceives Ichimai-e into thinking that he has been betrayed by Aobon and Hashira kakushi. Ichimai-e is furious; he draws his sword and seeks out Aobon for a duel. Just then, the wise Tōshisen 唐詩選 (Tang poetry anthology) and Genji monogatari 源氏物語 (Tale of Genji) pass by and persuade Ichimai-e to stop. They admonish Kurobon and Akabon for their bad behaviour and criticise Aobon for always thinking about the pleasure districts. They also rebuke Ichimai-e for intending to use his sword without first listening to reason. [Figure 9]

Akabon and Kurobon's behaviour is blamed on the fact that they are "roughly made 本の仕立てが悪いから". Under orders from Tōshisen and Genji monogatari, Tsurezuregusa 徒然草 (Essays in Idleness) instructs Yobunshō 用文章 and Teikin Ōrai 庭訓往来 (Guides to writing) to reform Akabon, Kurobon and the Kamigata books. [Figure 10]

"Henceforth, items for sale at the sōshi-doiya 草紙問屋⁽¹²⁾ will live in



Figure 10: *Gozonji no shōbaimono*, pages 28–29 (十四丁裏・十五丁表)

harmony, prospering for tens of thousands of years to come. これよりして草紙問屋の商売物仲むつまじく、行く末万々年も繁昌にさかへ” At that moment, the author is awoken by the cry of the bookseller shouting out the names of his items for sale: “Ichimai-e, kusazōshi, takarabune 宝船 (treasure-ship pictures), dōchū sugoroku 道中双六 (travel boardgame)!” and the publisher Tsuruya Kiemon arrives to make his New Year greetings.

To summarise the story in just a few words: books that have lost their popularity are resentful and angry towards those that are currently in vogue. The central characters are Aobon – who enjoys great popularity – and Akabon and

(12) In the Edo period, 問屋 was pronounced ‘toiya’ or ‘doiya’, so this is the form that I have used in contemporary quotes. In my discussion, however, I use the form ‘tonya’ or ‘donya’ that is current today.



Figure 11: Toyokuni III . Imayō mitate shinōkōshō 今様見立土農工商, 1857(Ansei 安政 4), National Diet Library, Tokyo.

Kurobon, who have fallen out of fashion and are resentful of him.

At the end of the story, we are told: “Henceforth, items for sale at the sōshi-doiya will live in harmony...” This indicates that these products are for sale at a specialist publisher and seller of prints and illustrated books called a sōshi-donya. In Edo, this type of shop was known as a “jihon donya 地本問屋”, where “jihon” refers specifically to illustrated books written in Edo.

This is a picture of a typical shop front of a jihon donya. On the large cloth sign that advertises the shop, we can see the words “東錦絵 azuma nishiki-e” (Edo ukiyo-e prints) written in large characters. In smaller characters on the right we have the words “shinpan sōshi shinajina” (newly published illustrated books) and on the left we have “稽古本 keiko-bon” (practice books for music and the performing arts). In the shop itself we can see rows of ukiyo-e prints prominently displayed. And on the right-hand side are the shop’s other main sales item – the illustrated books known as kusazōshi. [Figure 11]

The jihon donya produced and sold cheap pictures, light reading matter and educational books for beginners. They were quite different from the shomotsu donya 書物問屋 that dealt in more serious literature and scholarly books.

Elements of composition: a quantitative content analysis

In my summary of the story, I only mentioned a few of the characters. However, there are many more. Let's look at a list of the characters in this book to see how many there are and what they tell us about the type of publications that were circulating in Edo in the latter half of the 18th century. [Table 1]

The book contains a total of 47 different characters including people and personified books, pictures, games and types of writing paper. This is surely too many for a small book with only 30 pages and lots of illustrations. Yet, they all appear with appropriate characters and roles that reflect the nature of the people and objects they represent, and together they create a consistent and believable story.

Almost all of the personified characters represent items that were produced by the *jihon donya* and were widely used by people in their everyday lives. There are only two exceptions – the Kamigata books 上方の本 and the *mono no hon* 物の本 that were produced and sold by the *shomotsu donya*. So in this story we have books sold by both the *jihon donya* and the *shomotsu donya*. In a narrow sense, the 'familiar bestsellers' of the title describe the items sold by the publisher Tsuruya Kiemon, who appears at the end of the story, as he operated both types of publishing house. It is fitting that he appears in the final scene to offer his New Year greetings as he represents the entire breadth of Edo publishing.

There are 136 references in *Gozonji no shōbaimono* to publishing and the world of books. Hence, this book is an excellent source for learning about publishing at the time. For instance, a reference of special note that appears at the beginning of two scenes is to "last spring's *aohon hyōbanki*" (a commentary on *aohon* books). One of these scenes depicts *Aobon* and his friends discussing *gesaku* literature and is just like an enactment of the critiques in an *aohon hyōbanki*. This indicates the influential nature of this publication.

『御存南无物』作品の構成要素 *Gozonji no shōbaimono*: Elements of composition

【人間/Humans】3

人間 *people* :

作者 *author*, 板元 *publisher*, 行人 *book peddler*

【本/Books】30

上方の本 *Kamigata* (Kyoto and Ōsaka area) *Books*:

八文字屋の読本 *Hachimonjiya-bon* (Books published by Hachimonjiya in Kyoto), 下り絵本 *Kudari ehon* (Illustrated books published in Kamigata)

物の本 *Mono no hon* (Literary and scholarly books):

(classic works) 源氏物語 *Genji monogatari*, 唐詩選 *Tōshisen*, 徒然草 *Tsurezure gusa* (dictionary) 節用集 *Setsuyoshū*

草双紙関連 *Kusazōshi types*:

(forerunners of *kusazōshi*) 唐紙表紙 *Karakami byōshi* (illustrated old *Jōruri*) (Kusazōshi for children) 赤本 *Akahon*, 黒本 *Kurohon*, 小本 *Kobon* (small-sized, toy picture book) (gesaku works) 青本 *Aohon*, 袋差し *Fukuro zashi* (luxury-edition *kibyōshi*).

戯作 *Gesaku* (books written as a past-time):

洒落本 *Sharebon* (short story of the pleasure district), 茶表紙 *Chabyōshi* (*Sharebon*), 咄本 *Hanashibon* (jestbooks, in the same format as *sharehon*)

案内 *Guides*:

吉原細見 *Yoshiwara saiken* (Guidebook to *Yoshiwara*)

芸能 *Books for the performing arts*:

小謡本 *Koutaibon* (excerpts from well-known *Noh* chants), 長唄本 *Nagautabon* (practice book of *nagauta* music), 鶯鷲石 *Ōmuseki* (excerpts from famous *Kabuki* speeches), 義太夫の抜き本 *Gidayū no nukihon* (excerpts from famous puppet plays reciting), 狂言本 *Kyōgenbon* (Illustrated *Kabuki* narratives)

教育 *Educational works*:

塵劫記 *Jinkōki* (Arithmetics for beginners), 年代記 *Nendaiki* (chronological chart recording events from 1576), 道化百人一首 *Dōke hyakunin issō* (parody of *One Hundred Poets*), いろは短歌 *Iroha tanka* (Two sides of the story in husband and wife squabbles), 古状揃 *Kojō zoro*・商売往来 *Shōbai ōrai*・用文章 *Yōbunshō*・庭訓往来 *Teikun ōrai* (models for writing for beginners)

占い *Fortune-telling*:

男女一代八卦 *Nannyo ichidai hakke*

【ゲーム/Games】3

道中双六 *Dōchū sugoroku*・十六武蔵 *Jyūroku musashi* (Board games), 紋付の紙 *Montsuke no kami* (gambling game)

【絵/Pictures】10

浮世絵関連 (*Ukiyo-e*-related):

一枚絵 *Ichimai-e* (actor prints), 錦絵 *Nishiki-e* (multi-coloured *ukiyo-e*), 柱隠し *Hashira-kakushi* (long, narrow *ukiyo-e*), 石摺 *Ishizuri* (white on black reversed picture), 三文絵 *Sanmon-e* (cheap picture costing three mon), 豆絵 *Mame-e* (small toy picture), 浮絵 *Uki-e* (picture using Western perspective),

呪術的な絵 *Magical pictures*:

大津絵 *Ōtsure* (rough pictures sold at the Ōtsu station on the Tōkaidō; the Motif of "Ōni no nenbutsu (an ogre invoking the Buddha)" thought to prevent a child from crying at night), 紅絵 *Beni-e* (red pictures thought to cure smallpox), 宝船 *Tokarabune* (picture of a boat which was put under one's pillow to ensure good dreams for New Year)

【用箋/Writing paper】1

絵半切 *Ehangiri* (letter paper with beautiful patterns)

Table 1: List of characters in *Gozonji no shōbaimono*

The first aohon hyōbanki was published in Edo in 1781 (Tenmei 1) and was called *Kikujusō* 菊寿草. It was written by Ōta Nanpo 大田南畝, a leading figure in the new trends that were taking place in the literary world. In his hyōbanki of the following year, *Okamehachimoku* 岡目八目, Nanpo ranks *Gozonji no shōbaimono* in top position for kibyōshi of that year with the comment, “The best ever!”

At this point, I would like to introduce some of the results that I have obtained by the method of number counting mentioned previously, and what I have concluded from them about the main theme of this work. It is clear that the subject of the book is the world of Edo publishing in 1782, but let us look beyond the surface using numbers.

The main story unfolds in twenty scenes. The character who appears most frequently is Aobon (eight times), and he is often the focus even in scenes where he is not physically present. This is particularly true in the first ten scenes. In Scenes 1 to 3, the author falls asleep while thinking about Aobon, and the basis of the story is laid as Aobon’s enemies talk about him. When Aobon first appears in Scene 4, we are provided with a description of him that may be viewed as Kyōden’s own theory of kibyōshi.⁽¹⁴⁾ Scene 4 onwards shows Aobon’s everyday

(14) “Aobon delights his readers both high and low regardless of their social standing. He knows how to flatter, strives to achieve the stylish accomplishments of a ‘tsūjin’ and displays keen insight in his use of ‘ugachi’. He possesses haiku’s free spirit, yet is never off his guard. Women and children love his books, particularly on rainy days while snacking on roasted beans, so he continually strives to think up new stories for his readers. Despite his popularity, he doesn’t become proud, but continues to use cheap recycled paper for his books and discusses his ideas with his friends at their regular literary meetings.” (*For explanations of the terms ‘tsūjin’ and ‘ugachi’, see p109 and p107 of my text. Also, please note that although readers of aobon were traditionally referred to as ‘women and children’ in such comments, these works were equally enjoyed by men.*) 青本は貴賤の分かちなく人の目を喜ばせ、世辞にかしく、意気を専らとして、当世の穴をさがし、俳気もすこしあつて、毛すじほどもぬけめはなく、雨中の徒然には豆煎りと肩を並べ、女中様方・御子様方の御最屑つよく、新板の工夫に心をこらし、しかれどもその身おごる心なく、

life and what happens at his house. In this way we enter into his world and events are seen through his eyes.

As a result, we can see that the first six scenes describe Aobon's character and the following four scenes show how his attention turns to the Yoshiwara pleasure district. What we are presented with here is the author's concept of an aohon, and we can conclude from the content and the composition that the author's main theme and purpose of the work is to explain this to his audience.

With this in mind, we should take another look at the structure and content of our book. Because this work is about a conflict between personified objects, Giichiro Hamada 濱田義一郎 and others refer to it as an “iruigassen 異類合戦”.⁽¹⁵⁾ This is a term that describes a battle between non-human objects that can be seen in early picture scrolls and books, for example, river fish versus sea creatures. However, the protagonist Aobon does not fight and it is his friend Ichimai-e who plans to attack him, so the story does not fit neatly into this categorisation. If we look closer, it is the old-style books from Kamigata that bear a grudge against the Edo books and plan to cause a rift amongst them. Incited by the Kamigata books, the less fashionable Edo books in turn try to cause a rift within the more popular group. This makes for a duel-layered composition. The story resembles the family feud plots (sōdōmono) that were popular in kabuki and jōruri puppet plays of the time, and this is fitting as the characters Ichimai-e, Kurobon and Hachimonjiya-bon are all closely associated with the theatre. Because of this, the description of the story by Masahiro Tanahashi 棚橋正博 as an “iruisōdōmono 異類騒動物” (a

やつぱり渡し返しに紙にて、月並の会を催し、洒落本・袋差し・一枚摺、そのほかの当世本を集め、趣向の相談をする。

- (15) Giichirō Hamada 濱田義一郎, ‘Santō Kyōden’s kibyōshi of Tenmei 3 山東京伝の天明三年の黄表紙’, *Ōtsuma joshidaigaku bungakubu kiyō* 大妻女子大学文学部紀要, 4 (Tokyo, March 1972) 27. Yōshi Yamamoto 山本陽史, Santō Kyōden’s *Gozonji no shōbaimono* 山東京伝『御存商売物』をめぐる, *Meikai daigaku gaikokugogakubu ronshū* 明海大学外国語学部論集, 13, (Tokyo, March 2001) 8.

feud between non-human objects) seems particularly apt.⁽¹⁶⁾

We have noted how the main opposition and duality in this book is between Kamigata and Edo and, at first sight, it appears that the author has fun casting the Kamigata books as the villains. But if we consider the historical background, we realise that the situation is not quite so simple.

For example, Hachimonjiya no Yomihon (Hachimonjiya-bon 八文字屋本), one of the Kamigata books, only appears twice in the story but he exercises power behind the scenes through his influence on Kurobon. This is a fitting role for books published by Hachimonjiya of Kyoto that had dominated the world of ukiyozōshi 浮世草子 for more than 70 years since 1700. By the time of our book, no new works of this type were being produced but they were still popular and profitable items for book lenders. They were sold in Edo by Urokogataya Magobei 鱗形屋 孫兵衛, the well-known publisher of akahon and kurohon, and were influential in the development of Edo kusazōshi, with many kurohon being based on them.

By the end of our story, Akabon and Kurobon have been reformed and reprinted in an even more beautiful form than before. This also is a reflection of events in the real world. The publisher Urokogataya had hit difficult times and the woodblocks had been sold to up-and-coming publishers such as Tsutaya Jūzaburo 蔦屋重三郎, who reprinted the books for sale.

Viewed in this way, the book is full of information about the contemporary publishing industry and is a joyous celebration of its vibrant prosperity. It does not portray the simple dichotomy of old versus new, or of Kamigata versus Edo in the literary world. Instead, it shows the influence of many different types of books on kusazōshi, and through their personification creates an entertaining story along the lines of a family feud drama in order to demonstrate the true nature of an aohon.

(16) Masahiro Tanahashi 棚橋正博, 'The collected works of Santō Kyōden: *Gozonji no shōbaimono* 『御存商売物』解説', *Santō Kyōden zenshū*: Kibyōshi 1 黄表紙一, (Perikan sha ぺりかん社, Tokyo, 1992) 519

Analysing the text: sources of laughter

The basic function of this text is to make people laugh, so by analysing it we should be able to learn about Edo-period humour and also discover what things were considered to be common knowledge at the time.

There are 46 instances of humorous words and references in the text and the overwhelming majority of these are simple word-plays in which homophones or words with similar sounds are used with different meanings. This type of pun was known in Edo as a “jiguchi 地口”. My favourite example is in the lengthy speech that Genji monogatari makes to rebuke and discipline the Edo books: “Kanasazu, Shikaru Genji da to omou mai zo” (Do not think of me as Scolding Genji). In *The Tale of Genji*, the protagonist is referred to as “Hikaru Genji 光源氏” (Shining Genji), but here his name is amusingly changed to “Shikaru Genji 叱る源氏” (Scolding Genji).

The text contains examples of various other techniques for creating humour that were used widely in Edo-period literature. One common method in *kusazōshi* was to use words and phrases in a different way from their original meaning. Since the time of the *akahon*, *kusazōshi* maintained the pretext and form of being educational picture books for children and created humour by “teaching” things that were obviously incorrect. For example, in the scene where Hanashibon entertains his friends during *Himachi*, the ceremony to await the rising sun, he says: “Hanashi ga araba himachi no ban 話があらば日待ちの晩”. This is a proverb meaning “If it’s important, let’s talk about it when we have more time” but here it is made to sound like “If you want to watch Hanashi perform, *Himachi* is a good time to do so.” In our book, there are six instances of proverbs being turned around in this way.

Another common method was to use a 7–5 metre *mono zukushi* 物尽くし (list of linked words) and there are two instances of this in our book. One example

is when Hashira kakushi confesses her love for Ichimai-e: “Nobe ni sodachishi kogiku no watashi, tsurai kono mi no kamisan kakete 野辺に育ちし小菊の私、つらいこの美の紙さんかけて”. “Nobe ni sodachishi kogiku no watashi” can be translated as “I am a little girl who has grown up in the wild fields like a daisy”, but “nobe 延” and “kogiku 小菊” are also types of tissue paper that were used in the pleasure quarters and the tea ceremony. Also, hidden in the phrase “kono mi no kamisan この身の神さん (my god)” is “minogami 美濃紙” which is another well-known type of paper. This listing of linked words and the play on words known as kakekotoba 掛詞 were associated with classical Japanese poetry and literature and it is humorous to see them used here in a much less refined context.

The use of “ugachi 穿ち”, which is a much loved feature of gesaku literature of the later 18th century, refers to the comic effect of revealing things in everyday customs and behavior that are often overlooked. For example, Ōta Nanpo praised the “finger-severing” scene in which the attendant Sanmon-e 三文絵 (a cheap picture costing three mon), who is taking a nap in the next room while waiting for his master, is described as “the 32-sheets-for-a-hundred man”. In the Edo period, a hundred mon coins were often strung together as one unit, but it was quite common for 96 coins to be passed off as a hundred. For a hundred mon, you could buy 33 cheap sanmon-e, but with 96 mon you could only buy 32 prints, so this is the joke that is being made here.

The humour that is based on allusions to other texts provides us with glimpses of what was held to be common knowledge for readers, even for school children, at the time. For example, when Genji monogatari first appears, he is passing by some paddy fields on his way back from the Yoshiwara pleasure district and he says, “The frogs are croaking かわづが鳴きます”. This alludes to the preface of the *Kokin wakashū* 古今和歌集, the first imperial anthology of Japanese poetry: “Listen to the warblers crying among the flowers, the croaking

of the frogs that dwell in the water – is there any creature alive that does not give vent to song? 花に鳴く鶯、水に住む蛙の声を聞けば、生きとし生けるもの、いづれか歌をよまざりける”.⁽¹⁷⁾ As a means of illustrating the influence on *Genji monogatari* of the *Kokin wakashū*, it is both apt and amusing to see these words appear on his lips.

Hyakunin isshu 百人一首, *Kanadehon chūshingura* 仮名手本忠臣蔵, *Tōshisen* 唐詩選, *Genji monogatari* 源氏物語, *Kokin wakashū* 古今和歌集, *Tsurezuregusa* 徒然草, the Yamazaki school 山崎派, the Kobunjigaku school 古文辞学派, the Yamada school 山田流 and the Ikuta school 生田流 – all these works of literature and influential schools of thought that were fundamental in the formation of Edo culture appear or are alluded to in *Gozonji no shōbaimono*. When we read kusazōshi, we not only get to share the worldview of people at the time, we are also provided with hints as to what was important both in Edo itself and in the long history of Japanese culture leading up to this time. If we view kusazōshi as merely comical books, then we miss out on much of this aspect of studying premodern literature. Personally, it is this aspect of my research that I find particularly motivating.

Personification

Let’s now turn our attention to the method that the author uses for the personification of his characters.

It is quite common in kusazōshi to see objects and animals depicted in human form, and this reflects the influence of illustrations in medieval scrolls and picture books. In *Gozonji no shōbaimono*, books appear as people, who have their names written on their kimono along with book-shaped crests. [Figure 12]

In the scene where the fashionable gesaku books first appear, Aobon is sitting

(17) Ozawa Masao ed. *Kokin wakashū* in *Nihon koten bungaku zenshū* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan 1971) 49

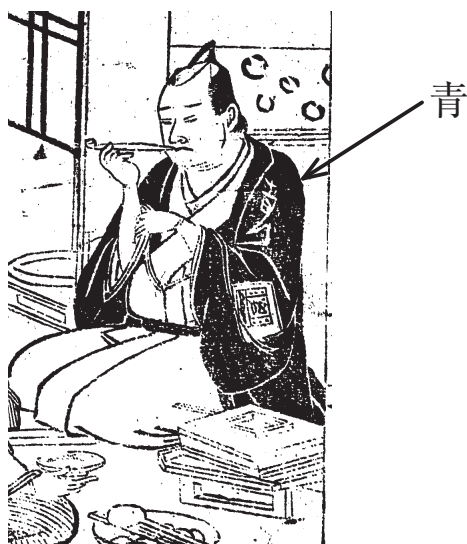


Figure 12: Aobon. From figure 9

on the far right. The name “Ao 青” is written in the place of a crest on his chest, and the likeness of an actual aohon is drawn on his sleeve. We should note that the books that appear are each given a human form appropriate to them. Aobon is given the typical appearance of a member of the literati called a “tsūjin 通人” who would have written such books. He wears a fashionable black haori 羽織 (kimono jacket), and a Honda 本田 hairstyle, whereby a thin bunch of hair is lifted up high. His kiseru 煙管 tobacco pipe completes his cool image. A tsūjin is the name given to a connoisseur who embodies the aesthetics of “tsū” that were much admired at the time. The first requirement was knowing how to dress fashionably and comport oneself with skill and elegance in the pleasure districts. In addition, one was required to have a thorough knowledge of the performing arts and other areas of learning, as well as an understanding of human nature and the ability to act appropriately in all situations.

I agree with Toshiyuki Suzuki who says of *Gozonji no shōbaimono* that “its

greatest ingenuity is the way that the nature of the books are reflected in their roles, and the way that various *jihon* are displayed in each scene”.⁽¹⁸⁾ Through these depictions, we can also learn about what was common knowledge at the time. One example concerns *ukiyo-e*. The beautiful, colourful *ukiyo-e* that appear in the book are *Ichimai-e*, and his lover, *Hashira kakushi*, and also the courtesan *Nishiki-e* with whom 青本 Aobon falls in love.

For a long time, *ukiyo-e* were printed in black and white, and colour was applied by hand. Later, a limited number of colour blocks were used in the printing process. Colour printing on a lavish scale was first carried out in private publications in 1765, and by the time of our book it was being used in commercial printing. Such prints were the pride of Edo and were prized throughout the country. The word “*ukiyo*” means literally “the floating world” and refers to contemporary society with its trends and fashions. In other words, “*ukiyo-e*” were pictures that portrayed the real world with its manners and customs, and as representatives of the height of fashion, courtesans and actors were their main subject. It was not until the 1830s that the “Thirty-six views of Mt Fuji 富嶽三十六景” by Hokusai 北斎 and the “Fifty-three stations of the Tōkaidō 東海道五十三次” by Hiroshige 広重 appeared and an interest in landscape pictures began to develop. And even then, such pictures were never central to the world of *ukiyo-e*.

The size and type of *ukiyo-e* reveals the importance of the character displayed. The format for actor prints (*ichimai-e*) was *hosoban* (33cm long by 15cm wide), while prints of beautiful women (*bijinga*) were *ooban* (38cm long by 27cm wide). In *Edo jiman meisai zue* 穢土自慢名産図会, a *kibyōshi* of 1805 by Kyōden, prices are given as 8 mon for an actor print, 9 mon for a two-volume *kibyōshi*, and 20 mon for a *nishiki-e ooban*. Reflecting their size and value, the high-class courtesan who remains aloof despite Aobon’s adulation, is given the

(18) Suzuki, 2011.103 「本の性格を的確に役回りに投影して、さまざまな地本を各場面に賑やかにちりばめるところが趣向の第一」



Figure 13: *Gozonji no shōbaimono*, pages 14–15 (七丁裏・八丁表), A crest resembling that of the Ōgiya can be seen on the left-hand page by the pillow in the *tokonoma*

name Nishiki-e, while the hosoban Ichimai-e is paired with the equally narrow Hashira kakushi, a pillar print measuring 70cm long by 12cm wide.

Furthermore, Nishiki-e is clearly based on a real-life model. In the picture of her rooms in the pleasure quarters, we see a crest of three folding fans (*ōgi* 扇). This reminds us of the crest of an actual Yoshiwara brothel known as Ōgiya Uemon 扇屋右衛門, which is also the brothel that *Genji monogatari* and *Tōshisen* visit in the story. [Figure 13]

The owner of the Ōgiya brothel was well known for inviting eminent scholars to teach his courtesans. One of his high-ranking courtesans was taught by the Confucian 儒学 scholar Sawada Tōkō 沢田東江, and another by the Wagaku 和学 scholar Katō Chikage 加藤千蔭. Such highly educated and cultured courtesans became the star attraction of this particular brothel. The story cleverly



Figure 14: *Gozonji no shōbaimono*, page 23 (十二丁表), Yoshiwara saiken

represents these scholars of the Chinese and Japanese classics as Tōshisen (Chinese poetry) and *Genji monogatari*, extracts from which often adorned a courtesan's rooms.

Another interesting character in the story is Yoshiwara saiken 吉原細見, a popular guidebook to the pleasure quarters, who most fittingly provides Aobon with information about the courtesans and warns him of the dangers. In real life, the publisher of the popular Yoshiwara saiken was Tsutaya Jūzaburō, and we can see his trade mark on Yoshiwara saiken's kimono in the illustrations. [Figure 14]

Kusazōshi were designed to be read and understood easily, but we can see how a little background knowledge increases our ability to laugh along with the author. As I mentioned before, the main attraction of this book is in the roles it assigns to its characters and by comparing these with the actual books that they represent, we are able to increase our understanding and enjoyment of it.



Figure 15: *Gozonji no shōbaimono*, page 8 (四丁裏) The letters on the screen

“Reading” the illustrations

As well as taking detailed care over the personification of his characters, the author also pays great attention to bringing out the humour in his illustrations. Ōta Nanpo’s *hyōbanki* praised the illustration where Hanashibon, one of the *gesaku* characters, is performing at the Himachi ceremony to greet the rising sun.

On the screen behind him are the words: “If you have borrowed this book, please return it as soon as possible 此本いつかたへ参り候共、早々お返し下さるべく候”. These are words that were often scribbled on the back cover of books by their owners requesting their safe return, but here they are grandly displayed on a screen just like a work of art. Nanpo obviously appreciated the way that Kyōden added humorous details like this throughout his book. [Figure 15]

More recent commentators have not always rated the illustrations so highly. For example, the well-known bibliographer Senzo Mori 森銑三 notes that,

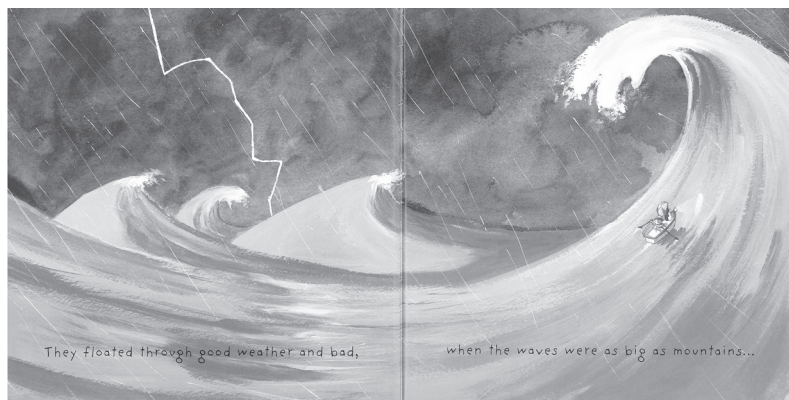


Figure 16: Oliver Jeffers, *Lost and Found*, (UK, 2005), pages 14–15

“There are many scenes where the books sit facing each other in a room, and the illustrations lack variety”⁽¹⁹⁾. However, I disagree with this criticism, as it seems natural to me and a true reflection of the nature of books that they are mainly depicted indoors.

As we continue to think about the various characteristics of the illustrations, I would like for us to take a look at this picture in a book that I bought at the Polar Museum in Cambridge. It is a picture of child and a penguin in a boat and is clearly modeled on “The Wave” by Hokusai. [Figure 16]

However, you will notice that the direction of the wave has been reversed. The reason for this is that in the vertical-script culture of Japan, the eyes of the reader move from right to left. This is true both for the scrolls of long ago and the manga of today, and is the point that Matthi Forrer makes for Western readers in his commentary on “The Wave”⁽²⁰⁾. This direction of viewing may be an

(19) Senzō Mori, ‘Gozouji no Shōbaimono’, *A synopsis of kibyōshi* 黄表紙解題, (Chūō kōronsha 中央公論社, Tokyo, 1972) 254 「室内の書物同士の対座してゐるやうな場面が多くて、挿絵の変化に乏しい」

(20) Matthi Forrer, *Hokusai: Prints and Drawings* (Munich, Prestee, 1991) Catalogue 11. Qtd by Kyōko Yoshida ‘Express the Wave by words 言葉で表現する「神奈川沖浪

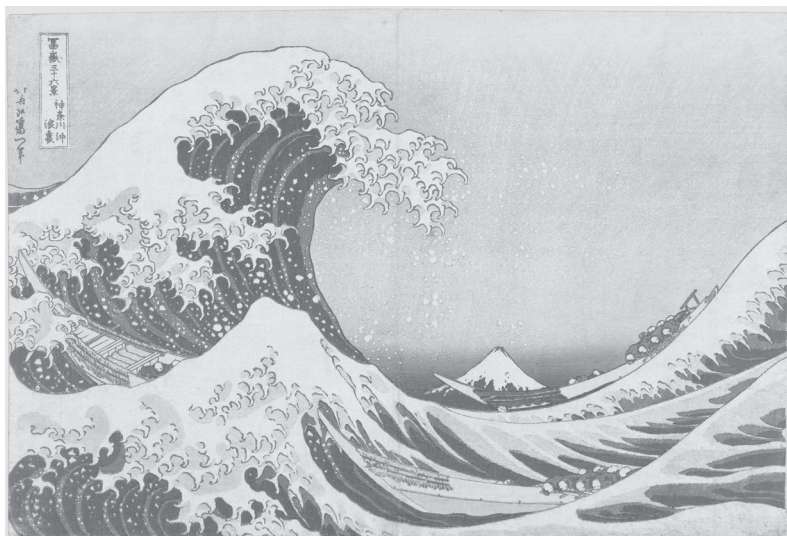


Figure 17: Katsushika Hokusai. The Wave (Under the wave off Kanagawa 神奈川沖浪裏) Edo, 1831. Keio University, Tokyo.

unconscious one for Japanese people, but Hokusai has clearly arranged his picture with this in mind. [Figure 17]

In a similar way, our eyes are directed in the illustration below from *Gozonji no shōbaimono* to the dramatic scene between the two main characters, and also beyond them to where further amusement is provided in the form of a servant taking a nap in the next room. [Figure 18]

In this scene where Hashira kakushi declares her love for Ichimai-e, it is not normal for a sword to be brandished on such an occasion, but this dramatic behavior is both characteristic of kusazōshi and is also in keeping with the fact that Ichimai-e is an actor print. These factors combine to create a humorous effect.

裏図」, *Touch the Ukiyo-e, Speak the Ukiyo-e* 触れ語れ——浮世絵をめぐる知的冒険 (Books of Keio Research Center for Liberal Arts 慶應義塾大学教養研究センター選書) 56



Figure 18: *Gozonji no shōbaimono*, pages 6–7 (三丁裏・四丁表)

The text is written as a “*kudoki* 口説き”, a speech written in the traditional 7–5 metre rhythm that is often used at the climax of a play where a young woman declares her innermost feelings. It does not, however, contain any description of the dramatic events in the picture where Ichimai-e attempts to stop Hashira kakushi from cutting off her finger in a practice known as “*yubi-kiri* 指切り” that was sometimes used to demonstrate the depth of one’s love. The important point to note here is that some illustrations closely follow the text and others do not. This scene is one of those where there is a difference between what is being described in the text and what is portrayed in the illustration.

Although they are describing different things, the combination of the two provides a vivid description of the beginning of their love affair. This method of expression which brings together the two mediums of text and illustration to create a rich, multi-faceted world is often used in *kusazōshi*. Its origins can be

found in picture books and picture scrolls from the Muromachi period and even earlier times, and is a topic that I would like to research further.

Conclusion

Our book concludes with the words “Wishing Edo a Happy New Year.” This is the role of kibyōshi – to put the reader in a jovial mood and, in the case of *Gozonji no shōbaimono*, a celebratory one as well. It is a work that depicts the younger generation rejoicing in the flourishing culture of Edo and taking great pride in publications that were influencing cultural trends.

I hope that you have enjoyed learning more about the world of Edo publishing, the culture of Edo, and the popular genre of kibyōshi through this small book. And I hope that it has demonstrated how a careful analysis of a kibyōshi can reveal many more facets to a text than a superficial reading.

Postscript: This lecture is based on an article that I wrote for *Aspects of Publishing History in the East and the West* 出版文化史の東西 (2015, Keio University Press) titled ‘Having Fun with Edo Illustrated Books: How Should We Read *Gozonji no shōbaimono*? 江戸の絵本で遊ぶ——『御存商売物』をどう読むか’. I shortened the article and made significant changes to its content and structure in order to make it easier to communicate in English, so please refer to the original for additional information. I would like to thank Brigitte Steger of Cambridge University and my translator Mary Anketell for their great help and advice in the preparation of my manuscript. I am also grateful to Alex Cracknell, David Parry and Barbara Cross for helping me prepare to deliver the lecture, and to Alessandro Bianchi for his assistance in producing the handouts. I am thankful to have been given this opportunity to meet so many kind and talented people and to have learnt so much from them. Finally, my thanks are also due to Aya Ono, Kyōko Yoshida, Noriko Matsubara and Hans Bjarne Thomsen of University of Zurich, and to all those institutions that granted permission for use of their materials in this lecture.